

# 5 Various physical activities

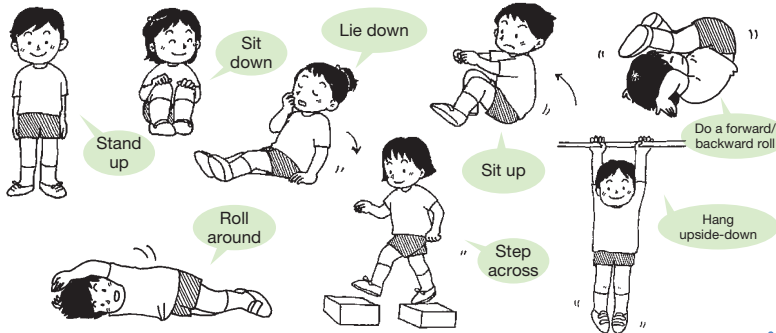
Help your child enjoy physical movement through various physical play and activities.



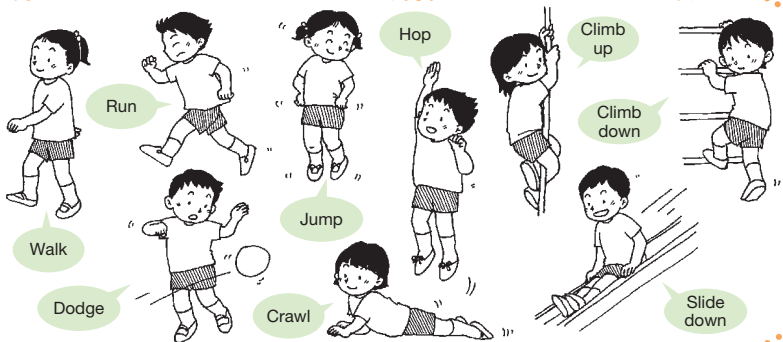
Children can naturally acquire various movement skills through a variety of physical play and activities. Create opportunities for your child to experience the enjoyment of playing through physical movement.

## Basic movements

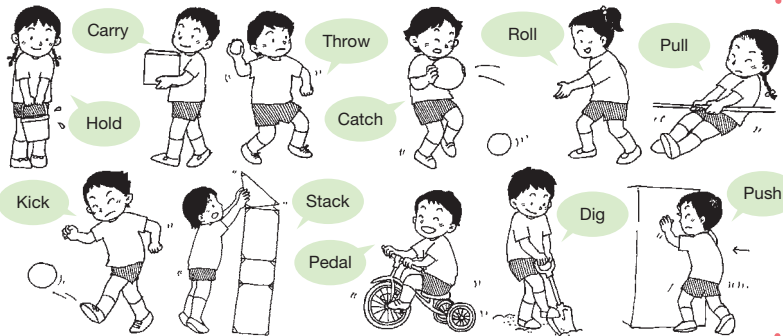
### Balance



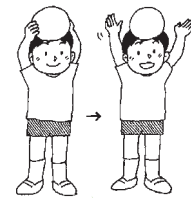
### Moving the body



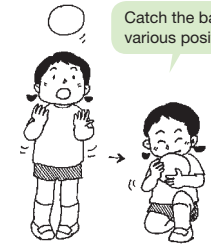
### Controlling objects



## Let's play at home



Put the ball on your head, then let it go.



Catch the ball in various positions.



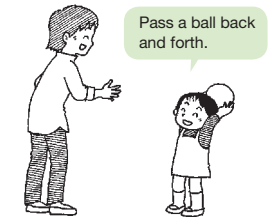
Kick the ball freely.



Kick the rolling ball.



Drop the ball and kick it.



Pass a ball back and forth.

## Making a ball at home

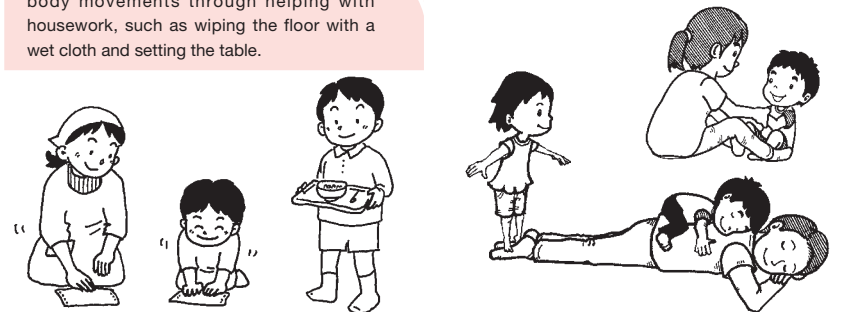
Engage in plenty of physical play with children to help them learn flexibility and how to match others' pace



It may be difficult to play using a big ball at home or at the neighboring park due to various constraints. We recommend that you make a ball by crushing a newspaper into the shape of a ball and taping it all around; it does not roll easily and will not hurt if it hits you.



