

Facts4Life Assemblies – Keeping Balanced

Bella's Bouncy Birthday



Keeping Balanced

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Ask for volunteers to come up to demonstrate balance.

Set a challenge – how long can they balance on one foot before putting the other foot down? A clap for the winner! If children find this task too easy then ask them to try it again with their eyes closed!

- How did it feel to be standing on one leg? [wobbly]
- What happened to your body when you were standing on one leg? [It wobbled about trying to keep balance, maybe the arms went out, the mind was concentrating on staying up etc.]
- Why did you eventually put your other foot down? [To restore complete balance]

The human body is very good at staying 'in balance' and keeping everything working as well as it can.

- What happens when you run very fast? [Your heart beats faster, you breathe faster]
- Why does that happen? [To supply the body with energy]
- What happens when you get very cold? [Shiver, get goose bumps?]
- Why does that happen? [To warm up the body]
- Has anybody here ever had a cold?
- What does it feel like to have a cold?
- What are the symptoms? Runny nose, feeling hot, achy body etc
- How does someone get a cold?

The body is fighting the cold virus and trying to keep the body in balance. Things happen as the body tries to keep itself in balance. A fever is a way of the body fighting the infection and getting itself back into balance. One way of looking at it is to say that the body is trying to 'crack the code' of the virus and how to manage it. The body needs time and energy to do this which is why we need plenty of rest. When we are ill we can do some things to help the body get itself back in balance - although most of the time it can recover with very little help.

- Has anyone ever pulled a muscle in their arm or leg?
- How did it feel?
- Why do we feel pain? (The body's alarm system)
- What happens to a pulled muscle? [It becomes swollen – or inflamed – which is a way of the body getting itself back in balance]

Story – Bella’s bouncy birthday

Synopsis:

Bella was looking forward to going to ‘Trampoline World’ with her friends for her birthday but on the morning of the trip she woke up feeling very hot and achy. Her mother felt her throat and discovered that Bella’s glands were swollen and that she had a temperature. Bella felt shivery and thirsty and didn’t feel much like eating.

Her mum wondered about taking her to the doctor’s but first she looked up Bella’s symptoms on the NHS Choices website [*Note to teachers- you could show this website as part of the assembly: <http://www.nhs.uk/pages/home.aspx>] and thought that Bella had ‘flu but she wasn’t sure as the information said that ‘flu was fairly rare. So, Bella’s mum called the NHS helpline and described Bella’s symptoms over the ‘phone and they confirmed that it sounded like ‘flu. They advised that Bella should stay in bed and try to get some sleep. She should drink plenty of water and have something to eat if possible – even if it was just toast.*

They explained on the phone that her body needed energy to fight the infection. If her symptoms got any worse then they should call her GP.

Bella stayed in bed for a few days. None of her friends could come and visit her in case they caught the ‘flu too. She rested, drank water and after a while she started to feel better. Soon she felt well enough to go downstairs to read and watch a bit of television. She also started to feel hungry.

A week later Bella was feeling completely better. Her parents arranged for her to go to ‘Trampoline World’ with all her friends as she was so upset that she had missed it before. She had a great time and on the way home she told her mum and dad that she was really good at staying in balance on the trampoline. Her parents pointed out that her body was really good at staying in balance too. Bella laughed.

- What did Bella’s parents mean by saying her body was good at staying in balance too?
- How can we help our body stay ‘in balance’?

You may wish to finish with the ‘balance ball activity’ as a practical demonstration of homeostasis (or balance) in the body. See Facts4Life booklet and website for further details.