

MY KIDZ COTTAGE NEWSLETTER

We Value Each Child's Potential



HOW TO IMPROVE IMITATION SKILLS IN CHILDREN

ST Nadeem Banu

WHAT IS IMITATION?

Imitation involves a child's ability to copy others:

- actions with objects (such as banging on a drum or pushing a car)
- gestures and body movements (such as clapping hands or waving)
- sounds or words

Children use imitation throughout infancy and early childhood to have social exchanges with their caregivers and to learn new things.



Infants first imitate their caregiver's actions with toys and objects, and they then go on to imitate gestures during the second year of life. Toddlers interact by copying each other's actions with toys, and this kind of imitation increases throughout early childhood.

Gradually you can move to visual imitation. If your child is not interested, wait a month and try these activities again. Once a child understands the concept of movement imitation, practice imitation using various other parts of the body.

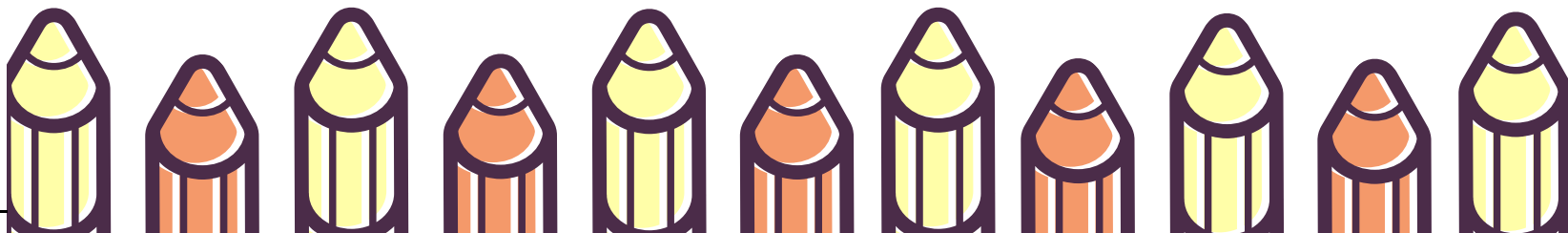


TEACHING IMITATION SKILLS TO CHILDREN

Imitation skills are vitally important for the development of language, play, and social skills. Generally, a child will learn to imitate movement before they learn to imitate sounds through speech. Even though motor imitation is not directly related to language development, teaching a child to imitate body movements is helpful because it teaches a child valuable imitation skills. Guiding a child by placing your hand over the child's hand and walking them through the motions will assist a child to learn repetitive movements.

Movements such as waving good-bye, will become much more meaningful movements, but the immediate goal is to develop motor imitation. Adding sounds will help stimulate the child and spark interest. More than likely a child is not ready to imitate sounds just yet.

A child will develop attention skill, now the next time, you can become the leader. Try rolling a ball, pushing a truck, playing a toy piano, tapping a block on the table, etc. If the child does not imitate the movement, try holding your hand over the child's and demonstrate the movement. Hand-over-hand guidance can help a child learn the initial movement, and later they will be able to do it themselves.



Activities to engage in to teach gestural imitation skills:

- waving bye-bye
- touch your nose
- place your hands on your head
- shake your head up and down
- close your lips tightly
- smile
- clap your hands
- lick your lips, pucker or smack your lips
- blow out your cheeks
- open your mouth

TEACHING IMITATION SKILLS TO CHILDREN

One way to encourage imitation is by teaching a child to recognize the words “So big” as a game. You say “How big is (you child’s name)?”. Then raise your arms high over your head and say, “So big!” At first you can assist the child by physically lifting his hands over his head. After doing this many times, you may just need to gently touch your child’s hands. Gradually, your child will imitate the movement on their own.

Once your child is able to imitate body movements, try getting him to add some sounds to the movements. These activities act as a transition to imitation of sounds for speech, because they provide practice in vocalization for your child as well as an opportunity to hear the sounds of speech in small increments.



Activities to help promote these skills:

- blow your cheeks out and make a popping sound
- make circles on your tummy, rub and say “mm-mm”
- wave your hand and say, “Bye-bye”
- move a toy car and say “vroom-vroom”
- move a toy dog along the table and say “woof-woof”.

Hand-play songs are very appropriate for children at this stage and help engage the child’s attention. They encourage a child to participate in speech or singing without really saying the words. By moving his hands, he is part of the activity which becomes repetitive. He can imitate the movements to the song, and later may begin to imitate some of the words.

Hand puppets are a wonderful aid to help a child learn imitation skills. The puppet will entertain the child, as well as encourage them to focus their attention on the movement. By having the puppet talk or sing to the child, they will learn to vocalize along with imitating movements.

