

# My Gym Core Vocabulary

A key attribute of a great My Gym teacher capable of leading high quality classes is “teaching with expertise.” In order to master this and the skill-based teaching technique, you need to understand the terms included in My Gym’s curriculum and programs. Many of the words listed below have multiple definitions; here you will find the meanings that best pair with young children and My Gym’s philosophies.

## COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT:

*Cognitive development refers to how a person perceives, thinks, and gains understanding of his or her world. Among the areas of cognitive development are information processing, intelligence, reasoning, language development, and memory. Cognitive development is the construction of thought processes, including remembering, problem solving, and decision-making, from childhood through adolescence to adulthood.*

### Stages of Cognitive Development:

- **The Sensorimotor Stage:** A period of time between birth and age two during which an infant’s knowledge of the world is limited to his or her sensory perceptions and motor activities - Behaviors are limited to simple motor responses caused by sensory stimuli.
- **The Preoperational Stage:** A period between ages two and six during which a child learns to use language - During this stage, children do not yet understand concrete logic, cannot mentally manipulate information, and are unable to take the point of view of other people.
- **The Concrete Operational Stage:** A period between ages seven and eleven during which children gain a better understanding of mental operations - Children begin thinking logically about concrete events, but have difficulty understanding abstract or hypothetical concepts.
- **The Formal Operational Stage:** A period between ages twelve to adulthood when people develop the ability to think about abstract concepts - Skills such as logical thought, deductive reasoning, and systematic planning also emerge during this stage.

COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT	DEFINITION	LIFE APPLICATION <i>(Or, “how this concept relates to a child’s overall development”)</i>
Active Learning	When one gains knowledge via interaction with objects, people, and the surrounding environment	Active Learning helps children to develop a unique pattern of interests, talents, and goals based on their interactions with objects and how they interpret the effects of their actions.
Attention Span	The length of time that someone can concentrate effectively on a task or activity	Being able to sit and listen to a parent or teacher, or being able to complete a task as directed (e.g., school readiness)
Concentration	Great and constant diligence and complete attention to a person, object, or activity	The first years of life are formative for developing focus and concentration. A long attention span is essential for creative, athletic, and academic achievement.
Development	The process in which an individual comes to a more advanced and expanded stage; to grow or to cause to grow gradually; to improve or change	As a child matures (“develops”), they’re able to handle more complicated instructions or more difficult tasks; progress is tangible (cognitive, physical, emotional, etc.).

<b>Effort</b>	The exertion put forth to complete a task (can be mental, emotional, or physical)	Putting forth effort leads to the completion of a task, thereby teaching children to put in work in order to achieve.
<b>Fundamental</b>	Serving as, or being an essential part of, a foundation or base; an essential component; underlying part on which more complex growth can occur	Basic skills come first: <i>crawling</i> before walking, <i>walking</i> before running, <i>hanging</i> and supporting one's own weight before going over the bar, etc.
<b>Following Directions</b>	Ability to listen, process instructions, and follow through with action; often contains several steps	Putting toys away when asked, "stopping" an action when directed, completing a puzzle or organized activity, etc.
<b>Imagination</b>	The formation of a mental image of something that is not perceived as real and is not present to the senses; the ability to form mental images of things or events; the ability to take physical objects and mentally transform them; the ability to deal resourcefully with unusual problems	Make believe, pretending, or storytelling - both actively (making it up themselves) or passively (participating and engaging in someone else's story, pretend game/world, etc.)
<b>Ingenuity</b>	Ingenuity is the quality of being clever, original, and inventive, often in the process of applying ideas to solve problems or meet challenges.	Ingenuity is often thought of as a cousin to "invention" (or to be inventive), but for older children, ingenuity is a quality that allows them to solve problems, complete more complex tasks, and show their individual creativity. Relays and games with complex rules often allow kids to exercise their ingenuity.
<b>Problem Solving</b>	The process of thinking through the details of a situation to find a solution to a question or situation	Young children solve problems by observation and imitation. They'll try every approach - until they hit on the one that works. With improved memory, older children can recall how other people solved problems similar to the ones they're facing, and then execute accordingly.
<b>School Readiness</b>	Pertains to the domains of language and literacy development as well as cognitive approaches toward learning, physical well-being & motor development, and social & emotional development	School readiness means each child enters school ready to engage in and benefit from early learning experiences that best promote the child's success.
<b>Sensory Integration</b>	Sensory integration (sometimes called sensory processing) deals with how the brain processes sensory input from multiple sensory modalities (the five classic senses of sight, hearing, touch, smell, and taste).	Helping kids coordinate their bodies and their senses helps them be successful in their activities of daily living. Self-regulation of sensory input is the ability to remain organized so that you can actively participate in your life.
<b>Verbal/Linguistic Intelligence</b>	Displaying a facility or aptitude for words and languages	Reading, writing, telling stories, and memorizing words along with dates or numbers

