

What's up there?

Let's play and talk together

- Encourage your toddler to practice climbing safely.
- Place fruit or vegetable pieces on a plate on the kitchen table and invite your toddler to climb safely onto a chair to enjoy a snack.
- Place a toothbrush and some soap on the counter in the bathroom. Put a footstool in place for your toddler to stand on so he or she can learn to brush teeth and wash with your help.



A good read-together book



Brave Bear by Kathy Mallat

Hints for success

- Put a favourite toy or some food in a safe place for climbing to encourage your toddler to practice climbing upwards.
- If your toddler is not ready to climb upwards, place pillows on the floor to climb over.



You will need a favourite toy, some favourite foods, a table and chair, a footstool, a toothbrush and some soap.

This activity helps children practice safe climbing on indoor furniture



More ideas for What's up there?

Try this way

- Place a book your child enjoys on a couch or chair. Show your child how to climb up onto the couch or chair and sit beside you to read the book together.
- Help your child climb down from a couch or chair by facing the furniture and sliding backwards to the floor.
- Help your toddler practice going up stairs safely. Explain that it is important to face the stairs and lean toward the steps at all times.

Language development

Help your child learn new words while you do these activities together. Use words like "climb," "kneel," "reach," "look up," "hold on" and "sit down" to help your child understand the names for actions involved in climbing.

Book link

Schnitzel Von Krumm, Dogs Never Climb Trees by Lynley Dodd



Safety tips

- Be sure that climbing surfaces are strong, stable and not too high.
- Stay within an arm's length of your child until he or she is secure and confident.



Up and down

Let's play and talk together

- Sit in a comfortable, stable position with your baby sitting on your lap facing toward you.
- Holding your baby's hands, gently help raise him or her from a sitting to a standing position.
- Hold your baby up for a few seconds, and then help her return to a seated position.

A good read-together book



My Up & Down & All Around Book by Marjorie W. Pitzer



Hints for success

- Let your baby push with her legs and pull against your hands while holding them steady.
- Sing phrases like "Let's stand up" and "Now sit down" during the activity.



You will need a comfortable place to sit up straight with baby in your lap.

This activity is good for strengthening baby's upper body, and for helping your child learn to pull up from a sitting to a standing position.



More ideas for Up and down

Try this way

- Once baby can pull up to a standing position, encourage balancing against a low table or chair that does not have sharp corners.
- Use a hand puppet to talk and sing to your child across the top of the table or chair. Encourage your child to use the table or chair to pull up and see the puppet talking and singing.

Safety tips

- When lifting your baby up, place your hands under his or her armpits. This protects the shoulder and elbow joints.
- For this activity, baby's legs need to be strong enough to push him or her up. If you have to help pull your baby up, try this activity at a later date.

Puppet Song

Where is baby, where is baby? Stand up tall, stand up tall! Now I see you standing, Yes, you're really standing. Please don't fall. Please don't fall.

Author unknown







Tummy time

Let's play and talk together

- Lie on your tummy beside your baby with your face up close. Talk or sing to your baby.
- Share a book while you lie side by side on your tummies. Talk to your baby about what you see in the book as you turn the pages.
- Point to pictures to encourage your baby to reach forward and touch the book. Hold the book so your baby has to reach out to touch the pages.
- Try gently guiding your baby's hand to feel the textures of the book.

A good read-together book



Touch and Feel Pets by Dorling Kindersley



Hints for success

- Start by lying on your back with baby on your chest. This will help your child get used to being on his or her tummy.
- Look for books with simple but colourful pictures and soft pages or textures to touch. Choose books that your baby seems to like.
- If your child becomes upset, keep tummy time short.



You will need a blanket or carpet area to place your child on, and some books that interest your baby.

This activity is good for developing neck, back and arm muscles, and for helping your baby enjoy books with you.





