



Gross Motor

Activities to Help Your Child Grow and Learn



Your child is continuing to develop and refine his gross motor skills. He has become much more stable and is learning how to balance on one foot or walk along a narrow beam. He is learning skills such as jumping, hopping on one foot, and skipping. He will enjoy activities such as throwing, catching, and kicking balls. You will need to watch him closely as he may try some dangerous tricks. He can ride a small bike with training wheels.

Fall Fun In the fall, take your child outside to play in the leaves. Rake the leaves into small piles. Chase each other around the piles, jump in them, or try to leap over them. Try burying each other in leaves or catching the leaves as they fall.

Freeze Tag Get a group of children together with your child to play a game of Freeze Tag. Designate one person to be "it." The person who is "it" runs around trying to tag other children. If a child is tagged, she must "freeze" (not move). Another child who is not "it" may "melt" a frozen player by touching her. A "melted" player can run around again to avoid being tagged. Whoever is tagged and made "frozen" three times is the next "it."

Splash Game This activity is good on a hot day. You, your child, and your child's friends can stand around a small plastic pool or bucket of water. Using a big ball (e.g., beach ball), take turns and try to make each other wet by throwing the ball hard at the water. Do not throw the ball at each other, just at the water. You can also just play catch. Of course, later you'll all want to get into the pool!

Ribbon Dance Cut a piece of ribbon or a party streamer into 6-foot lengths. Your child can explore ways to make designs in the air. Try circles and loops, up and down movements, and figure eights. Now try all of these movements with two ribbons, one in each hand. Finally, move from place to place taking the ribbons with you. Put on some music to help make a "ribbon dance." Try skipping, running, and walking.

Animal Games Cut pictures of animals out of a magazine. Turn them face down, and take turns choosing an animal with your child. You must act out the animal you drew, and your child has to guess what animal you are. Take turns so your child has to act out an animal for you to guess. If you draw a kangaroo, you must jump, jump, jump. If you draw a cheetah, you will probably need to run. If you draw a cat, you may relax and lick your paws or leap to catch a mouse. You may act out a giraffe by walking on tiptoes and stretching really tall.



54–60 months