



RISE & SHINE

RISE NI (NHSCT) PRESCHOOL NEWSLETTER



Happy New Year and welcome to the next edition of RISE & Shine. We hope you enjoyed the last edition, and found it both interesting and beneficial. Given that we are still in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic and the fact that most children are not currently in preschool, this edition will focus on what parents/carers/families can do to keep their children entertained during these 'strange' times, whilst also promoting general development and emotional health & wellbeing. We hope you enjoy some action packed and fun-filled days ahead, as you try out some of 'countryside' themed activities. But first...

AS A REMINDER...

WHAT DO WE DO?



RISE NI stands for the Regional Integrated Support for Education NI. We work with mainstream settings in the Northern Health & Social Care Trust (NHSCT) area to support staff and children from preschool through to the end of year 4. The service focuses on the following areas of development:

Social,
emotional
and/or
behavioural

Speech,
language
and
communication

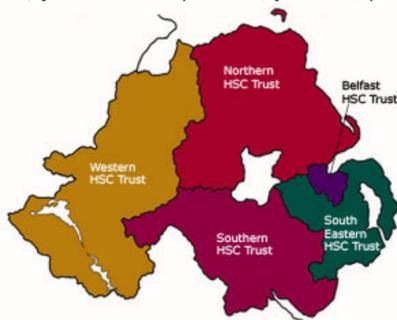
Sensory
processing,
fine motor
and visual
perception

Gross motor

WHERE ARE WE?

The Northern Health and Social Care Trust covers a large area within Northern Ireland. To manage this, we work across 4 different 'sectors':

- East Antrim which covers the Newtownabbey, Carrickfergus, Larne and Ballyclare area
- Antrim/Ballymena which covers the Crumlin, Antrim, Randalstown and Ballymena area
- Causeway which covers the Ballymoney, Coleraine and Ballycastle area
- Mid Ulster which covers the Portlennone, Maghera, Magherafelt and Cookstown area



OUR TEAMS...

Each sector team has a team lead, therapy assistant and admin support, and has input from behaviour therapy, clinical psychology, occupational therapy, physiotherapy, and speech and language therapy.

WHAT DO WE DO?

Our regional aim is to support children in schools, by working closely with parents and school staff, to help children develop the foundational skills for learning. We do this through different levels of support - universal, targeted or specialist.

Universal support

General training, advice and strategies for school staff and parents to enhance and enrich the development of all children

Targeted support

Targeted advice, consultation, strategies, training, class based and small group programmes

Specialist support

Assessment for children with persistent needs who have not responded positively to strategies and support already used in school

IN THE MIDST OF CRISIS, REMEMBER THESE TOP TIPS FROM PARENTING NI...

 <p>Positive Parenting Top Tip</p>  <p>#1 Love your children, no matter what they do.</p> <p>Helpline: 0808 8010 722 parentingni.org</p>	 <p>Positive Parenting Top Tip</p>  <p>#2 Listen to your children.</p> <p>Helpline: 0808 8010 722 parentingni.org</p>	 <p>Positive Parenting Top Tip</p>  <p>#3 Praise your children .</p> <p>Helpline: 0808 8010 722 parentingni.org</p>	 <p>Positive Parenting Top Tip</p>  <p>#4 Expect the best from your children .</p> <p>Helpline: 0808 8010 722 parentingni.org</p>	 <p>Positive Parenting Top Tip</p>  <p>#5 Make them feel safe physically & emotionally.</p> <p>Helpline: 0808 8010 parentingni.org</p>
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ROUTINES, ROUTINES, ROUTINES!!

Children thrive in homes that provide routines, consistency and structure. Especially now, children need this to feel more secure in their surroundings. Waking up, eating meals, going for exercise, doing 'work' and bed times should all occur at about the same time every day! You might even want to use a schedule to make sure everyone knows what's happening...



REMEMBER...PLAY IS THE 'WORK' OF CHILDREN

It is through play that children learn and engage with the world around them. Play helps children develop important social, emotional and communication skills; builds their self-confidence and develops resilience and empathy as children learn to control their impulses and frustrations. So...



- ★ Allow time for play
- ★ Provide household 'play' things e.g. box, pans, spoons, plastic containers etc. and allow your child to play in their own way both indoors and outside!
- ★ Join in when invited. Follow your child's lead and resist the temptation to get them to play your way
- ★ Be a positive, playful role model!



BEING BILINGUAL

Being Bilingual is when you can speak 2 languages. If you are raising or working with a bilingual child don't miss these helpful tips!

