

Physical activity recommendations for early years (birth to 5 years)

Active children are healthy, happy,
school ready and sleep better



BUILDS
RELATIONSHIPS
& SOCIAL SKILLS



MAINTAINS
HEALTH &
WEIGHT



CONTRIBUTES TO
BRAIN DEVELOPMENT
& LEARNING



IMPROVES
SLEEP



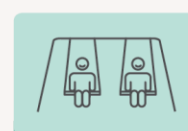
DEVELOPS
MUSCLES
& BONES



ENCOURAGES
MOVEMENT
& CO-ORDINATION

Every movement counts

Aim for at least
180
Minutes
per day
for children 1-5 years



PLAYGROUND



JUMP



CLIMB



MESSY PLAY



THROW/CATCH



SKIP

Under-1s

at least
30 minutes
across the day



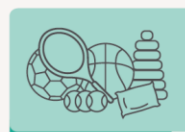
TUMMY TIME



OBJECT PLAY



DANCE



GAMES



PLAY



SWIM



WALK



SCOOT



BIKE

Get Strong. Move More. Break up inactivity

UK Chief Medical Officers' Physical Activity Guidelines, 2019

Physical activity helps children:

- With building relationships and social skills
- Maintain health and weight
- Contributes to brain development and learning
- Improves sleep
- Develops muscles and bones
- Encourages movement and co-ordination

Research has shown that young children tend to be more active if their parents participate in physical activity and are active with them, and if they spend more time outside.

Children aged 1 to 5 years

Aim for at least 180 minutes per day for children aged 1 to 5 years.

Examples of appropriate physical activity include: Playground playing, jumping, climbing, messy play, throwing and catching, skipping, object play, dancing, games, playing, swimming, walking, using a scooter and riding a bike

Under one year

Aim for at least 30 minutes across the day for under 1s.

Examples of appropriate physical activity include those listed above, and tummy time.

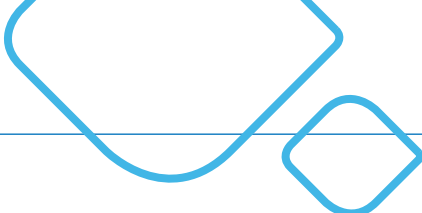
Some activities to try:

- Try placing your baby on their stomach on a blanket or play mat on the floor, and get down with them so they have the incentive to lift their head and look at you as you talk.
- Once your baby has started crawling, let them crawl around the floor, but make sure it is safe first. See the NHS Crawling Safety Checklist
<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/pregnancy-and-baby/baby-safety-tips/#crawling>
- Blow bubbles for your toddler and encourage them to try to catch the bubbles.

If your toddler is walking (or running!), make sure that there are no dangerous obstacles where you are playing.

- Sit with your toddler and play peek-a-boo by hiding your face behind your hands. Once your toddler knows the game, encourage them to use their hands and lead the play.

Progress to hiding behind furniture (indoor) or trees and shrubs (outdoor) and moving in and out of hiding while saying "Peek-a-boo!". Safety check the area first.

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- Most importantly aim to be an active, enthusiastic role model in participating in the activity.

Top tips for coping with a very active toddler

- Keep to a daily routine – routine can help if your child is restless or difficult; it can also help you stay calm and cope with the strain.
- Dedicate time to your child – make sure there are times each day when you give them your full attention.
- Avoid difficult situations – for example, keep shopping trips short.
- Try to go out every day – go to a park, playground or other safe, open space where your child can run around and use up energy.
- Set small goals – help your child to sit still and concentrate for a very short time, perhaps on a book or new toy, then gradually build it up.

For more information

<https://www.nhs.uk/conditions/baby/babys-development/play-and-learning/keep-baby-or-toddler-active/>

<https://www.nhs.uk/start-for-life/baby/baby-moves/>

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/tiny-happy-people/activities/zjh8hbk>

<https://www.nhs.uk/live-well/exercise/exercise-guidelines/physical-activity-guidelines-children-under-five-years/>

Contact details: **Nutrition and Dietetic Services** Tel: (01225) 824398 (RUH)

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Please contact the Patient Support and Complaints Team (PSCT) if you require this leaflet in a different format, or would like to feedback your experience of the hospital. Email ruh-tr.psct@nhs.net or telephone 01225 825656.

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