

Kneeling and High Kneeling

Kneeling is a good position for children with mild to moderate trunk control to develop this further.

You can support from behind by kneeling with your legs either side of your child if they need support around their ribs. You can raise or lower your hands depending on how much support they need.

If your child can kneel on their own you can encourage them to high kneel. They may find it easier initially to high kneel against a chair.

Good activities to try are:

- Balloon volleyball.
- Use a ziplock bag with paint in and tape it to a patio door for them to squish around and make patterns.



Sitting

There are a lot of positions you can use to help your child develop their sitting ability and engage with play.



- You can sit with your back against a supporting surface like a sofa with your child between your legs with their back against your chest. Use your hands to support their trunk if needed.
- You can place your arms under their arms to help support their body and to help them lift and use their arms so they are not having to work against gravity.

Try and ensure your child's pelvis is close to you so their trunk is upright. They may prefer to have straight legs or slightly bent legs. It is harder to keep your body upright with cross legged sitting as it tilts your pelvis back and so curves your back.

- If your child sits with one leg flexed as shown you can encourage reaching to the side for a toy to work on balance skills. Make sure this is not too much pressure on your back.



- You can also make a floor table with an upturned box. See the sensory play ideas page and the image below.



- It's good to have the box at your child's elbow height so that their arms are supported and they can reach for toys.
- If they tend to knock toys off you can always add sides to the top of the box to act as a block.
- Having your child leaning against a sofa gives them some support and if you feel they need a little extra support you can sit on the sofa with your legs either side of your child

- Another way children can sit is on a bench or stool with you behind them. Make sure their feet are supported and you are comfortable. This is also good to be done at a table or when doing an activity at eye height

We hope that helps and gives you some ideas. We are also developing some fun groups and advice on changing positions to help you during lockdown.

Please contact your hospice if you would like any further advice and ask for one of the occupational therapists or physiotherapists.

References:

1. Positioning for Play by Rachel B Diamant
2. Finnie's Handling the Young Child with Cerebral Palsy at Home edited by Eva Bower