

Things to Remember:

Safety first: Always take a look at the area where children play to make sure that it is safe. Remember to use protective equipment, such as helmets and personal flotation devices. Stay close and actively supervise your child. This means paying close attention to what your child is doing and anticipating risks. Seek out or create shade for outdoor activities and wear a wide-brimmed hat and sunscreen with an SPF 30 or higher.

Be creative: The ideas here and the equipment mentioned are just examples. Make up games with your child and have fun together.



For more ideas and information to help your child develop fundamental movement skills, visit www.activeforlife.ca and www.cs4l.ca.

** Adapted from "Canadian Sport for Life Active Start: The Importance of physical activity in the first six years of life: Play Activities-Ages One to Three". (2008) www.canadiansportforlife.ca*



For more information about physical literacy visit www.sdhu.com.



ACTIVE START Active Play—Ages 1 to 3

How can you help your child learn while they begin to walk? Encourage your child to practice walking on different surfaces such as tiles, carpet, grass or sand. As your child becomes confident, try walking on lines drawn on the ground and stepping over cracks in the sidewalk.





Try these suggestions:

- Draw shapes using pavement chalk to create squares, circles and triangles. Place them just far enough apart so that your child can take a big step from one shape to the other. Increase the space between the shapes, and encourage your child to jump from one to the other. Play games with your child running around the shapes and then call out instructions such as “stop on the square”, and “jump over the circle”.
- Use a soft ball that doesn't roll too far, kick it gently to your child, and have him kick it back. Don't worry if he picks it up or wants to roll it back with his hands, it all helps the eyes learn to track the movement of the ball.
- At bath time, let your child kick his feet up and down in the bathtub. In the summer, have your child sit in a wading pool and make as big a splash with his feet as he can. Start by putting your face in the water to blow bubbles and encourage your child to do the same. First try for just a moment and eventually for longer periods.



- When your child is confident on her feet, try skating. Support them as they walk and start to glide on ice (make sure your child wears a skating helmet).
- Play “catch” with your child. Use a large ball that is very soft (so that it won't hurt her if it contacts the face). Stand facing your child no more than a foot or two away, have your child make a basket with her arms, and gently toss the ball into the arms.
- Wheeled toys can be fun! Sit-on buggies, scooters, small tricycles or any wheeled toy can help develop fundamental movement skills. Your child can either peddle or move around by pushing with her feet. Let your child try wheeling on smooth, hard surfaces, rough carpets, or grass so that your child can feel the difference of how hard she has to push. Always use a bike helmet.



- Find a sturdy, smooth stick. Wrap some adhesive tape around one end as a handle and encourage your child to use it to hit a ball, a tin-can or anything else that will move. If it makes a noise when it's hit, that's a great encouragement. As your child gets better control of the stick, start rolling a large ball towards him so he can hit it.
- Take turns with your child being the leader and the follower. Try jumping, walking, running and suddenly changing direction, or stopping and starting at various speeds. When your child is leading, encourage him to exaggerate his movements. From time to time, have your child do things you can't (like squeeze through a child sized gap), which will give your child a great sense of achievement.
- Above all, provide the time to play, both with you and on his own. Make sure you provide opportunities to try things out, but remember not to force your child! Activity needs to be fun, so take your child to the park, and play on the climbing frames, slides and other equipment. Set time aside every day, and get outside to play whenever you can.

