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## Some solutions to develop movement skills for children at preschool in Thi Nguyen city

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### **Abstract**

Movement development for children is necessary to ensure the physical development of children. A healthy young body will be the foundation for the development of other aspects such as cognition, language, aestheticism, emotion and social skills. In preschools, movement development for children is done through many activities as well as at different times.

**Keywords:** Movement skill, children

### **Introduction**

Nowadays, developing movement skills for children in preschools is very important because their bodies are undergoing strong development, with muscles, bones, and organs in the process of maturing. If movement skills are not properly developed, children's bodies can become imbalanced and disproportionate. Therefore, in the process of caring for and educating children, each preschool teacher needs to employ appropriate measures to effectively promote children's movement skill development. Developing basic movement skills in preschool children satisfies their need for physical activity, enhances their health, and promotes balanced and harmonious physical development. These factors create conditions for children to grow strong and find joy in their activities. This activity is closely related to the educational process, aiming to provide comprehensive development for children. The article discusses the current situation of movement skill development for children in some preschools in Thai Nguyen city and proposes some solutions.

### **1. The concept of "movement skills"**

Skills are the ability to apply acquired knowledge in a particular field into practice.

Movement skills are a conscious activity of human beings. Movement skills demonstrate the level of performance that requires high attention to the components of the movement, the way the movement is executed, and the unstable nature of the movement.

For children, in order for their movement system to function well and perform movement functions effectively, it is necessary to regularly provide them with appropriate and age-appropriate exercises.

### **2. The characteristics of movement development of preschool children from 0-6 years old**

From a physiological perspective, movement refers to the motion of the human body, involving the participation of the muscular system, skeletal system, and the control of the nervous system.

A characteristic of children from birth to 6 years old is their active engagement in physical movement. If children swin arms and legs and do not move, their muscles, tendons, and joints will have limited development. These make it difficult to coordinate movements. Additionally, insufficient physical activity can slow down metabolic processes, weaken the functioning of the stomach and intestines, and hinder the development of the heart and lungs. Furthermore, movement is one of the fundamental sources for children to perceive the world around them. The more children grasp various movements and behaviors, the broader their exposure to the world becomes.

From 0 to 3 months old, infants can develop skills through simple actions such as bringing their hands to their mouths.

From 3 to 6 months old, the complexity level gradually increases as infants can grasp and shake objects with both hands or transfer objects from one hand to the other.

From 6 to 9 months old, infants are able to clasp their fingers to scratch surfaces, clap their hands, feed themselves with their hands, or use both hands to pick up toys.

From 9 to 12 months old, infants develop skills by holding toys with one hand, using their thumb and index finger to point at objects. Additionally, they can independently bring food to their mouths and may engage in banging or crashing objects together.

From 1 to 2 years old, most children can stack objects on top of each other, use a crayon to make scribbles on paper, and some are able to eat with a spoon.

From 2 to 3 years old, when guided by others, children learn to wash their hands, use a spoon for eating, and some can assemble simple toys.

From 3 to 4 years old, children are capable of dressing themselves, using scissors to cut paper, and can draw houses and simple objects with less detail.

From 5 to 6 years old, children can write, color within given lines, and their memory abilities further develop.

**a. The role of movement in the development of preschool children**

Physical activity play an important role for the health and well-being of people at all ages, especially children. Children can engage in physical activities in various forms,

including exercise, sports, playing games, and even through game activities. According to research conducted by the National Institute of Nutrition, physical activity has several effects on the development of young children, including:

Physical development, grow in height, increasing in oxygen to the brain, balance coordination of the 2 hemispheres of the brain, and intellectual development.

Enhancing coordination and control of muscles in the body, hands, and legs.

Acquiring skills such as walking, jumping, kicking, throwing, and catching.

Developing muscle strength, balance, control, and coordination, which are vital skills for a child’s overall development.

Boosting physical fitness and resilience against diseases.

Reducing the risk of overweight and obesity.

