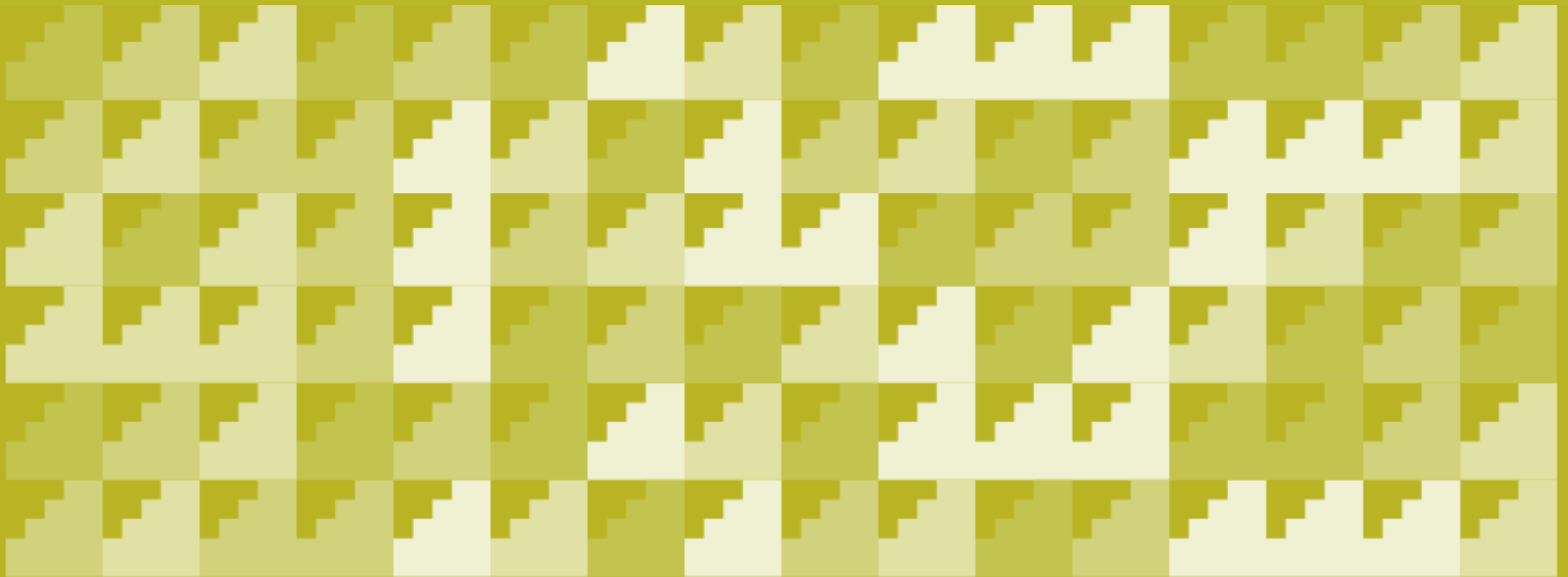
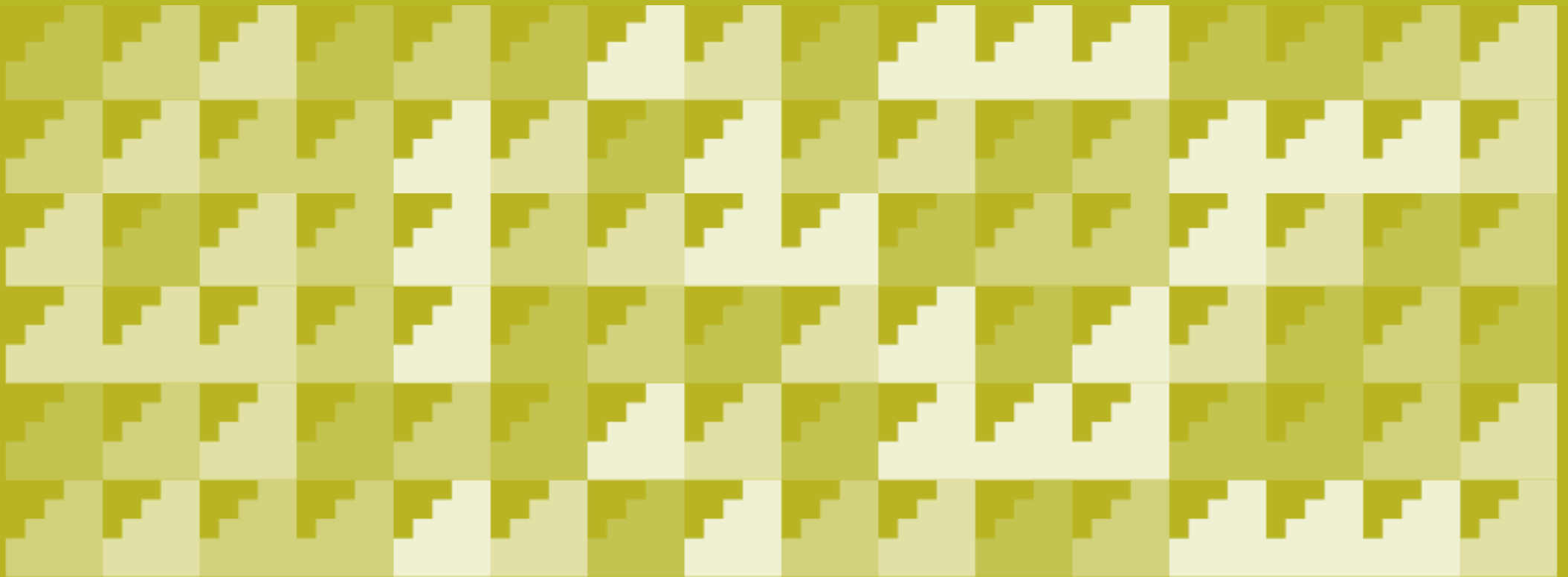


# MINI MOTOR SKILLS



# GUIDANCE



**A programme of activities for children in the Early Years (Birth-5yrs) to develop Physical Skills and School Readiness at a Universal and Targeted Level.**

**Developed and Written by  
Sally Holmes (Children's Occupational Therapist)  
and Jodie Wynne (Children's Physiotherapist)  
on behalf of the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) School  
Readiness Programme.**

## **This resource consists of:**

- A guidance booklet for Early Years Practitioners
- A set of Physical Development Activities
- Guidance of how to share the activities with parents

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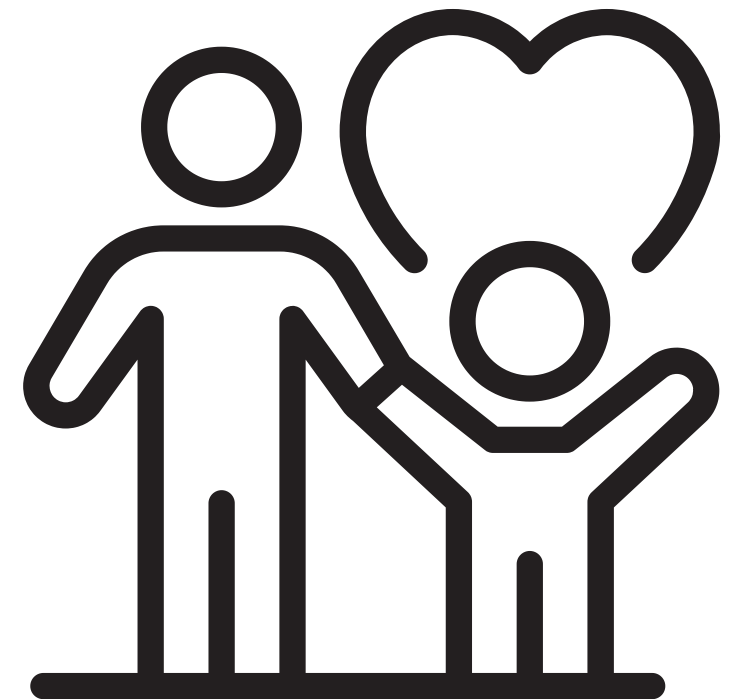
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## **Acknowledgements:**

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## **Dedications:**

For Gary, Ronnie, Charlie and all of the wonderful children who are preparing for school and beyond!

Jodie Wynne

For Betty, Alan, Dave, Helen, Lucy, Tom and all the amazing parents, carers and members of the Early Years workforce who nurture children and set them up for the rest of their lives!

Sally Holmes

# Introduction

This programme has been set up by Stockport Children's Therapists Sally Holmes (Occupational Therapist) and Jodie Wynne (Physiotherapist), to help the Early Years workforce in understanding and feeling confident, in supporting a child's physical development in a fun and easily accessible way.

It has been commissioned by the Greater Manchester Combined Authority (GMCA) School Readiness Programme, as part of the Greater Manchester Early Years Delivery Model.

This booklet will provide guidance on how Early Years practitioners can use the interventions with children and support you, with how to involve parents.

## Context

Movement, physical activity and play, have an important role in a child's Physical Development, impacting on their social, emotional, physical and cognitive development.

Unfortunately, not all children have the same opportunities for the best start in life, with many children starting school without the necessary physical skills to enable them to get the most out of their education. For example, in primary schools across the country, children have been observed lacking the core strength needed to sit still, concentrate and support themselves in a seated position.

The Greater Manchester School Readiness Programme aims to ensure that every child has the best start in life, by putting tools and support in place to support children's outcomes from birth to age 5. The programme currently uses two key measures of child development and school readiness:

- The Ages and Stages Questionnaire 3 (ASQ3) at age 2 – 2.5 years
- EYFS, attainment of Good Level of Development (GLD), at the end of reception.

Physical Development is important for a child's health and wellbeing as well as supporting a range of wider child development domains. There is strong evidence which shows us that physical literacy is an important feature in getting children 'school ready' and is fundamental to supporting good outcomes later in life. Activities such as the ones in this resource, aim to develop a child's physical development, which will also contribute to the development of the 5 domains of child development (Language, Social, Emotional, Cognitive and Physical).

'Movement is an integral part of life from the moment of conception until death, and a child's experience of movement will play a pivotal part in shaping his/her personality, feelings, and achievements. Learning is not just about reading, writing and maths. These are higher abilities that are built upon the integrity of the relationship between the brain and the body.'

**-(Goddard Blythe, 2005, p5.)**

## Intended Audience:

- This resource is aimed at the Early Years (EY) workforce e.g. Health Visitors, EY help / family support services, childminders, nursery practitioners, EY teachers / SENCO's, EY sports coaches.
- This programme is written and graded for ALL children in their early years (Birth – 5years) at both universal and targeted levels.
- It is aimed to be able to share the activities with parents/carers, as part of a universal / targeted offer to continue to support their child's development at home, outside the setting or school.

## Content:

The programme covers areas including gross motor, fine motor, and functional skills development throughout the early years (birth to reception) which, in turn, underpin learning. This will not only help a child develop physically, but will boost their confidence, self-esteem, resilience, and school readiness.

## Aims:

- Improve children's outcomes in Physical Development within the early years.
- Lower the number of referrals made to specialist services such as Physiotherapy and Occupational Therapy for support with physical development.
- Develop a shared language around physical development for both professionals and parents.



## Accessibility

- We have attempted to keep activities fully accessible to all to ensure success for the child and parent / carer \* as well as for ease of planning if running these activities as a group session. Throughout the programme a variety of resources and alternatives (on page 25) are listed to support the activities.
- Please remember that each child and family is unique and each individual child develops at different rates and at any time there may be differences in their development.
- We appreciate that some children may be involved with specialist services due to having additional needs. Please seek the advice from specialist professionals if required.
- Professional advice should be sought if there are uncertainties regarding additional medical issues or if developmental differences are highlighted during activities.

**REMEMBER: THE SAFETY OF YOU AND YOUR CHILD IS YOUR RESPONSIBILITY!**

## Reference:

- \* Throughout the programme the terms 'parent / carer' include guardians and any care giver such as a childminder, nursery staff, sports coach, group leader, grandparents, etc

## **Main aims of the activities:**

- To improve movement, balance and co-ordination.
- To improve fine motor control and dexterity, including readiness for handwriting.
- To improve functional skills for independence in feeding, dressing and toileting.
- To improve perception of self and how we physically interact with the world around us.
- To improve confidence and self esteem.
- To gain a well-rounded physical development throughout the Early Years.
- To increase physical and functional levels of school readiness.
- Many other core skills are also likely to improve, having a direct effect on play, learning and concentration.

## **How to use the activities:**

Whether the programme is being used at a universal level or a targeted level the operations remain the same:

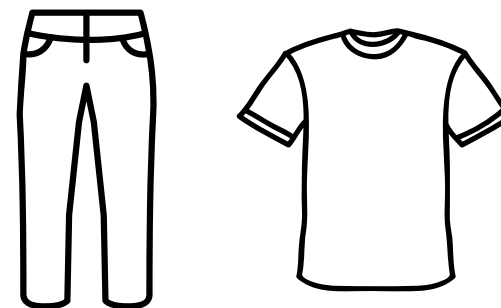
- The activities are split into 7 colours; one for each colour of the rainbow. Each colour represents a different area of physical development; therefore by doing one activity from each of the 7 colours, you will offer your child activities to develop their range of physical skills. The activities are non-prescriptive and can be completed in any order. Just pick one activity from each colour of the rainbow! (see page 14 for details).
- Consider using activities that are duplicated in more than one colour category (see page 15 for details) as this means you may be able to cover all 7 areas of physical development but with fewer activities.
- Don't be tempted to miss out some of the 7 colours as all skills of physical development interlink and have an impact on another. For example: you may think that the child is struggling with mark making, and only want to work on the red activities (fine motor skills and dexterity); however, the reason the child is struggling with mark making could be a number of things including trunk stability, bilateral integration, proprioception, head control, etc.

- The activities are carefully selected and graded to give access to all ages (birth-5 years) and abilities on either an individual basis or within a group setting (e.g. nursery, reception class, sports groups, childminder, Toddler groups, Baby group, etc.).
- The 3 graded levels are Non-mobile, Mobile and Pre-school / Reception:
  - **'Non-mobile'** refers to all children who are not moving about on their own in any way and will therefore require some level of support or positioning to be at the right level for activities as indicated in each activity.
  - **'Mobile'** refers to children who are able to move about by themselves which may include via crawling, commando crawling, bottom shuffling, stepping or walking.
  - **'Pre-school / Reception'** refers to children who are able to engage in pre-school and reception class activities which are in their nature more complex and challenging – the term does not necessarily refer to all children of pre-school / reception chronological age as it will depend on each child's unique strengths and differences and is merely a way to identify the more challenging levels of an activity.
- Note: Clearly, some children may have skills more developed in one area than another, for whatever reason, and therefore these are only guidelines for how to grade activities and should be used sensitively, realistically and with knowledge of the child's abilities. E.g. if a child is non-mobile due to a physical condition of the lower limbs, their upper limbs and dexterity may be much more developed allowing them to engage in some of the more challenging activities (the mobile and pre-school/ reception categories)
- HAVE FUN!

## Things to consider:

- If using the programme in a group session, before you start, it is essential that all staff members understand the aims and objectives of the group and have the knowledge of how to grade activities and encourage engagement of children. If staff are aware of the aims of the groups and the skills that are being worked on, then they can also encourage parents/ carers to encourage their child to be involved and carry on these activities at home.
- **Timing** – Ideally the activities are offered daily and parents / carers are encouraged to repeat them at home. Realistically, aim for including all 7 activities (one from each colour) in a group session. Different activities will take different lengths of time – follow the lead from the children in free flow.
- **Facilitation** - Ideally the activities should be built into a child/children's daily routine and play activities so that it is inclusive and supports the universal educational programme (curriculum) for all children.
- **Supporting resources** – Such as GMCA's Top Tips for Movement, Development Matters, Birth to 5 Matters and Early Movers and GM Moving. (Please see references section on page 32)
- **Parents / Carers** - The activities are designed in such a way that makes them accessible to share with parent/carers. This could be part of your universal offer and activities shared with families to try at home/outside the setting/school.
- **Repetition is key for consolidating skills** - Repeating the activity/opportunity in different ways/contexts allows practice. Think about this in terms of indoors and outdoors and the interests of the child/children. Repetition has been found to be beneficial to mastering skills and boosting self-confidence before moving on to the next level.
- **Develop the whole workforce** - All staff should know the intention of the Mini Motor Skills activities, so it becomes part of the daily routine that all staff can facilitate and are able to talk confidently about why they are doing activities and what opportunities are being planned for.

- **Resources** – Set up your space with the resources you need. (Staff please note: You could print off the activity sheets for parents / carers who may be in attendance. You could also consider offering cards with key words on e.g. for the playdough activity these might include: poke, squeeze, prod, pinch, roll, etc. Photos and models of examples might also help guide and give ideas. Staff will need to circulate to give ideas and guidance as to how each child can get the most from each activity offered).
- **Space available** – The activities have been planned so that they can be incorporated throughout the day in a variety of different environments – use outside areas or adapt your space however small, and use opportunities as they present themselves to include the wide variety of activities e.g. practice dressing when putting on a protective tabard for messy play, a coat to go outside or when changing for bathing / swimming / toileting.
- **Equipment** – Each activity has the resources needed for that activity – some do not need anything, most are items easily available around the home / nursery / school and there are generally suggestions for alternatives when bought equipment is mentioned. See page 25 for a list of alternative resources – have this list available to parents so that they can consider replication of activities (using equipment available) at home.
- **Clothing** – Wear easy to move in clothing that you and your child feel comfortable in and that you don't mind getting dirty e.g. if you are rolling on the floor or painting. Both, parents / carers and children, need to be able to move freely! Longer skirts or stiff jeans, for example, can be restrictive to children and unsuitable clothing for the parents, such as a short skirt can be equally restrictive in a group situation!



