

IMPORTANCE OF CRAWLING

To the surprise of MANY pediatric practitioners, in 2022 the CDC removed crawling as a milestone. Why do pediatric practitioners, like me, believe it is a necessary milestone in motor development?

BENEFITS OF CRAWLING

From a developmental standpoint, here is what crawling does for your child:

- As crawling is a cross-lateral movement, it strengthens the left-brain right-brain connection by increasing communication between the two sides of the brain
- It strengthens the left-brain right-brain connection required to process sight, hearing, and movement at the same time.
- Crawling contributes to the development of gross motor skills, fine motor skills, balance, and hand-eye coordination.
- The weight-bearing that a child does when crawling develops the arches in the hands and increases shoulder stability
- Crawling builds a foundation for the development of more complex skills that require motor coordination.

HOW CAN I ENCOURAGE MY CHILD TO CRAWL?

- Well first, **tummy time!** Don't just put your child on the floor and watch them. Get down there with them. Make tummy time fun and engaging!
- As your child begins to push up and lift their chest, **place objects of interest slightly out of their reach** and see how they try to move toward the object.
- Make sure they have **enough room to move around.** Babies will often pivot or roll first to get moving. Ensure that your child has a safe place to explore.
- **Minimize the amount of time your child spends in 'containers'** – infant carrier, bouncer, swing, etc. Yes, these different types of equipment can be life savers for times when you need to shower, or cook dinner, but a child should not be in them for long periods of time.