

GETTING READY TO CATCH AND THROW

Ball skills are a combination of many different elements such as:

- **Timing** – to predict where and when the ball will land
- **Tracking with the eyes** as the ball moves through the air
- Ability to **use hands together** smoothly
- Ability to **judge distance, speed and direction**
- Making **postural adjustments** to be in the right place at the right time
- Ability to **grasp and release** at the right moment

Ball skills require a lot of practice and repetition. Here are some suggestions to develop these skills.

CATCHING A BALL

- Prepare the hands for catching by rubbing the hands together. This gives feedback to the catching area of the hands.
- Start by throwing larger to smaller balls as the child's skills develop.
- Start by standing closer in distance to each other and increase the distance between them as the child's skills develop.
- Start by throwing straight to the child and as skills develop throw slightly to one side.
- Start by using objects that are easier to catch for example a bean bag, koosh ball, balloon.

THROWING A BALL

To encourage the child to throw and develop their skill in directing the ball, try the following.

- Use balls of varying sizes and weights.
- Start with a target close to the child and gradually increase the distance.
- Start with games involving rolling a large ball towards targets (for example skittles / target games).