

# HEAD SHOULDERS KNEES & TOES

Unexplained proximal muscle weakness in children can occur in some neurologic conditions and can be easily missed during exams that only focus on distal strength.

When examining children with sudden limb, neck, or trunk weakness, remember **head, shoulders, knees, and toes**.

## Lift both arms above the HEAD

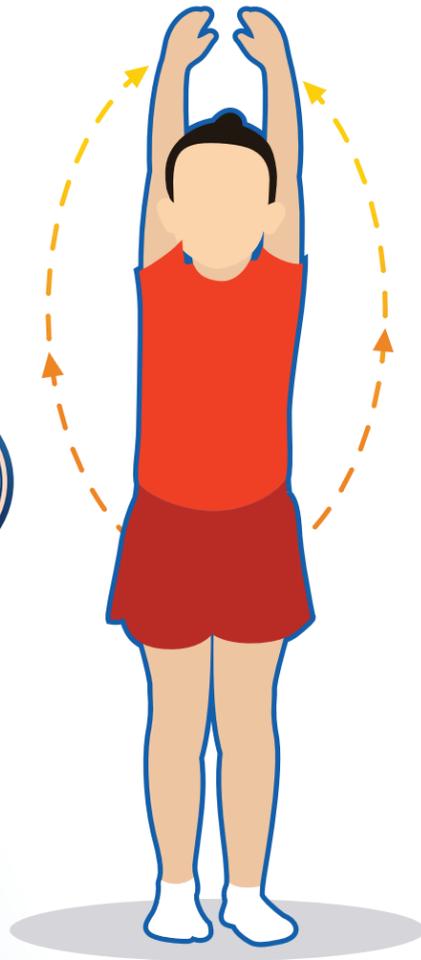
### Muscle Group:

\* Shoulder Girdle



### Ask:

- \* Are they using one limb less?
- \* Can they put on a T-shirt?
- \* Can they give a high-five with each hand?



## Shrug the SHOULDERS

### Muscle Group:

\* Neck/Shoulder Girdle



### Ask:

- \* Is one shoulder higher than the other?
- \* Can they throw a ball overhead?
- \* Can they hold up their head?



## Raise KNEES

### Muscle Group:

\* Hips



### Ask:

- \* Are they limping or dragging a leg?
- \* Can they put on pants?
- \* Can they do a squat and recover?



## Reach down & touch TOES

### Muscle Group:

\* Trunk



### Ask:

- \* Are they waddling or falling while walking?
- \* Can they sit up and stand without support?
- \* Can they get a toy off the ground while standing?



Don't forget to check both sides and document both proximal and distal muscle strength, tone, and reflexes.

See more examples at [CDC.gov/AFM/strength](https://www.cdc.gov/AFM/strength)

