

Balance &
Coordination

Physical Therapy Home Activities

Backwards Dunk

Targeted Skills:

Postural stability for functional mobility such as sitting, standing, and running

Materials:

- Lightweight toy, stuffed animal, or ball
- Container (basket, box, short trash can, or large bag)

Student should be with an adult at all times when performing these activities.

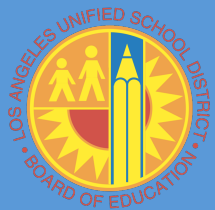
Caution: For floor activities, make sure that you choose an OPEN space so that your child does not roll onto anything or bump into anything. Check the floor space for loose objects that can be hazardous when performing these activities. Make sure to be WITHIN ARMS DISTANCE of them at all times for safety.

Directions:

1. Have child lay on their back, flat on the floor.
2. Put the container behind them about 2-5 inches from their head depending on their arm length and reach.
3. Place the toy between their feet or knees and have them transfer the toy to their hands (by extending their legs upwards and towards their head).
4. Have them transfer the toy into the container by moving their hands up and overhead. If your child stays on their back to place the item in the container; this will use mostly the core muscles on the front of the body. When completing the activity lying on their back, make sure that their back remains flat against the floor and does not arch.
5. As you see in this picture, our model rolled onto her side, then placed the item into the container. That movement targets the front and side core muscles.

Allow rest breaks as needed. Discontinue the activity if your child complains of any pain and contact your school physical therapist.





Modifications to Activity:

To make it less challenging:

- Use a lighter weighted object; place the item between the knees to start.
- If your child does not have enough flexibility in their arms/shoulders to reach the container, kneel behind them and have them reach to shoulder height (arms at 90 degree angle), handing you the item at a lower height

To make it more challenging:

- Use a slightly heavier and/or less compliant object such as a small basketball. Place it between the child's ankles/feet.
- Move the container a few inches further from them, but still within their reach, (they may have to stretch a bit). Pay close attention that their lower back is not arching. If so, use a lighter object and/or place the container closer to them.

Sitting on a chair or in a wheelchair:

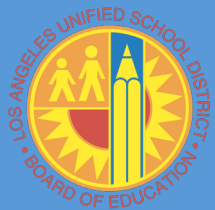
- Place the object between your student's feet (harder) or knees (easier) and have them reach down to grab it with their hands. Then have them reach up and place the item in the container on a shelf, being held by a family member or just pass to a family member overhead.

Make sure adult is next to student and guarding them so they do not fall out of their chair or wheelchair.



How to Incorporate into Educational Routines:

- Use various stuffed animals, colored objects, objects with letters, etc. and have your child name the colors and/or identify the objects before placing them in the bin
- Incorporate counting when placing objects in the bin, keeping score of how many you get in
- Read a story or sing an educational song while doing this activity
- For motivation you can involve siblings and have them both do the activity or have the sibling help with the set up



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Physical Therapy Home Activities

Animal Catch

Targeted Skills:

Trunk strength, Balance, Coordination

Materials:

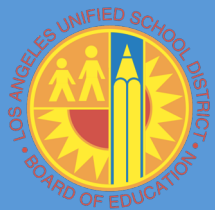
Item to catch with two hands (e.g. ball, small pillow, stuffed animal)

Directions:

* **SAFETY:** An adult should always provide close supervision and support as needed throughout the activity.

- 1) Position student in half-kneeling position.
- 2) Throw item back and forth either throwing or bouncing.
- 3) Make sure student maintains that position.
- 4) Once student begins to get tired (i.e. moving out of that position a lot), take a rest break and switch legs.





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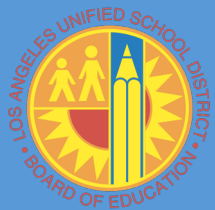
Physical Therapy Home Activities

Animal Catch

Different ways to do activity:

- Perform same activity in variety of positions: standing on both knees, sitting in a chair, or sitting in a wheelchair.
- Have student on uneven surface (couch cushion or pillow).





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Physical Therapy Home Activities

Reaching for Fun

Targeted Skills:

Trunk strength

Materials:

- 8-12 small items (e.g. toys, bean bags, puzzle pieces, etc)

Directions:

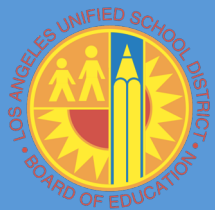
* **SAFETY:** An adult should always provide close supervision and support as needed throughout the activity.

- 1) Position student on hands and knees.
- 2) Tell student to reach forward for an item with one hand at shoulder height while maintaining positioning.
- 3) Repeat until puzzle is complete with same arm; give short break and repeat with other arm.
- 4) Make sure student is not moving legs or support arm.



Different ways to do activity:

- Perform same activity in variety of positions: sitting in chair, wheelchair, or standing on knees.
- Have student reach in different directions to the side or diagonally.
- After reaching for items, place them on the opposite side of body (reach with right arm and place items on left side of body).



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Physical Therapy Home Activities

Sit 'N Play

Grade Level:

Preschool - High School

Targeted Skills:

Sitting balance, Weight shifting in sitting, Use of upper extremities

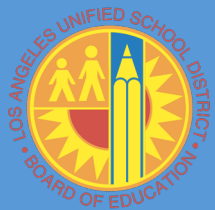
Materials:

- Toy or object for motivation

Directions:

Have an adult sit behind child (on the floor) straddling child's body with their legs and supporting their trunk with your arms and body. Shift child's body weight from trunk to the right, allowing him/her to use their hand to reach towards the floor. You may need to help them with that. Then shift back to center. Then shift weight to other side (left), again attempting to place hand out onto floor.





