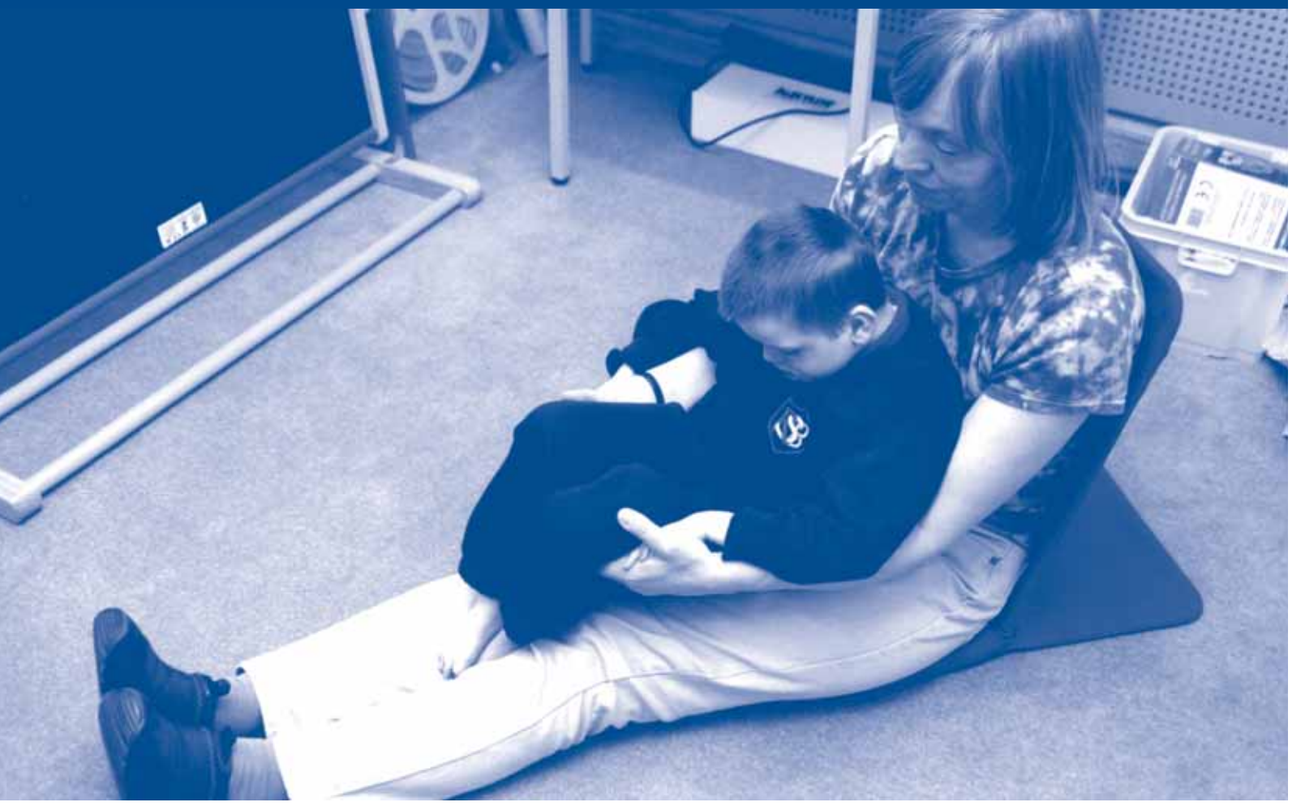
Chapter 2

Movement interaction

"If the interaction has the highest possible quality, then this quality will of itself create the possibility for subsequent interaction to become more complex and sophisticated... the interaction acts as the catalyst [for] the development of the child."
(Nafstad and Rodbroe 1999)



The starting point for the movement interaction approach is always the child's own movement. Through individual movement sessions the adult focuses on the communicative aspect of the child's personal movement patterns. The aim is not to precisely replicate mother-infant behaviour. Instead, it is this same style and method of communication that is developed and which can provide emotional satisfaction for the child.

Movement sessions

The aim of an interactive movement session is to approach the child on his own terms, focusing on what he can do, rather than on what we want him to do, or perhaps what we feel he should be doing. It is necessary to find a quiet place where adult and child can concentrate solely on each other throughout the session. The adult may then engage the child in simple and natural movement play. The aim is to form a bond of mutual trust from which the child can develop an understanding of himself as an individual and of his role as an active participant within the session.