- **Age and ability of the pupils** – Each activity is split into grading of: non-mobile, mobile, pre-school / reception (see graded levels on page 10) .
- **Size of group** – This will depend on the age and ability of the children as well as the adult ratio. If you are running a group for parents/ carers and their children then you can have far more children in your group, if you have the space, than if you have a group of children with a small staff ratio. Use the national guidelines for adult ratios for nurseries / childminders for safety.
- **Non-competitive** – The children should be developing their own skills and performance rather than trying to beat others. Some activities will need individual grading and some parents / carers may need guidance to remind them that the activities are non-competitive!
- **Glossary** – Please make sure that the glossary is available at your groups to share a common language and understanding (see page 17 for glossary)

## The 7 Colours are selected to cover skills in the following areas:

- Red - Fine Motor Skills & Dexterity; also includes Hand-Eye & Foot-Eye Co-ordination
- Orange – Proprioception, Body Awareness & Tactile Awareness
- Yellow – Head & Trunk control & Eye tracking
- Green - Bi-lateral integration & Crossing the mid line
- Blue – Gross Motor Skills & Balance
- Indigo – Perception; Spatial awareness & visual perception
- Violet - Functional activity

## List of activities in each colour:

### Red activities

1. Playdough
2. Making playdough
3. Pinching (pincer grip)
4. Threading
5. Vertical mark making
6. Pointing
7. Catching
8. Clapping
9. Tearing
10. Construction toys

### Orange activities

1. Row, row, row
2. Cycling
3. Commando crawling
4. Wheelbarrows
5. Crawling
6. Clapping
7. Vertical mark making
8. Quoits
9. Directions
10. Touchy feely

### Yellow activities

1. Cars
2. Bubbles
3. Catching
4. Torches
5. Wind-up toys
6. Vertical mark making
7. Balloon volleyball
8. Boat races
9. Skittles
10. Target practice

### Green activities

1. Commando crawling
2. Rolling
3. Clapping
4. Reading books
5. Construction toys
6. Tearing
7. Threading
8. Vertical mark making
9. Catching
10. Quoits

### Blue activities

1. Rolling
2. Kneeling
3. Sitting balance
4. Stop/ start
5. Dancing
6. Bat & ball
7. Catching
8. Climbing
9. Stepping up/ down
10. Jumping

### Violet activities

1. Snack time
2. Dressing: Socks and shoes
3. Dressing: T-shirt/ Jumper
4. Dressing: Trousers
5. Utensils
6. Body Parts
7. Pouring
8. Handwashing
9. Carrying
10. Quoits

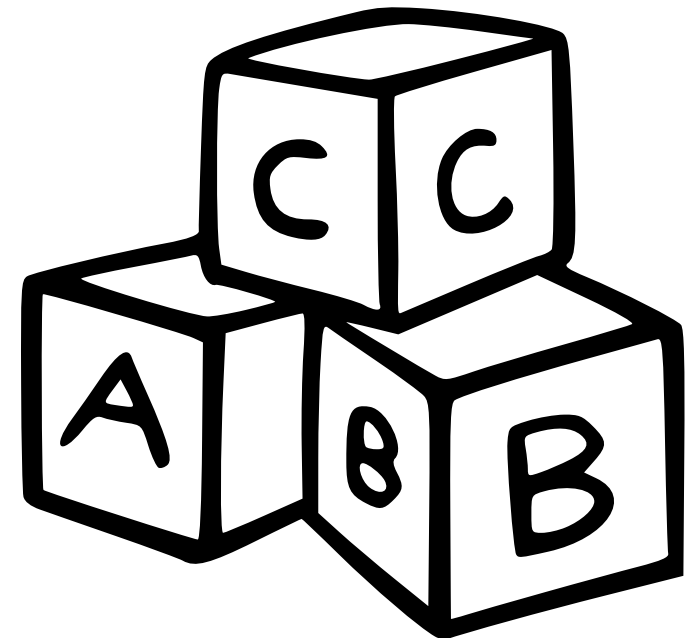
### Indigo activities

1. Shape sorters
2. Hide & seek
3. Exploring diagonals
4. Kim's game
5. Mazes
6. Threading
7. Vertical mark making
8. Construction Toys
9. Directions
10. Stepping up/ down

## Activities that overlap colours

To cover all 7 colour bands within 1 session you may choose to use an activity/ activities that cross more than 1 colour band. Please see below for activities that can be used to cover more than one area of skill and which colour bands they fall into.

- **Vertical mark making** - Red 5, Orange 7, Yellow 6, Green 8, Indigo 7
- **Catching** - Red, 7 Yellow 3, Green 9, Blue 7
- **Quoits** - Orange 8, Green 10, Violet 10
- **Clapping** - Red 8, Orange 6, Green 3
- **Threading** - Red 4, Green 7, Indigo 6
- **Construction toys** - Red 10, Green 5, Indigo 8
- **Tearing** - Red 9, Green 6
- **Commando Crawling** - Orange 3, Green 1
- **Directions** - Orange 9, Indigo 9
- **Rolling** - Green 2, Blue 1
- **Stepping up/down** - Blue 9, Indigo 10



# Record of session

If it's useful to do so, print off / photocopy this table for use with different groups and use it to record which activities you have used for future reference.

**Date: Start:**\_\_\_\_\_ **Finish:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of sessions this term:**\_\_\_\_\_

**Number of Children in group:**\_\_\_\_\_

Session no.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Red										
Orange										
Yellow										
Green										
Blue										
Indigo										
Violet										

# Appendices & Glossary

## Definitions

### Occupational Therapist (OT)

An occupational therapist helps people of all ages overcome challenges completing everyday tasks or activities – what we call ‘occupations’ – with an holistic approach. For children, that’s largely around play, as that’s how children learn and develop, but also the independence skills like feeding, toileting and dressing themselves.

Occupational therapy is about being able to do the things you want and have to do and is focused on your wellbeing and your ability to participate.

### Physiotherapist

Physiotherapy takes a ‘whole person’ approach to health and wellbeing, which includes the patient’s general lifestyle. Physiotherapy focuses on movement and helps people to restore, maintain and maximise their physical strength, function, motion and overall well-being.

A physiotherapist working with children aims to support children, from birth onwards, to reach their physical potential. Physiotherapists work together with children, young people, families and other people involved in their care to support the achievement of holistic goals.

**Occupational Therapists and Physiotherapists** are both science based professions that are regulated by the Health and Care Professions Council (HCPC).

### Balance and Core Stability

Balance is the ability to move from a stable position to an unstable position and / or maintain this unstable position for a period of time. This can be static (keeping still, like standing on one leg) activity or a dynamic (moving through space, like hopping) activity. Core stability is the ability of the joints and ‘core muscles’ of the body to create a stable base to move from. It is required to maintain an upright position against gravity. This section includes activities to work on both of these areas.

## **Bilateral Co-ordination and Integration**

Bilateral co-ordination is the ability to use two sides of the body together in a co-ordinated way. Bi-lateral integration is a function in the brain, which results in the integration or use of the two sides of the body in a co-ordinated way.

Children with difficulties in the area of bilateral co-ordination can sometimes have problems using a knife and fork, dressing, tying shoelaces, using scissors or threading.

Developmentally this function progresses this way:

- Both sides doing the same thing (e.g. holding a large ball with both hands)
- Reciprocal movements (alternating left and right sides of the body in activities such as crawling or climbing)
- Differentiated movements (where each hand does something different such as holding the paper with one hand to use the scissors in the other, holding a bowl with one hand and stirring with the other)

## **Bimanual**

Bimanual refers to the use of both hands together.

## **Body Awareness**

Body awareness is the conscious awareness and identification of the location, position and movement of the body in space in relation to its parts or in relation to the environment. We all need to learn that our hands or our feet are connected to us and that we can operate them; also how tall we are to know if we need to duck to go through a doorway! As a child is growing rapidly, this body awareness needs to continue to develop as they grow.

## **Crossing the Midline**

By the age of three or four a child should have mastered a bilateral skill called “crossing the midline”. This is the ability to move one hand, foot, or eye across to the other side of the body. We cross the midline when we scratch an elbow, cross our ankles, and read left to right.

For the child who avoids crossing the midline, co-ordinating both body sides may be difficult. It can be observed when painting at an easel when the child may switch the brush from one hand to the other at the midway point separating right and left sides of the body. They may appear not to have established a hand preference, sometimes using the left and sometimes the right to eat, draw, write, or throw.

NB: If a clear hand preference has not been developed (which is not unusual in pre-school children) it is important to offer paint brushes, pencils, etc. at the child’s visual midline, so in effect they have a choice as to which hand to use.

## **Depth Perception**

Depth perception is your ability to see objects in 3D, including their size and how far away they are from you. It helps you gauge how deep a step is to step down or how high up you are before you jump!

## **Dexterity**

Dexterity is the ability to use the hands in a purposeful, co-ordinated, skilled way to grasp and manipulate objects and use small, precise movements.

## **Eye Tracking**

This is the smooth co-ordinated movement of the eyes to attend to and follow objects and people in the environment. Along with other visual skills it allows us to read pages in a book without getting lost, track a ball to catch it, copy work from the white board without getting lost each time we glance up or down, following moving objects so that we can react to them (either move out of the way, propel them back, or stop them appropriately).

### **Fine Motor Skills**

Fine motor skills are skills that involve the use of small muscles in the hands and fingers, which are essential for performing tasks that require precision and coordination, such as writing, drawing, and manipulating small objects like fastening buttons or picking up beads.

### **Functional Activity**

Functional activities are the activities of daily living and independence skills such as feeding yourself, dressing, toileting, washing hands, cleaning teeth, brushing hair, etc.

### **Gross Motor Skills**

Gross motor skills are those which require whole body movement and which involve the large (core stabilising) muscles of the body to perform everyday functions, such as standing and walking, running and jumping, and sitting upright at the table. Along with other skills such as hand-eye coordination, it allows us to undertake activities such as throwing, catching, kicking a ball as well as riding a bike or a scooter and swimming.

### **Hand-Eye co-ordination and Foot-Eye co-ordination**

Hand / Foot / Eye co-ordination is the ability to co-ordinate the use of the hands / feet with what the eyes can see, for example, to catch or kick a ball, reach out and pick up a toy, put our foot into our shoe. By co-ordinating our hands and feet with what we can see, we also need to co-ordinate the rest of our body too, such as having trunk stability, proprioception and balance not to fall over whilst kicking the ball.

### **Kneeling / Half- kneeling**

Kneeling can be with bottom touching heels or high kneeling with both knees on the floor but bottom off the heels. Half kneeling is when one knee is on the floor and one leg is bent up with the foot on the floor.

## **Messy Play (or Sensory Play)**

Is a form of creative play that happens when children explore the senses with a range of materials in a safe and generally controlled way. Children get to explore materials freely usually with no specific product in mind and messy play substances can include: sand, mud, soil, gloop, foam, different foods, playdough, water, paint etc. Messy play encourages the development of fine motor, bilateral co-ordination, sensory processing, cognitive and hand-eye co-ordination skills. It allows children to develop their sense of touch as well as often including smell, sometimes taste and to recognise the sound and look of different substances.

## **Pincer Grip**

When you pick up something using your index finger and thumb tips.

## **Proprioception**

Proprioception is one of our senses; information is sent to the brain from the joints and muscles about the sense of position and movement of the body. This allows us to make continual adjustments and corrections to our body position and movements to suit the task at hand, whether it is sitting on a chair, climbing the stairs, reaching out to pick up a spoon, writing or aiming a ball at a target.

## **School Readiness**

School readiness is a measure of how ready a child is to succeed in school physically, functionally, cognitively, socially and emotionally. This will include many skills (along with many others) such as a readiness to sit, to concentrate, to interact with peers, independence in toileting, feeding and dressing, to have physical control over tools such as pencils and scissors, to be able to physically access the playground equipment, general safety awareness, to work independently or with others for short periods and to be emotionally able to cope with separation from parents/carers.

## **Side Sitting**

This is a good transition position to get from sitting to kneeling / crawling or lying to sitting. The child sits with their bottom on the floor and both legs bent to the same side (this could be either to the left or right). The child may need their hand on the floor to support themselves.

## **Spatial Awareness**

This is a perceptual skill which allows us to work out where we are in relation to everything around us, as well as how other things are placed in relation to each other and the space around them.

It includes the perception of in, on, next to, beside, on top of and under etc. as well as gauging spaces and distances.

Children with difficulties in this area often bump into things or knock things over more than the average child, can't follow craft or Lego instructions or copy block patterns, struggle to organise numbers into columns in maths, forget finger spaces or have irregular handwriting with little concept of letters being above, on or underneath the line.

## **Tactile Awareness**

The tactile system is our sense of touch and through it we receive information about the world. The sense of touch is essential to the development and correct functioning of our nervous system.

Babies first see things in 2D; it is through tactile exploration, feeling objects with their hands, mouths and other body parts that they begin to understand the 3D aspect of objects.

## **Trunk / Trunk Control (and Head Control)**

The trunk is the main part of the body which includes chest, tummy and back. Trunk control is the ability of the trunk muscles to allow the body to remain upright, adjust weight shifts and perform selective movements of the trunk that maintains the base of support during static and dynamic postural adjustments. Head control is the ability of the neck muscles to support and control the position of the head.

## **Tummy time**

This is placing babies or children on their tummy for short periods, when they are awake and supervised, which helps them to develop their neck and trunk muscles. Also, when they prop on their arms they are helping to develop awareness of where their arms and hands are (proprioception and body awareness) and build strength in their shoulders and upper arms.

## **Universal and Targeted Level**

Universal level refers to all individuals in the population; a targeted approach is when a child has been selected based on screening / assessment for specific intervention either long or short term to help them develop.

## **Vestibular**

Vestibular is one of our senses; information is sent to the brain from the semi-circular canals in the ears about the position and movements of the head to give us a sense of balance and movement. It is very closely linked to what we can see and is why we can have difficulties when what we see doesn't match what our balance system is telling us e.g. when we get dizzy or travel sick.

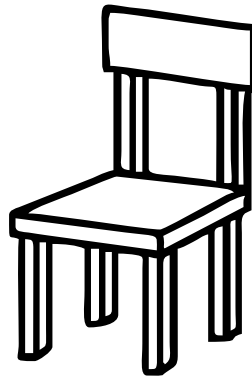
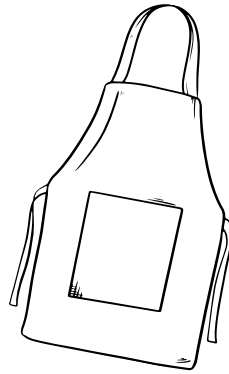
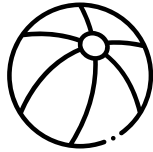
## **Visual Perception**

Visual perception is an umbrella term for lots of visual perceptual skills which are required to make sense of the information brought to our brains from what we see. Although we may have actually seen something, this does not necessarily mean our brains can interpret the information. Perception is split up into many areas – we may have difficulty with just one area or more. Here are a few examples: We may be required to remember what we see, such as remembering what each letter looks like (visual memory) or what order the letters appear in to spell our name (visual sequential memory); we may have to pick information out from a busy background such as spotting what is the main information in a “busy” picture (visual figure ground); we need to recognise the difference between a ‘p’, ‘d’, ‘q’ and ‘b’ even though they are all the same shape (visual discrimination); or we may need to fill in the gaps having not completely seen something, the skill we use to speed read (visual closure). Also see ‘Spatial awareness’.

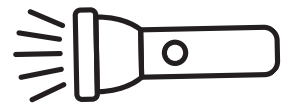
# Resources for Activities

You **do not** need to have the following together in one place but this is a list of most of the resources for programme. **However, many activities don't need anything.** All resources are noted on the individual activity cards. Keep what you need in a trolley or box in an accessible place. See the next page for suggested alternatives to use at home...

- Aprons
- Ball
- Balloon
- Bat (soft bat)
- Books
- Bowls
- Bubbles
- Cardboard boxes
- Cars or trains on track
- Chairs and tables (ideally a stool or chair that your child can sit on with their feet flat on floor)
- Clothes line
- Clothes pegs
- Clothing with zips/buttons
- Construction games e.g. duplo, lego
- Containers
- Counters
- Craft resources
- Decorations
- Drawing implements
- Finger puppets
- Gym mat/ soft floor
- Items to crawl under e.g. tunnel, duvet
- Jigsaws
- Lacing cards
- Large plastic jug
- Large trays/ washing up bowl



- Lentils, Pasta, Rice, Dried beans
- Markers
- Non-slip step
- Paint
- Peel able items e.g. yoghurt pot, sticker sheet, banana
- Pegboards & pegs
- Playdough (plus airtight bag to store)
- Playdough ingredients: Plain flour, cooking oil, measuring cup, salt, water, tablespoon, spoon
- Pull back cars
- Push button toys
- 'Puzzles – eg mazes, spot the difference
- Ride on toys, road / track markings
- Rolling pins
- Scissors
- Shape cutters
- Silk scarf
- Skittles (or plastic bottles to use)
- Spiky ball
- String/ wool
- Threads and laces
- Torches
- Variety of bangles, quoits and rings
- Variety of threadable objects
- Various familiar objects: spoon, key, bottle tops, coins etc.
- Various textures of paper
- Various writing materials
- Wall space



## Suggestions for Alternative Resources at Home:

All the activities in the programme should be accessible to all. If you don't have the commercially bought item suggested, here are lots of suggestions for alternatives – just think about what the activity is and if the alternative still allows your child to achieve the aim. You might have fun with your child trying to find the resources you need for an activity as well as doing the activity eg finding a suitable thick twig outside to use as a bat, collecting feathers or leaves to push into playdough, scrunching up newspaper to make a ball.

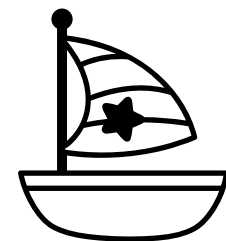
**The safety of you and your child is your responsibility- please supervise and adequately support at all times!**

**Risk assess any resources you are using; be aware of allergies for anyone involved in an activity**

**Ball:** different size balls with different weight and textures according to children's size and ability:- roll 2 socks up to make a ball, Koosh ball or similar, balloons, bubbles, scrunched up newspaper / tin foil, pull off sellotape / parcel tape and scrunch into a ball. You might be able to use a paper aeroplane (google how to make one), foam darts, soft toys to throw, depending on the aim of the activity.

**Bat:** use household items like a wrapping paper inner tube, rolled up newspaper or magazine, spatula, plastic or paper plate, place mat, thick straight twig.

**Boats:** paper boats (look up on google how to fold one!), light clean food trays or takeaway boxes / foil tray, margarine tub – put a blob of blutak in the middle of the base and stick a straw in for a mast and slide a small piece of paper over with a hole punched at the top and bottom for a sail!



**Books:** go to your local library and sign up for a library ticket for your child. It doesn't cost anything and you can have access to a life time of books! They have board books and lift the flap as well as picture books and reading books for all ages. You can also use adverts, magazines and catalogues that come through letter box.

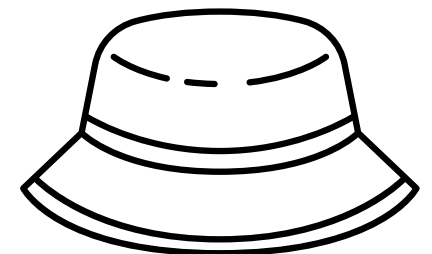
**Climbing:** use your local playpark, suitable trees, low walls, tree stumps in your local area, small step ladders, longer ladders on the ground or raised at one end on a firm box or low wall. To climb up and down smaller obstacles, try crates, non-slip bath / toilet steps, thick books, overturned boxes (if strong enough to step on), balance beams, benches, stepping stones, logs.

