

## PROPRIOCEPTIVE SENSORY ACTIVITIES

**Description:** Proprioceptive sensory problems arise due to the way in which the brain processes motor skills. Learners with proprioceptive sensory problems have issues with knowing their body's ability to perceive its own position in space.

Some examples of ways in which proprioceptive sensory problems can be identified is if the learner has difficulties identifying whether their feet are on soft grass or a hard surface without looking (with or without shoes), trouble recognizing their own strength, uncoordinated movements, balance issues, and poor postural control.

**Purpose:** Proprioceptive sensory activities are important for learners with proprioceptive sensory difficulties because they can help decrease existing harmful coping mechanisms and increase coordinated movements. It is also important to practice such activities to ensure that learners are gradually able to perform more challenging actions while maintaining movement accuracy.



### Activity 1: Desk push-ups

<b>Description:</b>	Practice doing push-ups by using a desk for help.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity helps learners develop upper body strength.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Find a table or a spot where the learner can do their push up against.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Have them stand a step or two away from the table with their feet together and place their palms fully on the desk.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Have the learner try to lower themselves onto the table with their whole body and push themselves up using their arms.</p>



### Activity 2: Light Hugs and Squeezes

<b>Description:</b>	Hug and squeeze dolls, soft toys and/or puppets to show affection through embrace.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity helps learners in applying the correct amount of pressure and force, this is also important for child development.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Find a soft toy or doll for the learner to use for this activity.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Ask the learner to squeeze/lightly hug the doll or soft toy with affection.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> If the learner uses too much strength ensure that they try again more softly.</p>



### Activity 3: Animal Walk Race

<b>Description:</b>	Walk like an animal (simple animals to complex animals) and the learner copies movement. Do a race to motivate the learner.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity helps develop a learner's core strength and muscles. Learners also use their imagination on animals.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Caregiver thinks of an animal and starts to walk like this animal.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Learner copies the caregiver's motions.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> If the learner would like, have a race as these animals.</p> <p>*For ideas on animals refer to the Paper Figures project linked <a href="#">here</a>. Paper Figures project description: Learners will explore the human body by labelling the body parts, exploring the five senses, doing some physical activity and observing some of our magical bodily functions.</p>



#### Activity 4: Crawling

<b>Description:</b>	Move slowly with the body close to the ground or on hand or knees.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity will help learners work the muscles and joints.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Tell the learner to go on all fours on their hands and knees, show them if necessary.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Start moving slowly around the house on their hands and knees.</p>



#### Activity 5: Climbing Stairs with Weighted Backpack

<b>Description:</b>	Practice going up and down the stairs while carrying objects of different weights. Gradually increase the weights from light to heavy
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity helps to improve a learner's concentration and focus. The weight of the object changes the learner's proprioception and balance so they learn to adapt and adjust.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Fill a backpack with some light objects and have the learner carry the backpack.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Look for a staircase or an uphill climb.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Have the learner walk up and down the stairs/hill with the backpack.</p> <p><b>Step 4:</b> Gradually increase the weight of the objects in the backpack to match the learner's abilities.</p>



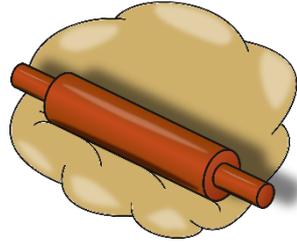
### Activity 6: Balancing Games

<b>Description:</b>	Balance a book/board on the learner's head while they try to hold a spoon in the mouth and balance a potato or lime in it.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity uses the unpredictable movements of a book/board/potato and re-educates the body to quickly react to the wobbly movements without having to think about these movements.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Look for a book or a large board or a spoon with a lime or potato.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Place the book/board on the learner's head and try to let them balance.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> If they are able to balance it, add the spoon with the lime to their mouth to balance both together.</p> <p>(If they are unable to do both at the same time, only do them separately.)</p>



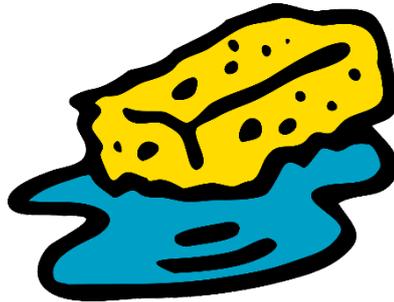
### Activity 7: Hand Squeeze

<b>Description:</b>	Shake hands or hold the hand of the caregiver (squeeze balls would be ideal for this activity but in the absence of this, holding hands can be an option)
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity improves the learner's sense of force through hand grip.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Sit with the learner and shake their hand 10 times. Each time, squeeze a little stronger to practice gripping.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> If there is a squeeze ball in the home, give the learner the squeeze ball and repeat step 1. This can also be done with dough at home.</p>



### Activity 8: Kneading Dough

<b>Description:</b>	Using any flour available at home and water, help the learner mix with their hands and then knead the mixture into a dough.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity improves the learner's sense of force and use of fingers in a coordinated manner.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Mix flour and water with hands and demonstrate to the learner how to mix and then knead.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Encourage them to knead this dough and then gradually begin with encouraging them to do the mixing as well as kneading.</p> <p><b>Step 3:</b> Make this a daily activity. Clay/soil/sand and water can be used instead of flour.</p>



### Activity 9: Scrubbing Surfaces

<b>Description:</b>	Using a brush or a sponge encourages the learner to scrub various surfaces around the house.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity improves hand eye coordination, sense of force and grip.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Take a soft sponge or brush and demonstrate to the learner how to scrub various surfaces.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Ask them to scrub and gradually create movement patterns like circular motions, horizontal motions, and vertical motions once the learner is confident with simple scrubbing motions.</p>



### Activity 10: Pillow/Cushion Jousting (for older learners)

<b>Description:</b>	Using a small pillow or cushion, the caregiver and the learner can joust with one another. Be careful to be gentle with the pillow so there is no injury.
<b>Purpose:</b>	This activity improves the learner's sense of balance, grip, instinct, and defense.
<b>Steps:</b>	<p><b>Step 1:</b> Take any soft pillow or cushion available around the house. Give one to the learner as well.</p> <p><b>Step 2:</b> Demonstrate a pillow fight without hurting the other person. Increase frequency and intensity only as the learner gets comfortable with the activity.</p> <p>*Make sure to stand on an even surface with no chance of falling over.</p>