

Body Awareness!



What is body awareness?

Body awareness is a person's awareness of their body parts and knowing where their body is in space. *Body Awareness is important for children to learn to motor plan and coordinate their body parts through space and around objects in their environment.*

Body awareness helps us walk around in the dark, put on a hat, sit in a chair without falling and remember how to write letters without looking at our hands.

Children tend to use their vision to learn new tasks first, then their body awareness takes over.

How can low body awareness impact function?

You may notice the following in students with low body awareness:

- Difficulty in judging distances and spaces and orienting the body. For example, attempting to fit the body into a space that's too small
- Using too much or too little force on things. For instance, may write too light or too dark
- May look at body parts frequently to ascertain where they are
- Frequently sliding off chairs
- Clumsiness and moving stiffly, because they don't realize where their own feet are
- Children with poor body awareness may shy away from games and sports with other children.
- Children having poor body awareness don't usually like the dark since they rely on their sight to know where they are
- May have a hard time learning new gross motor activities because gross motor activities rely on the input children get from their muscles and joints.

Can low body awareness be changed?

Body awareness is a developmental skill. The skill can improve over time with things like visual and tactile supports, activities that are motivating and fun like obstacle courses, individual sports like swimming or karate, and breaking tasks down into small parts. Your occupational therapist can also give suggestions and recommendations to improve body awareness.

Use of **accommodations** to **support** students with low body awareness is often helpful.

Info sheets created with ❤️ by occupational therapists for parents and teachers.