**b. Kinds of movement of preschool children**

Movement development is an important area in the comprehensive development of every child because it is not only related to physical health but also to the intellectual and psychological development of the child, and this development begins from the infancy period.

Children’s movement development is divided into two types: gross movement skills and fine movement skills.

These movement skills are regarded as significant milestones that mark each stage of the child’s development.

**Table 1:** The stages of gross and fine movement development of children

Ages	Gross movement	Fine movement - Hand-eye coordination
3 – 4 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lifting the head when being held in a sitting position.</li> <li>▪ Lifting the head and chest when lying on the stomach.</li> <li>▪ Rolling from a prone (lying on the stomach) position to a supine (lying on the back) position.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Moving the eyes back and forth.</li> <li>▪ Bringing toys to the mouth.</li> </ul>
6 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Being able to sit independently.</li> <li>▪ Rolling from a supine position to a prone position.</li> </ul>	Grasping and transferring toys from one hand to another
9 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Crawling</li> <li>▪ stand up, sit down by yourself</li> </ul>	Holding two blocks and transferring them from one hand to the other
12 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standing while holding onto support</li> <li>▪ Walking with assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stacking two blocks</li> <li>▪ Using thumb and index finger to grasp objects firmly</li> </ul>
18 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Standing independently without assistance</li> <li>▪ Walking steadily</li> <li>▪ Attempting to run</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Drawing squiggles</li> <li>▪ Imitating drawing straight lines with colored pencils</li> <li>▪ Stacking four blocks</li> </ul>
24 months	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Jumping off a step</li> <li>▪ Running</li> <li>▪ Climbing up and down stairs with handrail assistance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Stringing beads</li> <li>▪ Holding a wooden hammer and tapping</li> </ul>

**Research Results**

**1. The actual situation of organizing activities to develop movement skills for children in some preschools in Thai Nguyen city**

Based on a survey conducted over a 6-month period from January 2022 to June 2022 on the current situation of

organizing movement skill development activities for children, involving 67 teachers from 15 preschools in Thai Nguyen City, we obtained the following results:

**1.1 The current situation of movement skill development activities in the daily routine of preschool children**

**Table 2:** The current situation of movement skill development activities in the daily routine of preschool children (n=67)

Order	Activities	Usage level (%)					
		Always		Sometimes		Never	
		No	Per. (%)	No	Per. (%)	No	Per. (%)
1	Morning activities	51	76,1%	16	23,9%	0	0
2	Gross movement skills	46	68,7	21	31,3	0	0
3	Fine movement skills	33	49,3	27	40,3	7	10,4
4	Play game	48	71,6	17	25,4	2	3,0
5	Afternoon activities	42	62,7	26	38,8	1	1,5

Table 2 shows that there have been attempts to integrate movement skill development activities into the daily routine of preschool children. However, the distribution of these activities throughout the day is not balanced.

Specifically, activities that promote gross movement skill development are regularly utilized by 46/67 preschool teachers, accounting for 68.7%. On the other hand, activities

that promote fine movement skills are less frequently used, accounting for only 49.3%. In terms of play activities, 25.4% of teachers occasionally organize such activities, while 3% do not organize them at all.

**1.2 The current situation of selecting activities to develop movement skills in some preschools in Thai Nguyen City**

**Table 3:** Situation of using activities to develop movement skills in some preschools in Thai Nguyen City (n=67)

Order	Activities	No	Per. (%)
1	Run zigzag	26	30,8
2	Jump over the box	17	25,4
3	Movement game "hoping hopscotch"	37	55,2
4	Movement game "cat and mouse"	35	52,2
4	Move in rows	22	32,8
5	Slow running 80m	14	20,9
6	Dancing sack	9	13,4
7	Pass the ball	26	38,8

