Physical Education for Preschoolers
A Collaborative Approach
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Why is it important to begin PE in Preschool?
Less physical activity in today’s society
Studies show that physical activity improves learning


This study concluded “structured PE is important for preschool children’s psychomotor development because it increases their overall development.”


Things to consider when developing a PE program for preschoolers

- Short attention span
- The need to move
- Developmental level of your class of 3 & 4 year olds
- Students with special needs within your class

Typical Motor skills of a 3 year old
- Walks on a line
- Up stairs reciprocally with railing
- Runs smoothly with changes in speed
- Pedals trike
- Single limb balance 1-4 seconds
- Jumps down two feet together
- Hops 3 x each foot
- 2-3 steps on a balance beam
- Kicks large moving ball
Catches a bounced ball
Catches a 9 inch ball with arms and body

Typical motor skills of a 4 year old
  Walks forward heel to toe
  Walks part way on a balance beam
  Gallops
  Single limb balance 4-8 seconds
  Hops 5-8 times
  Up stairs reciprocally no railing
  Down reciprocally with railing
  Standing broad jump forward 8-10 inches
  Advances one leg forward with overhand throw

How can a Physical Therapist benefit your program?
  Assist in adapting/modifying activities for any children with special needs
  Knowledge of therapy type equipment that may be of use to adapt positioning within the PE environment
  Screening for children that may require gross motor evaluations
  Formal gross motor evaluations once recommended through the PPT or 504 process

Colchester’s Preschool Physical Education is structured like:

  5 centers for specific gross motor skills
  The skills are usually all part of a larger theme ie eye hand coordination
  Class is broken up into 5 small groups and is lead by an adult for each group
  Physical Educator gives directions to the class for each center at the beginning of the class mostly so that the adults leading each group know the activities
  Some units are done with the whole class instead of in centers
  Preschool PE classes are shorter than a typical class period
  Physical Educator plans the PE units and the centers within each unit with input from the PT as needed