

LEARNING THROUGH MOVEMENT

“Tell me and I forget, teach me and I may remember, involve me and I learn.” Benjamin Franklin

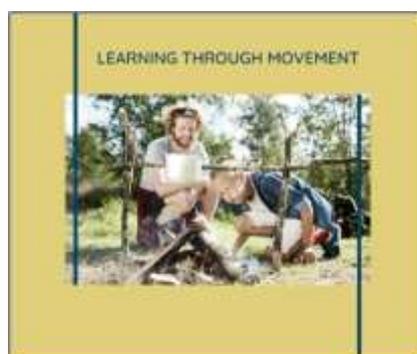
Every day, we believe in the power to succeed and shine.

To succeed and shine, we need awareness of our own gifts and strengths, as we become unstoppable, unbreakable & unconquerable.

Children who have a Kinesthetic (Tactile) Style of learning are often misunderstood, and some of the behaviour traits that come with this style are viewed as a ‘problem’. They are seen as ‘fidgets’ and ‘trouble-makers’. But, it is when lessons are combined with PHYSICAL action that these wonderful movement-masters can learn to the best of their abilities.

What can we expect to observe in a child with this learning style?

- They may find it harder to learn when listening to instructions or watching visual demonstrations.
- They learn the best when they are being PHYSICALLY active and/or PHYSICALLY engaged.
- Because of their style of learning, traditional classroom settings may not suit them. They may not enjoy busy environments.
- These children may be especially good at PHYSICAL activities such as: running, dancing and/or other sports.
- You may find that they are very coordinated and have a good sense of their own bodies in terms of the space around them, and body timing.
- They may also have good hand-eye coordination and quick reactions.
- These children may struggle with listening, and may lose interest in long discussions.
- You may find that they stand very close to the person they are speaking with or listening to, and may gesture a lot.
- They may like to try things out – to TOUCH, FEEL and manipulate objects.
- They may also find it easier to learn something new, and store it in their memory if they are STANDING or MOVING whilst doing so.
- These children will learn more easily if they are MOVING, TOUCHING and PHYSICALLY interacting with whatever it is they are learning.



WHEN CAN DIFFICULTIES ARISE?

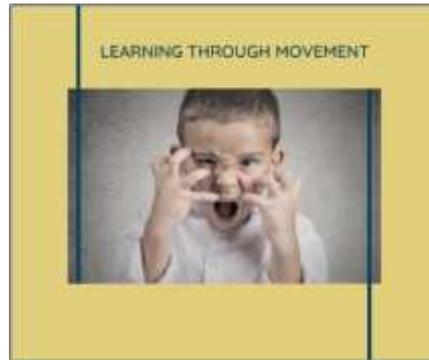
Children with a Kinesthetic Learning style can be difficult to teach as they will require a lot of movement in order for the learning to take place. This means that this style doesn't sit very easily within the current education system, which tends to be very visual- and auditory-focused. These children are the most likely to be labelled as the, 'rebels of the class'. They may fidget, mess around, stare out of the window and find little ways to move. If they are 'told off' and sent out of the room, it will actually feed the need for movement. Therefore, they are more likely to repeat the behaviours that led to being sent out.

Another aspect of learning through movement, which educators may find difficult, is that these children like to try things by themselves first. This means that they will want to give it a go, and THEN listen to the instructions. This 'order of play' works so effectively because they have had movement prior to receiving the auditory or written information, which makes them more receptive to it. What people may find difficult with this, is that the children will have a go, make a whole bunch of mistakes, get it wrong, and THEN look to the instructions to find out how to do it. The educator's response may sound like this, "well, if you had just listened to me first time..." But, the simple fact is, these children can't, because listening the first time, means they have to stand still.

All of this can have a huge impact on self-esteem. These children can often feel like they're failing. They will start to recognise that they are falling behind, compared to their peers. They will see that their handwriting isn't as neat and that they struggle to sit still. But, they will find it difficult to process and communicate how they're feeling. By the time they reach GCSE level, their self-esteem may be at rock-bottom. They may feel like they don't have a place in the world, or that they won't succeed when they leave school.

HOW DO THESE CHILDREN PROCESS THEIR BIG EMOTIONS?

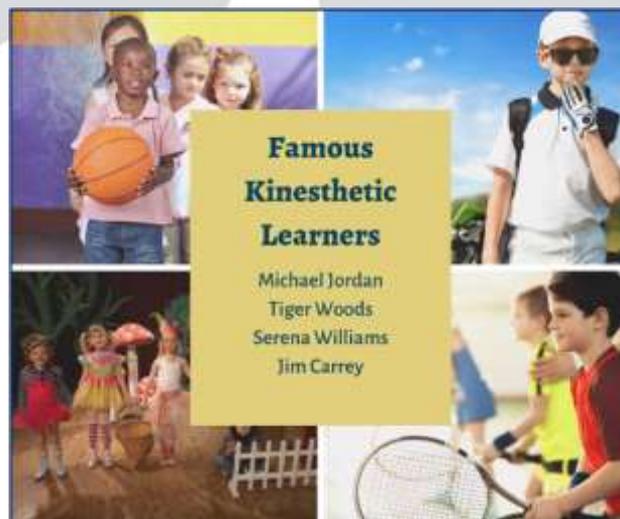
When a child with this learning style processes or tries to process their emotions, they have to do it through movement. When they're younger, they may do it through smashing things. Hold onto your plates and vases! As adults, they may do it through, for example, chopping up logs, smashing up concrete, knocking down walls, martial arts. These kinds of movements allow them to process memories and experiences. If you recognise that your child is a kinesthetic learner, try providing suitable outlets for all these big feelings.



WHERE WILL KINESTHETIC LEARNERS THRIVE?

These little movement-learners are likely to thrive in the countryside, on the sports-field and/or in acting/dance classes. In the past, they were the children who would have left school and gone straight into the factories or apprenticeships, and thrived! They're the ones who would have been happy to get up at 5 o' clock in the morning, go to work, move all day and go home. These children are the mechanics, the farmers, the countryside wardens, the conservationists, the carpenters, the builders, the athletes, the dancers, the actors and the sports-people.

They do not exhaust easily, which means that they can generally do a lot more than most. They will benefit, hugely, from time in Mother Nature. They have impressive levels of mental and physical strength, and sharp problem-solving skills. They have an, "I can do this, and I will find a path to it," attitude.



FOCUSING AT HOME

Of course, there are going to be times when your child has to focus on something visual and/or written. Don't worry if they need to pace the floor, swing their legs or fiddle with an object (stress ball or toy) at the same time – this will all help them to focus better. You can also break this time into smaller chunks so that they have regular movement- and stretch-breaks. You can work with your child on this – decide together how long each break should be, and have them set the timer. You may also like to change the location of the activity part-way through: sit on the floor, take it outside, move to the kitchen table.

WHERE TO GO FROM HERE?

If you do have a child who learns through movement, you have undoubtedly felt a lot of frustration and helplessness. But, what is in your control is how your child spends their time outside of school. Instead of only doing homework, use that extra curricula time to also develop their kinesthetic skills: climbing, bouldering, archery, swimming, judo, dancing. Your child will then be able to say, “well, I may not be very good at writing English but, my goodness, I am the national champion at archery!” This will help to balance out their self-esteem, but also give them confidence that they WILL have something to be proud of and put down on their CV.

Once they have a ‘project’ and once they have the motivation to do something, (with emphasis on the word ‘DO’), they will go at it! They will go as far and as wide as they can go, and put levels of effort in that would make anyone proud!

