

NURSERY PHYSICAL/MOTOR SKILLS

Physical and motor skills are what we use to move our bodies. These skills are practiced during physical education (gym), outdoor play (recess), indoor play (drama, blocks, art, literacy), and music.

It is important to practice and use these movements in early childhood as it sets the path for a child's healthy body growth and development. Not only do physical/motor skills improve fitness and support healthy bones and muscles, they also help with improved concentration and thinking skills. Canada Public Health recommends that children have 60 minutes of physical activity every day.

The Preschool Developmental Guide List breaks down physical/motor skills into two sections: gross motor and fine motor.

What is Gross Motor?

Gross motor refers to larger muscle movements that use the entire body. Skills such as balance, speed, coordination and power fall under the gross motor category. Running, hopping, galloping, throwing, catching, standing on 1 foot, riding a bicycle, rolling, and skipping are all examples of gross motor movements.

What is Fine Motor?

Fine motor refers to smaller muscle movements using hands, fingers and wrists. These movements use a lot of eye-hand coordination, precision and concentration. Cutting with scissors, holding a crayon, drawing, picking up items, using a zipper, button or snap, turning pages and holding cutlery are all examples of fine motor movements.

SKIP	GALLOP	HOP	JUMP
			
<p>CUES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand with feet shoulder width apart• Step forward with your lead foot and hop• Repeat pattern on opposite foot• Keep eyes up and forward	<p>CUES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand with feet shoulder width apart• Step forward with lead foot• Take long slide forward• Back foot chase to catch lead foot• Close feet fast together	<p>CUES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance on one foot• Keep other foot off the ground• Have arms to sides to help balance• Bend knees when hopping off ground and when landing• Keep eyes up and forward	<p>CUES:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Stand with feet shoulder width apart• Keep hands on sides• Bend knees slightly• Explode up with legs• Bend knees when landing

(Martin, A., 2019)

Chart for Gross Motor

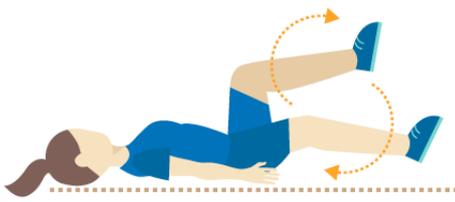
Concept	Examples
Walks up and down stairs, alternating feet	Climb a hill - If possible, find a nearby hill to climb with the children. Walking/running up the hill and walking/rolling down the hill are simple experiences. If there is no hill, then practice skipping using both feet and galloping using one foot in front.
Catches ball with two hands	Hot Potato https://fitkidshealthykids.ca/node/254
Shows a variety of locomotor patterns (walk, march, run, hop, gallop, skip, etc.)	Play Simon Says using different ways to move (Simon Says: hop/run/skip etc.) In this version keep everyone in the game and work on movement skills. https://www.wikihow.com/Play-Simon-Says
Can walk on tiptoe and remain balanced	Circus Performer - pretend to be a circus performer. Draw a line on the ground or place a string and have children walk on their tiptoes on the line.
Maintains balance while standing on one foot	Play Freeze Dance https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2UcZW XvgMZE Play Statue Game https://www.considerable.com/entertainment/games/statues/
Pedals tricycle smoothly	Upside down bike: Lay on your back on the ground, lift your legs up and move them like pedaling a bike. 

Chart for Fine Motor

Concept	Examples
Cuts along line with scissors	Cutting bin - Fill a bin with scraps of string, paper, pipe cleaners etc. Give children scissors to practice cutting motions.
Holds writing utensils using pincer grasp	Break crayons/chalk into small pieces for drawing.
Manipulates buttons, snaps, etc.	Encourage children to dress/undress for recess themselves. If they have zippers, start the zipper and let them do the rest. Add items to the dramatic play area that have buttons, snaps, zippers.
Demonstrates increasing fine motor strength and control with a variety of small objects and instruments (tweezers, droppers, paintbrush, etc)	Paint with smaller utensils such as qtips/droppers/straws/sticks.
Draws simple circles and squares	Drawing tray - Create a drawing tray with sand or salt. Put pictures of shapes next to the tray. Encourage children to draw the shapes in the tray with their finger.
Draws people and other realistic drawings (ex. Houses, animals, transportation)	In the art area, hang pictures of real people, real houses, real animals and real transportation

Recommended Resources

1. GoNoodle - <https://family.gonoodle.com/>



2. Fit Kids Healthy Kids - <https://fitkidshealthykids.ca/games-database>



Reference

Martin, Andrew. "Locomotor Delivery." PE Central. Last modified February 11, 2019.

<https://www.pecentral.org/lessonideas/ViewLesson.asp?ID=133500#.XsWLai5Kg2z>.