**brittany-g-sarah**

**brittany-g-sarah:**  Brittany, I'm excited to have you on the podcast today. So why don't you start by introducing yourself and telling us a little bit about your expertise and who your mom do?

[00:00:09] **brittany-g-brittany:** My name is Brittany. I'm a physical therapist. I have been a therapist for almost a decade, working with kids of all ages and all abilities. My passion really has always been like the birth to three year range and I've always just been really passionate about parent education.

[00:00:27] And then. Once my kids were born, it just changed the game for me. I just realized that as a mom, I have such a different perspective and I can really see my patients and their families from a totally different lens. And that's how mommy and me PT was born. Once my daughter was born, I realized that all parents really have the same questions and the same concerns.

[00:00:48] And. Even me as a mom, I have a degree that costs me a lot of time and a lot of money, but I still had questions about development and about, My daughter in general. And so I just really, I wanted to create a safe, encouraging, positive space for parents to come and be empowered and be equipped with knowledge so that they could foster their child's motor development, because I know it's something that's important to all of us and we just don't always have the resources necessary to do so I have a three-year-old little girl who was. The inspiration for a mommy and me PT. And then I also have a son who is 14 months and he actually has needed a little bit of extra PT support from both from me and from a friend of mine to meet some of his milestones. So I feel like he has really even changed my perspective, even more on what moms really need and what we go through when our kids need extra help.

[00:01:45] **brittany-g-sarah:** I that's, it's so interesting. I always wonder if If because you have more because you have all this education, if you're, if it like makes, does it make you a little more nervous or alert? You're just like, Oh my God I, you need to be doing that or not.

[00:01:59] **brittany-g-brittany:** it's definitely a blessing and a curse. I just find myself all of the time telling myself the things that I tell my followers and my patients, trying not to compare my son to my daughter and just chanting to myself, like he, all kids develop on their own timeline and at their own pace.

[00:02:16] And yeah, I know. I always say, I know just enough to be dangerous when it comes to knowing about development for my kids.

[00:02:24] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah. To that point, I find it impossible to not compare my kids and not even in a he was walking at this age and this other one, but it's more I, the first thing when they came out, I'm like, Oh, he looks just like Luca or it's like everything. They're, you're like your only barometer for, I guess you do see patients, but I'm like, these are my kids and this is a little anyway, What's let's talk about some early milestones.

[00:02:48] Cause you had mentioned that your son wasn't reaching them. So what kind of milestones should we be looking out for in the newborn phase? Let's.

[00:02:56] **brittany-g-brittany:** So actually go to my Instagram page and download, I have a phone. Full milestone tracker checklist that you can download that gives you all the milestones. Your kids should be meeting really from birth to three, but I thought today it would be fun to tell you some of my favorite little mini milestones, maybe some milestones that people.

[00:03:16] Aren't as familiar with, or maybe you've seen them in your kids and you don't really know what they are or what the purpose is. So a couple of my favorite ones, this is actually my absolute favorite one is when kids start bringing their hands to midline. So they start bringing their hands together in the middle, maybe start bringing their hands to their mouth that starts around 12 weeks or three months.

[00:03:37] Kids are able to. Grab a small lightweight toy at the middle, or they start folding their hands together and it looks like they're praying or, something like that. So cute. Another one of my favorites is when babies start lifting their feet in the air, when they're on their back, they start lifting their legs up and then start to grab their feet and maybe start bringing their feet to their mouth that starts around four to five months.

[00:03:59] And it's a great indication that rolling from bat to belly is on the horizon. I love that milestone because it's just an indication that things are about to get exciting. As far as rolling goes. I love when babies start swimming on their tummy, I'm sure that you know exactly what I'm talking about.

[00:04:18] When babies on their tummy and their arms go out to their side, it looks like they're flying or swimming. I find that a lot of times it can be alarming for parents because it just will show up out of nowhere. One day it's not there. And the next day it is, and parents are like, what is going on?

[00:04:32] But it's actually a really important reflex that starts to develop. And the purpose of the reflex is to start to strengthen the. Muscles on the back and the shoulders and the neck to start getting baby ready for sitting and crawling and things like that. It's called the Landau reflex. So I love that reflex because it just really is a good indication that baby is really on track with everything that they're supposed to be doing.

[00:04:56] And then the last mini milestone that I love is pivoting on and the tummy, which starts around five months. And that's when your baby's on their tummy. And they start shifting side to side and eventually going around in a complete circle. That's really the first time that other than rolling that our baby starts to get mobile and we start to see our babies being motivated by toys and learning that they can move their body to go and get those toys that they're motivated by.

