

Active

Child

Program

# ACP

[Guide book]



# Contents

The beginning of ACP .....	02
<b>Chapter 1 Importance of physical activity in children .....</b>	<b>03</b>
1. Present status of lifestyle and fitness among children .....	03
2. Significance of Physical Activity in childhood .....	07
3. Development characteristics of children .....	11
4. Qualitative evaluation of fundamental movement skills: evaluation measures .....	13
<b>Chapter 2 Introduction of ACP .....</b>	<b>16</b>
1. Combine Different Movements .....	16
2. Active plays .....	16
01 Karada Janken (Rock-Paper-Scissors using body action) 17	
02 Daruma-san ga koronda (Red Light Green Light) 18	
03 Tateru kana (Can you stand up?) 19	
04 Ningen Chie-no-wa (Human Disentanglement Puzzle) 20	
05 Oshikura Manju Oni (Shove-and-Push Tag) 21	
06 Hiyoko no Tatakai (Chick Fight) 22	
07 Daikon Nuki (Pull out the Radish) 23	
08 Pair Touch 24	
09 Teoshi Sumo (Pushing hands) 25	
10 Kenpa (Hopscotch) 26	
11 Dokaan Janken (Boom! Rock-Paper-Scissors) 27	
12 Iukoto Issho, Yarukoto Issho (Follow the Leader "Say together, move together") 28	
13 Kumo Oni (Spider Tag) 29	
14 Neko to Nezumi (Game of Tag: Cat and Mouse) 30	
15 Nezumi Nigashi (Game of Tag: Protect the Mouse) 31	
16 Kotoro-kotoro (Game of Tag: Steal the Child) 32	
17 Osakana Game (Fishing Game) 33	
18 Tetsunagi Oni (Chain Tag) 34	
19 Koori Oni (Freeze Tag) 35	
20 Sakana Tori (Fishing Tag) 36	
21 Tokoroten Oni (Tokoroten Tag) 37	
22 Wakuguri Kyoso (Thread- the-Hoop Relay) 38	
23 Naganawa Tamatsuki Tobi (Team Jump Rope) 39	
24 Shippo Tori Oni (Tail Tag) 40	
25 Shinbun-ni-Henshin (Newspaper Mimic) 41	
26 Mukade Dodgeball (Centipede Dodgeball) 42	
27 Osama Dodgeball (King's Dodgeball) 43	
28 X (Cross and Catch) 44	
29 Bakudan Game (bomb game) 45	
<b>Chapter 3 How to coach children .....</b>	<b>46</b>
1. Key perspectives required for a good instructor .....	46
2. How to arrange the program and get ideas .....	50
3. Safety precautions .....	51
<b>Chapter 4 Useful information .....</b>	<b>54</b>
1. Research Findings in Japan .....	54
2. Case Studies in Japan .....	58
3. Checklist for instructors and parents .....	60
4. FAQ .....	63
Reference list .....	65
Colophon .....	66
Children Safety Checklists .....	67

# The beginning of ACP

## What Japan Sport Association (JSPO) is

Prompted by Japan's participation in the Olympic Games, the Japan Amateur Athletic Association, the predecessor of the Japan Sport Association, was established in 1911. The JSPO promotes sport in Japan engaging in a multitude of projects, such as hosting the National Sports Festival, the largest multi-sport event in the country, operating Junior Sport Clubs, training sports instructors, promoting international exchange and cooperation, and conducting research in sport medicine and science.

Notably in the field of international exchange and cooperation, we promote interaction through sports among youth and adults in Korea, China, Germany and Russia. We also invite and train instructors of youth sports from neighboring Asian countries and regions to spread and promote youth sports.

## How the program was conceived

Today lack of physical activity among the youth has become an issue in many countries around the world and JSPO are now working on multiple measures to solve the problem.

Japan also faces various issues regarding young children's physical activity and exercise including moving their bodies through play. In specific terms, children play fewer games that require physical action and more children show immature body movements; they have fewer opportunities to exercise on their own initiative and move their bodies. One reason is the development in science which has made our lives fulfilling and convenient.

Under such conditions, JSPO developed and implemented the Active Child Program (ACP), an exercise program designed for children to cultivate the foundation of lifelong sports by conveying the joy of physical activity and sports.

The guidebook consists of theory and practical information to assist the instructors of active plays. We hope the guidebook will serve as a reliable source of information for the instructors around the world.

## 1. Present status of lifestyle and fitness among children

### (1) Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Around the World

The decline in physical fitness among today's children can partly be attributed to the decrease in physical activity in their daily lives. To address this problem, the WHO and many countries have published physical activity guidelines for children.



Based on Early Childhood Exercise Guidelines Guidebook (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2012)

Figure 1 Physical Activity Guidelines for Children Around the World

All these guidelines recommend a total of at least 60 minutes of moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity daily for the sound development of body and mind. How to ensure this daily physical activity is the key for the healthy development of children.

The guidelines for the recommended level of children's physical activity have changed over the years with the changes in the social environment. The minimum required level of physical activity has gradually increased to reflect the trend of the times.

Recommending organization (year)	Intensity	Duration	Frequency
US President's Council (1961)	Vigorous-intensity physical activity	≥15 min	Daily
American College of Sports Medicine (1995)	Moderate-intensity physical activity	≥30 min	Daily
WHO (2010)	Moderate- to vigorous-intensity physical activity	≥60 min	Daily

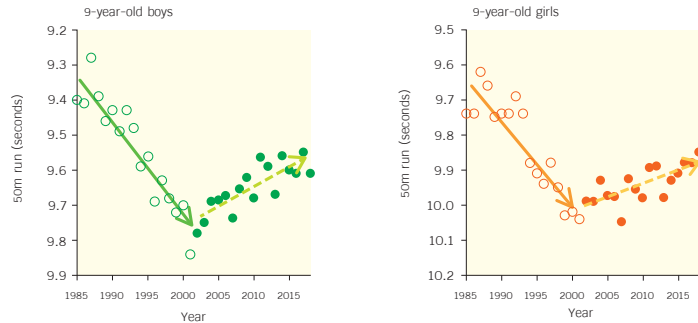
Table 1 Physical activity guidelines for children in the world (historical)

With these guidelines in place, we have promoted the Active Child Program (ACP) to provide opportunities for children to experience various physical movements and most importantly, enjoy physical activity. These initiatives are expected to foster children who engage in physical activity.

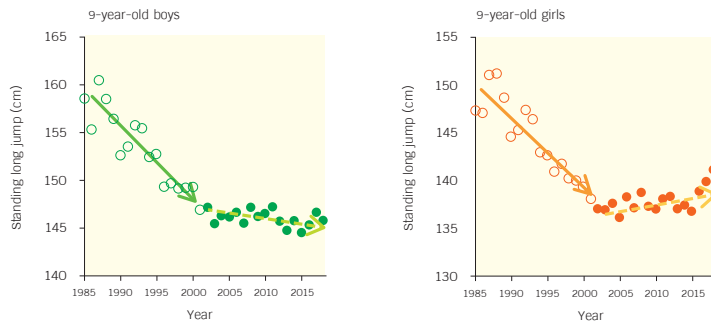
## (2) The present status of Japan

According to the Japan Sports Agency, Japanese children's physical fitness peaked in 1985 and declined sharply thereafter until around 2000. After that, while some categories in the annual physical fitness test showed improvement, the scores of many test items have still remained lower than those reported around 1985 when the overall level of Japanese children's physical fitness was the highest. This trend is especially obvious in fundamental motor ability such as running, jumping and throwing for elementary school children.

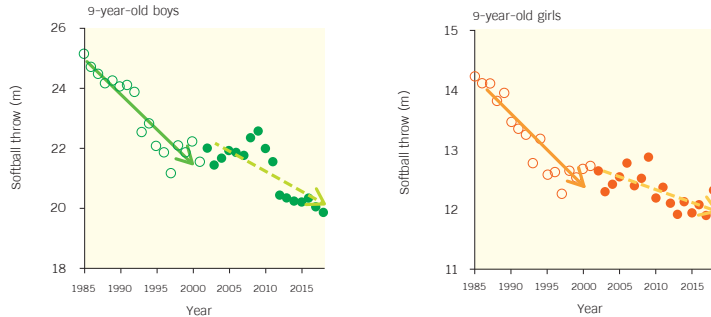
### Running: 50m



### Jumping: standing long jump



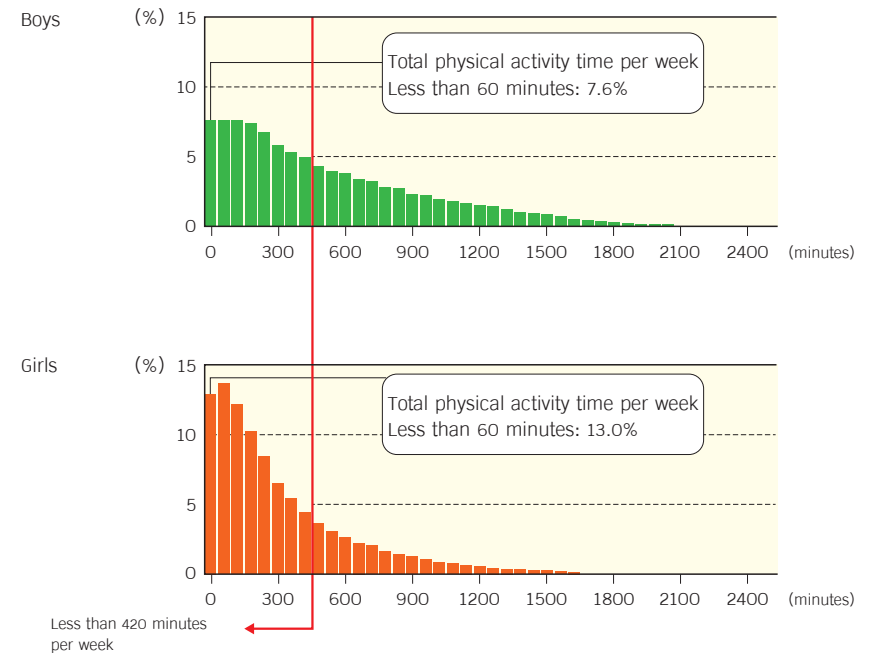
### Throwing: ball



Source: FY 2018 Survey on Physical Fitness and Athletic Performances (2019)

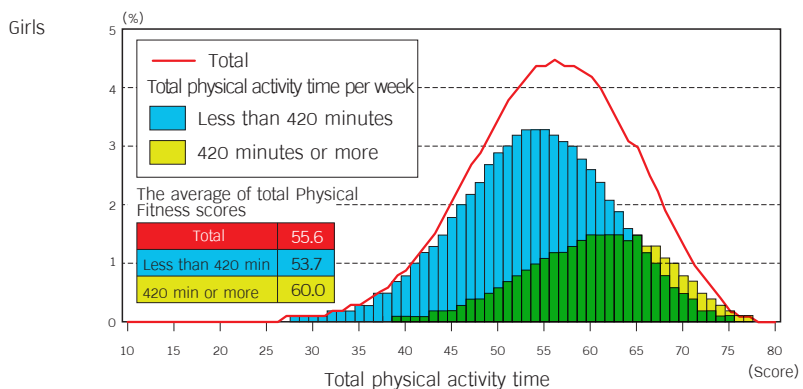
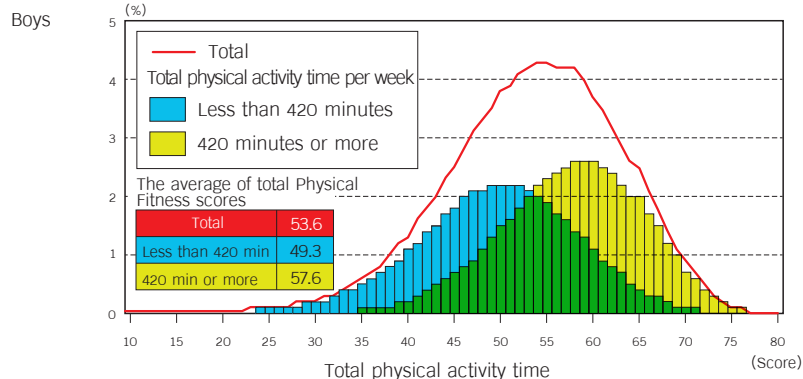
Figure 2 Changes in children's physical fitness

This can generally be attributed to, among other things, the widespread disregard for the importance of physical activity as well as the changes in the social and physical environment surrounding children, which have made it difficult for them to find time, space and friends for physical play and sports. However, not all children have become alienated from physical activity and sports; some children are even more engaged in sports. The survey conducted in 2019 by the Japan Sports Agency noted the high proportion of children who rarely engage in physical activity (total time of physical activity is less than 60 minutes a week, Figure 3) and the widening gap in physical fitness between the children who engage in physical activity and those who do not (Figure 4).



Source: FY 2019 National Survey of Physical Fitness, Athletic Performances and Exercise Habits (2019)

Figure 3 Distribution of total physical activity time per week (Fifth-grade students)



Source: FY 2019 National Survey of Physical Fitness, Athletic Performances and Exercise Habits (2019)

Figure 4 Correlation between total physical activity time and total Physical Fitness scores (fifth-grade)

## 2. Significance of Physical Activity in childhood

When children engage in different activities using their entire minds and bodies, especially in early childhood, each experience builds on the other experiences to steadily develop their minds and bodies. Therefore, performing sufficient physical activities focused on play during childhood goes beyond helping them acquire diverse body movements (“nervous system”) to also enhance cardiopulmonary function and bone formation. This, in turn, enables them to lay the foundation (“lifestyle”) for leading enriched lives, which includes building lifelong health and positive attitude to everything (“willingness”). The following outcome from physical activity is expected as follows:

### (1) Improved physical fitness and motor ability

#### ① Improve physical coordination and basic ability to avoid danger

Physical fitness is the source of human activity and largely contributes to maintaining physical health as well as enhancing mental health such as improved self-motivation and mental energy. As such, physical fitness is important in our lives and in childhood as well. However, we should remember that physical fitness varies from person to person. If it is not enhanced appropriately to the development profile of each child, it will be ineffective and may even have adverse effects. The nerve system develops greatly in early childhood to about 80 percent of its adult capacity by the age of around five. During this period, the ability to coordinate motion, such as timing the movement of the body or controlling the power to use, greatly improves during this period. The ability to coordinate motion is important in learning new physical movements; enhancing this ability in one’s childhood is significant in that it helps form the foundation for developing motor ability after childhood.

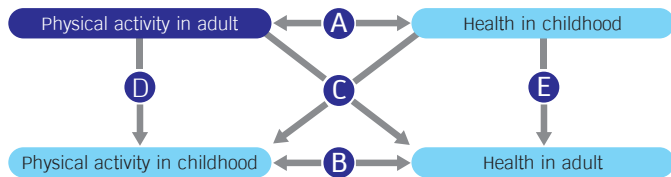
Particularly, the basic physical movement children learn during this period will help build the foundation for more complex play and physical activities (sports) as well as for protecting themselves from danger.

#### ② Enhance strength to maintain posture and increase endurance

In recent years, many adults realize that more children easily complain about fatigue and say that they are tired or cannot move anymore. Pre-school children who are physically active in kindergarten tend to show stronger muscle strength to support their body, which is measured by how long they can support their body weight with their arms while standing between two supports, putting one hand on each support and lifting their legs together off the floor. Also, studies have demonstrated that pre-school children attending kindergartens that have proactively introduced physical play programs show higher maximal oxygen uptake, which is a measure of general endurance. Muscle strength and endurance serve an important function in practicing more active play and exercise; they are also critical elements for physical fitness. This seems to hold true for children both under and at school age. Although muscle strength and endurance do not increase greatly in childhood, being physically active daily helps to gradually enhance endurance and cardiopulmonary function. It is important that children are given appropriate opportunities to develop muscle strength and endurance through active or continuous physical play.

