

Vancouver Regional Pediatric Team

Name:
 Provided By:
 Date:

POSTURAL STABILITY and BALANCE

To promote improved postural stability and balance it is important to focus on the central part of the body (head and trunk). This includes activities such as turning, reaching, straightening, shifting weight and pushing and pulling against some resistance. It also includes encouraging functional activities, which requires the child to use his balance mechanisms in a variety of ways.

1. Lying on stomach over small wedge:

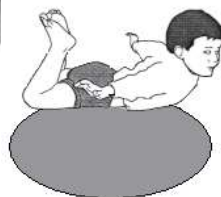


- Start by encouraging weight bearing through the elbows and progress to straightening elbows and weight bearing through hands
- Encourage shifting weight onto one hand and reaching with the other
- Place toys to encourage reaching forwards, up and to the sides
- Puzzles, blocks, mirrors, etc. are fun in this position

2. Lying on back on small wedge:

- Bend hips and knees up so they can see their feet.
- Encourage lifting the head to reach for the toes
- A necklace or small finger puppets on toes will encourage them to hold the position
- Progress by encouraging the child to turn to each side as he lifts up.

3. Using a large ball or a balance board:



- Tipping a large ball or board slowly will allow the child to tilt his/her body to maintain his/her balance and encourage protective extension of arms
- A. Lying on their stomach on a large ball
 - Encourage them to lift head, shoulders and legs off the ball (pretending to be an airplane, superman, swimmer, flying, etc)
- B. Sitting on a large ball or balance board
 - Tip the ball or board slowly in different directions while the child tried to maintain an upright position.
- C. Tipping balance board
 - Have the child assume different positions for this activity (i.e. on hands and knees, on knees only, standing)

4. Sitting on a 10" ball:



- With feet apart and flat on the floor have the child sit in front of a small table.
- Place toys so that they have to reach from side to side for them.
- You can also place items on the floor to either side to encourage them to reach down and then come back up to full sitting.

5. Rocking Horse, swing, and see-saw

- Encourage the use of this equipment

6. Scooter Board activities:



- a) Have child lying on stomach on board.
 - Encourage child to keep legs off floor and propel board along with the use of their hands.
 - Encourage child to keep legs off floor while holding onto rope and being pulled in different directions
- b) Have child lying on back while on board
 - Encourage child to keep legs off floor and chin tucked in while holding onto rope and being pulled in different directions.
 - Tie a rope across the room so that it runs parallel to the floor and have them pull themselves along from one end of the rope to the other.

NOTE: one adaptation for the scooter board is to use a piece of mat or a thick piece of cloth on the kitchen floor.

7. Moving against resistance:



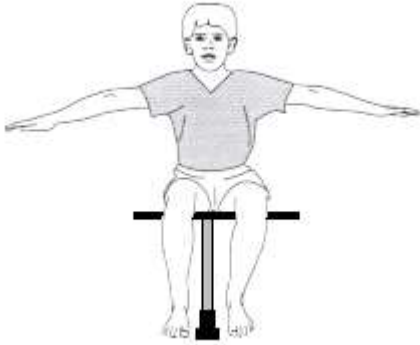
- Walk along while pushing or pulling a weighted cart or heavy object. You may want to use a large chair or a wagon with weights in it.
- Games involving pushing and pulling against another person. Example: tug of war or sitting across from each other on the floor with feet and hands touching while pushing and rocking back and forth.

8. Holding different positions against steady resistance:



- Use a variety of positions for this activity example – sitting, on hands and knees, kneeling and standing.
- Apply slow and steady pressure in different directions while asking the child to maintain the position.
- It is important to only give the child as much pressure as they are able to hold against.
- Apply pressure to shoulders and/or hips in a forward, backward, sideways or turning direction.
- While standing with one knee up on a chair, apply resistance as previously described.

9. T-Stool Activities



While sitting on a T-stool the following activities can be encouraged...

- Throwing and catching a ball
- Kicking the ball from one person to the other.
- Passing the ball back and forth from one foot to the other.
- Crossing one leg or ankle over the other knee and holding the position.

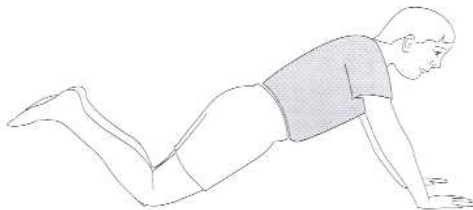
NOTE: an adaptation for the T-stool activities, which is slightly more difficult, is to use a 12" ball instead of the T-stool.

10. Sit-ups:



- With legs anchored and chin tucked in encourage the child to lift head and shoulders off the floor.
- Without legs anchored, repeat A
- To progress the difficulty of this activity the child can place hands behind head while being encouraged to bring elbow across to the opposite knee as they sit up.

11. Push-ups:

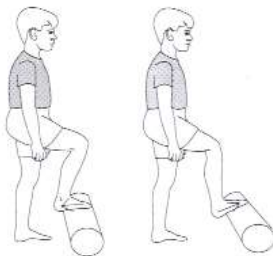


- Child laying on stomach on the floor with hands flat on floor by shoulders
- Encourage them to push body off of floor while remembering to keep chin tucked in, straighten elbows fully and keep the body and hip in a straight line.
- This can either be done as a regular push-up or a knee push-up (if the child is under 8 years old).

12. Sitting on a bench/stool or small box:

- Have the child fold arms across chest and rest their legs in your arms with the hips and knees bent.
- Ask the child to hold his balance while you move both his/hers knees up towards his left shoulder and down and then up towards his/hers right shoulder and down.

