

Occupational Therapy Activity of the Week

Bilateral Coordination

Bilateral coordination is the ability to use both sides of the body together in a coordinated way. This includes using both hands to do the same thing at the same time (ex: using a rolling pin), with alternating movements (ex: climbing up a ladder), or with one hand performing a task while the other hand assists (ex: using scissors). When a child struggles with bilateral coordination, they may avoid tasks that require both hands, appear awkward clumsy, or prefer to use only one hand for tasks that would be better performed with two. Bilateral coordination skills are required for a variety of gross and fine motor tasks. Below is a list of fun activities that encourage the development of bilateral coordination. Try some of them to build these skills!

* Ball games: Rolling or catching a ball with both hands. Dribble a ball back and forth between both hands.
* Jumping jacks
* Cross country jumping jacks: Place right arm and right leg forward, then jump and switch left arm and left leg forward.
* Shake musical shakers in time to music: Make with empty toilet paper rolls and fill with some coins or beans. Tape closed.
* March to music and clap hands at the same time.
* Cross crawl exercise: (See attached). Start with feet together, elbows bent and palms facing out. Lift right knee up and touch it with left hand. Then bring hands back up. Switch and lift left knee up and touch it with right hand. Try to go faster as you get better. Add music and march to the beat.
* Jump rope
* Shoot a basketball
* Ride a bike
* Animal walks: crab walk, bear crawl, inchworm
* Play hopscotch
* Climb up a slide or playground ladder (with supervision of course)
* “March” in place while seated and draw circles in the air with both hands at the same time.
* Kitchen Activities: Pour a drink while holding a cup, Mix batter while holding the bowl, Roll out dough with a rolling pin, spread soft butter or jelly on bread while holding the bread, use both hands to open jars and containers.
* Playdoh: Use both hands to roll snakes, roll a large ball with both hands, cut playdoh with scissors, build a structure with playdoh balls and toothpicks or straws, make a pinch pot.
* Play with stickers, using both hands to peel stickers off paper.
* Fold paper airplanes
* Make a “Cootie Catcher”
* Build with Legos or other building toys
* Color on small squares of paper, requiring one hand to hold the paper
* Rip paper into strips and small pieces. Use for a collage or make watermelon craft (see attached).
* Texture rubbing: hold paper over a textured surface (tree, concrete, a screen, leaf) and rub crayon over paper.
* Pull apart cottonballs and use to make clouds in a picture.
* Use a real or toy fishing pole to reel in some fish! (supervision with the real fishing pole please!)
* Lace a plate: punch holes around the edge of a plastic or paper plate and lace with string or pipe cleaners
* Make a paperciip chain (not for kids who mouth objects).
* Yoga poses. Younger kids may enjoy the yoga and accompanying stories on www.cosmickids.com
* Simon says
* Dressing/undressing dolls and stuffed animals
* Toys: Zoom Ball, animal ball poppers, Foam rocket launchers and foam finger flyers are always a fan favorite (with supervision of course).