

District of Parry Sound Best Start Network

Month 8: Olympics and Heart Health Infant

Opening Ceremonies: You will need objects to hit together such as small pots and pans, aluminum tins, spoon and a small box, metal salt shaker filled with rice, and two wooden spoons. Young children have natural rhythm, and if you put on some music and offer these "instruments," you can have fun moving playfully together. Be sure to trade instruments and exchange them for others

Ski jump: Early steps are even more fun when fun-loving adults lift the toddler into the air as they are walking. In no time, your toddler will be lifting and jumping to help you out.

Other ideas:

- Walk backwards and do the same thing.
- Lift your toddler up and spin her around in the air every few steps.
- Have your toddler walk forward or backwards with his feet on top of yours.

Bobsled: Your infant should have good sitting balance before attempting this activity – should be around 8-10 months old. Your infant will enjoy feeling the pull of gravity from the middle of a large blanket that you drag slowly around the floor. Talk about what you are doing and how it feels as you go.

Other ideas:

- Take this activity outdoors using a sled or toboggan.
- Go fast and then slow, using those words to talk about what you are doing.
- Put a favorite doll or stuffed animal in the blanket and give it a ride. Your walking baby can do the same

Skating Spins: Children love to spin around until they become dizzy and fall down. It makes them the center of their world as everything spins around them. Hold scarves out at shoulder level as you twirl while holding your baby in your arms. Besides providing a rush of floating color, the scarf will also keep the arms high.

Other ideas:

- Put on fast music and then slow music to spin to.
- Sew a bell on the end of the scarf.
- Hold a scarf in each hand.

Top of Ski Hill: This activity needs little more than your encouragement to provide giggles and smiles. Pile a group of pillows in the middle of the floor and put your baby on top of them. Fluff the pillows around her body so it feels soft and talk about what you are doing as you play.

Other ideas:

- Cover your baby (except for her face) with pillows so the soft weight is felt.
- Fluff a small pillow on your tummy and then on your baby's. Repeat gently with other body parts as you talk about what you are doing.
- Gently roll your baby across the pillows.

Through the Luge: Using a few chairs lined up and 2 or 3 sheets, your child will learn about the space around his body and how to control his limbs in an enclosed space. Cover chairs completely with sheets, making twists and turns that will build spatial awareness and require control of arm and leg muscles. Although you may be too big to join in this fun, go partway into the maze to demonstrate, or greet your youngster at the exit.

Other ideas:

- Add pillows to crawl over on the way through the tunnel.
- Let your child scoot a favorite toy through the tunnel.
- Add heavier blankets in some parts to make it darker.
- Use a flashlight while going through the tunnel.
- Put a favorite toy at the end as a surprise.