13. Standing with one foot on a small ball (8 – 12 inches):



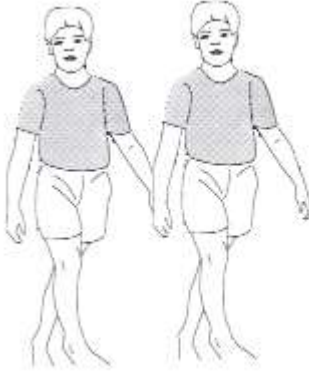
- Have the child stand with his hands on his hips and one-foot resting on top of the ball. Have them move the ball forwards and backwards, sideways, and round in a circle while maintaining his/hers balance.

14. Large body movements to music:

- Reaching, bending, and stretching and turning to music can be fun.
- These large movements can be done in different positions such as a sitting, kneeling or standing and can be made a little harder with outstretched arms.
- There are several excellent records available for

children. Any kind of dance the child enjoys is helpful.

15. In a circle with other children:



With the children joining hands in a circle the following activities can be encouraged:

- walking sideways around the circle, which can be progressed by crossing the legs over as the child walks sideways
- Walking forwards in to the center and backwards again.
- Standing on one leg and then the other.
- Swinging a leg
- Jumping with feet together

NOTE: If the Child requires extra support initially have them stand next to an adult in the circle.

16. Animal and Alphabet:



A) Imitate different animals. Have the “animal” turn their heads to look around, wag their tails, lift a foot or walk forwards, backwards, and sideways, etc.

- Snake – have the children roll or crawl on their belly.
- Dog – on hands and knees
- Elephant – on knees with arms and hands making the elephants trunk
- Bear – on hands and feet with bottom up in the air
- Crab – on feet with hands behind on the floor.
- Stork – standing on one leg.

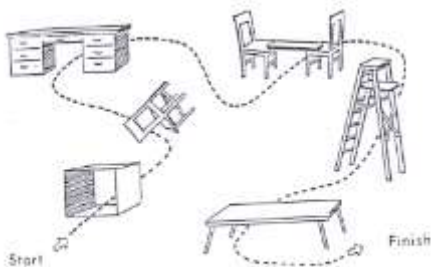
B) Imitate different letters of the Alphabet

- K or Y etc.

17. Climbing on playground equipment

- Encourage use of outdoor playground equipment, such as slides, stairs, etc.

18. Obstacle Course:



- Old inner tube, sturdy cardboard boxes, upright and overturned chairs, benches, etc. Can be used to set up an obstacle course.
- Provide the child with the opportunity to climb under, over, around, through, etc.

19. Outside Terrain:

- Encourage walking on various surface – e.g. grass, snow, gravel, walking along cracks, up and down curbs, etc.

20. Stops, starts and turns:

- Encourage walking and then running activities that

require stopping quickly or change direction e.g.: red light – green light” “Statues” or “freeze”. Relay races, soccer practice.

NOTE: Galloping and skipping can be included as well.

21. Trampoline:

- A variety of positions can be used – e.g. sitting, kneeling, and standing.
- Encourage jumping forwards several times, from side to side, over small objects, down from small heights
- Encourage standing on one leg with support initially if required.
- Progress to standing on one leg unsupported and then to place hands on hips in this position.
- Progress to hopping on one leg.
- Progress to hopping forward, sideways and backward.

22. Jumping with both feet together

23. Standing and hopping on one leg:



24. Footprints:



- Footprints can be cut from paper and taped to the floor or cut from a light vinyl material, which wears longer and grips to the floor.
- Place footprints so that the child has to take long and short steps, turn and walk frontward, sideways, and backward.
- Progress by placing the footprints so that the child has to jump with either feet or hop on one foot or ascend or descend stairs.
- Progress by having child walk in elevated blocks or bricks placed on floor.

25. Walking on a line:



- Place a 6 to 8 foot strip of masking tape on the floor.
- Activities can be progressed as follows.
- Walk forwards placing each foot on line.
- Walks sideways along line crossing one leg over the other.
- Walk backward placing each foot on the line.
- Walk on heels and toes along line.
- Walk on heels and toes along line.

26. Balance beam:

- A 6 or 8 foot long balance beam can be made from 2” to 4” piece of lumber with small blocks attached to each end.
- These activities can be started on an 8” wide beam and progressed to a 6” beam and then a 4” beam: - walk the length of the beam with one foot on the beam and one

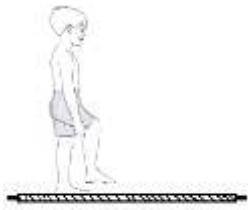


on the floor.

- Walk sideways sliding the feet along the beam
- Walk forwards taking alternate steps
- Walk backwards sliding feet along beam
- Walk backwards taking alternate steps
- Walk forwards touching the heel of the front foot to the toe of the back foot.
- Elevate one end of the beam and walk forwards, sideways, and backwards.
- Catch and throw a ball while standing on the floor.
- Stand on one leg on the beam
- Stand on one leg on the beam with eyes closed

NOTE: encourage the child to keep his hands on his hips for these activities.

27. Rope walk:



- Place a 6 to 8 foot length of rope on the floor.
- These activities can progressed as follows:
 - Walk on top of rope without stepping off
 - Walks sideways along rope crossing one foot over the other.
 - Walk along rope placing the left foot on the right side of the rope and the right foot on the left side of the rope.

28. Activities with tires:

- Arrange old tires in two staggered rows.
- Activities can be progressed as followed
 - Start by standing in the center of one tire and jump from tire to tire.
 - Walk (and progress to running) along the rows by placing one foot in the center of each tire (similar to football training practice.”
 - Walk along the rows of tires balancing on top of the tires.

29. Sport and Recreational Activities:

- Any sport recreational activity you choose should be fun for the child and should not be too competitive – e.g. soccer, skiing, skating...Etc.