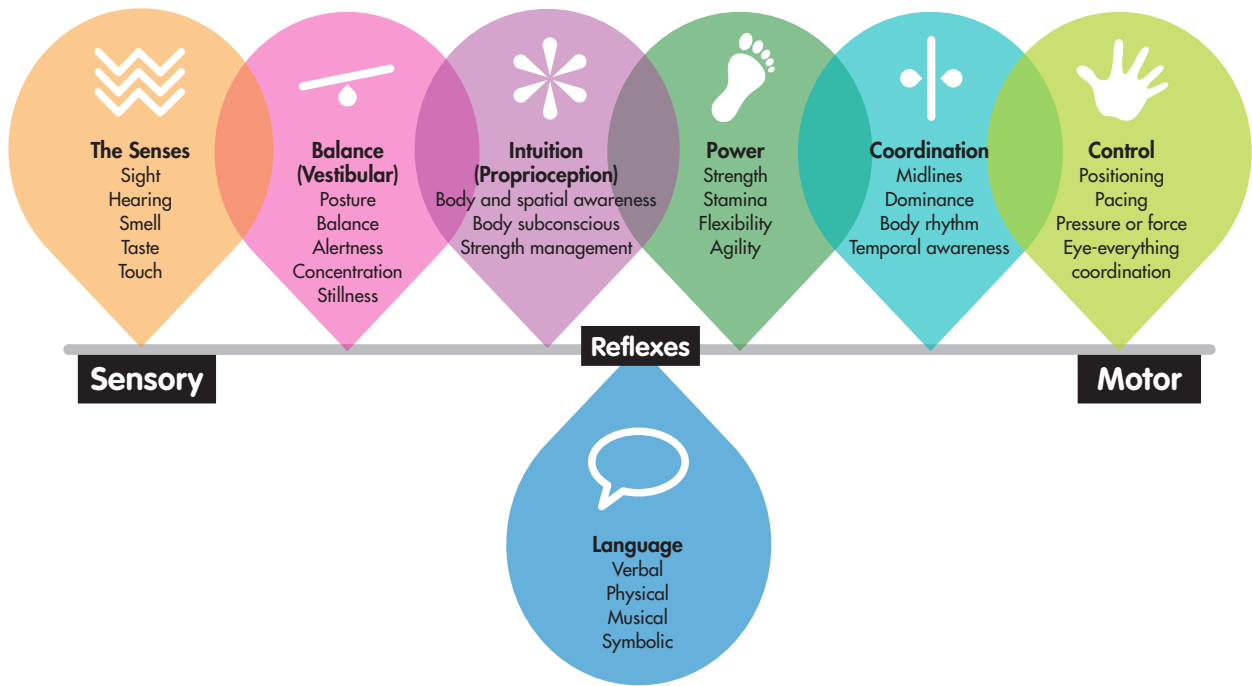



# The Kinetic Scale




# The Kinetic Scale: Move-to-Learn Activities Guide



**The Senses**  
Sight  
Hearing  
Smell  
Taste  
Touch

Sights  
Sounds  
Smells  
Tastes  
Textures  
Massage  
Eye fitness  
Object permanence  
Sorting  
Sequencing  
Patterning

Music and movement



**Balance (Vestibular)**  
Posture  
Balance  
Alertness  
Concentration  
Stillness

Rolling  
Spinning  
Swinging  
Rocking  
Balancing  
Turning upside down



**Intuition (Proprioception)**  
Body and spatial awareness  
Body subconscious  
Strength management

Tunneling  
Inclines  
Body awareness  
Pushing and pulling  
Lifting and carrying




**Power**  
Strength  
Stamina  
Flexibility  
Agility

Crawling  
Walking  
Running  
Jumping  
Hopping  
Skipping  
Climbing  
Tumbling  
Stretching  
Wheels play




**Coordination**  
Midlines  
Dominance  
Body rhythm  
Temporal awareness

Crawling  
Hopping  
Climbing  
Marching  
Skipping  
Bicycling  
Ball play  
Stepping-stones



**Control**  
Positioning  
Pacing  
Pressure or force  
Eye-everything coordination

Locomotion  
Stability  
Manipulative play  
Targeting  
Fine motor activities  
Playground games



# The Movement Can-Do Guide



















## On the Move

### Play by Play

### Watch Me Grow

## In the Know

### Automating skills while building confidence to try more

<p><b>Snugglers</b> Birth to rolling over Approximate age: 0-6 months</p> 	<p>Primitive reflexes in place Head control (first attempts) Enjoys touch, massage, and skin-to-skin care</p>	
<p><b>Squigglers</b> Rocking, crawling, and sitting Approximate age: 6-14 months</p> 	<p>Grasping Mouthing (mimicking mouth movements) Commando crawling (beginning to explore the floor)</p>	
<p><b>Scampers</b> Pulling up to walking Approximate age: 9-24 months</p> 	<p>Learning navigation (small spaces) Pulling up to standing (aided) Cruising Bobbing up and down (aided)</p>	
<p><b>Stompers</b> Running and jumping Approximate age: 20 months-3½ years</p> 	<p>Running Bobbing up and down (independently)</p>	
<p><b>Scooters</b> Hopping and climbing Approximate age: 3-4 years</p> 	<p>Early signs of handedness Balancing on one foot (dominant hand and foot awakening)</p>	
<p><b>Skedaddlers</b> Skipping, leaping, cooperative games, and dance Approximate age: 4 years and older</p> 	<p>Leaping (from standing) Cross-walking (crossing one foot over the other)</p>	
<p>Hand and foot recognition starts Hip tips (attempting to roll) Discovery through senses emerging (especially mouth)</p>	<p>Fascinated by faces (studies facial expressions) Rolling independently Pushing up (from tummy) Postural reflexes emerging (primitive reflexes abating)</p>	
<p>Up on all fours Rocking Releasing grasp (voluntarily) Changing hands</p>	<p>Crawling Pincer grip Pushing into sitting position</p>	
<p>Standing independently Climbing on furniture or stairs</p>	<p>Eye-hand coordination emerging (self-feeding) Toddling and walking</p>	
<p>Jumping (on two feet) Upper body strength (beginning to hold own weight)</p>	<p>Jumping (forward or backward) Manipulative skills (using objects to affect other things) Temporal awareness emerging (attempts to catch, bat, or kick moving ball)</p>	
<p>Marching Hopping on one foot Coordinated climbing</p>	<p>Galloping Midlines sharpening Dominant hand and foot developing</p>	
<p>Leaping (from running) Skipping (no rope)</p>	<p>Automated, coordinated movement such as dance, skipping rope, and playground games</p>	

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## Listening Mice

### Ear Development

Whenever you want children to listen closely, sing the “Listening Mice” song (page 190).

#### EQUIPMENT

- Blanket
- Rattle toys
- Music
- Quest Chests (see page 190)
- Sticks, leaves, pinecones, and other natural materials
- *Optional:* Various items for sound cues (bell, whistle, buzzer)
- Metal objects (such as spoons or coins)
- Blindfold

#### KEY BENEFITS

- Sound identification and discrimination
- Auditory figure ground (ability to tune in and tune out sounds)
- Ear tracking
- Auditory sequencing
- Cooperation

#### LANGUAGE FOCUS

toward

#### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

- **Babies:** Do not let babies or toddlers handle small objects such as stones, sticks, coins, or other objects that may be easily put into their mouths or swallowed. Supervise closely whenever small objects are used.



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- **Older children:** Ensure natural materials (sticks, pinecones, and so forth) are well rounded and not too sharp.
- **All children:** Do not blindfold children or cover their eyes if they are not comfortable with this. Supervise and support activities when children close their eyes or are blindfolded. Be sure the room is clear of obstacles when children are blindfolded.

#### TEACHING GEMS

Unlike visual stimulation, we don't always think about our auditory landscape as a learning experience. Even incidental exposure to sound helps develop auditory processing skills, which will one day play a major role in children's verbal and written skills. Create a sound-rich environment. Talk a lot. Narrate everything. And don't forget to sing, too!

