

## Building Balance, Strength and Body Awareness

Physical activities help teach your child to learn how to use various muscle groups and how to use the right and left sides of their body.

- During the early months (birth to 3 months) place your baby on their tummy for several minutes each day (or for as long as they will tolerate). This will allow them to begin to strengthen their neck and back muscles which will be used to help them support their head.
- Although holding your baby is great for bonding, babies also need time to move and exercise those little arms and legs. Several times a day lay your baby on a mat or blanket and allow them to have activity time where they get to play with toys and freely move their arms and legs.
- Crawling typically occurs between the 6 to 10 month mark. Support this developmental milestone by putting toys just outside your baby's reach. This will encourage your baby to move forward to grasp them.
- Help your child sit or stand during 9-12 months. Doing so helps your child strengthen their muscles for future activities such as walking.
- A little after your child turns one year old they may be ready to start playing ball. Encourage your child to throw and catch a small, soft ball. This will help improve their coordination and overall body awareness.

