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## **Helping Your Toddler With His Motor Skills**

**By Beverly Sugarman**

As everyone knows, toddlers are always on the move and full of energy. While normal play is a natural stage in the development of your child's gross motor skills, you may also need to have him participate in activities that can help to tune in his fine motor skills.

Gross motor skills are those that involve basic movements, such as walking and jumping. Fine motor skills are those that deal with the small movements that are executed with precision and usually involve the fingers, hands, and wrists. One way that you can help your child to develop these skills is to play with building blocks. By stacking these items, your child will learn to carefully place one block on top of the other. This exercise can also help to build his decision-making skills, as he will need to plan how to place the blocks to build the design that he wants.

Allowing your child to perform simple tasks for himself can also help to develop his fine motor skills. Working with him and teaching him how to button his shirt and work a zipper are excellent ways to give him practice at performing precision tasks. You can also allow him to help you with certain household tasks, such as folding washcloths. The folding process will also require your child to plan his movements in order to fold a cloth into a square.

Helping in the kitchen and feeding himself is also excellent ways in which you can help your child to develop his fine motor skills. His coordination will be tuned as he learns to put food on a spoon and to aim it towards his mouth. Allowing him to butter his own toast can also help to develop the precision movements in his wrist.

Another good way to help your toddler to develop his fine motor skills is to allow him to color and draw. You should make sure to have washable crayons and markers as little ones may not understand that they are only suppose to do this activity on paper. Finger-painting is another activity that you can share with him that will help him to concentrate and focus on using one finger at a time. Both these activities will also allow him to explore his imagination and use any creative talents that he might possibly possess.

An easy exercise for your child to help develop these skills as well as his coordination is to sing and dance to "activity" songs that require movement while singing. A few examples of these are "If You're Happy and You Know It", "Ring Around the Rosey," and "The Itsy Bitsy Spider." There are also a

number of interactive CDs and DVDs that focus on children's songs that your child can listen and dance to. These products can teach your youngster how to follow directions. The DVDs also contain a large amount of color and movement to keep your child's attention focused.

These are just a few of the many activities that you can share with your toddler to help him to develop his fine motor skills. For more information, you can discuss your child's skills with your doctor or search online for more creative ideas to help your child to improve his motor skills, coordination, and balance.

We have baby gift baskets that are cute and practical. Perfect for the newborn and new moms. Another article with more information on this topic can be found at <http://www.beauty-and-health-tips.com/baby-gift-baskets.html>.

## Construction Toys and Puzzles as Toddler Toys

By Chris Peace

When considering construction toys or puzzles as options for toddler toys, most parents might give them a pass thinking that they might not be appropriate for their young toddler to play with. This thinking however is not entirely true. Yes, toddlers might not be able to reassemble parts to form the picture on the box, but they can definitely assemble the parts to form something. Construction toys and puzzles are great toddler toys and learning aids for your kids. They stimulate a child's mental and motor skills encouraging problem solving, imaginative thinking etc.

### Types of construction toddler toys

The best kind of construction toddler toy would be interlocking blocks. These blocks are large and fairly simple. They fit by a child simply shunting them together. These construction blocks can also be used to increase a child's language and math capabilities. Language capabilities are increased by encouraging a child to speak about what he or she is building with the construction toddler toy and math capabilities can be increased by encouraging him to count the blocks etc.

### Guidelines to picking up construction toddler toys

There are fairly simple rules that you need to follow while buying a construction toddler toy for your young one.

Make sure that the blocks are the interlocking type and not the fitting type. This is important as a toddler's motor skills are not yet fully developed. Once you see that your child can handle the interlocking toddler toys with ease you can shift to the fitting type.

Make sure that the blocks are large.

Remember that your toddler does not have the capability to copy and build something from scratch. Therefore while choosing a construction toddler toy for your little one it might be simpler to opt for something that already has a base construction to which a toddler can add on.

### Puzzle toddler toys

Toddler puzzles are also a great way to encourage a toddler to think. They are also freely available at most toy stores. Like construction toddler toys, toddler puzzles also help develop motor, language and math skills. These puzzles generally have 2 to 4 pieces as part of the set and are made of durable materials like thick cardboard, wood and plastic. If you are looking for such puzzles you will find them at Smalltime Child. Smalltime Child has an interesting animal puzzle set called Baby Animal Pairs by Eeboo which will be perfect for your toddler.

### Helpful tips for buying puzzle toddler toys

Ensure that the puzzle set has large pieces

If possible try and ensure that the base of the puzzle has pictures corresponding to the pieces of the

puzzle. This makes it easier for the child to piece the puzzle together.

Puzzles made out of wood would be the best option as they make for durable toddler toys.

Try and pick up a puzzle set that has some sort of pegs on the pieces to facilitate easier handling for your toddler.

Smalltime Child offers a great selection of Toddler Toys. Visit us on the web at <http://www.smalltimechild.com> for our entire collection!

Related eBooks:

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