

# NORTH CAROLINA CHILD CARE HEALTH AND SAFETY BULLETIN

NORTH CAROLINA CHILD CARE HEALTH AND SAFETY RESOURCE CENTER

MAY 2002

VOLUME 2, ISSUE 5

## About The Resource Center

The NC Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center is a project of the Department of Maternal and Child Health, School of Public Health, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill. Funding for the Resource Center originates with the Maternal and Child Health Title V Block Grant of USDHHS's Health Resources and Services Administration/Maternal and Child Health Bureau, awarded to the University under a contract from the Division of Public Health, NCDHHS.

The development, translating, printing, web posting and mailing of the *Health and Safety Bulletin* are supported by funding from the Child Care and Development Fund Block Grant of the Child Care Bureau, Administration on Children and Families, USDHHS, through a contract between the Division of Child Development, NCDHHS, and the Department of Maternal and Child Health, School of Public Health, The University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill.

## In This Issue

- 1 Active Physical Play — Important for All Ages
- 2 Planning for Active Play Indoors and Out
- 3 Physical Activity Guidelines from Birth to Five Years
- 4 Activities That Promote Physical Growth
- 5-6 Parent Pages
- 7 Playground Equipment
- A-B Babies Get Outdoors! Outdoor Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers (Insert)

## Active Physical Play Important for All Ages

Children are naturally drawn to active play. Without it, they get "antsy" and "fidgety". We see it when they are buckled up in car seats on long drives and at other times when they are unable to be active for a period of time. Active play is crucial for children's health and development. In child care, provisions must be made for active play throughout the day. Caregivers working with young children must establish healthy patterns of physical activity, motor skill acquisition, and exploration of the physical environment. These experiences enhance the overall physical, mental and social development of children.

*Current research confirms that the physical activity of infants and young children is an important component of early brain development and learning.*

—National Association for Sport and Physical Education.

Health benefits of physical activity are many. Adopting a physically active lifestyle early in life increases the likelihood that infants and young children will develop motor skills. These skills become the foundation for sports, dance, and other types of exercise activities. Current research also confirms that the

physical activity of infants and young children is an important component of early brain development and learning.

*Physical activity also reduces the risk for development of*

*Coronary heart disease*

*High blood pressure*

*Diabetes mellitus*

*Obesity*

*Other chronic ailments*

Physical activity aids in mental development. Active play provides children with opportunities for planning their activities, experimentation with new



skills, learning by trial and error. Children who have opportunities to be active are able to focus their attention on self-directed tasks, develop cooperative friendships to overcome obstacles, and as a result, they develop social skills and relationships with their peers.

### Reference:

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2002). *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*. Reston, VA: NASPE Publications.



## Planning for Active Play Indoors and Out — Throughout the Day

There is no question that the outdoors offers a great opportunity for active play. Outdoor play can provide a release of energy, vigorous activity, and loud voices. Outdoor play is often viewed as the time for active play. Children's bodies do not always follow the same daily schedule in a child care setting. When the outdoor environment is viewed as the only designated place for active play, and the occasional day occurs where inclement weather makes it impossible to go outdoors, the only active play environment is unavailable. Often, outdoor time is scheduled for a specific time, i.e., 10:00 – 10:30 AM and may not coincide with the time each child needs activity. *The challenge then is to provide opportunities for active play choices throughout the day both indoors and out.* All children birth to age five as well as school age children should engage in daily physical activity that promotes health-related fitness and movement skills.

Many people believe that fundamental motor skills “just develop” as children get older, but this is not true. Developing motor skills requires experience, encouragement, and sometimes instruction. Adults often teach their children the alphabet and counting, but it is less common to see parents teaching fundamental motor skills. Fundamental motor skills are the skills that provide the building blocks for specific movements such as those found in sports, games, and dance. Skills such as walking and running seem to emerge whereas jumping, hopping, galloping, sliding, catching, throwing, bouncing, kicking, and striking may require more practice and instruction. Children need instruction, practice and encouragement to learn the basic skills for sport and lifetime movement activities.

*Research suggests that children may perform a skill to a certain level of proficiency but never acquire an advanced level without instruction, practice, and encouragement.*

— National Association for Sport and Physical Education

Indoors, a safe space can be made available so children can move around and be active. Some child care programs are fortunate to have access to a gymnasium or indoor space designated for active play. But many programs must make space for active play by moving furniture out of an area, using a hallway, or developing a covered transition area linking the indoors and outdoors. Many activities that traditionally occur outdoors can be offered indoors by making space available and by providing the opportunity to let it happen indoors.

