



HEALTH & PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT **18 TO 36 MONTHS**

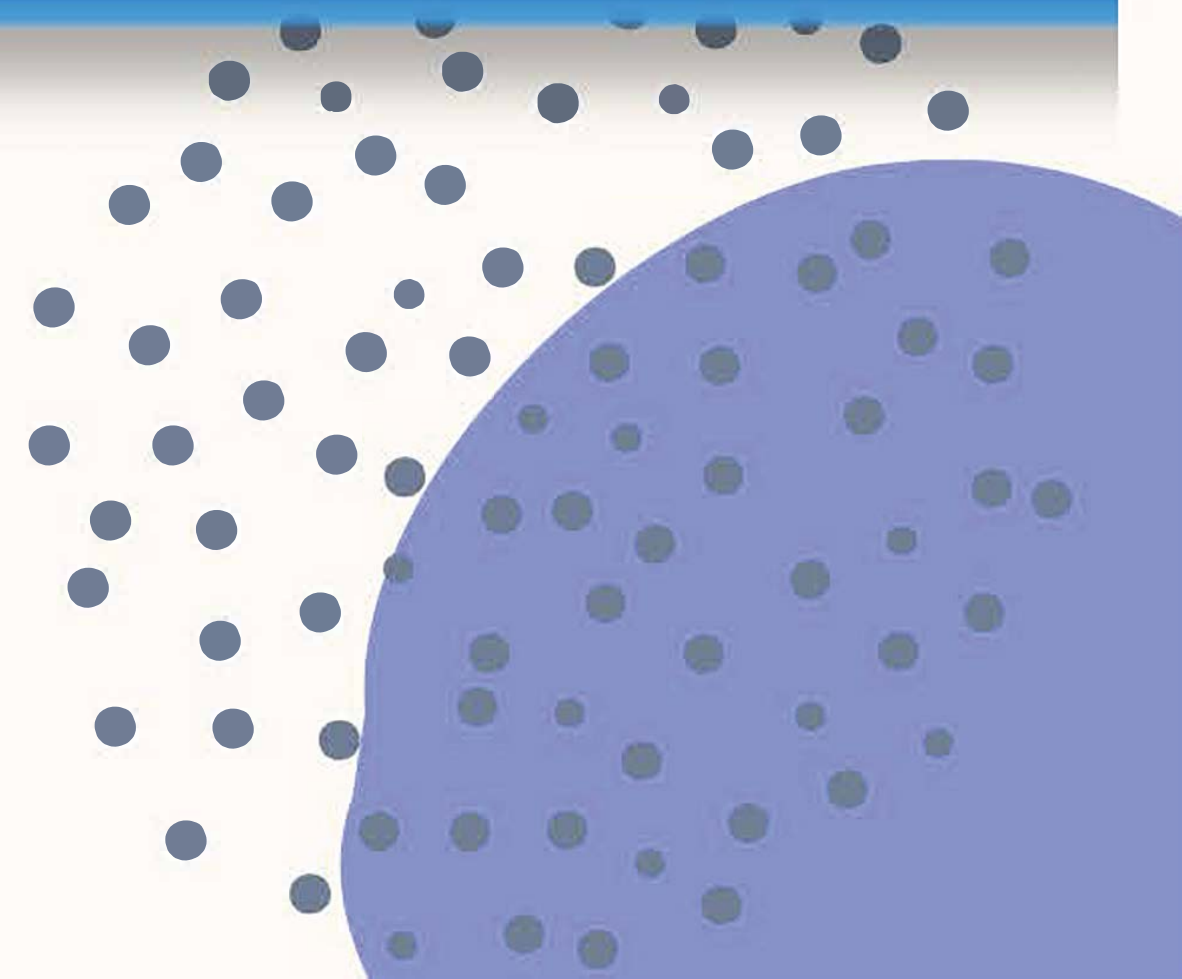
Introduce new foods to your child. It can take up to 20 times for a child to like a new food.

Encourage your child to use utensils to eat.

Once they are old enough, encourage your child to get ready for bed on their own with little support. Provide help where needed. Talk about the importance of sleep using child-friendly language: “Sleep helps you grow and makes you ready for the day.” Sleep improves attention, behavior, learning, memory, and overall mental and physical health.

Blow bubbles and catch with the whole body. Make it challenging and have them catch with hand, finger, head, elbow, etc.

Provide assorted fridge magnets for working on finger strength.





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Practice household actions to strengthen core muscles: sweeping, mopping, shoveling, raking, reaching, pushing, pulling, carrying, lifting.

