

	Physical Strategies
2. Demonstrates balancing skills	

- Encourage the child to stop, change directions, or walk up and down low ramps to promote their balance as he/she walks.
- Place masking tape or brightly colored yarn on the floor and encourage practice balancing by walking on it. Coach children about how to hold their arms out to steady themselves.
- Encourage the child to practice walking with bean bags on different body parts, e.g., on head, shoulder, elbow, or under the chin.
- Introduce balance beam activities by offering a wide, low (not more than 4-5 inches off floor) beam. Have the child walk with arms out to the side. Increase the challenge by having the child walk forward, backwards, or sideways, or walk forward while carrying a light object in their hands.
- Provide opportunities to practice static balance. Have the child stand on one foot; alternate legs. Give the cue *freeze* when you want the child to hold their positions (increasing duration). When they can do that, ask them to balance on the other foot or with their eyes closed.
- Create balancing cards that show animals, objects, or people in various positions. For example, you might have a stork standing on one foot, a frog squatting, a toy soldier, an airplane, a person in yoga position, etc. The child selects a card and then carries out the act. Incorporate other family members to try to guess what object the child represents.
- Identify body parts to be used as the base of support (feet, hands, back, bottom) and ask the child to create a balance (statue) using that base. Encourage the child to be creative with the balances.
- Encourage children to practice the following balanced cues:
 - Extend your arms for good balance when walking on the beam.
 - Tighten your muscles when performing a stationary balance. Hold your balance perfectly still.
 - Muscular tension is the key to holding your balance.
 - Extend free body parts for stability in your balance.