[00:05:21] So it's a really great milestone for starting to build that cognition and that cause and effect, and then starting to set the foundation for mobility. That's going to come later.

[00:05:30] **brittany-g-sarah:** It's so interesting. I think about my son, my third son, and H w like for him, it's for him, that last milestone is like the most resonant with me. And I feel like it's because it was more obvious and he did it earlier because he had two kids running

[00:05:47] **brittany-g-brittany:** You had a lot of motivation.

[00:05:48] **brittany-g-sarah:** He was. Spinning around. He was so excited about what they were doing. And I remember that phase and I was like, Oh my God, that came out of nowhere. And he was just and he was an early crawler too, but I just remember being like, Oh my God he wants to keep up with these two kids.

[00:06:04] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes. Yes. It's such an exciting milestone. I love that milestone.

[00:06:08] **brittany-g-sarah:** So let's talk about tummy time and the importance of it.

[00:06:13] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah. So the research is well-documented on the benefits of tummy time and honestly, like we could do an entire podcast on the benefits of tummy time and all of that. I won't bore you with all of the research, but I will just say that. Research does show that consistent tummy time is associated with improved milestones and skill acquisition.

[00:06:35] So the research is very clear that tummy time is a really important foundation to, like you said, all of these other skills that are going to come later. It's really important for strengthening the muscles on the back and in the shoulders and the neck again. As a foundation for other skills that are going to come later, like rolling and sitting and crawling.

[00:06:54] And then it's also really important for integrating and allowing some of these other reflexes to come about. So there are some reflexes that babies have when they're born, that we need to go away so that we can meet some of these skills. And then there are some reflexes, like I just talked about the Landale reflex that aren't present at birth that we need to come later.

[00:07:13] And so tell me time really has a dual purpose in helping with both of those things. But I totally agree with, I think what you were alluding to is that I think everyone knows the importance of tummy time. And I think that there's a really big gap in professionals recommending tummy time. And those professionals actually educating and equipping parents to know how to do tummy time.

[00:07:38] And that is. One, it really one of my passions. And if you're a follower of my page, you see me talking about tummy time all the time, because of that, same of that exact reason, I think everyone is so quick to say, yeah, put your baby on tummy time, but no one is actually showing parents how to do that.

[00:07:57] And I just, I truly believe that every baby deserves. To learn how to be comfortable and happy on their tummy. And I think that every parent deserves to know how to help their baby be comfortable on their tummy.

[00:08:12] **brittany-g-sarah:** Totally. And I think, like one of my next question is going to be, do you have any tips and tricks for, cause I think a lot of parents, put their baby on their tummy. Their baby is upset and then you never want to see your kid upset and it's just okay, nevermind. And then you just hesitate to do it.

[00:08:27] And so I think everyone needs to hear. Some tips for doing it as well as like tummy time. Doesn't always look like just putting your baby on there, on the floor, on their tummy. And so I'm going to let you take it from me.

[00:08:40] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah. So I do, again, I have tips for days on time, but I did narrow it down to just my top five. So my first one really is to start early and. If you're listening to this podcast and your baby is five months old, that is starting early, starting as early as you know how, and when that's what we're talking about here.

[00:09:00] So start early. If your baby isn't born yet, or you have a newborn, you can start from day one. You, I think it's a common misconception that you have to wait a couple of weeks or you have to wait until the umbilical stump falls off, but really you can start from day one by putting your baby on your chest.

[00:09:15] You know when you're burping them for feedings or when you're doing skin to skin or. When you're just cuddling with your baby, just lean back on the couch and put your baby on your chest. And that counts as early tummy time. My second tip is just really to be responsive. I think it's also a very common myth that you should put your baby on your tummy, whether they're.

[00:09:34] Upset or enjoying it or whatever. It's a bootcamp that we've got to get through this until, the timer goes off or whatever. But tell me time, really, in my opinion should be a no cries zone. Like you should really just be, you should be listening to your baby because when they're crying, they're trying to tell you something.

[00:09:50] And so when your baby is crying on their tummy, all they're saying is this is hard and I need a break. So it's totally fine too. Roll your baby out of tummy time, give them a break, help them calm down and then try again. So I would much rather see a baby have 10 short, successful sessions of tummy time in a day than to have one long session where mom or dad and baby are completely stressed out because that's really just not very productive.

[00:10:17] So that leads into my next tip, which is to roll your baby in and out of tummy time. Every single time when your baby is on the floor, that really just signals your baby. That okay. Tummy time is beginning now and now. Oh. Mommy heard me. She hears that I need a break and now she's going to roll me out of tummy time.

