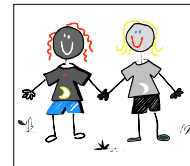


## Information and advice from:



Early Development and

Early Years Foundation Stage

# People Games



**The best games involve people not toys, so your child's best toy is YOU!**

We call them people games because all they need are two people, you and your child. These social games are perfect for encouraging the early stages of communication, such as, using eye contact, joint attention, sharing space, imitating and taking turns. Children also learn how to start and end a game.

**The key things to remember are;**

- Cue the start of the game with a word or action (or both). For example, holding up your arms and saying "row, row" to invite your child to play *Row, row, row the boat*
- Repeat the sounds, words and actions many times so it is easy for your child to learn what comes with each part of the game
- Offer an opportunity for your child to join in by pausing at key moments to let them copy an action, take a turn or anticipate what comes next. For example, just before the tickle in *This Little Piggy*
- Keep the ending the same so your child knows when the game is finished. If the game does not have a natural end (e.g. an action rhyme), then signal it's finished by using a gesture and saying, 'All done' or 'Tickles finished'
- And finally keep it FUN! Your child is learning to enjoy being with another person

Here are just a few ideas of people games you can play with your child, although sometimes the best ones are the ones you make up yourself that follow your child's interests, such as, jumping games. Try adding a rhyme or singing to your games too, which is a great way to signal the start and end.

- Tickles & Chasing games - "*I'm going to get/tickle you*" or "*you're going to get/tickle me*"
- *Round and round the garden* - on hand or tummy
- *This Little Piggy* - on toes or fingers
- Roly poly games - rolling up in a blanket or rug, or rolling over a gym ball
- Peek-a-boo and hiding games - behind hands, under blankets or cushions etc.
- Bouncing up and down games - on legs or lap (*Horsie, horsie*) gym ball or trampoline
- *Pat-a-cake* or *Head, shoulders, knees and toes* - (helps with understanding physical contact)
- Swinging games - "*1, 2, 3...*" (usually needs two adults and watch your back!)