



RESOURCE MANUAL

Birth to Five years



**MAKE
HEALTHY
NORMAL**



Acknowledgements

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In developing this manual, every effort has been made to acknowledge the original sources of information and to seek permission to reproduce published work.

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Photographs used in this manual have a signed permission from each child's parent or carer. Please note that the *Munch & Move* program supports the wearing of appropriate hats for sun protection, however in some photographs the child is either in the shade, under a protective outdoor roof or the child's hat has been temporarily removed so that his/her face can be seen.

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Move – Encouraging active play

Welcome to the Move section of the *Munch & Move Resource Manual*. This section aims to support Early Childhood Education and Care (ECEC) services to promote the key *Move* message of supporting active play and helping young children to be active each day.

In this section you will find general information on child development related to movement, as well as a selection of ideas for safe and appropriate physical activity for children birth to five years of age, including the intentional teaching of Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS). In addition, there are *Move* ideas and learning experiences that can be incorporated into ECEC programs and routines.

Physical activity is vital for a child's development and lays the foundation for a healthy and active life. Physical activity refers to any bodily movement, including small and large movements, produced by skeletal muscles which results in energy being expended. There are many ways that children can be physically active, including involvement in active play, games, organised activities, sports and active transport.

Young children should be given plenty of opportunities to move and be physically active throughout the day, both indoors and outdoors, and should not be inactive for prolonged periods of time. Physical activity goes hand in hand with healthy eating in promoting a lifetime of good health and wellbeing.

ECEC services are ideally placed to foster the development of good physical activity habits early in life and to positively influence families' attitudes towards encouraging physical activity on a regular basis.

Children are more likely to be physically active if ECEC services, families and community all work together.



Why is being active good for young children?

Being active is important for all children as they grow and develop. The benefits of being active for young children include:

- promoting healthy growth and development
- helping to achieve and maintain a healthy weight
- improving cardiovascular fitness
- building strong bones and muscles
- improving balance, coordination and strength
- maintaining and developing flexibility
- improving posture
- learning about the body and how it moves
- assisting with the development of gross motor and fine motor skills
- providing the opportunity to develop FMS
- helping to establish connections between different parts of the brain
- improving concentration and thinking skills – including how to solve problems and make decisions
- building self-confidence and self-esteem
- relieving stress and promoting relaxation
- providing opportunities to develop social skills and make friends
- promoting an enjoyment of being active.

Importantly, providing babies, toddlers and young children with appropriately challenging and engaging physical activity opportunities decreases their risk of becoming inactive, overweight adults who are at a higher risk of developing type 2 diabetes, high blood pressure, high cholesterol, heart disease and other chronic illnesses.

How much physical activity do young children need?

The following *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*¹³ were released in 2017 and provide benchmarks for how much physical activity is recommended for children.

To promote healthy growth and development, infants, toddlers, and pre-schoolers should achieve the recommended balance of physical activity, high-quality sedentary behaviour, and sufficient sleep. Over a 24-Hour period the following hours of physical activity are recommended for young children:

- **Infants (aged < 1 year)** - being physically active several times a day in a variety of ways, particularly through supervised interactive floor-based play, including crawling; more is better. For those not yet mobile, this includes at least 30 minutes of tummy time, which includes reaching and grasping, pushing and pulling, spread throughout the day while awake.
- **Toddlers (aged 1-2 years)** - at least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities, including energetic play, spread throughout the day; more is better.
- **Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years)** - at least 180 minutes spent in a variety of physical activities, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play, spread throughout the day; more is better.

The focus should be on the amount and type of physical activity, rather than the intensity.

How ECEC services can support physical activity

ECEC services should offer a wide choice of play-based, active play learning experiences that link to children's interests, abilities, identity and prior knowledge. Educators should show children that they enjoy and value being active. As positive, active role models, educators can encourage children to participate in active play experiences - adult participation in any physical activity increases the participation rates of children.

Opportunities for intentional teaching arise when educators are purposeful and thoughtful in the decisions and actions they make to ensure children's physical activity needs are met throughout the everyday curriculum. When promoting the key message 'Get active each day', ECEC services should take into account all available opportunities for developmentally appropriate active play that exist within the early childhood setting.

Consider:

- the physical environment – indoors and outdoors
- the way time is structured – routines and transitions
- active play opportunities offered to children – indoors and outdoors
- equipment and resources available
- interactions with children that encourage physical activity
- learning areas that promote movement
- individual and small group movement based learning experiences
- physical care opportunities such as nappy changing, mealtimes, etc
- routine tasks such as packing away, setting the table, etc.



Pattern of physical activity for babies, toddlers and preschool aged children

Babies should be encouraged to be as active as possible from birth in a safe, supervised, minimally structured and nurturing play environment. Physical activity encourages brain development, strengthens what the body can do, develops the senses and helps babies learn about their body and how it moves.

For babies who are yet to roll or crawl, physical activity can be encouraged via movement of their head, body and limbs during daily routines and via independent movements such as reaching and grasping, pulling and pushing and participation in supervised floor play.

Young children's physical activity patterns are characterised by short, intense bursts of activity intermixed with periods of rest (lower intensity activity). To naturally meet children's physical activity requirements, this pattern needs to be accommodated throughout the day.

Toddlers and preschool aged children should be engaged in short bursts of physical activity throughout the day. Active play experiences for toddlers and preschool aged children can occur through:

- unstructured 'free' play (child initiated, spontaneous, intentional teaching experiences)
- structured 'planned' play (action games/songs, intentional teaching experiences)
- everyday physical tasks (helping with gardening, setting up experiences, tidying play spaces)
- active transport (encouraging families to walk to destinations).

Preschool aged children have the stamina and ability to be active for longer periods and have developed more physical skills which broaden the range of movement experiences that can be used.

Children with additional needs

Physical activity benefits children of all abilities including children with additional needs. In order to best meet the active play needs of a child with additional needs, it is essential that ECEC services engage closely with the child's family to gain as much information as possible about the child's abilities. Additionally, with parent permission, other health professionals working with the child can be consulted for further information, resources and support. ECEC services may also consult with their local Inclusion Support Agency, whose role includes assisting ECEC services to support children's physical development.



Any concerns about a child's physical development should be discussed with the child's parents. The parents may then:

- discuss this with their doctor
- consult a paediatric physiotherapist
- consult with other relevant professionals.

Culturally appropriate active play

Active play offers excellent opportunities for children to learn about differences and similarities, to work with others, and to learn about different cultural practices and languages as well as their own.

A sense of identity and unity is developed when families and staff share knowledge (eg traditions, language), games, dances and activities which are unique to their culture or heritage. It is important to invite and engage families and the wider community to participate in promoting physical activity - ensuring the ECEC setting is both inclusive and respectful of other cultures.

It is important to respect different cultural sensitivities about physical activity. Talk to families about what 'play' and 'being active' means in their culture.

To develop an understanding and respect for Aboriginal culture and promote stronger links with local Aboriginal communities, ECEC services can seek advice from parents and community members about familiar words and traditional children's games and dances that would be appropriate for use in the ECEC service. It is recommended that local elders are consulted and invited to be involved in some way prior to undertaking any experience or special event using traditional Aboriginal games.

Safety

Safety is paramount. ECEC services must provide an environment that supports safe active play, minimising the risk of injury or accident to children, staff and visitors.

Ways that ECEC services can keep children safe during physical activity:

- Implement policies that promote safe learning environments.
- Closely supervise all activities.
- Provide developmentally appropriate experiences.
- Ensure sufficient safe space for all physical activities.
- Use safe, well maintained and developmentally appropriate equipment and resources.



- Provide guidance to families on appropriate clothing and footwear that allows mobility.
- Consider how children’s health issues/allergies may impact on their ability to participate in physical activity.
- Ensure sun safety by following the Cancer Council’s SunSmart Guidelines when children are playing outdoors.
- Comply with licensing and accreditation requirements with risks managed or avoided as appropriate.
- Ensure play surfacing and equipment meets the current Australian Standards and Guidelines and are appropriate for the ages, interests and abilities of the children.
- Encourage adequate hydration before, during and after physical activity.

Risk management

While ECEC services need to provide a safe environment to promote ongoing skill development it is important that the environment still supports children in their quest for mastery and challenge. Children need opportunities to play freely, explore play spaces, challenge themselves and manage new tasks. This may sometimes include being messy and loud, getting small grazes and bumps, and dealing with heights and different play surfaces.

It is not an effective strategy to remove all equipment and resources, and stop all play that may present a risk – the benefits of the play may outweigh the risks! If a risk can be managed while supporting children’s interactions with resources and the environment take the following actions:

1. Identify the risk
2. Clarify why it is a risk
3. Consider what needs to be done to manage the risk - discuss with children, staff and families
4. Implement strategies to manage the situation
5. Ensure everyone is informed
6. Include the strategies in your policy and procedures
7. Review regularly.



Sleep

Sleep is crucial for young children's overall health and wellbeing. It is important to establish healthy sleep habits from an early age to promote physical growth, better concentration levels, and reduce the risk of illness.

ECEC services are ideal settings to promote and compliment sleep habits that are implemented in the home environment.

Furthermore, the *Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*¹³ were released in 2017 and encourage the importance of developing healthy sleep hygiene patterns and ensuring sufficient sleep in the early years. Over a 24 hour period the following hours of sleep are recommended as a guide for young children:

- **Infants (aged < 1 year)** – 14 to 17 hours (for those aged 0-3 months) and 12 to 16 hours (for those aged 4-11 months) of good quality sleep, including naps.
- **Toddlers (aged 1-2 years)** – 11 to 14 hours of good quality sleep, including naps, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.
- **Pre-schoolers (aged 3-5 years)** – 10 to 13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with consistent sleep and wake-up times.

How educators can promote opportunities for sleep and positive sleep environments¹⁴

- Recognise and respond to common sleep cues such as yawning, eye rubbing, irritability, requesting comforters, disengagement in activities, decreased ability to regulate behaviour or seeking comfort from educators.
- Provide a comfortable and familiar place for children to sleep or rest as needed throughout the day.
- Have provisions for non-sleepers. Children who do not wish to sleep can be encouraged to do alternative activities (eg yoga, reading, puzzles, drawing) that support rest and relaxation.
- Ensure children feel safe and secure.
- Lower the level of light and noise, and provide comfortable (21-22°C) room temperatures.
- Use calm, consistent and predictable routines to transition children to sleep.
- Remove digital screen devices which can reduce children's ability to sleep.



Educators should recognise that sleep requirements will vary between individual children and it is important to work in partnership with families to ensure that their child's sleep and rest needs are met appropriately within the ECEC service and comply with safe sleeping guidelines. For current *Safe Sleeping Guidelines* please refer to <https://rednose.com.au/section/safe-sleeping>.

It is also recommended educators carry out reflective practice discussions amongst their teams to maximise opportunities in the area of sleep, rest and relaxation. These reflective discussions can also identify if the service policies and practices comply with the national recommendations and NQS.



Key Message – Get active each day

Movement and gross motor skills

Babies learn movement through touching, moving, looking and listening. Movement provides sensory messages to the brain. The developing brain needs sensory experiences to stimulate brain development.

Brain research has highlighted the importance of sensory stimulation in the early years. It has identified that babies need to receive a constant flow of sensory information to promote the formation of connections between brain cells. Importantly, vestibular (inner ear) stimulation has a large impact on the growth of these connections and it is through movement that vestibular stimulation occurs.

Movement stimulates the fluid in the inner ear over the thousands of tiny hair-like cells surrounding its surface. These cells are vital to knowledge of our position in space and play a major role in sensory integration (when the brain puts together and uses all the information received through the senses as a basis for ongoing development).

Studies have documented that babies receiving regular vestibular stimulation in the first months of life show accelerated motor skills development as they are receiving increased sensory stimulation^{15, 16}. Therefore it is essential to provide babies with a variety of learning experiences which encourage them to actively engage with people and their environment.

Gross motor skills involve movement and control of the large body muscles (such as those in the arms, legs, back, chest and abdomen). Children's muscles develop from the head downwards (cephalocaudal) and the centre of the chest outwards (proximodistal) therefore movement experiences should follow this path of development.

Developmental guidelines

While guidelines are given for the age at which gross motor skills develop, there is an accepted variation within these norms and children have their own individual patterns of development. Variations in development can be due to natural abilities and prior experiences.

It is important to recognise these differences and to offer children learning experiences they are able to achieve, while at the same time promoting ongoing skill development - scaffolding their learning from the known to the unknown. Encouraging children and acknowledging all attempts, not just successes, will also help to improve their confidence and participation.

Throughout the *Move* section, the age-range at which young children develop particular physical skills are given as a guide only.

Physical activity for babies - birth to 12 months of age

Newborn babies spend a lot of time sleeping and involved in care routines (eg feeding and nappy change). It is important to optimise the opportunities for play and movement when baby is awake (including during care routines) as this will assist their gross motor development and enable them to participate fully in physical activity as they grow.

At birth, babies' movements are instinctive and part of unlearned, involuntary reflex actions with their muscles reacting automatically in response to different kinds of stimuli. Reflexes change or disappear as babies grow and serve as the basis for later movement. As babies learn and develop control over their arms and legs, movements become voluntary instead of reflexive, (eg reaching for people and toys and kicking their legs).

