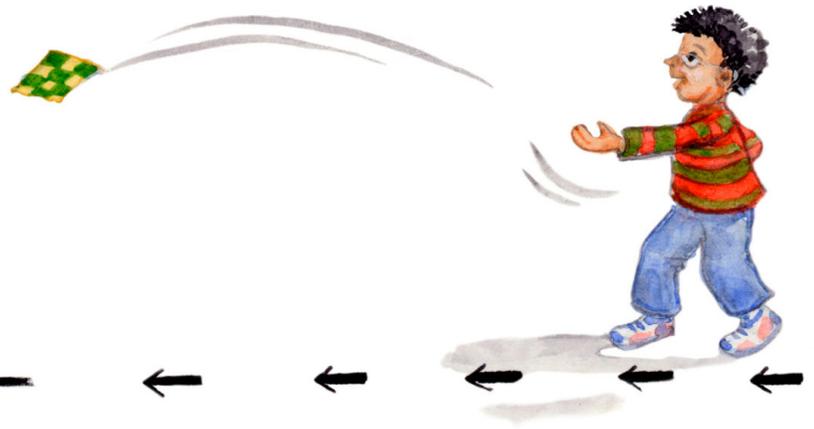


# Bean bag golf

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Make a golf course using large containers, hoops, old tea towels or rope circles for the "holes." Make as many different holes as you wish.
- ❖ Put a "tee" or start marker about three to four metres away from each hole. Lay out the tees and holes so they follow a path through your play space.
- ❖ Start the golf game by inviting your child to throw a bean bag or rolled-up sock from the first tee toward the first hole. Count how many throws it takes to get the bean bag or sock into the hole.
- ❖ Join the game with your child. Take turns throwing until you have both landed in the hole.
- ❖ Move to the next hole. Continue taking turns throwing and counting at each hole.



## Hints for success

- ❖ Set up your golf course in a large outdoor play space.
- ❖ Try throwing underarm and overarm. Talk with your child about which way is easier.
- ❖ In each round of play, start with the person whose bean bag or sock is furthest away from the hole, then the next furthest, etc. Others wait behind the throwers until their turn comes.

You will need large containers, hoops, old tea towels or pieces of rope to make golf holes, and small objects such as stones to make tees. You will also need some easy-to-throw objects such as bean bags or rolled-up socks.

This activity is good for developing eye-hand coordination, counting, learning to take turns and learning new words.

# More ideas for Bean bag golf

## Try this way

- ❖ Vary the distances from tees to holes. Encourage your child to predict how many throws it will take to land in each hole. Compare the predictions with the actual number of throws.
- ❖ Set out a tea towel or sheet to make a hazard or "trap." If a bean bag lands in a trap, it can only be picked up while standing on one foot.
- ❖ Number the holes with signs, or label them with names for each day of the week. Play the holes in order (i.e. starting with 1, 2, 3... or going from Monday through Sunday).



## Drawing

Have children draw pictures of sea creatures they might see in an aquarium. Ask them to put some pictures they have drawn into each hoop. Invite the children to imagine they are feeding the fish and mammals at the aquarium. Throw some different objects into each hole to feed the creature.

## Creative play

Encourage children to design their own golf course.



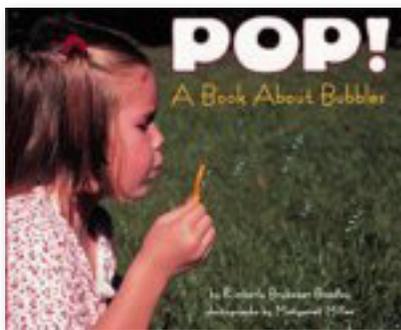
# Bubble chase

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Blow some bubbles and invite your child to chase them.
- ❖ Invite your child to pop the bubbles using different actions, e.g. clapping hands, a karate chop.
- ❖ Try to catch the bubbles using different body parts, e.g. knees, elbows, fingers.
- ❖ Try to catch some bubbles without breaking them.



## A good read-together book



**Pop! A Book About Bubbles**  
by Kimberly Brubaker Bradley

You will need some bubble soap and a bubble wand or a pipe cleaner shaped into a wand.

This activity is good for developing spatial awareness, eye-hand coordination, and using words to describe shape, size, colour and movement.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Talk about the bubbles as you play. Use words to describe how they move, e.g., high, low, fast, slow, floating.
- ❖ Take turns being the bubble blower and the bubble chaser.



## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Bubble chase

## Try this way

- ❖ Sing **Pop Goes the Weasel** as you play.
- ❖ Do an experiment to see how the bubbles change when you blow different ways, e.g. hard, soft, steadily, in puffs. Encourage the children to talk about what they see and try to explain what happens.
- ❖ Read the book **Pop! A Book about Bubbles** to learn more ways to play with bubbles.

