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The Chartered Society of Physiotherapy is the professional, educational and trade union body for the UK's 50,000 chartered physiotherapists, physiotherapy students and associates

APCP

<https://apcp.csp.org.uk>

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This leaflet has been produced after an initial review of literature and where there is lack of evidence, a consensus of expert opinion is agreed, correct at time of publication



Association of Paediatric Chartered  
Physiotherapists

## Babywalkers - are they necessary? Information for parents



Physiotherapists and other Health Professionals **DO NOT** recommend the use of babywalkers.

There are two main reasons for this:

**Safety** – even under supervision there are high numbers of accidents reported every year including: falling down stairs, head injuries, burns, scalds, and trapped arms / legs.

**Delayed development** – some studies have shown that babywalkers do not encourage development and may actually delay the achievement of standing and walking. Contrary to popular belief, they **DO NOT** teach a child to walk. They can cause a child to walk on their toes which may continue when they walk independently.

**If you are using a babywalker with your child:**

- Never leave your baby unattended
- Never let your baby near steps or open doors eg. patio windows
- Avoid use near open fires, cookers or radiators or trailing wires
- Check floor is free of objects that could cause tipping
- Your child can move at up to 7mph, faster than you can react
- Make sure both feet are flat on the floor, not on their toes
- Your baby should have good head control and ideally be able to sit up alone
- Use for a maximum of 20 minutes at a time

**Play safe** and encourage development without a babywalker.

We recommend these alternatives:

- Encourage your baby to play on their tummy on the floor
- Encourage rolling and sitting up
- Encourage crawling and pulling to stand
- Encourage supported standing

These activities will help your child to:

- Learn about their body
- Explore their surroundings
- Progress to standing and walking

All of these encourage your child's development

**Useful references**

[www.RoSPA.com](http://www.RoSPA.com)

[www.capt.org.uk](http://www.capt.org.uk)

<http://www.childsafetyeurope.org/publications/positionstatements/info/baby-walkers-position-statement.pdf>

Only buy or use a baby walker that complies with BS EN 1273:2005: the date is important (the last four digits are the year the standard was approved, in this case 2005) because that's when more stringent safety requirements were imposed.

**Do not buy second hand baby walkers.**