



healthy body
happy me 2025
BUSY BODIES

Wednesday

Healthy Body, Happy Me 2025

Terrific Twisters



National Day Nurseries Association

*Brighter thinking
for early years

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Activity 1 Let's twist again

Dancing helps to get children moving and have fun at the same time. There is no right or wrong way to dance, so children are free to move in whichever ways feel good for them. Incorporating twists and turns into the dance will strengthen children's core muscles and help develop flexibility.

Let's twist again

Activity outline

- To start, ensure you are in a space big enough for all the children to be able to move freely
- Make sure you warm up, explaining the reasons for this to the children. Put on some fun, energetic music and encourage the children to wiggle their fingers, toes and even whole bodies, like jelly. This will get them warmed up and ready for twisting
- Show the children how to twist their bodies from side to side. Try twisting slowly like a snail then get faster like a whirlwind. Spend some time practising twisting their arms, legs and entire bodies
- Choose a leader (you or a child). The leader performs a twisty dance move such as twirling in a circle, bending to the side or reaching for the sky whilst twisting for everyone else to copy. Swap leaders so everyone who wants to lead can have a go
- Give each child a coloured scarf or ribbon and encourage them to wave them high, low and all around, making colourful swirls in the air
- Finish with slow, relaxing twisty moves to cool down.



Resources

- Coloured ribbon or scarves
- Space
- Music.



Twist and turn

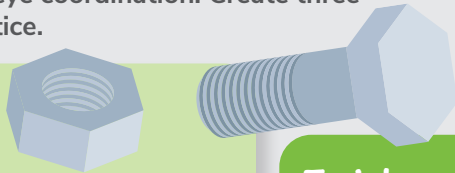
Activity 2 Twisty fingers

The motion of twisting helps develop fine motor control in fingers, wrists and elbows, as well as hand eye coordination. Create three activity stations for children to practice.

Nuts and bolts

Activity outline

Provide children with a set of chunky nuts and bolts and encourage them to screw the nuts on. For an added challenge, introduce a timer and see how many they can screw on within a time limit or perhaps they could race their friends to unscrew the nuts from the bolts.



Test your dexterity

Lids

Activity outline

Use a basket or other inviting box to offer a selection of jars, bottles and containers with their lids for children to explore. As well as twisting the lids on and off, this activity is great for encouraging talk about shape and size as part of their play, as they try to match the lid to the container.



Resources

- Chunky nuts and bolts
- A timer
- Six to ten washed baby food pouches
- Cardboard
- Glue or tape
- A basket or box
- Selection of jars, bottles and containers.

Twisty boards

Activity outline

- Collect and wash six to ten baby food pouches for each twisty board, cutting off the top section of each one
- Prepare a flat piece of cardboard by creating a hole to poke the plastic pouch tops through. Fix them to the underside with sturdy glue or tape. Once secure, turn the board over and screw the caps on
- Invite the children to twist the caps off the board – as these are quite small and fiddly, this can be challenging so plenty of patience and reassurance is essential. Putting the caps back on adds an extra challenge for those who are ready
- For variety, you can attach the board under a table or to a wall.



Activity 3 Team twisters

Twisting as a team is a great way to improve children's coordination, balance and flexibility as well as helping them to work with other children to achieve a goal.



Resources

- Music
- Space
- Football-sized ball or cuddly toy.

Team twisters

Activity outline

- Start with a warm-up, explaining why it's important to get muscles ready for exercise. Play some energetic music and encourage children to move around the space to get warmed up, e.g. running, jumping, small steps, huge steps etc. Demonstrate some simple stretches for children to follow
- Line the children up shoulder to shoulder with a little space between each of them
- Show them how to move an item from one side of their body to the other by twisting from side to side
- Give a football-sized ball/cuddly toy to the child at one end of the line. They need to pass it to the next person by twisting their body from one side to the other. When the object reaches the last person they can start passing it back down the line
- To keep things exciting, swap children's places around and keep the lines short so they don't have to wait too long for their turn.
- Try creating two lines so the children must race to pass the object
- Repeat the activity with the children standing one behind the other. This time, they'll have to twist to pass the ball to the person behind them or twist to receive the ball. Keep them moving and twisting to really use all those muscles.



Race to the finish!



Try it with a teddy



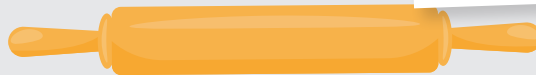
Activity 4 Cheesy twists

Cheese twists are a great snack and the addition of some pepper pesto gives them a real flavour boost. Children can get involved in the process, using their wrists to add twists to the pastry.

Cheesy twists

Activity outline

- Take the pastry out of the fridge half an hour before using so it can warm up a little
- Unroll the pastry carefully and lay it on a flat surface. Cut it in half down the middle width ways
- Using the back of a spoon, spread the pesto over one half of the pastry
- Sprinkle the cheese over the pesto
- Take the second piece of pastry and lay it over the top of the first. Press it down firmly on top using a rolling pin
- Cut the pastry into strips around 1.5cm wide using the pizza cutter
- Pick up each straw and give them a few twists before placing on the baking tray
- When they are all done, brush each one with a little egg
- Bake at 220°C for 12-15 minutes until crisp and golden brown
- Let them cool a little and enjoy while still warm.



Delicious



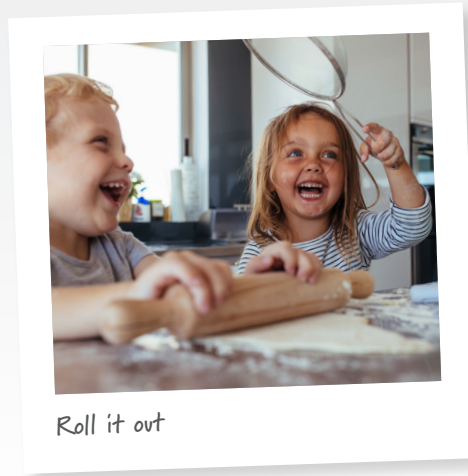
Cheesy!



Resources

- One sheet of ready rolled puff pastry
- Two tbsp red pesto (could use tomato puree if preferred)
- 50g hard cheese, e.g. Grana Padano (grated)
- One egg, beaten
- Oven (preheated to 220 °C)
- Lined baking tray
- Pizza cutter
- Pastry brush
- Large spoon
- Rolling pin.

Further resources, links and stories:



National Day Nurseries Association

At NDNA, we don't just provide nursery membership, lobby government and offer training, we are dedicated to making a difference. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours. We enhance, support, nurture, cherish and challenge.

Every year we run an annual Healthy Body, Happy Me campaign to encourage better health and happiness by giving nurseries FREE resources for play, learning and fun.

Get involved with our 2025 campaign and help keep your children happy and healthy.

Important: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.



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