## Let's make—Bubble recipe

### What you need:

- 2.5 L (10 cups) of water
- 250 ml (1 cup) of soap detergent
- 30 ml (2 tablespoons) glycerine (from the pharmacy)

### How to:

1. Put water in a pail or bucket and add the detergent and glycerine.
2. Stir slowly to avoid bubbling.
3. For best results let the mixture sit overnight.

## Let's make—Bubble wands

- For a yogurt lid bubble wand, you will need a plastic lid, a thumb tack and a wooden chopstick. Cut the centre out of the plastic lid and tack it to the wooden chopstick.
- For a fly swatter bubble wand, you will need a plastic fly swatter. Dip the fly swatter into a plate of bubble mix and wave it around for lots of tiny bubbles.
- For a pipe cleaner bubble wand, you will need a pipe cleaner. Shape it into a circle, with an end to hold on to.



## Pop Goes the Weasel

All around the cobbler's bench  
The monkey chased the weasel.  
The monkey thought 'twas all in fun—  
Pop! Goes the weasel.

Johnny has the whooping cough,  
Mary has the measles.  
That's the way the money goes—  
Pop! Goes the weasel.

A penny for a spool of thread  
A penny for a needle.  
That's the way the money goes—  
Pop! Goes the weasel.

All around the mulberry bush,  
The monkey chased the weasel.  
That's the way the money goes—  
Pop! Goes the weasel.

Traditional

# Cloud catching

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Read the poem **Clouds** with your child.
- ❖ Pretend you and your child are on a high hill among the clouds. Use some scarves or pieces of light cloth for clouds.
- ❖ Toss your clouds in the air and let them fall to the ground.
- ❖ Try catching the clouds with different body parts, e.g. head, knee, back, foot.
- ❖ Invite your child to suggest other body parts for cloud catching.



## Clouds

White sheep, white sheep  
On a blue hill,  
When the wind stops  
You all stand still.  
When the wind blows  
You walk away slow.  
White sheep, white sheep,  
Where do you go?

Christina G. Rossetti

## A good read-together book

**Cloud Dance** by Thomas Locker

You will need some scarves or other pieces of lightweight cloth.

This activity is good for developing movement skills, learning the names of body parts and practicing imagination and creativity.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Do this activity after looking at clouds with your child.
- ❖ Let your child experiment with different ways to toss the cloud.
- ❖ Talk about how your scarves float to the ground.



## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Cloud catching

## Try this way

- ❖ Add actions before catching, e.g. clap hands then catch, squat down then catch, touch nose then catch, turn around then catch.
- ❖ Add a challenge by trying to do two or three actions before catching.
- ❖ Toss a scarf back and forth with a partner. Try throwing two scarves at the same time and catching one other's scarves.



## Creative play

Read the poem **My Kite**, then play this game in pairs. Children take turns being the child with a kite and the "terrible tree." One child runs across a big space with the kite above her head and then lets it go. The other child runs behind and catches the kite in his "terrible tree branches."

## Early Literacy

Read **Once Upon a Cloud** together. Talk about different shapes and colours of clouds, where clouds come from, what they are, etc.

## Book link

**Once Upon a Cloud** by Rob D. Walker

## My Kite

It was splendid,  
My kite —  
It flew and it flew  
When we let out the string  
In the wind,  
And we knew  
It would fly with the birds —  
It would fly to the sea —  
Then its tail  
Tangled up in a  
Terrible tree.

Myra Cohn Livingston

# Creative balances

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Show your child different ways to balance, e.g. stand on one leg, stand on tiptoes, balance on two knees and one hand, etc. Invite your child to copy your actions.
- ❖ Take turns showing one another ways to balance using different body parts, e.g. two hands and one foot, elbows and knees, etc.
- ❖ Play "Puzzle Balances." Invite your child to try and balance with different combinations of body parts, e.g. on your bottom and two elbows. Call out a number for how many body parts can touch the floor.
- ❖ Take turns thinking of balance challenges. Encourage your child to think of tricky balances for you to try.



## A good read-together book



**The Little Red Hen and the Grains of Wheat**  
by L.R. Hen and Jago

You will need an open space for active play.

This activity is good for practicing body awareness, balance and creativity, learning the names of body parts and following directions.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Start with easy balances and then move to harder ones.
- ❖ Say the names of different body parts as you play the game.

Can you balance on a part that has no toes or fingers?

Show me how you can balance with four parts touching the floor.

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Creative balances

## Try this way

- ❖ Encourage children to discover new ways of balancing and describe what they've done.
- ❖ Invite children to try balancing with a partner by touching different body parts, e.g. touching hands, leaning on each other's backs, matching bottoms, etc.



## Early Literacy

Read the **Upside Down** poem together. Talk about how other creatures balance and move on different body parts.

Read **The Little Red Hen and the Grains of Wheat**. Look at the pictures and talk about where balancing is happening in each picture.

Read **Make It Balance** and try some of the experiments shown in the book.

## Book link

**Make it Balance** by David Evans  
and Claudette Williams

## Upside Down

It's funny how beetles  
and creatures like that  
can walk upside down  
as well as walk flat.

