

PRAXIS

Praxis, also known as motor planning, is the process of deciding what your body has to do and then performing a task. Dependent on effective tactile, proprioceptive and vestibular processing, it is the process of conceiving/ideating, planning, sequencing and executing actions.

Praxis allows a child to think of, organize, sequence, and carry out unfamiliar and complex movement skills. Praxis or Motor planning involves conscious attention to the task, while relying on unconscious body sensations.

Children who have motor planning difficulties often appear clumsy or have difficulty learning new movements. Their bodies move in an uncoordinated manner and lacks smoothness. Children with motor planning difficulties often say I don't want to or I can't do it! Difficulties can result in poor gross & fine motor skills.

Praxis is the ability to think of (conceptualize) and organise novel, purposeful actions. This has been described by Jean Ayers as an "intelligence of doing".

Suggested Activities to support Praxis development:

- Follow an obstacle course - incorporating a variety of gross motor movements and concepts such as over, under, next to and between. The next steps of this could be to 'create' an obstacle course.
- Provide a sequence of tasks for your child to imitate - start with one task and build on it. For example ask them to put his hand on his head. Then ask him to put his hand on his head and hop on one foot. Then ask him to put his hand on his head, hop on one foot, and spin around...
- Provide a variety of constructional toys and building blocks (i.e. Duplo, Lego, mechano, K'nex, Jenga etc.
- Simon Says
- Play charades & act out new characters or new information being learned in school.
- Create a play so the child will have to act like someone or something other than themselves.
- Eat snacks using the non dominant hand.
- Have the child turn pages using a different finger with his thumb per page.
- Sing songs that require finger plays or movements. Invent movements to songs.
- Have the child hit a balloon in the air or toss a balloon back and forth by hitting it with different parts of his body. Call out "right elbow," and let the child hit the balloon a few times; Continue to call out different parts of the body (i.e., "left knee," "right foot," "left

shoulder," etc.). This will help the child to incorporate right-left discrimination abilities while constantly working on motor planning tasks.

- The child can be jumping on a mini-trampoline while tossing a balloon up in the air, playing catch, jumping rope, clapping his hands over his head, etc.
- Play "Simon Says" and ask the child to do many different types of motor activities.
- Doing different activities with ones' arms while riding a stationary bicycle. A person can catch a ball, clap his hands, break bubbles, clap his hands above his head, rub his head and pat his tummy, etc. while continuing with a circular motion of peddling the bicycle.
- Hopping on one foot while doing another motor task is good for motor planning. Once again, the child can toss a balloon up in the air, pop bubbles, play catch, clap, etc. while jumping on one foot.
- Play any type of sports, but in a different way. For example, stand on one foot while playing volleyball, run to the bases backwards after hitting a baseball, throw a ball with the non-dominant hand, play tag with everyone running backwards or sideways, etc.