

# PHYSICAL ACTIVITIES

## for Fitness and Stress Reduction

| AGE RANGE | PHYSICAL SKILLS   | FITNESS  | STRESS REDUCTION   |
|-----------|---|--|--|
| Birth     |   | Gentle massage of arms and legs. "Bicycle pedaling" of babies' legs.   | Dancing held by parent or teacher; nestling into parent or teacher's arms or lap to sleep. Motion from car, stroller, hammock, rocking chair, and so on. Quiet times for sleeping.   |
| 1 year    | Crawling<br>Walking   | Enlisting safety precautions, opportunity to explore rooms and outdoor spaces. Opportunities to climb hills, furniture and equipment.  | As above. Swaying to music. Routines for basic activities—meals, rest, sleep, outdoors. A long bath with toys. Snuggling with favorite blanket or animal. Gazing at objects of nature.<br><br>Feeling understood—communicating.  |
| 2 years   | Marching<br>Running<br>Climbing<br>Jumping/landing<br>Transferring weight<br>Turning<br>Twisting<br>Bending<br>Throwing | Name and try all the skills listed at left—to music, with laughter, and some falling down on purpose (2s love slapstick!)  | As above. Dancing to music. Singing and humming. Routines for other activities as well, for example, "We read stories after cleanup; we go to the library on Tuesdays." Some simple choices—"Would you like milk or water?"<br><br>Noticing: clouds moving overhead, stars and moon at night, breeze on face, birds, blooming trees or plants, smells of fresh food, fragrant soap in the bathroom, and so on.<br><br>Being understood while trying to use language. Breathing together, thoughtfully. |
| 3 years   | Galloping<br>Hopping<br>Swaying<br>Catching   | As above. Play catch with soft objects (balloons, pillows, scarves). Pretend to be animals—galloping horses, hopping frogs, crawling snakes, and so on. Use music.                           | As above. Being listened to even though stories are long and fragmented.<br><br>Lying down or sitting still, paying attention to breathing for a minute. Standing like a mountain, reaching for the sun. Humming together. Nesting into blankets and pillows.  |
| 4 years   | Balancing on one foot   | As above. Balance beam, lines on floor to walk on. Imaginative play aided by props (cloths, flags, blocks), especially outdoors.   | As above. Yoga and tai chi, for example, tree, child, and games. Creative visualizations—growing from a seed to a flower, floating down a river, and so on. Expressive dancing to music, dramatizing clouds, birds, trees in wind (nature images).<br><br>Silent sitting or walking outdoors to hear and focus on environmental sounds.  |
| 5 years   | Skiping<br>Walking backwards  | As above. Keep track of how fast one can run a distance, how many hops. Build self-knowledge, not competitive.   | As above. Can enjoy some partner work with yoga.   |
| 6 years   | Leaping   | Obstacle courses inside and out. "Rocks in a river" for leaping on (chalk blobs on playground at suitable distances). Running laps around the playspace and checking pulse before and after. | As above. Some adult poses possible.   |