**Table 4:** Level of use of movement skills development activities in some preschools in Thai Nguyen City (n=67)

Order	Group of activities of preschool children	Usage level (%)					
		Always		Sometimes		Never	
		No	Per. (%)	No	Per. (%)	No	Per. (%)
1	Group of walking, running, balancing group	19	28,4	36	53,7	12	17,9
2	Group of jumping, bounce far, bounce deep group	19	28,4	31	46,3	17	25,4
3	Group of throwing, passing, catching group	13	19,4	38	56,7	16	23,9
4	Group of crawling, crawling, climbing	6	9,0	48	71,6	13	19,4
5	Some fine movement skills such as threading, piercing, folding, knotting, shoelaces, etc.	11	16,4	35	52,2	11	16,4

Table 3 reveals that the selection of movement skill development activities is given little attention and emphasis. Activities that require spacious areas, such as slow running, fast running, relay races, and tag games, are commonly used by most teachers in the surveyed schools. Slow running, in particular, is used in 82.1% of the schools. However, some preschools, such as Hoa Trạng Nguyễn Private Preschool, Quang Trung Preschool, and Happy Kids Preschool, face limitations in their physical facilities. Their classrooms are cramped, and there is a lack of ample play areas for children to engage in movement skill development activities. Despite these limitations, teachers still choose activities that require wide spaces, such as throwing, catching, passing, or fast running, which is impractical. In contrast, schools like Smine Preschool, Quang Vinh Preschool, and 19-5 Preschool, which have spacious environments, teachers tend to choose to organize movement skill development activities indoors, without fully utilizing the outdoor playground facilities. They also tend to select simpler activities, which result in children showing less interest.

**1. Some Solutions to develop movement skills for children in some preschools in Thai Nguyen City.**

**Solution 1:** Creating a stimulating environment that encourages children’s movement.

The environment can be considered as the "second teacher" that stimulates children’s curiosity and desire for exploration. The environment created by teachers should place children in an active role in the process of acquiring social experiences, contribute to the formation of their own perspectives, and foster their self-reliance and creativity.

The environment with movement skill development activities should always present challenges for children, encouraging them to explore and discover through engaging and captivating activities. Children should be motivated to participate in movement activities voluntarily and autonomously.

The environment for children should not be limited to the classroom. Although some teachers may hesitate to have children engage in outdoor activities due to concerns about managing them and ensuring their safety, it is essential to provide opportunities for children to engage in movement activities outside the classroom. Both indoor and outdoor environments must be utilized by teachers to take advantage of their unique benefits, allowing the two environments to complement each other and provide the most effective opportunities for children to engage in movement activities.

**Solution 2:** Developing well-structured and individualized movement exercises that consider children’s characteristics.

Based on the physiological characteristics, age, gender, health, cognitive abilities, and learning capacities of preschool children, teachers need to design exercises that are appropriate and balanced in terms of movement between the arms and legs, between movement organs and internal organs, and between different physical qualities such as speed, strength, endurance, and coordination. Physical education teaching should have a specific and comprehensive system, gradually increasing the difficulty of exercises to allow children's bodies to adapt and develop their capacity for movement. It is important to teach from easy to difficult, from simple to complex, and from less to more intense physical activities. Regular practice, monitoring, and updating of children's developmental progress should be conducted to serve as a basis for designing exercise systems.

For example, when planning walking exercises for children, the initial exercise can be "walking on a balance beam," followed by "walking on a balance beam with a sandbag on the head" in subsequent exercises, and then progress to "walking and overcoming 5-6 obstacles." It is not appropriate to start with exercises involving overcoming multiple obstacles right away. Such exercise progression ensures consistent and coordinated development.

When teaching physical education, it is essential to have a clear understanding of each child's individual characteristics in order to develop exercise programs, content, methods, and intensity that are suitable for their learning capacities. If the content is too simple and the intensity of movement is too low, the training effect on the body will be limited, and children may lose interest. On the other hand, if the content and intensity are too high, it can create fear and hinder the learning process. Additionally, within a class, students' abilities and health conditions may vary. Therefore, teachers need to not only focus on the overall health of the class but also find ways to provide individual guidance and support to each child. This measure should be implemented with the teacher's attentiveness and understanding of each child's individual characteristics.