Early communication stages that a child experiences are:

- **Awareness and response** – basic awareness of and response to what is happening within the interaction.
- **Anticipation** – the feeling of excitement engendered when the child is able to predict what is about to happen.

- **Intentionality** – an action made by the child to produce a specific reaction from another person.
- **Reciprocity** – sequences of imitation and turn-taking; the basis of all shared communication.

It is important to begin a movement session with an "open mind". In the sessions, the adult responds to whatever movements the child may make, observing movement qualities and reflecting them back to the child by imitation. This shows the child that the adult has some understanding of what he is doing. The adult's response is intuitive and quite natural but informed by knowledge of the child's likely sequence of development.

In the beginning the child will respond to what is happening in the here and now, but he begins to learn that through his actions, he influences another person and that he can initiate a game or interaction. For example, the child taps his face – his partner does it too – gradually he becomes aware that when he does it, something happens. He does it again, pauses, full of anticipation to see if he was right – will his partner do it again? Sure enough, she does.

When the child begins deliberately to make movements, gestures or sounds in order to gain the adult's response, he is able to initiate interactions or "games". Gradually the child may begin to develop specific signals that have particular meanings for himself and his partner. Put together these can make up a rich vocabulary of shared interactions. These are the activities and pleasurable experiences that form the bond or personal relationship between adult and child.

As adult and child get to know each other the communication may become more reciprocal with adult and child responding to each other more equally. This will often take the form of a "conversation" using vocalisations or movement, for example, a gentle rocking back and forth, with each initiating the activity in turn.

It is important to keep these early communication stages in mind. However, it is the process of participating in a shared activity that is important. Rather than working with planned goals in mind, our open-ended responses within the sessions will, over time, naturally further the child's development.

Some principles to keep in mind

Tune in

Our aim is to "tune in" to the child. The session will have no preordained outcome. The achievement will be the mutual enjoyment of each other's company. The session, however, is not a "free for all". There is a structure to the session that is imposed by the adult on herself. First of all, we arm ourselves with knowledge of children's early communicative development. This is our structure, but keeping this to the back of our minds, we simply react to what the child is offering us at that moment, building it into a communicative exchange.

Watch

Watching involves acute observational skills that are developed through experience. Many of the signals given by the child with visual impairment will be quite unconventional. We need to read his signals and interpret what the child is trying to convey. These signals may often be difficult to pick up. The child's self-expression is more "inward" than "outward". The adult has to show him that he is understood and "draw him out" into a social world.

Do not force a successful session to continue if the child has had enough. Remember the child's right to say "no". To say "no" is just as successful an achievement as to say "yes" in terms of communication.

"Do not force a successful session to continue if the child has had enough. Remember the child's right to say 'no' "

Wait

Give the child plenty of time. He requires longer to respond than would feel natural to us in a spoken conversation. Do not be tempted too early to "make things happen". This can lead to the adult dominating the activities. The child, given the time he needs, gradually gains in confidence and begins to realise that he can have an influence on what happens. Bit by bit, adult and child begin to understand each other and the movement interaction becomes like a shared conversation.

Follow

It is up to us to show the child that he can initiate an action and that it will be responded to. To do this, we have to make ourselves almost like a "sponge". We have to respond to the child, reflecting back what he is doing, without, at least in the early stages, imposing our own personalities on what is happening. This requires a lot of self-awareness. In order to achieve it, we need to emphasise in our own minds the need to keep our "selves" out of the interaction until the child is confident of his own ability to take control.

Responses should be made in movement and sound. Too much chat can lead to the adult dominating the situation. She may be working with a child who cannot use speech. By using what the child himself uses, adult and child are equal.

Technique and skills required

Mirroring

The first indication that a child is aware of, or recognises someone else, may take the form of stilling, attentiveness, smiling, increased activity or vocalisation. This can be encouraged by imitation or mirroring. In so doing, we assign meaning to the child's behaviour and adult and child exchange expressions and feelings of mutual enjoyment.

For example:

- The adult imitates the child's breathing, exaggerating the sound, or blowing gently on his face as she does this.
- The adult imitates the child's vocalisations or mouth sounds.
- The child's hand is resting on or in the adult's. The adult feeds back to the child his tiny movements.