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Physical Therapy Home Activities

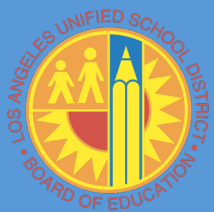
Sit 'N Play

Modifications:

1. Child can sit in a variety of positions while doing this, depending on what is comfortable for them. Can be in long sitting, ring sitting, or tailor sitting.
2. You can have child maintain hand contact with the floor, when shifting to each side, and hold for 5 seconds, before returning to center.
3. Same as number 2, but have child attempt to use opposite hand for an activity, such as popping bubbles, or hitting a balloon or a cause and effect toy.

How to Incorporate into Educational Routines:

1. Can do while reading a book or singing a song with your child. Can do while watching a movie, or listening to teacher on zoom call (if applicable).
2. Can incorporate activities using their hands (puzzle, coloring, bubbles) while sitting in the center and during breaks weight shifting to the sides.



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Physical Therapy Home Activities

Balancing Sticker Activity

Directions:

- 1) Place stickers on your child's shoe
- 2) Have child lift foot up to get the sticker off
- 3) Place sticker on a vertical surface (wall)
- 2) Alternate sticker placement between both feet.

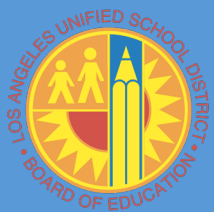
Materials:

- Stickers
- Tape
- Wall (vertical surface)



Different Ways to do Activity:

Try using stickers that can form an object i.e. Animal, monster, robot to encourage multiple repetitions.



Directions:

- 1) Have your child knock over cones with one foot.
- 2) Have child set cones upright without putting their foot down.
- 3) Alternate foot and repeat.

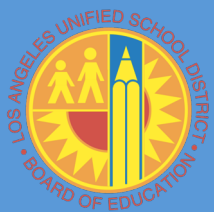
Materials:

- Cones



Different ways to do the activity:

Place bean bags or small plush toys on top of the cones and have them kick off the toy without knocking over the cones.



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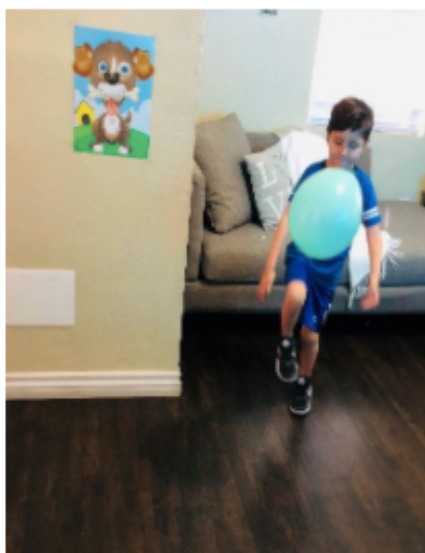
Balloon Volleyball

Directions:

- 1) Play balloon volleyball with your child
- 2) The rule is to use only your feet to kick the balloon
- 3) Keep score

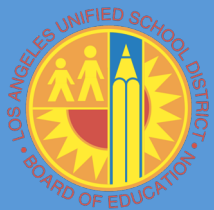
Materials:

- Balloons



Different ways to do the activity:

Encourage your child to alternate feet when kicking the balloon.



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Puzzle Squats

Materials:

- Favorite puzzle
- Table

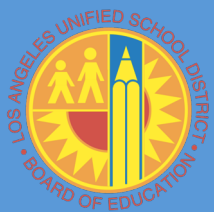
Directions:

1. Place completed puzzle on the table.
2. Disassemble puzzle piece by piece and place each piece on the floor by slowly squatting to floor. Return to standing position for next piece.
3. Continue until all pieces are on floor.
4. Assemble puzzle by squatting down and picking up one piece at a time.
5. Put puzzle together on tabletop.



Different ways to do the activity:

- Perform same puzzle activity in a variety of positions (e.g., kneeling, half-kneeling).
- Stand on one leg.
- Keep running time and try for personal record.



Directions:

- 1) Have your child place one leg on a step stool and one leg on the ground
- 2) Have them draw their favorite animal/cartoon while in that position
- 3) Alternate feet and repeat

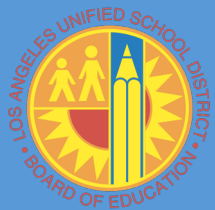
Materials:

- Stepping stool
- Paper
- Pencil



Different Ways to do Activity:

You can use different step stool heights, the higher the stool the greater the balance challenge.



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Walker Soccer

Materials:

- 2 chairs or any other object to define a goal
- Rubber ball, soccer ball, or playground ball

Directions:

1. Set up “goal posts” to define the goal area.
2. Position child in walker about 5 feet away from the goal.
3. Kick (stationary) ball toward goal.



Different ways to do the activity:

- Decrease support by having child hold on to walker with one hand.
- Vary distance to goal.
- Vary distance between goal posts.
- Vary ball size.
- Roll ball to child.