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| Skills | |
| Aiming | Children need to be able to aim when playing throwing and kicking games. This skill develops gradually and children need good spatial awareness, balance and hand-eye coordination in order to successfully aim objects.  Aims:   * Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object through a space * Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object towards a space * Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object towards an object * Can roll, throw, kick or strike a ball/object to another person |
| Avoiding | In many games children need to learn to avoid others and objects. They need, balance, coordination, spatial awareness and muscle strength to be able to avoid with required speed.  The ability to avoid is important for more complex games and sport when children grow older. |
| Bouncing | Body - Up and down movement of the body (bending knees) without jumping off the ground.  Object - A young child need to learn how to drop a ball and catch it once it bounces. Learning to bounce a ball on the ground in a controlled manner in order for them to be able to catch it can take a fair bit of practice.  Once a child can drop and catch a ball by themselves, pair up with them, stand a few feet away from them and throw and catch by bouncing. Aim for the mid-line of their body and once they are competent at this start bouncing the ball towards their sides.  Next pair children to bounce towards each other.  Bouncing and catching a bouncing ball is part of the development of throwing and catching. |
| Catching  Fundamental Skill | Catching a rolling ball, a ball or object thrown or a bouncing ball.  Children progress from immature to mature abilities. Progress from two handed catch, which includes the arms, of a large ball to eventually being able to catch a small ball with just the hands.  Aims:   * Can focus on and track a ball/object in order to catch it * Can scoop and catch a ball with their arms and hands (younger children) * Can catch a ball/object with their hands (older children) * Can line themselves up to be in a correct position to catch a ball/object * Can use different parts of their bodies to stop a ball being thrown/rolled toward them   Progression:   1. Children might initially turn their head away when they are first learning to catch. Children will not make use of their hands to catch the ball. They will keep their arms straight until the ball makes contact and try to scoop it towards their chest. 2. Children will be less inclined to avoid the ball/object but might close their eyes. Children will try to make use of their hands to catch the ball/object. Their arms will be slightly bent at the elbows, however will still try to scoop it towards their chest. They will not necessarily grasp the ball with their hands well. 3. Children will not try to avoid the ball/object and their eyes will track it. Their arms will bend as far as they need in order to catch the ball. They will grasp the ball with their hands with control.  * Collect a stationary object/ball * Retrieve a rolling object/ball * Take a given object/ball * Receive a rolling ball * Receive a bouncing object * Catch a ball thrown a short distance * Retrieve a bouncing ball and then sending it on, e.g. rolling, giving, bouncing, throwing, etc. * Receiving a given object/ball whilst walking and then twisting to a new position and sending on (rolling, bouncing, etc.) * Catching an object/ball thrown whilst travelling and then passing it on. * When children first learn how to catch start with bubbles and balloons as they move slowly |
| Chasing | Children need to learn how to chase others and objects to develop their abilities for when they start to play more complex games and sport.  Children need good spatial awareness and body management skills to stop them from bumping into the other person, object or others when concentrating on what they are chasing. |
| Climbing | Even before babies can walk they like to climb and explore. Climbing supports the natural development of babies and young children and they should be allowed to do so in a safe environment. Ensure children have many opportunities to climb horizontal tree trunks, ladders and climbing frames/equipment, etc.  Climbing supports the develop in many areas, such as:   * reaching for rungs above the shoulder raises the arms which increases the cardiovascular flow * stretching out develops flexibility * upper body strength, arm strength and better grip is developed through pulling themselves up and hanging from various rungs * leg strength and coordination is developed through climbing latters * concentration and focus is needed to get where they want to go * hand-eye coordination * positive self esteem and confidence when children have worked their way to the desired place * risk taking in a safe environment will help children to understand their own abilities and push themselves to develop physically * through allowing children to climb to heights and in ways that they feel comfortable and confident underpins self regulation and self esteem |
| Combining Movements | Babies and children initially need to develop individual skills and will then progress to using a combination of movements, e.g. twisting while walking. Many movements are naturally combined and in support of body awareness it is helpful to support children to identify what they are doing and what parts of their bodies they are using to do so.  Many combined movements will require a level of coordination, balance and body/spatial awareness. |