They crawl on a ceiling  
and climb on a wall  
without any practice  
or trouble at all.

While I have been trying  
for a year (maybe more)  
and still I can't stand  
with my head on the floor.

Aileen Fisher

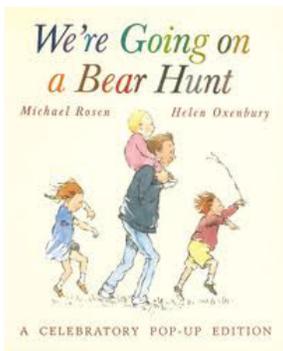
# Follow the trail

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Use a string or rope to make a winding trail through your play space. It could be outdoors on a grassy area, or indoors around the furniture or down a hall.
- ❖ Invite children to follow the trail using crawling and creeping actions.
- ❖ Ask children to suggest other ways of moving along the trail, e.g. scampering like a squirrel, stalking like a cat, creeping backwards, etc.



## A good read-together book



**We're Going on a Bear Hunt** by Michael Rosen and Helen Oxenbury

You will need a long stretch of space and 10 metres of string, wool or rope to mark the trail.

This activity is good for developing creativity, body control and awareness of space, and for learning words to describe positions, e.g. over, under, through, beside, between, along.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Start the game by being the leader. Invite the children to follow your actions.
- ❖ If children have difficulty thinking of movements, talk about creatures they know and do some examples of their movements together.

Remember how that snake slithered through our garden?

I'm a cat stalking a bird and I'm creeping toward it.

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Follow the trail

## Try this way

- ❖ Arrange the trail to go over, under, between and around objects. As you move along the trail, describe where the trail goes and invite the children to do the same.
- ❖ Encourage children to design a trail using their imaginations. Ask them where it goes and what they might find along the way.
- ❖ Introduce number sequences, e.g. "creep three paces forward, crawl back four, shake like a wet dog, then crawl forward six more."
- ❖ Invite older children to try this activity in pairs, with one child leading the creeping/crawling while the other child holds on to the leader's ankles and follows behind. Children can take turns being the leader and follower.



## Creative play

After reading *We're Going on a Bear Hunt*, pretend the rope is the trail to the bear's cave. Join the children in acting out the story along the way to the cave, and reverse the actions as you escape from the bear.

## Caterpillar

"Who's that ticklin' my back?"  
said the wall,  
(crawl fingers up the child's back)  
"Me," said a small caterpillar,  
"I'm learning to crawl."

Anonymous

## Language development

Read the *Caterpillar* poem together, and take turns doing snail tickles up one another's backs.

## Book link

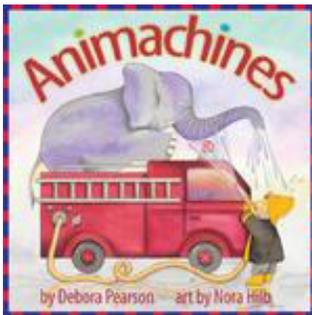
"Slowly, Slowly, Slowly," said the Sloth  
by Eric Carle

# Freeze dance

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Choose some music to play or sing a song that your child will enjoy. Invite your child to move to the music, e.g. by walking, skipping, rolling, twirling or swaying.
- ❖ Explain that when you stop the music, it will be time to "freeze." This means trying to stay perfectly still until the music starts again.
- ❖ Stop the music and call "freeze." Encourage your child to hold the position that he or she is in when the music stops.
- ❖ Start the music again after three or four seconds.

## A good read-together book



**Animachines** by Debora Pearson

You will need a large open space and you should be able to make music that is easy to start and stop, e.g. with a radio, CD player, musical instrument or your voice.

This activity develops large muscle movement skills, body control, balance, creativity and self-expression. It also helps children learn to listen and respond quickly.



## Hints for success

- ❖ At first, call "freeze" at a point when your child is in an easy position to stop and balance. Make the game more challenging once your child is able to stop moving and hold simple positions.
- ❖ Begin by playing music without words so your child can easily hear you call "freeze."

Can you move like a butterfly?

I see that you can balance on one foot!

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Freeze dance

## Try this way

- ❖ Suggest different movements made by characters or objects. For example, invite your child to move like an ice skater, a puppy with a sore paw, a cat stalking a bird, a sleek racing car, an airplane, etc.
- ❖ While playing freeze dance, have your child interpret feeling words with movement, e.g. happily, sadly, solemnly, mysteriously, joyfully, energetically, etc.

## Language development

Read the book **Animachines** together. Act out the movements in the pictures.

Take turns coming up with and calling out movement ideas when playing "Freeze Dance".

## Book link

**Slither, Swoop, Swing** by Alex Ayliffe



# Hit the target

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child to help you set up some throwing targets to knock down, e.g. empty milk cartons, or put some paper targets on a wall at different heights.
- ❖ Give your child several objects to use for throwing, e.g. a bean bag or a paper or sponge ball for indoors; a tennis ball for outdoors.
- ❖ Invite your child to choose a target and try to hit it by throwing one of the objects.
- ❖ Teach your child how to throw a ball overarm. Learn the poem together, and practice the motions as you say it.

