

There is no doubt, the Early Years are Fun and Challenging in equal measure!

Developmental Milestones – parents often wonder what their child should be doing in terms of development and compare their child to other children of a similar age or worse, feel inadequate because of what other people say their child should be doing! Please remember that all our children are unique and they will learn differently and achieve variable outcomes.

Always speak to your Health Visitor, School Nurse or GP if you have any concerns or for more advice about your child's development

This Week we are Focusing on Physical Development, Moving, Handling, Health & Self-Care

Why Physical Development is a Prime Area?

- Physical development has been described as 'experience-expectant' learning which means that the brain is wired in expectation of this development. If it doesn't happen early it is more difficult to establish late on.
- Babies and young children undergo rapid and wide-ranging physical and psychological developments in their early years which contribute to their future health and well-being.
- Physical development contributes to cognitive development – as children move and explore the world they learn about the properties of objects and their own capabilities.
- In the early years children are establishing patterns of activity which will affect their whole future. If activity and healthy eating are established early on good habits tend to remain. Whilst developing and maintaining a healthy weight they develop strong bones, muscles and heart.
- It is widely believed that physical development can also help with the development of personal and social skills such as self-confidence, interaction, taking turns, getting along with others and so on.

How Can We Support this Area?

Moving & Handling

- Offer outdoor and indoor areas to increase activity and reduce inactive behaviour.
- Provide activities that support fine motor development such as threading beads, sewing cards/cloth, painting and exploring colour, mark-making of all kinds, building with Lego or small blocks, pinching, rolling and cutting dough or clay.
- Provide activities that develop stability – stop and start games such as statues; games such as being rabbits or snakes so that children balance their weight on different parts of the body.
- Plan activities that encourage locomotor skills – such as galloping, running, climbing, cycling, hopping, skipping.
- Give children opportunities to develop object-control skills including catching, rolling and throwing skills – provide bean bags and buckets or hoops for throwing into; offer a range of balls of different weight, size and bounciness!
- Provide bats, skittles and any other resources to encourage movement and accuracy in catching and throwing.

Health & Self-Care

- Put out steps for hand washing and toilets and make up a song/rhyme and sing as you model hand-washing.
- Provide tissues within easy reach to remind your child about hygiene for nose-blowing and coughing.
- Grow edible plants together such as strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce and potatoes and prepare and eat them as a family.
- Encourage your child to care for their teeth; talk about the things that are good for oral health and the things that people do to encourage their teeth to remain healthy.
- Use puppets or your child's favourite character to model aspects of health and self-care.
- Encourage children to feel proud of achievements in health and self-care by using stickers and star charts.

For more information about parenting support available, please contact the Parenting Team via our Facebook page, or by email to bsmhft.parenting@nhs.net Fortnightly parenting themed tweets can be viewed on our Facebook page - Solihull Parenting Team, or via the school nurse twitter feed: @SolSchNurses

