



PLAYWORKS

Early Childhood Play

Game Guide

About this Playbook

At Playworks, we believe every child, no matter the age, should experience safe and healthy play every day. Playworks' evidence-based programs have been proven to get kids moving, while teaching them important skills like cooperation and conflict resolution. This guide was created in partnership with the Indiana State Department of Health to give parents and early childhood educators a resource to get children playing whether at home or in a large group.

Making playtime run smoothly often starts with game rules, while still keeping it fun. In the following pages, you will find the rules of games that can be played almost anywhere with little to no equipment. These games are not just for the early learners in your household or classroom, anyone can get involved!

As you explore this guide you will find that each game has the physical development goals and skills it teaches listed with it. These skills are in accordance with the Indiana Early Learning Foundations Physical Health and Growth Guidance that helps teachers and parents prepare early learners for kindergarten.

For more information visit playworks.org.

Have Fun!

The Playworks Team

Thank you Indiana State Department of Health



Indiana State
Department of Health

Let's Go Fishing

of people to play: 5+

Best for Ages: 3+

Equipment: A small ball or bean bag

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Players line up on a starting line.

An object (such as a bean bag or rubber chicken) is placed a distance in front of the starting line.

Explain that the object is an egg and as the leader (parent fish), you are in charge of protecting that egg.

Explain the object of the game: to get the egg from the leader and back across the starting line as a team.

Tell players that while your back is turned and you are saying "One fish, two fish, red fish, blue fish," they may move, but once you finish and turn around they must stop. Practice this with the players.

Check that everyone understands the rules.

Set Up

A visible starting line marked by cones, paint or surface differences. A rubber chicken, stuffed animal, cone or other small throw-able object.

How to Play

- The leader stands behind the object facing the players.
- The leader turns around with the players behind them and loudly says, "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish"
- The players may only move while the leader is turned the other way and says the phrase.
- When the leader finishes "blue fish", they turn around and all players must freeze.
- If anyone is moving after "blue fish," the whole group goes back to the starting line.
- If no players are caught moving, the leader turns around again and loudly says, "One Fish, Two Fish, Red Fish, Blue Fish" and the players get to move from their current spot.
- Once players get close enough to take the object from behind the leader, the players need to hide it behind their backs so the leader does not know which player has the object.
- Players still may only move during the phrase.

Game Variations

Change movements after each round i.e. penguin walk, tip toe.

4 Corners

of people to play: 6+

Best for Ages: 3+

Equipment: No equipment needed

Physical Developmental Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Have players split equally among the four corners (or as closely as possible).

Do a practice round with the leader in the middle.

Set Up

Use an area with four corners. This can be a classroom or an area on the playground.

How to Play

- The player in the middle will close their eyes and count slowly and loudly from 10 to 0.
- While they are counting, all others may stay where they are or quietly move to a different corner. When the counter gets to 0, everyone must be at a corner (if not, they must sit down).
- After counting, the player in the middle points to the corner of their choice and can only open their eyes after having done so.
- Anyone standing in that corner must sit down.
- If no one is standing at the chosen corner, all players sitting may stand up and get back into the game.
- When only one player is left standing, they become the counter for the next round.

Game Variations

Change the person in the middle when one player has been in the middle for 2 minutes.

The counter can say that they will point to the loudest corner.

Ants on a Log

of people to play: 5+

Best for Ages: 3+

Equipment: A line on the ground (painted, taped, chalked)

Development Goal: Practice teamwork and communication

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Have everyone stand on a line in a specific order.

Setup

Identify a line on the ground to play on.

How to Play

- The object of the game is to get the whole group to switch positions on the line without falling off the line.
- At the end of the game, the order of the players should remain exactly how it was before, only in reverse. That means that the player who started on the left end of the line ended on the right end of the line.

Beans on Toast

of people to play: 6+

Best for Ages: 3+

Equipment needed: None

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before you start

Choose one person to lead the game and remind the group to focus on playing safely.

Set Up

Find somewhere to play that allows everyone to have some space to move.

The leader should stand in front of the group so that they are visible to everyone.

How to Play

- The leader's job is to call out different types of beans. Each bean will have an action associated with it. When the bean is called out, the group does the action for that bean. The goal is to follow the direction as quickly as possible and without making any mistakes. If you are able to go the longest without making a mistake, you get to be the new leader.
- Teach the various beans one at a time. Practice each one and add in new beans until you have a list of 3-4 that the group knows. Here are a few to start with:
 - o String Bean- Stand straight and tall with your hands together over your head
 - o Chilly Bean- Shiver like you're out in the cold
 - o Dancing Bean- Show one of your best dance moves
 - o Green Bean- Run in place as fast as you can
 - o Red Bean- Stop running and freeze
- The leader should call out the beans and mix up the speed and order. Example: "String Bean, Green Bean, Red Bean, Red Bean, Chilly Bean"
- If at any point someone does the wrong action they should step out and sit next to the leader.
- Aside from the various beans, the leader can also call out "Beans on Toast." When you hear "Beans on Toast," fall to the ground as quickly (and safely!) as you can.
- The leader will watch for the last person to fall to the ground. If you're the last one on the ground, step out of the game, sit next to the leader, and help them come up with new bean ideas.
- As you play, add in more beans, create your own beans and actions, and try to trick the group any way you can!

Game Variations

Instead of sitting out when a mistake is made, have players perform an action, such as 5 jumping jacks, to re-enter the game.