[00:10:34] So it starts to set up a routine and some consistency with your baby. They know what to expect. They know that eventually you are going to roll them out of tummy time. And then it also starts to set up a foundation for your baby, rolling themselves in and out of tummy time. So my next tip is just to use supports in different positions as needed.

[00:10:54] So this could be a boppy pillow that you put under your baby's chest or a blanket roll that you put under their chest to lift them up a little bit off the floor. This could be, your baby, even at five months old or six months old. Just isn't enjoying tummy time on the floor at that particular moment.

[00:11:10] So you pick them up and put them on your chest or you carry them in an airplane position out in front of you, or you put them across your legs or whatever it is, you can really be creative as long as your baby is in that tummy down position where they're lifting their head against gravity.

[00:11:26] That's tummy time. It doesn't have to always just be flat on the floor every single time, which leads into my last tip, which is keep it interesting, be creative. Babies love novelty. They get bored, just like we do. So if something that you have been doing all this time, isn't working all of a sudden, just change it up, go to a different room, put your baby, up on the bed, obviously supervised or up on the couch, supervised, use some different toys, do it in front of a door or a window where your baby can see something different.

[00:11:57] Just, be creative and just try something different. If what you're doing, isn't working, it's totally fine to. Say okay. This isn't working anymore. Let's try something new.

[00:12:06] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yep. No, I love that. I, with my first, we had an exercise ball that we incessantly used to calm him down, but we also would put them on it and roll them forward and roll

[00:12:18] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes. That's a great one. I love that one for tummy time for sure.

[00:12:21] **brittany-g-sarah:** Neither of my other two kids were as challenging in the beginning, so we didn't even have the exercise ball blown up.

[00:12:29] But we were because they had siblings around, they were plenty of drugs.

[00:12:32] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes. Yes.

[00:12:33] **brittany-g-sarah:** Okay. What are some other positions that are important for babies to spend time in? Because again, we all know tummy time, but I think, there's other ones too.

[00:12:41] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes. Yes. So tummy time is important, but it's definitely not the only thing. In fact, I do see a lot of babies sometimes who have spent a lot of time on their tummy and they're comfortable there, but then they get upset and other positions, or they get stuck on their tummy and have trouble like rolling off of their tummy or doing some other skills.

[00:12:58] So playtime on the back is really important. And I think, this whole, like back to sleep campaign, which is great and has served a really great purpose for keeping our babies safe when they're sleeping, I think has gone too far in that. Making parents think that we can't ever put their babies on their back, which isn't true.

[00:13:17] Babies really do need to play on their back. You can use like an overhead gym. I had this cute little wooden play gym that my son loved that you can put like those little plastic play links or some other kind of hanging toy on. This is really great for helping your baby learn to move their neck in all different directions.

[00:13:37] Learning to like I mentioned, at the very beginning, start bringing those hands together at the middle, learning to SWAT and bat and grab at toys. Another position that's really important that I think is really overlooked. Oftentimes is sideline putting your baby down on their side, using your leg or a pillow behind your baby's back to prop them there before they're able to hold themselves, they're on their own.

[00:14:00] But that is a really great position to not only help your baby move their body against gravity in a different position. So they're really working. Different muscles in that position than they would be on their back or their tummy. But this also naturally brings the hands and feet together at the middle.

[00:14:17] So it's a great precursor to that. Bringing hands to midline. It's a great precursor to rolling. Your baby is already halfway there if they're on their side, so they can start to easily learn how to roll from their side onto their back, or even all the way over onto their tummy. And then around four months, it's really great to start just propping your baby up in sitting in your lap or putting them in the floor with their back against your body.

[00:14:42] And you're using your arms to fully support their trunk. Being an upright in an upright position is really important for your baby too. So starting around four months, I like to start encouraging parents to do some more upright play, too.

[00:14:54] **brittany-g-sarah:** That's a good segue. Cause I think what I don't want people to hear and you didn't say this, so I don't want you to think I'm saying, but is that this, the sitting upright, I think like every parent is just Oh, I just want to like, plop you in a, like a Bumbo chair, whatever, so that you're upright because they think that the baby wants to be upright.

[00:15:11] But I know that you talk about this a lot on your Instagram too, but a lot of these upright sitters, are not great for their. I don't know if it's a development, but definitely their anatomy. So do you want to talk a little bit about that?

[00:15:25] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah. In regards to baby containers in general, like obviously in a perfect world, our babies would get all the free unrestricted time that they could ever need. And we wouldn't need any containers or whatever, but that's obviously not real life. I'm a mom of two kids, you're a mom of three kids.

[00:15:42] Like we get it. Sometimes you just need to put your baby in something so that they're safe and contained so that you can just have a second to breathe. But then the problem comes. In that you can find a device to put your baby in pretty much any position that you want. And the problem with that is that these marketing companies that are developing these products are not developmental specialists.

