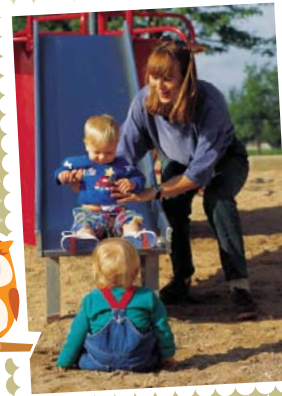


When your child can walk (or is trying)

Provide several opportunities for walking and falling safely! Gently support under your child's arms and gradually remove your support. Sit a few feet away and encourage your child to come to you. Have your child walk on different surfaces, walk slightly uphill and slightly downhill. Sometimes encourage your child to walk and carry toys to develop balance.



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-The First Years of Life." (2008) www.canadiansportforlife.ca*

 **Sport for Life**

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



ACTIVE START Physical Activity During the First Year

Active play should include activities that are fun so that children will develop a life-long love for being active.





Activities for newborns to 6 months of age

- Hold and support your baby while you move around.
- Place your baby on a blanket or mat on the floor and very gently roll your baby from side to side.
- With your baby laying on her back, hold each hand in yours, and cross your baby's hands in front of her body (so she hugs herself), and then uncross her hands. Repeat this several times and then do the same with your baby's legs. Having your baby's hands and legs cross the mid-line of the body is important for developing coordination.
- Since balance also depends on how your baby "feels" the ground under them, spend time stroking her hands and feet using different soft items such as feathers and different hard items like a smooth plastic toy.
- Place favourite toys at the edge of your child's reach, and encourage your child to roll-over to reach them.



Activities for 6 to 8 months

- Sit your child on your knees, on your ankles, or on your feet, and bounce your child gently to move up and down and side to side. Support your child with your hands and always make sure that you can catch your child if he starts to lose balance.
- Help your child support his weight on his legs in a standing position by holding both hands when your child is in a sitting position, gently help your child stand by pulling up.
- Make bath time fun to develop a love of the water. Make sure water is comfortably warm, and that there are colourful toys to play with. Help your child make splashing movements. For safety, make sure that you stay within arms reach.
- When your child can sit without any help, sit on the floor close to and facing your child, and roll a colourful ball a few inches to your child. Encourage your child to push it back to you. This will help to track moving objects later on.



Activities for 9 to 12 months

- Arrange and secure furniture so that your child can pull herself up and "cruise" around a low table while holding on. Place furniture a short distance apart so that your child can make an unsupported move from one item to another. Watch out for sharp corners!
- Find soft rubber balls in different colours for children to grasp and push around.
- Make sure that your child goes outside in the fresh air. Take your child for a walk in a buggy or sleigh (with side supports), and make going for a walk a part of each day. This is really good for parents and caregivers too!
- Sing songs, clap hands and dance. Do rhythmic activities, with or without music.
- Provide a safe place where your child can play with toys and move around without getting hurt. A safe, stimulating environment is the best learning tool you can provide.

