



healthy body
happy me 2025
BUSY BODIES

Thursday

Healthy Body, Happy Me 2025

Brilliant Balancers



National Day Nurseries Association

*Brighter thinking
for early years

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HOPE
is all you need

Activity 1 Obstacle course

Obstacle courses are a fun way to get children actively moving and support a range of physical movements, providing opportunities for children to learn new skills and control their bodies in different ways.

Obstacle course

Activity outline

- Gather a range of nursery equipment that can be utilised to create an obstacle course, including chairs, tunnels, crates, ropes, soft play resources, hoops, benches etc.
- Children's physical development is not defined by their age but by their opportunity to acquire skills and control. Young children need to be given lots of chances to practise and refine physical skills through being active
- Plan your course to include a range of skills, such as over, under and through, crawling, balancing and climbing. Ensure the course supports all children's ability levels. For example, by creating different width and height options
- Include experiences that get children's hearts pumping faster through hopping or jumping. Use rope or string to create a balance beam, add curves or loops for children to follow
- Adults should be on hand throughout the activity to provide encouragement and support to help build children's confidence and perseverance with new skills. Ensure your course is inclusive, such as for children who may use a walker
- As children's confidence grows, invite them to create their own obstacle course. Ask for their ideas of how objects can be used and where they could be placed. Encourage children to model how to cross their course for others to follow. Introduce language to help them describe a range of movements.

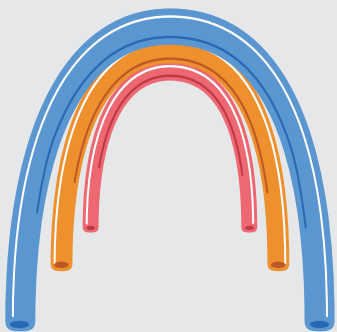


Resources

- A range of equipment that can be used to create an obstacle course, e.g. chairs, tunnels, crates, ropes, soft play resources, hoops, benches etc.



Adapt for all ages and abilities



Crawl through



Activity 2 Musical flamingos

Playing a game of musical flamingos encourages children to balance and hold a pose, controlling their body parts, building stability, balance, spatial awareness and coordination. Children must listen carefully to the music and respond to sounds as they start and stop. Children can use their creativity to think of new animals or shapes they can make with their bodies which their peers can copy.



Stop when the music stops



Try to stand still

Musical flamingos

Activity outline

- Introduce the flamingo images to the children. Talk about their key features and how they move. For example, look at how flamingos stand on just one leg without losing balance or falling over. Ask children if they can be a flamingo and stand on just one leg. Practise together, asking children to try balancing on different legs to see which is easiest
- Explain how to play musical statues and practise stopping and starting as the music changes. Once children are confident doing this, ask the children to become flamingos, flapping around like flamingos whilst the music plays and standing still on just one leg when the music stops. Ask children to hold their pose until the music starts again
- As children grow in confidence, think about adding other animals poses children can practice, such as an elephant with an arm out as a trunk. Invite children to suggest different animals and demonstrate poses.



Resources

- Fast and slow-paced music for the activity (explore cultural music from around the world)
- Free space for children to move
- Equipment to play the music
- Flamingo images.



Activity 3 Beanbag balancing

Balance activities are a fun way to physically challenge children. Balancing objects such as beanbags can help children's development by supporting core stability, balance, coordination, spatial awareness and problem-solving skills.

Beanbag balancing

Activity outline

- Give each child a beanbag or other balance object. Invite children to place the beanbag on their head and see if they can keep it there while they walk around the space. Demonstrate what happens if you move or tilt your head in a range of directions (the beanbag falls to the floor). Talk about keeping your head straight and share other tips to help with balance, e.g. look straight ahead, hold your arms outstretched and walk slowly
- Sitting babies can join in too – offer them small cuddly toys to balance on their arms, legs or heads
- Once children are confident walking with a beanbag, introduce a range of other moves to challenge children. This might include balancing the beanbag:
 - On your head, standing on one leg
 - On your head as you turn around in a circle
 - On your head as you jump/hop/skip
 - On an outstretched arm
 - On a shoulder/hand
- Ask children to suggest new ways to balance the bean bags and test out their ideas. Pose questions and test outcomes. For example, "What happens to the beanbag when we hop?" Encourage children to be curious and ask questions about what could happen and find the answer together.

Resources

- Space to move freely (ideally an outdoor space)
- Bean bags or other objects to balance (rolled up socks, bean-filled cuddly etc.).



Can you balance the teddy bear?

Activity 4 Savoury vegetable flapjacks

Talk to children about how our bodies need food to fuel them so that we can run, play, climb, hop, jump and relax. Discuss the healthy foods children eat which provide plenty of nourishment; ask them about their own favourite vegetables.

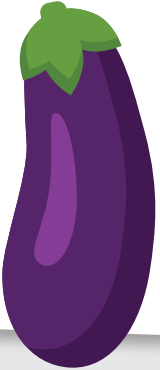
Prior to starting, ensure all children wash their hands and put on aprons, talking about health and hygiene.

Introduce the recipe for savoury vegetable flapjacks. As you prepare and combine the ingredients, talk about the different foods and describe the method as you go, helping to develop vocabulary and understanding.



Resources

- 150g porridge oats
- 50g unsalted butter
- One large egg, beaten
- 100g grated cheese
- 100g grated vegetables of your choice (carrots, courgette, aubergine - squeeze out any excess water prior to using)
- Fresh herbs/spinach (optional)
- Oven
- Scales
- Baking tin
- Large bowl
- Grater
- Spoons
- Whisk
- Bowl/jug/pan.



Savoury vegetable flapjacks



Activity outline

- Line a square baking tin and preheat your oven to 180°C
- Melt the butter and put to one side
- Mix all the ingredients and then add the melted butter
- Mix well
- Spoon the mixture into the baking tin. Press down firmly to ensure it is compact and the mixture sticks together
- Place in the oven and bake at 180°C for 20-25 mins
- Allow to fully cool before removing from the baking tin and cutting into bite size chunks.

Take photos of each stage to create a small book. Encourage children to remember the sequence, ingredients and methods to support with memory and recall.



Further resources, links and stories:

Physical Activity in Early Years
- NDNA Training

ndna.org.uk/PhysActivity



Jump through the hoops



Combine all the ingredients



National Day Nurseries Association

At NDNA, we don't just provide nursery membership, lobby government and offer training, we are dedicated to making a difference. We are a charity that believes in quality and sustainability so we put our members' businesses at the very heart of ours. We enhance, support, nurture, cherish and challenge.

Every year we run an annual Healthy Body, Happy Me campaign to encourage better health and happiness by giving nurseries FREE resources for play, learning and fun.

Get involved with our 2025 campaign and help keep your children happy and healthy.

Important: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.



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