



Humber Sensory Processing Service



Vestibular activities

Our vestibular sense is the sensory system responsible for controlling our muscles through balance and movement; and for most of our reflexes. The vestibular system is stimulated by movement: up and down, backwards, and forwards; around or over. It plays a big part in our how our bodies feel. Fast or rotational movements such as spinning, can be exciting and alerting, whereas slow, rhythmical movements like rocking are often calming and relaxing.

Where can I get vestibular input?

- Swings – linear or rotational movements.
- Sitting in a Rocking chair or gaming style floor chair.
- Spinning chair.
- Balance board.
- Yoga – especially inversion poses where the head is below the hips.
- Hanging upside down – this can be achieved at the park, swinging from a tree branch, at home with an internal door pole or hanging upside down over a settee or bed.
- Interactive games that have rocking actions e.g., ‘row, row, row your boat’.
- Swinging in a hammock.
- Skipping.
- Running.
- Paddle boarding.
- Kayaking.
- Riding a push toy/ bike/ scooter – downhill increases the input.



- Walking across balance beams or equivalent.
- Wheelbarrow walking with a partner.
- Rock climbing.
- Standing upside down with feet up against the wall.
- Handstand and cartwheels.
- Hopscotch, steppingstone activities - get the child involved in setting up the activity by positioning the items and drawing or painting with either water and paintbrush or chalk on the floor.
- Balance bikes.
- Bilibo seats.
- Gym ball for rolling on and sitting.
- Trampoline/ Trampette – with or without a handle (intensive input).
- Scooter boards – on your tummy or sitting. Independently moving or being pulled along. Assisting in the pulling if someone holds the rope still and the child use it to move forward (great proprioceptive work too).
- Obstacle courses that require jumping, crawling, rolling (get the child to help set up to incorporate good proprioceptive activities).

Always involve the child in the setting up of the activities and let the child direct and develop ideas whenever possible. Integrate other activities and games e.g., bouncing on the trampoline and playing catch with a ball or beanbag or lying/ sitting on a scooter board and playing shooting games with a ball into a bucket to make it more challenging.



"I need movement to help me focus. I always try to bike to school, because when I have to get the bus, I am less able to focus on my work and block out background noise in class."

What are the benefits?

- Calming and organising.
- Provides proprioception input in combination.
- Helps with attention and concentration.
- Builds up strength in the body and core muscles – helps with coordination.

It is Important to let your child know that you are there to help them, and to let you know if they are feeling scared or sick and to stop the activity immediately. This is especially important when an activity is tried for the first time. If the child is becoming over aroused, encourage them to stop and incorporate some proprioceptive or deep pressure input if possible. Let the child chose the activity as much as possible. Some children may need support to start with and for an adult to play alongside. Adults you are going to need to release your inner child! Fun is the key – it's essential that the child is having fun, and you will too!

