

Ribbon twirling

Ribbon twirling is a great activity to support the development of gross motor skills in young children.

It's also a fun activity to encourage physical development too. Children can make large circles, zigzags and make wiggly snakes and move gently to music twirling their ribbons.

Learning aims

To experience different ways to move and enhance the opportunities for children to be physically active.

Resources

- Rolls of florist's ribbon or fabric
- Music.



Activity Outline

- Firstly, discuss how to use the ribbon safely
- Ask the children to choose a colour of ribbon (or two favourite colours). Tie a knot at one end of two lengths of florist ribbon to join them together (the length of the ribbon will depend on the size of the child but 45cms or more x two for each child is a good guide)
- Make rips in the ribbon, starting from the untied ends and finishing a few centimetres from the knot
- You can curl your ribbons if you like: trapping the ribbon between your thumb and a ruler, starting from the knotted end and pulling to the loose ends, works well
- Now all you need is some music to move to and to have fun!
- The children might need you to show them some moves, to begin with:
 - Try waving the ribbon above your head
 - Bending over and waving it between your legs
 - Waving to one side and then crossing the midline of your body and waving it at the other side and then swap hands
 - The children will probably have some super and individual moves of their own once you model the idea.

Extending the activity

- Why not try a 'wake up shake up' movement activity a few times a day?
- You could explore the Disney 10 minutes Shake Ups via the Change4Life resources
- Try playing Simons Says e.g. "Jump three times, hop three times, turn around, run to the wall, touch your head" etc. – there are lots of opportunities to practice listening and attention as well as the obvious physical development here!

Working with babies

- Supervised tummy time is an important part of physical development for young babies. Could you try a whole body painting experience with babies on their tummies (supervised and risk assessed as required)?
- You can play crawling games for the slightly older babies – for example, crawling through tunnels, or chasing games crawling around.