

ACTIVITY PLAN 31 – BALLOON CATCHING

Aim

To develop hand eye coordination and the ability to catch a ball

Age

3–5 years

Equipment

Balloons, one medium-sized light-weight or bouncy ball, chalk, masking tape and rope (to mark a line)

Area required

Indoor or outdoor space of suitable size

Time

10 minutes

How?

- Ask the children to pretend they are jugglers who must keep their balloons up in the air using their hands.
- Ask the children to balance their balloons on different body parts (e.g. hand, arm, knee, foot) and then catch them.
- Ask the children to throw their balloons up in the air above their head and then catch them.
- Make a line for the children to stand on and in pairs throw the balloon to each other. Encourage the children to catch the balloon and throw it back.
- Introduce the medium-sized light-weight or bouncy ball for catching. Repeat the activity using the ball. Demonstrate each activity and allow sufficient time for each child to grasp each element of this activity.

Easier

Have the children stand closer to each other when throwing the balloon or ball. Use a beach ball instead of a balloon or a ball.

Harder

Balance balloons on more difficult parts of the body such as the elbow, wrist or ankle. Have the children throw the ball to the side or down low to change the degree of difficulty.

Key points

Skills involved in catching:

- Prepare to catch by holding both hands in front of the body and elbows softly bent
- Stretch the arms in front to reach for the ball as it arrives
- Watch the balloon or ball
- Catch the balloon or ball in the hands only, not the forearms
- Bend the elbows and stretch the fingers out wide. Say to the children “hands ready, fingers wide” so they are in position to catch the balloon or ball.