[00:16:05] They are just companies who are creating these products, this baby gear, and trying to sell it to parents. So almost every single device that you look at will tell you that it's marketed for. Babies that are three months or four months and up. And that really just has more to do with the babies, having good head control than actually being ready to be in those positions.

[00:16:28] So I do have a couple of guidelines that I just like for parents to keep in mind. And obviously these are not hard and fast, black and white, sometimes you might have to deviate from these guidelines a little bit, but it's just something to keep in the back of your mind and think about.

[00:16:42] So that you can evaluate the equipment or the baby gear that you have and see if it's serving your baby well. Because a lot of times the equipment that we're being told we need to buy is not gonna serve our baby and our families. So a couple of. Guidelines that I have first is just try to limit your container, use to 15 minutes at a time and no more than an hour a day.

[00:17:05] And again, sometimes that's not possible. If your baby is fussy and you need something to contain them while you cook dinner, it may be longer than 15 minutes, but in general, 15 minutes at a time, no more than an hour, a day is a good guideline to shoot for. Then on the opposite side of that, I like to aim for twice as much floor time as container time a day.

[00:17:26] So if you do end up needing to use a container for an hour a day, try to shoot for having your baby unrestricted and in the floor for two hours a day, whether that's in tummy time or on their back or playing on their side or whatever. I always say, avoid using containers that your baby is not developmentally ready for.

[00:17:48] And what I mean by that is try not to use a sitting container for a baby who is nowhere close. To working on sitting, try not to use a standing container if your baby is three months old and not even sitting yet, so you can look at what is this container promoting in my baby and what is my baby actually doing?

[00:18:07] Skill-wise. In their developmental sequence, because what can happen sometimes is if we start putting babies in containers that they aren't developmentally ready for, we disrupt that natural sequence of development and babies can start having a preference for standing or sitting. And then they get frustrated when it's time to go back to the floor and work on tummy time or work on rolling.

[00:18:29] So that's where all of these guidelines come together to help you prevent your baby. Skipping a milestone or being resistant to being in the floor or developing a preference for standing and not wanting to sit, et cetera, et cetera. When you're putting your baby in a container, just keep in mind that most of the time, whatever position you put your baby in the container in, they're going to stay there.

[00:18:52] So try to look at your baby's body position, make sure the head and the neck and the trunk are all aligned up in the middle. We don't want our baby all, Head going sideways and the trunk out of whack and the hips over to one side. Because then whatever amount of time your baby's in that container, that's the position they're going to stay in.

[00:19:09] So we just want to try to line them up in the middle as best we can. And then I always like to say avoid sleeping and containers as much as you can, just because again, that's going to be way longer probably than the 15 minutes that we're trying to shoot for. And then a lot of these containers just aren't safe for sleep.

[00:19:27] A lot of them are at an incline which can put the airway at risk. So I just always like to say as much as possible, avoid sleeping in containers just altogether.

[00:19:39] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah. Yeah. think everyone found that out the hard way. I felt so bad when that rock and play got recalled, it was like every mom who had a child that had reflux was like Oh shit,

[00:19:51] **brittany-g-brittany:** That just brings up a good point too. I always say this on my page and I tell people in my DMS all the time, like you can only do the best you can with the information that you have at the time. And. We can all feel guilty about things that we have done that maybe weren't the best or that we didn't know were bad for our baby, but really all you can do is just take the information you have now and move forward with a new clan.

[00:20:14] And it's never too late to learn new information and move forward with a new plan. Even if your baby isn't a baby anymore, and that information doesn't apply to you, you can still take that knowledge and maybe share it with another mom or keep it in the back of your head for a future reference.

[00:20:30] But. Really, we just can't be guilty and beat ourselves up over things that we didn't know about because that, that doesn't serve us well and that doesn't change the past. And so I just always say, use the information that you have to make the decision that's best for your family.

[00:20:45] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah. It's interesting that you say that. My first son had the most container use. My second one had eat with each kid I've done less containerizing and that's you think it'd be the opposite because life has gotten much harder. But that, that all comes from me.

[00:21:00] Just learning more about it. And now, one of my. Favorite tips for reducing my container use, we have a giant pack and play that has a bunch of toys in it. And that's a safe place for our kids to work on his stuff.

[00:21:17] Like all the things that he used to work on, where I don't have to worry about my other two kids, running around being maniacs. And he also like isn't

[00:21:23] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah, absolutely.

[00:21:24] Pack and play or a play yard. I always. Love to tell parents make sure you put that on your registry. Like they have some Amazon even has some great play yards that can go outside or inside, and it's a huge open space, but it also keeps siblings or pets out. It keeps your baby in one place.

