

## MOVING TO THRIVE: ACTIVITIES FOR AGES 3 TO 5 YEARS

### INDOOR OBSTACLE COURSE

**Materials:**

Pillows  
Laundry baskets  
Ribbon or streamers  
Rolls of socks  
Balloons

**Instructions:**

Obstacle courses are a great way to get and keep your child active. Many different types of obstacles can be set up. For example, use laundry baskets as targets for children to throw a ball or a pair of socks at. Stack pillows or cushions for children to climb. Tape up balloons or streamers to walls to create an obstacle course for children to run or crawl through without breaking the streamers or touching the balloons. For more obstacle ideas, visit Pinterest and other kid friendly websites.

### TAKE SHAPE GAME

**Materials:**

Painters tape

**Instructions:**

This is a great activity in which your child can practice following directions; learning shapes, letters, and numbers; and, most importantly, being physically active inside. Make a variety of shapes, letters, or numbers on the floor with the tape. Develop a variety of directions for your child to follow as he or she navigates to the next shape. Here are a few examples of directions: Jump to the square! Hop to the letter A! Sit on the diamond!  
Crawl to the triangle!

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### DICE PLAY



#### Materials:

Two dices, Paper, Pencil

#### Instructions:

On a piece of paper, label each number on the dice as a movement. For example, hop on one foot 10 times, fly like a bird to the bathroom and back, bark like a dog 5 times. You can assign one dice for movements and the other for a type of animal. Then create unique movements and sounds, like slither like a monkey or hop like a fish. **\*\*Always supervise your child while doing this activity as small parts are a choking hazard.\*\***

### MARBLE PAINTING



#### Materials:

Disposable baking pan, paint, white paper to fit the baking pan, tape and marbles.

#### Instructions:

Tape the white paper to the bottom of the baking pan. Put four 4-quarter- size drops of paint on the paper. Place a couple of marbles in the tray and let your child roll the marbles around in the paint. Once the painting is to your child's liking, carefully remove the paper from the baking pan and place it somewhere to dry. Try creating different paintings with different colors and different size marbles. **\*\*Always supervise your child while doing this activity as small parts are a choking hazard.\*\***

### STICKY NOTE WALL BOP



#### Materials:

Yellow sticky posted notes, maker, beanbag or stuffed animal or small softball.

#### Instructions:

On yellow posted notes, write one letter on each note (you can make as many posted notes as you want). Put all the posted notes on a door or wall, and make sure they are spread out. They don't need to be in order and can be scattered over the wall or door you use. Create a line behind which your child will stand with the object he or she has chosen to throw at the yellow posted notes. Next, give your child instructions to throw the object at a specific letter or ask your child to spell a word. You can create a point system and give your child points based on the number of correct letters he or she has spelled correctly.

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### PARACHUTE PLAY

**Materials:**

Parachute (a bed sheet works great!)

**Instructions:**

Have each person hold the parachute or sheet. Fan it upwards by lifting your arms above your head and lower them back to your waist.

Variations: Call out a child's name and have him or her run under the parachute to a new spot while the chute is up in the air. Toss soft balls on the sheet and move your hands quickly up and down to pop the balls all around. Try and keep the soft balls on the sheet! Place a soft object, like a ball or soft stuffed animal, on the sheet and launch the item in the air trying to get the object as high as possible and then catch it. If you have a bigger group of children you can have two groups and have the groups launch soft items to each other.

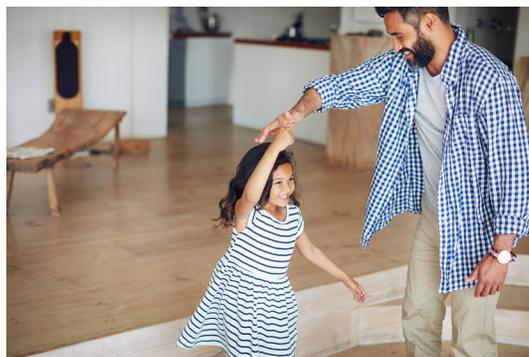
### DANCE PARTY

**Materials:**

Space to move  
Music

**Instructions:**

Turn on the music and start dancing!  
When the music stops, freeze and hold the pose until the music begins again.



