

Fitness is Fun

Fitness is Fun

Audience: Teachers & Administrators

Preparation Time

Activity 1: 5 min
Activity 2: 5 min
Activity 3: 5 min

Duration of Lesson

Introduction: 5 min
Activity 1: 15 min
Activity 2: 15 min
Activity 3: 15 min
Closing: 5 min

Handouts

Locomotor Skills
Object Control Skills
Developing Object Control Skills
Bean Bags and Balls
Streamers
Seasonal Indoor Activities(4)

Goal

To increase knowledge and awareness of the health benefits of physical activity, and increase the amount of time children are physically active in child care.


Participant Objectives

Participants will:

1. Name at least one benefit of physical activity.
2. Define current physical activity recommendations for children.
3. Name at least one reason preschool children should learn motor and object control skills.
4. State at least one benefit of modeling physical activity with the children.
5. Define current recommendations regarding media viewing.

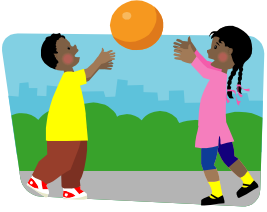


Points to Cover/Trainer's Notes

Points to Cover	Trainer's Notes
Benefits of physical activity	Being active can build stronger bones and muscles, give energy, and reduce the risk of obesity, diabetes and heart disease. It can even help us sleep better.
Current physical activity recommendations 	The National Association of Sports and Physical Education (NASPE) has established recommended levels of physical activity for children from birth to five years of age. NASPE recommends preschool children accumulate 60 minutes of structured activity and 60 minutes or more of unstructured activity daily. They also recommend that children not be sedentary more than 60 minutes at a time except when they are sleeping. (Show participants the <i>Active Start</i> book which details activity guidelines. This is part of their toolkit.)
Current media viewing recommendations	Television and computers can be a source of inactivity. Overall, children watch too much television and spend too much time with other screen media (i.e. computer games). The American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) recommends that

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<p>Current media viewing recommendations (continued)</p>	<p>television, video and other visual recording should not be used with children under two years of age. Preschool children should limit media time to no more than two hours per day of educational programming or programs that actively engage child movement. The NYC Department of Health and Mental Hygiene recently issued regulations limiting media time in licensed child care centers consistent with AAP guidelines.</p>
<p>Skills development</p> 	<p>Preschool children should develop basic motor and object control skills that provide the foundation for future development and sport skill acquisition.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Motor skills are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Run ○ Jump ○ Hop ○ Gallop ○ Side-slide ○ Leap • Object control skills involve the use of objects such as balls or Frisbees. They are: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Roll ○ Throw ○ Catch ○ Dribble ○ Kick ○ Strike <p>Many preschool children are in the developmental stage of acquiring these skills. Children who develop these skills during childhood are more likely to succeed in active pursuits later in life, increasing the likelihood that they will enjoy being active.</p> <p>Competitive sports are not the best choice for preschool children. To encourage skills development during structured play, offer children the choice of several play options. Set up several stations for different structured activities so children can choose which activity they would like to participate in.</p>

Activities

- Activity 1: Developing Skills for Life
- Activity 2: Be Active: Have Fun!
- Activity 3: Keeping Active on the Worst of Days

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Closing

1. Review participant objectives.
2. Discuss the next class.

References

Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to 5 Years

Media Guidelines for Parents

Sports, Play and Active Recreation for Kids Early Childhood Preschool Program



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Activity 1: Developing Skills for Life

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 15 min

Supplies

easel
easel pad
markers
Animal Boogie by Debbie Harter (book and CD)
CD Player
pitcher of chilled water
glasses



Preparation Prior to Class

1. Familiarize yourself with the book and CD *Animal Boogie* and practice the movements while listening to selection #2.
2. Assemble the easel and place a pad on the easel.
3. Refrigerate a pitcher of water.

