

Physical Development in Early Childhood Development

- Physical development refers to the child's physical growth and ability to control the body as it changes.
- It is measured by how well a child is able to control the movement of their muscles and perform actions that require the brain and body to work together. These are called motor skills.
- Motor skills have two parts: fine motor skills (small muscle movements) and gross motor skills (large muscle movements).

Gross Motor Skills (Big Movements)

- Supporting own head
- Sitting without support
- Rolling over
- Walking, running, climbing
- Catching objects
- Riding tricycle

0-12 months



1-2 years



2-5 years

Fine Motor Skills (Small Movements)

- Playing with hands
- Holding toy with both hands
- Putting one block on top of another
- Using a zipper
- Fastening/unfastening buttons
- Colouring in neatly

What you can do to help babies and toddlers/pre-schoolers to develop physically



Support your baby's body and head when you hold them



Help your baby see your face when you talk or play with her or him



Spend time together on the floor and provide tummy time



As babies learn to crawl and walk, encourage them to move toward you before picking them up



Offer teething rings, sucking toys, rattles, and other things to reach and grab



Play catch using a ball



Hold on to your baby's or toddler's feet, moving them gently as you sing songs like "The Wheels on the Bus"



Put on some music and dance with your child



Go for a walk with your child and provide opportunities for your child to run, jump, hop and use their muscles



Get creative with some crayons, finger paints or playdough