### ③ Childhood exercise habits affect them as an adult

According to a follow-up survey of pre-school children conducted by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, children who graduated from kindergartens that focused on developing physical fitness tend to exercise more frequently, participate in sports club activities more and generally score better on the Ministry's new physical fitness test. These findings demonstrate that children who engaged in physical play in their childhood remain physically active in their later lives. It is also known that exercise habits in childhood have a positive impact on exercise habits in adults and, in turn, on health in adulthood (Figure 5). Physical fitness and motor ability of children build up gradually through the habit of engaging in physical play and regular lifestyle habits. In terms of building a foundation for lifelong mental and Physical Fitness, it is important for childhood to experience the fun of physical activity while they are young and eventually develop the habit of regular exercise.



Modified in part from Blair et al. (1989)

Figure 5 The relationship between physical activity and health (the carry-over effect of physical activity and health)

## (2) Development of a healthy body

### ① Establish lifestyle habits conducive to good health

The established habit of regular exercise promotes the development of physical functions, likely contributing to building lifelong health and active lifestyle habits. This will help reduce health risk in early childhood and the risk of lifestyle diseases such as high-blood pressure, dyslipidemia, myocardial infarction and diabetes later in life.

The children who complain of drowsiness and fatigue in the morning, being sluggish in everything they do, also complain of mental tiredness. When children engage in physical play, they become hungry, eat well and obtain sufficient fatigue to sleep well (Figure 6). By continuing to do so, children will become healthier in terms of reduced headaches, stomachaches and physical fatigue along with increased vitality and mental energy, acquiring the habit of regular exercise. For children, physical play will help maintain physical and mental health.

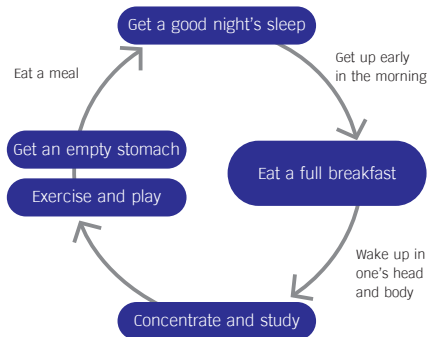


Figure 6 Lifestyle habits are a chain (a good chain)

### ② Develop a strong and balanced body

Obesity and being underweight can mainly be attributed to imbalanced nutritional intake and lack of exercise, which influence the bone formation as well. In addition to sufficient intake of calcium, vitamin D and other nutrients, adequate exercise is crucial for bone formation. Thus appropriate exercise will help develop a strong and balanced body and help prevent obesity and being underweight.

Playing well, eating well and sleeping well are important for the development of a strong and balanced body. An excess or shortage of any of the three is not desirable.

## (3) Development of a positive mind

### ① Develop positive attitude and perceived competence

For children, being vigorously active through, for example, physical play helps develop a positive attitude toward everything, and also nurtures a healthy mind. According to a survey of pre-school children by the Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, physically active children tend to show positive characteristics such as being self-motivated, patient, social and outgoing. Children who are observed as self-motivated tend to be more physically active, running around freely and playing together with many friends in kindergarten and nursery school.

This positive attitude is supported by a sense of competence, or a sense of can-do and self-confidence. Children gain the foundation of perceived competence in play and physical activity in childhood by accumulating successful experiences through physical play, and that perceived competence leads to active participation in physical or sports activity in later years. Children with perceived sport competence will grow up to love and participate in physical activity, but those with perceived incompetence will be unwilling to participate in physical activity. Therefore, it is important to create an environment that is designed to give children opportunities to accumulate successful experiences while enjoying physical play, as well as to enable children with different development profiles to participate in physical play together.

## (4) Development of social adaptability

### ① Help children to be able to control emotions and play harmoniously with other children

Children learn, through playing and interacting with many other children, that they need to follow rules, control themselves and communicate with others to cooperate and collaborate. Many children around five-six years old learn how to be leaders or fill certain roles in groups. It is essential that children interact with their family members, instructors and children in the same generation or groups as they grow up. Physical play or activity, especially organized play with rules or sports provide opportunities to stimulate social development. Physical play also helps release stress while giving the sense of refreshment and fulfillment.

## (5) Development of cognitive functions

### ① Support brain development and nurture creative minds

Many areas of the brain are involved when we engage in physical activity, from situational judgment to the actual movement of the body. In recent years, it is suggested that physical activity has potentially

positive impact on cognitive abilities. For example, a number of research studies have demonstrated that full body motion activities that require agile movement (e.g. turning around quickly), situational judgment or strategic thinking are effective in promoting the development of motor control and intellectual functions of the brain. These findings suggest that physical play and exercise (sports) may contribute to promoting the development of cognitive functions, going beyond the simplistic causal argument that physical exercise improves academic performance.

Space recognition ability is important for the brain to control movement. This ability enables us to accurately recognize the conditions of an object in 3-dimensional space (e.g. the position, direction, spacing or velocity). In the context of a sports game, for example, in a volleyball game, players make instant judgments about the speed, angle and trajectory of the ball, time their jumps accordingly and attack. This series of motions are caused by the movement involves the brain processing the information received from sensory functions such as seeing and hearing, which is followed by getting the body to react based on the information., or space recognition ability

Children learn to be creative while engaging in play and changing it by adapting and inventing new rules. Traditional children's play with a long history has local rules and ways of playing, demonstrating the creativity of children in playing.



### 3. Development characteristics of children

#### (1) Development of body and motor activity in early childhood

From birth to about age two, children grow rapidly in height and weight; after that, the growth rate slows and becomes gradual. However, the brain and nervous system continue to develop greatly in early childhood. With these distinctive physical changes, motor ability and movement patterns also change and develop greatly over several years of early childhood.

After acquiring walking skills and learning to walk on their own, and eventually to run around, children start to explore their surroundings and move even further afield. They approach what they find fun and interesting, thus building up new experiences. Therefore, providing an environment that will attract their attention and motivate them to move actively is desirable. Moving their bodies to react to what they come across will stimulate their motor functions and lead to the acquisition of new movement skills. It is important for children to actually feel the fun and enjoyment of physical activity through learning and experiencing new movements such as running, jumping, climbing, rolling over and throwing balls.

In terms of developmental change in movement patterns, children around three years old are generally timid and cautious in their movements. As they grow older, they gradually gain confidence, become active and move around more when they reach four to five years of age. They often behave recklessly but acquire coordinated movement through experiencing a wide variety of activities inspired by their imagination. Children acquire and become proficient at fundamental movement skills over early childhood. When they are around five to six years of age, they are more able to control their body movements, behaving in a more composed manner. As children grow, their movement skills develop so that they can perform more complicated movements, combine different movements and perform them in a smooth and coordinated way.

#### (2) Development of cognitive functions and physical activity and play in early childhood

In early childhood, children gradually develop the ability to communicate their wants and thoughts in words. They also learn to control the expression of their emotions. Children around three years old tend to act out their emotions impulsively and physically, but when they are around six years old, they are able to express their feelings in words and control them with restraint.

Children aged four or five also start to be independent in various aspects, wanting to do more on their own and being capable of doing more. They acquire an awareness of self, becoming more conscious of how well they did in physical activity. When they do well and receive praise or recognition, they will gain confidence and behave more actively. Experiencing success in physical activity, where children can easily see how well they are doing, has significant implications in developing children's self-concepts. For pre-school children, physical activity makes up an important part of their everyday life and how well they perform it means much to them. The confidence children gain in early childhood that they are skilled in physical activity will likely influence their willingness to participate in exercise or sports later in life.

As imagination grows in early childhood, children start to act on their imagination and imitate the movements of others. They find it interesting to arrange their play as they like and to create new rules. The children try hard to imitate the movement of a model that appeals to them or motivates them to do the same. Through such efforts, they naturally learn new movements.



In addition, spatial and temporal cognitive functions develop in early childhood. Children over four years old are able to perceive the pace of time, tempo and other temporal features; when they are around five or six years old, they can time their body movement in a coordinated way. As such, providing children with experiences where they can move their whole body or manipulate equipment to a rhythm is recommended.

### (3) Development of sociality and physical play in early childhood

Pre-school children develop sociality through interaction with others. Children around three to four years of age tend to assert themselves forcefully; they come to control themselves as they grow up though, demonstrate empathy toward others and act cooperatively. Thus, as the children get older, they learn to follow conventions and rules, wait their turns, step aside for others and keep their temper under control when things do not turn as they expected. Children gradually transition from solitary play to parallel play, which means playing alongside other children but not with them, and ultimately to cooperative play and organized play. As play becomes more complex, children need to understand the rules of play, what they are supposed to do and what roles they are expected to play. Around the age of three, only about three out of ten children can understand conventions and rules of play. This proportion increases with age, and six out of ten can follow rules by age four, and more than eight out of ten are able to do so by age six. Understanding, following and sharing rules is essential in children's group play. In group play, children learn to cooperate with friends, share roles to achieve a goal and build on their experience to add new twists to their play. They understand and learn how to act and behave in order to share enjoyment with others. Group play thus provides the best environment to develop sociality in pre-school children.

### (4) Acquisition of fundamental movement skills

In childhood when the nervous system develops rapidly, children acquire a number of movement skills by adapting to various stimulation around them. During this period, the ability to coordinate motion, such as timing body movement and controlling the power to use, increases and children become able to perform fundamental movements such as those necessary in their daily lives and to react instantly to protect themselves, and those relevant for sports that they will engage in during later years.

Fundamental movements are categorized into three types: stability movements such as standing up, sitting down, lying down, getting up, spinning and rolling, crossing and hanging down; locomotor movements such as walking, running, jumping, climbing up and down, crawling, dodging and ducking, and sliding; manipulative movements such as holding, carrying, throwing, catching, kicking, rolling an object on the floor, pushing, pulling, stacking, digging and rowing. Physical play involves a combination of the above fundamental movements to create wide variety of movements. For example, a game of tag involves many movements such as running, dodging, climbing up and ducking under. These movements occur in various actions; for instance, running involves chasing, fleeing, dodging or changing speed or direction. Ideally children experience different physical movements while having much fun with physical play and naturally acquire a wide variety of movement skills.

As children encounter and experience different movements in their daily lives, they will be able to

perform a wider variety of movements (acquisition of various movement skills). Also, as children repeatedly perform the same movement, they will be able to improve as they learn to move more efficiently (refinement of movement skills). As such, acquisition of movement skills in childhood has both quantitative and qualitative aspects in that children learn many new movements and become proficient in performing them. Actively engaging in physical activity helps develop both of those aspects.

Therefore, children becoming physically active through play and other activities in various aspects of their daily lives is important; we need to devise an encouraging environment to enable this to happen. It is desirable that instructors understand the developmental traits of children well and develop programs that will enable them to extensively experience activities based on their interests and, in particular, encourage them to engage in full body movements. For mixed-age groups, instructors also need to pay attention to the roles and contents of play that are appropriate for different ages.

## 4. Qualitative evaluation of fundamental movement skills: evaluation measures

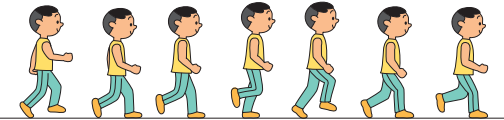



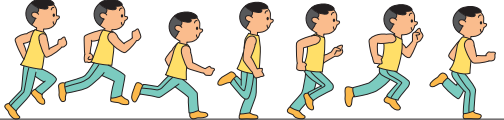
Children need to acquire diverse movement skills in childhood. It is crucial for them to experience a wide array of fundamental movements that will be required throughout their lives, including everyday movements such as standing up and walking, movements to avoid danger such as dodging, ducking and rolling over, and movements that form the foundation of sports, such as running, jumping and throwing. In childhood, clumsy and uncoordinated movements are refined into efficient movements that are fit for the appropriate purpose. Children's sports instructors need to have a good understanding about how children acquire diverse movement skills and refine them to help them develop these skills.

Evaluation measures have significant implications, especially in helping children to refine their movements. Quantitative measurements such as how fast children can run a certain distance and how far are strongly influenced by their body size. Thus, quantitative measures such as time and distance are inappropriate to evaluate their refinement of movements. In order to evaluate how efficient and fit for a purpose children are at using their bodies or how refined their movements are, we need to observe how children are moving; qualitative observation and evaluation of movements are required.

### (1) Qualitative evaluation of movements

What is involved in qualitative evaluation of movement? The Figure 7 illustrates how children between three to six years of age refine their running movement patterns. As children progress from Pattern 1 to 5, distinct characteristics become more apparent in parts of their bodies such as ① arms swinging more widely, ② the foot springing more upward after striking the ground and ③ the knee being more extended when the foot strikes the ground. Whole body movement becomes more dynamic, with the foot striking the ground forcefully to drive forward instead of taking short steps. Qualitative evaluation involves observing specific movements in different parts of the body as well as whole-body movements, identifying the degree of refinement of those movements. Instructors need to observe children engaging in physical play and perform qualitative evaluation of their movements to obtain an understanding of their development, while encouraging and helping children to refine their movement. Examples are discussed below.



	Pattern	Movement Pattern
1	Swinging of both arms is not observed.	
2	Movement of the arms such as in dog-paddle swimming is observed and swinging of the left and right arms is not well-balanced.	
3	The legs are sufficiently kicked back.	
4	Both arms are swung with large movements.	
5	Knees are sufficiently extended for kicking the legs back horizontally.	

Based on A Report on the Nature of Practical Activities in Early Childhood to Foster a Foundation for Physical Fitness (Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology, 2011)

Figure 7 Characteristics of the developmental stages of the "running" motion

## (2) Guidance depending on the development stage of movement skills

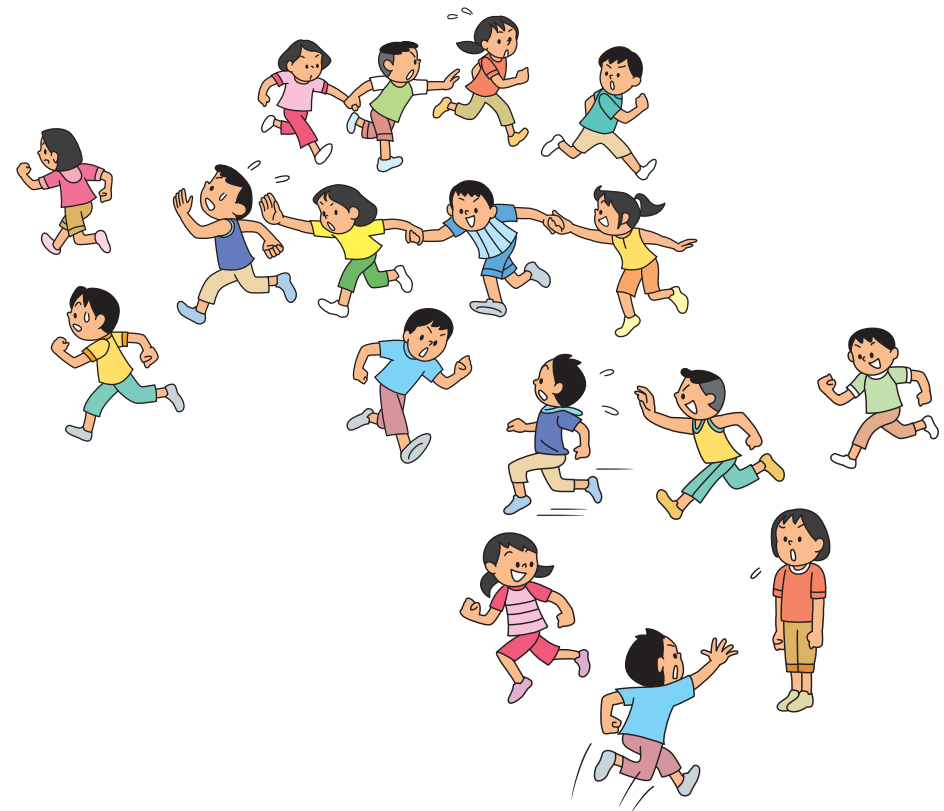
Consider a game of tag, for instance. Children, especially pre-school children, are not good at running a straight course with a defined start and goal and racing with other children, as in a short-distance sprint. They are not yet skilled enough to run straight and hard; furthermore they do not understand that they should run on a defined course or the meaning of racing with other children side by side. However, in a game of tag, children naturally run at their top speed given the clear and concrete purpose to flee from the tagger or chase others to tag them.

