

Ball skills - Sending and Receiving!

Notes

This activity is for children who are at the early stages of developing their gross motor skills and are not yet able to throw and catch a ball. All you need is a ball, but you might want to think carefully about the type of ball that you use (especially if your child isn't motivated to play with a typical ball). You could use a ball with a bell in it, or one with flashing lights (especially great to play with in a darkened room!).

Sit on the floor, facing your child, with your legs in a 'V' shape and try to encourage your child to do the same (might need physical prompt from another adult/sibling). Make a judgement on a realistic distance and roll the ball so that it lands in between the legs of your child. If they are motivated they will hopefully engage with receiving the ball, and may even pick it up to examine it. Encourage them to roll the ball back to you in the same fashion (again a physical prompt may be necessary initially). Take turns to exchange the ball, and when you are feeling more confident, reduce physical prompts and increase the distance between you.

EARLIER LEARNING OPPORTUNITIES: If your child isn't ready for this activity (or struggles with maintaining sitting balance) you could try offering your child a variety of different types of ball to explore whilst lying on their side (or on their front on a wedge). Encourage them to feel the ball and to move it around - for this activity different textured balls would be great.

EXTENSION IDEAS: If your child has mastered sending and receiving you could start working on some catching skills. The easiest way to do this is to start with a large ball (a beach ball is perfect) that is light and easy to catch. Start with the thrower standing very close to the catcher. As your child gains confidence, move further away, and gradually decrease the size of the ball. Encourage them to keep their eyes on the ball (not their hands!)

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