

# Ball Skills

MAINSTREAM SCHOOLS THERAPY TEAM

The following activities will help your child to develop their ball skills. They are graded from simple to more complex activities.

Please remember to encourage your child to look at the ball as it is thrown to them and to look where they are aiming it. When catching, prompt your child to hold their hands out ready.

- Sit on the floor opposite your partner and roll a ball to each other.
- Roll a ball to a target. Begin with a large target for example goal posts quite far apart. Gradually, as the child scores consistently, bring the goal posts closer together or use a smaller target. You can also move the child further away. Begin by using a large ball.
- Throw a large ball with two hands through a hoop or into a bucket.
- Balloon Tennis. Using a balloon with a partner bat it between you see how many times you can hit it.
- Bounce and catch a large ball with two hands. Progress to 'pat bouncing' with two hands whilst standing still (bounce the ball repeatedly on the spot, as in 'dribbling'). Then progress to 'pat bouncing' with one hand whilst standing still. The activity can be developed further by moving whilst 'pat bouncing', negotiating an obstacle course whilst 'pat bouncing' and varying the size and texture of the ball.
- Stand opposite your partner and bounce a ball to them so they can catch it, increase the challenge by bouncing the ball in a hoop on the ground.
- Mark out a large 'noughts and crosses' grid on the ground with masking tape; throw beanbags of two colours into the squares to play the game.
- Throw the ball against a wall, allowing it to bounce on the floor before catching it. Progress to catching the ball before it bounces on the floor. This activity can be varied by using a target and different sized balls.

When learning to throw and catch a ball it may be useful to start with a balloon and progress to a large, soft, slow moving ball e.g. a beach ball, then move on to a large foam ball. Reduce the size of the ball when the child is able to catch it consistently.

