

Guidance for Improving Throwing Movements in Early Childhood

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Abstract

Japanese children have poor throwing skills. They have very few opportunities to throw a ball because preschools and homes in Japan do not have gardens or are very small. Furthermore, playing with balls is prohibited in public parks. This was the situation when today's preschool teachers and parents were children. Therefore, adults find it difficult to show or teach children how to throw a ball. In this study, we examined ways in which preschool teachers and parents could promote improvement in children's throwing movements. We asked 11 children to throw a tennis ball. We observed that they were looking down, their faces were not facing the direction in which they wanted to throw, their feet were together, they were not stepping out on the right foot, they were throwing sideways, and their shoulders were not rotating. Points for improvement in children's throwing motions were the line of sight, feet, and shoulders. Verbal instructions were given to the children to look upward, put the leg opposite to the throwing arm in front, widen the space between the shoulders, and throw from above. Consequently, children's throwing movements improved markedly, and throwing distance increased for seven of the 11 children. The verbal instructions used in this study can be used by preschool teachers and parents who are unable to provide accurate demonstrations and are thought to be helpful in improving children's throwing movements.

Keywords: ball, children, instructions, motion, preschool