

LEAPS

learning eating active play sleep

Physical Activity

1 to 5 years



Toddlers and pre-schoolers should be physically active every day for at least three hours, spread throughout the day.

Importance of movement for 1-5 years olds

The movement skills developed between these ages, range from learning to walk through to running and throwing a ball. Children need time to learn different movement skills and every child should be encouraged to be active, regardless of ability.

Try to include these following types of movement activities:

- Unstructured 'free' play – e.g. free play in playgrounds or sandpits
- Structured 'planned' play – e.g. movement games and songs, such as 'Hokey Pokey'
- Everyday physical tasks – e.g. helping with the gardening or household jobs
- *Active Transport* – e.g. walking or riding to places

Items used in planned play can either be toys or everyday household items. Items should always be appropriate to the development stage of your child.

(Note: all balancing and jumping activities should be conducted at ground level to reduce the risk of injury).

Upper body movements

- Give your child objects to hold, wave, shake, bang, throw, hit or catch – e.g. balls, ribbons, mini bean bags

Lower body movements

- Give your child objects to move over, through or around – e.g. hoops, tunnels, foam noodles, cushions

Climbing

- Give your child objects to climb on. Always consider safety when planning climbing activities – e.g. climbing frames or stepping stones

Balancing

- E.g. Beams, wobble boards or planks of wood (balancing activities for your child do not need to be high, please consider their ability when setting up the activity)

Building

- Building can include stacking items e.g. wooden blocks or boxes or making constructions such as cubby houses and sand castles

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Creative movement

- Encourages children to use all of their body or parts of their body freely and in ways that feel good – e.g. music, bells, streamers

Activities for Children aged 1-2

- Crawling over cushions
- Walking on different surfaces such as floors, grassy areas and pathways
- Rolling a large ball near the child and encourage the child to pick up and throw back
- Pushing objects such as trolleys, prams or trucks
- Playing with balls

Activities for Children aged 3-5

- Climbing on playground equipment
- Playing 'chasey' and jumping games
- Balancing while walking along a plank of wood (which is at the ground level)
- Playing animal games where the child pretends to move like different animals
- Skipping with a skipping rope
- Playing with small balls (e.g. tennis balls)
- Running around objects
- Dancing