

Teaching children how to go up/down stairs on their own will help them to develop their independence but will also improve their strength, balance and coordination skills. The following are the steps that can be followed when teaching your child how to climb stairs:

- practice stepping on/off a small step; offer support by holding both hands then one hand and gradually work towards having them step on/off without support. You can find something around the house to use as a step (ie: stack of books).



- encourage your child to go up/down stairs holding the railing and your hand for support. Work towards reducing the support you are providing as their balance improves. Be sure to offer close guarding and/or supervision as needed.
- use colored footprints on each step to cue your child to alternate their feet when going up stairs. You can also do this by having them wear different colored socks on each foot. Progress towards alternating their feet when going down stairs as well.



- have them practice going up/down stairs while carrying objects to further develop their balance. Start with a small/light object and gradually increase the size and weight as their balance improves. Be sure to offer close guarding and/or supervision as needed.
- practice going up/down steps of varying heights to prepare them for the steps on the school bus. Try having them go up/down stairs while carrying a small backpack to further prepare them for the bus.

Remember to have fun together and be creative!

If your child complains of any pain or discomfort with the above mentioned activities, please consult your Health Care Provider.