| Creeping | Creeping can be interpreted in two ways:   * A precursor to crawling – pulling yourself along on your belly * Walking very quietly along in a crouched position   Creeping in a crouched manner helps children develop control of themselves and their bodies and supports development of balance and muscle strength.  When babies creep on their stomachs they are developing bilateral coordination and brain function. It can also help prepare them for the important developmental milestone of crawling. |
| Cutting | Cutting is an important fine motor skill. Ensure children have access to a range of scissors such as left and right scissors, pinking shears, wavy scissors, etc.  Children will need to develop good bilateral coordination and fine motor control in order to successfully cut with scissors.  Foundation skills to prepare children for cutting with scissors:   * Postural control * The ability to open and close the hand * Bilateral co-ordination where the one hand is the ‘doing’ hand and the other is the ‘helping’ hand * Being able to isolate fingers to move independently from each other * Hand-eye co-ordination * Stability |
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| Dancing  Movement to Music | All children, including pre-walkers, love to dance to music. Many dance moves can be done across the midline, which benefits brain development. Dance and movement to music can support all skills, balance and brain development and is a great high impact physical activity that can be done in small spaces, large spaces, inside and outside.  Us a variety of music, such as recent pop songs, child specific songs and classical music.  Aims:   * Understands different tempos * Can change between different tempos * Can move in different ways to music, i.e. High/Low – Loud/Soft and Faster/Slower |
| Digging | Digging with hands and spades support development of upper body muscles while having fun outside. It also helps fine motor development.  Digging can be done with both an implement or hands, is great for physical activity, exploring the world around them and mathematical concepts. |
| Direction | Changing direction, initially slowly and gradually going faster. Forward, backward, zigzag, straight, twisting, following others.  Children need to learn positional language and directions for later more complex games and sports. |
| Distance | Spatial awareness will help children to identify how close other objects and people are to them, allowing them to avoid bumping. Progression of throwing, catching, etc. includes extending the distance between the two children and the child and target. |
| Dodging | Dodging is a quick movement of the body in a different direction of the original line of movement.  Children need coordination, balance, body management and muscle strength to dodging objects and others.  Initially babies and toddlers will not have the skills to be able to dodge, however through opportunities where they learn to dodge, children should gradually get better at this skill. |
| Drawing | Drawing progresses from babies and toddlers holding a large crayon with a pincer grip in both hands to using the mature 3-finger pencil grip.  Development of good spatial awareness will help children to fit their drawings on a page, stay inside lines, etc.  By the age of 6 most children should have identified a dominant hand (either left or right handed). |
| Dribbling | Dribbling a ball on the floor using an object, hand or foot to keep it propelling forward.  Dribbling is a series of small touches whilst chasing the ball, this is rather than kicks/hits in order to allow the ball to stay close and in control. Teach children to keep their heads up in order to avoid bumping into anything/anyone.  Use imagery to help children to understand the concept of keeping the ball close. Tell them to pretend the ball is their pet (ask them what their pet is, i.e. dog, etc.) and if it gets too far away from them it will run away.  Hand Dribble is bouncing a ball while moving, requiring strong hand-eye coordination. Children learn to bounce a ball while standing still in the early years, however bouncing a ball while moving is much harder and will take much more practice. |
| Evading | Similar to dodging, however this will be planned ahead of time. Dodge a ball but evade another child playing the game. |
| Flow | The more opportunity children get to be active the easier they will find it to flow from one movement to another.  Movement to music can be particularly good to develop flowing movement. |
| Galloping  Fundamental Skill | Steps off with right foot and the left foot follows in a forward motion.  Place the left foot down next to the right foot, weight is transferred from the front (right) foot to the back (left0 foot with a small leap.  At the same time as the left foot is placed down, lift the right foot off and step forward again.  Be sure to practice on both sides.  Side gallop is the same but moving in a sideways motion. |
