

## ***Motor Planning***

Motor planning is the ability to plan, organize, and carry-out a motor action. Once a skill has been learned, it no longer requires conscious motor planning; it is then considered part of the child's motor memory. A child with motor planning difficulties often has to plan a task over and over because it doesn't "sink in" and become spontaneous (never moving into motor memory). The ability to motor plan is required to learn and remember any motor task.

Children with difficulty motor planning appear:

- Clumsy, uncoordinated
- Slow with motor activities
- Messy or accident prone
- Difficulty or decreased interest in physical activities
- Unable to generalize movements to a novel task

Tips for use in the classroom/playground:

- Simplify motor sequences/assignments into manageable "chunks". Give 1-2 steps at a time and have student repeat directions.
- Use imitation and visual models, especially when a new motor task is presented or a variation is required.
- Allow extra time
- Verbal prompts and physical help can be used. Fade these as soon as possible.
- On the playground, encourage use of large or moving equipment such as monkey bars, barrels, swings, crawling through tunnels, slides, kicking balls, etc... Encourage new and different ways to move and use the equipment. Follow the leader!

Center/Classroom Activities:

1. Provide a variety of sensory experiences. Use sand, macaroni, rice, fabric, water, brushes, bean bags etc... Encourage students to explore and use these materials freely
2. Working in pairs or small groups, have students position their body into letters/numbers.
3. Funny animal walks. Crab, bear, snake, duck, elephant, rabbit, etc...
4. Imitate hand clapping rhythms
5. Play "Simon Says"
6. Twister
7. Throwing ball/beanbag to self or to others. Increase difficulty after they can toss and catch by having them clap 1, 2, 3+ times after toss before they catch.
8. Follow the leader games – students can imitate a leader at front of class/ group. i.e.: raise one hand, place hand behind head, arms out to side, bend elbows, rub tummy...
9. Student bowling – use empty 2-liters as bowling pins; student is the "ball". Student must roll down a lane and see how many pins they can knock down.
10. Obstacle courses