



Physical Development

All physical activity is beneficial for your child. Large-scale (gross motor) movements help to enhance bone health and muscular development while small scale (fine motor) movements support the development of hand-eye coordination. Regular physical activity supports brain development, and helps develop social skills and emotional wellbeing. As your child develops muscle-strength, you can help them become independent with dressing and undressing, so they can be self-sufficient at nursery and when they go to school.

Gross motor development

Bowling or skittles

A great way to develop aim, hand-eye coordination and timing skills.

- ❖ Gather some empty plastic bottles, try and make sure they are roughly the same size.
- ❖ Set them up in a triangle shape at the end of your room or in the garden.
- ❖ Using a soft ball if you are inside or a tennis ball if you are outside and gently roll the ball towards the bottles to knock them down.
- ❖ Take turns and see who can knock down the most bottles each time.

Animal Statues

Dancing is a great way to keep fit and express yourself. The faster the music the more you can move, the fitter you will be!

Along with keeping fit you can teach your child to listen too and develop those all important communication skills.

- ❖ Put your favourite music on and get moving to the rhythm.
- ❖ Stop the music and instruct your child to freeze and make the shape of an animal.
- ❖ See if you can guess what animal they are.
- ❖ Turn the music back on and away you go again.

Let your child be in control of the music too and guess what animal shape you are making.

Bubble Popping

What is more fun than popping bubbles? A great way to develop hand-eye coordination and spatial awareness. You can buy them or make your own using this recipe:

- 50ml washing up liquid and 300ml luke warm water.
 - Pour the washing up liquid into a clean container (make sure it has a wide neck)
 - Slowly add the water – be careful not to create bubbles doing this so pour slowly!
 - Let the mixture rest for an hour or so – this make the mixture even better.
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- ❖ Blow bubbles into the space around you and let your child pop them. Start with them just using their fingers or hands and progress onto asking them to use other parts of their body, like their elbows, feet or nose!

Fine motor development

Play dough

Developing finger strength is a crucial first step to children learning to write. Manipulating playdough or kneading dough is a great way to build up those essential muscles.

The only limit to playdough is your imagination; it can be used in so many ways

- ❖ Pretend to cook; roll it out and use cookie cutters to make pretend biscuits.
- ❖ Make animal shapes and re tell the story of Dear Zoo.
- ❖ Form letters of the alphabet and see if your child can recognise the letters of their name.
- ❖ Make flowers and create your own box garden.

There is an easy recipe for home made play dough on the website.

If you want to keep your creations you can make them with salt dough and bake them, there is a video showing you how to make salt dough on the website.

Cutting

A simple task of using scissors takes a lot of practice for small hands.

- ❖ Make sure you have some small, round ended scissors for your child.
- ❖ You can buy scissors specifically for children who prefer to use their left hand so make sure you have these. This will help to stop any frustration.
- ❖ Use some old catalogues or magazines and let your child cut out the pictures. They could stick them and make a collage of the pictures they have cut out.

Threading

Homemade jewellery and decorations are always a hit and threading is a great way to develop those fine control and concentration skills.

- ❖ Find objects around the house like dry pasta, buttons or beads and thread them onto a length of wool, elastic or a shoe lace.
- ❖ Talk to your child about the different objects as you thread them.
- ❖ Make repeating patterns with your objects.
- ❖ Thread them according to size, shape or colour.