Ten Ideas for Active Movement with Bean-Bags

Bean bags are a fantastic way to encourage hand-eye co-ordination skills. They are ideal for throwing and catching. They can easily be made by sewing two pieces of fabric the same size into a rectangle, circle or square shape. Leave one side open, then turn the beanbag inside out and fill with either recycled plastic beads, lupin seeds, or wooden beads. Sew the end closed. The size and texture of the fabric of your beanbags can be varied to give an added dimension to children's learning.

1. Using a bean bag either touch your child's parts of their bodies or ask them to place the bean bag on that part of the body
   e.g Put the bean bag on your toes, on your head, then on your nose etc

2. Balancing parts of their bodies on the beanbags whilst the beanbag is on the ground.

3. Be a dumper truck and crawl along with the beanbag on their backs, when the music stops ask the children to back up then lift their upper body off the ground thus dumping their bean bag load. Alternatively they could lift their hips up to drop the bean bag off. Boys really love this game.

4. Children can be encouraged to walk along with the bean bag on their heads. This activity can be incorporated into challenge courses to increase the level of challenge.

5. Line all the bean bags up in a row, Use concepts such as behind, in front of and to the side to encourage children to place bean bag in these positions.

6. Pass the Bean Bag – Have 2 children stand together and hold the bean bag in their right hand. To the beat of a drum ask the children to change passing the bean bag between them. To increase the challenge they could pass it under their legs to each other!

7. Rob the nest – Use a hoop in the centre to create a nest. Place the bean bags in this nest. Children then try to rob the nest and bring the bean bags back to their own hoops.

8. Keep the bucket fill. Use a wide bucket, hoop or box and place in the centre of the group. Ensure every child has at least one beanbag. The object of the game is to throw the bean bag into the container and keep the container fill. The teacher can empty the bucket at any time

9. Target throwing – Have large targets that the children can throw their bean bags at. Vary the targets – have some up high, low and also on the ground. You can also use hoops or buckets to throw them into.

10. Parachute – place bean bags on the parachute and encourage the children to move the parachute fast and slow just like the movement of the wind or the waves.

Suggested by Pauline Butt, Active Movement Advisor for Sport Waitakere.