



fine motor strength
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hand arches
in-hand manipulation
thumb opposition
finger isolation
bilateral coordination
crossing midline
eye-hand coordination
upper body strength
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Crossing the Midline

Crossing the Midline refers to the ability to reach across the middle of the body with the arms and legs crossing over to the opposite side. Examples include being able to draw a horizontal line across a page without having to switch hands in the middle or sitting cross-legged on the floor.

Being able to cross the midline (an imaginary line down the center of the body) is an important developmental skill. It is needed for reading and writing, for being able to reach toward your foot to put on a shoe and sock with both hands, for participating in many sports and many other day to day activities. Children who have difficulty reaching across their middle may actually get stuck in mid-reach and have to switch hands. Or they may compensate by turning their trunk to reach toward the opposite side. Poor midline crossing also makes it difficult to visually track a moving object from one side to the other or to fully track from left to right when reading.



Activities

Catch and Throw games:

- ★ To discourage turning the body to reach to the other side, consider having the child straddle a bench or a jumping ball
- Throw or roll, if on the floor, a medium or large ball towards targets (bucket, container) to the right of center and the left of center
- Bat balloons or a light Gertie balls with both hands on the bat or a tennis racket
- Paddle games like ping pong, Stick-ums, water paddle, scoop paddle; encourage using the same hand
- Bean bag toss: place target containers to the left and to the right; instruct the child to use the same hand for a full round, may switch to the other hand for alternating rounds if desired.
- Catch balls thrown, or rolled, to the right and to the left of center, encourage catching with both hands together

General Activities

- Double drums or bongos: challenge your child to bang the right drum with the left hand and the left drum with the right hand.
- Push toy trucks and cars while crawling on the floor along a path made with tape; create lots of turns and waves
- Floor play: when playing on the floor, encourage your child to lean on one hand or elbow. Place the toys or games on the side being leaned on. This forces the child to cross the middle when playing.
- Play sorting games: place objects to sort on the left side and containers to place them in on the right side: sort coins, cars vs. trucks, pompoms, marbles, bingo chips, etc.
- Scoop sand into a bucket using one hand to hold the bucket and the other to scoop and reach across
- Play flash light tag in a darkened room on the ceiling and walls while lying on your back; be sure to hold the flashlight in the same hand
- Steering wheel (found in many playgrounds): encouraging using the same hand to turn the wheel all the way around
- Alternating hand-over-hand activities such as pulling along a rope while on a scooterboard
- Make figure 8's and other motions with streamers; one hand at a time and crossing left and right
- With a group of friends, play circle games to music while sitting crossed legged on the floor, such as passing a balloon or ball, toy, etc.
- Play body awareness games like the Hokey Pokey and Simon Says

Fine Motor Activities



- Draw a large circle, oval, horizontal line or any picture that requires a left to right reach. Position your child in the center. Have your child place stickers or a stamper along the lines of the picture using the same hand.

- Coin flipping: line up a row of coins, placing the child at the center. Flip coins one at a time with the same hand from one end to the other.
- Deal cards to a group using one hand to hold the deck and the other to deal to everyone around the table.

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