Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers

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First Edition
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Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers (HOP) is based on the belief that all children benefit from daily physical activity that promotes health-related fitness and movement skills. It is important that individuals responsible for the well being of pre-school children are aware of the value of physical activity and help to facilitate each child’s movement experiences.

The Care Environment

More and more children are spending time in the care of others. The ‘care’ environment, where caregivers take an active role in positively shaping young children’s futures, is an ideal place to promote physical activity. HOP is designed to facilitate the engagement of 3 to 5 year old children in physical activity and movement experiences that form an essential part of their overall physical, cognitive, social and emotional development.

What is HOP?

The contents of the Healthy Opportunities for Preschoolers (HOP) program are based on guidelines established nationally and internationally by researchers, health care professionals, child development experts and most importantly, the caregivers themselves. HOP comprises this handbook and associated workshops. This book contains a collection of developmentally appropriate movement activities designed specifically to meet the needs of the caregiver and child in their unique environment.

HOP provides opportunities:

• that promote physical, cognitive, and social development;
• for active learning and success;
• for exploration;
• for indoor and outdoor activity;
• that develop fundamental movement skills.

HOP is designed to be flexible in its implementation to suit the varying time, space and environments (e.g., weather, playground, indoors, outdoors) of child care. As such, the contents are presented as a ‘grab bag’ of ideas arranged under common groupings. Ideally these ideas will be implemented in conjunction with the guidelines that follow. The guidelines were adapted from A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to Five Years (National Association for Sport and Physical Education, 2002).
Guideline 1. 60 minutes of structured activity
Preschool children need to accumulate at least 60 minutes daily of developmentally appropriate, structured physical activity.

Guideline 2. Up to several hours per day of unstructured activity
Preschool children will benefit from engaging in at least 60 minutes and up to several hours of daily, unstructured physical activity and should not be sedentary for more than 60 minutes at a time except when sleeping.

Guideline 3. Develop fundamental movement skills
Preschool children need to develop competence in movement skills that form the building blocks for more complex movement tasks.

Guideline 4. Access for large muscle activities
Preschool children benefit from access to indoor and outdoor areas that safely encourage whole body activities, such as climbing and running.

Guideline 5. Caregiver awareness
Individuals responsible for the well-being of young children are aware of the importance of physical activity and the role it can play in developing active and healthy people.

The Guidelines Explained
Guideline 1. 60 minutes of structured activity
While many caregivers we spoke with in developing these materials discussed the need for unstructured physical and movement activities (i.e., where the child initiates the movements), HOP also acknowledges the need for structured activities in which some planning is required to accommodate the preschooler’s developmental level. Evidence has shown that with structured physical activity there is an increase in the amount of moderate and vigorous physical activity. Research has also demonstrated that in the absence of structured physical activity some movement skills may be neglected. The skills of catching, hitting a ball and kicking were least likely to be practiced by preschool children unless encouraged by an adult. While free exploration of these movements are encouraged, structured activities that involve planning, guidance and positive reinforcement are also very important.

The structured experiences presented in this manual are aimed at developing both social interaction and movement skills in cooperative non-competitive environments. Since children have a tendency to alternate short bursts of activity with periods of rest, structured activity can be accumulated over the day. All of the activities in this manual are designed for short periods of time.

Guideline 2. Up to several hours per day of unstructured activity
Children benefit from unstructured play that involves children initiating the physical activity as they explore their environments. Many caregivers spoke to us about the need for children to be more creative and to think for themselves when it came to physical activity. Environments rich
in opportunities for physical activity (e.g., outdoor space, parks, bats, balls) and low in barriers (e.g., rules restricting movement, extended periods of television/video game play, available space) will help children accumulate a minimum of 60 minutes and up to several hours of this type of movement.

While fine motor play, stories and craft are valued activities, avoiding being sedentary for periods longer than 60 minutes at any one time (i.e., except while sleeping) is also important. The exploration of large outdoor toys, bicycles and tricycles, and playground equipment can be encouraged as part of unstructured physical activity experiences. Safe opportunities for swinging, hanging, balancing and exploring the natural environment all foster an interest in movement. Taking young children on walks through different environments while changing the pace, distance and movement type (e.g., skip, walk and hop) may enhance their fitness and skill level and can serve to facilitate educational experiences (e.g., finding autumn leaves, round objects, etc).

**Guideline 3. Develop fundamental movement skills**

Experts and caregivers acknowledge the importance of developing movement skills. Encouraging young children to develop fundamental movement skills like running, jumping, catching, throwing, kicking and hitting a ball help them to form the building blocks for more complex skills used in sports and physical activities throughout later life. If sufficiently developed, fundamental movement skills play an important role in establishing physical confidence and competence. A focus on developing a variety of activities appropriate to the age and development of the child is ideal. It is important to have a large range of safe objects available for the child to kick, hit, roll, throw or catch.

**Guideline 4. Access for large muscle activities**

It is beneficial to offer children opportunities to build, change and shape their environment through child-initiated and adult-supervised physical activity and play. While indoor and outdoor rules are important for control and safety, children also need freedom to explore their environments. Opportunities to skip, throw, dance, strike or kick a ball, fostered through providing access to appropriate outdoor play areas, is highly associated with children’s physical activity levels.

**Guideline 5. Caregiver awareness**

All of the caregivers we spoke to were aware of the importance of physical activity and the role it plays in the development of the individual. Some of the important issues associated with physical activity in early childhood are outlined below:

**Health problems associated with physical inactivity**

Leading a sedentary lifestyle is a major health problem. Physical activity helps prevent chronic diseases such as Type II diabetes and heart disease. Obesity is a major risk factor associated with heart disease, diabetes and cancer. Childhood obesity has tripled in the last 15 years (Tremblay, Willms, & Douglas, 2000) and current estimates indicate that 36% of boys and 25% of girls in British Columbia are overweight or obese (McKay, 2003). This pattern has been caused by large changes in our way of life that have increased exposure of children to high calorie foods and sedentary recreational past times. Health behaviours and obesity track into adulthood so it is important that children have
every opportunity to adopt healthy behaviours that will contribute to their physical well-being as they grow and help protect them from diseases in their future.

**Bone Health**

Physical activity and diet are very important ways to increase bone density during childhood. Greater bone strength in childhood may prevent or delay the onset of osteoporosis later in life. Physical activities suggested for bone health are gross movements that work large parts of the body such as running, climbing, jumping and skipping.

**Gross Motor Development**

‘If (fundamental movement) skills are not acquired, the preschooler’s full movement potential may not be realized.’ (NASPE, 2002, p.9)

Motor development is the process by which a child acquires movement patterns and skills. Since young children are involved in the process of developing and refining basic movement abilities they should engage in activities that are appropriate for their current physical, cognitive, and social development. When used in ‘game like’ activities, fundamental movement skills such as throwing, catching, skipping and running can be developed to foster an affinity with sports and recreational activities throughout life. If motor development occurs in a supportive environment this should translate to greater enjoyment, and enhanced self-confidence and activity seeking behaviour.

**Social Development**

Play provides opportunities for children to learn about different aspects of the social world. Children progress from playing alone, to playing alongside other children but not with them, and finally to cooperative play, when they interact with others. As they move through these stages they learn to negotiate, cooperate and share. When children disagree about ‘who gets to walk on the stilts first’, they’re actually developing important social skills.

**Intellectual Development**

There are many areas of children’s emerging intellectual development that can be reinforced and expanded upon during physical activity. During the ages of 3 to 5 young children become more competent in the area of thinking, language and learning. Concepts such as weight, size, shape and colour can be integrated into physical activities. For example, by asking children which shape they are going to throw the ball at, or how many frog jumps they are going to do. Around the ages of 4 and 5, children can engage with words such as *in, on, over, under, through* and *behind*. Children can create, imagine and translate ideas into movement. While it may just look like play, there is intellectual work going on such as problem solving and overcoming physical and mental challenges.

