



The proprioceptive system is activated any time the joints are actively compressed together or stretched apart. This provides heavy muscle work which has a calming, organizing, and regulating effect on the body. This helps to decrease stress and anxiety. Heavy work / proprioceptive input can also increase focus and attention. With the right sensory input, children are able to sit still for longer because they feel grounded.

At home ideas:

- Carrying the shopping bags
- Walking with a heavy rucksack
- Walking the dog
- Washing the car
- Hammering
- Tug of war
- Rough and tumble play
- Rock climbing
- Swimming
- Karate
- Yoga
- Sucking hard sweets/lollies
- Chewing resistive foods (dried fruit, gum)
- Sucking thick drinks through a straw (milkshakes, smoothies)



Heavy Work



In school ideas:

These can be incorporated into the child's daily routine within the school environment.

- Walking with a heavy rucksack
- Clean the white board.
- Push the lunch trolley/ library trolley
- Open heavy doors for people
- Help move gym mats, PE equipment. Etc
- Fill boxes with books to take to other classrooms
- Use squeeze toys that can be squeezed quietly on the child's lap under the desk
- Jump on a mini-trampoline/ trampette
- Climb on playground equipment
- Swing from a fixed bar
- Play games that involve running/ jumping
- Run around the school track
- Chair or wall push-ups
- Animal walks



Heavy work is designed to provide sensory input in safer, more consistent ways. When children complete heavy work throughout the day, it can help them feel more organized before they need to seek input. The most effective heavy work activities activate as many muscles and joints as possible at the same time, and for a short period of time. That means not all heavy work is equal. Some activities, for example swimming, are more effective and powerful than others.

