

Active Solutions



Age Appropriate Activities for Infants and Toddlers



Daily physical activity is an important part of healthy development for infants and toddlers.

The following chart is adapted from The National Association for Sport and Physical Education's guidelines for infants (birth to 12 months) and toddlers (12 to 36 months).

Infants should:

- Explore their environment and not have their movement restricted for long periods of time
- Develop movement skills and engage in large muscle activities through daily interaction with parents and/or caregivers

Active Solutions:

- Encourage infants to:
- Grasp and reach for toys and objects
 - Roll
 - Sit up
 - Crawl
 - Crawl
 - Stand/walk (assisted)
 - Play/move on tummy



Toddlers should:

- Aim for a minimum of 90 minutes of daily physical activity
- Engage in at least 90 minutes and up to several hours daily of physical activity and not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping
- Develop movement skills
- Access indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for engaging large muscles activities.

Active Solutions:

- Encourage active play - play time where children are moving
- Provide toys that can be pushed or pulled
- Provide objects that can be climbed under, through or over
- Guide activities and games that encourage children to throw, run and walk.
- Lead rhymes and songs that encourage children to move. Ex: Ring Around the Rosie, If You are Happy and You Know It
- Walk, dance, throw, catch, jump, climb
- Provide mats for tumbling
- Provide developmentally appropriate outdoor spaces
- Use natural spaces for exploring



Be an **active** role model and be sure to play along!

In warmer weather, try at least one of these ideas everyday:

- Go for a walk together.
- Act like animals – slither like a snake, hop like a rabbit, trot like a horse, leap like a frog, flap like a bird.
- Have a ball – roll, throw, kick and toss. Try different kinds of balls.
- Blow bubbles and then chase and pop them.
- Blow bubbles toward younger infants to reach for.
- Dance or move to some music.
- Have a parade inside or outside using homemade instruments – beans in a jar, wooden spoon and plastic bowl.
- Crawl through tunnels, over pillows, and under tables.
- Spread some blankets on the floor and tumble, roll and balance.
- Invent silly names for simple exercises and then do them together.
- Put on music and encourage children to walk, crawl, or fly. When the music stops, call out “stop” and then start again.

In winter weather, try at least one of these ideas everyday:

- Read a story about winter and act out parts of the story together.
- Set up a place indoors where children can safely jump and climb.
- Find objects to push (empty boxes) and roll (cans). Have a race.
- Use handfuls of packed snow to create funny characters on a tree trunk.
- Provide your child with a strip of toilet paper to twirl and run around with for streamer fun.
- Make a snow man and snow angels as a group activity.
- Sing a song and act out the actions.
- Model movements in front of a mirror and encourage children to imitate – wave, touch your ear, wiggle your toes, or stick out your tongue.
- Assist infants to discover and explore body parts such as toes, feet, ears, and fingers.



MORE IDEAS FOR PROVIDING PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TO INFANTS AND TODDLERS:

- www.brightfutures.org/physicalactivity/pdf/Infancy.pdf
- www.ottawa.ca/residents/health/living/activity/children/infant_activity_en.html
- fun.familyeducation.com/outdoor-games/early-learning/33375.html

