

# 6.2 Push 'n' Pull

This is a fun challenge where children try to push or pull their partner in an enjoyable competition. It can be a good introductory activity as well as an opportunity to teach about working with a partner, responsibility, and mutual respect.



## EQUIPMENT



Cones



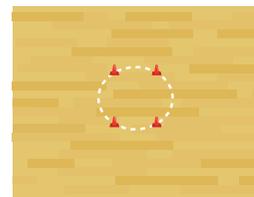
Large balls



Hockey stick



Mats (one each per group)



## LEARNING FOCUS

This game focuses on enabling close contact (touching, feeling, sensing) with another person to teach about:

- *care and risk*: trust and responsibility, choice, playing safely
- *movement mechanics*: exploring concepts such as force, stability, balance, and strength
- *body awareness*: feeling, sensing, and moving in relation to someone else.

## SET UP AND PLAY

### Set up:

- Emphasise that the goals are taking care of each other and doing each other no harm.
- Divide the children into pairs of equal physical size and strength.
- Define the 'dojo' or playing area with cones. It may be a circle or square.
- Have different equipment on hand to change the nature of the challenge when needed.

### Play:

- The players stand inside the circle or square (on the dojo). The objective is for each player to force their partner out of the dojo by either pushing or pulling them.
- Emphasise the importance of taking care of your partner.
- Players must stay in contact with each other during the challenge. Do not break the contact.
- Vary the challenge. This can be done by getting each player to push on a ball, pull on a stick, push while back-to-back, or pull while hopping.

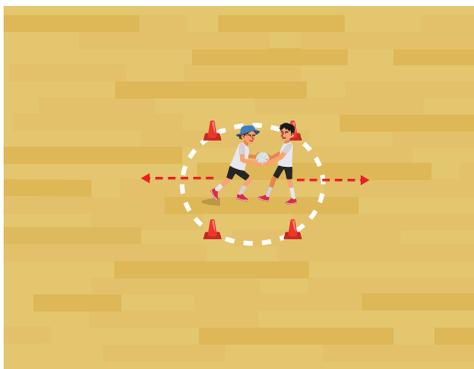
## PROGRESSIONS



### Step One:

Start by outlining the need to play safely and responsibly. Emphasise the need to take care of your partner and do no harm.

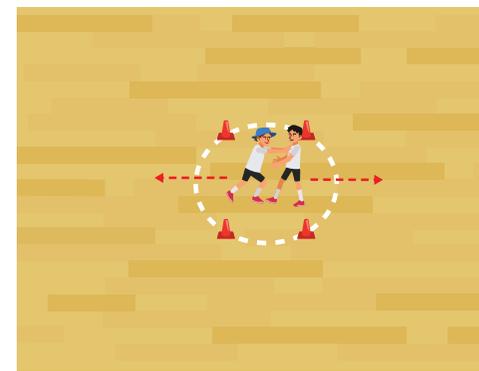
Children begin with some simple pushing activity. They go back to back and try to push the opponent out of the playing area.



### Step Two:

An alternative is the challenge of trying to pull the partner over a line. Introduce a ball or bat as the object each is pulling on.

Once again, point out the risks and ask how these should be managed.



### Step Three:

Variations can increase the complexity and difficulty of the task. For example, having children hop on one leg, or using different types of equipment to push and pull on.

## SKILLS

### *Twist, toss, and tumble play*

Play involving the physical contact of pushing, pulling, and wrestling is a very normal part of childhood. Often there is a fear that it will get out of hand and lead to fighting or someone getting hurt. However, fighting is more a sign of behavioural or relationship issues, whereas twist, toss, and tumble play is a normal aspect of the physical contact of pleasurable play. The objective in twist, toss, and tumble play is to engage in physical contact involving pushing and pulling one another in a safe environment with agreed rules so no one gets hurt. All children can benefit from well-structured twist, toss, and tumble games. Key learning outcomes include the development of:

1. Awareness and embodied understanding of concepts like boundaries, force, stability, pressure, balance, leverage, and weight
2. Movement coordination, agility, strength, and power
3. Confidence, self-esteem, and understanding of individual limitations
4. Cooperation, sensitivity, responsibility, fair play and communication skills
5. Tactical options and exploiting the movements of opponents, sensing opportunity
6. Fun and enjoyment of movement.