

Movement Area: Rhythmic Activities
Movement Skill: Manipulating Ribbon Sticks

Description:

A child will demonstrate the ability to move a ribbon stick rhythmically by listening and responding to music of varying rhythms and tempos.

What a Child Will Experience:

- Exploring rhythmic movement, following visual and verbal cues, understanding spatial awareness, effort and body relationship concepts.
- Listening to a repeated musical pattern (or beat) and moving body to the rhythm.
- Moving the ribbon stick(s) in a variety of ways:

Examples:

- Making circles in the air...
 - in front of the body
 - over the head (helicopter)
 - on the floor (tornado)
 - beside the body (ferris wheel)
- Making wavy motions like waves on the water
- Shaking ribbon very fast/slow
- Moving ribbon so it swirls and floats in the air
- Waving ribbon up high/down low
- Sweeping ribbon back and forth on the floor
- Swaying ribbon from side to side like a palm tree swaying in the wind
- Shaking ribbon behind/beside/in front of/below/above their bodies
- Making ribbon wiggle on the floor like a snake
- Moving ribbon side to side like a palm tree swaying in the wind
- Moving ribbon back and forth like wipers on the bus
- Turning ribbon and body in a circle

Materials/Equipment:

- Ribbon Sticks (scarves, pom poms, crepe paper streamers)
 - One for each child
- Musical Selection
 - Music with a constant, repetitive beat which is slow enough to allow young children to get the feeling of the music
- Floor Markers (Use in a circle or a scattered formation)
- Carpet squares, polypots, Velcro on carpeted floor

Developmental Progression:

- Without Music – adult demonstrates one movement and concept word at a time and children imitate a variety of ways to move the ribbon stick. Keep verbal cues short and simple.
- With Music – briefly listen to the music and identify fast or slow tempos. Continue matching the movement of the ribbons to the tempo of the music.
- Stationary Position - child remains in personal space on the floor marker and moves ribbon stick without touching other children in designated formation.
- While Moving - ask children how they would like to move to the music using ribbon sticks.

How Adults Can Help:

- Offer children ideas and demonstrations to get them engaged in the activity and to make them more comfortable with manipulating ribbon sticks.
- Encourage children to explore and create new ways to move with ribbon sticks.
- Ask challenging questions to stimulate creative movements during “ribbon stick play”.

Safety:

Provide adequate space for children to move ribbon sticks without touching other children.

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Learning movement concepts and vocabulary
- Watching demonstrations
- Listening (to directions and music)

Communication:

- Verbally expressing body movements

Social/Emotional:

- Creating original movements with ribbon sticks
- Expressing feelings through movements

Movement Area: Play Skills
Movement Skill: Climbing and Sliding

Description:

A child will climb up/down stairs, platforms or rung ladders, seat self at top of a slide, and slide down.

What a Child Will Experience:

- Climbing up platforms/stairs/rungs and climbing back down
- Seating self at the top of a slide, and sliding down independently

Materials/Equipment: (Any of the following)

- Free standing preschool rung climber/slide
- Free standing molded plastic cubes/stairs/slide
- Playground modules with slides (straight, curved, open or enclosed tunnel slides of various widths and heights)

Developmental Progression:

- Climb up/down using hand holds on rails on a rung climber and turn body toward rungs to back down--- stepping on one rung at a time.
- At top of slide sit down and extend legs (“feet first”), scoot seat forward and while holding onto side rails let gravity bring the child down the slide (sitting upright).
- Stop at the bottom of the slide and place both feet firmly on the ground before standing up.

How Adults Can Help:

- Allow child to sit on adult’s lap to go down the slide (getting used to the feeling of moving down while sitting upright).
- Have adult go down the slide first with child behind – child’s feet touching adult’s back (adult controlling the speed).
- Assist child by first holding his/her waist the whole length down the slide and later halfway down allowing child to finish independently.

Safety:

- Insist child slide with feet first (prevent head injury).
- Require child to sit and not allow standing on the slide.
- Provide enough space at the bottom for child to safely land.
- Do not allow child to climb up the slide when someone is sliding down.
- Provide soft cushioning at the bottom landing area (pea gravel, woodchip carpet, sand, rubber shock-absorbent mat).

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- Avoid slides that have a steep incline with no side rails
- Avoid metal slides that get very hot in the sun.

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Counting the rungs or stairs climbed

Communication:

- Practicing language skills: Saying “ready, set, go”

Social/Emotional:

- Rolling balls (or stuffed animals) down the slide for a friend to catch at the bottom of the slide
- Making a train: Two or more children slide down with feet touching the child seated in front

Movement Area: Play Skills
Movement Skill: Pedaling a Wheeled Toy

Description:

A child will pedal a wheeled toy (i.e. tricycle).