**Construction toys** for building towers: food packaging, tissue boxes, cups, bowls, empty containers for cotton buds or cosmetics, blocks of wood, measuring cups. Build models using vegetables, fruit, pine cones, leaves, twigs, pebbles, stones – you might need cocktail sticks, twigs or dried spaghetti to hold bits together.

**Containers:** all sorts of sizes and shapes such as bottles, cups, scoops, tins, plastic containers, wooden boxes, jugs, bowls, sieves.

**Cookie cutters :** bottle tops, turn containers upside down eg tumbler, plastic bottle, cups, bowls, yoghurt pots, toilet roll inners, crisp tubes.

**Dressing up:** hats, necklaces (they might have made these with beads and threads or ribbons in a threading activity!), toy stethoscope, feather boa, Hawaiian lay, woolly scarves, sunglasses, ear muffs, ear defenders, crowns, headbands (these might have tiger or bunny ears attached or be plain elasticated, metal or plastic), tiaras, paper hats, bangles, silk scarves / pieces of material , dressing up clothes and tabards, post-it notes, adults' / older siblings clothing – large and fun to put on! Loose fitting clothing, pillow cases, hoops, elasticated skirts, swimming costumes.



**Glue:** this can be made by mixing flour and water to a paste.

**Lines or markers** on the floor: try marks on the floor made from tape, pen, chalk, post-it notes. Start and finish lines could be string, drawn pen, tape, chalk, a tape measure, scarf, ribbon, skipping rope or a line on the pavement, change of surfaces or flooring.

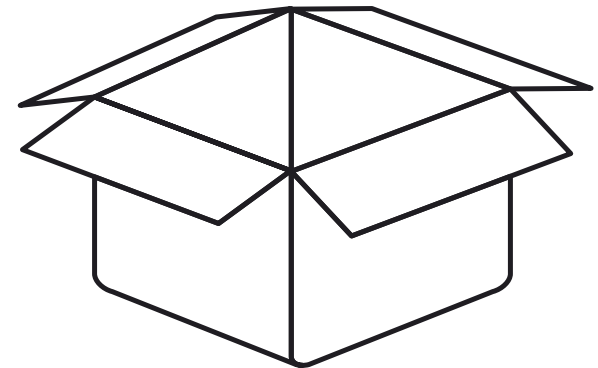
**Marble runs:** half cut through kitchen / toilet roll inners to make a half circle to roll a ball down or toy, clean guttering, the inner rolls from wrapping paper / foil / clingfilm.

**Mark making drawing implements:** your finger (!), big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, ink pads, whiteboard pens, pencils, crayons, a stick in some mud, fingers in the sand / in a tray or dried rice / salt / lentils, use sponges, feathers. Large area suitable for drawing / painting eg outside wall, large sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, easel, blackboard, whiteboard.

**Messy play substances:** different types of softer foods or substances like sand, soil, mud, water, foam, instant mashed potato, playdough, shaving foam, cooked pasta or spaghetti, mashed banana, oats and water, jelly, cooled cooked porridge, shredded paper, jam.

**Obstacles:** these really need to be stable and preferably softer or light if your child is likely to collide with them such as cushions, empty boxes, the washing pile, chairs, large soft toys, piles of books, large plastic bottles full of water (you could colour the water with food colouring or add glitter for interest).

**Paper / Card:** use old newspapers, old magazines, tissue paper, old packaging paper, old birthday or Christmas card fronts or backs, delivery (eg Amazon) boxing or packaging, cereal packets, the back of left over old wallpaper.



**Playdough:** playdough is easy to make (as in Red Activity 2 – Making Playdough) from plain flour, salt, water, oil and then food colouring and scents / textures such as glitter can be added. However; you can also buy playdough, or you could use food alternatives such as marzipan (don't use if you have children / adults with a nut allergy as this contains large amounts of almonds), sugarpaste or roll-out icing (can be left to set to make permanent models) or uncooked pastry or cookie/ biscuit dough which can then be baked and eaten!

**Pourable substances:** sand, water, dry rice, lentils, dry soil, gravel, cereals, porridge oats, dried pasta, couscous, dry autumn leaves (crunch into smaller bits to give a different consistency), glitter.

**Quoits:** bangles or rings large enough to go over arms or legs of the child (for children who are likely to put these in their mouth, please make sure that they are safe to do so), necklaces, bracelets, hair scrunchies, hoops, elastic bands.

**Rolling pins:** use a bottle / piece of dowel.

**Rolling things:** toy cars, full baked bean tins, toilet / kitchen roll inner, oranges, baubles, plastic bottles (full or empty as offer different weights, crisp tubes, sealed packet of biscuits, sealed spice / herb jars, empty shampoo bottles, rolling pin.

**Shape sorters and posting boxes:** these could be home made with a hole cut in a cardboard box or plastic top of a container such as a crisp tube or ice-cream / margarine tub, use containers of different sizes, cardboard tubes to post down or cut a slot into the side to make a 'postbox'. The holes can either be cut to match the shape or the item to be posted, or to make a slot for letters / coins like a post box or money box. Shapes to post could be a small box like an Oxo cube box, Duplo blocks, a ping pong ball, a round pebble, a pasta tube, larger coins (2p), cardboard cut into rectangles and draw on them to look like a letter from the postman, paper or foil food sachets like dried sauce mix / powdered dessert mixes. Also use inset jigsaws.

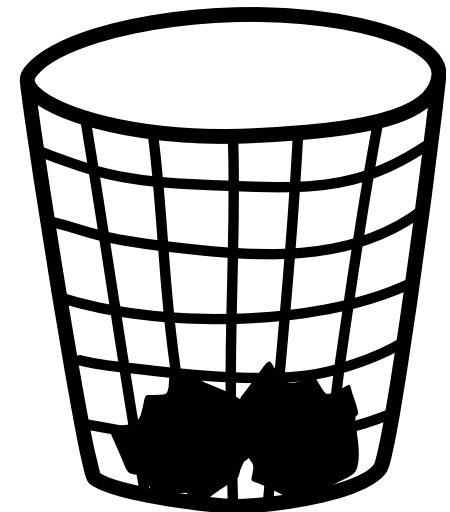
**Skittles:** try plastic bottles / crisps tube / inner from toilet roll or kitchen roll that can stand up and be knocked over with a ball. Try adding water (perhaps of different colours – use food colouring or paint to colour) into the plastic bottle for interest.

**Squashy foods / items:** peas, beans, sweetcorn, pom poms, sponge, foam, soft toys, sprung pegs also give the same pinching action (some have stronger springs than others; often underwear driers have softer springs).

**Stickers:** you could save any stickers given to your child on greaseproof paper to reuse; the same peel action may be achieved through peeling off a yoghurt pot lid, peeling a satsuma or banana.

**Targets:** a bucket, waste paper bin, tub (often a biscuit / sweet tin works well because this makes a noise when your child successfully hits the target), a stick with a hoop attached, a spot on a wall / on the floor (consider using tape or chalk to mark this out), dart board, stick a piece of paper / post-it note on the wall, a washing basket, a dry washing up bowl, a box, a hoop suspended from a washing line.

**Threading:** Kitchen roll holder, stacking rings, quoits, rings, scrunchies, pieces of dowel, sticks, pipe cleaners, bangles, thick nylon rope (stiffer rope), electrical wire conduit (the plastic coating of wire without the metal in the middle), threading boards made of wood / card, Spanish laces (red liquorice laces), penne pasta shapes, large holed beads, smaller holed beads, string, shoelaces (with a stiffened end), child friendly sewing needles (i.e. blunt with large threading hole), thicker embroidery threads, 'sewing' cards (these could be a picture drawn on card or an old Christmas / birthday card with holes punched into it using a hole punch).



**Tools:** spoons (e.g. wooden, metal , large, small, slotted, plastic, etc), straws, spoons, child's forks and knives (child sized blunt plastic, wood or metal), play scissors, sticks, cups, bowls, jugs, pans, beaters, scoops, ladles, fish slices, balloon whisks, buckets and spades.

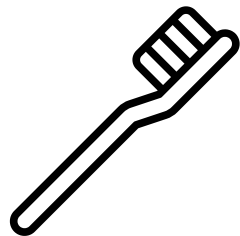
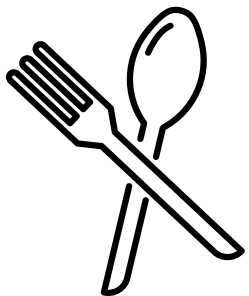
**Touchy feely objects:** items around the house that are safe and clean eg, sponge, remote control, carrot, ball, pencil, book, toothbrush, toy car, toilet roll tube, familiar toys, keys, new nailbrush or toothbrush, packet of crisps (sealed – or empty packets washed out and the top sellotaped across), bib, child's drink cup, spoon, different textures of clothing eg silky, woollen coats, fluffy jumper).

**Tubes:** inner roll from foil, wrapping paper, kitchen roll, drainpipes (new!), inner from large paper or material rolls.

**Tunnels:** large cardboard boxes with the ends open, a blanket / duvet cover over a table or clothes airer or supported between 2 chairs, tie up a string between 2 fence posts or trees and drape a blanket or sheet over.

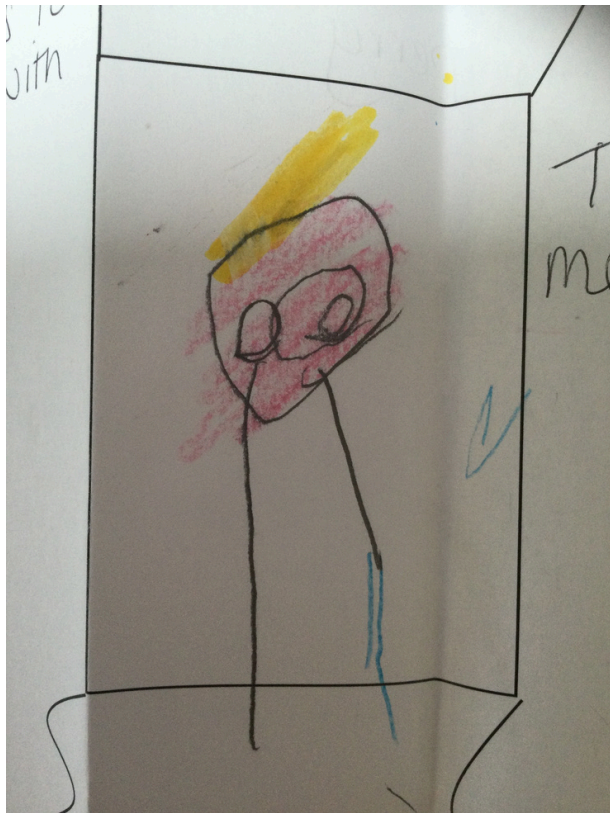
**Utensils:** a variety of spoons (e.g. wooden, metal , large, small, slotted, plastic, etc), sticks, child forks, play knives (child sized blunt plastic, wood or metal), cups, bowls, jugs, pans, drums and beaters, triangles and beater, scoops, ladles, fish slices, balloon whisks, buckets and spades.

**Water:** consider using a washing up bowl, a sink, a baby bath, bath, pottng tray or a tray of water.



## Case Study

Throughout the development of Mini Motor Skills trials were completed with implementation of the activities in a number of settings. Following this period we received feedback that through the implementation of Mini Motor Skills activities, progress had been seen for Child A on their ability to perceive and draw a human form. This was the progress obtained within 2 months of completing Mini Motor Skills activities on a weekly basis (not through practicing drawing!).



**Child A drawing May 2023**



**Child A drawing July 2023**

perception and body awareness has improved significantly to allow for a more detailed drawing of the human form

# References, Further Reading and Links

Physical Development is a Domain in the National Healthy Child Programme child development screen at age 2 years. (The Ages and Stages Questionnaire). It is a Prime Area of Learning and Development in the Statutory Framework for the Early Years Foundation Stage.

[Department for Health Healthy Child Programme](#)



[Every child starts school ready to learn](#)



[CBP-9292.pdf](#)



[Physical development-help for early years providers](#)



The Infographic Chief medical officer says that Physical Activity for Early Years (birth to 5 years) is recommended as at least 180 minutes throughout the day (with under 1 year olds at least 30 minutes across the day):

[Physical activity for early years: birth to 5 years](#)



[GM Moving](#)



The National Curriculum Key Stages 1 and 2

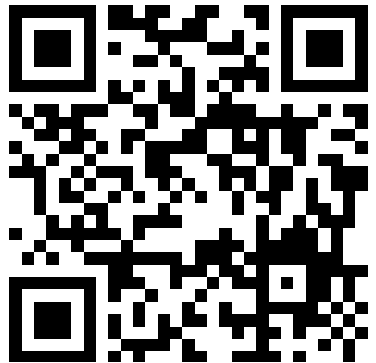
Early Years  
Foundation Stage  
Statutory Framework



Development  
Matters



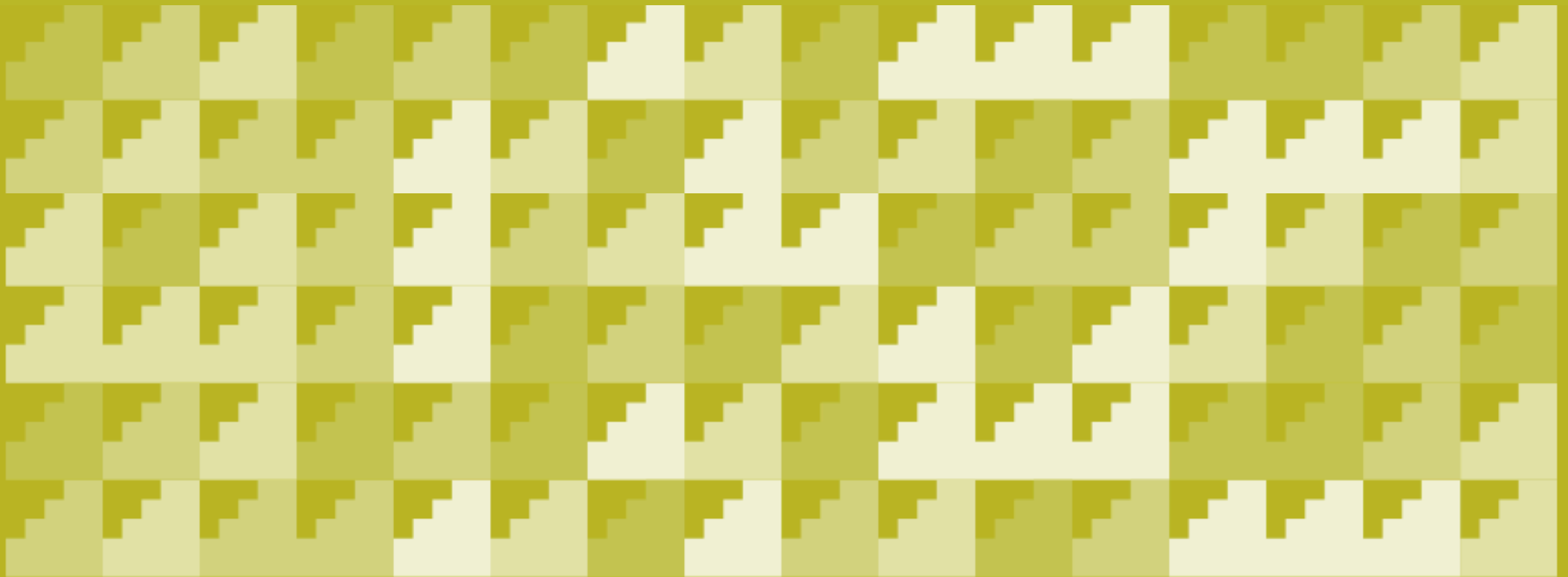
Birth to 5 Matters



Progress Check at  
age 2



# ACTIVITIES



# Playdough

## Red activity number 1

1

### Things you will need:

- Playdough (could be homemade – see activity 2 for Making Playdough)
- Tools (see page 30 in booklet)
- Substances to add e.g. pasta, lavender, glitter, buttons, beads, feathers



### Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands.
- To help desensitise hands for more messy play activities and for helping fussy eaters to get used to touching different textures.

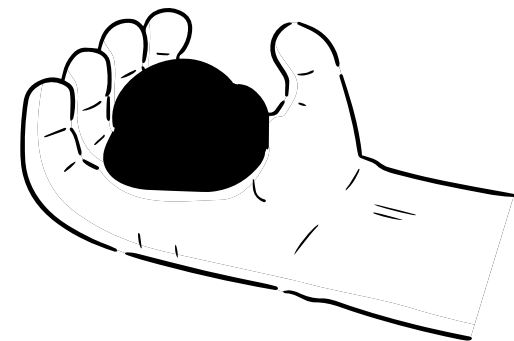
### Instructions:

Encourage your child to touch and explore playdough per grading below.

**Non-mobile:** Poke holes in, squeeze between hands or squash flat on table to make handprints.

**Mobile:** Roll sausages and knead the dough, explore use of tools, poke pasta pieces into the playdough to make a hedgehog, start cutting out shapes, hide things in the playdough.

**Pre-school/Reception:** Roll ball of dough between hands, push in buttons with one finger and then pinch to find them, practice pinching along the length of a playdough sausage to make a dinosaur, make models of simple shapes like a house/ pizza, practice snipping playdough with play scissors.



# Making Playdough

2

## Red Activity Number 2

### Things you will need:

- Large plastic jug, plain flour, salt, cooking oil, water, measuring cup or mug to measure and tablespoon, spoon. Airtight bag for storage.
- **Optional:** food colouring, flavouring / scents e.g. lavender, peppermint, glitter
- **Recipe:** 2 cups flour, 1 cup salt, 1 cup water, 1 tablespoon of oil - method below



### Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands.
- To help to desensitise hands for more messy play activities and for helping fussy eaters to get used to touching different textures.
- To practice sequencing skills and following instructions.

### Instructions:

Mix together the ingredients as listed above in a large jug using a spoon, tip onto a work surface and knead together. Add more flour if too wet and more water if too dry.

Make a hollow to add colouring / scents / glitter if wanted and then knead in.

Keep in an air-tight plastic bag (will keep longer in the fridge but may need re-kneading if salt comes to the surface).

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to pour in ingredients with adult guidance and support. Your child can hold the mixing jug handle with one hand whilst stirring with the other whilst an adult helps.

**Mobile:** Show your child what to do: Less hand over hand support required as your child gets older, encourage your child to pour, hold the mixing jug and stir copying what you do.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to be more independent in following the recipe; scooping, pouring, mixing and kneading. Give choices for optional extras.

