



Carla Grobler

Arbeidsterapeut / Occupational Therapist

Pr No:0660000080136



295 Charles Barry Avenue, Bronberrick (Hennospark), Centurion, 0157



084 581 0644



carla_occupational_therapist



carla@carlagrobler.co.za



www.carlagrobler.co.za

The basics about balance

Balance is a multi-sensory activity that enables us to know where our bodies are in the environment and to maintain a certain position. Normal balance depends on information from the inner ear (vestibular system), other senses (such as sight and touch) and muscle movement (motor skills and proprioception).

Our sense of balance is specifically regulated by a complex interaction between the following parts of the nervous system:

1. The inner ears (also called the labyrinth) monitor the directions of motion, such as turning or forward-backward / side-to-side / up-and-down.
2. The eyes observe where the body is in space (i.e., upside down, right side up, etc.) and also the directions of motion.
3. Skin pressure receptors such as those located in the feet sense what part of the body is down and touching the ground.
4. Muscle and joint sensory receptors report what parts of the body are moving.
5. The central nervous system (the brain and spinal cord) processes all the bits of information from the four other systems to make some coordinated sense out of it all.

Ideas to improve balance

Start with static (while standing still) balance before moving on to dynamic (while moving) balance. Start by doing these tasks with your eyes open and then with your eyes closed – be safe and do it under supervision.

- o Kick a ball while kneeling – use your knees
- o Jump with a ball held between your feet
- o Hop-sotch
- o Jump on 1 leg
- o Stand on 1 leg
- o Walk on a balancing beam
- o Stand on your toes
- o Stand heel-toe
- o Play Twister
- o Walk on your heels
- o Balance a beanbag on different body parts
- o Set up an obstacle course at home. Put objects with unstable surfaces such as thick blankets, air mattress, couch cushions and pillows down on the floor for the child to walk across
- o Stand with your feet in 1 position (not moving) and throw and catch a ball



References

www.wikipedia.org
www.ehow.com
www.pediastaff.com

