

Gross Motor

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn

Your child is now more coordinated and will run, climb, swing, and balance with more confidence. He can jump, dance, and balance on one foot for longer than 1 second. He can walk heel to toe and begin to do forward somersaults. He may have the skills to pump on a swing.



42-48 months

Mystery Journey

In the house, outside, or at the park, ask your child to follow you on a mystery journey. You might go over to the cooler, around the blanket, hop across the grass, walk backward, and slide down a slide. When you finish, let her take a turn leading you through a mystery journey.

Catch

This is a good age to begin playing catch. Use a soft, medium-size ball (about 8 inches) that won't hurt if your child does not catch it. Remind him to put his arms out in front of him. Toss the ball to him from a close distance, then move back so that he can practice catching from 5 or 6 feet away. Good catch!

Music Melt

Play music and move around with your child (or several children). When you turn off the music, everyone should stop moving. Encourage your child to freeze in many different positions (on one foot, bent over, on tip toe). Say, "Melt," so that everyone can move again.

Bag Toss

Make a beanbag out of a knotted sock or bag filled with dry rice, small peas, or small pebbles. Ask your child to stand behind a line and toss the "bag" into a small box. As her aim gets better, move the target back a little. She can try to toss it underhand or throw it overhand.

Jumping

When your child can jump and land with two feet at the same time, show him how to jump over something with a little height of about 3 inches. Start with a book or blocks. See if your child can still keep two feet together: "You jumped high!"

Toddler T-Ball

Use an empty round ice cream carton, bucket, or any other safe round container as the stand for a medium-size ball or balloon. Let your child swing a small plastic bat or a cardboard roll from paper towels or gift wrap. When she hits the ball, she can run home—right into your arms!

Notes:



Don't Forget! Activities should be supervised at all times by an adult. Any material, food, or toy given to a young child should be reviewed for safety.