

MPCRC Parent Newsletter

Caring every day, building stronger families

Important Dates to Remember:

MPCRC 30th Anniversary and Wheel-a-thon—May 31

Three Wheel-a-thon events taking place in each of our ridings. Exact locations to follow soon!



Ages and Stages ~ Gross Motor Development

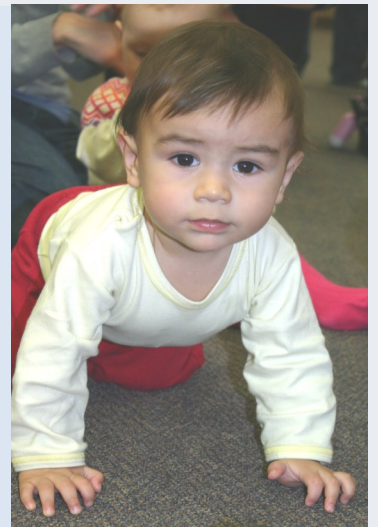
What is gross motor development?

Gross motor development is the acquisition of the skills to move the large muscles of the body. It typically starts with moving the head and neck and as a child grows and develops, the muscles in the core, arms and legs that lead to running, jumping, and dancing and so much more!



0-9 Months

In their first few months your baby's gross motor skills are developing as they turn to look at you and listen to your voice. As they get older, holding their head up and using their arms to push their upper body will help build the muscles they need for sitting and eventually crawling. During tummy time, you can encourage your baby to move in different ways by shaking a rattle at different places around their body or another motivator for movement is lying right next to them and singing songs together. They will love to see your face and hear your voice and will move towards it.



9-18 Months

At this stage, babies are beginning to sit on their own and crawl. When your baby sits and reaches for toys they are learning how to balance their body and move it in different ways. Crawling over couch cushions and pillows offers your baby an alternate way of climbing and strengthening the muscles they will use to pull themselves up to the standing position. This is the 'back-breaking' stage as you stand and bend over to give them support while they practice their first few steps. Try using your arm as a type of 'elevator' to bring them up to the level of the furniture. This will help strengthen the muscles in their arms and shoulders needed to lift themselves up. As their confidence grows push toys or toy strollers will also help build those muscles giving your back a much needed break!



18-36 Months

Running, jumping and climbing! Look at your toddler go! Toddlers are eager to try out their newfound gross motor skills and playgrounds are a great place to try them out. Standing on one foot or walking along a slightly heightened surface, such as the border around a playground, helps to encourage and develop balance. Jumping off one step while they hold your hand or going up stairs with your help are fun toddler activities that will keep them active and busy. Riding toys will let your little one explore their environment from a new perspective while practicing their stops and starts - the freeze game is a great way to do this. A ball and a big open space to introduce kicking, throwing, chasing and trapping will help them as they develop more gross motor skills.

3-6 Years

With greater independence your 3-6 year old is becoming a pro at using their body for gross motor activities. As they begin to climb up and down the stairs with ease, hop on one or two feet, throw and catch a ball, ride a tricycle or scooter and discover new ways of using playground equipment they are putting their strength and skills to the test. A trip down to the lake will give them a variety of ways to challenge their skills—encourage your child to run on the sand, climb on rocks, play follow the leader and chase you on the grass. Have fun and model safe ways for your child to explore their gross motor skills—you are their best toy!



Getting Active! Easy and fun gross motor activities to encourage active living at home.

Programs Offered

Infant Massage ~ 0-9 mos

This 4 session program gives participants the opportunity to learn the art of infant massage while promoting the bond between infant and parent/caregiver. This program is designed for infants who are not yet mobile.

Babies on the Move ~ 9-18 mos

For crawling, creeping, walking and running babies. You and your baby will enjoy singing songs and rhymes, exploring new sensory experiences and working on new developmental skills together. This program will provide an opportunity for adults to connect with others.

Move and Groove ~ 0-6yrs

This program provides an opportunity for parents and children to interact through music, movement and rhymes. This 30 minute program encourages gross motor development through the use of upbeat songs and dance.

Gym Time ~ 0-6yrs

Come explore informal and formal gross motor activities. Play cooperative games with friends or explore the toys independently. Run, jump, skip and hop your way into physical activity!



These are just a few examples of our programs. For program times and locations go to: www.mpcrc.ca

Board Update

At the Board of Directors for MPCRC, we are actively recruiting to fill two open positions. We are currently seeking someone with fund development experience and someone with experience in marketing/branding/communications. We meet as a board on a bi-monthly basis for three hours with committee meetings taking place on alternate months. The total time commitment is approximately 5-8 hours a month. If you are interested or would like more information about the board please email boardrecruitment@mpcrc.ca or ask at your closest centre.

Boxes

As your child is learning to walk, boxes are a great tool to assist their learning. Large, sturdy boxes, chairs, and laundry baskets are all great tools to help your child learn to walk. Children learn to pull themselves up, and use these tools as walkers while they strengthen their muscles and improve their balance.

Bowling

Bowling inside is a great and creative way to encourage gross motor development and can be done with materials found around the house! Objects such as empty paper towel/toilet paper rolls, old pop bottles, and old milk/juice cartons make great bowling pins while a beach ball or sock ball are ideal for indoor bowling and outdoors a basket or soccer ball are great.

Hop Scotch

Although the traditional hopscotch comes to mind, your child's age and abilities will determine how it can be played. For children just learning how to jump drawing circles close together in chalk on the sidewalk and modeling jumping from one circle to the next will give your child the opportunity to practice jumping. As your child improves their jumping abilities, creating more complex paths and obstacles with your sidewalk chalk will motivate them to discover what else their body can do. Try jumping on one foot (eventually switching feet), jumping off low heights or leaping.

Dance

Children love to just dance! Put on some music and dance together. Try different dance moves (jumping, spinning, leaping) and dance however the music inspires you! If you feel like changing it up, playing "Freeze" is a great way to do so. Pause the music and stand as still as possible! Challenge your child's abilities by posing in difficult positions and holding still as long as you can - improving balance and strength.

It is important to not only lead an active lifestyle but also to maintain a healthy one too. Regular checkups with your family doctor and healthy eating are all part of it! For great information on nutrition, staying active, child development and healthy lifestyles check out these online resources:

Staying Healthy!



www.eatrightontario.ca—Find information on children's nutrition, menu planning or speak directly to a registered dietician.

www.aboutkidshealth.ca—Information about pregnancy, nutrition, ages and stages of development and a dedicated section just for kids.

www.caringforkids.cps.ca—Information for parents from paediatricians with answers to a variety of questions.

www.participation.com—Lots of great ideas for fun and easy ways for every member of the family to be active.



Want to find a park? A playground? A splash pad? A picnic area? A soccer field? Close to home? In a new part of town? Go to www.eparks.ca and you can search by park name, postal code or amenity.

www.mpcrc.ca

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Mississauga Parent-Child Resources Centres is a non-profit, charitable organization. MPCRC relies on donations to continue to provide programs and services to families and children in our community.

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