

Gross motor/ balance activities

Gross motor skills are important to enable children to perform every day functions, such as walking and running, playground skills (e.g. climbing) and sporting skills (e.g. catching, throwing and hitting a ball with a bat). However, these are crucial for everyday self care skills like dressing (where you need to be able to stand on one leg to put your leg into a pant leg without falling over) and climbing into and out of a car or even getting into and out of bed.

Gross motor abilities also have an influence on other everyday functions. For example, a child's ability to maintain appropriate table top posture (upper body support) will affect their ability to participate in fine motor skills (e.g. writing, drawing and cutting) and sitting upright to attend to class instruction, which then impacts on their academic learning. Gross motor skills impact on your endurance to cope with a full day of school (sitting upright at a desk, moving between classrooms, carrying your heavy school bag). They also impacts your ability to navigate your environment (e.g. walking around classroom items such as a desk, up a sloped playground hill or to get on and off a moving escalator). Without fair gross motor skills, a child will struggle with many day to day tasks such as a eating, packing away their toys, and getting onto and off the toilet.

Some simple ideas to develop gross motor skills:

