

Physical Therapy Activities in the Home Setting for Preschool Children

Helping Children Grow, Move and Thrive

Esther Tusk, PT



Benefits of Physical Therapy/Movement at Home

- ❖ Improve motor skills: balance, strength, and coordination
- ❖ Supports development: encourages social, cognitive, and emotional growth
- ❖ Promotes independence: builds self-confidence and autonomy
- ❖ Increases flexibility: reduces risk of injury as children grow



Key Areas of Focus

- **Balance and Coordination:** essential for everyday activities such as walking, running, and climbing
- **Strength and stability:** Core strength and joint stability are fundamental
- **Flexibility and Mobility:** Stretching and moving in different directions enhance movement patterns
- **Posture and Alignment:** Encourages proper posture for overall alignment



Setting Up a Physical Therapy-Friendly Environment at Home

1. Clear space for play and movement
2. Non-slip flooring
3. Proper lighting-bright, soft
4. Supportive and safe furniture
5. Engaging equipment
6. Safe pathways for exploration

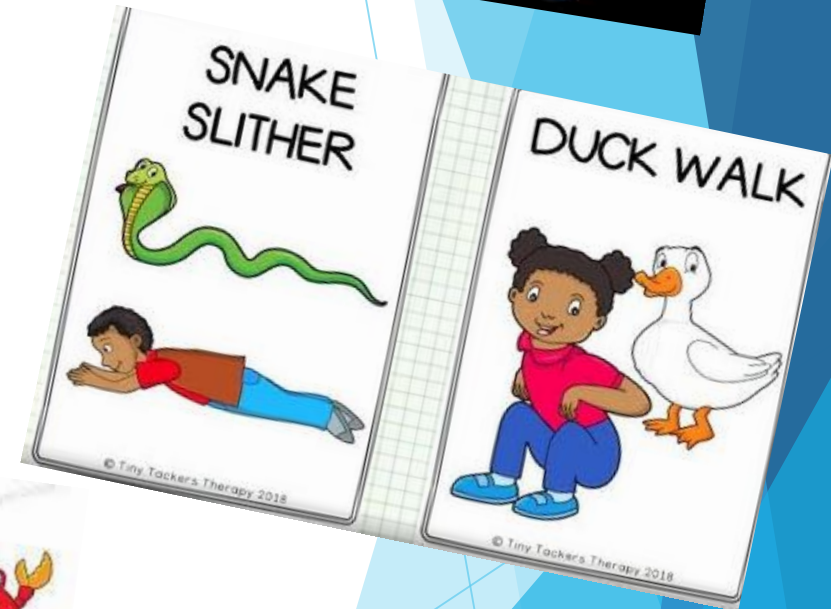




Let's have some fun with
movement!!

Animal Walks

- Bear Crawl
- Crab Walk
- Frog Jump
- Penguin Waddle
- Kangaroo Hop
- Duck waddle
- Snake slither



Obstacle Courses

- Cushion Climb: Stack pillows or cushions for kids to climb over or crawl on
- Tunnel Crawl: Use chairs and a blanket to create a tunnel for crawling through
- Hop on the Line: Use tape on the floor to create a straight or zigzag line for kids to balance on, jump over, or hop along
- Jumping Jacks: Add a station where kids can do jumping jacks or hops like a frog
- Ball Toss: Set up a target (laundry basket) for kids to toss soft tennis balls



Stretching and Yoga

Coordination

- ▶ Downward dog
- ▶ Cat-cow stretch
- ▶ Tree pose
- ▶ Butterfly stretch
- ▶ Child's pose
- ▶ Breathing exercises

- ▶ Keep sessions short and engaging- 5-10 minutes!
- ▶ Use playful language and imagination to keep kids excited
- ▶ Encourage creativity by having children make up their own yoga pose

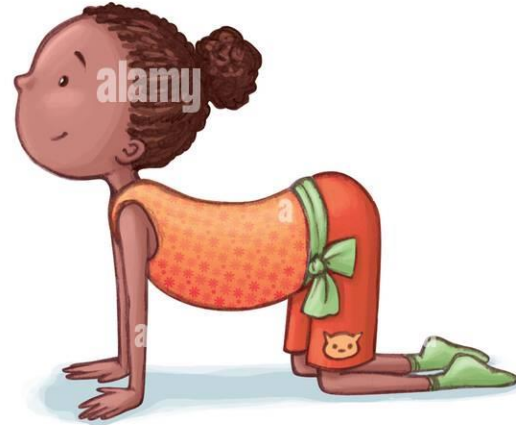
Body
awareness

focus

calming

Mindfulness

flexibility



KID'S
YOGA



Yoga videos:

Cosmic kids-great imaginative yoga videos for older preschool children with story themes

<https://youtu.be/LhYtcadR9nw>

The Kiboomers-yoga videos with songs for younger children

https://youtu.be/Qh2_w-qKGpl

Yogapalooza with Bari Koral

<https://youtu.be/29DQJWGwEnY>

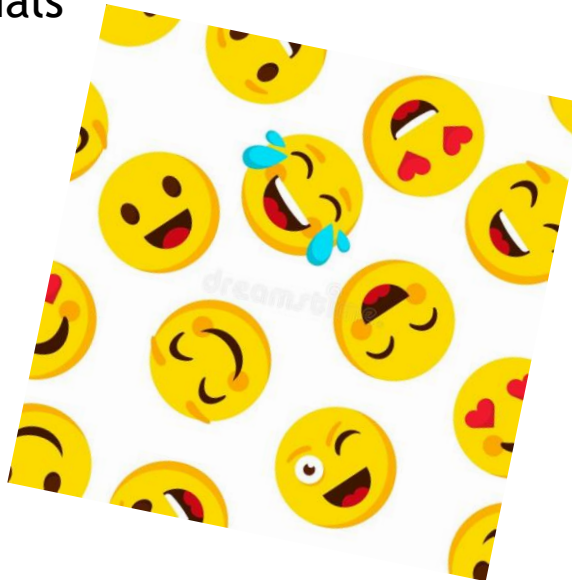
Moovlee Kids-simple yoga and meditation for kids-slower paced

<https://youtu.be/yarxCrHWyXQ>



Dance Party

- ❑ **Freeze Dance:** children dance freely, stopping when the music pauses
- ❑ **Balloon Dance:** children tap the balloon to keep it afloat, incorporating dance moves
- ❑ **Emoji Dance:** Children express different emotions through dance, mimicking various emojis
- ❑ **Animal Adventure Dance Party:** transform your home into a lively jungle or farm where children can move like various animals



Balance Activities



- Taped line-walking, hopping, tiptoeing, backwards
- Balance on one foot
- Balance on different surfaces-pillows, cushions, mats
- Stair climbing-practice climbing with one step at a time
- Balancing a tray game



BALL PLAY

- Rolling a ball-encourages engagement and coordination-simple back and forth or roll in and out of cones/bottles
- Roll a ball through a tunnel, under chairs
- Bouncing a ball to a beat-play music and bounce ball to the rhythm
- Kicking a ball to knock down a tower of blocks
- Hoppity-hop toy



Safety Tips for Gross Motor Fun at Home

1. Clear the space
2. Supervision is key
3. Proper footwear
4. Comfortable clothing
5. Use soft safe materials
6. Simplify movements if necessary
7. Establish a routine



Encouraging Participation

- ❖ Incorporate games-turn motor activities into fun games
- ❖ Use music-rhythm based movements such as dance or action songs
- ❖ Praise effort over perfection
- ❖ Keep activities short and varied to maintain interest
- ❖ Be active together-kids love to mimic adults
- ❖ Utilize home resources for creative games-like chairs and cushions



Conclusion

- ✓ Motor activities at home are essential for preschoolers' physical, cognitive, and emotional development.
- ✓ Regular movement helps build strong foundational skills that will benefit children in many areas of life.
- ✓ By making activities fun and interactive, parents and caregivers can support healthy growth and foster a love for physical activity.
- ✓ Small, consistent efforts can have a big impact-encourage creativity, exploration, and enjoyment in every activity!

