

## Strong and Balanced

**Practicing balancing and other coordination skills will help your child to:**

- Walk and run smoothly
- Improve balance needed for more complex activities
- Move from one place to another with confidence

### Ideas to try with your child:

- On a piece of masking tape on the floor, pretend to be a tightrope walker by placing one foot carefully in front of the other. Hold your arms out to improve balance.
- Turn on the music and balance a beanbag on your head while walking to the beat. Balance the beanbag on your hand, shoulder, and elbow. Make a beanbag with a sock and some dry rice or beans, closed tightly with a rubber band.
- Create a “river” using two jump ropes or string placed six inches apart on the floor. Challenge your child to jump across the “water” without getting her feet wet. Widen the river to jump farther. Place a paper towel or paper plate between the ropes as a “stepping stone” to get across. Try several stepping stones to balance on as she gets across the river.

### If your child is struggling:

- Practice walking up and down stairs with your child. Put one foot per step and hold your child’s hand. This will help them to improve balancing skills.
- Get down on the floor with your child and practice balancing on two knees and two hands. When your child is able to do this, practice balancing on two knees and one hand or one knee and one hand.

### Going further:

- Practice balancing on one foot to the count of five. Switch and practice balancing on the other foot. For an extra challenge, try doing this with your eyes closed.
- Play hopscotch with your child. This will improve many skills. If you are unsure how to play, type “How to play hopscotch” into YouTube for a video.
- Books to Check out: [Curious George Circus Act](#) by H.A. Rey, [Animal Gym](#) by Beth Greiner Hoffman, or [My Dad is the Best Playground](#) by Luciana Navarro Powell

The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children’s best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 3-4 years** that parents can help improve at home.



Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: “Show coordination and balance, such as in walking along a line or balance beam.” *Touching, Seeing, Hearing, and Moving Around: Ages-3-4 years*, pg. 60