More ideas for Tummy time

Try this way

- Put on light music and set up attractive toys around your child. Encourage your baby to reach out for favourite objects to strengthen neck, back and arm muscles.
- Try playing peek-a-boo while baby is lying on his or her tummy.



Book link

On the Farm (Bright baby touch and feel) by Roger Priddy

Itsy-bitsy fingers

Itsy-bitsy fingers, Wiggly little toes, Teeny-tiny tummy, Baby button nose— Lullabies and laughter, Lots of "baby things," And then to fill your heart— The love a baby brings.

Author unknown

Safety tips

- The Public Health Agency of Canada recommends that babies sleep on their backs. It is also important for babies to have "tummy time" to help with overall physical development.
- The floor is the safest place to lay your baby when awake. Place a blanket on the floor and lay your baby on his or her stomach while you work or relax nearby.
- · Tummy time should always be supervised.





Round things roll

Let's play and talk together

- With your toddler, sit on the floor facing one another with your legs apart to make a "V" shape.
- Roll a ball back and forth to each other.
- Try to keep the ball between your legs and on the ground.



A good read-together book



Wheels on the Bus by Raffi and Sylvie Wickstrom

Hints for success

- Start by sitting close together with your feet almost touching so the ball cannot escape.
- Show your toddler how to roll the ball by pushing it with two hands.



You will need a ball and an open space with a flat, level surface.

This activity is good for developing upper body core strength, learning to roll and stop a ball, and learning new words.







More ideas for Round things roll

Try this way

- Set up 4-8 objects such as plastic bottles or cups, and give your child a soft ball. Show your child how to roll the ball to knock the objects over.
- Sing "Wheels on the Bus" song together.
- Enjoy reading Wheels on the Bus book together during quiet time.



The Wheels on the Bus

The wheels on the bus go round and round, Round and round, round and round; The wheels on the bus go round and round, All through the town.

The ball on the floor goes round and round, Round and round, round and round; The ball on the floor goes round and round, When we roll it across the ground.

Author unknown





Ride with me

Let's play and talk together

- Lie on your back and bring your knees close to your chest.
- Place your baby tummy-down on your shins.
- Holding your baby's hands, lift your feet away from your bottom.
- By lifting and lowering your feet, take your baby on an airplane ride!



A good read-together book



Little Plane by Opal Dunn and Bettina Paterson

Hints for success

- Keep your knees still while raising and lowering your feet.
- Move slowly so you can control your baby's movements as you play this game.



You will need a comfortable space with a soft blanket or carpet to lie on indoors, or a soft, grassy spot outdoors.

This activity is good for helping infants develop core strength in the muscles of the trunk, and for developing balance while moving through space.



More ideas for Ride with me

Try this way

- Lie on your back and hold your baby by the trunk with your thumbs supporting the chest.
 Slowly and gently lift baby up in the air, then down to the chest.
- When baby is near your chest, try adding a kiss or rubbing noses for extra fun.
- When baby is up high, turn his or her body slowly from side to side to encourage looking around.



Safety tips

- These activities are for babies who have already developed good head and neck control.
- Make sure you are strong enough to control your baby's movements during these activities.

Wings

Bees have four wings, birds have two. I haven't any And that's too few.

Aileen Fisher







Little swimmer

Let's play and talk together

- Fill your bathtub or child's outdoor pool half full of warm water.
- Encourage your child to slide down into the water up to his or her shoulders.
- Invite your child to try a back float. Support the lower back using your hands and arms while your child lies in the water with head back and stomach pushed up.
- When your child is comfortable in a back float, try kicking. Practice kicking with the knees under water.
- Help your child lie on his or her stomach with hands on the bottom of the tub or pool. Support the belly while your child practices kicking.

A good read-together book



Let's Jump In! by Susan Hood

You will need swimsuits and a bathtub, a shallow pool or a beach with an area of shallow water.

This activity helps children become comfortable in the water, learn basic movements for swimming and increase their leg strength.



