

BrainDance – fundamental movement patterns

BrainDance is an exciting body of work by Anne Green Gilbert that connects music and movement with the growing child's brain development. This system describes eight fundamental movement patterns that occur in sequence in the first year of a baby's life. These movements "wire the central nervous system so the brain can operate to its full potential" (Gilbert). She uses BrainDance in conjunction with nursery rhymes to ensure that young children successfully achieve all movement milestones. Moving through these patterns on a regular basis can aid children's normal development but can also help to fill any gaps in a child's neurological development if any milestones have been missed due to illness, trauma or not enough opportunities to explore these movements in infancy. Below is a brief summary of BrainDance.

BREATH – to give blood and oxygen to the brain.

TOUCH – essential for social and emotional development and for sensory integration.

CORE- DISTAL -movements that stretch out through the fingers and toes and shrink back to a foetal curl.

HEAD – TAIL – finding the two ends of the spine and moving to bring them together then apart.

UPPER – LOWER -movements that differentiate the upper half of the body from the lower.

BODY SIDES – focusing movement from either right or left side of the body.

Horizontal eye tracking is an important development to prepare for later cognitive skills.

CROSS LATERAL – any movement that causes a crossing of the midline of the body.

Vertical eye tracking develops. important for reading & writing skills.

Vestibular – swinging, swaying or spinning movements that move the inner ear fluid around.

All these movement experiences are vital to children, When they are done in connection with music they provide many learning possibilities especially for children with additional needs.

For more info see:

[Music for Little People](#)

www.creativedance.org