

The Importance of Movement for Individuals with CHARGE Syndrome

Fourth in a series

By Dr. Beth Foster, CAPE, Assistant Professor in Adapted Physical Education, Department of Kinesiology and Health Promotion at California State Polytechnic University, Pomona

Strategies and Equipment to Assist Movement

Independent walking is the most important and most impressive developmental motor milestone, as it allows the hands to be free to further explore the environment (Shirley, 1931). This is particularly important for children who are deafblind, as their hands many times act as their eyes and ears as they explore their environment tactilely. For children with CHARGE syndrome, it is important to develop muscular strength, endurance, and balance to assist in movement development. So how can we do just that?

Strategies to Assist Movement

- Collaboration is key! Make sure that service providers are working together and sharing beneficial knowledge. Ask about ways you can implement strategies and increase opportunities to practice at home.
- Teach or interact from behind the individual (Payne & Isaacs, 2002). For individuals with dual sensory loss it is important to allow their hands to do the exploring and manipulation. At times, when someone is interacting in front of them, they may be distracted by the person present and not attend to the task or object in front of them.
- Pre-teaching is a teaching strategy that is used before the start of a new physical education unit or movement experience (Lieberman, Ponchillia, & Ponchillia, 2013). The child or student can learn and review the environment, layout, equipment utilized, rules, strategies, and teaching cues. Then, when the unit or experience occurs, the child or student will already have an understanding of the topic and be able to make choices and increase their independence level and performance.
- Peer tutors or peer modeling can be used to provide motivation to a child or student to move and increase their activity level and attentiveness (Lieberman & Houston-Wilson, 1999;

Wiskochil, Lieberman, Houston-Wilson, & Petersen, 2007). Peer modeling can also provide multiple sensory feedback by demonstrating the appropriate movement of a specific task or skill to the child or student.

- Provide time for exploration and curiosity of the environment and any additional objects within the setting. If movement occurs or is increased, observe the interaction of the child or student with the particular object or space in the environment to gain information about his or her preferences and comfort levels.
- Providing tactile modeling or physical guidance can increase understanding of the movement pattern and how to complete the skill (Brambring, 2006). With physical guidance, a peer, parent, or teacher moves the student through the motion while maintaining a hand under hand position. The strategy of tactile modeling allows the child or student to feel the peer, parent, or teacher moving through the skill. This enables the child or student to be in control and feel the body parts if they do not understand the movement components related to the skill.
- Coactive movement allows the child or student and another person to perform the activity together and be engaged with each other while moving (Holte et al., 2006). An example can be dribbling or kicking a ball, taking turns, or performing the skill together – both the child or student and other participant are engaged and having fun in a positive environment while increasing movement experiences and providing feedback.
- Increase your processing and response time. WAIT... then wait some more. Once you see movement or any action, then you can respond.
- Add rhythm to any movement task to focus on the beat, and then change the speed of the beat to adjust movements.
- Make sure the child or student is anticipating movement prior to movement experience. Anticipation is very important when interacting and providing opportunities for movement.

Another great tool to use when assisting in a movement task or increasing movement opportunities is motivation. Why should the child or student perform? Make sure to use preferred items, such as colors or textures. Also, reward them with a preferred item (e.g., iPad) when they perform the skill or task that you are asking of them. Then remove the preferred item, by the use of a timer or letting them know that you need it back, ask again for motor performance of that skill or task, then present the reward or preferred item or interaction again. It is important that communication is utilized through movement experiences to assist in understanding movement. Incorporating signs or matching a movement with a particular object or symbol promotes choice and control for the child or student. It also allows the child or student to communicate their wants and needs by using the sign, object, or symbol for that movement skill or task. Also, be sure to provide confirmation and feedback to the student or child based on their performance in order to validate their movement attempts.

Assist motor development by utilizing:

- Various positions and postures
- Reach, grab, and release
- Push and pull: Proprioceptive input
- Kick and strike objects with hands and feet
- Cross midline of body with arms and legs
- Body awareness: identify body parts, then identify location of body parts to objects
- Different tactile surfaces
- Varying play objects (i.e., grab toys, iPad, balls, flashlights, personal fans)
- Varying supportive objects (i.e., furniture, walker, stander, box)

Equipment Resources

American Printing House for the Blind www.aph.org (search physical education)

School Specialty <https://store.schoolspecialty.com> (search special needs or physical education)

Gopher Equipment <https://www.gophersport.com>

Flaghouse Equipment <https://www.flaghouse.com/Special-Needs/> (search special needs or sensory)

Maxiaids <https://www.maxiaids.com>

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