DEVELOPMENT OF FUNDAMENTAL MOTOR SKILLS

Children's physical development:

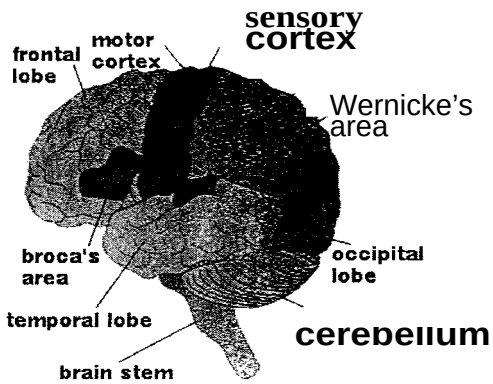
- affects how they perceive themselves
- affects how others respond to them
- determines what they can and cannot do
- makes new behaviours possible

We know that development generally occurs in an orderly process with new skills building on existing skills. This development is influenced by genetics and by experience. New skills take time to develop and are supported when children have opportunities to practice and repeat skills, and to imitate others. Opportunities to play and to experiment are critical. The refinement of skills is also supported through careful guidance and instruction.
Early experiences are critical for future development and learning. The first 5 to 6 years of life are particularly critical for the development of fundamental motor skills: walking. running, jumping, hopping, galloping and skipping; and for ball handling skills: throwing. catching, kicking and striking.

Brain development and motor skills
Some ways that we move actually improve learning. When children use both sides of their brain, functioning is enhanced.

The brain has 2 main parts called hemispheres.

Example af the left cerebral hemisphere



Source:http://suhep.phy.syr.edu/courses/modules/MM/brian/large/large.html

Benefits of motor competence
Opportunities to engage in physical activities help children develop:

- fine and gross motor competence
- visual skills
- thinking skills
- social skills

Children's bodies and movements develop:

- strength
- control
- balance
- speed
- agility and flexibility
- coordination

Well refined basic motor skills are necessary for children to participate effectively in sporting activities.

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