

DTF541



Name: _____
MR#: _____ Finance: _____
DOB: _____
MD: _____

Heavy Work for Elementary-Aged Children: Activities at Home

What do Heavy Work Activities do?

Heavy work activities put pressure on our joints (proprioception) and stimulate receptors located in joints and muscles. Proprioceptive or heavy work activities tend to have a calming effect on the nervous system. Stimulation of these receptors through heavy work can help your child feel calm, focused, and ready to learn. Here are some ideas of heavy work activities for your child:

Kitchen

- Stir batter while baking
- Roll, knead or scoop dough for pizza or cookies (cookie cutters for more input)
- Help cook with an onion chopper (or another safe kitchen utensil)
- Wipe the dinner table with a sponge and squeeze into the sink or a bucket
- Empty the dishwasher

Helping Around the House

- Clean counter tops/windows/tables with spray bottle and cloth
- Carry filled laundry basket
- Carry in groceries from the car
- Help change sheets on bed
- Sweep or mop
- Carry/pull trash cans

Make it a Game

- Push against a wall (make it fun by asking your child to make the room bigger)
- Make a "burrito" by wrapping your child in a blanket (make sure their head is out)
- Make a "sandwich" or "steamroller" by squeezing or rolling between two pillows
- Animal walks (bear walks, crab walks, leap frog, seal walks, swim like a fish)
- Build a fort using pillows and blankets or have a pillow fight
- Crawl under weight blanket or stuffed animals
- Play with playdoh or theraputty

Outside Activities

- Help wash the dog or car
- Rake leaves, dig in dirt, push wheelbarrow
- Jump rope
- Color with chalk on sidewalk
- Play catch with a heavy ball

Things to Keep in Mind...

- Make sure to communicate with your OT regarding duration/frequency of activities
- Keep activities fun and motivating for your child
- Try integrating heavy work activities before your child is expected to sit still (before dinner, sitting in a car, family gatherings, movie)
- Calming does not always happen in the moment, note changes 20-30 min. after activity