

## ACTIVITY PLAN 17 – OBSTACLE COURSE

### Aim

To improve climbing ability, co-ordination and balance skills

### Age

24–35 months

### Equipment

Playground equipment such as slide and trestle, tunnel (or cardboard box), balance board (or wood plank), blocks for stepping up and down, hoops ropes and mat, low hurdles and a wedge

### Alternative equipment options

Park equipment

### Household equipment

- rope or hose
- hoops or shapes marked with tape or chalk
- washing basket or large boxes for stepping in
- variety of objects for stepping over

### Area required

Indoor or outdoor space of suitable size

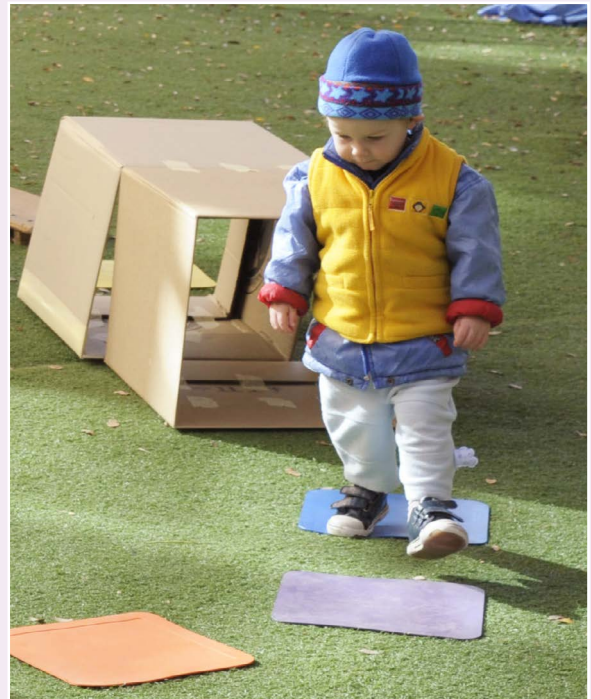
### Time

10 minutes

### How?

Set up equipment in a large circular shape on the ground. Ideally there should be equipment to practise:

- stepping up and down (e.g. blocks)
- moving in and out and through (e.g. removalist boxes or tunnels)
- stepping or jumping over (e.g. hurdles or large cushions)
- climbing (e.g. a ladder to a small slide or trestle)
- balancing walking on a straight line (e.g. a rope or beam or balance board made from a plank of wood)
- rolling up and down (wedges).



Ensure there are enough stations to cater for all children to be involved and to limit the waiting time between activities.

Demonstrate how to approach all the obstacles as well as giving children instructions during the activity. Especially to:

- hold on as they climb
- approach a trestle by lifting the outside leg over and turning the body as they lift the other leg over so that they are now facing the other way and can climb down the trestle backwards
- hold arms out to the sides to aid balance when walking on a balance beam or board
- look at where they are placing their feet.

Rotate obstacles daily to ensure practise for a variety of activities.

## Safety

Close adult supervision is required for any activity where the equipment is raised, especially at activities using the trestle and slide.

## Easier

Provide assistance by holding children's hands or standing close by and speaking encouragingly to them. Decrease the number of activities in the course.

## Harder

Increase the number and/or variety of activities or raise the height of the equipment e.g. higher blocks and boxes.

## Key points

For climbing:

- Children should always hold onto the equipment (not a person) for support
- When climbing up, place hands up onto a higher rung and then step up with one foot then the other (older children will develop the ability to climb using alternative arm/leg pattern).
- When climbing over the top of a trestle, it is important for children to learn to place hands to one side and lift one leg over at a time. They need to turn their body as they climb over the top of the trestle
- When climbing down backwards, instruct the child to bring one foot down to the rung below, feeling for it with their foot. Then bring the second leg down, followed by their hands. Repeat if there is another rung.