Implementation

1. Discuss the motor and object control skills that pre-school children should develop in order to provide the basis for succeeding in competitive sports later in life. List the skills on the easel pad as they are discussed. (See: Skills development*)
 - Motor skills – run, jump, hop, gallop, side-slide, leap.
 - Object control skills – roll, throw, catch, dribble, kick, strike.
2. Demonstrate the correct way in which each skill should be done.
3. Discuss that it is important that this skills development should be part of structured activities (vs. unstructured activities) to ensure that children are learning to do the skills correctly have adequate practice allowing them to learn how to make their bodies move.
4. Ask participants to identify two activities for each skill that they can plan in the child care day to help children develop these skills. Write these activities on the easel pad.
5. Show the group the tool kit materials that correspond to each, such as *Active Start: A Statement of Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Birth to 5 Years*, *Appropriate Practice in Movement Programs for Young Children 3 to 5*, *Berenstain Bears and Too Much TV*, *Early Childhood Classic* (music CD), *Playing With Your 3 to 5 Year Old*.
6. Discuss with participants that structured activities can be fun for the children while helping them to develop skills that make them confident movers who enjoy physical activity throughout their lives.
7. Explain that you will be demonstrating a structured activity that they can use with the children. Encourage the group to participate and explain that it is important to

* Underline denotes Points to Cover discussed in the Trainer's Notes in the lesson plan.

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Activity 1: Developing Skills for Life

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 15 min

model physical activity so children will see it as a normal part of life.

8. Read *Animal Boogie* to the participants. Explain that when reading to the children they should pause on each page that asks what creature is doing the movement described. Then, allow the children to answer this question before turning the page to reveal the answer. They should then pause on each page that identifies the creature and ask the children to practice the movement that the creature does.
9. When you finish reading the story, play selection #2 on the CD and dance the animal boogie with the participants as the singer guides.
10. Provide participants with a glass of water, explaining that water is a great drink when they are thirsty.
11. Discuss with participants how to measure their level of activity and how to help children learn what exercise feels like. (See: [Measuring physical activity](#))

Additional Discussion during the Activity

- Suggest that children can also be encouraged to dance freely along with the music on selection #3 as well. They should use their discretion regarding how long to dance.
- Preschool children should participate in at 60 minutes per day of unstructured activity and 60 minutes per day of structured activity per day. (See: [Current physical activity recommendations](#))
- Preschool children should not be inactive for more than 60 minutes at a time except when they are sleeping. (See: [Current physical activity recommendations](#)) Media time should be no more than two hours of educational programming or programming that promotes activity per day. (See: [Current media viewing recommendations](#))



Locomotor Skills

SKILL	DESCRIPTION	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
<i>RUN</i>	The ability to move steadily with springing steps so that both feet leave the ground for an instant with each stride.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bends elbows, moves arms in opposition to legs 2. Both feet are off the ground momentarily 3. Lands with a heel to toe pattern and narrow foot placement 4. Non-support leg bent approximately 90°
<i>JUMP</i>	The ability to perform a horizontal jump (takes off and lands on both feet simultaneously) from a standing position.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Starts with knees bent and arms extended behind body 2. Fully extends arms forcefully forward and upward on jump 3. Takes off and lands on both feet simultaneously 4. Arms swing downward at side upon landing
<i>HOP</i>	The ability to hop (on one foot) a minimum distance on each foot.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Arms are flexed and swing forward at takeoff to produce force 2. Non-support leg swings forward and back 3. Foot of nonsupport leg foot remains behind body 4. Hops three times with each foot consecutively
<i>GALLOP</i>	The ability to perform a quick, step-together-step pattern with a lead foot in front.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Bends arms to waist level at take off 2. A step forward with the lead foot followed by a step with the trailing foot up to the lead foot, keeping the same lead foot in front 3. Both feet are off the ground momentarily 4. Maintains a rhythmic pattern for four consecutive gallops
<i>SIDE-SLIDE</i>	The ability to slide sideways on a straight line, to the right and left.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Turns body sideways so shoulders and hips are aligned with a line on the floor 2. Steps sideways with lead foot followed by a slide of the trailing foot 3. Completes four continuous step-slide to the right and to the left
<i>LEAP</i>	The ability to leap (an elongated step) over an object.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Takes off on one foot, lands on opposite foot, in a large step-like action 2. Both feet are off the ground longer than running 3. Reaches forward with arm in opposition to lead leg

