

# WHY WEIGHT BEARING MATTERS FOR KIDS

## What does Weight Bearing mean?

Weight bearing involves the use of muscles against gravity. In this type of activity, 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.

## Why is Weight Bearing Important?

-Weight bearing positions promote bone health by increasing bone density and strength and also help to shape the joints (e.g. the point at which the leg bones meet the pelvis) of growing kids. Weight bearing also ultimately leads to improvement in a child's balance, strength, and coordination.

-Positions where kids are bearing weight provides proprioceptive input to the body's joints and muscles. A functioning proprioceptive system allows children to move, play, and explore in a smoothly coordinated and efficient way – not too gently, not too rough.

-Standing positions provide important proprioceptive and strengthening benefits to kids' feet, ankles, knees, and hips. Positions that require kids to bear weight on their upper extremities (e.g. quadruped, prone) are essential to the development of hand strength and stability in the wrists and shoulders.

## Weight Bearing Activities for Kids

- 1 || Climbing up a slide
- 2 || Playing in quadruped
- 3 || Wheelbarrow walking
- 4 || Yoga poses
- 5 || Pushing a heavy object across a room
- 6 || Holding a plank pose
- 7 || Hanging from the monkey bars
- 8 || Standing on one foot
- 9 || Animal walks
- 10 || Wall push-ups