| Gesturing | Gestures can benefit fine motor development and encourage children to move more through imagination.  Children making gestures such an elephant trunk when pretending to be an elephant or arm movements when dancing. Active stories, games based on animals or characters such as heroes, and movement to music encourages use of gestures.  Gesture is one of the 5 dance basics (alongside travel, turn, jump and stillness)  Examples of gestures:   * Raindrops, wiggle fingers and move arms up and down * Waves, move fingers up and down while moving hand and arm across the front of the body. Alternate arms * Night Fever, point finger up and out to the side and then cross the body and point down and out to the other side. Alternate arms * Hitch Hike, make fists with both hands and point palm of hands towards your body. Point thumbs to the sky. Then point one thumb out towards the side of the body twice, alternate with other thumb. |
| Grasping | Take hold of something, more active version of Gripping.  Newborn babies have an innate ability to grasp objects, however it will take them at least a year to develop the coordination to pick up and hold objects securely in their hands. |
| Handling | Handling can include building blocks, balls, small and large toys, etc. I  With a lot of opportunity to play with equipment children should progress in the control of how they handle objects, the size of objects they handle and the movements they use when handling the objects (i.e. with more control). |
| Hanging | Hanging from large equipment, trees, etc. helps develop upper body strength. It is therefore important to allow and encourage children to hang from climbing equipment, trees and large indoor equipment.  Hanging upside down develops the vestibular system, which is a component of good balance. |
| Height | Allow children to experience different heights such as:   * walk on tippy toes so we feel high up in the sky * walk with our knees bent so we are deep down in the sea * walk normally on land   Climbing on equipment at different heights and jumping from different heights are important for children’s physical development. |
| Hitting | Similar to striking, however hitting can be seen to be more energetic than striking.  Hit objects with other objects, such as rackets.  Hitting things with hands, etc.  Holding two objects in each hand and hitting them together helps to develop hand-eye co-ordination and bilateral coordination. |
| Hopping  Fundamental Skill | Hop on one leg, push with toes, taking off and landing on the same foot.  Supporting leg should bend on landing and straighten to push off.  Start by holding child’s hand to support them and encourage small hops on the spot.  Eventually, they should be able to hop in different directions.  Hopping is harder than jumping as they will require greater leg muscle strength and balance.  Games suggestions:   * hopping from lily pad to lily pad to avoid the crocodile * try to hop fast, slow and in different directions, etc. |
| Jumping  Fundamental Skill | Babies and toddlers love to jump with the support of adults or objects such as tables, bars attached to walls, etc.  When children are ready to jump by themselves they will prepare for jumping by slightly bending knees and swinging arms backwards. With feet close together, push off with both feet and land on both feet. Children will eventually propel their arms forwards and upwards whilst they are in the air. Children will require muscle strength and balance in order to jump effectively.   * Jumping upward for height * Jumping for distance * Jump with two feet and landing in the same place * Jumping from two feet and landing on two feet * Jumping from two feet to one foot * Jumping from one foot to two feet * Jumping onto something * Jumping off something * Jumping in and out of something (such as a hula hoop) * Jumping in different directions |
| Kicking  Fundamental Skill | Demonstrate how to kick and allow children ample opportunities to practice. Positioning the child will also help.  Children will find it easier to learn how to kick when they are barefoot as they will be able to feel the ball.  First children should kick from a stationery position.  When they show they are capable of this they can then progress to kicking from a walk then a run in.  Helping children to understand where to place their feet when kicking:  Placing a yellow spot or picture of a banana next to a ball.  Children need to squish the banana with their non-kicking foot while they kick the ball (make sure they will not slip on the picture/spot). |
| Landing | Teach children to land on both feet at the same time with knees bent when they jump.  They should also keep their knees slightly bent when they hop.  This will prevent them from putting too much pressure on their joints.  Children will need to develop good spatial awareness and body control to allow them to land in an identified area. |
| Leaping | When children leap they will lead with one foot, propelling it forward and placing their weight on it.  The other foot will follow but not placed down next to the front foot. This foot will be propelled forward and land, bringing the other foot forward.  Repeat.  Start with children leaping on a flat surface, then over lines, then low objects and progress with the height as and when they are ready.  A continuous leap is a series of leaps (otherwise known as an exaggerated run). |
| Lifting | Naturally children lift various types of objects and other children/people. This will help develop muscle strength and encourage independence.  Challenge them to try lifting different shapes, sizes and weight. |
