Solihull Parenting Team

Developmental Milestones: Physical and Self-Care

Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council

There is no doubt that 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 & 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 & will learn differently, achieving 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 & 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 & exploring colour, building with Lego or small blocks, pinching, rolling & cutting dough or clay
- Provide activities that develop stability – stop & start games such as statues; expressive play such as being rabbits or snakes so that children balance their weight on different parts of the body
- Plan activities that encourage locomotor skills – ie. galloping, running, climbing, cycling, hopping, skipping
- Give children opportunities to develop object-control skills including catching, rolling and throwing skills – provide bean bags & buckets or hoops for throwing into; offer a range of balls of different weight, size & bounciness!
- Provide bats, skittles & any other resources to encourage movement and accuracy in catching & throwing

Health & self-care

- Put out steps for hand washing & toilets - make up a song/rhyme and sing as you model hand-washing
- Provide tissues within easy reach to reminders your child about hygiene for nose-blowing and coughing
- Grow edible plants together, ie. strawberries, tomatoes, lettuce, potatoes - prepare & 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 & 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