**Mental Health and Risk Taking Behaviours**

Physical activity brings about both short- and long-term psychological enhancement and mental well-being. Young people who are physically active have improved self-concept and self-esteem and lower levels of anxiety and perceived stress. Social contact is also thought to be important for mental well being, and participation in physical activity provides young people with opportunities to meet with peers and develop friendships. In addition, children and youth who are physically active have lower levels of smoking and alcohol consumption and engage in sexual relations at a later age.
Importance of Caregivers

Significant adults, such as caregivers, play a vital role in the development of children’s physical competence, self-worth, and in helping children develop a long term commitment to physical activity. They also help children enjoy physical activity. Children who receive age appropriate movement experiences in activity stimulating environments are more likely to experience success in movement tasks and consequently, seek further activity opportunities.

Figure 3. Influence of significant adults and peers on self-perceptions, enjoyment, and motivation (Weiss, 2000, p.3)

Note: Reproduced with the permission of the President’s Council on Physical Fitness and Sports

The diagram above shows the influence of significant others, such as teachers, parents and caregivers in helping children develop the motivation to participate in lifelong physical activity (i.e., the Motivated Behaviour). Caregivers who structure a learning environment to encourage improvement and enjoyment will positively influence children’s self-perceptions and motivation to continue activity involvement. In addition, a caregiver’s own physical activity level, enjoyment of physical activity, and beliefs about their ability to facilitate physical activity play an important role in modeling and reinforcing physical activity.
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FOLLOW THE TRAIL

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Developing different movement patterns

Equipment: String or rope 10 metres long

Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Outline a winding trail on the floor, carpet or grassy area
• Ask or show the children different ways of crawling or creeping (e.g., like a cat, like a scampering squirrel)
• Have the children follow the trail using different crawling, creeping actions

Try this way

• Arrange the trail to go over, under and around objects in the house
• Have an activity or surprise waiting at the end of the trail (i.e., something the children can participate in next)
• Try crawling/creeping backwards
• Children could work together and crawl/creep holding onto the ankles of the child in front
• Instead of a crawling/creeping trail, draw and cut out footsteps from cardboard, felt or paper and place them on the ground so the children can follow the footsteps
JUMPING JACK HOPSCOTCH

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns - jumping
Equipment: Chalk or hopscotch patterns on a cloth or paper sheet, bean bag
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Draw a variety of hopscotch patterns or use a prepared sheet
• Toss the bean bag into any square
• Jump forward and miss the square where the bean bag has landed
• On every single square hop on one foot
• In the double squares, land with one foot in each square
• At the end square turn around and hop back, picking up bean bag while balanced on one foot

Try this way

• Children can decorate pre-drawn hopscotch patterns on an old sheet (NB., This may also double as a ‘parachute’ and eliminates problems drawing hopscotch patterns inside)
• Change the hopscotch pattern to make it easier or more challenging (i.e., adding or taking away squares)

Teaching tip

• Swing your hand as you fly up high, bend your knees softly as you return from the sky
JUMP AROUND

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns - jumping
Equipment: Hoops (1 per child) or chalk to draw shapes
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play
• With plenty of space in between, place one hoop per child on the floor or draw a variety of shapes on the ground (at least one per child)
• Children practice jumping, hopping and landing in and out of hoops and/or shapes

Try this way
• Place a line on the floor to jump over and back
• Hop or jump backwards and sideways
• Ski jump (i.e., feet together, from side-to-side)
• Cross-country ski jump (i.e., feet and arms opposite, forwards-and-backwards)

Teaching tip
• Springs in your legs as you crouch down low, look forwards, spring up, and gently down you go

Safety tip!
• If using hoops or printed shapes make sure they will not slide from under the children if they land on them (NB., Felt is non-slip on carpet)
FIND ME A HOME

No. of children 4 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Cushions, Carpet mats, felt squares (1 per child)
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Spread enough cushions or carpet squares on the floor for each child
• Children sit on the cushions or carpet squares
• Call out ‘Find me a home’
• When the children hear ‘Find me a home’ they need to move to a new cushion

Try this way

• Vary the movement patterns (e.g., hopping / jumping / skipping; move like an animal, etc.)
• Play musical cushions

Safety tip!

• Be careful of bumping into others
ZIG ZAG FRUIT PICK

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Bean bags and plastic bowls
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Set out bowls in zigzag pattern with one bean bag in each bowl
• Children run from one bowl to the next in a zigzag pattern collecting a bean bag (fruit) from each bowl on the way until they reach an end marker
• If two children are playing, the second child takes the bean bags and running in a zigzag pattern, replaces them in each bowl
• If one child is playing, they can pick up and replace the bean bags

Try this way

• Change the way the children move skip/hop/leap/gallop, etc.
• Use as part of an obstacle course
• Time the children to see if they can get faster
TOY BOX DROP

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Soft toys, balls, a hoop, 1 marker per child
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Set the markers 5 metres from a large central area
• Share out items from the toy box to each child
• Children are encouraged to run and put one object at a time in the central area until all of their items are in the hoop
• Continue but change the type of movement patterns each time to hop, skip, jump, leap, gallop, crawl, etc.

Try this way

• Have 3 different coloured hoops and ask the children to put the first toy in the red hoop, the second toy in the yellow hoop, the third toy in the blue hoop
• Match household items together (e.g., saucepan to lids, plastic dishes to a dish rack, scarf to toque have one of the pair at the base and the other scattered in the area children search for the matching item)
ENVIRONMENT MATCH

No. of children 3 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: None
Area: Outdoor playground or yard
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Call out an item in the environment and a different locomotor pattern (e.g., ‘Run to the big tree’, ‘Skip to the green hose’, etc.)
• Children move to the object and wait for the next call

Try this way

• Use coloured, numbered or lettered cards on a variety of items in the environment
• Call out an item in the environment and a different type of movement pattern as above (e.g., ‘Jump to the blue triangle’)
• Bounce while sitting/kneeling
• Children move to the object and wait for the next call

Teaching tip

• Look ahead as you run, ‘choof’ your arms like a train, lean forward, it’s fun
NUMBERS AND BODY PARTS

No. of children: 2 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Lively or fast music, a variety of coloured bean bags or colour cards
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let's play

• Scatter the bean bags or coloured squares around the area about 30cm apart
• When the music starts, children move around the area without touching the bean bags
• When the music stops, the children stop and freeze
• Call out ‘three feet’ or ‘five hands’, etc.
• Children move and touch three different bean bags with their feet and so on
• When they have touched the bean bags required they put their hand up

Try this way

• Continue, but change the type of movement pattern between the bean bags each time (e.g., hop, skip, jump, leap, gallop, crawl)
• Try using elbows, bottoms, knees, and shoulders to touch the bean bags

Safety tip!

• Encourage the children to look up so they don’t collide with each other
LOCOMOTION CIRCUIT

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Hoops, markers, chalk
Area: Outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Circuit: Spend 30 seconds at each station, then try the next
  Station 1: Draw small connected circles on the ground children
  step/hop/jump from circle to circle
  Station 2: Set markers out in a zigzag formation children move to touch as
  many as possible in 30 seconds (e.g., running, crawling, skipping)
  Station 3: Draw lines with chalk with varying gaps between the lines children
  jump/leap over or from line to line and challenge themselves to jump wider and
  wider

![Image of children playing with hoops and chalk marks]
WORLD RECORDS

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Markers or chalk
Area: Outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Mark out two points – a start and finish point
• Children get to the end point and back as quickly as possible
• Time the children with a watch
• Challenge the children to beat their own time

Try this way

• Change the type of movement patterns (e.g., hop/skip/jump/leap/gallop/crawl/high/low/wide, etc.)
• Experiment with timing by encouraging the children to count there and back
• Find out how many times the children can go there and back before you finish singing a nursery rhyme
• Compare whether some movements take longer than others (e.g., ‘How long does it take to crawl there and back? Now let’s see how long it takes to jump there and back.’)
LEAP FROG LILY

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Cushions
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Scatter cushions (lily pads) around the area
• Squat like a frog
• Children leap frog over the cushions moving around the area

Try this way
• Have children jump in and out of a pond (i.e., hoop or sheet on the floor)
• ‘Surprise lily’: hide pictures or flat objects under the cushions; call out a number for the children to jump to, when the number is reached lift the cushion to reveal the surprise

Teaching tip
• Springs in your legs as you crouch down low, look forwards, spring up, and gently down you go
COOKING CHAOS

