



Core stability

Core Stability is the ability to control the movement and position of the central 'core' of the body which is responsible for posture and limb movement. It is necessary to help maintain a good posture and give a stable base to allow the arms, legs and head to move in a coordinated manner. It involves the muscles in the trunk, shoulders and hips.

What you may see

A child with poor postural stability may demonstrate difficulties with:

- Remaining upright in their seat
- Leaning on walls or other people
- Holding postures against gravity
- Carrying out both fine and gross motor activities including writing, balancing and riding a bike
- Dressing and undressing
- Poor concentration and attention.

Activity ideas

The following activity ideas will help improve the muscle strength in the shoulder, hips and trunk and therefore help improve core strength and stability.

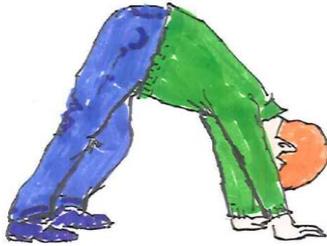
Children should be supervised at all times whilst completing these activities and, if working indoors, shoes and socks should be removed. Choose a couple of activities each time to help prevent boredom and keep the activities interesting.

Acknowledge when the child tires but aim to gradually and continuously increase strength and endurance in small steps.

- Any activity on hands and knees e.g. skittles, ball games, board games such as connect 4, twister, obstacle courses
- Any game in high kneeling e.g. throwing at a target, working at a low table
- Body Wrestling - face a partner in half kneeling then place flat hands together and push against each other whilst keeping a good upright position. Then try and pull against each other.



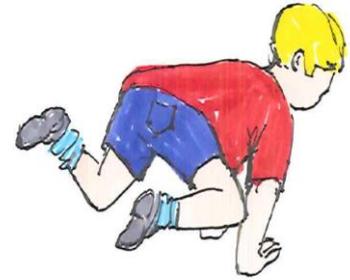
- Carry out activities at eye level on a vertical surface, e.g. chalkboard easel, paper taped to a wall using big arm movements
- Balloon volleyball - 2 teams in high kneeling pass a balloon over a net
- Games involving animal walks such as races, 'duck, duck, goose', crab football:



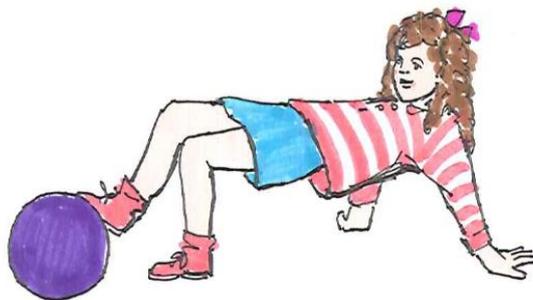
Bear



Donkey kick



Dog or Cat



Crab

- Aeroplanes - lie on your tummy, initially raising your head off the ground, then arms, then legs until the only thing that is touching the floor is your tummy. Hold this position for 10 seconds if possible.
- Bridging - lie on your back, with your body in a straight line. Bend your knees up, whilst keeping your feet on the ground and keep your arms by your sides. Tip your pelvis backwards to flatten your lower back into the floor and then raise your bottom off the floor keeping your heels on the floor. Hold this position for 10 seconds if possible.
- When watching TV or reading encourage your child to lie on their tummy on the floor, with forearms flat on the floor (rather than supporting the chin) for as long as they can.
- Swimming - Including using a kickboard/float, doggy paddle, treading water etc.



- Encourage general active play, particularly in playgrounds and walking over uneven surfaces

There are a number of programmes and websites that can also provide ideas of activities that can help develop core strength and stability such as SMART MOVES and BEAM as well as more commercial yoga and pilates programmes designed for children such as Cosmic Kids (www.cosmickids.com)



If you would like this factsheet in another language or format, for example Braille, large print or audio, please call:
01228 603890

E: communications.helpdesk@cumbria.nhs.uk

Or write to Engagement and Communications
Voreda House | Portland Place | Penrith | CA11 7QQ



Happier | Healthier | Hopeful

ID: CH107

Version: Final

Issue date: May 2017

Review date: May 2019

© 2017 Cumbria Partnership NHS Foundation Trust