## How to Throw a Ball Overarm

Stand side on,  
Make a star,  
Point your finger,  
Throw it far.

Anonymous

## A good read-together book

**One Bright Monday Morning**  
by Arline and Joseph Baum

You will need some empty plastic or cardboard containers, some sheets of coloured paper, tape, markers, and some throwing objects such as bean bags, crumpled paper balls, sponge balls or tennis balls.

This activity helps children develop throwing skills and eye-hand coordination. It is also good for learning the names of letters and numbers, and for counting and measuring.



## Hints for success

- ❖ When you first start the game, let your child decide which target to aim for, where to stand and whether to throw underarm or overarm.
- ❖ Encourage your child to practice aiming and throwing at different targets.

Which target are you aiming for this time?

Try throwing underarm to the juice bottle.

Ways to say it

# More ideas for Hit the target

## Try this way

- ❖ Invite children to measure the distance to a target with their footsteps, and help them keep a record of how far they can throw to hit a target.
- ❖ Put up paper targets of different colours or shapes. Encourage children to call out the shape or colour each time they hit a target.
- ❖ Put up paper targets of different sizes and heights. Have children aim and throw from largest to smallest, lowest to highest, etc.
- ❖ Put numerals from 1 through 5 on targets. Try some of the following games:
  - Throw until you have hit each of the numerals.
  - Aim to hit each numeral in order.
  - Hit the Number 1 once, Number 2 twice, etc.
  - Take turns making three throws each. Count up your scores by adding the numerals that you hit, e.g.  $1 + 4 + 2 = 7$ .

## Early literacy

Read the poem **Throw the Ball** together. Make targets that look like the sun and the moon. Say the poem aloud as you try to hit the targets.



## Throw the Ball

Let's throw the ball at the sun,  
Make it laugh and sigh,  
See it hide and smile and run,  
Then fall from the evening sky.

Let's throw the ball at the moon,  
And watch it falling down,  
Then catch it with a silver spoon  
In the middle of the town.

Edwin Thumboo

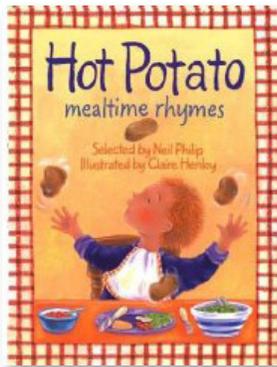
# Hot potato

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Blow up some balloons for you and your child to play with.
- ❖ Show your child how to keep the balloon in the air by tapping it up.
- ❖ Talk about different ways to tap the balloon with your body so it stays up in the air.
- ❖ Try using one hand, the other hand and then both hands.
- ❖ Try other ways of hitting the balloon, e.g. soft, hard, high, low.



## A good read-together book



**Hot Potato: Mealtimes Rhymes**  
by Neil Philip

You will need some balloons filled with air.

This activity is good for developing movement skills such as eye-hand coordination, and for naming and using different body parts.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Participate with your child.
- ❖ Talk about what you are doing as you try different parts of your body.

Look! I can bounce it  
with my elbow!

Let's see if we can  
keep it off the ground  
for five taps.

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Hot potato

## Try this way

- ❖ Use a paddle bat to tap the balloon up.
- ❖ Work in pairs to tap the balloon back and forth.
- ❖ Say the rhyme, **One Potato, Two Potato**, while you bounce the balloon.

### Healthy eating

Show the children several kinds of potatoes. Talk about how they are different and how they are the same. Look at the colours on the outside and on the inside.

Make some oven-baked potato wedges and eat them.

### Let's make—a paddle bat

#### What you need

Two knee-high stockings, some masking tape or duct tape and a metal coat hanger.

#### How to

1. Bend the coat hanger into a diamond or circular shape.
2. Squash the hanger hook closed a little to make a handle.
3. Insert the hanger into the stocking.
4. Pull the stocking tight around the hanger.
5. Tape the stocking onto the hanger just above the handle.
6. Put tape around the bottom to make a handle.



### One Potato, Two Potato...

One potato,  
Two potato,  
Three potato, Four,  
Five potatoes,  
Six potatoes,  
Seven potatoes. More!

Author unknown

### Safety tip

Use a stocking to cover the balloon so that children cannot choke or swallow the pieces. Before you blow up the balloon, cover it with a knee high stocking so that both openings are at the same end. Blow up and tie off the balloon inside the stocking. Tie off the stocking and cut off the extra fabric.

