

# DEVELOPING GROSS MOTOR SKILLS



**Supporting your child at  
home**

Examples of activities to support  
gross motor development at home:

**OBSTACLE COURSES –**  
CHILDREN CAN USE THEIR WHOLE BODIES  
TO MOVE THROUGH AND CLIMB OVER  
OBSTACLES.

**TRICYCLES, SCOOTERS, OR PEDAL CARS –**  
THESE CAN HELP CHILDREN PRACTICE  
BALANCE AND GET AROUND.

**CLIMBING –**  
CLIMBING ON FURNITURE OR OTHER  
OBJECTS HELPS CHILDREN DEVELOP GROSS  
MOTOR SKILLS AND SPATIAL AWARENESS.

**DANCING –**  
DANCING CAN HELP BUILD MUSCLE  
STRENGTH AND COORDINATION IN THE  
ARMS, LEGS, AND CORE.

**HOUSEHOLD CHORES –**  
CHORES LIKE SWEEPING, DUSTING, AND  
MAKING THE BED CAN HELP SUPPORT  
GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

**COOKING –**  
COOKING TASKS LIKE STIRRING, KNEADING,  
AND POURING CAN HELP SUPPORT GROSS  
MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

**WATER PLAY –**  
PLAYING WITH LARGE TOYS OR  
CONTAINERS IN THE BATH CAN HELP  
SUPPORT GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

**MOVEMENT SONGS –**  
SINGING MOVEMENT SONGS LIKE "THE  
HOKEY COKEY" OR "IF YOU'RE HAPPY AND  
YOU KNOW IT" CAN HELP SUPPORT GROSS  
MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

**GAMES –** PLAYING GAMES LIKE TWISTER  
OR SIMON SAYS CAN HELP SUPPORT  
GROSS MOTOR DEVELOPMENT.

**IMPROVE SOCIAL SKILLS: GROSS  
MOTOR SKILLS GIVE CHILDREN  
OPPORTUNITIES TO SOCIALIZE IN PLAY.**

**IMPROVE ATTENTION SPAN: ACTIVE  
PLAY CAN HELP IMPROVE ATTENTION  
SPAN AND PROBLEM-SOLVING SKILLS.**



**EXAMPLES OF GROSS MOTOR  
SKILLS INCLUDE:**

**RUNNING  
CRAWLING  
SWIMMING  
HOPPING  
LEAPING  
STANDING  
WALKING  
SITTING UPRIGHT WITHOUT A BACK  
SUPPORT  
CHEWING  
TWISTING YOUR TORSO**

## WHAT ARE GROSS MOTOR SKILLS?

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS ARE THE SKILLS THAT CHILDREN DEVELOP TO USE THEIR WHOLE BODIES TO MOVE AROUND, AND ARE IMPORTANT FOR PHYSICAL HEALTH, INDEPENDENCE, AND MOBILITY.

SOME EXAMPLES OF GROSS MOTOR SKILLS INCLUDE WALKING, RUNNING, JUMPING, CLIMBING, SITTING UPRIGHT, THROWING, KICKING, AND LIFTING.

### The Difference Between Fine and Gross Motor Skills

GROSS MOTOR REFERS TO THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE LARGE MUSCLES OF THE BODY WHICH ENABLE A CHILD TO WALK, CLIMB, BALANCE, ETC.

FINE MOTOR REFERS TO SMALL MUSCLE DEVELOPMENT WHICH ENABLES A CHILD TO HOLD A PENCIL OR BUTTON A SHIRT.

IT INCLUDES EYE-HAND COORDINATION, EYE-FINGER COORDINATION, FINGER STRENGTH AND CONTROL, AS WELL AS THE DEVELOPMENT OF MUSCLES SUCH AS THE TOES, TONGUE AND EYES.



MOTOR SKILLS DEVELOP FROM THE HEAD DOWNWARDS, AND FROM THE BODY OUTWARDS (TO THE LIMBS). THEREAFTER, THE SMALL MUSCLES STRENGTHEN.

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS, THEREFORE, DEVELOP BEFORE FINE MOTOR SKILLS.

THIS CAN BE SEEN IN PRESCHOOL CHILDREN WHO ARE SKILLED AT CLIMBING, RUNNING AND WALKING BUT ARE STILL LEARNING TO HOLD A PENCIL OR CONTROL A PAIR OF SCISSORS.

### WHY ARE GROSS MOTOR SKILLS IMPORTANT?

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT FOR CHILD DEVELOPMENT BECAUSE THEY HELP CHILDREN:

DEVELOP COORDINATION: CHILDREN LEARN TO COORDINATE AND CONTROL THEIR BODIES THROUGH GROSS MOTOR SKILLS.



THIS INCLUDES LEARNING HOW TO MOVE SMOOTHLY AND EFFICIENTLY FROM ONE POSITION TO ANOTHER.

BUILD CONFIDENCE: CHILDREN BECOME MORE CONFIDENT AND AGILE AS THEY DEVELOP THEIR GROSS MOTOR SKILLS. THIS CONFIDENCE HELPS THEM EXPLORE THE WORLD AROUND THEM MORE FREELY.

LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR FINE MOTOR SKILLS: GROSS MOTOR SKILLS ARE THE BASIS FOR FINE MOTOR SKILLS, SUCH AS PINCHING OR GRASPING.

IMPROVE OVERALL HEALTH: GROSS MOTOR SKILLS ARE IMPORTANT FOR OVERALL PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT, POSTURE, AND BALANCE.

