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Action: Sport (Small Collaborative Partnerships)



Sport Day for Every Child (Every Child)

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*Training Program "Every Child"
for teachers, trainers and volunteers*

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Motivational Strategies

Children with ADHD may sometimes experience difficulties in completing a task. For children with inattentive ADHD, this can mean difficulties in staying focused on the task in question, in carrying out the task at hand, and in keeping their attention without distraction. For children with hyperactivity ADHD, they often have difficulties with work, sitting still in class, constructing answers, waiting their turn and not interrupting others.

These specificities can interfere with the academic performance of the children concerned. One reason for this is a low level of dopamine in the brain, which affects the motivation of these children. Because of their disturbed reward pathways, they need more feedback and engagement.

Similarly, it can be difficult for a child with ADHD to focus attention and concentrate on a physical activity. It is therefore appropriate for sports educators to adopt specific motivational methodologies to help these children overcome their motivational difficulties in order to engage in regular physical activity.



Daily Report Card

One of the methodologies that can be used in the classroom by teachers is the daily report card. Some may use this methodology on a daily basis. The particularity of this methodology is that the teacher will not use grades with the child in question, but behavioural targets, feedback and tangible rewards. These rewards will encourage the child to improve his/her behaviour. The daily report card also involves parents who can use the strategy at home.

The first step in this strategy is to determine which behaviour needs to be improved. This requires input from parents and all teachers working with the child. Once the goals have been set, they should be linked to a reward that will be offered daily or weekly when a behavioural goal is achieved.

It is important that the goals are actually achievable for the child. If they are not, the level of difficulty in achieving them should be reviewed. On the other hand, if the child is found to be achieving the targets, the targets can be increased.

The first step in creating a Daily Report Card is determining which behaviors need to be improved. This requires input from the parents and all teachers who work with the child. This strategy can also be used in a sports education context to keep the children motivated and to encourage them to improve certain behaviours.

Games

When developing a motivational strategy for a child with ADHD, the key is to find an engaging strategy. Video games are a good example. Some video games work as a motivational strategy for a child with ADHD because they give the child immediate feedback. If the children succeed, they get points or rewards. If the children fail the task, they learn to do it again the next time they attempt it.

The FFFBI Academy video game is a good example of game for children with ADHD. Funded by the US Department of Education and developed specifically for children with ADHD, the game has seven parts, with each section focusing on a different ADHD symptom. For example, in the first FFFBI Academy game, "Step into the Triple E!", the child works through a scenario that helps him/her deal with his/her symptoms. If video games or other feedback activities work, parents and teachers can incorporate them into the daily report card. For example, if the child is focusing during an exercise, he/she can have 10 minutes to play a game during a break. Not only does this strategy give the child with ADHD the motivation to improve his or her behaviour, but the games also help to alleviate these symptoms.

The concept can apply also to sport education, by adjusting for example the sport exercises with different ADHD symptoms co-related with sport scenarios, or by offering the children some break where they can play a specific game as a reward of their behaviour.

Ice Breaking Games



Time Bomb

Stand in a large circle. Go around the circle and have everyone say their names. Once everyone has had a chance to say their name, toss a tennis ball or softball to anyone in the circle. Now, they have two seconds to call someone's name and throw the ball to that person. If whoever catches the ball can't remember anyone's name, the "bomb" explodes and they're out of the round. Continue until everyone left in the circle knows everyone's name!

Sports relay races

This is a simple, flexible and engaging change up activity that can be adapted to pretty much any sport. One simple example might be football, where two teams have to dribble to and from a point as fast as possible, and the first team to get all their players to do so wins. It's a simple game that offers an interesting change from your team's sport of choice – and brings with it all the team-building benefits you need.

Tug-of-war

A bit of a classic activity for team bonding, the tug-of-war is a staple activity for teams wishing to strengthen their solidarity. Opposing teams stand either side of a rope, and must pull against the other team until one team has been pulled over a certain point. Just make sure you balance the teams correctly, ensuring one team doesn't just blow the opposition away. That way, teams must use communication and tactics to win, rather than just brute strength.

Blanket Ball

Sure to be a particular favourite for youth teams, blanket ball marries the best of ball sports with volleyball. A team is given a blanket, which each player helps to spread out to form a sort of blanket trampoline. Throwing the ball into the middle of the blanket, teams must flip the ball over a volleyball net (you could improvise and use a pole or skipping rope as a makeshift bar that the ball must go over), which the opposing team must catch in their blanket. With teamwork and communication an imperative part of success in this game, it's an ideal team building exercise for youth teams.

