

# Playing together



~March 2020

## Adaptations to play inside the house

Current changes triggered by the COVID-19 pandemic have affected the daily routine of millions of families worldwide. In the middle of constant information flow and with millions of families increasingly self-isolating in their homes, it is normal for children to also feel anxious.

The first five years of life are a vital period in the development of intelligence, personality, and social behaviour. Thus, it is important to minimise the stress children are exposed to during situations of crisis or instability.

Playing as a family can change what children will experience in the upcoming weeks. Through play, bonds of trust are created between children and their caregivers, as well as positive and healthy relationships that will be strengthened throughout their lives. Following social distancing recommendations by the World Health Organization, all the activities in *Playing Together*—a handbook of activities designed to enhance play in public spaces—have been adapted so families can maximize their time together and still have fun inside their homes.



### NOTE

The adaptations are in pages: 42-43, 66-67, 88-89, 110-111 y 128-129.

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Activities' design and  
content development  
**Leticia Lozano and Mariana Rios**  
**MACIA Estudio**


Design  
**Fernando Arpio**

Illustrations  
**Israel Hernández, isra.pop**  
**Andrea Roa**

Copyeditor  
**Marian Pipitone**

Equality and inclusion consultancy  
**Priscila Pérez**

Typefaces  
**Aperçu Pro, Colophon**  
**Tiempos Text, Klim Type**

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# Introduction

As part of the support strategies to boost development in our country through early childhood development, the Banorte, Cinépolis, CMR, FEMSA, Gentera, LEGO and Televisa Foundations, conformed the Early Childhood Funders Group in Mexico. This corporate foundation workgroup promotes actions that drive the holistic development of early childhood in Mexico.

Early childhood is the period of time from birth until the age of 6 years. This life stage determines the future of children since 90% of brain connections are formed, and the foundations on which future skills and knowledge will be built upon are established.

The mission of the Early Childhood Funders Group in Mexico is to raise awareness in parents and primary caregivers about the importance of the early years of life, as well as give them the tools to take action—personally and systematically—to drive a holistic early childhood development. Our vision is for children in Mexico to achieve their full potential. Hence, this publication should serve to enhance public spaces through play, which will help—among other things—to raise awareness in parents and caregivers on the importance of play and creating emotional parent-child connections in early childhood, in a practical and fun way.

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# The value of Early Childhood

Our brain never ceases to develop. Every time we learn something new, a neural connection<sup>1</sup> is formed. However, the brain's fastest growing period is during the first years of life. This means that human beings learn much more quickly between the ages of 0 and 3 years than in any other period of their lives.

*In order to play, children need a space that can grow together with their capacity, their autonomy and their skills. A space that can accompany them during their development, which can offer them new experiences, new discoveries, new treasures.<sup>2</sup>*

The brains of babies are programmed to receive stimulation<sup>3</sup>—through experiences—that will shape their perceptions of the world. Thus, the first moments of a human being's life are of utmost importance for their brain architecture. Every time children interact with their environment, their brain forms a new neural connection.<sup>4</sup> According to recent research, the rate at which these connections are formed during the first years of life is at least 1,000 connections per second and up to 1 million in that same period of time.<sup>5</sup> The neural connections that are most used get stronger, and those that are not used, slowly wither until they finally disappear.

As simple as it may seem, a joyous smile, a sensitive and caring hug or making a baby laugh, modifies their brain development and has lifelong repercussions. Humans, from the moment they are born, seek to interact and connect naturally through babble, scream and smiles.<sup>6</sup> In adulthood, a smile could mean nothing, but to babies, a smile is a new learning element that teaches them to get positive reactions from their environment. Hence, they learn that their own smile is an opportunity for serve and return interactions with other human beings through gestures, and emotionally, it helps them feel loved.

**“Brain development is an essential part of early childhood development, the process by which a young child acquires essential physical, motor, cognitive, social, emotional and language skills. They build the foundation for later life and set the trajectory for health, learning and wellbeing”.**

Rebello, P. (2017, September). p. 9.

The quality and quantity of experiences in the first years of life become a key factor for brain development in every child, and thus, for their physical and emotional health, their happiness, their learning ability,<sup>7</sup> and the way they adapt to change. This means that through experiences and the neural connections formed in the first 1,000 days of a person's life, a solid or weak base is established, on which all future learning builds: each stage of brain development paves the way for the following one. However, with no solid or strong foundation, it is difficult for more complex stages to incorporate and remain stable.<sup>8</sup>

One of the most important scientific findings in recent years points out that every child's brain is the product of their genes as well as their experiences and their environment. In other words, it is the result of a combination of innate characteristics and acquired learning.<sup>9</sup> This means that genes hold the basic structural plan of human beings, while the care and experiences that caregivers<sup>10</sup>—parents, siblings, grandparents, extended family, health/childcare professionals and community<sup>11</sup>—could provide, just as urban development in their neighbourhood or in their city, shape, drive, determine and support the healthy formation of their brain architecture.

Neural connections are formed and modified in accordance with positive and negative experiences to which every child is exposed. Positive experiences include good nutrition, sensory<sup>12</sup> and gross motor stimulation, interaction with peers and other generations, and protection provided by caregivers. Negative experiences like neglect, indifference, stress, any kind of violence—physical, psychological or verbal—or exposure to pollution, can seriously hinder early development and have a negative impact on adult life.<sup>13</sup> When an adult's response to a child is not clear, non-existent or negative, it can cause delay and influence his or her development.

**“A child who feels safe with respect to his or her adult caregivers does not ignore the risks in venturing away from them slightly, but moves on anyway knowing they will have someone to lean on if need be”.**

## **Creating emotional connections**

Basic trust is the result of numerous positive interactions between children and their caregivers. It is essential for children to know that the adults around them are receptive to their physical and emotional needs, and that they are available when needed. This trust encourages the free exploration of the limits of their immediate world, to eventually become independent.

Creating emotional connections<sup>14</sup> between children and their caregivers, parents or playmates, allows them to develop their ability to think about the world around them and to be aware of themselves as part of that environment. Through sensations, perceptions, emotions, actions and behaviours, children build their own psychic apparatus,<sup>15</sup> which will continue to develop until they become integrated individuals of society.<sup>16</sup> The balance between dependency and autonomy varies according to the age of the child. However, the central themes in early childhood are basic dependency, safe environments and the fear of separation.

The first 1,000 days of life have a considerable effect on the future of people. Hence, adults and caregivers have a big responsibility and could have a transformative impact on children's lives. Holistic development of children depends on warm, stimulating and responsive parenting in these first days—in terms of nutrition, health, protection and positive stimulation. This way, children are much more likely to reach their full potential in adulthood.

*A long-lasting bond between parent and child can be established through playful interactions, laying the foundation for a positive and healthy relationship that can grow throughout childhood.<sup>17</sup>*



# Skills for holistic development

In early childhood,<sup>18</sup> interaction with the environment occurs through caregivers. However, positive stimulation “with love, play, communication, songs and reading [...], is not as simple as it looks”,<sup>19</sup> since there must be a balance between physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skill development.