If a child demonstrates an immature running pattern, barely swinging their arms, as seen in Pattern 1 of the Figure 7, the child most likely lacks adequate experience of running at their top speed. In this case, as the first step, an adult should be the tagger, adjusting their chasing speed and giving the child

the thrill of being chased around. The playfield should not be too large at this stage. As the child starts to show wider arm swings or stronger foot strikes as in Pattern 3, let them be the tagger or make the playfield increasingly larger. By the time the child's running pattern matures as seen in Pattern 5, the child will have refined their running movements enough and understood the fun of racing with others. The child will then be ready to engage in more sport-like activity such as a footrace or more advanced and tactical games of tag such as chain tag or freeze tag (refer to p. 34 - 35).

## (3) Toward the diversification and refinement of movement skills

As discussed above, an important role for sports instructors guiding children in childhood is to provide a wide variety of physical play which children will find engaging and fun, and to create an environment in which children can naturally refine their movements while playing. To that end, instructors need to understand what movements are involved in each physical play activity and how those movements develop qualitatively as children refine them. Instructors also need to be capable of adjusting the settings and rules of play to help children refine their movements.



# 2 Introduction of ACP

Childhood should experience a variety of movements by playing different plays. Too much focus on a specific event often leads to application of a simplified method or reduced activity, which turns out limiting children's exercise experience. Such an approach pulls away from diversification and refinement of movements. Moreover, any kind of activity conducted under instructions by adults is not regarded as "play." Rather than introducing a conventional activity in a unilateral way, designing and revising activities together with children is recommended as an enjoyable activity for them.

## 1. Combine Different Movements

Children can enjoy playing by using tools at hand or devising methods even without proper exercise equipment. Plays that seem too easy or simple to adults may be entertaining for children. And if they like a play, they will repeat it over and over again. This repetition of movement leads to refinement. We should, therefore, start by focusing on what the children like, add variations, and develop their play.

The point is to combine different movements. Childhood is a perfect time to acquire varied body movements. Experiencing movements that do not seem to be directly related to sports skills can be extremely important. We should think about what tools to use and how to play games based on the movement that the children have never experienced. For instance, instead of playing chase by running, we can tell children to pretend they are rabbits. By doing so, children will be able to experience jumping movements. Small ingenuities add variety. On the other hand, we need to increase variation by using modifiers as key words. New variations are conceived by adding modifiers of movements, such as forward, higher, silently, etc.

Furthermore, "to combine" also refers to movements and tools. Older children may find simple games somewhat boring. You could then make a game more complicated by combining other movements, such as playing tails while dribbling a ball. Children can also enjoy carrying a ball on a newspaper or make a ball with a newspaper, attach a rope to it and throw it like in hammer throw. By combining different tools, children will experience new plays and movements. Try to have children experience a well-balanced variety of plays.

## 2. Active plays

All the forms of active play introduced here have proved to be popular among children over years of practice. We recommend that you try the games as warming-up exercise before sport instruction or a parent-child game at an event as well as during afterclass club activities centred on active play. When doing so, bear in mind the "perspective of a good instructor" in Chapter 3 on p.46. We hope you will see a significant growth in children both physically and mentally and that active play will be promoted in schools and communities.

Your initiatives will provide active play to children!!

## Karada Janken (Rock-Paper-Scissors using body action)

### How to play

1. Divide the group into pairs.
2. Make sure each member understands the body actions for rock, paper, and scissors (Figure 1).
3. Each pair calls out, "Start from ROCK, Rock-Paper-Scissors, shoot!" (Figure 1) If both the players choose the same motion, the game goes on to break the tie.

### Variations

- ▶ Members can discuss and invent their own body actions to add fun to the game.
- ▶ The game can be played between a single leader and the rest of the group to see who beats the leader in the end.
- ▶ The play area can be changed from a square to a circle, ellipse, or other shape to increase variety and interest
- ▶ Losers may be asked to play a penalty game, such as jump leapfrog five times or run around the winner ten times, to add thrill and kinetic momentum.

### Precautions

- ▶ Be sure to there is adequate distance between the players to avoid bumping into each other.
- ▶ Don't wait to see the opponent's move.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Ability to express oneself

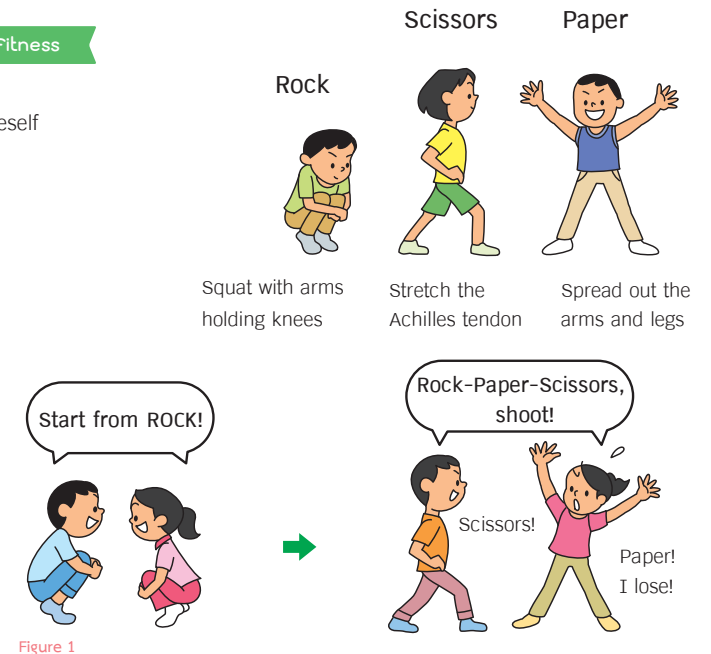


Figure 1

## Daruma-san ga koronda (Red Light Green Light)

### How to play

1. One child becomes "Daruma" or "It" and stands at the base point (wall, tree, etc.) while the rest stand on the starting line side by side, about 20 meters away.
2. Daruma starts the game by saying, "First step forward!" The others take one big stride forward.
3. Daruma faces the base point and shouts, "Da Ru Ma San Ga Ko Ron Da!" The others can move toward Daruma as long as his back is turned, but must freeze in position as soon as Daruma turns around. Repeat the procedure.
4. If a child is caught moving, they are told by Daruma to hold hands with Daruma.
5. When a child successfully approaches Daruma and touches the hand of a player caught by Daruma saying "CUT," all the other children run toward the starting line until Daruma says "Stop." (Figure 2)
6. Daruma takes the predetermined number of steps (5 - 10) and if Daruma can touch any of the other members, that child becomes Daruma.

### Variations

- ▶ You can decide to take a specific pose (e.g. both hands up, one leg up, etc.) when Daruma says, "Da Ru Ma San Ga Ko Ron Da"
- ▶ It is fun if Daruma calls out the action of one of the predetermined names of animals (e.g. lion, crane, or monkey). The children imitate the animal's motion the moment Daruma says, "Da Ru Ma San Ga ... LION!" for example (Figure 3).
- ▶ Parents can also join in the fun.

### Precautions

- ▶ Play where the ground is flat (in the gym, playground, on the lawn, etc.)
- ▶ When you run away from Daruma, be careful not to push others from behind.
- ▶ Try not to include animal action that may cause injury.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Ability to express oneself



Figure 2

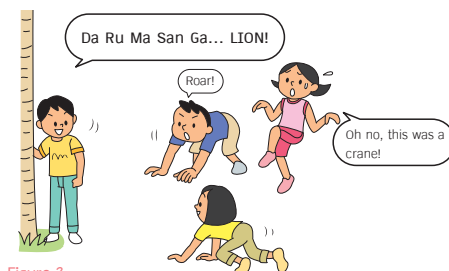


Figure 3

## Tateru kana (Can you stand up?)

### How to play

1. Sit in pairs back-to-back, linking each other's arms.
2. Match the timing to stand up together (Figure 4).

### Variations

- ▶ Add more players to the pair to make a group of three, four, five, etc.

### Precautions

- ▶ Look around and make sure there is nothing dangerous that you might bump into. It is safer to play the game on a PE mat or tatami.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength of legs and lower back

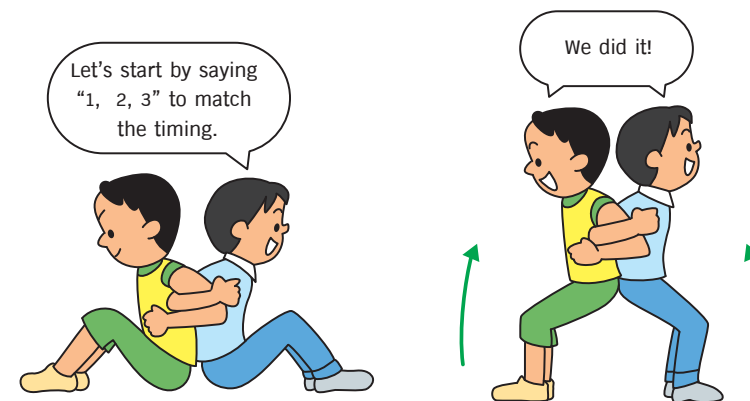


Figure 4

## Ningen Chie-no-wa (Human Disentanglement Puzzle)

### How to play

1. Make groups of 8-10; each group stands in a circle.
2. Hold hands with other team members following two rules: "Exclude your neighbor on both sides" and "Don't hold both hands with the same person."
3. The game succeeds if you are able to disentangle the circle to make one (or two) big circle by stepping over or under other members.

### Variations

- ▶ If you succeed with a small number of children, make the group larger increasing the number to 10, 11, or more. The more you have on the group, the more difficult the game will be.
- ▶ Shuffle the groups to let the children play the game with different members.
- ▶ Instead of playing the game in silence, let the leader give instructions or let the members talk and decide their next move.

### Precautions

- ▶ There are times when somebody's arm is twisted. Encourage them to call out if they feel any pain. The game will stop while they release hands, untwist the arm and hold hands again at the same position.
- ▶ Competition among multiple teams could cause elbow or shoulder injuries. It is recommended not to compete but to let the children take their time.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Flexibility
- ▶ Dexterity

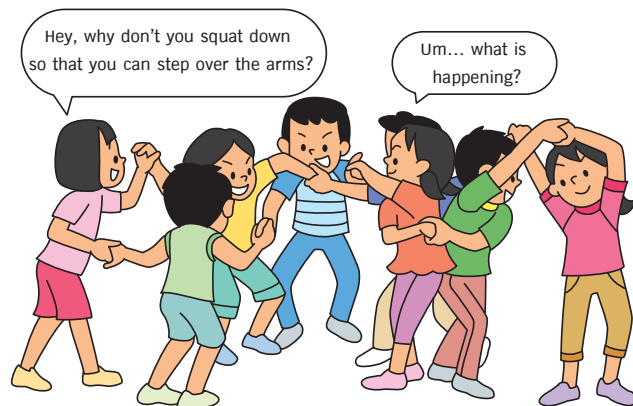


Figure 5

## Oshikura Manju Oni (Shove-and-Push Tag)

### How to play

1. Draw a circle large enough to accommodate the number of players.
2. One child becomes "It" and remains outside the circle, while the rest stand within the circle.
3. Standing back to back with each other, the game starts as they chant "Oshikura Manju osarete nakuna" meaning "Oshikura Manju don't cry when shoved" and powerfully shove backwards (Figure 6).
4. "It" touches the child who is pushed out to the edge of the circle. The child who is touched becomes another "It" and stands outside the circle.
5. Any child who steps out of the circle or falls on his bottom by mistake without being touched by "It" will have to join the "It."
6. The last to remain in the circle are the winners.

### Variations

- ▶ Make the circle smaller.
- ▶ Make an odd-shaped court instead of a circle.

### Precautions

- ▶ Tell the children to fold their arms in front to avoid danger of pushing each other using hands.
- ▶ If a child falls down within the court, tell him/her to exit the court immediately.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength
- ▶ Muscle endurance



Figure 6

## Hiyoko no Tatakai (Chick Fight)

### How to play

1. Draw a square court large enough to accommodate the number of players (about 5 meters square for 10 players).
2. Children squat holding their right (left) ankle with their right (left) hand (Figure 7).
3. They move around in this posture trying to push down other players with their shoulders or back. Those who are pushed down have to leave the court (Figure 8).
4. Those who remain without being pushed down before the clock runs out win the game.

### Variations

- ▶ Make the court smaller to make attacking easier and the game more exciting.
- ▶ “Chicken Fight” with players holding their bottoms higher will add speed and excitement to the game.

### Precautions

- ▶ Look around and make sure there is nothing dangerous that you might bump into. It is safer to play the game on a PE mat or tatami.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength of legs and lower back
- ▶ Flexibility



Figure 7

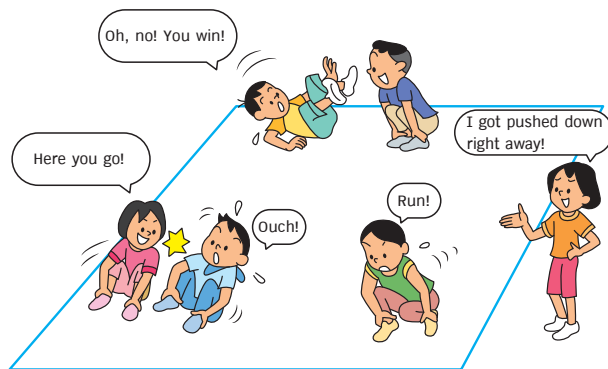


Figure 8

## Daikon Nuki (Pull out the Radish)

### How to play

1. Six to eight children, playing the role of radish, make a circle lying down face-down linking their arms with one another.
2. Several children become “It” and try to undo the players’ linked arms by pulling their legs (Figure 9).
3. Players whose arms are undone becomes “It.”
4. Players whose arms remain folded until the clock runs out win the game.

### Variations

- ▶ Play the game on a PE mat or tatami in a sitting position with arms linked with one another.

### Precautions

- ▶ Don’t let “It” pull at the player’s leg(s) if they are in pain or pull at the player’s pants.
- ▶ Players must watch out not to kick the “It” when they bang their legs.
- ▶ Don’t let players hold their neighbor’s arm.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength
- ▶ Muscle endurance



Figure 9

## Pair Touch

### How to play

1. Divide the group into pairs and each pair holds either their left or right hands.
2. With the starting call, the players try to touch the opponent's knee on the side of the joined hands by pulling or loosening their arm and making the opponent lose balance (Figure 10).
3. The player to touch the opponent's knee first wins the game.

### Variations

- ▶ Play again changing hands.
- ▶ Change the places to touch, like shoulders and lower back.
- ▶ Wear a tail and try to pull it off.
- ▶ Play within a circle or square court.

### Precautions

- ▶ Look around and make sure there is nothing dangerous that you might bump into. Keep a distance from other pairs.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength of arms and legs
- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Instantaneous force



Figure 10

## Teoshi Sumo (Pushing hands)

### How to play

1. Two players stand facing each other and take a starting position (Figure 11).
2. Push each other by pressing palms together. The player, who lifts their foot or cannot keep the position at attention, loses the game (Figure 12).
3. Holding hands or pushing the opponent's body is against the rule. The violator loses the game.

### Variations

- ▶ Add fun to the game by standing on one foot and making it harder to keep balance.

### Precautions

- ▶ Look around and make sure there is nothing dangerous that you might bump into. Don't push other parts including body or face.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Balance
- ▶ Muscle strength of arms

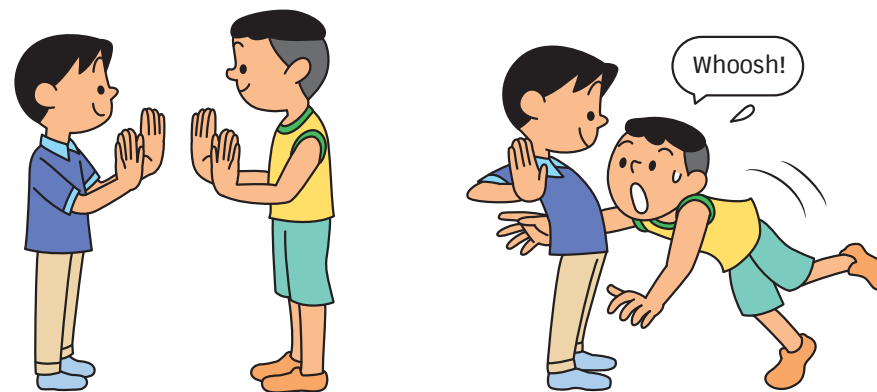


Figure 11

Figure 12

## Kenpa\* (Hopscotch)

\*Ken means hopping on one leg and pa means on both legs

### How to play

1. Draw multiple circles on the ground using a chalk field marker or a watering can. Small hoops can be used instead (Figure 13).
2. Hop on one leg (ken) for single circles and both legs (pa) for two circles.
3. Children enjoy hopping rhythmically on one leg or both legs up to the goal.

### Variations

- ▶ Children can enjoy hopping with irregular rhythm by drawing circles in a unique pattern, e.g. draw a series of single circles (ken) or two circles (pa), or connect the circles with another circle so that the players can start from wherever they like.
- ▶ Divide the group into two teams with each team starting from opposite sides. The game can be combined with “Boom! Rock-Paper-Scissors” described on the following page.

### Precautions

- ▶ Make sure to play in turns.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Jumping power

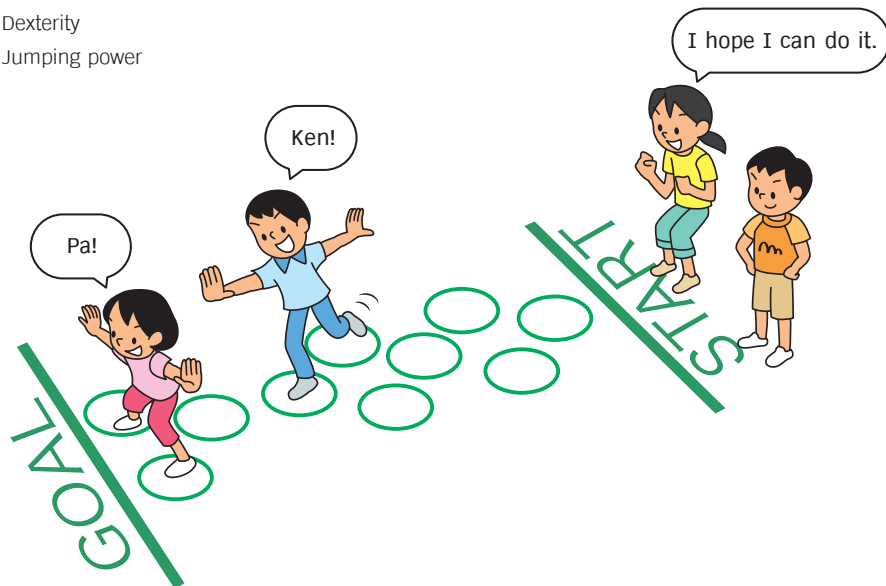


Figure 13

## Dokaan Janken (Boom! Rock-Paper-Scissors)

### How to play

1. Divide 5–6 players into two teams. Each team stands in a line on opposite sides of the territory.
2. At the signal, the lead member of each team starts running toward the opponent's territory. When the two meet, they call, “Boom! Rock-Paper-Scissors!” and play Rock-Paper-Scissors (Figure 14).
3. The loser gives way, returns to his/her own territory and the next player heads out. The winner proceeds on to the opponent's territory.
4. Repeat the procedure. A team wins when all members reach the opponent's territory.

### Variations

- ▶ If any child is afraid of running on the tires, let them play on the ground by drawing a line.
- ▶ Draw a curved line instead of a straight line for a change.

### Precautions

- ▶ Don't run too fast to avoid bumping into one another.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Balance

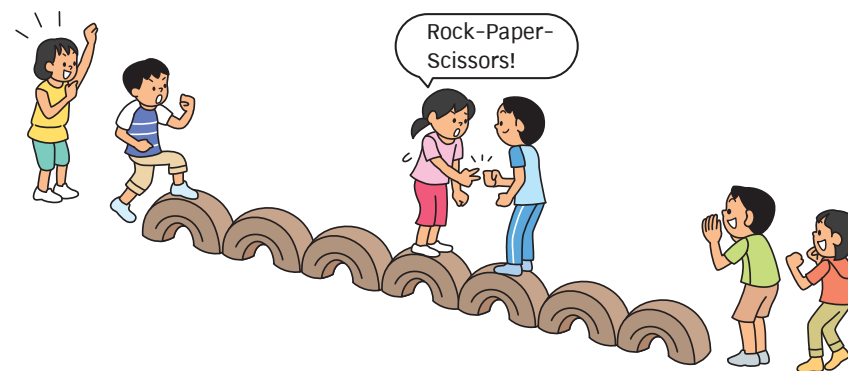


Figure 14



## Iukoto Issho, Yarukoto Issho (Follow the Leader "Say together, move together")

### How to play

1. The leader chants, "Say together, move together!" and commands, "Right!"
2. When the players (about six), standing side by side and holding hands, hear the leader say "Right," they jump to the right, repeating the command (Figure 15).
3. The leader may give other commands, such as "Left" "Forward" and "Back."
4. The players enjoy the game by jumping together in synchronized movement to the leader's commands.

### Variations

- ▶ You can change the leader's command by saying, "Say together, move in reverse" or "Say in reverse, move together."
- ▶ Make a big circle holding hands.

### Precautions

- ▶ When you have more than one line of players, keep enough distance so as not to bump into one another.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Jumping power

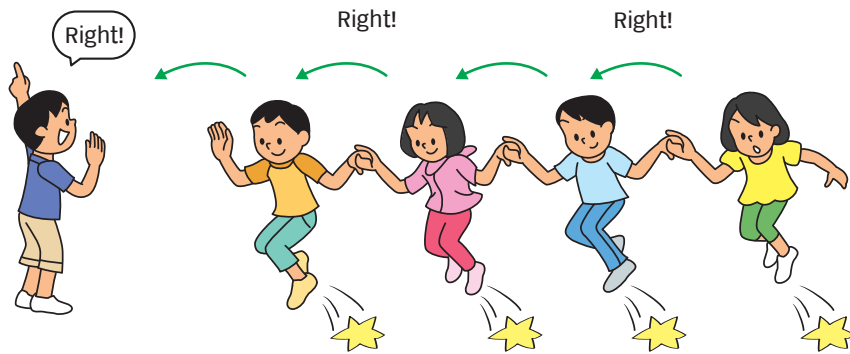


Figure 15

## Kumo Oni (Spider Tag)

### How to play

1. This is a game of tag crawling around on all fours.
2. Let a few children become "It" who will crawl on all fours and tag the rest of the members.
3. The rest of the children crawl on all fours but face up and move around so as not to be tagged.
4. When tagged, the child changes places and becomes "It." (Figure 16)

### Variations

- ▶ When tagged, the child joins the "It" team so that there will be more children who are "It."
- ▶ Make a "shelter" for the children to take a break, but they have to leave the shelter while the "It" counts to five.

### Precautions

- ▶ Play the game in the gym.
- ▶ The size of the court has to be in balance with the number of players.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Muscle strength
- ▶ Muscle endurance
- ▶ Flexibility

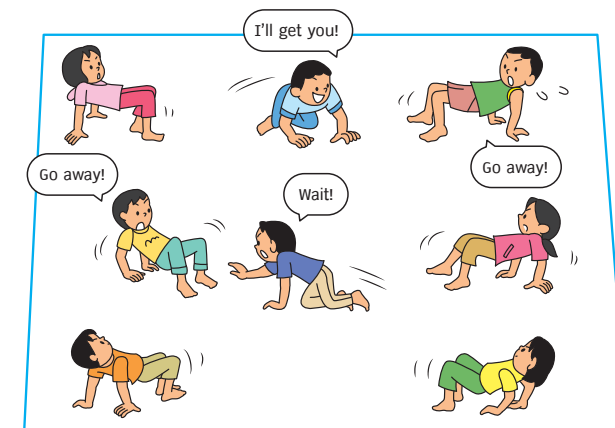


Figure 16

## Neko to Nezumi (Game of Tag: Cat and Mouse)

### How to play

1. Draw two lines and have two groups of children (Cat team and Mouse team) stand side by side on each line facing the other team.
2. When the leader calls out, "M-M-M, MOUSE!" the mouse team chases the Cat team. Children on the Cat team run to the other line, trying not to be tagged.
3. When a child is tagged before reaching the other line, he/she joins the opponent's team.
4. Repeat this at random and the team with the larger number of members wins the game (Figure 17).

### Variations

- ▶ The leader may sometimes call out other confusing commands with words beginning with the same letter such as "M-M-M, MOOSE!"
- ▶ You can change the distance between the two lines, or have the players sit or lie on their backs or stomachs to start the game.
- ▶ Instead of "Cat and Mouse," you can name the teams with other animals like "Octopus and Fish," "Shark and Salmon," etc.

### Precautions

- ▶ Do not push when you tag a player.
- ▶ When you run away from opponents, do not run zigzag but run straight to the other line.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Instantaneous force
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Running ability

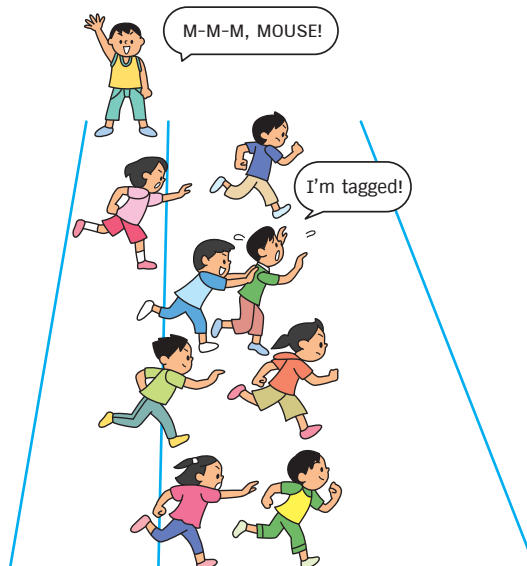


Figure 17

## Nezumi Nigashi (Game of Tag: Protect the Mouse)

### How to play

1. Make groups of four to five players and select one cat (It) and one mouse.
2. The mouse hold hands with the other members of the group making a circle and runs round and round trying not to be tagged by the cat (Figure 18).
3. The cat wins if he/she tags the mouse within a given time (about 10 seconds) or if a member of the group lets his/her hand fall away from the circle.

### Variations

- ▶ Increase the number of group members or the number of mice.
- ▶ Place a cone in the center of the circle and make sure the circle stays around the cone.
- ▶ Let the cat go inside the circle.

### Precautions

- ▶ Keep a distance from other groups.
- ▶ Do not release your hand suddenly.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Instantaneous force



Figure 18

## Kotoro-kotoro (Game of Tag: Steal the Child)

### How to play

1. Four players (“Children”) line up behind each other placing their hands on the shoulders of the player in front.
2. “It” faces the line of “Children” and tries to tag the child at the very end (Figure 19).
3. “It” wins if the line falls apart.
4. “Children” win the game if the child at the very end is not tagged within a given time, e.g. 20 seconds.

### Variations

- ▶ Increase the number of “Children.”

### Precautions

- ▶ Adjust the time limit so as not to exhaust “It.”
- ▶ Have the child in front of the line fold his/her arms, instead of spreading them, to avoid blocking “It” from tagging the child.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Instantaneous force
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Dexterity

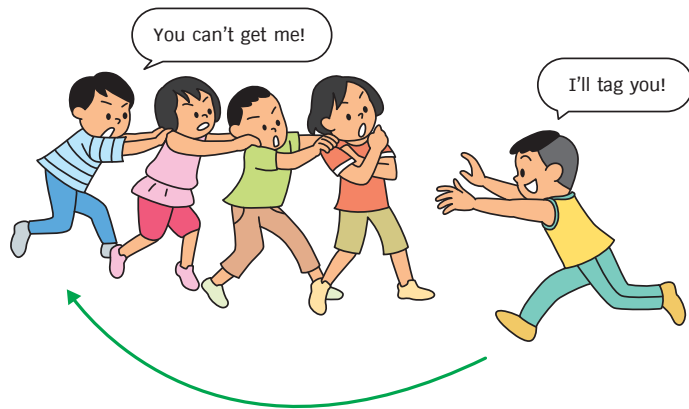


Figure 19

## Osakana Game (Fishing Game)

### How to play

1. Divide into two teams, one acting as a net and the other as fish.
2. The “Net” members make a circle, holding hands with “Fish” members inside.
3. The “Fish” members crawl on all fours and try to get out of the circle. The “Net” members squat while holding hands to block fish from escaping (Figure 20).
4. The “Fish” team wins if all the members get out of the net within the time limit. The “Net” team wins if there is even one fish remaining inside.

### Variations

- ▶ Let “Fish” members escape through the legs of the “Net” members.
- ▶ Switch the roles of “Fish” and “Net.”
- ▶ If the game is played on tatami or a PE mat, you can change the rule to let “Fish” escape over the net (linked arms).

### Precautions

- ▶ Your legs may be caught if you jump over the net. When the game is played on a hard surface, do not escape over the net (linked arms).

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Muscle strength of legs and lower back



Figure 20

## Tetsunagi Oni (Chain Tag)

### How to play

1. Select three or four "Its" who try to tag the other players.
2. When a player is tagged, they hold hands and hunt together (Figure 21).
3. This continues until the last player remains untagged.

### Variations

- ▶ When the chain of "It" becomes four, split into pairs.
- ▶ Adjust the size of the court according to the number of players. It will take time for "It" to tag others in an oversized court.
- ▶ "It" teams can work out a strategy to enclose the players from different directions.

### Precautions

- ▶ Look around and make sure not to bump into each other when you run away from the taggers.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Instantaneous force
- ▶ Total body endurance
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Running ability

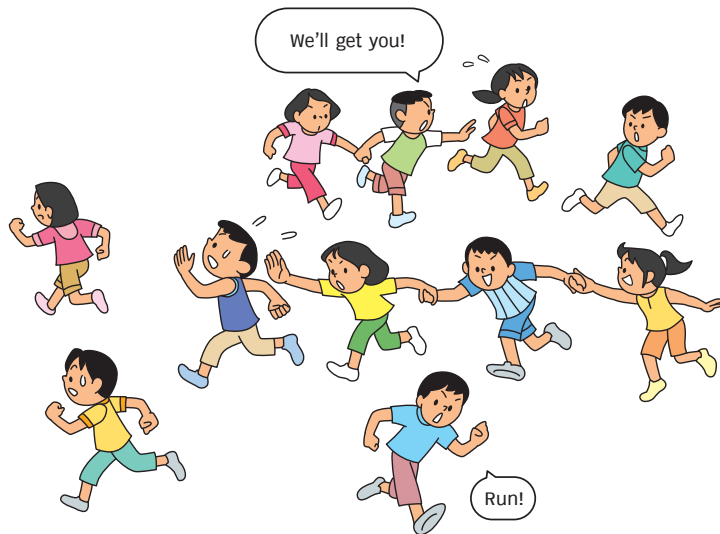


Figure 21

## Koori Oni (Freeze Tag)

### How to play

1. Play the game on a school playground or in the gym. You can vary the size of the court and the number of "Its" depending on how many children play.
2. When the players are tagged, they are "frozen" and must remain standing in place. The game ends when all the players are "frozen."
3. When the frozen player is touched by an unfrozen player, he or she becomes "unfrozen" and may rejoin the game (Figure 22).

### Variations

- ▶ The range of movement increases in a smaller court since the tagger and the rest of the players have to keep on moving.
- ▶ You can add fun to the game by inventing different ways to become "unfrozen," such as turning the frozen player into a banana and try to peel the banana to defrost (Figure 23).

### Precautions

- ▶ The game imposes a great amount of physical exertion on "It." Depending on the size of the court, you can set a time limit of three minutes, for example, before somebody else becomes "It."

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Endurance
- ▶ Dexterity

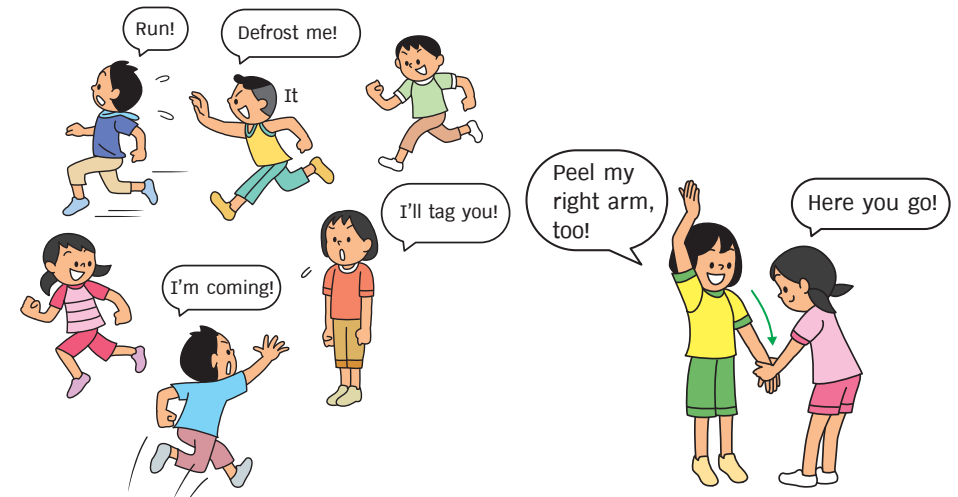


Figure 22

Figure 23

## Sakana Tori (Fishing Tag)

### How to play

1. Draw a square of adequate size depending on the number of players.
2. Elect an "It" to play the role of fisherman, while the rest (fish) stand side by side on one line of the square.
3. When the fisherman shouts, "Throw the net!" all the fish run to the opposite side of the square.
4. The fisherman tries to catch the fish. Those who are tagged become the fisherman's "net." (Figure 24)
5. Players who become the "net" hold hands with the fisherman and catch the fish together.
6. Repeat this several times.

### Variations

- ▶ Increase the number of fisherman at the start of the game.
- ▶ When the chain of "It" becomes four, split into pairs.
- ▶ If the game is played on a small court, let the children walk instead of run.

### Precautions

- ▶ Select an adequate size court depending on the number of players to avoid bumping into each other. When the game is played by children in the lower grades of elementary school, interact verbally by saying, "Watch where you're going!" or "Look around when you run!"

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Running ability

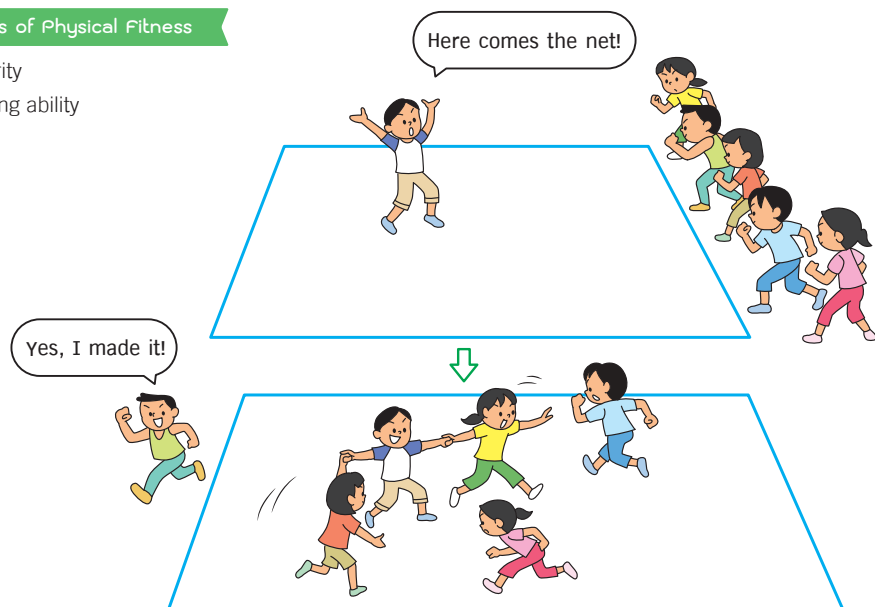


Figure 24

## Tokoroten\* Oni (Tokoroten Tag)

\*Tokoroten is gelidium (sea weed) jelly made into strips by pressing against a device and eaten with vinegar sauce)

### How to play

1. Elect two players, one to be "It" and the other as the "runner." The rest stand side by side in chains of three (Figure 25).
2. At the start signal, the game of tag begins.
3. The runner sticks to one of the chains before being tagged by "It."
4. The child on the other side of the chain is pushed out and become the runner.
5. When "It" tags the runner before he/she joins one of the chains, the two switch roles.

### Variations

- ▶ The range of movement can be adjusted by increasing the distance between the three players of the chain by open arms-length or three big strides apart.
- ▶ The runner will say, "Pon!" when he/she sticks to the chain, and the player who is pushed out will say, "Churun!" inspired by Tokoroten jelly to add rhythm to the movements (Figure 26).
- ▶ Make the game trickier by making the chain of three players sit or lie on their stomachs.

### Precautions

- ▶ If you find the same child playing the role of "It," let the children consider what they should do for everyone to enjoy the game.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Running ability
- ▶ Total body muscle strength

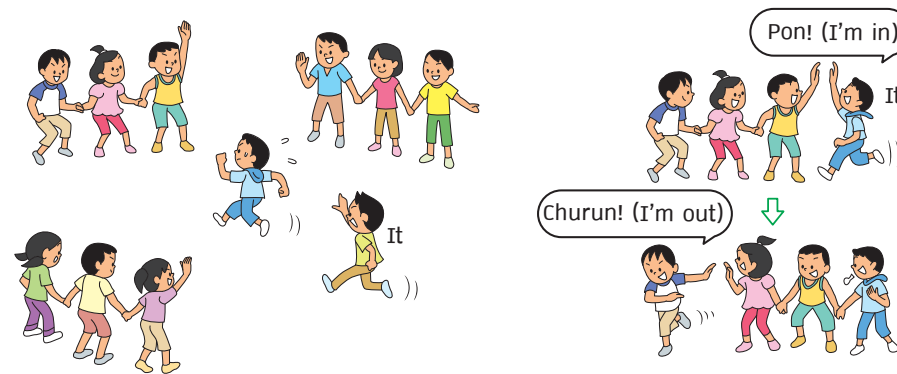


Figure 25

Figure 26

## Wakuguri Kyoso (Thread-the-Hoop Relay)

### How to play

1. Children (8–10 in number) stand in a circle holding hands.
2. The first child places a hula hoop on his/her arm.
3. With the starting call, pass the hoop over your head and down your body and pass it to the next person until the hoop goes round (Figure 27).
4. Compete with multiple teams and the fastest team to pass the hoop around wins the relay.

### Variations

- ▶ Children can stand in a line instead of a circle.
- ▶ You can use a plastic rope instead of a hula hoop.
- ▶ You can make the relay trickier by using a hoop with a smaller diameter.

### Precautions

- ▶ Some adolescents may feel uneasy to hold hands with the opposite sex. The leader can stand in between them or make boys' and girls' teams so as not to force them to hold hands and spoil the fun.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Flexibility

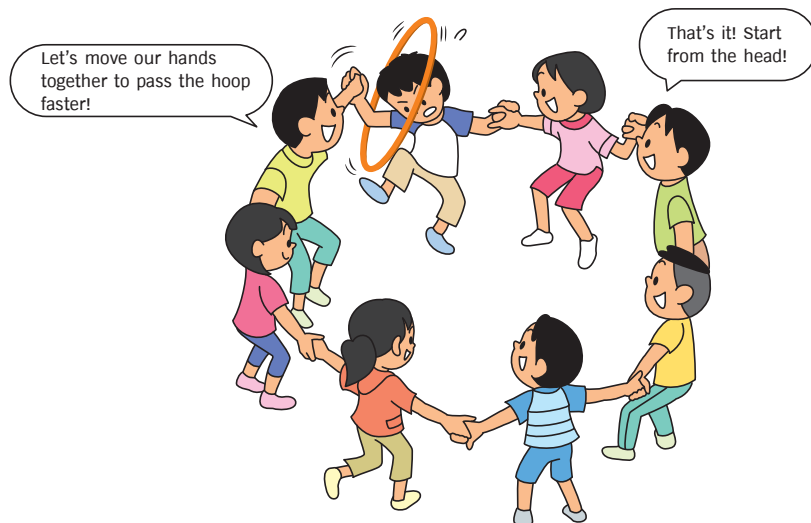


Figure 27

## Naganawa Tamatsuki Tobi (Team Jump Rope)

### How to play

1. Three to four children start jumping a long jump rope and when another child comes in, one gets out (Figure 28).
2. See how many children can get in (or get out) without stopping.

### Variations

- ▶ Instead of starting with three or four children, let each child come in and start the game when you have three to four children jumping.
- ▶ Once the children get used to the game, make it more fun by having them enter and exit at the same time.
- ▶ When they are good at the game, change the rule to jumping twice before entering and exiting so that they can enjoy jumping rhythmically.

### Precautions

- ▶ Do not push the person in front when you enter.
- ▶ Take turns turning the rope.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Jumping power
- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Cooperativeness



Figure 28

## Shippo Tori Oni (Tail Tag)

### How to play

1. Give a towel to each player and have them stuff a small part of it into the waistline of their shorts. Each player tries to grab the tail of his/her partner.
2. Even if a player has his/her tail removed, he/she can continue playing the game.
3. When the allotted time is over, the child with the most towels wins the game (Figure 29).

### Variations

- ▶ Adjust the size of the court according to the number of players.
- ▶ The longer the tail, the easier it is to be removed. You can adjust the length of the towel depending on the physical strength of the child.
- ▶ Instead of an individual match, you can make teams compete over the number of towels.
- ▶ Child may use a plastic string instead of a towel.

### Precautions

- ▶ Be careful not to let children bump into one another.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Instantaneous force
- ▶ General endurance
- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Running ability

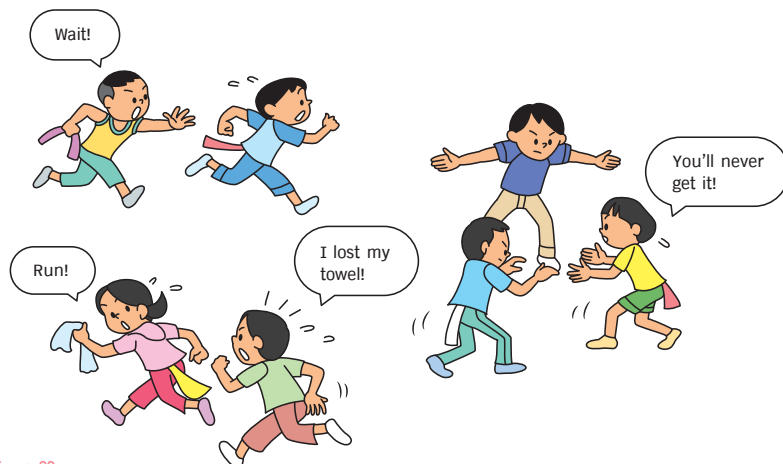


Figure 29

## Shinbun-ni-Henshin (Newspaper Mimic)

### How to play

1. Divide the group into pairs (Players A and B) and make them stand face to face with Player A holding a newspaper.
2. Player A throws the newspaper up, folds it in half, rolls it or tears it.
3. Player B mimics the movement of the newspaper (Figure 30,31).
4. Player A and B switch roles.
5. The game is to enjoy mimicking the various movements of the newspaper.

### Variations

- ▶ Playing the game in a big group with a single leader would also be enjoyable.
- ▶ Using a plastic bag or cloth instead of newspaper would also be entertaining.
- ▶ The game becomes exciting if the player quickly changes the shape of the newspaper.

### Precautions

- ▶ Players may slip if the newspaper is left on the floor. Put away unused newspaper to continue the game.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Ability to express oneself
- ▶ Flexibility



Figure 30



Figure 31



## Mukade Dodgeball (Centipede Dodgeball)

### How to play

1. Draw a court of 6 meters square.
2. Make two groups (A and B) of four. Group A enters the court and selects a leader, and the rest of the Group place their hands on the shoulders of the child in front to make a chain.
3. Group B stands outside the court and throws the ball to hit the child at the end of the line (Figure 32).
4. Group A stays safe even when the ball hits members other than the one at the end of the chain.
5. Group A and B switch roles to compete which team can hit the player at the end of the chain faster. The defending team loses if the hands are removed from the shoulders.

### Variations

- ▶ Make the court smaller.
- ▶ Use a ball of different size or softness.

### Precautions

- ▶ Do not throw the ball at the face.
- ▶ Do not pull the shirt of the child in front when moving around in a chain.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Agility
- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Throwing skill

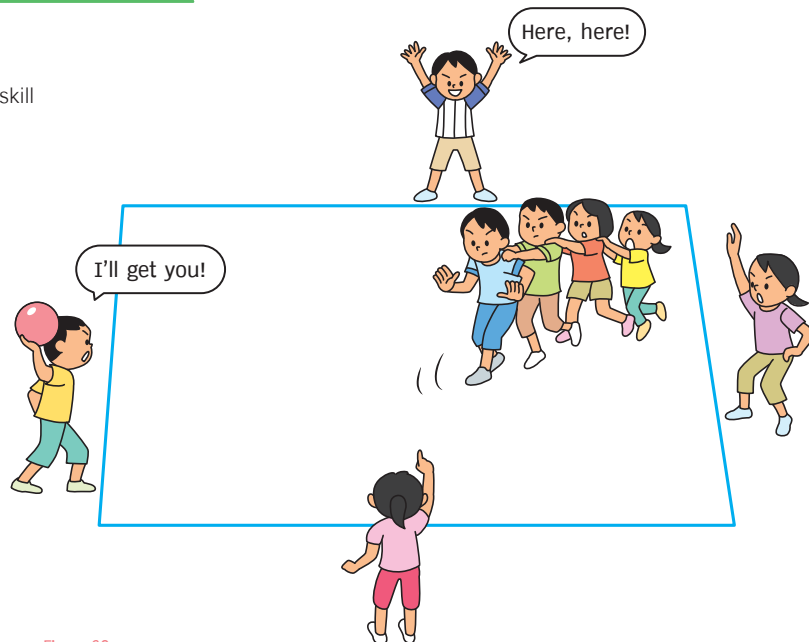


Figure 32

## Osama Dodgeball (King's Dodgeball)

### How to play

1. First, each team selects a king and informs the other team who their king is.
2. The rules are basically the same as in normal dodgeball.
3. The players hit by the ball have to go out of the court.
4. The team that hits the opponent's king wins the game (Figure 33).

### Variations

- ▶ It would be fun to play "Undercover King's Dodgeball (Kakure Osama Dodgeball)" in which the teams do not disclose who their king is and play the game guessing the opponent's king.
- ▶ You could add fun to the game by using a ball of different size or softness depending on the ability of the members.
- ▶ The game will be more thrilling if played on a smaller court.

### Precautions

- ▶ If you have too many members in one team, some players may not have a chance to throw the ball. The best number of members would be around eight. Make the court small so that everyone has the chance to throw the ball.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Throwing skill
- ▶ Dexterity

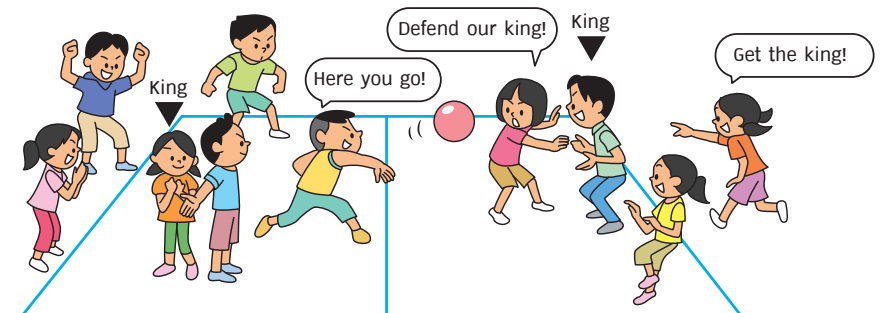


Figure 33

## X (Cross and Catch)

### How to play

1. Stand face to face 4-5 meters apart.
2. Throw the ball underhanded with both hands.
3. The player gets a bonus of one step forward if he/she catches the ball with arms crossed.
4. The player loses if he/she drops the ball (Figure 34).

### Variations

- ▶ Try using different types of balls.
- ▶ Give a bonus of two steps forward if the player catches the ball one-handed.

### Precautions

- ▶ It is against the rules to aim at the face.
- ▶ Use a soft ball instead of a hard one to avoid spraining a finger.

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Dexterity
- ▶ Throwing skill

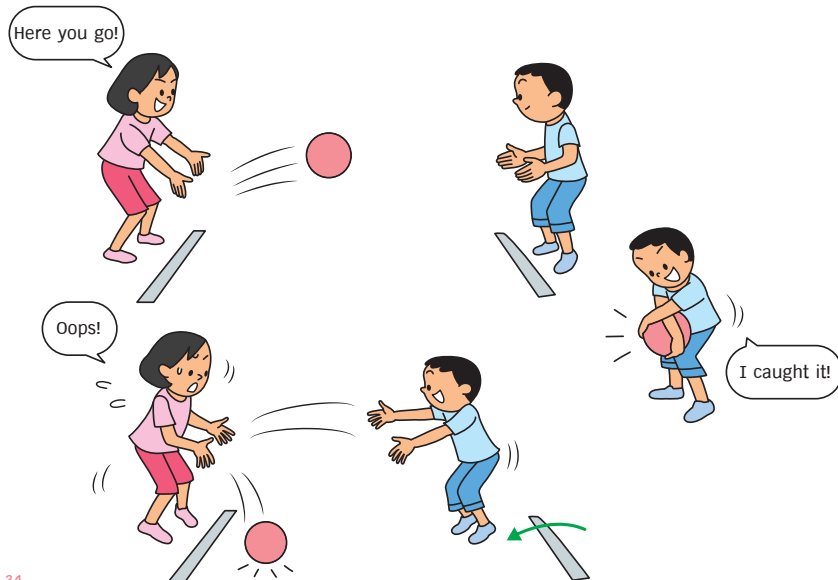


Figure 34

## Bakudan Game (bomb game)

### How to play

1. Play on a square court. Set up a net in the middle and scatter balls on either end of the court.
2. Divide the group into two teams and make them stand on each side facing the net.
3. At the starting call, the children run, get a ball in their territory, and throw it into the opponent's territory with a running jump. They should attempt to throw the ball as far as they can.
4. Children stop throwing at the final call and count the balls in their own territory. The team who has the smaller number of balls win the game (Figure 35).

### Variations

- ▶ The game can be played without a net.
- ▶ Let the teams plan their own strategies.
- ▶ To make the game more exciting, mix in a few lucky balls of different color for extra points, e.g. 3 points.

### Precautions

- ▶ For the safety of the players, select a suitable type of ball, including size and softness, depending on the children's age.
- ▶ Make sure the players know the rules, such as "grab just one ball" or "don't throw the ball from the side of the net."

### Elements of Physical Fitness

- ▶ Throwing skill

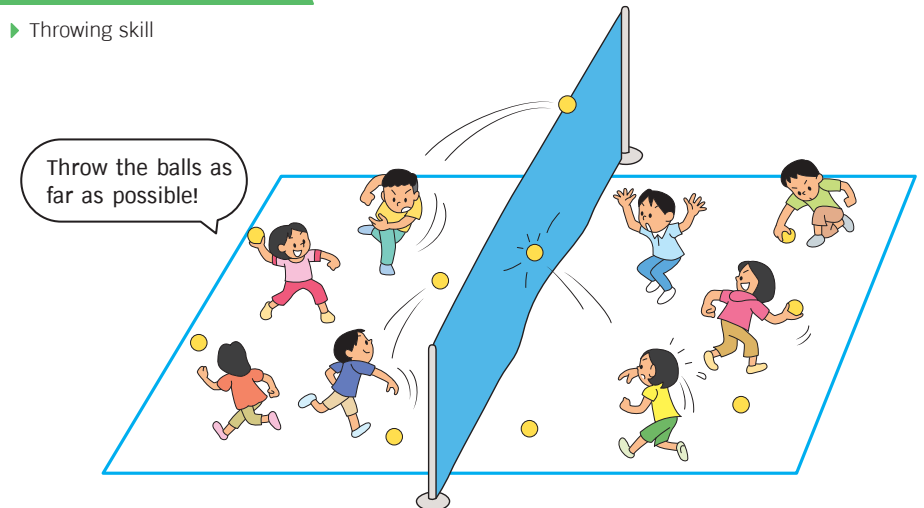


Figure 35

# 3 How to coach children

An instructor is responsible for working with children to create an environment where they can grow on their own, rather than the instructor raising them. To grow on their own means to learn to control themselves with their own will (autonomy), to feel confident and to act upon their own initiative to establish their goals and solve their problems (independence/activeness). The experience of achieving their goals motivates them to try harder (diligence). It is, therefore, essential for the instructor to think with the children, respecting their individuality and self-initiative instead of coaching them unilaterally by teaching or making them do things. The instructor's attitude of being there for the children and thinking together leads the children to focus on their records and results as well as the process of how much effort they put in.

Still, it is typical of childhood to be hyperactive (kinetic drive) and always searching for some kind of stimuli. At times they can take off without any reason and are at risk without a proper instructor. For this reason, an instructor must have shared awareness in advance to watch over them. The instructor has to establish some basic rules they must follow such as not leaving the specified area. Furthermore, the instructor explains the reasons why they have to follow the rules so that they can give thought to their significance. If the children behave according to the rules, the instructor praises them. If not, the coach stops the game to go over the rules and discuss what they should do. This type of approach on the instructor's side enhances their autonomy.

Let us now look at some of coaching methods and techniques.

## 1. Key perspectives required for a good instructor

### (1) Start off with physical interaction

Children are not good at listening silently to instructions or understanding complicated rules. They come to you expecting to have fun; if you tell them to line up, sit down and listen to detailed explanations, you are spoiling the fun. Lead the children so that they can comfortably join the game without being interrupted. Address the children as they come to the field and let them join the game even if some of them have not yet arrived. An icebreaker game should be simple enough for the children to enjoy exercising, such as throwing a ball, running around or playing tag instead of one that requires complicated rules. Gradually, as all the children gather and have a good sweat, give them a break to greet them. A flexible introduction maintains children's ability to concentrate on the activities to follow.

### (2) Experience diverse actions

Children need to experience a diversity of exercise through having a fun time playing. Therefore, the instructor must design a program that enables children to engage in different types of exercise (regardless of the event the instructor specializes in or the events of Sports Clubs). The experience of trying and having more sophisticated diverse physical exercise builds up the foundation for

comprehensive body movement, which will help them improve their competitive skills in a specific event that they might take up in the future. However, some guardians may request the instructor to give their children technical training for competitive sport right away. The instructor must therefore continue explaining to the guardians the importance of doing a variety of exercises in childhood.

### (3) Secure a certain amount of physical activity and intensity of activity

Children today lack physical activity in their daily lives, especially after school and during holidays. Sports clubs and sports lessons have a key role in securing a certain amount of exercise in terms of the time and intensity of each activity. Occasional use of a pedometer or activity tracker may be efficient to verify the content of an activity. An instructor should not let the children wait in line longer than the actual exercise session.

### (4) Take account of personal differences in growth and development

Children are often characterized by personal differences in growth and development including their strong and weak points. In fact, some are not good at sports in general. Individual differences in physical fitness and athletic ability are conspicuous, especially in younger age groups. An instructor is required to address each child according to their ability and watch over them patiently without comparing them. Singling out a child just because their progress is slow is inappropriate. An instructor must remember that the psychological development of each child also varies and that verbal interaction has to be conducted in accordance with their respective attributes.

### (5) Introduce a series of programs seamlessly

Since children easily become bored or distracted, an instructor needs to introduce a set of programs one after another before they lose interest instead of telling them to concentrate and not act up. It might be effective to include some fun workout games.

### (6) Give credit for what they have achieved

Children often ask us to watch their performance; they want their performance to be acknowledged when they achieve something new. If an instructor only praises good performers, the rest of the children will not be able to enhance their sport competence (refer to p. 49). In order to motivate them, the instructor should carefully watch the individual level of progress and praise them every time for what they have achieved or improved. Instead of saying that a child is still not good at XXX, the instructor should encourage them, saying that they did a good job and asking if they would like to try doing XXX next. Repeating positive comments will produce motivation and sport competence.

### (7) Always create a lively and fun atmosphere

Children are quite sensitive to subtle changes in the instructor's expressions and moods. When coaching children, take care how you express your emotions through facial expressions. Try to create a lively and fun atmosphere at all times. You must also be careful what you say or how you act in front of the children. Children often feel afraid when they see their instructor using strict words or acting harshly toward other children.

### (8) Enhance psychological development and stimulate sociality

In order for the children to enjoy exercising, coaching should be included in their play. This does not mean that the instructor, in an effort to please them, acts on every request from the children. There are only two situations when the instructor should scold the children: when they do something morally wrong and when they do something dangerous. Children, especially in their infant stage, do not clearly understand right and wrong; they lack sufficient ability to predict the consequences of their behavior. From time to time, they act only thinking of themselves or display dangerous behavior. At such times, the instructor should scold the child on the spot, indicating their misconduct and explaining why it is wrong. However, the standard for warning children should be consistent at all times. Improvement in their behavior is a sign of social development and the instructor should praise them from the heart. Furthermore, children often get into fights while playing. This is another sign of growth for the group and also an opportunity for psychological growth for the children. The instructor must watch and wait at times like this. Although children may complain to their instructor about their problems and ask for solutions, the instructor should try to refrain from stepping in as much as possible and just watch over them so that they gradually grow to express their opinions to their peers.

Basically, an instructor provides an environment for the children to improve their skills in exercise and sports as well as to enhance their psychological development such as motivation, endurance and overcoming problems as well as their sociality such as cooperativeness and rule compliance.

### (9) Make the most of cross-age interaction

Since sports coaching involves children of different age groups working together, exercise games are effective as part of cross-age interaction. The experience offers a perfect opportunity for children in higher grades to take care of the younger children. However, when they are left on their own, the older children may scare the younger ones by speaking aggressively, even when they are without malice. The instructor should supervise the older children and ask for their assistance.

### (10) Share coaching information

Coaching children without any planning would result in imbalanced activities. The activity program would also be fragmented when you have multiple instructors and guardians taking turns at coaching the children. A coaching log, for instance, is helpful so that everyone will be able to grasp the flow and purpose of the previous activities. You can write down the monthly goals, training focus, coaching methods and issues to be addressed, and share the progress of each child as well as the coaching items. When you try different variations of exercise games and practicing methods, you can note down anything that might be useful in the future such as that the children enjoyed the activity even more by changing the rules to such and such. By doing so, other members of the coaching team will be able to use the same methods and the children will have more opportunities to take interest and positively engage in the activities. The coaching log will be of great benefit to the coaching team in maintaining sophisticated programs through sharing information instead of each instructor trying out a new program or variation.

In the meantime, problematic issues happen frequently while coaching children. Instructor es

should share information of the potential danger of children's movements and reactions during exercise programs as well as that of the coaching area and exercise equipment so that the problematic issue will not happen a second time. Leaving a record of problematic issues in the coaching log is essential for safety.

### <About sport competence...>

Sport competence is a feeling of self-confidence or confidence in sports that develops through improved performance or successful experience. It consists of three factors: recognizing one's physical competence, which is to feel confident about one's performance in sports, self-control, which is to feel confident about one's achievement through trying or practicing, and a sense of acceptance, which is to feel confident about being accepted by the instructor and peers (See drawing below).

Childhood experience has much to do with developing sport competence. With the help of efficient methods and instructors, children will develop healthy sport competence. To the contrary, their sport competence will be significantly held back if they are misdirected. An instructor, therefore, is required to devote great attention when coaching children.



Figure1 Sport competence

## 2. How to arrange the program and get ideas

### (1) How to vary and arrange the program

Children tend to have an especially limited attention span when they are young. In order for them to concentrate and enjoy exercise, the instructor needs to vary the program by introducing new games one after another within a short time. Arranging the program maintains their focus, leads them to engage in various movements, controls exercise quantity and facilitates the games in a multi-age group where children can interact with younger children, their peers and older children.

Yet the instructor has to continue learning different repertoires of exercise games and may find the work overwhelming. It is, therefore, recommended to flexibly change the method or rules of each particular game. By changing or arranging each game, the instructor can create new ways of playing the game to add more variations. Children's creative rules may become a source of inspiration at times to conceive new variations. For this reason, the instructor is encouraged to be open-minded in developing a program. It is also effective to ask the children for ideas on how to develop a game and think together to create new variations.

#### ① Arranging a game to bring out various movements

- If they move forward, have them move backward. If they can do it with their right hand, have them do it with their left hand. Always be conscious of including movements in two directions; forward-backward, left-right and up-down. (bilateral movement)
- Combine multiple movements, e.g. by adding upper body movement to an exercise using the lower body. (composite movement)
- Vary the conditions, e.g. by using a volleyball instead of a tennis ball. (responsiveness)
- Change signals or intentionally introduce unexpected movements. (irregularity)
- Bring out various movements by gradually raising the difficulty level in small steps when the children successfully complete a particular exercise pattern. (degree of change)

#### ② Variation for controlling exercise quantity

- Adjust exercise quantity by changing the size of the court or the distance depending on the age and physical fitness of the players as well as environmental factors such as the temperature and humidity.

#### ③ Variations for cross-age groups (vertical relationship)

- Handicap children in the lower grades by doubling the score, for instance, or having the older children hop when a younger child becomes it in tag.
- When a game is meant for establishing peer relationships, add a condition to include one pre-school children in each group to also make sure that younger children are accepted by the older ones.

### (2) Have children enjoy sports through games and play

In tennis, for instance, if the coach focuses on practicing returns, the player would repeat returning the ball hit by the coach. Then the player may move on to practice volleys near the net or serves. Such drills focusing on a specific technique have been traditionally conducted in Japan. In many cases though, children may not acquire sophisticated skills; experiencing the entire flow of the game has a more favorable effect on their future development than encouraging them to learn each technique separately. Practicing sports in a game format including fun elements offers the opportunity to enjoy

and learn the typical movements required for the game, which is much better than simply repeating basic drills for specific skills.

### <Develop the habit of exercising>

In order to develop and perpetuate children's habit of exercising, we should deliberately create attractive places and artifices that make children want to spontaneously exercise. According to the guidelines of the Japan Sport Association, children are required to exercise at least 60 minutes or more every day. Instead of building special training facilities for children to meet the guidelines, we must direct the children to spontaneously achieve the required objective.

Let us look at some of the tips on how to approach children:

- ▶ Have the children think about how they can exercise more than 60 minutes, including daily activities, exercise and sports in their daily routines. Ask if they have any ideas about what kinds of exercise they can do after school.
- ▶ Have the children establish goals or think about themes related to physical activity.
- ▶ While teaching them how to play exercise games and playing the games together, stimulate the children's creativity by encouraging them to invent new variations and rules for the games.
- ▶ Take the children out on foot or by bike to explore different places.
- ▶ Give them items that provide them with opportunities to exercise such as jump ropes, unicycles and different types of balls.
- ▶ Make good use of traditional events and volunteer activities in the local community.
- ▶ Get the whole family involved in outdoor activities.
- ▶ Have the children watch professional sports such as baseball or J League football at stadiums and encourage them to watch the games on TV at other times.

## 3. Safety precautions

As mentioned earlier, we must create an environment where children have fun and exercise on their own initiative, engaging in a wide variety of movements. The instructor is required to offer a helping hand as necessary and watch over them to assure their safety. Aside from paying attention to the routes the children are likely to take to arrive as well as the layout of the grounds and equipment, the instructor must regularly conduct safety inspections of the facilities and equipment as well as hazardous spots. While playing games together, the instructor guides the children to understand the significance of the rules, risky behavior, hazardous locations and safe use of the play equipment so that they can become conscious of their own safety.

### (1) Place selection

#### ① The enough space and environment for movement

The instructor checks if the place has enough space for the planned exercise games and sports, trees to provide enough shade and if the trees create blind spots. Special attention must be paid to the condition of the play equipment and fences as well as the grounds for areas where children may climb and jump down from trees or structures.

## ② Positional relation of the place and roads

The instructor has to inspect the safety of the place assuming the movements of the children including their accompanying siblings; if there are car stops, guardrails or pathways at the entrances of the grounds as well as the volume of traffic on adjoining roads.

## (2) Check the facilities and equipment

### ① Confirmation of the facilities (e.g. fixed playground equipment)

Playground equipment used every day wears out little by little. The instructor must conduct regular inspections in advance by using or moving the equipment as well as by touching the main parts that the children may come into contact with to see if there are any loose bolts or damages. Especially after a long spell of rain, strong winds or heavy rain, or after a long interval, the instructor must inspect the equipment with extra care aside from the regular inspection. Having children join in some of the inspection work before playing will enhance awareness for their own safety.

### ② Hazardous spots

Adventurous children often climb trees and structures, such as lavatories and sheds. They should be following the rules but at times their mischief behind the instructors back provides significant experience as long as it does not pose any dangers. If you find a rock or a bump that might cause sprained ankles within a landing area, you should remove the obstacles. Special attention has to be paid to hazardous spots, such as structures with heights exceeding the permissive range.

### ③ Remove dangerous objects such as broken glass and cigarette butts, etc.

A ground or park where many people come and go may be littered with broken glass bottles and cigarette butts. Check the place in advance and be sure to remove dangerous objects. Instead of the instructor doing all the work, involve the guardians so that cleaning up becomes part of the regular activity for creating a play area together.

### ④ Play equipment and sports gear

As for sports gear that the instructor provides, be sure to check the gear regularly before and after use as well as during storage. Count the number of items, check for any damage or wear and try using the gear from time to time.

## (3) Preparation for emergency

### ① Neighboring hospitals

Securing safety is the priority but the instructor must list the neighboring hospitals, especially those with emergency departments, in case of accidents and injuries. The list should include surgeons, orthopedists, ophthalmologists, dentists, etc. and opening hours and days of the hospital or clinic.

### ② Contact information of people concerned

In the event of an accident or problem, the instructor may not be able to handle the situation alone. Contact the people concerned so that they will be ready to come and help. It is recommended to have a simulation with everyone concerned about how to respond in an emergency before starting to coach.

## ③ Emergency response manual

Produce an emergency response manual with a list of hospitals and carry it at all times so that you can take it out at any time during the activity. Share the manual information with the guardians as well as all the people concerned.

## (4) Prevention of heat stroke

Since children's body functions are still undeveloped and they cannot sweat as much as adults, their temperature rises quickly in hot environments. They are more exposed to sunlight reflecting off the ground because they are shorter. Do not make children push themselves in the heat and be sure to take frequent breaks. The Japan Sport Association lists five tips to prevent heat stroke during sports activities.

### ① Strenuous exercise in the heat can cause accidents

Even if the temperature remains unchanged, the risk of heat stroke increases as humidity rises. Adjust exercise intensity, take frequent breaks and have the children drink adequate amounts of water depending on the weather.

### ② Heat waves require caution

Many of the accidents caused by heat stroke occur when the weather suddenly gets hot. Caution is required during the first few days until our bodies acclimatize.

### ③ Replenish lost water and salt

We lose both water and salt from sweating. Be sure to replenish 0.1-0.2 percent of the salt in the body by having sports supplement drinks.

### ④ Dress lightly and stay cool

How you dress has much to do with keeping and releasing heat from the skin. During the hot season, dress in light clothes made with hygroscopic fabric and wear hats outdoors.

### ⑤ Poor physical condition can cause accidents

When you are not feeling well, your thermoregulatory function drops, causing heat stroke. Do not allow children to exercise when they have symptoms such as exhaustion, lack of sleep, fever, cold or diarrhea. Explain the importance of daily healthcare to the children and their guardians.

## (5) Prevention of infectious diseases

Infectious diseases such as COVID-19 and influenza may spread in the community. In order to prevent diseases from spreading, you should follow the guidelines provided by the specialized institutions of the government or the local community instead of deciding on your own when coaching the children. In view of the children's psychological and physical development, total absence of motion stimuli for a certain period of time holds back their healthy growth. For this reason, the instructor is required to provide exercise programs with ingenuity and proper supervision, placing priority on adhering to the guidelines to prevent the spread of infectious diseases.

Furthermore, the instructor is responsible for teaching the children the importance of healthcare and regular life habits.

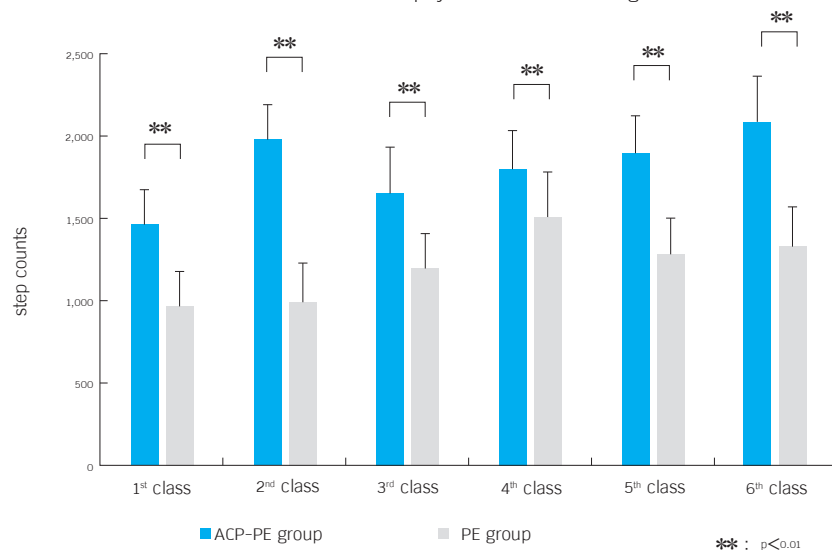


# 4 Useful information

## 1. Research Findings in Japan

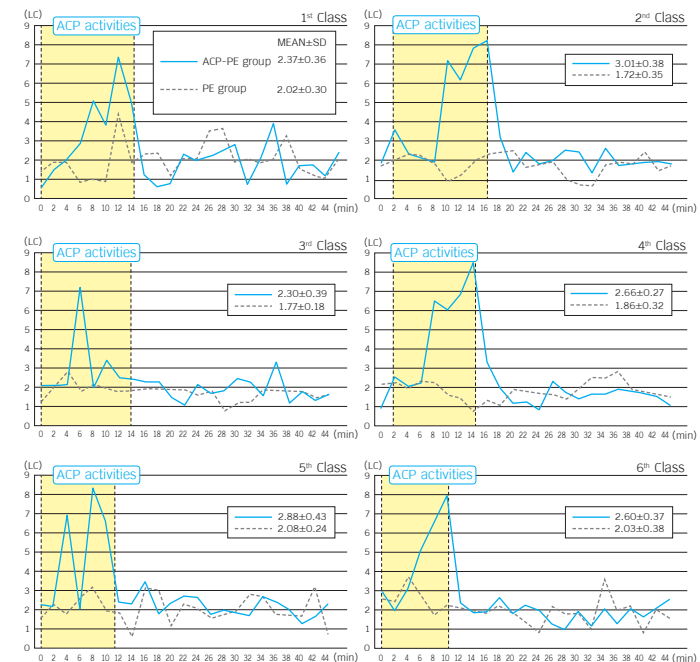
### (1) The effect of ACP on children's amount of physical activity

A study was conducted to identify how physical education (PE) classes that incorporate the ACP concept (Active Child Program) affect children's amount of physical activity, skill development and their perception of physical activity. The subjects were 53 children in the second grade of the public elementary school in Gifu prefecture, Japan. In the study, changes in the amount of physical activity, movement competence and awareness about physical activity were examined in a series of six mat exercise classes – 45 minutes a class. The analysis revealed that the amount of physical activity in the ACP-PE group; 26 children, which participated in ACP activities in all classes, was significantly higher for both exercise intensity and step counts than in the conventional PE group, which participated in conventional PE classes; 27 children. Concerning movement competence, the movement scores for the forward and backward rolls improved significantly in both groups through the classes, but a significant difference between the 2 groups was not observed. The research also demonstrated that children found ACP-PE classes more enjoyable and wanted to continue with them going forward. ACP-PE classes enabled children to engage in physical activity while having fun and helped them increase the amount of physical activity, without any adverse effect on mat exercise as the main exercise. These results demonstrate that ACP-PE is effective as physical education designed for children today.



Kasuga et al., 2020

Figure 1 The step counts in each class.



Lifecorder (LC; SUZUKEN Co.) was used to measure exercise intensity.

Kasuga et al., 2020

Figure 2 Time-series data of exercise intensity

### (2) The effect of ACP on children's mental health and sociality

Children's physical activity has been reported to be closely related to sociality such as compassion and cooperativeness. Physical activity has also been demonstrated to help improve children's mental health. Thus, we also need to pay attention to the positive effect that physical activity has on mental health and sociality, as well as on the improvement of Physical Fitness as we discussed earlier in the context of the declining physical fitness of children. In view of this, we designed PE classes that integrated ACP and examined their effects on the mental health and sociality of children. The subjects were 429 children from first grade to sixth grade in public elementary school in Tokyo, Japan. ACP was practiced in a series of three PE classes. Before and after those classes, a total of six questionnaire surveys were conducted. The classes aimed at providing children with opportunities to play harmoniously with their classmates and incorporated physical play designed to encourage physical contact and interaction. The findings showed that for children from the first to fourth grades, their feeling of comfort, sociality and concentration gradually increased through the classes, while the feeling of discomfort gradually declined. For children in the fifth and sixth grades, the feeling of comfort was noted to have increased after each class. Thus, we can conclude that physical play had a positive effect on the children from the first to fourth grades and helped improve their sociality and mental health. For fifth and sixth graders, the study demonstrated that practicing physical play can help refresh their minds as shown in the positive changes after each class.



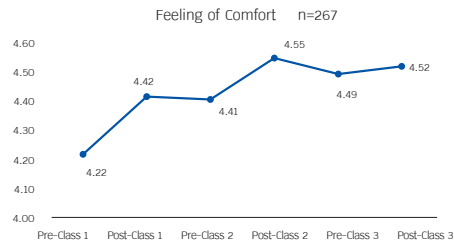


Figure 3 Survey results (first to fourth grade children): feeling of comfort

- ▶ Feeling of comfort increased significantly from pre-Class 1 to post-Class 3 ( $p < 0.05$ )
- ▶ Baseline level of feeling of comfort gradually increased through the classes ( $p < 0.05$ )

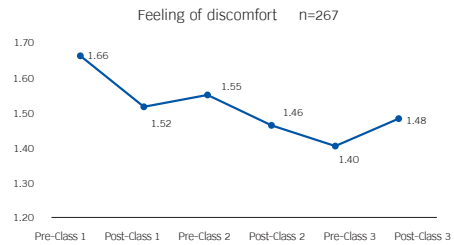


Figure 4 Survey results (first to fourth grade children): feeling of discomfort

- ▶ Baseline level of feeling of discomfort gradually decreased through the classes ( $p < 0.05$ )

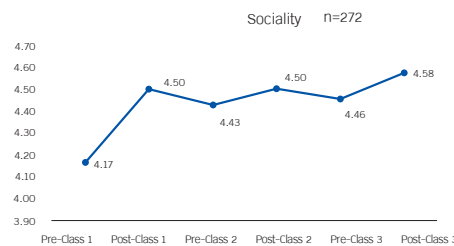


Figure 5 Survey results (first to fourth grade children): sociality

- ▶ Sociality increased significantly from pre-Class 1 to post-Class 3 ( $p < 0.05$ )
- ▶ Baseline level of sociality gradually increased through the classes ( $p < 0.05$ )

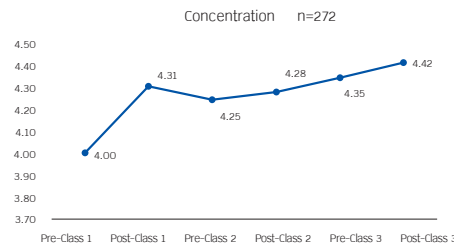


Figure 6 Survey results (first to fourth grade children): concentration

- ▶ Concentration increased significantly from pre-Class 1 to post-Class 3 ( $p < 0.05$ )
- ▶ Baseline level of concentration gradually increased through the classes ( $p < 0.05$ )

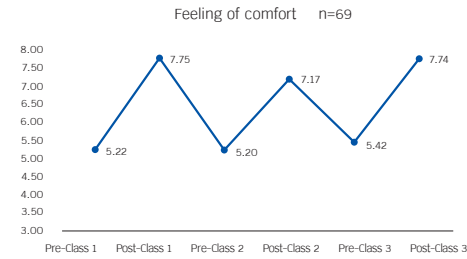


Figure 7 Survey results (fifth and sixth grade children): feeling of comfort

- ▶ Feeling of comfort increased significantly after each class ( $p < 0.05$ )

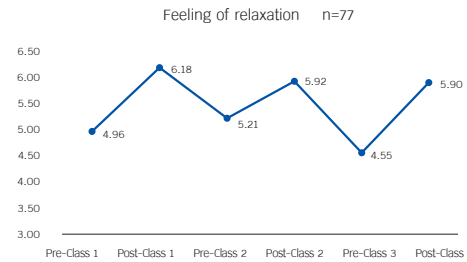


Figure 8 Survey results (fifth and sixth grade children): feeling of relaxation

- ▶ No significant difference in feeling of relaxation ( $p < 0.05$ )

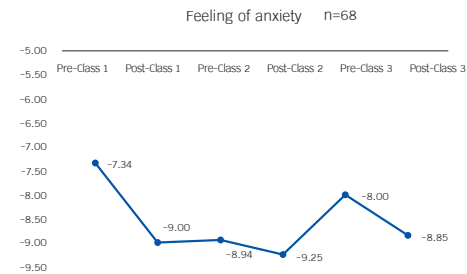


Figure 9 Survey results (fifth and sixth grade children): feeling of anxiety

- ▶ Feeling of anxiety declined significantly after Class 1 ( $p < 0.05$ )
- ▶ Baseline level of feeling of anxiety gradually decreased ( $p < 0.05$ )

## 2. Case Studies in Japan

### (1) Board of Education: Motosu City Board of Education (Gifu prefecture, Japan)

The Motosu City Board of Education focuses on developing children's Competences to Learn and Grow in the Future.

The physical strength and motor skills of elementary and junior high school children in Motosu City were found to be below the average national and prefectural levels. The level of motor performance among the city's small children was an issue compared to other cities; the children fell more easily, had more trouble skipping and doing hopscotch steps, and had more awkward body movements.

To address this situation, the city launched the Power to Live Project incorporating the ACP concept, and revamped the guidelines regarding the quantity and quality of daily play practiced at day care-kindergarten facilities\*. As a result, children demonstrated improved motor performance; their motor skills improved significantly.

Under the cooperation between preschools and elementary schools, the program has been implemented on a continuing basis. As part of the program, all elementary schools in the city revised physical education classes and introduced additional recess time for the first and second grade students to play. Following these changes, the students are now more willing to prepare for their physical education classes and cleanup themselves, and more cooperative with others. In addition, they now eat more during the school lunch.

\*Daycare-kindergarten is a hybrid facility that offers both kindergarten and daycare.



### (2) Junior Sport Club: Wakkanai-Nanbu Judo Junior Sport Club(Hokkaido, Japan)

In a corner of a judo dojo, pre-school children are playing hopscotch and tug-of-war, laughing and giggling. Elementary school children are playing Protect the Mouse (*Nezumi Nigashi*) and Pull the Radish (*Daikon Nuki*) games adapted to incorporate judo techniques. The coaches decided to include physical play in judo practice after they learned about ACP through Junior Sport Club workshops. Since introducing ACP, the club has attracted more members, and the number of members who skip practice has decreased.

The club had previously been keen on strenuous training sessions, prioritizing winning matches. However, some members quit as they found it difficult to win matches or felt burnt out. ACP aligned with the shift in coaching policy; the coaches now prioritize motivating children to continue practicing judo for a long time while having fun, rather than winning matches.

ACP is acting as a catalyst in realizing the coaches' passion for motivating children to love sports and continue judo for a long time.



### (3) JSPO Sports Festival

The JSPO Sports Festival is an event held on Sports Day to share the fun and joy of sports. Every year, more than 10,000 people participate in this event. As part of the festival, the Japan Sport Association organized and held an ACP event so that parents and children can join and enjoy together. The event was so popular that the number of those who signed up for the event exceeded the planned number; the venue was filled with much excitement.

ACP provides children with opportunities to be physically active while having fun. Physical play lays the foundation for children to grow up to be physically active and sport-loving, while helping them to develop physical fitness, strength and sociality. There are far less opportunities now for physical play to be passed on from generation to generation in communities and schools. Thus, teaching children the kinds of physical play that attract their interest and engagement is of great importance now.



### 3. Checklist for instructors and parents

This checklist is designed to demonstrate how day-to-day activity in sports club has influenced children's behavior and perceptions regarding physical activity and sports. The findings are to be used to improve teaching and activities in sports club.

Regularly checking the following items will help measure how effective physical activity and sports coaching is in practice, leading to better guidance for activities in sports club.

#### (1) Assessment of children from observation

Have you noticed any minor changes in children in the following items in sports club and in daily life? Please rate on the scale of 1 to 5 as follows: 1 = Agree, 2 = Somewhat agree, 3 = No differences observed, 4 = Somewhat disagree, 5 = Disagree.

Check		Check	
1	Play outside more	6	Demonstrate more creativity in play
2	Engage in wider varieties of play	7	Engage in group play
3	Play with more concentration	8	Follow rules in play
4	Show more enjoyment while playing	9	Able to move their body with more coordination when running, throwing, etc.
5	More children are actively participating in play	10	Less injuries and falling

Adapted from "A Study on Improvement of Children's Physical Strength and Motor Skills" by the Kanagawa Prefectural Education Center (2008-2009).

For the following questions, please rate on the scale of 1 to 5 as follows: 1 = Agree, 2 = Somewhat agree, 3 = No differences observed, 4 = Somewhat disagree, 5 = Disagree. Review the following checklist regularly, from every six months to one year, and share the findings among instructor, and between instructor and parents to improve the coaching program.

#### (2) Educational program review checklist for instructor

		Check
1	Do children look happy participating in the program?	
2	Do you introduce exercises to help children acquire diverse movement skills?	
3	Do you work to communicate the coaching aims to parents?	
4	Are you keeping track of how children's movement skills are developing?	
5	Do you ensure the safety of children during the program?	
6	Do you consider your language when speaking with children?	
7	Do you make sure to praise children when you see development in their movement skills or attitudes towards a task?	
8	Do you as an instructor enjoy doing activities with children?	
9	Are older members cooperative in helping pre-school children or younger members participate in activities and guiding them?	
10	Is activity in sports club fulfilling its role in the healthy development of children?	

### (3) Checklist for parents

		Check
1	Does your child look happy participating in the program?	
2	Do you talk to your child after each program session and ask about what they did during the session?	
3	Do you engage in and help with activities in sports club?	
4	Are you keeping track of how your child's movement skills are developing?	
5	Do you assist or work together with your child to help review what they learned at sports club?	
6	Do you directly communicate with instructors when you are unsatisfied with or have requests regarding activities in sports club?	
7	Do you make sure to praise your child when you see development in their movement skills or attitudes towards a task?	
8	Are you paying attention to activities in sports club with the understanding that acquiring diverse movement skills is important in childhood?	
9	Do you motivate your child to actively participate in activities through encouragement and praise?	
10	Are activities in sports club fulfilling their role in the healthy development of your child?	

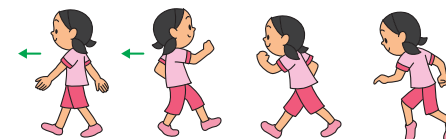
#### (4) Can you do this movement?

Observe how children move.

By gaining understanding of how children acquire movement skills, that is, the process of acquiring diverse and refined movement skills, instructors can provide programs appropriate for different development stages.

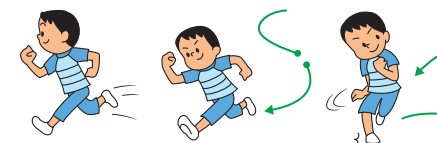
#### Walking and Running: Can you perform different types of walking and running?

##### Walking



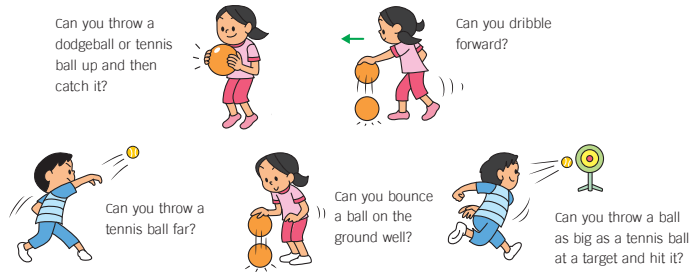
Can you walk looking straight ahead? Can you walk backward? Can you walk fast and slow? Can you walk on your toes and heels?

##### Running

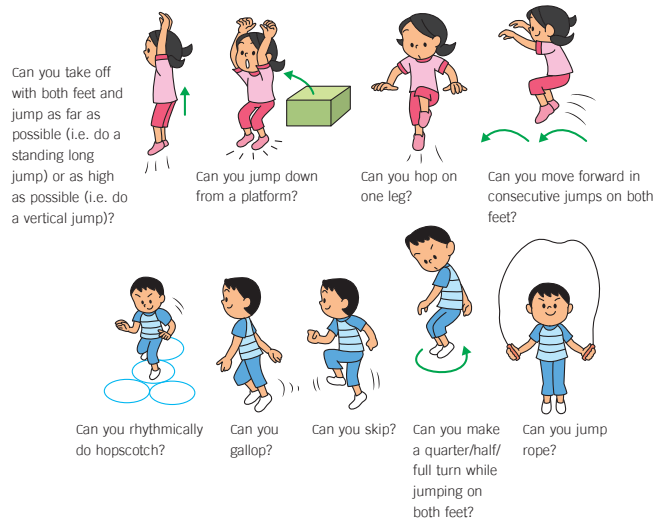


Can you run at top speed looking straight ahead? Can you run a winding course or curves well? Can you quickly change directions while running?

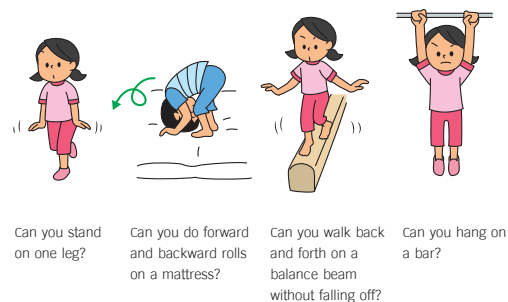
### Ball Handling: Can you handle the ball well?



### Jumping: Can you perform different jumps?



### Balancing Movement and Others: Can you control your body well?



## 4. FAQ

**Q1** Regarding qualitative evaluation of movements, do we set a target level by age group?

**A1** The target level by age group for qualitative evaluation of movements is not for assessing the relative merits of physical fitness. Rather, it is to grasp the development stage of each child to determine the kind of movement they are ready for in the next stage.

**Q2** What kind of plays improve physical fitness such as instantaneous force, endurance and flexibility?

**A2** There is no play that is the most suitable to strengthen a specific physical fitness. Children are stimulated through play in different ways depending on the number of players, duration and space. Therefore, by varying the settings, instructors are expected to observe whether the children are experiencing or repeating the targeted movement and elements of physical fitness.

**Q3** We cannot figure out the target age group of the plays introduced in the guidebook.

**A3** The plays introduced in the guidebook are not designed for specific age groups. The desirable way of applying or expanding the plays depends more on the development stage and experience of the children than their actual ages. Instructors need to arrange the plays as the situation demands while carefully observing whether the children are enjoying the plays.

**Q4** Some of the children do not follow the rules. What should we do?

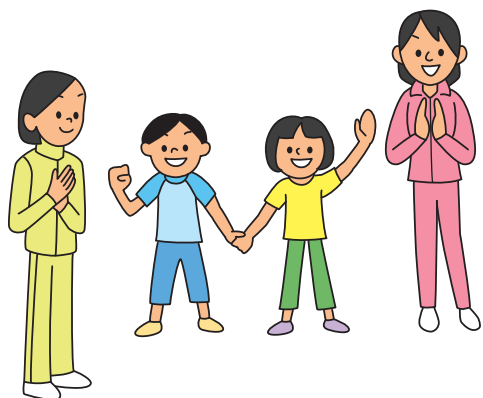
**A4** It is not natural for children to follow the rules. Prior to playing a game, instructors should talk with the children so that they promise to follow the rules. This will ensure safety and security for the children to enjoy the game. Furthermore, if any of them break the rules, the instructor will immediately stop the game, review what they promised in the beginning and find out which rule was violated. Remember that children in early childhood may be unable to follow even a simple rule depending on their development stage. Instructors are advised to embrace this as a learning opportunity for the child to acquire sociality.

**Q5** Please introduce some plays that are fun and effective when played by different age groups. And advise us on the essential points and precautions of such plays.

**A5** Any kind of play can be played by different age groups of children as long as special consideration is given to rules and settings. When a multiage group of children play together, they may need the instructor's assistance in the beginning. Gradually, however, an older child will become the leader and take care of the younger ones in the play. It is sufficient for the instructors to create an opportunity to start a play involving different age groups.

**Q6** How can we get everyone to have a good time?

**A6** First of all, instructors should have fun themselves. When instructors play with the children, the children become motivated to beat the adults and try to challenge the instructors more and more as the play proceeds. Children will get more excited if you praise them with enthusiastic remarks for good moves and encourage them when something goes wrong. Always work to create a positive atmosphere.



## Reference list

### Chapter 1

- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2012) Exercise guidebook for early childhood
- Japan Sports Agency (2019) Physical fitness and exercise capacity survey (2018)
- Japan Sports Agency (2019) The National Survey of Physical Fitness, Athletic Performance and Exercise Habits
- Japan Sport Association (2020) JSPO-ACP Guidebook
- Blair, S.N., Clark, D.G., Cureton, K.J. and Powell, K.E.(1989) Exercise and fitness in childhood: implications for a lifetime of health. In Perspectives in Exercise Science and Sports Medicine, Vol. 2: Youth, Exercise and Sport (edited by C.V. Gisolfi and D.R. Lamb), pp. 401 - 430. New York: McGraw-Hill.
- Ministry of Education, Culture, Sports, Science and Technology (2011) Report on research and study on practical activities in early childhood to cultivate the basis for improving physical fitness

### Chapter 2

- Japan Sport Association (2020) JSPO-ACP Guidebook

### Chapter 3

- Japan Sport Association(2020), JSPO-ACP Guidebook
- Okazawa, Y., KITA M., SUWA, Y.(1996) Factorial Structure of Physical Competence and its Developmental Tendency and Sex Difference. Japanese journal of sport education studies, 16: 145-555
- Japan Sport Association(2019) Guidebook for the Prevention of Heatstroke during Sports Activities

### Chapter 4

- Kasuga, K., Otsubo, K., Sato, Y., and Aono, H. (2020)The effects of physical education classes incorporating the concept of The Active Child Program on physical activity, skill development, and awareness of children, Studies of growth and development, 86:10-20
- The practical approach in elementary school : The effect of physical activity on psychological and social aspects (2010) Pedagogy of Physical Education,67:50-53
- Research on improving physical fitness and athletic ability of children (2010) Kanagawa Prefectural Physical Education Center

Edited by

**Tetsuya Matsuo**

Professor, College of Community and Human Services, Rikkyo University

**Hisashi Naito**

Professor, Graduate School of Health and Sports Science, Juntendo University

**Yoshihito Sato**

Associate Professor, Faculty of Education, Tokyo Gakugei University

**Hiroshi Aono**

Acting General Manager, Sport Sciences Laboratory, Japan Sport Association

Published by

Japan Sport Association

March 31, 2022

We prohibit the reprinting or republication for commercial purposes.

©2022 Japan Sport Association

Contact information

International Affairs Division, Sport Promotion Department, Japan Sport Association

JAPAN SPORT OLYMPIC SQUARE

4-2, Kasumigaokamachi, Shinjuku-ku, Tokyo, 160-0013, Japan

Email: international@japan-sports.or.jp

Designed and Printed by

KOHKEN PRINTING Co.,Ltd.

Government-subsidized projects of the Japan Sports Agency

## Children Safety Checklists

### 1. Place selection

✓ Check

1 Prepare the enough space and environment for movement.  
(Appropriate size, layout, floor/ground)

2 Check the positional relation of the place and roads.  
(Surrounding traffic and road conditions, children movement lines of flow)

### 2. Check the facilities and equipment

1 Confirm the facilities. (e.g. fixed playground equipment)

2 Identify the hazard spots.

3 Remove dangerous objects such as glass and cigarette butts, etc.

4 Check the play equipment and sports gear.

### 3. Preparation for emergency

1 Confirm the neighboring hospitals.  
(Department, consultation hours, contact information)

2 Get the contact information of the people concerned.  
(Establishment of a cooperation system)

3 Create an emergency response manual.  
(Identify roles)

### 4. Prevention of heat stroke

1 Do not force children to do strenuous exercise in the heat can cause accidents.

2 Be careful of heat waves.

3 Replenish lost water and salt.

4 Dress lightly and stay cool.

5 Take particular care for children's physical condition to prevent accidents.

For more information, please refer to p. 51.

Active  
Child  
Program