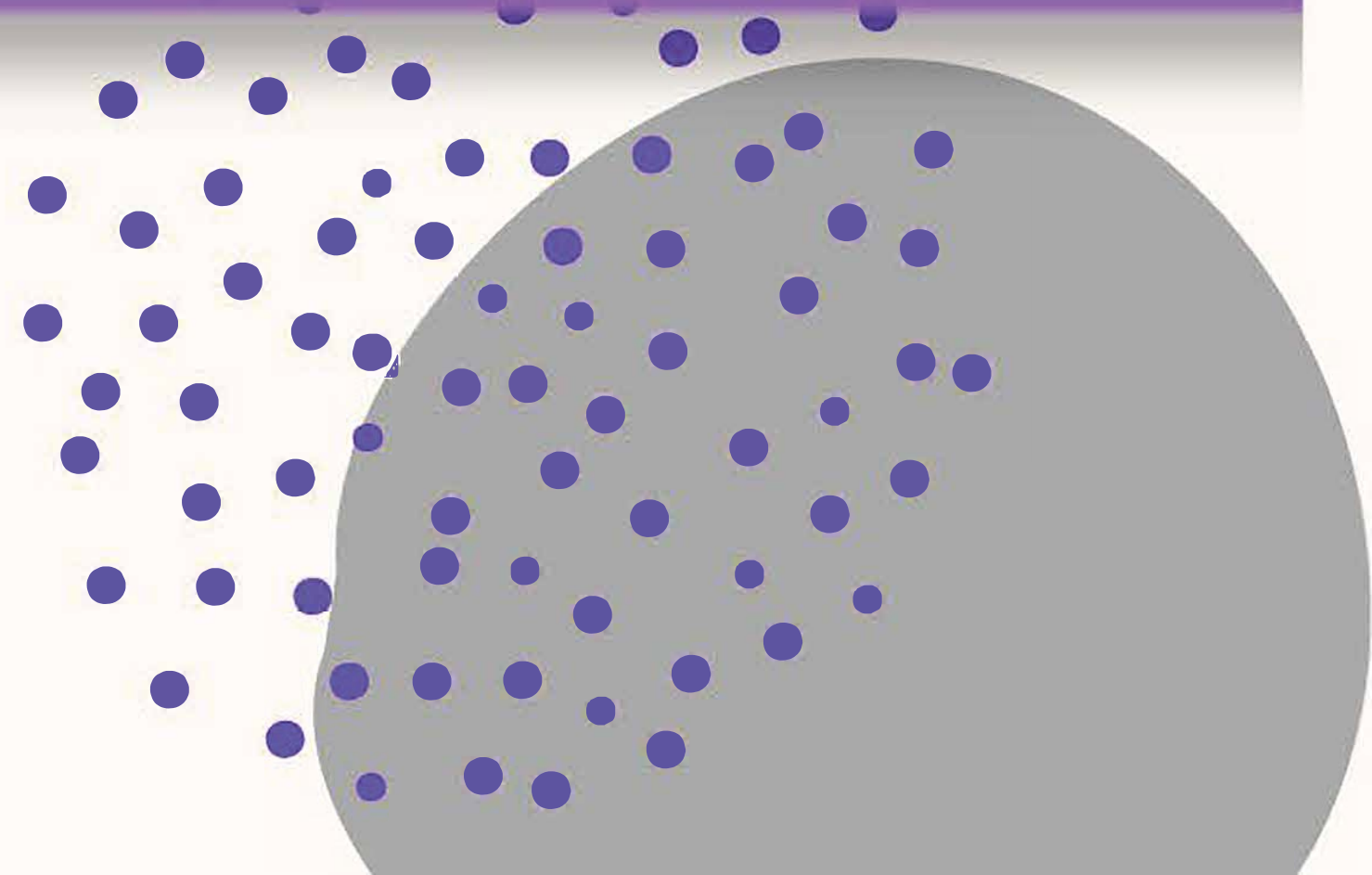
Practice climbing stairs. Begin simple – one foot on step, the other foot on same step before moving on to more challenging such as alternate feet for each step.



Continue practicing dressing using zippers, buttons, snaps, putting on/taking off.

Go for a walk outside.

Practice hopping, galloping, jumping with feet together, running.

Talk about safety with your child: pedestrian, fire, playground, safety inside or outside, strangers, who can help you stay safe, dangerous objects, harsh weather, and what to do in dangerous situations.





