

Get Up, Get Out & Play!

Make Every Day a Play With Your Kids Day!

It's winter again in Central New York, and that means great outdoor exercise playing in the snow! Some of the wintertime activities families can do together outdoors are:



- sledding
- snow angels
- snow painting
- build snow people
- outdoor obstacle course

When playing together as a family outdoors, be sure to:

- Dress children warmly for cold weather.
- Watch for signs of frostbite and hypothermia.
- Plan for shorter periods of outdoor play with younger children.

If you can't do many outdoor activities this winter, there are still lots of fun indoor games and activities children will love. Here are a few simple ideas. So, turn off your computer, TV, or DVD player and have some fun this winter moving with your child! Even if it's just for a few minutes a day, both you and your child can enjoy the benefits of regular physical activity!

Sled Push/Pull – Load a laundry basket and have children pull or push items of different weights over short distances. Young children love to show how strong they are! Children can also load and unload “snowballs” (white, rolled-up socks or white yarn balls) or haul “logs” (rolled up paper). Use your imagination to make up a story or song about where you're going in your “sled”. Then give the children some rides in the basket for your workout!



Build a Snow Child – With your children, ball-up paper (junk mail or recycled papers work well) and spread them throughout the area. Ask the children to crawl, tiptoe, jump or hop to gather the paper and stuff it into three paper bags (large, medium and small sizes). Stack and tape the three bags together to create an indoor paper snow child. Dress the snow child in old clothes and draw a happy face for it on a piece of blank paper. Invite the snow child to join you at snack!

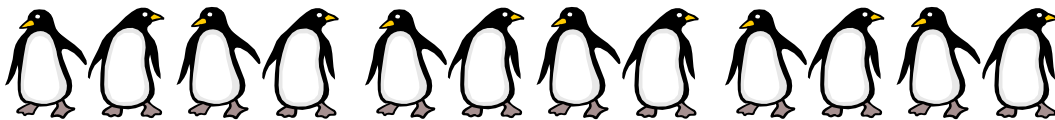


You might already know that movement is important to children’s brain development, but did you know that movement helps children...

- Learn to share, cooperate and take turns
- Learn about their bodies when they become movers
- Learn to enjoy movement so they are more likely to become active adults!

Stickers on a Penguin

Draw a penguin on a large sheet of coated paper, such as poster board. Place the penguin on one end of a large room, and have the children gather at the other. Ask the children to go and place stickers on the penguin. Have the children move in a variety of ways - crawl or tip-toe to sneak up on the penguin, jump to catch him before he gets away, or waddle so he thinks the children are also penguins! Ask the children to place the stickers on different parts of the penguin’s body such as its head, feet and belly to help them learn these body parts.



Good For You...Good For Your Baby!

Before, during and after your baby arrives, you can enjoy the season by getting out in the fresh winter air. Take a walk outside (if you can’t go out, go to different windows in your house). Talk with your baby about her new world and what she experiences through her senses. Singing, swaying and doing finger play with your baby helps you both:

- Feel better
- Reduce stress
- Create energy
- Build muscle tone
- Encourage bonding
- Develop language
- Use imagination
- Enjoy movement

Pocket Socks™ Activities

Try these activities with children of 18 months or older:

Keep just a few pairs of toddler socks rolled up in your pockets and you have all the equipment you need for many fun movement games and activities for kids and adults in motion! Try some of these activities next time your preschoolers are fidgeting but you can't go outside...