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Movement patterns

Equipment: 1 hoop per child, variety of coloured objects (e.g., bean bags, cards, small balls), chalk

Area: Outdoor

Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Mark a line and place variety of objects (e.g., bean bags, playing cards, small balls or toys) behind it
• Set out a line of hoops (pizza bases) an equal distance from the line
• Carrying one item at a time, children move back and forth decorating their pizza base or cookie with toppings (e.g., bean bags, cards, small balls)

Try this way

• Change the type of movement patterns (e.g., skip/jump/leap/gallop/crawl/high/low/wide, etc.)
• See how fast they can decorate their pizza, can they decorate it faster the next time
LET’S FLY

No. of children 2 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Chalk or small ropes
Area: Outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• With chalk or ropes, mark out a series of lines with different intervals between the markers
• Children to leap and bound over lines from one end to the other

Try this way

• Try jumping like a kangaroo (i.e., one jumps between the lines)
• Leap like a frog
• Hop on one leg

Teaching tip

• Off one foot, on the other you’ll land, long stretched out legs look so grand
• Bend your knees as you land; softly, softly don’t make a sound
COLOUR SCATTER

No. of children: 2 or more
Skill: Movement patterns
Equipment: Pairs of coloured cards with numbers on them
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 10 mins+
Let’s make: Make the cards

Let’s play

- Scatter coloured numbered cards around area (e.g., Red 1, Blue 2, Green 3, etc.)
- Have a copy of the cards with you
- Hold a card up and call out the number and colour
- Children move to the scattered cards that match the called number and colour

Try this way

- Use more than one copy of each card so that the children don’t just follow each other
- Change the type of movement patterns (e.g., skip/jump/leap/gallop/crawl/high/low/wide, etc.)
- Use animal shapes instead of numbers and move like the called animal
RIVER BANK JUMP

No. of children 2 or more
  Skill: Locomotion, vertical jump, leap
Equipment: Chalk or small rope
  Area: Outdoor
  Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Mark two lines with wool, rope or chalk
• The middle is the ‘river’ the sides are the ‘banks’
• Call out ‘on the bank’ or ‘in the river’ and have the children jump in and out of the river or across the river
• In the river, do the motions for swimming

Try this way

• Gradually make riverbanks further apart

Teaching tip

• Springs in your legs as you crouch down low, look forwards, spring up, and gently down you go
• Swing your arms as you fly up high, bend your knees softly as you return from the sky
HELICOPTER

No. of children: 1 or more  
Skill: Jumping  
Equipment: A skipping rope weighted with a soft object (e.g. bean bag) at one end  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

• Stand in the centre and hold the skipping rope at one end  
• Spin around slowly with the rope close to the ground  
• Children jump the rope when it reaches them

Try this way

• Increase speed or height in relation to children's ability
**ROLL AND BOWL**

*No. of children* 1 or more  
*Skill:* Accuracy, body manipulation / awareness  
*Equipment:* Skittles, mats (optional)  
*Area:* Indoor (quiet time)  
*Time:* 5 mins+

**Let’s play**

- Set up pins at one end of area  
- Children lie on their back with their arms above their head or by the side of their body in a ‘log’ position  
- Children roll the distance of area attempting to knock over skittles  
- Set up skittles and continue

**Try this way**

- Mark two lines approximately 5 feet wide on the floor and ‘log roll’ from one end to the other without skittles  
- Practise rolling in both directions (i.e., left and right)  
- ‘Log roll’ the length of the room or yard  
- Find a nice grassy hill with a gentle slope to ‘log roll’ (NB., not a good activity for after lunch)
SWAY SKIP

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Jumping, body manipulation/anticipation
Equipment: Skipping rope
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Attach one end of the rope to something that won’t fall over
• Holding the other end, sway the rope slowly back and forth for the child to jump over
• Stand side-on to jump (i.e., like skipping in a long rope)

Try this way
• Hop over the rope
• With the rope on the ground wiggle each end, jump across without touching the wiggly rope
JUMP STUNTS

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Springing and landing
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play
• Ask children to think of different ways to jump (e.g., jump up high, jump far, jump and ¼ turn to left or right, 180 degree turn jump, jump and make a star)

Try this way
• Jump from a low bench

Teaching tip
• Arms behind and bend your knees, swing arms forward and up
• Bend your knees as you land
COLOUR SEARCH

No. of children: 1 or more  
Skill: Movement patterns/matching  
Equipment: Paint swatches (i.e., colours of the environment)  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Ask children to select a paint swatch from a container and search the local environment (e.g., a park) as quickly as possible for something of a similar colour  
• After finding a match, choose a new point swatch

Try this way

• Move in different ways for each swatch (e.g., skip/gallop/run)
STILT WALKING

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Balance, coordination
Equipment: 2 small cans / blocks per child, thin smooth rope
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Stilts

Let’s play

• Make stilts, adjusting the height to suit the children using them
• Each child needs to be able to pull the rope tight to keep the can on their feet but also be able to stand up straight when walking on the stilts

Safety tip!

• Use a flat surface to walk on
MANIPULATIVE MOVEMENT SKILLS

EGG HUNT
CATCHING BUDDY
KNOCK OUT
CLOUD CATCHING
HIT THE TARGET
GO BOWLING
FROG IN A POND
BEAN BAG GOLF
NOVELTY THROW
DIRTY WASHING
OVER THE RIVER SOCCER
COPY ME SOCCER
KNOCK 'EM DOWN
OVER THE FENCE
HOT POTATO
WALK THE DOG
SHOOT A GOAL
PANCAKE FLIP
RAZAMATAZ BALL
BOUNCY BALL
BOUNCE IT
UP AND OVER
BALLOON BOUNCE
BALLOON BALLET
BOWLS/BOCCE
CATCH TIME
TARZAN BOWLING
LINE TENNIS
ROCKET LAUNCH
WALL BALL
EGG HUNT

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination and locomotor movement patterns
Equipment: Bottle scoop, paper screwed up into balls (eggs), a bucket (nest)
Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)
Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Bottle scoops

Let’s play

• Place eggs on the floor, and the nest nearby
• Scoop up eggs and place them in the nest

Try this way

• Make a trail to follow
• Use the other hand
• Move quickly; time how quickly the eggs can be collected
• Hide the eggs

Teaching tip

• Keep your eyes on the eggs!

Safety tip!

• Be careful not to bump heads if there is more than one child playing
CATCHING BUDDY

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Hand-eye coordination, catching with an implement

Equipment: 1 ball per child, 1 buddy per child

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

- Bounce the ball with one hand, holding the buddy in the other hand
- Catch the ball in the buddy
- Throw the ball in the air and catch it in the buddy

Try this way

- Play in pairs, bounce or throw to your partner who catches the ball in their buddy
- Use a Frisbee or a pillow case as the buddy

Teaching tip

- Watch the ball
KNOCK OUT

No. of children: 2 or more
Skill: Accuracy, underarm throwing
Equipment: Rope, at least 1 medium-large ball per child, 1 medium-large ball per 'centre'
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Shape the rope into a circle or square and place the centre ball inside the rope
• Children stand on the outside of the rope with a ball each, and roll the ball to hit the centre ball, trying to knock it to the rope or out of the circle
• Children retrieve their own ball and continue until the centre ball hits the rope or is knocked out of the circle

Try this way

• Kick the ball to hit the centre ball
• Throw bean bags to hit the centre ball
• Increase/decrease the circle size

Safety tip!

