

Deep Pressure and Heavy Activities for School Age Children

An effective form of sensory modulation is "Deep Pressure" or "Heavy work" activities. These are wonderful for providing children with the input they crave including deep proprioception (or joint sensation) and joint compression.

| Heavy Work Activities for School | Heavy Work Activities for Home and the Community |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Scooter board to and from a designated location (sit or lie on stomach and propel with arms). There will be more resistance if wheeled on a carpeted floor. 2. Place chairs on desks at end of day or take down at beginning of day 3. Erase or wash the chalkboard 4. Carry beanbags on shoulders or head and walk across the room. Wear weighted vests, belts, or wrist weights 5. Help rearrange desks in the classroom 6. Push the teacher around on a wheeled chair or scooter board 7. Pull someone while they sit on a scooter board holding onto a hula hoop 8. Child can pull himself/herself up a ramp while on a scooter board 9. Help out the janitor with emptying wastebaskets, mop the floor, etc. 10. Fill egg crates (small ones that kids can carry) with books to take to other classrooms. Teachers could ask kids to move these crates back and forth as needed 11. Help the gym teacher move mats, hang them up, etc. 12. Chewy candy breaks (this addresses the janitor's "no gum rule"). There are lots of chewy candy that take awhile to chomp and don't get stuck on furniture 13. Sharpen pencils with a manual sharpener | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Carry heavy items (baskets with cardboard blocks, groceries for Mom, etc.) 2. Mop the floors 3. Allow child to chew gum, eat chewy or crunchy foods, or sip water from a water bottle with a straw while doing homework 4. Push or pull boxes with toys or a few books in it 5. Pillow cases with a few stuffed animals in it for weight, pushing or pulling up a ramp, incline or stairs 6. Take the cushions off the sofas, vacuum under them, then put them back. Can also climb on them, hide under them, jump and "crash" into them, play sandwich games with them 7. Pull other kids around on a sheet or blanket 8. Roller skate uphill 9. Pull a heavy trash can 10. Yard work, including mowing the lawn, raking grass/leaves, pushing wheelbarrow 11. Housework including vacuuming and mopping, carrying buckets of water to clean with or to water flowers/plants/trees 12. Shovel sand into a wheelbarrow, wheel the wheelbarrow to a spot, dump out sand and use a rake to level it out. (functional for filling in low spots in backyard) 13. Pull a friend or heavy items in a wagon 14. Push a friend in a wheelbarrow |

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>14. Have students carry heavy notebooks to the office or from class to class</p> <p>15. Carry school supplies/books in a backpack when or fanny pack when walking from class to class.</p> <p>16. Carry books with both hands hugging the book to yourself</p> <p>17. Tie theraband around the front legs of a chair that a child can kick his/her legs into</p> <p>18. Have child pass out papers/objects to class members</p> <p>19. Wash desks or chalkboard/dry erase board</p> <p>20. Push the lunch cart or carry lunch bin to the cafeteria</p> <p>21. Staple paper onto bulletin boards</p> <p>22. If there is a garden project at the school, have child dig the dirt</p> <p>23 Play with medicine balls (get from gym teacher)</p> <p>24. Run around the track at school</p> <p>25. Push a large therapy ball across/around the room (can purchase weighted therapy balls)</p> <p>26. Push square plastic nesting boxes (the largest one was 18 to 20 inches) in the halls or around the classroom.. One or two of the nested boxes can be removed to decrease the weight or small balls and/or bean bags could be added to the box to increase the weight. I</p> <p>27. Use beanbag chairs in classrooms, allowing kids to use them during silent reading time or to lay over or under them during independent work tasks to get a change in position and the benefit of consistent pressure input. Falling into the bean bag provides more "heavy work".</p> | <p>15. Milkshake rewards sipped through a narrow straw</p> <p>16. Suck applesauce through a straw</p> <p>17. Scrub rough surfaces with a brush</p> <p>18. Carrying heavy cushions</p> <p>19. Pillow fights</p> <p>20. Playing in sandbox with damp heavy sand</p> <p>21. Have the child "help" by pushing in chairs to a table or push chairs into table after a meal</p> <p>22. Push a child's cart filled with cans and then put the cans away on a low shelf where the child needs to be in a weight bearing quadruped (on hands and knees) position</p> <p>23. After a bath, parents can squeeze child and rub him/her briskly with a towel</p> <p>24. Use heavy quilts at night and tight flannel pajamas</p> <p>25. Swimming. Also, have child dive after weighted sticks thrown in pool</p> <p>26. Dancing</p> <p>27. Activities such as gymnastics, horseback riding, wrestling, karate</p> <p>28. Bath the dog</p> <p>29. Wash the car</p> <p>30. Carry the laundry basket</p> <p>31. Sweep, mop, vacuum the floors</p> <p>32. Jump or climb in inner tubes</p> <p>33. Fill up a child's suitcase with heavy items (such as books) and push/pull the suitcase across the room</p> <p>34. When travelling, let child pull own small suitcase on wheels</p> |
|---|--|

