

EFFECTIVE STRATEGIES TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT AND LEARNING

- Play with infants on their tummies frequently throughout the day. Place interesting toys in front of them and use a rolled towel to support a baby's chest and arms if needed. For babies who do not like being on their stomachs, try a few minutes of tummy time several times a day rather than for one long period.
- Use diapering time to do baby exercises and to play (bicycling legs, arm lifts, kicking, reaching).
- Give young children brightly colored and interesting toys to reach for or move toward (balls, mobiles, soft toys).
- Encourage young children to bring their hands together as they play with objects.
- Play games from different *cultures* that include hand motions with words, such as "Pat-a-cake," "Todos Los Pescados," and "Itsy Bitsy Spider."
- Encourage children to move their bodies indoors and outdoors with movement games, music, and dancing from different cultures ("I'm a Little Teapot," "Little Sally Walker," "De Colores," "All Fish Swimming in the Water").



- Run, jump, skip, hop, and throw balls with children, both inside and outside.
- Encourage children to take part in *active play* every day, such as climbing, running, hopping, jumping, and other large muscle activities.
- Encourage children to walk on balance beams, sidewalk cracks, and chalk lines on the ground both forward and backwards.
- Practice balance by having the children stand on one foot for a small amount of time building up to more time.
- Give children opportunities to practice each skill in numerous ways, when practicing throwing and kicking, use balls, beanbags, or other objects of different shapes, weights, and sizes.
- Encourage children to stretch, bend, twist, and turn while keeping their feet in place.
- Provide opportunities for children to practice hitting balls with paddles, plastic bats, or racquets. Begin by having a stationary target, such as a large ball on the ground, gradually working up to a moving target.
- Encourage children to try new types of movement, such as skipping. Give them verbal cues, including "lift your knees," "hop and land on one foot," and "hop and land on the other foot."
- Take walks with children, varying pace and distance.
- Provide opportunities for non-competitive games and daily movement activities to allow children to practice motor skills and cooperation skills.