On the back to sleep, on the tummy to play.

Tummy time

From birth it is important to follow safe sleeping guidelines and put babies on their back to sleep. This decreases the risk of 'Sudden Infant Death Syndrome' and sleeping accidents.

From birth, babies should be provided with the opportunity to play on their tummy every day for short periods of supervised time, increasing with age and ability (10 seconds to 10 minutes), to help develop their movement skills. Through 'tummy time' babies learn to lift their head and take weight through their arms. It strengthens their neck and back muscles, and develops spatial awareness and balance. These are important building blocks for future movement – including rolling, sitting, crawling and standing.

By around five months of age babies are showing an increased interest in the world around them. Some babies may have learnt to creep on their tummy for mobility. Their neck and back strength has increased from practicing tummy time and babies may now be able to hold themselves in the sitting position with support. As babies' sitting balance and strength improve, less support will be required.

By seven months of age babies have further improved their sitting balance and can maintain this position for a short period of time. Once sitting balance is more established (by eight months of age) babies will learn to push up from their tummy in to a sitting position..

Between seven and 12 months of age, babies develop their movement skills quite quickly as they master the ability to move from both their tummy and sitting into and out of the crawling position. They learn to crawl for mobility, pull to stand, stand at furniture to play, cruise along furniture, start to balance in standing and take their first steps.



Walking

Once babies can cruise around a variety of stable furniture and can stand independently, they have the physical ability to walk independently. Attempts to walk should be acknowledged and babies should be encouraged to try again if they lose their balance and topple over.

Initially babies walk with their arms held up high for extra balance, however as they practice and their balance improves, their arms come down until they develop enough balance to walk while carrying toys in their hands. Babies can practice walking by pushing a stable wheeled toy (eg a block trolley), but should only use these for short periods so they can attempt to walk without support.

How ECEC services can promote physical activity for this age group

Babies enjoy a wide range of experiences which stimulate their senses. Close interactions with educators during these experiences are vitally important for scaffolding babies' physical development, as well as supporting other areas of development.



How educators can promote physical activity for this age group:

- Spend time interacting one-to-one with babies on the floor.
- Ensure time is planned for floor-based play experiences.
- Use physical care times as opportunities to promote physical activity.
- Ensure the environment provides space to move for crawling and appropriate stable furniture to pull to stand and cruise along.
- Provide an environment with flat, non-slip surfaces and enough space to practice standing and walking without being knocked over by other children.
- Provide a range of experiences which encourage balance and gross motor activity.
- Provide opportunities to revisit movement experiences – encouraging practice of the new physical skills.
- Provide movement opportunities in both the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Program 'Intentional FMS Experiences' every day.

Refer to *Move* ideas and learning experiences in the next section.

Resources to promote movement and support gross motor development for this age group

- A variety of appropriate and interesting baby toys (large and small, different textures, bright colours, moving, sound making, popping up, graspable) that babies can look at, track movement of, reach for, easily grasp, stack, move and manipulate.

- Cushions, low foam shapes (eg vinyl covered foam wedge) and tunnels for crawling over/through.
- Low, stable furniture (eg table, foam shapes, lounge) for cruising.
- Equipment to support beginning walkers (eg stable push along toys such as a block trolley).
- A repertoire of nursery rhymes, children's songs and music (eg, instrumental, classical, pop) and simple percussion instruments to promote movement – including those from different cultures.

Physical activity for toddlers – one to three years of age

Children will learn to walk independently between approximately 10 and 18 months of age. This is a new and exciting time for them and they will spend a lot of time walking and perfecting this skill. The main assistance required now is a supportive physical and social environment and opportunities to practice this new skill.

Younger toddlers will experiment with moving up from the floor to standing and back down again, moving from sitting on a chair to standing and back again, walking and then squatting to pick up a toy from the ground or remain squatting to play for a short time. All of these activities help to strengthen muscles and develop necessary balance skills. Toddlers will also experiment with walking in different directions, on different surfaces and carrying large toys while walking. Once children have developed independent walking they will be eager to practice this skill all the time.

By two years of age, toddlers have mastered their walking skills, and have an improved ability to engage with other children and interact through playing games together. They can jump on the spot, attempt to run (initially using a fast walking pattern), go up and down stairs using two feet per step with support and use their feet to propel and control a toddler bike. They are able to climb on low playground equipment and maintain their balance in sitting to come down a slide. They are beginning to understand how to catch a ball, walk into a ball to kick it and can throw very short distances.

Older toddlers are learning how to follow an obstacle course with different stations. This develops their ability to follow physical sequencing and respond to different verbal instructions for the same piece of equipment (eg 'Can you step over the line?', or 'Can you walk along the line?').



How ECEC services can promote physical activity for this age group

Educators should:

- Interact positively with children during physical activity to both scaffold the children's physical development and be active role models.
- Provide a variety of equipment and experiences that support the development of independent walking and challenge toddlers' balance while walking.
- Provide a range of active play experiences using a variety of appropriate equipment and resources to inspire movement and build upon gross motor skills.
- Encourage toddlers to practice and explore different movements.
- Encourage toddlers to fully explore their environment - indoors and outdoors.
- Adjust the physical activity experiences to meet the individual needs of toddlers.
- Program 'Intentional FMS Experiences' every day.

Refer to *Move* ideas and learning experiences in the next section.



Resources to promote movement and support gross motor development for this age group

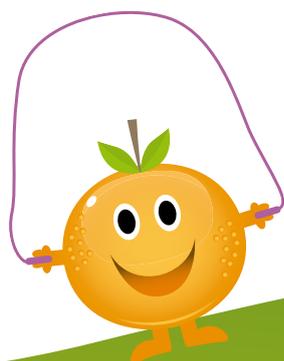
- Equipment to support and challenge independent walkers – low, stable obstacles to walk around (eg table, foam shapes), pushing/pulling toys (eg trolley, toy pram), large toys to carry (eg ball, teddy bear) and obstacle courses to walk over (eg cushions, low foam blocks).
- Tunnels, boxes, foam wedges, shapes and mats, wide balance beams and wobble/jouncing boards for climbing through/over and balancing.
- Low trestles, ladders and slides for climbing up and down.
- Hoops, shapes marked with tape or chalk and large boxes for stepping in and out of.
- Variety of objects for stepping and jumping over (eg chalked or masking taped lines, horizontal ladders and small blocks).
- Large, soft balls for catching and kicking.
- Small soft balls or bean bags that children can hold in one hand for throwing.
- Toddler bikes to increase leg strength.
- Repertoire of nursery rhymes, children's songs and music (eg instrumental, classical, pop) and simple percussion instruments to promote movement – including those from different cultures.
- Props to move with (eg scarves, streamers).
- Children's picture books, puppets, toys (eg farm and jungle animals) and dramatic play props (eg dress-ups) to inspire movement.
- Display photos of the children being active to motivate further active play.



Physical activity for preschool aged children – three to five years of age

During the preschool years, children are refining their gross motor skills. Their strength, agility, flexibility, balance and coordination all improve during this time. With greater control over their body, preschool aged children gain increased confidence and mobility.

Preschool aged children need opportunities to use, expand and refine their gross motor coordination. Educators need to consider how they are challenging the gross motors skills of preschool aged children, especially the older preschool aged child.



How ECEC services can promote physical activity for this age group

Educators should:

- Interact with the children during physical activity – scaffolding physical development and using active role modelling.
- Provide a range of active play experiences using a variety of appropriate equipment and resources to inspire movement and challenge and refine gross motor skills.
- Involve preschool aged children in the planning of movement experiences.
- Adjust the active play experiences to meet the individual needs of preschool aged children.
- Provide movement opportunities in the indoor and outdoor environments.
- Program 'Intentional FMS Experiences' every day.

Refer to *Move* ideas and learning experiences in the next section.

Resources to promote movement and support gross motor development for this age group

- Repertoire of nursery rhymes, children's songs and music (eg instrumental, classical, pop) and percussion instruments to promote movement – including those from different cultures.
- Props to move with (eg scarves, streamers, ribbons, balloons).
- Children's picture books, puppets, toys (eg bugs, dinosaurs) to encourage movement.
- Dramatic play props (eg plush animal tails, fire fighting equipment, action cards) to inspire movement.
- Display photos of the children being active to motivate further active play.
- Variety of appropriate equipment and resources creatively used to inspire, challenge and refine movement. See the ideas and learning experiences section on page 125!



Fundamental Movement Skills

Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are a specific set of gross motor movements that involve different body parts such as the feet, legs, trunk, hands, arms and head. These skills are the building blocks for more complex and specialised skills required by children throughout their lives to competently participate in games, sports and recreational activities.



The earlier FMS are introduced and practiced the more competent and confident children will become in these skills. Failure to master a basic set of FMS can be a significant barrier to participation in physical activities generally and to achieving the amount of physical activity recommended for the maintenance of good health.

It is important that educators guide and support children in the development of FMS, as children do not naturally learn these skills as part of their normal growth and development. Babies and toddlers need opportunities to explore and enjoy gross motor movements, in readiness for further development of FMS during the preschool and school years.

FMS are categorised into 3 groups¹⁷:

Stability skills – movements where the body remains in place but moves around its horizontal and vertical axis - stretch, bend, twist and balance. These skills are needed to develop locomotor and manipulative skills.

Locomotor skills – moving the body from one location to another – crawl, walk, run, jump, leap, gallop, hop, side-slide, skip.

Manipulative skills – give or receive force to or from an object – overarm throw, catch, kick, underarm throw, stationary dribble, strike a stationary ball.



What do the FMS look like?

The following tables describe in detail the stability, locomotor and manipulative FMS that *Munch & Move* focuses on.

Stability skills

What is . . .	Key points
Stretch – Extending the body, its parts and one or several joints vertically, horizontally or to any point in between.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Arms, legs, torso and neck can all stretch. ✓ Can be done while standing, sitting, kneeling or lying.

What is . . .	Key points
Bend – using body joints (ball and socket or hinge) to bring two adjacent parts of the body together, generally towards the centre of the body.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The body as a whole, as well as many body parts, can bend (eg arms, legs, fingers, neck). ✓ Bending and stretching are natural partners as once a body part is bent, it must straighten again.

What is . . .	Key points
Twist – rotation of part of the body around an axis.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ Trunk, arms, legs and neck twist most easily. ✓ Wrists, ankles, shoulders and hips twist to a lesser extent. ✓ If rotating the trunk, the heel of the back foot should lift off the ground in the direction of the rotation.

What is . . .	Key points
Balance – when there is an even distribution of weight on each side of a vertical axis. Static balance (in place) develops before dynamic balance (while moving).	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ The centre of gravity is over the base of support. ✓ Uses a wide base of support. ✓ If on one foot, arms are held out for balance.

Locomotor skills

What is . . .

Jumping – it is the action of pushing off with both feet and landing with both feet.

Running – it is a rapid movement that involves transferring weight from one foot to the other, where both feet briefly come off the ground.

Hopping – it involves standing on one foot and lifting off the ground by leaning slightly on the hopping foot side. The arms are moved forwards and backwards for momentum and balance.

Galloping – it is stepping off one foot then sliding with the other foot in a forward direction. Weight is transferred from the front foot to the back foot with a small lift, before the front foot takes the next step. The stepping foot is always the front foot.

Leaping – it is a graceful long step where the body lifts off the ground to cover a distance or go over a low obstacle. A short run before a leap aids the momentum of the leap.

Side-sliding – it is like a gallop but to the side instead of forwards.

Skipping – it is a rhythmical forward movement involving a step-hop on one foot, and then transferring weight to the other foot to repeat the pattern.

Manipulative skills

What is . . .

Catching – it involves receiving an object with two-hands.

Underarm throwing – it involves applying a pushing force to an object to propel it.

Overarm throwing – it requires applying a pushing force to an object to propel it.

Kicking – it involves applying a pushing force to an object to propel it with the foot.

Stationary dribbling – it involves applying a pushing force to an object and immediately receiving and pushing it down again.

Striking a stationary ball – it involves applying a pushing force with a bat to propel an object into the air.

Intentional FMS experiences

Acknowledging that children do not naturally learn how to correctly perform FMS as part of their normal growth and development, it is essential that children experience frequent, supported opportunities to explore, practice and develop these skills. The more opportunity children have to practice the FMS covered in *Munch & Move*, the more skilled and proficient they will become in performing these skills.

It is important that ECEC services program 'Intentional FMS Experiences' daily through:

1. Educator-guided FMS experiences and/or
2. FMS opportunities during free active play

This will ensure all children attending the ECEC service will have the opportunity to explore, practice and develop FMS on a regular basis.

This simply means planning daily FMS experiences that will fit within your existing program and routine. Providing a daily 'Intentional FMS Experience' will promote the development of children's FMS and gross motor skills while supporting physical activity.

All FMS experiences should be positive and play-based, with educators supporting and encouraging children's emerging skills. The duration and group size of 'Intentional FMS Experiences' will depend on the age and interests of the children - ie, toddlers will have smaller groups and a shorter duration than preschool aged children.

