

- Ask the child to throw a balloon/ball/beanbag up in the air and then catch it. Progress by asking your child to clap/turn around/jump or kneel down before catching.
- Ask the child to bounce a ball (large/small) and catch it. Can also bounce and catch to each other.
- Progress to throw a ball against the wall and catch. 2 handed then 1 handed. Large ball then small ball
- Roll a ball to the child and ask them to trap it against the ground with a racket. Progress to soft bat and ball games.
- Play football. Try kicking back and forth to your child. Show them how to stop it under one foot when it comes to them. Kick ball into goals
- If in a group, stand in a circle call out the name of the person you are going to throw the ball to. This can also be done with calling out with favourite food, TV shows, computer games etc.

Ball games are fun, ask around others for more ideas of games that can be played with a ball!

By providing children with short, frequent opportunity for active play you can help a child develop in the following areas:

Co-ordination  
Balance  
Strength & Stability  
Motor Planning  
Spatial Awareness  
Sensory Processing  
Concentration  
Confidence/self esteem

Give plenty of opportunity to use toys/equipment available to them such as bike riding, trampolines and balance trails.

Where possible take trips to the play park, swimming, forest walks and the beach.

Always seek the “JUST RIGHT CHALLENGE” for the child. Activities should not be too easy as this will not progress their development but should not be too challenging that they perceive they have failed.

***Always think safety first!***

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We are happy to consider requests for this publication in other languages or formats such as large print or Braille.

**Contact 01324 590886,**

text **07990 690605,**

fax **01324 590867**

or email [fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot](mailto:fv.disabilitydepartment@nhs.scot)

## Suggestions of active play activities to help develop children’s motor skills



## Balance, co-ordination and movement skills

- Play games that have movement in them - Simon says! (Simon says jump, hop, stand on one leg etc), Animals - choose an animal and ask the child to pretend to be this e.g. rabbit doing bunny hops, kangaroo jumping, bear walking on hands and feet, cat/dog on hands and knees, flamingo standing on one leg, crab leaning back on hands and feet, lifting bottom off the ground etc.
- Younger children may enjoy songs that have movement in them e.g. ring a ring of roses and head shoulders knees and toes.
- Ask the child to walk/tiptoe along a line (you can use chalk or tape to mark the line) pretending it is a tightrope. Progress to walking along low walls with supervision if required.
- Ask the child to place a beanbag on their head – run/jump/turn around or kneel down and stand up without it falling off.
- Ask the child to pretend to be a rocket launching by crouching down low then jumping up pushing arms into the air.
- Play games that involve stopping, starting and changing direction

- Play musical statues, encouraging the child to hold the 'statue' for as long as possible in different positions.
- Play stepping stones using mats/cushions. Progress to varying the distance and direction between them.
- Play jumping/hopping games.
- Ask the child to jump over a line/skipping rope (can move skipping rope to make it seem like a snake or river). Encourage them to bend their knees and then push through their feet.
- Ask the child to jump along a series of mats/cushions. Progress to hopping. Encourage the child to try jumping off bottom step, low walls.
- Play hop scotch (can chalk it on to the ground)
- Ask the child to commando crawl under a low table, rope, blanket or tunnel.
- Choose some of the above exercises to make up an obstacle course.
- Try toys/games that encourage movement e.g. hula hoops, trampolines, bouncy castles, space hoppers, balance bikes, foot stilts, scooters, twister.

## Ball skills

- Blow bubbles and ask the child to burst them with both hands, progressing to one finger.
- Play balloon volleyball with the child by tapping the balloon back and forwards to each other.
- Play ten-pin bowling using plastic skittles or plastic bottles filled with a small amount of sand or rice. Ask the child to try to knock down the skittles or use the skittles as goals.
- Ask the child to throw a ball or beanbag/beanie toy into a basket/hula hoop.
- Play golf with a lightweight ball and a long cardboard tube or rolled up newspaper.
- Play catch - In catching activities progress from using balloons to large ball to bean bag (can use a beanie toy) to a small ball. Give the child cues like hands out, ready, steady and catch.
- Roll large ball back and forth to each other. Progress to small ball.
- Ask the child to throw and catch balloon/ball/beanbag back and forth to yourself.