

Core Strengthening for Children

Here are some fun exercises kids can do at home to work their core muscles and achieve better posture, balance, and endurance!

Prone(face down activities)

1. Supermans: lay on stomach with arms overhead (like superman flies). Lift arms and legs and tighten all your back muscles so chest and upper legs lift off the ground. Arms and legs should be straight
Fun Activities: reach up for desired objects, play catch from this position, put paper up on the wall so they have to reach to color on it
2. Hands and Knees position: Lift opposite hand and leg off the ground. Try To Balance!, Switch sides
Fun Activities: add movement and crawl around with a toy on the low back, trying not to let the animal drop!
3. Plank: Get Into a push up position, Hold body straight for as long as possible
Fun Activities: Have a contest who can hold it the longest, set up play kitchen toys or other toys and have the child pretend they are a table

Supine (face up activities)

1. Bridges: Lay on back with knees bent and feet flat on floor. Push through heels of feet and lift bottom off floor. Hold position and focus on keeping hips and shoulders level.
Fun Activities: zoom cars under the bridge to see how many can pass under. Put a squeaky or musical toy under the child that will sound every time the child lifts and lowers
2. Sit-Ups: Lay on back with knees bent and feet on floor. Lift head and shoulders off surface. (You can hold the child's feet for increased stability) Breathe out as you lift and in as you lower
Fun Activities: Play catch with a ball as the child lifts and lowers. Have the child grab a puzzle piece with each lift and complete a puzzle
3. Dead Bugs: Lay on your back with arms and legs off ground. Lift right arm overhead and straight left leg. Repeat movement to the opposite side. Keep alternating while keeping the belly muscles nice and tight.
Fun Activities: Swat or pop bubbles while performing this exercise. Play balloon volleyball while in this position

Standing/Sitting/Kneeling

1. **Lunges with a Twist:** Stand with one foot in front of the other (flat foot in front and on ball of foot in back). Bend Front knee and return up. Make sure your front knee does not go over front toe

Fun Activities: making the lunges walking lunges around the house during a scavenger hunt, race walking lunges

2. **Wood Chops:** Sit with both hands together, lift arms up over one shoulder and with control, lower across body to opposite hip. Repeat movement to both sides

Fun Activities: Use a plastic bat or wrapping paper roll to swing to pretend to make sword movements to knock down toys, have a play sword fight or swipe at balloons or bubbles

Other Fun Core Strengthening Games

- **Build an obstacle course out of chairs and cushions at home and have the child crawl or climb over it**
- **Climb up the slide instead of using the stairs, then turn around and slide down**
- **Hold relay races in wheelbarrow, crab position, or bear (hands and feet, no knees on ground) position**
- **Crawl backwards around the house**
- **Standing on an uneven surface (ie. bed or pillow) while playing catch. This can also be done in kneeling and ½ kneeling**