Imitating a movement is not only a matter of following the form of the movement, ie what it looks like. It is also reflecting back the quality of the child's movements, taking account of whether they are heavy or light, controlled or free. This can be done by matching the adult's movements to the child's through visual imitation (if the child can see this) or more often, through direct physical contact, if this is acceptable to the child. Mirroring may be done by reflecting back the rhythm and tempo of the movement through touch and vocalisation. Children without sight will thus be made aware that it is their actions that are being followed.

The adult may use her voice, adding sounds to the child's movements – if he likes the sounds he will be motivated to try again. She must be attentive and aware of the child's facial expressions and vocalisations. If these, for example, express surprise or pleasure they can be reflected back to him through voice, so he knows that he has been understood. The adult must stay responsive to whatever the child is doing. If he is enjoying himself, he will extend his own movements and sounds and try out different ideas for himself.

- The child pushes back, and the adult develops this into a rock backwards, adding a vocalisation as she does so. The child picks up on this and joins in the vocalisation while pushing back to rock again.

Rhythm and timing

Rhythm is an important element in communication. The adult may consciously use timing and repetition as a means of attunement. For some children with a visual impairment, the use of rhythm and timing within an interaction can be particularly motivating. It can offer even the child with complex disabilities the opportunity to direct and control within an interaction. The adult should pick up on the pace of the child's movements and on the rhythm of each action. The speed and flow of a child's movements will be a good indicator as to mood and will convey much of the emotional content of the interaction. It can be done by patting, tapping, clapping, vocalisation or through the action of the movement itself eg lifting arms up and down.

- The child and adult clap together, with the child's hands on top. The adult pauses, holding her arms outward. The child pushes the adult's hands back with some effort. The adult varies her speed to match the effort of the child. The game gets faster.
- The child is standing in front of the kneeling adult, the adult supporting with her hands under the child's hands. The child starts to rock slightly from side to side, and the adult, feeling the pressure on her hands, joins in. The child changes the speed and length of the rock, and at the end of one long slow rock, pauses before initiating a short, fast flurry of rocking activity.
- The child is lying on his back on the floor. The adult's hand is resting gently in his hand. The child throws the adult's hand up in the air. She reacts to the force of his throw and brings her hand back down with a heavy thud. The child laughs and begins to experiment with heavy and light throws, which in turn alter the rhythm and timing of the action.

Building anticipation

The build up of dramatic tension is fun and can motivate the child to attend and concentrate. Create a situation whereby the child is full of anticipation, waiting for the next move. Build this up to a climax, perhaps through vocalisation or exaggeration of movement or facial expression, till finally – action!

- The child lifts his arms up in the air. The adult moves with him and slightly exaggerates the extent of the lift, adding a rising vocalisation and pausing at the top. The child giggles and pulls the adult's hands down.

Turn-taking

At the outset, the adult moves in unison with the child in order for him to become aware of what his partner is doing. Turn-taking, which involves action then reaction, follows on from this awareness. Through mirroring activities, the adult creates a turn-taking situation and the

experience of communicating at a fundamental level – the feeling of a flow of "conversation". Turn-taking takes many forms involving movement, sounds and vocalisation. Rhythm and timing are clearly important skills for the adult to use during these activities.

- The child kicks his feet on the ground. The adult lying beside the child kicks her own feet. The child kicks again and finds himself answered again. This builds into a happy, noisy non-verbal conversation with changes in volume, speed and rhythm.

Pauses

Pauses play an important part in early non-verbal conversations. These follow a pattern involving a burst of interactive activity followed by a pause, until the activity is repeated again. Within our movement interaction sessions this behaviour is evident in the turn-taking routines that are set up between the child and his adult partner. Typically a burst of turn-taking activity builds to a kind of climax; there is a pause while the child has time to reflect on what has happened, before again initiating another burst of activity. The aware adult allows pauses to occur, never pushing the activity along too soon for the child.

Pauses within interactions are vital if we are to develop the child's understanding of communication and encourage active participation. The pause is filled with expectancy which sends the message – "your turn". It is essential to wait long enough for the response. If not, then the child will not realise his own role within the conversation.

- Child and adult sit together with the child leaning against the adult. The pair rock together. The adult pauses midway and waits. The child waits too, clearly wondering what happens next. When nothing appears to happen, he tries to continue the rocking action with a push of his shoulder, as if to say, "I like this, let's go on." The adult continues and he smiles.

