

# Developing Independence in 3 - 5 year olds



**I Can Do It  
Myself**



Improving your  
child's physical  
development -  
making sure your  
child walks all by  
themselves



**'CHANGE'**  
Is going to be  
hard, but that  
doesn't mean it  
isn't worth it!

You may read information in this booklet that will change the way you parent. Please make sure you think about the approaches you are going to use beforehand, talk to the other parents/carers involved and remember that it will be hard, but it is worth it!

There are lots of reasons why parents like the convenience of having a buggy. We have shared some of them and given approaches you can use to address this need.

**They are really useful for carrying bags**

- Have bags that you can carry while holding your child's hand e.g backpacks
- Get your child to help you carry some of the lighter bags

**I can do the shopping if my child is strapped into the buggy**

- Talk with your child about what you are planning to do and what the expectations are e.g. "we are going to the shop to buy milk and apples, you are going to hold my hand and help me get the food and then when we've paid, we can walk home."
- Give your child lots of praise when they are doing as you have asked.

## My child is tired

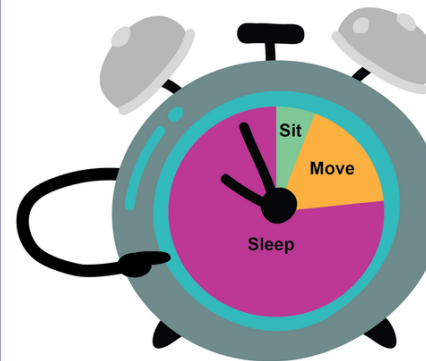
- Make sure your child knows that wherever you are going, they will be walking
- Make the walk fun – look for numbers on houses/car number plates, talk about what you see
- Give them little checkpoints e.g. “can we walk to the lamppost, yay, we did it! Now let’s walk to the traffic lights” etc.

## I am in a rush

- Be organised and try to leave plenty of time for your child to walk
- Make the rush into a game e.g. we have to run to the bus, when you get there tell your child “that was great exercise, you were so fast!”

**Always remember to praise your child for following the boundaries you set. They need to know they have done the right thing!**

**Children should be moving for at least 3 hours a day. They should be sitting for less than 1 hour each day (this time includes eating and reading time. Children should not be restrained in buggies at this time).**



World Health Organization  
Recommendations for How  
Much Children Should Move,  
Sleep, and Sit Every Day

**Children 3-4 years of age...**



**MOVE**  
3h

should spend 180 minutes in a variety of activities at any intensity, of which at least 60 minutes is energetic play spread throughout the day; more is better



**SLEEP**  
10-13h

10-13 hours of good quality sleep, which may include a nap, with regular sleep and wake-up times



**SIT**  
< 1h

should not be restrained (e.g., in strollers) or sit for extended periods of time. Sedentary screen time should be no more than 1 hour; less is better. When sitting, engaging in reading and storytelling with a caregiver is encouraged.