INFANT MOVES

“Watch and help me learn to move on my own.”

**Sitting...**

“Learning to sit is fun but I need you to help me.”

“When I get better I can sit on my own and start to reach for toys you put near me.”

**Crawling...**

“Place a toy in front just out of my reach. I will learn to crawl as I move to play with it.”

“Pulling up against low furniture helps me learn to use my legs and get me ready for walking.”

**Walking...**

“Look, I am learning to walk by moving around furniture. Give me toys to move towards and watch me play.”

“Standing...”

**Back to sleep. Tummy to play.**

“It is safe for me to be on my tummy when I am awake and you are with me.”

The NSW Ministry of Health wishes to acknowledge the following sources: South Eastern Sydney and Illawarra Shoalhaven Local Health Districts Healthy Eating and Active Play at Playgroup manual and case studies, and the NSW Ministry of Health Munch and Move program and Local Health District resources.

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**INTRODUCTION**

Babies love to move around and be active, this is called ‘active play’. Playtime on the floor will give your baby the opportunity to be active, get stronger, and want to move into new positions such as sitting, crawling, standing and walking.

**LEARNING TO SIT**

**With support**
- Sit on the floor with your legs stretched out in front of you and place your baby between your legs, close to your body.
- Bring your legs in close to your baby for extra support.
- You may feel more comfortable leaning back on a wall or lounge.

**Without support**
- Sit your baby on their bottom on a soft surface with a cushion on each side and behind them.
- Help your baby develop their balance by encouraging them to reach for a toy.
- Stay close to help them play safely.

**LEARNING TO CRAWL**
- Sit on the floor with your baby on their tummy in front of you.
- Place a toy out of reach and encourage your baby to move towards it.

**LEARNING TO STAND**
- Place a toy on a low piece of furniture such as a lounge or coffee table.

**LEARNING TO WALK**
- When your baby is strong in standing, get them to stand and hold onto a low piece of furniture.

**HELPFUL HINTS**
- Try not to let your baby spend more than two hours per day in equipment like strollers, rockers, swings, baby seats, walkers or jolly jumpers when awake. Spending more than two hours a day in this equipment can delay the development of movement skills such as crawling and walking.
- Leave shoes off to play as babies balance better in bare feet.
- Babies will often fall. Playtime on the floor should take place on a soft surface such as a rug.
- Stay close to help your baby play safely. Playing face to face will help you see if your baby is getting tired or not enjoying an activity.
- Provide your baby with new play opportunities every day to help them develop. For example when they crawl put cushions on the floor for them to crawl over and when they walk slowly roll a ball for them to chase.

**Remember:**
- There is a connection between babies sleeping on their tummies and SIDS (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome).
- Always supervise your baby when they are playing on their tummy.
- If your baby falls asleep on their tummy immediately roll them onto their back.

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