Learning FMS

There are three developmental periods in relation to gross motor development and the development of FMS in young children (birth to five years of age). As every child develops at a slightly different rate, these developmental periods should be used as a guide only. The three developmental periods are:

- Birth to 12 months of age
- One to three years of age
- Three to five years of age



These three developmental periods can be explained using the FMS of 'catching' as an example:

Birth to 12 months of age - baby tracks a moving object (rolling ball) with his eyes during tummy time.

One to three years of age - toddler is encouraged to catch a large, soft ball.

Three to five years of age - preschool aged child plays catch.

The development of FMS is age-related however it is not age-dependent. The order in which children gain these movement skills is important, not the age at which they gain them.

Appropriate FMS experiences for babies, toddlers and preschool aged children are outlined below and are supported by the *Move* ideas and learning experiences in the next section. Importantly, each suggested experience clearly identifies the specific FMS that the experience supports.

Developing babies' FMS (birth to 12 months of age)

Planning for developmental movement experiences every day will enable all babies attending the ECEC service to practice these skills on a regular basis, which will assist babies to develop their muscles, inner ear and eyes in preparation for developing FMS.

The following table demonstrates movement strategies that educators can include in their programming and physical care routines to promote the development of babies' FMS. These strategies will mostly involve 'one-to-one' interactions (eg as a child focused experience or during physical care routines) or setting up the environment to encourage movement.

Movements programmed	Physical skills being promoted	FMS Supported
Gently sway and rock	Sense of balance (the vestibular system within the inner ear is being stimulated).	Promotes development of Stability Skills
Tummy time (including pivoting and creeping on tummy)	Muscle tone and strength, spatial awareness and balance.	
Roll	Muscle strength and balance.	
Sit and stand	Moving while sitting and standing further develops muscle tone and balance.	
Cruise around furniture	Control and balance in standing.	
Tummy time (including pivoting and creeping while on their tummy)	Muscle tone and strength, spatial awareness and balance - important for rolling and crawling.	Promotes development of Locomotor Skills
Roll	Muscle strength and balance in preparation for crawling.	
Crawl	Spatial awareness, body strength and hand-eye coordination.	
Sit and stand	Moving while sitting and standing further develops muscle tone and balance, enabling babies to safely move in and out of these positions.	
Cruising around furniture	Control and balance in standing to progress to independent walking.	
Track a moving object (may occur during tummy time, playing on back/side, sitting, standing, cruising, walking)	Prepares for catching, overarm throwing and coordination skills.	Promotes development of Manipulative Skills

Developing toddlers' FMS (one to three years of age)

Once children are walking well, development of other locomotor skills can be encouraged and supported, as well as the exploration of manipulative skills. Children under two years of age are developing the hand-eye and foot-eye coordination required for manipulative skills. Exploring and practicing will develop this coordination.

Toddlers are still developing an awareness of their hand and foot preference for throwing and kicking, so it is important to let them choose which hand or foot to try first and then encourage them to have another go using the other hand or foot.

Appropriate FMS for toddlers to explore include:

- **Stability** – stretch, bend, balance
- **Locomotor** – crawl and walk, then run, jump, gallop and hop
- **Manipulative** – catch, underarm throw and kick.

Programming 'Intentional FMS Experiences' every day (educator guided and/or FMS opportunities during free active play) will enable all toddlers attending the ECEC service to practice these skills on a regular basis. When scheduling FMS experiences for toddlers it is important that there is an appropriate balance of both intentionally planned play and child focused free play that encourages the children to actively engage in skill development.

The length and group size of the FMS experiences will depend on the age and interest of the children.

For example, for younger toddlers these FMS experiences will mostly involve one-to-one interactions with educators while for older toddlers they could occur in small groups, pairs or as individuals.

For older toddlers (two to three years of age), developing FMS should also include small group participation in an Intentional FMS Experience based on the following format: 'Warm-up', 'FMS Move Game' and 'Cool-down' – approximately 10 minutes duration. This type of Intentional FMS Experience is explained in more detail in the section entitled: '*Planning and structuring an Intentional FMS Experience for older toddlers and preschool aged children*'.



The following table identifies movements that educators can include in their programming to promote toddlers' FMS development.

Movements programmed	FMS supported / physical skill being promoted
Rock, swing and sway	<p>Stability Skills</p> <p>These movements promote stretch, bend and balance.</p>
Dance	
Climb on low playground equipment	
Crawl	<p>Locomotor Skills</p> <p>Promoting the development of these movements and future locomotor skills.</p>
Walk	
Run	
Jump	
Gallop	
Hop	
Track moving objects	<p>Manipulative Skills</p> <p>- Tracking moving objects develops coordination.</p> <p>- Catch, overarm throw and kick develop the coordination and skills required for these movements and future manipulative skills.</p>
Catch	
Overarm throw	
Kick	

Developing preschool aged children's FMS (three to five years of age)

During this period preschool aged children continue to build on the FMS they were exposed to during the toddler period. They also learn some additional skills that require greater coordination such as leaping, side-sliding, skipping, overarm throwing, underarm throwing and striking a stationary ball. Appropriate FMS for preschool aged children to explore include:

- **Stability** – stretch, bend, balance, twist
- **Locomotor** – crawl, walk, run, jump, gallop, hop, leap, side-slide, skip
- **Manipulative** – catch, kick, underarm throw, overarm throw, striking a stationary ball, stationary dribble.

Programming 'Intentional FMS Experiences' every day (educator guided and/or FMS opportunities during free active play) will enable all preschool aged children attending the ECEC service to practice these skills on a regular basis. Having specific opportunities to practice these skills, and to receive positive, constructive feedback and encouragement from educators, is crucial during the preschool years; this is what supports development of these skills.

As with toddlers, when scheduling daily FMS experiences for preschool aged children it is important that there is an appropriate balance of both intentionally planned play and child focused free play that encourages the children to actively engage in skill development. Also, the duration and group size of the FMS experiences will depend on the age and interests of the children.

The following table identifies movements that educators can include in their programming to promote preschool aged children’s FMS development.

Movements programmed	FMS supported
Rock, swing and sway	<p>Stability Skills These movements promote stretching, bending, balancing and twisting.</p>
Dance	
Climb on playground equipment	
Crawl	<p>Locomotor Skills</p>
Walk	
Run	
Jump	
Gallop	
Hop	
Leap	
Side-slide	
Skip	
Catch	
Kick	
Underarm throw	
Overarm throw	
Striking a stationary ball	
Stationary dribble	



Planning and structuring an 'Intentional FMS Experience' for older toddlers and preschool aged children

For older toddlers and preschool aged children, developing FMS should also include small group participation in 'Intentional FMS Experience' using the format shown in Figure 1.

Figure 1: 'Intentional FMS Experience' format



The *Move* ideas and learning experiences in the next section of the manual can be combined to provide this type of 'Intentional FMS Experience' (warm-up, *Move* game and cool-down) for older toddlers and preschool aged children. The *Move* ideas and learning experiences are designed to be stand-alone resources that can be chosen to meet the identity, strengths, abilities and interests of the children attending your ECEC service.

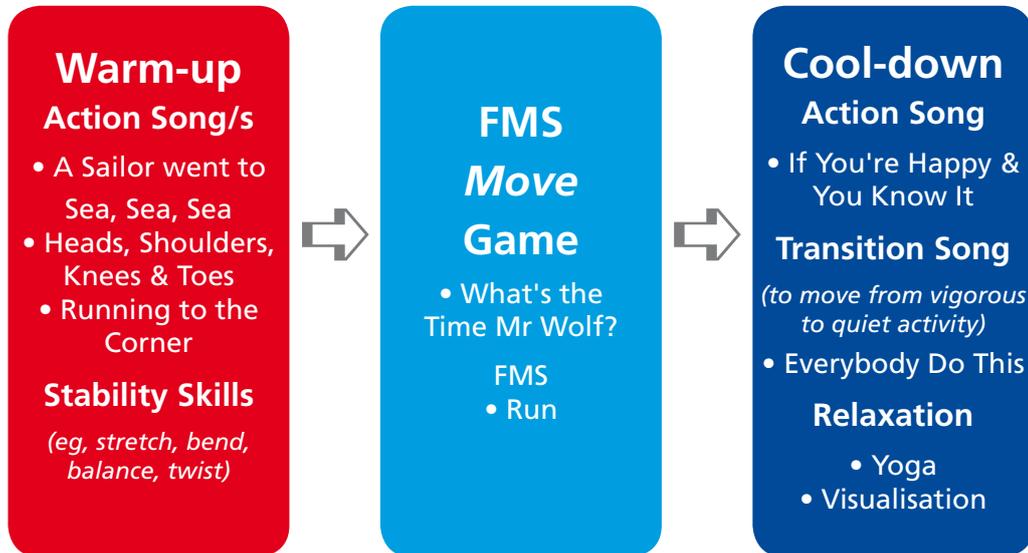
Each *Move* idea and learning experience is designed to support one or more FMS. Stability skills like balance, twist and bend will mostly be practiced during the warm-up and cool-down. However, stability skills will also be practiced when doing locomotor and manipulative skill games.

There are locomotor games that address running, jumping, hopping, leaping, side-sliding, galloping and skipping or that combine a number of these skills. The manipulative games concentrate on catching, kicking, stationary dribbling, overarm throwing, underarm throwing or striking a stationary ball.

For preschool aged children, the duration of this type of small group 'Intentional FMS Experience' should range from approximately 10 to 20 minutes and for older toddlers approximately 10 minutes (depending on the children's interest).

Figure 2 provides an example of an 'Intentional FMS Experience' for older toddlers and preschool aged children using the suggested format.

Figure 2: Example of 'Intentional FMS Experience'



Why are warm-ups and cool-downs important?

By exposing children to 'warm-ups' and 'cool-downs' educators are role modelling their importance and helping children form good habits for their future participation in physical activity.

Warm-ups

The 'warm-up' helps children get their muscles and brain ready to start moving, reduces their risk of muscle injury and should be approximately three to five minutes in duration. The warm-up starts with one or more action songs (depending on their length) that gradually increase in intensity. The action song/s warm the muscles up before undertaking gentle stability skills movements (stretch, bend, twist and/or balance - never stretch cold muscles. For sample *Move* 'warm-ups' please refer to page 140.

Cool-downs

The 'cool-down' helps children relax their muscles after playing the *FMS Move* game. The cool-down reduces their risk of muscle injury and gives children time to calm down before moving to other experiences. The cool-down should be approximately three to five minutes in duration - starting with one or more action songs, followed by a transition song (decreasing in intensity) and a relaxation experience. For sample *Move* 'cool-downs' please refer to page 149.

For further information relating to *Move*

- **Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years)** – This page contains Australia's Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep Recommendations including links to brochures, a summary fact sheet for each of the guidelines, tips and ideas for how to be physically active, as well as evidence review reports: www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/Content/health-publth-strateg-phys-act-guidelines#npa05
- **Department of National Parks , Sport and Racing** has a selection of early childhood physical activity resources available:
 - *Move Baby Move* – a booklet for parents, carers and educators that includes appropriate physical experiences for babies as they develop
 - *Active Alphabet* – a resource designed for toddlers and their parents, carers and educators to promote basic active movement skills while also learning important health messages. There are two booklets – one for parents, carers and educators and one for toddlers
 - *Let's Get Moving* – a booklet for parents, carers and educators that includes learning experiences to get preschoolers activewww.nprsr.qld.gov.au/community-programs/school-community/childhood-programs/index.html
- **Ethnic Community Services Co-operative** has a Bicultural Support Pool with a wealth of information regarding working with Culturally and Linguistically Diverse (CALD) communities: <http://ecsc.org.au/>
- **Get Up & Grow** website and resources. The Commonwealth Government have developed a comprehensive set of resources entitled *Get Up & Grow* designed to be used in a wide range of early childhood settings by directors, educators and families. They support a consistent, national approach to childhood nutrition and physical activity. The resources include a director/coordinator book, a staff and carer book, a cooking for children book, a family book, posters, brochures and stickers: www.health.gov.au/internet/main/publishing.nsf/content/phd-early-childhood-nutrition-resources
- **Kidsafe NSW** is a non-government not-for-profit charity organisation that provides support, information and resources across home and community safety including on sleep: www.kidsafensw.org/home-community/safe-sleeping/
- **Healthy Fundraising: Ideas to promote health while still making a profit**, by Cancer Council NSW. Booklet available from: www.cancercouncil.com.au/wp-content/uploads/2010/11/09271_CAN3042_HealthyFundraising_FINAL.pdf-low-res-for-web.pdf
- **NSW Healthy Kids** is a joint initiative of the NSW Ministry of Health, NSW Department of Education, Office of Sport and the Heart Foundation. This site provides supportive information on promoting children's physical activity, as well as information and resources to support the *Munch & Move* program: www.healthykids.nsw.gov.au

