Hop 3.1: Hopping mazes
8 - 12 year olds

TIME: 30 minutes
SKILL: Locomotion
EQUIPMENT: Skipping ropes, cones, gymnastics mats, yoga mats, and/or hula hoops

Introduction (2 minutes)

Call the children into a circle or into designated lines and greet them.

Explain any special safety rules and remind children to stop, look, and listen whenever you signal.

Explain in 20-30 seconds what you will be doing today.

Hopping requires a lot of strength in one leg, as well as good balance.

Can you think of reasons why it is good to know how to hop?
Warm-up: Jumping and hopping (5 minutes)

- Each child has one skipping rope, and lays it out in a straight line.
- Invite the children to explore different ways to jump and hop over their rope.
- Children should land without falling down.
- Leader should move through the activity space and observe.
- Allow children time to explore different jumps and hops at their own pace.
- Emphasize landing with control and as softly as possible.
- Encourage children to try different jumps and hops:
  - jump off two feet and land on one.
  - hop off one foot and land on two.
  - hop back and forth over the skipping rope 5 times without stopping.
  - hop all the way around the rope with one foot.
  - hop all the way around the rope with the other foot.

Demonstration: Hopping (2 - 3 minutes)

- Demonstrate to children that hopping means jumping off one foot and landing on the same foot.
- In preparing to jump, both arms swing back at the same time the bent knee of the leg in the air (non-jumping leg).
- Arms swing forward and up while the children push from the ball of the foot (toes) and perform a “hitch kick” by swinging the knee forward and up to hop higher and further.

Practice: Exploring the hop – Follow the leader (8 - 10 minutes)

- Children stand in their own space and follow the leader with different hops.
- Hop in place on right foot, then left foot.
- Hop softly so you don’t make a sound.
- Hop side to side.
- Hop forward, hop backwards.
- Hop forward and swing your arms.
- Hop five times in a row then change feet.
- Hop quickly, then hop slowly.
- Hop forward in a straight line.
- Hop, then jump, then hop, then jump.
**Game: Hopping mazes (8 - 10 minutes)**

- Form children into groups of 2-3 children.
- Each group has their own skipping rope, a few cones, and hula-hoops.
- Each group makes a maze on the floor that they must hop through.
- Once all groups have tried hopping through their own maze, they switch with other groups and try the other mazes.

**Wrap-up (2 minutes)**

Call the children back into a circle or designated lines and review what they learned today.

*Why are arms important in hopping and landing?*