

PARENT *handout*

# Building Bodies: Large Muscles, Strength and Endurance

*Your child is discovering all the things her body can do. To do them well, she needs practice. To practice longer, she needs strength and endurance.*

As your child gets bigger, she naturally becomes stronger. The growing large muscles in her arms, legs and body help her get better at jumping, running, throwing, climbing and kicking.

Strength and endurance in gross motor activities help your child in several ways. They lead to:

- > The physical confidence to enjoy playing with others.
- > Eye-hand coordination when throwing and aiming at targets or when catching.
- > An outlet for extra energy.
- > A release for tension and stress.
- > Problem-solving skills from overcoming challenges related to movement.
- > Other skills that will be useful in school, including planning, attention and body control.

## How you can help

Give your child:

- > Opportunities to throw balls and beanbags harder and farther. Encourage her to throw in different directions at targets of various heights and sizes.
- > Challenges like counting the number of times she can bounce a ball, jump up and down or hit a balloon into the air.
- > Ways to practice her balance. This builds core muscle strength everywhere from her legs to her neck.
- > The chance to learn a variety of sports. For example, swimming is a sensory-rich gross motor activity. Moving and balancing in the water moves both sides of your child's body and builds her core strength.
- > Positive encouragement for her efforts, not her skills. This keeps activities enjoyable. She'll be inspired to play longer.



### REFLECTION

Take time to think about your child.

- > My child has been successful at gross motor skills like:
  
- > Now my child is learning to:
  
- > My child needs more growth and development in her large muscles before she will be able to: