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## Celebrate!

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Celebrate your three-year-old's gross motor development.

Three-year-olds are still in the process of developing good gross motor coordination. Children this age seem to be in constant motion. To a great extent, the continuous movement is because children use their bodies to convey thoughts and emotions that they cannot yet convey with language.

From 36-42 months you will observe that your child:

- Likes to test her own physical strength
- Enjoys acrobatics
- Enjoys outdoor equipment

## Play!

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### Up! Down! All Around

**Why this playtime activity is good for your child:** Three-year-olds need a great deal of physical exercise. On the days when the weather prohibits outdoor play, this playtime activity will give your child some good exercise and also challenge her gross motor and following directions skills.

**What you'll need to play this activity:** two chairs facing each other

**How to play *Up! Down! All Around*:** Have your child sit in one of the chairs while you sit in the other one. Slowly give directions. In the beginning, perform the exercise with your child. After your child gets good at following directions, sit and give only verbal commands.

#### Example of Exercises:

Stand up; stretch arms up; reach for the sky; stand on tip-toes; reach up, up, up; hold it there.

Bend down; touch your knees; touch your toes; stretch down, down, down; hold it there.

Turn round and round; march around the chair; march around the room; around, around, around; stop and hold it there.

## Share!

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When you were three years old, one of your favourite ways to exercise indoors was:

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## Celebrate!

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Celebrate your three-year-old's fine motor skills.

Three-year-olds have more control and can better direct their movements. Self-care skills like dressing, eating and toilet training are developing and will ensure that your child can take proper care of his own body for the rest of his life. The best way you can help build your three-year-old's positive self-image and guide his self-discipline is to let your child practise these new self-care skills so he feels confident and capable. Praise all your child's efforts to get dressed, feed himself and meet his own needs.

From 36-42 months you will observe that your child:

- Is developing increased finger control
- Can pick up small objects using the pincer grip
- Can hold a pencil using adult grasp
- Is building a self-image (positive or negative)

## Play!

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### Treasure Hunting with Fingers and Toes

**Why this playtime activity is good for your child:** While exploring different kinds of materials with hands and feet, your child will discover creative ways to work with the materials and thus become more aware of textures in his everyday world. Plus your youngster will discover that textures do 'feel' the same when experienced with his feet and toes as they do with the hands and fingers.

**What you'll need to play this activity:** large, plastic dish pan; something to bury treasure under such as cornmeal, sand, sawdust, foam packing pieces or shredded newspapers; treasures such as seashells, gem stones, coins, coin-shaped chocolates wrapped in foil, or small plastic prizes.

**How to play *Treasure Hunting with Fingers and Toes*:** Fill the tub with cornmeal, sand or whatever textured material you choose to use. Hide one treasure (seashell, stone, coin, chocolate etc.) under the material. Have your child close his eyes and use fingers to feel for the prize. The next time you hide a prize, have your child use his toes instead of fingers to search for the treasure. Alternate fingers and toes during additional searches.

## Share!

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When you were three years old and we played treasure hunt, your favourite textured material was:

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