

## Fundamental Movement Skills

Fundamental movement skills as Hardy, Barnett, Espinel, and Okely (2013) summarized, are important skills to nurture and develop in children. These skills are not only important for sports and social development, but the ability to move well is a lifelong gift as well as a mechanism for survival in a disaster situation.

Hardy et al. (2013) noted that developing fundamental movement skills should be and must be fun in order to achieve best compliance. Movement, natural movement, should be fun. It is an opportunity for discovery, self-discovery, and better awareness. David Kirk (2010) described today's physical education system as being an "artificiality where movement is taught in ways that are abstracted from their natural contexts through an 'authoritarian pedagogy of command-response'" (as cited in Lloyd, 2012, p. 24). There lacks a connectedness between movement, mind, body, and soul. It is possible that by infusing some of the principles and ideas of the somatic movement that both children and adults can relearn how to move, enjoy moving, and play.

In Lloyd's (2012) study, children in Grade 1 and Grade 9 were introduced to JungleSport ([www.junglesport.ca](http://www.junglesport.ca)) through their school in cooperation with JungleSport staff, school teachers, parents, and physical education teachers. The goal of Lloyd's (2012) study was to observe how the children physically interacted with and immersed themselves in this "new" creative climbing environment. By removing the children from the context of structured school physical education "skills and drills", it was an opportunity to observe the children's "fun" movement and learning how to move driven by curiosity, exploration, and fun.

Lloyd (2012) made several observations that the children quickly learned how to naturally progress their climbing and rope course skills based on how their body felt (often indicated by facial expressions and confirmed later in interviews and logs). The children were able to "figure out" the best way to attack a problem and to develop a graceful solution, as in the case of crossing hand and feet coordination. Through exploratory play, Lloyd (2012) observed the children exhibited a stronger mind to body (somatic) type of connection and also body awareness in the context of the JungleSport play environment.

Lloyd (2012) noted that it was important to have that element of "thinking" about movement, skills, and sports-related drills but it was equally important to "feel" movement--right or wrong, graceful or clumsy. The "feeling" and establishing an organic and spontaneous mind-body-soul-environment type of connection is currently not well explored in the physical education curriculum. It seems that perhaps by incorporating a somatic movement point of view, it might be possible to improve physical education for children and also develop stronger fundamental movement skills as Hardy et al. (2013) described.

Fundamental movement and natural play are not only important to children, but to adults as well. Two organizations Primal Move (<http://primalmove.com/>) and MovNat (<http://www.movnat.com/>) have been receiving a lot of attention and gaining popularity. Many martial arts drills, such as BJJ drills, Ginastica Natural (<http://www.ginasticanatural.com/>), and

Prasara Yoga (<http://www.prasarayoga.com/>) also help develop better interconnectivity through a health-first approach--movement coming from inside out. Much of Scott Sonnon's work with Intu-Flow and Tacfit very successfully adopt this perspective.

## References

Lloyd, R. J. (2012). Moving to learn and learning to move: A phenomenological exploration of children's climbing with an interdisciplinary movement consciousness. *Humanistic Psychologist*, 40(1), 23-37.

Hardy, L. L., Barnett, L., Espinel, P., & Okely, A. D. (2013). Thirteen-year trends in child and adolescent fundamental movement skills: 1997-2010. *Medicine & Science in Sports & Exercise*, 45(10), 1965-1970. doi: 10.1249/MSS.0b013e318295a9fc