

Activities for your Toddler (1 year- 2.5 years)

Introduction

- © The following activities are to help your baby get stronger and develop their gross motor skills as they progress through early life.
- © **Please note:** the age ranges used for the purposes of this leaflet are rough guides of how a typically developing baby might progress through the stages but remember that **every child develops at a different rate**. If your child is not yet able to perform the activities in their specified age range, this does not necessarily mean there should be immediate cause for concern. Some babies will skip certain stages, some will be slower to develop certain skills but quicker with others, some babies will develop 'slowly' but will catch up. **Monitor your babies progress over time** and seek support from your health visitor if you still have concerns.

What activities can I practice from 12-18 months?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your toddler from roughly **12-18 months** (in addition to the previous activities).

Pulling to Stand Through ½ Kneeling

Once I am able to come up in to high kneeling I can start to practice pulling to stand

You will need to help me to do this movement to begin with

- From a high kneeling position help me to bring one foot forward and flat on the floor
- Supporting me at my trunk give me a little help to lift my weight forwards and up, but do it slowly so that you can feel me pushing through my foot to stand up.
- Make sure that we practice on both sides.



Standing Practice

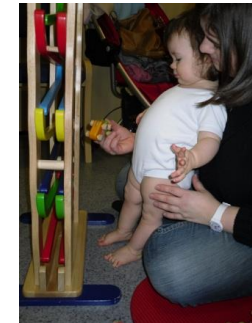
- Practicing a standing position with full support helps me to feel safe while I am learning to accept a standing position
- Position me in Standing.
- Support me at the trunk and across my knees to help my legs stay straight. As you can feel me take my own weight by using my leg muscles take the support away a little



Sitting to Standing

Once I have mastered standing and box sitting I can practice sitting to standing.

- Sit me with my feet on the floor
- Help me to practice leaning forwards to stand up 'nose over toes' like in the first picture. You might need to guide me forwards with your hands
- Practice reaching for toys in all directions while I am standing, this will help me to learn to transfer weight between my legs in standing in preparation for walking
- Make sure I don't lean back as I stand up (like in the last picture), If I do it this way it will be difficult for me to learn to balance on my own.



Reaching in Standing

- When ever you are playing with me in standing try to offer me toys so that I need to reach for them
- First of all I will lean on the table while I reach but as I get stronger I will only need to hold on with my hand like in the 2nd picture. I am also learning to transfer my weight between my legs.
- Also offer me objects lower down so that I need to bend my knees to squat to reach them. This will help to strengthen the muscles at the front of my legs.



Cruising

- Once I have started to be confident at reaching in standing and transferring weight between my legs I should start to step to the side and cruise along the furniture
- Encourage me to do this as much as possible in both directions by placing the toys I am after out of my reach a little.
- You might need to move my leg for me to start off with so that I can feel the movement, before I start to step myself.



“Bridging the Gap (1)”

- Start with me standing up using a surface for support with another similar height surface behind me.
- Engage me in a toy in this position.
- Challenge me to reach round behind me to pick up a toy from another surface.
- As I gain confidence to reach and step further gradually increase the distance between the two surfaces, until I'm taking a few steps independently.



“Bridging the Gap (2)”

- Start with me standing up at the sofa for support with another similar height surface at the end with a slight gap between the two surfaces.
- Engage me in a toy in this position.
- Encourage me to cruise to the end of the sofa, then move the toy to the other surface to encourage me to step and reach across the gap.
- As I gain confidence to reach and step further gradually increase the distance between the two surfaces, until I'm taking a few steps independently.



Walking with hip support



- When you are supporting me to walk, if I'm “hanging off your hands” try supporting me at the hips instead.
- Encourage me to walk towards the sofa or my favorite toy.
- Challenge me to do more on my own. When I get more stable reduce the support at my hips and “hover” your hands, so you can help me if I need it.
- Hopefully soon I will be able to take a few steps independently.

Developing Independence with Walking

- Start with me holding on to your hand.
- Then place the teddy (or favorite item) between you and me but still have your hand touching my hand
- Then just hold the teddy so I get some stability through it
- Then gradually let go of the teddy so I'm walking on my own just holding onto the teddy.



What activities can I practice from 18 months-2.5 years?

- © The following slides show activities that are good to practice with your toddler from roughly **18 months- 2.5 years** (in addition to the previous activities).

Squatting for toys

- Whenever you are playing with me in standing try to offer me toys so that I need to reach for them.
- Offer me objects lower down so that I need to bend my knees to squat to reach them.
- At first I will need to hold on tight and may need encouragement to bend my knees even just a tiny bit. I may need support at my hips when I let go of one hand to reach for the toy.
- As I get more confident challenge me so I need to squat down further and more independently, until the toy is right on the floor.



Reaching to stand up on my tip toes

Practicing reaching up for toys so that I stand on tip toes will help to strengthen the muscles around my feet, ankles and leg



Challenging Walking Balance



- Challenge my walking by encouraging me to walk across an obstacle course of pillows, duvets, cushions and other soft/squashy objects. Let me hold your hand at first if I need to then gradually decrease the support given.

Climbing

- Encourage me to climb. This will help me to continue to develop my muscle strength in preparation for walking.
- You can put obstacles in my way, anything from my toy box, your own leg to the cushions off of the sofa!

Encourage me to climb hands first, I may need you to assist me by bringing my feet round behind me.

- Once I get good at dealing with smaller obstacles I might start to pull up on to the sofa or a small chair.
- Soft play is great fun too!



Standing and kicking

- Developing my kicking will help develop my strength and confidence in standing on one leg.
- Hold my hand and support me to knock over the tower with my foot.
- Support me to develop my confidence so I can do this on my own.
- Playing a game with a balloon or ball will challenge my standing on one leg and co-ordination even more.



Exploring at the park- different



Stepping up and down kerbs



Coming down stairs - with help



Obstacle course

You can make your own obstacle course indoors or outdoors which children always find fun.

Outside you can use flower pots/bricks to balance on as stepping stones, planks of wood as balance beams and garden canes/sticks to step over.

Indoors you can use duvet covers/cushions/pillows as wobbly stepping stones. If you have tiles on your kitchen floor you can get your child to balance along these. Have a look around your house and garden and see what you can use to make your own fun obstacle course!



If any activities or recommendations within this programme cause undue pain or discomfort please **stop** and contact our team immediately.

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