



Brain Beats Music

The Vestibular System and Why it Matters

Our vestibular system helps us to maintain our sense of balance and spatial orientation in relation to movement. It is controlled by structures in our inner ear that detect our head movements. Our brains interpret this, along with information from our eyes, muscles and joints to maintain balance whether we are stationary or moving.

Our vestibular system needs stimulation from birth. Experiences that develop the vestibular system include balancing, going upside down, rolling, spinning (fast and slow), swinging, swimming underwater, wheelbarrow walking, and tumbling.

Adults tend not to participate in movements that stimulate their vestibular system as frequently as children often do through play. If you have noticed that you are bumping into furniture, getting dizzy when you move suddenly or bend over, or dislike the feeling of swinging on a swing, your body may be telling you that you need more vestibular stimulation. A great way to give your vestibular system a helping hand is to join in with your children while they move to songs such as *I'm a Ball* and *Stretchy Circle*. Stimulating your vestibular system with movement is beneficial throughout life and your children will be delighted to have fun along with you.

The most complex form of balance is being still. This may surprise you, but being still requires careful attention to the messages our brains are receiving from our vestibular system. Therefore, it is essential to classroom success that children receive plenty of opportunities to develop their vestibular system before they reach school age. That's why, at Brain Beats Music we intentionally produce music that encourages children to move and in ways that stimulate their vestibular systems. We know that in today's world of smaller back yards and containerisation, children are missing out on opportunities to practice these movements. What better way to feed our children's brains and prepare them for life than enjoying music and movement activities together!

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