The Big Cheese

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 4+

Equipment needed: None

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Practice the call and response of “I am the Big Cheese”, with all the players responding “You are the Big Cheese.”

Introduce the 3 different movements: Cheddar Cheese (hands circled in front), String Cheese (arms stretched overhead), Stinky Cheese (waving hand in front of nose)

How to Play

- The leader begins each round by saying “I am the Big Cheese!” and the other players respond, “You are the Big Cheese!”
- The leader then counts “1...2...3!” On the “Three,” players pick one of the 3 predetermined movements to show (Cheddar, String, or Stinky Cheese). At the same time, the leader shows one of the 3 movements.
- Players who make the same movement as the leader are recycled (or out) and can sit down or move elsewhere.
- The object of the game is for players to stay in the game by doing a different sign than the leader. The last player standing gets to be the next “Big Cheese.”

Challenge ideas

Play the game while standing on one leg!

Challenge the players to come up with more cheeses and associated actions.

Game Variations

Participants can complete an action (ex: 5 jumping jacks) to re-enter the game rather than sitting out.

Connect the game to what kids are learning in class (shapes, colors, letters, numbers, etc.)

Blizzard

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment needed: 1 piece of paper

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence.

Before You Start:

Find an open space large enough for the group to stand in a circle.

Set Up:

Take the piece of paper and create small rectangles (about 2 inches wide by ½ inches tall). You can rip the paper or cut it with scissors. These rectangles will be the “snowflakes.” Stand with the group in a circle in the middle of the designated open space.

How to Play

- For the first round, choose someone to hold one of the “snowflakes”. When everyone is ready, throw the “snowflake” as high as you can into the air.
- As the “snowflake” floats down, work together with your team to catch it before it hits the ground.
- If you are able to catch it before it hits the ground, you move up to the next level! To move to the next round, everyone shouts “Just one More!” Add one more “snowflake” this will be thrown with the first “snowflake.” Take turns throwing the “snowflakes” each round.
- During the second level, you must catch BOTH “snowflakes” to move up, during the third level you must catch ALL three to move up, the fourth you must catch ALL four... and so on.
- If at any time you throw the “snowflakes” into the air and the team is unable to catch ALL the “snowflakes,” that's alright! Try that level again using the same number of “Snowflakes.”
- Keep playing and get creative with how you work together to catch them all!

Game Variations

Try using items of various weights and textures such as scarfs, or fake leaves.

Bob the Bunny

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: A small object like a ball or stuffed animal

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Introduce the participants to “Bob the Bunny,” a small object or ball, preferably a bunny. Gather a group of participants in a circle. Have participants place their hands behind their backs. Choose one student to be in the middle.

How to Play

- The person in the middle is trying to guess who on the outside of the circle is holding the bunny.
- To begin, the person in the middle closes their eyes while the group begins chanting in rhythm, “Bob the Bunny, Bob, Bob, the bunny!”
- As you are chanting, start passing the bunny around the circle, keeping the bunny behind you.
- Once the bunny is in motion, the person in the middle opens their eyes. They get 3 tries to guess who is holding the bunny; the group is still chanting and passing the bunny.
- If the person in the middle guesses correctly they change places with who was caught holding the bunny.
- If the person in the middle does not guess correctly within 3 tries they become part of the circle and a new person is chosen to go in the middle.

Game Variations

Give participants the opportunity to change the name of the character (i.e. incorporate the school/local sports team mascot, birthday participants’ name, etc.)

Play with multiple bunnies.

Bridge Ball

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: A soft ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Have everyone stand in a circle, foot to foot. Their legs should be slightly more than shoulder width apart, forming a “bridge.” Have everyone get into a ready position with their hands on their knees. Make sure all players know not to reach in front of others in order to get the ball.

Set Up

Designate a safe play space in which the group can stand in a large circle.

How to Play

- The object of the game is for players to try to hit the ball between other players’ bridges (formed by their legs) and block balls from coming through their own bridges. Players get a letter in the word “bridge” each time the ball goes through their legs. Once the group has spelled “bridge,” the game restarts.
- Players may only hit the ball with an open palm (low-five hits). No throwing.
- They may catch the ball if it is head height. If the ball is caught, players must place the ball on the ground and hit it back into play.
- If a ball goes outside the circle, the player closest to it, when it went, out may go and get it.
- If the ball goes between a player’s legs, they get a letter toward the word bridge. That player may go get the ball and hit it back in play.

Game Variations

Play sitting on the floor with participants sitting with their legs in a “V” shape. Try to roll the ball over someone’s legs.

Instead of spelling bridge, players can turn around and play backwards once the ball has gone through their legs 1x, 2x, or however many times you decide.

Add a ball or two once players know how to play.

Put a player in the middle of the circle to keep the game moving faster.

Bubbles

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: A lightweight ball or balloon

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Spread out participants in an open playing area sitting on the ground.

Talk about safety and demonstrate how to avoid contact with each other.

How to Play

- The object of the game is to keep the ball up as long as possible by hitting the ball in the air.
- Participants should call the ball by saying "I got it!"
- Participants can only hit the ball one time.
- Participants must remain on the ground.
- They can use any part of their bodies to hit the ball.

Game Variations

Add another beach ball.

For more advanced groups, add on more challenges such as going in sequential order and/or seeing how many hits they can get in one minute without dropping the ball or going out of order.

Once participants understand the concept of positions, being responsible for the area around them and not intruding on the space of other participants, you may allow them to stand up and play. Play outside!

