

Healthy or Unhealthy?

This activity, which reinforces throwing and catching, can be done individually, with a partner, or in a group, depending upon equipment, number of students, and time available to work on the skills. Preface this activity with a review of the skills and a discussion about healthy and unhealthy practices.

Set up for Activity

Place different cards around the gym that have pictures of healthy and unhealthy practices on them. (I made my own using computer clip art.) On the back of each card put a corresponding smiley face or sad face sticker. It might also be helpful to write a brief description of the practice. Examples might include:

Healthy (Use with the underhand/smile throw)

Walk dog
Brush teeth
Floss
Milk
Vegetables
Fruits
Jump Rope
Jog
Bathing
Sleep
Hand washing
Using the crosswalk
Smoke detector
Seat belt
Stretching
Helmets for bike, skateboards, scooters, etc.

Unhealthy (Use with the overhand/sad face throw)

Smoking
Pills (taking pills without adult supervision)
Sweets (candy)
Lightning (standing outside)
Guns/Weapons
Fighting
Matches
Sunbathing
Loud music (too close to ears)
Poison
Fast food (eating it too often)
Watch T.V. (sitting too close)
Coughing without covering mouth
Alcohol/Drugs
Boating with no life jacket
Not dressing appropriately in cold weather

At each station, place a piece of equipment that students can use to throw and catch. Remember that throwing and catching items do not always have to be a ball. Be creative with the equipment. Different sizes, shapes, and textures of equipment help children with eye/hand coordination, reaction time, and sensory skills. The teacher will need to explain each station or have written directions.

Activity

You can simply have children work on basic overhand or underhand throwing or you can come up with some fun variations that let children practice the skills. Examples might include:

Overhand Throw...

over a rope/net
into a bucket, hoop, or trash can
to a target on the wall
knock down a bowling pin or Pringle's can
a yarn ball to hit a hippity hop
a balloon and catch
into the inflatable baseball catcher
a yarn ball to knock waffle ball off of cone
wall with a bumpy ball, let it bounce, catch

Underhand Throw...

under a rope/net
with a deck tennis ring - catch
a catch ball jack into a hoop
a beanbag into a hoop
a beanbag into a tipped cone
with rings to a ring toss
with a slime or koosh ball
with one hand then catch in a scoop against a
toss and catch to self

When the teacher designates, students rotate to stations. Upon arriving, students look at the card and determine if it is a healthy or unhealthy choice. If it is healthy, an underhand throw is used with the equipment. If it is unhealthy, then an overhand throw is used with the equipment. Rotate often.