
Learning to Move – Moving to Learn

INSTRUCTIONS

This handout was designed for use with the article, “Learning to Move – Moving to Learn,” from Birth to Three. The questions and activities in this handout could be used in a work session (e.g., professional learning community, professional development session), for individual coaching, or for self-reflection.

Goals

- ◆ Understand the impact motor skills has on a child’s learning.
- ◆ Reflect upon current best practices and identify barriers that may exist in the environment.
- ◆ Create an action plan for using current best practices and adapting new practices to develop inclusive environments for all children based on their abilities.

Activity

- ◆ Read the article.
- ◆ After reading, use the questions below to guide your reflection and action plan to support children to be successful in your current environment to fully participate in physical play.
- ◆ Implement your plan and adjust the environment as needed to support gross motor skills.

“Just as physical exercise is a well-known and well-accepted means to improve health for anyone, regardless of age or background, so can the brain be put ‘into shape’ for optimal learning.”

Naveen Jain

REFLECTION QUESTIONS

- ◆ What caught your attention from the article? What made that fact, excerpt, or example meaningful to you?

- ◆ The article offers many ways to promote movement while creating an environment that focuses on children's motor development. These include modifications to the physical environment that encourage active participation and various ways for children to move their bodies through activities.
 - Observe how children enhance their motor skills when they practice and experience movement regardless of their ability. How do these movements increase their involvement in the learning environment?
 - Consider how your children's behavior and needs are impacted by limitations in the classroom.
 - How can you adapt the environment, so it encourages movement for all children in your learning environment?

- ◆ The article asks to consider how all children benefit from adjustments to the classroom environment.
 - In what ways can you increase access in your learning environment to enhance the experience for all children?
 - How does incorporating gross motor movements create an inclusive play experience that supports the children in your learning space?
 - Consider ways to:
 - Modify activities to promote movement
 - Ensure children can move their bodies and challenge themselves
 - Modifications that assist children to be independent in the classroom

- ◆ It's important to consider the whole child as you are planning adaptations to your classroom.
 - What kind of impact do these accommodations have on all children in the learning environment? Consider those with disabilities and those without.
 - How do these accommodations affect your learning environment?

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Learn more about supporting children's gross motor skills:

- ◆ **Source:** National Association for the Education of Young Children
- ◆ **Article:** Fostering Engagement Within Inclusive Settings: The Role of the Physical-Social-Temporal Environment in Early Childhood Settings
- ◆ **Link:** <https://www.naeyc.org/resources/pubs/yc/winter2021/fostering-engagement>
- ◆ **Description:** This article describes the impact of small adjustments to the environment on children's overall comfort in a classroom environment, which enhances their learning experiences. Modifications were made to the physical, social, and temporal (routines) environment.

- ◆ **Source:** Head Start Early Childhood Learning and Knowledge Center
- ◆ **Video:** Physical and Motor Development in Preschoolers
- ◆ **Link:** <https://eclkc.ohs.acf.hhs.gov/school-readiness/teacher-time-series/physical-motor-development-preschoolers>
- ◆ **Description:** This video discusses how children's learning is impacted through daily movement, specifically gross and fine motor movements. The video provides ideas for educators to support these movements through daily activities.