

Time spent in movement play in children has been declining steadily for a number of years. Changes in transport, work, leisure and the use of technology mean that many families are leading increasingly sedentary lives. Our modern, 'fast paced' society no longer gives children the time, freedom or opportunity to learn the physical skills that are so important for a happy successful life.

This lack of physical play is having a direct impact upon all areas of children's well being – including a negative impact on long term health, weight management, energy level, appropriate social behaviour and academic success at school: Skills such as balance and stability, co-ordination, good eye movement and good listening skills are not only vital for success in PE at school – they are also the 'tools' a child needs in the classroom and in later life. Good physical development is also crucial to a child's social skills, self esteem and self respect.

This BIG MOVES parent's resource has been created to go alongside the work your child's school is doing to help children improve their movement skills. Parents and schools working together can make a real difference to a child's chances of success and happiness.

The games are fun and play based. It is hoped that YOU join in and play too. Nature designs us for success – and playing and laughing together create 'feel good' chemicals in the brain and body. These chemicals are known to boost learning and memory and lift depression. Research actually shows that exercise can grow NEW brain cells, and physical activity has been likened to 'Miracle Gro' for the brain.

The Department of Health recommends that children 5-18 years old be physically active for at least 60 minutes a day.

EQUIPMENT

- 1 x whoopee cushion
- 1 x hoop
- 1 x size 4 foam ball
- 1 x bean bag
- 1 x chiffon scarf



These games are not competitive

However, learning physical skills takes EFFORT and perseverance. The movements in the resource are based on the movement they will be learning at school. They make use of the whole body and require strength. Some are tricky to master. It helps greatly if you are supportive and encouraging of this new learning - and give plenty of praise.

This play resource is only a 'starting point'...Try to remember how you played as a child

It is highly likely that you were developing some very useful skills – even if you thought you were 'only mucking around' at the time.

Support your child to take manageable risks

It is impossible to prevent your child from ever having a fall, trip or accident. It is, however, possible to prevent them developing the skills that help them to move safely. Children who have had lots of opportunity to develop good balance, stability and co-ordination, move more confidently and safely than those who have not had a chance to learn.

Brains like bodies that are moving and having fun

Games may spontaneously change into a different game altogether

Your child may lead this – or you may. You may start rolling with a ball, move to rolling up in a duvet to bouncing on the bed catching a ball. This is great – and is a good example of co-operation, creativity and problem solving.

The word 'YET' is a magical word

Use it whenever your child says, 'I can't do it'. This will teach them perseverance and determination – and will give them a sense of pride when they do achieve good movement skills. It is *inevitable* that your child will feel disappointment, failure and frustration at some point in their lives. By avoiding such situations or 'rescuing' your child you deprive them of the opportunity of dealing with the natural negative feelings that arise. Have faith in your child. By teaching them that some skills are difficult and need practise you will be creating a resilient child, capable of dealing with life's ups and downs.

In our hurried world, it is easy to forget that our children develop *slowly*. They need time to learn

Many of us are so busy, we find ourselves 'doing everything' for our children, without realising it. Give time to support and encourage your child with self care skills such as dressing and washing. Try to involve your child in physical household tasks such as cleaning and shopping. Let them help drag out the wheelie bin, change the duvet and carry the shopping.

Be mindful of how much 'screen time' your child has – especially if there is a TV in their room

Remember that to develop well, children need REAL play in a REAL world.

The games in this resource are completely safe. However people have different levels of fitness and flexibility. Please remember to move safely at all times and do not attempt to do anything you feel may cause you pain or injury

BIG MOVES PARENT RESOURCE

WHY supporting your child's physical development helps them at school

Good Balance and Core stability helps your child:

To sit still
Remain alert.
Control the muscles of their eyes for reading and writing
To understand left and right for organising their work.
Remain upright and protect themselves from head injury.
Move with control
Produce better handwriting
Succeed in P.E.

Body and spatial awareness is essential for:

Tool use-pencils, scissors, racquets and balls
Organising their work – especially on paper
Understanding Maths concepts e.g. size, weight and direction.
Good self care e.g. dressing, toileting, washing and eating.
Getting on with other children.
Moving safely around the school and playground

Controlling eye movements is essential for:

Focusing on letters on a page
Following a line of print without losing your place
Copying from the board
Recalling the shapes of letters
Hand eye co-ordination for neat handwriting, art work and tool use.