Hints for success

- If your child is timid getting into the water, go slowly and provide support with your hands.
- Include time for your child to enjoy the water in his or her own way.



móve

More ideas for Little swimmer

Try this way

- Sit side by side in the water with your child. Try kicking while in a sitting position. See how far you can splash the water with your feet.
- If your child is enjoying water activities at the beach, try carrying your child or holding hands and walking together in water of different depths. See how it feels to move through water up to the ankles, the knees and the thighs.
- Experiment with different ways to move your bodies in the water. Take small steps and bigger ones. Push the water with your arms and hands. Pour water over your shoulders and even your heads.





Safety tip

Stay within one arm's reach of your toddler when in or near the water.

Language development

Help your child learn new words for water movements such as "floating," "kicking," and "splashing." Use words such as "ripples," "waves," and "sparkling" to describe the water.

Book link

Two Dogs Swimming by Lynn Reiser







I won't fall

Let's play and talk together

- Create a straight line using a ribbon or scarf if you are indoors, or draw a line on the pavement outdoors. Use a large book or a strong box to make a step up at the end of the line.
- Show your child how to walk on the line with arms straight out at the sides for balance.
- Step up onto the step, turn half-way around, step down and walk back to the starting point along the same line.
- Encourage your child to walk the line, step up, turn, step down and walk back on his or her own.



A good read-together book



Rosie's Walk by Pat Hutchins

Hints for success

- Encourage your child to look forward rather than down at his or her feet.
- Let your child hold on to one of your hands at first.



You will need a scarf, ribbon or piece of chalk to make a straight line, and a box or old telephone book for a step.

This activity helps develop strength, balance and coordination.



More ideas for I won't fall

Try this way

- Make the activity more challenging by keeping legs straight and toes pointed, with arms out to the sides.
- Practice walking along curbs at the playground or on logs at the beach.
- Take your child to a place where there are stepping stones to practice balancing while taking different-sized steps.



Little Feet

These little feet have learned to walk, And now they've learned to run... These little feet just love to dance, They climb and have some fun... These little feet don't want to rest, They only want to play... These little feet are busy feet, They're on the go all day.

Anonymous







Empty, full

Let's play and talk together

- Fill a box with soft toys and put it on one side of a large space.
- Put an empty box on the other side of the space.
- Show your child how to play by taking a toy from the full box, hugging it, walking across the space with it and dropping it into the empty box.
- Invite your child to follow your example.
- As you play the game, talk about what you are doing together.



A good read-together book



Opposites by Sandra Boynton

Hints for success

- So Join in the fun by taking turns with your child.
- Ask questions to encourage your child to talk while playing the game.



You will need two large containers such as cardboard boxes or baskets, and some soft toys or other favourite objects.

This activity will help your child with lifting, grasping, moving in different ways, following a sequence and talking while doing.





More ideas for Empty, full

Try this way

- Encourage other ways to move from one box to the other, like crawling, walking sideways or skipping.
- Give your child two smaller containers and a collection of small toys such as blocks. Play this game while sitting on the floor to practice grasping smaller objects.
- Read the book Empty to Full, Full to Empty with your child to find more examples of "empty" and "full."



Book link

Empty to Full, Full to Empty by Harriet Ziefert

Safety tip

Practice grasping with smaller objects that are safe to play with and large enough that they cannot be swallowed.

What is empty? What is full

- E Egg shells are empty after a chick is born.
- M Mouths are empty after we swallow.
- P Planes are empty after passengers get off.
- T Trains are empty after they unload their freight.
- Y Yards are empty after children go indoors.
- F Fountains are full of water.
- U Upside-down umbrellas can be full of water.
- L Lemons are full of juice.
- L Lanterns are full of light.

Author unknown







Do you see what I see?

Let's play and talk together

- Choose a medium-sized toy that you think will interest your baby.
- Place your baby on his or her back in a comfortable place on the floor.
- Kneel or sit close to your baby's feet and hold the toy a few inches above his or her face.
- Slowly move the toy from one side to the other, and watch your baby follow with head and eye movements.