### ON THE MOVE



#### Snugglers

**SOUND AWARENESS.** Giving baby different experiences with the sound of your voice starts to build her understanding of sound differentiation.

**THESE ARE YOUR EARS.** Softly touch the contours of baby's ears while talking and singing. Watch for baby's reaction. Gently blow on her ears. Encourage her to touch her ears and yours. Talk about what you hear. (D 5 min.)

### WATCH ME GROW

**SOUND GOES UP AND DOWN.** Lay baby on her back and gently massage her from top to toe. As you move down baby's body, lower the pitch of your voice. Next, massage up her body, raising the pitch of your voice as you go. Repeat with baby lying on her tummy. (D 2–3 min.)

### IN THE KNOW



**FOLLOW THAT SOUND!** Lay baby down on a blanket on the floor. Talk, sing, or make a sound as you move around the room, encouraging her to look toward the sound. Be sure to let her find you and see the sound coming from you. (D 2–3 min.)



#### Squigglers

**SOUND AND MOVEMENT.** Exploring sounds by using the body stimulates multiple senses while building sound discrimination and listening skills.

**EAR-A-BOO.** Sing a song to the child. At different intervals, gently cover the child's ears to muffle what she hears. This will give her the sense that sound continues even when she can't hear it clearly. Repeat several times so she hears the difference in volume throughout the song. (D 1–2 min.)

**SHAKE! SHAKE! SHAKE!** Give the child 1 or 2 rattle toys and assist her to shake them in different ways: high, low, to the front, out to the side, and so forth. Turn on music and shake to the beat! (D 2–5 min.)



**SOUND AND SEEK.** Once baby is up and crawling around, duck out of sight and call to her to encourage her to head toward the sound of your voice. If baby is having difficulty locating your voice, reveal yourself several times until she grasps the game. Repeat by hiding in a new spot for baby to find you. (D 2–5 min.)



## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Scampers

**SOUND DYNAMICS.** Understanding that sound varies in volume and intensity is the beginning of a child's understanding of how to modulate her own sound-making efforts.



**QUEST CHEST: SOUNDS.** Fill your Quest Chest with things that make sounds. Encourage the child to listen to the sounds, identifying the qualities of the sounds for her. For instance, "That sound is loud" or "That sound is high." Once she's explored each sound individually, assist her to create several sounds at once. (D 2–5 min.)

**WHAT DOES A STICK SOUND LIKE?** Take a walk outdoors and find a stick. Explore all the sounds the stick can make on the ground, on tree bark, and so on. Repeat with different objects, such as leaves or pinecones, listening closely for the differences. (D 5–10 min.)

**QUIET AND LOUD.** Ask the child to show you what a quiet mouse does. Talk in whispers. Tiptoe. Be very, very quiet. Then ask what a noisy cat does when it comes toward you. Shout loud. Stomp your feet! Meow! Meow! Be very, very loud! (D 2–5 min.)



### Stompers

**LISTENING MEANS HEARING.** As children develop mastery over their soundscape, learning to focus on specific sounds (known as auditory figure ground) is the next step.



**SOUND SAFARI.** Take a sound safari outdoors, listening for different natural and human-made sounds. "Can you hear the sparrow? Can you sound like a sparrow? Where is the sparrow? Let's walk toward it. Listen. It's getting louder!" (D 10–15 min.)

**SOUND REBOUND.** Present the child with a sound (such as a bell ring or whistle). Each time she hears that sound, have her make a sound back by moving (for example, by clapping or stomping). Once she gets the idea, introduce a second "sound rebound." (D 2–3 min.)

**LISTENING MICE.** Give the child 1 or 2 sounds to make by moving (such as clapping or stomping). Then sing the "Listening Mice" song, making the sounds throughout the song. ("Listening mice." Stomp. "Listening mice." Clap. "Turn on your ears." Stomp.) With a group, give different children different movement sounds to create a party-sized sound game! (R 2–3 times)



### Scooters

**UNDERSTANDING COMPLEXITIES IN SOUND** underpins important classroom and life skills such as recognizing the inflections in speech that aid in understanding other people's meaning.



**PINDROPS.** Listening mice are so quiet they can hear a pin drop! Have the child close her eyes. Drop a spoon on the floor at different spots around the room. Have the child point toward the sound. Repeat at different distances and with different objects, making softer and softer sounds, until the child can hear a pin drop! (R 2–3 times)

**WHO'S GOT THE CHEESE?** Form a circle and assign each child a sound to make. Ask for 3 volunteers to wear blindfolds and play the mice in the middle. Give 1 child in the circle a beanbag to represent the cheese. The child holding the cheese makes a funny noise of her choice while the mice in the middle listen for the sound and point to it. Pass the cheese to another child in the circle and continue the play. (D 3–5 min.)

**HIDE AND HEAR.** Present a silly sound (such as quacking like a duck) and have all the children repeat it. Select 3 children to play the noisy mice. Have the mice hide while the others shut their eyes. Then the others go and find the noisy mice by moving toward the sounds they hear. For added challenge, repeat the game with different sounds for each of the mice, and have children find the sounds in sequence. (R 3–5 times)



### Skedaddlers

**SOUND IN CONTEXT** is the way we hear everything, so encouraging children's hearing skills in a noisy environment is real-life practice for building good listeners.



**NOISY BARNYARD.** Assign animal sounds to children, making sure 2 or more children each have the same sound. Have them make their sounds while moving around the room looking for their matching sounds. Have them try moving like the animal, too! (D 2+ min.)

**SOUND CIRCLES.** Select 3 children to be mice; assign each of the other children a barnyard sound. Barnyard animals stand in a circle; the mice stand in the center with their eyes covered (or blindfolded). The barnyard animals make their sounds all at the same time. Call out different sounds for the mice to point to. "Where's the rooster?" "Can you find the cow?" (D 3–5 min.)

**SOUNDS-GO-ROUND.** Repeat "Sound Circles," only this time the barnyard is moving, circling left then right. Call out different sounds for the mice to find. Next, have the barnyard children move like their animal while making the sound. Change the pace from slow to fast. Change the volume from loud to quiet. (D 5–7 min.)

# Hello, Octopo

## Balance and Positioning: Meeting Gravity in New Ways

Say hello to Octopo,  
A friend of smiles and charm.  
When Octopo calls out, "Hello,"  
He waves with all eight arms!

With all those arms and legs going every which way, it's no wonder Octopo is a little bit clumsy. Let's see if we can help Octopo keep his balance.

### EQUIPMENT

- Laundry basket
- Blanket
- Spinning chair, such as an office chair
- Small toys
- Bucket
- Scoop
- Basket
- Pillows
- Drawing implements
- Cardstock
- Towel or sheet

### KEY BENEFITS

- Teamwork
- Strong posture
- Alertness and concentration

### LANGUAGE FOCUS

stop, go, around

### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

- Ensure that an adult is lifting the child only slightly off the ground. Slow spinning should be carried out at 1 revolution per 8 seconds.
- Whenever a child is upside down, maintain personal supervision at all times.



### TEACHING GEMS

- Orientation matters, so throughout the day give children opportunities to do routine activities from different perspectives. For instance, they can draw pictures while lying on their backs or listen to a story while lying upside down.
- Balance and orientation are inseparable forces that underpin virtually everything we do. Key off of these and other balance activities in this section to provide small bites of balance activity throughout the day.
- When pairing up children for Smart Steps active movement activities, keep in mind their physical size and build and current level of capabilities, so that they are evenly matched.

SARAH WHITING

## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW

### Snugglers



**ORIENTATION.** From the very start, moving in our 3-dimensional world gives the brain many different orientations to better develop a well-rounded sense of balance.



**GENTLE WAVES.** Line a laundry basket with a soft snuggly blanket. Place baby in the basket on his back. Very gently tip the basket from side to side. Make sure you keep eye contact at all times. (D 1–2 min.)

**OCTOSPIN.** Sit on an office chair and hold baby vertically, close to your chest. Gently stretch her arms and legs out, like in the spread-eagle position. Support her head and back. Slowly spin to the right, then to the left. (R 2–3 times) Repeat with baby facing away from you.