- **NSW Government's Human Services (Community Services)** website provides information booklets for Aboriginal parents and carers on basic child development (birth to five years of age), including healthy eating and physical activity. There are different booklets representing the Aboriginal regions throughout NSW: www.community.nsw.gov.au/parents,-carers-and-families/parenting/for-aboriginal-parents-and-carers
- The **Playground Advisory Unit** is the leading independent organisation in NSW that issues technical and design advice in relation to playgrounds and children's play in a variety of settings. For safety information regarding a variety of playground equipment and playground surfacing contact the Playground Advisory Unit of Kidsafe NSW: www.kidsafensw.org or <http://kidsafensw.org/playsafety/index.htm>
- **Raising Children** website and resource. This Australian parenting website supported by the Australian Government offers information for parents on children's physical activity and sleep: <http://raisingchildren.net.au>
- **Red Nose (SIDS and Kids)** has a selection of articles and brochures on safe sleeping practices for infants and children aged birth to five years: <https://rednose.com.au/section/education>
- **Sleep Learning for Early Education Professionals** is a Queensland Government website that has a range of fact sheets, positive practice examples, reflective practice case studies and videos to provide guidance to early childhood workers on healthy sleeping environments to meet children's sleep, rest and relaxation needs: <https://det.qld.gov.au/earlychildhood/news-publications/sector-reports/sleep>
- **Sports Ability Activity Cards** – these activity cards are great inclusive games for people with or without disability. They are easy to use and provide examples of modification to cater for all skill levels. These games can be used developmentally or to provide new pathways in disability sport. www.sportingschools.gov.au/resources-and-pd/schools/sports-ability
- The **SunSmart Early Childhood Program** supports early childhood services in developing and implementing a sun protection policy that reduces children's exposure to UV radiation and reduces the risk of skin cancer. Being SunSmart sends a positive message to the community and can also help services meet National Quality Framework requirements. Contact SunSmart: www.cancercouncil.com.au/reduce-risks/sun-protection/sunsmart-program-for-childcare-services/
- **Yulunga: Traditional Indigenous Games** – a resource developed by the Australian Sports Commission promoting physical activity through traditional Indigenous games. This resource is aimed at the Kindergarten to year 3 age group. Certain games could be adapted to meet the needs of the older children at your ECEC service. For example the 'Kai Wed' game on pages 9 and 10 could easily be simplified to play with preschool-aged children: www.sportingschools.gov.au/resources-and-pd/schools/yulunga

Fundamental Movement Skills

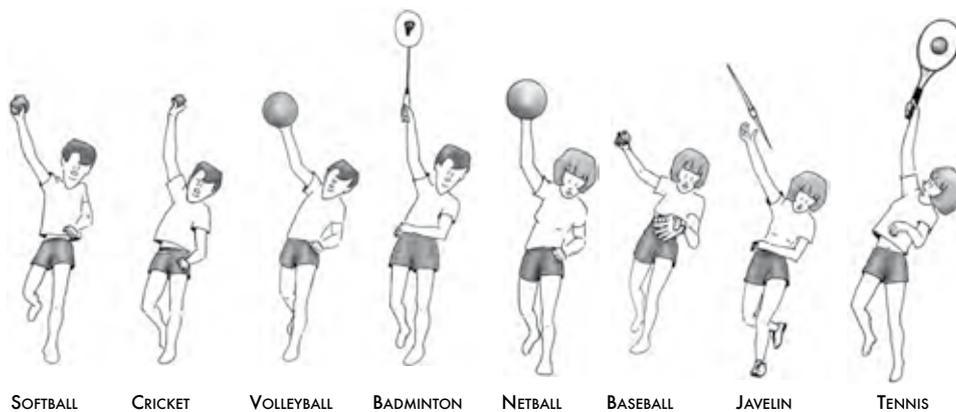
Fundamental Movement Skills (FMS) are the building blocks for more complex and specialised skills to be built upon - skills that are required to play different games, sports and recreational activities offered in later life at school and in the community. Children do not naturally learn how to correctly perform FMS as part of their normal growth and development and it is essential that children are exposed to frequent, supported opportunities to explore, practice and develop these skills. The more opportunity children have to practice the FMS the more skilled and proficient they will become in performing these skills.

FMS for older toddlers/preschool aged children (two to five years)

Why is it important to promote active play experiences for toddlers and preschool aged children?

Promoting active play for toddlers and preschool aged children has many health benefits for example:

- Improves balance, coordination and strength.
- Develops and maintains flexibility.
- Assists with development of gross motor and fine motor skills and FMS.
- Improves confidence, self-esteem and social skills.
- Improves concentration and thinking skills.



Source: Department of Education, Victoria 1996¹⁸

It is important to intentionally plan FMS experiences daily through **both Educator-guided FMS experiences and/or FMS opportunities during free active play.**

Tips for educators to teach children FMS:

- To teach children FMS correctly, educators need to become very familiar with the components for each skill – it's all about practice, practice, practice.
- When explaining the skill components, it is important to demonstrate each component.
- Use age appropriate terminology with children so they understand the instructions you are telling them and use examples that resonate eg stand up straight and tall like a rocket ship.
- It is important that educators follow children's interests and strengths when planning and implementing active play learning experiences.
- Remember it is all about exposure of the FMS components and making it FUN!!!

Tip: Break the components down and revisit each component regularly, this will assist children in being able to master the relevant FMS. Children could be practicing that particular component for weeks, before they feel confident to move on to the next component.

This section has fun, practical ideas to help educators break down the components of the FMS. The breakdown of the FMS components allows educators to work on one or more components of the FMS which will lead to mastery of the FMS. Breaking down the FMS components shows how babies and toddlers can practice FMS components too.

These ideas are to assist educators in the planning and implementation of locomotor and manipulative FMS learning experiences.



Locomotor Skills

Locomotor skills transfer the body from one place to another.

Jump

- Prior to take off both knees are bent and arms are extended behind the back.
- Arms extend forcefully forward and upward reaching above the head and both feet come off the ground together and land together.
- Both arms are forced downward during landing.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Look up and focus your eyes on where you want to go*
- *Get ready to take off with both feet*
- *Bend your knees and arms*
- *Stretch and swing your arms back and up*
- *Bend your knees on landing*
- *Land on both feet and swing your arms downward*
- *Land with your feet shoulder width apart.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Jump*:

- Encourage the children to bend their knees during dancing/music experiences.
- Aerobics with the children – practice squats or bouncing up and down.
- Placing feathers on the ground beside the children's feet, and asking the children to bend their knees to pick up the feathers. Children then throw the feathers above their head and attempt to catch them.
- 'Jack in the Box' – encourage children to bend their knees, then jump.
- Ask the children to pretend they are skiing - to practice lifting their arms in to the correct position.

- Jumping over obstacles – as the children’s skill in jumping develops increase the height of the object they jump over. For babies and toddlers, start with jumping over masking tape. For older children add higher equipment ie rope, balance beams, small boxes.
- Blow bubbles and encourage the children to jump into the air to pop them. Role model this action and ask children to do the same.
- Ask the children to reach up high to try to catch a star.
- “Simon says, put your hands up high”; “Simon says, put your hands down low”; “Simon says bend your knees”.
- Encourage children to jump on to a foam mat (encourage them to land with soft knees by bending them).
- Jumping off a balance beam.
- Jumping onto circles on the floor (using chalk or jumping over masking tape).
- Jumping on laminated pictures on the floor, eg dinosaur claws or current children’s interest. Encourage children to jump on each picture all the way to the next activity, or transition to the bathroom.
- Place lines of masking tape on the floor, and encourage the children to jump over the line. Encourage children to jump further each time.
- Play music to promote jumping and encouraging children to have both feet off the ground at the onetime eg *Wombat Wobble*.



Run

- The arms move in opposition to legs with elbows bent.
- There is a brief period where both feet are off the ground.
- The child has a narrow foot placement landing on heel or toes (not flat-footed).
- The non-support leg is bent about 90 degrees so foot is close to buttocks.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- Bend *your elbows and swing your arms*
- *Bring your heel close to your bottom*
- *Land on the balls of your feet*
- *Look ahead instead of looking at the ground.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Run*:

- Stretching up high, encouraging the children to move from their toes to their heels.
- Aerobics – encourage children to run on the spot (speed it up when they are ready to do so).
- Place a pool noodle behind children's back near their buttocks and ask them to kick the noodle whilst running on the spot.
- Chasing games – ie 'Tip', 'Stuck in the Mud', 'What's the Time, Mr. Wolf'.
- 'Running to the corner' song/dance.
- 'I can run as fast as you' action song.
- Races and relays (a good opportunity to practice other FMS).
- Parachute games – encourage children to run around the outside of the parachute.
- Bubble wrap running – place some bubble wrap on the ground and encourage all the children to run up and down the bubble wrap to see who can pop all the bubbles. This is ideal to do indoors.
- Create a maze in the yard using chalk, masking tape or witches hats. The children can practice running through the maze.
- Dramatic play – encourage children to pretend they are holding a remote control. The remote control will determine how fast/slow they need to run.

Tip: Encourage the children to walk on their tippy toes first and then run, rather than asking children to go heel to toe or toe to heel.

Hop

- Start with balancing on one leg and bending the non-hopping leg.
- The non-hopping leg swings forward in a pendular fashion to produce force.
- The foot of the non-hopping leg remains behind the hopping leg so that it does not cross in front of the hopping leg. The arms are bent and swing forward to produce force.
- The child hops four consecutive times on the preferred foot before stopping.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Bend your leg to push off*
- *Land on the ball of your foot*
- *Find your rhythm*
- *Look ahead, with head and eyes level*
- *Use your arms for momentum and balance.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of Hop:

- Yoga movement to practice balancing on one leg (as this is one of the skill components).
- "Simon says balance on one leg".
- Stretching – practice balancing on one leg and slightly bending it – holding on to a partner or furniture if needed.
- Tying a small scarf on to the child's shoe or ankle to encourage the child to keep their foot up so the scarf doesn't hit the ground.
- Warm up movement – swinging bent arms back and forth to warm-up our arms to practice moving them to produce forward momentum.

- Hold on to furniture or a partner and practice balancing on one leg and moving it back and forth in a pendulum fashion.
- Music to promote hopping – *Munch & Move* CD – Track 5 Let's all move together and 'hop, hop, hop if you feel you want too'.
- Change popular songs that children are already familiar with – for example 'Rock a bye bear'. Instead of singing 'everybody clap' sing 'everybody hop'.
- Draw marks on the floor with chalk and ask children to hop on the chalk marks.
- Start with one hop and then increase later when they become more confident and competent.
- Hop from one activity to another.
- 'Hop little bunnies' action song.
- Hopscotch.

Tip: Clapping can encourage children to move slowly to the beat, rather than hopping too fast and losing balance.



Gallop

- The arms are bent and swing forward.
- The child takes a step forward with the lead foot followed with the trailing foot landing beside or a little behind the lead foot – not in front of the lead foot.
- There is a brief period where both feet come off the ground.
- The child maintains a rhythmic pattern for four consecutive gallops.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Bend your elbows and hold them like your holding reins and swing them forwards*
- *Have a little bend in your knees*
- *Take a step forward*
- *Move your back foot just behind your front foot*
- *Find your rhythm.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of Gallop:

- Educators clap their hands or play a musical instrument to encourage children to maintain rhythmic pattern.
- For children who are first being introduced to the FMS Gallop, start off slow – walk the movements out.
- Galloping songs – to encourage children to have both feet off the ground at the one time (as this is one of the skill components) eg 'She'll Be Coming Round the Mountain When She Comes'.
- Gallop around an obstacle course.
- Horse races.
- Relay races – not only galloping can be included but many other locomotive FMS can be incorporated in to relay races.
- 'Duck, Duck, Goose' – rather than only running children could gallop instead.

Tip: Place streamers in the child's hands to demonstrate holding the reins on a horse.

Leap

- The child takes off on one foot and lands on the opposite foot.
- There is a brief period where both feet are off the ground, longer than running.
- While in the air, there is a forward reach with the arm opposite the lead foot.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Look straight ahead*
- *Bend knees to take off*
- *Use scissor legs*
- *Stretch your arms out, opposite to your legs*
- *Lean into the leap*
- *Land on the opposite leg to take off*
- *Land softly.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Leap*:

- To introduce this FMS ask the children to leap over a small object.
- Make up animal action cards. Place them in the middle of the dance floor and when the music stops, the children pick up a card. Whoever picks up the leaping gazelle, will leap around the room.
- To introduce the leap encourage children to concentrate on the leg movements rather than the arm movements - until they feel confident in the leap.
- Leap over objects. Why not make a leaping relay - place an object on the floor to assist children to leap over it. To accommodate all age groups you could use chalk, masking tape, or a small stick.
- Imagine there is a large river in the middle of the room - the only way you can get to the other side is to leap.



- Change the words of a familiar song to encourage children to leap. For example, for '5 Little Ducks Went Out One Day' - change the words to:
*'5 little frogs went out one day,
leaping over the hills and far away,
Mother frog said "croak croak, croak"
But only 4 little frogs leaped back'.*
- If it has been raining, ask the families to pack some gumboots and have some fun practicing leaping over puddles.

Tip: To practice the cross patterning movement, encourage the children to walk like a soldier – then ask them to leap over an object.



