

Infant Development

Creeping & Crawling - One of the Most Important Developmental Milestones

Educators often hear from therapists, "When in doubt, crawl, crawl, crawl!" It seems from the onset, crawling is an amazing developmental activity that translates into all kinds of academic success. The importance of a long crawling and creeping period in development is often overlooked by Pediatricians and parents as they don't know the vital importance of this developmental milestone and impact later on in life. As Occupational Therapists, we see children daily that have poor reading, can't crossing midline, decreased trunk stability, and poor writing and fine motor skills all due to short or missed belly time! Infants should spend as much time as possible on their bellies from the time they can turn their head at a few weeks when playing. Try not to put babies in supported sitting, car seats, entertainers, walkers, and johnny jumpers more than 30 minutes a day, as them getting on their bellies sooner will prevent a myriad of developmental and learning delays later in development!



Crawling is when you are on your belly like an 'army man or snake'.

Creeping is when you are on your hands and knees like a 'cat creeping up on a mouse'

Doing this activity even through older ages helps in all areas of development:

- Calms by activating heavy work receptors in the muscles and joints
- Continues to calm by building muscles that help breathing
- Helps children sit in chairs by building back and stomach muscles
- Coordinates two body sides so hand specialization is more likely to occur
- Improves handwriting by developing shoulder, arm, and wrist stability
- Helps develop fine-motor coordination as it builds the arches of the hand
- Decreases touch sensitivities by deep input and rubbing the floor
- Integrates many of the primitive reflexes, integration of these reflexes is vital to gaining higher motor skills
- Strengthens trunk, shoulder and arm strength which is needed to sit and attend
- Sets up the communication in the brain across the midline of the brain which is needed for reading skills to occur
- Increases muscle tone, muscle strength, and coordination throughout the body

We have wonderful brochures on belly time to help you find ways to help your infant or child crawl and creep daily!

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