**Physiotherapy Advice**

**Gross Motor Skills**

 **CORE STABILITY & CROSSING MIDLINE**

**Aim:** Working on keeping an upright posture during sitting/kneeling/standing activities and also the ability to keep a trunk stable while moving the arms/legs and body. This also incorporatesworking on awareness of the left and right sides of the body

**What to do:**

1. Ensure area is clear of other obstacles
2. Encourage child into 4-point kneeling position, i.e. onto hands and knees in crawling position. Use ‘pair of hands’ as a visual cue as required. You may need to demonstrate this position to your child and or assist them in this position
3. Set toys out on floor within arm’s reach of your child
4. Set balls/counters on floor in-between child and toys
5. Ask child to put one ball/counter into/onto/beside each toy so having to lift one arm away from the floor
6. Encourage child to keep going until there is a ball/counter in/on/beside each toy
7. Encourage child to use one arm then the other arm
8. Try to maintain position of body throughout activity
9. Try to repeat 3 times

**Variations:**

* If unable to maintain 4-point kneeling position, encourage child to lay on tummy to complete activity instead
* You can encourage your child to complete a matching shape/colour/picture game instead of toys or balls/counters. It can be any games/activity that your child enjoys
* Reaching for objects in 4 point kneeling/crawl position can challenge core stability more, ensure that your child tries to maintain the position throughout the activity.
* Encourage child to ‘cross their midline’ i.e. to reach for object with left hand and place on right side, and vice versa

**Similar activities:**

* Any activity in 4-point kneeling position will challenge core stability
* Practise crawling at home
* Practise reaching for objects across body to work on ‘crossing their midline’

Important Note

Encouraging gross motor skills requires a safe, open play space and adult supervision at all times. Helping a child succeed in gross motor tasks requires patience and opportunities for a child to practise desired skills.

Remember, each child is an individual and children develop at different rates. You know your child best so ensure the activity is aimed at an appropriate level for him/her and provide supervision/assistance at all times.