Infant\Toddler Active Physical Play Tip Sheet

w\much of the day explanation

Infants and toddlers should have active physical play for much of the day. Much of the day means anytime a child is awake and not involved in routine care they are able to move around freely. Children should not be kept in restrictive equipment (i.e. swings or infant seats) or held without interaction for 20 minutes or more throughout the day.

This is a non-mobile infant that has been placed in a restrictive seat without interaction. If restrictive seating is used, it is important to remember that this should only be for brief periods of time, not totaling more than 20 minutes a day. Children should be given access to a wide array of materials and have engaging interactions with others to promote cognitive and physical development.

Children placed in anything that confines natural body movement should be monitored closely (i.e. highchairs-children should always be within reach), and this should be for very brief, purposeful periods. Stroller rides do not count as active physical play because movement is restricted.

Ample play is needed for infants and toddlers. Children should be able to crawl or walk around the room with no interference from furnishings, and movement should not be restricted to a rug or confining area.

Infants and toddlers should have an easily accessible, safe outdoor area. They should go outside for at least 1 hour per day year around unless there is an active weather advisory preventing people from going outside. Infants and toddlers should be dressed properly for any given weather.

Spaces and equipment should be appropriate for infants and toddlers. There should be ample space, and stationary and portable equipment should stimulate a large array of skills.

Harms, T., Cryer, D. & Clifford, R. (2006) Infant\Toddler environment rating scale (ed.2nd). New York, NY: Teacher's College Press.