Clap and Move

of people to play: any size

Best for ages: any age

Equipment: no equipment

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Running forward and backward, skipping, hopping, galloping, etc...

participants know what signal indicates they can begin to run

Clap a few times with a different number, i.e. twice or six times, to demonstrate what signal does not sound like. Then clearly clap three times and count out loud to show what the signal sounds like

Set Up

Set up a clearly designated rectangular play area with visible boundaries

How to Play

- Participants are listening for the signal of three claps in a row
- When you clap three times they will run to the other side of the field without touching anyone else
- Once the participants have done this successfully several times, you repeat the game with a different method for them to get across the field, for example skipping, hopping or leaping

Game Variations

Change the number of claps participants are listening for.

Change the rhythm of the claps so it is harder to hear the number of claps

Other visual cues such as body movements for participants who have difficulty hearing

Clean Your Room

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: volleyballs or soft foam balls

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills. Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routine.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before You Start

Distributed balls (balled up socks, small pillows, t shirts, or any other soft object) evenly on either side of the court before the game begins.

Review the concepts of bumping, setting and serving with volunteers. Have every player practice on an imaginary ball.

Teach the rules of the game and ask the players to explain it back to you.

Set Up

Set up a traditional volleyball court, using lines or cones for clear boundaries.

How to Play

- Divide players into two teams.
- Players are not allowed to touch any balls until you give the signal.
- When you give the signal for the game to begin, all players try to get the ball to the other side of the net.
- They can bump, set, serve, throw, etc.
- You can focus on one type of hit, or let the players choose.
- This process continues until you give the stop signal.
- The goal of the game is to have no balls left on your team's side.
- Redistribute balls before you begin the next round.

Game Variations

- Change the start and stop sound for a listening challenge.
- If playing inside, clear a small area and use soft objects.
- Play outside and allow participants to kick, roll, or throw.
- Have teammates cheer for balls returned without them touching the ground
- Have teammates cheer for balls that are returned without touching the ground, and only volleyball techniques were used (bumps or sets, not catches and throws).

Cookie Jar

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Demonstrate safe tagging:

Light touch, like a butterfly, on the back or shoulder.

Unsafe tags: hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall.

Line participants up shoulder to shoulder along one of the boundary lines, making sure there is adequate space for the participants to spread out.

Practice the verbal cues so the whole group asks “Cookie Monster, Cookie Monster are you Hungry?” in unison.

Review boundaries and consequences for going out of bounds.

Set Up

Set up a rectangular play area with enough space in between for the group to run around.

How to Play

- Explain that the participants are cookies and you are the Cookie Monster. It is almost lunchtime for you and you may be hungry.
- The players must ask you, “Cookie Monster, Cookie Monster are you hungry?”
- If you say “yes” they must try to run across the play area without getting tagged by you.
- If you say “no” they must remain where they are and ask again until you say “yes.”
- If someone gets tagged they become one of your helpers.

Game Variations

If you do not have room to play tag, practice asking the questions. When the “Cookie Monster” is ready, do a silly walk across the play area.

Modify for older kids who may not relate to cookie monster, i.e. “Boogie monster”.

Once the game is understood, allow one of the participants to be the Cookie Monster.

Drop and Catch

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 4+

Equipment: Bouncy Ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Explain how to hit the ball and where to place the ball.

Use volunteers to demonstrate.

Point out various rules and directions.

Choose several volunteer groups to demonstrate before having everyone begin.

Ask everyone how many bounces can occur in their square and to name three ways that play can be stopped.

Set Up

Use the four-square courts on the playground and/or draw new courts with chalk if needed.

How to Play

- The game begins when one player serves the ball.
- Players let the ball bounce once and then hit it into a different player's box.
- The receiving player must let the ball bounce once, and then they may catch it before they return the ball in the same manner.
- Play continues until the ball:
 - Is hit outside the square.
 - Bounces twice before it is returned.
 - Is not allowed to bounce.
 - Is hit onto a line
- When a player stops the play, they go to the end of the line and a new player comes in square D. The remaining players close the gaps, moving up as necessary.

Game Variations

- Instead of allowing a catch before the ball is returned, you can allow a variety of different techniques before each player returns the ball.
- Examples are bubbles or spins.
- Play inside and use the lines on a tile or carpet.
- With a small group, see how long you can bounce the ball back and forth without dropping it.

Drop the Cookie

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: Cones or small objects to be “cookies”

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Show players the “cookies” (half-cones) and tell them ‘how delicious they are.’

Remind players what a safe tag looks like (soft like a butterfly on the arms, shoulders and back) and tell them what the boundaries are.

Set Up

Use a large play area with clear boundaries appropriate for the number of players.

How to Play

- Hand out cones to about one-third of the group.
- The players who do not have cones chase those who do. When they tag them, they yell “Drop the cookie!”
- The player who is tagged must drop it and run away (becoming a tagger).
- The tagger picks up the cone and then is chased by the other players.

Game Variations

Exchange the cones for pool noodles. Players then yell “Drop the Linguine!”

Replace the cones with other equipment.

Have the cones represent another object, such as a ball or pizza.

Have players yell other’s names, such as “Hey (name), drop the cookie!”, to reinforce learning names.

If played indoors, emphasize safety and spatial awareness by alternating movement, such as hopping, walking or playing on knees.

Fox and Rabbit

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 4-8

Equipment: Two balls of different size and/or color.

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before You Start

Have the group form a circle.

