

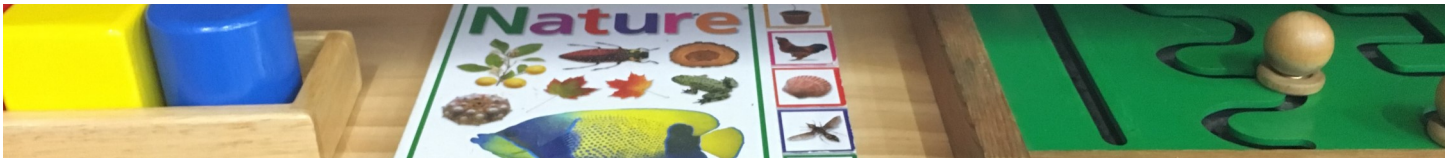


## Communication and language

- Take every opportunity you can to enrich your child's life with songs, rhymes, stories and chats.
- Speak slowly and clearly, and allow your child to watch your mouth as you speak.
- If you have any concerns about your child's hearing and/or speech development, consult with your early childhood health professionals, your GP or an early childhood health nurse (e.g. MACH nurse).

### Activities to try:

- Have conversations at mealtimes that include your infant
- Chat about the things you both see as you go for a walk
- Read books, poems and nursery rhymes together



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Some songs that young children love:

**Twinkle twinkle little star**

Twinkle twinkle little star  
How I wonder what you are  
Up above the world so high  
Like a diamond in the sky  
Twinkle twinkle little star  
How I wonder what you are



**Row row row your boat**

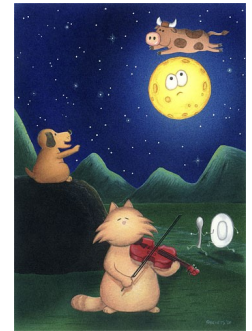
Row row row your boat  
Gently down the stream  
Merrily merrily merrily  
merrily, life is but a dream



Some nursery rhymes that young children love (can be sung or spoken):

**Hey diddle, diddle**

Hey diddle, diddle  
The cat and the fiddle  
The cow jumped over the moon  
The little dog laughed to see such sport  
And the dish ran away  
With the spoon



**Humpty Dumpty**

Humpty Dumpty sat on a wall,  
Humpty Dumpty had a great fall  
All the king's horses  
And all the king's men  
Couldn't put Humpty together again

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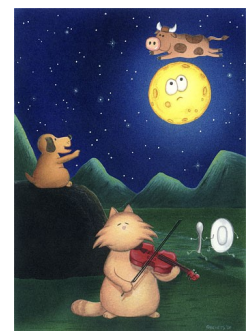
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## Movement

For non-mobile infants you should assess your home to make sure it is clean and safe, and provide opportunities for movement.

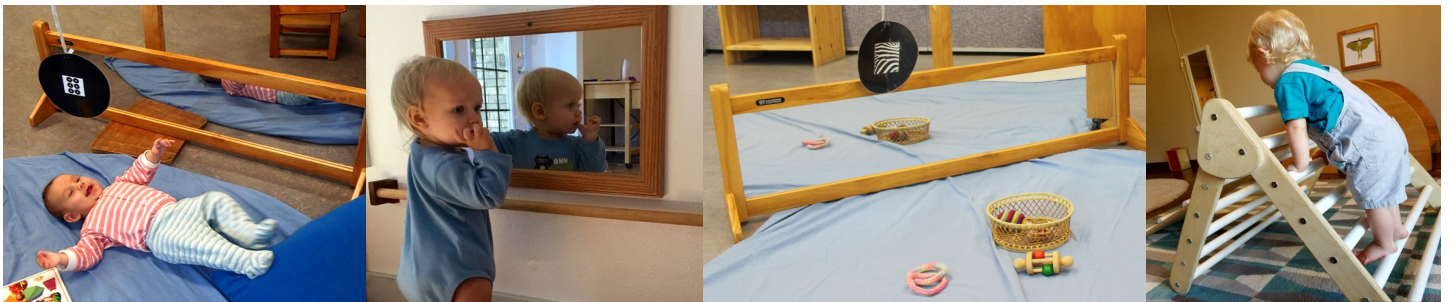
**Idea:** You can provide your child with a movement mat area.

For moving infants who are slithering, turning over, sitting, crawling, and pulling up to standing. You will need to re-assess the safety of your home environment, so your child can continue to practice movement.

**Idea:** Your infant can practice pulling up using low furniture in your home (sofa edge, safe and secure coffee table, etc) or a dedicated climbing structure (assessed for safety in your home)

Average walking ages: by about 14 months many children walk independently, or with support. With practice, many children are confident walking and carrying something by about 24 months old.