What a Child Will Experience:

- Climbing into a seated position on wheeled toy
- Placing feet on pedals
- Starting pedaling motion and continue pedaling
- Steering left and right turns
- Stopping pedaling
- Getting off wheeled toy

Materials/Equipment:

- Tricycle, big wheel, pedal tractor, small two-wheeled bicycle (training wheels), small two-wheeled bicycle (the size of the wheeled toy should be appropriate for the child)
- Pedal adaptations: velcro straps (for children who cannot maintain foot contact with pedals)
- Adapted tricycles: back rests, hip/chest security straps (seat belts) for children who lack adequate trunk support to maintain an upright sitting position

Developmental Progression:

Tricycle:

- Climbing into sitting position
- Grasping handlebars and placing feet on pedals
- Alternating left and right foot pushing motion
- Pedaling in a continuous rhythm
- Steering left and right (wide turns and narrow turns)
- Stopping movement by slowing pace, putting feet on the ground.
- Climbing off the wheeled toy

Two-Wheel Bicycle With Training Wheels:

- Standing straddling bike frame or sitting on bike seat
- Grasping handlebars, placing foot on pedals and pushing downward while other foot lifts off the ground and onto the pedal
- Pedaling in a continuous rhythm
- Steering left and right turns (first wide, then narrow)
- Stopping movement by slowing pace or pedaling backwards (coaster brakes) or by putting foot on ground and climbing off

Two–Wheeled Bicycle:

- Standing straddling bike frame
- Grasping handlebars, placing one foot on pedal and pushing downward while the other foot lifts off the ground and onto the pedal
- Lifting body onto seat pedaling in a continuous rhythm
- Steering left and right wide turns (later narrow turns)
- Stopping movement by slowing pace or by pedaling backward (coaster brakes); or, when weight is on the downward foot, lifting other foot off the pedal and stepping onto the ground to get off

How Adults Can Help:

- Provide physical assist getting on/off, supporting bike in a steady position
- Provide initially a large open space without obstacles or need for turns
- Provide a gentle push start to assist first pedaling strokes or place tricycle/bike on a gentle downward incline
- To help children understand the alternate push-pedal stroke, adults can alternately give a gentle push on top of the child’s thigh alternating left and right leg.
- Provide verbal cues such as “push” or “pedal” or “go feet go”
- Assist with turning handle bars left and right and touching feet to stop pedaling motion
- Select a wheel toy appropriate for the size of the child

Safety:

- Check bike for loose nuts or bolts or sharp edges
- Encourage (on two-wheeled bikes) children to wear bike helmets
- Select a firm surface, yet one that is forgiving in case of a fall (i.e. hard-packed dust vs. asphalt/cement)
- Some bikes come with attached pushing bars/sticks or you may wish to create your own. This prevents adult back fatigue or injury from extensive bending.

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Learning directions (forward, backward, left, right); can make tape or chalk pathways for children to follow
- Learning concepts of starting and stopping; can use music to indicate commands
- Creating a “trike town”. Children pedal to gas station, tunnel, car wash, repair shop, fast food store which are created with mats, cones, streamers, and other gym equipment

Communication:

- Learning to wait in line to visit the stations in the “trike town”
- Learning to talk to people (other students) at the stations: car wash, fast food store, gas station, etc.
- Learning to say “thank you” and “please” when stopping at various stations in the “trike town”

Social/Emotional:

- Learning to take turns
- Learning to follow leader (around cones, through tunnels, etc.)

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Movement Area: Play Skills
Movement Skill: Propelling a Scooterboard

Description:

A child will travel on a scooterboard.

What a Child Will Experience:

Traveling on a scooterboard in a sitting, kneeling, or prone lying position (tummy) without falling off.

Materials/Equipment:

- Standard 12” x 12” gym scooterboards – safety handles preferred for preschoolers.
- Use 16” x 16” gym scooterboards for larger children and adult facilitators.

Developmental Progression:

- Prone lying – push with hands on floor while feet alternately press against the floor (in a “frog” position).
- Seated – grip safety handles (if available) or sides of scooterboard and use feet to push/pull/propel scooterboard forward, backward, turn in circles.
- Kneeling – use hands to push/pull to move scooterboard forward, backward, and spin/turn.

How Adults Can Help:

- Model, give verbal cues, physical assist (assist moving arms and/or legs).
- Use two gym scooterboards to support children who cannot lift legs or use legs to propel when in prone position.
- Sitting: Adult sits on a scooterboard behind seated child on his/her scooterboard to provide gentle nudges/pushes so child will move forward.
- Sitting: While facing the child, plant child’s feet together near his scooterboard then assist child to extend legs while pushing to propel scooterboard in backward direction.

Safety:

- Do not allow children to stand on scooterboards or ride like a skateboard.
- Provide adequate open space for children to move on scooterboards.

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Learning to follow directions: Riding scooterboards while music plays and stopping movement when the music stops. Add sequencing/tasks when the music stops (put hands on head, spin scooterboard around, touch a cone, etc.)
- Following paths made by tape placed on the floor. Using scooterboards as transportation for completing tasks: delivering mail to a mailbox, carrying puzzle pieces (one at a time) to complete a puzzle
- Creating a scooterboard obstacle course and incorporating concepts of under, around, and through
- Learning spatial concepts (over, under, around, etc.)

Communication:

- Creating a “scootertown” play environment. Children can travel to a grocery store, fast food store, car wash, through tunnels, over bridges, to a repair shop etc. Children will need to talk to each other to request pretend fast food, helping each other repair their cars, etc.
- Talking to other children/adults while creating a “scooterboard town”
- Talking to adults/students working at the various pretend stations (request food at fast food place)

Social/Emotional:

- Playing “Follow the Leader”
- Playing tag games on scooterboards
- Pulling a partner on a scooterboard (partners can use jump ropes or plastic tubing to pull each other)
- Creating a train of scooterboards: An adult pulls the first child who is lying on tummy on scooterboard while the other scooterboard riders (who are also lying on tummies on scooterboards) hold onto the ankles of the child ahead of them.