## **SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT:**

*Social development involves learning the values, knowledge and skills that enable children to relate to others effectively and to contribute in positive ways to family, school, and the community. This kind of learning is passed on to children directly by those who care for and teach them, as well as indirectly through social relationships within the family or with friends and through children's participation in the culture around them.*

*The significance of social and emotional development is seen in every area of a child's life. A child will have a strong foundation for later development if he or she can manage personal feelings, understand others' feelings and needs, and interact positively with others. Differences in social and emotional development result from a child's inborn temperament, cultural influences, disabilities, behaviors modeled by adults, the level of security felt in a child's relationships with adults, and the opportunities provided for social interaction.*

Supporting Social and Emotional Development:

- **Teach by Example:** Children learn a great deal about behavior standards by observing the actions of those around them. When one is teaching social values, it is especially important not to just talk about them but rather to show through your actions the kinds of caring, respectful, and responsible behaviors you expect of students.
- **Help Resolve Conflict in a Healthy, Appropriate Way:** Young babies and children express themselves in many different ways. They are always learning and trying new behaviors. Sometimes those behaviors are subtle, like smiling or laughing. Other times they are brazen, such as screaming or trying to hit. Redirecting and teaching children which behaviors are appropriate is an important part of their emotional and social growth.
- **Expressing Feelings is Vital:** Children should be encouraged to express their feelings. It relieves frustration and presents excellent teaching opportunities. Crying or being sad may be appropriate reactions in certain situations and should not necessarily be discouraged. Young children must also learn that being insensitive or emotionally hurting other people is not a healthy way to interact. Therein lie the boundaries and social lessons to be learned.

<b>SOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL DEVELOPMENT</b>	<b>DEFINITION</b>	<b>LIFE APPLICATION</b>
<b>Character Development</b>	Character is established by conscientious adherence to just values, not by lofty rhetoric or good intentions; it is ethics in action.	Character development helps to instill the values of integrity, respect, responsibility, fairness, honesty, caring, and citizenship.
<b>Communication</b>	The act of exchanging thoughts, opinions, or information; can be both verbal and nonverbal	Nonverbal at first, children express their most immediate needs by crying. As they get older, they communicate through body language and single words. By age 2, most children start forming 2 to 3+ word sentences.
<b>Confidence</b>	To be certain of oneself, or their abilities. One can also have	Confidence inspires children to set and reach specific goals.

	confidence in people, plans or the future.	As a child's confidence increases, it will be accompanied by a rise in self-esteem.
<b>Conflict Resolution</b>	The goal of conflict resolution is to find common ground and leave everyone feeling positive or neutral (not negative or combative). It isn't about deciding who's right and who's wrong – instead, it can involve acknowledging that different opinions sometimes clash.	Learning to deal with conflict is a lifelong skill. It's especially important for today's children, who can face conflict not only in person, but also online through cyberbullying.
<b>Contribute</b>	To give in order to help achieve or provide something; to help cause or bring about; to provide part of a whole; to be an important factor to help a cause	To offer their own ideas to the task at hand; helping make up a story, creating a character in dramatic play, and (when older) helping to complete a group project; goes hand in hand with cooperation
<b>Cooperation</b>	Working or acting together for a common purpose or benefit.	Working together to build with blocks, do a puzzle, or put toys away - For older children, this can be parlayed to school projects and sports.
<b>Cooperative Play</b>	Involves the division of efforts among children in order to reach a common goal - Cooperative play is concerned with solving a problem by working together for a solution.	Cooperative play allows children to interact with others, express their thoughts, and try out new ideas. It also promotes social growth and sharing.
<b>Coping Skills</b>	Strategies (e.g., using words, pretend play, drawing) to establish greater control and competence in managing intense emotions	Helping children manage their emotions is important for developing self-regulation skills, resilience, and sense of self, nurturing their mental health and well-being.
<b>Empathy</b>	To be able to put oneself in other people's shoes, and support those involved to do the same	Over time, children will respond more appropriately and sympathetically to others who are in need, upset, hurt, or angry.
<b>Friendliness</b>	The condition or quality of being friendly; a disposition to favor or befriend; good will; can also be an exercise of benevolence or kindness	Progress in developing friendships with peers, even if a bond is formed with just one other child. Will also try to please other children (e.g., child says, "You can come to my birthday, OK?")
<b>Independence</b>	Freedom to think and act on one's own accord; ability to exist without control or influence of others	When independence is encouraged, children become good decision makers because they were allowed to consider various options and, with the support and guidance of their parents, make their own decisions.
<b>Interpersonal Communication</b>	Communicating with others	As children develop, so do their interpersonal and social skills. Children learn to share and also to be assertive and persuasive.
<b>Leadership</b>	The power or ability to lead other people; the capacity to lead others to create a result that might not have otherwise	Building foundations of children's leadership in early childhood forms social interactions, nurtures diverse skill sets

