Crossing the Midline

INTRODUCTION
Midline crossing encourages the child to be able to reach their hands left to right and right to left across the body. This means that if you imagine a line drawn down the centre of your body, you should be able to put either hand past that line without any difficulty. Some children find this hard, and can be seen to turn their whole body to avoid crossing the midline. These activities help the child practise midline crossing, and it is helpful to remember the imaginary line as you do them.

It is a skill that encourages good balance, bilateral activity, good co-ordination and pre-writing skills.

WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP?

• ‘Lazy Eights’ – Draw a large figure of eight on its side. Put a piece of old wallpaper on the wall and get the child to stand at the middle of the figure, and draw over the shape lots of times in different colours.

• Cleaning the whiteboard/blackboard or even wiping down tables or surfaces.
• Passing games – Offer the child an object so they have to reach across their body to get it. Play pass the parcel or just passing items at the dinner table.
• Drawing rainbows or roads in sand, talc or on paper to encourage the left to right action.
• Using beanbags or similar, set targets in front of the child at either side (hoops or boxes can be used). The child must use their right hand to get the beanbag into left target and left hand into right target.
• Get the child to wave a flag or scarf in a figure eight.
• Get the child to roll or bounce a ball around their body as far as they can towards the left side with the right hand and then the left hand can take over once the ball is behind the body. Then swap direction.
• Rub shaving cream on the wall next to the bath with both hands, and then using the hands one on top of the other to draw a large circle or loop, will help your child to cross the midline with both hands.
• Play a game telling your child to touch somewhere on their body, such as ‘Simon Says touch your left shoulder with your right hand’. They should only do it when the sentence starts with ‘Simon Says’.