Movement Area: Play Skills
Movement Skill: Swinging

Description:

A child will sit and maintain balance on a moving swing that has been either pushed or pumped.

What a Child Will Experience:

- Sitting on a swing independently
- Maintaining balance while being pushed
- Creating/beginning a swinging motion
- Pumping the swing for continuous movement

Materials/Equipment:

- Swings (variations i.e. belt, bucket, tire, chair)

Developmental Progression:

- Sitting on the swing independently, holding onto ropes, lifting feet off the ground and maintaining balance and grasp while being pushed (begin low and increase height of push)
- Touching feet to ground and walking feet backward on tiptoes, then lifting feet so swing propels forward
- Pumping: extending legs forward while leaning backward as swing goes forward; Bending knees bringing heels toward seat as swing glides backward working to maintain a smooth pumping and swinging rhythm

How Adults Can Help:

- Have child sit on adults' lap to feel the motion of leaning forward and backward
- Give verbal cues and physical assistance—move child's legs "out and back" (bend knees with heels moving toward seat)
- Practice the "legs out/legs back" (pump) while the swing remains stationary
- Instruct to "toe walk" the swing while seated to make the swing move
- Stand in front of swing and hold hands (adults) out for child to touch with feet while legs are extended forward ("touch the sun or stars" with your feet)

Safety:

- If child is seated on adult lap, adult should have a secure hold on the child.
- Make sure that there is enough space in front of/behind the path of the swing so that the swing does not bump anyone.

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- Provide safe ground covering (sand, pea gravel, woodchip carpet, absorbent rubber matting under the swing)
- Check if swing rope/chair is sturdy and secure
- Adjust seat to height that child's tiptoes touch ground

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Learning concepts of high/low

Communication:

- Learning to create/repeat rhymes while swinging

Social/Emotional:

- Learning to help a friend (pushing a friend who is sitting on swing)

Movement Area: Play Skills
Movement Skill: Pulling a Wagon or Toy

Description:

A child will pull a wagon/toy while walking forward or backward.

What a Child Will Experience:

- Pulling a light or heavy object that rolls on wheels while walking backward and forward
- Making turns and weaving around obstacles while pulling an object

Materials/Equipment:

- Lightweight wheeled toy
- Larger, heavier wheeled toy (i.e., wagon)
- Long rope (to pull toy)

Developmental progression:

- Pulling while walking backward: Have the child face the object, grasp the wagon/toy handle (or cord) and take 1-2 steps backward; increase steps until walking in a continuous pattern while pulling the object;
- Pulling while walking forward: Grasp the object handle (or cord) with hand and face away from it; walk forward pulling the object (arm extends backward toward the object);
- Pulling wagon/toy by handle/cord through an obstacle course without bumping the objects in the course

How Adults Can Help:

- Demonstrate/model pulling wagons/toys and provide simple verbal cues.
- Provide hand-over-hand physical assist on the handle/cord.
- Play “Follow the Leader”: Adult pulls wagon/toy and child follows pulling wagon/toy

Safety:

- Provide a large space for maneuvering the object being pulled.
- Provide a smooth surface (less chance of falling).
- Check objects for loose handles, secure wheels, and sturdy ropes/cords

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Learning to follow directions when pulling wagon or toys

- Learning to pull wagon or toy through an obstacle course or path

Communication:

- Talking to friends during theme play: pretending to go shopping at a grocery store, transporting supplies to build a house, giving animals a ride, etc. Ask Child: “Where are you taking the Teddy Bear?”, “What are you going to buy at the store?”

Social/Emotional:

- Taking turns (pulling and riding in wheeled toys)

Movement Area: Group Games
Movement Skill: Movement Skills Vary With Individual Games
(Can target one or more movement components)

Description:

Children will participate in group games that may be either adult directed or child directed.

What a Child Will Experience:

- Participating in group games which have few rules and no competition/elimination
- Using imaginations
- Developing movement skills and knowledge of various movements: Locomotor skills, object control skills, body awareness, spatial concepts, body action skills, rhythmical skills, play skills

Materials/Equipment (Varies with Individual Games):

Simple objects/equipment, or none needed.

Developmental Progression:

- Begin with a partner, expand to a small group of 3-6 children and then to a larger group (i.e. preschool class).
- Begin with a simple stimulus/response game (i.e. move and stop with locomotor patterns to music) and progress to a game with multiple steps or concepts (i.e. tag games, “Clean Out Your Backyard”).

Characteristics of Well-Selected Games:

(Adapted from: Torbet, M. and Schneider, L.B. (1993) Follow Me Too. A Handbook of Movement Activities for Three to Five Year Olds. New York: Addison Wesley Publishing)

- Children have many turns where they can experiment continuously.
- Accommodation for a broad range of skills allowing progressive challenges.
- Instructions are clear, consistent, and attainable.
- Feedback is positive, immediate and frequent.
- It takes time and experiences to learn a game. Part of “natural learning” is making mistakes.
- The format of the game allows children to develop perseverance and coping skills.
- The components of the game enhance positive social interactions.
- Maximum participation vs. elimination is promoted.

