



Moving with Pool Noodles

- **Obstacle Course Fun!** Create an obstacle course using the pool noodles as barriers to jump over, duck under, or weave around. Ideal for building muscle coordination, self-regulation, and fine motor control, this activity is a child favorite.
- **Row, Row, Row Your Boat.** Children sit in pairs facing each other, holding onto the same pool noodle. Children pretend to row the boat by pulling back and forth. Increase the challenge of the activity by having the children sit on big, bouncy balls. Using the balls improves stability and further engages core muscle (trunk) strength.
- **Rocket Ships.** Cut pool noodles into half or into thirds. Count 1, 2, 3 Blast Off! And then throw the pool noodle high into the air. Try to catch it. Or, throw the noodle into the air and call out an action to do before it lands (i.e. jump, touch, the ground, turn around).
- **Jack Be Noodle.** Cut the noodle into 2-3 inch segments. Children can jump over the noodles, building coordination and improving stability. Line the pieces up to make a low wall for the children to jump over. Or, jump over one piece, then stack one more piece with each successful jump. See how many you can stack before the jumper knocks them down. For a variation, children can do standing broad jumps starting on a spot marked on the floor. Mark the landing spot and then let the children measure the length of their jump using pool noodle segments.
- **Noodle Limbo.** Adults or two friends hold ends of the noodle, starting up high over their heads. Children walk under the noodle. The holders lower the noodle in increments (i.e. shoulder, chest, belly button, hips, thighs, knees, shin) so that children get low to move under the noodle. As the noodle gets lower and lower, let all children play without eliminating anyone. Children learn to move their bodies through space at different levels—high, medium, and low. What creative ways will they come up with to get under the noodle?
- **Ride'em Cowboy!** Put on your imaginary cowboy hat and boots. Children pretend the noodle is a horse and gallop. Add some fun by giving signals to go fast/slow, left/right, or start/stop. Get creative! What other animal might they like to ride? How do those animals move—walk, crawl, waddle, etc.? Children can experience a variety of locomotion patterns such as sliding from side to side; twisting back and forth; walking in straight, curved or zigzag paths.

Adapted from *Head Start Body Start*