Upper body strength and strong hand development helps your child:

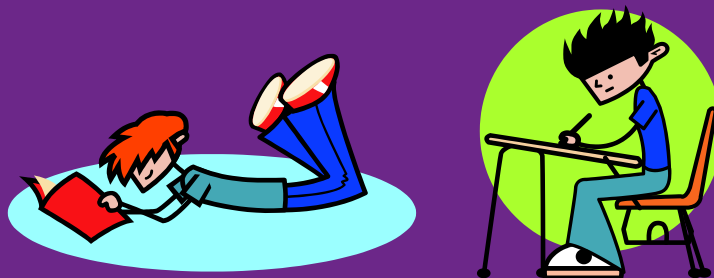
Have a proper pen grip for continuous writing
Control pencils, pens and scissors
Produce neat work
Succeed in P.E.
Sit with good posture and breathe efficiently

Listening skills are essential for;

Understanding instructions
Tuning out background noise so they can focus in a busy class
Recalling a number of instructions
Remembering a sequence of instructions
Getting on with others
Enjoying and achieving in music, dance and singing

Movement and positional language helps your child

Understand and respond to the teacher's instructions
Organise and sequence their work
Understand science and maths concepts
Co-operate and join in playground games



BIG MOVES PARENT RESOURCE

HOW to support your child's physical development



Balance and Core stability

Children should practise going OUT of balance every day

- Swings, slides and roundabouts
- Rolling and spinning
- Tipping, tilting and rocking
- Bouncing and jumping
- Stopping, starting and changing direction
- Moving on uneven surfaces e.g. hills, fields, woods
- Rough and tumble play
- Climbing

Upper body strength and strong hand development

Having a strong shoulder and control of the muscles of the hands is very important for all school work—especially writing.

- Creeping on all fours
- Pushing and pulling – e.g.: tug of war
- Lifting, carrying and dragging
- Hanging and holding on (monkey bars, trees)
- Pressing and wringing out
- Playing with playdough, plasticene
- Wheelbarrow racing, handstands and cartwheels

Listening skills

Children need a quiet time, with an adult, every day to listen and be listened to.

- Have a special time each day to talk and listen to your child without distractions.
- Talk to your child face to face.
- Do not have the T.V. on continuously- background noise prevents the development of good listening skills.
- Give your child time to respond to instructions- repeat them if necessary.
- Read to your child
- Think hard about how much TV your child watches.
- Talk to your child about how they are moving – and include words that describe what they are doing e.g. under/over, left/right, up/ down, above/below



Body and spatial awareness

Children need support (and lots of praise) to do things every day that involve effort and the use of muscles.

- Floor games e.g. rolling, belly crawling and creeping on all fours
- Pushing and pulling
- Lifting, carrying and dragging
- Climbing
- Rough and tumble play

Controlling eye movements

Eye movement is controlled by 3 pairs of muscles. These muscles need exercising every day too.

- Lots of balance activities.
- Throwing and catching
- Playing with balloons, feathers and streamers.
- Lots of outdoor play
- Target games (e.g. darts, basketball etc.)

BIG MOVES PARENT RESOURCE: GAME CARD 1

ROLLING IN A BALL

Lying down, your child curls up small – as small as they can. They roll *sideways* over and over like a ball (They do not roll forwards as in a forward roll).

THE GOAL IS – To roll while remaining in the curled up shape.

IDEA - They can roll, like a ball, towards empty water bottle 'skittles' and knock them over.

BEANBAG – Place the beanbag on their tummy so they have to curl their body around it and hold it there. Ask them to roll keeping the beanbag on their tummy. This is difficult and needs practise!

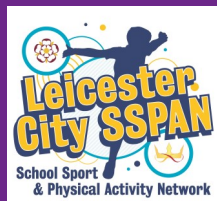
"PARCELS"

Your child lies on their side and curls up in a ball, tucking their chin in and with their arms wrapped around their knees. Ask them to imagine that they are a parcel – all wrapped up. You tell them you are going to peel open the parcel by pulling gently on their legs and arms. They have to resist as much as they can and remain in the curled up shape.

THE GOAL IS - To try and stop you opening them out.

BEANBAG - Put the beanbag inside the 'parcel'. This is the 'treasure/a jewel/secret map. Try and reach in and get the treasure and your child resists.