A good read-together book



Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle

You will need a comfortable space on the floor and a colourful toy that your baby enjoys.

This activity develops an infant's visual tracking and head movements, and strengthens neck and shoulder muscles.



Hints for success

- Choose a toy with bright or contrasting colours, e.g. red, green, yellow, blue, or black and white.
- Talk gently as you do this activity to keep your baby's attention and encourage social interaction.





More ideas for Do you see what I see?

Try this way

- Place your baby in a car seat or infant seat in a safe spot. Talk with your baby as you move from one side of the seat to the other. Watch for his or her eyes and head to follow your movements. Make eye contact and smile when your baby sees you.
- Place your baby in your lap facing forward. Read aloud from the book Brown Bear, Brown Bear, What Do You See? while moving your finger across the pages to point to pictures and words. Talk about the pictures as you point to them.

Language development

Have conversations with your baby during activities such as bath time, mealtime or changing diapers. Describe what is happening around you, ask questions and make comments in response to your baby's sounds and actions. Hearing conversation patterns and responding with body movements and babbling are important for young children's language development before they begin to talk.

Book link

Polar Bear, Polar Bear, What Do You Hear? by Bill Martin Jr. and Eric Carle



for children ages birth through 3 years

move

Dance with me

Let's play and talk together

- Put on some music that you enjoy.
- Hold and cuddle your baby while you sway to the music.
- Dance in circles and change directions.
- Talk with your child about what you see around you.
- Talk about how it feels to move in different ways.
- Cuddle and kiss your child as you move together.

A good read-together book



Guess How Much I Love You by Sam McBratney



Hints for success

- Play different types of music and see what your young child seems to enjoy most.
- Smile, laugh, sing or rock gently with your child while dancing.



You will need an open space for dancing and a way to make music.

This activity is good for connecting with your child and showing your child how to move to music.

move

More ideas for Dance with me

Try this way

- Hum or sing a favourite song rather than using recorded music.
- When baby is sleepy or upset, turn down the lights or close the curtains. Choose a soothing lullaby or a relaxing song to play while you are dancing and cuddling together.
- When your child is awake and active, keep the room bright and play fun music with a fast tempo. Songs with many words and rhymes are especially good.
- Bring an older infant or toddler into the middle of the floor and turn on the music. Encourage your child to dance in his or her own way, letting the music be the guide. Continue dancing to different kinds of music, making up dances as you go.

Book links

Barn Dance by Bill Martin Jr. Goodnight Moon by Margaret Wise Brown

Safety tips

- If your baby is only a few months old, dance slowly. Make sure that baby's neck is supported, especially when you make circle movements.
- Make sure the floor isn't too slick. You may want your toddler to dance in bare feet to avoid slipping.



The baby's dance

Dance, little baby, dance up high: Never mind, baby, mother is by; Crow and caper, caper and crow, There, little baby, there you go; Up to the ceiling, down to the ground, Backwards and forwards, round and round: Then dance, little baby, and mother shall sing, While the gay merry coral goes ding-a-ding, ding.

Ann Taylor



Cruise around town

Let's play and talk together

- Play a game of follow the leader. Get down on your knees and move sideways around a table or along a couch. Encourage your child to follow by using the furniture for support.
- If your child is just learning to walk using furniture for support, sit on the floor at the end of a table or couch. Encourage your baby to come to you by using the furniture for help.
- Once your baby can step while holding onto the furniture, encourage letting go and taking one or two steps from one piece of furniture to another.



Hints for success

- Encourage cruising by placing a favourite toy at the far end of the table or couch.
- Speak gently to your baby to keep the activity relaxed and enjoyable.



A good read-together book



First Steps by Lee Wardlaw

You will need an open space with a smooth floor or carpet and a couch or table.

