KidBuilders Motor Skills in the Classroom
For Preschool and Kindergarten

KidBuilders is a comprehensive, yearlong motor skills program written by Marilyn Bitsis and Margaret Schafer. It is designed to meet the needs of the motor skills teacher of young children. KidBuilders workshops can be customized to meet the needs of its audience—from sampler settings to 12-hour continuing education workshops. If you are interested in learning more about the complete KidBuilders curriculum, please contact Marilyn Bitsis at (713) 306-9875. You may also go to www.houstonkidbuilders.com.

The Motor Skills in the classroom for Preschool and Kindergarten presentation is just a small sampling of our sequential skills, activities, suggested music and equipment. Today’s session is prepared especially for participants in the PTAC Conference January 22, 2011, who teach preschool and kindergarten children ages 2 1/2 to six years old.

Essentials of Motor Skills

Realizing the importance of motor development to later learning, these are fourteen basic skills, or essentials; you can work on during the school year. While the basics remain constant, the variety and creativity you add make them into essentials of preschool motor development. The following is a list of basic skill areas we believe are essential to healthy gross motor development. We have added some suggestions of music, equipment and games for making your skill activities FUN!

#1 – NON-LOCOMOTOR MOVEMENT

Various body movements while remaining stationary-no locomotion. The body stays in one place.

Example Skill: Stretches, knee bends, roll shoulders, twists, jumps in place
Example Activity: Bouncing’ Body Parts (or other stationary movement to music);
Kids’ Great Ideas

Skill Sequences:

From a sitting position:
Shoulder shrugs
Shoulder rolls
Head nods up and down
Head turns side to side
Shake hands

Wiggle feet
Wiggle fingers
Bounce knees
Turn in place

From a standing position:
Wiggle
Knee bends
Elbow flaps/arm flaps
Turn in place
Bend at the waist—front, sides and back

Trunk twists
Jump in place/jump & turn/slow jump
Leg kicks
Walk/march/run in place
#2 - LOCOMOTOR MOVEMENT

Basic Body movements used to transport one’s body from one place to another.

**Example Skill:** Walk, jog, gallop, tiptoe, etc.

**Example Activity:** (As in transition) Call children’s names individually and have each one hop, skip, jump, crawl to his /her space in the room or to line up.

**Skill Sequence:**
- Log roll; Alligator Crawl; Crawl; Bear walk; Baby bunny; Seat scoot (forward and backward);
- Walk; Tiptoe; Jog (or run slowly); Walk backwards; Gallop; Sand crab; Jump (2 feet);
- Hop (one foot)

#3 - BILATERAL MOVEMENT

Movement using both side of the body simultaneously or in parallel movement.

**Example Skill:** Bear walk, crawl, “angel in the snow”

**Example Activities:** Bear walk on the ladder; baby bunny/alligators, other animals on mats.

**Skill Sequence:**
- “Angel in the snow”
- Crawl
- Alligator crawl
- Bear walk
- Baby bunny
- Frog jump
- Seat scoot (forwards and backwards)
- Walk backwards
- Sand crab
- Elephant walk
- Jump (2 feet)
#4 - LATERAL (SIDE) ROLLING

Movement in both directions from back to front to back again while lying flat.

**Example Activities:** Log rolls on a mat; roll down a hill or other incline; Log roll in transition

**Skill Sequence:**
Lie on the tummy and push with one hand to roll to the back; repeat on the other side with the other hand.

Lie flat on the back with arms at the side and roll to one side, return to the back then roll to the other side without rolling completely over.

Lie flat on the back with arms at the side and roll to one side then continue rolling onto the tummy.

Lie flat on the back with arms at the side and roll to one side, continue onto the tummy and on to the other side. Repeat the sequence rolling in the opposite direction.

Lie flat on the back with arms extended over the head and use the trunk muscles to roll to one side, return to the back, then to the other side.

Lie flat on the back with arms extended over the head and use the trunk muscles to roll to one side to the tummy and continue to the other side. Repeat rolling in the other direction.

