

# Balance Play Guide



## Welcome to BALC Balance Play!

Our Balance Play program is tailored to suit the growing needs of preschool children aged approximately 18 months to 5 years.

This program provides the first steps in developing the fundamental movement patterns that are transferable to so many different sports and physical activities. Start Here, Go Anywhere!

### Our Balance Play classes run for 45 minutes and include:

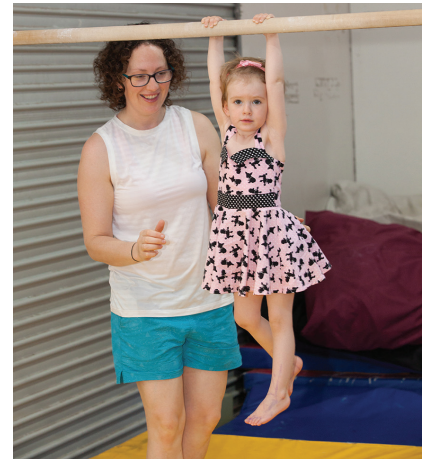
Initial 15mins	Free Exploration	Child-led discovery and exploration about the gymnastics hall.
10mins	Mat Time	Includes a simple warm up, a coach-led activity involving both child and adult, and the singing of a few songs.
15mins	Activity Stations	Moving around the gymnastics hall completing and revisiting the activity stations.
5mins	Mat Time	The conclusion of the class with a calming activity which might include songs or the parachute.
End	Song	A special 'Good Bye' song to end the Balance Play class.

### Our Balance Play program will:

- Be planned and run by our experienced Balance Play coaches.
- Have a different lesson theme each week which helps to enrich their learning and assist with creative thinking and imaginative play.
- Provide your child with a term certificate where they will collect a new themed sticker each week and be able to take the certificate home at the end of the term.
- Have a 'Skill of the Week' which is based on fundamental skills and movement patterns.
- Provide an instruction card at each activity station to assist you and your child to know what to do.
- Offer two 'make up' classes per term which need to be booked in advance through the Customer Service Team.

### And most importantly our Balance Play program will:

- Encourage the development of your child's gross motor and fine motor skills in a fun and supportive environment.
- Provide positive movement experiences that can influence your child's outlook on physical activity for life.
- Assist in the development of your child by providing an environment where your child may creatively explore and practise skills safely in order to increase self-confidence and self-esteem.
- Provide a fun environment in which you and your child can play together and build social connections with other children and adults .



### How can I ensure my child gets the most out of Balance Play?

As our Balance Play classes are a 'parent/carer and child' class, your involvement and supervision is essential to ensure our program is safe and enjoyable for all.

#### We ask that parents/carers agree to:

- **Supervise your child** throughout the class and be actively involved with each activity.
- **Remove your child's shoes and socks**, and ensure jewellery is removed and hair is tied back. We ask that all adults remove their shoes for safety reasons.
- Ensure that you have **one child in your care**. Babies are welcome in baby carriers so that you can support your Balance Play child fully. Our Children's Centre is also available for childcare between 8:45am - 12pm.
- Encourage your child to **listen to the Balance Play coaches** and to follow the instructions.
- **Encourage your child** to join in either with 'mat time' or the different activity stations, but please do not worry if they don't participate straight away. It can take multiple weeks for your child to learn the Balance Play routine. We understand this and will support you with encouraging your child to join in or participate.
- **Have the same expectations of boys and girls**. Allow both boys and girls to explore and try the wide range of activities equally, free from gender stereotypes.
- **Please ensure each activity station is set up and ready** for the next person after your child has used that station.
- **Let the coaches know if there is any specific need** or area of development for your child. We are here to help in every way we can.
- **Refrain from using your mobile phone** during Balance Play as this can affect your ability to be fully engaged with your child. There is to be no photography or filming in the gymnastics hall as per the Ballarat Aquatic and Lifestyle Centre photography policy.

### Is this class right for my child?

Your child will get the most out of the Balance Play classes if they are over 18 months old, a confident and stable walker and can follow simple instructions. If this is not yet the case, our Crawl Play classes may be a better class choice. Please ask your coach for more information about our Crawl Play program.

If your child is over 4 years old and is able to complete a majority of the Balance Play activities independently, they may be ready to start in the BALC Gymnastics program. Our 'Roll' gymnastics classes are for children aged 4-6 years. Please speak to your Balance Play coach for more information about Roll.