| Marching | This is a great cross-body / bilateral action but might take some time for young children to figure out as they will need to coordinate their arms and legs.  Children should raise one knee (e.g. right knee) and the opposite straight arm (e.g. left arm) and alternate with opposite side.  If children have not developed good coordination they might find it hard to raise opposite arms and knees.  Practices marching with legs only, then try arms only and eventually they will be able to put both arms and legs together. |
| Matching | Activities where children can match one thing to another.  Great for problem-solving and fine motor development.  Matching shaped blocks with shaped holes, puzzles, etc. |
| Painting | Give children and babies opportunities to use body parts to paint as well as paintbrushes, sponges, etc. See grasping for the progression of holding a paintbrush.  Play music for children to paint to.  Use water and painting equipment, spray bottles for children to paint the outside are (best to do when warm as many might find themselves water painted!) |
| Pathway | Turning the shoulders is changing pathways  Turning corners  Walking in circles  Figure or eight  Straight  Zigzag  Curving  Twisting  Forward  Backward  Sideward  Can move through set paths, obstacle courses  Can follow others who are moving in different ways  Create pathways that children should attempt to walk in/on to support balance.  Create pathways with rope, etc. that children can move in and out of, move an object/ball in, etc.  Create a pathway of ‘treasures’ for children to follow. Place up high, down low, under other objects, etc.  Use rope to create a curving pathway. Give children a straw and light ball such as a ball pool ball. Children should attempt to blow the ball through the pathway to the end. |
| Pivoting | Turning on the spot.  This can support development of balance and spatial awareness. |
| Pointing | Pointing finder and object in the correct direction.  Pointing objects correctly so that they fit into other objects.  Pointing mark making objects in order to make desired marks. |
| Predicting | Being aware of what should happen next when taking part in activities. Doing the same activity on a regular basis helps children to learn to predict.  Give children the opportunity to lead activities.  Children will need to develop this skill in order to take part in more complex games and sports.  Predicting situations is also an important life skill. |
| Pressing | Pressing with fingers on small surfaces, pressing with full hands using arm strength or body strength on larger surfaces. Pressing on play dough, sand, etc. helps develop fine motor skills.  Children will lean the impact of pressing with varying pressure. |
| Prodding | To jab or poke, as with a pointed object.  To push something with your finger or a pointed object  Manipulating objects (not people) |
| Reaching | Put articles just within reach or slightly out of reach of babies, toddlers and pre-schoolers to encourage reaching and movement. This will also encourage stretching.  Reaching for objects that are slightly out of reach of children will help develop balance.  Encourage children to reach for objects on the left of their bodies with the right hand and vice versa to encourage crossing the body. |
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| Rolling  Fundamental Skill | Physical Rolling:  The transference of weight to different body parts around a central axis.  Children should learn to roll forward, backward and sideways (pencil roll).  Learning to roll helps to prevent injury when falling or overbalancing.  Rolling is one of baby’s first important motor milestones, supporting the development of postural control and a good cross-body movement. Babies learn to roll from birth, however some might take some time before they can do so.  If children have physical disabilities that prevent them from moving their whole bodies they can roll one arm over the other, etc. |
| Rotating | Rotating is when we move in a circular manner around a center point or move a body part around a center point such as moving arms in a rotation, etc. |
| Running  Fundamental Skill | Running is an extension of walking, except there is a flight phase when both feet are momentarily off the ground. |
| Scoring | Use of counting skills and understanding the rules.  This will help develop mathematics while having fun. |
| Shooting | Shooting objects into a container or marked area.  This is often done with one hand and is a combination of aiming and throwing. |
| Skipping | March with knees high; each time one knee is in the air, hop on the other foot — step/hop, step/hop, step/hop. This is a rhythmical movement.  Skipping is a good cross-body / bilateral activity. |
| Slither | Lying on our stomachs we move forward in a sliding manner by twisting our bodies. Pretend to be a snake.  Sliding or shuffling with our feet along the floor. |
| Speed | The speed an activity or skills is performed will change the difficulty.  Many activities become more challenging when performed faster, however activities and skills that require balance or muscle strength can be more challenging if performed very slowly.  Changing speed on an intermittent basis helps develop good body control and agility, e.g. moving to the rhythm of music that changes speed. |