# Pinching (pincer grip)

3

## Red Activity Number 3

### Things you will need:

- Squashy food/ items e.g. peas, beans, playdough
- Items to pinch e.g.: koosh ball, tweezers, threading activities, zips, clothes pegs

### Benefits:

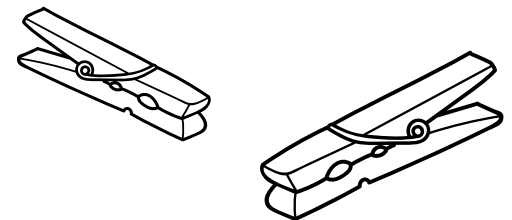
- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands, particularly the index finger and thumb, which will eventually help with activities such as handwriting!
- To practice precise movements for picking up smaller items and have control e.g. for fastening buttons.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Initially your child may not be able to pinch, so encourage your child to grip a larger object such as a silk scarf with their whole hand and pull it through with their other hand. Encourage holding on tight so that eventually the last part of the scarf is in the fingers and thumb grasp to get the idea of a pincer grip. Move on to squashing small items as above- with the index finger and then with the thumb and index together.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to use the tips of their fingers/ thumbs to squash items as above. They can also their fingers and thumbs to pinch flattened areas of playdough to make wings / scales on the back of a dinosaur. Tweezers can be used to pick up small items.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage using tweezers, threading activities, pulling zips up and down, using sprung clothes pegs (e.g. to hang out dolly's clothes or pieces of art work to dry on a washing line).



Red activity number 4, (Green Activity Number 7), (Indigo Activity Number 6)

## Things you will need:

- A variety of different 'laces' and things to thread- see resources list (page 29 of booklet).

## Benefits:

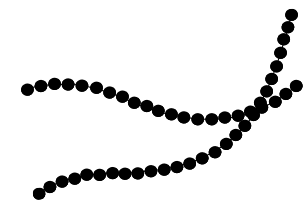
- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands, hand-eye co-ordination and spatial awareness.
- To build on sequencing skills and sequential memory (visual or auditory).
- To work towards fastening buttons and craft activities such as sewing.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to place hoops over an item e.g. kitchen roll holder. Start with bigger items that might take 2 hands to hold to lift up and over the top.

**Mobile:** Show your child what to do by initially holding a thread e.g. stiffer rope and encourage them to put through a hoop. Then encourage your child to have a turn with holding the thread in one hand and threading through the hoop with the other. Progress onto using floppier threads e.g. string through smaller holes.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to thread string through small hole e.g. on thicker card or through beads. Once they get the hang of this, then move onto threading beads in a specific order – tell or show them a pattern (e.g. blue, red, blue, red) and encourage them to copy this. Use threading cards, show your child to thread in and out of consecutive holes as if sewing and encourage them to copy that sequence.



# Vertical mark making

5

Red activity number 5 , (Orange Activity Number 7), (Yellow Activity Number 6), (Green Activity Number 8), (Indigo Activity Number 7)

## Things you will need:

- Large vertical drawing area e.g. outside wall, sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, window with condensation, easel.
- Tools to mark make e.g. their finger(!), big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, pencils, crayons.
- Suitable clothing!



## Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands, shoulders and arms.
- To build up a spatial awareness and the ability to cross midline for up, down, side to side and round and round movements.
- To practice sequencing skills, eye tracking, visual perception and following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child either in supported sitting, standing or upright in your arms so that they can reach the vertical drawing area. Give them the tools to mark make as above and encourage making marks. Start with dots and scribble.

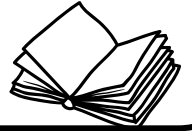
**Mobile:** Stand your child at the vertical surface and encourage circular marks, marks from top to bottom ('down lines'), or side to side ('across lines'). Give your child lots of directional language e.g. round, down, up. Use hand over hand to support the direction. Add a start and finish point for the child to draw a line to and from e.g. 'draw a line from the car to the house' (we write from left to right so ideally the car would be on the left and the house on the right). Don't worry which hand they use – present the drawing implement in the midline so they can choose. Draw a wide straight 'road' for them to draw a line in the middle of to build accuracy.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** See above (mobile section)- draw a road that is narrower with curves in the road for them to draw between. Practice drawing objects such as a complete circle or a ladder (encouraging your child to fill in the lines for the rungs). This encourages starting and stopping a line precisely. Eventually aim for crosses '+' and individual 'sloping lines' (diagonals) – 'X' shapes and squares are very hard. Also draw people (they usually have no body at this stage and that is ok!).

## Red Activity Number 6

### Things you will need:

- Objects to point at e.g.: Books, bubbles, piano, playdough, finger puppets (or draw a face on their finger!), play phones, pop-it fidget toys, touch screens, computer keyboards.
- Objects to flick/ press: ping pong ball, jumping frogs, toys with buttons.



### Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands.
- To develop accuracy of movement in the index finger to help with pincer grip and tripod grasp. Control of the index finger is key in building up dexterity in the whole hand.
- Provides practice in cause and effect games when pressing buttons.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Try pressing buttons on toys; particularly at this stage, the musical and light up toys are often more appealing. Start pointing at details in books e.g. 'Where's the cat?' and hitting keys on a piano. They might like pushing their fingers into playdough to make holes.

Initially your child might be using their whole hand or all of their fingers – if this continues over time, then you might need to help them by tucking under their other fingers and thumb, with hand over hand adult support, to isolate their index finger.

**Mobile:** Continue with use of push button toys. If they are using touch screens, then encourage them to use their index finger to swipe, rather than their thumb. Encourage them to point out more precise detail in books rather than just the main part of the picture. When using bubbles, encourage popping with an isolated finger.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Press specific keys on a keyboard; you might like to put stickers on each keyboard letter with lower case letters as these are more familiar for children. Use finger puppets and sing finger rhymes (e.g. '1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive', 'Wind the bobbin up.....point to the ceiling...', etc.). Use pop-it fidget toys to push individual cells, use a finger to trace along maze pattern in a book or drawn on paper, flick or press objects such as a scrunched-up ball of paper to score a goal or jumping frogs.

Red Activity Number 7 , (Yellow Activity Number 3), (Green Activity Number 9), (Blue Activity Number 7)

## Things you will need:

- Objects to throw/ catch: Balloons, bubbles, different size balls with different weight and textures.

## Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands.
- To increase the ability to track moving objects with the eyes.
- To build up hand-eye co-ordination.
- To support spatial awareness and depth perception with regard particularly to gauging how fast a moving object is going and in what direction (particularly important for road safety).

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Use a bright toy and encourage your child to look at it whilst you move it steadily towards their face / hands. Encourage them to reach out for it (give hand over hand adult support with this if they find reaching more tricky). Once able to prop on their tummy or sit up with or without support, then get their attention first on the ball and roll it towards them encouraging them to 'catch' it. Sit with legs splayed to naturally guide the ball towards them. Use a soft light ball that won't hurt when it rolls into them!

**Mobile:** Use balloons and encourage your child to hit them or catch them. Continue to roll a ball to 'catch' – this can be done in standing or sitting. Use bubbles and get your child to pop them by clapping to pop them. Start showing your child how to hold their hands together to catch and use a smaller soft ball (so it fits nicely into their hands) and throw it so that it lands in their hands - try to encourage them to look at the ball, not their hands, and encourage them to keep hold of it.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue throwing and catching as above. As skills increase practice throwing and catching over different distances with different sized balls.



Red Activity Number 8, (Orange Activity Number 6), (Green Activity Number 3)

## Things you will need:

- Music can be useful or a knowledge of nursery rhymes (you don't need to be a good singer!)



## Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands.
- To improve the ability to bring both hands together with fingers extended at the same time.
- To be able to praise others, join in and show joy!

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child lying on their back or in supported sitting, help them clap by bringing hands together. Don't worry about having hands outstretched initially – just help them bring their hands together either with your hands on top of theirs, or theirs guiding yours, or them holding something in each hand for them to bang those together (banging 2 things together is easier than spreading fingers out to clap). Once sitting or standing, try clapping in these positions too perhaps to nursery rhymes, action songs and to praise.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to clap in praise of doing something, to action songs or to music.

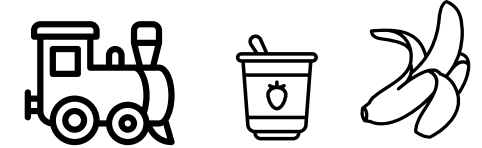
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to clap to a rhythm, to clap loud or soft and to start and stop on command. Maybe count claps and stop or stop when the music stops, or loud and soft as music is loud and soft. Try clapping out rhythms of names or words.



## Red Activity Number 9, (Green Activity Number 6)

### Things you will need:

- Things to tear e.g.: Paper (see page 27 for alternatives), velcro'd items e.g. velcro fastenings on shoes or dressing up clothes.
- Constructional toys e.g.: magnetic toys such as Brio trucks and trains, playdough.
- Items to peel e.g.: Sticker sheets, yoghurt pots with lids or bananas with skin on.



### Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands, which needs to be equal when working towards managing food packaging, clothing fastenings and other independence skills such as tearing a sheet of toilet paper off a roll.
- To encourage both hands to come together but then pull apart in a different directions in a co-ordinated manner.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Start by playing tugging games where you hold one part and your child holds the other of something that sticks together so that they get the feeling of something being pulled apart e.g. magnetic pieces/ velcro. This could be done in lying or sitting (with or without support).

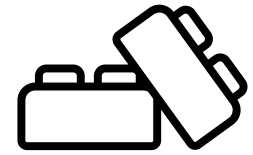
**Mobile:** Build on the activity above (non-mobile) and introduce tearing paper – make sure you emphasise that this is OK during this activity but not in books / or your wallpaper! You may need to start the tear and ask your child to continue with this. You can collect up torn pieces of paper and use them in other activities such as pouring (Activity Violet 7). Also try Velcro on shoes / clothing and pulling zips up / down.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to tear smaller pieces, perhaps to make collages. Remove stickers from sticker sheets or yoghurt pot lids initially by lifting the edge up for them; peeling bananas/ satsumas, doing zips/ velcro.

Red Activity Number 10, (Green Activity Number 5), (Indigo Activity Number 8)

## Things you will need:

- Construction toys e.g. Soft cubes, Duplo, Sticklebricks, Popoids, Mobilo, Bricks, Magnetic blocks



## Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands and encourages both hands to work together in a co-ordinated way.
- To build visual perceptual skills, particularly spatial awareness.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to knock down towers that you've built - Destruction comes before construction! Encourage them to pull apart two pieces placed together e.g. Sticklebricks or Popoids and progress on to the child placing one block on top of another – they will only manage one block on top to start with; a tower is more complicated.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to pull apart more difficult pieces like Duplo. Move towards them putting pieces together starting with things that stick easily e.g. Velcro- initially they may need hand over hand guidance to do this. Move on to building towers or 'models'. Also encourage your child to match pieces and sort them by colour or size or to find one the same as yours from a selection.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Use more challenging construction toys to put together. Really encourage following some simple instructions either by building a model one piece at a time next to your child (you put two pieces together and give your child two identical pieces to copy what you did), copying a picture or instructions instead of just free building.

## Orange Activity Number 1

### Things you will need:

- **Optional:** roll, bench



### Benefits:

- To develop proprioception and body awareness through pulling and pushing.
- To help with development of head/ trunk control and the vestibular system for balance.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child in sitting/ standing against your body and rock gently back and forth whilst singing 'Row, row, row'. Once they can support their head well, try gentle rowing back and forth whilst supported on your knee or whilst sat on your tummy (you lie down with your knees bent up behind their back).

**Mobile:** Sit or stand opposite your child, hold their hands and encourage movement back and forth whilst both singing 'Row, row, row'. Also try side to side movements, perhaps whilst singing 'Dingle Dangle scarecrow' or 'See saw, Margery Daw'. You could try sitting astride a roll or a bench or your knee or whilst standing on the floor.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Actively encourage your child to push and pull you whilst holding your hands and both singing. Don't rush the rhythm as this will make them giddy (unless you want to!!)– aim for about 1 beat per second to calm the child.

## Orange Activity Number 2

### Things you will need:

- Trikes or ride-ons, Scuttle bugs, balance bikes



### Benefits:

- To develop proprioception and body awareness alongside awareness of the legs and an awareness of how to use them to pedal one at a time (reciprocal movement).
- Builds strength and co-ordination.
- Develops spatial awareness and safety awareness to be aware of speed and distance.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Lay your child on their back and hold their feet to cycle whilst singing e.g. 'Wheels on the bus'. Also, try 'Nose to Toes' by gently bringing your child's foot towards their nose one foot at a time – you could do this during nappy changing.

**Mobile:** Lay your child on the floor and cycles their legs independently. Encourage the use of Scuttle bugs and age appropriate ride-on toys or balance bikes for your child to push themselves along. Work towards them using alternate legs rather than both together. Also, put obstacles in the way or have tracks to ride along to encourage the development of steering whilst looking and avoiding obstacles – it's hard putting all of that together as well as pedalling!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Work towards pedalling a trike – this might need an adult to go behind your child and push the knee down on the higher leg each time to give the feeling of alternate pushing, then move towards using a bike with or without stabilisers. Again, add obstacles and tracks ('roads') to encourage accurate steering. Adding lines to stop at helps to develop control (perhaps 'traffic lights' or you / other children could be a 'policeman' with hand signals to stop and go).

# Commando Crawling

3

Orange Activity Number 3, (Green Activity Number 1)

## Things you will need:

- Equipment to crawl through/ under e.g.: Tunnel, bed sheet / blanket over table, clothes airer, between 2 chairs

## Benefits:

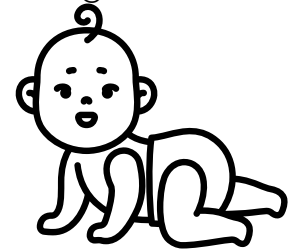
- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To encourage the ability to use both sides of the body together in a coordinated way.
- To build trunk and core strength.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Practice tummy time and encourage your child to lift their head and push through their arms (forearms initially and then straight arms as able). A rolled blanket can be used under their chest for support. Also encourage them to practice reaching with one hand at a time in this position whilst still pushing up on the other arm.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to commando crawl on their tummy. Perhaps encourage them to crawl underneath objects as above. Please supervise the child at all times for safety.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to commando crawl underneath objects (see above for ideas) whilst also role playing and changing positions e.g. 'snakes' (commando crawling) to 'frogs' (jumping) to 'bears' (hands and feet).



## Orange Activity Number 4

### Things you will need:

- Tummy time roll / rolled blanket, cones/ obstacles to navigate around e.g. piles of books
- **Optional:** toys to play with in tummy time



### Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness, specifically the awareness of hands and arms and where they are in relation to your body.
- To build strength and stability around shoulders, arms, back and neck joints.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child to enjoy tummy time. This may be with your child lying on your chest (you can lie back so that your child is on their front!). Try using a tummy time cushion or rolled blanket to support your child under their chest on the floor/ mat and promote pushing up through their hands and arms.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to push up through straight arms with their hands on the floor. Attain the 'wheelbarrow' position by kneeling on the floor with your child and gently supporting their trunk and lower limbs to come off the floor so that their weight is going through their hands and arms only. They might enjoy crawling on their hands off a low surface e.g. sofa cushion (supervised closely) with their legs resting on the cushion whilst their hands are on the floor before they are strong enough to do a full wheelbarrow.

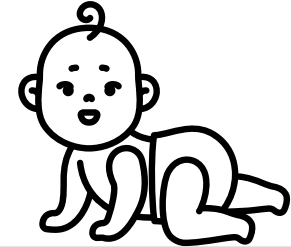
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Attain the wheelbarrow position and encourage your child to walk on their hands whilst supporting their body safely throughout –the closer you are to their body, the easier it is for them, so hold thighs, then knees, before moving to just feet being held . Your child can be encouraged to walk on their hands around obstacles.

## Things you will need:

- Toys to play with in crawling (soft toys for non-mobile children)
- **Optional:** tunnel/ surface to crawl under/ through. Soft play blocks/ furniture to crawl over. Scooter board.

## Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To strengthen arms, legs and trunk muscles.
- To help desensitise hands.
- To increase bilateral integration.



## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** If your child cannot yet hold their own head up: Support your child to enjoy tummy time. Try using a tummy time cushion or rolled blanket to support your child under their chest and promote pushing up through their hands and arms.

If your child can hold their own head up without support: Sit on the floor with your legs out straight and your back fully supported (e.g. against the sofa). Position your child in the crawling position (on hands and knees) with your leg underneath their tummy for support. Encourage them to play in this position for short periods with toys in front of them.

If your child can sit independently: Sit them between your legs on the floor and encourage them to move from sitting to the crawling position over your leg. Encourage child to play in the crawling position on their hands and knees with your leg underneath their tummy for support. If your child gets tired or wants to get out of the crawling position, then use your hands to support them at their hips to move back into the sitting position on the floor for a rest; this will help them get used to moving in and out of the crawling position from sitting.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to practice getting in and out of the crawling position and play games that involve crawling e.g. pretending to be animals on the floor, crawling through a tunnel or around an obstacle. You can join in too for encouragement!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Incorporate crawling into obstacle courses (supervised closely) which could include crawling through a tunnel, under furniture, over or around an obstacle, up and down steps. You could also encourage your child to lie on a scooter board on their tummy and to propel themselves along.

Orange Activity Number 6, (Red Activity Number 8), (Green Activity Number: 3)

## Things you will need:

- Music can be useful or a knowledge of nursery rhymes (you don't need to be a good singer!)



## Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To encourage the ability to bring both hands together with fingers extended at the same time which is used in bi-manual activities.
- To be able to praise others, join in and show joy!

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child lying on their back or in supported sitting, help them clap by bringing hands together. Don't worry about having hands outstretched initially – just help them bring their hands together either with your hands on top of theirs, or theirs guiding yours, or them holding something in each hand for them to bang those together (banging two things together is easier than spreading fingers out to clap). Once sitting or standing, try clapping in these positions too perhaps to nursery rhymes, action songs and to praise.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to clap in praise of doing something, to action songs or to music.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child clap to a rhythm, to clap loud or soft and to start and stop on command. Maybe count claps and stop or stop when the music stops, or loud and soft as music is loud and soft. Try clapping out rhythms of names or words.



# Vertical Mark Making

7

Orange Activity Number 7, (Red Activity Number: 5), (Yellow Activity Number: 6), (Green Activity Number: 8), (Indigo Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Large vertical drawing area e.g. outside wall, sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, window with condensation, easel.
- Tools to mark make e.g. their finger! big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, pencils, crayons.
- Suitable clothing!

## Benefits:

- To develop fine motor skills, dexterity and strength in hands, shoulders and arms.
- To build up a spatial awareness and the ability to cross midline for up, down, side to side and round and round movements.
- To practice sequencing skills, eye tracking, visual perception and following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child either in supported sitting, standing or upright in your arms so that they can reach the vertical drawing area. Give them the tools to mark make as above and encourage making marks. Start with dots and scribble.