**OCTOCLAP.** Lay baby on her back. Gently stretch her arms out to her sides, then bring them back to center. *Clap!* Next, gently bring both arms to the right. *Clap!* And then to the left. *Clap!* Repeat with the feet. When the game is done, support or assist baby to roll over on her tummy. (D 2–3 min.)

## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Squigglers

**VERTICAL BALANCE.** As baby works toward independent, vertical orientation, she's developing balance that will keep her upright.



**UP AND AT 'EM, OCTOPO!** Lay baby on her back. Fully support her under her back and neck and lift her parallel to the floor. In a very slow and gentle swinging motion, glide her up to a vertical position, hold for a few seconds, then bring her back down between your legs. Return baby to the floor. Rest and repeat, this time starting her on her tummy so she's looking away from you during the ride. (R 2–3 times)

**OCTO-CLOCK:** Sit down and hold baby facing you. Very slowly, rotate her 360 degrees like the hands of a clock from 12:00 to 3:00, 6:00, 9:00, and back to 12:00. Repeat very slowly, going the other way. (R 1–2 times).

**FLYING OCTOPO.** Hold the child in the flying position and slowly lower her down toward some toys scattered on the floor. Encourage her to reach for any toy. When she grabs hold of one, lift her back and admire her prize! Repeat in an upside-down flying position. *Note:* As the child learns how the game is played, encourage her to drop the toy back on the floor or into a basket. (D 1–2 min.)



### Scampers

**ROLLING. SPINNING. UPSIDE-DOWNING.** These 3 movements pay big dividends to children's balance at any stage of development.



**SPINNING OCTOPO.** Hold the child under the arms securely facing you. Lift her up and spin her slowly around once. Stop and repeat, going the other way. As she gains confidence, spin a little longer in each direction. To end the game, spin the child around one more time fast. *Whee!* (D 1–2 min.)

**OCTOROLL.** Lay the child on her back. Place a favorite toy to her right just out of reach. At the same time, tilt her legs and hips to the left to encourage her to look in 1 direction while moving her body in the other. Encourage or assist the child to roll left, then go find her toy. Repeat in the other direction. (D 2–3 min.)

**SCOOP IT UP!** Give the child a bucket or scoop and hold her in the flying position. Slowly lower her down toward some small toys scattered on the floor. Encourage her to scoop up as many toys as she can. Lift her back and admire her prize! Repeat in an upside-down flying position. *Note:* As the child gains confidence, encourage her to drop the toys into a basket or back down on the floor. (D 1–2 min.)



### Stompers

**OFF BALANCE.** Learning balance means conquering off-balance moments.



**HELLO, OCTOPO.** Get down on the floor with the child. Have her get on all fours. Tap 1 hand and have her wave while balancing on her other hand and knees. Return to all fours. Now tap the other hand. Return to all fours. Continue the game, lifting 1 arm or 1 leg off the ground at a time. (D 2–3 min.)

**DOUBLE OCTOPO.** Repeat the "Hello, Octopo" game. Next, tap 2 limbs at once and have the child lift them both, balancing on the other 2. For instance, tap the right hand and left foot. Then tap the left hand and left foot. Tap both hands or both feet. (D 3–5 min.) For added challenge, tap both hands and 1 foot (for a 1-legged kneel).

**UPSIDE-DOWN OCTOPO.** Have the child stand, bend over to put her hands on the floor, and look between her legs. Now play "Hello, Octopo" and "Double Octopo" again, only this time upside down. (D 2–3 min.)

## ON THE MOVE



### Scooters

**POSTURE CONTROL.** Being able to adopt and hold unusual positions demonstrates good balance, body control, and a high level of concentration.

**GONE FISHIN', OCTOPO.** Scatter toys on the floor. Have the child lie down and explain you're going to go fishing upside down. Lift her around or above the thighs. Support her with your body. Have her pick up the toys and put them in a bucket. Then have her form her fingers into hooks to try to hook the toys. (D 2–3 min.)

**SURFING OCTOPO.** Have children lie on their tummies and lift their arms and legs in the air (parachute position). Have them wave their arms and legs like Octopo. When you call out, "Swim," have them roll in one direction until you call out, "Stop." When they stop, have them return to the parachute position and wave some more. For added challenge, place pillows on the floor for children to roll over. (D 3–5 min.)

## IN THE KNOW



**MEMORY OCTOPO.** Have or help the children draw pictures on cardstock of hands and feet creating 4 cards total—2 hands and 2 feet. Now play a game of "Hello, Octopo," only this time using the cards and calling out, "Hand," or "Foot." Next, create a short sequence to follow, such as: "Wave your hand." "Now wave your hand and wave your foot." "Wave your hand, your foot, and your other foot." (D 3–5 min.)



### Skedaddlers

**COMPLEX COORDINATED MOVEMENTS** challenge the brain to maintain its sense of balance no matter which end is up!

**WAVE AROUND, OCTOPO.** Have 2 children stand back to back and lock arms. Now have them turn round in a circle, waving their arms like Octopo. Be sure to have them turn in both directions. (D 1–2 min.)

**THE TANGLED TANGO.** Repeat "Wave Around, Octopo." Then, while still with their arms locked, have the children lean back on each other and slide to a sitting position on the floor. Once seated, have them turn themselves in a circle, waving all 8 arms and legs at once! Be sure to turn in both directions. When done, have them lean back on each other and return to a standing position. (D 2–3 min.)



**HANGING OUT WITH OCTOPO.** With 8 arms at the ready, Octopo loves to hang out! Assist and support the child to hook her arms and legs over a straight bar and hang for 10 seconds. (R 2–3 times)





## Game Day

### Understanding Boundaries

The biggest day of all is Game Day, when everyone comes out to play their favorite games! What are your favorite games to play? See page 191 for lyrics to “Ring Around the Bull’s-Eye,” the song for this activity sequence.

#### EQUIPMENT

- Low obstacle (rolled-up towel or small pillow)
- Different-textured surfaces (newspaper, bubble wrap, towels, furry fabrics)
- Chairs
- *Optional:* blanket
- Stairs
- Toys
- Chalk or tape
- Blanket, sheet, or parachute
- Hoops
- Rope

#### KEY BENEFITS

- Spatial awareness
- Body awareness
- Temporal awareness
- Following rules
- Teamwork

#### LANGUAGE FOCUS

around, inside, outside

#### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

- When climbing stairs, always stay behind the child and support him as needed. *Never* leave a child unattended on or near stairs.



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- When teaching a child to climb down stairs, always prompt and assist him to go down backward. When children are young, their heads are heavier than the rest of their body, so doing it this way is safer.

#### TEACHING GEMS

To play “Freeze Tag”: Define the boundaries for the game and select 1 player to be “It.” “It” will chase the other players. Other players run, trying to avoid being tagged. When “It” tags you, you have to freeze in place until 1 of 2 things happens: (1) you are “thawed out” by another player crawling through your legs or (2) all the players are frozen, the game ends, and a new person is chosen to be “It.”

### ON THE MOVE

### WATCH ME GROW

### IN THE KNOW



#### Snugglers

**MY FIRST BOUNDARIES.** A child’s understanding of the boundaries of space begins with understanding the boundaries of his body.



**FACIAL FEATURES.** Gently guide baby’s hands around the contours of your face. Maintain eye contact and talk about the features he’s touching. Next, guide his hands to touch his own face. Talk about his forehead, cheeks, chin, mouth, nose, and so forth. (D 1–2 min.)

**THE ENDS OF ME.** Slowly massage baby’s hands 1 at a time, beginning at the wrists, palms, and backs of the hands. Massage each finger separately, slowly working down to the fingertip. Tap or kiss each finger when you get to the end. Repeat with the feet and toes. (D 2–3 min.)

**BOUNCING OFF THE WALLS.** Take baby’s socks off and hold him facing away from you, holding his feet out in front of you. Tour the room, putting baby’s feet on different surfaces such as the walls, furniture, pillows, and rugs. When you feel him push away, step back as though you’re bouncing off the surface. (D 2–3 min.)

## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Squigglers

**MOVING FREELY.** With the onset of independent movement, babies naturally encounter boundaries. With boundaries come the beginnings of strategizing and problem solving.

**FREE-RANGE FLOOR PLAY.** Clear the floor of as many obstacles as you can to give baby wide-open spaces to move and explore. Start by sitting within reach of him. Gradually move yourself back a few feet at a time to entice him to come to you. Keeping a watchful eye, step out of sight, and see what he does on his own. (D 10–20 min.)

**SOMETHING'S IN MY WAY!** During “Free-Range Floor Play,” introduce an obstacle between the 2 of you such as a rolled-up towel or small pillow. Entice baby to commando-crawl (belly-crawl) over the obstacle to get to you. Assist and support as needed. (D 10–20 min.)



**FLOOR PLANS.** Cover the entire floor with different-textured mats such as newspaper, bubble wrap, towels, and furry fabrics. Put baby down on all fours and explore the textures together. Step back a bit and encourage him to crawl to you. Reassure him if he hesitates to cross from one texture to the next. (D 10–20 min.)



### Scampers

**NAVIGATING BOUNDARIES.** With independent movement comes an increased understanding of space and objects. **Note:** Never leave a child unattended on or near stairs.

**BACK UP THE BUS.** Line up table chairs in a row. If you'd like, cover them with a blanket to create a tunnel. Entice the child through the chairs, greeting him as he gets to the exit at the other end. Next, block the exit, encouraging him to crawl backward. (D 3–5 min.)

**CLIMBING UP.** Children often learn to climb *before* they can walk. When a child shows interest (pulling himself up and lifting his leg in an attempt to climb), introduce the stairs. Stand behind him for physical and moral support. Watch him work out how to lift his knee up on the first step and bring the rest of his body up. Support him around the waist for safety, but do not do the work for him. Cheer his attempts. Entice him to climb up farther by putting toys on next steps. (R 2–3 times each session.)

**CLIMBING DOWN.** Once the child begins climbing with ease, it's critical to train him how to get down safely. And that means climbing down *backward!* (Climbing down backward keeps the head above the body for balance.) For this, put him on the second step. Holding him securely under the chest, guide 1 knee down to the first step, then assist him to bring his other knee down. Repeat until he's back on the floor. (R 2–3 times each session)



### Stompers

**MODIFYING MOVEMENT.** Impeding a child's movements with boundaries challenges him to move and control his body in new and different ways.

**ON TRACK.** With chalk or tape, make a long line on the floor or outdoor surface. Have the child follow the track, keeping 1 foot on the line at all times. Say, “Toot!” to go forward and, “Toot toot!” to go backward. For a group of children, have them keep 1 hand on the shoulder of the child in front of them. (D 2–3 min.)

**OFF TRACK.** Draw a curvy, twisted, overlapping line on the floor or outdoor surface—the more twists and turns the better. Have the child walk in a straight line to the other end of the play area while he *avoids* stepping on the track. Have him toot once to go forward and twice to go backward. For a group of children, have them keep 1 hand on the shoulder of the child in front of them. (D 2–3 min.)

**DERAILED.** When train cars go off the track, they roll! Draw a long, straight track on the floor. Then tell children to lie down at one end of the track with their fingers on the line above their heads. Explain that one “toot” of the train whistle means the children need to roll down the track, keeping their fingers on the track. Two “toots” mean to roll up the track. Three “toots” mean to stop rolling. Challenge children to roll as long as they can while listening for your cues. Encourage children to try to keep their arms straight and ankles together as they roll. (D 2–3 min.)



## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Scooters

**RESPECTING BOUNDARIES.** When children learn to respect boundaries in play, they're picking up clues about playing by the rules and respecting others.



**MUSICAL BULL'S-EYE.** Draw 3 circles to form a target on the floor or outdoor surface. Use different colors for the lines. Have the children hold hands and circle around the outside and sing the "Ring Around the Bull's-Eye" song. On the last line, call out the destination they all need to jump to together. Next time, have them try the game using different kinds of movements. (R 3–5 times)

**JUMPING CHECKERS.** Draw a giant black-and-white checkerboard on the floor or outdoor surface. (See the checkerboard diagram on page 191.) Have the children form teams. Have them line up on either side of the board facing each other. Using only the black squares, have them jump to the other side. When they meet in the middle, allow them to figure out how to navigate around one another without stepping on the white squares. Repeat using different kinds of movement. (D 5–10 min.)

**CAT AND MOUSE.** Have the children hold hands in a circle. Put 1 child in the middle of the circle (cat) and 1 child on the outside (mouse). The circle's goal is to stop the cat from reaching the mouse by blocking the cat from getting through the line. If the cat does get through, the circle lifts their hands to let the mouse inside. When the mouse is caught, she becomes the cat, the other child joins the circle, and a new mouse is chosen. (D 10–20 min.)



### Skeddaddlers

**CHANGING BOUNDARIES.** Life doesn't always come with defined boundaries, so play a game that gives children a chance to react to changing circumstances.



**SHEEP ON THE LOOSE.** Create a large play area and show the children its boundaries. Make 1 corner the corral. Divide the children into 2 teams—the Sheep and the Farmers. Give the Farmers 1 large blanket, sheet, or parachute to hold taut between them. (This is their moving fence.) When you say go, the Sheep scatter, staying in bounds. The Farmers need to figure out how to work together, using their moving fence to get all the Sheep into the corral. Round 2: switch positions. (D 5–10 min.)

**DODGEHOOP.** Give each child a hoop and have them line up on either side of a running lane. Select 1 child to run the lane. As the child runs, the players on the sidelines roll their hoop to try to catch the runner. The runner has to watch out for all the oncoming hoops and try to dodge them. If the hoop catches (touches) the runner, that hoopster becomes the new runner. (D 10–20 min.)

**SHRINK TAG.** Outline a large playing field with yellow rope and invite the children to play a traditional game of "Freeze Tag." Next, try "Shrink Tag": In this version there is no "thawing"; the round ends when all the players are frozen. At that point, redraw the boundaries around the frozen players (shrinking the play area), choose a new person to be "It," and start again. (D 15–30 min.)



# Let's Go to Hopscotch Camp

## Whole-Body Development: Jumping and Hopping

Hopscotch isn't just a game, it's a way of getting around. Imagine if every sidewalk were a hopscotch board. How would you get from here to there? It's time to go to Hopscotch Camp!

### EQUIPMENT

- Beanbags
- Blanket
- Squeaky toy
- Adhesive dots of different colors
- Pillow
- Music
- Chalk or tape
- Bell

### KEY BENEFITS

- Stamina and fitness
- Agility
- Homolateral midline development

### LANGUAGE FOCUS

in, out, around, on

### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

Support the child when jumping on uneven surfaces.

### TEACHING GEMS

- Use a beanbag rather than a stone for hopscotch. Beanbags don't bounce or roll, lessening potential frustration.



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- Try to do as much of this activity as possible with bare feet and legs to provide more sensory messaging for the child.
- When learning to do any specific skill, such as the "Learning to Hop Up and Down" activity, do not rush the process. Allow plenty of time for the child to master each step with confidence so that she can do the movement automatically (without thinking about it). Then move on to the next step in the learning process. *Note:* When a child is learning to hop, focus on learning to hop with the dominant foot first. When that is automated, switch to the other foot and start again from the beginning.
- See the layout and rules for hopscotch on pages 193–194. Size the hopscotch squares for the size of the children. Remember, new hoppers have little feet and short legs. Also try changing the shape of the hopscotch board, such as making the board circular.

### ON THE MOVE

#### Snugglers



**REFLEXIVE MOVEMENT.** The push-away reflex assists baby through the birthing canal. After birth, the reflex works to strengthen leg muscles in preparation for independent movement.

**FOOT MASSAGE.** Lay baby on the floor on her back. Hold her bare foot up at 90 degrees. With your thumb, stroke firmly down the foot from the big toe pad to the heel. Next, create a pulsing sensation, squeezing in and out as you massage. (D 1–2 min.)

