

PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

for Fitness and Stress Reduction

AGE RANGE	PHYSICAL SKILLS	FITNESS	STRESS REDUCTION
Birth		Gentle massage of arms and legs. "Bicycle pedaling" of babies' legs.	Dancing held by parent or teacher; nestling into parent or teacher's arms or lap to sleep. Motion from car, stroller, hammock, rocking chair, and so on. Quiet times for sleeping.
1 year	Crawling Walking	Enlisting safety precautions, opportunity to explore rooms and outdoor spaces. Opportunities to climb hills, furniture and equipment.	As above. Swaying to music. Routines for basic activities—meals, rest, sleep, outdoors. A long bath with toys. Snuggling with favorite blanket or animal. Gazing at objects of nature. Feeling understood—communicating.
2 years	Marching Running Climbing Jumping/landing Transferring weight Turning Twisting Bending Throwing	Name and try all the skills listed at left—to music, with laughter, and some falling down on purpose (2s love slapstick!)	As above. Dancing to music. Singing and humming. Routines for other activities as well, for example, "We read stories after cleanup; we go to the library on Tuesdays." Some simple choices—"Would you like milk or water?" Noticing: clouds moving overhead, stars and moon at night, breeze on face, birds, blooming trees or plants, smells of fresh food, fragrant soap in the bathroom, and so on. Being understood while trying to use language. Breathing together, thoughtfully.
3 years	Galloping Hopping Swaying Catching	As above. Play catch with soft objects (balloons, pillows, scarves). Pretend to be animals—galloping horses, hopping frogs, crawling snakes, and so on. Use music.	As above. Being listened to even though stories are long and fragmented. Lying down or sitting still, paying attention to breathing for a minute. Standing like a mountain, reaching for the sun. Humming together. Nesting into blankets and pillows.
4 years	Balancing on one foot	As above. Balance beam, lines on floor to walk on. Imaginative play aided by props (cloths, flags, blocks), especially outdoors.	As above. Yoga and tai chi, for example, tree, child, and games. Creative visualizations—growing from a seed to a flower, floating down a river, and so on. Expressive dancing to music, dramatizing clouds, birds, trees in wind (nature images). Silent sitting or walking outdoors to hear and focus on environmental sounds.
5 years	Skiping Walking backwards	As above. Keep track of how fast one can run a distance, how many hops. Build self-knowledge, not competitive.	As above. Can enjoy some partner work with yoga.
6 years	Leaping	Obstacle courses inside and out. "Rocks in a river" for leaping on (chalk blobs on playground at suitable distances). Running laps around the playspace and checking pulse before and after.	As above. Some adult poses possible.