



CoOperBlanket®

Created and written by Kimberly Dye MS BC-DMT

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The Large CoOperBlanket's 9 Oz. lycra/spandex strength and elasticity promotes group cohesion, trust, individual balance, and risk taking for up to 15 children at a time. The Medium size is perfect for 3-5 year olds, while the Small is suitable for small groups of 2-4 children. CoOperBlanket is machine washable, cold water, gentle cycle.



Blossoming Flower

Promotes cooperative play



WARM-UPS

Spine/Torso/Abdomen

DIVE AND SPLASH

Stand inside blanket equidistant from each other, facing inwards, and step backwards until there is a equal pressure against the fabric. Holding top edge, individuals extend arms over head, bend knees, and begin warming up the spine by pressing the lower back into fabric and curling upper back and arms forward. Roll through spine while pressing into support of blanket and extend to full height as if cresting a wave, arms opened wide. Maintain full body contact with blanket. Twist right to left while keeping either arms or feet stable. Have children explore ways of "churning up the waters" Return to joint circling action from the waist while holding top edge with extended arms.

Legs/Feet

TALKING FEET

Children sit down on blanket with 1/2 fabric still supporting back, other 1/2 under legs and feet. Reach down and grab bottom edge with both hands pulling fabric up and over feet. Begin by pressing toes and feet into elasticity, stretching and flexing foot and calf muscles. Using rhythmic music instruct children to talk with their feet. Extend whole leg up while bending other leg. Stretch hamstring one leg at a time. Encourage group synchrony and cooperation. Roll onto back and stretch both legs in air simultaneously. This can also be done with heads towards center. Press feet against fabric in a straddle or abdominal leg lift.



Shoulders/Neck

Bald Heads

Participants sit and relax their spines into the support of blanket. Slowly roll head right and left. Bring top edges over back of head and maintaining resistance, press head back and forward, for strength and stretch. Playful improvisation occurs while wrapping blanket over head and/or face. Have children make up names for funny shapes or characters that emerge.

MOVEMENT EXERCISES

NAME THAT STATUE

Turn on some music and instruct children to secretly choose a theme and move within the blanket with the theme in mind. Examples: earth/ weather formations, flying, sea, land creatures, insects, aliens, metamorphoses, etc. Stop the music and observers try to guess the themes.

SCRAMBLER

All lean against walls of fabric holding top edge with hands. Begin moving feet and alternately move towards and away from center without running into each other. Try occasionally turning outwards while maintaining contact with the walls. This promotes spatial awareness, body boundary formation, group interaction and fun!

CLIFF HANGER

Children take turns leaning as near to the floor on two feet while others in the blanket support their weight. Hangers may lean forwards, backwards, sideways, This promotes balance, trust, group cooperation, and confidence building.

KALEIDOSCOPE

Children sit inside blanket pulling it over their heads. Prompt them to experiment with concepts of fold/unfold, opening/closing, inhaling, exhaling, etc. as they move in synchrony, sequentially, and asymmetrically towards and away from the center. Encourage children to create their own images. Examples: an opening flower, sea urchin, starfish eating, kaleidoscope. Put sound to it if suitable.

SKYDIVING

Everyone stands inside the blanket facing outwards, legs spread wide. While holding top edge, arms outspread, they then lean out to an equal balancing point, with mutual support distributed equally around the circle. Make sure they press their hips into the fabric so the body can arch as if flying in a swan dive



Flower

Group sits crouched inside blanket with top edge pulled over their heads. Instruct children to slowly unfold backwards together to a supine position. Reverse direction. For a variation instruct the group to open sequentially to create a wave-like effect.

DIGESTION

Use the blanket to act out science lessons. Have children move/act out stages of digestion by using the blanket and their imaginations such as a man eating bug. Propose each stage and encourage them to "move it". Break children up into teams and have each other watch the other team's version. Rapid learning occurs from visual and physical enactment.



CATERPILLAR/SNAKE/DINOSAUR

6-8 children kneel on top of 1/2 of the blanket with the other 1/2 of fabric covering their heads. Using both hands to close the side edges, children can move and create a creature of their choice, the front child being the head, the last in line being the tail.

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STORYMAKING

Fables, Folktales, Cross-cultural stories come alive in the child's imagination when given the opportunity to enact the main themes. CoOperBlanket has become the object of many a fantasy: a raging river, a king or queen in his/her court, a man eating fish, a half man/ half insect, a galaxy of stars, a canoe trip, a space invasion, etc. You may either read the story while the children "move" it, or you can use images that you see them creating before your very eyes. You can also suggest that each person takes a turn developing a story with a new movement. For example the first person begins, "Once upon a time there was an ocean that never stopped churning." He/she leads the group in creating a churning effect with the blanket. The next person may say "Until one day there emerged a sea creature. They in turn begin to lead the group into forming a sea monster shape etc...

GAMES

PEAS IN A POD

Sitting inside the blanket children create an oblong, tent-like shape. On the count of three and by secret pre-arrangement, everyone but one child presses their head out of the pod. Quickly, those watching must determine which child is missing.



RACE

Two teams, each inside a separate CoOperBlanket must move from point A to Point B by:

1. No one falling down (group cooperation, spatial awareness)
2. moving in circles, zig zags, maintaining a square, oblong, triangle, (shapes)
3. while responding to caller's commands, "all circle to right," "wave making," "boomeranging," etc.. (response, cooperation, coordination)

DODGE BALL

Ten children sit inside CoOperBlanket spread out to a comfortable tension. Insiders perform the opening and closing flower exercise while those outside behind a line try to throw their balls to the inside of the blanket circle. When balls are all thrown the ball eating blanket stands up, keeping the circular pulled out tension, and throws the balls one at a time trying to hit the outsiders. Those hit, trade places with insiders.

TUG OF WAR

Stand equidistant from each other and pull back as far as you can go. The first one to move off the sides of fabric must leave the circle. Last one left is winner and gets to be dragged by others. Variation: First one to move their feet must leave circle.

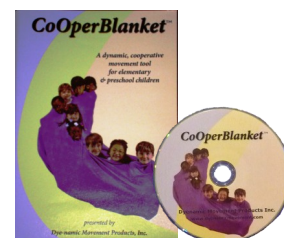
SECRET TAG

Two at a time children change places rebounding off the sides. At various times determined by the one who is "it", someone is tagged and becomes "it" Nobody knows who is "it" until they are tagged.

RUN AND DRAG

One person lies down on fabric so no part is touching the floor. The group faces outwards, runs and drags the rider for a ride of their lifetime. Take turns and rider can practice spinning or holding impossible positions while being dragged.

CoOperBlanket Instructional Dvd Available!!!



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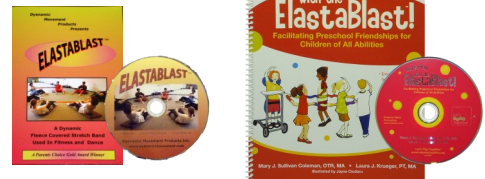
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