Examples of Preschool Games:

- Non-elimination musical hoops (similar to “Islands” *1)
- Non-elimination tag games
- Clean Out Your Backyard
- Follow the Leader
- What Time Is It, Mr. Fox? (also called “Midnight”)
- Help Your Neighbor
- Red Light, Green Light
- Busy Bee and Back to Back *1
- Car and Driver *1
- Cross Over *1
- Freeze *1
- Jet Pilots *2
- Cross the River *2
- Beach Ball Push *2
- Keep It Up *2
- Body Built Letters, Numbers, and Shapes

**See footnotes on following pages*

Examples of Parachute Games:

- Ripples and Waves
- Mountains
- Umbrellas
- Pop Goes the Weasel
- Merry Go Round
- Changing Places
- Popcorn
- Bubble Bath
- Roller Ball

How Adults Can Help:

- Keep the game simple (i.e. reduce the amount of equipment, let completion be the goal, not speed).
- Model and use visual aids (pictures etc.) to show children what to do. Break down the game into sections that can be put together as children learn.
- Use the same game over many play periods. Children love repetition.
- Be available to redirect/reinforce information (verbal cues, physical assist).
- Everyone is a winner/focus on success.

Safety:

- Have ample space for size of group and activity.
- Use only equipment that is developmentally appropriate.
- Remove any obstacles in the playing area and check the ground floor surface for holes or for uneven surfaces that could cause a fall.

Integrated Concepts:

Cognitive:

- Understanding defined boundaries (marked and unmarked)
- Listening and following directions – sometimes multi-step
- Increasing attention span
- Developing problem-solving skills/generating alternatives

Communication:

- Giving verbal encouragement to friends: Examples might include saying “thank you”, giving a high-five, or sharing positive comments such as “I like this game” or “We did our best”.

Social/Emotional:

- Sharing equipment
- Taking turns
- Developing self-control
- Trusting peers
- Making contributions to groups
- Taking leadership role
- Taking initiative
- Trying new activities
- Building self-esteem

*1. Torbet, Marianne and Lynn B. Schneider (1993) Follow Me Too A Handbook of Movement Activities for Three to Five Year Olds. New York, N.Y.: Addison Wesley Publishing.

*2. Wessel, Janet A. and Laurice L. Zittel (1995) Smart Start, Preschool Movement Curriculum Designed for Children of All Abilities. (1995) Austin, TX: Pro Ed.

Evaluation

Evaluating the Movement Skills and Abilities of Young Children

Formal and informal evaluations can be used to evaluate a young child's movement skills and abilities.

Formal Evaluations use standardized test instruments. The information learned from a formal evaluation is valuable as it compares the child's overall performance to the performance of other children the same age. Standardized tools are often used for *initial* special education evaluations to determine if a child meets criteria for one of the special education categories. *(See Appendix F (Special Education Laws) for Early Childhood Special Education Eligibility Criteria and for the Developmental Adapted Physical Education Eligibility Criteria)*

Some disadvantages of formal evaluations are that they are most often not administered in a natural environment, they are usually not administered by adults familiar with the child, and they do not always measure skills that are functional and that relate to the child's needs in the real world activities.

Informal Evaluations do not use standardized test instruments, but use other instruments, tools, and procedures to gather information about what the child already knows, what the child is learning, and what the child needs to learn. Some methods and procedures used for informal evaluations are: systematic observations, parent interviews, review of records, developmental/skill checklists and videotaping. Informal evaluation methods and procedures are used in both regular education and special education to supplement the more formal standardized evaluation tools. Informal evaluation procedures, such as developmental checklists and systematic observations, are also routinely used to determine if a child is making progress with educational goals.

Informal evaluation is valuable because it considers the total development of the child, it is most often administered in the child's natural environment by adults familiar to the child, and it allows adults to get a more realistic picture of what skills the child has now and what skills the child will need to learn in the future to become more independent in home, school, and community environments.

(See Appendix C and Appendix D for examples of Informal Evaluation tools)
(See Appendix E for listing of Tools for Evaluating Young Children)

Evaluating Movement Education Programs

The effectiveness of a Movement Education Program should be evaluated periodically to determine if the movement skills being taught to the children are the skills they need to learn; and, if the children are learning the movement skills being taught.

The Ongoing Cycle of Movement Education Program Evaluation should include the following:

- Evaluating the children’s movement skills to determine what skills they need to learn
- Planning movement activities to assist children in learning the movement skills
- Teaching the children the movement skills they need to learn
- Evaluating the students and the Movement Education Program to determine if it is an effective one

National Physical Education Standards / Kindergarten Benchmarks / Preschool Movement Curriculum Outcomes

In 1992, the Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC), a division of NASPE, created a document entitled “Developmentally Appropriate Physical Education Practices for Children” which focuses primarily on elementary physical education. In 1994, COPEC created and published another document entitled “Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Movement Programs for Young Children Ages 3-5.” This latest COPEC document supports the beliefs that early childhood movement programs should be developed with the preschool child’s needs and interests in mind rather than extending the elementary physical education curriculum down to the early childhood setting. In 1995, the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) developed national standards in the area of physical education to promote appropriate physical education practices for students in kindergarten through grade twelve.

Listed below are the national physical education standards and the recommended kindergarten benchmarks as written in NASPE’s National Physical Education Standards (NASPE 1995). Immediately following the kindergarten benchmarks are examples of possible early childhood /preschool movement curriculum outcomes which reflect the basic premises for movement programs for young children as stated in the 1994 COPEC document, “Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Movement Programs for Young Children Ages 3-5.”

Standard 1. Demonstrates Competency in Many Movement Forms and Proficiency in a Few Movement Forms

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Travels in forward and sideways directions using a variety of locomotor patterns and changes in direction quickly in response to a signal.
- Demonstrates clear contrast between slow and fast movements while traveling;
- Walk and runs using mature form;
- Rolls sideways without hesitating or stopping;
- Tosses a ball and catches it before it bounces twice;
- Kicks a stationary ball using a smooth continuous running step;

- Maintains momentary stillness bearing weight on a variety of body parts.