• If more than one child is playing, children should retrieve their balls at the same time
CLOUD CATCHING

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, catching technique
Equipment: 1 scarf, tissue, handkerchief or paper towel per child
Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Toss the scarf in the air
• Make a landing pad with hands to catch the cloud as it drifts down

Try this way

• Catch on head, knee, behind back, on foot/toes
• Clap hands, bob down, turn around before catching

Teaching tip

• Hands together; fingers wide; watch the scarf
HIT THE TARGET

No. of children: 1 or more
   Skill: Overarm and underarm throwing technique, accuracy
Equipment: 1 throwing object, targets
   Area: Indoor/outdoor
   Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Make and decorate the targets

Let’s play
• Set up a variety of targets for practicing underarm/overarm throwing (e.g., hit the smiley face on the wall, land the object in a bin, throw the object through a hoop)
• Have a few goes at each target
• Throw overarm and underarm

Try this way
• Use paper balls for throwing indoors
• Increase/decrease the distance to the target
• Change target size/colour/shape/height from the ground
• Try throwing a sock ball in a variety of saucepans
• Use alphabet cards to practice letter recognition

Teaching tip
• Stand side on; make a star; point your finger; and throw it far
• Stand side on; behind the line; front foot over; back stays behind
GO BOWLING

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Underarm throwing and rolling technique, accuracy
Equipment: 3 or more skittles (e.g., shoe boxes, empty milk cartons), ball, something to make a line (e.g., wool or chalk)
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play
• Stand skittles in a triangle shape
• Mark a line approximately 2 metres from the skittles for the children to stand behind
• While crouching with slightly bent knees, roll the ball to knock over the skittles

Try this way
• Underarm or overarm throw
• Vary the distance from the skittles
• Pairs – face your partner and stand either side of a target, see who can knock over the skittles first

Teaching tip
• To roll the ball underarm, bend your knees down low; close to the ground; no bounces though
FROG IN A POND

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Overarm and under arm throwing technique, accuracy
Equipment: Container (pond), throwing object (frog), line marker
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Mark three lines approximately 1 metre apart
• Place pond 1 metre from first line
• Underarm throw the frogs into the pond
• Move back to next line for a greater challenge

Try this way

• Overarm throw

Teaching tip

• Stand up straight; make your arm swing back low; with your other side step forward and watch it go
• To allow children to do an overarm throw use a light throwing object like paper balls forward and watch it go
BEAN BAG GOLF

**No. of children** 1 or more

**Skill:** Overarm and underarm throwing technique, accuracy

**Equipment:** 1 throwing object per child, 2 or more start markers (tee), 2 or more hoops (hole)

**Area:** Outdoor

**Time:** 5 mins+

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**Let’s play**

- Place a start marker on the ground with the first hoop approximately 3-4 metres away, place the other start marker near the first hoop with the second hoop approximately 3-4 metres away
- Children start at the first start marker and overarm/underarm throw the bean bag towards the hoop
- Continue to throw the bean bag and count how many throws taken until it lands inside the hoop
- Move to the next start area

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**Try this way**

- Set out a scarf or sheet for a hazard/trap
- Encourage children to design their own golf course

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**Teaching tip**

- Stand up straight; make your arm swing back low; with your other side step forward and watch it go
- To allow children to do an overarm throw use a light throwing object like paper balls or a badminton birdie
**NOVELTY THROW**

*No. of children:* 1 or more  
*Skill:* Overarm and underarm throwing technique, accuracy  
*Equipment:* 1 birdie, paper ball or bean bag per child, cushions, and a set of cards  
*Area:* Indoor/outdoor  
*Time:* 5 mins+  
*Let’s make:* Make and decorate cards

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### Let’s play

- Place the cushion or set of cards randomly on the floor/ground  
- Leader calls out a shape/animal-colour  
- Using underarm or overarm throw, children aim for object called

### Try this way

- Vary the size and shape of the cards  
- Ask challenging questions, such as: ‘Throw to the shape with 4 sides’, ‘Throw at the red circle’, ‘Throw at the animal with the longest neck’

### Teaching tip

- Stand up straight; make your arm swing back low; with your other side step forward and watch it go
DIRTY WASHING

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Overarm and underarm throwing technique, accuracy
Equipment: 1 washing basket, 5 non-bouncy throwing objects per child
Area: Outdoor/indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Stand the basket near a wall or fence
- Underarm or overarm throw object to bounce off the wall and into the basket
- When everyone’s objects are thrown skip to the basket to collect them, counting 5 objects each

Try this way

- When indoors, throw paper balls onto a curtain or suspended a sheet to drop into the basket

Teaching tip

- Stand side on and make a star; point your finger; throw it far
OVER THE RIVER SOCCER

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Foot-eye coordination
Equipment: 1 medium/large ball, 2 long pieces of wool, a large box or washing basket (cave)
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Decorate the box

Let’s play
• Use the wool to make a ‘river’
• Place the box or basket on its side on the opposite side of the river with the opening (a cave) facing the children
• Place the ball approximately 1 step back from the river
• Kick the ball into the cave

Try this way
• Take a couple of steps before kicking the ball
• Make the river wider
COPY ME SOCCER

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Foot-eye coordination, locomotor patterns and ball control
Equipment: 1 medium/large ball per child
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Leader pushes the ball forward using the inside of their foot
• Using their ball, children perform the same action
• When the leader stops, the children stop
• Stop the ball by putting your foot on it

Try this way
• Vary the speed walk/jog/skip
• Take turns as the leader

Teaching tip
• Little pushes with the inside of your foot; keep it close
**KNOCK ‘EM DOWN**

No. of children: 1 or more  
Skill: Foot-eye coordination  
Equipment: 1 medium/large ball per child, standing targets such as shoe boxes  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+  
Let’s make: Decorate targets

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**Let’s play**

- Stand the targets up like bowling pins and draw a line 2-5 metres in front of the targets
- Children kick the ball attempting to knock over the pins
- Stand up all of the pins and keep trying

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**Try this way**

- Increase/decrease target size/number
- Try dribbling the ball to a mark before kicking it
OVER THE FENCE

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Kicking
Equipment: A variety of balls or balloons, 1 net or barrier
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

**Let’s play**
- Make a net to kick under and over
- Children decide whether to kick ‘under’ or ‘over’
- Once all of the balls or balloons are used collect them and try again

**Try this way**
- When using balloons, a child could be on either side of the net

**Safety tip!**
- Dispose of balloons and balloon debris after use as ingestion can lead to choking
HOT POTATO

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination and object manipulation
Equipment: 1 balloon per child
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Use hands to keep the balloon in the air by tapping it upward
• Use one hand, other hand, and then both hands
• Hit soft, hit hard, hit high, and hit low
• Hit the balloon in different directions

Try this way
• Use a paddle bat to tap the balloon up
• Work in pairs rallying the balloon back and forth
• Count how many taps you can do keeping the balloon off the ground

Safety tip!
• Dispose of balloons and balloon debris after use as ingestion can lead to choking
WALK THE DOG

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Object manipulation and control
Equipment: 1 ball or balloon (dog) and a plastic hockey stick or rolled up newspaper for the stick or lead
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Holding onto the stick with two hands, the children push the ball along the ground, moving around the whole area

Try this way

• Create an obstacle course for the children to move around
• Draw lines on the ground for the children to follow
• Push the ‘dog’ to a partner

Teaching tip

• Push, don’t hit; keep the ball close to the stick
SHOOT A GOAL

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Striking, accuracy, object manipulation and control

Equipment: 1 medium/large ball, 1 roll of newspaper or soft foam or plastic hockey stick, standing targets

Area: Outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Spread out the targets
• Mark a line 2 metres from the targets
• Holding onto the stick with two hands, children hit the ball attempting to knock over the targets

Try this way

• Push the ball with the stick, in a similar way to ‘Walk the Dog’, before shooting at the target

Safety tip!

• Everyone must be out of the way of the targets and the hitter before each child takes their turn
PANCAKE FLIP

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Object Control

Equipment: 1 bean bag and 1 paddle bat per child

Area: Outdoor/indoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Children move in random directions balancing a bean bag on a paddle bat
- Progress to flipping the bean bag up and catching it on the paddle bat

Try this way

- Create an obstacle course for children to move around balancing the bean bag on their paddle bat
- Use a paper ball

Teaching tip

- Children shake hands with the paddle bat for the correct grip
- Keep your eyes on the bean bag
RAZAMATAZ BALL

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Sidearm striking and visual tracking

Equipment: 1 stocking, 1 post, 1 piece of string, 1 tennis ball, and 1 bat

Area: Outdoor

Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Put a ball in a stocking and tie it to a post
• Throw the ball so that it wraps around the post

Try this way

• Hit the ball, stand back and watch it swing around

Safety tip!

