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Crossing the Midline

Visualise an imaginary line going down the centre of your body from head to foot separating both side, this is the midline. Crossing the midline is the child's ability to spontaneously move their arms or feet over the midline, rather than each hand working on its own side of the body. Crossing the midline is important for developing hand dominance, reading and writing exercises as well as gross motor activities. Children who have difficulty crossing the midline tend to develop compensatory methods which can include, switching between hands, leaning or moving when writing or adapting the positioning of the paper when writing, which can make writing more difficult for the child.

General Activities to Encourage Midline Crossing

- Sit cross-legged and with crossed arms.
- Side sit, leaning on one arm and crossing across the body with the other arm to do an activity such as batting a balloon or a puzzle etc.
- Double drums or bongos: challenge your child to bang the right drum with the left hand and the left drum with the right hand.
- Push toy trucks and cars while crawling on the floor along a path made with tape; create lots of turns and waves.
- Play sorting games: place objects to sort on the left side and containers to place them in on the right side: sort coins, cars vs. trucks, pompoms, marbles, bingo chips, etc.
- Scoop sand into a bucket using one hand to hold the bucket and the other to scoop and reach across.



- With a group of friends, play circle games to music while sitting cross legged on the floor or standing, such as passing a balloon or ball, toy, etc.

Gross Motor Activities

- Catching, throwing and kicking balls from the opposite side of the body.



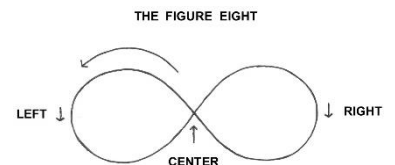
- Throwing a ball or beanbag at a target on the opposite side – use left hand for right target, then swap.
- Keep a balloon in the air using dominant hand.
- Alternating hand-over-hand activities such as pulling along a rope while on a scooter board

- Make figure 8's and other motions with streamers; one hand at a time and crossing left and right
- Play body awareness games like the Hokey Pokey and “Simon Says” – touch right shoulder with left hand, left eye with right finger, right knee with left toe etc.
- Play racket games such as tennis or badminton.
- Hit a suspended ball with a cardboard tube (or similar), make sure arm movement is across the body, crossing the midline.
- Exercises
 - Bend at waist and touch foot with opposite hand.
 - Walk sideways crossing the right foot over the left and the left over the right.
 - Crawling moving one arm and the opposite leg forward.
 - Marching – ensure right arm swings when left leg is lifted and left arm swings when right leg is lifted.



Fine Motor Activities

- Drawing, scribbling - on a large piece of paper or a white board, work from left to right or right to left across their middle. Discourage any turning of the body or leaning.
- Coin flipping: line up a row of coins, placing the child at the centre. Flip coins one at a time with the same hand from one end to the other.
- Deal cards to a group using one hand to hold the deck and the other to deal to everyone around the table
- Lazy 8 Exercises - Using “Lazy-8”'s has long been a popular way to help a child to cross the midline. Vertical surfaces work best - use a blackboard, whiteboard or even an outside wall! **MAKE SURE** your child is positioned in the centre of the "lazy 8" and has one hand on the board/paper for stability.



- Draw rainbows on a large piece of paper or the whiteboard. Ensure left to right actions.
- Dot to dot – on a large piece of paper or a white board. Make sure that the child remains standing in the centre of the design and continues to use the same hand
- Peg board –Pick up pegs from opposite sides and place on the opposite sides of the board.
- Puzzles – spread puzzle pieces around table and ensure child consistently reaches for them with dominant hand.