Catching 2.1: Basic ball catching
5 - 8 year olds

Introduction (1 - 2 minutes)
Ask children to name different sports and activities that require catching.
Tell them that knowing how to catch will help them enjoy different activities.

Warm-Up: Individual toss and catch (5 minutes)
• Each child takes a ball and finds a space next to a wall.
• Each child practices catching by tossing their ball against the wall above them.
• Ask children to explore different ways to catch the ball:
  » catch it with two hands.
  » let the ball bounce before catching it.
  » toss the ball at different heights or aim for a target on the wall.
  » catch the ball with one hand and then the other.
Demonstration: Catching (2 - 3 minutes)

- Demonstrate the elements of catching.
- Keep your eyes on the object until it arrives in your hands.
- Get your body behind the object (i.e. in front of its flight path).
- If you see the ball passing to one side, move your whole body to the side. Don’t just reach your arms out to the side.
- If the object is arriving above your waist, your palms face forward, your fingers point up, and your two thumbs should be touching.
- If the object is arriving below the waist, your palms face forward, your fingers point down, and your two pinky fingers should be touching.
- As you receive the object with your hands, you should bend your arms and bring the object in towards your body.

Practice: Partner toss and catch (8 - 10 minutes)

- Repeat the warm-up activity with children grouped in pairs.
- Children can use a wall or simply toss the ball to each other.

Game: Trick catch (8 - 10 minutes)

- Children organized in pairs, and every child has a ball.
- Partner 1 tosses the ball up in the air and does a trick before catching (e.g. clapping hands).
- Partner 2 tries to do Partner 1’s trick.
- Next, Partner 2 does a trick that Partner 1 has to imitate.
- Leader signals for children to find a new partner and start again.
- Extra fun: Leader can do a trick and ask all children to imitate it, or leader can pick a child to do a trick for the entire group to imitate.

Wrap-up (2 minutes)

When you reach out to catch an object, what things do you need to remember to do?

TIPS FOR INSTRUCTION

- At this age, the ball will touch the ground many times.
- Praise children if they use even one key element of catching (see Cues).

CUES

- Eyes on the ball
- Get “behind the ball”
- Hands together (pinkies or thumbs touch)
- Bring to body