Dance Concept: Levels

This week, we explored Levels - Low, Middle and High! The brain and body correspond with three levels; feet with our reptilian (low) brain, waist with our emotional (mid) brain, and head with our processing (high) brain (see brain image in next page).

When we do:

- Low level movements like floor time/tummy time, it organizes the reptilian brain
- Crawling & middle level movements stimulates the emotional brain
- Vertical & high level movements stimulates the thinking brain

When we move up and down THROUGH these 3 different levels physically, we are helping the brain create connections between the different levels of the brain. The more we move up and down, the more connections/pathways are created and the more quickly and automated information will flow up and down the brains. That is what an integrated brain means!

When we've built these connections up and down the brain, it'll help us when we need to help our children move through these different levels quickly. For example when our kiddos are upset, they're very much so in the emotional (mid) brain, so first connect with them on an emotional level to tell them that we understand them and see where they're coming from. When we do that, they automatically disarm themselves and becomes less defensive because they feel safe and heard and gets them out of their fight or flight response. From there, you bring them up to their high brain by talking through what happened and process the issue together and problem solve and connecting it back to how they're feeling. The more we practice this, the more quickly and automatically they'll be able to do this in the future because the connections are strong. You can read more about this in Dr. Dan Siegel's Book, The Whole Brain Child.

Lastly, you can see how movement activities in the different levels develops different cognitive skills in the chart below.

Movement is the Gateway to Learning

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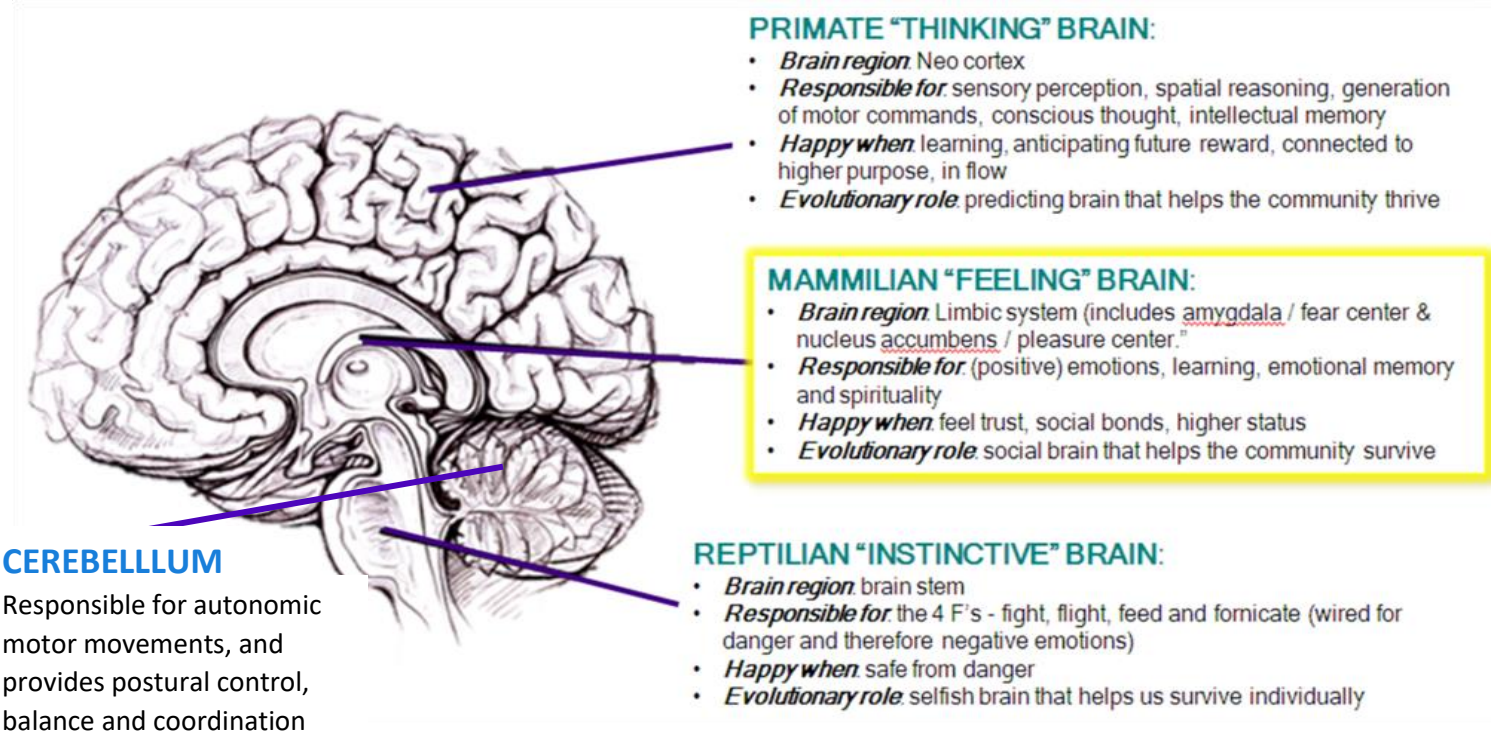
Physical Activities Build Mental Capabilities

Physical mastery leads to mental mastery and develops the whole brain.

Brain Area	Movement Activity	Cognitive Outcome
Reptilian Brain	Grasping, Crawling, Walking, Reaching, Turning, Pulling, Pushing, Touching	Hand-eye coordination Gross motor skills Pre-writing ability
Cerebellum	Spinning, Balancing, Rolling, Listening, Swinging, Somersaults	Fine motor coordination Reading skills Writing skills
Mammalian Brain	Stroking, Cuddling, Massage, different kinds of tactile touch, Playing together	Social skills Cooperation Confidence & security
Primate Brain	Dancing to music Working with patterns of movement Following patterns & sequences Obstacle courses	Math, logical thinking Problem solving Fluent reading, spelling Musical ability



CEREBELLLUM

Responsible for autonomic motor movements, and provides postural control, balance and coordination