

Occupational Therapy advice – ‘Heavy work’ Activities

Opportunity for 'heavy work' activities can be incorporated into daily routines.

'Heavy work' activities at home/ nursery

Activities that involve 'heavy work' to muscles and joints through resistance by pushing, pulling, lifting can have an organising effect on the nervous system. They can be effective to calm or energise by having a regulating effect on our arousal/activity level.

Suggestions that can be completed within everyday routine may include some or all of the following: (develop ideas which are most suitable and motivating for you and your child)

- ❑ When crawling, 'be a turtle' - place a bean-bag on child's back and crawl over the sofa cushions placed on the floor
- ❑ Squash down paper for recycling
- ❑ Manipulating objects – squidgy toys
- ❑ **Gardening activities** - Watering plants, digging etc
- ❑ Wiping tables or surfaces
- ❑ Sand and water play – pouring/ tipping
- ❑ **Cooking activities** - moulding dough, stirring/mixing ingredients

Physical activities/sports include:

- ❑ Swimming/ Water play
- ❑ Crawling
- ❑ Rolling

Food and drink

Chewing when eating involves proprioceptive sensation to the jaw which can be regulating.

- Chewy or warm foods are mostly calming – chewy sweets, dried fruit, bread etc. Warm and aromatic - hot chocolate etc

Drinking liquids through a straw or water bottle involves increased effort which can be a method of incorporating increased proprioceptive sensation through the day. i.e. carrying a sports bottle with you.