

Help your children
to be the best
they can be with...

Born to move



Children today are much less active than their parents and grandparents were, spending more time in car seats, highchairs and bouncers, as well as having more screen time.



Why is movement So important?

Movement in babies and children helps them to:



- ◆ develop intellectually, emotionally, socially and physically

- ◆ build the foundations for learning, moving and communicating



- ◆ develop a life-long interest in being active

- ◆ become a happy and confident child.



This leaflet gives advice for parents and carers on how to achieve this.

Chatter matters...

talk to your baby each day.

The more you talk to your child, the quicker they will start to talk.

When your baby is quiet and alert, try talking and waiting to see their response.

Babies learn to communicate through eye contact, facial expression and sounds before using words themselves.

Awake tummy time in babies



Placing babies on their tummies while awake helps to:

strengthen

your baby's back and neck muscles in preparation for crawling

develop

the brain and strengthen links between the right and left sides – 60 per cent of brain development happens in the first year of life. Awake tummy time is important in this

encourage

your baby to learn to roll, which helps to develop balance and to learn how big they are in relation to their surroundings (spatial awareness)

encourage

crawling: Babies who spend time on their tummies are more likely to be crawling by eight-months-old

prevent

a condition called plagiocephaly – a flattening of one side of the skull, which can develop if babies spend too much time on their backs.



Activities

for babies



To encourage awake tummy time, you could try:

placing

your baby on a bright rug. A rolled up blanket can be placed underneath their chest and armpits to make them comfortable

crawling

These activities will help your baby learn to crawl. Crawling is vital in developing your baby's motor system, but is also important in many other ways including helping many areas of brain development such as speech

Make sure you always supervise your baby during tummy time and stop if your baby is getting tired.

Do not put babies to sleep on their tummies.

baby massage

stimulates and develops nerve pathways and is great for relaxation too

lying

- ◆ your baby on your chest
- ◆ your baby on your legs and gently lifting them up and down



Eyes

need to move too

Try blowing bubbles; they are a great way to encourage babies to track moving objects with their eyes. This will strengthen the muscles that control eye movements, which will help them when learning to read.





Tips to get your children's eyes to move

Children's eyes need to move too.

Eye muscles

Too much time spent in front of a TV can cause ocular lock, where eye muscles develop less well. To help your children to develop good control of their eye muscles, you must give their eyes some stimulation.

Play games

Play games with brightly coloured puppets and toys, which will help develop vision and is also great fun and a fantastic way to bond with your child.

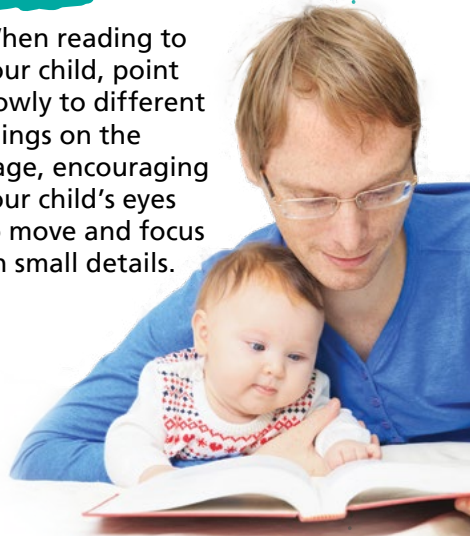


Eye-to-eye contact

When you look into your baby's eyes and they have your full attention, they are engaging all of their brain.

Read

When reading to your child, point slowly to different things on the page, encouraging your child's eyes to move and focus on small details.



What about toddlers and pre-School children?



Toddlers and young children love to be active.

It will improve their co-ordination, movement and balance, and it may just wear them out for bedtime.

Activity	Why not try...	To improve...
Catching, throwing and kicking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> chasing bubbles playing with different types of balls or bean bags or balloons. 	your child's hand-to-eye co-ordination.
Hands and fingers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> climbing ladders or frames, when supervised playing with Play-doh baking and making things. 	fine finger movements and strength, which will help when learning to write.
Swinging, spinning and rocking	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> encouraging hanging upside down safely at the park. A child must be supervised at all times rolling down banks. 	balance.
Running and jumping	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> games of tag or stuck in the mud encouraging hopping and jumping. 	balance and keep your child fit and healthy. They are also great fun and will help strengthen muscles.

Get your child ready for School...

Your child will feel more independent and confident when they start school. Why not try practising these things with your child in the run up to school.

- ◆ Going to the toilet and washing their hands by themselves.
- ◆ Dressing themselves; putting on coats, jumpers and shoes.
- ◆ Putting their toys away when they have finished playing.
- ◆ Playing with other children to make friends.
- ◆ Enjoying getting messy when playing.
- ◆ Sitting and talking about a book.
- ◆ Using a knife and fork.
- ◆ Holding a pencil.



Ready,
Steady,
go!

Any worries, Speak to your health visitor

Your local Health Visiting Team is here to support you and your child on your amazing journey from birth to school.

You will be offered regular health and development reviews for your baby until they are two. These are to support you and your baby and make sure their development is on track.

This gives you both a chance to ask questions and talk about any concerns you have.

If you have any concerns or would like to speak to a health visitor, please see our website www.kentct.nhs.uk/kent-baby for details of your local team

Free NHS

Born to move app



Free to download from the App Store and Google Play this handy little app has been developed by health visitors and parents to help your baby move and develop, every step of the way.



We like to move it

Leaflet code: 00682
Published: Oct 2019
Expires: Oct 2022

Produced by the
Communications
and Marketing Team

02.10.19

Encouraging your children to be active from the beginning of life will improve all areas of development and prepare them for the challenges of school.

If you want your children to fulfil their potential and stay healthy, get them moving today.

For more information, visit:

- ◆ Find out more at
www.kentcht.nhs.uk/Borntomove
Facebook @kentcommunityhealth
Twitter @NHSKentCHFT
- ◆ www.sportnz.org.nz and follow the link to the 0 to 5 active movement resources.



Do you have feedback about our health services?

Phone: 0300 123 1807, 8am to 5pm, Monday to Friday

Text: 07899 903499

Email: kentchft.PALS@nhs.net

Web: www.kentcht.nhs.uk/PALS

Patient Advice and Liaison Service (PALS)

Kent Community Health NHS Foundation Trust
Unit J, Concept Court
Shearway Business Park
Folkestone
Kent CT19 4RG

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Our values
Compassionate Aspirational Responsive Excellent

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