



3 Reasons Why You Should Teach Your Child To Jump

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I don't know how many times I have heard my own family members or friends say to a child "Don't jump down from there." And although there are some instances where jumping is not safe there are other times that it may take away the opportunity for our children to learn some of the fundamental skills for play.

#1 - Strength

Strength can be gained through multiple methods. Children gain strength the most when there is motivation and desire for what they are doing and therefore during forms of play and exploration. We watch our children gain strength from the day they are born from being able to hold their head up so they can see things and people around them, roll across the room to get to a toy out of their reach, and then to walk across the room to give someone a hug. Strength however is not completely developed in children at the time when they are walking. Climbing onto furniture, crawling and walking up and down stairs and jumping down from low surfaces are great ways for children to continue to increase the strength in their core, hips and lower legs. Providing children opportunities to practice these activities in a safe and supervised manner will allow them the chance to continue their development of strength and prepare them to keep up with their peers.

#2 - Balance

A child is developing their sense of balance since the first day of life. They learn to keep their head up when someone is holding them, put their hand down to catch themselves from falling while they sit to play, and keep themselves upright while walking from one side of the room to the other. Stepping down from a height and jumping down from a height create the sensation of your feet meeting the floor and develops the body's reaction to catch itself.

#3 - Confidence

When a child has practiced something new over and over again they begin to gain confidence in doing it again successfully. Giving our children support to perform skills successfully and taking away that support slowly over time prepares them for the confidence to do it on their own. Holding a child hand in hand and helping them to jump down from the last step in a staircase, mom or dad putting a child's pants on while they stand and hold onto a wall, and encouraging a child to step up and down from a step stool to wash their hands are ways to build confidence in skills they will before long be successful on their own.