Hand the balls out to two people on opposite sides of the circle.

Designate which ball is the fox and which one is the rabbit.

Explain that each ball is like a hot potato and should not be held for more than one second.

How to Play

- The object of the game is for the fox to catch the rabbit.
- Both the fox and the rabbit move by being passed (not thrown) around the circle in any direction.
- If a student is holding the fox they should pass the ball to the person next to them, whomever is closer to the rabbit. Those players holding the rabbit should pass to someone farther away from the fox.
- When the fox catches the rabbit, it starts a new round.

Game Variations

For younger groups start, with a Hot Potato warm up, giving them the basic idea of how to receive the ball and get rid of it quickly.

If the group can't catch the rabbit, add an extra fox to the game.

Add multiple balls and see if they can cross over each other.

Giant!

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment needed: None

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions.

Before your Start

Identify the clear boundaries of the game and make sure players know of any off limits spaces (under furniture, leaving the room etc.)

Make sure all participants understand how Villagers get “Caught” and how to get back in.

Set Up

Identify an area where players can safely crawl. Ideally there will be obstacles to crawl around.

Identify where Villagers go when they get caught.

How to Play

- The leader is the Giant, all other players are Villagers.
- The Giant starts on the edge of the space and says “Fee, Fie, Foe, Fum, Freeze!” to start the game. Villagers may crawl around the space until the Giant says “Freeze!”
- While frozen, Villagers must stay totally still and silent!
- After saying “Freeze!”, the Giant can take up to three giant steps to tag as many frozen villagers as possible. Villagers cannot move away from the Giant!
- Villagers must return to their seat (or the designated “Caught” area) when they are:
 - Tagged by the Giant.
 - Caught moving by the Giant OR Any adults in the room.
 - Caught making noise by the Giant OR any adults in the room.
 - Caught moving on their feet (running) instead of crawling by the giant OR any adults in the room.
- After the Giant takes three steps and tags as many Villagers as possible, the next round will start! The Giant will start from the place they ended after their three steps. The Giant will say the phrase , and the Villagers can move until the Giant says “Freeze!”

Repeat until either all Villagers have been tagged OR the Giant was unable to tag a Villager in that round.

Tagged Villagers may return to the game after a round when the Giant is not able to tag anyone (and no one is caught moving or making a noise!)

Game Variations

Engage everyone in the room even if they don’t want to be a villager or giant, they can still try to catch the villagers moving.

Huckle Buckle Beanstalk

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 3+ (with modifications)

Equipment: small object to hide

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Identify an object, such as a bean bag, small ball or cup, to the group.

Share the special words ***huckle buckle beanstalk*** and have everyone repeat it back to you. Until the group can recall and say ***huckle buckle beanstalk***.

Demonstrate how to move around the room observing, but not touching.

Set Up

This game is best played in a classroom.

How to Play

- Have all players sit in their seats with their heads down and eyes covered.
- Hide the object in plain sight.
- When you say so, players may open their eyes and quietly walk around the room looking for the object with their hands behind their back.
- When a player finds the object, they must sit back down and say huckle buckle beanstalk without letting others know where the object is.
- Continue playing until everyone has found the object.

Hint:

You may want to encourage players to continue looking for five to ten more seconds after they've found the object so that it's harder for others to know where the object was found.

Game Variations

If players are having a hard time finding the object, play hot and cold. Say hotter, hot and boiling hot as the player gets closer to the object and colder, cold and ice cold as the player gets further from the object.

Have Multiple people hide an object then race to see who can find someone else's object first.

Allow the object to be hidden out of plain sight – in a box, under a pile of clothes, etc.

Hungry Fox

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 4+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before You Start

Demonstrate safe tagging:

Light touch, like a butterfly wings, on the shoulder

Unsafe tags: hard contact that might cause the person being tagged to fall

Practice with the participants asking Hungry Fox “What time is it Hungry Fox?”

Demonstrate what happens when you get tagged, you freeze and become the Hungry Fox’s helper.

Show the children where the safe line that they need to pass so Hungry Fox cannot tag them.

Review the boundaries, the safe zone and the consequence for going outside them.

Set Up

Designate a large rectangular play area with clear boundaries and enough room for children to run.

On one end of the rectangle have an end zone that will be the designated safe zone.

How to Play

- The object of the game is to avoid being tagged by Hungry Fox
- The children will start at the beginning of their safe zone and ask “What time is it Hungry Fox?”
- Whatever time Hungry Fox says the children will take that number of steps towards Hungry Fox, leaving their safe zone.
- If Hungry Fox says “its lunch time” the children must run back to their safe zone without getting tagged.
- If you get tagged you do 5 Jumping Jacks
- Teacher chooses a new fox after each round.

Game Variations

Modify the movement if you are playing in a small area. (Baby steps, frog hops, crawl, etc...)

I Love My Neighbor

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: all ages

Equipment: no equipment needed.

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Make sure everyone understands the rules.

Cue players to think about what they will say if they get to be in the middle.

Briefly discuss awareness and review how to play Rock-Paper-Scissors in case there is a tie.

Set Up

Position chairs/cones to form a circle. Make sure there is one less cone/chair than the number of players.

How to Play

- The person standing in the center of the circle begins the game by saying “I love my neighbor especially my neighbor who...”
- They complete the sentence with a piece of information that is true for them
- Example: “I love my neighbor, especially my neighbor who was born outside of state, loves to play basketball, has a pet, is an only child, etc.”).
- As soon as they are finished with the statement, everyone (including the person in the center) who this applies to moves from their cone to an empty cone that is not right next to them.
- The person who remains in the middle begins a second round of the game.

