

Eyes Need to Move Too!

An activity guide for under-fives

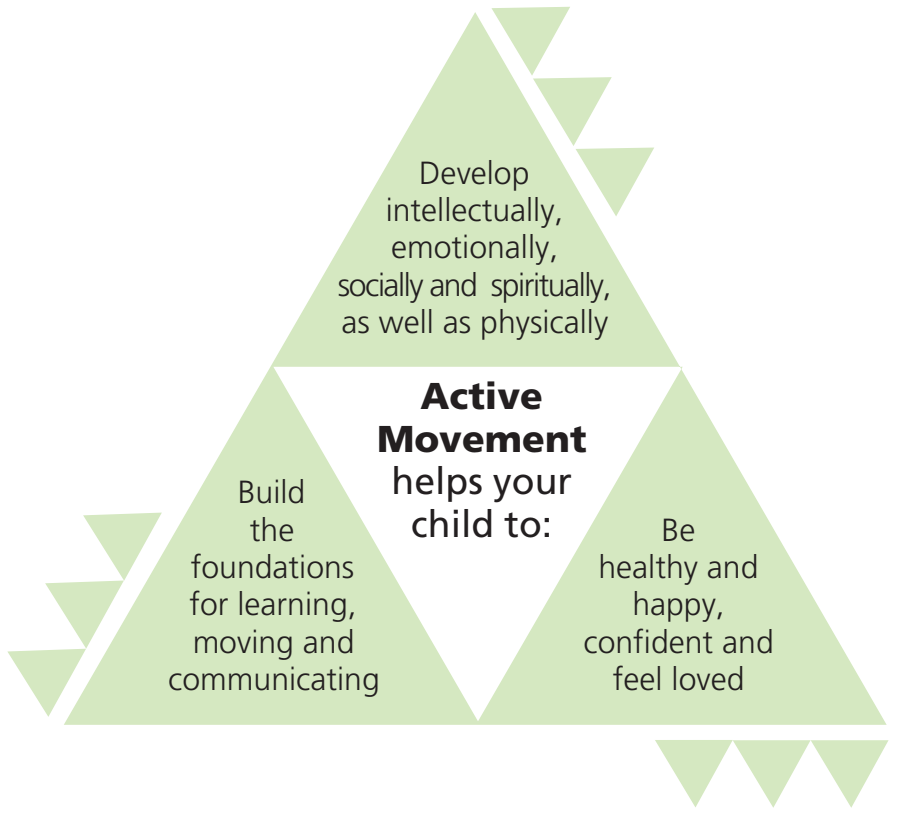


What is Active Movement/ Koringa Hihiko?







Active Movement is just as important for newborns as it is for older children. By helping your child to get active, you help their body to develop, you help them to learn and to feel safe, and you show them they are loved.

The Active Movement series of brochures helps you with ideas for fun activities.






? Why is eye movement important?

-  From very early on in a child's life, Active Movement activities for the eyes are essential, as they help the eye muscles become stronger.
-  Our eyes work together, but see images separately, so it is important to develop strong eye muscles so that the right messages are sent to the brain. The brain then combines the information and makes one image.
-  We also need strong eye muscles to keep the eyes straight during movement so you can see things straight in front of you, and beside you, and to make sure these are steady.
-  Good eye fitness also assists with concentration, following words on a page when reading, and following moving objects when participating in games and sports.

? How do you use your eyes to imagine?

-  When you talk on the telephone, you can see or imagine the person you are speaking to in your head. When you read a book you imagine the scene and the characters and form a picture of this in your head. This is called **visualisation**. When constantly staring at television screens, all the visual information is there, so we don't have to imagine. The more we look at television screens, the more likely we are to lose this important skill.

Activities for Newborns and Infants

He ngohe mā ngā Pēpi



These activities can also be done with toddlers and young children.



It is important to encourage activities where the head stays still and just the eyes move. You may need to hold the child's head gently in some of these activities to encourage eye muscle movement only.



When reading, slowly point to different things in the pictures at different places on the page. This encourages his eyes to move.





Use bubbles when she is in the bath.
Always stay with your child when they
are near water.



More activities to do with newborns and infants

- ▶ Lie him on his tummy and roll a toy across his body. Roll it on the floor too – away from him and towards him. (This encourages eye movements and also upper body strength.)



- ▶ Place a finger puppet on your finger and move it gently from one side to the other and up and down while she watches, keeping her head still.

- ▶ Play finger games like 'Two Little Dickey Birds'. These games encourage eyes to move in both directions.



Activities for Toddlers

He ngohe mā ngā Tamariki Nohinohi



These activities can also be done with young children.



For more ideas to develop eye fitness and movement see the brochure **Catching, Throwing and Kicking**.

More activities to do with toddlers



Give her a small ruler to hold. Blow bubbles and ask her to catch the bubbles on the ruler.



Blow up a balloon and, using a foil tube or clean fly swat, have him hit the balloon up and down as many times as he can.





▶ Spin slowly on merry go-rounds, swings and other playground equipment or simply roll down a hill.

▶ Play skittles (develops short-range and long-range vision).



Activities for Young Children

He ngohe mā ngā Kōhungahunga



These activities can also be done with toddlers.



Use different voices for the characters when reading a story.



Act out the characters in a story – you and your child can pretend to be the different characters/animals or things in a story e.g. the fire engine, a donkey etc.



Dress up when reading a story.



Before sleep, tell a make believe story with no pictures. Then he has to imagine the scene and the characters. Talk about both with him and compare what you thought of and what he did.