[00:21:42] And they're just, I just think that's an invaluable investment as a parent is to have. A really good pack and play or a play yard, or, even some of those little baby fences that you can like gate off a certain area. All of those are

[00:21:57] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah. Yeah. I've seen some really fantastic like gated spaces that are like huge and giant, which my kid would love, but I'm like, we don't have that room downstairs. You're we're to continue a little bit more than that, but I wish we had that space. So I want to talk about some specific things.

[00:22:17] Every parent that has a two and a half, three month old is thinking about rolling. So , what are some ways that we can encourage rolling? W and what is the importance of learning that skill?

[00:22:29] **brittany-g-brittany:** There's a wide range of when rolling develops, it can start as early as four months. And we like to see rolling both directions, both back to belly and belly to back by seven months. So that just gives you a little frame of reference. But my best tip for encouraging her baby to roll is to utilize all of those play positions that I talked about earlier.

[00:22:50] So make sure your baby is getting time on their tummy time, on their back and time inside line because all of those positions are working and strengthening different muscle groups that are all important for rolling. We really want. Baby to have experience in all of those positions, because that's the foundation for baby being able to roll over.

[00:23:11] Now when your baby is on their back and you're wanting to specifically encourage rolling something that's really important is where you place the toys that baby is looking at. So you really want to put the toys. Up by baby's head right above their eyes at a diagonal so that they have to look up into the side to see the toy, because that puts the head in the right position for rolling.

[00:23:35] And it also, if you think about it, if you're rolling on the laying on the floor and you lift your head up, it lifts one shoulder up, it starts to rotate your trunk a little bit. So the head is really the key to getting the body to get rolling. We want the head to be in a good position to encourage rolling.

[00:23:53] And then the other one kind of goes back to one of my favorite mini milestones I was talking about earlier, which is encouraging your baby to lift up their feet and grab their feet. That is really going to turn on those lower abdominal muscles that are important for rolling and. A really easy way that you can encourage the skill is to roll up a small, like burp rag or a small, like Muslim blanket into a little roll and put it under your baby's hips, like right where their diaper is that kind of lift their pelvis off the floor a little bit and get them started on. Toward this lifting up the feet and just makes it a little bit easier. Something else you can do is like clapping your baby's feet together. So that's lifting the baby's feet up, showing them which muscles they need to activate. I even liked to. Bring the feet up to the face and tickle the face with the feet or show baby how to grab their feet and you can roll side to side.

[00:24:48] So there are lots of fun things that you can do just during your regular play time that are all going to eventually encourage rolling.

[00:24:55] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah, I love that little position. Now I'm going to ask this question because I have friends that are going through this problem and they're, they'd kill me if I didn't ask it right. So the babies that learn to roll onto their belly at night and then get very upset that they're on their belly. Do you have any tips for that?

[00:25:14] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes. So I actually just released a rolling guide this month, and that was one of the big sections in there because I know that everyone has that question. What do I do when my baby rolls over in the middle of the night? Do I go in there and continue to roll them back on their bat?

[00:25:30] Really, the best thing that you can do is to practice. During wake times to show your baby, this is what you do when you're ready to get off of your tummy. And it even goes back to what I was talking about earlier, which is rolling your baby in and out of tummy time, every single time, because that is really setting up the foundation to cue your baby.

[00:25:51] Hey, when I'm done with tummy time, my mom always Rose me over onto my back. It's giving your baby that input to those specific muscles that do that action. And then. When your baby is developmentally ready for that, which is again around five, four or five, six months, somewhere around in there. It's different for every baby.

[00:26:11] They already have that foundation of, I always roll off of my tummy when I'm done in this position. And so those two things together, rolling your baby in and out of tummy time, every time. And then just practicing that specific skill. Both of those two things will go hand in hand to help get through that really rough patch of when baby learns how to roll to their belly.

[00:26:34] And they haven't yet mastered rolling off. And they also haven't learned yet that they can comfortably sleep on their belly. So one of those two things usually happens for most babies. They either learned to be comfortable there or they learn to roll off, but practicing during the day will help a lot.

[00:26:49] **brittany-g-sarah:** Okay. That's that is good to know. They will be relieved.

[00:26:52] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes.

[00:26:54] **brittany-g-sarah:** So what are the different ways that we can encourage sitting and what are those progressions look like?

[00:26:59] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah. So this might surprise you a little bit actually, but my biggest tip for encouraging sitting is to make sure your baby masters rolling first. And I am seeing this more and more that babies are learning to sit before they're able to roll. And then what happens is these babies are getting stuck and sitting, so they become really strong, stable sitters.

