



Movement Breaks

What Are They?

They are short breaks to let the child move around before going back to a previous task or activity.

Who Would Benefit from a Movement Break?

Everyone! Movement breaks give us a chance to move so we can focus during activities that require:

- Maintaining focus/attention
- Sitting still
- Maintaining appropriate energy levels.



Why are Movement Breaks Effective?

It is hard work to focus on one task for a long time. Our bodies are made to move, interact and feel the environment around them. Think about how tired you feel after sitting all day at your desk, studying a lengthy book, or listening to a long talk. Our bodies need a break! By moving around, the body gets a chance to re-energize and refocus attention. This helps us improve our concentration to get the job done.

TIPS FOR USE

- Movement breaks are a great tool to use:
 - After school
 - Before periods of concentration (dinner, while watching TV, car rides)
 - When your child is having difficulty focusing.
- At the beginning, you can help your child by acting as their 'external brain'. You can help them know when to take a movement break and teach them over time how to ask for one.
- Movement breaks do not need to be a structured sport or exercise program. Simple chores or errands around the house work to give children the breaks they need. Teach your child how to ask for a movement break so that over time they can become more independent.

Movement Break Suggestions

- Push or pull furniture
- Shovel snow
- Put away the dishes
- Carry things around the house (e.g. laundry)
- Get a forgotten item from another room
- Push the shopping cart or carry the groceries
- Put groceries away into the cupboards
- Use a rocking chair
- Do wall or chair push-ups
- Play an active game together like 'Simon Says'
- Go for a walk
- Play outside

For More Suggestions, Ask Your Occupational Therapist!



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