Object Control Skills



SKILL	DESCRIPTION	PERFORMANCE CRITERIA
UNDERHAND ROLL	The ability to roll a ball forward toward a target with the preferred hand.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Swings hand down and back, reaching behind the trunk while chest faces target 2. Steps with opposite foot as roll is initiated 3. Bends knees to lower body 4. Releases ball close to the floor so it does not bounce higher than 4 inches
THROW	The ability to throw a ball at a point on a wall with the preferred hand.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Initiates downward movement of hand/arm 2. Rotates hips and shoulders as throw is made 3. Steps forward w/opposite foot for weight transfer 4. Follows-through when releasing ball
CATCHING	The ability to catch a ball that has been tossed underhand.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Preparation phase: hands/elbows are bent in front of the body 2. Extends arms to reach for ball as it arrives 3. Catches ball with hands only (no chest)
DRIBBLING	The ability to dribble a ball a minimum of four times with dominant hand before catching the ball with both hands, without moving feet.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Contacts ball with one hand around waist level 2. Pushes ball with fingertips (not a slap) 3. Ball bounces on preferred foot side 4. Maintains control of ball for four consecutive bounces without having to move feet to receive it
KICKING	The ability to kick a stationary ball with the preferred foot.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Runs up to the ball 2. Takes a stride immediately before contacting ball 3. Places non-kicking foot even with or slightly behind the ball 4. Kicks ball with instep or shoelaces
STRIKING	The ability to strike a stationary ball with a bat.	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Places dominant hand on bat above non-dominant hand 2. Feet are parallel w/nonpreferred side facing tosser 3. Rotates hip and shoulder during swing 4. Transfers body weight to front foot 5. Bat contacts ball

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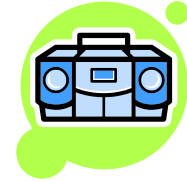
Activity 2: Be Active: Have Fun!

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 20 min

Supplies

CD player*
music CD
poly spots
bean bags/yarn balls
scarves or ribbon wands, or streamers
photocopies of *Developing Object Control Skills* handout
photocopies of *Bean Bags and Balls* handout
photocopies of *Streamers* handout
pitcher of chilled water
glasses



Preparation Prior to Class

1. Familiarize yourself with the music CD.
2. Place poly spots around the room, one for each participant. Place a bean bag on each poly spot.
3. Refrigerate a pitcher of water.

Implementation

1. Review the current physical activity recommendations and the benefits of physical activity. (See: Benefits of physical activity, Current physical activity recommendations[†])
2. Explain to participants that this lesson can be used as structured activity for pre-school children. Explain that you will be modeling the activities as the participants would with the children.
3. Have each participant stand on a poly spot and do the “helicopter” (gently twist and turn and move arms all around) to make sure they have enough room to be active. Have participants spread themselves out if necessary, and explain that they should raise their hand if they can touch someone else, so the teacher can move the poly spot.
4. Explain that the poly spots can be used to develop the children’s motor skills. (See: Skills development) Demonstrate each movement for the group. Then have the participants perform the movements:
 - Walk, gallop, run, side-slide, and hop in place.
 - Step forward off the poly spot and return.
 - Step backward off the poly spot and return.
 - Step sideways off the poly spot and return.
 - Jump forward off the poly spot.

* You may play background music if you desire.

† Underline denotes Points to Cover discussed in the Trainer’s Notes in the lesson plan.


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Activity 2: Be Active: Have Fun!

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 20 min

- Stand behind the poly spot and jump over it.
 - Walk around the poly spot.
 - Straddle the poly spot; then turn and face the other way.
5. Explain that bean bags can be used to develop the children's object control skills and balance. (See: Skills development) Demonstrate each movement for the group. Then have the participants perform the movements. Remind participants to practice on both sides of their bodies:
- Balance bean bag on head, then knee, then foot.
 - Balance bean bag on head and walk around the poly spot.
 - Balance bean bag on shoulder and walk around the poly spot.
6. Give each participant a scarf or crepe paper streamer or ribbon wand, explaining expectations for using the ribbon wand: Do you think we have to be careful with our wands? Why? Yes, we have to be careful not to rip the streamers off the handle. What is the handle? That's right, a stick. Sticks can poke people so we need lots of space. Be careful with our beautiful ribbon wands (streamers).
7. Demonstrate movements using the streamers for the group. Turn on the music CD, then have the participants perform the movements:
- Go up and down like a sideways curve.
 - Go up and down sharply like a sideways zigzag in front of you.
 - Draw a circle over your head.
8. Support cognitive skill development by asking participants to:
- Run across the room, if they have a red streamer.
 - Gallop across the room if they have a yellow streamer.
 - March across the room, if they have a blue streamer.
- 
9. Provide participants with a glass of water, explaining that water is a great drink when they are thirsty.
10. Hand out the *Developing Object Control Skills, Bean Bags and Balls* and the *Streamers* handouts for participants to refer to in the future.
11. Ask participants to name two structured indoor activities for the classroom that they could do using the bean bags, balls and/or streamers/ribbon wands.

