



The first day of May is “May Day”. In the past this was celebrated by dancing around the Maypole and placing baskets of flowers on people’s doorsteps. May 5th is Cinco de Mayo, a Mexican holiday. I know both of these dates are past but you can do your own versions of them. Perhaps a ribbon dance or hat dance outside. There are many activities that can be taken outside to do.

INFANTS: Remember, sunscreen should not be used on infants younger than 6 months old. Protect them from the sun by going out early in the morning and later in the evening. Look for shady spots or use umbrellas. There are small shade “tents” made to be used on the beach that can be used in the yard.

Toddlers: Set up an “alligator pit” to practice balancing skills. Place a balance beam (can be a flattened piece of foam pipe insulation) on the ground for a bridge. Have everyone start at the same end. For toddlers, the goal is to walk across the bridge without stepping into the water and waking up the alligator (the teacher). If they wake up the alligator, it starts roaring and chomping. When they get to the end of the bridge they circle around on the side away from the alligator and get back in line. No one is eliminated. This works on balance, standing in line, taking turns and listening to instructions.

Preschoolers: Preschoolers can play “alligator pit” with the addition of having to carry something across. It should be something light weight but that they need to use both hands to carry (example – foam blocks, rolled up socks, cut up pool noodles). This can be adapted to each child’s ability. Have them take one object and carry across and drop in a basket. Increase the number of objects each time they go across. They should carry enough items to make it challenging, but not so many they can’t succeed at least two out of three times. You don’t want it so easy they become bored or so hard they get frustrated. Remember, they don’t have to all carry the same amount. If carrying objects is too easy, have them do it walking



backwards or side stepping. Their goal is to carry the objects across the bridge and place in a basket. If they drop something and wake the alligator, it will chase them until they put their objects in the basket. This activity can be varied for all different ages and abilities.

Alligator Pit can be played both indoors and out.

Alligator Pit is a game that can be found in “Active Play! Fun Physical Activities for Young Children” by Diane H. Craft, PhD and Craig L. Smith.

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