[00:27:23] But they're not able to reach for toys that are outside of their base of support. They're not able to get in and out of sitting on their own. And so they ended up just stuck and frustrated in sitting. And so I just always like to tell parents, make sure that you are. Giving enough time and practice to rolling.

[00:27:45] Before you move on to sitting, it really sets up the foundation for those really important trunk muscles. We were just talking about like rolling encourages trunk rotation, and really focuses on the core strength that your baby is going to later need for sitting. So rolling is just a really important foundational skill for sitting.

[00:28:03] So that's my first tip is just make sure your baby is. Able to roll at least belly Tabak or sorry. No, make sure your baby is at least able to roll back to belly before you work on sitting. And then as far as the progression of sitting, so sitting we'll really begin with your baby prop sitting, which is they look like they're folded in half forward and their arms are resting either on their legs or on the floor.

[00:28:29] And it looks a little funny. Because you're not really sure. Are you doing something well or are you just stuck in this position? I can't really tell, but it really is a great, it's a great starting position. And basically what your baby needs to learn is how to activate the back muscles a little bit more.

[00:28:48] And and that will just naturally come obviously, but. So that's really the first way that fitting usually happens for most babies. I love to tell parents to put a boppy pillow around the front of their trunk. If you don't have a boppy, you can use really any kind of pillow. But that will just help lift your baby up off the floor.

[00:29:06] Just a little bit. Sometimes what happens is if babies are folded too far forward, they don't have enough strength in their back to lift all the way back up. To get into that upright sitting position. So if you have a pillow or a boppy or something right in front of them, it lifts them up just enough where they can activate those muscles on their back to start sitting up.

[00:29:25] I love to have toys pretty much at eye level so that your baby has to lift their head up and lift their arms up to reach the toy, which also promotes, that extension of the back to get into a more upright sitting position. And then as your baby starts to progress, you'll just naturally start to see the progression.

[00:29:45] You'll see that your baby needs less and less support from the Bobby or the pillow or whatever it is that you're using. And then you can start to move the support away from your baby's body. And you can start to put pillows out to the side in case your baby does lose their balance, but the pillows aren't actually supporting them or helping to hold them and that position.

[00:30:03] And there's really no. Like specific timeline of when those progressions happen, it'll really be different for every baby, but using the supports and using a toy at eye level will both really help your baby to progress through those sitting skills.

[00:30:18] **brittany-g-sarah:** It's so interesting that you brought up the importance of rolling, as I think about my third child like. All of my kids. They first, they learned a role. Then they would do these like planks and they would just like plank. And then they do the like plank pushes, like where they're, they, they look like they're about to launch.

[00:30:36] And then they don't, they put their knees down and then they would take one, one step. And then as soon as they would start crawling, then they would start to sit. And it was like the crawl sit crawl said, and it all happened within. Two weeks. It was like w our babies went from just just the plank to crawling and sitting very quickly.

[00:30:59] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yes, and it definitely can happen like that. Some babies will sit before they crawl, but a lot of babies really will start to crawl and move forward before they learn to sit. And those babies, I just like to call them movers and shakers. I think these are babies who are really movement oriented and really motivated by movement.

[00:31:17] So they figured out that they can move and that is more motivating to them than learning how to sit up right. In a, in one stationary position. So both are totally normal and totally typical. And. Neither one indicates you know, better or worse.

[00:31:31] **brittany-g-sarah:** Oh, no. That's funny that you say that I'm like, cause that could not describe my children better.

[00:31:36] **brittany-g-brittany:** that was my daughter. That was my daughter too. She was definitely, and still is even at three very movement oriented, loves to move, loves to be always on the go.

[00:31:48] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah. So all my children are wild animals. Now I didn't have this on here and I wish I did. And so let me know if you're cool, but same question for walking.

[00:32:00]**brittany-g-brittany:**  I get questions about walking every single day in my DMS on Instagram. Wondering how can I encourage my child to walk? What can I do? So the first thing I like to say is remember that the normal range of walking is 12 to 16 months. I think it's very common for especially parents and grandparents to ask us, when's your baby gonna start walking?

[00:32:22] Are they walking yet while they're 10 months old now, why aren't they walking? All of my kids were walking by seven months and I think that is just more to do with the fact that they have forgotten over the last 30 plus years, what it's like to raise kids. So I just feel like there's so much pressure on parents.

[00:32:40] That our babies should be walking by their first birthday. And really that's just an unrealistic expectation. And we should all just let that go because yes, some babies will walk early and be walking by their first birthday, but a large majority of babies. Don't and that's totally normal.

