



# Gross Motor

Activities to Help Your Toddler Grow and Learn



By now your active toddler is attempting to run. He can carry large items and toys and loves to push and pull big things such as boxes around on the floor. He's learning how to walk upstairs with one hand held by you and is getting better at walking down stairs. He may climb up into a chair to see and reach new things. Your watchful eye is important.

- Swinging** Take your child to a park to swing. Be sure the swing is safe and has a seat belt. Show your child how to push her feet out when swinging forward. Push gently so you know baby will hold on. Chant in rhythm while you push: "Up you go, and up you go!"
- Climbing the Stairs** Hold baby's hand while you climb up steps or a few stairs. Be patient; stairs are very high for little legs. Don't expect much luck with climbing down just yet. If you don't have any stairs in your house or yard, a playground will have places to practice, such as a small slide or a jungle gym platform.
- Balance Beam** Put a 2-inch wide strip of masking tape on the floor or sidewalk. Let your child walk along the tape, placing one foot in front of the other. Praise your child. Tell him, "You really know how to balance!"
- Chasing** Your toddler is beginning to run now. In a grassy part of your yard or a safe park, play chase with your little one. Most toddlers love to be chased, and they love to be caught and hugged. Your toddler will love doing this over and over! It's good exercise.
- Moving Day** Give your child a small wagon or a box with a pull string for hauling toys around. Your child can load the wagon and unload at a different place. Maybe the teddy bear wants to ride!
- Playing Music** Your toddler will love making and moving to music. A small keyboard or a little tambourine is fun to play with. You can make a drum with an oatmeal container, large plastic containers, and wooden spoons or chopsticks. Join her for a little music making. Take turns making music and dancing and moving to different rhythms.
- Kickball** Give your child a medium-size ball (6 inches), and show him how to kick it. You can also make a ball from a wad of newspaper taped all around. See how far he can make it go. Kick it and chase it!



16–20 months