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## \* Physical skills

Maintaining an active and healthy body, increasing physical resistance and exercising the mind through spatial understanding, are fundamental aspects to promote the building of motor skills in children. Movements that stimulate this development include: jumping, climbing, rolling, running, holding, balancing, turning, pulling, pushing, going down, going up, stretching, carrying, riding, dancing, throwing, exploring and falling.<sup>20</sup>

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## \* Social skills

As adults, and thanks to complex social skill development, we have the capacity to work in teams, communicate assertively, be open to different perspectives, be understanding towards other people, and build significant and meaningful relationships. It is thus essential for children to put these skills into practice from early years. In this sense, activities involving socialising, talking, sharing, taking part in free play, negotiating, solving problems as a group, doing sports or participating in games with rules should be encouraged.<sup>21</sup>

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## ⦿ Cognitive skills

Developing cognitive skills is essential for solving complex tasks. The ability to create strategies to identify effective solutions depends on these skills. Abstract and flexible thinking is also involved. In early childhood, it is important for children to get involved in decision making of their environment, as well as to feel free to transform, undo, shape and modify it. Also, in order to strengthen thinking skills, it is important to be still and observe, explore, discover and ponder.

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## ⦿ Emotional skills

From an early age, people need to understand, guide and express their feelings in order to build self-awareness. That is why children must put into practice their ability to control impulses, maintain motivation and feed self-confidence, especially when faced with difficulties.<sup>22</sup> These complex processes allow them to strengthen their emotional universes and prepares them to build nourishing and healthy relationships. Furthermore, it endorses empathetic and responsible responses towards the people around them, as well as with the environment. Thus, it is important to remember that in early childhood, children need to have regular contact with nature,<sup>23</sup> and carry out exploration, collection and observation activities in the process of building an awareness of themselves and an emotional stability.

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## \* Creative skills

In childhood, everything is possible by just imagining it. Imagination is the engine that fuels creativity, sharpens ingenuity and provides other spaces for conventional thinking in order to broaden the established parameters of reality. Exploring new ways of doing things helps develop critical thinking and strengthens trust through trial and error processes. These characteristics evolve as new possibilities are tested, ideas are evaluated, and solutions are identified. Hence, it is fundamental to give children space and time to create, transform, associate, express ideas, and most importantly, make mistakes.

**“Children’s play is ‘any behaviour, activity or process initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves; it takes place whenever and wherever opportunities arise [...] is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and undertaken for its own sake, rather than as a means to an end’”.**

Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). Convention on the Rights of the Child: General comment No. 17 on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, (Article 31, par.1). Retrieved on 12 October, 2019: <http://docstore.ohchr.org/SelfServices/FilesHandler.ashx?enc=6QkG1d/PPRiCAqhKb7yhsqIkirKQZLK2M58RF/5F0vFw58qKy0N-sTuVUIOzAukKtwGqGgFkAgArTuTdZZUuSZObAaHCoPs-dppxu9L6un29TyD4Jyrk0F22kRyLCMeCVm>

## Learning through Play

Playing is a universal right<sup>24</sup> for all children. However, despite play<sup>25</sup> being extremely important for health, wellbeing and holistic development<sup>26</sup>—for childhood as well as for society—, it is rarely taken seriously<sup>27</sup> or people are not aware of the learning resulting from children playing. Thus, General Comment No. 17 under Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child<sup>28</sup> emphasises the importance of recognizing and facilitating this right for children of all ages. Additionally, it highlights the role of play in creating opportunities to express creativity, imagination, self-confidence, self-sufficiency, and developing physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skills. It also points out that through play, children explore the world around them, experiment with new ideas and roles, and by doing so, build their social position in the world on a daily basis.<sup>29</sup>

Some researchers question this definition and argue that play can be manipulated by adults who want to meet their own—forementioned—outcomes for children. Especially, when they encourage playful activities to impose adult rules, through a kind of invisible coercion.<sup>30</sup> For children, defining play is much more simpler: almost all activities can be play, except the boring ones. The level of fun is what determines whether something is play or not; as soon as an activity is no longer enjoyable, it is no longer seen as play.<sup>31</sup>

*When parents talk, sing and play with their babies, they help to build a healthy brain that is well wired to learn and interact with others.<sup>32</sup>*

Depending on the perspective, play can be an activity, a behaviour, an attitude, a mood, a disposition or an expression of mental structure. What is certainly constant—and not questionable—is that play contributes significantly in all aspects of holistic development, especially in early childhood.

Doctor in cognitive development psychology, David Whitebread, summarises the five major categories of play, which when balanced in childhood, have a long-term impact on the development of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skills. *Arquitectura para el juego urbano*, the first guide to design plays spaces published by the Mexico City government<sup>33</sup>—that included a child perspective on design processes and urban planning, especially in public spaces for play<sup>34</sup>—dives into these categories.

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### Physical play

This is divided into three types: active play, play fight and games where fine motor skills are used. These types of play are related to developing hand-eye coordination and aggression management. Manipulating construction toys, running, jumping, dancing, playing wrestling with peers and coloring are—among others—play activities that encourage the development of concentration and perseverance skills, strength and endurance.

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### Play with objects

This type of play starts at a very early age and is derived from curiosity and exploration. It relates to the development of abstract thought, reasoning and problem solving. This repertoire of cognitive skills and strategies unfolds in the narratives children compose while they put together, build, create, order and associate objects.

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### Symbolic play

This is an experimental activity in which, through sounds, made-up words, jokes and object counting—among others—the development of language, interest in reading and writing, using numbers or music appreciation is seen. Symbolic play gradually increases skills and means of expression, furthermore the ability to reflect on experiences, ideas and emotions.

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### Socio-Dramatic play

It is also known as role play: where children act out imaginary situations or pretend to be something or someone they are not. Creating new worlds is common in this type of play, and these can—or cannot—have something to do with the environment they play in. Examples include: using costumes, representing a superhero, playing with stuffed animals or camping in the schoolyard. Role play or pretend play gives children the opportunity to explore and create multiple play scenarios, and change identities. Socio-dramatic play has a big impact on the development of narrative, deductive, social, representative, self-regulatory and self-representation skills.

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### Play with rules

In the process of discovering how the world around them works, children are attracted to games with rules and sometimes make up their own. When playing hide and seek, tag or stop, social skills learning is promoted, such as understanding different perspectives, taking turns and the importance of sharing, among others. As children grow older, board or electronic games, as well as a variety of sports, become increasingly attractive.

Recent studies have shown that play experiences are not only fun or a way of spending time until adulthood. Instead, play has a central role in learning and in preparing children for challenges later on.<sup>35</sup> From this standpoint, it must be pointed out that while human beings are biologically programmed to play and explore, we cannot understand play and learning independently from each other, but rather, we must see them as a flexible and symbiotic experience,<sup>36</sup> a mental state of children that should be encouraged and celebrated. Similarly, skill development does not happen on its own, but in an interconnected and dynamic way.