This activity is good for developing arm and leg strength and learning to crawl and walk with support. It helps prepare children to learn to walk on their own.

move

More ideas for Cruise around town

Try this way

- Hold your baby's hands and walk behind while he or she practices taking steps.
- Invite another person that baby knows to stand a short distance away and reach out toward your child. Encourage your child to let go of your hands and take a few steps on his or her own.
- Encourage your baby to push an object around the room, e.g. a large empty box or a push toy.

Language development

As you help your baby learn to crawl and walk, use action phrases such as "hold on," "walk over here," "take another step" and "come this way." Help your child learn to listen and follow simple directions while being physically active.

Book link

Walk On! A Guide for Babies of All Ages by Marla Frazee



Safety tips

- Make sure your cruising area is away from stairs and furniture with sharp corners.
- Stay within one arm's reach while your baby is learning to cruise and walk.
- Remember to lift your baby by placing your hands under the armpits. This will protect the shoulder and elbow joints.

LEAP BCTM is a set of resources for healthy child development which includes Hop. Move. Talk and Food Flair.



Country adventure

Let's play and talk together

- Create a pretend adventure in your back yard or at a park.
- Bend for bugs. Put some toy bugs in the grass for your child to find. Bend down low and look in the grass for bugs.
- Creep and crawl for critters. Put some toy critters in the grass. On your hands and knees, move through the grass looking for critters.
- Leap over a log, like a frog. Use a paper towel roll for a log.
- Run to the river and take a drink. Put out a bowl of fresh drinking water and scoop a drink from it with a small cup.

A good read-together book



From Head to Toe by Eric Carle

You will need toy bugs and other toy critters, a paper towel roll, a bowl of water and a cup.

This activity is good for bending, crawling, jumping and running, and for learning to pretend.



Hints for success

- Have other children or family members join in the fun and take turns on the adventure.
- Talk about what you are doing as you do each activity. Show your child how to pretend.



move

More ideas for Country adventure

Try this way

- Read the book From Head to Toe and talk with your child about all the actions you can do with your bodies.
- Make up actions you can do together at the beach. Walk in the water, step from stone to stone, or jump over real logs. Practice bending to pick up stones and throwing them into the water.
- Think of other activities to add to your pretend adventure, e.g., running away from an animal.

Let's make—a pretend log

You will need:

- A paper towel roll
- A crayon
- Brown paint or brown-coloured construction paper

How to:

Colour or paint the paper towel roll brown, like a log. Invite your child to help you.

Action poem

Learn the poem **A Caterpillar Crawled**, and do the actions with your child.

Safety tip

Make sure that all toys are safe for young children, and are not too small.



A caterpillar crawled, (creep fingers up one arm) To the top of the tree. "I think I'll take a nap," says he. (place one hand over opposite fist) So under a leaf he began to creep To spin his cocoon, And he fell asleep.

All winter long he slept in his bed, 'Til spring came along one day and said, "Wake up, wake up, little sleepyhead, (shake fist with other hand) Wake up, it's time to get out of bed." So he opened his eyes that sunshiny day. (spread fingers, hook thumbs) Lo! He was a butterfly, and flew away. (flap hands as wings and fly away)

Author unknown







Cat and mouse

Let's play and talk together

- Tuck a scarf or stocking into the back of your pants to make a tail. Give your child a tail too.
- Pretend you are a cat and your child is a mouse.
 When you say "Go," your child, the mouse, tries to run away from you, the cat.
- Try to catch the mouse by pulling off its tail.
- After you catch the mouse, switch places and let your child be the cat.

A good read-together book



Cat & Mouse by Ian Schoenherr



Hints for success

- Run slowly enough so your child can catch you and remove your tail.
- Make cat sounds while you are chasing the mouse, or mouse sounds when you are being chased.



You will need a scarf or stocking for each person.

This activity is good for running and grasping, making sounds, and learning new words.



