



District of Parry Sound Best Start Network

Month 4: Upper Body Development Activities

School Age

Target Toss

Materials: Bean bag/ball/etc., Target (hoola hoop), cone/tape.

Players will toss a bean bag or a ball at a target. Points may be awarded based on where the ball hits the wall (inside the target=5 points, outside= 3 points). The target is hung on a wall or laid on the ground and a cone or a designated line will indicate the distance away from the target (where the line of participants throws). This distance can be determined by the care provider.

Hand Clapping Games (To a rhythm)

Bring in a song that has an easy rhythm and also a song that may interest the participants. Create a rhythm in which the children may clap to this song. This will develop coordination and a sense of rhythm and accuracy.

Some rhythm examples:

- Clap every beat;
- Double time (two claps to one beat);
- Clap to beat and sing along.

Hand Clapping Games

To do a hand-clapping rhyme, face your partner, clap your hands in a special pattern, and say or sing the rhyme. The basic pattern goes like this:

1. clap your own hands together
2. clap both your hands against your partner's hands
3. clap you own hands again
4. clap your partner's right hand with your right hand
5. clap your own hands together
6. clap your partner's left hand with your left hand

Wheelbarrow

Have your child lie face down on the floor. With your arms supporting the knees and lower legs, ask the child to push straight up on the arms. Ask the child to “walk” on the hands across the floor as you follow supporting the legs. If the child is small, you will need to walk on your knees as you follow. This is a difficult activity, and many children can “walk” only a short distance before needing a rest.

Hanging and Swinging

On the playground encourage your child to tackle the monkey bars. Have the child hold onto the bars “hanging”, with parent supporting his/her waist if required. Pretend that he/she is a monkey and have him/her swinging back and forth transitioning between either arm like a “monkey”.

Tug of War

Using a soft piece of rope, children may play tug of war. Separating into teams of equal numbers, have the teams try to pull each other over a pre-marked line on the floor.

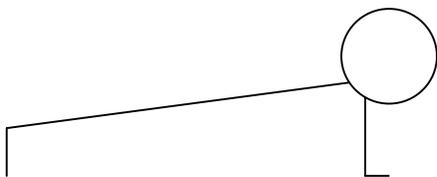
Hot Potato

This stimulating game will include any number of children and doesn't take any special skill to perform. Have the participants sit in a circle. The instructor can also partake in this game providing instruction - “the caller”. Using a bean bag or a squishy ball, have the participants begin passing the object around the circle. As the children get the hang of the game include more objects (balls) to pass around. Any creative twist on the game can take place, for example: changing direction, increasing speed, etc.

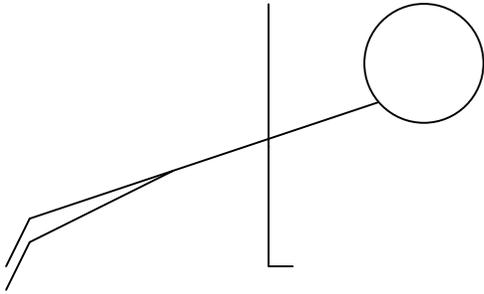
Note: the game usually contains elimination. To increase participation and interest in the activity create ways of playing the game without eliminating the participants.

Yoga Moves for Upper Body

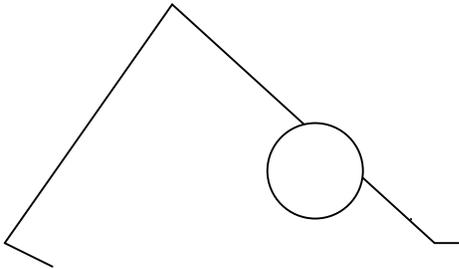
Plank – child positions self on mat in full push-up position: on toes and pushing up on extended arms. Child then holds this position for 3-5 long, deep breaths.



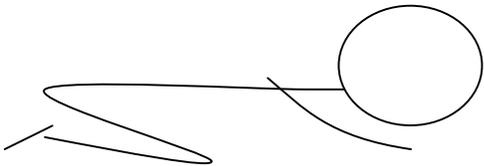
Side-plank – from plank position, instruct and show child how to move weight from both arms and legs to one arm with legs stacked one on top of the other



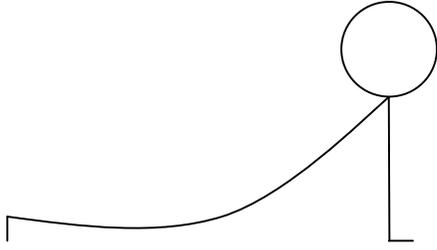
Down-ward dog – Start from hands and knees. Hands should be directly under shoulders, knees under hips. Spread fingers wide and point them straight ahead. Curl toes under. Press down through hands and feet into floor and push hips as high up as possible. Let head hang down so you can look at your legs. Lengthen your back and straighten your arms and legs. Reach heels towards floor as you ball back and yawn just like a dog. Hold pose for 3-5 long breaths, then lower to hands and knees.



Lion – Start by kneeling on shins and resting chest onto thighs.



Place forearms on the floor with elbows touching knees and look straight ahead. Be a lion in hiding, silent and still, preparing to pounce. When ready, spring ferociously forward onto hands and roar with mouth and eyes wide open. Press hands down into floor, arms straight and push chest forward. Make sure that shoulders are away from ears and that legs are extended straight out behind.



Crow – from a low squat position, have the child place hands in front of him/her on the floor. Slowly bending elbows, instruct the child to shift weight forward, resting knees on elbows and slowly trying to lift feet from the floor, so all weight is supported through upper extremities.

References:

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