| | |
|--|--|
| <p>28. Have kids pull themselves by a long jump rope tied by one end to a doorknob while they are seated on a scooter board with their legs crossed and off the floor. Can also have one child hold the jump rope while the other child is pulling him/herself on the scooter board up to the child holding the rope. A variation is to play "army jungle maneuvers" where the child on the scooter board can deliver secret messages to the other child, and that child (who is holding the rope) has to write a secret answer back to the commander (teacher). This could be incorporated into academics in lots of ways. How about the first child taking a math problem to the second, the second solves the math problem and sends it to the commander (teacher)</p> <p>29. Bouncing on a large therapy ball while counting down from one hundred</p> <p>30. Prior to seat work, have child pinch, roll, pull therapy putty; use hand exercisers, balloons filled with flour.</p> <p>31. Playground play, on equipment, hanging from a bar, running up steps, etc.</p> <p>32. Use bubble pack as part of an obstacle course. Child can jump onto it or run across it. They love the noise it makes!</p> <p>33. In the classroom, use heavy duty tape to fasten a large phone book to the bottom of students' chairs then teacher arranges the student's schedules so that the students move to a new area of the room (taking their chair) between subjects. Teach the use of wall pushups or the idea of "the room feels small this morning, can everyone help me push the walls out" for younger students</p> <p>34. Have student move several packs at a time of Xerox paper from the storage area to the school copy center</p> <p>35. Pull therapist's suitcase on wheels or therapy cart</p> <p>36. Sports activities involving running and jumping</p> | <p>35. Go "shopping" with a child's shopping cart filled with items</p> <p>36. Child can help change the sheets on the bed, then toss the linens down the stairs</p> <p>37. Go "camping" with a heavy blanket pulled across a few chairs. Child can help set up and take down the blanket</p> <p>38. Child can help rearrange his/her bedroom furniture</p> <p>39. Have child put large toys and equipment away</p> <p>40. Wipe off the table after dinner</p> <p>41. Help dust the furniture</p> <p>42. Climbing activities (such as playground equipment)</p> <p>43. Swing from the trapeze bar</p> <p>44. Push against a wall</p> <p>45. Fill up big toy trucks with heavy blocks, push with both hands to knock things down. Push or pull heavy boxes across the floor.</p> <p>46. Sports activities involving running and jumping</p> <p>47. Two adults can swing child in a sheet. Watch child's face carefully to note when child has had enough</p> <p>48. Play "cars" under the kitchen table (or table in classroom) where the child pushes the car with one hand while creeping and weight bearing on the other hand</p> <p>49. "Hot dog" game where child lies across end of a blanket and is rolled (ends up inside the rolled up blanket with head outside)</p> <p>51. Walk up a ramp or incline</p> <p>52. Use therapy band or tubing attached to a door and pull it then let it snap. Supervision necessary.</p> |
|--|--|

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>37. Open doors for people</p> <p>38. Quiet squeeze toys such as the cow, fondly named by everyone as "Moo" (squeaky squeeze toys are frowned on by our teachers). Kids can be taught to squeeze Moo or the likes of him on their laps under their desks so as not to disturb the class</p> <p>39. Stack chairs</p> | <p>53. Wood projects requiring sanding and hammering</p> <p>54. Play wrestling: pushing game where two people lock hands facing each other and try to see who can push and make the other person step back first. Use other body parts also, but be sure to have rules (no hitting, no biting, no scratching, one person says stop then both stop)</p> <p>55. Open doors for people</p> <p>56. Make a walking trail with plastic cut-out feet (the non-stick matting sold with shelf paper is a good material choice). Create an obstacle course to encourage big steps and turns. Stamping the foot provides "heavy work". Stepping one foot to the other and turning works on balance and trunk control.</p> <p>57. Fall into a beanbag chair</p> <p>58. Jumping and rolling games</p> <p>59. Slowly roll a ball or bolster over the child, applying pressure</p> <p>60. Bounce on a Hippity Hop ball</p> <p>61. Sandwich games (child is place between beanbags, sofa cushions, mattresses and light pressure is applied to top layer)</p> <p>62. Play catch with a heavy ball. Bounce and roll a heavy ball</p> <p>63. Animal walks (crab walk, bear walk, army crawl)</p> <p>64. Play "row, row, row your boat" both sitting on the floor, pushing and pulling each other</p> <p>65. Mini trampoline</p> <p>.</p> |
|---|--|