#5 - BODY IMAGE/ BODY AWARENESS

The concept and knowledge of one's body and its parts; the structure of body parts, their movement and functions, and their position in relation to one another and other objects.

**Example Skill:** Identify body parts as part of a song (in a transition) or game

**Example Activities:** Song: "Head & Shoulders, Knees & Toes." Game: "Body Parts Squares"; Body Parts Mats

**Skill Sequence:**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Head</th>
<th>Hand(s)</th>
<th>Elbow</th>
<th>Chin</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Eyes</td>
<td>Back</td>
<td>Ankle</td>
<td>Shin</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mouth</td>
<td>Feet (Foot)</td>
<td>Neck</td>
<td>Heel</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nose</td>
<td>Toes</td>
<td>Bottom</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ears</td>
<td>Shoulder(s)</td>
<td>Wrist</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Knees</td>
<td>Tummy/stomach</td>
<td>Fingers/thumbs</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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#6 - BALANCE (DYNAMIC AND STATIC)

The ability to gain and maintain a body position against the force of gravity by working the muscles to keep the body on its base.

**DYNAMIC BALANCE:** Balance during locomotion or other movement

**Example Skill:** Walking on the balance beam or ladder.

**Example Activities and suggested Skill Sequence:**
- Walk on a *line* (6” wide) on the floor; repeat backwards
- Walk heel-toe on a *line* (6” wide) on the floor; repeat backwards
- Walk heel-toe on a *line* (4” wide) on the floor; repeat backwards
- Walk on a *wide beam* (6”-8” wide) on the floor; repeat backwards
- Walk on a *wide beam* a few inches off the floor; backwards
- Walk on a *regulation beam* (4” wide) on the floor; backwards
- Repeat the above on tiptoe; Repeat the above with a side step in both directions
- Bear walk forward, backward and sideways on the *ladder*

**STATIC BALANCE:** Balance while remaining still.

**Example Skill:** One-leg standing balance (floor or on beam.)

**Example Activity:** Body Parts Mats game while they hold the position for 3 seconds; Statue Cards game

**Skill Sequence:**
- Tuck sit on the floor
- Tuck balance on the floor
- One-foot balance on the floor
- Repeat the above on the balance beam
- Knee balance/one knee scale on the floor

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# 7 - JUMPING/HOPPING

To spring free from the ground or other base by the muscular action of feet and legs (jumping) or one leg and foot (hopping).

**Example Skill:** Kangaroo jumps as part of animal imitation: jumping from a low step or jump box,

**Example Activities:** Hopscotch (modified); hop on one foot to line up; jumping rope; Jump from curb

**Skill Sequence:**
- Knee bend/bounce
- Knee bend & jump from a low step (2-4”) holding a hand for help
- Knee bend & jump from a low step *without* help
- Knee bend & jump up and down while moving
- Knee bend & jump from a higher step (6-8”)
- Walk/run a few steps and jump into a hoop
  
  **Jump over a rope on the floor**
  **Hop on one foot holding a hand**
  **Knee bend & jump up and down in place**

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# 8 - DIRECTIONALITY

The projection of one's self in space and the understanding and knowledge of the direction (left, right, up, down, etc.) needed to achieve the desired movement.

**Example Skill:** Scooters and Cones - The child makes an "S" figure in and around the cones while riding on the scooter.

**Example Activity:** Obstacle course in the room: between, under, over, around objects in the classroom

**Skill Sequence:**
- Raise arms up (above)
- Reach arms to each side (beside) –one side, the other side, favorite
- Reach down (below)
- Place hands between knees; under knees
- From a spot or hoop step sideways (beside)
  - Forward (in front of)
  - Backwards (behind)
- Repeat the above jumping
- Step/ jump over ropes
- Crawl under chairs
- Walk a course going around cones
- Scoot the course on a scooter
- Crawl through a tunnel
#9 – PUSH/PULL

**Push:** To press with force against an object.

**Example Skill:** Pushing against a wall  
**Example Activity:** Line the children up against the wall and tell them to push as hard as they can with different body parts; Push a friend in a wagon around a cone or course.

