

CROSSING MIDLINE



What is crossing midline?

- The body's midline is an imaginary line down the centre of the body that divides the body into left and right.
- Crossing the body's midline is the ability to reach across this imaginary line to the opposite side of the body.

Why practice crossing midline?

- To help both sides of the brain work together
- To improve body awareness and overall coordination

How does crossing midline help?

- It improves coordination to reach across the body when performing a task (dressing, puzzles and printing, etc.).
- It encourages the use of a stabilizing hand and a working hand during activities.
- It helps develop hand dominance.

A child that has difficulty crossing midline may do the following:

- Switch hands at midline during tasks such as writing, drawing, painting or colouring
- Avoid or refuse to reach across body to grasp an item (uses the left hand to reach items on left side of the body and uses the right hand to reach items on right side of the body)
- Find difficulty visually tracking an object from one side of the body to the other, such as when following a ball or scanning the pages of a book from left to right
- Switch which foot they use to kick a ball (uses the left foot to kick a ball on the left side of the body and uses the right foot to kick a ball on the right side of the body)
- Have difficulty coordinating gross motor patterns (e.g. crawling, skipping, star-jumps)

Practice the following activities to help develop crossing midline:

- Set up activities with items to the right and left of the child to encourage reaching in all directions.
- Position the child in side sitting or on hands and knees to help encourage the use of one hand to reach for items.