The child's communicative strategies can be developed by leaving gradually lengthening pauses, so that the child has to be much clearer in his intentions. This should be done with care. The child whose self-awareness is only just emerging will require immediate feedback from his actions. A child more confident in his abilities to express himself can be gently encouraged to be more precise. It is very important to be aware of the communication level at which the child is working so that the pause strategies are right for that individual.

Positioning

How the adult positions herself relative to the child will be based on the way that best suits him, taking into account his visual and emotional needs and his physical capabilities. As a general rule she should remain close to the child, taking care her back is supported when working on the floor.

Sometimes within a session, it is advantageous for the adult to change her position in relation to the child eg moving from beside to in front. This results in her focusing differently on the child and enables the child to expand the repertoire of activities that he is able to initiate. For example, touching or holding a foot or leg, can encourage the child to make a new movement with this part of his body. This must be done with care, always ensuring first that the change of position is acceptable to the child.

When working with children who tend to go into spasm or extension, it will be necessary to seek advice from a physiotherapist about positions whereby this can be lessened or inhibited.

Some suggestions for different positions:

- The child facing the adult, either sitting on her lap or sitting supported on the floor (taking care with children who have physical disabilities to check with the relevant therapists).

This is a good position for close face-to-face interactions, blowing, vocalising, mouth movements, eye contact, and movement activities.

- The child seated on the adult's lap, or in front on the floor, with his back against the adult.

For a child who tends to go into extension, this can be a good position, as legs are kept well flexed, and the adult's body acts as a stabilising support. It is a good position for movement activities, as the adult can pick up the child's tiny responses through her body, and for following hand and arm movements.

- The child lying on the floor on his back, with head supported, if necessary.

This can be a good position for all kinds of close face-to-face interactions. It is a useful position for reacting to the child's leg movements and for activities such as side-to-side rolling. This is a position that can be used with older or heavier children.

- Older children.

As children grow older it is less appropriate to have close physical contact. However, by using wedges, physiotherapy balls or physiotherapy rolls and by carefully positioning the young person, it is possible to interact and turn-take naturally and to provide varied movement experiences.

Developing intentional movements

Intentionality is the knowledge that a movement or action elicits a reaction. Intentionality develops naturally from the activities previously described. The child gradually learns that he can be in charge of situations and make things happen. Conversations now begin to be about the activities and not simply an exchange of feelings.

At first, the adult may be interpreting the child's unintentional movement and taking it as a request for something she thinks he would like, such as an arm movement for a lift or a bounce. It is important that the child's "requesting" movement is made part of the activity, for example, if a child raises his hand for a rocking game, the adult should continue to raise his arm as she rocks him. Vocalisations and voiced sounds can be used in the same way, with the adult interpreting these as requests. The adult imitates the sound the child makes while rocking him. Through the experience of having his actions interpreted in this way, the child begins to make these movements and sounds purposefully.

The child's initiations may at first be extremely small movements such as a tensing of the muscles, apparent only to the alert adult who is in close contact. However, the child can be motivated to make more definite body movements, through his enjoyment of the activities.

Another form of intentionality emerges when the child takes the adult's hand and puts it back to the same place to request a repeat of a favoured activity. This sometimes comes before more deliberate gestures or "signs" which symbolise the activity requested.

Developing signals or signs

Gradually adult and child will begin to build up a repertoire of known and remembered activities that the child particularly enjoys. As his awareness grows, in particular his ability to anticipate and to make his intentions known, the child will begin to develop gestures or body movements to ask for what he wants. This is quite a big step as it is the beginning of understanding that these are symbolic and may "stand for" particular activities.

Within a movement session, once the child feels that he is in charge and has begun to initiate requests, we can start to look for specific signs or signals for particular activities. It is important that we do not rush into this stage. Some children may only have a limited range of movement to call upon to make their requests. In this case it is possible that the child may use the same gesture to request a number of different activities. The adult, depending on the context in which the request is being made and the position of the child, can understand which activity is being requested. At the same time, the adult should, in order to extend the child's vocabulary of signs and signals, keep on building up his movement repertoire as far as she can within his physical capabilities.

At this stage it is important to be careful to keep the sessions interactive. There are various pitfalls that are only too easily encountered. When the child uses a sign/gesture to make a request it is very easy to say "Good boy!" This immediately puts the adult in a dominant position and is not what would happen in ordinary conversation. If someone asks you for something you would not normally praise him for asking, before responding to his request.