**Skill Sequence:**  
Push large buttons (with the whole hand) on a toy telephone  
With palms together push hands together as hard as possible  
With feet together push feet together as hard as possible  
Push against a friend’s hands, feet, back, etc.  
Push against the wall as hard as possible with hands, feet, back, side  
Push a heavy box on the floor  
Push the pedals of a tricycle—attempt

**Pull:** To exert force upon so as to cause motion toward the force.

**Example Skill:** Pull a scarf out of a tight container; Pull against force on a rope  
**Example Activity:** Sit in a circle with a large piece of stretch fabric and have the children pull back and forth. Repeat standing, forward, sideways, and backwards.

**Skill Sequence:**  
Pull with both hands on a rubber band or exercise band  
Pull with a group on a large piece of stretch fabric  
Pull a wagon around cones  
Pull a weighted box around cones

#10 - UNILATERAL MOVEMENT

Movement using and isolating only one side of the body.

**Example Skill:** One-sided angel (either on floor or on beam.)  
**Example Activity:** Use 1 Stilt to the music “Pause” by Hap Palmer

**Skill Sequence:**  
One-sided “angel in the snow” on the floor  
Swing one arm  
Swing one leg  
Swing same-side arm and leg  
Step on one stilt holding string with same-side hand—attempt  
Walk on beam with one foot on and one foot off  
Step on a step-launcher to make a bean bag jump—attempt
#11 - TRACKING (Ocular Pursuit)

The ability of the eyes to follow a moving object.

**Example Skill:** Follow floating scarves, bubbles, etc.

**Example Activities:** Play "Follow the Scarf" game; Ping Pong ball & Straw; Bubbles; Streamers

**Skill Sequence:**

- Eyes follow a suspended moving object
- Strike or reach for a suspended moving object
- Eyes follow an object without moving the head
- Eyes follow an un-tethered object to strike it with a hand, foot, etc.—attempt
- Eyes follow a thrown scarf until it lands on the floor
- Toss and follow a scarf to land somewhere on the body
- Toss and follow a scarf to land on a designated body part
- With a short straw in the mouth, blow and follow a ping-pong ball—attempt

#12 - EYE-HAND COORDINATION

The use of the eyes and hands together to accomplish a skill.

**Example Skill:** Bounce-catch (two-handed catch) a ball.

**Example Activities:** Catching jug; Beach Ball Volleyball; Scarves to music; Elefun game

**Skill Sequence:**

- Reach for and strike a suspended object with a hand
- Catch a large rolled ball (seated), return the roll
- Catch a large bounced ball (seated), return bounce
- Catch a large bounced ball (standing), return bounce
- Catch a large thrown ball (body/hug catch)
- Catch a large thrown ball (hands-only catch)
- Throw a ball at a target (large then small)—attempt
- Strike a large moving ball with hands (beach ball volleyball)
#13 - EYE-FOOT COORDINATION

The use of the eyes and foot or feet together to accomplish a skill.

**Example Skill:** Kicking jug - Standing-kick or walk-up-and-kick.
**Example Activities:** Soccer Dribble around cones; step launchers.
**Skill Sequence:**
- Kick a suspended object (scarf, etc)
- Kick a stationary object while sitting
- Kick a stationary object while standing
- Kick a rolled ball
- Step on a step-launcher to make a beanbag jump

#14 - CROSS-LATERAL MOVEMENT

Movement when both sides of the body are working *in opposition* to one another (walking with left foot forward and right arm forward); Crossing the *mid-line* of the body (right foot crosses over left foot to step.)

**Example Skill:** Zigzag walk on floor or grid. Side cross over step on beam or floor.
**Example Activity:** Cross Lateral “Freeze” to the music *Pause* by Hap Palmer
**Skill Sequence:**
- Cross arms in front of body
- Cross one foot over another
- Big arm circles in front of the body
- Sit crisscross (cross-sit)
- Zigzag walk over a line or rope on the floor or on a grid--attempt