TOP TIPS IF A CHILD IS LEARNING TO/CAN SPEAK 2 LANGUAGES

- A bilingual child will learn to talk as easily as a child who can only speak one language. However, it can take up to 7 years for them to become fully competent in English academic language.
- It can take 2-3 months for them to begin to understand a second language. So initially they should be given shorter instructions.
- The child will benefit from hearing parents use the language they speak best.
- Parents should enjoy speaking their own language at home. Your child will learn the local language at school and in their community.
- A toolkit for diversity is available from the Inclusion and Diversity Service: <https://www.eani.org.uk/school-management/intercultural-education-service-ies/newcomers>.



LEARNING LANGUAGE ON A COUNTRYSIDE WALK

TREE BARK RUBBINGS

Talk about how the tree bark feels, smells, it's size, colour and texture as you make bark rubbings together.



CLOTHING



Explore what you may wear on a walk in the countryside thinking of the concepts hot/cold. Talk about how to describe the things that you see on your walk - hard/soft, rough/smooth, clean/dirty etc...

LET'S COLLECT

Collect leaves, sticks, stones, tree bark and lots more on your countryside walk. Make pictures together with the collections! Talk about what has been found. Plan together what picture they might make. Incorporate instructions for the child to follow e.g. find 3 small leaves; can you find the long stick? Once the child has created their picture, they can tell you all about it!



WHAT'S IN MY BAG? ?

Use the items you have collected and play the game 'What's in my bag?'. Take turns at putting your hand in the bag and picking an item. Don't let the other person see what you have picked. You must describe it and get the child to guess what it is e.g. it's hard, rough, has spikes and grows on trees - a pine cone!



LET'S EXPLORE



'I went walking and I saw a...tree.' Take turns when playing this game, each person adding something new to the list. See how long you can make your list with good attention, listening and remembering skills needed. E.g. Person 1 - 'I went walking and saw a tree', Person 2 - 'I went walking and saw a tree and a dog' etc.

COOKERY FUN

Enjoy bringing the outdoors, indoors for snack time. Cooking with children can be a great way to build on vocabulary and to develop understanding and use of language.

Banana Snowman:



Ingredients

- Banana
- Raspberry
- Blueberries
- Bread sticks
- Orange segment

Method

Chop banana and build to make snowman shape. Add other fruit to decorate snowman.

Talking tips

Talk about the steps involved when making. Use words like first, next and last. Ask your child to retell the sequence of how it was made.

Forest Animal Cookery:



Ingredients

- Pancakes
- Strawberries
- Blueberries
- Banana
- Chocolate chips

Method

Use ingredients to make forest animals e.g. owls, bears, deer etc.

Talking tips

Talk about the animals, where they live and what they look like. Think of other animals and sort them e.g. forest vs zoo vs farm etc.

SENSORY MOTOR & PERCEPTUAL

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY + PHYSIOTHERAPY

VESTIBULAR SENSE



Close your eyes – imagine being on a roller coaster – your brain will be able to tell whether you are upside down, upright or speeding fast on the ride. This is all thanks to one of our lesser known senses called our vestibular sense. Although the function of this sensory system is complex, at a basic level we can think of our vestibular sense as our GPS or balance and movement sense. The receptors for this sense are located within the inner ear and are stimulated by movement - any activity where the head is moving, the head is out of an upright position or where the body is accelerating or decelerating. Vestibular input will initially be used in early infancy to help regulate a child's arousal level – gentle rocking will help calm, while gentle throws will be used to excite and play. Indeed, vestibular input will remain a useful tool to help with arousal / attention control throughout the lifespan.

As a baby develops, there will be continued opportunities for vestibular input. These include activities that children typically enjoy such as running, swinging, rolling and jumping. For some children, this sensory system may develop differently, resulting in some difficulties. These may include **poor balance and core stability, avoidance of swings or playground equipment, or children may appear excessively on-the-go constantly moving and spinning around as their brain tries to get more vestibular information.**



ACTIVITIES TO DEVELOP VESTIBULAR SENSE



The trick is to provide opportunities where your child places their head in a **variety of positions** – upside down leaning forward, upside down leaning backwards, laying to the left, laying to the right – while stationary and in motion at different speeds and in different directions.



NOTE

Complete the activities at your child's pace/ tolerance as some children can be very sensitive to vestibular input.

Signs your child may be overwhelmed with the input – dilated pupils, sweating, or if you notice changes in breathing or disorientation. Proceed cautiously with spinning activities in particular and build this up if the child enjoys this input.

