

- CELIA PRIEBE SHEDD
- ASSOCIATE TEACHING PROFESSOR
- IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY
- TIFFANY SCHIEFFER
- LAB SCHOOL TEACHER
- IOWA STATE UNIVERSITY

LARGE MOTOR EVERYDAY



MOTOR SKILLS/DEVELOPMENT

Motor skills support children in fully exploring their environment and interacting with people and things and thus, support development in all domains.

<https://www.headstart.gov/school-readiness/article/perceptual>



MOTOR SKILLS

- Large Motor/Gross Motor
 - Gross motor skills are the movements we make with large muscles, like those in your legs, arms and torso. “Gross,” in this case, means “large,” and “motor” means “movement.” Walking and waving your arm are examples of gross movements.
- Fine Motor
 - Fine motor skills are the small, precise movements we make with our hands, fingers, feet and toes. They involve the complex coordination of your muscles, joints and nerves.

EXAMPLES OF LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENTS



PEDALING



STANDING



RUNNING

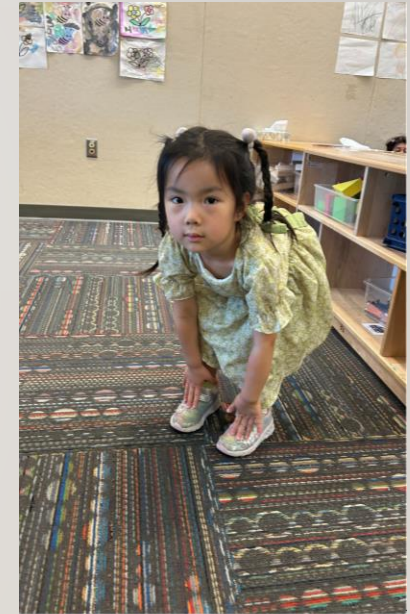
EXAMPLES OF LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENTS



TWISTING



SWINGING



BENDING OVER

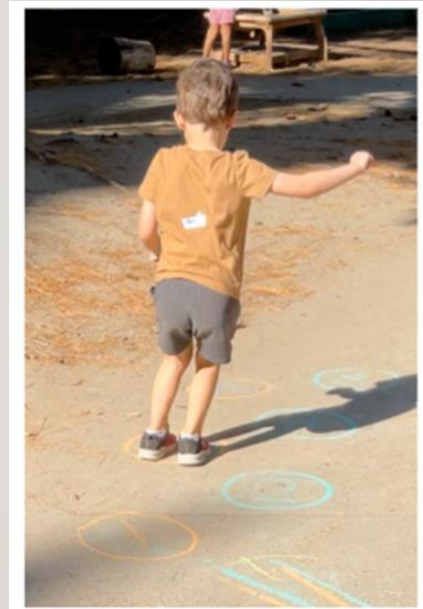
EXAMPLES OF LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENTS



THROWING A BALL



SOMERSAULT



JUMPING

PARTICIPATION

- Jot a few notes
 - What large motor activities/choices do you offer now?
 - What barriers/challenges do you have?
- Discuss with your table
- Share with the group
- What questions do you have?

GROSS MOTOR SKILLS REQUIRE PROPER COORDINATION AND FUNCTION OF

- Skeletal Muscles (the strength and power behind the movements)
- Bones (the structures that your muscles attach to)
- Nerves (the “messengers” of your brain that tell your muscles when and how to move)
- How Do Our Bodies Move

LARGE MOTOR SKILLS ARE RELATED TO:

- Balance
- Coordination
- Body awareness and spatial awareness
- Reaction time

HEALTH BENEFITS OF LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENT

- Increase cardiorespiratory fitness
- Build strong bones and muscles
- Maintain a healthy weight
- Improve sleep
- Reduce the risk of developing health conditions such as
 - Heart disease
 - Cancer
 - Type 2 diabetes
 - High blood pressure
 - Obesity

MORE BENEFITS OF LARGE MOTOR MOVEMENT

- Brain development
 - crossing midline-bubbles, scarves
 - Using both sides of the body (bilateral coordination)-self hug, tricycle, crawling
- Active and passive balance
- Meets children's 'need to move'
- Leads to fine motor development
- Helps maintain a healthy appetite
- Helps with coordination

ACTIVE OPPORTUNITIES FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY (CARING FOR OUR CHILDREN)

All children, birth to 6 years of age, should participate daily in:

- Two to three occasions of active play outdoors, weather permitting (see [Standard 3.1.3.2: Playing Outdoors](#) for appropriate weather conditions)
- Two or more structured or caregiver/teacher/adult-led activities or games that promote movement over the course of the day—indoor or outdoor <https://iastate.box.com/s/6absb5ryfh2e3hfvr3f6pxmxxzyjnfab>
- Continuous opportunities to develop and practice age-appropriate gross motor and movement skills



