

## Trafford Children's Therapy Service

# EARLY YEARS - GETTING READY TO THROW, CATCH AND KICK A BALL

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**BALL SKILLS** are a combination of many different elements such as:-

**TIMING** to predict where and when the ball will land

**TRACKING** with the eyes as the ball moves through the air

**ABILITY** to use two hands together smoothly

**ABILITY** to judge **DISTANCE, SPEED** and **DIRECTION**

Making **POSTURAL ADJUSTMENTS** to be in the right place at the right time **ABILITY** to

**GRASP** and **RELEASE** at the right moment

**ABILITY** to **GRADE MOVEMENTS** smoothly

These are ideas that will help your child to develop these skills. Use large balls such as blow-up balls, Balzac (balloon ball), balloons, Velcro ball with paddle to catch, screwed up paper, beanbags, square chiffon scarves, cushions. Start with rolling balls between you and then use balloons that move slower in the air so that your child has a better chance of hitting or catching it.

- Rolling a ball between you as you sit on the ground
- Pass a large ball between you and child
- Rolling a ball towards a target, e.g. cardboard box on its side
- Put balloon between you and child, gradually increase the distance
- Make skittles with plastic bottles partly filled with sand. Roll ball to knock them over
- Use balls, beanbags, cushions, scrunched up paper to aim at skittles, empty tubs, small stuffed toys etc.
- Try putting a sweet or Hula Hoop or something on each one to motivate the child, so that when the target is hit, the sweet can be eaten.
- Use the scoops above and "Pour" lentils, sand, water or small balls from one to the other, gradually increasing distance between the hands.
- Roll the ball to chase and stop it
- Stand at either end of a table and roll the ball along the table, catching it as it falls off the end.



- Keep a balloon in the air using hands
- Hit a balloon back and forth using a plastic bottle or empty cling film tube or wrapping paper tube.
- Using bubbles, blow a small number up in the air and encourage the child to watch them float down, then clap hands together to pop them
- Blow bubbles for the child to pop them with index finger
- Use scrunched up paper and a receptacle such as a box or wastepaper bin. Aim paper balls into it. Vary the distance of the receptacle and the height at which it is placed. Make sure the child can succeed.
- Make a “target” of a large circle of brightly coloured paper or card stuck to a wall with Blu tak at eye level. Have the child aim balls, cushions, beanbags or scrunched up paper at it.
- Place a hoop on the floor and aim beanbags, cushions or scrunched up paper balls into it. Move onto two hoops placed on the floor placed slightly apart.
- Throw a ball or balloon directly above the head in order to catch it
- Bounce a ball and catch it
- Throw and catch with one another, start by bouncing it to each other
- Kick the ball between two people

