

Prime Time

Physical

A movement approach to learning and development

Jo Blank

Contents

Introduction	2	Section 4: Movement and the Curriculum	40
The national picture	2	Why is it important?	40
The body and the brain	3	The adult role	41
		Get active!	42
PART 1			
Section 1: Movement Play	5	Working with parents and carers	53
Why is it important?	5	Planning for everyone	54
The adult role	8	Playing safely	56
Get active!	10		
Section 2: Movement Skills	16	PART 2	
Why is it important?	16	8-week Development Programme	58
The adult role	18	Revision of key knowledge	76
Get active!	19	Audit	83
Section 3: Movement and Dance	29	Resources	91
Why is it important?	29	Acknowledgements	92
Adult role	31		
Get active!	32		

Published by Practical Pre-School Books, A Division of MA Education Ltd, St Jude's Church, Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 0PB.

Tel: 020 7738 5454 www.practicalpreschoolbooks.com

Associate Publisher: Angela Morano Shaw

Design: Alison Coombes **fonthillcreative** 01722 717043

All images © MA Education Ltd 2016.

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopied or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher. ISBN 978-1-909280-92-2

Section 1: Movement Play



Why is it important?

This section is about promoting children's natural physical development. It explains how 'movement play' (based on Jabadao, 2007) enables them to explore what their bodies can do, is essential for brain development and helps them to become who they are.

Given the right environment and adult support, babies and young children naturally seek to practise and develop movements that are right for them at the time. Their bodies know what they need to do!

These movements prompt brain development and form the basis for developing more complex physical skills.

Movement is the natural way children learn. Babies and children use their bodies to learn how they fit into the world. Early movement play builds essential skills for life. Movement play is ordinary playful movement based on

children's natural developmental movement. It is child-led and is about exploring what the body can do.

Developmental movement is children's natural physical development. It is the sequence of reflexes and movement patterns that begin at birth and continue through childhood that help our bodies work efficiently. Examples are grasping, flinging arms back (reflexes), rolling, spinning, crawling, running (movement patterns).

All humans are born with reflexes and some develop after birth. These are instinctive responses to stimuli. Some are necessary for survival, like the moro reflex. This is when a baby throws back their arms in a response to a sudden noise, or lowering of the head. Given enough opportunity to move their bodies, babies and toddlers gradually gain control over these spontaneous reflexes. The moro reflex is usually integrated by four months.

Get active!



Providing a movement friendly environment

Why? Children are naturally driven to do these significant movements at any time, and the best support you can provide is an appropriate movement friendly environment.

Resources: Equipment that supports early movement, like tunnels, body balls, rockers, soft play, climbing equipment, a soft surface, cushions, tummy rolls.

How?

- Provide sufficient clear floor space; ensure adults are at floor level
- Place some toys and equipment on the floor
- Value floor based movement even if children can walk
- Enable children to choose how they sit at certain times of the day, such as story time
- Use belly crawling or crawling in familiar games, such as 'What time is it Mr Wolf?'
- Have fun moving from one place to another during routines: march to go outside, be aeroplanes to get to the snack table.

Helpful hint: Value movement learning by talking about it and making it visible on displays and in learning journeys.

Setting up a movement area

Why? A movement area values movement in your room and makes it of equal importance to other learning areas. Just as you organise role play, construction and writing areas, you can provide an area for movement. It provides a place for children just to 'be', to move when they want to, and to explore strong feelings when needed. A movement area can be permanent or available for part of the week, if there are space issues.

Resources: A floor space with surfaces for sliding, rolling, dancing and relaxing. Props to encourage different movements, such as ribbon sticks, scarves, musical instruments, hoops, elastics, Lycra, soft body balls. For younger children, textured materials to encourage touching and feeling such as pine cones, brushes, sponges, massage balls, bark and peat. These could be put into trays for crawling and walking on. Use different textured carpet squares for crawling and walking on. An easy to use CD player, a collection of music to create different moods and stimulate a range of movements: slow, fast, peaceful, lively (Arc Music, World Music series).

How? As with any new area, children will need help as they discover how to use this area and keep themselves and each other safe. Talk about the things you can do in the movement area such as rolling around, relaxing, dancing, playing with others, boisterous play. The rules they must remember are:

- Don't hurt yourself
- Don't hurt anyone else (Jabadao, 2007).