[00:32:56] Totally. Okay. The thing about walking is you really can't force it, your baby really, and truly has to be developmentally ready to walk and. There are a lot of steps that lead up to walking, namely pulling to stand cruising along furniture, but even more than that, being able to cruise between pieces of furniture.

[00:33:17] So for example, in our house, we have a coffee table in front of our couch. So I need my baby to be able to cruise from the coffee table and go to the couch. He needs to be able to let go of a surface with one hand, rotate his body and go to the next surface without losing his balance. To progress toward walking.

[00:33:37] There really are, and obviously there are specific things that we can do to help our babies learn to walk, but really the biggest thing you can do to promote walking in your baby is just give them a lot of time to practice cruising, lots of opportunities to master that skill and progress from that.

[00:33:55] And just, they just need time. A lot of babies, all they need is time. They babies are so intuitive. They, their bodies are so well equipped to learn these next milestones. If sometimes we just need to get out of their way and just let them do what they inherently know how to do. And a lot of times with walking, that's exactly what it is.

[00:34:18] We are getting in their way by trying to do all of these interventions. And we really just need to get out of the way and just let them practice, give them opportunity and give them time.

[00:34:28] **brittany-g-sarah:** Yeah, it's funny. I've seen friends who are trying to get their kids to walk and they just like constantly pick them up and put them on their feet and then hold their hands above their head. And I'm like, that's not going to work.

[00:34:40] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah. I feel like that's just part of our genetics as parents is to want to stand our babies up and hold their hands over their head to learn how to walk. But really that's almost counterproductive because we don't walk with our hands over our head. So it's really not teaching the best movement patterns for our baby.

[00:34:58] If you do. Feel like your baby is ready to do supported walking like that. I encourage parents to hold their baby's hands below their shoulders, or even support them by the forearms or the shoulders. It gives your baby some support, but they're not using their hands to pull against you for support and balance.

[00:35:17] Because again, that's not how we learn how to walk. That's not how they're going to walk on their own. So bring the hands down below the shoulders and let them walk that way. If your baby is having trouble with that's probably an indication that they're not quite ready for supportive walking.

[00:35:31] **brittany-g-sarah:** I know you are, your favorite Walker is the Vtech, we've had that. My love it. I will say that it's incessant playing of music, even when you're not even near it. I'm like, what is it? Are you broken?

[00:35:45] **brittany-g-brittany:** I've been hearing welcome to our learning farm in my dreams for the last three years, since my baby was, since my daughter was a baby.

[00:35:53] **brittany-g-sarah:** Same. I like know everything that comes out of that, but I love that too. There's so many different uses for each stage of development and so I love it. And anyone listening go on to your Instagram, because there's tons of different tips on there about it, but I want my question about walkers is if.

[00:36:10] Are do they get, do walkers get in the way of walking or do they help learn the skill of walking?

[00:36:17] **brittany-g-brittany:** Okay. So I'm going to try really hard to not get up on my soap box on this, because this is definitely a pain point for me. So I just want to clarify really quickly, the difference in a push Walker and a baby Walker. So what we are talking about. That helps promote development that I love is a push Walker.

[00:36:37] So it's made by BTech the front of this push Walker comes off and you can use it for tummy time and sitting and crawling and things like that. So I love push walkers. I do not love baby walkers that your babies sits in. Again, I'm not going to get up on my soap box on this. I'm just going to leave it there.

[00:36:57] They are not developmentally appropriate and they do not teach your baby how to walk. Whereas push walkers. These are specifically designed for babies who are already able to pull up on their own. They're starting to cruise, they're starting to show signs of being ready to take steps forward.

[00:37:14] And this push Walker is just a tool to help your baby learn how to balance while they are in a standing upright position. So as long as you are not trying to force a baby who is not ready to walk with this, the push Walker is not going to hinder your baby's development at all. I know that a lot of parents are afraid that it will become like a crutch and their baby won't ever progress from pushing behind this to walking.

[00:37:43] But I promise you that they will the, eventually the push Walker is going to slow your baby down. In the fact that they're ready to take independent steps and it's just more effort and energy to push this push Walker forward than it is to just let go of it and start taking steps on their own.

[00:38:00] And then even after your baby is walking, my daughter loved her push Walker for so long because it's a stable device for them to start experimenting with. How fast can I go? Can I walk faster than this? Can I walk slower? What happens if I go really fast? And then I stopped, it starts to teach your baby some of those more advanced.

[00:38:20] Skills like changing directions and going and starting and stopping. So it's, it really is just a great overall tool. Now, obviously you don't have to have one of these. Your baby will learn to walk just fine without a push Walker. But if you do have a good push Walker, I promise you it won't be a crutch.

