

Dynamic Balance

Balance refers to the ability to maintain head and torso upright over the base of support (in sitting, kneeling or standing). The ability to shift weight and maintain balance is necessary for developing varied and controlled body movement, both gross and fine motor. Dynamic balance allows us to remain in position during activities that require movement, like walking and running.

Dynamic Balance Activities

- Animal walks – see the *Different Ways to Move tip sheet* for suggested animal walks
- Walking
 - Walk forward, backward, and sideways in a straight line
 - Walk on heels, walk on toes
 - Walk over obstacles at spaced intervals (ie. small objects to items suspended like broom sticks or string)
 - Step in and out of boxes
 - Stop, start and turn (red light, green light/freeze/statue games, games in slow motion)
 - Walk along curbs outside
 - Tightrope walking (use masking tape)
 - create a line on the floor and have your child walk using a heel toe pattern as if it were a balance beam
 - make 6 lines of tape and jump from the first line and see how far you can get, jump backward, jump with one foot
 - Walking along stepping stones of various heights
 - Walking high knees (marching)
 - Walking straight leg kicks – opposite arm to opposite foot
 - Walk sideways crossing one leg in front and then behind you (grapevine)
 - Walking over pillows – scatter them on the floor with some stacked one on top of the other to vary the height of each pile, and have your child stretch and climb from one to the other
 - Walk forward with your eyes closed
 - Walk forward or backward – try this with your eyes closed or turning your head left to right, or up and down
 - Walk on uneven ground and inclines; walk on the beach in the sand; climb on/over logs and rocks
 - Yoga poses – dancer, airplane, triangle, warrior
- Play jumping games: see the *Jumping tip sheet* for more resources
- Stairs
 - Stair scavenger hunt – create a scavenger hunt by having your child walk up the stairs to find puzzle pieces. Ensure your child doesn't use the hand rails while walking up and down the stairs, and that they crouch down into a squat position when picking up each puzzle piece. Assemble puzzle at the end (supervision required, spot child from behind)

