



## Learning About the Body & How It Moves

When your child starts kindergarten, she will need to know about the body and how it moves. You can help your child learn the parts of the body and practice different movements by trying these easy and fun activities with your child:

### YOUR INFANT (birth to 2 years old):

- Put your baby in different positions during the day: sitting in a swing, lying on her back, or lying on her stomach for 'tummy time'. Always put a baby to sleep on her back – never on her stomach.
- Play with and support your child as he learns to roll over, sit up, crawl, pull himself to stand, and walk.
- Read books that help young children learn the names of different body parts, such as Head, Shoulders, Knees and Toes by Annie Kubler or Toes, Ears, & Nose by Karen Katz.

### YOUR TODDLER (2-3 year olds):

- Play *Mommy Says*. Ask your child to point to specific body parts: "Mommy says, point to your eye" or "Mommy says point to your nose." Once your child shows that he knows most of the recognizable body parts, ask about more little-known body parts: ankles, chin, elbows, knees, ribs, or shins.
- Make flashcards. Cut out pictures of different parts of the body from magazines and glue them to index cards or small pieces of paper. Show your child each flashcard and challenge him to point to that part of his own body; help your child to name the body part if he doesn't know it.
- Try *Body Beanbag Toss*. Trace your child's body by having her lay down on a large piece of paper or poster board. Give your child a beanbag and ask her to toss it at the body. Have your child call out the name of the body part that the beanbag lands on.<sup>1</sup>

### YOUR PRESCHOOLER (4 year olds):

- Play *What Am I?* To play, think of a body part. Then, give your child clues about the body part, such as: "You can wiggle me" (fingers or toes) or "You use me to smell" (nose). Ask: "What am I?" Congratulate your child if he guessed correctly. If not, restate the clue while doing the action stated in the clue or pointing to the body part referenced.<sup>2</sup>
- Get your child moving. Place two objects (try beanbags, hula hoops, masking tape "Xs," or pillows) on the ground. Ask your child to travel between the two objects using different types of movement. For example: jump like a frog, slither like a snake, gallop like a horse, or hop like a bunny. Or, try asking your child to move different parts of her body at the same time: running while wiggling her arms or walking backwards while nodding her head. Encourage your child to try different styles of movement: slowly, quickly, lightly, or loudly.

### Book Suggestion

From Head To Toe by Eric Carle

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<sup>1</sup> Kathy Charner. The Giant Encyclopedia of Theme Activities for Children 2 to 5: Over 600 Favorite Activities Created by Teachers for Teachers.

<sup>2</sup> How to Teach Your kids to Learn Body Party, LiveStrong. <[www.livestrong.com](http://www.livestrong.com)>