Enable children to take responsibility for their own safety, by helping them to notice what is risky. Encourage children to ask for help if they need it. If a child is moving in a way that concerns you, stop the activity and help them notice the risks, consider the possible consequences and find solutions.

Helpful hint: Place some drawing materials in the area sometimes, so that children can express themselves in art, whilst relaxing and listening to music.



Section 3: Movement and Dance



Why is it important?

Movement and dance explore 'where' and 'how' the body moves. This develops an awareness of space and improves the quality of movement. The 'where' and 'how' and with 'what' and with 'whom' the body moves are known as 'movement concepts', in other words, it is about 'movement understanding'.

Movement concepts (understanding) must be developed alongside **movement skills**.

As children improve their skills, they develop an understanding of where and how their body moves. They become aware of how much effort to use to throw a ball a long way; they learn how to avoid others as they run about.

The movement skill is what the body does. The movement concept is where, how, and with what or whom the skill is

performed. In order to use skills in different situations, (for example, climb a variety of equipment, run quickly or slowly to receive a ball) children need to be aware of:

Space – where the body moves, the space around them, directions, levels, their own personal space and general space.

Effort – how the body moves, how much effort they need to perform a skill, how hard to kick the ball to make it reach their partner, how slowly to move to balance across a beam.

Relationship – with whom or what the body moves, the relationship it has with objects and people, how to use the bat to hit the ball, how close to stand to the person who is throwing the ball.

The adult role



Leading movement and dance sessions

- Have plenty of enthusiasm and energy
- Believe in what you are doing, have confidence!
- Be involved, your movements are important so exaggerate everything
- Observe children's responses and be flexible and ready to change and move on; respond to their comments and mood and ask yourself, 'is it working?'
- Use powerful language, images and words to stimulate imagination
- Control your voice by using tone and expression sensitively to create atmosphere. For example, whisper slowly when creeping through the jungle, and be louder and talk faster when running away from lions.

Making it work

- Enlist extra help from staff where possible
- Begin with a calm quiet atmosphere; space children out, begin by doing simple loosening movements (see warm-up ideas in the next section)
- If this is new for you, begin by dancing with a small group for a few minutes
- Don't worry about the non-doers, let them watch, or give them an instrument to involve them. They will be absorbing more than you think!
- Aim for a quiet, organised ending, such as going to sleep, making themselves very small, tall, or stretching out or holding a position.

8-week Development Programme for 2-3s

Week	Adult role	Get active!
<p>Week 3 Focus: Climbing and balancing</p> <p><i>Continue</i> Movement play</p> <p><i>And</i> Review ball skills</p>	<p>Read Section 2: Movement Skills and complete the 'Reflection' activities.</p> <p>Encourage them to use different climbing and balancing equipment indoors and outdoors.</p> <p>Continue with movement play as an everyday part of every child's experiences.</p> <p>Lead simple movement games for running and jumping, such as follow the leader, rhymes, the Bean game.</p>	<p>Improve climbing and balancing experiences, based on your review of equipment and its use. Be creative with what you have! Think of under, over, round and through. Rearrange your existing equipment to make it more challenging, both indoors and outdoors. Make a wish list!</p> <p>Play simple movement games as in week 2.</p> <p>List the equipment you have for developing ball skills and record:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ How often it is used ■ Who uses it ■ How they are used.
Review	What worked well?	What can you improve? How? Complete the 'Equipment review sheet' on page 75.
<p>Week 4 Focus: Ball skills</p> <p><i>Continue</i> Movement play Movement games Improving climbing experiences</p>	<p>Complete the 'Revision of key knowledge' on pages 78 and 80.</p> <p>Introduce ball play, focus on throwing and kicking at the level of your key children.</p> <p>Continue with movement play every day, emphasising proprioceptive and vestibular development.</p> <p>Play simple games spontaneously as week 3.</p> <p>Encourage children to try new experiences climbing and balancing.</p>	<p>Make sure you have variety of soft balls and bean bags, which are attractive to children. Introduce simple games using targets and buckets to throw at and into.</p> <p>Use the body balls and Lycra and keep improving your movement play area, adding music, scarves and ribbon sticks.</p> <p>Combine equipment in different ways to provide variety of pathways for approaching equipment.</p>
Review	What worked well?	What can you improve? How?