

PHYSICAL ACTIVITY TIPS TO DO WITH YOUR CHILD

2½ to
4 years



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

for a healthy development

You are probably fully aware of the fact that your child needs exercise to stay in good health. Children who get adequate physical activity are more even-tempered, sleep better and have a healthier appetite. Play and physical activity boost their self-confidence and help them express their emotions and build relationships. Research has shown that children who engage in physical activity are more skilful and sustain fewer injuries. Regular physical activity is good for their bones, heart and body weight and promotes learning (e.g. during language acquisition).

Children need exercise

Children seldom sit still for very long, and you might think that that's enough physical activity. In point of fact, children's physical condition has deteriorated in recent years. This is largely inadvertent and mainly a result of our modern lifestyle: Our days are busy, we walk and cycle less, we sit for long periods, surrounding ourselves with screens (TVs, smartphones, etc.), and our environment is less suited to physical activity (parks that are far away, dangerous roads, neighbours who are sensitive to noise). But children have a natural urge to move, and even simple activities are beneficial.

How can you support your child?

The suggestions on the following pages are intended to help you support the development of your child's motor skills in day-to-day life. Use your – and your child's – imagination to supplement these ideas.



PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HELPS ME TO...



... develop My personality



... improve My mobility
and channel My energy

My parents can help me by:

- » encouraging me to express my ideas and my imagination
- » ensuring that I interact with children my age
- » helping me follow instructions and rules
- » giving me the opportunity to learn how to do things on my own
- » going outside to play with me in any kind of weather



... become more familiar
with My body and more
adept with My hands



... meet other children



... Learn and understand
My environment

CRUNCHED FOR TIME?



Let's dance!

Play some music you enjoy listening to, and dance with your child.

variation

Choose different rhythms and musical styles.



Helping mummy and daddy

Encourage your child to help you put away the groceries.

They can put items of various sizes and weights where they belong.

variation

Let them help with housework.



Jumping and diving

Your child can dive into a pile of pillows or roll around on the carpet.

variation

Hold your child's hands and let them jump around on the bed.

QUIET ACTIVITIES

Playing dress-up

Fill a bag or box with items of clothing that are too large for your child (e.g. hats, scarves or your own clothes and shoes).

variation

Let your child dress up their stuffed animals or dolls..



Beware of crocodiles

Mark a path on the ground (with adhesive tape, string, branches, etc.). Anyone who steps off the path falls into the water.

variation

Walk in single file. The person at the head of the line demonstrates movements which the others in the line will copy.

Playing silent hide-and-seek

Play hide-and-seek with your child in the house.

variation

Play hide-and-seek with several children outside.



TOO TIRED FOR PHYSICAL ACTIVITY?

Build a cave or a shack

Hang a blanket over a table or chairs to build a cave. Your child can hide in the cave and make up a story to go with it.

variation

Go outside and mark the boundaries of a shack using stones or branches.



The world of things

Give your child things to play with (laundry basket, cardboard boxes, newspapers, etc.).

variation

Newspaper can be crumpled up into balls that can be aimed at the wastepaper bin as a target. It can also be used to make swords.

Painting and drawing

Draw with your child.

variation

Draw an animal. Let your child pretend to be that animal.



WEARING THEM OUT

Playing horse

Place obstacles on the ground that your child can jump over like a horse.

variation

Outside, your child can climb onto low walls, steps or benches and jump off.



Collecting

Go for a walk and collect what nature has to offer: stones, leaves, chestnuts, etc.

variation

Knock chestnuts together to make sounds or collect them in a container.

Playing football

Play football with your child.



FURTHER INFORMATION

You can find informational material such as brochures, videos and more with additional suggestions, ideas for games and advice at www.paprica.ch (website in German and French only).



RECOMMENDATIONS



ENCOURAGE PHYSICAL ACTIVITY

Children between the ages of two and four should get at least three hours of physical activity every day (playing outside, running, jumping, etc.).

BASIC PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

- » climbing, pulling up, standing tall, scaling something
- » maintaining balance
- » throwing and catching
- » jumping (up and down)
- » **sliding (playground), moving on wheels**
- » swinging, moving forwards and backwards rhythmically
- » rolling over and spinning around
- » using their strength
- » floating in the water, stopping a fall, tolerating the feeling of a free fall
- » seeking out and mastering dangerous situations
- » running and testing their limits (to the point of healthy exhaustion)
- » practising and demonstrating routines

LESS SITTING



Try to minimise the amount of time your child spends sitting still. Children under the age of three do not belong in front of a screen (TV, computer, video games, etc.). From the age of three, children should not spend more than one hour a day in front of a screen.

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