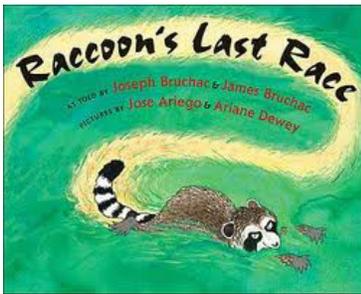
# Knock down

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child to help you set up some targets such as empty milk cartons or shoeboxes. Stand the targets up like bowling pins.
- ❖ Draw a "foul line" 2 to 5 metres away for the "bowler" to stand behind. Show your child how to roll the ball without crossing the line.
- ❖ Invite your child to knock over the "bowling pins" by rolling a ball toward them.
- ❖ Take turns trying to knock over all the pins with one roll.



## A good read-together book



**Raccoon's Last Race** by Joseph and James Bruchac

You will need a large space, some targets such as milk cartons, juice bottles or shoeboxes, a ball for throwing, and a stick or rolled-up newspaper for hitting the ball.

This activity helps children develop movement skills such as rolling, kicking and throwing, as well as eye-hand and eye-foot coordination.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Start with the foul line quite close to the bowling pins.
- ❖ Join the game and take turns with your child.
- ❖ Help children with vision impairment to sense the location of the pins by playing music behind the pins or by using a fan to blow air toward the child from the direction of the pins.

# More ideas for Knock down

## Try this way

- ❖ Move the targets further away as your child becomes more skilled at throwing or kicking the ball.
- ❖ Invite your child to show you different ways to knock down the targets, e.g. by kicking the ball or using a stick to push the ball toward the targets.



## Early literacy

Decorate the targets with colours or shapes. Encourage your child to call out the colours or shapes as they are knocked down.

Put the letters in your child's name on a series of targets. Help your child spell out his or her name by trying to knock over the targets in sequence.

## Problem-solving

Invite your child to suggest different ways to arrange the targets to make it easier or harder to knock them all down with one throw.

Try different ways of throwing or rolling the ball towards the targets to see which works best.

Can you hit the targets  
by kicking the ball?

Good throw! You  
knocked down three  
pins at once!

Ways to say it

# My friend beanie

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child to try balancing a beanbag on different parts of the body. Show your child some possibilities with your own beanbag.
- ❖ Encourage your child to explore different ways to balance the beanbag, e.g. on the head, shoulders, nose, ear or bottom.
- ❖ Try balancing the beanbag on different body parts while in different positions, e.g. standing on one foot, sitting with feet in the air, on hands and knees, etc.
- ❖ Try balancing the beanbag on different body parts while moving around, e.g. on the head while walking, on the back while crawling, etc.
- ❖ As you practice balancing, talk about what you are doing. Help your child learn the terms for different body parts and positions, e.g. between your legs, on the tip of your nose, under your chin, etc.

## A good read-together book



**Stretch** by Doreen Cronin and Scott Menchin

This activity helps children develop awareness of body and space, balance and counting skills. It is also good for learning the names of body parts and different positions.

You will need an open space and some beanbags.



## Hints for success

- ❖ Participate in this activity with your child.
- ❖ Invite your child to explore different ways to balance the beanbag before giving suggestions or challenges.

Can you keep it  
balanced while we count  
to five?

Have you tried  
balancing the beanbag  
on your elbow?

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for My friend beanie

## Try this way

- ❖ Challenge your child to invent some tricky balancing positions for beanie. Ask your child to predict how many seconds they can hold the position before the beanbag drops. Then count the seconds together.
- ❖ Play "Pass the Package" by passing the beanbag back and forth from one person to another, e.g. with feet, elbows, under the chin, etc. Pretend the beanbag is magic and will break if it is dropped.
- ❖ Play "Copy Cat" together. Take turns showing different tricks for one another to try.

## Let's make—a beanbag

### What you need:

- Bird seed, dried beans or un-popped popcorn
- A funnel
- Some balloons
- A pair of scissors

### How to:

1. Use the funnel to fill a balloon with birdseed (this can be a slow process).
2. Cut the neck off the balloon and place a second balloon over the hole. Completely cover the first balloon so that no birdseed can come out.
3. Cut the neck off another balloon, open it up and place it over the balloon, and repeat the process.
4. Add several more balloons. Make sure that the original hole is always covered by several layers of balloons.

## Language development

Read the poem "Body Language" and do the movements together.



## Body Language

Hips wiggle  
Tummies sag  
Shoulders shrug  
Tongues wag  
Feet patter  
Scalps tingle  
Teeth chatter  
Chests heave  
Backs ache  
Hair curls  
Nails break  
Arms fold  
Legs jump  
Ankles sprain  
Hearts pump  
Noses twitch  
Hands clap  
Elbows bend  
Fingers snap  
Skin wrinkles  
Knuckles crack  
Knees knock  
Lips smack  
Thumbs twiddle  
Eyes blink  
Heads nod  
Brains think!

