Body Scheme
Body Awareness

Children’s Therapy Services
What is Body Scheme and Body Awareness?

**Body Scheme - Body scheme** is the knowledge and awareness of our own bodies learnt mainly through movement and experience.

**Body Awareness** - Understanding the boundaries of the body and its movements within space. This is developed through proprioception and kinaesthesia.

**Proprioception & Kinaesthesia**

Proprioception is the internal awareness of the body position of body parts in space and in relation to each other e.g. knowing where parts of the body are without being able to see them. Kinaesthesia is the awareness of movement of body parts in space.

When applied to the hands - Proprioception is the internal awareness of finger position in relation to other fingers and in space e.g. knowing where the fingers are without being able to see them. Kinaesthesia is the awareness of movement of the fingers (even without being able to see them).

**General Guidelines**

**Encourage physical activity that explores movements of the body from one position in space to another and in relation to space around them.**

Provide the child with a variety of sensory play e.g. sand and water, rough and tumble, texture games.

Begin with large movements, progress later to fine movements, begin with concrete concepts (i.e. crawl under the chair) before using abstract concepts (i.e. drawing yourself under the chair).

Children need to understand spatial concepts i.e. in / on / under / above in both movement and language.

Encourage weight bearing through joints to stimulate joint/muscle feedback.

Work with and without vision, as child can tolerate, e.g. work behind back, under screen and offer the child a lot of feedback (visual, verbal, touch).
Provide the child with activities that require hard work physically for the hands e.g. plasticine / play dough.

Establish a gross motor activity that the child ‘enjoys’ e.g. walking, swimming, horse riding.

Be sensitive to a child’s changing body image as they grow.

For older children (12 years and over) who have not sufficiently developed these skills, help them to use different ways of coping with their environment.

Activities for Home

• Rough and tumble play
• Gym Ball activities
• Wheelbarrows
• Swimming
• Judging games / Obstacle Courses

Activities for School

• Chair and wall push ups
• Playground, climbing, jumping etc.
• Ball Games
• Movin´sit cushion
• Obstacle Course

Useful Groups in the Community

• Tumbletots

Why is Body Awareness important for your child?

Good Body Awareness enables us to :

• Carry out coordinated movements with use of appropriate muscle strength
• Fine motor tasks: control of pencil and scissors
• Gain a realistic body scheme and self-esteem
• Move safely in our environment without bumping into obstacles
• Gain a realistic judgement of owns capabilities
For further information about this service contact:

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If you require this information in a different format such as in large print or on audio tape, or in a different language please contact the service on the details above.

If you have any compliments about this service or suggestions for improvements, contact our Patient Advice and Liaison Service on 0300 131 1000 (charges may apply depending on your network) or email: ccs-tr.pals@nhs.net.

For free, confidential health advice and information 24 hours a day, 365 days a year please contact NHS 111.