Children can also experience various body movements through helping with housework, such as wiping the floor with a wet cloth and setting the table.



Stretching while talking with children is a way of incorporating physical interaction.

Physical activity guide for children in early childhood for fun daily physical activities (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2013)



# 6 Let's learn about traditional Japanese events through seasonal craftwork



Many preschools place importance on traditional seasonal events in order to help children understand the meaning and hopes incorporated into the events, and to give them rich experiences by introducing these events in play to feel the changes in the seasons.

Making crafts for each event is one of the ways children can have fun. Teachers come up with ways for the children to enjoy making crafts appropriate for the stages of their development. Various efforts are made at each preschool, and the following are examples of materials and techniques used for each age group according to the children's development.

We recommend that you display what your child brings back from preschool or play with it together at home, so he/she can experience the traditional event and get a sense of the seasons.



## May Tango no Sekku (Boys' Day)

### 3-year-olds



- The teachers introduce techniques and materials with which the children can make paper carp streamers easily and quickly, so they will feel motivated

to make the craft repeatedly.

- The size of a carp streamer corresponds to the size of the children's hands. They make a stick by rolling a flyer and attach the streamers to this stick, so they can play with it and hold it in their hands.

### 4-year-olds

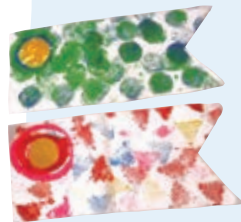


- The teachers let the children choose the color and shape of their paper carp streamers and the color of the scales, so the children enjoy the fun of

making the craft by themselves and take delight in having their own carp streamers.

- The teachers have the children learn to use scissors and glue through making carp streamers.

### 5-year-olds



- The teachers place importance on communication between the children, letting them discuss and cooperate with each other to make carp streamers as a collaborative project. In the process of forming a united idea with a few

friends, the children learn to consider and accept the opinions of others.

- The children feel the joy of completing the craft while cooperating with friends.



Pretending to be a carp!

### Trivia of Tango no Sekku

Tango no Sekku is an age-old celebration of putting up carp streamers and displaying samurai warrior helmets and figurines, in hopes for children's healthy growth. In some areas, people also take a hot bath with iris leaves and eat chimaki (rice dumpling wrapped in bamboo leaves) and kashiwa-mochi (mochi wrapped in oak leaves).

\*There are various theories.

## July Tanabata Festival

### 3-year-olds



- The teachers provide materials for the children to choose from to make a craft in their favorite color, so they will have fun and feel motivated to make the craft repeatedly.

- The teachers introduce crafts that are easy to make using glue, such as a paper circle garland or an origami watermelon.

### 4-year-olds



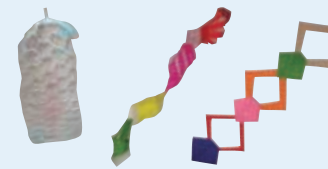
- The teachers have the children make a paper triangle or square garland and paper chains, so they can enjoy making these long decorations.

- The teachers also have the children work on making crafts of Orihime (Vega) and Hikoboshi (Altair), to teach them the origin of the Tanabata Festival. The teachers provide the materials which the children modify by cutting and pasting to complete the crafts.

### 5-year-olds

- The teachers give the children an opportunity to attempt more difficult techniques, such as making small cuts with scissors, to make more complex crafts such as shellfish paper chains, diamond chains, and the Milky Way.

- There are many kinds of decorations, so the teachers first show them which decoration they will work on to let them have an idea of what they are going to make.



### Trivia of the Tanabata Festival

It is believed that you will have good handwriting if you rub the dew of taro leaves onto an inkstick on the day of Tanabata. That is why we have the custom of writing wishes on paper slips at the Tanabata Festival.

\*There are various theories.

The paper slips used are usually red, blue (green), yellow, white, and black (purple). Streamers and threads are also often decorated to represent the weaving yarns of Orihime.



