

Creative Movement for Babies: PATHWAYS

SONG

Washing Machine

(rock baby from side to side)

Twist and twist in a washing machine.

(rock baby forward and back)

Twist and twist 'til we're all clean.

(rock baby side-to-side)

Twist and twist in a washing machine.

(tip baby up)

Twist and twist now we're all clean.

(repeat with "bounce and bounce in a drying machine" or "bend and bend in a folding machine".)

TUMMY TIME

Explore pathways taped on the ground -- zigzag, straight and curvy -- and let baby focus and locomote on these new superhighways!

LET'S DANCE!

Homemade marching band! Everyone has a song to sing or an instrument to play -- even if they're off-tune and homemade! You could even use a portable stereo as you move in, around and out of rooms using curvy, straight and zigzag pathways.

FOLLOW THE LEADER

Babies will delight in your imitating their movement. If they're on their tummies, playing and cooing, do you think you can play and move the way they do? Do you notice that your baby's tendencies towards using certain pathways may change as s/he develops? Imitation will help him/her to understand his/her own body, but it's also a lovely way for you to enjoy and savor his/her unique way of moving now!

BABY SCIENCE

Bounce a ball on a towel or sheet to see what pathways it takes. Maybe you could bounce stuffed animal, a soft block, or other objects. How do they move? As babies work towards developing a greater sense of kinesthetic awareness, they will start to make predictions or even have knowledge of how things in their environment will move.

DEVELOPMENTAL TIDBIT

From three months to 24 months, your baby is focused on play that will shape and develop his/her cerebral cortex, the area of the brain responsible for language, memory, reasoning, planning, logic and problem-solving. Their "work" is the play that they do all day, so feel great about giving them the opportunity to move freely, explore and come back to your arms for your reassurance and love!