**Solution 3:** Using music and stimulating equipment to engage children

Music is commonly method in various activities to create interest for children. In physical education, music can make the atmosphere of the training session more lively and energetic. Instead of using plain commands and counting, incorporating music into physical education allows children to perform exercises in the right rhythm and follow the instructions more effectively.

When organizing physical activities with the use of music, it is observed that children's enthusiasm for participation in movement is significantly higher. They engage in exercises actively while experiencing a sense of joy and freshness.

**Solution 4:** Using games

Games are used in all activities because they are highly effective. When organizing activities that incorporate games, the ability to attract children's participation is significant. In particular, for physical development activities, using games helps generate interest for children in movement exercises, enabling them to perform them repeatedly without getting bored. When children engage in these "games," they feel like they are playing a role and performing actions related to that role, rather than being

forced to engage in physical exercise. As a result, their movement skills naturally develop. Importantly, teachers can still reasonably assess the results of children's movements.

This measure can be implemented in two forms:

First: Incorporating play elements into exercises.

When play elements are added to exercises, it is easy to observe that children become more active, natural, and comfortable in their movements.

Second: Using movement games to reinforce movement skills.

Movement games belong to the category of games with rules and prominent educational roles, aimed at training and reinforcing basic movements such as walking, running, jumping, throwing, as well as movement qualities (speed, strength, agility, endurance). Each game usually requires children to perform 1-2 types of movements along with specific movement qualities. For example, in the game "cat and mouse," children must run fast while also navigating. Therefore, by using games, we can actively help children reinforce movements they have not yet mastered. However, to achieve effectiveness when using games, it is necessary to carefully determine the educational value of the game and the child's abilities in order to choose appropriate games that align with the ongoing theme. This way, we can develop children's movement skills.

**Solution 5:** Competition

The notable feature of the competition measure is the spirit of competing, challenging, aiming for the championship position, or achieving high performance. Competition requires high physical and mental demands on participants. For preschool children, the competition measure is implemented after they have grasped the relatively basic steps of performing movement exercises. The purpose of competition is to enhance advanced movement skills, refine movement techniques at a high level, and cultivate ethical qualities such as self-esteem, self-confidence, and team spirit in children. Competition increases interest, enhances movement abilities, develops movement qualities, and engages and captivates children in training, thereby developing their movement skills.

**Solution 6:** Organizing Sports Day

Sports Day here refers to the school-wide sports day. When participating in Sports Day, children will engage in organized physical activities in a pre-determined sequence. On this day, all children actively and enthusiastically participate in sports and physical education. It promotes team activities and creates an energetic atmosphere for children as they get to "perform" and showcase their skills to other classes. Through such team activities, children develop flexibility, confidence, teamwork spirit, and leave them with joyful and exciting experiences, appreciating the beauty of sports.

**Solution 7:** Monitoring and Assessing Children

If all educational activities for children, despite implementing the above measures, are not monitored and evaluated, it is impossible to accurately determine the level of achievement for each child, their individual progress, and the effectiveness of the applied measures. Therefore, when implementing these measures, it is important to monitor and assess the level of achievement of each child in physical

education activities in order to have flexibility in applying the aforementioned measures.

### **Conclusion**

The ages from 0 to 6 are considered the golden stage of a child's development, where they experience remarkable cognitive and daily activity advancements. Understanding the development of a child at each age will assist parents in better accompanying and nurturing their child.

The development of movement skills in preschool children plays a crucial role because their bodies are undergoing rapid development. The nervous system, skeletal system, and respiratory system are all maturing, and the child's body is still fragile and susceptible to imbalances and developmental disorders if not properly cared for and educated. Therefore, we need to pay attention to the development of movement skills in order to train the younger generation of Vietnam to have intellectual development, physical strength, rich spirit, and moral integrity. Innovating methods and enhancing professional expertise for teachers in an integrated and comprehensive approach to improving movement development for children is crucial and necessary. It requires each teacher to seek knowledge and learn in order to implement effective measures to enhance movement development for children.

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