Additional Discussion during the Activity

- Remind participants to review safety rules and expectations with children when using objects such as bean bags and ribbon wands.
- Discuss that children can warm up with some music by dancing or moving as they wish.
- Preschool children should participate in at 60 minutes per day of unstructured activity and 60 minutes per day of structured activity per day. (See: Current physical activity recommendations)

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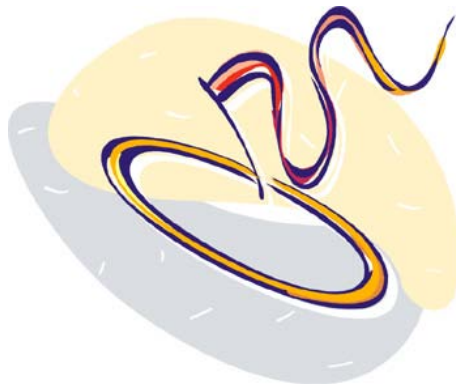
Activity 2: Be Active: Have Fun!

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 20 min

- Preschool children should not be inactive for more than 60 minutes at a time except when they are sleeping. (See: [Current physical activity recommendations](#)) Media time should be no more than two hours of educational programming or programming that promotes activity per day. (See: [Current media viewing recommendations](#))

Adapted from [SPARK Early Childhood](#).



Developing Object Control Skills

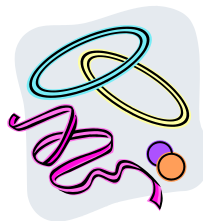
Preschool children should be developing object control skills that provide the foundation for future development and sport skill acquisition. Object control skills involve the use of objects such as balls or Frisbees. They include rolling, throwing, catching, dribbling, kicking, and striking.

Materials and Equipment:

There is no need to purchase special expensive equipment to conduct fun, interesting and educational movement activities with children that develop their object control skills. Equipment can be made from items commonly found around a home. Inexpensive items can also be purchased from discount and dollar stores.

Objects:

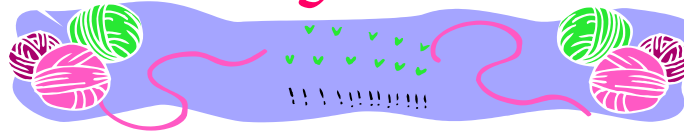
- Yarn balls (variety of sizes and colors) purchased or homemade
- Tennis balls (different colors)
- Beanbags (different sizes, shapes, colors) purchased or made from colorful socks
- Balls that are small and soft such as koosh balls, fleece balls
- Rolled up socks of different colors
- Rolled up dishcloths
- Nylon knee highs filled with batting
- Small nylon mesh pouf sponges
- Rolled up gloves



Targets:

- Hula hoops
- Clothesline taped to the floor, make squares, circles, or lines
- Laundry baskets
- Colorfully decorated cardboard boxes
- Bowling pins made from 2-liter plastic bottles filled with dried beans, small rocks, or strips of colored paper. For safety reasons, securely glue the top on the bottle
- Empty milk cartons
- Shoe boxes standing on end
- Brightly colored paper targets taped to the wall or floor

Bean Bags and Balls



Tossing activities offer children a chance to manipulate a small object by themselves. Using bean bags or balls in activities will develop skills including coordination (hand-eye, fine/gross motor), balance, rhythm and creative movement. Instructors should provide an atmosphere free of competition and encourage children to progress at their own rate.

