



## Movement is a Key to Learning

The 2 halves of the brain begin working together. What starts as random, haphazard movement becomes organized.

- Flags – children initially operate both sides of the body, but don't cross the center of the body with arms, legs, eye movements. Integration in the process of getting both sides of the body and brain working together. Simple flag waving activities encourage crossing over. Allow children lots of opportunity to dance and wave scarves, ribbons.
- Creeping on Hands and Knees

Body Coordination - Refinement of Sequential Movement (essential for sequential thinking ... what comes next? Learning Letters, spelling, number skills, reading – what do we do next in class?)

Eye Control – near to far. Distance of reading later.

800 hours using the muscles of the hands – which is important for learning to control a pencil.

- Playground and P.E. – many schools no longer have gym time or recess. It is viewed as exercise, blowing off steam or just playing and taking away from academic learning time.

In fact, this time is essential for academic learning because by refining fine & gross motor skills we are exercising the brain - not just the body - for reading, math, geometry, language, problem solving.

- Catching a ball trains vision – tracking and focusing on a moving object...which is different than simply seeing. This is absolutely necessary for functioning in a classroom
- Swinging, running, hanging upside down, marching, playing ball, tumbling, kicking, climbing – all the activities children love they love for an important internal reason...something inside knows this is good for them. It teaches posture and balance, and it also teaches thinking skills.
- Climbing up, over, down, through - helps a child learn body awareness.
- Children need to repeat a skill many times over to develop a good muscle control and a strong pattern in the brain.
- Instead of watching a video, which creates all of the imagery for your child....Try listening to a story on audio cassette - this helps your child learn "visualization."
- Any activity that promotes imagination and pretending develops visualization.
- In school this helps spelling, word recognition, fluency in reading, sequences of sounds, memory and recall. The ability to see something inside your head.
- Talk with your child. Explain the world. Listen to their responses. Follow their interests.
- Show your enthusiasm for learning, but allow your child the opportunity to make discoveries



Children need to learn to work with both sides of the body in a coordinated manner so the brain can decide which side is in charge – by developing handedness.

- Some skills Like opposites – need to be learned by exposure to many examples. There is no way to explain “what is an opposite.”
- Natural science is a high interest area for young children – It is very hands-on and easy to tie into everyday life. Although most 2 year olds would have no life experience with volcanoes – you are creating an awareness of the world, expanding their vocabulary about the world (what is this thing called?) and most importantly – you are planting the seeds for interest in everything.

Next time these children see something about volcanoes, they will have a familiarity about it that creates a comfort level for learning more.

There is a basic assumption out there that just because very tiny children can't talk about experiences, that they can't learn about them. This is not true from our experience. **Each exposure to any new subject is a building block for later learning!**