

Growing Together

ABA Strategies for Family Services Series



Anderson
Early Learning
Academy

**ABA Strategies for Gross Motor Development :
Encouraging Movement at Home**



ABA Approach to Gross Motor Development

Why Gross Motor Skills Matter

- Gross motor skills help children move, explore, and interact with their world.
- They support balance, coordination, strength, and confidence.
- ABA strategies—like modeling, prompting, and reinforcement—help children build motor skills through fun, structured activities.

Types of Gross Motor Play that Build Development

1. Balance and Coordination Play

- Activities like standing on one foot, walking on a line, or stepping over objects.
- Builds stability and body awareness.

2. Strength Building Play

- Jumping, climbing, pushing, pulling.
- Supports muscle development and endurance.

3. Movement & Rhythm Play

- Dancing, marching, freeze games.
- Improves timing, coordination, and following directions.

4. Outdoor Motor Play

- Running, throwing, catching, riding scooters or bikes.
- Encourages exploration, problem solving, and social interaction

Tips for Success



- Follow your child's interests — if they like cars, make them “drive” through motor paths.
- Keep activities short, fun, and positive.
- Celebrate effort, not perfection.
- Rotate activities to keep things fresh.
- Communicate with your child's ABA or therapy team for individualized strategies.

ABA Strategies That Support Gross Motor Skills

Modeling

- Demonstrate the movement first: “Watch me jump!”
- Use simple gestures and language to show the skill.

Prompting and Fading

- Physical prompts (e.g., hand-over-hand for climbing steps).
- Visual prompts (spot markers on floor).
- Gradually remove support as independence grows.

Reinforcement

- Use praise, high fives, preferred toys, or play breaks to keep motivation high.
- Best when delivered immediately after the skill is attempted.

Task Analysis

- Break big skills into smaller steps (e.g., jump → bend knees → push off → land).
- Teach each step in order to build success.

Structured Choices

- Offer options: “Do you want to hop or crawl first?”
- Increases engagement and reduces frustration.

Embedded Learning in Movement

Pair motor play with communication:

- Requesting turns
- Labeling actions
- Following simple or multi step directions
- Example: “Tell me ‘go!’ for your turn to run.”

How Parents Can Encourage Gross Motor Play at Home

During Daily Routines

- Step over pillows during clean up.
- Carry groceries or laundry to build functional strength.
- Make hallway “walk lines” or pretend tightropes.

During Quiet Time

- Try simple yoga poses.
- Build block towers that require stretching or reaching.

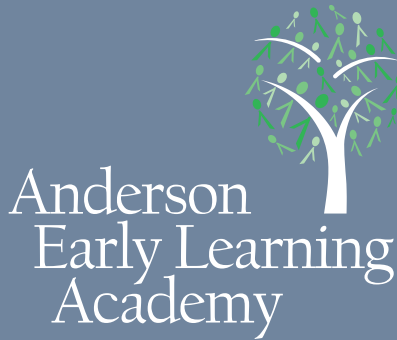
During Outdoor Time

- Create obstacle courses with chalk or playground equipment.
- Play catch, kick a ball, or run races.
- Go on nature walks that include climbing or balancing.

During Social Play

- Set up relay races with siblings or peers.
- Use turn taking games like “Red Light, Green Light.”
- Encourage cheering and celebrating others’ successes.





Anderson Early Learning Academy (AELA) is a NYS approved 4410 program that provides children ages 3-5 years of age opportunities to learn in an environment that is developmentally appropriate and teaches the skills needed to be successful in kindergarten

Anderson Early Learning Academy
www.AndersonEarlyLearningAcademy.org



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