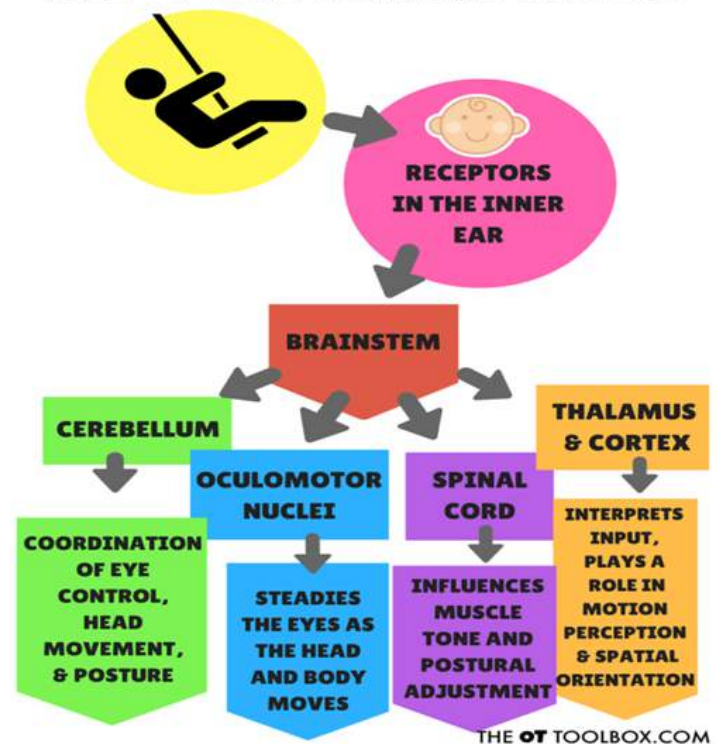
WHAT IS THE VESTIBULAR SYSTEM?



OT Kharushni Piretti. A

The vestibular system includes the parts of the inner ear and brain that help control balance, eye movement and spatial orientation. It helps keep you stable and upright. Children with vestibular issues may not know where their body is in space. This can make them feel off balance and out of control.

THE VESTIBULAR SYSTEM



RED FLAGS OF VESTIBULAR PROCESSING PROBLEMS:

- poor visual processing
- poor spatial awareness
- poor balance
- difficulty with bilateral integration
- sequencing deficits
- poor visual-motor skills
- poor discrimination of body position
- poor discrimination of movement
- poor equilibrium
- difficulties discerning the orientation of head
- trouble negotiating action sequences

VESTIBULAR ACTIVITIES:

- bounce on gym ball
- animal walks
- scooter board
- swing
- jumping/skipping/running
- see - saw
- yoga poses
- get pulled on a wagon or sled
- prone, seated and standing swing
- upside down movements
- slow marching on straight line
- galloping
- somersault
- log rolling
- wheelbarrow
- riding bicycle
- twister



Simple Acts Of Kindness

WHAT IS KINDNESS?

Ms Jessica Wang

Kindness refers to the behaviours toward others that are compassionate, genuine and require the ability to empathise, which is the ability to understand the emotional experiences and responses of another person,” says Rachel Tomlinson, a registered psychologist and author of *Teaching Kids to be Kind*.

<https://www.dymocks.com.au/book/teaching-kids-to-be-kind-by-rachel-tomlinson-9781510747029>

“Behaviours that are considered kind are often centred on consideration for others and being able to understand and meet another person’s needs.”

In 2015, researchers assessed how children perceived kindness.

<https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/15167> and [2016 https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/16097](https://journals.uvic.ca/index.php/jcs/article/view/16097)

Expressed through drawings, children typically perceived kindness as physically helping others, maintaining friendships, showing respect and helping each other emotionally.

Rachel points out that kindness should not be confused with being nice. She explains that being nice is more about how other people see you, whereas being kind is how you feel about yourself.

“Genuine kindness is all about being kind because you want to, not because you have to or you are getting some kind of reward for it,” she says.

POSITIVE EFFECTS OF KINDNESS?

A 2012, Canadian study of nine to 11-year-olds found that those students who regularly performed kind acts were, not only more socially acceptable to their peers, but their actions benefited their entire class as the students were more likely to be inclusive and less likely to bully each other.

<https://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0051380>

“The effects of kindness help set our children up in good stead to be successful and happy adults,” adds Rachel.

HOW DO YOU TEACH KINDNESS?

“Children learn to be kind, not only by receiving kindness, but by experiencing the warmth and satisfaction of offering kindness and compassion to others,” explains Rachel.

Within her book, Rachel explores five strategies on how parents and caregivers can demonstrate kindness, as well as how they can set up opportunities for their children to be kind.

“The five strategies focus on: modelling (walking the walk), language use and development (talking the talk), reinforcing behaviours, emotional regulation (self-managing their emotions and distress) and expanding their circle of concern to notice others,” she says.

Rachel recognises that it can be tough to get children to consider other’s needs.