Side-slide

- The body is turned sideways so that the shoulders remain aligned with a line on the ground.
- The child takes a step sideways with the lead foot followed by a slide with the trailing foot where both feet come off the ground briefly.
- The child completes four continuous slides to the preferred side, and four continuous slides to the non-preferred side.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Take off and land on the front of your foot, don't allow the feet to cross*
- *Make your body face to the front/forwards*
- *Keep eyes straight ahead (or look over your shoulder)*
- *Step, close/slide, step, close/close ... or step, together, step, together.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Side-slide*:

- Encourage the children to side-slide using a line on the ground eg chalk or masking tape.
- Side-slide along holding onto furniture (beneficial for the babies/toddlers who are practicing cruising).
- Set up an obstacle course and encourage the children to side-slide along the beam.
- Clap your hands and encourage children to side-slide each time you clap.
- Side-slide songs eg *Munch & Move* CD, Track 6 'Sliding'.
- Rather than running in particular games and dances, encourage the children to side-slide, eg 'Captain's Coming'; 'What's the Time Mr Wolf?'; 'Duck, Duck, Goose'; or 'I Wrote a Letter to My Mother' are popular games children like to play.
- Create animal action cards ie a crab moves sideways - place them around the room or yard. When the music stops children find and do the action on the card.
- Line dancing – 'heel and toe, heel and toe, side-slide, side-slide'.

Tip: For younger children you could hold on to the child's hand and side-slide together.

Skip

- Take a step forward followed by a hop on the same foot followed by a step-hop on the other foot.
- The arms are bent and move in opposition to the legs to produce force.
- The child completes four continuous rhythmical alternating skips.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Use light springing steps*
- *Keep eyes straight ahead*
- *Make sure your body faces to the front/forwards*
- *Keep your arms bent*
- *Take off and land on the front of your foot*
- *Step, hop, step, hop.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Skip*:

- Skipping around a circle during a game – you could use a parachute.
- Relay races – encourage children to skip to each end.
- Step up on a beam – children step onto beam with the lead foot and lift the opposite foot in the air. Continue doing this action on the same leg to practice the first component of skip.
- Place witches hats on the ground and encourage children to skip around them.
- 'Skip to my Lou' dance.
- Skip songs eg 'Everybody skipping'.
- Yoga movements – encourage balancing on one leg.
- Slow the components down so children can practice the cross patterning movement.

Tip: Clap your hands to encourage children to skip to the beat – for the children who are competent in skipping, clap faster.

Animal Safari Obstacle Course

Why provide opportunities for toddlers and preschool aged children to participate?

To develop toddlers and preschool aged children's locomotor skills, such as run, jump, leap, side-slide, hop, skip and gallop through an intentionally planned Move learning experience.

When encouraging toddlers and preschool aged children to participate, it is important to:

- Ensure you have adequate space for the children to move around.
- Ensure you have sufficient amount of appropriate equipment. Such as animal pictures, hoops, markers/cones, masking tape, chalk, skipping ropes, climbing equipment, balance board and tunnel.
- Have the Munch & Move FMS lanyard cards with you to ensure correct techniques are being implemented.
- Have a selection of stations for the children to visit, such as:

Station 1: Frog Jump – Children jump across five lily pads – draw these with chalk, or use masking tape, circle templates or hoops in a row.

Station 2: Giraffe Balance – Children walk across a balance beam or chalked/masking taped line.

Station 3: Lion Leap – Children run and leap over three chalked/masking taped lines or horizontal skipping ropes - set approximately four metres apart.

Station 4: Monkey Climb – Children climb over a ladder and/or trestle.

Station 5: Horse Gallop – Children gallop around a pattern outlined on the ground using markers/cones.

Station 6: Sliding Snails – Children side-slide along a snail trail – a balance board on the ground.

Station 7: Crawling Bear – Children crawl through the tunnel.

Key points:

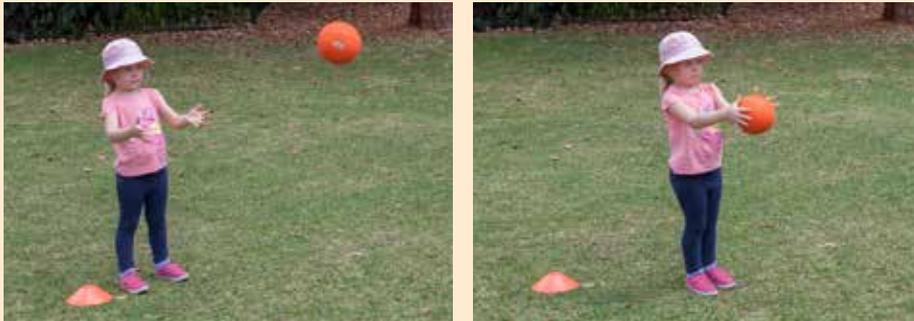
- Begin the experience by exploring with the children how each animal moves. Explain and demonstrate the skill components and how to move through the circuit.
- If more than one educator, divide the children so there is a group for each educator.
- The educator and the children move through the safari obstacle course together – moving like the animal pictured at the start of each station.
- The educator positively guides and supports the children's movements, and closely supervises at all times to ensure safety.

Manipulative Skills

Manipulative skills are the giving or receiving of force to or from an object.

Catch

- The hands are positioned in front of the body, with the elbows bent.
- The arms extend reaching for the ball as it arrives.
- The ball is caught by the hands only.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Cup your hands*
- *Watch the object move into your hands*
- *Move to the ball*
- *Point your fingers up for a high ball*
- *Point your fingers down for a low ball*
- *Bend elbows to absorb the force of the object.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Catch*:

- Throughout music and movement experiences encourage the children to practice bending the arms in front of their body.
- Encourage younger children to hold a large ball, progress to a smaller ball as they become more confident and competent.
- Encourage babies, toddlers and preschool aged children to track objects. Babies can track objects by an educator holding a toy of interest in front of them. Toddlers and preschool aged children can be encouraged by an educator prompting, eg "Watch the ball, ready 1, 2, 3, catch".
- When you are about to throw the ball to the child, make sure you prepare

them - "Look at the ball. I am going to throw it to you when I count to three. Ready 1, 2, 3 catch".

- Popping bubbles – encourage the children to wait until the bubble reaches eye level and then clap the bubbles.
- Play relays with a group of children – each child moves around an obstacle course and when they get back to the start, they pass the ball (using the correct hand techniques) to their friends and then they run around.
- Use balloons, soft balls, or even get creative and use a balloon ball. These are ideal for younger children or children who are not confident in catching a ball.
- Rather than playing tunnel ball and rolling the ball under your legs, you could encourage the children to stand in a line and catch the ball from the child in front of them. They then turn around and either pass or throw the ball to the next child.

Tip: For younger children, move close to them and gently pass them the ball – encourage children to hold their hands out in front of them – role model this action.



Underarm Throw

- The preferred hand swings down and back reaching behind the trunk.
- The child steps forward with the foot opposite the throwing hand.
- The ball is tossed forward hitting the target without a bounce. The hand follows through after ball release to at least chest level.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Look at your target*
- *Point at the target (with your non-throwing hand)*
- *Swing your arm down and back as you prepare to throw*
- *Step forward and throw*
- *Follow through, with hand down to at least chest level.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Underarm Throw*:

- Encourage the children to do lunges – where they step out with one leg and lower their body, this is where educators can encourage children to practice using their dominant leg first.
- Old milk cartons can be used as objects to hit with the small ball.
- Bend the knees during stretching and movement experiences.
- ‘Koolchee’ is an Aboriginal game where you use an underarm throw of a ball to knock down objects. For younger children start off closer to the objects, and gradually move backwards as they become more competent.
- Use arrows to help children with direction.
- For babies who are able to sit, position yourself in front of them and roll a large ball to them - encourage them to roll it back.
- Tape lines of masking tape to the floor, so it resembles something like a ‘Ten Pin Bowling Alley’. Children can practice underarm throwing the ball down the alley (this is a perfect indoor activity).
- Encourage the children to gently underarm throw balls under tables or chairs.
- Recycle old boxes to create an underarm throwing game.

Tip: Role model underarm throwing alongside children to assist with mastery of this FMS.

Overarm Throw

- Windup is initiated with a downward movement of the throwing hand and arm.
- The child rotates their hips and shoulders to a point where the non-throwing side faces the target.
- The child then steps with the foot opposite the throwing hand toward the target.
- The throwing hand follows through after the ball release across the body towards the hip of the non-throwing side.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Look at your target*
- *Point at the target (with your non-throwing hand)*
- *Swing your arm down and back as you prepare to throw*
- *Step forward and throw*
- *Follow through, down and across your body with your throwing arm.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Overarm Throw*:

- Use terminology like – “start with your hand near your hip”.
- During music and movement experiences – encourage children to transfer weight from one leg to another – forwards and backwards (like a rocking motion).
- During stretching and music and movement experiences – encourage children to twist/rotate their hips to encourage free movement through their hips.
- Target hit (eg place plastic cups on a table or bench in a tripod shape and encourage children to throw a ball or rolled up piece of newspaper to knock the cups down).
- To encourage follow through – place a scarf in the child’s non-throwing side pocket. This encourages children to collect the scarf as they follow through after ball release.

Tip: Get the children to point with their non-throwing hand in the direction of where they would like to throw the ball.

Kick

- The movement starts with a rapid, continuous approach to the ball.
- The child takes an elongated stride or leap just prior to ball contact.
- The non-kicking foot is placed close to the ball.
- The child kicks the ball with the shoelace areas or the inside of the preferred foot (not the toes).



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Keep your eyes on the ball*
- *Place your foot beside the ball before you kick*
- *Step forward and kick*
- *Swing the arm opposite to your kicking leg*
- *Swing your kicking leg back to follow through.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Kick*:

- Encourage children to kick a stationary ball. Progress to kicking a moving ball when they feel confident and competent.
- Role model using your shoelace area of the foot or inside of the preferred foot.
- Tie a balloon to the child's ankle and practice kicking the balloon with the shoelace area or inside of the preferred foot.
- Throughout music and movement experiences – encourage the children to kick their legs, whilst pointing their toes.
- Set up an obstacle course using masking tape or chalk. Encourage the children to kick the ball along the masking tape or chalk lines. Add arrows as an extension to this learning experience.
- Kicking bubbles during music and movement experiences (ensure you have adequate space).
- Draw large circles on the wall with chalk and encourage the children to kick the ball inside a large circle.
- Create tunnels for children to kick balls into or through eg cardboard boxes with holes cut out.
- Play games such as tunnel ball.
- Play a sport that involves kicking such as soccer.

Tip: Encourage kicking with a large ball first, then move to a smaller ball as the child's skills develop.

Stationary Dribble

- The child contacts the ball with one hand at about waist level
- They push the ball with their fingertips, not the palm of the hand
- The child maintains control of the ball for at least four consecutive bounces without moving their feet to retrieve the ball.



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Stand with your feet apart*
- *Hold the ball in your hand*
- *Hold the ball at the same height as your belly button*
- *Drop the ball, when it bounces back up to you push down with your fingertips*
- *Hold your hand like spider legs, not flat like a pancake*
- *Count four bounces.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Stationary Dribble*:

- Tie a balloon on to the children's wrist and encourage them to push the balloon up and down with their fingertips.
- Draw circles or place pictures on the ground and encourage the children to bounce the ball on the circle.
- For children who have mastered stationary dribbling, challenge them by asking them to dribble with their non-dominant hand.
- Dribble the ball races – place masking tape in a line and encourage the children to dribble the ball to the other end – 'who can get there first?'
- 'Busy bee bounce' – draw different coloured flowers and bees on the concrete. Encourage the children to bounce the ball on the flower or the bee and sing "Busy bee, busy bee, can you bounce your ball like me" (Hint – sing the song slowly and a number of times before stopping).
- Make a balloon ball – this is ideal for younger children.

Tip: Using terminology like 'put your hands like spider legs – rather than flat like a pancake' will help children.

Striking a Stationary Ball

- The child's preferred hand grips the bat above the non-preferred hand.
- The non-preferred hip and shoulder faces straight ahead.
- The hips and shoulders rotate and de-rotate during the swing.
- The child steps with the non-preferred foot.
- The child hits the ball sending it straight ahead.

As children master the striking of a stationary ball they can practice striking a self-bounced ball



Teaching cues, say to the children:

- *Stand side-on*
- *Keep your eyes on the ball*
- *Position your hands so they match your feet*
- *Use a big swing*
- *Step forward and swing*
- *Follow through.*

Ideas on how to promote and break down the components of *Striking a Stationary Ball*:

- During stretching, yoga, or music experiences – encourage the children to rotate their hips side to side also moving their weight from one leg to another.
- A bat can be made out of a pool noodle cut in half or rolled-up newspaper wrapped with masking tape.
- Tie balloons to the clothes line, or tree for children to practice hitting the balloon. Supervision is important.
- From a stable fixture such as a tree, hang several stockings with a bouncy ball inside. Make sure there is sufficient room in-between the children to safely swing their bat.
- Play games such as t-ball.

Tip: To find out the child's dominant hand – pass the child the bat – they will most likely use their dominate hand to take the bat.