• Everyone should stand well out of the way of the ball (and any bat, if one is used)
BOUNCY BALL

No. of children 1 or more  
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, object manipulation and control, catching  
Equipment: 1 bouncy ball per child  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Drop the ball, let it bounce, then catch it
• Bounce the ball with two hands

Try this way

• Bounce the ball high/low/medium height
• Bounce while walking forwards/backwards/sideways/in a circle
• Bounce while sitting/kneeling
• Show me a bounce trick (e.g., bounce-clap, bounce-turn, etc.)
• Bounce to a friend
• Bounce and let the ball land in a box/bin
BOUNCE IT

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, object control, bouncing
Equipment: 1 bouncy ball per child
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

• Bounce a ball with one hand or two hands while standing still
• Bounce as many times as possible in a row

Try this way

• Try bouncing and moving (e.g., follow a line, chase a friend)
• Bounce at various levels (e.g., high/medium/low)
• Play ‘Simon Says’ or ‘Follow the Leader’

Teaching tip

• Push the ball to the side of you, so you don’t bounce it on your shoe
UP AND OVER

No. of children: 1 or more  
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, object control, bouncing  
Equipment: 1 large ball (e.g., beach ball), 2 chairs, 1 rope  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

**Let’s play**
- The ends of the rope are tied to chairs  
- Begin with the rope close to the ground  
- Try to bounce the ball over the rope  
- Raise the rope higher with each successful ‘over’

**Try this way**
- Work in pairs rallying the ball back and forth  
- Move further away from the rope  
- Place shape cards on the opposite side of the rope and bounce the ball over rope attempting to hit a shape card
BALLOON BOUNCE

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination and catching
Equipment: 1 round balloon or beach ball per child
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Using both hands bounce the balloon on the ground and catch it
- Try one hand
- Walk and bounce the balloon at the same time
- Kneel down and bounce
- Bounce to a partner
- Bounce and catch off the wall

Try this way

- Create an obstacle course (e.g., around the chair, between the cushions, along the scarf
- A large bouncy plastic or rubber ball can be used outside or on a paved area

Safety tip!

- Dispose of balloons and balloon debris after use as ingestion can lead to choking
BALLOON BALLET

No. of children  1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination and locomotor movement patterns
Equipment: 1 balloon or beach ball per child, music
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Bounce the balloon or throw it up as high as possible to the music
• When the music stops try to balance the balloon on a finger (or head, elbow, foot, knee)
• Bounce again when the music starts

Try this way
• Call out a body part to balance the balloon on before the music stops

Safety tip!
• Dispose of balloons and balloon debris after use as ingestion can lead to choking
BOWLS / BOCCE

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, object control, cooperation
Equipment: One small ball, several larger balls or bean bags per child
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 5 mins +

Let’s play
- Place small ball or ‘Jack’ a few metres away from the starting point
- Children take it in turn to underarm throw, roll, bounce, or slide their bean bags toward the ‘Jack’; trying to get their balls closest

Try this way
- Children throw the bean bags or soft toys to see who can get closest to a cushion

Teaching tip
- To roll the ball underarm, bend your knees down low; close to the ground; no bounces though
CATCH TIME

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, catching technique
Equipment: 1 object per child (e.g., ball, bean bag, paper screwed up into balls, balloon, teddy bear)
Area: Indoor/Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play
• Throw and catch the object
• Throw, clap, and catch
• Kneel, throw, stand, and catch
• Bounce and catch
• Throw and catch, starting small, getting higher and higher

Try this way
• Throw to a partner
• Use different shaped/sized objects
• Throw one hand, catch two hands
• Throw and catch off a wall

Teaching tip
• Hands together; fingers wide; watch the ball; softly inside

Try this way
• Throw to a partner
• Use different shaped/sized objects
• Throw one hand, catch two hands
• Throw and catch off a wall

Teaching tip
• Hands together; fingers wide; watch the ball; softly inside
TARZAN BOWLING

No. of children: 1 or more  
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, accuracy  
Equipment: Rope, stocking, ball, skittles  
Area: Outdoor  
Time: 10 mins+  
Let’s make: Make and decorate the skittles

Let’s play

• Place the ball in the stocking and tie the other end of the stocking to the end of a rope suspended high above children’s heads (e.g., attached to a tree branch)  
• Set the skittles up across from the hanging ball so that when ball swings it hits the skittles  
• Children attempt to knock the skittles over by swinging the ball in the stocking

Try this way

• Make the targets (i.e., the skittles) bigger/smaller

Teaching tip

• Be careful of the return swing of the stocking and ball  
• Do not allow children to swing or hang from the stocking
LINE TENNIS

No. of children 2 or more  
Skill: Overarm and underarm throwing and catching technique  
Equipment: 1 large bouncy ball or teddy bear per pair, line or net  
Area: Indoor/outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

**Let’s play**

- Mark a line between two children  
- Children toss the ball/teddy bear back and forth over the line  
- Count the catches and see how big the rally total can get  
- Make your partner move by throwing the ball/teddy bear forward, back, and to the side

**Try this way**

- Children throw over a higher net  
- Catch the object overhead  
- Use different objects for a net

**Teaching tip**

- Hands together; fingers wide; watch the ball; softly inside  
- For catching overhead: Make a diamond in the sky; watch the ball and catch it high
ROCKET LAUNCH

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, catching technique
Equipment: 1 bean bag (rocket) per child, launch pad
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Launch pad

Let’s play

• Place a bean bag on the end of the launch pad
• Stomp on the other end of launch pad
• Watch the rocket blast into space
• Catch the rocket on its way down

Try this way

• Use a paper ball, hat, and teddy bear as a rocket
• Launch a hat and try to catch it on your head

Teaching tip

• Hands together; fingers wide; watch the ball; softly inside

Safety tip!

• Only use soft objects as rockets

Try this way

• Use a paper ball, hat, and teddy bear as a rocket
• Launch a hat and try to catch it on your head
WALL BALL

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, object control, catching, cooperation skills
Equipment: 1 large beach ball per child
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Stand about 5 metres from the wall
• Throw the ball at the wall, let it bounce, and then catch it
• Try these tricks: throw-turn-catch, throw-clap-catch, throw-touch floor-catch, etc.
• Invent your own throw-catch combination

Try this way
• Try with a friend, one child throws at the wall, and the other catches

Teaching tip
• Hands together; fingers wide; watch the ball; softly inside
MOVING TO MUSIC, SHAPES AND CREATIVE PLAY

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THE COPY CAT TRAIN

No. of children: 2 or more

Skill: Movement patterns, creativity, cooperation

Equipment: Lively or fast music

Area: Indoor / outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Children stand one behind the other like carriages in a train
• When the music starts, the person in the front begins moving in a certain way and the other children copy their action
• Let every child be the leader changing the way to move
• Try hop, skip, jump, gallop, crawl, high, low, wide

Try this way

• Change the speed of actions by playing different music
ANIMAL MYSTERY SEARCH

No. of children 2 or more

Skill: Movement patterns

Equipment: Markers, pictures of animals, lively or fast music

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play

• Scatter animal pictures around the available area.
• Have the children move around to the music between the pictures
• When the music stops, the children stop and move to the nearest picture
• The children imitate and move like the animal shown in the picture

Try this way

• Change the type of movement patterns (e.g., hop, skip, jump, leap, gallop, crawl, high, low, etc.)
• Change the type of music played to encourage fast or slow movements)
CHRISTMAS CHANT

No. of children: 2 or more
Skill: Body awareness, body manipulation, cooperation
Equipment: 1 ball per child, 1 buddy per child
Area: Outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• One child is the Christmas tree; the other children walk around the Christmas tree chanting: ‘Christmas tree, Christmas tree, Do you have a gift for me?’
• The Christmas tree calls out a type of toy
• The moving children must then move like the named toy (e.g., jump like a ball, walk tall like a soldier, hug like a teddy bear)
• After a couple of turns the Christmas tree says: ‘No toys for you, shoo, shoo, shoo and chases the children.’
• The first child caught becomes the next Christmas tree

Try this way

• The Christmas tree has a sack of toys and pulls out the toy they want the other children to move like
ROW, ROW, ROW YOUR BOAT

