

# 10 CREATIVE OBSTACLE COURSE IDEAS FOR KIDS

**1 || Carrying An Object** Have kids carry a ball, toy, or other object through the obstacle course to increase the challenge. Make it a weighted object for more proprioceptive input and to build strength.

**2 || Holding Hands** Make it a partner game! Assign partners and challenge kids to hold hands with their buddy without letting go as they move through each obstacle.

**3 || Red Light, Green Light** This is a great way to work on impulse control, reaction time, and self-regulation. When you call out "green light!", kids begin moving through the obstacles. Call out "red light!" and that's their cue to freeze – even if they're teetering on the edge of an obstacle!

**4 || Animal Walks** Have kids try moving like an animal all the way through the obstacle course (crab walk, bear walk, inchworm).

**5 || Speed Challenge** Can kids race against the clock as they make their way through the obstacle course, trying to achieve their fastest time? Or, can they try it in slow motion?

**6 || Song Signal** Play music as kids move through the obstacles. Stop the music without warning and see if kids can freeze as soon as they hear it stop. Repeat!

**7 || Take it Outside!** Using natural obstacles like logs to balance on, stones to step on, and branches to crawl under is a great way to breathe a little life into an obstacle course. Try our Sensory Motor Scavenger Hunt for more ideas!

**8 || Partner Carry** Have kids work as a team to carry an object (ball, balloon) as they make their way through the course.

**9 || Lights Out!** Dim the lights and give kids flashlights, headlamps, and glow sticks to light their way through the obstacles!

**10 || Super Simple DIY Obstacle Course** No supplies or equipment? No problem! Use chalk to draw an obstacle course.

# 10 TRANSITION STRATEGIES FOR KIDS

## 1 || Make it clear how much longer the activity will last

Try a visual timer. Bring the child's attention to it when you set it and keep referring to it throughout the activity.

-Offer a set number of turns with the activity before moving on and then count them out clearly (e.g. 10 more pushes on the swing, 3 more turns with the toy, etc.).

-Give lots of warnings for how long the child has left in the activity.

## 2 || Make sure the child knows and understands what is coming next and give her something to look forward to!

-Set up a visual schedule showing the child several steps of her day (e.g. get dressed, brush teeth, eat breakfast, go to school) either in pictures or, if your child can read, using words.

-As much as you possibly can, stick to your schedule until it's an easy routine.

-Try breaking it down into even simpler terms with a "First...Then" chart, showing that first the child must complete one activity before moving on to a more preferred activity.

## 3 || Use a transition object or toy

Try a special toy, book, or other object that can be designated for use only during transitions.

## 4 || Don't rush it

-If you know that a child is going to struggle with an upcoming transition, give him/her LOTS of extra time to make the switch from one activity to another.

## 5 || Practice makes perfect

-Social stories are great for easing anxiety over new or difficult transitions. They allow kids to mentally "practice" the transition in a calm, non-threatening way.

## 6 || Practice the art of distraction

- Use bubbles! Can the child stomp bubbles all the way to the car? Can they run through the bubbles to get all the way to the therapy room?

- Singing also tends to work wonders for distraction during transitions as well as movement activities that get you from point A to point B (e.g. "Can we hop all the way to the sink to wash our hands?").

- Play catch with a bean bag or bat a balloon back and forth as we move through the hallway.

## 7 || Make a sensory "pit stop".

-If there's a place in the hallway to leave a tactile bin, a few resistance bands, and a container of Theraputty – this is a great opportunity for kids to do a little "sensory drive-by" as they transition in the halls and it's usually a good motivator too!

-Try heavy work activities during transitions.

# 10 TRANSITION STRATEGIES FOR KIDS (CONTINUED)

## 8 || Have a consistent way of signaling that an activity is over

-Try singing a consistent song that lets kids know that a transition is coming – like a “Line Up” song or a “Clean Up” song.

-If there is a specific kiddo who is struggling with transitions, make it his job to turn off the lights, turn on the music, or lead the song.

-Sing or play a specific song to show that it's time to get dressed in the morning or time to get in the bath.

## 9 || Make “wait” time less confusing

-Movement breaks and sensory activities are great time fillers.

-Fidget toys and simple hands-on tasks (e.g adapted books and fine motor tasks) are also great tools for keeping little hands busy during downtime

## 10 || Consistency, structure, and organization are key!

-Lulls in the action, waiting time, lots of shuffling around of papers/materials are all great ways to lose kids' attention and invite problem behaviors

-Clearly defined spaces and work areas help.

-Try a specific area for homework at home.

-Try a specific place where the child can find his clothes and get dressed in the morning.

-In the classroom, teachers can paint shapes on the floor or use tape marks to show kids where to line up.

-Try to have defined spaces and activities for kids who finish activities early (e.g. puzzles or books on the carpet, sensory table, etc.).