



VERMONT EARLY LEARNING STANDARDS

MODULE 2: FAMILY ACTIVITIES

ACTIVITY 6: BUILD YOUR OWN OUTDOOR OBSTACLE COURSE!

AGE: K – 3rd Grade

WHAT YOU'LL NEED: Your obstacle course may be made by using things you have in your yard, such as trees, rocks or outdoor chairs. You can also use things you may have on hand, including:

- Toys, such as balls, buckets, or jump ropes
- Recycled items, such as empty cereal boxes, milk jugs or plastic soda bottles

PURPOSE

Getting outside to play is an important part of every child's growth and development. Obstacle courses give children the opportunity to create different activities that help them develop balance, strength, endurance and coordination. When your child creates an obstacle course, they are also learning to make their own plans and carry them out, and to challenge themselves to do more complicated movements with their bodies.

This activity relates to the Motor Development and Coordination element in the **Growing, Moving and Being Healthy** domain of the VELs.

HERE'S WHAT YOU CAN DO!

The first time, you may want to create obstacle course together to help your child get the idea of the different ways things may be used to create the course. After the first time, you can help your child plan their own obstacle course by giving them different ideas and suggestions when they ask.

Here are some easy obstacle course ideas:

1. Think about different ways you can set up the obstacle course across your yard or use the structures at your local playground. Think about how to use the things you have in your environment – for example, include things like running up hills, around trees or balancing on curbs. The edges of the driveway or gardens may be used as places to stop and turn around, or to change actions.



2. Choose different actions to get from place to place. Choose from this list to give your child different ideas:

» Run	» Skip	» Crab walk	» Slide
» Jump	» Hop	» Zig zag	» Throw
» Walk backwards or sideways	» Crawl	» Start and stop	» Balance
3. Talk your child through the course. Cheer them on and praise them for trying the different activities in the course.
4. You can time your child, if he/she would like to be timed and it is fun for them.
5. When your child is ready, switch up the obstacle course and arrange it a different way.

SWITCH IT UP!

Here are some different ways that you and your child can do this activity throughout your day together.

- Go through the obstacle course with your child together, taking turns with each part of the course. For example, your child might start with the first task to jump from one place to the next and then you'll take the next task to walk backwards to the tree on the side of the yard. Keep taking turns until you have gone through the whole obstacle course.
- Include other children (brothers, sisters, or friends) in the obstacle course. They can help plan the course, and then go through it with your child.



BRIDGING ACROSS DOMAINS

These are ways to work on other areas of development (or bridge across domains) during the same activity.

- **Language:** When your child makes up his/her own obstacle course, ask your child to explain to you the order of activities. Encourage them to use as much detail as possible, including where to go and how to get there.
- **Fine motor development:** Use sidewalk chalk to create part of the course on the driveway or sidewalk (for example, hopscotch). Include activities in the obstacle course that have your child stop and draw with the chalk before moving on to the next action.



