



## Have a Ball Together!

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by/par health **nexus** santé

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# Physical activity for 1.5-2.5 year olds

Physical activity is important for all children – even toddlers who still may be a little unsteady on their feet. For toddlers, physical activity is all about exploring new challenges and having fun with movement!

## Guidelines

### Physical Activity Guidelines

- Toddlers should accumulate 180 minutes of physical activity at any intensity spread throughout the day, including:
  - A variety of activities in different environments.
  - Activities that develop movement skills.

### Canadian Sedentary Behaviour Guidelines

- Adults should minimize the amount of time toddlers spend being sedentary (doing very little physical movement) during waking hours. This includes prolonged sitting or being restrained (e.g., stroller, car seat) for more than 1 hour at a time.
- For those under 2 years, screen time (e.g., TV, computer, electronic games) is not recommended.
- For children 2-4 years, screen time should be limited to under 1 hour per day but less is better.

## Benefits

Physical activity helps your toddler:

- Build a healthy heart, lungs, bones, muscles and joints
- Increase energy
- Improve coordination and balance
- Develop social skills
- Nurture imagination and creativity
- Better control their emotions
- Build a foundation for more difficult movement in the preschool years

## Skills to Develop

Here are some physical skills you can help your toddler develop:

- Walking up the stairs
- Pushing and pulling objects while walking forward
- Running
- Walking backwards
- Kicking a ball
- Jumping with 2 feet





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## Tips

To help your toddler develop their movement skills, you can:

- Choose age- and skill-appropriate activities.
- Provide lots of opportunities to explore movement.
- Be an active role model and play with your toddler.
- Make sure the activity is fun so your toddler enjoys their active time.
- Explore different types of physical activity so your toddler can figure out what they enjoy.
- Keep your toddler interested by providing lots of variety.
- Involve your toddler in picking what games and activities are played.
- Try something active instead of watching the TV.
- Encourage outside play as children are more active when outside.
- Remember to be positive, enthusiastic and provide plenty of encouragement.

## Activity Ideas

Here are some activity examples to get your toddler moving:

- Roll a ball for your toddler to chase.
- Help your toddler build a fort out of cushions, blankets and chairs.
- Sing songs with actions.
- Have your toddler move like different animals.
- Use a bed sheet like a parachute.
- Try to keep a balloon in the air.
- Dance around with ribbons or scarves.
- Practice throwing a stuffed animal into a laundry basket.
- Push a doll in a stroller or pull a stuffed animal in a wagon.
- Try a game of bowling with plastic bottles.

Whether at home, in childcare, at school, or in the in the community, we all have a role in getting kids active. Help set the path to a happy childhood and a lifetime of healthy living!

## References

Canadian Society for Exercise Physiology (<http://csep.ca>)

Nipissing District Developmental Screening (<http://www.ndds.ca>)

For more information, tips and activity ideas, visit [haveaballtogether.ca](http://haveaballtogether.ca)