Catching cradle

This one sticks to cricket, but helps young cricketers improve a traditionally boring aspect of the sport in an engaging, enjoyable, fast-paced way that also has all the team-based advantages these games bring. Split the group into two teams and stand them both in a line either side of the catching cradle. One team sets off and throws the ball through the cradle, running to the back of the queue after they've thrown the ball. The least amount of dropped catches after a couple of minutes wins.

Human Knot

Another exercise that goes big on communication and teamwork, the human knot gets team members working together to solve a problem. With the group standing in a circle, each person grabs a hand across from them. When all hands are connected, the circle should resemble one big mess of hands that teams must work their way out of without letting go. This activity builds problem solving as a team, and relies on communication in a sensible, concise manner.

Move it name game

Similar with Time Bomb game Moving away from sport a little, this team building activity is an ideal ice-breaker for any group that are meeting each other for the first time and need to get to know each other. A good place to start is names, and creating a game out of communicating them with one another helps to breakdown that initial barrier. So, stand in the middle of the group, who are circled around you. Everyone has 30 seconds to memorise the names of the people on their left and right. When time's up, point at any group member and say "left" or "right". They then have to say the name of the person stood on whichever side you requested. Break the game up by shouting "Move it!", when everyone has to rush to a new position where they can learn new names.

Gutter Ball

Another classic game that requires teamwork for success is gutter ball. Give each participant a tube of guttering or pipeline and place a suitably-sized ball into it. Each team has to pass the ball down their pieces of tubing to the end without the ball slipping out and touching the floor. It's a fast-moving, team-orientated game that youth teams from any sport can enjoy.

Bolf

Similar to gutter ball in what it brings to team-building exercises, Bolf is another great ice-breaker that isn't specific to any given sport. In fact, it touches on a number of sports simultaneously. Get two large buckets or bins and place them 15 feet from two teams. Each team gets wide array of sporting balls placed at their feet: golf balls, footballs, cricket balls, netballs, tennis balls (and pretty much any you can lay your hands on). When the game begins, the first player chooses a ball and attempts to throw it in the bin. If successful, the next player is able to choose the next ball. If unsuccessful, the ball is passed onto the next player and they have a go. First team to sink all the balls wins. Bolf is another great example of team-based activities that are mild in their competitive nature, but fun and exciting for youngsters.



Inclusive Games

Game: Life-Sized Chutes and Ladders

While this game requires a fair amount of equipment and setup, it's fun for players of all ages and abilities, and a great choice for giving students practice in taking turns while developing their fitness skills.

Lay out a long rope (or series of ropes) on the floor of the gym, arranging it in a path with several straight sections as well as a few bends to change the path's direction. Then, lay hula hoops interspersed with foam squares along the path, and set cones — weighted, if possible — at each turning point of the rope.

Similar to the board game, players take turns by rolling foam dice and then moving that number of hula hoop/foam square "spaces" along the path. Students with impaired vision can use the rope as a guide, while students on foot or in wheelchairs can step or hop in the hoops or wheel alongside them. Landing on a square sends the player back to the start; the first player to reach the end of the rope path wins. Players can also buddy up and assist each other to the finish line.

Activity: Cultivate Mindfulness

Teachers and coaches know that mindfulness plays an important role in physical education, and it can also have a positive effect on students' academics as well as their moods and self-confidence. Best of all, students of all abilities can practice mindfulness, cultivate related skills and reap the benefits.

Start with one of the simplest mindfulness activities: counting your breaths as you breathe slowly in and out as a group. Another great and simple activity involves taking slow, deliberate breaths as you talk your students through relaxing each major muscle group, starting with the head and neck and working downward.



Game: Bowling

Adapted bowling is fun and easy for students of all abilities, and it's simple to set up. Stretch exercise bands between the legs of a chair or desk so that students can use their hands or feet, or enlist a partner, to slingshot a ball across the floor toward bowling pins. Balls can be foam, yarn or any other type that is appropriate for your students; pins can be plastic cones, blocks, smaller balls, or anything else that works. For students with visual impairment, use tape on the floor to mark off the optimal path for the ball.



Bucket Run game

- Line up several balls, socks or beanbags spaced about one meter apart. Place a bucket or a laundry basket at the end of the line, again around a meter away.
- Now the run is prepared, ask the children to stand by the bucket.
- Time to go! They should run to pick up the first ball/beanbag, run back and pop it in the bucket.
- Next, they run to the second item, grab it, run back and put it in the bucket.
- Repeat in turn until all items have been collected.
- You can time how long it takes them to complete the bucket run to see if they can beat their record next time.

Jumping

The child can jump onto a pile of cushions (use a fitted sheet to help make sure the cushions won't slip away as they bounce onto them) or just on the floor.

