

Areas of Learning

Physical – Tummy Time



What is Tummy Time?

Tummy time describes the times when you place a baby on his or her stomach whilst they are awake whilst an adult is closely watching and encouraging. Tummy time can be introduced as soon as a baby is born. Tummy time is important because it:

- Helps prevent flat spots on the back of a baby's head
- Makes the neck and shoulder muscles stronger so your baby can start to sit up, crawl and walk
- Improves your baby's motor skills (using muscles to move and complete an action)
- Is active, fun, and good for bonding.

TASK 1

“Movement is the child's first language, right from the time the foetus kicks and pushes on the boundaries of the womb. After birth, infants' spontaneous wiggling of arms and legs indicates their search for early movement patterns. It is wise to watch with interest and in awe as they reveal their sequential developmental stages towards significant patterns of movement. Development of the early movements enables the infant to move along the floor on their tummy, exploring their environment in their drive to make sense of their world from the physical actions they perform within it”. **Nursery World 2018**

Watch the short video: [How to do tummy time with your newborn baby - BBC Tiny Happy People](#)

Next, answer and discuss the following questions:

- What physical skills were the babies developing during this activity?
- How were the adults supporting each baby? What made their interactions so effective?
- Consider the length of time exposed to tummy time and when this activity be appropriate within a baby's routine.
- How did the environment support the babies during this activity?

TASK 2

Reflect on your own practice by answering the questions below, discuss how you can develop 'Tummy Time' opportunities for babies in your setting:

- Do you provide a sensory baby gym with space for babies to roll with interesting items to look at and grasp?
- How often do you encourage a baby to lie on their side and encourage them to roll from side to back/tummy?
- Do you place interesting items just out of reach to encourage stretching and movement?
- Do you get down on the floor and interact - sing songs, play with toys and place a plastic mirror in front of them?

- How often do you hold a toy to the side where they can see it and move it over their head to land on the other side. This will encourage a baby to follow it with their eyes and even roll over.
- How do you promote the importance of tummy time with parents?' Think of ways on how you can develop this.

Below are some ideas you may wish to consider when supporting and informing parents/carers:

- Promote the importance of Tummy Time to by creating a display with photos and key messages.
- Invite parents in for a 'Tummy Time' session, encourage them to take part in a variety of tummy time activities with their baby.

Further reading

[Early Movers — Tummy time](#)

[Your baby's development from 2 to 12 months | Ready Steady Baby! \(nhsinform.scot\)](#)

[Babies Need Tummy Time! | Safe to Sleep® \(nih.gov\)](#)