

# Developing motor skills with play

## Games to help your child develop Gross Motor Skills

There are lots of commercial games and toys available that will help your child to develop their gross motor skills for balancing and moving around. Shops like Woolworths, Argos and the Early Learning Centre are good places to start looking, as are local and national toyshops.

- Twister / globe trotting
- Cranium hullabaloo and cadoo
- Hopscotch mats or markings with chalk
- Space hoppers
- Pogo sticks
- Stilts
- Trampoline
- Skipping ropes
- Bikes, trikes and scooters
- Rollerskates and blades
- Parachute
- Skittles
- Climbing frames
- Tunnels
- Swings
- Chutes
- Going to the local play park
- Balls and bats / frisbees
- Hula hoops
- Plastic hockey sticks and golf sets
- Swingball
- Stepping stones
- Charades for kids
- Giant games like snakes & ladders, draughts and connect 4
- Elefun

We are sure you can think of lots more games, toys and activities that your child would enjoy. Remember to encourage them to enjoy moving and experimenting with toys without pressuring them into doing it just the same way as you would.

## **Games to help your child develop Fine Motor Skills**

There are lots of commercial games available that will help your child to develop their fine motor skills like control of their whole arm, using two hands together, manipulation, speed and general dexterity. They may also help with learning about sharing, taking turns, building concentration and attention span.

Enjoy playing family games with your child, or encourage older brothers and sisters or friends to play with younger children to reinforce rules and sharing.

### **Games for co-ordination and control**

- Fishing game
- Bopit and bopit extreme
- Topit
- Buckaroo
- Jenga
- Buzz off
- Monkey Business
- Jacks
- Tea sets

### **Construction Games**

- Lego / lego technic / ello
- K'nex
- Brio mechano and train sets
- Magnetix
- Marble runs
- Transformers
- Junk modelling / model making
- Jigsaws

### **Games to encourage scribbling /drawing**

- Etch a sketch
- Magna doodle
- Aqua draw

### **Games for thinking and talking with fine motor skills too**

- Scrabble
- Guess who

- Pictionary

### **Games for manipulation**

- Operation
- Bed bugs
- Kerplunk/busy bees
- Pop up pirates
- Wiggly worms
- Pick up sticks
- Scoobies
- Card games
- Hamma beads
- Tiddly winks
- Hungry hippos
- Threading and lacing beads and cards
- Dressing up dolls
- Mr and Mrs Potato head
- Ludo and frustration
- Play doh and clay and toys/tools to play with eg rolling pin, cutters and pastry wheel
- Travel versions of games like draughts and connect four
- Battle ships
- Rubiks cube
- Mousetrap
- Perfection

# The importance of messy and outdoor play

## Why?

The sense of touch is important for learning about our own bodies, objects and our world.

Children should have the opportunity to explore their world in a safe and controlled way through play, inside and outside. This can give them the opportunity to feel lots of different surfaces, textures, sensations and nature by playing with them. It is important for children to explore in clean, dry, wet and messy places so they can get themselves dirty. This should be fun for children and it is OK to get dirty!

## Outdoor play

- Playing at the park or beach
- Rolling down grassy slopes
- Playing in a sand pit
- Running barefoot in the garden
- Playing in ball pools
- Running through sprinklers
- Playing in paddling pools
- Climbing trees and walls within the safety limits for you child
- Digging in the garden or at the beach
- Gardening and growing things
- Collecting leaves, acorns, pinecones, shells etc for making collages and pictures
- Making mud pies

## Indoor play

- Rolling around the floor and carpets
- Playing on the floor
- Rolling child up in towels, duvets and blankets
- Making tents from blankets and sheets
- Playing in sand and water
- Finger and foot painting
- Cutting and gluing to make pictures with leaves, scrap materials, dry food, sand, cereal boxes etc
- Hiding toys and things in dry rice, sand, beans, shaving foam, spaghetti etc for child to find

- Making and using play dough, gloop and slime
- Baking breads, pastry and dough's using hands
- Making pizzas, fruit salad, sandwiches etc
- Playing in food for babies and toddlers
- Using sponges, flannels, loofahs, scrub mits at bath time
- Use bubble baths, creams. Lotions and talcum powder at bath time

### Recipes for messy play

- Play dough
  - 2 cups plain flour
  - 2 cups water
  - 1 cup salt
  - 2 tablespoons cooking oil
  - 1 tablespoon cream of tartar
  - Food colouring - few drops

Mix together in a sauce pan and bring to the boil

Cook for 2 minutes until it forms a solid lump

Allow to cool

Child can now help you to knead it smooth

Store in a plastic bag

- Gloop
  - 2 cups of cornflour
  - Water
  - Food colouring

Carefully add water to cornflour until it becomes semi firm

You can now mould it in your hands but when you stop it runs through your fingers

You can add more water to make it runnier and play with it on a tray or in a bowl

- Cornflour clay
  - 1 cup cornflour
  - 2 cups salt
  - 1 1/3 cups of cold water

Put salt and 2/3 cups of water in a sauce pan and bring it to boil

Mix rest of cornflour with remaining water and stir well

Blend the two mixtures and knead into clay

Mould the clay and let it dry for several hours, it can then be painted

- Lux Flakes  
1/2 box lux flakes  
Hot water from the kettle  
Food colouring

In a bucket or very large and deep bowl, mix with electric whisk until it is thick and creamy. This makes enough to play with in a baby bath.