

Visual Activities to Develop Ocular Control and Gross Motor Skills

Gross Motor Skills Groups

This is one of a series of activities designed to aid the development of a child's gross motor skills. Each session begins with some warm up exercises to improve the children's balance, co-ordination, bi-lateral integration and spatial awareness. A range of equipment is used during the sessions that have been approved and recommended by physiotherapists and occupational therapists.

Most exercises are also attempted without vision.

Equipment used

Benches, hoops, quoits, cones, mats, physio balls, physio rolls, scoot boards, a variety of weights and sizes of balls, rocker board, bubble wrap, bean bags, tunnels, hockey sticks, markers and posts.

How the equipment is used

Benches: to walk forwards, backwards, sideways, on tiptoes, heels and heel to toe. To pull along whilst on stomach, crawl and step ups. Occasionally hoops are placed around the benches and the children crawl under or over them. The benches are usually put out on angles or straight lines.

Quoits, cones and markers: to make courses for the children to follow.

Mats: these are nearly always set out diagonally. Children follow the direction around the edge of the mats by walking, running, knee walking or using hockey sticks and balls.

Tunnels: to crawl through, to roll in and to roll balls through.

Physio ball and roll: to sit on, lay on (front and back), to act as support.

Rocker board: for balance.

Variety of balls: different weights and sizes for visual and spatial perception.

Scoot boards: to lay on, sit on and kneel on.

Edra cones and hoops: are used to make an obstacle course. All the warm up exercises for balance, body awareness, body perception and co-ordination are attempted without vision.

Visual Activities

Ocular Control

Occasionally there is a time lapse when you are following an object with your eyes. Although the object has passed in front of your eyes, the eyes will not follow the object immediately. To improve ocular control with the following exercises, the head must be kept still and only the eyes moving.

- Stand nice and straight and throw a balloon up and down and track the balloon with your eyes. Stand in front of the child to ensure that only the eyes are moving.
- Throw a beanbag up and down with your right hand and track the path of the beanbag with your eyes.
- Throw a beanbag up and down with your left hand and track the path of the beanbag with your eyes.
- Throw a beanbag from your right hand to your left hand and vice versa tracking its path with your eyes. Stand in front of the child making sure that they are only moving their eyes.
- Hold a beanbag whilst standing in front of the child; making sure that the beanbag is raised higher than the child's field of vision. Then ask the child to look up at the beanbag and be ready to catch it when it falls. The child must follow the path of the beanbag as it falls with their eyes.
- Use frog bean bags too, with bulgy eyes so that the child can follow the frog's eyes. It also makes it fun.
- Shine a light on the floor or wall and let the child track the path of light with their eyes. Shine the light from left to right, right to left, up and down and curve patterns. Make sure that the child is only moving their eyes and not their head and keeping their head still.

