

Catching Activities - 5 - 12

Catching is the third step in basic ball handling skills, and it is usually the last of these skills to be mastered, sometime after 2 years of age. Teaching your child to catch is an activity which should be approached cautiously - if he or she isn't ready and gets hit with the ball, it will knock his or her confidence and you may have difficulty convincing them to try again.

Foster and Hartigan suggest the following tips for teaching your child to catch successfully:

- Let your child hug the ball close to his/her body. This hug forms the basis of the catch.
- Once he or she enjoys hugging the ball close to his or her body, he or she will begin to actively seek the ball and time his or her hands to trap the ball against his/her chest. You can help by guiding the ball to his/her tummy in slow motion, encouraging him or her to trap it in a tummy hug.
- Again using slow motion, guide the ball into your toddlers hands for a two-handed catch.
- Bounce the ball and encourage him or her to chase it and catch it "on the bounce".
- Bounce the ball so that it arrives level with his/her navel. Don't expect him/her to catch it first go, but when he/she does, give plenty of praise.
- Throw the ball to, or below, his tummy level.

Activity

- Individual exploration using a variety of equipment including different sized balls, balloons and bean bags.
- Working in pairs further develop catching skills by practising bouncing and throwing to each other
- Four or six square – encouraging passing in a variety of ways.
- Pass and Follow (Kiwidex pg 200 – in groups of 3 have 2 children standing on one side and one on the other. First person throws the ball to 2nd who throws it back to third. Once the first person has thrown the ball, they run behind 2nd and 3rd then throws to 1st. Repeat several times.
- Catch It (FMS Manual pg 185) – in two teams of 3 facing each other. The aim of each team is to land the ball in the oppositions space without them catching it on the full.

