

# Core/Trunk Control

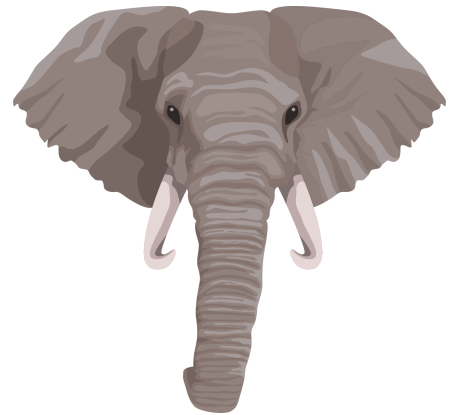
## What is core/trunk control?

Core or trunk strength and control refers to the ability to maintain stability and balance through the muscles of the torso, including the abdomen, back, and pelvis. This foundational skill is crucial for a wide range of activities, from simple tasks like sitting upright and maintaining posture to more complex movements such as running, jumping, and participating in sports. Adequate trunk control supports the development of fine motor skills, as it provides the necessary stability for the arms and hands to perform precise movements.

## How can low trunk control impact function?

You may notice the following in students with low core or trunk control:

- Difficulty with sitting comfortably unsupported in a chair
- Decreased ability to focus and engage in activities
- Challenges with remaining stable for reading tasks
- Decreased fine motor skills such as writing, and feeding
- Decreased breath support for speaking and thinking skills
- Fatigues easily
- Often lays head on or slumps across desk
- Challenges with oral motor skills
- Decreased endurance and stamina



## Can decreased trunk strength and control be improved?

Yes! Improving low trunk strength can be achieved through a variety of activities. Here are some strategies to consider:

1. Incorporate activities that children find enjoyable, such as playing on a stability ball, which can enhance balance and core engagement. Encourage games that involve reaching, twisting, or turning, like Simon Says or obstacle courses.
2. Simple yoga poses such as the plank, bridge, and cat-cow can strengthen the abdominal and back muscles while promoting good posture.
3. Swimming, is an excellent full-body workout that supports core development without putting undue stress on the joints. It also enhances coordination and endurance.
4. Ensure that children have plenty of opportunities for active play, both indoors and outdoors. Activities like climbing, crawling, and tumbling can significantly improve core strength.

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