

## Proprioceptive Activities for Schools

Proprioception is the sensation that has been observed to help children regulate their responsiveness to sensation. Proprioception occurs when we move our muscles. Movement of our muscles against gravity or against a weight (heavy muscle work) increases the amount of proprioceptive stimuli. The following heavy work activities are useful if provided before or during class activities:

- Wash/wipe desks or wipe chalkboard or dry erase board.
- Pulling apart resistance toys – lego, snap beads, stretchy toys, exercise bands.
- Encourage the child to help prepare for PE lessons as much as possible by moving mats etc.
- Encourage the child to play, or read etc. on all fours, lying on their tummy when reading.
- Stamp, slowly and heavily, with alternate feet, in rhythm: 20 stamps.
- Jump, slowly and heavily, in rhythm: 10 jumps.
- Marching between activities/areas of the classroom.
- Bear hug: fold arms over tummy, and hold onto your sides. Give yourself a big hug and squeeze!
- Keep hugging, and count to 10.
- Boxes filled with rice, lentils etc. to find small items in.
- Use cardboard boxes, blankets and pillows to make dens – fill boxes with ball pool balls or cushions to provide deep touch pressure.
- Animal walks – walking like a bear, crab, giraffe.
- Colour a rainbow/picture on a large piece of paper or outside with chalk on hands and knees.
- Use a squeeze ball and squash it flat in as many different ways as you can.
- Using playdough, stand at a table, place palms over the dough and press flat. Repeat several times. Roll the dough into sausages, or use a rolling pin.
- Climb on playground equipment.
- Help to move things around the classroom/school e.g. boxes, books etc.

### In addition:

- Chewy foods also provide proprioceptive input (e.g. toasted bagel, dried fruit, beef jerky).
- Oral motor games to explore with the mouth like whistles, blowing bubbles or using blow pens.
- Drink thick liquids e.g. smoothies, milkshakes through a straw, the thickness of the straw can be.
- Changed to make this harder – smaller straw = harder work and more proprioceptive input.