“It’s not because they are bad children, but because when they are young, they can be very egocentric and focused on themselves,” she says. “In order to teach our children to be kind we have to get away from rewarding behaviour in traditional ways.”

“This counteracts the message because children are only being kind to get something out of it, not because they actually wanted to be kind towards another. We need to set up age appropriate opportunities for our children to start learning about and considering other people’s experiences and emotions. If they can clearly understand this, then it’s easy to encourage them to wonder and be curious about how to start acting kindly.”



RACHEL TOMLINSON'S TOP TIPS TO TEACHING KINDNESS

1 Teach your children to name and understand their emotions.

- By naming their emotional experience, they will be less frustrated or anxious about strong feelings and will cope better with distress.
- This skill also forms the early ability to empathise. If they understand where emotions come from and how they feel, they will start to be able to identify them in others.

2 Create opportunities to show interest in other people.

- Ask questions about what people or characters are doing while watching television together or reading a book or sitting in the park people-watching.
- Can they identify other people's feelings or needs based on what they see? This builds great skills in being able to empathise.

3 Volunteer or arrange ways to give back to your community.

- Contributing to an appeal, donating old clothes to a local charity, taking old blankets to an animal rescue centre are all ways to expand your child's circle of concern beyond your family.
- Explain to your child why you are donating or caring about others, ask them what it might feel like to be on the receiving end of such kindness and how does it feel to be kind to others. This really cements the learning and gets them thinking about what it means to be a kind person.



BUILDING UP MYSELF IN MY OWN STAGE

Teacher Tin

Talent shows, and show and tells are usually the first opportunity for kids to stand in front of a crowd and present themselves. This is a step closer for them to practice public speaking as they are to present a topic that they well know and love.

Whenever an opportunity like this happens, remember the positive impact it can give them on their confidence and communication skills. This gives them a safe and familiar environment to open up themselves to a lot of people, hence giving them more confidence in expressing their ideas and feelings. This also highlights how children shows their appreciation over the things that are interesting to them, special item, people or their talent. It also allows them to make an opinion or think about how their special item makes them feel.

.Preparing for a show and tell or a talent show no matter how simple or small it may be allows children to develop a sense of pride which boosts self-esteem. This activity will also encourage the pupils to use descriptive language and develops a child's ability to retell and recall stories which are all beneficial to improve communication.

“

All those iconic presenters of today were a shy little kid back then”.



On the other hand, being the audience of a show and tell also has its pros, they learn how to sit still and listen to someone other than their teacher and teaches them about respect. They also learn to come up with opinions, suggestions and own ideas, think of questions to raise. A simple activity that they do today can greatly influence and mold them to be a better person in the future.





WATER PLAY

Teacher Fatim

In the first term of 2021, we resumed our water play activities at MKC. In addition to playing in the pool, the children also played in the new water tub. Using their nets and bowls, they scooped up the little fishes and rubber ducks swimming in the water. Not only did they manage to work on their fine motor skills while doing so, but the teachers also encouraged learning through play by counting the toys, identifying shapes and colours, and even comparing sizes.

The children also got to experiment the strange texture of sponges and its ability to absorb water. It's clear that water play continues to be a popular activity amongst the children, as they enjoy splashing about. We hope for more sunny days so that the children can continue to cool off in the refreshing water!

Benefits of water play:

- improves hand-eye coordination from scooping and pouring from one tub to another.
- enhances concentration and focus as the children are able to engage in an activity that excites them.
- develops sensory exploration through different sensations and temperatures.
- build social play and communication skills as children bond through a common activity.



烹饪小记

假期里，我学做了两道菜，都是我最爱吃的，中式汉堡包和鱼油麦菜，既简单又美味！



LIU LAO SHI

先来说说汉堡包的做法：首先准备材料：有汉堡坯子、火腿肠、鸡蛋、圆生菜还有我们独特添加的玫瑰豆腐乳，当然也可以加入甜面酱、千岛酱、番茄之类。先把油倒入锅中预热，鸡蛋打入锅内，翻面煎熟，火腿也要在锅里加热一下，然后把准备好的材料抹上豆腐乳，依次放到汉堡坯子里，这样就做成了，大家可以试试看哦。加了豆腐乳的味道还很不错呢，再美美的喝上一杯自制奶茶，健康又有营养，更是别有一番滋味。

再来说说百吃不厌的鱼油麦菜，做法更是简单，味道也鲜香可口。用料有：油麦菜、鱼罐头、葱、蒜。做的时候先把油麦菜洗干净，切大段：取鱼肉，把鱼肉切成小块。起油锅，葱蒜末爆炒，然后放入油麦菜，大火翻炒一会儿，放入鱼，知道菜软了就可以出锅了。

其实做菜也不是很难，记清楚要领，用心学习，我们也可以当大厨，我爱上了烹饪，他给我带来了许多的快乐！

