

CORE STABILITY ACTIVITIES

To have good control of movement, we need to be able to stabilise our joints. Poor core stability means not being able to balance the muscles in our trunks, around our hips, and around our shoulders.

Prone Activities

The following activities will help to improve your child's ability to use the muscles that are involved in straightening the trunk.

Sea Lion

Ask your child lie on their stomach with legs straight and arms bent at right angles to the body on either side. Slowly ask them to lift their head until it is level with their back (only 4-5 inches off the ground). The head should not be tilted back, if necessary an adult can place a hand at the top of their spine to let them 'feel' where the correct level is. Hold for x 3 building up to x 5; then slowly let the head down to the starting point. Repeat x 1 building up to x 5.



Nosey Sea Lion

Starting position as for the sea lion. Have your child raise their head to the level of the back; then push up with the arms until resting on the forearms. Hold this position for 3 – 5 seconds. Slowly lower the body to the ground keeping the head in line with the back. Repeat x 1 building up to 5 times.

Seal Push-Ups

Have your child lie on their tummy propping on their forearms. Then have them push up onto straight arms and hold this for a count of 5 before slowly lowering back down onto tummy and then repeat. As progress is noted increase the number of repetitions and the length of time the position is held for.

Superman

Have your child lie on their tummy with their arms in front of them and then simultaneously raise their head, arms and legs off the ground. Legs should be kept straight. Encourage your child by saying you're flying like superman". Start with 5 seconds and work your way up to 20 seconds as your child's strength increases.



Football Roll

Have your child lie on their tummy propping on their forearms. Place a football between their hands, ask your child to place both hands onto the ball and roll it away from their body (keeping hands/arms in contact with the ball), then roll it back to starting point. Repeat this 5 times. Then ask your child to do the same activity first with their right hand then with their left. As your child's stamina increases increase the number of repetitions.

Supine Activities

The following activities will help to strengthen your child's muscles at the front of the body.

Chin Raises

Have your child lie on their back. Ask them to lift their head so the chin touches the chest. Hold for a count of 3 and slowly bring head back to the floor, gradually build up to 5 repetitions.

The Egg

Have your child lie on their back, curl head and legs up into a ball, with arms crossed in front of chest. Start with 5 seconds and work your way up to 20 seconds as your child's strength improves. When your child's skills improve they can pretend to be a 'jellybean' and can rock from side to side and back and forwards.



Breaking the Egg

Ask your child to assume the supine flexion position (as above) while you try and pull them apart by putting gentle pressure on their forehead and above their knees.

Back Catch

Have your child lie on the floor with 2 pillows under their head and shoulders, knees should be bent up. Throw a ball to your child encouraging them to lift their head slightly off the pillows to catch the ball then place their head back down. When they are ready encourage them to raise their head again to throw the ball back to you. Try 5 catches and as progress is noted increase the number of throws/catches to gradually improve your scores.

Weight-bearing Activities

These activities aim to improve the strength in your child's hip and shoulder muscles.

Animal walks

Crab

Have your child sit on their bottom, with knees bent, feet flat on the floor, and hands flat on the floor beside or slightly behind their bottom. Ask them to lift their bottom off the floor, taking their weight through their hands and feet. Walk forwards, backwards and sideways.



Crab football

Using the crab position (described above) try to kick a football between goalposts – this can be played individually, in pairs or in a small group.

Frog

Ask your child to bend their knees and crouch down, resting their hands on the floor in front of them, with their elbows on the inside of their knees. Then they stretch their arms out in front of them, and lean through their hands (keeping elbows straight) as they hop their feet forward. Remember, their legs stay outside of their arms.



Balancing Dog

Have our child start on all fours. Ask them to raise one arm out in front of them and then raise the opposite leg out behind them. Legs should be straight. Hold arm and leg up for a count of 5 before returning to start position and change to raising the other arm/leg. To increase the difficulty increase the length of time the position is held for.



Static cycling

Get your child to lie on their back with hips and knees bent at right angles, and move their legs to pedal an imaginary bike. See how many times they can do this before needing to take a break – keep a record, and aim to increase either the time, or the number of cycles.

Floor push ups

When your child has mastered wall push ups they can move onto floor push ups. It is easier to do push ups in four point kneeling to start with and then to progress to straight legs. Make sure your child pushes up with straight arms and keeps their trunk straight.

Arm circles

Have your child hold their arms out to the side. Make 10 small circles from the shoulder in a forward direction. Then make 10 small circles in a backward direction.

Half Kneeling Games

Have your child kneel on the floor in a high position without their bottom touching their feet. Then ask your child to bring 1 leg forward in front of them into a half kneel position. Once in this position you can throw a ball to each other, start by throwing a ball straight to each other then move onto throwing the ball slightly to the side. Complete 10 throws & change legs.



Wheelbarrow walks

Support your child's legs above the knee joint. Ensure your child's hands face forward and that they walk with straight arms. If your child finds this difficult to start with, try supporting then near their hip joints and progress downwards to above the knee.

Helper hold just below hips or above knees depending on child's ability



Wall push ups

Get your child to place their body at 45 degree angle to the wall, with shoulders directly in front of elbows and wrists, and elbows straight. The child bends at elbows keeping back straight to complete a push up. Try to complete 10 wall push ups.



Table push up's

Your child stands behind a table, weight-bearing through straight arms with flat open palms and outstretched fingers on the table. While keeping arms straight, your child rocks forwards and backwards and from side to side. Then they can bend their elbows to do a push up.