Imagine a group of neighbourhood children playing on a playground. These children are pretending to be part of a family, with different children taking on different roles in the family—the parents, the siblings, even the family pet! At first glance, this appears to be a simple game of pretend. But when viewed through the lens of playful learning, we see that children are actually building much more than a pretend family. As they negotiate roles, they are building the skills of communication and collaboration. As they look around for new materials to incorporate into their pretend reality, they are exhibiting creative innovation (e.g., a bicycle turned upside down becomes an ice cream truck). As the younger ones begin to question the ‘rules’ imposed by the older children, they are practicing their critical thinking skills. As they all begin to act out things outside of their comfort zones, they are building confidence in themselves and their ability to face new challenges. Finally, even content knowledge is being strengthened through increased exposure to language and even math as they pay the ice cream seller with their “currency” (e.g., sticks).<sup>37</sup>

## Characteristics of playful experiences

In order to explain playful learning processes, the LEGO Foundation has established five characteristics that playful experiences must include.<sup>38</sup> These features do not arise at the same time, but should appear during the time of play. They were developed based on the idea<sup>39</sup> that a deep and conceptual understanding of childhood requires children to remain immersed in activities that invite them to continuous interaction.

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### Meaningful

Meaningful play occurs when children can relate new experiences with something they already know; they tend to explore and repeat what they have already done or what they have seen other people do. This is how they have a better appreciation of what their actions mean and how they relate to their own world. Making play meaningful allows them to express and increase their understanding through different media, symbols and tools.

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### Joyful

Joy is in the heart of play, both when enjoying a task in itself, and when experiencing a momentary feeling of surprise, reflection or success when overcoming a challenge. Recent research<sup>40</sup> has shown how curiosity and positive experiences relate to learning. For example, children demonstrate deeper learning after a surprising event than they do after a predictable one.

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### Socially interactive

During play, social interaction is a powerful tool for learning. By communicating thoughts, understanding other people's perspectives, having intergenerational interaction and sharing ideas, children can build a deep understanding of the world and have greater opportunities to create more meaningful relationships with their surroundings.

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### Actively engaging

Playful learning means actively getting involved in play. For example, if a girl is absorbed in a play activity of building blocks and imagining how pieces can come together, she would be so concentrated that she would not realise that her father was calling her for dinner. Mental immersion, eye contact and physical stimulation are especially powerful in the context of playful learning and to promote engagement.

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### Iterative

Iteration examples include: a boy trying different ways of building a high tower of blocks, or a young girl discovering that the angle of the slide affects the distance the marble will move in a room. Iterating means trying new possibilities, going over different hypotheses and discovering new questions that lead to greater and deeper learning.

Every child builds skills at their own pace and these will depend on the stimuli to which they are exposed. Any type of play can also be a learning opportunity and vice versa. Caregivers are thus not faced with an easy challenge: children must develop their full potential, learn nimbly and have a range of interconnected skills that allows them to adapt and respond quickly to an ever-changing contemporary world.

## Play for everyone

Discrimination is an ongoing challenge Mexico faces everyday. Various sectors of the population, such as people with disabilities, face structural obstacles that prevent them from exercising a full enjoyment of their rights. Governments are not the only ones who need to face this reality; it is a shared responsibility that includes all society.

The segregation from social activities of people with disabilities, “not only causes asymmetries between individuals (vertical inequality) but also between social groups (horizontal inequality)”.<sup>41</sup> The outcomes of these kind of discrimination are long-term consequences in society creating unequal, indifferent and apathetic communities.

Attitudes, situations or policies that promote inclusion should be directed, above all, to groups of people who, due to their status—whether of an economic nature, gender, religion, ethnicity and/or disability—are in a vulnerable position within a community.

Seeking inclusion is not only a task for individuals in vulnerable situations. In order to get closer to a more inclusive reality, we must join forces that allow the environment—as a whole—to offer equitable opportunities to everyone.

Integrating all the groups that make up a community in decision-making and the enjoyment of social life is a task that promises benefits in a very broad spectrum: fairer social dynamics, greater understanding of one's emotions and that of others, novel educational models, and long-lasting and solid relationships in the community, to name a few. In brief, integration<sup>42</sup> enriches everyone's living conditions. By guiding our efforts to create spaces and activities that include all children—with disabilities or in other vulnerable situation—we encourage vibrant parent-child interactions and ensure a future with more inclusive societies and environments that are welcoming to everyone.

**“Many studies have shown that stressful experiences in the first months of life have negative emotional and neurological effects. Thus, it is important to increase the stimuli that generate safety and early experiences of pleasure, favouring the bond with parents, the exchange of love through eye contact, touch, skin-to-skin proximity and voice”.**

## **General considerations for children with disabilities**

### **Words to use and avoid when naming a disability**

#### **Yes Person with a visual impairment**

**No** The blind

#### **Yes Person with a physical disability**

**No** Cripple  
Invalid

#### **Yes Person with an intellectual disability**

**No** Retarded  
Mentally handicapped

#### **Yes Person with a hearing disability**

**No** Deaf mute  
Deaf and dumb

#### **Yes Person with a psychosocial disability**

**No** Crazy  
Insane  
Mad

#### **Yes Person of short stature**

**No** Midget  
Dwarf<sup>43</sup>

### **General considerations to appropriately include children with disabilities:**

- Ⓐ Respect their silences and personal space.<sup>44</sup>
- Ⓑ Allow autonomy in carrying out activities and provide support only when necessary.
- Ⓒ Enable and motivate child interaction.
- Ⓓ Treat children in accordance to their age and development.
- Ⓔ Adapt play activities according to capabilities and skills.
- Ⓕ Ask permission before taking, moving or removing assistive devices and technologies.<sup>45</sup>
- Ⓖ Use any support material or assistive devices and technologies for children to carry out activities in equal basis with other children.
- Ⓗ Encourage children without disabilities to support their peers and playmates, when they need it or ask for it.
- Ⓘ Remember the basic questions:
  - ① Can I help you?
  - ② How can I help you?<sup>46</sup>

# Why the need to design a handbook to enhance play in public spaces?

As previously explained, play is an exercise of autonomy that children carry out individually or in groups, and that involves physical, mental and emotional processes. It can manifest in infinite forms, spaces and imaginaries. Moreover, play enables skill development in a natural and fun way in different scenarios. While it is true that “children play anywhere, it is also true that the current environment can have a significant impact on the ability of children [...] finding time and places to play”.<sup>47</sup>

The urban environment, among other variables, is a key factor that has an impact on health, behaviour and development of every child, not only within childhood, but also across their adult life. Daily activities like walking, riding a bicycle and especially playing, foster physical activity. Conversely, lots of traffic, poor air quality and the scarcity of public spaces discourage people from being physically active. This phenomenon results in a lack of opportunities for children to build skills freely, and the absence of spaces to interact—spontaneously—with their urban environment.<sup>48</sup>

One could say that, historically, the car-centred city model has transformed the way generations interact with public space,<sup>49</sup> and has not considered the specific needs of vulnerable and minority groups, including children. While child-friendly cities and urban planning is an emergent field, it recognises the fundamental importance of independence, play and the environment, which as a whole, help shape children's holistic development.