**February Setsubun  
(the Bean-Throwing Festival)**

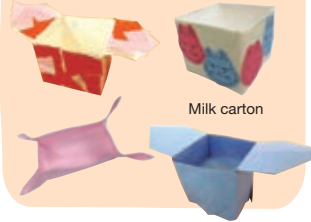
**3-year-olds**

- The teachers show the children how to hold a crayon firmly and color the mask properly.
- The teachers introduce crafts that are easy to make, and which the children can put on right after they finish making them, so that children can experience the joy of creating the crafts by themselves on the spot.



It is fun to make a box to put beans in (a sampo box). Make one with your child at home.

Sampo box (a box to put beans in)



**4-year-olds**

- The teachers have the children come up with the facial expression of an ogre and draw or paste the facial parts accordingly.
- The teachers help the children cut the paper along the lines of a circle and other shapes with scissors.
- The teachers help the children apply an appropriate amount of glue on the corresponding area of the paper, so the parts do not peel off.
- The teachers give the children an opportunity to use materials other than paper.



**5-year-olds**

- The teachers provide paint, wool yarn, thick board paper, etc., so the children can make the ogre mask more realistic.
- The teachers respect the way the children concentrate their efforts in making the mask using a paper bag or papier-mâché.
- The teachers may have the children brainstorm with a few friends to make the craft of an ogre together.



**◦ Trivia of Setsubun**

Setsubun literally means "seasonal division." It used to refer to the day before the beginning of each season in olden times, but it now specifically refers to February 3rd, the day before Rishun (the first day of spring). It was believed that ogres bringing harm to people would appear at the changing of seasons. In order to drive away such evil spirits and welcome the new spring, Setsubun is only celebrated in spring nowadays.

\*There are various theories.



**March Momo no Sekku  
(the Doll's Festival)**

**3-year-olds**

- The teachers encourage the children to fold paper by themselves by preparing samples with simple folding techniques while teaching them so they can try on their own.
- The teachers show the children how to bring the two ends of the paper together.
- The teachers prepare long narrow strips of paper, and have the children cut them with scissors. The children then paste these pieces of paper to the board with glue, so they can experience the enjoyment of creating things by themselves.



**4-year-olds**

- The teachers have the children make crafts using familiar materials, so they can enjoy combining different materials to make crafts.
- The teachers motivate the children to be creative by having them try more difficult techniques, such as cutting a three-dimensional object like a paper cup.



**5-year-olds**

- The teachers respect the way the children make crafts by themselves using different materials with the techniques they have learned.
- The teachers help the children bring their crafts to completion as they imagined, so they feel a sense of satisfaction and accomplishment.
- The teachers have the children look at their classmates' work, and recognize parts that have been carefully done or worked hard on.



**◦ Trivia of Momo no Sekku**

It is said that Momo no Sekku is a day to wish for healthy growth and happiness for girls. Families display dolls as substitutes for their girls in hopes of protecting them from evil.

It is also believed that peach blossoms have the power to ward off evil spirits and to grant longevity to people. This is why people began to display peach blossoms on Momo no Sekku.

\*There are various theories.







# 7 How to choose a picture book

– Books enrich your mind –



When adults offer to read a picture book to children, they may wonder why children turn the pages at their own pace, do not pay attention until the end of the story, or always pick the same book.

Some of you might not be sure of the kind of picture books you should pick for your child.

Here, we introduce how to choose books according to the child's age.

Why doesn't he listen to the story all the way to the end? Is it alright that he always asks for the same book?

## 3-year-olds

Children 3 years of age like picture books with clear and colorful pictures and books with rhythmic repetition of words. When they find their favorite books, they will keep asking you to read them over and over again.

We recommend that you read your child his/her favorite book as many times as he/she wishes.



## 4-year-olds

Children 4 years of age have greater curiosity towards a wide range of subjects since they have learnt the fun of playing with friends and experienced struggles and frustration through fights with friends. They enjoy stories with topics that are familiar to them, such as doing laundry and taking a bath. Picture books with themes about something they experienced at preschool, such as a birthday party and a sports meet, are also good.

## 5-year-olds

Children 5 years of age are beginning to develop compassion and have the motivation to solve problems. They imagine the feelings of the characters in the book and excitedly enter the world of the story, identifying with the main character and thinking, "What is going to happen next?"

### [We hope you will make good use of the libraries in Minato City.]

Books that are relevant to the seasons and recommendations are on display in the picture book/children's book section at our libraries. The library staff can also give you some advice on how to choose books and how to read them to your child, etc. It is fine to start with books with titles and pictures that catch your child's attention at preschool, the library, or a bookstore.



