



## **Month 3: Upper Extremity Strength and Stability Introduction**

### **Objectives of this Month**

1. Caregivers will learn the importance of upper extremity development as it relates to fine motor skills
2. Caregivers will learn fun and easy ways of incorporating upper extremity development activities into their environments
3. Children will strengthen their upper extremity muscles and increase shoulder stability

### **Importance of Upper Extremity Strength**

- Developing the strength of upper extremity muscles can directly increase skeletal growth/strength – stronger muscles mean stronger bones
- Practicing skills and increasing strength leads to the ability to learn new skills more efficiently
- Proximal shoulder and trunk strength results in easier development of and more control of fine motor skills – a child needs proximal stability to have distal control
  - Have you ever seen a child use scissors with their elbow pointing in the air or try to print with their wrist hooked? When asked why they say because it's easier or they get too tired doing it correctly; they are compensating for weak upper extremity muscles
- Strengthening of the shoulder muscles helps to maintain good posture
- Age-appropriate muscle strength will lead to a less likelihood of movement related injuries.

Ivany, L. (2009). *Gross motor facilitator project*. Parry Sound Best Start Network.

SPARC: Sports and Recreation New Zealand. (2008). *Upper body development: Climbing, hanging and swinging*. Active Movement.



## Developmental Expectations for Upper Extremity Development

<b>0-2 months:</b>	Baby clears nose when on tummy
<b>2-4 months:</b>	Baby props on elbows & holds head at 90 degrees
<b>4-6 months:</b>	<p>Baby pushing up on extended arms</p> <p>Baby can free one arm to reach in forearm support &amp; enjoys playing with a toy in that position</p> <p>Baby holds your fingers and pulls self up to sit</p> <p>Some babies may start pushing up partially to hands &amp; knees</p>
<b>6-9 months:</b>	<p>Baby pushes up to hands &amp; knees, and rocks forwards &amp; backwards</p> <p>In 4-point, baby frees one hand to reach for toy</p> <p>Baby attempts to move forward &amp; crawling is achieved</p>
<b>9-12 months:</b>	<p>Crawling is primary method of mobility</p> <p>Baby climbs over obstacles &amp; furniture</p> <p>Baby begins to creep/crawl up the stairs</p>
<b>12-15 months:</b>	Child continues to crawl up stairs even though they have mastered walking
<b>15-18 months:</b>	<p>Child is crawling up and down stairs</p> <p>Child climbs age-appropriate playground equipment with supervision/assistance</p> <p>Child climbs up onto furniture (chairs &amp; couches)</p>
<b>19-21 months:</b>	Child climbs on, off, & over furniture
<b>31-36 months:</b>	<p>Child climbs ladders &amp; slides on outdoor playground equipment with supervision only</p> <p>Child copies movements accurately &amp; participates well in action songs</p> <p>Child will wheelbarrow walk a short distance if supported proximally at hips or pelvis</p>
<b>48 months:</b>	<p>Child climbs outdoor playground equipment independently</p> <p>Child capable of forward tumble</p> <p>Child is able to wheelbarrow walk with adult supporting a shins or feet</p>
<b>60 months:</b>	<p>Child is able to complete 10 jumping jacks, moving arms and legs in a coordinated fashion</p> <p>Child is able to hang from the monkey bars, holding extremity weight for at least 20 seconds</p> <p>Child is able to perform 3 or more push-ups from his knees</p>

Cornish, A., & Summersby, L.D. (2006). *Gross motor development from birth to six years*. One Kids Place.  
 Folio, M.R., & Fewell, R.R. (2002). *Peaextremity motor development chart*. Austin (TX): Pro-ed.  
 Ivany, L. (2009). *Gross motor facilitator project*. District of Parry Sound Best Start Network.