



Team Games

Many children in the Play Phase will go on to play in a team so including some team activities in your approach can help you to introduce the concepts of teamwork, sharing, understanding each others strengths and weaknesses etc. It is also a great opportunity for you, as a Captain of Play” to role model winning, losing and competing with sportsmanship, dignity and respect.



Try to remember these simple guidelines:

- Team activities always work best when there is an equal challenge for each child. Uneven teams (even if the numbers are equal) will promote frustration and bad temper so be careful.
- The numbers on each team could be different (ie three on one team and four on another) IF, when the activity starts the challenge is good for everyone despite the uneven numbers then this can still work well.
- Notice effort as well as good work from the children. Children improve if they make an effort so begin to notice this.
- Encourage teamwork and unselfish play as well as outstanding individual efforts (these tend to catch your eye) but some children do really well in a quiet and unassuming way – try to “see” these as well.

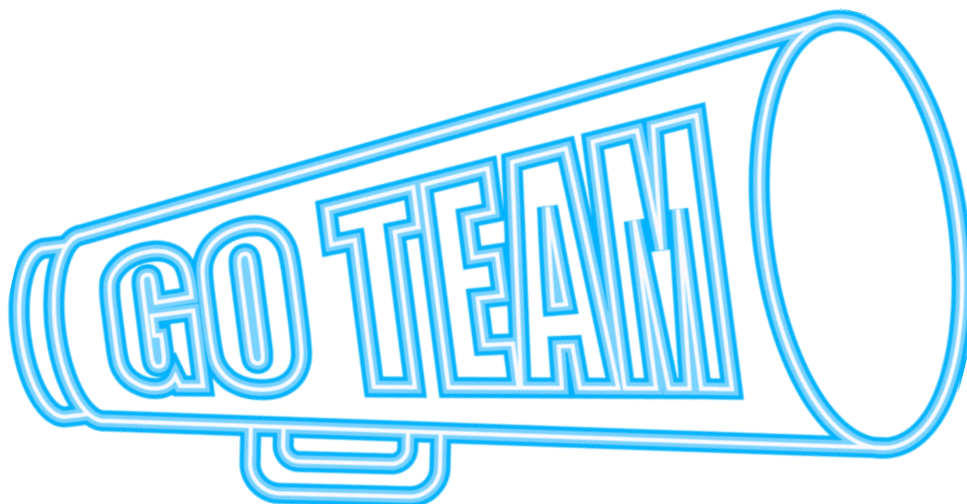


Delivery Hints & Tips:

Things to think about as a Captain of Play when delivering this type of activity.

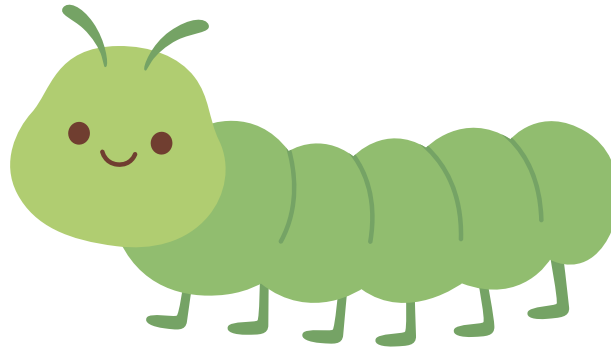
- Give some thought as to who is on each team. Time spent doing this beforehand will pay off and help the activity run smoothly.
- Experiment with different ways to select teams if it is not so critical that the teams are equally matched (ie when children are completing a task rather than being in direct competition with other children). Using captains (children not Captains of Play) to pick tends to leave the same children until last pick – how might this child feel? Draw names out of a hat, give players numbers randomly and call out numbers “Bingo style”. Try to be creative.
- Our 2v2 format is a great way to get children working together as the game satisfies an individual desire to get on the ball whilst providing opportunities to pass and share.

Using this basic framework for the game - the possibilities are endless!





Let's have a look at: HOT POTATO CATERPILLAR



A caterpillar needs to pass a hot potato along its back so that it doesn't get burnt. But which caterpillar can do it the quickest?

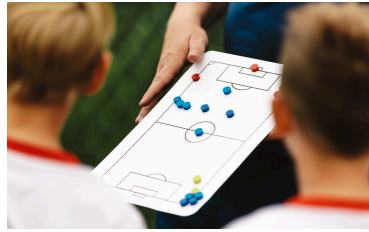
THE ACTIVITY

The children are divided into equal teams where possible and for the game to work well each team needs to have 5 or 6 members.

The teams sit down in a line facing the front and the first player holds a ball in their hands. On "GO" the first player passes the ball over their head to the next player (the other teams do the same).

Once a player has passed the ball over their head and it has been taken by the player behind, this player gets up and runs to the end of the line, sits down, and waits for the ball to reach them again.

As each player passes it over their head they move to the back of the line. In this way the caterpillar moves backwards towards the winning line (Cones mark where the race will end). Children must not throw the ball over their head – they have to keep hold of and then pass it on.



Generating more forms of play from this simple game:

Over the weeks that you are together with the children we want them to experience the different forms of play. To help you, think about these things:

Imaginative
PLAY

Social
PLAY

OBJECT
PLAY

PHYSICAL
PLAY

FORMS OF PLAY

To introduce more **IMAGINATIVE PLAY**:

It should be quite easy to incorporate some extra "imagination" into this activity. Instead of being a caterpillar you could be a well oiled super machine, a car or other vehicle, in fact, anything that moves or has moving parts. Be the race commentator and describe what is happening, who is in the lead, who is catching up, who has dropped the ball.

To introduce more **OBJECT PLAY**:

Include lots of activities that require manipulation of objects/balls etc to help gross and fine motor development. Have kicking games, throwing games, catching games using your equipment in innovative ways to promote all round skills.

To introduce more **SOCIAL PLAY**:

Team games are great for bringing children together so encourage half times to chat, team talks by the captain, ideas to be shared during a water break etc.

Be observant and try to notice lots of examples of the things you want to promote and reinforce. Discuss with the children why these things are important and how they help the sessions run well and make them enjoyable for all.

If you are working as a "team" of Captains, ensure you are consistent in your messaging to children and parents.

To introduce more **PHYSICAL PLAY**:

Instead of the ball going over the head, have the children twist and pass it at the left and right side.

Try a version that is very funny and requires the children to be spaced further apart. The ball is between a child's ankles and they lie back, bring their legs over their head with the ball in place and the person behind grabs the ball and repeats. Its crazy but great fun.



WAYS TO GIVE THE ACTIVITY MORE OF A FOOTBALL FOCUS

- Play 2v2 games but also try to provide an equal challenge for as many children as possible. 1v2 or 2v3 might work better depending on the children
- Avoid letting the teams get too big for other non football team activities. When it is football – 2v2 is the preferred format.
- Have balls ready to keep play going if one goes out of play.
- If you can use proper goals this is so much better.
- Chat to the parents about the type of comments and support you want to hear as part of our Play Phase approach.
- Ask the parents to stand around the pitch to retrieve balls as they go out. You need to have the next ball ready to keep the game going.
- Make sure that the pitches or areas are the right size. Its OK to vary the shape but try to think about the different returns. For example a longer, thinner pitch may promote more running with the ball whereas a shorter, wider pitch brings the goals nearer so you may get more shots at goal.

