



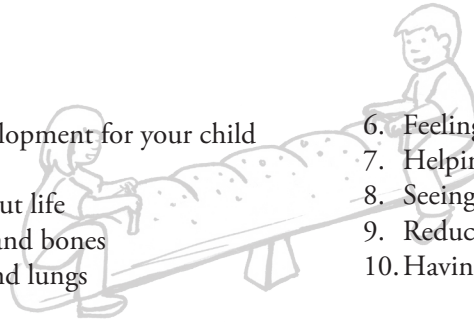
Toddler and Preschool Fun and Activity

A wonderful part of parenting is being active and having fun with your toddler and preschool child.

Why Be Active?

Top 10 reasons are:

1. Healthy growth and development for your child
2. Good night's sleep
3. Healthy weight throughout life
4. Building strong muscles and bones
5. Keeping healthy hearts and lungs
6. Feeling good about yourself
7. Helping learn
8. Seeing new places, meeting new friends
9. Reducing your stress
10. Having fun!



How Much and What Types of Activities do Toddlers and Preschoolers Need?

- Toddlers need at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity, and at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of daily unstructured physical activity.
- Preschoolers need at least 60 minutes daily of structured physical activity and at least 60 minutes and up to several hours daily of unstructured physical activity.
- Young children should be still for no more than 60 minutes at a time, except when sleeping.

Structured physical activity includes games and activities that you direct or do with your toddler and preschooler. These experiences help extend a child's awareness of their abilities, and help promote movement skill and the ability to interact socially.

Unstructured physical activity is supervised free time for a child to play actively alone or with other children. It is child-initiated movement and physical play. For example, play inside or outside, on play structures, building forts, running and jumping. These experiences involve both indoor and outdoor settings and the use of equipment that match with the young child's interest and physical ability.

Games and Activities for Parents and Their Preschool Children

Over and Under

You can do these activities with your child encouraging, "over" and "under" movements. After your child does the activity, reverse roles.

Explore "over" and "under" by providing ropes, poles, hoops, blankets, and climbing equipment that enable your child to walk, run, climb and jump "over" and "under."

For older children, lay on the floor. Your child walks over you. Reverse roles. Your child lies on floor and you walk over your child.

- Balances on your hands and feet facing the floor. Your child crawls under the bridge made by your body. Reverse roles. This is an interesting challenge for the adults. Try your best!
- Stand with your legs slightly apart. Your child crawls through your legs. Adult's turn!
- Sit on floor with legs apart and straight. Your child jumps over one leg and then the other leg. Reverse roles.

Zoo Loo

Move your bodies to imitate animal movements. You may want to play some music to help you and your child to:

- Slither like a snake.
- Stomp like a big black bear.
- Hop like a kangaroo that never stops.
- Crawl like a slow old turtle carrying their heavy house on their backs.
- Fly like a bird so high in the sky.
- Climb like a monkey up in a tree.
- Gallop like a horse crossing in a field.

Pathways

Make pathways with obstacles such as cones and chairs that your child can follow by walking, running, or steering a riding toy. You may also use masking tape or rope pathways. Tape a pathway in a straight, angular, or curved pattern. Encourage your child to move, steer a riding toy or push an object along the pathway.

Bean Bag Hit

Standing facing each other 3 metres apart. Place a large beach ball in the center between you and your child. Each person has a bean bag and tries to move the ball to the other person's side by throwing the bean bag at it.

Popcorn

Using an old bed sheet, have everyone hold the sheet on the outside edges. Place balls, old socks or soft objects on the sheet. Raise it up and down to make the balls jump like popcorn. To add a challenge, place containers on the floor around the playing area and "pop the corn" into the containers.

Fox & Goose

Tramp down snow to make a big wagon wheel with a hub in the centre. One person is the fox and the rest are the geese. The fox tries to catch a goose while staying on the paths. The first one caught becomes the fox. A goose who steps off the path becomes the fox. Geese are "safe" in the hub but no more than 2 geese may be in the hub at a time and only for 30 seconds.

Sweep

Place the open end of a box towards the starting point 3 metres (9 feet) apart. Give your child a broom or hockey stick to sweep or hit a ball or similar object into the box. Repeat several times.

Long, Long, Long Jump

The object of the game is to jump together as far as you can. You broad jump first. Your child starts where your heels landed and broad jumps. Continue taking turns. How far can you jump working together?

Dance to the Music

Put on your favourite music and dance together as a family.

Shuttle Race

Place two boxes 3 metres (9 feet) apart. Put several interesting objects in one of the boxes. On the signal "go", your child runs and takes an object from one box and places it in the other. Repeat until the box is empty. You may wish to talk about the objects in the box first, so your child's curiosity will not interfere with playing the game.

Rocking Chair

To strengthen abdomen, legs, and arms and increase balance.

Position: Sit on seats with your legs bent and your hands out to the side for balance.

Action: Tuck your legs into your bodies, wrap your arms around them, feet off the floor and rock forward, backward, side to side.

Wash the Dishes

To stretch the shoulder muscles.

Position: Stand facing your child, holding hands.

Action: Swing your arms side to side while singing the rhyme "Wash the dishes, dry the dishes, turn the dishes over." On the word "over", swing your arms up overhead and turn your child around in a full circle so your arms are crossed.

Repeat arm swings and rhyme and on word "over," return your child to original position (arms uncrossed). Repeat several times.



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