Semi-structures can provide a transition area and can serve many purposes. Semi-structures are open covered areas such as overhangs or arbors where children can be outdoors and protected from rain, sun, and other weather conditions. A screened porch, covered patio, or awning, either canvas or plastic, can provide similar play opportunities. It is a place where indoor activities can be taken out and outdoor activities can be protected from the elements.

A semi-structure can be used to develop an “outdoor classroom.” The outdoor classroom can be designed in many ways and can be utilized for multiple purposes including active play. Just as we address the need to extend the classroom to the outdoor environment, we need also to



address making active play opportunities available both indoors and outdoors.

Opportunities for active play outdoors can be made available in many ways. Many programs install anchored, permanently placed, playground equipment to provide opportunities for children to exercise.

When the outdoor environment is dominated by anchored equipment, children will try to be inventive using what is available. They will try to use the slide to go up, use the slide for toy trucks and cars and other toys, throw mulch from platforms above, swing sideways, on their stomachs, or standing up. Very serious problems can result if

children wear bike helmets when using anchored equipment because of the head entrapment or strangulation hazard that is created. **Children like to learn and try new things, however, it is important to limit exploration in the anchored equipment area because of the safety problems that result.**

The advantage of safe and well maintained anchored playground equipment is that it can offer children the opportunity to take risks in an environment free of protrusions, entrapment spaces, sharp edges, hot surfaces, and other hazards. From anchored equipment, children can jump onto protected surfaces, go to heights they wouldn't otherwise reach and view things from above. Children can experience movement (swinging, sliding, spinning) in ways they wouldn't be able to otherwise. Providing a variety of opportunities for active play indoors and out is important whether or not anchored playground equipment is used.

Other opportunities may include:

- a riding toy area.
- an open space for creative active play
- a building area, work area, project area
- a ball area
- a music, sound, creative movement space
- a lifting/pulling area
- opportunities for hauling things
- loose parts for building — boxes, sawhorses, boards
- a raised pile of mulch, sand or dirt for climbing and digging
- earth forms such as little grassy hills, berms
- elements from the natural world such as stumps, logs, rocks

When the environment does not define what the active play will be, three things emerge:

- Children invent, experiment, create and expand the opportunities for active play,
- Teachers invent, experiment, create, expand and in some cases guide opportunities for active play,
- Both teachers and children have more fun.

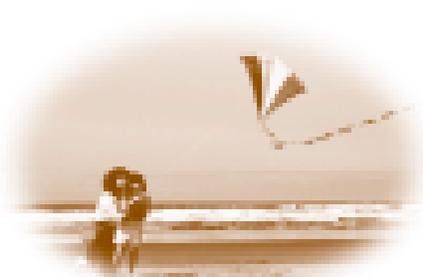
Active play does not mean a child has to perform any specific task, such as climb, swing, or run. A child may get great exercise by building and navigating an obstacle course or moving dirt to the garden area. In fact, most children are active off and on throughout the day in a variety of ways.

## Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years

from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education

### Infants

1. Infants should interact with parents and/or caregivers in daily physical activities that are dedicated to promoting the exploration of their environment.
2. Infants should be placed in safe settings that facilitate physical activity and do not restrict movement for prolonged periods of time.
3. Infants' physical activity should promote the development of movement skills.



4. Infants should have an environment that meets or exceeds recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.
5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of infants should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the infant's movement skills.

### Toddlers

1. Toddlers should accumulate at least 30 minutes daily of structured physical activity.
2. Toddlers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours per day of daily, unstructured

### Nutrition is Important, Too!

Just as with adults, nutrition plays an important role in children's health. In addition to physical activity, children need a wide variety of nutrients with a greater concentration of foods of high nutrient density. With the emphasis on junk food in our culture and its ready availability, it is important to resist serving foods that supply few nutrients. Parents and caregivers should provide children with a variety of wholesome foods to make sure their nutritional needs are met. And don't forget how important it is for children to drink water, especially during warm weather.

- physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.
3. Toddlers should develop movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks.
4. Toddlers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.

Continued on Page 8

### Reference:

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2002). *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*. Reston, VA: NASPE Publications.