	happened	in all children, and fosters decision-making skills.
<b>Non-verbal communication</b>	A precursor to verbal communication; typically associated with infancy; can include body language and facial expressions, gestures, cues, etc.	Non-verbal communication gives way to verbal around the age of 12 months. Over the 2 <sup>nd</sup> year of life, communication becomes more and more verbal.
<b>Parallel Play</b>	A form of play where children play near or close to one another but do not try to influence another's behavior	Playing with toys independently, side by side - One child sometimes observes the other, but there is little sharing involved. By 2 years old, parallel play morphs into cooperative play.
<b>Participation</b>	The act of taking part or sharing with others	Completing a class (or part of a class); listening to directions, demonstrating skills, going with a group, etc.
<b>Reinforcement</b>	An act performed to strengthen approved behavior; the addition of strengthening or supporting materials or reactions to make something stronger	Can be negative ( <i>If I hit my friend, Timmy, I get in trouble.</i> ) or positive ( <i>If I listen during class, I get a sticker at the end.</i> )
<b>Self-Esteem</b>	A favorable impression of oneself; self-respect; the feeling that you are as important as other people and that you deserve to be treated well	A feeling of self-worth lays the foundation for a preschooler's future as he/she sets out to try new things on his/her own.
<b>Self-Assurance</b>	Realistic confidence in one's own judgment, ability, power	Developing the confidence to understand whether you can deal with a problem or need to consult with a parent or adult
<b>Self-Reliance</b>	Trust in one's own efforts and abilities; correlates with independence	It is developmentally appropriate for children to become more independent, self-reliant, and responsible as they age. With proper support from adults, this allows children to thrive because they feel more confident in themselves while still feeling supported and properly mentored.
<b>Sportsmanship</b>	Showing the characteristics of a sportsman: fairness, courtesy, good temper, following the rules of the game, and being a cheerful loser or gracious winner	Overcoming frustration when a child loses, is pushed around, or gets a "bad" call made on them; turning the other cheek and learning to be the bigger person
<b>Teamwork</b>	Cooperative or coordinated effort on the part of a group of people acting together	Being part of a team enables a child to move from more intrapersonal (individual) ways of thinking to interpersonal (communicating with others). It will aid children in all areas of their learning as well as help them feel part of a community.

## **PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT:**

*Physical development is a process that starts in human infancy and continues into late adolescence with an emphasis on gross and fine motor skill development. It involves developing control over the body, particularly muscles and coordination. The peak of physical development happens in childhood,*

*which is, therefore, a crucial time for neurological brain development and body coordination that encourages specific activities such as grasping, writing, crawling, and walking. As children learn what their bodies can do, they gain self-confidence, which promotes social and emotional development. According to the Surgeon General, physical activities geared toward aiding physical development contribute significantly to a person's health and well-being.*

PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT	DEFINITION	LIFE APPLICATION
<b>Agility</b>	The power to move quickly and easily; nimbleness	Developing proficiency in agility will transfer into many movement forms, concepts, and principles that can apply to the learning of other motor skills.
<b>Bilateral Coordination</b>	Using both sides of the body together to perform a task - Bilateral coordination is a result of proper midline development.	Examples: Clapping games, playing two-handed musical instruments such as symbols, tearing and cutting objects, galloping, riding a bicycle, and tossing a ball
<b>Cardiovascular</b>	<b>"Cardio"</b> Relating to the heart and blood vessels. A cardio workout is high energy to get your heart rate up.	Cardiovascular fitness is integral to heart health and the prevention of heart disease.
<b>Balance</b>	A state in which a body or object remains reasonably steady in a particular position; the ability to maintain bodily equilibrium with both sides of one's body equal and not tipping over - Balance is a function of the Vestibular System.	Balance is vital to normal everyday activities, such as getting out of a chair and walking, bending over to put on shoes, running, and reaching or climbing.
<b>Core Muscles</b>	Abdominal muscles, lower back muscles, oblique (side stomach) muscles, pelvic muscles	These underlying muscles of the torso help determine posture. When developed properly, they aid in core stability.
<b>Core Stability</b>	Relates to the bodily region bounded by the abdomen, pelvis, lower back, and diaphragm working together to resist change in motion	The core provides strength and stability for the rest of the body, which plays a part in everything from crawling to walking, balancing, jumping, hanging, tumbling, etc.
<b>Coordination</b>	The skillful and balanced movement of different parts at the same time	While not innate for all children, coordination can be learned. Improved coordination through repetition of skills will result in more purposeful, accurate movements, and less "klutziness."