Try offering challenges: how many jumps can you do in a row? Can you throw and catch something while you jump? Can you do a tuck jump and still land on your feet?

For this exercise, you can use a Trampoline, always making sure all security precautions are taken.

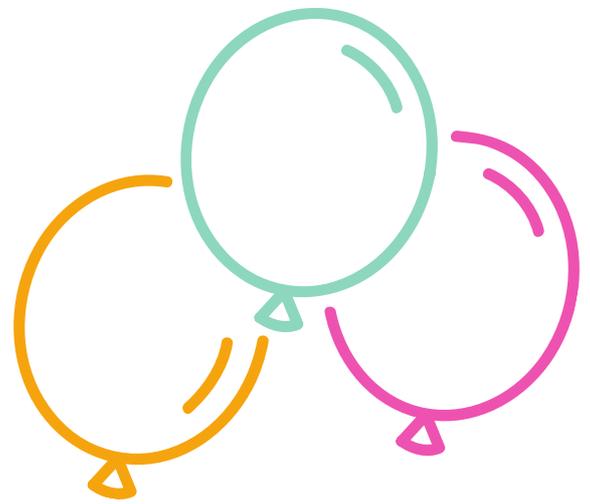


Balloon volleyball

Blow up a balloon and use a piece of tape to mark the center line or “net” on the ground. Balloon volleyball is a great game for two or more kids, but it can work for just one.

If there’s nobody else around, have the children play both sides by running back and forth over the line to hit the balloon before it lands on the ground.

Variation: If you have more than one child playing, you can add more balloons to make the game more challenging.



Twister

This classic game is a great way to keep kids moving, help them work on gross motor skills, and give them practice telling left from right. If you don’t have the game, you can use coloured paper or other supplies to create your own grid.

Fun with bubble wrap

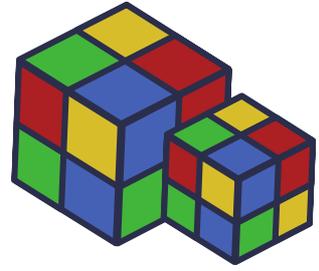
Bubble wrap can inspire all kinds of activities. Roll out the bubble wrap carpet and let the children walk the “runway.” Make a hopscotch grid with squares of bubble wrap. Or use permanent markers to write letters on the bubbles, and see how quickly your child can “pop” the alphabet. You can even let kids paint the bubble wrap and then press paper down on top of it. When the bubbles pop, they’ll have spectacular “bubble print” paintings.



General Adaptive Strategies to the games

- Use targets or goals that make noise when hit by the ball, or radios under the basket in a game of basketball.
- Vary the size, weight and texture of balls so students with ADHD will be stimulated and be more involved. Also, students with visual impairment can more easily tell the balls apart.
- Designate a quiet area where students can take a break from the noise and hubbub, and another area where students can take movement breaks with mini-trampolines or squeeze balls.
- Use simple visual reminders and cues, such as photographs of students performing each pose of an exercise routine, to help students remember steps, rules or movements.
- Use smaller playing areas with well-defined boundaries, including tactile boundaries.
- Use Velcro on balls as well as in gloves, in mitts and on paddles, so every student can have success.
- Have students pair up so partners can assist each other.
- Lower baskets and nets, enlarge goals and targets, and loosen or eliminate time limits.
- Give students choices to help them feel empowered in their physical education.
- Keep it consistent: Students with many types of disabilities benefit from knowing what to expect, including what the rules and expectations are, what types of activities they will be doing, what types of noises they will hear and make, and when all of these will occur.

Guidelines for volunteers and youth workers



1. Go one to one

Children with ADHD respond very well to individual attention. If possible, ask another coach to help you, for example by asking the child with ADHD questions about an exercise or routine during the demonstration.

2. Be patient and positive

Use as much praise and positive motivation as possible and try to keep the mood up at all times, so that everyone is having fun.

You can adjust the time or number of attempts. If you do adjust one of these, offer the adaption to all students if possible. For example, all students get two tries to catch the ball.

Intimidation and pressure will not help children with ADHD. Never humiliate a child. When possible, give a child with ADHD a special mission or responsibility. This will keep them busy and build their confidence and self-esteem.

3. Give clear instructions

Use a calm, clear voice and eye contact. Keep instructions short. Break instructions down into small pieces as long lists of instructions may not be remembered. Involve children in demonstrations if they are confident enough - this keeps them engaged and helps them understand the exercise. Ask children to repeat the instructions to check that they have understood them - or use visual cues such as signs and diagrams to reinforce the information. For example, if playing colors tag, you can hold up something blue when you call blue, or you can include different kinds of balls during Ball Toss Race. Different textures, shapes, and colors can keep kids engaged.