Anonymous

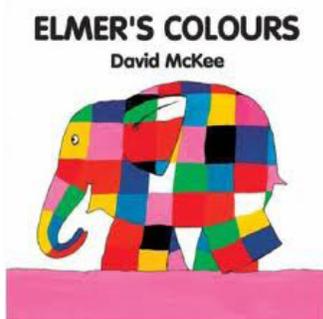
# Rainbow scatter

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Scatter some cards, papers or felt pieces of different colours on the floor around an open area.
- ❖ Invite your child to play the game by moving to each colour as you call its name.
- ❖ Start by calling one colour at a time, e.g. "Now move to green." Once your child understands the game, call several colours in a sequence, e.g. "Move to red, then blue, then green."



## A good read-together book



Elmer's Colours by David McKee

## Hints for success

- ❖ Before you start the game, walk from colour to colour with your child and say the colour names together.
- ❖ Start the game with colours that your child already knows. Add new colours once your child understands the activity and can easily follow the directions.

You will need a large indoor or outdoor space, some felt, paper or cardboard pieces in different colours, and a marker to add letters, numbers or words to the coloured pieces.

This activity is good for building strong bones and muscles, developing body control during movement, and learning to follow directions in sequence. It can also be played with shapes, letters or numbers to develop early literacy and early numeracy skills.

Can you think of a different way to move this time?

I see two yellow cards. Which one will you choose?

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Rainbow scatter

## Try this way

- ❖ Call out different ways to move from colour to colour, e.g. hop, skip, jump, leap, gallop, crawl or stay low.
- ❖ Use shapes as well as colours to play the game, e.g. "Now move to a red circle."
- ❖ Add an extra challenge by including negatives, e.g. "Run and touch four different colours but DON'T touch purple."

## Language development

Mix poster paints to make a wide range of colours, or cut colour samples from pictures in magazines. Introduce new words such as "bright," "pale" or "dark" to describe unfamiliar colours, e.g. "pale pink," "bright turquoise," "navy blue." Learn the colour words with your child and play the game with them.

Read the poem "Spring Song" together. Talk about different colours that you see around you. Look for colours that are bright or pale, or winter, fall, summer and spring colours. Think of words that describe the unusual colours that you see around you.

## Early literacy

Add letters or numbers to the coloured pieces. Call out letter cues, e.g. "Move to a letter that is in your name" or "Stand on the first letter in the word 'Dad'."

## Early numeracy

Put numerals on the cards and invite your child to move to the different numerals as you call their names.



## Spring Song

Have you ever seen  
such green, such green?  
Have you ever seen such blue  
as the woods in April  
when they blink  
and a bit of the sky  
looks through?  
And the light — the light  
is tiny and bright  
in every blob of dew?  
Have you ever seen  
such green, such green?  
Have you ever seen  
such blue?

Jean Kenward

## Book link

**EyeLike Colors: See! Learn! Grow!** by PlayBac

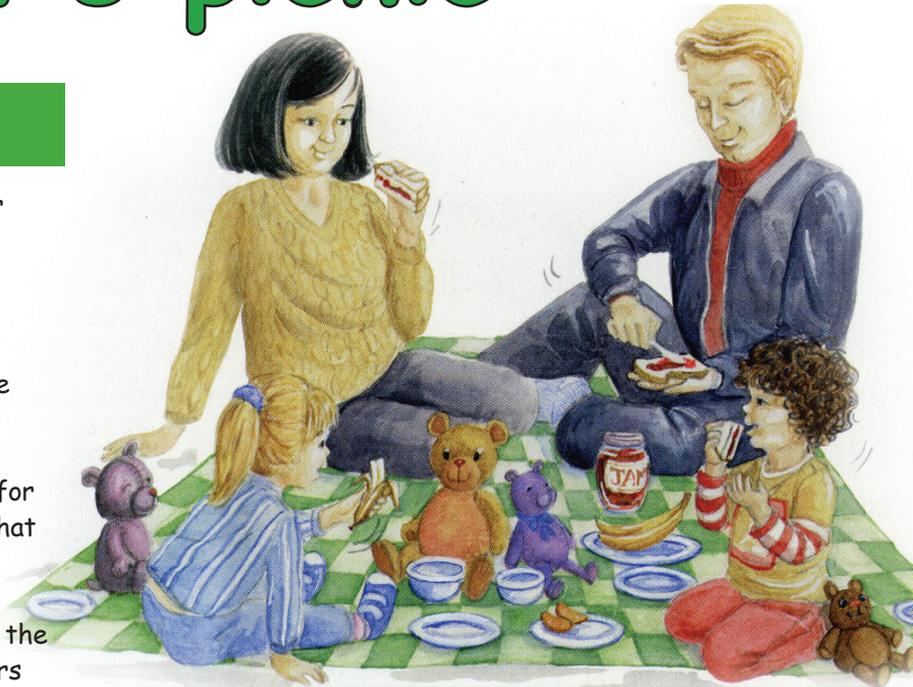
## Safety tip

If you are playing the game with more than one child at a time, encourage children to watch where they are moving so they don't bump into one another. Use more than one card of each kind so every child can find a separate place to stand.

