

ACTIVE START

Newsletter for Coaches & Recreational Directors

Learning the Terms

Active Start programs should be constructed using the **Multi-Movement Approach**. The multi-movement approach includes 7 fundamental movement patterns (FMPs) of gymnastics (Landing, Stationary Positions, Locomotion, Rotation, Spring, Swing and Object Manipulation). Games, dance, music and circuits are incorporated to develop and extend the qualities of these FMPs. This approach is holistic and should consider the social, emotional, cognitive and motor needs of the child more than the development of physical attributes. It is also important to include many elements of FUN!

Circle Time Activity

Give each gymnast a light transparent scarf. Turn on the song 'Let's Go Fly a Kite' and let them practice tossing the scarf up in the air and catching it. They could also try:

- Catching it in the opposite hand or behind their back
- Blowing the scarf in the air and catching it
- Wearing it as a super hero cape
- Spread it overhead side to side and make a rainbow
- Spread it on the floor like a mud puddle and jump over
- Flap two of them up and down like wings



Snowflake, Snowflake

(Teddy Bear, Teddy Bear Turn Around)

Snowflake, snowflake dance around,

Snowflake, snowflake, touch the ground.

Snowflake, snowflake, soft and white.

Snowflake, snowflake, snowball fight!

Snowflake, snowflake in the air,

Snowflake, snowflake everywhere!





Coaching Tip

Introduce circuits by having the gymnasts moving while you are explaining. Have the group play follow the leader with you while you do the first station and then add on stations one by one explaining as they follow you. For example do station 1, then station 1 and 2, then station 1, 2, 3 and so on. To keep it easier for young gymnasts to remember you could make a circuit with six stations but the first three stations are repeated with different equipment but the same activity is performed.

Safety First

The Active Start child has soft bones, small hands and body parts that may be unproportional. It is important to consider the safety concerns related to children under 6 years old.

- Children should not practice headstands until the age of 5
- No bridges until the age of 5
- Avoid large trampolines under the age of 3. Use other springing devices like mini-tramps and assist the child by holding their waist.
- This age group shouldn't be on anything higher than chest height without assistance.
- No hanging unsupported until 2 yrs
- Never spot between their wrist and elbow, since it may cause their elbow to dislocate.

Roll the Snowball

One child gets ready to do an "egg roll" (a tucked log roll). Partner or parent (in a parent and tot class) rolls the "snowball" to a cone or mat or line on the floor. Then switch positions and roll back to the starting place (when 2 children are partnered). Helpful hint: practice the egg rolls first.

Santa Catching his Reindeer

(Introducing the 'tag' concept to Active Start participants)

Place a couple of mats side by side each other or lie some ropes on the floor to create a 'corral' for the Reindeer. The coach is Santa or Mrs. Clause and the children are the Reindeer (crawling on the floor). Santa has to gather the Reindeer by tagging them with an object. When a Reindeer has been caught, he/she needs to go to the corral and wait for the other Reindeer to be captured. Make the corral big enough so the Reindeer have room to play in the corral. Once all the Reindeer have been caught Santa can open the gate and let them out to play again.

I'm a Friendly Snowman

(I'm a Little Teapot)

I'm a friendly snowman, big and fat.
 Here is my tummy and here is my hat.
 I'm a happy fellow, here's my nose.
 I'm made out of snow from my head to my toes.
 I have two bright eyes so I can see,
 All of the snow falling down on me.
 When the weathers cold, I'm strong and tall.
 But when the weather is warm I get very small. (Melt to floor)



Resources: NCCP Gymnastics Foundations Active Start manual, Kindergym Cookbook, Beth Gardner's presentation (Nov 2014).