**Idea:** Provide lots of supervised opportunities for your child to safely practice walking.



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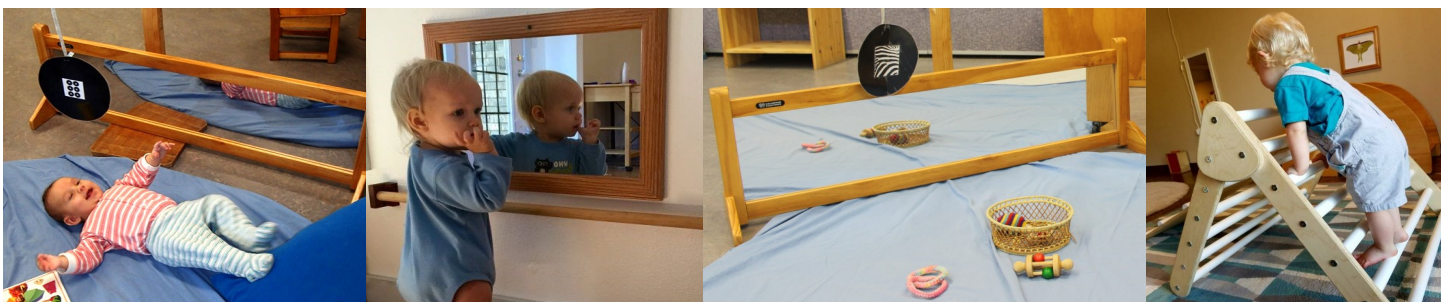
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### Activities to Try:

**Create a Sensory Path:** choose some items your child can walk on or around such as: 3-4 cushions, a small rug, non-slippery pieces of fabric, a large piece of bubble wrap, a doormat (not too rough), carpet samples. Lay the items out to create a straight path. Demonstrate to your child how you would like him/her to walk on the path. Hold your arms out to balance. Encourage your child to walk the path, offering support (holding hands, etc.) when needed, and allowing your child to try a few steps unaided. Keep safety in mind, and offer to hold hands to help your child over the cushions. Encourage your child to repeat the walk as many times as he/she wishes.

**Find opportunities for climbing and balancing activities that will safely challenge your child's balance and proprioception.**

- Walking on a path
- Walking on different surfaces (grass, dirt, sand, tan bark, paving, etc.).
- Hopping on the ground.
- Climbing up on a step stool, stone, low tree stump. Holding adult hands to balance and step down safely. Dancing to music (not too loud to damage ears or over stimulate the senses).



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## Independence and your infant

- Independence is the ability to think for ourselves and do things by ourselves.
- Include your child in daily activities so he/she begins to understand the routines of the day, his/her own abilities and role in the family.
- When you offer a few choices at the right times and only offer help when the child needs it, you are letting your child know that “I know you can do this by yourself.”
- Create a home environment where your child can move freely and safely, and their items are accessible
- As your infant grows show her/him how to do daily activities that lead to functional independence (e.g. drinking from a small cup, wiping up a spill with a small cloth)
- Allow time for your child to practice and learn about their daily routine



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### Activities to try

- Once your infant can hold something with two hands, introduce a small glass for drinking. Infants feel like they are being like their grown-ups, and your trust in your child makes him/her feel good about him/herself. Pour a small amount of water into the small glass, and using slow, precise movements show your child how to drink from a glass. You can also demonstrate drinking from a glass yourself. Explain to your child what you are doing throughout this process. Allow your child to practice, and expect some small spills and dribbles.
- Choose clothes that allow your child to move freely, at whatever stage of development she/he is at.
- For more ideas see: [www.aidtolife.org](http://www.aidtolife.org)



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## Sensory Learning

- Infants and young children are sensory learners. They use their senses of sight, hearing, touch, taste and smell to explore their environment.
- Babies are eager observers of the environment around them. In the months after birth they can focus on objects to about 30 centimetres away from their eyes. By three months they can begin to focus on objects that are further away.
- Provide lots of opportunities for listening experiences, such as recorded music (not too loud), talking and singing to your infant, and listening to sounds in the environment around you (birds, wind, etc.).
- When your baby begins to eat solid foods, provide a variety of foods which stimulate your child's sense of taste and texture (always follow your early childhood health practitioner's advice).
- Provide safe tactile experiences for your baby once she/he can pick up objects.

**Idea:** Talk and sing to your baby and make direct eye contact with him or her and observe how he/she responds. Sensory stimulation is necessary for optimal childhood development, but also be careful to avoid over-stimulation.



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## Activity to Try:

### Make a Treasure Basket

- Choose a variety of objects from around the home which are non-toxic and not choking hazards. Choose items that the infant can safely manipulate, mouth, reach for and grasp. These items will stimulate your infant's senses.
- Some examples of Treasure Basket objects are:
  - wooden clothes pegs (solid wood—no springs)
  - wooden spoons
  - wooden honey dippers
  - small infant maracas, clackers or rattles
  - interlocking rings of metal, wood or knitted wool
  - small knitted or woollen balls; interlocking wooden discs
  - rubber teething balls
  - And large, smooth grasping beads on a tether (leather, ribbon, string).



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