**Mobile:** Stand your child at the vertical surface and encourage circular marks, marks from top to bottom ('down lines'), or side to side ('across lines'). Give your child lots of directional language e.g. round, down, up. Use hand over hand to support the direction. Add a start and finish point for your child to draw a line to and from e.g. 'draw a line from the car to the house' (we write from left to right so ideally the car would be on the left and the house on the right). Don't worry which hand they use – present the drawing implement in the midline so they can choose. Draw a wide straight 'road' for them to draw a line in the middle of to build accuracy.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** See above (mobile section)- draw a road that is narrower with curves in the road for them to draw between. Practice drawing objects such as a complete circle or a ladder (encouraging your child to fill in the lines for the rungs). This encourages starting and stopping a line precisely. Eventually aim for crosses '+' and individual 'sloping lines' (diagonals) – 'X' shapes and squares are very hard. Also draw people (they usually have no body at this stage and that is ok!).

Orange Activity Number: 8 , (Green Activity Number: 10), (Violet Activity Number 10)

## Things you will need:

- Different types of quoits e.g. bangles or rings large enough to go over arms or legs of your child (see page 28 of the booklet for alternatives).
- Brightly coloured socks. er!



## Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To build awareness of limbs and tolerance to taking items on and off arms and legs.
- To help with the development of bilateral integration and crossing the midline.
- To develop balance and co-ordination for activities such as dressing/ undressing e.g. when pulling a sock off.

## Instructions:

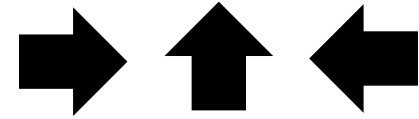
**Non-mobile:** When lying on their back, put socks on your child's hands or feet (start by putting them only just at the finger tips or toes) and encourage them to pull them off. As they become more proficient place the sock further on the limb to start and encourage them to cross their midline and reach to the opposite foot to pull their sock off. Practice this activity in sitting as well with adequate support for safety.

**Mobile:** Play games where you put quoits on an arm or a leg to pull on or off. Can they pull them up to their shoulders / top of their legs, can they stand in a hoop and pull it right up from the ground over their head or from their head back down?

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Practice putting scrunchies or elasticated bands on/off arms and legs (these take a bit more effort than quoit). Try balancing on one leg to hook a quoit on/off the other foot.

## Things you will need:

- Objects to walk around, move under, make tracks out of (see page 26 of booklet)
- **Optional:** 'We are Going on Bear Hunt' book



## Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To increase spatial awareness for changes of direction in physical activity.
- To aid with development of muscle strength and balance skills for when moving and changing direction.
- To build knowledge of directional language and abilities in following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child with adequate support in your arms and walk around with them. Practice changes of direction and use lots of directional language about what you are doing e.g. 'around the table' 'up/ down'. Read the Bear Hunt book and do the actions.

**Mobile:** Set up toys on different height surfaces and in different areas of the room. Move about the room to access each of the toys and encourage your child to follow whilst talking them through what you are doing 'teddy is under the table' – then see if they can follow instruction and find the toy. Play games of hide and seek when they haven't seen you hide the toy, give prompts such as 'up a bit/ down a bit'.

Also sing songs and do the actions for directions e.g. 'The Grand Old Duke of York' – reach up to the top of the hill etc. Give directional language to describe where your child is when on play equipment e.g. on the See saw or swing – we're going up and down; on the slide – you're at the top, you're at the bottom.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Set up obstacle courses and include tracks (using markers on the floor) for the child to move through- include changes of direction. Demonstrate completion of the course and support them to complete the course safely whilst talking through all of the directions that have been used throughout. E.g. Jump in the hoop, over the rope, throw the ball in the bucket, crawl under the table. Diagonals are particularly hard to perceive so try to help your child 'feel' what a diagonal is like by helping them experience slopes. They can practice pushing toys up a slope or rolling toys down e.g. a car up/ down a ramp. Go up and down slides in different ways (supervised!) – lie down on the tummy, feet first, head first, lie down on their back as well as climbing up and sitting on their bottom to go down.

## Things you will need:

- A bag of items that are safe for your child to feel and explore e.g. sponge, remote control, carrot, ball, pencil, scrunchie, book, toothbrush, toy car, toilet roll tube, paints and paper

## Benefits:

- To develop proprioception, body awareness and tactile awareness.
- To help desensitise the hands.
- To build knowledge on the properties of different objects e.g. texture, shape and size.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Start by showing your child what you are putting in a bag, then place it in the bag and. Talk about what they can feel – it's hard, soft, fluffy, rough etc. and then help them take it back out again. Then hide an item they haven't seen in the bag and ask them what may be in the bag. Help your child (with hand over hand assistance if required) to put their hand in the bag to feel and explore the object. Discuss what they can feel e.g. small, hard, squishy, cold. Change the object that is in the bag and ensure your child explores a range of items with differing feels.

You could also paint your child's hands or feet and print them onto paper with adult support. Whilst completing the painting talk to your child about the feel of the paint on their skin- is it wet/ cold/ warm. Does the paper feel warm/ firm etc.

**Mobile:** Lay out a range of objects. Explore each object individually talking about the properties of each object e.g. 'prickly/ soft/ cold etc'. Encourage your child to pick out some of those properties themselves and give help as needed for maximum learning. Once they have explored them, put more than one in a bag and see if they can find the one you named without looking.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Build on the activity above. As their skill with this develops you could encourage them to use their tactile skills to identify objects without looking (using the bag to hide an object inside) or you could ask them to look and feel objects on the table and tell you which ones are 'soft/ hard/cold/ warm etc'. Try putting 2-3 items in the bag and asking your child to find a specific one. Try and obtain 2 matching items- place one in the bag with a variety of items and have one on show- ask your child to find (from the bag without looking) the one that is the same as the one on show- complexity for this can be increased depending on the similarity of items in the bag (e.g. finding a car from a bag of other vehicles will be harder than finding a car in a bag with a ball and toothbrush). Eventually your child could progress to being able to identify an object whilst not looking and by description only (not naming the item!) e.g. 'find me the object that is hard, round and fuzzy (tennis ball).

## Yellow Activity Number: 1

### Things you will need:

- Toy cars (age appropriate i.e. larger, bright colours to smaller more realistic models)
- **Optional:** balls of different sizes and colours; light up toys that can be sizes and colours; light up toys that can be rolled / move on their own.



### Benefits:

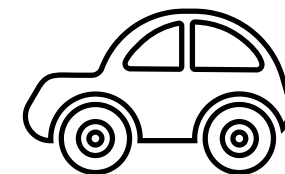
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).

### Grading:

**Non-mobile:** Whilst your child is supported in lying / sitting/ or in a seat, hold a large, bright toy approximately 20- 30 cm away from their face and allow them to focus on it with their eyes. Once focussed, move the toy slowly from side to side / up and down and encourage your child to follow the toy with their eyes.

**Mobile:** Toy car to be rolled along the floor and encourage your child to follow where it has gone with their eyes and then go and collect it; also balls or toys with motors that move themselves.

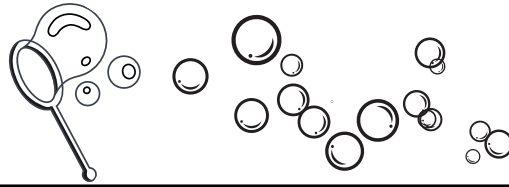
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to sit on the floor with legs straight and open. Roll a car towards them so that they can catch it with their hands between their legs. They can then roll it back (or use a pull-back car to roll towards you) in an early turn taking activity.



## Yellow Activity Number: 2

### Things you will need:

- Bubbles



### Benefits:

- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- To develop hand-eye coordination.
- Practice with hand skills such as pointing, pincer grip and clapping.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child appropriately in sitting/ lying/ seat. Blow bubbles close enough to your child's face for them to see (approx. 30cm away maximum for youngest children).

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to sit or stand by themselves- blow bubbles close by and encourage your child to pop them by clapping- work towards them using their index fingers for popping.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to sit or stand by themselves. Blow bubbles and encourage them to reach and pop them with a pincer grip (pretending they are crocodiles 'snapping' the bubbles with their fingers). Practice catching bubbles on a bubble wand.



Yellow Activity Number: 3, (Red Activity Number: 7), (Green Activity Number: 9), (Blue Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Objects to throw/ catch: Balloons, bubbles, different size balls with different weight and textures.

## Benefits:

- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- To build up hand-eye co-ordination.
- To support spatial awareness and depth perception with regard particularly to gauging how fast a moving object is going and in what direction.

## Grading:

**Non-mobile:** Use a bright toy and encourage your child to look at it whilst you move it steadily towards their face / hands. Encourage them to reach out for it (give hand over hand adult support with this if they find reaching more tricky). Once able to prop on their tummy or sit up with or without support, then get their attention first on the ball and roll it towards them encouraging them to 'catch' it. Sit with legs splayed to naturally guide the ball towards them. Use a soft light ball that won't hurt when it rolls into them!

**Mobile:** Use balloons and encourage your child to hit them or catch them. Continue to roll a ball to 'catch' – this can be done in standing or sitting. Use bubbles and get your child to pop them by clapping to pop them. Start showing your child how to hold their hands together to catch and use a smaller soft ball (so it fits nicely into their hands) and throw it so that it lands in their hands - try to encourage them to look at the ball, not their hands, and encourage them to keep hold of it.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue throwing and catching as above. As skills increase practice throwing and catching over different distances with different sized balls.

## Yellow Activity Number: 4

### Things you will need:

- Torches, darkened room, or darker pop-up tent



### Benefits:

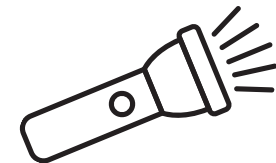
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child appropriately in sitting/ lying/ a seat in a darkened area. Light up the torch and direct the light onto a wall or ceiling opposite your child in their central area of vision (NOT in the child's eyes). Once your child's attention is on the light, slowly move it around, trying to keep their attention on the light.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to lie down on the floor on their back or sit/ stand by themselves and shine the torch onto the ceiling/ wall encouraging them to follow the beam with their eyes. This could be done to music or you could draw patterns and talk about them.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to lie on their back on the floor and watch the torch beam move around the wall/ ceiling. Practice moving it slowly and quickly, in different directions. Let your child have control of the torch and encourage them to point it to certain places on the ceiling / walls e.g. point their torchlight on number 3 on the clock. If working with a group of children, then all the children race to point their beam to certain places e.g. 'can everybody shine it at the window'.



## Yellow Activity Number: 5

### Things you will need:

- Pull back or wind-up toys, road or rail track if required for the toys, marble run / ball shoot

### Benefits:

- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking where movement is more random and quite often at speed (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- If your child can wind up the toy then this is great practice for fine motor dexterity!

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child appropriately in sitting/ lying/ a seat such that they can see the area being used for the toy. Wind up / pull back the toy / let the marble or ball go encouraging them to watch it move. Try toys going towards and away from your child and also from side to side across their field of vision.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to watch the toy moving around on the floor / table / run. Encourage them to pull back / wind it up themselves if possible. Show them how to do it and demonstrate hand over hand to help them get the right action. Play as a turn taking game between pairs of children – this is easier sat on the floor legs splayed to help direct the toy to the child.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to watch the toy and see if they can intercept it / make their legs a bridge for the toy to move under. Also, to practice winding it up / pulling it back themselves in order to aim it at somewhere specific.



Yellow Activity Number: 6, (Red Activity Number: 5), (Orange Activity Number: 7), (Green Activity Number: 8), (Indigo Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Large vertical drawing area e.g. outside wall, sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, window with condensation, easel.
- Tools to mark make e.g. their finger! big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, pencils, crayons.
- Suitable clothing!

## Benefits:

- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- To develop strength in the shoulders and arms as well as dexterity and control in the hands.
- To build up a spatial awareness and the ability to cross midline for up, down, side to side and round and round movements.
- Practice in sequencing skills, visual perception and following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child either in supported sitting, standing or upright in your arms so that they can reach the vertical drawing area. Give them the tools to mark make as above and encourage making marks. Start with dots and scribble.

**Mobile:** Stand your child at the vertical surface and encourage circular marks, marks from top to bottom ('down lines'), or side to side ('across lines'). Give your child lots of directional language e.g. round, down, up. Use hand over hand to support the direction. Add a start and finish point for the child to draw a line to and from e.g. 'draw a line from the car to the house' (we write from left to right so ideally the car would be on the left and the house on the right). Don't worry which hand they use – present the drawing implement in the midline so they can choose. Draw a wide straight 'road' for them to draw a line in the middle of to build accuracy.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** See above (mobile section)- draw a road that is narrower with curves in the road for them to draw between. Practice drawing objects such as a complete circle or a ladder (encouraging your child to fill in the lines for the rungs). This encourages starting and stopping a line precisely. Eventually aim for crosses '+' and individual 'sloping lines' (diagonals) – 'X' shapes and squares are very hard. Also draw people (they usually have no body at this stage and that is ok!).

# Balloon Volleyball

7

Yellow Activity Number: 7

## Things you will need:

- Balloons already blown up, string
- **Optional:** a 'net' to bat them over e.g. a rope or line on the floor or line of benches, babygym

## Benefits:

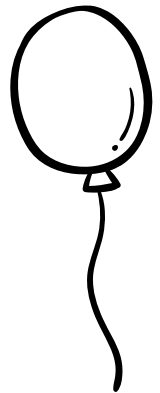
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- Develops strength in the shoulders / arms and bilateral co-ordination.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Tie a balloon to a babygym/ suitable surface so that your child can lie underneath and either kick or punch the balloon allowing it to move back and forth (supervised). Once sitting, bat a balloon up and down for your child to watch and bat it to them for them to bat away – you can also do this whilst holding your child in your arms upright.

**Mobile:** Bat a balloon to your child and encourage them to bat it back or encourage them to try to keep the balloon in the air for as many hits as possible.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Play at keeping the balloon up in the air as long as possible with both hands clasped together so both arms move at once. This could also be done as a group. Move onto playing over a 'net' – this can be a line on the floor – so that the balloon is batted over the 'net' and back again to take turns. Try to keep the balloon off the floor as long as possible!



## Yellow Activity Number: 8

### Things you will need:

- A boat (see page 25 of booklet for options), a wind-up swimming toy e.g. a swimming frog.
- Water (to sail the boat)- consider using a washing up bowl, a sink, a bath or a tray of water
- **Optional:** appropriate clothing/ waterproof tabard! Remote control boats.

### Benefits:

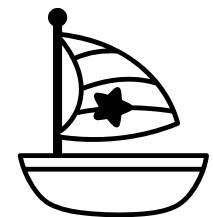
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking where movement is more random and quite often at speed (see glossary for more detail).

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Provide adequate support to your child in a sitting or standing position. Ensure that the body of water is within their visual field and push the boat across the water. Encourage your child to watch the boat and use lots of directional/ instructional language whilst the boat makes its journey e.g. 'ready, steady, go', the boat is going 'across' the water, 'straight on' or 'to the side', the boat is going 'fast' or 'slow'.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to push the boat across the water themselves. They could propel the boat by blowing or using their index finger to tap the boat without sinking it! As above, use lots of directional/ instructional language which could now include 'push' and 'blow' 'start' 'stop'.

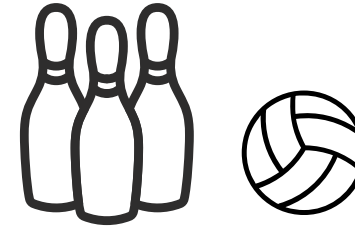
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to take part in making the boat or winding the swimmer toy up, encourage them to push the boat on the water and to keep it moving with blowing or tapping. Your child should be able to track the direction of the boat and if access is available they could be encouraged to move to the other side of the water to catch the boat. If you have a remote control boat, encourage your child to operate the controls with instructions. They can practice steering in specific directions e.g. to a specific landing point (a person on the side of the water).



## Yellow Activity Number: 9

### Things you will need:

- A ball (see page 25 of booklet for options)
- Skittles (see page 29 of booklet for options)
- **Optional:** Line or spot on the floor (consider drawing this with chalk or tape).



### Benefits:

- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- Develops hand eye coordination and balance.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Your child could lie on their tummy facing the skittles or you can support them adequately in sitting with their body facing towards the skittles. Give hand over hand adult support to your child to facilitate rolling of a ball/ cylinder towards the skittles. Start with the skittles very close by and close together in order to ensure success with knocking them over. Give lots of praise when your child has successfully knocked over some of the skittles using their object.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to be more independent with knocking skittles over using their ball/ cylinder. Your child can change their position to practice in different ways. Encourage standing as one of the positions for your child to practice this in- they may need prompting to throw with 1 or 2 hands and to use an underarm throw. Your child may need a spot to sit/ stand/ lie on to prevent them from moving whilst rolling/ throwing. They may also need a line drawn on the floor to encourage rolling/ throwing in the right direction.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Make the above activity increasingly more challenging by increasing the distance that your child has to roll/ throw to the target skittles. Widen the distance between the skittles themselves and use a smaller ball/ cylinder. Consider trying this in the kneeling/ half kneeling (refer to glossary) position to challenge their balance further whilst completing.

## Yellow Activity Number: 10

### Things you will need:

- An object to throw/ aim with- consider using a ball (see page 25 of booklet for options), a hoop, a beanbag, foam dart, paper aeroplane of booklet for options), a hoop, a beanbag, foam dart, paper aeroplane
- A target- a bucket/tub/tin, a spot on a wall (this could be a piece of paper)/ on the floor (consider using tape or chalk to mark this out), dart board.

### Benefits:

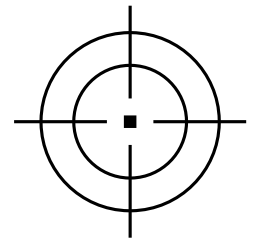
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary pg 19 and 22).
- To develop abilities with ball skills whilst learning about distances and the force required when aiming an object at a target.
- To develop physical strength and balance.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child or position them in appropriate seating and encourage them to participate in picking up an object (rather than swiping or throwing) and dropping things into a large target- this may require hand over hand adult support. Use a large tub/tin as the target and give lots of praise as your child successfully hits the target with their object. Consistently use the prompt 'in' as they are completing this activity.

**Mobile:** Your child can practice dropping and throwing objects at a target in different positions e.g. sitting/ standing. Start to change the weight/ size/ shape of the object being used e.g. a ball and a hoop. The target still needs to be close and big in order for maximum success.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue to build on the challenge of aiming for targets that are further away and smaller whilst throwing/ dropping objects that are varied. Consider changing the direction that your child is aiming for e.g. hook the bucket on the back of a door. Still try to ensure maximum success without being too easy.