Game Variations

This game can also be called Move Your Booty. Players say move your booty if.... Or Move If....

Instead of running, this can be played in stadium seats with an audience as Stand Up. The leader says stand up if....

I See, I See

of people to play: any size

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment needed.

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills. Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routine.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Make sure the participants know to NOT make any body contact with each other (to prevent injury). participants need to also know where they can walk so that none of them are wondering off where they are not supposed to be.

Set Up

Can be played outside, in a gym or in a classroom. Get the participants attention with attention getters. Again, demonstrate the boundaries of the space and their own physical boundaries.

How to Play

- Participants begin walking around in the designated area. (Make the walk fun: have them do a cool walk, slow-mo walk, zombie walk, etc.)
- When Coach says the words "I See, I See," the participants freeze.
- After the participants freeze, they will ask Coach, "What do you see?"
- Coach will then say, "I See ____." The blank can be anything.
- Whatever Coach says, the participants act it out in the designated area.
- An example dialogue for the game:
COACH: "I See, I See!!"
Participants: "What do you see?"
COACH: "I see a superhero flying in the sky!"
[participants then act like superheroes flying in the sky.]
- After the participants have successfully acted, Coach will then repeat the phrase, "I See, I See," and the game will continue in the same type of action/dialogue, but with a new action.

Magic Ball

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: small ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Talk about how to pass a ball, not throw it at the person next to them.

Set Up

Have players sit in a circle.

How to Play

- In the circle, have players think of three magic words.
- Repeat and practice the magic words in a particular order a few times.
- Come up with what the magic ball is going to turn into (ex. A sticky ball), say the magic words and all of a sudden the ordinary recess ball turns into a magic ball. Pick up the ball and pass it in a sticky motion... hands sticking to the sides of the ball.
- Have each player take a turn with the magic ball. Once the ball gets back to you place it back in the center of the circle and come up with a new magic ball (ex. A heavy ball, an apple, a slippery ball, take student ideas).

Mountains and Valleys (Builders and Bulldozers)

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: a large number of cones or any object that has an “up” side and a “down” side

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Listening, coordination and awareness

Make sure participants understand safety precautions such as hands and feet should be kept to themselves and be aware of other participants.

participants understand what to do when you blow the whistle.

participants know what team they are on and what their task is.

Set Up

Place cones randomly inside the boundaries of the game

How to Play

- Divide participants into two teams.
- One team is known as the “Tipper overs/ bulldozers/ valleys”, who must knock the cones over.
- The other team is the “Picker uppers/builders/mountains”, who must stand the cones up.
- The “Tipper overs” must tip over all the cones, the “Picker uppers” need to stand the cones up.
- Cones must be tipped or picked up gently with one hand; their feet should never touch the cones.
- On your whistle all participants must freeze and put their hands in the air.
- Count how many cones are tipped and how many are standing.
- After the first round, switch the teams roles so each team gets a chance to do the other job.
- Each round is one minute in length.

Game Variations

Use pieces of papers that have a color on each side for each team.

Movement Name Game

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Have the whole group stand in a circle.

Demonstrate how to speak loudly while doing a large movement.

Have everyone repeat your name and movement.

How to Play

- The first person begins the circle rotation by loudly saying their name while at the same time doing a movement.
- The whole group repeats back the name and movement.
- The next student says their name and does a movement of their own.
- Again the whole group repeats back their name and movement.
- This call and response continues around the circle until everyone has gotten a turn.

Game Variations

For a second rotation specify the kind of movement the participants are to make- must leave the ground, must land on one foot, must spin around, etc.

Pre-K: Send participants into the middle of the circle to do their movement so everyone can see.

Night at the Museum

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Talk to participants about what statues do: Do they move? Do they touch each other? Do they make a lot of noise? But we all know they come alive and move around the museum at night, right?

Remind participants to be safe and be aware of where their friends are around them. We want to ensure participants do not run into each other.

Have participants practice appropriate statue poses.

Set Up

Make sure the space is clear of obstacles and there are boundaries for where you will be playing. Designate an area where participants will go to do jumping jacks when they get caught moving.

Equipment needed to play the game:

“Flashlight” for the janitor to hold (cone, marker, anything they can pretend is a flashlight)

How to Play

- Everyone is going to be a statue, and they can't let the janitor catch them moving.
- The janitor will move slowly around the room, pointing their flashlight at the statues. If they shine the flashlight on a student and that student moves/laughs/etc., they will have to go to the designated area and do 5 jumping jacks (or consequence of your choice) to get back into the game.
- If playing this indoors/in a classroom, encourage participants to be sneaky when they're moving around. You do not want the janitor to hear you moving!

Game Variations

Turn off the lights and use an actual flashlight.

One Step Back

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment needed: A tossable object like a ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start:

Have all players stand in a circle, or an equal distance apart.

Set Up

You'll need a ball or tossable object, and some space for everyone to spread out.

How to Play

- Start with a small circle- each person standing an arm's length apart. The leader starts the game by passing the ball to the person next to the, When each person gets the ball, their job is to pass it on to their neighbor.
- Once the ball makes it around the circle without anyone dropping it, the leader says "one step back!" and all players take one step back.
- Then, everyone passes the ball around the circle again. If the group successfully passes it all the way around without dropping it. The leader says "one step back" and everyone takes one step back – making the circle even larger.
- This continues until the ball is dropped, at which point we say "Good job, nice try!" and the group returns to the center to try again.