### JUMPING LINES

**Materials:**

Painters tape (it's easy to remove)

**Instructions:**

Create three sets of lines on the floor. Each set of lines gets progressively farther apart. The first set should be very close lines for hops. The second set should be medium distance lines for average jumps, and the third set should be big distance lines for leaps!

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### HOMEMADE RING TOSS

**Materials:**

Newspaper  
Masking and decorative tape  
Chair

**Instructions:**

Roll three layers of newspaper from one corner to the opposite corner to form a tube. Fasten the paper tube with masking tape to stop the roll from unraveling. Shape the tube in a circle shape and join the ends with masking tape to form the ring. Wrap with decorative tape.

The object of this game is simple, you toss a ring and try to loop it over the top of the chair legs.

- Keep eyes on the target; then step, swing, and follow through letting go of the ring. Opposite foot forward.
- Stand closer to the target and as your child improves, take a step back to be farther away.
- For older children, you could provide a point system for each chair leg. For example, 10 points for the two top legs and 5 points for the two bottom legs.

### MOVEMENT MAT

**Materials:**

Construction paper  
Tape  
Markers  
Bean bag

**Instructions:**

Create a movement mat by writing a movement word in large print on construction paper. Use word phrases, such as march in place, jump 10 times, wiggle, run in place, stomp your feet, touch your toes, Tape the construction paper together to make a mat at least 3 X 3 (9 total movements). Toss a bean bag and perform the action!

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### SCOOP!



**Materials:** To play, you need 2 plastic one-gallon milk jugs and a beanbag or small ball. To make the scoops, carefully cut the bottoms off the milk jugs. (You may need a grown-up to help you with this part.)

**Instructions:** This game is for two or more players and should be played outside or in an open area. Using your scoops and the beanbag, begin to play catch with your partner. Each time you catch the beanbag, take one step backwards. See how far apart you and your partner can go and still catch the beanbag.

### ANIMAL RACES



#### **Materials:**

Cone

Rope or other material to mark a start and finish line

#### **Instructions:**

Line up at the start line. Hop like a bunny, fly like an eagle, waddle like a duck, or gallop like a horse from the start line to the finish line. Play several rounds changing the animal each time. Add silly animal sounds to get kids laughing!



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## SIMON SAYS!



With no materials needed, this is an easy activity to play with your children! This activity can be played indoors or outdoors or with limited space or plenty of space!

The point of this game is to follow the leader, Simon. One person is selected to play Simon. Simon stands in the front of the group and is responsible for giving tasks to all the other players. Players should only follow a task when Simon starts the instruction with “Simon Says...” The point of the game is for Simon to try and get the players to do a task that Simon did not start with “Simon Says...” For example, if Simon says, “Simon says, ‘March in place!’” all the players should march in place. If Simon says, “Jump up and down!” players should not follow this instruction because it did not start with “Simon Says.” They should just keep marching in place. Those who do not follow orders correctly are eliminated until a winner is identified.

Shake your whole body.	side and make circles with them in the air.	over.
Jump up and down.	Hop on your left foot 10 times.	Show off the muscles in your arms.
Spin around in circles.	Hop on your right foot 10 times.	Lie on the floor and stretch out as far as you can for 10 seconds.
Do a cartwheel.	Hop around like a bunny.	Pretend to shoot a basketball 10 times.
Wave your arms above your head.	Balance on your left foot for 10 seconds.	Pretend to jump rope for 10 seconds.
Walk like a bear on all 4s.	Balance on your right foot for 10 seconds.	Pretend to ride a horse.
Walk like a crab.	Bend down and touch your toes 10 times.	Pretend to milk a cow.
Hop like a frog.	Reach behind you and try to hold your left foot with your right hand without falling over.	Take five of the biggest steps forward that you can.
Walk on your knees.	Reach behind you and try to hold your right foot with your left hand without falling over.	Pretend to lift a car.
Lie on your back and pedal your legs in the air like you are on a bike.		Do the strangest dance you can think of.
Pretend to sit in an invisible chair five times - sit then stand, sit then stand, etc.		Scream.
Hold your arms out at your		