Mini Olympics

Why provide opportunities for toddlers and preschool aged children to participate?

To develop the toddlers and preschool aged children's manipulative skills, such as, catch, underarm throw, overarm throw, kick, striking a stationary ball and stationary dribble through an intentionally planned Move learning experience.

When encouraging toddlers and preschool aged children to participate, it is important to:

- Ensure you have adequate space for the children to move around.
- Ensure you have sufficient amount of appropriate equipment ie balls, hoops, pool noodle, markers/cones, masking tape, chalk, skipping ropes, balance board and tunnel.
- Have the *Munch & Move* FMS lanyard cards with you to ensure correct techniques are being implemented.
- Have a selection of stations for the children to visit, such as:

Station 1: Catch – educator throws the ball to the child – the child then throws the ball into a basket/bucket.

Station 2: Underarm throw – set up skittles for the children to knock down.

Station 3: Overarm throw – encourage children to throw beanbags through a hoop suspended from fixture.

Station 4: Kick – encourage the children to kick the ball over the sandpit.

Station 5: Stationary dribble – children dribble a ball on a target on the ground.

Station 6: Striking a stationary ball – educator blows bubbles – children are encouraged to hit the bubbles using a pool noodle or rolled-up newspaper wrapped in masking tape.

Key points:

- Begin the activity by exploring events held during the Olympics.
- Explain and demonstrate the FMS incorporated within each of the stations.
- If more than one educator, divide the children so there is a group for each educator.
- The educator and the children move through the Mini Olympic stations – with lots of role modelling, praise and encouragement.
- The educator positively guides and supports the children's movements, and closely supervises at all times to ensure safety.

Extensions:

- Read books that relate to sports ie 'The Champion Hare' by Gwen Christie.
- This could be a great fundraiser to invite families and members of the community to participate.

Tip: To encourage involvement of all children it is important to be enthusiastic with lots of cheering, clapping and motivating.

Move ideas and learning experiences

The following *Move* ideas and learning experiences have been designed to provide educators with a range of active play learning experiences for babies, toddlers and preschool aged children that can easily be incorporated into early childhood programs and routines in both the indoor and outdoor environments.

The suggested experiences are presented in an order that allows for a logical progression of skills and sequentially support the children's gross motor and fundamental movement skills (FMS) development through active play. However, all children are individuals and learning experiences should be adapted (content, length, group size) by educators to meet the identity, strengths, abilities and interests of the children and to scaffold upon prior knowledge. Suggested resources can also be substituted with current ECEC service resources as required. You will find some of the ideas and learning experiences can be implemented with mixed age groups.

The *Move* ideas and learning experiences outline information that will support you in the planning and implementation of daily intentional *Move* learning experiences. This includes:

- A rationale
- The FMS(s) eg promoting and breaking down the FMS components
- Additional advice to support educators with the successful implementation of the learning experience.

For older toddlers and preschool aged children their 'Intentional FMS Experience' must also include the format of 'warm-up', 'FMS *Move* game' and 'cool-down'. The *Move* ideas and learning experiences can be combined as needed to create this format, with a selection of warm-up and cool-down experiences included as a guide.

As children learn through role modelling, *Munch & Move* recommends that educators are active role models by participating in active play experiences with the children while scaffolding their development. Importantly, adult participation in any physical activity increases the participation rates of children, especially if the adult demonstrates the enjoyment and value of being active. Physical activity is all about having fun!!!

Templates are available on the NSW *Healthy Kids* website. These will be useful for the implementation of the *Move* ideas and learning experiences suggested in this section of the *Munch & Move Resource Manual*.

Safety first!

- Close supervision of children is required at all times – especially for any experience where the equipment is raised (eg trestle).
- Ensure correct playground surfacing and regulatory requirements are met at all times.

Music

Why provide music experiences for babies?

Engaging in music experiences automatically encourages movement.

When engaging babies in a music experiences it is important to:

- Cradle the baby, sing/hum a tune and gently rock/sway baby – this will calm and soothe them, as well as stimulate their vestibular system.
- Sing simple, repetitive nursery rhymes and songs (including those from different cultures) with actions that you can help baby perform (eg 'Round & Round the Garden').
- Make up songs and chants, or make spontaneous changes to the words of familiar tunes, to match the activity/routine you are undertaking with the baby – be creative, incorporate movements.
- Introduce baby to a wide range of music: singing (including body percussion), instrumental, classical through to pop (using different tones and levels of sound) – link these to appropriate movements.
- Build up a repertoire of movement songs that the baby becomes familiar with. Music can be soothing or stimulating and can affect the baby's mood (eg lullabies for relaxing, playful/active songs for waking times).
- Sit the baby safely on your knee facing towards you. Sing a simple song and move the baby in response, eg bouncing, clapping their hands together – this is an opportunity to experience and enjoy music together.
- When reading stories, bring out the rhythms and the sounds, move with them, repeat them, play with them – let the baby physically experience them.

Tip: Introduce baby to a range of simple percussion instruments to move with and play.

Key points:

- Ensure all music experiences are undertaken in an appropriate space, safely and are closely supervised at all times.
- Newborn babies learn by hearing different tones and different levels of sounds. Very early on babies show their awareness of sound by responding with movement.
- By four months of age babies will coordinate their senses and muscles to turn and track the source of sounds.
- Around six months of age babies are usually fascinated with sound from any source as well as experimenting with their own vocal sounds and will respond with chuckling, movement and babbling.
- As babies gain confidence in stability and locomotor skills (stand, walk, dance), educators should offer verbal and physical support (positive encouragement and holding the babies hands).



Rocking and swaying experiences

Why provide gentle rocking and swaying experiences for babies?

Did you know - When you 'rock and sway' a baby, the fluid in the baby's inner ear washes over all the tiny hairs and nerve endings and sends messages to the baby's brain about balance/imbalance. This movement experience is stimulating the vestibular system – sense of balance - within the inner ear.

When engaging babies in a 'rocking and swaying experience' it is important to:

- Hold the baby in your arms and gently sway the baby from side to side.
- Sit on the floor with the baby in your lap, with his/her back resting against your torso – gently rock backwards and forwards.
- While you are standing, support the baby to lay face down in your arms by holding under his/her chest and hips.
- Place baby on his/her back on the floor – gently rock the baby from side to side – no more than 45 degrees. The baby's head will move accordingly. Ensure baby is comfortable by placing a blanket underneath them.
- These experiences could be undertaken to related music/songs (eg gentle and flowing music for swaying).

Tip: This is a lovely experience to do with babies as they are going to sleep. You could softly sing to them to help relax them before their rest.

Remember: If the baby has not established independent neck and head control, support the neck and head at all times during these experiences.

Tip: Include gentle rocking and swaying on the daily routine/program as this will ensure it happens daily. It will also show families how rocking and swaying is an important physical activity for babies.



Tummy Time

Why provide opportunities for babies to play on their tummy whilst supervised every day?

Tummy time improves a baby's ability to lift their head and chest off the floor and take weight through the arms. Tummy time tones and strengthens baby's head, neck and back muscles, and develops their spatial awareness and balance. Whilst babies are having tummy time, it allows them to track moving objects.

When engaging babies in a tummy time experience, it is important to:

- Choose a suitable time, when babies are not tired or hungry.
- Place a soft floor covering (eg baby blanket, mat) for the baby to lie on.
- Interact with the babies whilst supervising – talking calmly to reassure them that they are okay, encouraging their movement and also assisting with language development.
- Use a variety of appropriate and interesting baby toys that encourage the baby to lift his/her head, look, track, reach for and grasp (large and small, different textures, bright colours or high contrast colours, sound making, moving).
- Variety of appropriate and interesting baby toys.



Key points for promoting tummy time:

- The baby must be closely supervised for safety.
- Place toys invitingly onto a blanket in an appropriate floor space – consider the positioning of the toys to ensure they are placed within baby's sight.
- Position the baby on their tummy onto the blanket.
- Sit on the floor with the baby to play – getting down to their level.
- Move and roll toys in front of the baby – motivating them to lift their head to look and to track movement with their eyes.
- In a group setting, position babies so they are facing each other.
- Use (unbreakable) mirrors so that the baby can see themselves– this encourages them to get their head up.
- Use bubbles to get baby's attention.

Tip: The time spent in tummy time will increase with age and ability – at first it may only be 10 seconds, increasing to around 10 minutes.



Extension:

Reaching for toys

- During tummy time, place a toy or rattle in front of the baby to one side and encourage them to reach for the toy using one hand at a time. This enables the baby to learn to shift their weight onto one arm and balance in this position and coordinate both hands.
- Catching has its foundation in a baby's tummy time as he/she tracks a moving object – a skill you need if you are going to be able to catch something coming towards you.



Pushaways

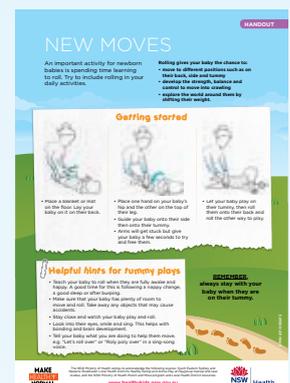
During tummy time, sit behind the baby and place your hands against their feet– their legs should be slightly bent. The baby will push and move away from your hands, moving forward. Use an interesting toy in front of baby to encourage forward movement.

Tip: Include tummy time on your daily routine/program as this will ensure it happens daily. It will also show families how tummy time is such an important physical activity for babies.

Key points

- Choose a suitable time for babies (eg when they are fed and rested).
- Babies may find it easier to lift their head and lean on their arms if a rolled towel is placed under their chests.
- Babies who suffer from reflux may need to be slightly inclined (eg use a small, wedge-shaped or boomerang pillow).
- Interact with babies on the floor – they respond better if you are on the ground with them.
- Babies can be safely carried on their tummies for short periods.
- Talk in a calm voice while playing with babies – this will not only reassure them but also help develop their speech and language.
- Baby toys should be bright and colourful, or high contrast colours (black, red and white), to attract the baby's attention.
- Never use a toy which will fit entirely into a baby's mouth.

The **Newborn Moves** posters are part of the *Active Play for Birth to 12 Months* resources – these resources include many ideas for physical activity for babies including tummy time and also have great parent handouts. This resource is available on the NSW *Healthy Kids* website.



Tip: If a baby isn't happy with tummy time on the floor, try other tummy time methods – for example, tummy time could be undertaken lying across your lap, lying on your chest, or by holding the baby tummy down along your forearm.

Playing on back

Why provide opportunities for babies to play on their back?

Encouraging babies to play on their backs allows them to practice reaching for toys and kicking as they learn control and direct movements. This provides opportunities for babies to track moving objects, which, like tummy time is an important skill for catching. Playing on their back provides a good opportunity for babies to find and explore their feet and legs.

When engaging with baby's whilst they are playing on their back, it is important to:

- Supervise baby closely.
- Place a soft floor covering (eg baby blanket, mat) for the baby to lie on.
- Add a variety of interesting and appropriate toys for the baby to play with. Baby toys should be bright and colourful, or high contrast colours (black, red and white), to attract the baby's attention.
- Ensure there is appropriate floor space.
- Sit on the floor with baby to play.
- Encourage baby's movement – reaching for and grasping toys with hands, and kicking toys with feet.



Tip: Hold or safely suspend toys from a frame so the baby can reach or kick the toys.

Extension:

• Side playing

Lying on their side is also a good position for young babies to start to learn to reach for a toy at an early age. Remember to place babies on both their right and left sides.

• Leg movements

While the baby is lying on their back, gently bend and straighten their legs – together and individually – up and down, in and out. This movement could be undertaken to the beat of a simple nursery rhyme or song. This leg movement is ideal to do during nappy change time (eg movements stimulate muscle tone and knee flexibility – important for later movement).

Key points

- Babies initially have random movements of their arms and legs.
- Never use a toy which will fit entirely into a baby's mouth.
- Encourage reaching and grasping by providing baby toys with areas/surfaces that can be held by the baby. Larger baby toys that make a noise can be used to encourage babies to kick.

Pivoting and creeping on tummy

Why provide opportunities for babies to play on their tummy whilst supervised every day?

When babies are provided with the opportunity to play on their tummy every day, it develops their muscle tone and strength, balance and spatial awareness in preparation for crawling. When babies develop these, they will move on to pivoting on the tummy. This is where the baby will turn their tummy around on the floor.

When encouraging babies to pivot on their tummy, it is important to:

- Ensure there is appropriate floor coverings (eg baby blanket, mat) for the baby to lie on.
- Add a variety of interesting and appropriate baby toys; you can place these in front of the baby or to the side.
- Sit on the floor with the baby and engage in play.
- Talk in a calm voice while playing with baby to reassure them and help develop their speech and language.

Tip: Interact with babies on the floor – babies will respond better if you are on the ground with them.

Extension - Creeping stage (one step closer towards crawling)

Key Points:

- To encourage forward movement (creeping), sit behind the baby and place your hands gently against baby's feet – baby's legs should be slightly bent. The baby will push and move away from your hands, moving forward.
- Provide baby toys that move, make a sound or play music to stimulate babies to move towards the toy.
- Encourage the older children to get down on the floor too, this is a great opportunity for the older children to role model.