Another common pitfall occurs when the adult says "Would you like a swing? Come on show me your sign". In this case the adult is not giving the child a choice, but telling the child what to do!

Developing reciprocity

Reciprocity involves the ability, on the part of the child, to pick up on and imitate the actions of the adult. It involves an awareness of the two-way nature of communication and an ability to understand another's point of view. Once the child has gained an awareness of being able to make things happen, the adult can begin to put more of "herself" into the activity. Within a repetitive sequence, familiar to the child, the adult can add changes of rhythm and speed or make suggestions of her own. Suggestions will invariably be based on the adult's knowledge of the child's preferences.

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Sessions do not have to consist of non-stop activity. The intensity of the communication will come and go. The skill of the adult is to avoid pushing on from one activity to another, but rather to remain available and to quietly signal this. The adult may rest a hand close to the child's dominant hand so that he knows his partner is still there. This gives the child the opportunity to take the adult's hand to signal that he wants to continue.
Many children may not develop true reciprocity, however, they can participate in rich communication with their partners through a wide variety of interactive experiences.

Awareness of adult approach

One of the most important skills required in movement sessions is the ability to observe the child with an open mind. The adult must be able to "read" the child's gestures and react in a similar fashion without, in the initial stages, imposing her own movement preferences on the interaction. That is, the adult must become aware of her own movement behaviour and how this may affect the child. We all have our own preferred ways of moving which have been developed over years, depending on our characters and our life experiences. Mostly we are unaware of them and would be surprised if anyone brought them to our attention. The intuitive communication skills that come so readily to us all in our everyday interactions, without even thinking, must be brought into our conscious awareness.

"One of the most important skills required in movement sessions is the ability to observe the child with an open mind"

These are some ideas to keep in mind when working with a child. By knowing yourself you begin to know the child.

Proximity
What effect does your presence have on the child? Alter the distance between yourself and the child and observe any changes in the child's behaviour. Your near presence can encourage reaching movements from the child. Be aware of the child's visual field and place yourself in the optimum position for the child to use any residual vision.

Voice
How are you using your voice to speak to the child? Do you use much inflexion? If the child is totally blind, observing the way he reacts when he hears your voice can tell you about his relationship with you.

Touch
Observe your own actions – is your touch heavy or light? Have you altered your customary approach in response to a perceived need in the child? Does the child recognise your touch?

Approach
Think about your approach in terms of space and time:

- Are you moving in a direct or in a more circumspect manner? Are you moving towards the child from behind/the side/in front or from above/below/the same level? Are you aware of the child's visual field?
- Do you approach quickly or slowly? Direct and fast can be more threatening than indirect and slow for some children or vice versa.

Partially support body weight
For example, child leaning against adult. Observe your own movements. Are they adapted to the movements of the child?

Wholly support weight
Have you established trust? Children should not be fully supported until trust has been established. Be sensitive to passive acceptance on the part of the child and try to guard against it. (Always follow manual handling guidelines.)

Case study: Sadia

Sadia is a three year old with visual impairment. She has quadriplegic cerebral palsy and severely limited intentional movement. She also has a hearing impairment. She enjoys close physical contact, but remains tactile defensive, not liking to touch with her hands.

The session starts with Sadia seated sideways on the adult's lap. Gradually the adult picks up on Sadia's breathing, imitating it in an exaggerated way close to her ear. Sadia becomes aware of this, and her breathing gets louder, until she is vocalising, and a turn-taking exchange with the adult ensues. After a pause, Sadia makes a small backward movement with her head, and the adult rocks her back into the position she knows Sadia enjoys. There is another longish pause, then Sadia vocalises. The adult imitates the vocalisation, gently swinging Sadia from side to side, thus interpreting the vocalisation as having a definite message. Sadia enjoys this, and vocalises again this time with a small head movement. This sequence is repeated several times.

The adult changes position, so Sadia is facing her. Again Sadia makes a small but definite backward movement with her head, and the adult moves so that Sadia can rock back. She is now lying back over the adult's legs. The adult very sensitively slips her fingers under Sadia's fingers, so she is able to follow her arm movements. Sadia lifts her arm, and the adult follows. When the adult detects a slight downward pressure on her hand, she allows both their hands to bang down on the floor close to Sadia's head. Sadia smiles at the noise, and repeats the movement again. This turns into a sustained routine, with Sadia changing the speed and strength of the bangs, by altering the amount of pressure she exerts and the timing of her arm movements. Sadia is pleased and excited, appearing to know that she is initiating and controlling, and she is smiling broadly.

