

BABY BYTES

For families with infants and young children

People Games

People games are where play begins. Simple games like “peek a boo” or “tickle” help children learn important play skills, like engaging with others, paying attention to what they are doing, taking turns and keeping the interaction going. These skills will eventually transfer to everyday interactions and conversation.



DID YOU KNOW???

- Initial People Games usually involve some **PHYSICAL SENSATION** that a child enjoys such as movement, sound or touch. For example if your child loves movement/running, he may enjoy playing “Chase”. If they seek out pressure, a game of giving “Bear Hugs” or “squishes” might work.
- **OBSERVING** your child will help you understand which types of sensations your child seeks out and which they avoid.
- When playing People Games with your baby, **Be FACE TO FACE** so you are able to see your child’s facial expressions and their attempts to interact. Also your child can see your smiles and enjoyment of the interaction.
- You can create a People Game by **IMITATING** what your child is already doing. This can become a turn taking game by repeating a simple action (banging a table, clapping, blowing raspberries). Imitation shows your child that you are paying attention and engaging.
- Your child may resist in the beginning as they are not used to you playing in this way. If you **PERSIST** by following your child’s lead and continuing to put yourself in their world, you will eventually see success. However, gauge how much persistence your child can take; pushing

your child too far could lead to a meltdown; whining and complaining is ok but a tantrum won't be helpful.

- It is helpful for you to INTERPRET what you think your child is trying to tell you. If they grab your hand and put it on their belly after being tickled, say "Tickles! You want more tickles!"

PROGRESSION OF PEOPLE GAMES

- Looking at play partner.
- Taking a turn with sounds or words.
- Doing actions to continue the game (such as looking at play partner and moving his body back and forth).
- Imitating actions (such as clapping hands during pat-a-cake).
- Taking a number of back and forth turns with actions or sounds/words.
- Staying engaged, smiling, laughing and having fun.
- Playing games with other children.



EXAMPLES OF PEOPLE GAMES

Movement

Chase

Blanket Swing

Block the Way

Row Row Row Your Boat

Jumping on Bed

Ring Around the Rosie

Touch

Horse Ride

Blanket Roll

Peek a Boo under pillows

Pat a Cake

Squish

Round and Round the Garden

Sound

Early Actions Songs - Eensy Weensy Spider, Head and Shoulders, The Hockey Pokey, The Wheels on the Bus