## Activities that Promote Physical Growth

sliding  
swinging  
rocking  
climbing  
balancing  
crawling  
jumping  
tumbling  
rolling  
pushing  
pulling  
hopping  
skipping  
running  
throwing  
catching  
cooperative games  
competitive games  
building/constructing  
walking  
collecting  
distributing  
arranging  
hiding  
ordering  
manipulating  
molding  
feeling/handling  
sitting  
observing  
digging  
planting  
exploring  
seeking  
water play  
sand play  
ball play  
toy play  
doll play  
drifting

### Reference:

Eriksen, A. (1985) *Playground Design: Outdoor Environments for Learning and Development*, New York, Van Nostrand Reinhold Press, pp 79-80.

## Activity

### Musical Hoops — an activity that can take place indoors or outdoors

This is a variation of musical chairs that provides children with opportunities to run, hop, gallop, skip, and crawl. As the number of hoops dwindles, it requires all the children to share, cooperate, and fit into the space of one hoop.

### How to play:

Spread hula hoops around an open space either indoors or outside. Play music and instruct the children to move around the room. Stop the music and ask the children to find a hoop to stand in. Slowly eliminate hoops until there is only one left.

### Goals for children:

1. Develop locomotor skills.
2. Develop cardiovascular fitness.
3. Develop balance.

### Directions

1. Select movements such as running, galloping, jumping, or crawling for everyone to use to move around the room when the music starts.
2. Designate a new way to move each time you start the music.
3. Continually reinforce the idea of sharing space. This may be a new concept to many children.
4. When you have eliminated all but one or two hoops, coach the children on ways to cooperatively fit in a single hoop.
5. Remember to congratulate the children on a great job!



### Reference:

From McCall, R. M. and Craft, D. H (2000) *Moving with a Purpose: Developing Programs for Preschoolers of All Abilities*, Champaign, IL: Human Kinetics



## May is

Asthma and Allergy Awareness Month  
Better Hearing and Speech Month  
Skin Cancer Awareness Month  
Clean Air Month

May 4 – 11 is National SAFE KIDS Week

May 12 is Mother's Day

May 20 – 27 is Buckle Up America Week

May 25 is National Missing Children's Day

May 31 is World "No Tobacco" Day

## June is

National Trauma Awareness Month  
Fireworks Safety Month  
Light the Night for Sight Month  
Vision Research Month

June 6 – 8 is National Headache Awareness Week

June 10 – 16 is National Men's Health Week

June 23 – 29 is Helen Keller Deaf-Blind Awareness Week

June 27 – July 5 is Eye Safety Awareness Week



### Family Lifestyles — Changes Over Time

Family lifestyles have changed drastically in North Carolina and the entire country over the past few generations. We have moved from a culture in which mothers were mostly in the home with young



children to one in which there are two working parents, and where there are more single parent homes. Child care was not a necessity for many households even if the mother did work because extended family members and neighbors were often available and participated in caring for children.

Until the last few decades, parents felt more safety in allowing children to play outside in the neighborhood. The

outdoors was a place to explore and learn. Some children grew up near a playground or with a swing set in their back yard. Others did not. In both cases, children played imaginative games, created their own play and played more independently and with less supervision than children do today growing up in child care.

Today, more than 65% of mothers of children age 0 - 5 years in North Carolina are employed outside the home (North Carolina Partnership for Children, 2001). Our culture has changed to one in which children need non-parental care, often beginning at birth, so that parents can work. For the child who does stay home with a parent, there are not as many children in the neighborhood to play with because so many children are in child care. Unsupervised outdoor play is a safety concern in today's society where we hear far too many horror stories about kidnapping, child molesting, and intentional and unintentional injuries. More effort has been placed on finding companionship for stay at home parents and children — playgroups, preschool groups, mothers' morning out groups, mothers' groups and fathers' groups. This companionship was a given when most moms were at home with their children. Socialization of children took place in the

*Continued on Page 6*



1.800.246.6731

home, in the family, in the neighborhood, and in religious communities. It still does today, but with more parents working, early socialization and learning is also taking place in formal child care programs and preschools.

A child in full time care from infancy to the time he or she starts school spends about ten hours per day, five days per week, 50 weeks per year in the child care setting. That totals 12,500 hours which is about the same amount of time today's adults spent in school from kindergarten through high school graduation (Olds, 1998).

Time child is in child care from 6 wks – 6 years	Time child is in school from 6 years – 18 years
12,500 hours	12,500 hours

Another change with the current generation of children is the arrival of technology. Television viewing among children has been a concern for years with respect to the content of the viewing material and the amount of time spent watching television. Now video games and computer games may dominate children's play (Johnson, 1999).