Make sure you take turns being the parcel.



Learning about the middle of the body - Stability and Control

"TWINKLE, TWINKLE LITTLE STAR"

Your child sits on their bottom on the floor, in a curled up shape, arms wrapped around their legs, nose pointing down towards their belly button. As you sing the first line of 'Twinkle, twinkle little star' slowly 'open out' the body until the arms and legs are straight and the nose is pointing towards the ceiling. As you sing the second line ("How I wonder what you are") slowly curl back up again. Continue to open out and curl up for each line of the song (This will be three times in total). **When the child has mastered this movement** they can try this. The movement is carried out lying on the back, with the head alternately lifting up off the floor and then resting on the floor.

THE GOAL IS - to open and curl up the entire body, three times with control and co-ordination whilst lying on the back. This is a tough exercise and will need practise.

"STUCK IN THE MUD"

Your child lies face down on the floor in an X shape, forehead on the floor. Ask them to imagine that they have fallen into some mud SPLAT! And they are stuck to the floor. All the front of their body is stuck down. Tell them you are going to try and lift their arms/ legs/body away and turn them over. They resist as much as they can and stay 'stuck'.

THE GOAL IS - to resist any part of their body being lifted off the floor.

BEANBAG - Place the beanbag under the belly button. This is the treasure/ jewel/treasure map. Try to get the bean bag out from under your child by lifting them out of the mud. They resist.

Make sure you take turns in being "Stuck in the Mud."

Building a strong and flexible spine

ROCKET ROLLING

Your child lies on the floor in a straight line, arms above the head. Hands together and legs together. Ask them to roll over and over, trying to keep their body straight. Make sure you roll both ways

THE GOAL IS - to roll slowly in a straight line over and over, keeping the arms above the head and the legs together.

IDEAS -

- Take hold of your child's shoulders and hips and slowly roll them over and over like a rolling pin. This is especially useful if your child is having difficulty.
- Lie down with your child so you are facing each other, lying on your tummies. Hold hands and roll together, both ways.
- Roll down and knock over a line of empty water bottle 'skittles'.
- Roll to gentle music. Ask them to imagine they were waves rolling up a beach or raindrops rolling down a window pane.
- Roll your child up in a blanket

BEANBAG – hold the beanbag between the knees and roll

WHOOPEE CUSHION - roll over the whoopee cushion

BALL - Roll keeping the ball on the floor above the head

LOG ROLLING

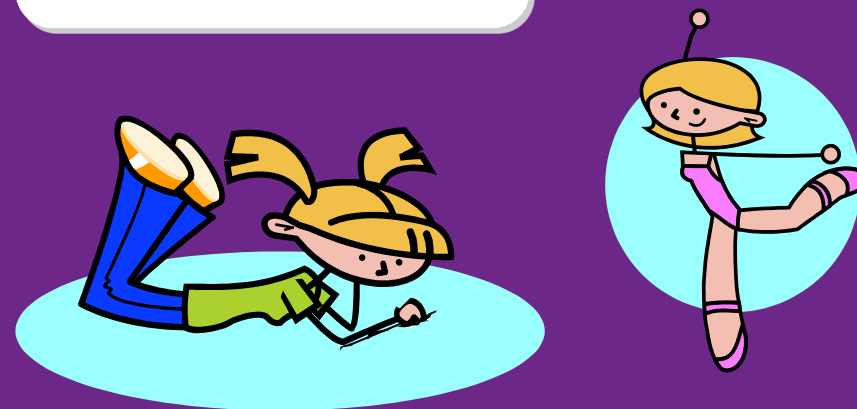
When your child has mastered the Rocket Roll they can try this. This movement is the same as the Rocket Roll, but the arms are held down by the sides of the body. This is a much harder movement and requires much more strength.

THE GOAL IS – to roll over and over in straight line, keeping the arms by the sides and the head OFF the floor.

BALL - Roll on the floor keeping the ball on the floor above the head

ROLLING OUTDOORS

Rolling down hills and grassy banks.



JUMPING

BOTH FEET TOGETHER.

THE GOAL IS - to jump with both feet together and land with control

HOOP - in and out of the hoop/ over the hoop

BEANBAG - over the bean bag

"TRAINS"

Sit on a smooth floor, back to back with your child. The person who is 'The Engine' bends their knees and places their bare feet flat on the floor, arms on the floor at the sides. The 'carriage' keeps their legs straight and their hands in the lap. The 'Engine' uses both legs together to push the carriage along the floor. Take turns in being the engine.

"ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT"

Sit opposite your child, legs straight, with their legs either on top of, or underneath yours. Hold hands and play 'Row, row, row your boat.'

THE GOAL IS - your child must not only pull themselves up from lying down, but also help pull you up from lying down.

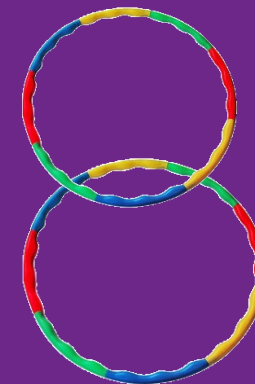
Learning about the upper and lower body (strong arms, strong legs)

TUG OF WAR

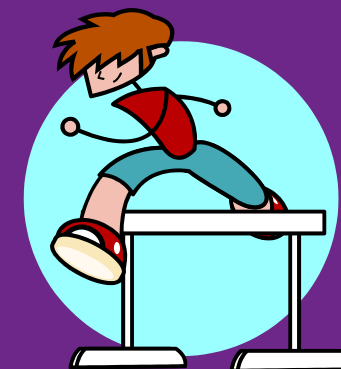
Sitting down, facing one another, use a tea towel/towel or rope to play tug of war. Ask your child to really try pulling you towards them.

OUTDOORS

- Swings – teach your child to swing themselves, using their legs to move
- Space hoppers
- Ride on toys – using both feet together, or pedal bikes
- Trampolines
- Hopscotch



In these games, both arms or both leg move together – doing the same thing.



Learning about the two sides of the body (understanding left and right)

BELLY CRAWLING

This is a strong movement for many children but is important for developing all the joints and muscles of the body, including the feet – and for developing determination. Your child may need to practise this one.

The child moves on the belly, on a smooth surface, such as laminate floor or linoleum. They crawl along the floor like a crocodile, bending alternate legs and using their feet and toes to push themselves along. (They do not use their arms to pull or push themselves along). The arms reach forward as they move.

THE GOAL IS – to move in a co-ordinated way on the belly, using alternate legs to push the body across the floor.

IDEAS –

- Play crocodiles and chase each other. (When the crocodile catches his dinner he has to roll over with it!)
- Ask them to belly crawl through your legs
- Blow the chiffon scarf along the floor
- Belly crawl over to the whoopee cushion, lift and then squash it with the tummy.
- **MUSICAL CROCODILES** – belly crawl while music is playing. When the music stops get into an on all fours position and stay still.

BEANBAG AND HOOP – take the bean bag and belly crawl over to the hoop. Remaining on the tummy, put the bean bag in the middle of the hoop. Tell them this is 'Putting the Cherry on the Cake'. (You may think of other objects around the house that you can use for this game)

CHIFFON SCARF – blow the chiffon scarf along the floor whilst belly crawling.

OUTDOORS

Gallop sideways to the left and to the right.
You may hold hands with your child and do this.



CREEPING ON ALL FOURS

The child creeps like a cat on hands and knees. The arm moves at the same time as the leg on the opposite side of the body.

THE GOAL IS – to be able to creep on all fours slowly, co-ordinating both sides of the body together.

IDEAS -

- Through tunnels/boxes/ dens
- under you/through your legs
- over you
- soft play areas

BEAN BAG – ask your child to get into an on all fours position and balance the beanbag in the centre of the back. Ask them to travel from one end of the room and back without dropping the beanbag.

BEANBAG & HOOP – ask your child to hold the beanbag under their chin and creep over to the hoop and drop it in. Tell them this is the topping for a pizza. (You may find other things around the house that they can use for this game.)

CHIFFON SCARF - Tuck the scarf into the back of your waistband so that it hangs down like a tail. Get down on all fours and face your child. When you say "Go", your child has to try and pull your tail off. You try to keep moving out of the way. (If you have an extra scarf, you can both have a tail to grab at.)

WHOOPEE CUSHION. – whilst music is playing your child creeps around on the floor. When the music stops they have to lower their tummy down onto the whoopee cushion.

Putting it all together using the upper and lower body and the two sides of the body together

OUTDOORS

Walking

Marching – lifting the knees high

Skipping

Running