| Splashing | Children splashing with their hands or vessels/object during water play supports cognitive development, helps them to learn mathematics and science concepts, develops fine and gross motor skills, helps social skills and communication, and supports better co-ordination. |
| Squatting | Squatting is important for building strength, power and muscle.  Between 12 and 18 months, when a child bends over to pick something up show them how to bend their knees into a squatting position and encourage them to practice this.  What a correct squat should look like:  Upright torso with open chest  Knees apart, bent and over the toes  Head upright, relaxed and looking forward  Back straight and solid  Feet shoulder width apart and flat on the floor  Weight on heel  Hips below the knees |
| Squeezing | Playing with play dough, which includes actions such as squeezing helps build up strength in all the hand muscles and tendons, which will help prepare children to eventually control pencils and scissor.  Playing games where children need to squeeze objects, such as a balloon, between their legs helps to develop muscle strength, balance and coordination. |
| Sorting | Young children noticing the similarities and differences between objects and shapes and numbers.  Learning to group objects supports cognitive development, mathematics skills and problem-solving skills.  Children need to work things out with their hands before they can figure them out with their brains. |
| Standing | To encourage babies to stand ensure there is furniture and rails that they can pull up on, put toys up high to stimulate their curiosity, holding baby’s hands while they bounce strengthens their leg muscles, using push toys.  Children standing in position for a period of time helps develop balance. Extend the period of time they stand still to make it more challenging. Progress to standing on one foot. Ensure they practice on both feet.  Standing on various objects can help develop balance. If children need to stand on a small or unstable object they will need to use their arms to help balance. |
| Striking | Similar to hitting, however striking can be seen to be less energetic than hitting.  Striking objects with other objects, such as rackets. Striking things with hands, etc. |
| Tapping | Tapping toes to music.  Tapping objects on other objects.  Supports movement, coordination and balance. |
| Throwing  Fundamental Skill | Children will progress from passing a ball with two hands to throwing towards a nearby space (target) to throwing up, throwing overarm and throwing underarm (along the ground). Give children as much opportunity to try throwing in different ways, whilst moving and standing still.  Progression:   * Hold a ball/object with two hands * Push a ball/object along the ground * Roll an object along the ground * Move a ball along the ground around the body * Bounce a ball with two hands and then with one hand * Give an object/ball to another person with two hands from the chest, one hand from the shoulder * Give an object/ball to another person with one hand from the shoulder * Give an object/ball to another person underarm with one hand * Throw an object/ball to another person with two hands from the chest, one hand from the shoulder * Throw an object/ball to another person with one hand from the shoulder * Throw an object/ball to another person underarm with one hand * Throw a ball over arm with one hand aimed at a specific place or person * Throw a ball over arm with one hand aimed at a specific place or person whilst traveling |
| Twisting | Holding your lower body still while turning your torso at your waist, avoiding turning your whole body.  Children can practice by standing on the spot and looking over their shoulders, how far can they see behind them?  Help children to understand using imaginative examples in active stories, such as look over your shoulder to see if the pirates are catching you.  Eventually children can do windmills where they stand with feet apart, bend down at the waist and touch their left foot with right hand and vice versa. |
| Volley | Striking, catching or touching a ball before it touches the ground.  This is part of the development of throwing and catching and is more challenging than catching, etc. once the ball has bounced. |
| Writing | Children require building blocks to lay the foundation before acquiring fine motor control. These building blocks include:   * Stability - strength and balance allowing one part of the body to stay still while the other moves * Sensation - awareness of the placement of your fingers, hands and arms and how they are moving * Bilateral co-ordination - both hands being involved in separate aspects of a task.   Children also need to be able to plan, be aware of what they are doing, have co-ordination, and develop a matured nervous system and strong muscles in their back, stomach, neck and shoulders to support refined hands and finger skills.  Once the building blocks have been established, children develop dexterity. They will be able to use small, accurate, and precise movements to complete various day-to-day tasks.  Foundation skills to prepare children for writing:   * Posture & Balance for hand and arm control * Grasp strength and finger control for appropriate grip on a writing implement * Ocular motor control in order for hand and eyes to move together * Being able to following instructions * Being able to pay attention * The ability to recall correctly * Spatial organisation |