Children of all ages are spending more time indoors and less time outdoors, and there is evidence of negative effects in all age groups of children. An increase in obesity among young children, and a decrease in physical activity and fitness are some of the negative effects. We are also seeing an increase in a number of related health conditions in children, including increased cholesterol levels and increased respiratory illness and asthma. (American Academy of Pediatrics, 1999).



Providing inviting and stimulating outdoor learning environments for children can offer alternative experiences. *For many children in child care, their primary experience of the outdoors may be what they experience outside in their child care program.* In early childhood, children learn to love being outdoors so that in later childhood they will retain outdoor life. Child care programs should strive to provide an outdoor environment that will give children the opportunity to explore, learn and experience the outdoors in as many ways as possible. When being outdoors is not possible find other ways to be active with your children. Create mazes in the basement, visit the local swimming pool, dance in the kitchen or the hallway, do some yoga.

### References:

- American Academy of Pediatrics. Media Education Policy Statement. *Pediatrics* 1999; 104(2): 341-343.
- Johnson, S. R., M.D. *Strangers in Our Homes: TV and Our Children's Minds*, Presented at the Waldorf School of San Francisco, 1999 (May 1).
- NC Partnership for Children (2001). *Professionals: Facts and Figures*, retrieved 4/8/02 from [www.ncsmartstart.org](http://www.ncsmartstart.org).
- Olds, A. Lecture at the Child Care Design Institute, Harvard School of Design, 1998.





## Playground Equipment

Anchored playground equipment is equipment and structures permanently anchored in the ground. Swings, slides, climbing structures, platform structures, and spring rockers are examples of the anchored equipment frequently found on early childhood outdoor play spaces. Playgrounds that have focused traditionally on this type of equipment often have experienced safety problems (Greenman, 1988). A variety of active and imaginative play can occur with playground equipment. Children scheme, climb to high adventures, fly to parts unknown and experiment with each new skill their bodies are mastering. Playground equipment tends to define the activity more, however, leaving less to the imagination of the child. A child is challenged to be more creative when activities are less defined, as in the example of building an obstacle course. Many decisions must be made by the child — what parts to use, how to put them together to create the right amount of challenge, where to build the obstacle course, how to best use it.

With most traditional playground equipment activities are already defined. Children have no way to change the setting and creativity and social interaction can be limited. In fact “children *least prefer* traditional play areas when given a choice” (Noren-Bjorn, 1982). It is important to realize that including playground equipment in the outdoor learning environment is a decision, not a requirement. Anchored playground equipment does require a well thought out plan and budget.

When including anchored equipment in the outdoor learning environment, it is important to consider the following:

- What will be required to prepare the space? Issues to consider include drainage issues, fencing, possibly removing of some plants or trees, the need for additional plants or trees.
- How much space, including fall zones, is needed for the installation of the equipment?
- What is the purpose of the equipment? What will it provide for the children? Are there other ways to meet that purpose?
- Is the equipment safe? The manufacturer/builder should be able to provide written documentation that the equipment meets the Consumer Product

Safety Commission (CPSC) guidelines and the American Society for Testing and Materials (ASTM) standards.

- Can the equipment be used by children with varying abilities? Is it accessible to children with diverse abilities, including children with disabilities?
- Who will benefit by using the equipment? Is the equipment designed for the ages of the children who will be using it?
- How much will it cost in time, effort and money to install the equipment and the resilient surfacing? Anchored equipment is often costly and frequently requires professional installation.
- What kind of maintenance is required for the equipment area, who will do it, and how much will it cost?

Although the Division of Child Development requires child care programs to provide activities for children outdoors, it does not require programs to have anchored equipment or structures. When the outdoor space and/or the budget is limited, it is suitable and sometimes preferable to use loose parts and other alternatives to equipment to achieve the outdoor learning environment goals. Some anchored equipment such as balance beams, crawl tubes and tunnels, platforms and slides are also available as smaller, moveable equipment and can be rotated in a small space or removed to provide open space in the play area. When using these moveable components, it is important to provide adequate space and protective surfacing if a fall could occur. Some components, for example portable crawl tunnels, that are placed directly on the ground do not present a fall hazard and would not require protective undersurfacing.

### References:

- Greenman, J. (1988). *Caring Spaces, Learning Places: Children's Environments that Work*, Redmond, WA: Exchange Press.
- Noren-Bjorn, E. (1982). *The Impossible Playground*. West Point, NY: Leisure Press.

Continued from Page 3

5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of toddlers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the toddler's movement skills.

