

10 WAYS TO ENGAGE THE BODY



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#1 Go for a walk

Get out in the great outdoors! Even if the weather isn't great where you are, just being outside for a short period of time will help bodies stay engaged and hopefully get a dose of Vitamin D! If your child has difficulty getting their body going or maintaining motion when walking, it is helpful to give them short goals to meet. For example, let them know the goal is to get to the next light post, or the mailbox. Coach their bodies to get moving and then help to maintain the motion by adding rhythm – walking to the beat while clapping or even music. Here is a [blog that I wrote about motor goals](#) and ways to help support purposeful motor skills.

#2 Chores

We may think that most kids don't like to do chores, however for an individual who has difficulty with purposeful movement, doing chores with coaching can be very engaging and provide them with a sense of body control. Start with simple tasks such as taking out the trash or sorting laundry. Once those become easier, try things like folding the laundry or putting laundry away. Engaging in chores will not only build purposeful motor skills, but also independence.

#3 Body Engagers

Things like puzzles, painting, Lego, paint by sticker are all things that can be used as [Body Engagers](#). It is really important to keep in mind that those with significant motor differences will need 1:1 support and coaching to be successful with any body engager. It may be very challenging for them in the beginning, but with practice and coaching, they will be able to keep their bodies engaged. For more ideas and information about body engagers, [check out this blog](#).

#4 Podcasts/Audiobooks/TedTalks

Keeping the brain engaged will also help with keeping the body engaged. Age appropriate audiobooks, podcasts and TedEd or TedTalks are all great things to have playing when at home. Even when we don't "think" our spellers are listening, they are! This is a great time to pick a book and either read out loud to your speller or choose an audiobook to have playing during the day. Check out these [free audiobooks available through Audible](#).

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#5 Exercise-Indoors or Outdoors

Exercise is a great way to keep the body engaged. It will also provide some great proprioceptive feedback to bodies that tend to be dysregulated. Exercise can be done in a variety of ways. Some ideas include going for a run, following an exercise video, dancing, body weight exercises like push-ups, sit ups, air squats or even jumping jacks. Get that heart rate up!

#6 Games

Games can be a fantastic way to engage the body. If some have a difficult time with fine motor movements, try games like Twister or obstacle courses. Other games like chess, checkers, Uno, or other board games are great as well, but may need more body coaching due to the fine motor movements that are needed.

#7 Spelling

This can be a FANTASTIC time to get some spelling practice in. Spelling engages the body and mind not to mention how great it is for the Communication and Regulation Partner to develop some great skills. Choose a lesson that is super interesting, combine it with some VAKT (Visual, Auditory, Kinesthetic, Tactile) Activities and have fun together!

[Check out the free lessons on the I-ASC website.](#)

#8 Yoga/Meditation

Yoga and meditation will help to support not only engaging the body, but also with the increased stress that we are all under. Practicing relaxation methods helps to support regulation and make us all feel better. Just remember that those with motor differences will need more body coaching in order to get their bodies in the yoga positions. Keep things simple!

#9 Hobbies

This is a great time to start a hobby! Everything from crafts to baking or cooking are great things to keep the body engaged. [Our list of VAKTivities](#) (activities that engage visual, auditory, kinesthetic and tactile) may give you some ideas. Maybe you've always wanted to learn how to bake cookies or a cake. Keeping the motor tasks simple and with body coaching, hobbies can be a great way to stay busy and learn something new!

#10 Connect with friends/family

With today's technology we are able to connect with anyone, anywhere at any time. Take advantage of this by Zooming or Facetiming a friend or family member. Have friends read to your speller or engage in a conversation even if our speller doesn't "look" like they are listening or attending, we know they are! Even if it's just for a few minutes, connecting with others in whatever way we can will help to ease the anxiety, engage the body and build relationships!