



Name: _____

MR#: _____ Finance: _____

DOB: _____

MD: _____

Heavy Work Activities for Preschoolers/Toddlers: 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:

Things to do in the Kitchen

- Stir batter while baking
- Roll cookie dough and using cookie cutters
- Knead pizza or bread dough
- Push/pull chairs in/out from the table
- Wipe the table with a sponge after dinner

Helping Around the House

- Clean counter tops/windows/tables
- Carry laundry basket
- Carry in groceries from the car
- Water plants with watering can
- Sort recycling
- Stuff pillow cases or duvets

Make it a Game

- Push against a wall as if to make it move
- Crawl under weight blanket or stuffed animals
- Animal walks (bear walks, crab walks, leap frog, seal walks, swimming like a fish)
- Build a fort with a heavy blanket/chairs/couch cushions
- 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
- Play with playdoh or theraputty

Outside Activities

- Color on sidewalk with chalk
- Dig in the dirt/help garden or weed
- Play catch with a heavy ball
- Play tug-of-war
- Roll or sled down hill

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