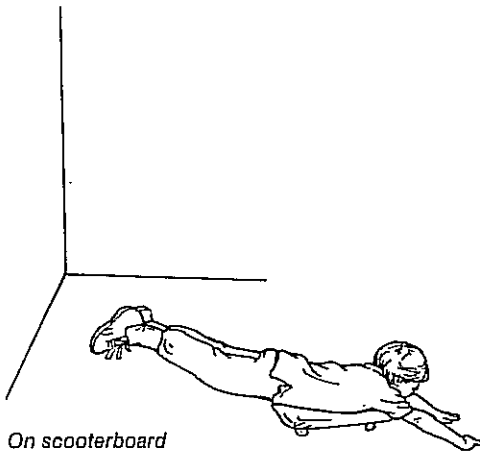


Child's Name _____

Date _____

POSTURAL CONTROL
Gym, Playground, and Extracurricular Practice
TRUNK EXTENSION



Purpose

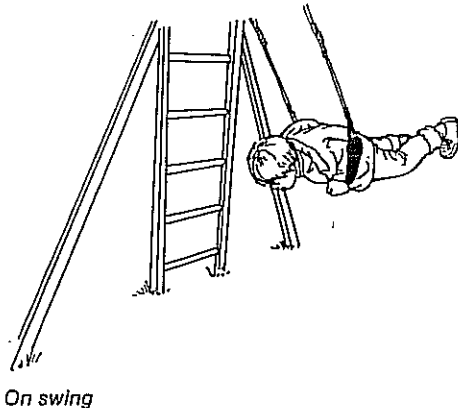
To improve child's ability to use the muscles that result in straightening the trunk

Preparation

If tone is abnormal, spend a few minutes working on normalizing tone before beginning this activity.

Activities

Any activity that requires pulling the back into an arched position is helpful. Incorporate these into classroom movement or gym activities.



1. Scooterboard. Child lies on stomach on a scooterboard, keeping arms and legs up. Child pushes off from a wall by starting with legs bent and feet against wall, then straightens legs to propel scooterboard forward. The back is arched, the head and shoulders are raised, legs and hips are extended, and arms are either bent at the elbow to hold onto the scooterboard or held straight out in front. Child propels scooterboard as far as possible to beat previous distance records or another child's performance.

2. Swings. Child lies on stomach on a swing and runs forward. Arms are held straight out in front or used to hold onto swing; body weight rests on chest or upper abdomen. Child lifts feet off the ground and swings in this position. Soft swings or net swings work well for this.

Child maintains this position on a playground swing or net swing while throwing beanbags or balls into a bucket or at a target.



3. Prone extension positioning. Child lies on stomach and arches back and neck while pulling straight arms and legs off the ground. Child is encouraged to "fly like a bird" for increasing periods of time as skill improves, and to rock from side to side in this position.

4. Physioball. Adult provides support as child lies on back over a large ball so that gravity and the shape of the ball lengthen the muscles that flex the trunk. Child rolls onto stomach, then lies on ball; adult provides support at the hips, knees, or ankles. Adult tips ball forward so child can reach a ball placed on a chair or the floor, and then pulls child back up onto the ball so child can throw the ball at a target or into a bucket. Arching of the back and straight arms are encouraged. Exercise is repeated.

5. Wheelbarrow walking. Child arches back and holds head up while adult or another child supports legs. Child walks on straight arms and attempts to walk for longer distances or lengths of time.

Desired Response

Child arches back, raises head and shoulders, extends legs and hips; child maintains this position for increasing periods of time.

Variations and Adaptations

If child is unable to maintain this position independently, start with activities that involve passive positioning, such as lying on stomach in a net swing or hammock while throwing a beanbag. The net swing should support the child's body in an arched position from the thighs to under the arms. Progress to activities that require active holding of this position (such as the same activity on a soft playground swing) for very short periods of time.

If child sits with very rounded back, encourage sitting with arms behind trunk when watching television or engaging in group sitting activities.

Increase length of time for maintaining these positions or engaging in these activities as abilities and comfort increase.

Use of these activities should be directed by a qualified therapist.