



## Brain Food

NUTRITION

Nutrition plays an important role in early brain development and throughout our lives. Eating a variety of fruits and vegetables is important for a healthy nervous system. Additionally, healthy fats known as **Omega-3s** support nerve cell communication. Adding these foods\* to a child's diet improves their ability to move and learn.

### FOODS WITH OMEGA-3S:

- AVOCADO
- EGGS
- GRASS-FED BEEF
- TUNA
- EDAMAME
- WALNUTS
- ALMONDS
- PISTACHIOS
- FLAXSEED
- SALMON

These foods are also an excellent choice for mom during pregnancy, as they contribute to a baby's healthy growth in the womb.

\*Consult your medical provider if you or your child has certain allergies.

## Lasting Action

LIFELONG IMPACT

Unlocking a lifetime of health and vitality begins in the earliest stages of life. As parents and caregivers, it is important to understand the role movement plays in how the brain processes sensory input from the eyes, ears, mouth and sense of touch. Early movement activities strengthen and organize a child's sensory systems, which can reduce challenging behaviors such as:

- FUSSY EATING
- POOR IMPULSE CONTROL
- HYPERSENSITIVITY
- BED-WETTING
- HANDWRITING DIFFICULTY
- FIDGETING
- POOR CONCENTRATION
- POOR MUSCLE TONE
- POOR BALANCE

By embracing movement during the earliest stages of life, we can help our children develop a greater sense of emotional and physical resiliency.



Visit [www.pqinitiative.com](http://www.pqinitiative.com) for more information on why movement matters.



# The Importance of Movement in Early Childhood Development

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# Movement Matters

PURPOSE

## The Importance of Daily Physical Movement For Infants and Children

Did you know physical movement is important for a child's developing brain? Our earliest movement experiences are reflexes in our mother's womb. These set the foundation for later growth. During infancy, daily movement patterns are essential for a child to develop such things as spatial awareness, balance, coordination and emotional regulation.

Physical movement affects our nervous system, the communication network between the body and the brain. A well regulated nervous system helps us feel safe and calm managing sensations, thoughts and emotions.

When regular physical movement is not encouraged during the first few years of life, the nervous system does not develop properly. This can disrupt brain development and worsen symptoms of developmental, behavioral and learning challenges related to conditions like ADHD, dyslexia, and autism. Furthermore, there is also an increased risk of experiencing emotional or sensory difficulties later in life.

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# Container Timed

DEVELOPMENT

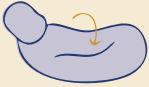
Baby swings, walkers and bouncers can be helpful tools but frequent use of these "containers" affects a child's ability to move freely. Lack of free movement has been shown to negatively impact brain development in children. Whenever possible, provide opportunities for free movement with safety precautions and proper supervision. When "containerization" is necessary, consider a play pen or babywearing with a front or back carrier.

# Activity Recommendations

ACTION

Daily routines with your infant or child that incorporate physical movement will benefit their long-term growth and development. The following activities create the foundation for a child's ability to learn, make friends and have confidence in their abilities. (Note: Activities are most beneficial when performed slowly in calm settings to avoid overstimulation of the nervous system)

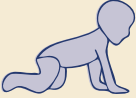
### For Infants:



BLANKET ROLL



TUMMY TIME



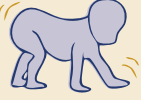
CRAWLING



ROCKING

Encourage at least 30 minutes of healthy play daily. Tip: incorporate into daily routines

### For Pre-K+:



ANIMAL CRAWL  
Bear Crawl, Snake



ROLLING/ROCKING



SPINNING



HEAD ROTATION



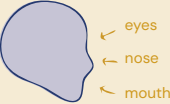
SIDE-TO-SIDE



UP AND DOWN  
Eyes and head



MARCHING



BODY GAMES



RUNNING



JUMPING/HOPPING



BALANCING

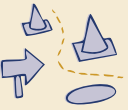


CRAWLING WITH

### For Older Children:



SIMON SAYS



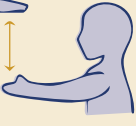
OBSTACLE COURSE



RELAY RACES  
Potato Sack, Soccer Ball, 3-Legged, etc.



SKIPPING



BEAN BAG  
Toss and Catch



TUMBLING