#### Preschoolers

1. Preschoolers should accumulate at least 60 minutes daily of structured physical activity.
2. Preschoolers should engage in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours daily, of unstructured physical activity



and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.

3. Preschoolers should develop competence in movement skills that are building blocks for more complex movement tasks.
4. Preschoolers should have indoor and outdoor areas that meet or exceed recommended safety standards for performing large muscle activities.
5. Individuals responsible for the well-being of preschoolers should be aware of the importance of physical activity and facilitate the child's movement skills.

#### Reference:

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2002). *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*.

## HEALTH BULLETIN

VOL. 2 ISSUE 5

#### EDITOR:

Janet McGinnis

#### CONTRIBUTORS:

Jonathan Kotch and Jacqueline Quirk

#### SPECIAL THANKS TO:

Advisory Committee for the North Carolina Partnership for Children's Outdoor Learning Environment Project. Janet McGinnis, Chair, Mark Baker, Kathy Brownfield Dail, Lisa Camp, Anna Carter, Richard Clifford, Nilda Cosco, Marlin Deacon, Vicki McPherson Daughtry, Karen DeBord, Mary Jo Deck, Mary Douglass, Nancy Easterling, Thelma Harms, Kim Heath, Phyllis Hill, Jonathan Kotch, Robin Moore, Ed Norman, Scott Payne, Jackie Quirk, Amy Rabb, Linda Rivers, Rhonda Roach, Lois Slade, Dave Smith, Ann Stephens, Nancy Striniste, Virginia Sullivan, Barbara Vandenberg, Pat Wesley, Catherine Woodall.

This publication is produced by the North Carolina Child Care Health and Safety Resource Center and distributed to licensed child care facilities, CCR&R agencies, Smart Smart partnerships, DCD child care consultants, and child care health consultants throughout North Carolina.

You may download a copy of this publication from our website at: [www.healthychildcarenc.org](http://www.healthychildcarenc.org)

Articles may be reprinted without permission if credit is given to the bulletin and the material is not reproduced for commercial purposes.

#### FOR MORE INFORMATION

or if you would like to send comments

#### WRITE:

NC Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center  
1100 Wake Forest Road, Suite 100  
Raleigh, NC 27604

#### OR CALL:

1-800-246-6731

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH & HUMAN SERVICES  
  
Health Resources & Services Administration  
Maternal & Child Health Bureau

10,000 copies of this document were printed at a cost of \$ .46 per copy

NC Child Care Health & Safety Resource Center  
1100 Wake Forest Road, Suite 100  
Raleigh, NC 27604

Nonprofit Org  
US Postage  
PAID  
Chapel Hill, NC  
Permit No. 177



## Babies Get Outdoors!

### Outdoor Learning Environments for Infants and Toddlers

#### Active Play with Infants and Toddlers

Exercise for infants and toddlers is one of the crucial building blocks in learning to walk, run, and later, swing a tennis racket. Too often infants and toddlers are confined when they go outdoors in strollers, baby seats, or playpens for long periods.

#### Creating Positive Early Movement Experiences for Infants and Toddlers

Infants are born with a collection of reflexes that help them to survive. They quickly learn to move and manage their bodies and they develop a number of movement capabilities that allow them to explore and interact with their surroundings. Given the opportunity, infants will practice and refine their movements which helps them to gain control over their body movements and provides the basis for more skillful motor performance in the toddler and

*Continued on Side B*

## Safety Concerns

Resist the temptation to “containerize” very young children outdoors to keep them safe as they need room to move and explore. Infants and toddlers are at particular risk for injuries during active play. Some of the reasons for this are:

1. Their emerging physical skills are new and shaky. Tripping and falls are very common when a toddler is learning to walk, run or climb.
2. Their physical skills are developing so rapidly that caregivers may not anticipate what they will do next and may not supervise them adequately — and the first time they test a new skill might lead to an injury.
3. Infants’ and toddlers’ awareness of hazards and their ability to avoid them is very limited.
4. Toddlers can often get up to heights from which they’re unable to get down safely. They may fall down or attempt to slide down feet-first through openings in railings or platforms — and their bodies may be narrow enough to fit through but their heads may be trapped, causing strangulation.
5. Most playground equipment is designed for preschool and school-age children and is not appropriate for infants and toddlers.

**Infants and toddlers need close supervision and safe play environments!**

#### Reference:

Sokal-Gutierrez, Karen. (2001). *Safe Active Play: A Training Manual for Early Childhood Professionals*. Piedmont, California: Video Active Productions, Inc.

