



Toddler climbing

1 - 3 years

TIME: 10 - 15 minutes

SKILL: Agility, Balance, Coordination

REQUIREMENTS: staircase, sofas, large chairs, bed, cushions and pillows

Outdoors: simple climbing obstacles such as benches and garden walls, or play frames at a playground

Directions

1. Encourage your toddler to climb obstacles that are free of sharp edges. Stay close and be ready to catch your child if she loses her balance, her footing, or her hand grip.
2. If you are indoors, encourage your child to climb the stairs or climb onto beds and sofas. You can also create a climbing/crawling obstacle course using sofa cushions and pillows.
3. If you are outdoors, encourage your child to climb objects you encounter such as park benches, garden retaining walls, logs and even small rock outcroppings. Low playground equipment and climbing frames designed for toddlers are excellent if available.
4. Always stay close to your toddler, especially between ages 1-2 years, and be prepared to catch her if she loses her balance, her footing, or her hand grip! Don't allow her to climb too high, or into any areas beyond your arm reach.
5. Use encouraging words, and avoid comments that communicate fear. Simply lift her down from any place where you feel she is exposed to excessive risk of falling and possibility of injury.

Variation

- If you sense that your toddler needs encouragement to climb, try placing one of her favourite toys on top of an obstacle in full view, or make a motion to climb the obstacle yourself and encourage her to climb with you.

Benefits

- This activity develops balance and physical coordination, along with some agility, and it builds strength in the limbs.