# Teddy bear's picnic

## Let's play and talk together

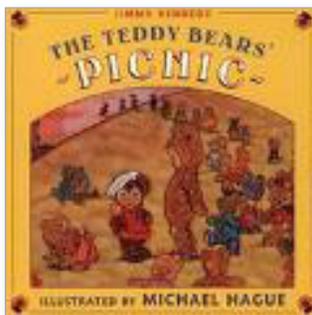
- ❖ Invite your child to plan a special picnic for teddy bears and favourite stuffed toys.
- ❖ Help your child make an invitation card for each of the teddy bears and other stuffed toys that might come to the picnic, and give them out to the toys.
- ❖ Decide on what kind of food will be needed for the people and the animals. Make a list of what you need and take it when you go shopping.
- ❖ Help your child prepare some real food for the people, and some pretend food for the bears and stuffed toys.
- ❖ Pack a picnic basket for the people and a bucket of imaginary snacks for the animals.



## Hints for success

- ❖ Help your child count how many people and animals will be coming to the picnic. Count the same number of plates, spoons and napkins.
- ❖ Help your child prepare some easy-to-make, tasty snacks to take on the picnic.

## A good read-together book



**The Teddy Bears' Picnic** by Jimmy Kennedy

You will need a picnic basket or carrying bag, some stuffed animals and picnic snacks.

This activity is good for planning, counting, writing, pretending and making food.

How many people are coming to our picnic?

What kind of snack do you think a teddy bear would like?

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Teddy bear's picnic

## Try this way

- ❖ Make two shopping lists—one list of food for bears (pretend) and one for people.
- ❖ Look at the book **Fast Food**. Create some "picnic creatures" from fruits and vegetables. Name your creatures. Be creative!
- ❖ Pretend you are bears on the way to a picnic. Make the rhythm match the pace of the bears lumbering along.



## Research

Find out what bears really like to eat. Look in **Owl** magazine, on the Internet or in the library.

## Book link

**Fast Food** by Saxton Freymann

## Five Little Bears

Five little bears  
Were dancing on the floor,  
One fell down  
And that left four.  
Four little bears  
Climbed up a tree,  
One found a bee hive  
And that left three.  
Three little bears  
Were wondering what to do,  
One chased a  
Bunny rabbit  
And that left two.  
Two little bears  
Were looking for some fun,  
One took a swim  
And that left one  
One little bear  
Sitting all alone,  
He looked all around  
And then ran home!

Author unknown

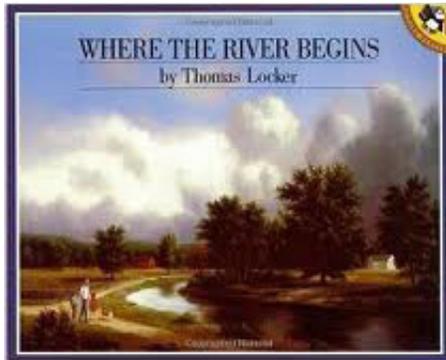
# River bank jump

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Use chalk lines or ropes to mark the banks of a pretend river. Make the river wide at one end and narrow at the other.
- ❖ Invite your child to try jumping across the river and then back again. Practice jumping at different widths. Move the river banks closer together or farther apart as needed.
- ❖ Experiment with different ways of jumping. Try jumping from a standing start, running and jumping, and jumping backwards.



## A good read-together book



Where the River Begins by Thomas Locker

You will need a large indoor or outdoor space, and some ropes or a piece of chalk or a towel or scarf to mark the river.

This activity is good for building strong bones and muscles, developing movement skills such as jumping and leaping and learning to follow directions.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Start by inviting your child to try jumping across the river wherever he or she chooses. Encourage longer jumps as your child's confidence grows.
- ❖ If your child has difficulty imagining a river between the chalk lines or ropes, use a towel or scarf on a carpet to make it look more real.
- ❖ If your child has difficulty jumping, encourage other ways to move that are easier or more comfortable.

That was a big jump!  
You crossed the river  
without getting your  
feet wet.

Can you get across the  
river a different way?

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for River bank jump

## Try this way

- ❖ Play a game where your child jumps into, out of or over the river as you call out the following directions: "in the river," "on the bank" or "across the river." You may need to show your child what each of these directions means before you start the game.
- ❖ Pretend that the river has hungry alligators in it. Set the mood by reciting or acting out the "Three Little Monkeys" poem.



## Early numeracy

Use chalk or other markers such as slips of scrap paper to show how far your child jumps each time. Measure the distance using your feet from heel to toe, e.g. "This time you jumped as far as eight of my feet." Try measuring with other tools, e.g. a ruler or yardstick, but do not be too fussy about the numbers. At this age it is more important for children to see how things can be measured in different ways.

## Book link

**Alligator Pie** by Dennis Lee

## Three Little Monkeys

Three little monkeys swinging from a tree,  
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"  
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be  
Then ... SNAP!

Two little monkeys swinging from a tree,  
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"  
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be  
Then ... SNAP!