No. of children 2 or more

Skill: Flexibility, cooperation

Equipment: None

Area: Indoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Face each other and sit on the floor with legs bent in front
• Touch the bottom of your feet to your partner’s feet and hold hand
• Gently rock back and forth singing:
  Row, row, row your boat, gently down the stream
  Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily, life is but a dream
ANIMAL WALK

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Body awareness, spatial awareness, body manipulation
Equipment: Simple musical instruments, 1 hoop per child
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Play simple instruments so the children can move like different animals to the different sounds (e.g., tapping with a stick - little mouse, big booming drum - elephant walking, rice shaker - snake in the grass)

Try this way

• Also try bunny hops (i.e., hands inside hoop/feet outside hoop), crab walk, bear walk, frog hops, big elephant steps, small mouse steps, etc.
• Tell a story about going for a walk through the forest or jungle and seeing different animals along the way
MULBERRY BUSH

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing
Equipment: Music (optional)
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

• Children sing and perform actions as they play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singing</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Chorus:</strong></td>
<td>Hold hands and skip or walk in a circle</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Here we go round</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the Mulberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush, the Mulberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush, the Mulberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush, here we go</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>round the Mulberry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>bush, so early in</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the morning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Verse:</strong></td>
<td>Perform hand washing action while standing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we wash our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hands, wash our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hands, wash our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hands, this is</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the way we wash</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our hands so</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>early in the</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>morning.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Repeat chorus</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Other verses:</strong></td>
<td>Actions suitable for verse</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>This is the way</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>we ‘eat our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>breakfast’, ‘brush</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our teeth’, ‘do our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>exercises’, ‘stretch</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>our body’, ‘comb our</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>hair’</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Moving to Music, Shapes and Creative Play 69
MUSICAL LEADERS

No. of children: 3 or more  
    Skill: Movement patterns, exploration  
Equipment: Music, one cushions or carpet squares per child  
    Area: Indoor  
    Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

• Scatter the cushions on the floor
• Play the music for children to move around to
• When the music stops, children find a cushion to sit on
• Children take turns to call out an action and demonstrate it (e.g., walk like a cat, slither like a snake, act like a robot, etc.)
• Children move around performing that action while the music plays
MAKE A DANCE

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing
Equipment: Music
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Listen to the music and do actions in time with the beat (e.g., march, hands shake, clap, slap on knees; heads- nod, shake; feet- stamp; arms- circle, wave, shake; floppy dance; stiff dance, etc.)
• Add some of the actions together to make a dance
HEAD, SHOULDERS, KNEES AND TOES

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Sing or say the following while touching each body part with both hands:
  Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes
  Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes
  And eyes and ears and mouth and nose
  Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes

Try this way

• Repeat verse; progressively leave out singing each body part but still perform the actions. For example, the next verse would be:
  _____, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes
  _____, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes
  and eyes and ears and mouth and nose
  _____, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes
• Ultimately, the children perform the actions only
BIRDIE DANCE

No. of children 1 or more
  Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing, and cooperation
  Equipment: Music (optional)
  Area: Indoor
  Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

- Children sing and perform actions as they play

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singing</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. With a little bit of this</td>
<td>Fingers and thumbs open and close four times (your quacks)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. And a little bit of that</td>
<td>Flap arms four times (your flaps)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. And shake your bottom</td>
<td>Shake bottom back and forth four times (your wiggles)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. Clap, clap, clap, clap</td>
<td>Clap four times</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. Chorus: Dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah [change direction] dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah dah and here we go</td>
<td>Eight right arms swing with partner, then eight left arm swing with partner</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
JOIN THE BAND

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing

Equipment: Homemade instruments

Area: Indoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s make: A drum

Let’s play

• Move around to the music playing your instrument
• Try to keep to the beat

Try this way

• Have a variety of instruments on the floor, children move around then area and when the music stops they find an instrument to play, continue to change instruments
• Form a band and play instruments together
• Draw a line with chalk/string/rope and follow it while playing the instrument and keeping to the beat
• Sing: ‘I am a fine musician, I practice everyday and people come from far and wide just to hear me play, my drum, my drum, they love to hear my drum…'
CREATIVE RIBBONS

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Dance, body awareness, spatial awareness, rhythm, timing, creativity

Equipment: 1 ribbon stick per child

Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Hold the end of the ribbon stick and practice making patterns (e.g., windscreen wipers, circles, sweep the floor, fishing, squiggle down, snake flag, etc.
- Use just your wrist to make the ribbon move, use your whole arm or just from the elbow.
- Create your own movements.

Try this way

- Make up actions to a favourite song/music
- Play, ‘Simon Says’, make your scarf move like …
HOKEY POKEY

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Dance
Equipment: Music (optional)
Area: Indoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Stand in a circle and perform actions while singing the following song:
  Verse 1: You put your right hand in. You put your right hand out. You put your right hand in and you shake it all about. You do the hokey pokey and you turn around. That’s what it’s all about.
  Verse 2: You put your left hand in, etc.
  Verse 3: You put both hands in, etc.
  Verse 4: You put your right foot in, etc.
  Verse 5: You put your left foot in, etc.
  Verse 6: You put your elbows in, etc.
  Verse 7: You put your shoulders in, etc.
  Verse 8: You put your head, etc.
  Verse 9: You put your whole self in, etc.

Try this way

• Place a coloured sticker or tie a coloured ribbon around the child’s wrist and ankle to help them determine their right from their left
• Children suggest body part to ‘put in’
TEDDY BEAR

No. of children 1 or more  
Skill: Creative movement
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Standing in a circle or scattered around the area, children say the ‘Teddy Bear’ chant and perform the appropriate actions:
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear turn around
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear touch the ground
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear show your shoe
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear that will do
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear climb the stairs
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear say your prayers
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear turn off the light
  Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear say ‘goodnight’
PUNCHINELLO

No. of children: 2 or more
Skill: Creative movement, cooperation
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor/outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Children form a circle with one child in the centre as Punchinello
• One child is Punchinello the other children watch and copy Punchinello’s actions to the song/chant

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singing</th>
<th>Actions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Verse 1. What can you do Punchinello funny fellow? What can you do</td>
<td>Punchinello does an action (e.g., hopping on one foot or twirling while</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Punchinello funny you?</td>
<td>the children sing)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 2. We can do it, too, Punchinello, funny fellow. We can do it,</td>
<td>Children in the circle copy Punchinello’s action</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>too, Punchinello, funny you!</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verse 3. You choose one of us, Punchinello, funny fellow. You choose</td>
<td>Punchinello selects another child to be Punchinello and then takes that</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>one of us, Punchinello, funny you!</td>
<td>child’s place in the circle</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
KNEES UP MOTHER BROWN

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Dance, rhythm, aerobic fitness, endurance

Equipment: None

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- With children standing, say the following chant or sing the tune if you know it, while the children do the movements described:
  - Knees up Mother Brown (i.e., bend knees and lift leg)
  - Knees up Mother Brown
  - Knees up, knees up don’t let the breeze up
  - Knees up Mother Brown
  - Jumping up and down
  - Jumping up and down
  - Jumping, jumping, always jumping
  - Jumping up and down
  - Hopping on one foot
  - Hopping on one foot
  - Hopping, hopping, never stopping
  - Hopping on one foot
  - Knees up Mother Brown
  - Knees up Mother Brown
  - Knees up, knees up don’t let the breeze up
  - Knees up Mother Brown
CREATIVE SUPPORTS

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Body awareness, body manipulation
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 5 mins+

Let's play

• Show the children various supports and balances (e.g., long sit, wide sit, cross-legged sit, front support, front/back lying, squat, tall/short stand, stand on one leg, etc)

Try this way

• Play 'Puzzle balances'; ask children to think of how they could balance on different body parts (e.g., 'balance on your bottom and two elbows', 'balance on one foot and one hand')
• Call-out animal shapes (e.g., 'stand like a lizard')
• Play music to walk around to, push pause, and call out a way to balance
• Children balance by leaning on each other with their hands, knees, bottoms...
THE SHAPE GAME

No. of children 2 or more
Skill: Body awareness, body manipulation
Equipment: None
Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Encourage the children to make a variety of shapes with their bodies (e.g., star, ball, bridge, wide, long, tall, short, round, etc.)