Game Variations

You can use any tossable object to play this game. Balls work well outdoors, but if you're playing indoors, try using a soft object such as a bean bag!

Challenge ideas

Try playing this game while standing on one foot.

Add throwing challenges to the game. For example, only throw with your non-dominant hand, or throw under your legs.

Over Under

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: a small ball to pass

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Have everyone line up behind each other in groups of six to ten, spreading out one arm's length apart.

Demonstrate how to pass the ball over someone's head then under someone's legs.

Give the person in front of the line a ball.

Set Up

Designate a start and finish line. You will need one medium size ball (of any variety) per group of six to ten.

How to Play

- Each line passes the ball back either over their head or under their legs, alternating methods with each person (first person passes over their head, second person passes under their legs, third person over their head and so on) as quickly as possible.

Game Variations

Have participants shut their eyes while they are passing and receiving the ball.

Use the game as a fun way to clean up an area. Pass each object over and under until it is back in its place.

Popcorn

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment needed: 1 ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence.

Before You Start

Get a ball or soft throwable object and a few people to play with.

Set Up

Find an area with space for your group to make a circle- preferably with a high ceiling. Playing outside works great too!

How to Play

- One person starts the game by throwing the ball in the air, clapping one time, and then catching the ball.
- Once you've tried it one time, pass the ball to the person next to you in the circle so they can try. Continue this all the way around the circle, giving everyone a turn.
- If you drop the ball or don't clap the correct number of times, you were unsuccessful and that's okay.
- When it gets back to the first person, check in with everyone. If you successfully clapped and caught the ball, move up to level Two. If you were unsuccessful, stay on Level one.
- Level Two means that you'll try to clap two times before catching the ball. Level Three means three claps, Level 4 means four clasp, and so on.
- Each time the ball comes to you, try the level you are on. If you're unsuccessful, stay on the same level and try again when the ball makes it back to you.
- The goal of the game is to see how many claps you can work up to and still catch the ball each time.
- If you're playing on your own, just work your way up and see how many claps you can get!

Game Variations

Crumple up a piece of paper to use as a ball.

Play outside for more space.

Pumpkin Face Raisin Face

of people to play: any size

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

A magic word can be used to get the participants to stand up and move to the starting area after you explain the game to them.

How to Play

- Children and adults stand in a circle.
- Adult models what a 'Pumpkin Face' and a 'Raisin Face' look like.
- "Pumpkin Face" = open your body up. Stand on your tip-toes. Put your arms up and stretch. Stretch out your face by opening your mouth big, your eyes wide, and look like a scary Pumpkin Face.
- "Raisin Face"= Getting very low and stretching out your legs until you are sitting on the back of your legs (get very small). Close your face in by squinting your eyes, sucking in your lips, and tightening your cheeks.
- Have the children practice while also saying 'Pumpkin Face' or 'Raisin Face.'
- The adult leads the activity by going back and forth between calling out Pumpkin Face and Raisin Face. Children will then act out and stretch in character.

Game Variations

Try playing lying on the ground and stretching as big as one can like a star.

Recycle Ball

of People to Play: 5+

Best for Ages: 2+

Equipment needed: Playground ball/ soft throwable object and recycling bin or box.

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routine.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence.

Before You Start

Everyone should sit in a big circle. Emphasize the importance of cheering others on and using positive language!

Set Up

Place a recycling bin/bucket/basket in the middle of the circle.

How to Play

- The ball passes around the circle while the group sings a song. When the song ends, whoever is holding the ball gets to stand up and try to throw the ball into the recycling bin!
- Practice passing the ball hand to hand while singing a song. Song examples: “happy Birthday,” “Alphabet Song,” “Row your boat”
- Emphasize that the only time someone should stand is if they are holding the ball at the end of the song.
- The player holding the ball at the end of the song gets to stand up to toss the ball/object into the bin.
- Only the leader can get up to retrieve the ball from the recycling bin.

Game Variations

Clean up fun! – Use this game to return toys into a toy box/basket, clean up after a meal, etc.

Red Light, Green Light

of people to play: Any size

Best for ages: Good for all ages

Equipment: None

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start:

Make sure everyone knows the rules and what happens if they move on a 'Red Light'.

How to move quickly and safely

Set Up:

Clearly define the playing area with a designated starting line and finish line.

How to Play:

- Start with everyone along the starting line,
- When you say 'Green Light' everyone will move towards the finish line,
- When you say 'Red Light' everyone must immediately stop.
- If players are still moving when you call 'Red Light', they must go back to the starting line.
- Start a new round when everyone gets across the finish line or when most players make it across the finish line.

Game Variations

Introduce new colored lights, giving variations on how to move towards the finish line, such as run on green, walk heel to toe for yellow light, hopping for purple light, skipping, galloping, tip toeing, etc.

The leader can designate itself as the finish line. This enables the game to move around so that when players get close to the finish line (the leader), the finish line moves farther away.

For the hearing impaired, you can turn your back towards the group for red light and turn around (face your group) for green light.

The first person to finish round one can be the leader for round two.

Rhythm Detective

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 4+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

Players begin in a circle

Explain and give a few examples of how to create a rhythm with hands and feet, such as using clapping, snapping and stomping.