Examples of Possible Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- Allow the child to explore and develop a variety of locomotor and non-locomotor patterns (particularly walk, run, stretch, and bend);
- Encourage walking and running and modifications of these skills;
- Require throwing, catching, striking, and kicking of objects of various sizes and shapes;
- Enhance static and dynamic balance;
- Reinforce stopping and starting signals.

Standard 2. Applies Movement Concepts and Principles to the Learning and Development of Motor Skills

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- walks, runs, hops and skips in forward and sideways directions and changes direction quickly in response to a signal;
- Identifies and uses a variety of relationships with object (e.g., over/under, behind, alongside, through);
- Identifies and begins to utilize the technique employed (leg flexion) to soften the landing in jumping.

Examples of Possible Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should allow the children to:

- Explore traveling in different directions;
- Be exposed to a variety of spatial relationships (e.g. on/off, under/over, and concepts (e.g. personal/general space);
- Experiment with a variety of locomotor, non-locomotor and manipulative patterns.

Standard 3. Exhibits a Physically Active Lifestyle

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Participates regularly in vigorous physical activity;
- Recognizes that physical activity is good for personal well-being;
- Identifies feelings that result from participation in physical activities.

Examples of Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- By their very nature are vigorous;
- Seize “teachable moments” that allow the children to know why vigorous movement is beneficial and positive feedback given for being vigorous;
- Encourage the use of many large muscle groups. This area should be used during both structured and non-structured times (but always with adult supervision!).

Standard 4. Achieves and Maintains a Health-Enhancing Level of Physical Fitness

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Sustains moderate to vigorous physical activity;
- Is aware of his or her heart beating fast during physical activity.

Examples of Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- Require the children to use their large muscle groups (arms, legs, trunk) while repeating a movement pattern a series of times;
- Discuss the location and “characteristics” of the heart (e.g. function, size and rate) and lungs (e.g. function, size and action).

Standard 5. Demonstrates Responsible, Personal, and Social Behavior in Physical Activity Settings

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Knows the rules for participating in the gymnasium and on the playground;
- Works in a group setting without interfering with others;
- Responds to teacher signals for attention;
- Responds to rule infractions when reminded once;
- Follows directions given to the class for an all-class activity;
- Handles equipment safely by putting it away when not in use;
- Takes turns when using a piece of equipment;
- Transfer rules of the gym to “rules of the playground.”

Examples of Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- Allow the child to practice appropriate social skills (e.g. sharing, courtesy, honesty);
- Allow practice at putting away manipulatives and apparatus;

- Enhance listening skills and the sequencing of directions.

Standard 6. Demonstrates Understanding and Respect for Differences Among People in Physical Activity Settings

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Enjoys participation along and with others;
- Chooses playmates without regard to personal differences (e.g. race, gender, disability).

Examples of Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- Afford opportunities for playing alone and with groups of varying sizes;
- Encourage interacting with a variety of classmates.

Standard 7. Understands That Physical Activity Provides the Opportunity for Enjoyment, Challenge, Self-Expression, and Social Interaction

Kindergarten Sample Benchmarks

- Enjoys participation alone and with others;
- Identifies feelings that result from participation in physical activities;
- Looks forward to physical education classes;

Examples of Early Childhood Movement Curriculum Outcomes

The preschool movement curriculum should provide activities that:

- Are safe, fun, and exciting;
- Create an environment conducive to learning in which children feel accepted, success is anticipated, and failure is not feared.

Rip Marston's article in *Teaching Elementary Physical Education*, (September 2001) from the National Association for Sport and Physical Education, *National Physical Education Standards* (NASPE 1995) and the Council on Physical Education for Children (COPEC 1994), "*Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Movement Programs for Young Children Ages 3-5*"

Modifying Movement Experiences for Young Children

Modifying movement experiences involves changing some aspect of an activity to make it accessible and beneficial to all children. Modifications allow children, including those with disabilities, to participate in movement experiences in a safe and challenging setting that affords opportunities for success. It is important for a movement facilitator to understand the general process of creating and implementing modifications and applying them to a variety of situations. A practical systematic approach of planning, implementing, and evaluating movement programs is recommended.

Today, young children enrolled in various early childhood programs have diverse needs and abilities. There is a broad range of development which is considered to be age-appropriate. However, if children have disabilities, they may have an atypical delay in cognitive, social/emotional, physical, or sensory development. Personnel working in early childhood programs, parents, and caregivers are continually challenged to plan for safe and meaningful movement programs for all children in a variety of environments. **There is no “cookbook” of directions for how to modify movement experiences.** Modification of movement activities for children involves using specific approaches to modifications, modifying the curriculum, changing the play environment, selecting proper equipment, including children with disabilities, and periodically evaluating the modifications.

Approaches to Modifications

To successfully modify movement experiences, the adult should have an understanding of how children learn movement skills. This includes having knowledge of movement activities, movement skill components, task analysis, and of the developmental progression of movement skills.