LOG ROLL

Log roll down a hill – find one that is free of any hard rocks to allow your child to enjoy this activity safely.

RIVER WALK

Pretend that the floor is a river. Use items around your home to create a way to travel from shore to shore. Try to incorporate uneven surfaces, jumping/skipping, and opportunities to roll or crawl across the floor. You can take turns adding items.

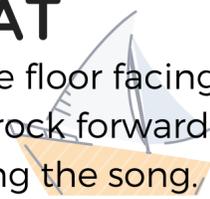
FROG JUMPS



Hop around the room to catch “flies” for dinner. Place things around the room that can represent flies, such as stuffed animals, or raisins. Place the items at different levels and places to encourage greater body movement and the need to go upside down and spin around.

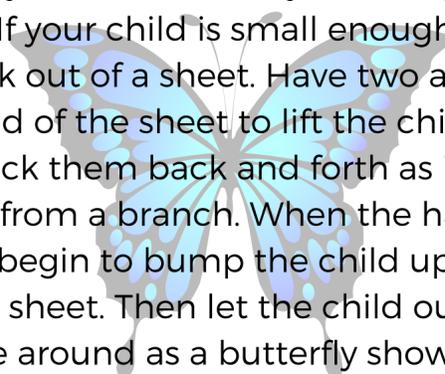
ROW YOUR BOAT

Play ‘row, row your boat’ – sit on the floor facing your child – hold hands and gently rock forwards and backwards/ side to side singing the song.



BE A BUTTERFLY

Pretend you are a butterfly hatching from its cocoon. If your child is small enough, create a hammock out of a sheet. Have two adults hold either end of the sheet to lift the child up and gently rock them back and forth as if they are swaying from a branch. When the hatching is occurring begin to bump the child up and down within the sheet. Then let the child out and have them move around as a butterfly showing off their new wings! Encourage them to spin, twirl, jump, and more!



JUNGLE RUN

Children imagine they are running through the jungle and run into many animals that they need to get away from.

The teacher calls out what's ahead and the children have to carry out a suitable action: jump over logs, duck under branches, high knees through quicksand, run from the tiger, tip toe past the snake etc.



SENSORY MOTOR & PERCEPTUAL

OCCUPATIONAL THERAPY + PHYSIOTHERAPY

ANIMAL WALKS

Try completing at different speeds!



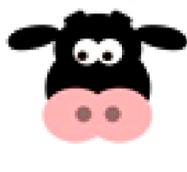
Frog jump

Hop like a frog!



Horse gallop

Gallop around the room, leading with one foot at a time



Cow walk

Walk around the room on your hands and knees while shaking your head



Pig roll

Roll like a pig in the mud



Hen flap

Flap your wings and strut around the room!

PLAY PARK



Visit the local park and use the slide, see-saw, swings and climbing frame. For intense input, hang upside down from low set bars - (with adult supervision for safety).

JUMPING IN PUDDLES



CATERPILLAR HOPSCOTCH

Draw a caterpillar on the ground using chalk. Roll a dice to determine how many steps to hop/jump along the caterpillar. How many times does it take for you to get to the caterpillar's head?



BOUNCING ON A TRAMPOLINE

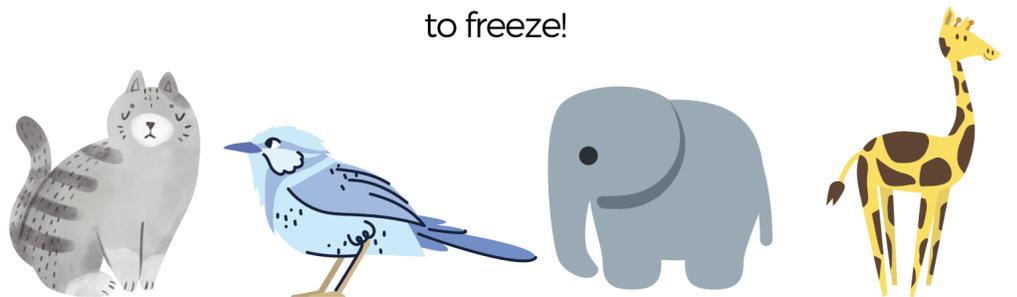


RUNNING AND STOPPING

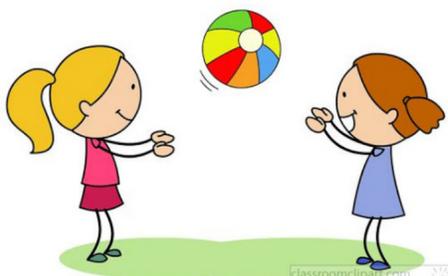
Children are required to run in 1 direction in a circle. Pretend one direction is toward hills, and the other is towards a river. Call out instructions such as- "Run towards the hills" or "Run towards the river". When told to "stop", the children must stop as quickly as possible and "freeze" in that position. They can also practice running in 1 direction and then when told to "change" they have to change direction quickly and safely.

