

WILD BY DESIGN

EXPLORE THE POWER OF THE PROPRIOCEPTIVE SENSORY SYSTEM

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Activity

SAUCER & COCOON SWINGING

Children will gently swing, twist, rock, and sway using both open saucer swings and enclosed cocoon-style swings. These movements offer deep body input that helps children feel grounded, strong, and safe in their own skin.

WHAT IS THE BODY AWARENESS (PROPRIOCEPTIVE) SENSORY SYSTEM?

The proprioceptive system tells the brain where the body is in space. It's how kids know where their arms, legs, and joints are without looking—and how they move with strength, coordination, and confidence.

* Remember

Body awareness doesn't come naturally to every child—and that's okay. If your child seeks or avoids certain kinds of movement, it's not a flaw. It's information. And with the right support and opportunities to move, stretch, and feel their body in space, they'll grow stronger, more confident, and more at ease.

There's nothing wrong with how your child experiences the world—it's just a chance to better understand them. And in doing so, you become their greatest advocate and source of safety.

OCEAN STATE KIDS

* Signs of a Proprioceptive Sensory Challenge

Your child might show signs of proprioceptive under-responsiveness if they:

- Appear clumsy or uncoordinated
- Constantly bump into things or people
- Push too hard or too soft when writing or playing
- Seek crashing, jumping, climbing, or tight hugs
- Tire easily or avoid physical activities

* How to Tell if Your Child Benefits from Proprioceptive Play

- They become more regulated after swinging, jumping, or climbing
- They ask to be carried or hugged tightly
- They seem more alert and emotionally balanced after rough-and-tumble play
- They use swinging or movement to calm themselves

* Why Swinging Is Powerful for Body Awareness

Swings provide consistent, rhythmic input to the joints and muscles—exactly what the proprioceptive system craves! Whether wrapped in a cocoon or stretched out on a saucer, swinging can:

- Calm overwhelmed nervous systems
- Improve coordination and posture
- Help kids feel “centered” and grounded
- Support focus and emotional regulation
- Encourage independent, confidence-building movement

* What Parents Might Notice

- Calmer transitions and fewer meltdowns
- Increased confidence in physical play
- Better sleep and body awareness
- Less resistance to movement-based tasks (like dressing, climbing, or sports)
- More joy and freedom in their bodies

* Ways to Stimulate the Proprioceptive System at Home

- Swinging (indoor or outdoor)
- Climbing playground structures or trees
- Carrying a weighted backpack
- Animal walks (bear, crab, frog jumps)
- Pushing/pulling laundry baskets or wagons
- Jumping on trampolines or into piles of pillows

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