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### SUN MELTED RECYCLE CRAYONS



#### Materials:

Shaped cookie cutters, tin foil, paper plate, and broken crayons.

#### Instructions:

This activity works best when the weather is hot outside. Break crayons into small pieces so they fit in the cookie cutter shapes. Wrap the paper plate with tin foil. Next, place the paper plate in the hottest location and then place the cookie cutters on the tin wrapped plate. Place broken crayon pieces inside the cookie cutters. If it a 100 degree day, the crayons should melt in about 1 hour; if it is less hot, it will take longer. Once you have noticed the pieces have melted, have a parent remove them from the sun and cool them inside. Once cooled, you can use the crayons, which are now in cookie cutter shapes, to color other projects.

### SIDEWALK CHALK OBSTACLE COURSE



#### Materials:

Sidewalk, chalk

#### Instructions:

Instead of skipping and picking up stones like hopscotch, think of different activities that your child can do, like twirl, touch your toes, 10 jumps, arm circles, squats, run a in place for 15 seconds, or sit-ups. Have kids toss a rock and perform the task where the rock lands, or have the kids run the obstacle course from start to finish!

### HOMEMADE BIRD FEEDER



#### Materials:

Large pinecones (or toilet paper rolls), peanut butter, birdseed, raisins, and yarn.

#### Instructions:

If you cannot find pine cones, toilet paper or paper towel rolls will work. Tie the yarn either on the top of the pinecone or pierce it through the cardboard roll. Spread peanut butter all over the pinecone or cardboard roll. Then, roll the pinecone or cardboard in the bird seed and raisins. Finally, hang your bird feeder outside on a tree or porch, and enjoy watching the birds eat.



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### WATER BALLOON ART

**Materials:**

Balloons, container, canvas, water color crayons.

**Instructions:**

Start by coloring the canvas with watercolor crayons – washable markers will work too but use darker more vibrant colors. Fill the balloons with water. Your toddler can throw the water balloons on the painting. Make a game out of it by testing your child's throwing skills. Let the canvas dry, then you can color the canvas again or just keep your creation the way it is.

### NATURE SCRAP BOOK

**Materials:**

Leaves, flowers, twigs from outside, hole puncher, yarn, wax paper and iron/ironing board.

**Instructions:**

Have your toddler go on a nature walk with you. Pick up a variety of flowers, leaves, and bark. Once at home, cut out two large pieces of wax paper that are the same size. Place all of your nature findings on one of the pieces of wax paper. Make sure wax side is towards the leaves. Have an adult carefully move the covered wax paper to the ironing board. Plug in iron and place on a low heat. When the iron is hot, place the other piece of wax paper on top of the covered one. Gently have the adult iron the two pieces of paper together. When everything is melted and the two pieces are combined, wait for the wax paper to cool. Then punch two holes, using the hole puncher, on the top of the wax paper some distance apart. Tie the yarn through them. You can now hang your nature walk finding in a window or on the refrigerator.

\*\*Be sure to watch your child carefully when near the hot iron.\*\*

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### TREE BARK RUBBINGS



#### Materials:

Easel paper, packing tape, and crayons.

#### Instructions:

Outside on a tree, wrap the easel paper around the tree trunk and secure it with packing tape. Grab crayons and remove the wrapping from them. Let your child use the crayons to outline the tree bark and to rub the crayons all over the paper.

