

Rough-and-Tumble Play



BY SUSAN WOOG WAGNER / © NAEYC

We believe that exuberant, boisterous, rough-and-tumble play supports preschoolers' development. Energetic big body play lets children use language, understand cause and effect, and learn how to negotiate, take turns, compromise, and make and follow rules. Vigorous big body play is a great way to support physical development. Because children enjoy it so much, they tend to play for a long time.

To support big body play, at home you can

- Play big body games, such as tag and hopscotch, or throw, catch, and roll a ball with your child.
- Build and use an indoor or outdoor obstacle course. Include a box to crawl through, a piece of rope on the ground to walk like a tightrope, and a hula hoop to jump in and out of.
- Supervise your child's active play, whether solitary or with a friend; be sure to watch and listen at all times.
- Walk, instead of riding, to the places you are going. Vary your movements to include periods of hopping, skipping, galloping, and twirling.
- Move aside furniture and breakables in an area of a room so children can tumble and wrestle safely.
- Encourage children's rough-and-tumble play outside in the yard or at a park. Preschoolers like to run, jump, tag, roll, twirl, fall down, and chase—each other or you.

A message from your child's teacher _____