# Commando Crawling

1

Green Activity Number: 1, (Orange Activity Number: 3)

## Things you will need:

- Equipment to crawl through/ under e.g.: Tunnel, bed sheet / blanket over table, clothes airer, between 2 chairs

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To use both sides of the body together in a coordinated way.
- To build trunk and core strength.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Practice tummy time and encourage your child to lift their head and push through their arms (forearms initially and then straight arms as able). A rolled blanket can be used under their chest for support. Also encourage them to practice reaching with one hand at a time in this position whilst still pushing up on the other arm.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to commando crawl on their tummy. Perhaps encourage them to crawl underneath objects as above. Please supervise the child at all times for safety.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to commando crawl underneath objects (see above for ideas) whilst also role playing and changing positions e.g. 'snakes' (commando crawling) to 'frogs' (jumping) to 'bears' (hands and feet).

## Green Activity Number: 2, (Blue Activity Number 1)

### Things you will need:

- Gym mats or soft floor e.g. rug/ carpet or a dry grassy slope
- Toys to motivate

### Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To strengthen muscles for twisting and turning.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child lying on their back move a toy from directly above them (once child is focused on the toy) to one side slowly. Give support at one side of their hip to encourage them to roll to their side and back again. Do this in both directions to help your child learn to roll. Once your child is on their side, move the toy along the floor in a direction that encourages them to roll onto their tummy (i.e. above their head) and gently support at their side throughout to achieve the roll. Encourage your child to roll from their tummy to their back with gentle support and a toy to motivate- your child's arms should be tucked underneath them before completing this so they don't become trapped.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to roll across the mat both ways- encourage them to keep their body straight like a log (arms above head to prevent them getting trapped).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to roll like a log down small slopes or across the mat and work towards holding a soft ball/ toy above their heads to keep a nice long log position.

Green Activity Number: 3, (Orange Activity Number: 6), (Red Activity Number 8)

## Things you will need:

- Music can be useful or a knowledge of nursery rhymes (you don't need to be a good singer!)



## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- Develop the ability to bring both hands together with fingers extended at the same time used in bi-manual activities.
- To be able to praise others, join in and show joy!

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child lying on their back or in supported sitting, help them clap by bringing hands together. Don't worry about having hands outstretched initially – just help them bring their hands together either with your hands on top of theirs, or theirs guiding yours, or them holding something in each hand for them to bang those together (banging 2 things together is easier than spreading fingers out to clap). Once sitting or standing, try clapping in these positions too perhaps to nursery rhymes, action songs and to praise.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to clap in praise of doing something, to action songs or to music.

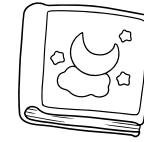
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to clap to a rhythm, to clap loud or soft and to start and stop on command. Maybe count claps and stop or stop when the music stops, or loud and soft as music is loud and soft. Try clapping out rhythms of names or words.



## Green Activity Number: 4

### Things you will need:

- A variety of books (board books, flap books, paper books, toy catalogues)



### Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To help develop visual perceptual skills when looking at pictures and good for eye tracking.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child in an appropriate position (lying on their back, in sitting with or without support or lying on their tummy) to look and interact with a book. Present a book to them and encourage them to reach to turn pages or lift flaps if present (you may need to start to turn the page and encourage them to just complete this action or give hand over hand support throughout).

**Mobile:** Read a book with your child. Encourage them to lift flaps and turn pages of a book whilst holding the book in different positions (e.g. to each side rather than directly in front of them). This encourages your child to look to each side and reach out to each side. Encourage them to reach across their body with the opposite hand to point to detail or turn the page. Progress to encouraging them to turn the pages of a paper book which is trickier than with board books!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Read a book with the child and encourage them to hold the book with one hand and reach across their body to turn pages, lift flaps and point to certain objects/ pictures with the other hand.

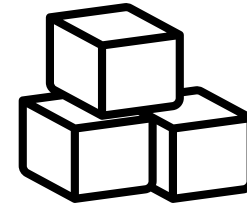
Green Activity Number: 5, (Red Activity Number: 10), (Indigo Activity Number: 8)

## Things you will need:

- Construction toys e.g. Soft cubes, Duplo, Sticklebricks, Popoids, Mobilo, Bricks, Magnetic blocks

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To build up strength and accuracy as well as dexterity.
- To help build visual perceptual skills, particularly spatial awareness.



## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to knock down towers that you've built - Destruction comes before construction! Encourage them to pull apart 2 pieces placed together e.g. Sticklebricks or Popoids and progress on to the child placing one block on top of another – they will only manage one block on top to start with; a tower is more complicated.

**Mobile:** Encourage the child to pull apart more difficult pieces like Duplo. Move towards them putting pieces together starting with things that stick easily e.g. Velcro- initially they may need hand over hand guidance to do this. Move on to building towers or 'models'. Also encourage the child to match pieces and sort them by colour or size or to find one the same as yours from a selection.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Use more challenging construction toys to put together. Really encourage following some simple instructions either by building a model one piece at a time next to your child (you put 2 pieces together and give your child 2 identical pieces to copy what you did), copying a picture or instructions instead of just free building.

Green Activity Number: 6, (Red Activity Number: 9)

## Things you will need:

- Things to tear e.g.: Paper (see page 27 for alternatives), velcro'd items e.g. velcro fastenings on shoes or dressing up clothes.
- Constructional toys e.g.: magnetic toys such as Brio trucks and trains, playdough.
- Items to peel e.g.: Sticker sheets, yoghurt pots with lids or bananas with skin on

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To encourage both hands to come together, but then pull apart in a different directions in a co-ordinated manner.
- To encourage dexterity and more equal strength in both hands and aids with developing towards managing food packaging, clothing fastenings and other independence skills such as tearing a sheet of toilet paper off a roll.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Start by playing tugging games where you hold one part and your child holds the other of something that sticks together so that they get the feeling of something being pulled apart e.g. magnetic pieces/ velcro. This could be done in lying or sitting (with or without support).

**Mobile:** Build on the activity above (non-mobile) and introduce tearing paper – make sure you emphasise that this is OK during this activity but not in books / or your wallpaper! You may need to start the tear and ask your child to continue with this. You can collect up torn pieces of paper and use them in other activities such as pouring (Activity Violet 7). Also try Velcro on shoes / clothing and pulling zips up / down.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to tear smaller pieces, perhaps to make collages. Remove stickers from sticker sheets or yoghurt pot lids initially by lifting the edge up for them; peeling bananas/ satsumas, doing zips/ velcro.



# Threading

7

Green Activity Number: 7, (Red Activity Number: 4), (Indigo Activity Number: 6)

## Things you will need:

- A variety of different 'laces' and things to thread- see resources list (page 29 of booklet).

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To encourage both hands to come together, but then pull apart in a different directions in a co-ordinated manner.
- To encourage dexterity and more equal strength in both hands and aids with developing towards managing food packaging, clothing fastenings and other independence skills such as tearing a sheet of toilet paper off a roll.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to place hoops over an item e.g. kitchen roll holder. Start with bigger items that might take two hands to hold to lift up and over the top.

**Mobile:** Show your child what to do by initially holding a thread e.g. stiffer rope and encourage them to put through a hoop. Then encourage your child to have a turn with holding the thread in one hand and threading through the hoop with the other. Progress onto using floppier threads e.g. string through smaller holes.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to thread string through small hole e.g. on thicker card or through beads. Once they get the hang of this, then move onto threading beads in a specific order –tell or show them a pattern (e.g. blue, red, blue, red) and encourage them to copy this. Use threading cards, show your child to thread in and out of consecutive holes as if sewing and encourage them to copy that sequence.

# Vertical Mark Making

8

(Green Activity Number: 8), (Yellow Activity Number: 6), (Red Activity Number: 5), (Orange Activity Number: 7), (Indigo Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Large vertical drawing area e.g. outside wall, sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, window with condensation, easel.
- Tools to mark make e.g. their finger! big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, pencils, crayons.
- Suitable clothing!

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To develop abilities with head and trunk control and eye tracking (see glossary).
- To develop strength in the shoulders and arms as well as dexterity and control in the hands.
- To build up a spatial awareness and the ability to cross midline for up, down, side to side and round and round movements.
- To practice sequencing skills, eye tracking, visual perception and following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child either in supported sitting, standing or upright in your arms so that they can reach the vertical drawing area. Give them the tools to mark make as above and encourage making marks. Start with dots and scribble.

**Mobile:** Stand your child at the vertical surface and encourage circular marks, marks from top to bottom ('down lines'), or side to side ('across lines'). Give your child lots of directional language e.g. round, down, up. Use hand over hand to support the direction. Add a start and finish point for the child to draw a line to and from e.g. 'draw a line from the car to the house' (we write from left to right so ideally the car would be on the left and the house on the right). Don't worry which hand they use – present the drawing implement in the midline so they can choose. Draw a wide straight 'road' for them to draw a line in the middle of to build accuracy.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** See above (mobile section)- draw a road that is narrower with curves in the road for them to draw between. Practice drawing objects such as a complete circle or a ladder (encouraging your child to fill in the lines for the rungs). This encourages starting and stopping a line precisely. Eventually aim for crosses '+' and individual 'sloping lines' (diagonals) – 'X' shapes and squares are very hard. Also draw people (they usually have no body at this stage and that is ok!).

Green Activity Number: 9, (Yellow Activity Number: 3), (Red Activity Number: 7), (Blue Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Objects to throw/ catch: Balloons, bubbles, different size balls with different weight and textures.

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To increase the ability to track moving objects with the eyes.
- To build up hand-eye co-ordination.
- To support spatial awareness and depth perception with regard particularly to gauging how fast a moving object is going and in what direction (particularly important for road safety).

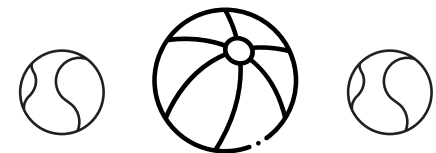
## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Use a bright toy and encourage your child to look at it whilst you move it steadily towards their face / hands. Encourage them to reach out for it (give hand over hand adult support with this if they find reaching more tricky). Once able to prop on their tummy or sit up with or without support, then get their attention first on the ball and roll it towards them encouraging them to 'catch' it. Sit with legs splayed to naturally guide the ball towards them. Use a soft light ball that won't hurt when it rolls into them!

**Mobile:** Use balloons and encourage your child to hit them or catch them. Continue to roll a ball to 'catch' – this can be done in standing or sitting. Use bubbles and get your child to pop them by clapping to pop them. Start showing your child how to hold their hands together to catch and use a smaller soft ball (so it fits nicely into their hands) and throw it so that it lands in their hands - try to encourage them to look at the ball, not their hands, and encourage them to keep hold of it.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue throwing and catching as above.

As skills increase practice throwing and catching over different distances with different sized balls.



Green Activity Number: 10, (Orange Activity Number: 8), (Violet Activity Number 10)

## Things you will need:

- Different types of quoits e.g. bangles or rings large enough to go over arms or legs of your child (see page 28 of the booklet for alternatives)
- Brightly coloured socks.

## Benefits:

- To develop bilateral integration and abilities with crossing the midline.
- To build awareness of limbs and tolerance to taking items on and off arms and legs.
- To build balance and co-ordination for activities such as dressing/ undressing e.g. when pulling a sock off.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** When lying on their back, put socks on your child's hands or feet (start by putting them only just at the finger tips or toes) and encourage them to pull them off. As they become more proficient place the sock further on the limb to start and encourage them to cross their midline and reach to the opposite foot to pull their sock off. Practice this activity in sitting as well with adequate support for safety.

**Mobile:** Play games where you put quoits on an arm or a leg to pull on or off. Can they pull them up to their shoulders / top of their legs, can they stand in a hoop and pull it right up from the ground over their head or from their head back down?

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Practice putting scrunchies or elasticated bands on/off arms and legs (these take a bit more effort than quoit). Try balancing on one leg to hook a quoit on/off the other foot.



Blue Activity Number: 1, (Green Activity Number: 2)

## Things you will need:

- Gym mats or soft floor e.g. rug/ carpet or a dry grassy slope
- Toys to motivate

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop abilities with crossing midline.
- To strengthen muscles for twisting and turning.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child lying on their back move a toy from directly above them (once child is focused on the toy) to one side slowly. Give support at one side of their hip to encourage them to roll to their side and back again. Do this in both directions to help your child learn to roll. Once your child is on their side, move the toy along the floor in a direction that encourages them to roll onto their tummy (i.e. above their head) and gently support at their side throughout to achieve the roll. Encourage your child to roll from their tummy to their back with gentle support and a toy to motivate- your child's arms should be tucked underneath them before completing this so they don't become trapped.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to roll across the mat both ways- encourage them to keep their body straight like a log (arms above head to prevent them getting trapped).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to roll like a log down small slopes or across the mat and work towards holding a soft ball/ toy above their heads to keep a nice long log position.

## Blue Activity Number: 2

### Things you will need:

- Appropriate toys to motivate your child, appropriate height surface to play at

### Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- Practice with playing with toys in a variety of positions.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child in a sitting or side sitting position (bottom to one side, legs to the other) on the floor at the toys and encourage them to join in with the activity. Gradually work to reduce the amount of support you are giving your child to maintain the position.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to kneel at a surface to play with the toys - maybe kneel in front of a sofa or toy box. Support as necessary for safety and challenge their balance to reach for toys perhaps going between kneeling to high kneeling (see glossary) and back again; put toys on the sofa and the floor to encourage your child to move up and down (kneeling to high kneeling) between the toys e.g. place toy cars on the floor and the top of the ramp/ tube on the sofa- your child can repeatedly pick up cars and push them down the ramp/ tube.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to high kneel or half kneel (see glossary) with no support. Challenge their balance by encouraging them to reach for toys in different directions, perhaps engage them in a game of bowling a ball at skittles.



## Blue Activity Number: 3

### Things you will need:

- Toys/ objects to encourage your child to reach, stool or box to sit on that allow your child's feet to be flat on the floor whilst sitting
- **Optional:** Small stool/ bench without a back, wobble cushion, small stool, tunnel, trampoline

### Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20) for sitting.
- To develop co-ordination for reaching and moving in sitting, such as when reaching for toilet paper and tearing it off whilst sat on the toilet.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Sit your child on your knee:

-If they cannot yet support their own head then give full support at head and neck for safety and encourage them to look at toys/ objects and track with their eyes whilst supported.

-If your child can hold their own head independently: Sit them on your knee with support at their trunk (see glossary).

Encourage them to look at different things around the room. Slowly try to lower your hands to support lower down their trunk whilst ensuring they are always safe in the sitting position on your knee.

- Once they are confident in sitting then support your child lower down, on the hips, and play games such as 'wobble wobble' whereby you gently move your knee side to side whilst encouraging them to maintain upright sitting.

**Mobile:** Sit your child on your knee or a small stool/ bench that has no back on it. Encourage them to maintain sitting on the surface by themselves (supervise closely). Encourage them to reach for toys and objects upwards/ downwards/ sideways whilst sitting. Play 'wobble wobble' on your knee as above but steadily and carefully change the speed of your movement whilst encouraging your child to keep themselves upright in sitting.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Using a wobble cushion on a stool / chair (at a height that the child can reach the floor with their feet flat) encourage your child to sit and practice reaching down to the floor and back up – perhaps put the toys on the floor and your child reaches down to the floor and back up to play with them. It's all about positioning toys that motivate your child into reaching up and down! Also, try sitting your child inside a tunnel or on a trampoline and gentle wobble the tunnel / trampoline challenging them to keep their balance.

## Things you will need:

- A space to move around in
- Dots on floor or areas for 'stopping' in (could be a large hoop, an area masked out with tape or drawn with chalk)
- **Optional:** access to music that can be started and stopped

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop the ability and co-ordination to stop and start when moving around e.g. when approaching a road.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child in arms walk around the room and practice stopping and starting using the command words 'stop' and 'go' appropriately. You could sing a song or listen to music and stop with them in your arms when the music stops. Also, use 'Stop' and 'go' in play situations e.g. whilst cycling their legs in lying on their back, clapping, waving, drumming, etc.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to move around and to stop on the spot using the command words 'go' and 'stop'. This could be done with music and guiding them to stop when the music stops. Additionally, use a hand signal to re-enforce the 'stop' and 'go'. You could pretend to be animals, ride on trikes, crawl through a tunnel – move slowly, quickly, low on the ground, tall as you can, giant steps, stomping steps, fairy steps, etc.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to move around the room by walking, running, crawling or skipping and encourage them to 'stop' on a specific target area when the word 'stop' or a specific hand signal is used. This could again be done as a game of musical statues, or that you stop on a specific place of an obstacle course e.g. jumping along a line of squares and stop on the last one, hop 3 times and only 3, walk along a line and stop at the end, jump over a rope on the floor with one jump only and stand still.

## Things you will need:

- Music (or sing songs if no access to music) – no dancing expertise required!



## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop confident co-ordinated movements across the whole body, rhythm and coordination, body awareness and enjoying free movement to music!

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child safely in your arms (support their head if needed) and dance to different types of music with them. Try this whilst you are sat down and whilst standing up so that your child can experience movement in arms at different levels. With them sat independently/ in a seat, then gently hold their arms or hands and 'dance' with them moving their arms around and encourage them to bounce and wiggle.

**Mobile:** Play music and dance whilst encouraging your child to watch you and join in / copy if they want to - this can be done with your child in sitting or standing. Children usually love to express themselves to music in all different ways; also use appropriate dance videos to copy movements and 'dance moves' e.g. 'Flamingo Chicks' which includes Makaton signing and accessible dance for all.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Play music and encourage your child to dance /complete actions to the beat. This may include copying sequences to the music, making up routines or musical statues. Try action songs as well as dance sequences.

## Blue Activity Number: 6

### Things you will need:

- Soft toys. Bat & Ball (see page 25 of booklet for options), balloon



### Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop hand eye coordination.
- To support eye tracking and spatial awareness.

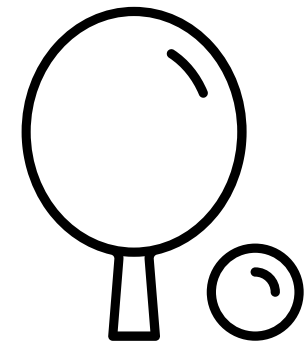
### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to reach out and bat with their hand to tap suitably soft toys in a supported position (lying or sitting). Support your child's arm safely (with a flat hand) at their elbow if they cannot do this by themselves. Perhaps fasten a balloon to a baby gym so that your child can bat it with their hands or feet (supervised).

**Mobile:** Roll a ball to your child along the floor encouraging them to bat it back to you with the palm of their hand or with a small bat (child can be stood / sat on floor and swipe the bat along the floor).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to hold a bat. Throw soft ball or balloon (these move much more slowly allowing your child time to react) to your child and encourage them to hit it back.