--	--	--

<b>Depth Perception</b>	The ability to perceive objects and their spatial relationship in three dimensions	Being able to decipher proximity (e.g., a parent calling to a child - The child will determine how near/far the parent is perceived to be.) Later in life, this is a foundational skill for reading, driving, sports, etc.
<b>Endurance</b>	The ability or strength to continue despite fatigue; stamina - Good muscular endurance gives you the ability to repeat a movement without getting tired or to hold a position or carry something for a long period of time without being worn out.	A child who has good cardiovascular and muscular endurance will enjoy and have greater success in his/her physical activities, in play, and in sporting and athletic competitions.
<b>Fine Motor Skills</b>	The coordination of small muscle movements, usually in the fingers and hands (typically with coordination of the eyes)	Examples: Counting with fingers; learning and eventually mastering reading and writing



<b>Flexibility</b>	The distance of movement for a joint; the range of motion thereof or the ability to move joints effectively	Flexibility is one of the main fitness components important for success in many sports. Good flexibility is also important for injury prevention.
<b>Foot-Eye Coordination</b>	Foot-eye coordination is the ability to perform tasks which involve coordinating the movement of the feet and eyes, as when kicking a ball.	Any game or activity that forces a child to keep his/her eye on one thing while his/her feet do another will develop this skill. Ultimately, it's good for agility, nimbleness, and body control.
<b>Gross Motor Skills</b>	Movements and development that involve large muscle groups and whole body movement	Examples: Standing, walking, running, skipping, walking up stairs. They are the foundational skills of locomotion.
<b>Hand-eye Coordination (aka eye-hand coordination)</b>	The ability to coordinate vision with fine motor skills; the capability to do things that involve your hands and eyes working together	Examples include catching a ball, passing something through a needle, or drawing pictures. As children develop better hand-eye coordination, they may enjoy more proficiency in certain sports.
<b>Homolateral Movement</b>	One side of the body is moving while the other side of the body is still.	Hopping is a primary example, the benefits of which range from midline development, body rhythm and control, balance, muscle strength, and spatial awareness.
<b>Locomotor Skills</b>	A category of motor skills - They are a group of movements in which the feet move the body from one place to another.	Walking, running, hopping, skipping, jumping, galloping, leaping, and sliding are all locomotor movements.
<b>Manipulative Ability</b>	Ability to manipulate objects using reasoning and force (Usually involves fine-motor skills)	These skills are exercises in precision in accordance with speed and control. They are essential for writing, grasping, completing puzzles, etc.
<b>Non-locomotor Skills</b>	Non-locomotor movements consist mainly of using the upper body to move - They don't travel and are usually performed in a single area/space.	Swinging, twisting, turning, stretching, swaying, and bending are non-locomotor movements. In gymnastics, examples may include handstands, splits, and tummy-pulovers.
<b>Spatial Awareness</b>	A sense of distance learned through movement and exploration - Spatial awareness is the ability to be aware of oneself in space. It is an organized knowledge of objects in relation to oneself in that given space.	When children are developing their spatial awareness, they begin to become aware of their placement in relation to the things around them. Generally, the better a child's spatial awareness, the less accident-prone he/she is.
<b>Timing</b>	Selecting the best time or speed for doing something in order to achieve the desired or maximum result; the ability to judge time and do or say things at exactly the right moment	A foundational skill for many sports, dance, and music, timing goes hand in hand with coordination. Through practice, children can learn how to be in sync with music, with a team, in choreography, when playing a game, etc.
<b>Tumbling</b>	Tumbling is a form of gymnastics that is performed without the assistance of props. You may also hear it referred to as floor gymnastics.	Rolling is good for Vestibular Development (assists in balance), Midline Development (to assist in coordinated movement and thinking), Sensory Development (to assist in creating understanding of the world), Gross Motor

		Development (to build strength and coordination), and Proprioception (to develop a tactile understanding of space).
--	--	--