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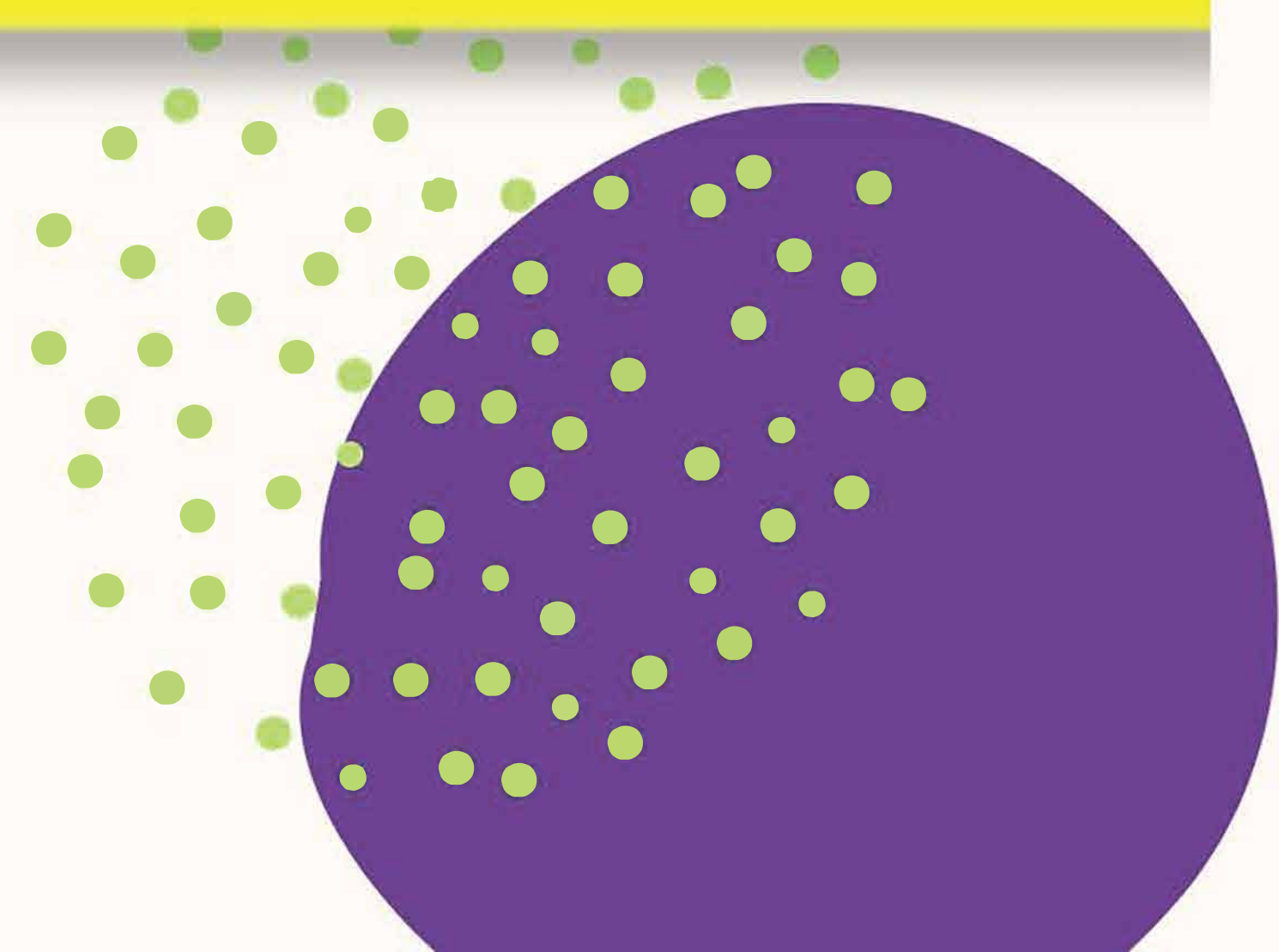
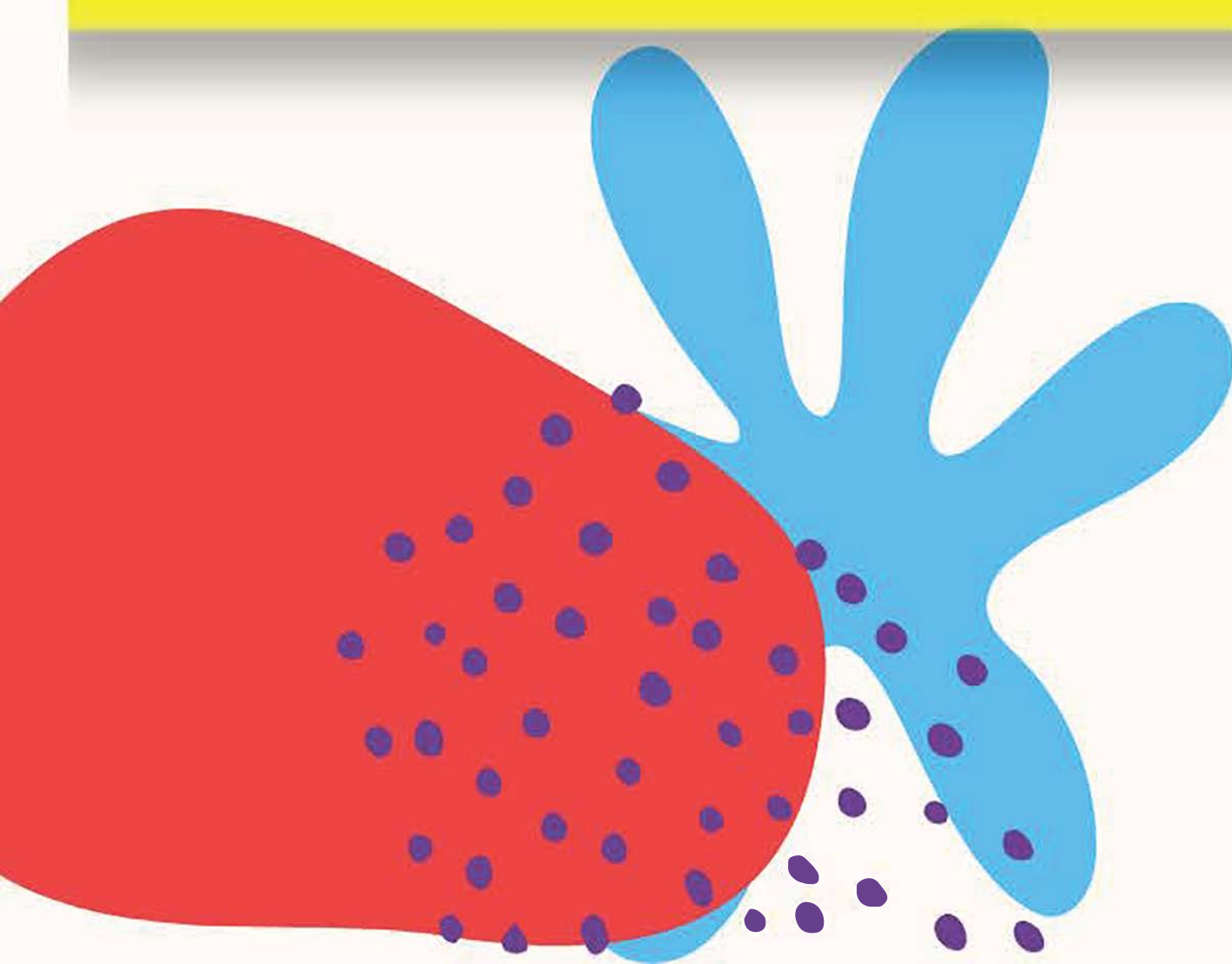
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Practice throwing and catching. Catching will begin with your child using their whole arms and bringing the ball toward their chest. As they become more balanced and agile, they will use their hands only. Throwing will begin with “flinging” of the object, then will involve more control using the arm and elbow, and eventually throwing overhand with some direction.