Particular areas of difficulty

Ideas and suggestions

There are some children who can be particularly hard to reach, and for whom interaction with another person seems to represent a threat or holds little intrinsic reward. They actively reject any physical contact apart from very basic lifting and handling, and this rejection can take various forms. Some merely reject by turning or moving away, and others can become aggressive or very upset at any intrusion into their space and privacy. These children can at first appear more difficult to work with, but the authors have never worked with a child who has not responded to and enjoyed movement interaction sessions.

Children who do not want to interact

The key points are:

- patience
- flexibility
- start with the child's interests
- put no pressure on the child
- establish trust
- allow time.

At first the session may have to consist of the adult and child just being in the room together. When physical contact is attempted it should be very gentle and non-intrusive, and at all times the child's reactions should be very carefully monitored.

The following suggestions have been found to work well in different situations, and with different children:

- Have the child in a partially enclosed area, for example, a large open-ended cardboard box. Use sound and rhythm, such as tapping and scratching on the surface of the box, to attract the child's attention. Once the child starts responding from the security of his box, he may gradually become willing to accept more direct physical contact.
- The adult can lie beside the child, and make her presence felt through gently tapping, clapping or moving. When the child shows interest, by for example turning to the adult, a further gentle approach can be made. In one case a child slightly extended her fingers, and allowed the adult to approach her hand and eventually to make contact with it.
- The child is in his wheelchair or buggy as security. The adult can attempt to interact in front of the child, for example, gently moving the chair to encourage a response from the child.
- Objects may present less of a threat to a child, and can be used in different ways both to attract and maintain the child's interest, such as moving an attractive object across his line of vision, allowing the child to touch it if he wants to, or tapping a drum gently, close to him.
- Using rhythm and timing can be excellent ways of interesting and motivating a child. Touch can be kept to a minimum and the child is fully in control. This can be used in connection with rhymes and songs, where children can have control over the speed at which favourite songs are performed.

It is worth stressing that children who are noticeably aggressive in many circumstances, rarely show aggression within these sessions since they have the experience of being in control in an appropriate way. This is evidence that a mutual bond of trust has been established between adult and child.

Children with "stereotypical" movements

Stereotypical movement can be a feature of the play and behaviour of many children who have built up a pattern of repetitive movements and ways of using objects that do not vary or change, and appear to have little creative or communicative function. In many cases this appears to be used for the purpose of blocking out interactions, and these children can become isolated and seem to be "in their own world". It is worth looking carefully at their movements and ways of behaving, as although they are often described as "non-communicative", they will have developed for a purpose, and can give clues to a child's emotional state.

Movement interaction sessions offer very good opportunities in which to use these movements to make contact with the child.

The key principles are the same as for children who do not want to interact (see above).

Where possible treat the child's stereotypical movements as meaningful, and demonstrate this to the child within an interaction. Try to turn these movements into a movement game that the child enjoys.

Some examples:

Children who constantly turn their head or rock their body

- if the child is in a chair, turn the chair in time to his head turns
- lightly tap the child's shoulder every time he rocks to one particular side
- ring a bell or tap a drum at the side of the child at each twist of the body
- lightly place your head against the child's to mirror his movements.

Children who bang, shake or tap repetitively

- tap or bang against the same surface or object as the child
- join in with the child, tapping another object in an exaggerated way so he is aware of this
- tap against the child's body in the same rhythm
- keep the child's basic rhythm, but add to it slightly.

Children who keep hold of an object

- use a similar object (or another favourite one), and play close in front of the child to attract attention. Try to turn this into a give-and-take game, exchanging objects without forcing.

The child is likely to be using movement and objects as blocking strategies. In this case sessions are best carried out in a room with as little distraction as possible.

Children who are constantly on the move and avoid interaction

- follow the child, imitating the rhythm of his footsteps or other movements in an exaggerated way to get awareness and attention
- use a kind of "peek-a-boo" technique, going round the child to create surprise in a fun way.