### WATCH ME GROW

**FOOT TAPS.** Repeat the "Foot Massage" activity, only this time tap firmly down the foot. Next, hold baby's feet facing one another and "clap" her toes together. Hold baby's ankles and rub the soles of her feet together. Avoid tickling. (D 1–2 min.)

### IN THE KNOW



**PUSH-AWAY TIME.** Lay a blanket on the floor and put baby on her tummy. Hold your hand firmly against the soles of baby's feet. If the push-away reflex is still active, she will reflexively push away from your hand and move herself forward. (D 1–2 min.)

#### Squigglers



**FOOT AND LEG AWARENESS.** Independent movement is facilitated by baby's emerging awareness of her whole body—right down to her toes!



**PLAYING FOOTSIÉ.** Lay baby on her back and hold a bell above her feet. Show her how to kick the bell to make it ring. Encourage her to kick at the bell as much as she likes. (D 2–3 min.)

**FROG LEGS.** Lay baby on her back and show her ways her knees move. Pull her knees in close to her chest. Keeping knees bent, open her knees out to the side. Bring 1 knee back to center, then the other. (D 2–3 min.)

**UPSIDE-DOWN BIKE RIDING.** Lay baby on her back and help her "pedal" her legs as if riding a bicycle. Pedal forward and backward, both legs alternating, then 1 leg at a time, then both legs together. (D 2–3 min.)



## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Scampers

**FOOT AND LEG DEVELOPMENT.** Strengthening the muscles, tendons, and ligaments in the lower body prepares little ones for going vertical.



**UPSIDE-DOWN DANCING.** Put on some music and lay the child on the floor with her feet in the air. Assist her to “dance” upside down. Use her full range of motion, including knee and ankle flexing, hip rotations, and scissor kicks. (D 2–3 min.)

**PICKUPS.** To encourage deep knee bends, put a few small toys at the child’s feet and encourage her to crouch down for them. Assist by holding her at the waist to keep her steady. (D 3–5 min.)

**ROCKET SHIP LAUNCH.** Hold the child under her arms. Encourage her to crouch down. Bob up and down as you count, “5, 4, 3, 2, 1, blastoff!” On the word *blastoff*, lift her high in the air. Whee! (R 2–3 times)



### Stompers

**DEFYING GRAVITY.** Balance, coordination, and leg strength come together in big new ways when children start testing their ability (and courage) to leave the ground.



**PILLOW JUMPING.** Place a squeaky toy under a pillow and stand the child on the pillow. Holding her under her arms, encourage her to jump up and down, using the pillow to give her more spring (and squeak). (D 2–3 min.)

**JUMPING SPOTS.** Spread out adhesive dots of different colors on the floor, using multiples of the same color. Put on some upbeat music. Call out a color and have the children find and jump on that color, continuing to jump to the beat until all the children have found a colored dot. Repeat with another color. (D 3–5 min.)

**JUMPING LINES.** With chalk or tape, make a straight line on the floor. Have the children line up at the beginning of the tape. Have them straddle the tape and jump forward to the end. Next, encourage them to jump with both feet together on the tape. Add curves and turns to the tape to encourage them to steer their jumps. (D 3–5 min.)



### Scoters

**HOPPING.** Learning to hop is one of the most sophisticated midline activities for the human body, involving refined balance, coordination, and control.



**THE JUMPALONG.** Lay out a path of dots and lines on the floor that includes straight parts, curves, turns, and zigzags. Have the children play follow the leader. The leader follows the path, jumping 3 times on each dot, then jumping forward along the line. (D 3–5 min.)

**LEARNING TO HOP UP AND DOWN.** Have children hold onto something stable and stand on 1 foot. Next, still holding on for balance, have them hop on the grounded foot while the other foot is kept off the ground. Repeat using the other foot. When the children are ready, have them let go and try hopping in place on their own. (R 2–3 times)

**JUMP AND HOP.** Start by having children alternate 2-footed jumping and 1-footed hopping in place: jump, hop on the right foot, jump, hop on the left foot. Repeat until children can do the pattern with ease. Next, call out a random pattern (jump, jump, hop, hop, jump) and have them repeat the pattern. (D 3–5 min.)



### Skedaddlers

**COMBINATION SKILLS.** Simple as it appears, hopscotch demands mastery of many physical skills and the ability to combine those skills in multiple ways.



**THE HOPALONG.** Start by having the children hop on 1 foot in place. Repeat on the other foot. Next, draw or mark a line in front of the children and have them hop forward to the line. Repeat as often as needed until they can hop forward with ease. Repeat on the other foot. Then, lay out a short path on the floor and have the children play follow the leader, hopping along the path (3–5 hops to start). (D 5–10 min.)

**THE JUMP TWIST.** Start by having children jump as high in the air as they can. Next, demonstrate how they can change position while in midair by twisting the torso as they jump. Challenge children to jump and twist their bodies 90 degrees to the right, then to the left. Then see if they can jump and turn 180 degrees to face backward. (D 3–5 min.)

**HOPSCOTCH!** Introduce the fundamentals of the game (see the game rules on pages 193–194). Be sure to have children switch the hopping foot after each game so they get a well-balanced experience. Have fun! (R 2+ games)

## Farmer Gates

### Complex Coordinated Movement

It's a busy day on the farm. Can you help the farmer move the sheep and the cows in and out of the barn?

#### EQUIPMENT

- Soft toy
- Squeaky toy
- Mirror
- Chair
- Ball
- Music

#### KEY BENEFITS

- Midline development
- Body awareness
- Coordination
- Laterality

#### LANGUAGE FOCUS

open, close, left, right

#### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

Ensure the floor is free from hazards when moving around with children.

#### TEACHING GEMS

- When directing children left and right, have an arrow pointing in the direction you want the children to move toward. When facing children, remember to show the opposite direction to what you call so children see it correctly.
- Help children visualize left and right by marking the sides of the body with different-colored stickers, such as red on the left and blue on the right.
- When children are opening and closing arms and legs together, look out for a motor overflow. Motor overflow is a natural, involuntary occurrence signaling that the midlines



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haven't fully matured and the brain is having difficulty with complex movement patterns. For instance, you may see the mouth mirroring the movement or the tongue sticking out. Or you may see another part of the body moving even when it's not involved in the required activity (such as both shoulders hunching at the same time or the left hand copying what the right hand is doing.) When you see this happening, simplify the activity. Start by isolating independent movements—just the arm or just the foot—until the movement pattern appears fluid, easy, and automatic for the child. Then add a second movement to build up to more complex movement patterns.

#### ON THE MOVE

### Snugglers



**MOVEMENT CUES.** Feeling what it is like to have different parts of the body move in sync and in opposition helps program baby's brain for complex movement.

**GOOD MORNING, FARM!** Lay baby on his back. Lean over him and offer him your fingers to grasp. Say, "Good morning, sheep!" Very slowly and gently, bring his arms out to the side, then back to center. Now let's wake up the cows. Place your fingers on baby's ankles and gently push his legs apart and back together. "Good morning, cows!" (R 3–5 times each)

#### WATCH ME GROW

**COWS AND SHEEP ON THE MOVE.** Lay baby on his back. Gently move his right hand and left leg out to the side then back to center. Repeat with the other side. (R 3–5 times each)

#### IN THE KNOW



**SHEEP AND COW CROSSING.** Lay baby on his back. Gently move his arms out to the side and back to the center, then cross the right hand over the left and return it to center. Repeat, this time crossing the left over the right. Repeat with the legs. (R 3–5 times each)

## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Squigglers

**ON THE ROAD TO CRAWLING.** Putting baby in a position where he can see, feel, and move his arms and legs in different ways prepares him for the more complex movement patterns to come.



