Moving and Grooving
Supporting Healthy Development through Movement and Music
Course Objectives

By the end of this training, participants will be able to:

▪ Explain how motor development, or a disruption in motor development, affects a child’s learning readiness.

▪ Provide examples of intentional motor activities to help promote development in children.
Introductions
Tell us-
Your name
Your setting and years of experience
Your favorite form of exercise
The Journey of Can-Do
(from *A Moving Child is a Learning Child* by Gill Connell and Cheryl McCarthy)

- **Snugglers** - Birth to rolling over: 0-6 months
- **Squigglers** - Rocking, crawling, sitting: 6-14 months
- **Scampers** - Pulling up to walking: 9-24 months
- **Stompers** - Running and jumping: 20 months-3 ½ years
- **Scooters** - Hopping and climbing: 3-4 years
- **Skedaddlers** - Skipping, leaping, cooperative games, and dance: 4 years and older
Building a strong foundation—like Jenga®!
But sometimes...
Barriers and Strengths for Healthy Motor Development

**Barriers**
- Nature
- Nurture
- Containers
- Skipping a milestone

**Strengths**
- Children are born risk takers
- A lot of equipment is unnecessary
- Indoors and outdoors works
- The floor is a playground
Brain Basics
Purpose of the Brain

Brain Stem: Survival
Senses: Perception
Cerebellum: Moving
Limbic System: Feeling
Cortex: Thinking
Wiring the Brain

Myelination
Automaticity
Muscle Memory
Building a Moving Child

Journey of “Can-Do”

Fundamental Movement Patterns

Music
Fundamental Movement Patterns

- Locomotion
- Stability
- Manipulation
Reflexes

Primitive, Postural
Primitive Reflexes

Releasing Reflexes in Babies

- Massage
- Holding baby in different positions
- Gentle rocking and spinning
- Stroking baby’s hands and feet
- Hold baby upright with feet on lap, or push gently on feet
- Gentle rolling and stretching

Signs Reflexes are Not Released in Older Children

- Struggle crawling
- Poor balance, clumsiness
- Poor muscle tone
- Floppy or hunched over posture
- Fidgeting
- Potty training delays
- Motion Sickness
Activities to Release Reflexes in Older Children

- **Egg Rolls**: Lie with baby face up on your chest. Pull knees to your chest and gently roll with baby side to side, and rock forward and backward. Sing, “Roll, roll, roll along. Sing a silly song. Scramble. Scramble. Scramble. Scramble. Scramble. Good thing our shells are strong!” (From “A Moving Child is a Learning Child”)

- **Child led Egg Rolls**: help the older child do these movements on his own.

- **Popcorn**: Curl knees to chest and chin to knees. Hold for 5 seconds (work up to 20), then POP legs and arms out. (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)

  - **Superman**: Lie on stomach with arms and legs stretched straight. Raise arms and legs off the floor, looking straight ahead. Hold for 5 seconds (work up to 20), then rest. (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)
Postural Reflexes

- Keep babies out of containers
- Tummy time
- Allow babies to fall
Senses

Vestibular System

Proprioceptive System
Vestibular System
- Controls balance, posture, alertness, concentration, stillness
- Helps us get and stay upright when still or on the move
- Helps kids to listen and learn

Signs a child may need more vestibular stimulation:
- Fidgety
- Poor posture
- Falling, or falling off chairs
- Motion Sickness
- Does everything quickly
Activities to help develop the vestibular system

- Slow spinning, rolling or hanging upside down
- Pencil Roll- Hands above your head and roll from your hips
  (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)
- Reading upside down
- Balance beam
- Stable Table- Get on hands and knees. Hold one arm straight out in front of you (switch), hold one leg straight out behind you (switch), do this with opposite arm and opposite leg (switch)
  (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)

(From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)
More vestibular activities

- **Cozy cocoon** - Form a long line and hold hands. Move slowly so the line curls into form a spiral. When the cocoon is as tight as can be, have the children slowly reverse their movements and open the spiral back into a straight line. “The caterpillar spins his cozy cocoon, cozy cocoon, cozy cocoon. The caterpillar spins his cozy cocoon so the butterfly can fly free!” (From “A Moving Child is a Learning Child”)

- **Helicopter spins** - Hold your arms out like a T and slowly spin for 10-15 seconds; try it with music of different tempos (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)
  - **Flamingos** - Stand on one foot with eyes open (switch), stand on tiptoes with eyes closed, stand on one foot with eyes closed, (switch) (From “Get to the Core of Readiness”)
Proprioceptive System
- Sense of intuition
- Body awareness
- Spatial awareness
- Body subconscious
- Strength management
Motor Tools
Power, Coordination, Control
Power - Full and efficient use of the body’s energy

- Strength
- Stamina
- Flexibility
- Agility

- Transferable fitness - Crazy Crab Crawl - come up with many different ways to crab crawl - around corners, through obstacles, race, or other creative ideas (From “A Moving Child is a Learning Child”)
Coordination

- Midlines
- Development of ability to cross the midline
- Brain hemispheres working together
- Dominance/mixed dominance
Activities to Promote Coordination

- Cross patterning
- Hand clapping games
- Dancing
- Crawling
- Jumping/Hopscotch
- Adding music
Control

- Movement leads to body control and self-organization
- Learning to adapt
  - Positioning
  - Pacing
  - Pressure/Force
Activities to Promote Control

- Freeze dancing - changing the speed of music practices different types of control

- Traffic Cop - pick a basic movement children have mastered - crawling or jumping, for example. Direct the children to move in different ways - jump in place, forward, backward, sideways, etc. (From “A Moving Child is a Learning Child.”)

- Pushing and pulling activities

- Simon Says/Mother May I
Wrap-Up

- How has your perception of the role of movement in learning readiness and other domains of development changed?
- Is there anything to add to our list of how music and movement help children develop?
- How does a gap in development affect learning readiness?
- What is one strategy you will take back to your setting?
Sources


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