One little monkey swinging from a tree,  
Teasing Mr. Alligator, "Can't catch me!"  
Along came Mr. Alligator slowly as can be  
Then ... SNAP!

Anonymous

## Safety tip

If you use a scarf or towel to mark the river, put it on a non-slip surface such as a soft carpet.

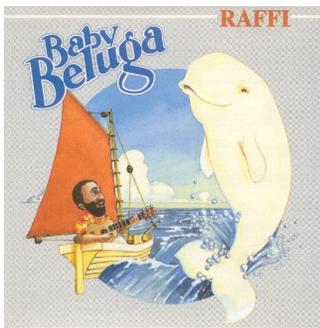
# Wriggly ribbons

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Give your child a length of ribbon fastened to a stick or a canning ring.
- ❖ Show your child how to hold the end of the stick or the canning ring and move his or her arm to make patterns with the ribbon.
- ❖ Encourage your child to move the ribbon around in different ways, e.g. with the whole arm, just from the elbow or just from the wrist. Change hands and try moving the ribbon with the other arm.
- ❖ Invite your child to make the ribbon move like different objects, e.g. a windshield wiper, a tornado, a bicycle wheel, a wiggly snake, etc.



## A good read-together book



**Baby Beluga** by Raffi

You will need some pieces of ribbon about 1 m (1 yard) long, and some smooth sticks or old canning rings.

This activity helps children develop body and space awareness, rhythm and timing, and helps them learn to describe movements with words. It also encourages imagination and creativity.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Encourage your child to experiment with the ribbon before making suggestions.
- ❖ Join the fun with your own wriggly ribbon.

Let's pretend we're inside a washing machine swishing back and forth.

Look! I can make a BIG circle by using my whole arm.

## Ways to say it

# More ideas for Wriggly ribbons

## Try this way

- ❖ Play "Copy Cat." Make a pattern with your ribbon and invite your child to copy it. Then let your child make a pattern for you to follow. Take turns inventing new patterns for one another to try.
- ❖ Read **Baby Beluga** or listen to the song sung by Raffi. Make up actions with your ribbons to show different parts of the story, e.g. a wave action for "swim so wild and swim so free" or a spiral above your head for "the water squirtin' out of your spout."

## Language development

Read the poem "Washing Machine" out loud together. Learn the words and create the movements with your wriggly ribbons.

## Imagination

Pretend the ribbon has magic powers if it is used in certain ways, e.g. if it never touches the ground, or never stops moving, or if the person holding it stands on tiptoe. Imagine what you could do with a ribbon that had magic powers, and act out the possibilities.



## The Washing Machine

Washing in the washing machine,  
going round and round.

Washing in the washing machine,  
moving up and down.

Round and round and up and down,  
it makes a noisy sound.

Faster, faster, faster,  
round and round and round.

Anonymous

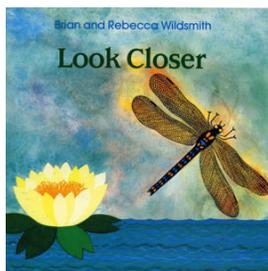
# Tread lightly, look closely

## Let's play and talk together

- ❖ Invite your child on a nature walk through a field, park, patch of woods or backyard. Explain that you are going to stop and look closely at interesting things along the way.
- ❖ Talk about the saying, "Take only memories, leave only footprints" and explain that on your walk you will be looking and listening, but leaving everything just as you found it.
- ❖ On your walk, look and listen carefully. Take turns pointing things out and describing them to each other.
- ❖ Help your child learn new words for patterns, colours, shapes, textures and sounds.



## A good read-together book



**Look Closer** by Brian and Rebecca Wildsmith

This activity is good for learning to enjoy outdoor physical activity, looking and listening carefully, observing details, and learning new words.

## Hints for success

- ❖ Stop from time to time to look closely at plants, insects, rocks or other details.
- ❖ Listen for sounds made by birds, animals, machines and people.

Did you notice the spots  
on that ladybug?

What sounds can you  
hear now?

**Ways to say it**

# More ideas for Tread lightly, look closely

## Try this way

- ❖ Take a camera on your walk, and photograph some of the interesting things you see. Encourage your child to find interesting details for you to photograph.
- ❖ Look at the pictures together when you get home. Try to find more details when you study the snapshots.

### Healthy eating

When berries are ripe, go out together and gather enough to make a smoothie or a berry parfait. Chant the "Blackberries" poem as you pick. Change the words when you are picking different kinds of berries. When you get home, wash and sort the berries together.

### Early literacy

Read **The Butterfly Alphabet**. Make a game of finding patterns in nature that have the shapes of alphabet letters and numbers.

### Book links

**The Butterfly Alphabet** by Kjell B. Sandved

**Green Fun: Plants as Play** by Marianne Haug Gjersvik



### Blackberries

Blackberries, blackberries on the hill.  
How many pails can you fill?  
Briers are thick and briers scratch,  
But we'll pick all the berries in the blackberry patch.

Anonymous