

Occupational Therapy & Physical Therapy Program

General Guides for Functional Activities for Students with Moderate to Severe Disabilities

****Safety is a priority. Do not perform any of these activities if you feel your child's safety is at risk!**

Allow child to assist as much as possible, in a safe manner. Try not do activity for child. Provide only as much support as necessary.

It is important to provide opportunities for children to be in different positions throughout the day, to the greatest extent possible.

A. LYING DOWN ACTIVITIES

If a child is typically in a wheelchair, the child can be placed on a mat on the floor or on a firm bed, using pillows to support head, as well as other parts of the child's body, depending on the position.

1. On child's back, have child:

- Try to track a toy and rotate head.
- Reach for a favorite toy, or your hand.
- If able, move from lying down to sitting up (pull to sit) with your help.
- Try to roll to either side – may need to use a motivating toy.



Back Lying Position

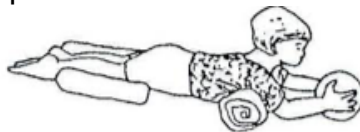
2. On the child's side, have child:

- Attempt to reach a toy or your hand with hand that is free, if able.



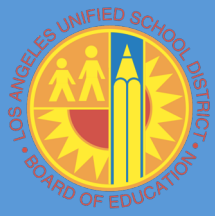
3. On the child's stomach (if able to do so in a safe and comfortable manner):

- Assist your child to prop up onto forearms or extended arms (if able).



- If child is able to prop him/herself on forearms, have child attempt to maintain position and reach with one hand at a time to an object or toy in front of child. Alternate arms, if able.
- Assist your child to transition to quadruped, if able. Have child attempt to maintain this position for a little while, with/without your assistance.





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B. SEATED ACTIVITIES

If your child can sit on the floor (with or without help) child can also participate in these activities.

1. On the floor, you can place your child in tailor sitting (criss-cross), side-sitting, long sitting or ring sitting. To support your child, you can sit behind him or her, straddling child's body with your legs.
 - a. You can work on head control here, having your child attempt to keep his head upright in a neutral position. If child is not able to keep head upright, you may have your him/her recline slightly onto your body to support child's head.
 - b. If he/she is able to place their hands in front and to the side slightly, you can have him/her attempt to prop themselves in sitting.
 - c. If your child can sit without much support, have him/her participate in activities that require them to use his/her hands, as well as shift his/her weight to the right or left.



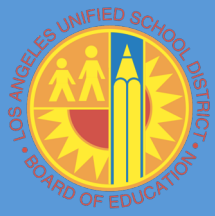
2. In a chair, you can have your child sit in a chair in which you feel child is safe to sit with arm and back supports.
 - a. Have your child participate in activities that require him/her to use child's hands, as well as shift his/her weight to the right or left, as well as reaching up and behind child, if able.

C. STANDING ACTIVITIES

If your child is able to stand with/without support) he/she can also participate in these activities.

****Always have an adult stand next to your child while doing these activities.**

1. If your child needs physical assistance to stand, have an adult support child.
 - a. You can have child stand at a stable table or counter, so that he/she can lean against it. You can sit in a chair behind child and support his/her trunk and position his/her legs.
 - b. Have child attempt to stand at a table, while completing a puzzle, watching a short video, or any other toys child enjoys.



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C. STANDING ACTIVITIES (continued):

1. Stand at the wall (either against a flat wall or in a corner, for more support).
 - a. Participate in games such as art activities in standing, completing puzzles, balloon toss, catch, kicking a ball.
2. Stand without support.
 - a. Participate in above games (#2).
 - b. Walk around obstacles placed in the middle of the room.
 - c. Walk and step over low obstacles (1-2 inches high).
 - d. Walking over uneven surfaces, such as soft pillows, grass, sand, hills.