

# Everyday Early Intervention: Couch Time

Many families enjoy spending time relaxing on the couch together. The couch can be a great place to sit together to talk, read, and play. Moments on the couch can also be times to work on early intervention outcomes. Here are some ideas to help you fit learning and development goals into everyday routines.



## Climb a Couch Cushion Mountain

Stack two or three couch cushions or pillows and encourage your child to use his arms and legs to climb up the mountain. Reaching and climbing strengthens large muscles. As your child grows stronger, add another cushion to the stack for a bigger climb or encourage your toddler to build the stack.

## Cruise and Play

Encourage the large muscle development of infants and toddlers that are not quite walking by encouraging them to cruise the lengths of the couch. Take the cushions off your couch and place favorite toys toward the back. This will encourage a child to pull herself up to stand and reach toward the back of the couch to get to the toys.

## Build a Blanket Fort

Stretch a blanket or sheet between your couch cushions and chairs to create a blanket fort. Crawl in and out of the fort to work on large muscle development. Talk together about who is inside or outside the fort and how the blanket makes a little house. Using words such as *on*, *in*, *out*, and *under* builds children's spatial vocabulary and conceptual knowledge.

## Snuggle and Read

Keep a basket of books near the couch so you always have something for story time. Reading to young children is essential for building their language skills and conceptual knowledge. Read favorite books again and again. Encourage your child to point to the pictures as you read by asking questions such as "Where is the brown doggy?"

 For more information, visit the Illinois Early Intervention Clearinghouse at <http://eiclearinghouse.org>

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