

Physical Play!

Our bodies are made to move! Kids need a lot of opportunities to get out and get moving so they can build the strength and skills they need to grow. That is called 'Gross Motor Development', and it means learning how to use big muscles to make big movements like running, jumping, balancing, climbing or kicking.

Kids need a minimum of 180 minutes of movement every day, and at least 60 minutes of that needs to be high energy play time. You can encourage your child to move by role modeling exercise and spending time outside, by working it into your routine and by making it a priority.

Here are some fun ways you can help your child meet their Gross Motor Developmental needs:

- ·Make it fun! Young children do not want to 'workout' but they love to play games. Challenge them to hop on one foot every time they go down the hallway, let them throw clothes or balled up socks into the laundry basket or have them pretend to 'balance on a tightrope' and walk on a crack in the sidewalk.
- ·Ride a bike! By the age of 3, your child is ready to be riding a tricycle. This builds coordination, strength and balance and is such a fun way to get out and see your neighbourhood. Don't forget to wear a helmet!
- ·Encourage 'risky' play! Risky play is how kids experiment to see what they are able to do and is an important aspect of children's development. It is how they figure out how the world works and it actually reduces the risk of injury. Teach your child to spot potential dangers and role model how to navigate those dangers and then give them the space and freedom to explore.