Skill Components

Children develop skills in the movement areas of locomotion, object control, body awareness, spatial concepts, body actions, rhythmic activities, play participation, and group games by participating in a variety of movement activities. An understanding of the movement skill components will assist adults in planning and modifying movement activities for all children. For example: Children having difficulty with balance may need the assistance of their hands, an adult's hands, or a structure (rail/wall) for support when performing balance activities. When structuring movement activities for children with a high level of balance development, the adult should include movement experiences that will challenge the child's balancing abilities. One way to do this would be to limit the child's base of support i.e. ask the child to balance on one leg, ask the child to stand on one leg with eyes closed, ask the child to stand on a balance beam with only one leg.

Task Analysis

Task analysis is the process of breaking a skill down into its components. The components are usually sequenced and taught from simple to complex. The use of task analysis requires the adult to identify important sub-skills within a motor experience to determine which part of the skill is difficult for the child. The facilitator then develops a

plan to assist the child in performing the task. For example, a task analysis for walking up steps would include: standing at the bottom of the steps, grasping the handrail, lifting one foot to the first step, putting weight on the foot, lifting the other foot to the second step, and putting weight on that foot. If the child is able to perform the first two components of the skill (standing at the bottom of the steps and grasping the hand rail), but has difficulty with the third part (lifting one foot to the first step), the adult should focus on helping the child improve balance and upper leg strength to enable the child to complete the third part of the movement sequence.

Developmental Progression

In general, children's motor patterns and skills progress through a series of steps or stages. The development of various skills is, for the most part, sequential and builds upon previously learned skills. Understanding the developmental progression for various skills is helpful in making an activity easier or more challenging for a particular child. For example, if the adult is presenting opportunities for children to practice catching objects, various teaching approaches should be used. Children at the beginning developmental stage can benefit from catching rolled balls. Other children's needs may be best met by catching suspended objects that are swinging in an arc. More highly skilled children's catching skills can be challenged by trying to catch objects that are not thrown directly to them, but are thrown to the left and right sides of their bodies.

Modifying Curriculum

The movement curriculum for young children should provide movement experiences in the areas of locomotion, object control, body awareness, spatial concepts, body actions, rhythmic activities, play participation, and group games. The curriculum can be modified for children who are having difficulty and enrichment activities provided for highly skilled children. The following table includes examples of modifying movement components and skills.

Movement Component	Movement Skill	Modification of Activity	Enrichment Activity
Locomotor Skills	Jumping	Assisting a child by holding hands and giving verbal cues, such as “bend knees”, “swing arms”, and “jump.”	Combining different movement components when jumping i.e. jumping off a high object, jumping and turning, jumping and landing in a hoop.
Object Control Skills	Catching	Providing hand-over-hand assistance to child catching a ball.	Throwing a small ball at wall and catching it on the rebound.
Body Awareness	Identifying Body Parts	Playing “Copy Cat”. Adult touches head and says, “This is my head”. Child imitates actions.	Using activities/challenges involving body identification, body actions and cognitive skills, such as; “If you have the color blue on your shirt, shake your arm.”
Spatial Concepts	Moving Through an Obstacle Course	Following an adult or peer through an obstacle course.	Designing, demonstrating, and telling other children how to move through an obstacle course.
Body Actions	Imitating Body Movements	Imitating movements repetitively i.e. bending, stretching.	Demonstrating a sequence of movements such as bending knees, stretching arms, turning around.
Rhythmic Activities	Manipulating Ribbon Sticks	Imitating movements with rhythm sticks.	Designing and demonstrating a sequence of 2-4 movements with ribbon sticks
Play Skills	Pedaling a Wheeled Toy	Assisting child by using a push-pull bar attached to wheeled toy.	Pedaling a wheeled toy following commands i.e. “stop”, “ride around the cone”.
Group Games	Playing Parachute Game (“Popcorn”)	Providing hand-over-hand assistance while shaking parachute.	Shaking parachute with one hand or both hands. Shaking parachute at fast and slow speeds. Shaking parachute held at various heights.

Changing the Play Environment

Play Area

Major changes to an instructional setting cannot usually be made, but there are a number of things that can be done to accommodate students with special needs. Boundaries of the play area can be reduced for children with limited mobility. The play area can also be marked with cones or brightly colored tape for children with visual impairment or those needing well-defined boundaries.

Space

Hula hoops, mats, or polyspots can be used as floor markers for children who have difficulty maintaining personal space. During locomotor movements, a hula hoop held by the child at waist level may become their “bubblemobile” to help them define their personal space and prevent collisions with other children or with walls.

Distance

Distance is generally an easy element to modify. A basketball net or other target can be raised or lowered, children can stand closer to the target, and the distance a child travels during an activity can be shortened or lengthened.

Selecting Equipment

An understanding of child development helps the movement facilitator select equipment that will be the most beneficial for preschool children. Important considerations when selecting age appropriate equipment are: size, weight, color, and texture.

Size

Large targets and large striking implements (bats, racquets, balls, large-wheeled scooters) are helpful in promoting success in movement activities.

Weight

Light weight equipment such as plastic bats, lollipop racquets, and nerf balls are easier for preschool children to manipulate.

Color

Brightly colored equipment promotes visual tracking skills. It is usually most beneficial to select equipment which is of a contrasting color to the play environment.

Texture

Most equipment is available in a variety of textures. Foam or Nerf material make it easier to engage young children in activity because equipment moves a little slower and is soft if it hits the child’s body. Using equipment with a variety of textures invites children to grasp and manipulate objects in new and exciting ways. Foam balls, Nerf balls, koosh balls, whiffle balls, bean bags, punch balls, beach balls, yarn balls, gripper balls (gripper patches), catchballs, gertie balls (tacky surface), bumpballs (bumpy knobs and tacky texture), squellet balls (colorful beads inside), geodesic (rope balls), and spider balls all provide a range of possibilities when modifying ball activities for young children.