- **Sock Toss** –Socks are tossed into a laundry basket from a short distance away. Children pick up the socks for more tries.
- **Sock Hoops** – Children try to make a 'basket' tossing rolled-up socks through the 'hoop' formed by an adult's outstretched arms.
- **Sock Jump** – Children stand at one sock on the floor and jump as far as they can away from that sock. Use other socks to mark the distances jumped. Measure distance in human feet (heel-to-toe-to-heel) and record to show how children can jump farther as they practice.*
- **Sock Mile** – Not really a mile, but any distance you choose! Place two socks on the floor 10 feet apart, and have the children run, crawl, jump, or tip-toe laps around the socks.
- **Sock Shuttle** – Place many single socks in a row 10 feet from the children. Children run to the row, grab a sock, run back to the starting point where they place the sock in their 'pile'. Continue until all the socks are picked up. Count the socks and record each child's personal best.*



- **Clean Up the Snow** - Too cold outside to shovel snow? Create a 'snow storm' with socks in your living room and have fun cleaning up! Divide the room into 'sides' and clear items that might break. The goal is to clear the sock 'snow' from your side and pile it up on the other side! Use plenty of socks so everyone can quickly find lots of socks to toss for fast-paced fun! After clearing all the 'snow', let the children pile socks on top of you!
- **Sock-Put** - Do this activity just like the shot put, but substitute socks for the heavy iron ball. Mark the throws with colored socks. Measure the distances with the heel-to-toe-to-heel method.
- **Snowplow in the Kitchen** - Children put socks on both hands and push balled scrap paper or whatever you wish around the kitchen floor. This activity works best on smooth, vinyl-like floor surfaces.
- **Sock Hurdles** - Children move through a room filled with challenging obstacles to pick up socks at the other side and return them to their sock 'pile' at the starting line. Create safe obstacles from seat cushions, pillows, rolled-up blankets, and laundry baskets. Encourage children to climb over, go under, or move around the obstacles in the way they feel most comfortable.
- **Sock Hop (Step or Jump!)** - In a carpeted room, scatter single socks all over the floor. Children have to cross the room hopping, stepping or jumping only on the socks!

* **A Note About Competition:** Try not to compare children with each other. Instead, record the children's personal results so they will see progress as they grow and become better at the activities. If the children want to compete, encourage them to try to get just one more shot in or one inch further or five seconds faster to improve their own performances.

Explore the World and Learn How to Move

Before the baby is born:

Did you know that movement can give an infant a head start in life, even before the infant is born? Pregnant moms can try this:

The Kick Game: When your baby starts to make kicking motions:

- Gently pat or press your stomach where the baby is kicking.
- Say "kick, baby, kick."

Your baby is starting to get the idea that the physical sensations related to kicking are associated with certain sounds.

0-6 month olds:

Where Will They Land? Cut out small snowflakes and tape them to the ends of your fingers. Sing (to the tune of London Bridge):



Snowflakes are falling down, falling down, falling down. Snowflakes are falling down on my fair baby!

Will they land on baby's nose?
Baby's toes?

Will they land on mommy's nose?
Mommy's toes?

My fair baby! (Touch baby's nose and toes when you say the words).

6-9 month olds:

Get Moving - Place baby on his/her back on a blanket on the floor. Show baby an attractive toy that is just out of reach. Encourage baby to wiggle, squirm, and move in any way baby can to get the toy.

What is that white stuff? When outside, let baby touch and taste clean snow. Talk about how snow is cold and wet.

Use your imagination to adjust any of these activities to your child's age and development.

See how many ways you can change the activity to fit all the children in your care.

10-12 month olds:

Where did the toy go? With baby on a blanket on the floor, put a favorite toy just out of reach. As baby watches, partially cover the toy with a cloth. Encourage baby to roll, scoot, or creep to the toy and remove the cloth to see the toy underneath.

What's in the box? Place a covered box, such as a shoebox with a lid, in the room with a few safe objects inside. Share the excitement when baby lifts the box's cover and discovers the objects inside. Next time, place the box in another part of the room with different objects inside for baby to find and discover. Use the box with new objects often to stimulate baby's curiosity and motivate baby to move.



13-15 month olds:

Scatter safe toys around the room. Encourage the toddler to cruise or walk around the room, moving to each of the toys to play with it.

Walk in the Snow - Bundle up your toddler and go outside. Hold your toddler's hand as you walk through the snow together. Talk about concepts such as cold, slippery, ice.

