

Essential ingredients for healthy development

Play,
movement
and time
outside

Motor Skill Development

Motor skills are the use of our muscles through movement such as being able to run, jump, hop, skip, balance, catch, kick, throw and climb. Building the foundations of motor skills also help:

- » Develop focus and concentration,
- » Problem solving skills;
- » Ability to regulate emotions;
- » Social skills,
- » Feels good - which helps manage stress and anxiety.

Children develop motor skills with lots of repetition and practice but it doesn't need expensive equipment or structured lessons - many opportunities are found during play especially outdoor play.

OTs number 1 pick for gross motor development: Climbing Trees

Trees are a natural resource that is freely available in our backyards, parks, beaches and national parks that has been a long time favourite of many childhoods.

What you may not have realised is that climbing a tree is also building:

- » Core strength and postural control;
- » Balance;
- » Body and spatial awareness;
- » Engaging all the senses;
- » Coordination of both sides of the body;
- » Motor planning;
- » Eye-hand and eye-foot coordination;
- » Hand and finger strength;
- » Crossing the midline;
- » Visual perception;
- » Attention;
- » Problem solving;
- » Risk analysis.

Make sure your child has lots of chances to climb lots of different trees. If you're not convinced, check out these websites:

rhythmsofplay.com/get-outside-connect-climb-a-tree/

www.essentialkids.com.au/health/health-wellbeing/should-i-let-my-kid-climb-trees-we-asked-five-experts-20191031-hlj9ne

www.brisbanekids.com.au/best-kids-climbing-trees-in-brisbane