

MOVE LAUGH GROW – IN THE GARDEN

During our workshops we talk about how these 5 topics are incredibly important in your child's development. You can find out more about this at

www.sportbop.co.nz/movelaughgrow

Below are some suggestions of fun garden activities that we can do with our young ones that promote healthy development. Your own yard is brimming with opportunities to be active and develop fundamental movement skills.

- Water play
- Blowing bubbles
- Collecting piles of leaves
- Newly mown grass
- Looking for birds' nests
- Treasure hunts
- Kicking a ball
- Playing in the sand pit.

We run a workshop called Move laugh Grow which is based around 5 main topics.

Floor time | Crawling | Balance | Vision | Language

Floor time:

Now is a fantastic time for adventures and outdoor fun in our own yards. Why not go on an 'adventure' and see what nature can provide for your kids to collect along the way?

Once they have collected their treasures, head to a space where you can sit together and share what you have found. Pass things around to touch and feel. Talk about what they are, how they feel etc.

Maybe you could see what creative pictures you could make with the treasures they have collected?



Floor Time
Benefits include

- * Squirming, rolling, sitting and crawling are vital for developing our brain and body
- * Awake tummy time strengthens muscles needed for moving and exploring; it encourages upper body strength and leads to crawling
- * Baby's pincer grip is developed as babies reach and stretch
- * Rolling helps infants develop balance, strength and their vision
- * Babies need to be able to do these movements freely on the floor
- * All children benefit from doing these movements

Find out more
Website: sportbop.co.nz/movelaughgrow
Email: earlychildhood@sportbop.co.nz



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Crawling:

What better time to use up some of that pent up energy by getting down and doing some crawling?

Whether your kids are 12 months, 4 years, or older, crawling is a fabulous cross-pattern activity that is great for brain and physical development.

How about a game of crawling balloon soccer on the grass or in your lounge? No touching the balloon with your hands or feet, just knees, shoulders, elbows etc. Set up the goals and go for gold! No team, no problem! Soft toys to block the way would do the trick nicely.

If that's a bit 'out there' for you then try crawling around on the grass looking for four leaf clovers or worms. Pretend to be wild animals, play follow the leader or make chair tunnels and forts.

Balance

Benefits include

- * Children's balance or Vestibular Systems develop before birth until adulthood
- * Our Vestibular System is stimulated by movements like spinning slowly, rocking and rolling
- * Balance sense organs are located in your inner ear; cilia (tiny hairs) move, relaying constant positioning to the rest of the body
- * Good balance is supported by strong back and tummy muscles
- * Vision and muscular development are enhanced by vestibular movements
- * Fidgety children can have poorly developed Vestibular Systems
- * Language and emotional control is enhanced by vestibular movement

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Balance

Now is the time to have some fun! Who can roll (pencil style) from one end of the backyard to the other, or from the couch to your front door? Rolling is fantastic for your vestibular system (balance). After you have all rolled along the floor, see if there is a line you can walk along without falling off. This line can be:

- A painted one
- Chalk
- Masking tape
- Rope

It could even be the edge of a garden bed or some wooden planks - it all helps with developing balance and your children's vestibular system.

Crawling

Benefits include

- * Helps develop the brain; it gets the two sides of the brain talking to each other
- * Helps breakdown the midline; the imaginary line that separates the left side of the body from right
- * It's the first time children use opposite arm, leg movements
- * Creates pathways in the brain that assist with cognitive processes like reading and writing
- * Mobility, upper body strength and balance are all helped by crawling
- * Develops independence, exploration and understanding of body size
- * Crawling helps develop vision and hand-eye coordination
- * An average baby spends approximately 400 hours crawling

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Language

Talk. That's what our little ones have been doing whilst trapped inside, so let's get that talking outside and have some fabulous language developing experiences with nature.

"Wow, look at this yellow flower that is coming up in the garden"

"I love the way you are helping pull out the weeds from our garden James, thank you"

"Let's count how many birds we see"

The more language children hear alongside the activities they are experiencing then the better they build their understanding. Talk with the child about the texture of objects using descriptive words (e.g. rough, smooth, heavy, light etc). Also talk about colours, smells, or the sounds they can hear outside as it is encouraging them to use their senses.

How about setting up a game with your clothes peg? Spread them around the backyard and get your little one to collect them all up and place them into groups by colour. Line up the pegs to make letters.

Vision

Such a fun thing to develop and so easy to do.

Let's look out the windows or head into our yards and watch the leaves blowing in the wind, birds flying in the sky and clouds that turn into bears, fish and rocket ships.

Blowing bubbles to chase is always a winner, too.

Simply playing with balls, balloons and other things that our children track with their eyes are also great activities.

Why not pop on our favourite music and dance around with ribbons or scarves?

Language

Benefits include

- * The more we talk with children, the more their language is enhanced, the more they will understand
- * The optimum learning time for language is in the first 3 years of life
- * Children who have extensive experience of being talked to before and after birth have an advantage over those who don't
- * Language acquisition is partially instinctive and partly learned as children interact with people and their environment
- * Children learn receptive language (understanding what is said) before they learn expressive language (speaking)
- * Many children simply parrot when they first learn to talk; only once they have experienced language with the item, is full understanding made

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Vision

Benefits include

- * The greatest development of eyes takes place in the first year of life
- * Our eyes work together but see images separately. It's important to develop control so similar images are sent to the brain
- * Good eye muscle control keeps the eyes straight during movement
- * When our eyes are controlled without effort, our attention is available for visual concentration like reading or participating in games
- * To read, a child's eyes need to be able to move together across the page; this is called eye tracking
- * There is a difference between sight and vision; sight is the ability to see clearly while vision is understanding what is seen

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