Practice balance by putting a masking tape line on the floor. Begin with wider tape and get thinner tape as they progress. Practice using flat feet, toes only, and walking backwards.

Go to the park or a school playground.

Practice on riding toys. Those that require feet to push and pull, those with pedals and three wheels, and those that require balancing using their feet.





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Create a simple obstacle course to encourage walking, crawling, jumping, turning, and other large body movements.

Dance to a variety of songs: fast, slow, stop and go, loud, quiet.

Play Simon Says using large muscle commands such as hop, jump, turn around, reach up, squat down, etc.

Work on puzzles together. Begin with 2–5-piece puzzles and eventually more pieces depending on your child's skills.

Play with nesting cups such as measuring cups or containers that will nest.

Practice stacking toys or objects such as blocks, containers with lids, small, closed boxes, larger flat rocks.





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Play with sensory items and smaller items, such as playdough and toothpicks to encourage use of finger strength. Other activities to develop finger and hand strength include paper crumpling, tearing paper, peeling stickers, using stamps and stamp pads, beading, putting little objects in a row, squeezing sponges, etc.

Allow your child to practice writing with assorted writing tools: crayons, markers, pens, pencils, paint brushes.

Practice hand strength by setting the table, wiping tables, turning doorknobs, beginning to buckle car seat (at least partially), holding objects in their hands for a long time such as the handle of a trike or the chain of a swing.