*Playing Together* is a compendium of activities designed to enhance play in public spaces and seeks to maximise playful experiences.<sup>50</sup> Its main goal is to foster, across early childhood, the creation of emotional connections among babies and toddlers and their parents and primary caregivers. The activities proposed are designed to boost physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skill development in children. With this publication, the Early Childhood Funders Group in Mexico aims to generate a positive impact that ensures that all children in Mexico have opportunities to reach their full potential.

**“Physical activity and an outdoor environment can additionally play a part in improving caregiver mood and wellbeing”.**

## **How to use the Playing Together handbook**

### **About this publication**

Activities proposed here were designed to encourage the building of physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skills in early childhood. These can all be carried out among children and their caregivers. In some cases, activities can be made between two children or participants while others will be for groups of more than two people. Furthermore, general and specific considerations are included so children with disabilities<sup>51</sup> get the assistance they need from their peers, caregivers or adults.

This publication contains play activities, in which the play facilitator<sup>52</sup> is encouraged to invite everyone to participate. Creating opportunities for children to come up with their own play activities, using the space and the materials<sup>53</sup> they suggest, is also recommended.

Some activities designed for this handbook are inspired in existing and well known activities and aim to motivate participants—children and adults—to adapt, modify, complement or transform them according to their wishes and needs. It is worth mentioning that activities to be added must be carried out with equal opportunities for each and every child. The play facilitator must foster inclusion,<sup>54</sup> respect and interaction among peers and other generations.



## Every play facilitator and adult that joins the play must:

- Ⓐ Allow children to take control of the activities
- Ⓑ Encourage curiosity
- Ⓒ Guide and support children to try as many times as necessary, without caring about failure
- Ⓓ Motivate them to overcome complex emotions, especially the negative ones
- Ⓔ Encourage the creation of new play activities

## About the space:

- Ⓐ Play activities can be carried out in any public, open, accessible and inclusive space.<sup>55</sup>
- Ⓑ The use of a jumper or piece of fabric is recommended for protection during activities carried out on the ground.
- Ⓒ Necessary measures should be taken with children with disabilities<sup>56</sup> so they have the support material and technical aids<sup>57</sup> to play.
- Ⓓ Care and appreciation for nature (plants and animals), and respect for the space where play takes place will be encouraged.

## Guiding steps for activities:

- ① **Preparing:** before starting, the play facilitator will explore the space to choose the area that best suits the activity. All activities proposed in this publication must be carried out in safe environments and in the presence of adults. If it is a sunny day, it is important to look for an area under the shade. In addition, to avoid unnecessary accidents, soft and levelled surfaces should be chosen. Also, a reasonable proportion of play facilitators per number of participants is suggested, according to the specific characteristics of each activity.

- ② **Breaking the ice:** it can start with an original introduction of the play facilitator and caregivers who will participate in the play activities. Children are then encouraged to introduce themselves in a funny way. For example, after saying their name, they can mention their favourite activity or what they had for breakfast that day.
- ③ **Anticipating:** in a very simple and clear way, introduce the theme and activities to be carried out on that day.
- ④ **Playing:** it involves staying responsive and committed without forgetting that play can be messy. The ultimate goal of these activities is to have a good time and generate collective memories as well as a sense of community. As play facilitator, it is essential to know how to have fun and enjoy the benefits that play brings at any stage of life.
- ⑤ **Sharing:** we invite play facilitators, parents and caregivers to share their experience with these activities on social media with #LearningThroughPlay and tagging @colectivoprimerainfancia, @maciaestudio and @LEGOfoundation. Before posting any information, remember that parents, caregivers and/or legal guardians must give their consent. You must also follow the basic security rules for photographs or videos of children on the Internet. These include: **never show a close-up of a child; always introduce them as a group; do not identify them with names and surnames; and never disclose contact or confidential information.**
- ⑥ **Reflecting:** after the play activity is over, it is important to think about the moments those involved in play enjoyed most and had most fun in. Useful questions for play facilitators could include the following: what did I do differently from other times? was the playful experience meaningful, joyful and actively engaging? what aspects of my performance can I improve to make the activities more successful?
- ⑦ **Hacking<sup>58</sup> and adding:** feel free to adapt, reinvent, reinterpret or include other play activities in this handbook. However, what must be taken into account is that any activity must contribute to skill and holistic development and more importantly, they must be fun and include every child.

## List of materials


• Cardboard
• Cardboard boxes
• Chalk in different colours
• Coloured pencils
• Cushions
• Flour
• Food colouring
• Glue
• Jumpers or tracksuit tops
• Kraft-paper bags, approximately 25 × 30 cm
• Lemons
• Markers in different colours
• Natural branches in different sizes
• Paint brushes
• Paint in different colours
• PET bottles in different sizes
• Pieces of fabric
• Play dough
• PVC pipes and elbows
• Rope

• Salt
• Sand
• Screw lids in different colours
• Sheets of paper in different colours (preferably recycled)
• Shoe belonging to a play facilitator or an adult
• Small pieces of paper with indications <sup>59</sup>
• Soft leaves in different colours from a shrub, tree or plant (found on the ground)
• Soil
• Speakers (optional)
• Spoons
• Stones in different sizes
• String
• Water
• White sheets of paper (preferably recycled)
• Wooden spoons
• Yarn in different colours


