

## BEACH BALL FOCUS FUN!

### FUN WAYS TO HELP YOUR CHILD'S SELF-CONTROL & ATTENTION

*Resiliency includes the ability to concentrate, to listen carefully, to focus attention and to persist and follow through to complete a project, do school work or engage in rich play experiences.*

*Brain scientists say an easy way to build our self-control, focus and calming from strong feelings is to move our bodies.*

*Here are some fun, easy activities to do inside or outdoors. They will move bodies and exercise brain connections.*

#### Playing Tips:

**Pick a space for ball throwing that has room for active movement and away from breakable objects. TRY EACH GAME. First round --adults direct game, then as children learn, let them lead!**

**\*Feeling Toss**—Players sit or stand in a circle. The adult tosses or rolls the ball to another telling them to do any of these:

- a. Act like a quiet mouse
- b. Act like an angry lion
- c. Act like a thoughtful turtle
- d. Act like a smart deer
- e. Act like a mad horse
- f. Act like a sad crocodile
- g. Act like a shy bunny
- h. Act like a scared chipmunk

HINT --- feel free to invent your own phrases

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**\*Ball Toss** – The adult starts a ball toss and calls out a number. Child that catches the ball says the next number. For more challenge, have children add 2 to the number or multiply by 3 etc.

**\*Kindness Callout** – The adult starts a ball toss and asks child that catches it for examples of how they are kind –OR – how they help. EX: “What do you do at home to help the family?” “What do you do at school to help your friends?” etc. (NOTE: To prompt more, ask --- “What COULD you do to help before dinner?” or “What COULD you do when a friend is feeling bad?”

**\*Funky Phrases** – Ball is tossed with a starter phrase like “peanut butter”, the child that catches the ball says “jelly”. Next toss can start with “chocolate” and child can finish with ice cream or any phrase. Continue game with contrasting phrases like hot and cold or other fun ideas. OPTION: The adult can use different tones (from a squeaky voice to a low voice) and volumes (from a whisper to yelling) and encourage the child to imitate.

**\* Body Bounce** – HINT: clear game area because the ball may get away. The adult will say a particular body part - finger, toe, elbow, shoulder, head, nose, etc. and then toss the ball. The child will then hit the ball back with that body part. Try to keep ball in motion as much as possible.

**\*Red Light, Green Light Toss** – Have children stand in place and instruct to hop up and down, then move arms, then march in place, etc. The adult then uses the words "Red Light" to stop the action, and "Green Light" to start it up again. To make more complex, toss the ball back and forth as this is played.

**\*Categories-** Before tossing the ball, chose a category and explain to children with a few examples. Then start a ball toss and whoever catches the ball gives an answer. CATEGORIES:

- A. Favorites: color, food, book, movies, songs etc.
- B. I like to help with \_\_\_\_:( give hint: at home; at school; at Grandma's, at church, etc.)
- C. Kind words: Say a kind word that would be said to a specific person (give hint: a friend, a store clerk, military person, a neighbor, someone you don't like, etc. )
- D. What I am good at: Whoever catches the ball will say something that they are good at.

**WITH CHILD PAIRS or 1 ADULT + 1 CHILD**

**\*Body Signal Game** – The adult and child OR 2 children face each other and hold ball between them. The adult or child leader uses non-verbal body signals to indicate which direction the two will step and how many steps to take. Ex: wink your right eye 3 times means both take 3 steps to the right. Or nod head once to left and both move 1 step to the left. During this activity the less predictable the leader is the more effect it has on the ability to WAIT and WATCH for non-verbal signals.

**Follow The Leader Train** – The adult stands in front and children stand behind with their hands holding the waist of the person in front of them. The adult begins moving in a certain way and those behind must copy the movement. This can also be done sitting in a circle, with the adult directing the movements to be used.

**Mother May I** – Line all children up at a starting line. The adult is on opposite side of the room. The adult gives instructions so each child can move toward them. EX: The adult says "Tommy, take 3 giant steps toward me." The child MUST SAY "Mother May I?" before acting out the command. If the child forgets to ask the question before doing the action, they need to go back to the starting line. The goal is to have the child get to the adult and give them a hug.

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