Library	Telephone number	Library	Telephone number
Minato Library	3437-6621	Konan Library	3458-1085
Mita Library	3452-4951	Daiba Civic Center Library Room	5500-2356
Azabu Library	3585-9225	Aoyama Lifelong Learning Hall Library Room	3470-4584
Akasaka Library	3408-5090	Local History Museum Book Reading Room	6450-2107
Takanawa Library	5421-7617	Gender Equality Center, "Libra" Library and Reference Room	3456-4149
Takanawa Library Annex	3443-1666		

\* See the Minato City Library website for details.

### 3-year-olds

**Ookina Kabu (The Gigantic Turnip/The Enormous Turnip)**  
Author: Aleksei Tolstoy  
Illustrator: Churyo Sato  
Translator: Risako Uchida  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Tebukuro (The Mitten)**  
Illustrator: Evgenii M. Rachev  
Translator: Risako Uchida  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Watashi no Wanpisu (My Dress)**  
Author and illustrator: Kayako Nishimaki  
KOGUMA Publishing Co., Ltd.



**Nezumikun no Chokki (Little Mouse's Red Vest)**  
Author: Yoshio Nakae  
Illustrator: Noriko Ueno  
POPLAR Publishing Co., Ltd.



### 4-year-olds

**Ofuro Daisuki (I Love to Take a Bath)**  
Author: Kyoko Matsuoaka  
Illustrator: Akiko Hayashi  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Guri to Gura (Guri and Gura)**  
Author: Rieko Nakagawa  
Illustrator: Yuriko Omura  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Oheso no Ana (The Belly Button)**  
Author and illustrator: Yoshifumi Hasegawa  
BL Publishers



**Sentaku Kaa-chan (Sudsy Mom's Washing Spree)**  
Author and illustrator: Waikō Sato  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



### 5-year-olds

**Ookikunurutte iu koto wa (Getting bigger)**  
Author: Hirotsuka Nakagawa  
Illustrator: Yasunari Murakami  
DOSHINSHA Publishing Co., Ltd.



**Oshaberina Tamagoyaki (A King and his Fried Egg)**  
Author: Teruo Teramura  
Illustrator: Shinta Cho  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Oshiire no Bouken (The Adventure in the Closet)**  
Author: Teruo Teramura  
Illustrator: Shinta Cho  
Fukuinkan Shoten Publishers, Inc.



**Tomodachi-ya (The Fox's Friend-shop)**  
Author: Rintaro Uchida  
Illustrator: Nana Furiya  
KAISEI-SHA Ltd.



\* The recommended age is only for reference.

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Chapter 2 How teachers should interact with children at preschool, and what is important at home 49





## How to keep insects at home as pets

– Let's keep a snail –

On the way to preschool, you may have many chances to interact with nature. Your child may find ants, pill bugs and cicada shells, for example. If he/she finds a snail, you can keep it at home.

### What to prepare

- A pet container ... A case or a transparent container for the snail
- Small branches and fallen leaves

### Feed

- Feed the snail with vegetables such as cabbage and carrot.
- Observe it to find out what it eats besides cabbage and carrot.
- Eggshells provide good nutrients for its shell.
- \* Soft green leaves are good for a baby snail.

### How to care for your snail

- Put the container in the shade in a well-ventilated area.
- Keep the inside of the container moist. (Water it frequently using a mist-spray.)
- Remove the leftover feed and the feces to keep the inside of the container clean at all times.
- Make sure to wash your hands after you touch the snail.

Taking care of a familiar animal at home will help children take an interest in living things.

It will also be a good opportunity for your child to learn about the importance of life through taking care of small creatures. You and your child will enjoy having chats about the snail, taking care of it and observing its growth together.

### Other insects that can be kept at home



#### Beetles

If you intend to breed it from a larva, we recommend you look up how to do so.



#### Pill bugs

Pill bugs are omnivores; they eat anything. It will be interesting to observe what feed they like.



### Trivia of snails

Snails defecate colored feces depending on the color of feed they eat. Observe their feces with your child and look it up in a reference book.

## Minato Science Museum

The Minato Science Museum is a new museum that opened in June 2020. Taking full advantage of the many urban features that come together in Minato City, this museum provides everyone, from children to adults, with opportunities to learn about science based on the theme "Discover and explore the science that lives in the city."

The Minato Quest Map in the permanent exhibition area on the 1st floor provides various information on Minato City. Visitors can also enjoy hands-on exhibits that cover the different themes of City, Sea, Nature and Human.

