



geronimo

SHOULDER STABILITY

Muscles in the shoulder work together to enable us to co-ordinate and control movements during fine and gross motor activities such as handwriting, drawing, tying shoelaces, crawling and swimming.

Shoulder stability is important as it creates a strong foundation for arm, wrist and hand movements. Large joints close to the body need to be stable to allow for smaller, coordinated movements to occur such as handwriting. If someone has weak shoulder stability they will have difficulty with reaching, carrying, grasping and coordinating arm movements.

Does your child experience any of the following:

- Stiff, ridged movement or rotation of the arm when completing fine motor tasks? e.g. cutlery, drawing, writing, hair brushing, teeth brushing.
- Use whole arm movements when colouring or drawing (instead of hand and finger movements)?
- Tense up the neck and shoulders when attempting to cut with scissors, draw/write or use a knife and fork?
- Move the paper to write or draw rather than moving their arm?
- Tire easily during fine motor tasks?
- Rest their elbows on the table or show signs of fatigue?
- Is unable to hold their arms at shoulder height for over 30 seconds?
- Avoidance behaviours when fine motor tasks are too hard.

If yes – it is likely that your child has poor shoulder stability

The next page includes suggestions in how to promote shoulder stability

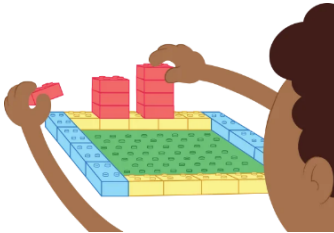
It's important to remember that muscles take time to build and strengthen, and you're unlikely going to notice immediate improvements. For best outcomes it is recommended completing a range of tasks you can build into your daily routines.



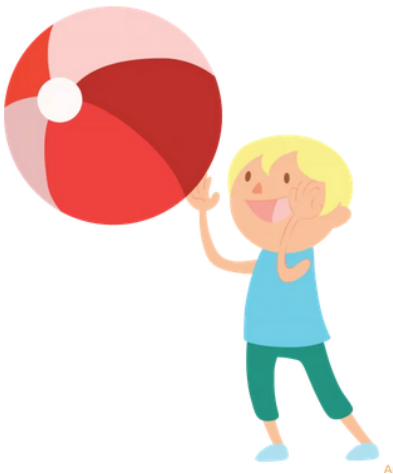
- **Wheelbarrow walks and animal walks:** This is a fun way to assist in strengthening the shoulders. Please ask your Occupational Therapist for additional information.

- **Using playdough/putty, or Lego whilst seated at the table,** ensuring

- They don't have their elbows resting on the table (forearm can rest on table)
- They are seated on an appropriately sized chair
- They have their feet flat on the floor
- They are sitting straight and tall, facing forward.



- **Be involved in cooking/gardening/cleaning:** This will promote strengthening and coordination while also completing productive tasks. This could include mixing, pouring, measuring, pulling weeds, raking, sweeping, dusting, wiping etc.



- **Draw/write on a vertical or a slanted surface:** This will keep the shoulders, arms and hands in the correct position when handwriting and drawing as well as activate the shoulder muscles to assist with strengthening.

- **Playing catch with a ball.** If this is too easy, use a weighted ball/bean bag (up to 1kg) to increase intensity.

- **Extra-curricular activities** will assist in developing strength in the shoulders. Activities can include Swimming, Basketball, Netball, Dancing, Tennis, Taekwondo/Karate, and AFL.

For more information and to find out how Geronimo can support you to improve your shoulder stability and control please visit www.geronimo-ot.com.au

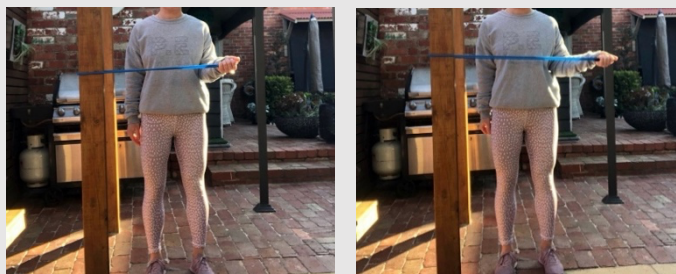
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TheraBand exercises: Theraband exercises can be used in a variety of environments providing opportunities to develop muscle tone, increase agility and enhance co-ordination levels whilst providing additional sensory feedback for your child. It is a great way to strengthen the shoulders to increase overall gross and fine motor skills in order to help children become stronger and thus more independent in daily tasks!

Therabands can be bought from many different stores using NDIS funding. We recommend you buy one that is long and is lightweight to make it easier for your child to use.

