

Home activities to help regulation

Author: James Fitch, Occupational Therapist
for Witherslack Group

Proprioceptive or physical movement:

- **Bear walks** - Hands on floor, bum in air (hips above head), back legs almost straight move alternate hands and legs to move.
- **Slither like snake** - Slither on tummy like a snake / army crawl.
- **Inch worms** - From standing place hands on floor keeping legs as straight as possible, walk hands out as far as you can then work feet in again keeping legs as straight as you can and repeat.
- **Press ups**
- **Wall** - Assume the starting position with feet and legs together, standing about 2 feet from a wall with your arms straight out in front of you. Your palms should be on the wall at about shoulder-level height and shoulder-width apart, with finger pointed toward the ceiling. If you feel like you're reaching too far, move your feet closer. Bend your elbows and begin to lean your body toward the wall until your nose almost touches it. Ensure your back stays straight and your hips don't sag. Push back to the starting position and repeat.

- **Knee** - Kneel on the floor. Extend arms and put hands shoulder-width apart on the floor in front of you. Bend arms, lowering your torso until chest grazes the floor. Push back up by straightening arms. Slow and controlled and repeat.

- **Full** - Go down onto all fours, placing your hands slightly wider than your shoulders. Straighten your arms and legs. Lower your body until your chest nearly touches the floor. Pause, then push yourself back up. Repeat.

- **Climbing activities** - Clip and climb, climbing frames at the park, soft play etc...

- **Wall sits** - Make sure your back is flat against the wall. Place your feet firmly on the ground, shoulder-width apart, and then about 2 feet out from the wall. Slide your back down the wall while keeping your core engaged and bending your legs until they're in a 90-degree angle or right angle, so that if someone wanted to sit on your lap, they could. (Although now probably isn't the best time.) Your knees should be directly above your ankles, not jutting out in front of them. HOLD your position, while contracting your ab muscles.

- **Hanging** - Hanging by hands or feet / knees from monkey bars, chin up bars or anything that made to hold a weight hanging from it.

- **Lifting** - Example activities; carrying shopping bags, weighted backpack collecting milk etc...

- **Pulling** - Example activities; tug of war, resistance bands, body sock etc...

- **Pushing** - Example activities; body sock, pushing into therapy ball etc...

- **Weighted backpack**

- **Thera band/resistance band stretches**

- **Walk out over therapy ball/peanut** - Lay on tummy on peanut, walk out as far as you can, then roll peanut up your legs keeping hands on the floor and feet must not touch the floor. When peanut has been manoeuvred up body walk hands out again as far as you can and repeat until you have reached desired distance.

Outings:

- **Long walks / hills**
- **Parks**
- **Bike rides**
- **Scooter rides**

Pre-writing:

- **Multi-sensory pre-writing shapes** - Use of different mediums like shaving foam, pasta, rice, paint and sand.
- **Playdoh** - You can free play with playdoh, form shapes and letters or follow something like doh disco on You tube.
- **Hand over hand** - Place hand over child's hand and form shapes, letters and numbers.
- **Thera putty** - To use for hand strength

- **Free drawing** - Use different mediums chalk / paint / pencils / fingers / sand / play doh / shaving foam

Fine motor:

- **Threading** - Thread beads or cotton wheels onto a lace. Have races or set a timer to make this a challenge.

- **Playdoh** - See pre-writing

- **Lego**

- **Meccano**

- **K'nex**

- **Operation**

Shoulder stability (use body weight or small weight):

- **Arm holds** - Hold to front, side or shoulder height for as long as you can

- **Shoulder spirals** - Hold arms out to the side at shoulder height and move arms slowly in small plate size circles forwards and backwards.

- **Wall / knee / full press-ups**

- **Punching** - Punch out in front at shoulder height, movement should only come from shoulders and not hips.

- **High plank** - Adopt press up position with arms straight (with slight bend in elbow). Hold this position for as long as possible.

Core strength:

- **Sit ups / crunches**

- **Mountain climbers** - Put both hands and knees on the floor. Place your right foot near your right hand and extend your left leg behind you. In one smooth motion, switch your legs, keeping your arms in the same position. Switch your legs back and forth twice, such that your right leg is again close to your right hand.

- **Plank**

Visual perception:

- **Word search**
- **Where's Wally**
- **Board Games**
- **Eye spy**
- **Spot the difference**
- **Memory games**
- **Cards**
- **Uno**
- **Guess who**

Other regulating activities:

- **Time out / quiet space**
- **Listen to music**
- **Warm drink i.e. tea / hot chocolate**
- **Warm comfort food i.e porridge**

Blowing activities

- **Blow football** - Make a paper ball and goals. Take in turns to blow ball into goal. You can do this using straws if preferred.

- **Bubble volcanos** - Make solution with washing up liquid and water and put into a small beaker. With a straw blow into this and see how high you can make the bubble volcano.

- **Blowing bubbles**

Mindful breathing

There are lots of videos on Youtube and other sites that can be accessed on the internet. Here is an example from the NHS:

- If you're sitting or standing, place both feet flat on the ground. Whatever position you're in, place your feet roughly hip-width apart.
- Let your breath flow as deep down into your belly as is comfortable, without forcing it.
- Try breathing in through your nose and out through your mouth.
- Breathe in gently and regularly. Some people find it helpful to count steadily from 1 to 5. You may not be able to reach 5 at first.
- Then, without pausing or holding your breath, let it flow out gently, counting from 1 to 5 again, if you find this helpful.
- Keep doing this for 3 to 5 minutes.

About Witherslack Group

We are committed to sharing advice and support to parents, carers and professionals. Our webinars and online resources provide expert knowledge and practical support. If you would like to find out more information you can email webinars@witherslackgroup.co.uk or visit www.witherslackgroup.co.uk.

