

Centipede Parade

Teams of three traverse an overhead ladder or other brachiating apparatus. The “head” of the centipede sets the pace, style, and rhythm. Whatever that child does, the other two children (the “segments”) must also do — at the same time. “Head” calls out commands or otherwise leads the team: “Right hand forward! Skip one rung, grab with left! Swing both legs left, then right!” At the end of the line, the second child takes the lead on the way back. Continue until all have had a turn as the head.

Play Element: Brachiating

NASPE Standards

#1, #2, #3, #4, #5, and #6

Benefits

- Develops core stability, kinesthetic awareness, and upper-body muscular strength and endurance
- Fosters cooperation, teamwork, and leadership opportunities

Teaching Tips

- Head of the centipede will have to “hang around” for a short time as the two segments take their places.
- Forbid kicking. Remind students that the centipede needs to move like one integrated organism.

Safety Tips

- Spot as needed.
- Ensure that there is sufficient playground safety surfacing under and around the equipment.

Variations

Easier | Start with two children instead of three.

More Challenging | Travel sideways or backwards.

Did You Know?

Although the name centipede means “hundred-legged,” the average centipede actually has only about 35 pairs of legs.