Rolling from back to tummy

Why provide opportunities for babies to practise rolling from their back to their tummy?

When babies are given the opportunity daily to practice rolling from their back to their tummy, it helps develop the baby's ability to move on the floor. Through these daily opportunities, the baby's muscle strength, balance and spatial awareness strengthen as they prepare to crawl.

The Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep¹³ state that infants should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (eg, in a stroller, car seat or high chair).

When encouraging babies to pivot on their tummy it is important to:

- Ensure there are appropriate floor coverings (eg baby blanket, mat) for the baby to lie on.
- Use interesting toys to stimulate movement.
- Position the baby on their back on a blanket/mat in an appropriate floor space.
- Sit on the floor with baby to play.

Key points

- Babies will roll from back to tummy, before rolling from tummy to back.
- Help babies develop this skill by guiding them to roll each time they need to be moved or picked up.
- Some babies will use rolling to move around the room, while others will only roll to change their position.

Tip: Assist baby to roll by guiding the movement at the pelvis and supporting the head – slowly perform the action so the baby has time to respond and can then use his/her own muscles to help complete the movement.

Extension:

When the baby is able to start reaching for a toy, encourage him/her to roll by moving the toy to the side - as baby reaches for the toy, move the toy in front so baby learns to complete the roll from his/her back to his/her tummy.

For toddlers and preschool aged children encourage them to join the baby on the floor while you sing 'Everybody rolling'. Remember, close supervision will be important at all times during this learning experience.



Supported and independent sitting

Why provide opportunities to encourage supported and independent sitting?

Supporting babies whilst sitting helps them to strengthen their body, and helps with their sitting balance.

When encouraging supported sitting, it is important to:

- Supervise baby closely by sitting with them.
- Place the sitting baby onto the blanket/mat, supporting baby's sitting position by either holding the baby or by using support pillows. Make the space inviting by placing appropriate toys close by.
- Provide a variety of appropriate and interesting baby toys.

Tip: It is important for the baby to learn to keep their weight forward in sitting so they do not fall backwards. This can be encouraged by suspending toys in front of the baby so they have to bend at the hips to reach for the toys.

Extension - Independent sitting

When encouraging independent sitting, it is important to:

- Supervise baby closely.
- Place blanket/mat in an appropriate floor space.
- Sit the baby on the blanket with a variety of graspable toys.
- Position support pillows behind the baby for safety but not touching baby, so they do not learn to lean on the pillows but instead develop their own balance.
- Sit on the floor in front of the baby to play together with the toys. This helps the baby to keep their weight forward and develop sitting balance.



Key points:

- When picking babies up from lying, move them into sitting position first so they learn to bend at the hips and spend a short time in sitting prior to being picked up.
- Following the movement of toys or people helps babies develop the ability to move their head while maintaining their sitting balance.

Extension:

Place toys in front and to either side of the baby and encourage them to practice reaching for the toys and picking them up.

Tip: Toys suspended at chest height encourage babies to reach upward, strengthening their back muscles while developing their balance skills.

Sitting to tummy and sitting to crawling

Why provide opportunities to encourage sitting to tummy and sitting to crawling?

When babies have the opportunity to move from the sitting position to their tummy then back into sitting position, it helps to develop their balance and movement skills. This movement allows babies to shift weight and balance in the crawl position, and can lead onto crawling.

When encouraging sitting to tummy to sitting, it is important to:

- Supervise baby closely.
- Ensure there are appropriate floor coverings (eg baby blanket, mat) for the baby to lie on.
- Add a variety of interesting and appropriate baby toys that are graspable.
- Sit on the floor with the baby on the blanket/mat in an appropriate floor space.
- Encourage the baby to move onto their tummy to reach the toys.
- Encourage the baby to move back into the sitting position by holding toys above and to the side of them.

Key points

- Once babies have developed this skill they can perform it without prompting.

Tip: Position toys invitingly in front of and to the side of the baby – slightly out of reach.

Extension - Sitting to crawling position (nine to 10 months)

When encouraging sitting to crawling, it is important to:

- Supervise baby closely.
- Sit on the floor with the baby on the blanket/mat in an appropriate floor space.
- Position toys in front and to the side of the baby – a short distance away so they have to move into a crawl position to reach the toys.
- Baby will practice rocking to and fro on all fours and playing with toys in this crawl position.

Key points:

- When babies can move into a crawl position, provide them with large toys so they can practice taking weight through one arm and reaching with the other.
- Once babies can crawl, their new found mobility will allow them to access previously unexplored areas of their environment.

Crawling obstacle course

Why provide opportunities to encourage babies to crawl?

When babies are given the opportunity to practise crawling through obstacles, it supports the cross-pattern movement. Crawling further develops spatial awareness, body strength and hand-eye coordination.

When encouraging babies to crawl through obstacles, it is important to:

- Use a variety of appropriate equipment eg cushions, low, soft foam shapes (eg vinyl covered foam wedge) tunnel, ball and/or bubble blower.
- Supervise baby closely. Give babies assistance when they come to a change in height on the equipment. If it is a low drop in height they can come down hands first. If it is higher drop in height, babies need to be assisted to turn so they can learn how to safely come down backwards on a step.
- Ensure adequate spacing between each piece of equipment.
- Encourage baby to crawl over and through the obstacles – join in with them.

Key point:

- To encourage the baby to crawl through the circuit they could follow their favourite toy or ball, or chase and catch bubbles.

Extension:

- Providing different surfaces to crawl on such as carpet, grass, soft mats and low cushions or blocks and wedges to crawl over, help to challenge and develop baby's balance and problem solving skills.

Tip: Crawling involves 'cross patterning' – the right arm and left leg go forwards, then the left arm and right leg. This cross-pattern movement occurs in the standard walking and running movements, as well as many of the locomotor and manipulative FMS.



Pulling to stand

Why provide opportunities to encourage babies and toddlers to pull themselves up?

Babies should be encouraged to explore their environment to promote the use of all their muscles by moving, stretching and flexing, which are the precursors of independent walking.

When encouraging babies and toddlers to pull themselves up to stand, it is important to:

- Ensure the furniture is low and stable (eg table, lounge, soft foam shapes).
- Use a variety of appropriate and interesting toys.
- Place the baby/toddler in a sitting position on the floor next to the low stable furniture - side on, not facing it, so they are able to pull themselves up and down.



Tip: Place toys on the furniture and attract baby's/toddler's attention to these toys.

Key points:

- Turning towards the toys will make it easier for them to pull up into a kneeling position and from there into a standing position.
- Once babies/toddlers are crawling, they will approach the furniture front on and will pull straight up to a kneeling position and then to stand.
- Babies/toddlers learn to pull to stand first before they develop the ability to move from standing to sitting with control, so they tend to become stuck standing up or fall back down onto their bottoms.

Extension:

- Offer a toy down towards the floor so they will bend their knees to reach for it. This will teach the baby/toddler how to start the movement of stand to sit.

Standing to play

Why provide opportunities to encourage babies and toddlers to stand up to play?

Encouraging babies and toddlers to stand whilst playing, helps in strengthening their muscle tone and ability to balance in the standing position – a precursor for walking.

*The Australian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (birth to 5 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep*¹³ state that infants should not be restrained for more than 1 hour at a time (eg, in a stroller, car seat or high chair).

When encouraging babies and toddlers to stand up to play, it is important to:

- Ensure the furniture is low and stable (eg table, lounge, soft foam shapes).
- Place a variety of appropriate and interesting toys on the low table/furniture to encourage the babies/toddlers to visit the area.
- Baby/toddler should stand with their feet flat on the ground and slightly apart so that their feet are in line with their shoulders. The baby/toddler will need assistance until they become more proficient at this skill.
- Initially the baby/toddler will be unable to move from standing back to sitting, so will need assistance to sit down when he/she becomes tired of standing.

Tip: Ensure the environment is safe for babies/toddlers to explore – eg soft corners. Supervision is essential!

Key points:

- The ability of the baby/toddler to take weight through their legs increases with age, as does their control in standing, however this may disappear again briefly during the time babies are perfecting their sitting balance.
- It is important to provide a variety of surfaces for babies/toddlers to stand at and play with toys to help develop their balance in standing.



Cruising circuit

Why encouraging babies and toddlers to cruise around a circuit?

Encouraging babies and toddlers to practice moving around low equipment/furniture helps with their control and balance whilst in the standing position – necessary for independent walking.

When encouraging babies and toddlers to cruise along equipment/furniture, it is important to:

- Ensure the furniture is low and stable (eg table, lounge, soft foam shapes).
- Provide a variety of appropriate and interesting toys (eg ball or car).
- Position the baby/toddler in a standing position at the low furniture and encourage them to play with the toys.
- Once settled, using the toys encourage the baby/toddler to walk sideways:
 - along the edge of the furniture in both directions
 - around the inside of a corner
 - around the outside of a corner
 - between two pieces of stable furniture.
- Assist the baby/toddler to move by supporting them at the pelvis and gently lifting one leg out to the side so that they take a step. Guide their weight onto this leg and they will bring the other leg in.

Tip: Arranging different surfaces such as soft lounge chairs and tables, as well as furniture at different heights, further enhances the baby's skill and balance in cruising.

Key points:

- Initially babies/toddlers may just lean with their arms and upper body to reach the toy and not move their feet. They will quickly learn that this limits how far they can reach and will start to move their feet.
- Babies/toddlers need to practice walking sideways along the furniture both to the right and to the left.
- Babies/toddlers are cruising at this stage but not yet walking and need time to strengthen the legs for later independent walking. During the cruising stage do not encourage walking by holding their hand.

Extension:

When the baby/toddler is confident in cruising around the different heights, they can be challenged by moving the furniture slightly apart so they can practice letting go of one piece of equipment and moving to another.



Independent walking

Why provide toddlers the opportunities to independently walk?

Encouraging toddlers with plenty of opportunity throughout the day to practice independent walking helps strengthen their control and balance.

When encouraging toddlers to independently walk, it is important to:

- Position the toddler in an appropriate floor space away from any obstacles they may hit or fall on.
- Position yourself approximately two metres away from the toddler and encourage them to walk towards you.
- Once toddler has successfully achieved this distance, the distance can be increased.
- Encourage them to hold a trolley or toy pram with two hands.

Key points:

- Direct the toddler's attention to where they are walking and placing their feet.

Extension:

- When they are confident walking around the environment, set up a walking obstacle course (eg cushions, low soft foam wedge and foam shapes). Encourage and assist the toddler to walk over the obstacles – give one hand for support until their stability skills have improved.
- As the toddler becomes competent in walking independently around the obstacle course, add different surfaces (small ramps, uneven surfaces). It is important to always remain close to the toddler to offer support when needed.

Tip: Ask the toddler to hold on to a large toy (eg ball or teddy bear) with two hands, as this will help the child with their balance.



Warm-up

Why provide opportunities to encourage children to warm up?

Encouraging children to warm up their muscles and brain ready to start playing the *Move* games, increases core body temperature and reduces the risk of muscle injury.

As adults, we know how important it is to warm up our body before doing physical activity. Encouraging children to do the same is helping them to form good habits for future participation in active play and sports.

The warm-up should be approximately three to five minutes in duration. It starts with one or more action songs (depending on their length) that gradually increase in intensity.

The action song/s warm the muscles up before undertaking gentle stability skill movements (stretch, bend, twist and/or balance) - never stretch cold muscles.

Tip: Warm-ups are a great opportunity to discuss with children about their heart rate, and how it changes when we move.

Ask the children to place their hands on their chest to feel their heart rate before starting their warm-up. After one song ask the children to place their hand on their heart to feel it increasing to a faster beat.

Start with an action song/s:

Choose one or two familiar 'action songs' to start the warm-up. Some examples include:

- *If you're happy and you know it*
- *Heads, shoulders, knees and toes*
- *Hokey Pokey*
- *Shane & Josh*
- *Wombat Wobble*
- *The warm up song – Munch & Move CD – Track 3*
- *Johnny works with one hammer*

If the action song is only short, be creative and link several action songs together that gradually increase in intensity – remember the children's muscles must be warmed-up before undertaking gentle stability skills.



Be creative

Think of other actions that could be added to the songs - including actions that will be covered in the *Move* game as this will help prepare the children for these movements (eg jumping up and down, running on the spot). Encourage ideas from the children

Stability Skills - Balance, Stretch, Bend and Twist

Demonstrate then guide the children through a combination of five of the following gentle stability skills movements:

Balance

- **Body balance** - Stand with both feet flat on the floor and keep the body straight and still. Ask the children to focus their eyes ahead on a point that is not moving and spread their arms out to keep balance. Ask the children to do each of the following:
 - balance on both feet with eyes shut
 - stand on one foot with their eyes shut
 - stand on tiptoes without moving
 - stand on both feet and reach out to each side.
- **Cat balance** – Start on all fours like a cat. Ask the children to do each of the following and hold for the count of five seconds:
 - balance on two hands and one knee (swap knees)
 - balance on two knees and two elbows
 - balance on one knee and one hand (swap).
- **Knee taps** - Stand and lift up the right knee and tap it with the left hand and return to standing with both feet on the ground. Next lift up the left knee and touch it with the right hand and return to standing with both feet on the ground. Repeat this three times on each side.
- **Hand push** – Ask each child to kneel opposite another child. Ask them to hold their hands up in front and push against each other's hands. To make this activity harder, ask the children to try standing on one foot and see who can hold their balance the longest. Make sure you have mats or other soft materials to fall into.
- **Feet push** - Ask children to lie down in pairs on a large mat; children need to be on their backs with their feet up in the air, knees bent and feet touching. Ask them to push their feet up against their partner's feet. Hold for the count of five seconds.



