



# Kittens and Puppies

**Age** 2 years and older

**Materials** Imagination

**Setting** Open space

**Description** Children love animal babies, especially kittens and puppies. Say, “Let’s pretend to be kittens and puppies!” and then demonstrate getting down onto hands and knees. Rock front and back and side to side. Crawl around while purring or barking lightly. Ask your kitten and puppy friends to lift up a front paw and wave to you. Now lift up a back paw and give it a shake.

## Learning Outcomes

**Approaches to Learning** The toddler demonstrates initiative and curiosity by exploring using movement and space. He or she engages in activity alongside other children. He or she engages in pretend play and imitates the actions of adults and other children.

**Large Motor Skills** The toddler continues to expand gross (large) motor skills developing coordination, balance and body awareness.

**Movement** The toddler shows increasing body control and enjoys creative movement. He or she represents experiences and concepts through movement.

**Dramatic Play** The toddler begins to assume the role of someone or something else in dramatic play. He or she enjoys pretending to be different things.

**Did You Know?** This activity uses the toddlers’ own body weight and movements to provide proprioceptive and vestibular input. It is one example of how caregivers can stimulate the toddlers’ senses with a variety of materials, movements and activities, a SHAPE America recommended practice. Caregivers can also provide vestibular input by swinging the toddler or holding the toddler on an exercise ball on his or her stomach while moving the ball back and forth. Provide proprioceptive input by encouraging weight bearing play, massaging the toddler and/or encouraging creeping and crawling.

**TODDLERS**