

Midline Skills

Crossing midline means that a body part is able to spontaneously move over to the other side of the body to work there. Crossing midline is important on a physical level and a brain level. At the brain level, the ability to cross midline indicates that the right and left side of the brain are communicating effectively with each other. At the physical level, when students spontaneously cross midline with the dominant hand, then the dominant hand practices and is able to develop good fine motor skills. If your student avoids crossing midline, then both hands will tend to get equal practice at developing skills and true handedness may be delayed. This means that learning to write will be much more difficult as they will have two less skilled hands rather than one stronger, more skilled hand.

Signs your student has difficulty crossing midline:

- Continues switching hands during writing, coloring, drawing tasks
- Transfers objects hand to hand frequently
- Uses left hand for activities on the left side of body and right hand for activities on right side.
- Has poor pencil skills
- Difficulty looking/scanning in multiple places. Leads to difficulty visual tracking for reading and copying in school
- Difficulty throwing/catching a ball

Activities to Encourage Crossing Midline:

1. Position activities strategically - Set up games, objects so that the student has to reach across body to obtain the piece/item.
2. Standing at chalkboard/white board or use a slant board at table
 - Draw train tracks, roads, maze paths
 - Horizontal figure 8 – trace and re-trace
 - Drawing multi-color rainbow
3. Drive car on curvy “road” using one hand at a time
4. Scoop sand into a bucket using one hand to hold the bucket and the other to scoop and reach across
5. 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.
6. Stringing beads
7. Stickers
8. Work on vertical surface
9. Deal cards to a group using one hand to hold the deck and the other to deal to everyone around the table.
10. Simple relays – have several children sit side by side and pass objects down the line. Important that the student passes and receives using both hands together.
11. Clean up – wipe dry erase board/table using only one hand and keeping body in one spot
12. Any game set-up where student has to reach across body to obtain or move pieces
13. Simon Says