**DOUBLE DOORS.** Stand holding baby against your chest facing out. Stand opposite another adult and baby. Put on some music and tap the babies' toes together. Line up the soles of their feet so they are gently pushing against each other. In that position, swing babies' legs out to the side with their feet still touching and return to center. Try it with 1 leg at a time, too. (R 3–5 times)

**CATCH THE STRAY.** Sit on the floor with baby between your legs. Open your legs and assist baby to open his. Place a soft toy (a cow if you've got one) between baby's legs. Together, close your legs and baby's, corralling the toy. ("Moo!") Then open the legs and let the cow loose. (R 3–5 times)

**SQUEAKY GATE.** Sit on the floor with baby between your legs. Place a squeaky toy under your leg. Now open baby's arms to the side and back to center. Squeak the toy with your leg as they close. *Squeak!* Repeat with baby's legs. *Squeak!* Then try the right arm and left leg simultaneously. *Squeak!* Repeat on the other side. (R 3–5 times each)



### Scampers

**TWO-SIDEDNESS.** Exploring movements using 1 or both sides of the body works to develop the brain's full understanding of the body's many dimensions.



**THE SPRING IS BROKEN.** Sit on the floor with the child between your legs. Hold his hands and slowly open the arms to the side, then quickly spring them back to a clap in the center. Next, keeping the right arm stretched out in front, open only the left arm out to the side and spring back to a clap. Repeat to the right. Then repeat the same pattern with the legs. (R 3–5 times each)

**THE LATCH IS BROKEN.** Kneel behind baby while you both look into a mirror. Repeat "The Spring Is Broken" game, only this time bring the arms out quickly to the side and slowly back to center. Repeat with the legs. (R 3–5 times each)

**HIGH GATES.** Sit in a chair and stand the child on your feet, supporting him carefully around the waist. Open and close your legs slowly so his open and close with yours. Now open just your right leg to the side. Then the left. (R 3–5 times)



## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Stompers

**LEFT AND RIGHT.** Children learn to establish an understanding of left and right when they move their body and hear the language of direction at the same time.

**CATCH THE STRAY 2.** Sit the child facing you on the floor with each of your legs in the open position. Roll a ball toward him and encourage him to catch it with his legs. Work with him to trap the ball by closing his legs around it. (D 3–5 min.)

**SHEEPDOGGING.** Have the child stand opposite you. Tell him he's a sheepdog, and it's his job to catch the sheep (the ball). Roll a ball along the ground and encourage him to stop it any way he can. As he gains confidence with the game, have him try to stop the sheep with his feet, hands, knees, elbows, and so forth. (D 3–5 min.)



**SLEEPY GATES.** Have the child lie on his back on the floor. Explain that his arms and legs are like gates that can open and close. Kneel behind his head and explain that the object is to open and close whichever gate you call out and tap. Have him move both arms out to the side and back down (imagine the arms of a snow angel). Repeat with the legs. Then do both at the same time. Next, have him open just the right gates (right arm and right leg). Then the left. Be sure to give the child both a verbal and physical cue throughout the play. Do this activity slowly and quietly so he has time to absorb the sensations of isolated movement. (D 3–5 min.)



### Scooters

**COORDINATED TEAMWORK.** Working with others challenges children to coordinate their movements in dynamic context with others.

**WHICH GATE?** Have the child lie on his back on the floor. Kneel behind his head and explain that the object is to open and close whichever gate you tap. Start with 1 gate at a time and create random combinations, then try 2 gates at once. Now try it sitting up, which gives the brain an experience of a different orientation for these complex movements. Pair up children, having 1 child play the role of the tapper. Switch roles after a few minutes. (D 2–3 min.)

**THROUGH THE GATES.** Turn on some upbeat music. Have 2 children form a gate-way by joining hands above their heads. The others form a line and go through the gates. As the line leader goes through the gates he joins up with the end of the line to keep the game going. Whenever the music stops, the gates close (arms drop to waist level), and the next 2 children in line become the gatekeepers. For more fun, have the children move in different ways through the gates (hop, jump, heel-to-toe walk). (D 2–3 min.)



**THE REALLY BIG GATE.** Have children hold hands and form 2 lines facing each other. Tell the children at one end to reach across and hold hands as well. (They are the gate's hinge!) On your cue, the children step backward to create a single, straight line (an open gate). Now reverse the process and close our really big gate, with the 2 children standing firm as the hinge. (R 3–5 times)



### Skedaddlers

When the midlines have been fully established and the concept of left and right is internalized, moving in a well-coordinated manner becomes easier and easier.

**MOO AND BAA.** Have children sit on the floor with their arms out in front of them. Tell them that their arms are the sheep gates and their legs are the cow gates. When you say, "Moo," children open both cow gates and keep them open until you moo again. When you say, "Baa," they open both sheep gates and keep them open until you baa again). (D 2–3 min.)

**QUACK GATES.** Repeat the "Moo and Baa" game to warm up. Then explain that a duck has come into the barnyard, and things are now going every which way! Each time you quack, the children must close and open their gates at the same time. (For instance, open the cow gates while closing the sheep gates.) Have them stop and hold that position (legs open, arms closed) for a few moments, then reverse the simultaneous movement—cow gates (legs) closing as sheep gates (arms) are opening. Work up to a pace at which children can do this fluidly. (D 3–5 min.)



**ALL MIXED UP.** Repeat "Moo and Baa" and "Quack Gates" as warm-ups, with legs as cow gates and arms as sheep gates. Then, explain that the cows and sheep are all mixed together in the same field, and children need to move them. First, have children open and close the left sheep gate and the right cow gate simultaneously. Then do the reverse, opening and closing the right sheep gate and left cow gate. Now really mix it up. Have children keep the right sheep gate open while they open the left cow gate and close the left sheep gate. Continue, having fun with all the possible combinations! (D 3–5 min.)



# Trusty Yellow Rope

## Dynamic Equilibrium: Stability in Motion

One day, the children arrived at school and found a great big surprise. Their whole classroom was empty except for 1 piece of yellow rope. Puzzled, they asked their teacher what they were going to do today. Teacher Wendy explained that Trusty Yellow Rope would show them. The children sat down along the rope and waited for the rope to start the lesson. The rope lay quiet on the floor. The children waited and waited. The rope waited and waited. For sure, this was going to be a very long and boring day.

Then Carter, tired of waiting, got up and tugged on the rope to see if it was awake. The rope wiggled. Next, Caitlin got up and tugged on the other end. The rope twisted. Jakie jumped over the rope. Max crawled under the rope. Kaleb walked along the rope. No matter what the children tried, Trusty Yellow Rope played along. They played all day, discovering all the tricks Trusty Yellow Rope had to teach! And when the day was done, everyone agreed that you can always trust Trusty for a day of fun and learning! (And Trusty had fun, too!)



SARAH ALICE LEE

### EQUIPMENT

- Towel
- Baby toy
- Ball
- Toy vehicle
- Chair or table
- Ropes of different lengths (substitute masking tape or chalk if necessary)

### KEY BENEFITS

- Temporal awareness
- Stability
- Locomotion

### LANGUAGE FOCUS

wide, narrow, on, over

### CRITICAL SAFEGUARDS

Adult supervision is required at all times when children are working with ropes.

### TEACHING GEMS

- Directional activities require commentary with contextual language. Be sure to tell children often where they are (at the *wide* end of the rope, at the *narrow* end of the rope, jumping over the rope, walking on the rope).
- Automate 1 movement at a time. Complex activities require lots of practice, so repeat an activity as often as the child needs before moving to the next.
- Many of the rope tricks can be tried wherever there is a line, such as on a footpath, in the floor tiles, at a grass edge, or at the edge of the rug or carpet.

## ON THE MOVE

## WATCH ME GROW

## IN THE KNOW



### Snugglers

**DYNAMIC EQUILIBRIUM.** Whenever baby moves (or is moved), his brain is adjusting its understanding of the sensations of balance.



**TOWEL ROLL.** Gently lay baby on an open towel on his back. Lift both sides of the towel just off the ground and gently rock baby from side to side, smiling and keeping eye contact the whole time. Do this slowly so as not to stimulate the moro (startle) reflex. (D 2–3 min.)

**TOWEL BALANCE.** Fold a towel, then roll it up like a sausage. Lay baby on his tummy lengthwise on the towel and then gently rock him from side to side, supporting him around the hips. Now hold a toy in front of baby's eyes and encourage him to lift his head slightly to see the toy. (D 2–3 min.)