On the 2nd floor is a planetarium hall equipped with a state-of-the-art optical projector and a 4K full-dome imaging system that displays 8 million stars. The planetarium screens original videos produced by the museum and features live commentary on the starry sky.

Seasonal exhibitions and workshops are also held on certain occasions. See the official website of Minato Science Museum (<https://minato-kagaku.tokyo>) for details.



- [Address]** 3-6-9 Toranomon, Minato City, Tokyo  
 \*The Minato Science Museum occupies the 1st and 2nd floors of the building.
- [Access]** 4 minutes' walk from Exit A1 or A2 of Toranomon Hills Station on the Hibiya Line  
 5 minutes' walk from Exit 4B of Kamiyacho Station  
 10 minutes' walk from Exit 2A of Toranomon Station on the Ginza Line  
 15 minutes' walk from Exit 3 of Roppongi-Itchome Station on the Namboku Line
- [TEL]** 6381-5041
- [Hours]** 9:00 a.m.-8:00 p.m. \*Last admission: 7:30 p.m.
- [Closed]** 2nd Monday of each month, the New Year/year-end holidays (December 29-January 3), temporary closures
- [Admission]** Free \*An admission fee is required only for the planetarium.

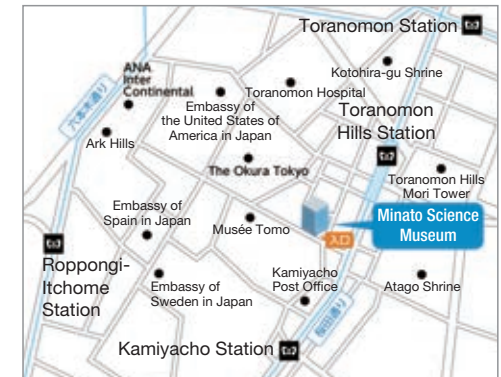


Admission fee for the planetarium	Adults	Elementary/junior high/high school students
One general showing	¥600	¥100
Annual membership (Member's Card)	¥2,000	¥300

- [Official website]** <https://minato-kagaku.tokyo/>  
**[Official Twitter]** @minato\_kagaku



Planetarium image of the starry sky of Minato City



Look, it made ice! It's really thick!

One very cold winter morning

I want to make ice! What should we use for a container?

Shall we put flowers in the ice?

What happens if we put water in a wash tub outside?

The next day...

We made ice with flowers in it!

The water in the plastic bottle hasn't turned into ice...

Why is that? Let's experiment and find out why!

After experimenting with ice for several days...

Do we want to use a frying pan, too?

According to the weather forecast on the news, today's low is 5 degrees Celsius.

Let's mark the date when ice formed and write down the temperature on the calendar.

I checked the temperature on the roof.

Ice forms on a really cold day.

Look! We've got ice this big!

Ice forms on days when it is colder than 6 degrees Celsius.

Children grow significantly in early childhood, physically and emotionally. They are still young but start to acquire the qualities that should be nurtured by the end of early childhood (refer to pages 8-9) in the period before they start elementary school. How do they show those qualities in their actual life at preschool?

Let's see how the 5-year-olds in January from the column on the left displayed the qualities that should be nurtured by the end of early childhood.



Qualities observed in the children in the column on the left:

**Qualities that should be nurtured in children by the end of early childhood**

(Refer to pages 8-9)

● **Connections to social life**

As they wondered if there was a relationship between temperature and ice forming based on the weather forecast on TV, they started to check and record the temperature on the calendar at preschool, notice the changes in temperature, and inform the other children.

● **Budding thinking ability**

Because of their interest in ice, they carried out many ice-making experiments with their peers. While doing so, they learned the properties of ice and further expanded their interest to places and containers where water freezes easily, as well as conditions for forming ice, such as temperature. They also learned to think from different perspectives while exchanging views with their peers and gaining exposure to different ways of thinking.

● **A relationship with nature/respect for life**

The children had the opportunity to learn about the properties of ice by seeing and touching it firsthand and experiencing its coldness, wonder, and fun. This also helped cultivate curiosity and inquisitiveness as their desire to make ice generated an interest in conditions such as temperature.

● **Communication in words**

Things related to ice became a common topic of the children's conversation. They expressed their questions, discoveries, and thoughts to one another with words, and the whole class shared information and learned.

As described above, children develop an inquiring mind and motivation to answer questions independently through the experience of working toward a solution, experimenting, and sharing thoughts with their peers during play and in their daily life. Experiences in early childhood help children acquire and understand knowledge backed by real experience as well as form the basis for children's lifestyle and studies at elementary school and beyond.