

Heavy Muscle Work: Chores



What Is It?

Heavy muscle work activities utilize our body's proprioceptive system. The proprioceptive system is an internal sense that comes from our muscles and joint receptors. This system helps us understand the physical boundaries of our bodies (i.e., my body is separate from your body); know where our body parts are positioned (i.e., arms above head, knees bent); plan our movements; learn new motor tasks through feedback; and use appropriate force or pressure during tasks. Doing heavy muscle work activities throughout the day can help a child achieve and maintain a calm and regulated state.



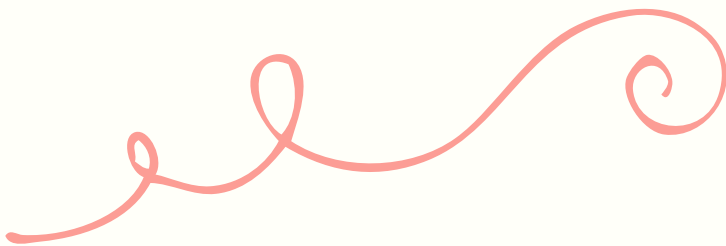
Indoor Chores

- Vacuuming
- Sweeping
- Mopping
- Dusting
- Re-arranging furniture
- Carrying groceries inside
- Wiping off the table after meals
- Pushing in chairs after meals
- Carrying/pulling/pushing a full laundry basket
- Carrying buckets of water to clean with or to water flowers/plants
- Cleaning window, mirrors, or the fronts of appliances using a spray bottle
- Helping change the sheets on the bed (i.e., carrying dirty sheets to the laundry room or clean sheets to the bed)
- Taking out the trash (i.e., pulling/pushing a heavy trash can)
- Collecting toys in a basket while pushing/pulling basket around the house to gather toys and take them to the rooms they belong



Outdoor Chores

- Pushing/pulling wheelbarrow or wagon
- Carrying buckets of water to water flowers/plants/trees
- Digging dirt to help plant flowers
- Mowing the lawn
- Raking leaves
- Pulling weeds
- Washing the car
- Washing windows
- Sweeping the porch
- Carrying firewood
- Shoveling dirt or snow



Tips When Trying New Heavy Work Activities

- Pay attention to your child's response
- Discontinue if strategies are causing distress
- Consider your child's age and other sensory preferences
- Incorporate activities into daily routines

Consult with your occupational therapist for an individualized plan to meet your child's needs

