

How to help your child with planning and organising their movements.



Why?

Being able to plan and organise movements is important for learning all sorts of new movements like riding a bike, learning a sport like swimming, football or learning a new dance routine or your favourite pop song. To be good at planning we need to be able to think through an idea, plan how to do it and then actually do it. Although this sounds like a complicated process, this happens automatically for most of us.

Planning and organising relies on good body awareness so it may be helpful to look at these ideas first then try the ideas below.

- Copying movements like playing Simon Says, being different animals eg. elephant, kangaroo, crab, snake, rabbit, monkey.
- Copying movements whilst outdoors eg. be a monster, be a mouse, walk backwards, sideways,
- Copy sequences like hop, hop, jump, jump and try hand clapping games or copying rhythms with a drum or on your knees.
- Make up obstacle courses indoors or outdoors and include things to go under, over and through eg. coffee table, chair, cushions or outdoor equipment like a trampoline, hoopla
- empty boxes, garden chair etc.
- Encourage the child to plan out the obstacle course with a variety of objects in a different order. Ask them to tell you how they are going to do it to encourage them to plan ahead. Check afterwards if it went to the plan they made.
- Encourage different ways of moving eg. crawling, going backwards, walking sideways if this seems too easy, try different ways of moving on the obstacle course.
- Play 'Kids Charades' or make up your own cards for miming actions like brushing teeth, driving a car, using the phone for other to guess. Start with simple mimes becoming more complicated as they get better.
- With a new toy or game encourage child to investigate how it works and experiment with it.
- If this is not working for them try giving clues or ideas but try not to tell them exactly what to do or do it for them.
- For older school age children who find it difficult to pack their schoolbags, or who forget gym kits or lunchboxes, try to help them by using daily checklists or simple colour-coded timetables as reminders.