

## PLAY & LEISURE ACTIVE / ENERGETIC PLAY

### LEARNING TO SKIP

#### GENERAL ADVICE

Children learn to jump before they can hop or skip. Skipping is a difficult skill to learn. It involves the legs and arms performing different tasks at the same time. Rhythm and timing are extremely important. Some children find it easier to learn to skip on the spot while others find it easier to learn to skip on the move (e.g. like they are walking). Try both to see which your child finds easier.

Children learn best when they participate in activities that are just the right challenge, not too easy or too difficult. Below are some activities you can try. Try to do them in the order that they are presented in as this will make it easier, but if your child easily achieves one task, move onto the next one.



#### ACTIVITY IDEAS

Before your child can learn to skip they need to be able to:

- Jump/hop over a rope laid on the floor.
- They need to be able to hold and turn the rope without worrying about jumping.
- Jump on the spot 10 times or hop from one foot to the other staying in the same place 10 times.
- Move their arms and legs at the same time e.g. doing star jumps.
- Time their jump/hop – can they jump/hop in time with the beat? Use music with a strong beat.

Practice each of these steps individually before trying to co-ordinate them.

Make sure you have more than enough space for the child to swing the rope, if your child has reduced body awareness they will probably move around a bit.

The child should start with the rope held in both hands so that it touches the ground behind them. Get them to lift their arms so the rope lifts up and swings against their legs. Do this 5-10 times.

Get them to bring the rope up over their head so that it lands in front of them.

Once they can do this they can start to jump or step over the rope. Go really slowly. Get them to wait for the rope to stop before they jump or step over it.

Once your child has mastered the process they can start to speed up. They could try skipping to music to help them establish a rhythm.

## EXTRA CHALLENGES

Once your child can skip they could try the following activities:

- How many skips can they do in a row? Count them, and then see if they can beat their record the next time.
- See how many skips they can do in two minutes.
- Try skipping and moving at the same time or skipping on the spot (depending on how they learnt to skip).
- Skipping round obstacles.
- Race with a friend.
- Can they do any tricks? Skipping backwards, crossing the rope.