

Gross Motor

Gross Motor is your child's ability to use his large muscles in his arms, legs and body. The first movement skills to develop are locomotive skills such as crawling, walking, running, hopping, galloping, skipping, climbing, and chasing. The next to develop is stability which includes balancing, jumping, rolling, stretching, twisting, and swinging. The last to develop are manipulative skills which includes throwing, catching, kicking, dribbling, and hitting an object.

Young children need many opportunities to explore and practice these skills. We are fortunate to have a developmental gym program which provides our children the opportunity to develop and strengthen all of these physical movements. Your child is also working on his gross motor skills when we go outside on the playground or moving to songs in the classroom. Gross motor skills need time to mature in order to compete in organized sports, too.

Let's get moving with some gross motor fun at home:

- Monkey See, Monkey Do! Your child imitates moving like different animals (galloping horses, waddling ducks, swimming fish, flying birds, lumbering bears, and slithering snakes).
- Wheelbarrow Walk! Lift up your child's legs and let him walk using only his hands and arms. See how far he can go or how long he can stay in that position. Always do this on the rug!
- Obstacle Course! Create an obstacle course throughout your house by going under, over, through, and around furniture.
- Sock Toss! Match and ball up socks then shoot them into the clothes basket.
- Scarves! Wave and dance with them to music.
- Outdoors! Go to the playground, ride bikes, pull wagons, walk through the woods, or play with different size balls.

Physical movement is also good for the brain, mental health, and reducing stress. It improves school performance, attention, and helps our bodies to stay fit and healthy. Young children should have at least 60 minutes a day of physical activity. It does not have to be all at once, but can be broken up throughout the day.

Let's Get Moving! It will be fun!