Stretch and Bend

- **Good morning stretch** - Ask children to lie on their back and pretend they are still in bed and just waking up. Ask them to slowly stretch as wide as possible (like sunshine), then ask them to stretch as long as possible (like a tall tree).
- **Cat balance stretch** – Start on all fours like a cat. Ask the children to point one arm forward and stretch the opposite leg back. Try to balance on the hand and knee that remain on the ground. Hold this for a count of five seconds. Swap to the opposite leg and arm and repeat the cat balance stretch.
- **Toe touch and sky reaches** – Stand with feet apart and knees slightly bent. Ask the children to bend forward and try to touch their ankles or toes. Then walk their fingers up their legs and stretch one arm up to the sky, then stretch the other arm up to the sky. Repeat.
- **Arm stretch** – Ask children to move into the sitting position. Ask them to place one hand behind their back and the other one over their shoulder and see if they can touch their fingers. Repeat on the other side.
- **Finger stretch** – Ask children to move into the sitting position and interlock the fingers of both hands, then gently try to straighten the arms, pushing the palms of the fingers forward. Hold this stretch for the count of five seconds, relax and then repeat.
- **Figure eights** – Use the right hand to draw a figure-eight in the air towards the front and side of the body – repeat about five times. Now do the same using the left hand.
- **Windmills** – Stretch arms out to the sides and gently circle arms forward and backwards in small circles. Repeat the windmill action but this time use big circles.
- **Shoulder shrugs and rolls** – Shrug shoulders up and down five times each. Repeat. Roll the shoulders forward and backward five times each. Repeat.
- **Head nods and jelly shakes** – Standing tall, gently nod the head as if saying 'yes'. Shake each arm, then each leg and then wiggle the whole body like jelly.

Twist

- **Body twists** – Stand with legs apart and hands on the hips. Keeping the hips still, ask the children to rotate their upper body to face the right and hold this position for the count of five seconds, then return the body to face the front. Now do the same to the left. Repeat.

Music and movement

Why provide music experiences for toddlers and preschool aged children?

Engaging in music experiences automatically encourages movement.

Ways to encourage physical activity through music experiences:

- Become familiar with a repertoire of children's rhymes, songs, musical games and music (eg instrumental, classical, pop) - including those from different cultures.
- Use simple percussion instruments to accompany music and inspire movement - encourage children to move to the rhythm and the beat.
- Add props to move with (eg scarves, streamers, ribbons, balloons).
- Include music that uses large muscle movements (eg running, jumping, galloping, hopping, side-sliding, leaping and skipping).
- Encourage children to spontaneously and freely explore the way their bodies can expressively respond to different types of music (eg live, recorded, classical, instrumental, pop). Move with the children, demonstrating the way your body responds to this music.
- Use varied action songs for children to move with and practice their physical skills.
- Choose simple rhythmic songs with plenty of repetition and regular, predictable rhymes and sequences – encourage the children to move their bodies in response.
- Explore simple percussion instruments and ask children questions such as 'What sounds do they make?' 'Can you make different sounds?' 'Can you move like these sounds?' eg flying like a fairy as the 'triangle' percussion instrument plays or stomping like a giant with the beating of a 'drum'.
- Play musical games where the song/instrument directs the children how to move (eg 'If you're happy and you know it jump up and down').
- Dramatise animal movements with simple music accompaniment (eg beating the drum to the movement of an elephant or dinosaur).
- For favourite songs that include no movement or very minimal movement, add appropriate movement/actions – get movement ideas from the children.
- Once a song is familiar, try to be consistent with the actions performed - children enjoy participating in and performing actions they know.
- Ask children to make sounds with their bodies (eg body percussion). This encourages children to tune into sounds and to explore and increase their awareness of their bodies, as well as being active.
- Print movement cards – place them on the floor and the children dance around the room.
- Play musical statues with the children.
- Become familiar with unknown tracks on the CD rather than going to the same track each time.



Celebrating music and movement from around the world

Music and movement experiences are a perfect opportunity to explore various cultures from around the world. Ask parents or members from your local community to visit your service and teach the children cultural dances/movement. Research these dances on the internet and practice them with the children:



- **India:** Bollywood
- **Brazil:** Samba
- **China:** Dragon Dance
- **Cuba:** Salsa
- **Russia:** Ballet
- **Switzerland:** Traditional Folk Dance
- **Argentina:** Tango
- **Japanese:** Kabuki
- **Australian:** Aboriginal dancing
- **Scotland:** Highland dancing
- **Ireland:** Irish dancing
- **Africa:** African tribal dancing



It's time to get creative!

Choose popular songs which the children like such as 'Do your ears hang low?' You could change the words to encourage more movement.

Sing to the tune of 'Do your ears hang low?'

'Can you flap your arms, can you shake them round and round.
Can you jump up high, can you sit on the ground.

Can you shake your body really, really fast...can you flap your arms.
Can you nod your head up and down.
Can you reach to the sky then lie on the ground.
Can you roll on the floor then jump up high.
Can you nod your head.

Can you slide side to side then spin round and round.
Can you touch your head, can you sit on the ground.
Can wiggle your body really, really fast, can you nod your head'.

Created by Jodie Rusten

Remember, songs normally sung sitting down can be modified to include more gross motor movement. You could adapt a known song and change the words based on a current interest, while still being mindful of the *Munch & Move* key messages.

If you're happy and you know it, spin around,
If you're happy and you know it, spin around,
If you're happy and you know it, then you really ought to show it,
If you're happy and you know it, spin around

If you're happy and you know it, jump up high.

If you're happy and you know it, start to hop.

If you're happy and you know it, wiggle your body.

Upsy-down Town

In Upsy-down Town (*every time you say 'Upsy' you stand up and every time you say 'down' you crouch down*) the sky is in the sea,

The rabbits in the nest (*bounce around like a rabbit*) where the birds should be (fly like a bird),

The rain is falling up (*move your body up*) instead of falling down (then move your body down)

Down in Upsy-down Town (*stand up and then crouch down*).

There's a chocolate cake as white as snow (*crouching down on the ground make a circle shape with your arms out the front of your body*),

The more you eat, the bigger it grows (*stand up slowly and stretch your arms out far*),

You walk upon your nose (*put your head down to the ground*) instead of on your toes (*stand up on your tippy toes*),

Down in Upsy-down Town (*stand up and then crouch down*).

Remember the *Munch & Move* key messages – what could the words 'chocolate cake' be changed to?

Change the words to familiar songs.

Open shut them,
Open shut them,
Lie down on the ground.

Open shut them,
Open shut them,
Spin around and around.

Stamp them, stamp them,
Stamp them, stamp them,
Hard down on the floor.

Open wide your little arms,
Then point them to the door!!

Shake them, shake them,
Shake them, shake them,
Shake your legs like this.

Roll them, roll them,
Roll them, roll them,
Blow a little kiss.

Action story:

If a child has a particular interest, try to create an action story. Below is an example of an action story written to extend a child's interest with the ocean.

Living under the sea

If you could live in the ocean, what would you be?
Would you be a bright coloured fish, swimming through the sea?

(swim around the room)

Would you swim really fast - round and round, ***(swim really fast)***
Or would you swim really slow and have a rest on the sea ground?

(swim slowly, then lower down to the ground)

Maybe you would be a dolphin and clap your hands super fast,
(clap your hands)

Wait! Was that a great white shark that just swam past?

(swim with your hand above your head like a fin)

You are now an octopus with 8 floppy legs that wiggle.

(wiggle your arms and legs)

You brush past the seaweed and it starts to tickle. ***(the educator brushes past the children with create paper pretending it is seaweed)***

Oh no! The waves are getting strong, they make you swirl around on the sand. ***(stand up and move your body like big crashing waves)***

Quick!!! Find a friend close to you and hold their hand.

(hold a friend's hands)

Together, you find a rock to hide underneath.

(sit down on the ground and huddle into a ball)

Here, you will stay safe together hiding under the coral reef.

(tuck your head into your knees and hide)

Created by Jodie Rusten

Extension:

You could extend this by reading books related to the ocean:

- 'Smiley Shark and the Tickly Octopus' by Ruth Galloway
- 'Commotion in the ocean' by Giles Andrea and illustrated by David Wojtowycz
- 'The rainbow fish' by Marcus Pfister
- 'Where the forest meets the sea' by Jeannie Baker



Books promoting movement

There are many books that promote movement. Books can be used to introduce different types of dances with the children. Examples could include:

- 'Dancing with Grandma' by Rosemary Mastnak
- 'Dancing Feet' by Linsey Craig & Mack Brown
- 'Tallulah's Tutu' by Marilyn Singer
- 'Giant Dance Party' by Betsy Bird
- 'Hernando Fandango – The Great Dancing Dog' by Rachel Swirles
- 'Dragonfly dance' by Rebecca Johnson
- 'Herbie Dances' by Charlotte van Emst
- 'How Can You Dance?' by Rick Walton and Ana Lopez-Escriva
- 'Song and Dance Man' by Karen Ackerman and Stephen Gammell
- 'Giraffes Can't Dance' by Giles Andreae

Bring the book to life! Next time you read 'We're going on a bear hunt', ask the children to go on their very own bear hunt.



Cool-down

Why encourage toddlers and preschool aged children to cool down after a physical activity game?

The cool-down helps children relax their muscles after playing the *Move* games. Like the warm-up, the cool-down reduces the risk of muscle injury and forms good habits for future participation in active play and sports.

The cool-down will also give children time to settle and relax before moving to other experiences.

Key point:

The cool-down should be approximately three to five minutes in duration. It begins with one or more action songs, followed by a transition song (decreasing in intensity) and finishes with a relaxation experience.

- **Start with an action song(s)**

Choose a familiar action song to start the cool-down. Some examples include:

- *'Here we go round the Mulberry Bush'*
- *'What can you do Punchinello?'*
- *'If you're happy and you know it'*
- *'Dr Knickerbocker'*
- *'Giddyup Horsey'*
- *'One Finger, One Thumb'*
- *'Can you point your finger and do the twist?'*

If the action song is only short, be creative and link a couple of action songs together.

Use a variety of movements to reinforce different actions covered in the *Move* game eg to the tune of *'Mulberry Bush'* sing *'Let's all jump up and down, up and down, up and down, let's all jump up and down, and then it's time to stop'*.

- **Transition song (to move from vigorous to quiet activity)**

Choose another familiar action song (eg *'Everybody do this'*), incorporating slow movements into this action song – gradually decreasing the amount and speed of movement required eg *'Everybody swaying, swaying, swaying, everybody swaying nice and slow'*.



- **Relaxation**

Demonstrate then guide the children through a gentle relaxation – examples include:

- **Scarf stretches** - Give each child a scarf to hold. Lead the children in breathing slowly in and out as they lift and lower their scarves. Extend to stretching high and low - reaching for the stars, curling up like a cat. Demonstrate breathing in as you stretch up high and out as you curl down low. Repeat this experience two to three times to ensure children have relaxed and have coordinated their breathing and movement together.

- **Breathing** - Ask the children to stand and breathe in through their open mouths. Ask them to put their hand close to their mouth while they inhale (breathe in), ask 'does it feel warm or cool?' Now ask the children to exhale (breathe out) through their mouths and ask 'how does it feel now, warm or cool?' Ask the children to compare the temperature of their breath while inhaling and exhaling.

*Wriggle your toes in the sun,
Lovely and warm, lovely and warm,
Wriggle your toes in the sun.*

Change the words as you direct the children's attention up the body: knees, tummy, nose, eyes, etc.

*Feel the sun on your knees,
Lovely and warm, lovely and warm,
Feel the sun on your knees.*

To wake the children up get them to slowly sit up and sing these last two verses.

*Wriggle your nose in the sun, etc.
Flutter your eyes in the sun, etc.*

- **Cat curl and cow call** - Ask the children to kneel on all fours. As they inhale (breathe in), they curl their back up like a cat. When they exhale (breathe out) they relax their back and say 'Moo' like a cow.

- Create your own cool-down story based on children's current interests.
- Use instruments to cool-down – start off playing a faster beat and then softly slow it down.
- Encourage children to take big deep breaths by throwing a feather in the air, and slowly breathing out until the feather hits the floor.

Cool-down experiences are a great opportunity to discuss with children about their heart rate and how it changes from beating fast to slowing down as their body cools down.

Before the cool-down experience ask the children to put their hands on their chest and feel how fast their heart is racing! Throughout the cool-down experience encourage the children to keep monitoring their heart rate to see if it is slowing down.

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