

the school years toolkit

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Core stability

Core Stability is necessary to help maintain a good posture and give a stable base to allow the arms, legs and head to move in a coordinated manner. It involves the muscles in the trunk, shoulders and hips.

If you have used this Advice Sheet and not seen improvement after four months, please contact CYPIT.

What you may see

- A child with poor postural stability will demonstrate difficulties with:
- Remaining upright in their seat
- Leaning on walls or other people
- Holding postures against gravity
- Carrying out both fine and gross motor activities
- Dressing and undressing
- Poor concentration and attention.

Strategies and Advice

The following activities will help improve the muscle strength in the shoulder, hips and trunk and therefore help improve core stability.

Children should be supervised at all times whilst completing these activities and, if working indoors, shoes and socks should be removed. Choose a couple of activities each time to help prevent boredom and keep the activities interesting.

Chair push ups

Whilst sat on a chair hold on to the edge of it and push your body up from the seat whilst pushing down using your arms and hands only. Aim to complete five – 10 in a row.

Arm spirals

Hold both arms out to the side at shoulder height and begin to circle them, starting with small circles and progressing to larger circles. When the circles have reached full size, gradually reduce the circles to get back to the smallest size (approx 10 circles in total). Start with a few repetitions aiming to get up to 10 with practice.

Section 5 **advice** sheets

Wall push ups

Face the wall standing approx one-and-a-half arm's lengths away. Then stretch out your arms at shoulder level placing your hands flat on the wall. Bring your face to the wall without moving your feet and keeping your body straight, then straighten your arms pushing yourself away from the wall. Repeat 10 times.

Aeroplanes

Lie on your tummy, initially raising your head off the ground, then arms, then legs until the only thing that is touching the floor is your tummy. Hold this position for 10 seconds if possible.

Bridging

Lie on your back, with your body in a straight line. Bend your knees up, whilst keeping your feet on the ground and keep your arms by your sides. Tip your pelvis backwards to flatten your lower back into the floor and then raise your bottom off the floor keeping your heels on the floor. Hold this position for 10 seconds if possible.

Sit ups

Lie on your back with your knees bent up but feet on the floor. Place your hands on your thighs, tuck your chin onto your chest (it is important not to try to overuse your neck muscles when sitting up and keeping your chin tucked in will prevent this). Then run your hands up towards your knees whilst lifting your head and shoulders off the ground. Do this slowly and try to get a little further up each time you practise.

Crab Football

Support your weight on your hands and feet in a crab position. Then kick a ball to a partner and back whilst maintaining this position.

Hip Walking

Sit on the floor with your legs extended and arms crossed. Then move forward by weight shifting from hip to hip whilst moving the leg forward. Keep alternating which leg moves forward.

High Kneeling

Maintain a good posture in high kneeling whilst carrying out the activities of your choice. Kneeling on hands and knees lifting alternate legs and arms.

In four point kneeling, lift your right arm straight out in front and your left leg out behind. Then repeat this with the opposite arm and leg. To start, just try lifting an individual arm or leg and keeping it there without losing your balance

Section 5 **advice** sheets

Body Wrestling

Face a partner in half kneeling then place flat hands together and push against each other whilst keeping a good upright position. Then try and pull against each other.