More ideas for Cat and mouse

Try this way

- Play some fast music to make the game more lively.
- Say the poem Pussycat, Pussycat together when you take a break from running.

Language development

Point out animals with tails whenever you see them. Help your child learn new words to talk about tails, e.g. short, long, fluffy, straight, curly, droopy, etc.

A good read-together book



Cat & Mouse: A Delicious Tale by Jiwon Oh

Pussycat, Pussycat

Pussycat, pussycat, where have you been? I've been up to London to visit the Queen.

Pussycat, pussycat, what did you dare? I frightened a little mouse under her chair.

MEOWW!

Traditional





Blow and pop

Let's play and talk together

- Help your child explore blowing. Blow on different parts of your child's body, such as a hand or arm. Invite your child to blow in the air and on your hand. Talk about how it feels.
- Show your child how to blow through a straw into a cup of water. Watch the bubbles and talk about them.
- Blow soap bubbles into the air. Encourage your child to chase the bubbles and pop them with hands or feet.

A good read-together book



Bubbles, Bubbles by Kathi Appelt



Hints for success

- Blow gently at first.
- As you play with bubbles, talk about what the bubbles look like and what happens to them.



You will need a straw and a cup of water, some bubble solution, a bubble wand and an outdoor play space.

Blowing bubbles into a cup can help your child learn to blow and to use a straw. Chasing bubbles develops eye-hand coordination and movement skills such as running and jumping.

móve

More ideas for Blow and pop

Try this way

- Try different ways of making bubbles such as splashing soapy water into a tub or bucket.
- Add bubble bath to an outdoor play pool in warm weather and encourage your child to have fun splashing and blowing bubbles into the air.
- Blow bubbles in the tub during bath time.
 Encourage your child to pop them with his or her hands.

Counting

Blow some bubbles and watch them float and fall. Count them as they pop.

Strengthening bones

Explore bubble wrap with your child. Tape the edges of the bubble wrap to the floor and encourage your child to jump and stomp on the bubbles.

Safety tip

Choose an area with a non-slip surface for chasing and catching bubbles.



Let's make—bubble mix

What you need:

- 5 cups of water
- $\frac{1}{2}$ cup of liquid soap
- 1 tablespoon of glycerin (can be found in a pharmacy)

How to:

- 1. Pour the water into a bowl and add the liquid soap and glycerin.
- 2. Stir slowly until mixed.
- 3. Let the mixture sit a while before using.

To make a bubble wand, take a pipe cleaner and bend it into any shape you wish.





A whole new world

Let's play and talk together

- Take your infant outdoors.
- Sit on a comfortable seat such as a park bench, and hold your baby on your lap facing outward.
- Point out things that you see, e.g., children playing on a swing or slide. Describe the sights and sounds around you.

A good read-together book



Look & See: Let's Count! by La Coccinella



Hints for success

- Help your baby to sit up "tall" instead of leaning back against you. Support your infant with your hands around the waist and thumbs against the upper back.
- If your baby is not quite ready to sit, use an infant car seat and sit side-by-side so you can both look out together.



If your child cannot sit up alone, you will need a sitting support such as pillows, an infant seat or a stroller.

This activity is good for helping your child develop core strength and balance while sitting, and for learning new words.



More ideas for A whole new world

Try this way

- Hold your baby upright on your lap while you both look out a window. Enjoy the view or the actions of people, cars or animals.
- Hold your baby upright on your lap while talking with a friend. Your baby will watch the expressions and listen to the tones of other people talking, and might try to join the conversation by babbling.
- When your baby is ready to sit alone, begin on the floor with pillows behind and beside for support and safety. Once the pillows are not needed, place a toy in front to help your baby focus forward.



Safety tip

Keep padding around your baby when he or she is learning to sit.

A whole new world

In this world so big and bright, I coo and move from day 'til night. So much to see, so much to do, Each day I discover something new.

Author unknown



