

Gross Motor Activities For 12-24 Month Olds

What Are Gross Motor Skills?

- Gross motor movements involve large muscle groups, such as the muscles of the arms, legs, and trunk. Gross motor skills are needed for actions like walking, running, reaching, and even just sitting upright. It is important for children to develop gross motor skills because they aid in a child's awareness of where their body is in space and many of the skills act as precursors to more intricate movements, known as fine motor skills. (Pathways, 2021)

What Should You do if Your Toddler is Not Reaching Milestones?

- If you notice that your toddler is not reaching developmental milestones on time, it is important to speak with your pediatrician to determine the cause of the delay. This could indicate a developmental condition, but many times there is nothing to worry about because there is a lot of variation in when toddlers meet these milestones.

(Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, 2021)

What Gross Motor Milestones Should a Toddler be Reaching?

- At 12 Months a Toddler Can:
 - Maintain balance while sitting and throwing objects
 - Pull themselves up to stand
 - Stand alone and take several independent steps
- At 18 Months a Toddler Can:
 - Walk independently
 - Squat to pick up toys
- At 24 Months a Toddler Can:
 - Walk up and down stairs with two feet on each step
 - Throw and catch a large ball without losing balance

(Pathways, 2021)

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Developing your toddler's gross motor skills can be both easy and fun! You just need to know where to start. Here is a list of simple activities and games you can play with your little one to make them a gross motor expert!

Balloon Boxing

- For this activity, you will need a few balloons, streamers, and tape. Begin by blowing up at least 3 of the balloons and set them aside. Next, tape one end of a streamer to the ceiling or door frame with the other end cut so it hangs about 4 feet off the ground. Repeat this until you have as many streamers hanging as you have balloons blown up and keep the streamers hanging around the same area. Then, secure one balloon to the end of each streamer with tape. Now have your toddler try and punch and kick the balloons. This will help to increase your child's coordination, as well as strengthen their core, arms, and legs.

Color Race

- For this activity, you will need several different colored sheets of construction paper and tape. Tape the different colors of paper randomly around your home where your toddler could see them. Call out a color and have them race to try to find the color. When your child finds the color, call out another until all the colors are found. This is an excellent activity that strengthens the muscle groups of the core and legs.

Penguin Waddle

- For this activity, all you will need is a blown-up balloon or a small enough ball that will fit between the child's legs. Next, see how far or long they can walk like a penguin without having the balloon or ball fall out. This activity challenges your child's endurance, strength, and balance.

References

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2021, July 28). *Concerned about your child's development?*.
<https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/concerned.html>.
Pathways.org. (2021, April 20). *Developmental milestones for all ages*.
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