

healthy  
bodies

All ages



## Social play - simple games with people

Explore the fun and magic of people, while children build language and positive interactions between friends new and old. Learn new games, create new memories and most of all, have fun!

As people we can turn ourselves into anything that creates a meaningful and interesting game. We can change our voices, the pitch and volume. We can use any part of our body to create noises or new touch sensations. We can become the most amazing and super toy that a child can ever learn or engage with. Being excitable, interactive and most of all fun, allows children to want to be with us. This in turn builds their skills and creates secure attachment.

### Learning benefit/skill development

- **Improves social skills:** children who regularly play with other children learn how to work together, solve arguments amongst themselves and establish friendships. While playing with others they notice social cues, develop listening, and taking others perspectives into consideration, which are key aspects to developing empathy. Social play also requires children to share ideas and express feelings while negotiating and reaching compromises.
- **Builds confidence:** children gain the confidence to take on leadership roles, voice their opinions and think independently.
- **Encourages teamwork:** social play activities encourage children to learn to lead, follow and support and work with their teammates, to together achieve a specific goal or overcome a challenge.
- **Emotional development:** children learn self-regulation as they follow norms and pay attention while experiencing feelings such as anticipation or frustration.

### What you'll need

Social games, come in many forms. All you need is a willing peer or adult and a smile on your face.

Some social games include but are not limited to:

- Running and chasing games
- Round and round the garden (like a teddy bear)
- Follow the leader
- What's the time Mr Wolf
- Finger games such as tickles, or patty cake

The main rule to follow in social games is to make it fun! Smile, laugh, make big exciting sounds and get your child involved by being the MOST exciting thing in the room. This creates strong bonds and positive interactions.

### Instructions:

- Select your game, depending on the age and level of your child. Think about their likes and dislikes. If your child likes to run, play a chasing game.
- Some children may like to lead the game while others may prefer an adult or older peer take charge. Work to the child's comfort level.