

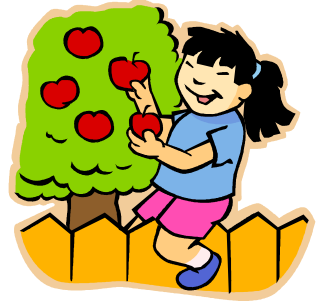
# Get Up, Get Out & Play!

*Make Every Day a Play With Your Kids Day!*

**Fall! Crisp afternoons, picking apples, watching trees turn colors, visiting a pumpkin patch!**

This is a great time to get outside, enjoy the colorful scenery and play with your children. Some of the fall activities families can do together are:

- Rake leaves, then enjoy jumping in and over the piles of leaves.
- Walk on a trail in the woods to see the leaves fall.
- Kick and chase foam soccer balls around the yard.



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

- Bring bottles of water. It's the best drink when you are thirsty from playing.
- Dress in layers. If the day warms up, you can take off a layer and still be comfortable.

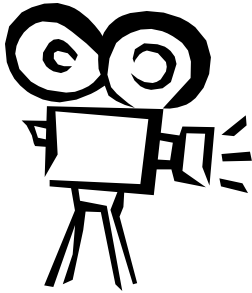
**Note:** Children can be so creative and quick in the ways they can place themselves in danger. While these are safe and age appropriate activities, these and all physical activities requiring close adult supervision of young children.

**Shake in the Mirror** - Let the children move in silly ways in front of an unbreakable mirror. Show the children a hula dancer, a ballet dancer, a disco dancer, a squirrel in the rain looking for a nut. Ask the children to show you some silly movements.

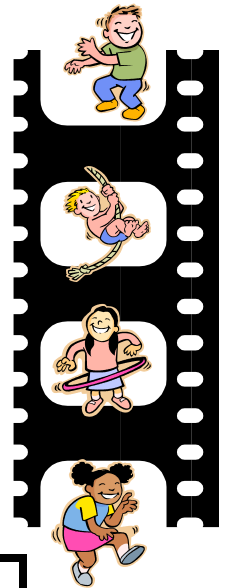




**One Ring Circus** - Like Stop-and-Go to Music, except you don't stop but simply change the way you're moving to match the motion of different animals. Put on lively music. Show younger children how each animal they name might move. Encourage children to use their imaginations to show how they think the animal moves. Have children move around the circle like a horse. After one time around, ask the children to suggest a way to move around the circle, such as like a duck, fox, cat, dog, cow, elephant, pigeon, or snake.



**Hollywood** - If you have a video camera, make a movie of your children being physically active to show to relatives. Let the children dress in costumes. Be the scriptwriter and director. To encourage their imaginations, use a theme such as 'Circus Day' or 'Animals at the Zoo'. While you film them, give suggestions to the children on how to move and keep moving, such as walk like ducks, fly like birds, run like a deer, sway in the breeze. Or perhaps film the children as they negotiate an obstacle course.



**Research says:** Enjoy being physically active with your children. If children see that you are active with them, they are likely to also enjoy and value physical activity.

### **Good For You...Good For Your Baby!**

Before, during and after your baby arrives you can enjoy the fall season by getting out in fresh air. Walk and talk with your baby about his new world and what you experience through sight, sound, smell and touch. Babies love to hear your voice.

Babies learn to use their muscles when they have interesting things to see and do. After your baby is born, show your baby the fall leaves. Pick a leaf and place it on your baby's hand. Talk about what it feels like. If your baby is old enough, help your baby pick up his own leaf.

# More Pocket Socks™ Activities

**Try these sock activities with children 18 months or older:**

**Sock Soccer** - Children kick rolled-up pairs of socks around the room and into a box or laundry basket placed on its side. Hold infants and toddlers under their arms and just off the floor so they can kick the socks too.

**Sock Collectors** - Hide socks around the yard or house. Direct children to run around and find all the hidden socks and bring them to you. After all the socks are gathered, help children sort and match socks. When sorting and matching, describe the socks to the children to build their vocabulary and understanding of 'matching'. You might say, "This big, white sock with the blue band at the top matches this other this big, white sock with the blue band at the top."

