

Massage for the Growing Child

The Crawling stage

- ✎ Do not be disheartened if your baby does not appear interested in massage at this stage.
- ✎ If they are happy, massage what is in front of you i.e. just the back, or the legs, or the tummy.
- ✎ Make the massage more stimulating to maintain your baby's interest. Include/continue to use nursery rhymes and music.
- ✎ At about 18 months old, they start to have time for a longer massage again.
- ✎ Consider introducing baby yoga at this stage.

The Toddlers, Pre-School Children and Beyond

- ✎ Let your child choose where they would like to be massaged (e.g. on a chair, or bed, etc.).
- ✎ Let your child decide what massage they want and what items of clothing they want to remove (massaging over clothes still has its benefits if your child wishes to remain partly clothed).
- ✎ Including nursery rhymes, music and other favourite songs your child enjoys can add to the pleasure of the massage.
- ✎ Mentioning the parts of the body being massaged can help with body awareness.
- ✎ Storytelling whilst massaging can be fun. You can include such ideas as 'The Squirrel & The Acorn' (see next page), 'Weather games', 'Planting a garden' or 'Making a pizza'.

The Teenager

- ✎ For the older child who might be a little sensitive about having 'baby massage', rename your routine to suit them. For example, 'The footballers post match rub down' or a 'hockey match warm up'.