Including Children with Disabilities

Some children who attend early childhood programs have disabilities such as autism spectrum disorders, emotional/behavioral disabilities, physical impairments, developmental cognitive disabilities, or other health related disabilities. The range of effect the disability has on the development of large motor skills varies within each disability from mild to severe. Each child is unique. **It is important to focus on the *functional skills of the child rather than on the child's disability*.** Instructional modifications such as giving verbal cues, using visual cues, demonstrating or modeling an activity, providing physical assistance or guidance, and Braille (allowing the child to feel a peer or an adult performing a movement) are beneficial for children with or without disabilities.

Evaluating Modifications

Suggestions for modifying and evaluating the effectiveness of large motor activities is an on-going process. Considerations suggested by Martin Block in his book [A Teacher's Guide to Including Students with Disabilities in Regular Physical Education](#) include:

1. Are activities modified only as much as necessary to afford success while promoting challenge?
2. Is the modification safe for all children?
3. Does the modification affect other children in a negative way?
4. Is the modification difficult to implement?

When used properly, modifications enhance the learning of all children. Success and challenge are continually balanced. By modifying large motor activities, adults not only enhance learning, but are also positive role models in respecting and accepting the uniqueness of each individual.

Expanded Movement Opportunities

Our feelings and connections about movement and our bodies begin very early in life. Opportunities for integrating movement into the lives of young children can be found in homes, neighborhoods, and communities. Encouraging young child to participate in simple and enjoyable physical activities daily can be the beginning of an active lifestyle that benefits the whole family. This section will provide families with activity ideas that are simple, inexpensive and fun!

(See Resource Section in this guide for a list of books containing details on appropriate activities and games for play at home.)

Indoor Play

1. Ball Play
 - rolling, throwing, bouncing, catching, kicking, hitting, striking
 - playing Nerf basketball (i.e. Fisher Price or Little Tikes)
 - throwing, ball overhand/underhand to partner
 - bouncing ball to partner
 - bouncing ball to self
 - rolling/bowling ball at objects (i.e. empty plastic soda bottle)
 - striking beach ball

2. Locomotor Play
“Can you...”
 - Crawl like a snake to the dining room?
 - March with your knees up high to the bathroom?
 - Gallop like a horse to the kitchen?
 - Walk with tiny little steps?
 - Walk with HUGE dinosaur steps?
 - Hop on one foot like a bunny to the family room?
 - Tiptoe quietly like a mouse (shhhh) to the kitchen?
 - Jump like a kangaroo to your room?

3. Tumble Play (on padded carpet)
 - perform a forward roll (somersault)
 - perform a log rolling to the (to left/ to right)
 - Leap frog

4. Hoppity Hop Play
Commercially available ball with a handle. Child sits on the ball and grasps handle. Child can bounce up/down/forward on ball while trying to maintain upright position.

Pretend your hoppity hop is a horse! What is your horse’s name? Let’s

take our horse out to the pasture for a ride! Giddyup horse! Wh-o-o-a!!

5. Hopscotch Play
Use tape to mark square sections on hard floors or Velcro on carpeted floors.
6. Dancing to Favorite Music!
How many different ways can you move your body? Can you: twist, shake your hips, bend your knees, shake your foot, shake your head, pretend to swim, march with your knees up high, clap your hands, hop on one foot, jump up and down, turn around, reach up high, reach down low.

Can you think of another way to move your body? Let yourself have fun!
(Refer to Resource Section for Early Childhood's Greatest Musical Hits!)

7. Playing "Musical Chairs" (use washcloths/paper towels on floor)
Children walk around the outside of the circle formed by washcloths. Each child should have one washcloth. Children sit down on the washcloth when the music stops! No elimination of players...everyone is included in the activity. Vary the locomotor pattern by having the children jump, gallop, hop, or skip around the circle.

8. Skating
Use paper plates, shoe boxes, tissue boxes, or paper bags for pretend skates. Step on one plate with each foot and push and slide plates (skates) around the floor. Can skate on tile, concrete, or carpet. If a child is having difficulty keeping feet on the paper plates, boxes, or bags, a strip of masking tape can be applied over the top of the shoe to attach it to the pretend skates.

Skating to Music

Can you skate: backward? Forward? in a big circle?

9. Creative Play
 - Make a tunnel, fort, teepee, igloo, or cave from an empty appliance box or blanket draped between two pieces of furniture.

Imitate animal actions:

"Can you make your body move like a..."

- | | |
|------------|------------|
| • frog | • elephant |
| • kangaroo | • crab |
| • horse | • dinosaur |
| • rabbit | • snake |
| • duck | • bear |
| • seal | • bird |

10. Bubble Play

With bubble solution and wands, blow bubbles and try to...

- hit it
- pop it with your finger, knee, foot
- step on it
- jump over it
- smash it with both hands
- catch it

Adult can hold the bubble wand in front of a fan to create a room full of bubbles for several children playing!

(See **Outdoor Play** section for Bubble Solution Recipe and for more ideas on Bubble Play)

11. Imitate animal movements.

Can you move your body like a: bear, seal, snake, duck, crab, elephant, rabbit, horse, frog?