**Sock Bowling** - Children bowl rolled-up pairs of socks at empty plastic bottles set up on the floor. Then reset the 'pins' and roll again. Place single pins around the room so children stay in the center of the room and roll the sock ball in different directions.

**Bunny Tails** - Place a sock under each child's belt in back so it looks like a tail. Place one in your belt too. Chase the children and try to grab their tails. Then let them chase you and try to get your tail.

**Flying Fox** - Push a pair of adult-size rolled-up socks down into the toe of one larger sock to make a 'flying fox'. Throw the sock across a safe, open area outdoors with no vehicular traffic, no holes, and no obstacles. Ask the children to run to retrieve the sock. Make one 'flying fox' for each child, so you can throw the socks further away for the faster, older children, and still accommodate younger children at the same time.



**Chickens Gather Eggs** - Place a laundry basket in the center of the play area. Scatter many pairs of rolled-up socks around the edge of the play area. Ask children to stand by the basket. When directed, have the children move from the basket to the eggs, and bring the eggs back to the basket. See if the children will hop or jump or tiptoe between the basket and the eggs they are gathering.

**Bean Bag Balance** - How far can the children, and you, move with a bean bag balanced on the head? Shoulders? Upper back? Make bean bags from old socks filled with dried beans. Sew the ends shut. Ask the children to walk, run, jump, hop, or crawl while keeping the bean bag balanced. If these challenges are too difficult, very young children can simply hold the bean bag on their heads with their hands as they move.

**\* 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 relaxation during pregnancy is healthy for both you and your baby. One way to relax is by using your imagination to see your baby and your baby's world.

**Imagine Your Baby:** Close your eyes and imagine that you are visiting your baby in your womb. This is your baby's cradle - warm, snug, and safe. Fill in as many details as you wish: the baby's eyes are closed peacefully, the fingernails and toenails are growing, every now and then the baby kicks. You and your baby are one. Take a moment to enjoy your baby's home. Tell your baby that your body is preparing to be her/his parent. Thank your body for the miracle.

## 0-6 month olds:

**Picture Play** - Cut out pictures of baby faces or simple familiar objects. Glue pictures to a tissue, oatmeal, shoe or other box. Cover the pictures with clear contact paper. Baby will love looking at and hearing you talk about the pictures. As baby grows and starts reaching for things set box just within her/his reach and encourage baby to reach and grab box or to roll toward box.

**Fall Leaves** - Place two or three fall leaves in a zip-lock bag. Fill the bag about full of warm water. Close it tightly and check to see that the bag is sealed. Let baby explore the bag with hands and feet. Talk about what you see and feel.

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

## 6-9 month olds:

**Baby Blanket Explorer** - When baby can sit independently, place him on a blanket to explore washed and clean seasonal objects such as an apple, a small pumpkin with its sharp stem removed, a squash, a shucked ear of corn, and a potato.

**Pillow Obstacle Course** - Place pillows and couch cushions on the floor for baby to creep, crawl, roll and climb over and around.

## 10-12 month olds:

**Knocking Blocks Over** - Build a small tower from blocks and watch baby joyfully knock it down. Rebuild it again and again so she can continue the fun while she is learning about 'cause and effect.' You build it, she knocks it down, you rebuild it, on and on...

**Matching Practice** - Baby playing with two identical plastic sipper cups will learn to put one inside the other and remove it by trial and error, as he practices his hand-eye coordination.

**Baby Mountain Climbers** - Children climb up the legs of a lying-down adult, then slide down the legs onto the adult's belly!

## 13-15 month old toddlers:

**It's Dark Outside!** Go outside with your toddler at night when it is dark. Take a walk through the yard, holding his hand. Talk about how the sun sets and it becomes dark, but the sun will rise in the morning and it will become light again. Look up to see the stars and moon. Use a flashlight to show your toddler how light helps her see things that don't seem to be there when it is dark.

