

# Scarves

Scarf play holds fascination for children of all ages. The novelty of the item is exciting as well as challenging. Scarf play can help to enhance fundamental movement skills such as hand-eye coordination and eye tracking, teach important concepts, and help children to express creative movements. It is also a wonderful sensory activity. For younger children, the ability to track moving objects transfers to many games and sports.

Make sure your scarves are light-weight. They don't have to be store bought fancy ones; any old light-weight material that can easily be ripped up into scarf like pieces will work just as well.



## Scarf Activities for Under 5s and School Aged Children

### Locomotion

#### Scarf Tag

Get children to tuck their scarf into their pocket or band of pants/skirt, so that it is hanging out as a tail. Children now have to try and catch other children's tails, while trying to move around and keep theirs safe. To start with once a child takes another child's tail encourage them to hand it back so they can continue playing.

To increase the challenge let them keep any scarves they catch, tucking them into their clothes as they go. Make sure they only take one at a time though.

#### Scarf Stamp in Locomotion

Ask the children to get into pairs and one of them put a scarf into the edge of their sock or shoe. They then have to run away and the other chases them and tries to stand on the scarf. When the scarf has been stood on, the second child puts it in their sock and runs away to be chased.

#### Catch the Dragons Tail

Played in small groups of 6 - 8.

Children line up holding each other's waists with the back person tucking a scarf into the back of their skirt, shorts, jersey or pocket.

On 'go' the front person in the line (Dragon) chases his own tail.

When caught the dragon goes to the back and everyone moves up.

Variation – each group tries to catch another group's tail.

#### Magic scarf

Get the children to dance or move around to music. When the music stops, get them to move to a scarf. At this point magic scarves make the children freeze in different positions on different coloured scarves e.g. green scarf – like a lion, blue scarf – like a giraffe.

## Manipulation

- Wave scarf above head, on ground, under legs. One armed swinging, forwards and backwards, then swap arms and do on other side. Big o's in front of body with the scarf, then attempt doing the first letter of your name – big movements.
- Screw scarf up and make it into a small ball in your hands (great for hand movement). On the count of 3 get children to throw the scarf up into the air and catch it. Repeat this, getting children to screw their scarf up each time. Use different body parts children have to catch it on instead of just using hands; head, elbow, knee, foot, back.
- Can you throw and catch with only one hand? Try the other hand.
- Throw it across your body from one hand to the other.
- Throw scarf up. How many times can you clap before catching?
- Throw a scarf with a bean bag in the middle of it up into the air try and catch both the scarf and bean bag as they will fall at different rates.
- Random scarf catching in locomotion – in pairs, ask one child to move away from the other and randomly throw the scarf in any direction. The second child has to catch it before it hits the ground and then takes off to do the same. Suggest to the children that they throw it high, low, to the side, behind or in front.
- Scarf Hoop Twist – Throw the scarf into the air and pass it through the hoop as many times as possible before it hits the floor.
- Scarf Hoop Catch – Throw the scarf into the air and catch it on the edge of a hoop.

### Toss and Introduce

Each participant receives one scarf. Activity begins with children walking and tossing the scarf with their dominant hand in a designated area.

When they meet another participant they toss their scarves in the air simultaneously three times. On the first toss, one person says their name (i.e. "My name is \_\_\_\_\_"), on the second toss the other person says their name, and on the third toss they grab the other person's scarf and then look to find another participant to repeat the process.

The goal is to talk to someone different every time – hoping to introduce yourself to everyone in the group at least once.

## Balance and Rotation

### Co-operative pencil rolling

Get children to lie opposite to one another so that they can join hands and roll together. Use scarves to hold onto.

### Hoop Chain

Ask the children to stand in a row along a line either holding hands or holding a scarf between two of them. Put a hoop in the hand of the last child. The aim of the game is to get the hoop from one end to the other without breaking the chain. Try having two groups of children doing it to see who can do it fastest. To make it harder stand the children on a plank with tyres underneath.

## Juggling

Juggling is a great skill to teach to students. When juggling keep the scarves between the thumb, index finger and the middle fingers. Getting height on the scarves is useful when juggling. Try practising with one scarf first.

Juggling with two scarves - hold one scarf in each hand, toss one in the air, and when it gets to the top of the peak arch, toss the other scarf across your body. Catch the first one and then the second. Do not toss both scarves up at the same time. Be sure to toss and catch with both hands.

Juggling three scarves is tricky and takes a lot of practice. Hold two scarves in one hand and one in the other. Start by tossing one of the two scarves and, while the scarf is in the air, toss the scarf from the other hand.

Release the second scarf from the two-scarf hand. Catch the first scarf and then toss the scarf from the first hand and catch the other scarf. It is helpful to say after the first scarf is released: "toss, catch, toss, catch." At least one scarf is always in the air. Juggling with scarves is a great precursor to juggling other objects like beanbags, rings, balls and hoops.

