

ZONES, STATIONS, AND RELAYS

Games that use zones, stations, and relays are great for meeting the physical activity needs of all children. These types of games create defined boundaries to accommodate children who get overwhelmed by large spaces like open gyms and fields. They divide children into smaller groups to ensure everyone is active. And they make room for children of varying skill levels to participate. Here are some examples of how to use zones, stations, and relays to plan fun activities that include all children.

Zone Games

Divide a large play area into zones. Direct children to different zones based on ability level or some other criteria.

Example: Basketball Using Zones

- Divide the court into zones using tape or cones.
- Create 3 zones: one for runners, one for walkers, and one for “wheelers” (children in wheelchairs or on scooter boards).
- Change the set-up in each zone as needed. For example, the hoop height may vary between zones.
- Establish different rules for each zone. For example, one zone may allow 5 tries to shoot a basket, while another zone only allows 2 tries.

Station Games

Set up multiple stations, with a different activity at each location. Allow children to rotate from one station to the next, but to skip any station they are not comfortable with. Try numbering, lettering, or color coding stations so children know where to go next. You may also code stations by level of difficulty.



Examples of Stations:

- Jumping jacks
- Push ups
- Planks
- Push motions
- Balance board
- Arm circles
- Fast clapping
- Dips
- Punching bags
- Bouncing balls

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Relays

Break a large group of children into smaller teams. Provide an active task that each child must complete before the group is finished. Make sure to emphasize teamwork rather than competition and winning.

Example: Soccer Ball Relay

Set Up

- Set up lines of cones on a field or in a gym.
- Split up the group into teams of 3 or more children. Create the same number of lines of cones as you have teams.
- Give each team a soccer ball.

Play

- Children line up at one end of their team's line of cones.
- A child from each team moves the soccer ball to the end of the line and back, and then passes the ball to a teammate who does the same.
- Children may move the ball any way that they choose, as long as they do not use their hands. They may dribble with their feet, hop with the ball between their legs, wheel with the ball between their feet, etc.
- A team has finished once all team members have dribbled the ball up and down the line of cones.
- The goal is to move the ball across the field in the most creative way, and to have the most cheering for your team members.

Adapt

- Children may move the ball in a straight line, or back and forth between cones for more of a challenge.
- Each team may elect a “cheerleader” or “enthusiast” who runs/wheels alongside the person with the ball and cheers them on.
- The rest of the team, while waiting for their teammate to return the ball, must keep moving by jogging in place, doing push ups or jumping jacks, etc.

Adapted with permission from *Discover Inclusive Physical Education, A Guidebook for Physical Educators*. Published by the National Center on Health, Physical Activity and Disability (NCHPAD) 2015. www.nchpad.org/fppics/Discover%20Inclusive%20Physical%20Education-Final.pdf. Accessed July 5, 2016.