#### Birth to 6 months:

**Generally safe toys:** Things that are bright and safe to hold, that can be hooked on a wall or fence, wind socks, chimes, soft toys, fabric books.

#### 6 to 12 months:

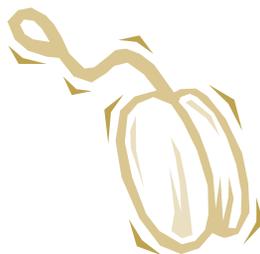
**Generally safe toys:**

- Unbreakable, large end rattles
- Squeak toys with molded-in noise makers
- Washable dolls and stuffed animals with bright, embroidered features
- Brightly colored objects hanging in view (mobiles, for instance) but out of reach with cords less than 12 inches long
- Brightly colored cloth or rubber balls with textured surfaces to grasp
- Unbreakable cups and smooth objects that can be chewed

#### Choosing Toys for Infants and Toddlers

**Generally safe toys for toddlers:**

- Blocks with rounded corners
- Push-pull toys
- Books with cloth or stiff, pasteboard pages
- Non-glass mirrors
- Take-apart toys with large pieces
- Shape sorters



**Potentially dangerous toys for infants:**

- Rattles with ends smaller than 1 3/8 inches in diameter
- Toys with easily removable parts that are small enough to swallow or that are sharp
- Toys made with lead paint, or with cords more than 12 inches long
- Stuffed animals with glass or button eyes
- Balloons

**Potentially dangerous toys for toddlers:**

- Same as for “Birth to 12 Months” category, plus toys for older children that are within the toddler’s reach
- Toys with strings more than 12 inches long
- Balloons

Continued from Side A

preschool years. This is a critical time during which brain-muscle connections develop.

Infants need to master a wide range of basic movements such as: sitting, standing, and walking. Parents and caregivers must provide the opportunities for movement and encourage the development of gross and fine movement skills.

#### Provide planned activities for infants

1. Baby games — peekaboo, pat-a-cake
2. Sessions holding, rocking the child, carrying him/her to new environments
3. Place the child on his/her stomach and encourage him/her to move about actively on a clean or blanketed floor.
  - a. Place a rattle or favorite toy just out of her reach.
  - b. Change the position of the object to ensure success.
4. Provide a variety of safe play objects that can't be swallowed, are lightweight for handling and



grasping, have no sharp edges or points, are brightly colored, vary in texture, and are nontoxic.

5. Provide a safe space (a minimum of a 5' x 7' rug or blanket) for playing, rolling, and other large muscle activities.
6. Provide close supervision in an open environment for the exploration and development of rolling over, sitting up, crawling, creeping and standing.
7. Interact with the infant as long as he or she is attentive to playful activity. Use facial, verbal, and nonverbal expressions to motivate the child's physical participation.



Toddlers have their own particular characteristics, strengths and needs. They can be expected to explore with energy using their newfound walking skills. The hands-free upright posture opens a new world of movement possibilities and increased opportunity for exploration and learning. Basic movement skills such as running, jumping, throwing, and kicking will develop and emerge from movement experiences provided. If the experiences are not provided, the development of movement skills may be affected. A child who does not have access to stairs may be delayed in his/her ability to climb stairs. A child who is discouraged from bouncing and chasing balls may lag in hand-eye coordination.

#### Provide planned activities for toddlers

1. Emphasize skills such as throwing, catching, kicking, and striking objects when developmentally appropriate. They are prerequisites for more complex movements performed during childhood and adulthood.
2. Engage in activities that encourage the toddler to support some body weight with his or her hands to begin to develop upper body strength.
3. Provide objects for structured physical activity to enhance movement and social skills: child size equipment, musical instruments, active follow along songs and basic rhythms, and chase games.
4. Provide opportunities for unstructured physical activity experiences for the children to experiment:

places to crawl under and around, grasping large balls and inflatable toys, digging and building in sandboxes.

5. Provide objects that promote the development of strength, balance, flexibility and cardiovascular endurance: riding toys, push and pull toys, toys to balance on, climb up, jump safely down from to ground level.
6. Provide a safe space indoors and out for active play. Indoors provide a child-proofed and accessible space (minimum of 5' x 7' per child) for active movement.
7. Set appropriate boundaries within the child's physical capabilities. Encourage the child to repeat and expand upon previous learning. Provide encouragement and child-sized toys and equipment to keep interest and help the toddler learn new movement skills.

#### Reference:

National Association for Sport and Physical Education. (2002). *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years*. Reston, VA: NASPE Publications.

