

**It's fun and easy to  
be active with children!  
Run, jump, dance...**

**Do at least one of these  
ideas everyday:**



- ✓ Go for a walk together in the park
- ✓ Act like animals – slither like a snake, hop like a rabbit, trot like a horse, leap like a frog
- ✓ Have a ball – roll, throw, kick and toss. Try different kinds of balls
- ✓ Dance or move to some music
- ✓ **Group Activity:** Have an outdoor search looking for flowers, berries and feathers. Inside, hide toys, books and stuffed animals for children to find

# Let's Play Ball

- ✓ Teach your child to “hug the ball”, as a first stage in learning to catch the ball
- ✓ When your child shows interest in catching a ball, show them how to cup their hands together – baby fingers touching – like a basket
- ✓ Carefully toss the ball – aiming well – so the ball lands in their arms. Remind them to “hug the ball” when it is in their arms
- ✓ Set up targets like boxes to improve aim
- ✓ Balls for catching by young children should be at least 15 cm (6 inches) in diameter and made of soft material
- ✓ As their skill increases you can offer different sizes

## SUMMER

**It's fun and easy to  
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**Do at least one of these  
ideas everyday:**



- ✓ Ask your child to follow you, then hop on one foot, sit down, stand up, touch your toes etc.
- ✓ Set up an obstacle course using couch cushions for your child to crawl over/under
- ✓ Have your child walk instead of riding in the shopping cart
- ✓ Blow bubbles, chase and pop them
- ✓ Run through the water sprinkler
- ✓ Have your child try to score a goal while you act as the goalie
- ✓ **Group Activity:** Go on a bug safari – dig for worms, hunt for ladybugs, follow ants

# Para-sheet



- 1** Use a big towel or a sheet and ask your child to grab hold of an edge
- 2** Show your child different ways to lift the chute... full arm's length, rippling wrist action, or hands in front of chest to over head
- 3** Start with something like a cotton ball on the towel and then change to a pair of socks, a stuffed toy or a foam ball

## FALL

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**Do at least one of these  
ideas everyday:**



- ✓ Have a parade inside or outside using homemade instruments – beans in a jar, wooden spoon and plastic bowl
- ✓ Spread some blankets on the floor and tumble, roll and balance
- ✓ Invent silly names for simple exercises and then do them together
- ✓ Put on music and encourage your child to run. When the music stops, call out “stop” and then start again
- ✓ Rake the leaves and jump in the pile
- ✓ **Group Activity:** Catch the leaves as they are falling. See who can collect the most yellow, orange or red ones

# Over and Under

- 1** Lie on the floor while your child steps over you
- 2** Form a bridge using your hands and feet and your child can crawl under you
- 3** Stand with your legs apart and ask your child to crawl through
- 4** Sit on the floor with your legs apart have your child jump over one leg at a time
- 5** Remember to take turns!

## WINTER

**It's fun and easy to  
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**Do at least one of these  
ideas everyday:**



- ✓ Read your child a story and act out parts of the story together
- ✓ Set up a place indoors where your child can safely jump and climb
- ✓ Find objects to push (empty boxes) and roll (cans). Have a race
- ✓ Use handfuls of packed snow to create funny characters on a tree trunk
- ✓ Streamer fun: provide your child with a strip of toilet paper to twirl and run around with
- ✓ **Group Activity:** Make a snow man. Make snow angels

# Sing and Move

Sing songs to your child while you do the actions. Have fun and be creative. Sing to your favourite tune or make up your own. Ask your child to help you think up the next verse. Try making up new songs while you do everyday activities and make sure to do the actions.

Let's go walking in the snow.  
Walking, walking on tiptoe.  
Lift your one foot way up high.  
Then the other to keep it dry.  
All around the yard  
we skip.

Watch your step or  
you might slip."

Turn Around  
(Frere Jacques)

Turn around, Turn around  
Touch your toes, Touch your toes  
Do a little jumping,  
Do a little jumping  
Squat real low, Squat real low.

"Snowflake, snowflake  
falling down.  
From the clouds on to  
the ground.  
Twirling, dancing floating free.  
Oh so cold when you touch me.  
Snowflake, snowflake  
falling down.  
From the clouds on to  
the ground."



## Skill Building Tips

Teaching movement skills such as jumping, throwing or kicking is just as important as teaching your children to talk and read!



- ✓ Adjust the challenge to the right level: not too difficult, not too easy. Find ways to vary the challenge using larger balls, larger targets, shorter distances, etc.
- ✓ Offer opportunities for repetition: roll back the ball so that your child can continue to practice throwing or kicking it.
- ✓ Get on the floor and stretch with your child (touch toes, reach to a wall, etc.). Children will likely outperform the adult and this helps them build self-esteem.
- ✓ Choose inclusive games in which children aren't eliminated. Try to keep everyone active most of the time.

