

appropriate preparation (see [Sibling Rivalry, Chapter 11](#)).

Play

Various types of play are typical of this period, but preschoolers especially enjoy associative play—group play in similar or identical activities but without rigid organization or rules. Play should provide for physical, social, and mental development.

Play activities for physical growth and refinement of motor skills include jumping, running, and climbing. Tricycles, wagons, gym and sports equipment, sandboxes, wading pools, and activities at water parks can help develop muscles and coordination ([Fig. 12-4](#)). Activities such as swimming and skating teach safety as well as muscle development and coordination. Children involved in the work of play do not require expensive toys and gadgets to keep them entertained but often enjoy playing with common household items such as a broom handle or even items adults consider junk (boxes, sticks, rocks, and dirt). The imaginative mind of the preschooler enjoys playing for play's sake.



FIG 12-4 Preschoolers enjoy play activities that promote motor skills, such as jumping and running. Water play is an exciting activity for preschoolers.

Manipulative, constructive, creative, and educational toys