



CORE STRENGTH

What is Core Strength?

The body's "core" refers to the muscles surrounding the abdomen, pelvis and back. These muscles play an important role in supporting, aligning, and moving the trunk of the body. Core Strength is the foundation for children to be able to assume and maintain an upright posture whilst standing and sitting without support.

Why is Core Strength Important?

The development of Core Strength starts during infancy and supports infants so that they reach developmental milestones such as crawling, rolling over and sitting up independently. As a child gets older core strength becomes important for the development of fine and gross motor skills. Core Strength is very important for all aspects of daily living such as standing, running, walking, posture, and supports us to carry out fine motor activities (handwriting, cutlery, drawing).

Does your child complete any of the following:

- | | |
|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Changes positions frequently | <input type="checkbox"/> Holds their head/self up with their helping hand |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Leans over the desk | <input type="checkbox"/> Leans on whatever surface is available |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Slumps over when sitting | <input type="checkbox"/> Shows signs of fatigue quickly and easily |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Has difficulty paying attention | <input type="checkbox"/> Difficulty getting on and off the ground |

If yes – it is likely that your child has poor core strength

The next page includes suggestions in how to promote core strength and development in daily living tasks

Play in prone position (encourage the child to lay on their belly on the floor). You can encourage prone positioning when watching TV, playing on the iPad/tablet, playing video games, colouring/drawing, playing a boardgame.

PRONE



4-POINT QUADRUPED



2-POINT QUADRUPED



Play in quadruped position (encourage the child to play on all fours). Encourage this position by playing a game, animal walks, Yoga, build a tower/use Lego or complete a puzzle while on all fours

Kneeling positions (encourage the child to play in a tall kneeling position). Play catch with a ball, 'Simon says' or crafts on an appropriately sized small table.

TALL KNEEL



ONE-HALF KNEEL



Other activities your child could engage in to promote further Core Strength include:

- **Exercise Ball:** Encourage the child to complete schoolwork, gaming or art and craft on an exercise ball. Exercise balls are also great for sensory needs and children who need to fidget/move.
- **Encourage Squatting/bending:** Position toys, school bags or clothing in ways that promote a child to squat/bend to pick it up.
- **Heavy Work Chores:** Children can help with carrying in the groceries/laundry baskets, gardening, raking.
- **Using playground equipment:** Using monkey bars, climbing up ladders, sitting upright when going down a slide all engage the core muscles. Encourage kids to play outdoors (run up/down hills, rolling, walking across logs).
- **Balancing:** Stand on 1 foot, walk on a straight line, walking backwards all promote balance. Encourage this in fun ways through games.
- **Extracurricular activities:** Swimming, yoga, karate, dance and tai chi for other strengthening workouts for kids.

For more information and to find out how Geronimo can support you to improve your child's Core Strength please visit www.geronimo-ot.com.au

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