Physical Therapy Activity of the Week.

Moving on Uneven surfaces and Inclines

Uneven surfaces such as walking in sand, mulch, or grass, change the way we move and react in order to keep our balance. Think about the first time you may have walked at the beach or across a gravel drive way, it was different! Your body learned to recognize the difference and you changed the way you moved so that you could stay upright. Maybe your arms came out to help you balance, or you widened your feet or even bent your knees more than usual. The same type of reaction will happen when you walk up and down a hill. For children with delayed motor skills this process may not be as automatic. It can require increased time to make those postural adjustments and to learn how to move safely on various terrain. We can help by giving them more opportunities to learn, even for children who are not yet walking on their own, exposure to inclines and various surfaces helps them learn about their bodies and how they may have to adapt in different circumstances. So…. What can we do? Here are a few ideas that are fun and simple to work on

1) Use stuffed animals, rolled up towels or small toys and put them under a throw rug. Have your child practice walking over them or across them in an open area

2) Take walks outside or play outdoors often with your child. Practice moving from sidewalks to grass, to gravel. Even crawling or walking up a hill and controlling how you come down the hill, hold their hands if they need help.

3) Let them play on pillows and cushions in a safe area. Stack them up, walk and crawl over them. Build forts with them and let them help design them. Walk from one pillow to the next and try not to step off!