

Activities to Support Body Awareness (Proprioception)

In general, we stimulate proprioception when we jump push, pull, carry heavy objects, hang by the arms, apply pressure to joints in our limbs, etc. Self-movement/proprioception gives us our experience of body geography - this means knowing where the body parts are in relation to one another. Through body geography, we can connect the names of body parts and touch specific locations when asked to in a game. Proprioception helps us to sequence body movements and move with smooth coordination. Proprioceptive sensing helps the human being to move with efficiency and coordination. When self-movement/proprioception has developed well, the child can accomplish a sequence of movements without applying conscious thought and without having to watch the body move. An advanced example of this would be to tie apron strings in a bow behind one's back.

Outside/Gross Motor Activities

- Tumbling on the ground
- Hammering nails into wood
- Sanding
- Sawing
- Hanging from monkey bars
- Pushing or pulling a wagon
- Gardening – digging shoveling pulling weeds, raking leaves
- Pushing a heavy broom
- Working in general
- Pogo stick jumping
- Building snow forts
- Angels in the snow
- Playing horsey
- Handling/peddling tricycles and bicycles
- Walking/hiking
- Block stilt walking

Inside Activities

- Building with heavy blocks, i.e. hollow blocks
- Crawling through tunnels of boxes or other confined spaces
- Walking with a beanbag on the head or heavier ones draped on the shoulders
- Making a child sandwiched between two cushions or nap mats; apply pressure on top
- Playdoh or clay modeling

Practical Tasks /Domestic Tasks

- Self-care and putting on boots and heavier outerwear (also orienting body to get clothing on)
- Opening doors without help
- Carrying or moving heavy objects, such as grocery bags, pails full of water
- Laundering heavy clothes on a washboard

- Ringing water out of a heavy cloths, such as a towel
- Caring heavy laundry basket
- Hanging wet laundry and a clothesline
- Pouring liquid or dry beans from one container to another
- Pouring water or tea from a pitcher into cups for snack time
- Grinding grain in grain mill
- Stirring a heavy dough or batter
- Kneading bread dough
- Washing and drying dishes
- Heavy work – mopping, carrying mop bucket
- Washing off table with sponge or cloth
- Watering garden plants with heavy, water-filled watering can
- Scrubbing the kitchen sink or bathtub
- Scrubbing mud off boots
- Washing the floor with large sponge
- Washing car with heavy, sopping sponge or rag
- Wiping down the car with a towel after it is washed
- Household tasks appropriate to the age
- Carding wool

Fine Motor Activities

- Tying bows, shoelaces
- String games
- Artistic activities – such as drawing, painting, modeling, cutting, gluing, etc
- Sewing and other handcrafts, such as knitting and crochet

One-on-one for the home:

- Rolling up in a blanket (burrito roll)
- Brushing a shaggy dog
- Having a pillow fight
- Hugging/gentle roughhousing

Note: each of the activities listed above involves proprioception. Some also involve other sensory rounds, such as balance, eye-hand coordination, motor planning, crossing midline, gross motor coordination, integration of body spatial planes, etc. Common playful and, especially, practical work activities naturally combine many of these aspects together. The more practical life activities are available to speak to the children's experience, the more multiple aspects of the developmental process are supported.