Older children

The whole question of the appropriateness of movement interaction sessions that depend on close physical contact has to be considered for young people approaching adulthood. Teenagers and young adults although physically well developed may often still be developmentally very young. They are likely to be emotionally dependent, and many still need the security and comfort of being close to another person. If they are denied this contact, then we may be denying them their most important means of communication. We must therefore work out a carefully planned, age appropriate way to provide sessions for these young people.

By keeping touch within age appropriate boundaries and using other strategies to let the young person know that he is important and special, we can develop his interactive skills. Some of these young people may have developed challenging behaviour, and these sessions can offer a way of releasing tension, and allow them to experience the benefits of positive interaction. It is also worth bearing in mind that for the more able, many leisure, sports and creative activities, particularly those based on dance and movement, involve physical contact that is socially acceptable.

The following ideas and suggestions may prove useful in situations where it is felt appropriate to continue the one-to-one sessions with older children and young adults who are developmentally young.

Activities and routines based on movement activities

- seated on the floor, hands held rocking at different speeds and in different directions
- seated side by side, rocking as above
- partners seated back to back rocking as above
- back to back, taking turns to push and move the other across the room.

Using rhythm and timing, in turn-taking routines

- turn-taking routines involving clapping, stamping, footsteps round the room
- using drums and other sound making instruments
- reflecting vocalisations of adult and young person.

Using objects

- large objects eg physiotherapy balls and wedges can provide the basis of movement activities
- smaller objects eg a vibrotube, can be the basis of turn-taking play. Aim to keep this interactive rather than directive
- hoops and ropes can provide activities that do not involve touch, but are co-operative and interactive.

Case study: Laura

Laura joined the nursery as an introverted little girl, with poor interactive skills, who showed little need or desire to be with other people. However, when she was introduced to movement activities, she gradually began to develop an interest in interacting and communicating with her partner. She liked, for example, to be picked up by her partner, holding out her arms to request this, and, sitting legs astride her partner's waist, she would use her head to indicate that she wanted to be twirled around. Then she would bounce up and down in her partner's arms to show she wanted to be lowered to the ground. Laura was learning that interaction is fun, and that she could take charge of a sequence of events.

This new-found ability to control and direct activities, developed over the next 18 months, and her sessions began to include long sequences of interaction in which Laura would manipulate her partner through various movement patterns. Her limited residual vision is particularly stimulated by movement, and one of her favourite routines was to push her partner's arm up in the air and wait for it to fall. By altering the height to which she pushed the arm, she could control the speed and timing of this routine, and the knowledge that she was in charge gave her great pleasure.

"Her limited residual vision is particularly stimulated by movement, and one of her favourite routines was to push her partner's arm up in the air and wait for it to fall"

The next stage for Laura was to learn to take the lead sometimes and give it up at others, and to "listen" to her partner. This was not an easy lesson for her. However, through gentle, playful interaction she learned to take turns. For example, she would initiate a game involving pushing her partner from behind so that she ran forwards then stopped. Her partner then turned and did the same to Laura.

Now Laura is eleven and she is beginning to take much more interest in what her adult partner can do. Often she will sit close opposite her partner and watch her very carefully. Sometimes they will copy each other, tossing their hair from side to side, or shaking a hand in the air. Other times they will vocalise, each copying the other in turn. So long as the adult keeps her own suggestions within Laura's range of interests, Laura will happily follow her. The session often ends in giggles!

Recording a movement interaction session

In order to provide consistency, movement interaction sessions should be recorded as fully as possible, especially where more than one adult is likely to be working with the child. It is difficult to describe movement in words, as there are so many layers of activity to observe as well as facial expression, vocalisation etc. The quality of movement is more difficult to describe than the action but it is important to note. It may be the best clue as to how the child is feeling at the time of the session.

In recording a session, train yourself to be analytical and try to give an accurate description of:

- **What happened?**
  What did the child do? What did you do? Was there a repeated pattern of movement? Any movements not seen before?
- **Why did it happen?**
  For example, the child flapped his hand. Was this in response to something you did, or was it a new activity/an habitual gesture? Was it an expression of feelings? A request?
- **How did the child move?**
  Were his movements deliberate or uncontrolled? Gentle or strong? Brisk or relaxed? What use of space did he make?
- **When did he move?**
  Describe also periods of non-activity. These are important to the overall communication.

Have you learnt anything about the child or about yourself within the session? (Be objective.)

Record of movement interaction session

Name of child: ..... Date: .....

Staff member:

Description of session:

Any new activities today?

How do you feel about the session?