## Symbology

### Skill development groups

 Physical development activities


 Social development activities


 Cognitive development activities

 Emotional development activities


 Creative development activities


### Duration of play activities

 8 minutes

 15 minutes

 24 minutes

 30 minutes

 60 minutes

 Indefinite time

### Number of play facilitators per number of participants (children, parents and caregivers)

**1:5** One play facilitator for every five children

**1:10** One play facilitator for every ten children

**1:15** One play facilitator for every fifteen children

**:** No particular proportion

### Activity codes

#### Physical development activities

**P1** Ants

**P2** Human pyramid

**P3** Skipping rope

**P4** Lemon spoons

**P5** Obstacle race

#### Social development activities

**S1** Duck, duck, feather

**S2** Dancing chairs

**S3** Smelly shoe

**S4** Earthquake

**S5** The stone soup

#### Cognitive development activities

**C1** Hanging forest

**C2** City fossils

**C3** Animal memory activity

**C4** Swappaton

**C5** Colours

#### Emotional development activities

**E1** Sensory activity gym

**E2** Cradles

**E3** Bugs

**E4** Hugs

**E5** Silly walks

#### Creative development activities

**R1** Free play construction


**R2** Stone sculptures

**R3** Masks

**R4** Surprise egg

**R5** Free play

## How to read the play activities in this handbook

	Activity code	Name of the play activity		
Skill group to develop	R3	Masks	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>① A kraft-paper bag will be given to every child.</li><li>② If necessary, adults can help mark the holes for the eyes, nose and mouth.</li><li>③ Children will make the holes for the aforementioned areas.</li><li>④ The sheets of paper in different colours, markers, dry leaves or branches will be used to make the mask.</li><li>⑤ The play facilitator can spark some ideas by asking questions: does the mask have hair?, what size will the teeth be?, do you like using many or few colours?, will you glue something on your mask?</li><li>⑥ It is important for adults not to take over the mask design since the activity is not aimed to making them perfect.</li><li>⑦ Have you all finished? Now it's time for everyone to put on their masks!</li></ol>	<p><b>Materials</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Water, PET bottles, kraft-paper bags, coloured pencils, sheets of paper in different colours (preferably recycled), dry leaves, pencils, glue, paint brushes, paint in different colours, markers and branches.</li></ul> <p><b>Considerations for children with disabilities</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>For children with physical disabilities or any kind of fine motor skills condition, caregivers will help as guides in the activity without taking it over.</li><li>Each step of the activity as well as the possible materials to use will be explained to visually impaired children. Care will be taken to ensure they have understood and are able to carry out the activity.</li><li>If children have hearing, intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, visual aids may help to carry out this activity.</li><li>If necessary, help will be provided when gluing the materials.</li></ul> <p><b>0 to 1.5 years old</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>It is important to invite children to touch the material used for the mask.</li><li>Adults can guide the activity but not take it over. They must invite babies to make their own masks.</li></ul> <p><b>1.5 to 3 years old</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Caregivers can help decorate the mask. They should not forget that the aim of the activity is for children to express their creativity. Play facilitators must ensure that adults are not taking over the design of the masks.</li></ul>
Other skills developed				
Number of play facilitators per number of participants	1:5			
Duration	24 min.			
Instructions				
				

124–125

## Notes

- 1 See Neural connection in the Glossary.
- 2 Tonucci, F. (2005, spring). Citizen Child: Play as Welfare Parameter for Urban Life, in *Topoi* 24, p. 183.
- 3 See Stimulus in the Glossary.
- 4 See Environment in the Glossary.
- 5 Center on the Developing Child / Harvard University. (2007). The Science of Early Childhood Development. [summary]. Retrieved on 12 October, 2019: <https://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/inbrief-science-of-eed/>
- 6 Rebello, P. (2017, September). *Early Moments Matter for Every Child*. New York: UNICEF, p. 35. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: [https://www.unicef.org/media/48886/file/UNICEF\\_Early\\_Moments\\_Matter\\_for\\_Every\\_Child-ENG.pdf](https://www.unicef.org/media/48886/file/UNICEF_Early_Moments_Matter_for_Every_Child-ENG.pdf)
- 7 See Learning ability in the Glossary.
- 8 Urban 95. (2019). *An Urban 95 Starter Kit: Ideas for Action*. The Netherlands: Bernard Van Leer Foundation, p. 6. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: <https://bernardvanleer.org/app/uploads/2018/05/Urban95-Starter-Kit.pdf>
- 9 *Idem*, p. 7.
- 10 See Caregivers in the Glossary.
- 11 See Community in the Glossary.
- 12 See Sensory experience in the Glossary.
- 13 Rebello, P. (2017, September). p. 9.
- 14 See Emotional connections in the Glossary.
- 15 See Psychic apparatus in the Glossary.
- 16 Armus, M., et al. (2012, April).
- 17 The LEGO Group. (2019). *What We Mean By: Playful Parenting in the Early Years*. [white paper]. The LEGO Foundation, p. 5. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: <https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1695/what-we-mean-by-playful-parenting-in-the-early-years.pdf>
- 18 See Early childhood in the Glossary.
- 19 Rebello, P. (2017, September). p. 33.
- 20 Ríos, M., Lozano, L. and Blanco, L. (2018). *Arquitectura para el juego urbano: Lineamientos para diseñar espacios públicos de juego en la CDMX*. Mexico City: Mexico City Government - Lab for the City, p. 17. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: [https://issuu.com/maciaestudio/docs/apju\\_\\_dig\\_single](https://issuu.com/maciaestudio/docs/apju__dig_single)
- 21 *Ibidem*.
- 22 Learning through play: definition of the authors.
- 23 See Nature in the Glossary.
- 24 See Right to Play in the Glossary.
- 25 See Play in the Glossary.
- 26 See Holistic development in the Glossary.
- 27 Brooker, L. and Woodhead, M. (eds.) (2013). *Early Childhood in Focus 9: The Right to Play*. United Kingdom: The Open University. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: <https://icdi.nl/media/uploads/publications/the-right-to-play-young-children-in-focus-2013.pdf>
- 28 Committee on the Rights of the Child. (2013). Convention on the Rights of the Child: General comment No. 17 on the right of the child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities, cultural life and the arts, (Article 31, par.1).
- 29 Brooker, L. and Woodhead, M. (eds.) (2013). *Early Childhood in Focus 9: The Right to Play*.
- 30 Brooker, L. and Woodhead, M. (eds.) (2013).
- 31 Schepers, S., Dreessen, K. and Kosten, N., To Play, or Not to Play? That's the Question!: Exploring a Child-Perspective on Play to Negotiate Power Relations in Participatory Design Processes Involving Children, in Golchehr, S. (ed.) (2016). *Mediations: Art & Design Agency and Participation in Public Space—Conference Proceedings—*. London: Royal College of Art.
- 32 Urban 95. (2019). *An Urban 95 Starter Kit: Ideas for Action*, p. 7.
- 33 This work was developed by the Lab for the City—the experimental and creative area of the Mexico City government (2013–2018)—from its research–action branch Ciudad Lúdica. APJU leveraged the four years of this research and connected with the experiences of national and international allies that—from their professional practice—promote the right to play, catalyse the voice and opinion of children, and seek the creation of accessible, inclusive and healthy spaces for everyone.
- 34 Whitebread, D. in Ríos, M., Lozano, L. and Blanco, L. (2018). *Arquitectura para el juego urbano: Lineamientos para diseñar espacios públicos de juego en la CDMX*. Mexico City: Mexico City Government - Lab for the City, pp. 16–17. Retrieved on 22 October, 2019: [https://issuu.com/maciaestudio/docs/apju\\_\\_dig\\_single](https://issuu.com/maciaestudio/docs/apju__dig_single)
- 35 Zosh, J. M., et al. (2017, November). *Learning Through Play: A Review of the Evidence* [white paper]. The LEGO Foundation. Retrieved on 2 October, 2019: [https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1063/learning-through-play\\_web.pdf](https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1063/learning-through-play_web.pdf)
- 36 See Symbiotic experience in the Glossary.
- 37 Zosh, J. M., et al. (2017, November). p. 10.
- 38 *Idem*, p. 6.
- 39 Hirsh-Pasek, K., et. al. cited in Zosh, J. M., et al. (2017, November). *Learning Through Play: A Review of the Evidence* [white paper]. The LEGO Foundation. Retrieved on 2 October, 2019: [https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1063/learning-through-play\\_web.pdf](https://www.legofoundation.com/media/1063/learning-through-play_web.pdf)
- 40 Hirsh-Pasek, K., et. al. cited in Zosh, J. M., et al. (2017, November).
- 41 Solís, P. (2017). *Discriminación estructural y desigualdad social: Con casos ilustrativos para jóvenes indígenas, mujeres y personas con discapacidad*. Mexico City: Conapred, p.7.
- 42 See Integration in the Glossary.
- 43 National Commission on Human Rights. (n.d.). *Trato adecuado a las personas con discapacidad*. Retrieved on 18 October, 2019: [https://mecanismodiscapacidad.cndh.org.mx/Main/Trato\\_Adecuado](https://mecanismodiscapacidad.cndh.org.mx/Main/Trato_Adecuado)
- 44 See Personal space in the Glossary.
- 45 See Assistive devices and technologies in the Glossary.
- 46 National Commission on Human Rights. (n.d.).
- 47 Ríos, M., Lozano, L. and Blanco, L. (2018). p. 8.
- 48 Gill, T. (2017). *Cities Alive: Designing for Urban Childhoods*. London: ARUP.
- 49 See Public space in the Glossary.
- 50 See Playful experience in the Glossary.
- 51 See Disability in the Glossary.
- 52 See Play facilitator in the Glossary.
- 53 See Materials in the Glossary.
- 54 See Inclusion in the Glossary.
- 55 See Inclusive space in the Glossary.
- 56 See types of disability in the Glossary.
- 57 See Technical aids in the Glossary.
- 58 See Hacking in the Glossary.
- 59 See Obstacle race activity on page 58 for more information.



