

## PARENT DIRECTED ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP GROSS MOTOR SKILLS

### BALANCE ACTIVITIES

- Play a balance game in which your child pretends to be a tight rope walker and walks along a line or string placed on the floor. See if she can walk along a narrow board on the ground; try it with eyes open, closed. Walk with both hands on hips and then on shoulders.
- Animal walk: Trot like a pony; hop like a frog, crab walk, bear walk-- Forward and backward; Bunny hop to a target.
- Have her jump a certain distance on one foot, then back on the other foot. See if she can stand on one foot and balance for a short time.
- Play "Statue" with her and have her "freeze" while in mid-stride.
- Play on a mini-tramp; first in sitting, then in kneeling, then standing while holding hands with a partner that is not on the tramp.
- Box activities: Create an obstacle course--over and under, standing and crawling through the course. Box races: pushing and pulling, one foot in and one foot out of a box or one foot in one box and the other foot in another box as if skating.
- Hip Hop: Place a long rope on the floor in a pattern in which rope crosses itself often. Have child walk along the rope, jumping over each crossing point.
- Backward kickball: Kicking forward: child is to name where or to whom she is going to kick the ball. Try it backward and sideways.
- Ladder Walk: Lay an ordinary ladder down on the floor. Child walks from point A to point B and must "climb" the ladder. Child can think of different ways to walk, play follow the leader, or use your direction. Try walking only on rungs, on the sides of the ladder, or stepping on the floor between the rungs.
- Bounce on a hoppity-hop ball.
- Play "jump the brook" over two tape lines. Gradually increase the width of the stream. Try this with both feet together or a running step-jump.
- Have child pretend to be a tree blowing in the wind. Encourage weight shifting from one foot to the other and hold in place for at least 2-3 seconds.
- Draw small circles with chalk or masking tape; have child try to walk on tiptoes only in the circles or around a larger circle. Or incorporate tiptoe walking into an aerobic/dance exercise with a partner.
- Tape large paper circles and squares on the floor. Show your child how to walk only on those shapes.