When conducting tossing, throwing, or catching activities:

- State safety expectations.
- Check to make sure children are far enough apart so children can't touch one another.

Make your own bean bag:



Fill a colorful knee sock 1/2 full with dried beans or rice. Secure with a rubber band. Turn the remainder of the sock inside out around the beans, then twist the sock and fold over the beans again.

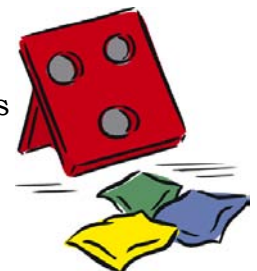
Make your own yarn ball:

Wrap 4-ply yarn around a 5-inch by 5-inch cardboard square about 200 times. Slide the yarn off the cardboard square and secure the yarn near the center with a 24-inch piece of yarn that has been folded in half. Cut the ends of the yarn at the top and bottom. Fluff yarn out to make a ball.



You can use bean bags and balls in many ways:

- Balance on different body parts and on both sides of the body.
- Stand or sit and toss and catch.
- Color identification (have children do various bean bag activities according to color of bean bag).
- Color race
- Hop or leap over
- Toss at hoop, rope, or basket targets



Have water available for the children during fitness time. It's a good idea to have water available to the children all day.

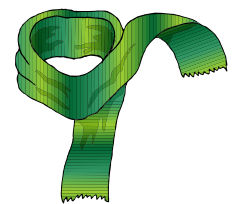
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Streamers

Streamers are another manipulative tool and provide a new venue for stimulation. Physical parameters developed with streamers include hand-eye coordination, fine and gross motor skills, lateral and bilateral movements, rhythm and timing. Cognitive skills such as color identification, body part identification, patterning and listening can all be integrated into working with streamers.

Items that can be used as streamers:

- Colorful scarves either purchased or found at home
- Strips of colored crepe paper taped to or strung through a short cardboard tube or attached to a wooden or plastic ring
- Purchased ribbon wands

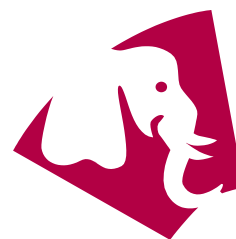


When working with the ribbon wands and streamers:

- State safety expectations.
- Make sure children are far enough apart so they can't touch one another with the streamers.
- Prompt children to brainstorm safety considerations.

You can use the streamers in other ways:

- Mimic actions:
 - Flick like a fly.
 - Wave like an elephant trunk.
 - Slither on the ground like a snake.
- Toss in the air and catch by the handle.
- Toss from one hand to another.



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Adapted from SPARK Early Childhood

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Activity 3: Keeping Active on the Worst of Days

Preparation Time: 5 min

Activity Time: 15 min

Supplies

easel
easel pad
markers
photocopies of four *Seasonal Activities* handouts



Preparation Prior to Class

Assemble the easel and place a pad on the easel.

Implementation

1. Review the benefits of physical activity and the current physical activity recommendations for preschool children. (See: Benefits of Physical Activity*) Review what is meant by physical activity and exercise. (See: Measuring physical activity)
2. Introduce the purpose of the brainstorm, which is to share ideas on how to promote physical activity in the child care center.
3. Review brainstorming rules:
 - Any idea is fine – no comments on the ideas of others
 - It is okay to build on someone else’s idea
 - Yell out your ideas
 - We will discuss ideas later
4. Record participant responses to icebreaker and brainstorming questions on the pad.
5. Start with an icebreaker: What is your favorite way to be active? Return to the participants’ favorite activities when brainstorming role modeling ideas and ways to create an activity friendly environment.
6. Then, move into the brainstorming questions. Use prompts, if necessary, to move conversation along:
7. How can you role model an enthusiasm for physical activity?
 - Demonstrate movements during structured activities with the children
 - Act out stories and poems as you read them to children
 - Talk about physical activities you enjoy and ask children what they like
 - Be active while children are engaging in unstructured physical activity
8. How can you create an environment that encourages physical activity?
 - Provide toys and equipment that encourage active play
 - Play music to promote dancing and spontaneous movement
 - Set up “stations” of structured activities for children to choose

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Activity 3: Keeping Active on the Worst of Days

Preparation Time: 5 min




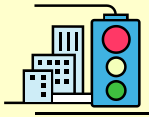









Activity Time: 15 min

- Keep parents informed of the physical activity program at the center
 - Invite parents to events at the center that include games and physical activities
9. How can you keep children active indoors even when the weather is bad? Distribute the four *Seasonal Activities* handouts after participants have had a chance to contribute their own ideas
 10. After the brainstorming is over, ask each participant to name one way their center could promote physical activity, especially on days when the weather is not cooperative.