# Activities



# Physical development activities



~March 2020

## Adaptations to play inside the house

### Ants

When the anteater catches an ant, he or she should only touch the participant's back. The ant will not fall on the ground, but rather remain standing and will wait for the other ants. Ants will be rescued by others pulling on their clothes, on their back, and will walk backwards towards the ant's nest.

### Human pyramid

A human pyramid can be made up of 2 or 3 participants. The variations depend on the number of family members inside the house: one boy on top of a caregiver, one small girl on top of a bigger boy, one boy on top of two caregivers, three girls, etc.

### Skipping rope

The rope can be tied to the leg of a table if there's not more than two participants inside the house.

### Lemon spoons

It is played the same way inside the house. Remember to wash the lemon and the spoon thoroughly before playing.

### Obstacle race

Every station can be in a different part of the house: kitchen, a room or living room. To build obstacles, elements from nature will be replaced with common household items. For example, jump over a shoe, dodge a chair, crawl down a rug, go under a table, or jump over a cushion without touching it.



1:15



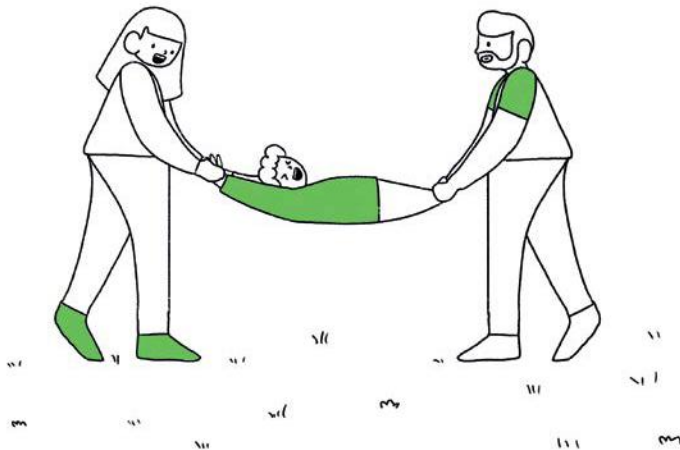
24 min.

# Ants

- ① Choose a person among the participants to be the anteater. The rest will be ants.
- ② Choose a place to be the ant's nest.\*
- ③ On the count of three, the anteater will go after the ants and after it touches them, they will fall on the ground.
- ④ The ants that are still alive or standing must help the ones that have fallen to come back to life by grabbing their foots or hands, and taking them to the ant's nest. Try to have "carrying ants" with similar height and weight. An adult should always carry the head of the fallen ants.
- ⑤ The anteater cannot touch live ants while they are carrying fallen ants.
- ⑥ If the anteater manages to have all ants fall on the ground, another person will become the anteater and the activity will continue.

\* See Ant's nest in the Glossary.

No materials are needed for this activity.



## Considerations for children with disabilities

- The anteater must wear a bracelet or rattle on their leg or arm.
- Always ask children with disabilities if they need any specific support or help.
- When the anteater catches a child in a wheelchair, live ants must help by pushing the wheelchair to the ant's nest, with prior permission from the child to move them.
- Visually impaired participants must have support from a caregiver or another child.

