

movement

for playful, intelligent children

by Pennie Brownlee

The design of the human baby is perfect, miraculous even. All perfectly designed babies are designed to move. They need to move often, and in many different ways. That way they can make the most of their design potential.

For a baby, moving is learning. Your baby will move to learn as she learns to move. The two are one and the same.

Learning rules OK

The learning in the early years underpins all future learning. That's because the way your child approaches learning sets up **learning patterns** that are **wired into the body and the brain** as a result of your child's physical experience. By exploring and playing your child will learn and grow in -

- **concentration** and **focused attention**
- **independence** and **self reliance**
- **problem solving skills** and **persistence**
- sound **judgement** and **balance**
- the **courage** to risk and learn

That's a lot of essential learning achieved through your baby's play.

To assist your child's development, here are some facts about child development and some simple ways in which you can support your child

Your child's physical development follows the inbuilt "human plan," **so rather than you telling your child what to do, allow your child to lead the adventure.** That way your child can follow the wise body-promptings which come from within.

It's all about balance

Physical development is a question of balance, and only your child can find his or her own.

balance. You cannot find balance for your child. If you hold your child's hands, or steady them in any way, you are taking away the chance for *them* to learn how to balance.

How balanced are you?

To get some idea of what is involved in learning to balance, stand on one leg and balance. Then close your eyes and balance. You will notice that your body works very hard to find its balance and to stay balanced. Balancing is very serious work for young children too.



This is no help to Baby

Help is not the same as Support
Helping teaches helplessness
whereas

Support allows your baby to follow their genetic programme for movement development

When your child attempts something that is new for them, **let them do it for themselves.** You support your child when **you encourage them to work it through for themselves, their way.** Let them use *their* body and *their* brain to solve the problem and grow *their* intelligence.

Why not help?

Children who have been “helped” a lot don’t always know the limit of their capabilities. They do not know their body as well as they would if they had worked things out by themselves.

Because of this they **often choose tasks beyond their capabilities**, then they ask you to help them to achieve their goal.

You know that you encourage dependency when you help, but what do you do when your child is clearly stuck at the top of the ladder for example? How do you support?

Support and encouragement

Start by ~

- **Acknowledging** your child’s achievement:

“You have climbed up to the top of the ladder by yourself...”

- **Describe** the situation to your child. It lets your child know that you understand what they had in mind:

“And you haven’t worked out how to get over to the other side yet have you?”

- **Acknowledge** their feelings:

“I can see it is very frustrating when you know what you want to do...”

- **Defuse** the situation:

“So I will lift you off for now and you can attempt it another time.”

You are giving your child the message that you **expect that he or she will do it**, but not just yet. **You trust** that your child *will* try it again and achieve it, and most importantly, **your child experiences your trust**. Sometimes your child will tackle and achieve that task the very same day.

Simple support like this is everything a child could want. It makes them feel **understood, valued and secure**.

They receive clear messages at a very deep level:

- *Mum and Dad noticed what I achieved.*
- *They were paying attention because they could even see what I had in mind.*
- *They understood how it felt for me when I couldn’t do it just now - but I will do it.*
- *I could tell by what they said that they trust that I will be able to do it too.*



All by myself with support close by

And you know **the satisfaction** that you experience when you achieve something **all by yourself**, especially when you have had to work for it - it is the same for your child.



Supporting your child like this assists your child to **know their body and what it is capable of**. These children do not have accidents, they know just how far to go - for now. Tomorrow they will try something new.

**Be your baby’s greatest support,
let them learn to move and move to learn
in the natural way.**