SUMMER FITNESS BINGO

On days when you can't be outside, play **FITNESS BINGO**. Ask the class if they want an up, down, across or diagonal **BINGO** and then do the 5 activities for the **BINGO**.

B	I	N	G	O
Play music and dance; Freeze when the music stops 	Flick a fly off your: Shoulder, nose, tummy, toes 	Skate around the room as if it were cold outside 	Wiggle-5 counts Shake-12 counts Repeat to music	Toss a scarf, move your body so the scarf lands on your arms
Play red light, green light 	Jump your jiggles out Yawn your sleepies out	Buzz around the room like a bee: Put your hands together behind your back and side-slide	Play follow-the-leader 	Do the hokey-pokey 
Twirl, skip, dance in place with your streamer: you are a butterfly 	Pretend you are picking cherries off a tree. Now pick pretend peaches	 Free Space	Pass a bean bag around your waist. Now rock forward and shake the bean bag	Play head, shoulders, knees and toes
Take your pulse Run in place for 3 minutes Take your pulse again	Hop on your left foot Hop on your right foot	Form a conga line 	Sit on the floor and play mum ball with a bean bag	Jump high Jump low Jump fast Jump slow 
Play choo-choo 	Sit on the floor and pass a bean bag around. Don't let it fall to the ground	Stomp on bubble wrap 	Flap like a bird, slither like a snake	Make up your own dance using your streamer 

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Fall Fitness Fun

Here are games to play indoors on a fall day:

Simon Says



Play this body parts identification without any elimination.

Jog in place.
Tip toe around the room.
Bend and Stretch.
Lift your heels.
Dance the Twist.
Stretch like a cat.
Do the Swim.
Make your body a bridge.

Mirror Game

Stand facing the children, explaining that you want them to do exactly as you do. Begin with slow movements that you can do in place.

WINTER CALENDAR OF ACTIVITIES

SUNDAY	MONDAY	TUESDAY	WEDNESDAY	THURSDAY	FRIDAY	SATURDAY
 <p><i>If Winter Weather Keeps You Inside, Try These Indoor Activities</i></p>						During the winter month, try to make every day special.
	Sing Jingle Bells and march in place. Do it again two more times.	JUMP Do one jump for every day in the month.	Try to keep a balloon in the air for a long time.	Give yourself a gift! Make up a happy dance.	Jump, hop or leap for at least three minutes to some music.	
	ZOOM Pretend you are a car and zoom around the room.	How fast can you shake hands with everyone in the room?	Run in place with a smile on your face for a whole song.	Crouch down, jump up high 20 times.	Kick a balloon in the air. Use your feet and hands to keep it there.	
	Balance on one foot as long as you can. Rest a moment and do it again.	Flap your wings and pretend to fly around the room.	BOUNCE Bounce a ball and catch it as many times as you can.	Hop on one foot and count to 10. Hop on the other foot. Do it again!	Leap like a frog all across the room.	
	Walk like a bear on your hands and feet. Growl at every bear you meet.	Act out building a pretend snowman inside.	Roll like a log across the floor. Be sure you don't roll out the door!	Dance to music you like for three minutes.	GALLOP Gallop fast, gallop slow, as three times around the room you go.	

Adapted with permission from Diane Craft

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Spring Indoor Activities



What goes up when the rain comes down?
An umbrella.

Any time the weather keeps you inside, try one of the activities listed below:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____
6. _____
7. _____
9. _____
10. _____

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit and toss bean bags. Hop around the room. Run in place. Stand on one leg.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Shake your sillies out. Balance your bean bag on your head like an umbrella. Jump over puddles.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Start small and grow like a flower. Gallop. Dance to music.
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