

Gross Motor Skills - Activities to Promote Jumping

In order to jump a child needs to bend their knees, tuck the tummy in then push their feet off the floor. S/he should aim to land on the balls of their feet, with their bottom tucked in and head up. It would be advisable to liaise with the child's physiotherapist for specific advice about the child's abilities.

Resources:

Ball, quoits, hoop, newspaper, skipping rope, trampette.

What to do:

Activities to strengthen the feet and ankles should be practiced before a child attempts jumping:

Feet - walking using different parts of the feet, e.g. toes, heels, insides, outsides.

Heel walking - moving along a straight line, then through 'S' shaped line.

Tip-toe walking - ask the child to walk on tip-toes, forwards, backwards. Next ask the child to tip-toe walk and change direction.

Ball - sitting on a chair, ask the child to put a small ball under the left foot. Next roll the foot over the ball, forwards and backwards. Change to the other foot. Try using a football size ball, roll it using both feet together.

Beanbag or quoit - ask the child to sit on a chair. Pick up a quoit using the toes of either or both feet

Tennis ball or shuttlecock, - ask the child to use their feet to pick up the tennis ball then place it in a container, e.g. bin, bucket, box or tray.

Activities to encourage jumping:

Hoop - ask the child to practice jumping in and out of the hoop.

Newspaper - place a piece of newspaper on the floor. Ask the child to stand on the paper. Next ask the child to jump. The adult quickly removes the paper when the child is in the air (the paper will tear if the feet do not jump).

Paired working - ask two children to stand facing each other, holding hands. Nominate one child to jump on the spot. The second child then has their turn to practise jumping.

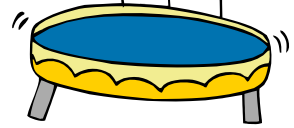


Trampette - initially hold the child's hands when practising jumping.



Extension Activities:

Increasing the base off the floor will encourage the child to jump further.



Mat - the child jumps off the mat on to the floor. Try stacking one mat on top of another to create a higher pile, then the child jumps off the higher pile of mats to the floor.

Low bench - the child jumps off the bench to the floor.

Top Tips:

Children may benefit from watching an adult then copying their actions.

Gestures may compliment verbal instructions.

Initially children may need an adult to hold their hands, until they gain confidence.