

HOW CAN WE SUPPORT KIDS WITH LOW MUSCLE TONE?

How to tell when a child has low muscle tone

- Tires easily and may appear lethargic
- Has increased flexibility
- Demonstrates poor reflexes
- Has decreased strength
- May have speech difficulties
- Shows decreased tolerance of activity or decreased endurance
- Has a hard time maintaining static postures (sitting/standing)
- Presents with global developmental delays
- Often demonstrates w-sitting and/or slumped posture when sitting unsupported

How to Support Kids With Low Muscle Tone

- 1 || Remember that a child with low muscle tone may not be able to tolerate more than 2 minutes of perfect posture in a classroom chair.
- 2 || Warm-up activities can improve a child's endurance by helping to wake up the muscles and can help increase a child's level of alertness and body awareness.
- 3 || Improving strength and muscle tone can be a long and slow process. It will not happen overnight and it will not happen without daily practice.
- 4 || Make exercises more like a game and less like a chore and the child will be more likely to adhere to a consistent program.
- 5 || Weight Bearing Activities: Muscle groups work together to support the bones as the body holds a position such as standing, propping up on your elbows in a prone position to play a game, or doing a downward dog in yoga.
- 6 || Proprioceptive Activities: Jump on a trampoline, push a giant ball down a wall, crab walk, or bear crawl. Wake up those joints so that the child knows where her body is in space and can more effectively strengthen those muscles that stabilize and protect her joints.
- 7 || Think Proximal Before Distal: Improving core strength will inevitably improve a child's endurance and the functional use of their extremities.
- 8 || Providing appropriate support in various work spaces is key so that daily functional activities aren't frustrating. Consider alternative seating to provide postural support in the classroom. Modify backpack weight. Incorporate frequent rest and postural breaks or heavy work activities to wake muscles back up.