How to Play

- A person is chosen to leave the room.
- A player in the circle is chosen to start a rhythm. Using their hands or feet, players clap, snap, stomp or otherwise develop a rhythm.
- Everyone in the circle copies the rhythm.
- The leader of the rhythm changes it every few seconds and the rest of the group must follow suit, also changing the rhythm.
- The person who has been out of the room returns and tries to notice who is leading the rhythm.
- They have three guesses.
- If they guess correctly, the leader of the rhythm becomes the detective and the previous detective chooses the next rhythm leader.
- If they can't guess in three guesses, they choose the next detective and someone else becomes the rhythm leader.

Game Variations

Try sitting in multiple chairs scattered around the room instead of a traditional circle.

Play it before or after a meal while sitting at a table.

Run If...

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before You Start

Identify the boundaries.

Line up participants on one line and have them point/go to the other line

Set Up

Cone and/or chalk out a space to play

How to Play

- Call out “Walk if...”, “Run if...” or “Hop if...” and an identifier “you have shoe laces”. All participants who have shoe laces will walk/run/hop (or another movement) to the other line and wait on it.
- Continue to call our identifiers. “Run if you have Velcro shoes!” “Run if you have on sandals!” until all participants are on the other line. This is a great time to practice identifying emotions!
- Turn-around and continue the game with new identifiers back to the first line.

Game Variations

Instead of having participants move from one line to another, have them “Run”, “Walk”, “Hop”, etc. in place.

Running Through the Forest

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Jogging, jumping, running, ducking and following instructions

Have participants stand on their home bases

How to Play

- Tell all of the participants to imagine that they are not in the yard, but that they are in a forest.
- Explain that the class is going to be explorers going on a walk through the forest using their imaginations.
- Have all the participants walk in place while you describe the trip the class is taking through the woods. Occasionally have the participants duck under “branches” and jump over fallen “trees.”
- Slowly begin to speed up the pace the children are walking. Maybe you hear something coming and you speed up so it doesn’t catch the class. Soon the class is jogging in place instead of walking.
- Suddenly yell that there is a bear or some kind of predator chasing them and speed the jog to a run.
- Add in the “branches” and the “fallen trees” so that the participants are warming up their other muscles as well by jumping and ducking.
- After the participants are winded, slow them down again.
- Next you can pretend to “swim” across a river or “climb” tree or cliff.
- Any other variation that requires movement at different speeds and loosens the body is great.
- The activity can carry on for however long and however silly as necessary.

Game Variations

After participants are familiar with this warm-up, it’s fun to have their input on the type of story to tell or journey to take—the beach, a hike through the mountains, etc.

Secret Agent

of people to play: any size

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Make sure all participants know the rules and what happens if they are caught moving on “Abort!” Demonstrate how to move quickly and safely

Set Up

Clearly define the playing area with a designated starting line.

How to Play

- Have one player, the secret agent, stand 50 ft or more away from the other players, the spies.
- The secret agent has his or her back towards the spies, and to start each round the secret agent yells “Access Agent” and the spies advance toward the secret agent’s cone to try and capture it.
- At any moment the secret agent can turn around and shout “Abort!” Then the spies must stop immediately, and any spy caught moving must sit down where he or she is and wait till the next game.
- The first spy to reach the secret agent’s cone becomes the new secret agent for the next game.

Game Variations

Instead of sitting down when caught moving, the spies have to go back to the starting line and can continue playing.

Indoor Modifications:

Sneak through a hallway.

Use the lights in a room as a signal.

Adjust how the participants move; skipping, hopping, backwards, heel-to-toe.

Use hand signals instead of words, to keep the noise down.

If there are too many participants for the room, divide into groups and use multiple rounds

Simon Says

of people to play: any size

Best for ages: any age

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Running, skipping, hopping and balancing

Play a practice round to make sure everyone understands.

Be sure players are clear on the consequences when they do not follow directions.

Check that everyone knows how to maintain safe distances between themselves.

How to Play

- Explain that you are going to give directions to perform a specific movement or sound
- Everyone should only follow your direction if you first say “Simon Says”
- If someone follows your direction when you don’t say “Simon Says” they receive a consequence, such as:
 - 10 jumping jacks
 - Touching the ground for a round
 - Getting a high five from a leader
- The leader can call all types of directions, i.e. touch your nose, toes, etc., stretch to the sky, run in place, jump 5 times, skip high, make silly animal noises, etc.

Game Variations

Allow others to take on the leader role and be “Simon”.

Pre-K: Instead of saying “Simon says”, say “touch your nose” while touching your nose at the same time. participants should mirror the action and touch their nose. Continue the game, saying touch your ears, touch your knees, etc. When participants get the hang of that, say touch your _____, but touch a different body part. Most of the participants will copy the movement and laugh when they realize the mistake.

Snowball Alley

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: small dodgeball, balled up socks

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate conflict resolution. Demonstrate relationship skills.

Before You Start

- Clearly define the safety rules:
- Rolling the ball underhand only. Demonstrate this and have all players practice with an imaginary ball.
- All balls should be low to the ground, below players' knees.
- Teach and give a fair consequence for throwing balls above the knees, such as telling the leader why it is safest to roll the ball below the knees or running to a designated spot on the playground before returning.
- Divide the players into two teams. Or decide who will run and who will roll first.
- One team will line up shoulder to shoulder at one end of the alley.
- Divide the second team in half. Each half stands outside either set of cones, with the alley in the middle.

Explain the rules and ask the players to explain them back to you.