[00:38:37] It won't delay your baby's walking. It's a great tool to help your baby learn balance and stability. And I promise that they will eventually graduate off of the Walker on their own.

[00:38:48] **brittany-g-sarah:** Good to know. Good to know. I know I said that. Wasn't my last question, but I have one other question. What about skipping, crawling and going straight to walking? I have always thought that was, or I had read somewhere that is it's it's bad. It's I've read somewhere that it was bad and I'm interested in hearing if that's true.

[00:39:07] And why, if so,

[00:39:08] **brittany-g-brittany:** So I just did a post actually today on my Instagram saying that common does not equal normal. So is it common for babies to skip crawling? I would say yes, it's becoming more common, but that doesn't mean that it's normal. So there are tons of babies who skipped, crawling. And many of them won't have any kind of residual effects from it, but crawling is such an important developmental milestone.

[00:39:35] So this is the first time that your baby is truly going to be mobile. And what crawling does is it promotes a symmetrical movement pattern where you are using both sides of the body equally, which also means that you're using both sides of your brain equally. So the two different sides of your brain control the different parts of your body.

[00:39:55] We all know this. But I think sometimes we forget about that when we're thinking about development and crawling, we really want babies to learn how to. Move their body in space in a symmetrical way, using both sides of their body, using both arms and both legs. It really sets up an important foundation for later when we're going to be walking and running and jumping.

[00:40:17] And we want baby to be able to use both sides of their body equally for those skills. So why wouldn't it make sense that we would want our baby to use a symmetrical pattern for crawling to get around? Yeah. Yes, it's common for babies to skip crawling. I would not say it's normal. I have never met a baby who skipped, crawling that didn't have a reason that they were skipping crawling, whether it's a weakness in the hips or the tummy or the shoulders, or it's a tightness in the hips or the shoulders, or there's something going on.

[00:40:48] That's preventing the baby from learning to crawl. So if your baby is skipping, crawling, That's a great reason to chat with your pediatrician about getting a PT referral. We're not scary. I promise we just want to look at your baby. Look at the whole picture of your baby and figure out what is keeping them from crawling and help them fix it so that it doesn't show up later in other skills.

[00:41:11] **brittany-g-sarah:** Totally. And just as an aside, like I had a friend that her child was having regulation issues and this friend also their child skipped, crawling. And so when they were talking to the pediatrician about it, they sent them to PT and the PT was like, yeah, the like regulation comes from your. Both sides of your brain, being able to communicate in that could be.

[00:41:32] And so it's interesting, like how that ends up showing up, like in, in a, not a physical way, but,

[00:41:37] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah, for sure. So my son, actually, I mentioned before that he needed extra PT support and it actually was for crawling. So he was. Approaching the nine month Mark approaching the 10 month Mark. I had been working with him on crawling and he really just wasn't making any progress. And I knew, I was trying to balance being his mom and being a PT and trying not to see him through PTIs, like looking for something that was wrong.

[00:42:04] But I just knew in my guts, something is keeping him from making progress because I know I'm doing all of the things that I need to do to help him with crawling. So I took him to a friend of mine. Who's a PT and she specializes in reflex integration. And there were two riff reflexes that he had that were not kicking on appropriately.

[00:42:23] And that is just not my area of expertise. We learned about reflexes. I know about them enough to know what they are and when they're not present, but she is so skilled in turning those reflexes on and really helping to. Elicit the appropriate reflexes. And she did that for him and he started crawling almost immediately.

[00:42:44] And it was just really amazing and really just affirmed for me that even though I'm a therapist, I still had to trust my mom, got to know that there was something else going on. And I truly believe that if I were not a therapist or I had not gotten him extra support, I truly think he would have been one of those kids that skipped, crawling.

[00:43:05] He would have figured out a different way to move around whether it was through butt scooting or, rolling everywhere or something, he would have figured out a different way to overcome those challenges he was having with reflexes and he would have just gone straight onto the next skill. And I think that's just what happens so many times is.

[00:43:24] Babies have something that's keeping them from crawling, but they obviously have to progress to that next skill. And so their body just compensates in one way or another, and it can look different for different kids, but. So that's why I say, if it looks like your baby is skipping crawling, if you've been working on it and they're struggling with it, or even if you have an older toddler who never crawled, it's still never too late to go to a PT, just get checked out, make sure there's not something that's going on.

[00:43:50] Make sure there's not some kind of residual effects from not crawling.

[00:43:54] **brittany-g-sarah:** Totally. Brittany, thank you so much for coming on this podcast.

[00:43:58] **brittany-g-brittany:** Yeah, it was so fun. Thank you so much for having me.

[00:44:01] **brittany-g-sarah:** You were so informative, so thank you.

[00:44:04]