ANIMAL STATUES

The children are required to run around the room and when told to "freeze", they must adopt an animal pose and then keep as still as possible. (Poses such as- forming cat ears with fingers/ bird beak with hand, frog crouching, forming elephant trunk with arm, stretching tall like a giraffe etc). You can also turn this into a disco and play musical statues- when the music stops, the children have to freeze!



TWIRLING CATCH



The children play catch with each other by tossing or bouncing a ball to a partner. When throwing the ball, shout out your favourite farm animal or favourite type of flower- think fast! Once the child catches the ball, they have to spin in a circle before they try to throw it back to a partner.

SCAVENGER SEARCH

Create a scavenger hunt that the children have to find things that are at different heights (give them a checklist to mark what they find, rather than collect things). Make sure to have them look for things at various heights (objects on the floor -such as daisies or slugs in the garden, objects on a wall- moss/ ivy/ snails, or even up high like a nest in a tree or an airplane or a cloud).



TURN TAKING

Social skills are a specific set of life skills that need ongoing tweaking as children grow. They are not something a child either has or doesn't have. They are skills that can be learned and strengthened with effort and practice. Social skills are an essential part of children forming relationships and maintaining friendships, specifically the skills of sharing and turn taking. Ultimately we share so that the other person will feel good and like being with us. We may need to explain this clearly to children as it all comes back to how we feel about sharing and how it makes others feel. If children can see the positive effects when they share, they will be more likely to do it. It is important to remember that children need to feel secure in their ownership before they can share. Therefore, the concept of taking turns is crucial to the development of sharing. Turn taking is an important skill to master because we use it in everyday conversations with others, waiting in lines and playing games. It promotes a sense of order, mutual respect and reciprocity.



TIPS TO DEVELOP SHARING/TURN TAKING



- **Role model:** explain why you are sharing for example, I want to share this book with my friend because I know he will enjoy reading it.
- **Share for a short time:** agree to share something for a short time with use of a visual timer. This will help them understand when it is their turn again.
- **Use toys that encourage sharing:** puzzles, balls, blocks will encourage children to share and play together.
- **Praise the child when they share on their own:** when you see a child share on their own, let them know they made a good choice.
- **Use a visual cue to indicate whose turn it is, e.g. sand timers** - these are a great way of helping children visually see the time they have to do something. Using a timer enables a switch over, giving each child say 5 minutes with a toy or piece of equipment before having to give it to someone else.
- **Use turn taking language:** i.e "it's my turn" or "your turn" so that the child will know exactly whose turn it is.
- **Play games:** board games are one of the best ways to work on turn taking. Simple games that require children to wait for only a few minutes at a time are helpful in supporting children's attention and listening.



ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE TURN TAKING



BUILDING A TOWER



Take turns in rolling a large dice to decide how many blocks to add on the tower. The tower is built together until it collapses.

PAPER PLATE FRIENDS

Provide children with a paper plate which they will make a funny face on. Provide bowls of separate materials such as coloured wool, straw, buttons. Providing limited glue will encourage children to have to share resources and wait for others to finish them first. This will also encourage good communication skills. 😊

FLOOR PUZZLES



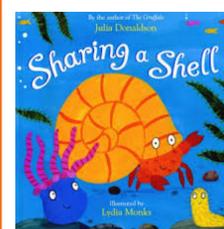
Encourage children in pairs to work together to complete large piece jigsaw puzzles.

SING NURSERY RHYMES



Sing a familiar song with the children and leave off a word or several at the end of a verse. Wait to see if the children attempt to sing the last words. If they do, resume your turn and start the next verse.

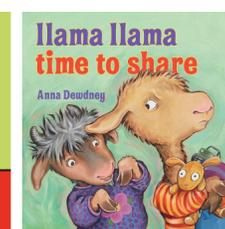
BOOKS



Sharing a Shell -
Julia Donaldson



Time to Share -
Penny Tassoni



Llama Llama Time
to Share - Anna
Dewdney