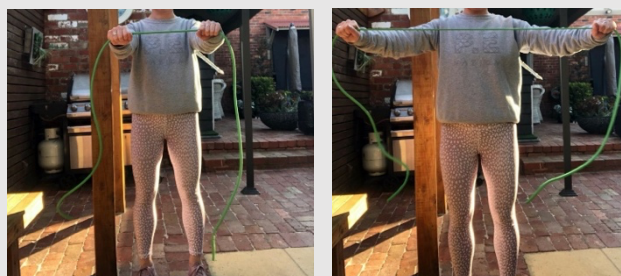
Internal/External Rotation:

- Wrap the band around a secure object and hold onto both ends with the hand of the outside arm.
- Keeping the elbow tucked into the side of your body, pull the band outwards with your hand as far as comfortable.
- Hold for 2 seconds and slowly return



Pull Apart:

- Stand up straight and hold the theraband out in front of you at chest height. Your hands should be shoulder width apart.
- Pull the band apart, squeezing your shoulder blades together.
- Return to the starting position.



Floor Press:

- Place a theraband underneath your shoulders and wrap the ends around your hands.
- Start with elbows touching the floor and extend both arms until they're straight, pulling the band up with them. Keep elbows slightly bended when pushing up.
- Lower arms back down to starting position and repeat.



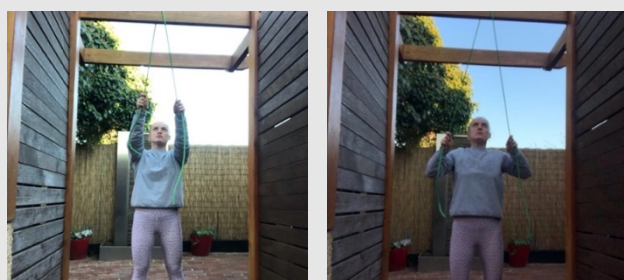
Standing Row:

- Wrap the theraband around a secure object at chest height. Step back enough so that your arms are straightened with the theraband in hand.
- With feet hip-width apart, bend knees slightly for more stability OR place one foot in front of the other.
- Starting with arms out straight, drive elbows back to the side of the rib cage whilst squeezing the shoulder blades together.
- Slowly return to starting position.



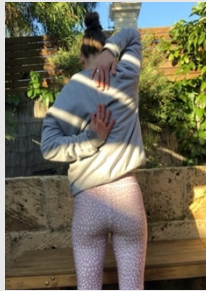
Pull Downs:

- Secure the middle of the theraband to a stationary object above shoulder level.
- Facing the theraband, grasp the ends of them above shoulder height with your elbows outright.
- Bend elbows and bring hands to your chest, pulling the bands down and back.
- Hold and slowly return.



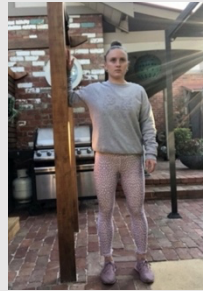
Woodchoppers:

- Wrap the theraband around a secure object and hold on with both hands together (palms facing downwards)
- Start with the arms out straight, closer to the inside of the body (the side closer to the secure object)
- With the feet hip width apart and hips facing forwards, pull the band to the outside of the body and keep the arms straight (if hips twist slightly this is okay, but should be minimal movement)
- Return arms slowly to starting position.



Back Scratch Stretch:

- Place one hand behind the head and back over the shoulder and reach as far as possible down the middle of your back, your palm touching your body and the fingers directed downwards.
- Place the other arm behind your back, palm facing outward and fingers upward and reach up as far as possible.
- Hold position for stretch.



Doorway Stretch:

- Stand in an open doorway or against a pole.
- Raise each arm up to the side, bent at 90-degree angles with palms forward.
- Rest your palms on the door frame/pole.
- Feel the stretch in your shoulders and chest. (If you cannot feeling the stretch along the chest, step forward slightly).

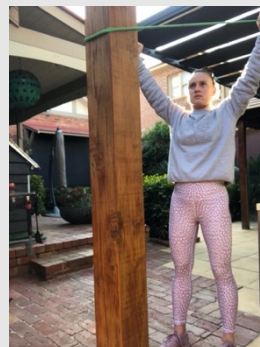
A, T, Y, I Stretches:



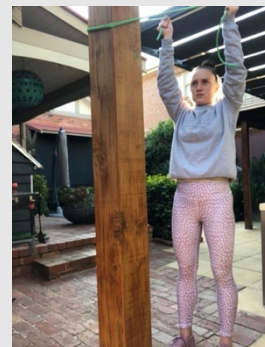
- Secure the middle of the theraband to a stationary object above shoulder level.
- Facing the theraband grasp the ends of them and pull down to make an A shape with your arms.



- Facing the theraband grasp the ends of them and pull down to make a T shape with your arms.



- Facing the theraband grasp the ends of them and pull down to make a Y shape with your arms.



- Facing the theraband grasp the ends of them and pull down to make an I shape with your arms.

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