Set Up

Find a rectangle area and create an “alleyway” with the cones. Spread out the balls outside the alley.

How to Play

When the teams are in their positions and ready, give a signal to start the game.

The running team now has ten seconds to run from one end of the alley to the other.

As they are running, the other team attempts to roll the “snowballs” underhand and hit the runners below the knees.

Throwers must stay behind the cones when they roll, or it doesn't count if they hit someone.

If a runner gets hit or does not make it to the other end of the alley in ten seconds they cheer in a designated area.

When all of the runners are eliminated the teams switch roles.

Game Variations

Take turns running and rolling.

Play in a hallway or outside.

For more advanced players, allow players to throw the balls underhand below the waist or knees.

Tornado

of people to play: 6+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: small ball

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills. Demonstrate increased independence in personal care routine.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence. Demonstrate self-control. Demonstrate conflict resolution.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Throwing and following directions

Make sure the participants understand the object of the game is to not have the ball participants understand that only the Tornado spins, and that they must pass the ball to the student next to them.

How to Play

- Have participants make one big circle.
- A single student begins in the middle as the Tornado.
- The other players pass the ball around the circle while the Tornado in the middle spins around 10 times.
- When the Tornado stops, whoever has the ball becomes the next Tornado.

Game Variations

Allow participants to alter the direction of the ball, have more than one ball going at the same time, or alter the number of spins.

Under the Sea

of people to play: 5+

Best for ages: 2+

Equipment: No equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-awareness and confidence, Demonstrate identification and expression of emotions. Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

Skills Practiced: Balancing, physical awareness, memory, verbal and nonverbal communication

How to Play

- The leader explains that they are in a submarine under the sea and are looking out the window at ocean creatures. The leader will be giving commands of the different things they want to see on their adventure.
- Commands
- Fishies: the participants put their hands together and wiggle them like a fish, swimming (walking) around saying "Blub, blub, blub, blub!"
- Seaweed: participants stand with their legs shoulder width apart, arms above their head, swaying silently. Silent seaweed can be used throughout the game, and is also a great command to use as a cool down
- Rock: participants crouch on the floor with their knees pulled to their chest.
- Sea Horse: participants gallop, swinging an imaginary lasso saying "Yee-haw!"
- Pirate: participants stop in one spot, make a hook with their hand and say "Arrr!"
- Treasure Chest: participants stop in one spot, pointing to their heart and sing "Ahhhhhhhh!" in a high-pitched voice.
- Starfish: participants stop and stand with arms stretched like a starfish
- Shark: participants make a shark fin on their head with their hands and stop around the room saying "BA DUM BA DUM!"

Game Variations

Make up commands with things that you have learned recently.

Have participants practice staying in a small area or bubble.

Up, Down, Stop, Go

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 1+

Equipment: no equipment needed

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of healthy practices. Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination. Demonstrate development of oral motor skills.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

- Have players stand up either by their seats or spread around the room/play area.
- Demonstrate the appropriate actions for “up”, “down”, “stop”, or “go”.
- On “Up”, players should squat down.
- On “Down”, players should jump, or stretch up as high as they can.
- On “Stop”, players should move around the play area in a specific movement (such as walking, jogging, running, skipping, hopping, etc.) or, if players cannot move around the play area, they should run in place.
- On “Go”, players should freeze.
- Players not doing the correct movement can complete a task (such as jumping jacks, give the leader a high five, etc.) before returning to the game.
- Do a practice round first so that all players understand the commands and movements that go with them, and understand what to do if they get the movements mixed up.

How to Play

Call out the commands “up”, “down”, “stop”, or “go” one at a time.

For the first few minutes, watch the group and stop when players do the wrong movement and prompt them to complete the designated task (jumping jacks, etc.)

After the first few minutes, call out the commands without stopping for those who make a mistake. They can just quickly do the task and get back in the game.

Game Variations

Run in place rather than freely moving through the home.

Pre-K Variation: Use literal commands (up means up, down means down, etc). Start out just doing up and down. Then do, stop and go. Then mix up all four commands.

Whistle Mixer

of people to play: 7+

Best for ages: 3+

Equipment: whistle

Physical Developmental Goal: Demonstrate development of safety practices. Demonstrate how the five senses support processing information. Demonstrate development of body awareness. Demonstrate development of fine and gross motor coordination.

Skills Practiced: Demonstrate self-control.

Before You Start

participants need to be scattered within a playing area. Have them walk around without touching each other. Feel free to have them skip, hop, jump, etc.

Have a practice round so participants can get the idea before they are put under the pressure of sitting out a game.

Set Up

Set up a clearly designated play area with visible boundaries.

How to Play

- When the leader blows the whistle a specific number of times the participants must form groups with the same number of people as whistle blows.
- If they blow the whistle four times the participants must group themselves in groups of four (five whistles=groups of five, etc.).
- participants can be directed to hold hands or perform a number of physical movements once they form their group.
- Those participants who were not able to form a group will go to the “waiting area” and be out for just one turn, and rejoin the game the following round.

Variations

Have the participants hold up the number of whistles on their fingers or count the whistles out loud. You can challenge the more advanced participants by requiring them to perform a specific task when the whistle is blown before they can form groups.

Pre-K Variation

When the adult blows the whistle, kids must find a partner as quickly as possible. Remind participants to let go of their partner’s hand before telling them to go again. Repeat, asking them to find a new partner each time.

Indoor Modifications:

Instead of using a whistle, clap or snap to reduce the noise indoors.

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