Note: A larger racquet is easier to hit something with rather than a baseball / rounders bat type.



Blue Activity Number: 7, (Green Activity Number: 9), (Yellow Activity Number: 3), (Red Activity Number: 7)

## Things you will need:

- Objects to throw/ catch: Balloons, bubbles, different size balls with different weight and textures.

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To build up eye tracking and hand-eye co-ordination.
- Support spatial awareness and depth perception with regard particularly to gauging how fast a moving object is going and in what direction (particularly important for road safety).



## Grading:

**Non-mobile:** Use a bright toy and encourage your child to look at it whilst you move it steadily towards their face / hands. Encourage them to reach out for it (give hand over hand adult support with this if they find reaching more tricky). Once able to prop on their tummy or sit up with or without support, then get their attention first on the ball and roll it towards them encouraging them to 'catch' it. Sit with legs splayed to naturally guide the ball towards them. Use a soft light ball that won't hurt when it rolls into them!

**Mobile:** Use balloons and encourage your child to hit them or catch them. Continue to roll a ball to 'catch' – this can be done in standing or sitting. Use bubbles and get your child to pop them by clapping to pop them. Start showing your child how to hold their hands together to catch and use a smaller soft ball (so it fits nicely into their hands) and throw it so that it lands in their hands - try to encourage them to look at the ball, not their hands, and encourage them to keep hold of it.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue throwing and catching as above. As skills increase practice throwing and catching over different distances with different sized balls.

## Things you will need:

- Surface to climb on and off (needs to be safe- steady and preferably padded e.g. sofa, soft play pieces, padded steps)
- **Optional:** Climbing frame, slide

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To build up eye tracking and hand-eye co-ordination.
- Support spatial awareness and depth perception with regard particularly to gauging how fast a moving object is going and in what direction (particularly important for road safety).

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child to enjoy tummy time. Try using a tummy time cushion or rolled blanket to support them under their chest and promote pushing up through their hands and arms.

**Mobile:** Support your child to maintain a kneeling position directly in front of a surface. Use your hands to gently encourage them to climb on and off the surface with one leg leading and then repeat with the other leg leading. Try this at different height surfaces and encourage them to become more independent with this whilst giving lots of encouragement (supervise closely for safety). Show your child how to climb off a surface safely by turning around and coming down backwards with support as needed. Give verbal and visual prompts like 'turn around' accompanied with a hand signal to show this.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Set up surfaces for your child to climb on and off independently. They could be encouraged to do this on their hands and knees or via stepping. This activity could be incorporated into an obstacle course whereby your child climbs on and off different height surfaces whilst completing a circuit of activities.

# Stepping up/ down

Blue Activity Number: 9, (Indigo Activity Number: 10)

## Things you will need:

- Surfaces to work, objects to crawl over/under/around, non-slip surfaces to step up and down onto (see page 26 of booklet for options)

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop strength and reciprocal movement for stepping.
- To build visual perception including spatial and depth awareness for judging distances and heights.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child in sitting, provide adequate support for them to play with toys at surfaces of differing heights. Once they are ready, you can practice encouraging them to move from sitting into the crawling position through side sitting (see glossary) with your leg or a roll underneath their tummy for support.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to crawl over/ under/ around objects. Include surfaces at differing heights to climb onto and over, this can even include your legs! Once your child is steady in walking, you can begin to practice stepping onto and off non-slip steps. Provide maximum support with your hands around their trunk (see glossary)- don't hold their hands as your child will use them to balance. The focus is on your child being confident in learning about different heights not on them being independent at this stage.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Set up a variety of surfaces for your child to step on and off independently. They may need to use a handrail or have a steady surface to hold onto. If there are no surfaces available for your child to hold, you could gently support them at their trunk or at their elbows to allow them to keep their hands free whilst developing skills in stepping up and down. This activity could be incorporated into obstacle courses. Use language to support this e.g. 'up' 'down' 'on' 'off'.

## Things you will need:

- Steady surfaces to jump on / off- very low height surfaces of 1-2cm
- **Optional:** A spot on the floor (can be taped/ drawn on), mats, hoop to jump in/ out of, a line to jump over, a stick to jump over, hopscotch, skipping rope.

## Benefits:

- To develop gross motor skills and balance (see glossary pages 17 & 20).
- To develop strength and power for jumping.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child adequately and help them to experience gentle bouncing in a standing position either on your knee or when holding them in arms and dancing (this does not mean using a jumperoo). If your child does not yet have full head control, then please ensure they are supported safely. The bounce should not be vigorous. Once your child is very secure in sitting them encourage them to bounce up and down themselves in sitting e.g. to music.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to sit or stand and to bounce on the spot - this may be to music or singing e.g. 'Hop little bunny hop'. Once your child is confident on their feet, then encourage them to stand and bend their knees and attempt a jump - they may not clear the floor yet however, practicing the jumping action will be useful as they get stronger. Encourage them to stand on a small raised and steady surface (1-2cm high) and hold their hands or support them around the trunk whilst they are encouraged to 'jump' off the surface onto the floor. This will be a stepping action to start with, but it gives them practice at changing height.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Practice independent jumping. This can initially be jumping on the spot and then progress to jumping over a line, then into a target e.g. a circle on the floor, then jumping over something raised which could be a skipping rope or a stick held at an appropriate height- ensure the object doesn't move to begin. Once your child is confident in all of the above, they can begin to practice jumping over a slow-moving object e.g. a moving skipping rope.

## Indigo Activity Number 1

### Things you will need:

- Shape sorters (see page 28 of booklet for options).

### Benefits:

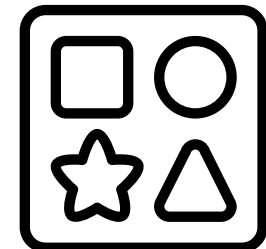
- To develop visual perception including spatial awareness (see glossary for terms).
- To develop the ability to post and orientate objects. This will help with learning and recognising letters and numbers as well as helping your child to move around spaces and objects.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Find an object that your child can hold comfortably in their hand (e.g. rattle, scarf) and encourage them to place it in a box / bag / tube. Also, encourage them to then take the object out of the container.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to post a ball down a tube or into a circular hole cut in a box or into a shape sorter (initially block off all holes with your hand other than the correct one to limit the choice). Practice posting into letter boxes / piggy banks. Build towards inset jigsaws and then interlocking jigsaws (Inset jigsaws with the picture behind each shape gives a lot more clues as to which piece goes where).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage independence with more complicated jigsaws and shape sorters. Increase the complexity by using for example a jigsaw with more pieces or an inset jigsaw with more holes/ no pictures behind the holes.



## Indigo Activity Number 2

### Things you will need:

- Objects to hide, a blanket or scarf or cup / bowl / soft furnishings to cover

### Benefits:

- To develop visual perception specifically visual memory around the spatial awareness of where something is (see glossary for terms). This will help with tasks such as remembering where things are kept.

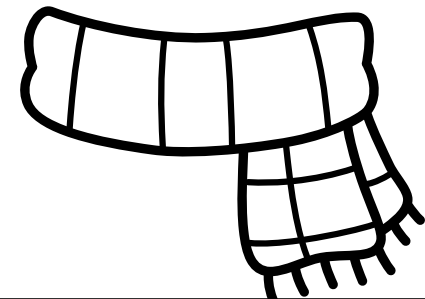
### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Play peekaboo - cover your own face with a scarf and encourage your child to pull the scarf off to find you. Work on building anticipation.....'Where's ..... ( your child's name)....? Peek-a-peek-a-peek-a.....boo!'

**Mobile:** Show your child where you are hiding an object, then hide the object and ask them to find it, e.g. show them the toy, then hide it under a cushion, then ask your child 'where's the ....?' and encourage them to retrieve it. Use directional language to help identify where you are placing the toy e.g. 'Under the cushion', 'In the box'

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Have 2-3 hiding places and encourage your child to watch you hide an object and then find it in one of the 2-3 places e.g. have three different coloured cups and hide a chocolate button under one of them whilst your child watches, then ask them to find the chocolate button. Build up to using more than one object e.g. hide toy cat, toy horse, toy dog under three bowls and ask your child to recall where each of them are in turn. Progress to hiding things in a wider area e.g. the shoe behind a cushion, the teddy behind a curtain, the doll in the box, then ask your child where the teddy is and for them to retrieve it.

You can make this as physically demanding as you like e.g. so your child has to climb up onto something to retrieve the hidden object, or to get into a container with a more challenging top to open such as a screw top jar, etc.



## Things you will need:

- A slide or equivalent sloping surface, tubes (see page.....of booklet for options), paper, crayons, stencils (these could be homemade cut outs in cardboard), cookie cutters / playdough cutters with diagonals (such as triangles, yachts with sails / houses with sloped rooves / ice cream cones), ball / cars to roll down the tubes

## Benefits:

- To develop visual perception of diagonals needed for drawing and writing letters and numbers with diagonals in them e.g. A, K.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Support your child in lying on their tummy or in sitting and roll a ball or car down a slope. Use 'Ready, Steady.....go' to build up anticipation and let your child let go of the ball / car (or help them to push to set it off). Once able to sit and let go more readily, try rolling a ball / car down a tube and bring your child's attention to where it will come out. Support your child to go down a slide either on your lap or holding them steadily.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to roll cars / balls down slopes – also try to roll them up the slope! Help your child to slide down the slide (safely) and experience the movement in different ways e.g. sitting up, lying down, feet first, head first, on their tummy etc (supervised). Also, try climbing up the slide or pulling themselves up a slope on their tummy. Have a go at rolling down slopes in the park / garden if the ground is dry enough! Always supports with directional language: 'Up' / 'Down'.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Your child can continue exploring going up and down slopes in different ways and rolling cars/balls up and down slopes. Pull and climb up slopes too. Then start drawing diagonals. Start by the adult drawing two parallel diagonal lines and ask your child to draw a parallel line between them. Then draw two dots for your child to join with a diagonal line. Then your child may copy sloping lines drawn by an adult. Using stencils/ cookie cutters / playdough cutters, encourage your child to draw round the inside or outside of the shapes to experience drawing diagonals whilst pushing against the sides to maintain the shape drawn.

## Indigo Activity Number 4

### Things you will need:

- A variety of familiar toys or objects, something to cover them with e.g. silk scarf / bowl / container / cup / T-towel / piece of paper
- **Optional:** Pairs game / lotto



### Benefits:

- To develop visual perception specifically visual memory around the spatial awareness of where something is (see glossary for terms). This will help with tasks such as remembering where things are kept.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child in either on their tummy or in sitting (this can be in a seat), play hiding games by drawing your child's attention to a toy, then popping it under a cover and saying, 'Where's the....?'. Pull the cover off to show them! Keep playing this and helping your child to pull off the cover. Once they have the hang of this, then try putting two objects under two different covers and ask them where one of the toy is – if they don't pick the correct one then be 'surprised' - 'Oh no! – where's the .....gone?' so that your child is not despondent. If your child is unsure of the names of objects, try hiding two different objects but have duplicates of the two objects so that you can show your child what they are looking for e.g. 'Where's the other teddy / car / ball?' and show them what a teddy / car / ball looks like so they know what you mean.

**Mobile:** Play lots of hiding games where you show your child where you are hiding different objects then ask where a specific one is - this could be under a cup or bowl or even leave a bit of the object still peeking out if they are finding it difficult e.g. have three different coloured cups and hide one object under a cup then ask where the object is. Gradually build up how many objects they are trying to remember to three different ones.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Continue playing memory games and build up the number of how many objects you are hiding. This can be done in Kim's games where several items are on a tray, your child looks at them, tries to remember them, then when they are hidden, they try to name them. If your child struggles to name items, have a selection of duplicate objects a few different toys for them to identify which ones were on the tray by giving you the ones that match. To make this even harder, put the objects in a specific order for them to remember e.g. ball, teddy, spoon, pencil – cover them up and see if they can remember the order! Again, if naming objects is hard, then put a selection of duplicate objects plus a few others out to select from so your child can make the same sequence with the toys they have available. Games on the market like Lotto and Pairs are also working on similar skills.

## Indigo Activity Number 5

### Things you will need:

- Scarf, bangle, tube, ball, Duplo and Duplo board, paper and crayons
- **Optional:** Bead mazes, click clack car tracks / roller ball tracks, board book mazes, books with mazes, mazes off children's food packaging e.g. sometime on cereal packets, etc

### Benefits:

- To develop visual perception including visual tracking, spatial awareness and problem solving.
- To develop finger isolation to point or pencil skills to draw.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Thread a bangle or ring onto a long scarf and tie it round two chairs at the right height so your child can reach when supported in sitting. Get your child's attention onto one end of the scarf and slowly slide the bangle along the scarf to the other end. Help your child to move it from one end to the other. Progress onto helping them set off a ball / car down a clip clack track or ball race or tube. Once sitting independently try a bead maze or build your own maze by tying two (or three) scarves between chair and putting a bangle on each for your child to move it along the scarf to the other end.

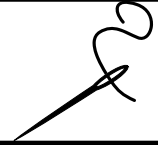
**Mobile:** Build mazes using Duplo blocks on a board, books / food packaging on the floor so your child can roll a ball or car around the maze. There are also maze board books available so your child can draw a track through a maze with their finger – some already have the route cut outs of card in the book (try your local library!).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Either use books, print off the internet or draw your own mazes on paper or make them outside e.g. lines in the sand / mud and encourage your child to navigate through the maze. Go and visit mazes at playparks or in gardens or make them in your garden / parks with sticks and stones so that your child can run around them to find a way through – great for drawing in the sand on the beach!

Indigo Activity Number: 6, (Green Activity Number: 7), (Red Activity Number: 4)

## Things you will need:

- A variety of different 'laces' and things to thread- see resources list (page 29 of booklet).



## Benefits:

- To develop visual perception specifically spatial awareness and sequential memory (visual and auditory)- see glossary for terms.
- To develop dexterity and hand-eye co-ordination.
- To work on skills required for fastening buttons and craft activities such as sewing.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to place hoops over an item e.g. kitchen roll holder. Start with bigger items that might take 2 hands to hold to lift up and over the top.

**Mobile:** Show your child what to do by initially holding a thread e.g. stiffer rope and encourage them to put through a hoop. Then encourage your child to have a turn with holding the thread in one hand and threading through the hoop with the other. Progress onto using floppier threads e.g. string through smaller holes.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to thread string through small hole e.g. on thicker card or through beads. Once they get the hang of this, then move onto threading beads in a specific order –tell or show them a pattern (e.g. blue, red, blue, red) and encourage them to copy this. Use threading cards, show your child to thread in and out of consecutive holes as if sewing and encourage them to copy that sequence.

# Vertical Mark Making

7

Indigo Activity Number: 7, (Yellow Activity Number: 6), (Red Activity Number: 5), (Orange Activity Number: 7), (Green Activity Number: 8)

## Things you will need:

- Large vertical drawing area e.g. outside wall, sheet of paper stuck onto a wall, big mirror or tiled area, window with condensation, easel.
- Tools to mark make e.g. their finger! big paintbrushes and a bucket of water, paint in tray / pot for handprints or paintbrushes, chalks, shaving foam applied to wall, pencils, crayons.
- Suitable clothing!

## Benefits:

- To develop visual perception including spatial awareness and the ability to cross midline for up, down, side to side and round and round movements.
- To strengthen the shoulders and arms as well as build dexterity and control in the hands and fingers to aid mark making.
- To practice sequencing, eye tracking, visual perception and following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child either in supported sitting, standing or upright in your arms so that they can reach the vertical drawing area. Give them the tools to mark make as above and encourage making marks. Start with dots and scribble.

**Mobile:** Stand your child at the vertical surface and encourage circular marks, marks from top to bottom ('down lines'), or side to side ('across lines'). Give your child lots of directional language e.g. round, down, up. Use hand over hand to support the direction. Add a start and finish point for your child to draw a line to and from e.g. 'draw a line from the car to the house' (we write from left to right so ideally the car would be on the left and the house on the right). Don't worry which hand they use – present the drawing implement in the midline so they can choose. Draw a wide straight 'road' for them to draw a line in the middle of to build accuracy.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** See above (mobile section)- draw a road that is narrower with curves in the road for them to draw between. Practice drawing objects such as a complete circle or a ladder (encouraging your child to fill in the lines for the rungs). This encourages starting and stopping a line precisely. Eventually aim for crosses '+' and individual 'sloping lines' (diagonals) – 'X' shapes and squares are very hard. Also draw people (they usually have no body at this stage and that is ok!).

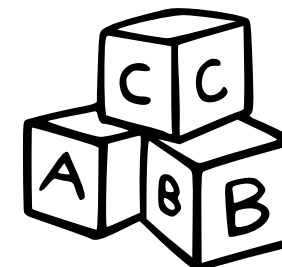
Indigo Activity Number: 8, (Green Activity Number: 5), (Red Activity Number: 10)

## Things you will need:

- Construction toys e.g. Soft cubes, Duplo, Sticklebricks, Popoids, Mobilo, Bricks, Magnetic blocks

## Benefits:

- To help build visual perceptual skills, particularly spatial awareness.
- To encourage both hands to work together in a co-ordinated way.
- To build up strength and accuracy as well as dexterity.



## Instructions:

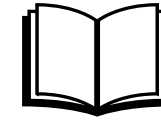
**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to knock down towers that you've built - Destruction comes before construction! Encourage them to pull apart 2 pieces placed together e.g. Sticklebricks or Popoids and progress on to the child placing one block on top of another – they will only manage one block on top to start with; a tower is more complicated.

**Mobile:** Encourage the child to pull apart more difficult pieces like Duplo. Move towards them putting pieces together starting with things that stick easily e.g. Velcro- initially they may need hand over hand guidance to do this. Move on to building towers or 'models'. Also encourage the child to match pieces and sort them by colour or size or to find one the same as yours from a selection.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Use more challenging construction toys to put together. Really encourage following some simple instructions either by building a model one piece at a time next to your child (you put 2 pieces together and give your child 2 identical pieces to copy what you did), copying a picture or instructions instead of just free building.

## Things you will need:

- Objects to walk around, move under, make tracks out of (see page 26 of booklet)
- **Optional:** 'We are Going on Bear Hunt' book



## Benefits:

- To increase visual perception skills including spatial awareness for changes of direction in physical activity.
- To aid with development of muscle strength and balance skills for when moving and changing direction.
- To build proprioceptive skills, knowledge of directional language and abilities in following instructions.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Hold your child with adequate support in your arms and walk around with them. Practice changes of direction and use lots of directional language about what you are doing e.g. 'around the table' 'up/ down'. Read the Bear Hunt book and do the actions.