Try this way

• Play ‘Simon says make a star’
• Make shapes with a partner or in a group
CHRISTMAS SHAPES

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Body awareness, body manipulation
Equipment: Music (optional)
Area: Indoor/outdoor (quiet time)
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Play Christmas music or sing a Christmas carol to set the theme
• Move around to the music in a variety of ways
• Music stops and leader calls out a Christmas shape (e.g., reindeer: gallop around, elves: tiptoe around, Christmas trees: stand tall, Santa: rolls on his back laughing)
• Allow children to come up with their own ideas

Try this way

• Try Easter shapes (e.g., Easter basket: make a bridge, Easter parade: march around, Easter eggs: curl up like a ball on your back)
• Try seasonal shapes (e.g., umbrella: arch over, beach ball: roll around, Autumn leaves: float gently to the ground, Spring seed: growing up tall, wind in the trees: arms up high moving with the breeze)
MY FRIEND ‘BEANIE’

No. of children 1 or more

Skill: Object and body manipulation, balance

Equipment: 1 bean bag per child (beanie)

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• With your bean bag, explore a variety of tricks to perform (e.g., balance beanie on your head, leg, shoulders, nose, ear, elbow, etc.)
• Jump/hop/leap over ‘beanie’ (NB., ‘Don’t squash your beanie!’)
• Make shapes with your body over ‘beanie’ (e.g., crab, bear, star, bridge, bunny, etc.)

Try this way

• Work in pairs; balance your ‘beanie’ on a body part, if beanie falls, ‘FREEZE’ until your partner places ‘beanie’ back on the body part it fell from
• Call out a body part
• Use a ‘beanie’ teddy bear instead of a bean bag
BUBBLE CATCH

No. of children: 1 or more
Skill: Hand-eye coordination, locomotor movement patterns
Equipment: Bubbles, bubble wand or pipe cleaners shaped into a wand
Area: Indoor/outdoor/community
Time: 5 mins+
Let’s make: Bubble recipe

Let’s play

• Children take it in turns to blow the bubbles, while the other child moves and tries to catch all of the bubbles before they hit the ground
• Encourage the children to pop the bubbles using different actions or body parts (e.g., with knee, elbow, finger, etc.)
• Try to catch the bubbles back on the bubble wand without breaking them
• Make a statue shape with your hand out to catch the bubble; then try on one leg, behind your back, etc.
JUNIOR GYM

No. of children 1 or more
Skill: Body awareness, body manipulation
Equipment: Mats / cushions, rope, chair, hoop, table, low bench
Area: Indoor / outdoor
Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play
• Set up an obstacle course for a variety of movements (e.g., crawl under a chair, jump over cushions, forward roll on a mat, stand on and jump off a low bench, walk along a rope, move around a hoop, etc)
• Encourage a variety of movements and pathways
• Let children explore and make their own course

Try this way
• Play music for the children to move to
• Change the equipment to suit the playing area
• Allow the children to design their own course
PAINT THE HOUSE

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Arm strength, imagination, eye-hand coordination

Equipment: A bucket or bowl with water, paintbrush, chalk (optional)

Area: Outdoor (i.e., warm weather)

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Show the children the areas that are allowed to be painted with water
- Place the bucket of water nearby the children and let them use their imaginations as to how they paint that area
- Use chalk to outline a child’s name, a picture or shape for a child to trace
- To increase movement, place the bucket further away from the painting area to encourage walking/running
- Areas that can be painted include paths, trees, play equipment, fences, etc.
- Paint your partner’s shadow or a body outline on a path
LOOK WHAT I’VE FOUND

No. of children 1 or more
    Skill: Problem solving, teamwork, locomotor movement patterns
Equipment: Plastic bag
    Area: Outdoor/community
    Time: 10 mins+

Let’s play
• Give each child a bag, or 1 between 2 if working in pairs
• Choose an area in the playground/park as a home base
• Name an item in the environment for the children to find (e.g., a big leaf, a piece of bark, a small stone, etc.)
• Children run to find the object, once found they place the object in their plastic bag and then return to home base

Try this way
• Tell a story using the environment, collecting items as the story goes on
• Place a piece of tape around the child’s wrist with the sticky side facing out and stick items to it, creating a nature bracelet
• Make a scavenger hunt booklet (i.e., the children look for the items stuck to each page in the booklet)
• Make a person or funny animal using natural materials items collected by the children, paste, paper and pencils
PARACHUTE GAMES

No. of children: 3 or more

Skill: Cooperation, strength

Equipment: 1 sheet or tablecloth to act as a parachute, light balls or teddy bear (optional)

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 10 mins+

Let's play

- Spread out the parachute
- Space children evenly spaced around the parachute, holding onto parachute with 2 hands at all times
- Start by lifting the parachute up, then down
- Try different movements (e.g., ‘Wishy Washy’: move side to side with the parachute; ‘Popcorn’: place light balls or teddy bear in the middle of the parachute and wave it up and down attempting to get all of the balls or teddy into the air; ‘Big Waves, Little Waves’: vary the hand movements to alter the size of the waves, etc.)
PARACHUTE DANCE

No. of children 3 or more

Skill: Cooperation, rhythm, spatial awareness

Equipment: 1 sheet or tablecloth to act as a parachute, music (optional)

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 10 mins+

Let's play

• Spread out the parachute
• Children hold a side of the parachute each
• Holding the parachute taut, perform the following in sequence:
  Walk clockwise 8 steps
  Walk anti-clockwise 8 steps
  Face the centre of the parachute and walk in 4 small steps
  Walk back out 8 steps
  Shake the parachute twice, then raise it above children’s heads and lower
  Begin again

Try this way

• Children design their own movement sequence
CREATIVE SHADOWS

No. of children: 2 or more

Skill: Balance, flexibility, body manipulation

Equipment: Sunny day or slide projector

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

- Children get into their own space and make shadows (e.g., big/small, wide/narrow, animals, buildings, etc).

Try this way

- In pairs copy your friends shadow
- Use a light when indoors or a slide projector against a wall
- Hang paper on the wall and draw around your shadow, outside paint your shadow with water or chalk on concrete
FOOT BALANCE

No. of children 1 or more  
Skill: Balance, body manipulation  
Equipment: Hoops, bean bags, balls  
Area: Indoor / outdoor  
Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play
• Children lie on their back with their feet in the air  
• Balance a big beach ball, bean bags, teddy on their feet

Try this way
• Pass objects from one child to another without dropping them

Safety tip!
• Make sure the objects are light and soft because they might fall on the child
SECRET HANDSHAKE

No. of children: 1 or more

Skill: Balance, flexibility, body manipulation

Equipment: A variety of small toys or bean bags

Area: Indoor/outdoor

Time: 5 mins+

Let’s play

• Children pass, not throw, toys or bean bags to each other in as many different ways as possible (e.g., from foot to foot, elbow to head, foot to knee; under legs to partner)

Try this way

• With older children, make a plan of how to pass in advance and test to see if it works
• Children stand on marks on the ground so they must stretch, without falling, to pass the object
LET’S MAKE

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Rocket Launcher

You will need

- 1 metre length of wood plank
- Halved section of a round post (or rounded block) the same width as the fence post

Method

- Position the halved post section half way down the plank with the flat side of the post against the plank
- Secure the plank to the halfed post with 1” nails or large screws making sure the nails and screws run from the plank through to the post section — Check for any sharp, protruding ends and round them off or hammer them back
- The rocket launcher is now ready to be used on any firm surface
- Place a bean bag or soft toy at one end. Stomp on the other end and watch the bean bag fly up
- To help keep items on the launch pad attach an icecream container lid or small block to one end
Bubble Recipe

**You will need**

- 1/4 cup dishwashing liquid
- 1 cup water
- 1 teaspoon sugar
- Try a few drops of glycerine to hold the bubbles together and make them shiney and colourful

**Method**

- Mix together carefully making sure not to froth too much or the bubbles won’t hold
Stilts