Offer a quiet word if a child is struggling to understand or remember the instructions rather than showing them to the whole group. Let children know that it is okay to ask coaches for help. It can be good to know that just because a child with ADHD does not stand still while being instructed does not mean that they are not listening or taking in what is being said. Many children with ADHD need to move to process information and they can listen better when they are busy with their hands or feet.

4. Mix it up and prevent boredom

Keep children busy by using short exercises with a quick change. If children get bored, move on to a new activity. Move players around so that everyone has an opportunity to be active. Keep children busy even if they are waiting their turn or on the bench - help with markers, keep equipment tidy - anything to keep them active.

It's fine if a student needs a break. Maybe the tag game is 10 minutes, but a certain student can play for 5 minutes before getting distracted or disruptive. It is fine to work up to playing longer. Talk to other adults about an alternative activity if needed. For example, a student could have a hula hoop break or take a lap around the playground.

5. Open communication channels and keep them open

Meet with the parents or carer and keep an open line of communication to talk about successes and problems that arise. Parents are the best experts on their child and can answer your questions. Find out what is likely to help and what may be triggering difficult behaviour. Ask the child to tell you how they are finding the sessions and what might help them - they may not be able to tell you, but by asking regularly you can build their confidence and allow them to tell you how they are doing. Inform other coaches of additional needs and how best to manage them. If appropriate, consider pairing the child with a supportive teammate who can help them follow instructions during sessions. Be careful to respect the child's confidentiality by not sharing the diagnosis with other children, parents or people not directly involved in the situation. Young children with ADHD may not know much about the diagnosis themselves - you should be sensitive to this.

6. Be prepared for matches and events

Explain to the children from the outset, in simple language, what you expect of them. If necessary, discreetly inform the coach and referee of the opposing team of the team's additional support needs and the strategies you have in place.



7. Manage excitement and anxiety to avoid arguments

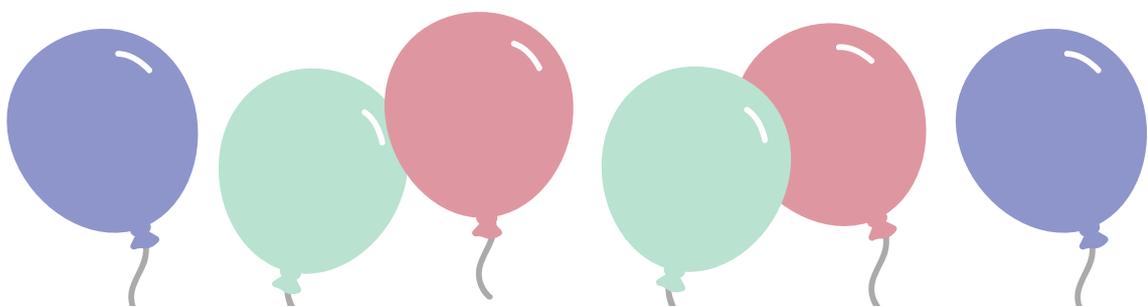
Children with ADHD can easily get caught up in the action of the game and forget about strategy and teamwork. Remind players with ADHD that winning or losing is a team responsibility, not an individual failure or success. Help them manage their emotions about defeat and disappointment by focusing on the positives and thinking about how they can regroup. Children with ADHD can be emotionally and socially young for their age and take things badly when they go wrong. Being aware of this will help coaches to keep children focused. Watch for triggers and, if necessary, take children out to relax and refocus (with a quick drink) and put them back in at the first opportunity. Involve the child in self-monitoring by agreeing a way for them to tell you when they are getting upset or in danger of losing their temper. If they know how to 'raise the red flag', this may prevent them from acting out on the field. Don't argue with the child - you can quickly get into a stalemate, which is never good. Praise them, take away a point or give them a short sanction if necessary.

8. Keep it simple and structured

Start each session with a familiar, calm routine. Establish a small number of clear and fair rules and explain the reasons for them. Give examples of what they mean.

9. Use warnings and short sanctions if really necessary

Ignore small incidents where you can. Giving attention and encouragement to those who are on task in the group can help the young person to refocus. If necessary, give a clear warning if the behaviour does not follow the rules. Warning cards or colours (red, orange) can be useful - use the same language every time. Try saying "I'm giving you a warning now for", it cuts through the 'noise' that surrounds ADHD children. Use light and immediate sanctions if necessary - such as a short time-out. It is good to check these sanctions in advance with the young person and their parents or carer. It may be helpful to have the young person do a lap or star jumps instead of asking them to stand still on the side, which is not realistic for some children with ADHD.





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