**Mobile:** Set up toys on different height surfaces and in different areas of the room. Move about the room to access each of the toys and encourage your child to follow whilst talking them through what you are doing 'teddy is under the table' – then see if they can follow instruction and find the toy. Play games of hide and seek when they haven't seen you hide the toy, give prompts such as 'up a bit/ down a bit'.

Also sing songs and do the actions for directions e.g. 'The Grand Old Duke of York' – reach up to the top of the hill etc. Give directional language to describe where your child is when on play equipment e.g. on the See saw or swing – we're going up and down; on the slide – you're at the top, you're at the bottom.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Set up obstacle courses and include tracks (using markers on the floor) for the child to move through- include changes of direction. Demonstrate completion of the course and support them to complete the course safely whilst talking through all of the directions that have been used throughout. E.g. Jump in the hoop, over the rope, throw the ball in the bucket, crawl under the table. Diagonals are particularly hard to perceive so try to help your child 'feel' what a diagonal is like by helping them experience slopes. They can practice pushing toys up a slope or rolling toys down e.g. a car up/ down a ramp. Go up and down slides in different ways (supervised!) – lie down on the tummy, feet first, head first, lie down on their back as well as climbing up and sitting on their bottom to go down.

# Stepping Up/ Down

10

Indigo Activity Number: 10, (Blue Activity Number: 9)

## Things you will need:

- Surfaces to work, objects to crawl over/under/around, non-slip surfaces to step up and down onto (see page 26 of booklet for options)

## Benefits:

- To build visual perception including spatial and depth awareness for judging distances and heights.
- To develop gross motor skills and balance.
- To develop strength and reciprocal movement for stepping.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With your child in sitting, provide adequate support for them to play with toys at surfaces of differing heights. Once they are ready, you can practice encouraging them to move from sitting into the crawling position through side sitting (see glossary) with your leg or a roll underneath their tummy for support.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to crawl over/ under/ around objects. Include surfaces at differing heights to climb onto and over, this can even include your legs! Once your child is steady in walking, you can begin to practice stepping onto and off non-slip steps. Provide maximum support with your hands around their trunk (see glossary)- don't hold their hands as your child will use them to balance. The focus is on your child being confident in learning about different heights not on them being independent at this stage.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Set up a variety of surfaces for your child to step on and off independently. They may need to use a handrail or have a steady surface to hold onto. If there are no surfaces available for your child to hold, you could gently support them at their trunk or at their elbows to allow them to keep their hands free whilst developing skills in stepping up and down. This activity could be incorporated into obstacle courses. Use language to support this e.g. 'up' 'down' 'on' 'off'.

## Violet Activity Number 1

### Things you will need:

- Unprepared snack (e.g. whole banana with skin on), chopping board, appropriate utensils for cutting up snack, plate or bowl. Close adult supervision.
- **Optional:** variety of snacks

### Benefits:

- To develop functional skills around food.
- To develop ability with bilateral integration and hand skills.



### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Prepare the snack appropriately for finger feeding. Support your child safely in a position for feeding and offer food either to take off you or off a tray to independently finger feed (with supervision). Build on using a spoon to self-feed.

**Mobile:** Start to practice opening fruits/ packages (adult may start this process and your child then completes). Begin practicing holding the snack e.g. banana, and cutting with play knife (cut on a chopping board). Start encouraging feeding with a fork - stab food and bring to the mouth.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** With support for safety, encourage further independence with prepping snacks (e.g. peeling and slicing more of the banana – your child will need to hold banana with one hand and cut with the other), cutting up food with knife and fork (adult hand over hand to start with), stabbing food using a fork and bringing to mouth independently. Encourage your child to peel satsumas, open packets and help prepare food for others.

Note: Always encourage hand hygiene before and after food preparation / eating

# Dressing: Socks and Shoes

2

## Violet Activity Number 2

### Things you will need:

- Socks, Shoes (for older children)
- **Optional:** Velcro, child friendly bells for attaching to ankles



### Benefits:

- To develop functional skills around dressing.
- To develop body awareness.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to reach for their feet and play with their feet (perhaps use bells on their feet or brightly coloured socks). Encourage your child to take their socks off one at a time - you may need to pull the sock off their heel to make it easier to do.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to sit by themselves and take off their shoes and socks off (may need hand over hand help initially, but work towards independent opening of Velcro straps- consider shoes without laces as these are more difficult). Encourage your child to assist with getting their shoes on. Wellies are easier to start with!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Work towards independence with putting socks and shoes on and off. Break the task down – e.g. for socks on: Start by encouraging your child to pull socks up only, gradually reduce how far the sock is on the foot before allowing your child to take over.



# Dressing: T-Shirt/ Jumper

3

## Violet Activity Number 3

### Things you will need:

- Hats, necklaces, T-shirts (could use Jumper or tabard) - preferably a bit too large (looser fitting ones are easier to start)
- **Optional:** Dressing up props that go over the head e.g. silk scarf (see resources on page 26 for options)

### Benefits:

- To develop functional skills around dressing.
- To develop body awareness and tolerance of clothing materials as well as sequencing abilities to know what goes on first and where.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to pull items off their heads – play games of peek-a-boo where they can pull the silk scarf off their head and progress onto hats. Once mastered, encourage your child to pull off a T-shirt once you have helped take their arms out and pulled it up to their forehead. Next, encourage your child to join in pulling their T-shirt on/off over their face-emphasise the words 'on' or 'off' to help them identify the direction they are pulling. Also, encourage your child to offer up an arm to put in the clothing by gently tapping it first and saying 'arm in'. This helps them identify the name for the body part and where it is.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to reach behind their head / to the side of their neck to take necklaces, etc. off over the head. If they struggle with this, then play games where they peel 2 post-it notes off their cheeks / neck / shoulders to get the idea of reaching to those areas and pulling away, preferably pulling off 2 post-it's at the same time, one with each hand.

Once your child has their head in a T-shirt then open the arm holes one at a time and encourage your child to push their first arm in themselves. Also, encourage your child to lift up / pull down their T-shirt over their tummy to join in taking off/ putting on. When taking T-shirts off leave it with just one arm left partly in and encourage them to shake / pull it out.

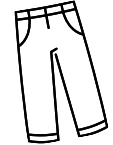
**Pre-school/ Reception:** Work towards independence with putting T-shirts on/ off. Lay the T-shirt on a table / bed with the back upwards and teach your child to pick up the waistband of the T-shirt to lift it up and over their head. Break the task down – e.g. picking up the right bit of the clothing as one task; pulling it over the head; putting in the first arm then the second; pulling the T-shirt down over their tummy – the same in reverse for taking off. Arms are tricky!

## Things you will need:

- Trousers (loose fitting), bells, socks, pillowcases, quoits (see page 28 of booklet for options), hula hoops

## Benefits:

- To develop functional skills around dressing, particularly for adjusting clothing for toileting.
- To develop body awareness and tolerance of clothing materials.



## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Encourage your child to pull items off their feet – brightly coloured socks, quoits, bells, etc.

Encourage them to recognise their feet by massaging them, drawing attention to them – ‘where are your feet?’ (followed by tickling them!), saying rhymes for toes e.g. ‘This Little Piggy went to market...’. When lying on their back, gently clap your child’s feet together whilst singing to build up awareness of where the feet are.

**Mobile:** Once upright, encourage your child to pull clothing up from their knees or ankles to their thighs (pulling over your bottom is really tricky!) and back down when putting trousers on (if in standing you may need to give support). Undressing is easier than dressing; baggy clothes are easier than tight. Get in extra practice in a fun way e.g. standing inside hula hoops and pulling them up from the floor and over their head, pulling quoits up and down legs. Start by putting the trousers on the floor with the 2 holes for each leg obvious so your child can put one foot in each hole, then pull up. Remember dressing takes time and practice so best practiced away from the morning rush to get out!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Play games like ‘sack races’ using pillowcases so that your child stands in the pillowcase and pulls it up to start jumping. Tucking scarves or socks down the back of your child’s waistband, leaving an end hanging out, and encouraging them to pull it out can help with the action of pulling up over their bottom. Teach your child how to run their thumb around the waistband and tuck the thumb into the band to help pull it up. Help your child learn how to orientate their clothing the right way round to put it on. Let your child finish off the activity i.e. they put the second leg in after you’ve done the first so they feel they have finished the activity.

## Violet Activity Number 5

### Things you will need:

- A variety of tools (see resources list page...), different types of softer foods and substances like sand, soil, mud, water, foam, mashed potato, playdough.
- Optional: drums and beaters, triangles and beater, scoops, ladles, fish slices, balloon whisks, buckets and spades, Velcro veg / fruit

### Benefits:

- To develop functional skills around using tools, particularly for managing a knife and fork.
- To improve dexterity, bilateral coordination and spatial awareness as well as tolerance to food and messy play.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** In supported sitting, encourage your child to bang on upturned pans or bowls to make a noise – put on some music and have a band! In the bath or sat in the sand tray, help them to use containers, to fill and empty and stir the contents with a spoon or stick. Encourage your child to finger feed, take toys (if safe to do so) to their mouth to explore, and also give them their own spoon at mealtimes to get used to holding and helping you. When your child has hold of a spoon (with appropriate food on it) hold on top of their hand to guide it up to their mouth.

**Mobile:** Use a stick as a tool to: run along railings to make a noise, beat a drum, push into a pile of sand, soil or playdough (maybe to make a hedgehog!). Use forks to stab softer foods (hold on top of their hand to guide it up to their mouth). Help teach your child to scoop up substances using a spoon, scoop or cup and tip into a larger container e.g. bubbles in the bath/sink! Practice this same action in play e.g. with playdough (see Red activity 1). Encourage your child to scoop, lift and fill containers e.g. spooning dry rice from one bowl to another. Try using a fish slice to slide under and lift things like leaves off the ground; this is a great way to learn how to scoop up food with cutlery.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to mix, stir, whisk, roll out when baking or pretend baking with mud etc. Practice cutting with a play knife – start with Velcro fruit and veg or soft foods like banana / fish fingers or a roll of playdough. Hold the knife in the dominant hand and the 'food' in the other hand. Then progress on to stabbing the 'food' with a fork and cutting with the knife in the dominant hand – you will probably need to hold on top of their hand to start with until they get the idea. Children sometimes like to serve themselves or others with a big spoon!

## Violet Activity Number 6

### Things you will need:

- **Optional:** A mirror, beanbags, Mr Potato Head or similar, dolls, large sheets of paper and crayons, picture books with people / animals, toy animals, masks, props for dressing up e.g. bunny ears, tail, animal outfits, etc.

### Benefits:

- To develop body awareness for functional activities such as dressing, negotiating physical activities and also building up a perception of self which is needed to draw pictures of people.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Massage is a lovely way to help your child become aware of their body and feel the different parts. Name parts when you massage them to help your child build up the vocabulary for the different parts of their body. Tap different parts of the body to prompt your child where they are as you talk about them e.g. 'Where's your arm?', then tap their arm to put on their coat. Ask them to point to different parts of their body – start with head, tummy, hands, toes. Sing action songs with them supporting them to do the actions e.g. 'Heads, shoulders, knees and toes' '1,2,3,4,5 once I caught a fish alive....' 'This little piggy....' 'Round and round the garden....'

**Mobile:** Continue to sing actions songs with body parts mentioned and encourage your child to join in. Play games where you put things on different parts of your body e.g. balance a beanbag on your shoulder/hand /foot, or put clothing in the wrong place e.g. socks on your hands – talk about this and give the names of body parts as you play! Use books and toys and point to body parts encouraging your child to point to them on themselves or on the picture / toy and to name them e.g. 'Where's teddy's nose?' 'Where's your ears'. Perhaps dress up and add a tail / bunny ears / masks to encourage talking about faces and body part. Use a mirror to point out what body parts you can see and give them the correct names e.g. 'Where is your tongue?'. Try lying your child on the floor and drawing round them and them to add features such as eyes and ears etc. (they could use a mirror to guide them). Try building Mr Potato Head and adding features to him in the wrong / right place!

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Start drawing pictures of people and making craft models of people and animals. Expand the names and add other parts of the body in play e.g. 'Simple Simon says....' and using shoulders, wrists, ankles, knees, eyebrows, chin, etc. Also name body parts when getting dressed/ getting bathed/ washed e.g. 'where do you wear a bracelet?' 'What do you hear with?'.

## Things you will need:

- A variety of: Bottles, cups, scoops, a variety of containers and pourable substances (see page 28 of booklet for more options).of booklet for more options).

## Benefits:

- To develop skills with using both hands together in a co-ordinated way (bilateral co-ordination) for functional activities as pouring and carrying a tray.

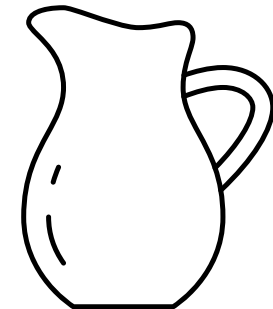
## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Start with your child in sitting (give support if needed) and pour substances such as sand and water whilst encouraging your child to put their hands underneath the stream. Give your child support to pour from containers. Your child might manage tipping a container with one hand or both together. Help explore the fun of pouring items from one container to another.

**Mobile:** Practice pouring from bottle or jugs (usually starts two handed and tips towards the child – so watch out if using water!). Use larger containers so that your child practices using two hands together. Encourage your child to independently pour from one container to another – the wider the opening of the container the easier it is to pour in. Perhaps pour through sieves or round a water wheel or pour cereals into a bowl for breakfast or ingredients into a bowl when baking.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to precisely pour from one container into another – gradually make the neck of the bottle / container smaller so that the pour needs to be progressively more accurate.

Let them pour their own drink (start by putting the cup in a larger bowl / deep sided tray first to minimise spills!)



## Violet Activity Number 8

### Things you will need:

- Water, bowl / sink, soap (bar of soap / dispensers), towel / paper towel (and if so, a bin)

### Benefits:

- To encourage functional skills of independent hand washing for toileting and hygiene/ cleanliness.
- To develop understanding of sequencing different parts of an activity.
- To build tolerance of water and soap (as opposed to always using wipes) and being in an echo-ey public toilet/bathroom environment.

### Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** Practice hand washing whilst supporting your child appropriately by holding the hands under water of an appropriate temperature (this could be a bowl of water or running water from the tap), massaging with soap and then patting dry. Accompany the actions with key words like 'water', 'soap on', 'wash', 'dry'. Give experiences of being in echo-ey toilet environments whilst handwashing e.g. public toilets. Let your child watch you using hand-driers, switching them on / off, blowing your hair or wafting clothing in them to build familiarity. Try to warn your child that the drier will come on before you start it.

Encourage supported hand washing around nappy changes/ mealtimes in particular to build a link.

Play with a soap bar and experience how slippery it is or how foamy the pump soap is as well as giving them the towel and helping them rub their hands dry.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to handwash in a sink using a non-slip step stool for them to reach. Warn them when you are switching the tap on / off, checking and telling them about the temperature of the water. Show and guide your child with how to turn the taps on/off and use a variety of soap dispensers. Have fun trying to make as many bubbles as possible and then wash them all off. Continue to use sinks in public toilets to wash hands to build tolerance of water, echo-ey spaces and hand driers, even if your child is in nappies and generally changed in a separate changing room. When completing messy play/ eating then save handwashing to the end and make it part of the activity (if your child doesn't like being so messy during the task then try offering a damp flannel for a quick clean before a full handwash at the end).

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Encourage your child to be independent in handwashing with supervision. Give them key words such as 'water first', 'soap', 'water', 'wash', 'dry' and perhaps prompt this with a visual sequence stuck to the wall near the sink. Encourage use of a towel/ paper towel and show them how to put this back onto a towel rail or in the bin. Teach them to check if they are dry and talk about 'wet' and 'dry' and help them feel and see the difference. Always encourage handwashing before eating and after toileting and make it a fun part of the day.

## Things you will need:

- Small objects e.g. rattle, ring, small stick, items of clothing (e.g. hat, gloves, socks)
- Larger objects (e.g. book, soft toys, lunch tray, plastic plate)

## Benefits:

- To develop skills with using both hands together in a co-ordinated way (bilateral co-ordination) for functional activities such as carrying a tray.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** With you child in lying (on their front or back) or with them in a supported sitting position, encourage your child to reach for toys and objects. Offer objects that can be easily grasped and gradually increase the distance that you ask your child to reach for them (ensuring this is still achievable). Gradually increase the size of the object so that eventually two hands are needed to hold this.

**Mobile:** Encourage your child to hold small objects and crawl or take steps whilst holding them in one/ both hands. Make this a game by encouraging your child to drop the object into a large target area (e.g. a basket) once they have carried it a short distance. Once your child is more confident with walking whilst carrying, encourage them to carry more than one thing at a time. This is harder as it will probably require two hands and some problem solving to hold onto a number of items e.g. carrying 3 soft toys at once hugged into their trunk.

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Work towards independence with carrying larger objects such as a book or tray that is solid and flat. Encourage your child to be fully independent with reaching out of their base of support to pick up the object safely (e.g. reaching for the book in the middle of the table), carry it across a room and place on another surface. Progress this activity by encouraging your child to carry objects whilst navigating simple obstacles in the room (e.g. other tables). Build up to carrying another item on a tray for short distances and delivering it without anything dropping off. This is easier with a sticky non-moveable item on the tray to start with e.g. a squashed ball of playdough, then move towards something that might move e.g. play food. You can really make it challenging by placing a ball on the tray and encouraging your child to carry it without letting it fall.

Violet Activity Number 10, (Orange Activity Number: 8), (Green Activity Number: 10)

## Things you will need:

- Different types of quoits e.g. bangles or rings large enough to go over arms or legs of your child (see page 28 of the booklet for alternatives). Brightly coloured socks.

## Benefits:

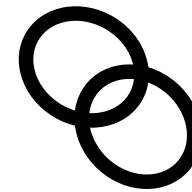
- To develop awareness of limbs for the functional skills of dressing and tolerance to taking items on and off arms and legs.
- To help with the development of bilateral integration and crossing the midline.
- To build balance and co-ordination for activities such as dressing/ undressing e.g. when pulling a sock off.

## Instructions:

**Non-mobile:** When lying on their back, put socks on your child's hands or feet (start by putting them only just at the finger tips or toes) and encourage them to pull them off. As they become more proficient place the sock further on the limb to start and encourage them to cross their midline and reach to the opposite foot to pull their sock off. Practice this activity in sitting as well with adequate support for safety.

**Mobile:** Play games where you put quoits on an arm or a leg to pull on or off. Can they pull them up to their shoulders / top of their legs, can they stand in a hoop and pull it right up from the ground over their head or from their head back down?

**Pre-school/ Reception:** Practice putting scrunchies or elasticated bands on/off arms and legs (these take a bit more effort than quoit). Try balancing on one leg to hook a quoit on/off the other foot.



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