



**Big Heart
Appeal**

Heart obstacle course

Create a life-size “Heart obstacle course” where children roleplay blood circulating through the body.

The obstacle course shows tamariki how blood:

- travels from the heart to the lungs to pick up oxygen
- delivers it to the body through the arteries
- returns via the veins back to the heart to repeat the cycle.

What you need:

- Chalk to draw the outline of a body
- Red and blue string, ribbons, yarn or rope (arteries and veins)
- Large red/pink cushion (heart)
- Two inflated blue balloons (lungs)
- Several small red and blue beanbags/balls (blood cells)
- Playground equipment to create an obstacle course (e.g. tunnel, hula hoops, cones)
- Arrow cards

Set-Up:

1. Draw the body on the ground with chalk. Ensure the outline takes up enough space so that tamariki can move around inside it (up to 3 metres by 5 metres).

2. Mark the key organs

Place simple signs or cut-outs:

- Heart in the chest area (use a red beanbag, pillow or laminated heart picture)
- Lungs on each side of the heart (blue balloons or light-coloured cushions or pictures)

3. Create the blood pathways with string

Use:

- Blue string = deoxygenated blood
 - Red string = oxygenated blood
- Lay the strings on the ground as shown on the diagram:
- Blue pathway: from the *body outline* → *heart* → *lungs*
 - Red pathway: from the *lungs* → *heart* → *body outline*

4. Set up obstacles along the red and blue string pathways for tamariki to climb over and crawl through. Create obstacles that suit the skill level of your tamariki.

5. Add props (optional)

- Blue beanbags/balls = deoxygenated blood
- Red beanbags/balls = oxygenated blood
- Arrow cards to show direction
- Traffic cones or hoops to mark turning points

Play “Be the blood!” in the heart obstacle course

Step 1: Tamariki become the blood

Tell tamariki they are the blood cells moving through the body.

Step 2: Start in the body

Children begin at a point on the body outline (e.g. feet or hands).

Step 3: Walk the blue pathway

They follow the blue string to the heart, then to the lungs.

Explain:

- “You’re carrying used blood that needs fresh oxygen.”

Step 4: Oxygen time

At the lungs, swap a blue beanbag/ball for a red one to show they’ve picked up oxygen.

Step 5: Walk the red pathway

Children follow the red string back to the heart, then around the rest of the body.

Explain:

- “You’re delivering oxygen to all the parts of the body!”

Step 6: Repeat

They return to the starting point to begin the cycle again, just like real blood.

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