12. *Balloon Play

Balloon play can be a creative and fun way for a child to experience manipulating a moving object. The slower moving speed means more time for a child to react and more success in controlling the balloon. This means it can be an effective tool in learning pre-ball skills. Experience in catching a balloon can assist a child who is unsuccessful at catching a ball.

- Can you catch, hit, bat, kick the balloon?
- Can you tap the balloon with your: knee, elbow, leg, finger, head, foot?
- Can you: jump over it, go under it, hit it fast, hit it slow, hit it up high, down low?
- Count how many times you can hit your balloon before it touches the floor!

Play balloon volleyball using a string taped to two walls to act as the net.

Play balloon tetherball: Attach a string to balloon and secure the other end of the string to the ceiling. Push, hit, tap, and catch the tetherball.

**Close adult supervision is required when using balloons due to the choking hazard resulting from children inserting deflated or broken balloon pieces into their mouths. Never use balloons with children who have a latex allergy. Balloons, inflated or deflated, should be stored out of the reach of children.*

Outdoor Play

1. Ride a trike or bike
2. Ride a scooter
3. Pull a wagon
4. Rollerskate
5. Tumble on the grass (forward roll/somersault)
6. Log roll on grass (right/left, up/down a gentle slope)
7. Yard Play – move across the yard by:
 - walking (forward/backward)
 - running (forward/backward)
 - hopping
 - galloping
 - sliding
 - skipping

8. Play “Leap Frog”
9. Gunny Sack Play
10. Wheelbarrow Play
11. Play Group Games:
 - “Hide and Seek”
 - Tag games
 - “Clean Up Your Backyard”
 - “Red Light, Green Light”
 - “Captain, May I?”
 - “Midnight” (“What Time is it Mr. / Mrs. Fox?”)
 - “Fox and Goose”
 - Hopscotch (with or without points)
 - Tug of War

(See Appendix B for descriptions of Selected Group Games)

12. Hula Hoop Play
 - Twist, twirl, jump in/out of hoop on ground, roll it
 - play “Musical Hoops”
 - twirl/swing hoop around your: waist, wrist, arm, neck, leg
 - roll hoop to a friend
 - roll hoop and run beside it
 - roll it with a backspin so it returns to roller

13. Jump rope
14. Hoppity Hop Play
15. Bubble Play
 - ”Can you...”
 - Squish the bubble with both hands?
 - Pop it with one finger?

- Kick the bubble?
- Pop it with your knee
- Jump over the bubble?
- Chase the bubble?
- Reach up and grab the bubble?

Homemade Bubble Makers may include:

- Paper or foam cup with bottom cut out. Place bottom opening in solution and blow bubble through top opening.
- Plastic holder from a six-pack of soda cans. Attach the entire six-pack holder to a wooden craft stick with duct tape. Insert plastic holder in the bubble solution. Then hold it up into the wind while moving your hand to create many bubbles.

Homemade bubble solution recipe:

 _ cup Joy or Dawn dishwashing liquid
 4 _ cups water
 4 tablespoons glycerin (available at drug stores)
 Gently stir the mixture together.

16. Water Balloon Play
 - Throw balloon up in the air and catch it.
 - Throw balloon higher and higher.
 - Throw and catch water balloon with friend. (Start with thrower and catcher close together and gradually increase the distance for a challenge!)
17. Water Balloon Basketball
 - Use a low goal, such as Fischer Price/Little Tykes, or use a large box or a garbage or laundry basket as the goal.
18. Water Sponge Play
 - Dunk sponge ball in water and throw to a friend. Splash!
19. Run through a sprinkler
 - Can you jump over the stream of water?
20. Play in kiddie swimming pool
21. Flying a kite.
22. Catch butterflies.
23. Take a Family Walk around the neighborhood.
24. Frisbee Play
 - Use soft and lightweight frisbees made from foam, paper plates, or pizza cardboards.

25. *Obstacle Course Play
 - Obstacle courses made from old car or bike tires, hula hoops, appliance boxes, ropes, picnic tables. Use available objects to safely and creatively move over, around, through, under, in, out, on, off, and in between.

*Refer to Appendix A for an example of an obstacle course.
26. Walk on a balance board made from a 6 foot long 2” X 4” board.
27. Ball Play
 - Throw small/medium/large balls overhand, underhand to a target or partner.
 - Catch, kick, roll, or bounce a ball
 - Play Beachball Volleyball
 - Play Driveway Hockey (using a soft puck or ball)
 - Play basketball (with a low goal)
 - Play T-ball
28. Large Muscle Equipment Play
 - swings, slides, teeter-totters, gliders, climbers, ladders, bridges, balance beams, tunnels, swinging rings, stairs
29. Build a snowman
30. Throw and catch snowballs
31. Go sledding down a hill
32. Make angels in the snow
33. Walk through the snow (up/down hills)
34. Build a snow fort/igloo
35. Go ice skating
36. Community Movement Opportunities:
 - Gymnastics’ Clubs
 - Dance Studio
 - Ice Skating Rink- indoor/outdoor
 - Community Center - variety of fitness and movement programs for all ages.
 - Parks and Playgrounds – community, school, city, county, or state.
 - Swimming – free play swim or lessons at: area lakes, school pools, fitness center.
 - Fitness/Health Club
 - Community Education – School district. A variety of family activities, Fun Nights, special events.
 - City Parks and Recreation – local activities, events for children.

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- County/Regional Nature Center – variety of nature activities walks for families.
- Family Fun walk/run for charity.
- Courage Center
- Therapeutic horseback riding