



**TAKE IT  
OUTSIDE!  
WEEK**

## Moving with Pool Noodles

*Row, Row, Row Your Boat* Children sit in pairs facing each other and hold onto the same noodle. Children pretend to “row the boat” by pulling back and forth. Increase the challenge of this activity by sitting on big balls. This will challenge stability and engage more core (trunk) muscle strength.

*Tug of War* A great partner activity for adult and child. Each person holds onto an end of the noodle and tries to pull it from the other. Vary positions to increase the fun and benefit. Try sitting, kneeling, and then standing. Try kneeling while the child stands. Challenge him/her to pull you over—you will both have fun when you fall over! This activity increases muscular strength and endurance.

*Copy Cat* What fun ways can we move with the pool noodle? Let the children create the fun. Take turns being the “leader” and everyone copies. Beware this could get silly while children practice moving through self space and taking on the roles of leader and follower.

*Rocket Ships* Cut pool noodles in half or into thirds. Count 1,2,3 Blast Off! And then throw the pool noodle high in the air. Try to catch it. Or, throw the noodle high in the air and call out an action to do before it lands (i.e. jump, touch the ground, turn around).

*Jack be Noodle* Using an electric bread knife, cut the pool noodle into 2-3” segments. Children can jump over the noodles. Line the pieces up to make a low “wall” for 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 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 height, chest, belly button, hip, thigh, knee, shin) so that children need to get down lower to move under the noodle. Let all children continue as the noodle gets lower without eliminating anyone. Children learn to move their bodies through space at different levels-high, medium and low. What creative ways will they generate to get under the noodle as it gets lower? Get in the fun and model some!

*Ride'em Cowboy!* Put on your imaginary cowboy hat and spurs. Children pretend the noodle is a horse and gallop. Add some fun by giving signals to go fast/slow or start/stop. Get creative. What other animals might they like to ride? How do those animals move—walk, crawl, run, waddle, etc. Children can experience a variety of locomotor patterns such as sliding from side to side; twisting back and forth; walking in straight, curved or zig zag paths.

Pool noodles are inexpensive and typically not used after summer is over. Pull out your pool noodles to help your child develop a variety of gross motor (large muscle) skills.

**Did You Know?** Children are smarter, more cooperative, happier, and healthier when they have had many opportunities for varied outdoor play activities.