You will need

- 2 used strong tin cans
- Rope or cord, about 2 metres for each can
- A drill

Method

- Drill 2 holes on opposite sides of the closed end of the can
- Thread the rope through the holes and join the ends together
- Children hold onto the ropes as they walk on the closed end of the cans
- Decorate the cans with scraps of contact or enamel paint
**Bottle Scoop**

**You will need**
- An old plastic bottle, well washed

**Method**
- Using a pair of scissors cut off the bottom of the bottle
- Make an opening slanting back toward the handle or top
- Cover the cut edges with duct tape so the edges are not sharp
Hoops

You will need

• 3/4” plumbing tubing (NB., the lengths depend on the size of hoop you require)
• 3/4” plastic or wooden dowel
• Tape

Method

• Place a 4 cm dowel firmly in one end of the tubing making sure that half of the dowel remains sticking out
• Bend the tubing carefully around, making sure that it doesn’t crimp, and join to dowel
• Tape the outside firmly to keep together with the dowel
• Make it interesting by using clear tubing and filling it with beads and glitter
Litre Bottle Bat

You will need

- 2 litre plastic bottle
- 25 mm wooden dowel rod
- Wood screw
- Drill
- Screw driver
- Strong tape (e.g., duct tape)

Method

- Cut a 45 cm length of dowel rod
- Stick the dowel into the bottle, pushing it all of the way to the bottom
- Center the rod in the bottom of the bottle and drill a hole through the bottle and into the dowel
- Take a wood screw and screw it through the hole in the bottle and into the dowel
- Tape the dowel to the the neck of the bottle
- Children can decorate their own bat
Balloon Paddles

You will need

- Small styrofoam dessert plates
- Paint stirrers (NB., you can obtain these from a paint store free of charge)
- Masking tape

Method

- Wrap masking tape around the handle portion of the paint stirrer (i.e., where the child will hold it)
- Tape the top portion of the paint stirrer to the back of the styrofoam plate (i.e., at least 3 times)
- Children can decorate their own plate with a marker pen
## Hacky Sacks

### You will need

- Birdseed or popcorn
- Funnel
- Balloons

### Method

- Use the funnel to fill the balloon with birdseed (NB., this can be a slow process)
- Cut the neck off the balloon and place a second balloon over the hole, completely covering the ball so that no birdseed can come out (NB., add a second balloon base if you want the hacky sacks to be stronger)
- Cut the neck off another balloon, open it up and place it over the ball; repeat the process adding several layers of balloons (NB., Try to ensure that the original birdseed hole is always covered by several layers of balloon)
- Cut holes in successive layers of balloons to create coloured patterns
Hurdles

You will need

- Water noodle
- Plastic water or pop bottle
- Tape
- Cone

Method

- Cut a water noodle (i.e., 1.5 m long, 50 cm diameter floating foam toy) in half
- Take an empty plastic bottle and cut both ends off with a utility knife, then on one end of the bottle cut a ‘U’ shape in which to place the three foot water noodle (NB., various sizes of plastic bottle can be used to alter the height of the hurdle)
- Tape the bottle to the middle of the noodle making a ‘T’ shape
- To challenge older children, place the ‘hurdle’ on a cone
Nylon Stocking Racquet

You will need

- Nylon stocking
- Tape
- String

Method

- Bend a coat hanger into a diamond shape (NB., circular or rectangular racquets can also be made)
- Straighten the hanger hook
- Insert the hanger into the stocking, pushing the end of the hanger into the toe of stocking
- Pull the stocking tight around the hanger
- Tape or tie the stocking onto the hanger just above the handle
- Wrap tape around the hanger to create a handle
- For greater strength use two hangers
- Tape the stocking to the hanger (i.e., around the edge) for greater strength
Sock Balls

**You will need**
- Tube sock

**Method**
- Lay one tube sock flat, then roll it up toward the open end and tuck it inside itself (NB., like when matching socks after doing the laundry)
- Make additional sock balls (or remake existing balls) as they flatten
Ribbons

**You will need**

- 20-30 cm length of 15 mm wooden dowel rod
- 1-3 metres of ribbon (i.e., depending on the size of the child)
- 1 eye bolt
- Fishing line snap swivel (NB., number 12 size works well)
- Drill

**Method**

- Drill a hole down into the end of the dowel
- Screw the eye bolt into the drilled hole
- Attach the snap swivel to the eye bolt
- Fold the ribbon in half and feed it through the end of the swivel
- Tie a knot in the ribbon to secure it to the swivel

**Teaching Tip**

Ribbons are normally used individually. They can be held in either hand, however, most people find it easiest to use the ribbon in the hand that they write with. There are only a few basic moves that can be done with the streamer:

Circle: The circle is the most basic move. It involves moving the handle of the streamer around in a circle. It can be done overhead, in front of your body, or to the side of the body.

Figure Eight: The figure eight consists of two circles together. As you complete the first circle, you move immediately into the second circle. If, for example, the first circle is clockwise, then the second circle would be counterclockwise. This movement can be done overhead or in front of your body.

Wave: A wave consists of moving the streamer back and forth rapidly overhead, in front of you. This is usually only done overhead, as doing it in front of you will cause the streamer to just drag on the ground, and will not look as good.

Weave: A weave is a continuing ‘S’ motion in front of your body. You would start on one side, usually the side away from the hand holding the streamer, then move the streamer across your body, waving the handle up and down.

Toss: To toss the streamer, make a large circle in front of your body. As your hand comes back up to the vertical, increase the speed, and release the handle of the streamer when it is just above your head. This movement takes a lot of practice to master!

The key to using a ribbon effectively is to make large, smooth movements. With large movements, the streamer will make a smooth, clear loop following the stick. When most people start using ribbons, they tend to make small, jerky movements. This will cause the ribbon to get tangled or wrapped around the dancer’s arm. If you want a greater challenge, try using two streamers at once. Although this is difficult, on a fast song, it can be spectacular.
Musical Instruments

Jiggle Stick

You will need

• A 30cm stick or a wooden spoon or some staws taped together
• Ribbons
• Bells, things that jingle and jangle

Method

• Attach ribbons and bells to the top of stick with string, cotton or tape
• Jingle and jangle

Maracas

You will need

• Plastic containers with a lid (NB., a screw top is best)
• Rice, beans, sand, or lentils
• Strong tape
• Ribbons for decoration

Method

• Fill the plastic container 1/3 full with one of the fillings (NB., use different fillings for different sounds)
• Tape firmly
• Decorate and shake
Tambourine

You will need

- Two paper plates per tambourine
- Rice, beans or lentils
- Stapler and tape
- Decorations

Method

- Staple the paper plates together leaving a small opening, then tape the same area
- Fill paper plate pocket with rice, beans or lentils
- Decorate and shake

Ankle Bells

You will need

- Two sided Velcro tape available from gardening or haberdashery suppliers (NB., if you are unable to find two sided Velcro tape try sewing two 8 cm pieces of Velcro together making sure the hook side and furry side are opposite)
- Small bells available from a haberdashery or reject shop
- Needle and thread

Method

- Cut a length of two sided velcro tape about 15 cm long
- Attach 2 or 3 bells
- Attach around child’s ankle for them to stomp, jump or wiggle
Balloon Drum

**You will need**
- Juice can, oatmeal box, potato chip can or other similar containers
- 2 large balloons
- 2 heavy rubber bands
- 2 pencils with erasers (NB., not sharpened)

**Method**
- Open both ends of the container to make the drum body
- Cut the small end off the balloons, this is the drum skin
- Stretch the closed end of the balloon over the drum body
- Hold the balloon in place with the rubber band and smooth out any wrinkles
- Repeat the previous steps to make the opposite end of the drum
- Use the pencils as drum sticks
- Use the eraser end of the pencil on the drum (NB., Do not sharpen the pencils)

Shakers

**You will need**
- Length of conduit (i.e., rigid plastic pipe)
- Beans, grains or beads
- 2 round chair stoppers (i.e., to fit the ends of conduit)
- Tape

**Method**
- Cut the plastic pipe into 15 cm lengths
- Attach a stopper to one end of the pipe using tape
- Place beans, grains or beads inside the pipe
- Attach the second stopper to the other end of the pipe using tape
- Children can decorate their own shaker