**BABY AIRPLANE.** Sit down and support baby under his chest and legs so that he is lying flat on his tummy in your arms. Hold him slightly away from your body with his feet toward you. Start gently, gliding baby back and forth by pulling your knees in and out. Next, lift your feet slowly and gently and tilt baby's head ever so slightly toward you. (D 2–3 min.)



### Squigglers

**MOTIVATING MOVEMENT.** Instinctively, babies strive for independent movement from the start. Encourage that instinct with play that makes moving fun.



**TUMMY TEASERS.** Lay baby on the floor on his back or tummy. Dangle a ball on a rope in front of him. Move it to the left and right, encouraging him to twist and swivel his body to follow it. (D 2–3 min.)

**3 OUT OF 4.** With baby up on all fours, dangle a ball on a rope in front of him. Move it around him, encouraging him to touch it. This requires him to lift 1 hand up—the first step on the road to crawling. (D 2–3 min.)

**I CRAWL, YOU CRAWL.** Tie a ball on a rope to your own ankle. Crawl around the floor and encourage baby to follow you. Play keep-away for a few minutes, then allow him to catch you! (D 3–5 min.)



### Scampers

**DELIBERATE MOVEMENT.** Simple challenges, like following a pathway, encourage children to sharpen their skills, even when they get off track.



**TRACK CRAWLING.** Lay 2 ropes on the floor to create a pathway. Encourage the child to crawl between the ropes. Create different patterns—straight, curved, zigzag. (D 3–5 min.)

**ON TRACK.** Lay a rope on the floor and encourage the child to crawl along it with 1 hand and leg on each side of the rope. Next, give him a toy vehicle and show him how it runs on the rope. Encourage him to crawl and keep the toy on track. (D 3–5 min.)

**TRACK WALKING.** Tie the ends of 2 ropes to a chair or table. Hold the other ends approximately waist high for the child and guide him to walk between the ropes from the chair or table to you, holding onto the ropes as he walks. Next, lay the ropes on the floor and repeat the game, having the child walk between them from the chair or table to you. (D 3–5 min.)



### Stompers

**NARROW AND WIDE.** Experiencing the concepts of narrow and wide with their bodies gives children a physical understanding of early math concepts like *greater than* and *less than*.



**RIVERBANKS.** Lay out 2 ropes on the floor in a narrow V shape. Start the child at the pointed end and have him walk the "riverbanks," with 1 foot on each side as the banks get wider. Remind him to try not to fall in the river! Repeat in the other direction, from wide back to narrow. (R 2–3 times)

**MONKEYS ON THE RIVERBANKS.** Repeat the "Riverbanks" activity, but this time tell the child to walk like a monkey (see page 193). For extra challenge, have him try monkey walking the riverbanks backward! (R 2–3 times)

**JUMP THE RIVER.** Lay out 2 ropes on the floor in a narrow V shape. Starting at the pointed end of the V, encourage the child to jump over the river to the other side. Have him continue to move up the river, making the jump wider each time. Repeat, going from wide back to narrow. (R 1–2 times)

## ON THE MOVE



### Scooters

**MOVING TARGETS.** A moving target is a great challenge for developing judgment, timing, balance, and control.

**ROPE WAVES.** Tie a long rope to a chair or table leg. Hold the end of the rope. Move the rope back and forth on the floor as the child tries to stomp on the rope with 1 foot or jump on it with 2 feet. Next, for solo or group play, have children line up and step or jump over the rope as it goes by. (D 2–3 min.)

**WRIGGLE ROPE.** Pull a rope along the floor, wriggling it back and forth like a snake as the children take turns trying to stomp or jump on it. Next, pair up the children and have them play the game with 1 wriggling the rope and the other stomping on it. For group play, have the children step or jump over the rope as it wriggles. Change speed as you go to keep the game unpredictable. (D 2–3 min.)

## IN THE KNOW



**ROPE ROMP.** Lay a rope on the floor and have children straddle the rope with 1 foot on either side of it. Start by having them turn in place, crossing their right foot over to the left and left over to the right. Next, encourage them to jump up and down with their feet on either side of the rope. Then, demonstrate how to jump and turn in midair, landing with 1 foot on either side of the rope. Have them see how many times in a row they can “rope romp”! (R 3–5 times)

### Skedaddlers



**MIDAIR MANEUVERS.** Moving in midair, such as doing scissor jumps, takes time to master, but it signals highly sophisticated, whole-body control and concentration.

**SCISSORS WARM-UP.** Place a rope on the floor. Position the child facing the rope and tell him he is standing *behind* it. Have the child put 1 foot in front of the rope and keep the other behind it. Lift the child up over the rope. Have him practice a scissor-legs movement in midair, then put the child back down in his original position. Lift the child again and have him switch his legs and land. (R 3–5 times)

**SCISSOR STEPS.** Place a rope on the floor. Have the child place 1 foot in front of the rope and the other behind it and then leap up and switch his legs in midair. Watch to be sure the child is using only his legs and that his upper body remains facing forward. Stop after each leap. Next, work toward continuous movement—leaping and switching legs 2 times, then 3, then 4, increasing speed until his movement is fluid. (R 5–10 times)

**SCISSORS FLYING.** Warm up with “Scissor Steps.” Next, have the child stand in the scissor position straddling the rope. Have him put 1 hand on his tummy, the other hand on his back. Give him a chance to practice switching hands from front to back. Then, put it all together in an opposite arm-leg movement (right arm on tummy with left leg forward, left hand on tummy with right leg forward). Encourage him to build up speed to create a smooth tempo for synchronized movement. (R 5–10 times)



# Additional Resources

## Activity 2, Listening Mice

### The Quest Chest

The Quest Chest can be as simple as a cardboard box or plastic pail, but it's even more fun if the child makes her own. Get out the arts and crafts supplies and encourage the child to make her own Quest Chest by drawing a picture or writing her name on 1 side of the container. Then, after each quest, have her add a souvenir from that quest by drawing more pictures or gluing on objects she's found. Keep the Quest Chest for this and other games in which collecting items is required.

### Listening Mice

*(sung to the tune of "Three Blind Mice")*

Listening mice. Listening mice.

Turn on your ears. Turn on your ears.

To hear what nobody else can hear,

No matter how far, no matter how near.

When somebody's talking, you turn on your ears.

We're listening mice. Listening mice.

## Activity 30, Let's Go to Hopscotch Camp

### Traditional Hopscotch Rules

#### Basic Rules

- Players must hop on one foot in each single space. They must jump on both feet in side-by-side spaces, one foot in each square.
- Players may not touch the lines. If you touch the lines, you lose your turn.
- Players must hop over any squares with markers in them. If you step on a square with a marker, you lose your turn.
- Players must pitch their markers within the squares. If the marker goes outside the lines, you lose your turn.

#### Game Play

To start, the player pitches her marker into the #1 square. She must hop over the #1 space and continue to hop along the game board in order: 2, 3, 4-5, 6, 7-8, 9, Home.

When she lands on the Home space, she must turn and return along the path: 9, 8-7, 6, 5-4, 3, 2. If there are other markers on the board during her turn, she must hop over those spaces.

On her return, when the player reaches the #2 space, she must stop and, while balancing on one foot, lean over and pick up her marker. With her marker in hand, she may then hop on space #1 and off the board.

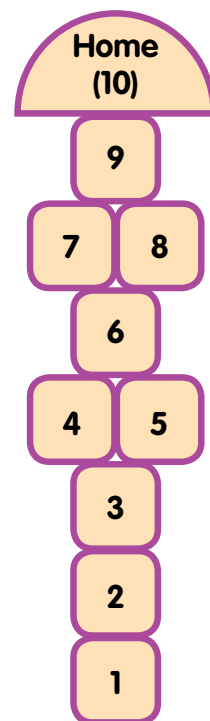
On the next round, the player must pitch her marker to the next space on the board.

The first player to complete nine rounds successfully wins.