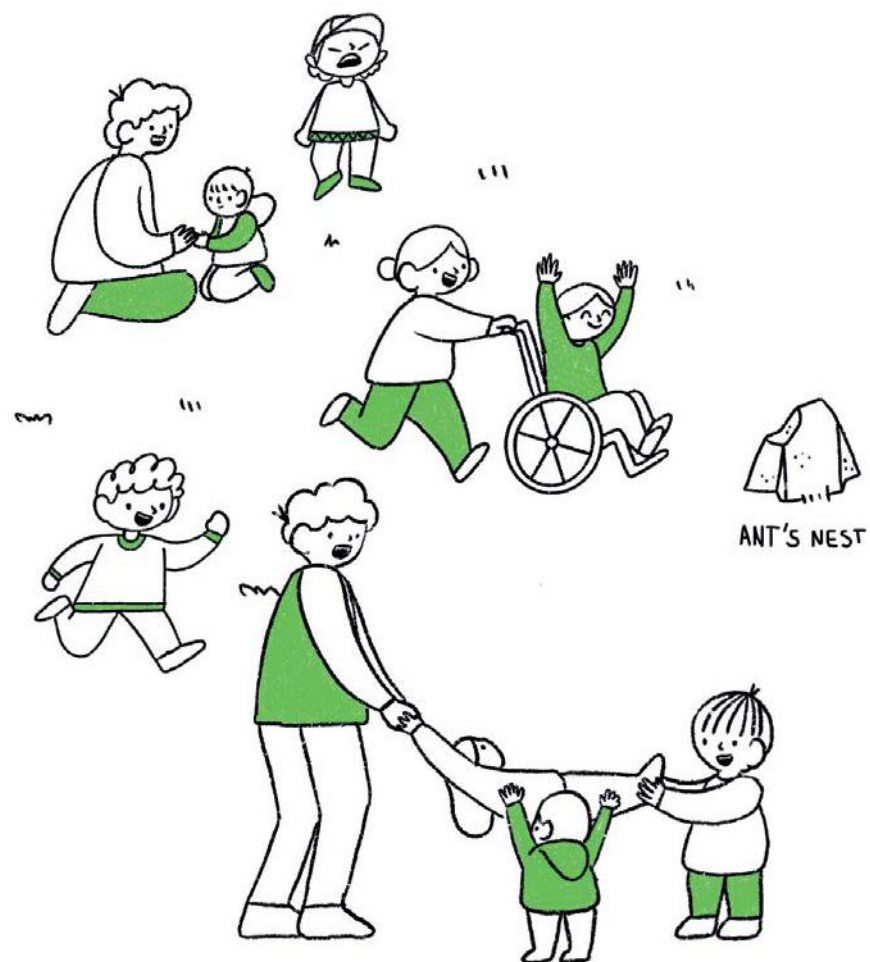
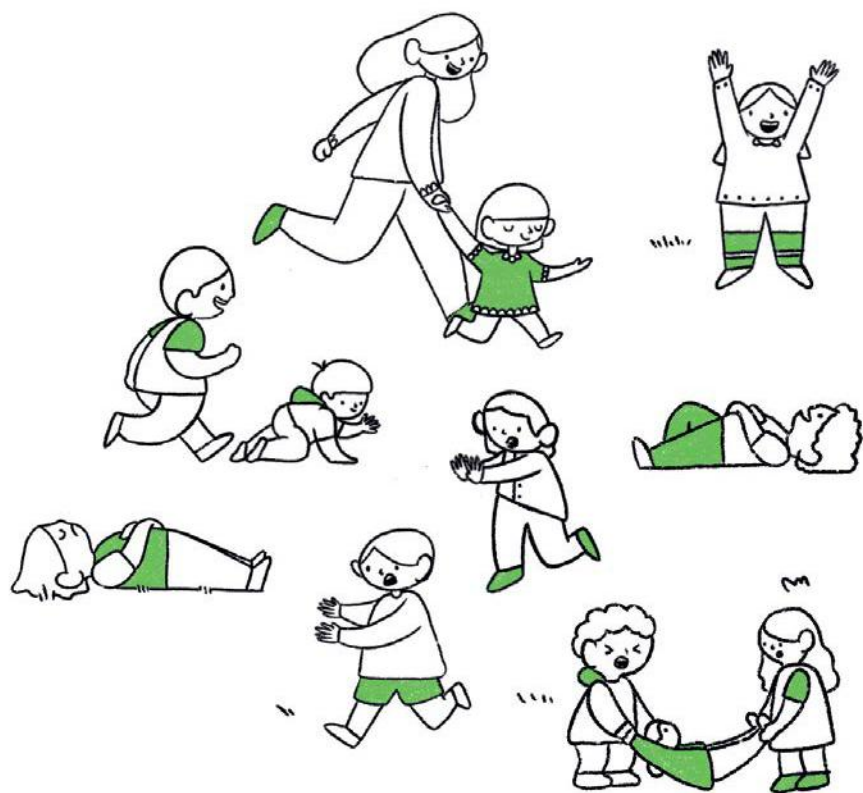
## 0 to 1.5 years old

- When the anteater touches a baby, the parent or caregiver must sit on the ground without crossing their legs, place the child on their legs and be face-to-face with him or her to make eye contact.
- To bring the ant back to life, the adult must touch their fingers and count them out loud or, clap along with the child. After the caregiver or parent-child interaction, they can walk towards the ant's nest.
- If the baby crawls, when the anteater touches him or her, their caregiver must guide them to the ant's nest to bring them back to life.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- If necessary, when the anteater gets the children, a caregiver must guide fallen ants to the ant's nest in order to bring them back to life. Otherwise, adults can help children carry the fallen ants.







# Human pyramid

- ① Participants will take off their shoes.
- ② The cushions or jumpers will be placed on the floor to protect knees from hard surfaces.
- ③ At least five adults will be next to each other, shoulder to shoulder, on their hands and knees.
- ④ Children will climb on the adults' backs and stay in the same position, on their hands and knees. They will place one hand and one knee on one adult's back, and the other hand and knee on another adult's back. The aim is to distribute weight.
- ⑤ Only four children will go on the first row. The second row will have three children, the fourth row two children, and the last row only one child, who will be the top of the pyramid.
- ⑥ This activity can be repeated as many times as wanted.

**NB:** At least five adults will be needed to help children throughout this activity, in addition to the caregivers and play facilitators.

**Safety consideration:** This activity can only be carried out on grass.

## Materials

- Cushions, tracksuit tops or jumpers.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- Wheelchair users can guide this activity if they wish. In any case, they will get help to go to the edge of the pyramid.
- Visually impaired children will get help to get to a position of the human pyramid.
- Adults will use gestures, signs or sounds to explain what is happening at all times.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

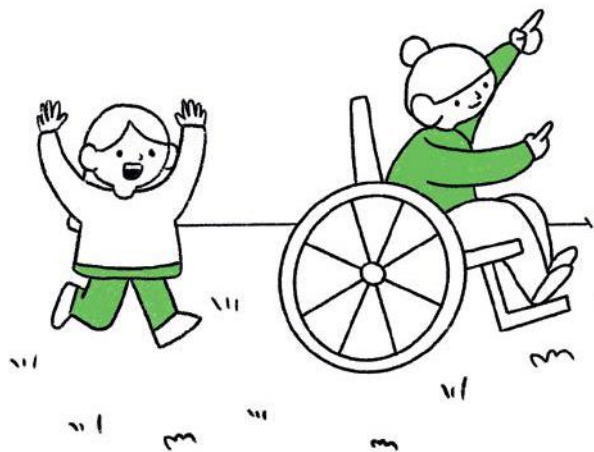
- Caregivers will help children climb the human pyramid. They will also help them roll or crawl on the backs, and will help them get down. Adults will never let go of babies.
- It is important for all participants to warmly cheer when babies walk or crawl on the pyramid.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Caregivers will hold toddlers from both hands so they can walk along the pyramid.
- If there are more than three rows, children will be helped by their caregivers in order to finish the rows.
- At the end, children will go down the pyramid with the help of adults.

## 3 to 6 years old

- Children will climb up on their own—as much as possible—to be the second row of the human pyramid.
- If needed, children will get help in order to avoid falls when forming the pyramid and when climbing down.





# Skipping rope

- ① Children and caregivers line up, except for two adults.
- ② The two adults will move the rope on the ground, as though it was a snake.
- ③ On the count of three, and taking turns, each participant will jump on the other side of the rope without touching it.
- ④ **Attention!** If the rope moves a lot, children can step back to run and jump.



## Materials

- Pieces of rope, at least 3.5 m long.