### BALLOON TENNIS



#### Materials:

Balloons, Fly Swatters

#### Instructions:

This game gets everyone moving. Simply, blow up the balloon and keep it in the air, using only the fly swatter. Hit the balloon back and forth to each other with a goal of keeping the balloon in the air. If the balloon touches the ground, simply pick it back up and put it in play! When you have mastered one balloon in the air, try adding more balloons to see how many you can keep in the air at the same time!

### RIBBON-DANCE



#### Materials:

Long Ribbon with handle. (You can make a homemade version with a branch and long ribbons!)

#### Instructions:

It's a simple toy that helps work the shoulder muscles. Play music and have your child sway the ribbon to the tempo of the music. Twirl it, swirl it, zig-zag it, and circle it. So many new verbal routines come from this one little magical wand.



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## POMPOM HOCKEY



### Materials:

Pompoms, wrapping paper cardboard tubes, paper plate for a scoop, masking tape.

### Instructions:

Make two scoops out of the two paper plates. Tape each plate on a cardboard tube. Using tape, make square shape boxes on the floor as a goal for the pompoms. The challenge is to get as many pompoms as possible into your square. The rules of the game are to not use your hands and use only the scoop on your cardboard hockey stick to move the pompoms into the squares.



Photo credit:  
[www.learning4kids.net](http://www.learning4kids.net)

## BLACKBERRY FINGER PAINTING



### Materials:

You will need a purple and black paint, picture of blackberries (or real ones) for reference and paper. Just use a small amount of black paint and a larger amount of purple paint.

### Instructions:

Dip the tips of our fingers in the purple and black paint and use your finger tips to create blackberries. The tips of the fingers are great for making painted blackberries because they imitate the small round balls that make up the shape of blackberries.



Photo credit:  
[www.learning4kids.net](http://www.learning4kids.net)

## HANGING CRYSTALS



### Materials:

You will need two jars, a string of wool, water, two paper clips, small plate and bi-carbonate soda and a table chart.

### Instructions:

Fill two jars with hot water. Stir in about six teaspoons of bicarbonate soda or until no more will dissolve. When a layer forms at the bottoms of the jars, this means no more will dissolve. Tie a paper clip to each end of the piece of wool and place each end in each jar. Leave the jars for a week. Crystals will grow along the wool and hang down. Record week by week what happens to the wool string.



Photo credit:  
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### TOILET PAPER ROLL PEOPLE



#### Materials:

Toilet paper rolls, pipe cleaners, recycled fabric scrapes, scissors, glue, pompoms and black marker.

#### Instructions:

Help your toddler pierce the top and bottom of the toilet paper roll. Push the pipe cleaners through the small holes to create the arms and legs. Use the large pompoms for the hair by stuffing them into the top of the toilet paper rolls. You can cut out or glue the scrapes of fabric around the roll to make clothing. Draw faces on the roll. Create as many people as you would like and allow your child to role-play with the characters.



Photo credit:  
[www.learning4kids.net](http://www.learning4kids.net)

### MUSICAL CHAIRS VARIATION



#### Materials:

Construction paper, tape, and music.

#### Instructions:

Tape the same color of construction paper in a circle on the floor. You can add three pieces of another color of construction paper or draw a sad face on three of the existing pieces of paper. Place the sad faces or the three pieces of a different color paper in the circle. The kids will now walk on the paper, moving from piece to piece. When the music stops, the child standing on the sad face or opposite color paper will be out of the game. Each time you stop the music, remove one piece of paper.

### LIMBO



#### Materials:

Broomstick or other long stick.

#### Instructions:

Two players hold the limbo stick while the other players take turns going under it. Players should lean the top half of their bodies backwards, so their hips go under the stick first. (BE SURE TO STRETCH FIRST!) After each player goes under once, lower the bar at least 1 inch and start over. Players keep *limboing* as the stick gets lower and lower. If a player touches the stick with any part of his or body, he or she is out. The last person left is the winner!