#### Simplified Hopscotch

For children who are just getting comfortable with hopping, here are a few quick ways to make hopscotch more accessible to them:

- Shorten the board to a 5- or 7-step game.
- Offer children the option to hop up the board on one foot and jump two-footed on the return trip.
- Loosen the restrictions for stepping on the lines. If part of a child's foot lands in the square, that counts, and she can continue.
- Loosen the restrictions for hopping over spaces with markers. If children need to, they may jump two-footed over those spaces.
- Balance can be an issue when picking up a marker. If need be, allow the child to stand on two feet to pick up her marker.
- Restrict the number of players to two per game.





## Reading the Moves

Children often use movement as their primary means of communicating with us, so learning to read the moves makes it easier to understand what a child is thinking and feeling. For instance, have you ever had any of these children in your classroom (or living under your own roof)?

**The Eye Rubber** might not be ready to read on his own. A child who rubs his eyes, blinks a lot, looks away from the page, or avoids reading altogether may need more time to develop his eye fitness before tackling the highly refined movements independent reading requires. To support this child, look for activities with lots of eye tracking to help build up his eye stamina.

**The Ear Muffer** covers his ears when the room is noisy. He may be struggling to make sense of the sounds, and when he can't, he tries to block them all out. He may need more quiet space in order to concentrate for now, as well as lots of musical experiences and games that focus on sound discrimination.

**The Clean Freak** avoids messy play. You can see “Yuck!” written all over his face. Patient, gentle exposure to a variety of tactile stimulation is in order. But always follow the child's lead.

**The Fidgeter** can't sit still. Fidgeting isn't necessarily a sign of disinterest. In fact, it may well be a sign that a child is trying to concentrate. (Or he might just need to go to the bathroom!) Balance activities are probably in order for him.

**The Spinner** loves to make himself dizzy. This is not necessarily a sign of hyperactivity, but instead, an indication his brain craves vestibular (balance) stimulation. Slowing down the spinning will likely satisfy that craving.

**The Chair Tipper**, despite repeated reminders to be careful, may not be the daredevil he seems. Instead, he probably just needs the sensation of rocking. Try more balance activities with him.

**The Kid Who Goes Bump** into the furniture and into his friends isn't necessarily clumsy or unobservant. He just may not understand where his body begins and ends. Body awareness activities are probably a good idea, especially those that allow him to fit his body through, between, and under things such as tunnels and tables.

**The Toucher** touches everything. He's up close and leaning right into you. But that doesn't necessarily mean he's grabby or needy. More likely, he feels adrift without grounding himself through physical contact. He probably needs to develop more spatial awareness through fitting into things in his environment.

**The Pencil Breaker** breaks the lead in his pencil all the time. He may also be the kid who pushes or pulls too hard on the playground. This child seems aggressive, but he simply may not know his own strength. He might need experience with delicate tasks that require adapting and controlling his muscles, such as pouring water without spilling it.

**The Clumper** runs all his words and letters together when he's first learning to write. This is partly due to inexperience, of course, but it's also a sign that he needs more physical experiences moving his body in, out, over, under, through, and around different kinds of space.

**The Slumper** struggles to sit up straight for long periods of time. He looks bored, but he may just be tired. Good posture depends on core muscle strength. More whole-body movement—especially games and activities that challenge the core muscles—is probably a good idea.

**The Jumper** flits from activity to activity. It might look like he can't focus or lacks determination. But in early childhood, it's more likely that he switches gears a lot because his muscles lack stamina. Timed games may be in order here, to challenge him to use his muscles for longer and longer periods of time (such as jumping up and down for 15 seconds, then 30 seconds, then 45 seconds).

**The Quitter** asks if it's time to go home at 10:00 a.m. When this happens regularly, there's probably a physical reason for it. Chances are he's tired—not necessarily from lack of sleep but from lack of physical readiness for hours of activity in the classroom.

**The Hand Swapper** changes hands when he's drawing or writing across a page. This is a classic signal his midlines still need work, which means his hand dominance isn't fully in place yet. Spending some time doing cross-patterning activities will do him good.

**The Letter Reverser** writes his letters backward sometimes. This common mistake is probably not a matter of misunderstanding the letterforms. It may simply be a matter of immature midlines, which can result in misinterpreting the direction and order of things. Both lateral and cross-lateral movement patterns may be helpful.

**The Pretzel** contorts his body to do simple tasks like writing his name. When children strike unnatural positions, they're likely working around or avoiding the midlines. Homolateral and cross-lateral activities may help. (For instance, have the child pretend his left hand is glued to his side and his feet are glued to the floor. Now tell him to try to use just his right hand to catch feathers before they fall to the floor. Be sure to repeat with the left hand.)

**The Fist** struggles with proper pencil grip. Chances are, he needs more time playing on the monkey bars and doing other activities that build strength in the upper body, hands, and fingers.

**The Speed Demon** does everything fast. When you ask him to slow down, he can't. Chances are, he's struggling with controlling his muscles. Challenge the speed demon to do things slowly. Try staging an entire "slow day" and see how long everyone lasts!

**The Last Kid Picked for the Team** is usually the one his peers see as the worst player in the group. Most team sports (soccer, T-ball, basketball, and so on) require manipulative skills. If a child struggles in this area, use bubbles, feathers, and other objects that move slowly so his eyes, hands, and feet have more time to work together.

## Individualizers: The Six Ds

While Smart Steps provides a sequence of 18 progressions for each main activity, it would be hubris to suggest that those activities alone could fully account for each child's unique needs. Here is a handy list of ways to make just about any activity a little bit easier or a little bit more challenging. We call these individualizers.

*Note:* Take special safety precautions when using individualizers for activities in which the child is elevated off the ground, is inexperienced with the movement patterns, or is unfamiliar with the equipment in use. Prioritize safety at all times.

To change up an activity to suit a child's individual needs, we've created six rules of thumb we call the Six Ds: dynamics, distance, direction, duality, duration, and difficulty.

To increase the level of challenge, start by adding one D to the basic activity. For example, push the goal out farther. As the child masters each new level of challenge, change or add another D. For instance, have the child try reaching the goal using the other hand.

Similarly, if a child struggles with an activity, tamp down the level of challenge using the same Six Ds. For instance, move the goal closer, or have the child use both hands.

Here's a quick review of the Six Ds.

**Dynamics.** Young children tend to do things fast for the simple reason that *fast* is usually easier. The slower you go, the more balance and control are required. So, to increase challenge, encourage children to slow down. Ask, "How slow can you go?" To make an activity easier, encourage them to speed up. In addition, to challenge children's control, at any point in the activity call out, "Freeze." The ability to stop and hold a pose supports and challenges listening skills, physical abilities, and emotional self-control.

**Distance.** The same activity can be easy or challenging depending on how far away the goal is. Move the goalposts, targets, and finish lines closer or farther away to make any game easier or more challenging.

**Direction.** Forward movement is the most natural movement, of course. When a child needs extra challenge, have him try the same movement using his body in different ways. For instance, when walking on a rope, he can try walking sideways or backward. Instead of a straight racecourse, add zigzags or patterns to encourage moving in different directions.

**Duality.** In the early years, using both the right and left sides of the body is important to balanced development. No matter the age of the child or whether hand or foot dominance has emerged, encourage him to try activities using both sides of his body together and separately. To start, watch to see which hand or foot he uses naturally. Then encourage him to switch to the other side. Then (when appropriate to the activity) have him use both hands or feet together.

**Duration.** Doing activities for shorter or longer periods of time builds stamina and provides necessary repetition for movements to be automated. Of course, if a child is showing signs of struggle with an activity, cut the time short and come back to it another time, gradually building up his endurance. For a child who has mastered or is close to mastering a task, add time and watch to see if he maintains concentration and endurance.

**Difficulty.** To add challenge to an activity, change up the terrain or gradient. For example, if the child is running on a smooth, level surface, challenge him to run up a hill. Adding obstacles to navigate is another fast and easy way to add challenge. And when a child has mastered an activity, give him something else to consider. You might, for instance, have him hold an object or balance something on his head while doing the activity. Naturally, to make an activity easier, simplify the environment and remove obstacles and objects that get in the way of the basic movement pattern.