## More Skill Building Tips...

- ✓ Make physical activity a priority in your family's daily routine, just as you do for eating and sleeping.
- ✓ At bath time, encourage them to try to put their face in the water for an instant at first and then for longer to develop confidence for swimming. Stay with them at all times.
- ✓ Teach your child to skate by pushing a chair or skating aid if your rink allows it. If you don't know how to skate, learn at the same time.
- ✓ Look for used equipment such as skates and tricycles at yard sales and at equipment swap events.
- ✓ Be a good role model. Play the games with them but also do activities for yourself.
- ✓ Always talk in a positive manner about being active and make sure it is always fun.
- ✓ Register your child for activities at your local recreation centre. If needed, ask about subsidies.

# Outdoor Games

**Play outside every day with your child. Children need large spaces to move.**



- ✓ Play throwing games. Throw a ball at a target or in a bucket ten times. Throw with both left and right hands and see which one is better. Use other objects to throw such as rolled-up socks or balloons full of water on hot summer days.
- ✓ Play balancing games. Stand on one foot, balance on both knees, balance on a line, beam or fallen log.
- ✓ Play jumping games. Jump on one foot, on both feet, make a shape in the air, jump as far as possible, jump over objects.

## More Outdoor Games...

- ✓ Play with water. Splash in a wading pool, play tag games with water balloons. Attend a learn-to-swim program or teach your child some basic swimming skills.
- ✓ Play with snow. Make snow people and animals. Go tobogganing. Make a snow fort. Roll a giant snowball.
- ✓ Play with equipment found around the house, such as soft balls, containers, plastic bats, cardboard boxes and simple toys to pull or push.
- ✓ Go near a river or lake and throw stones in the water. Use the opportunity to teach about water safety.
- ✓ Create an obstacle course around the yard or park. Have the children jump over puddles, go around a tree, climb some stairs, go under a railing, etc.
- ✓ Organize scavenger hunts and other outdoor group games for birthday parties or family events.

# Indoor Games

**Being active inside  
can be fun too!  
Clear some space  
and get moving.**



- ✓ Play hide and seek in the house.
- ✓ Make letters of the alphabet or numbers using your bodies.
- ✓ Jump over lines on the floor using one foot, two feet, jumping backwards, sideways, etc.
- ✓ Play “Simon Says” using various movements such as hopping on one foot or lifting up the knees.
- ✓ Place your baby on her tummy for some time each day when she is awake to strengthen her arms, legs and back. Take her out of the car seat once you arrive at your destination so she can move.

## More Indoor Games...

- ✓ Play bowling with a soft ball and empty plastic containers such as yogurt cups or water bottles.
- ✓ Try a number of ways to move across a room: walk, jump, crawl, slither, go backwards, sideways, etc.
- ✓ Make up a mini routine by doing a front roll, balance on a board, cartwheel, etc. Add music.
- ✓ Use crumpled up sheets of recycling paper to make balls to play indoors.
- ✓ Limit the amount of screen time to less than 1-2 hours per day. It is best for children under 2 to not watch TV. Suggest a fun activity instead.
- ✓ Put pictures of children being active around your house: pictures of your own children, drawings you have done with your child or pictures from magazines.

# Imagination Games

**It is easy to be active when you are creative! Lead the way and you will have fun too.**



- ✓ Pretend you are a bird or butterfly and “fly” around a room or outside.
- ✓ Invent a race: on your knees, slithering like a snake, backwards, like an inch-worm, etc.
- ✓ Suggest doing imaginary activities such as walking in a field full of glue, swimming in snow, being a windmill in a storm, being a flower growing, etc.
- ✓ Imitate animals: shake like a dog, stretch like a cat, hide your head like a turtle, walk like a giraffe, peck like a chicken, etc.

## More Imagination Games...

- ✓ Invent a chase game using your child's favourite book or TV characters.
- ✓ Jump over every crack in the sidewalk as you walk somewhere. Try hopping over the cracks on one foot. If you miss, try again.
- ✓ Invent an adventure story in which you and your child need to run, climb, row, jump, swim, hide, pedal, crawl, etc., to outsmart an imaginary enemy.
- ✓ Cut pieces of cardboard and tape them on the floor. Encourage your child to hop from one to the other like stepping stones. Pretend they will fall in the water if they step off the cardboard. Increase the distance between the pieces of cardboard, put colors or numbers on them to vary the challenges.
- ✓ Create a surprise bag. Put a variety of things in a bag and have children mimic that object's movement or how it is used: a ball, a spring, a rock, a toy car, a toy animal or fish, a rolling pin, etc.