CONTINUOUS OPPORTUNITIES TO DEVELOP AND PRACTICE AGE-APPROPRIATE GROSS MOTOR AND MOVEMENT SKILLS

Choices during the day

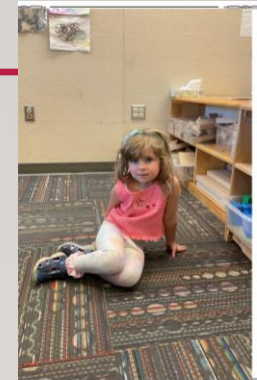
- Sitting at group time
- Hallway movements
- Sitting or standing during work time



CRISS
CROSS/PRETZEL



MOUNTAIN



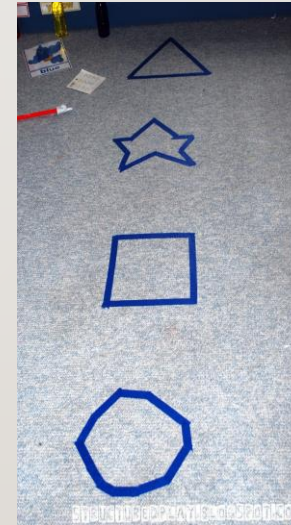
MERMAID



TREE

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- One big area of the classroom for large motor play during free choice time
 - Tape Ideas
 - Jumping to shapes, letters or numbers
 - Make a hopscotch
 - Tape lines or signal movements
 - Tape on the wall
 - Tear it off
 - Put things on



LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Scarves
 - Dance with scarves
 - Catch scarves
 - Pull or wave scarves
 - Juggle scarves

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Boxes

- Playing in and around
- Turn into 'cars'
- Use as tunnels
- Make a face with a mouth and throw beanbags to 'feed the ____'



LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Bean Bags
 - Tosses
 - Juggling
 - Bean Bag Song Bean Bag Song
- Bowling
 - Commercial
 - Homemade



HEALTHY PLATE
TOSS

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

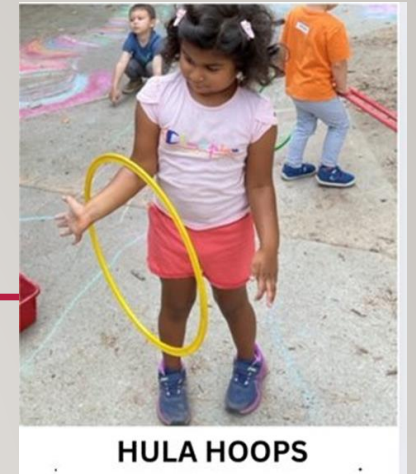
- Balance beam
- Riding toys
- Streamers
- Rocking boat
- Step stool

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Indoor climbers
- Laundry baskets and crumpled up paper
- Ball catchers
- Instruments and marching
- Garland and tubes

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Hoops
 - Rolling and catching
 - Chasing
 - Hopping in and out of
 - Use like a jump rope
 - Spin on arms



HULA HOOPS



HULA HOOPS

LARGE MOTOR CENTER IDEAS

- Small parachute/old sheet
- Obstacle course
- Ring toss
- Scooters
- High Steppers
- What ideas do you have?



PARTICIPATION

- Jot a few notes
 - Do you have a space for large motor play?
 - Ideas to address your barriers/challenges.
 - What three center ideas could you offer the next three weeks?
 - What movement choices can you offer next week?
- Discuss with your table
- Share with the group
- What questions do you have?

RESOURCES

-
- **Cleveland Clinic. (n.d.).** *Gross motor skills.* Cleveland Clinic. <https://my.clevelandclinic.org/health/articles/gross-motor-skills>
 - **Haupt, A. L., Massare, B., Nizer, J., Paul, M., & Valenti, L. A.** (2024). *Healthy young children.* National Association for the Education of Young Children.
 - **Schieffer, T. M., & Thomas, K. T.** (2012). *Fifteen years of promise in school-based physical activity interventions: A meta-analysis.* Human Kinetics.
 - **Wiener-Vacher, S. R., Hamilton, D. A., & Wiener, S. I.** (2013). Vestibular activity and cognitive development in children: Perspectives. *Frontiers in Integrative Neuroscience*, 7, Article 84. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fnint.2013.00084>
 - **Shi, P., & Feng, X.** (2022). Motor skills and cognitive benefits in children and adolescents: Relationships, mechanism, and perspectives. *Frontiers in Psychology*, 13, Article 1033572. <https://doi.org/10.3389/fpsyg.2022.1033572>
 - **American Academy of Pediatrics, American Public Health Association, & National Resource Center for Health and Safety in Child Care and Early Education.** (2025). *Caring for our children: National health and safety performance standards; Guidelines for early care and education programs* (4th ed.). American Academy of Pediatrics.

RESOURCES

- **Palmer, H.** (2004). *The Bean Bag Song. On Can a jumbo jet sing the alphabet?* [Album]. Hap-Pal Music.
- **SciShow Kids.** (2016, February 3). *How do our bodies move?* [Video]. YouTube.
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hKoCQCnC2f8>