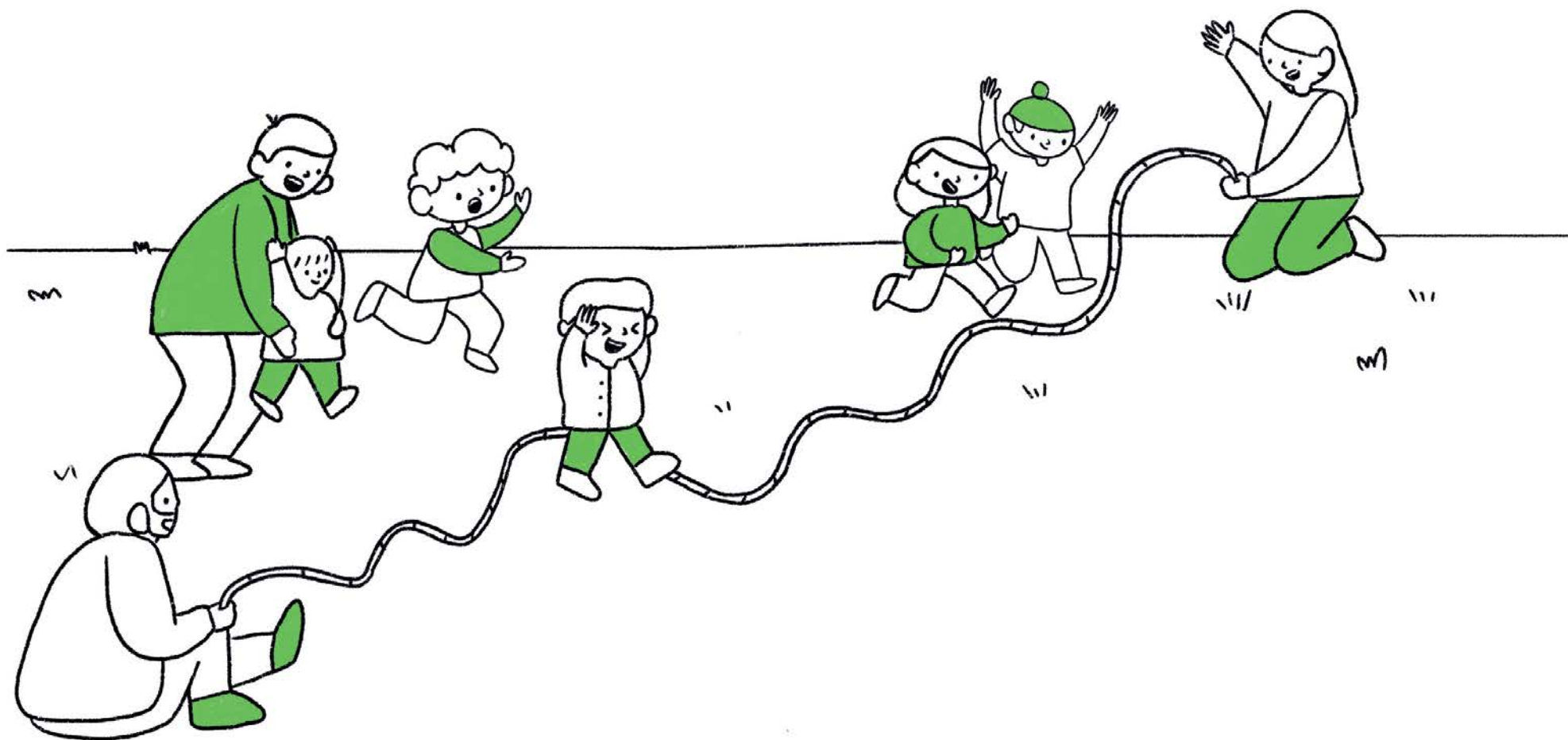
## Considerations for children with disabilities

- For children using wheelchairs, an adult or the play facilitator will go behind the wheelchair and push it with his or her body, while throwing the rope forward with both hands to go over it with the wheelchair, as though they were skipping rope.  
Demonstration video: <http://cort.as/-SW6w>.\*
- If visually impaired children participate, a step mode can be useful to announce the right moment to jump. The special needs aide or caregiver will move the rope and say when to jump.
- Hearing aids, like rattles, can be used on the rope. Another suggestion is for the play facilitator to ring a bell every time they need to jump.

\* Teacher Helps Wheel Chair Bound Student Jump Rope. [Bstone]. (2018, February 8). [Video]. Retrieved on October 23, 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=acqlx1VIIQc>

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- For babies to jump easily, the rope will not move a lot.
- Adults will hold the children by the waist, that way they will be able to touch the ground, run and jump on their own.
- Every time a baby jumps over the rope or goes to the other side of it, the other participants can celebrate warmly.





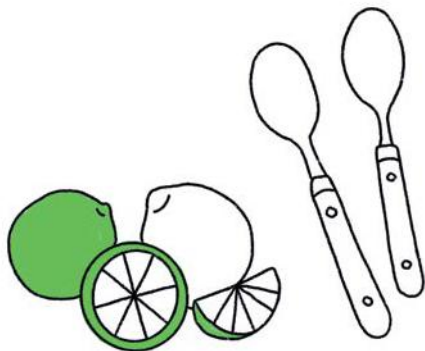
1:15



15 min.

# Lemon spoons

- ① Every caregiver and child will get a spoon and a lemon.
- ② They will place the lemon on the hollow head of the spoon.
- ③ With their left or right arm stretched out, they will hold the end of the spoon handle. Only one hand can be used. The other hand cannot be used to support the spoon.
- ④ On the count of three, all participants will walk while balancing the lemon on the spoon so it doesn't fall.
- ⑤ **But that's not all!** They will try to knock someone else's lemon over with their free arm.
- ⑥ They can protect the lemons from attacks, but they cannot pull the lemons close to their body, use their other hand to prevent it from falling, or hold the middle of the handle.
- ⑦ The last person with a lemon on the spoon wins!



## Materials

- Spoons and lemons.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- Wooden spoons, plates or small boxes should be used instead of spoons in case there are children with motor disabilities playing. They can also participate by knocking over other participants' lemons.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Adults will allow babies to play around with the lemons. They can help them by rolling the lemon on their hands, arms or cheeks, and invite them to play around with the spoon.
- If possible, babies will try to throw the someone else's lemons with both hands.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Adults will help toddlers put the lemon on the spoon.
- If necessary, adults can help children walk and/or keep their balance.







1:10



24 min.

# Obstacle race

## Instructions for different stations

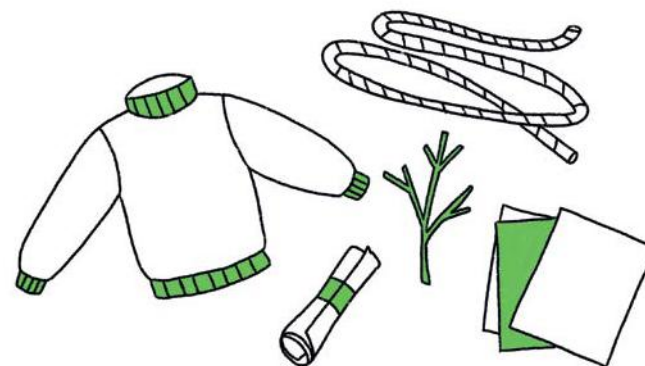
- ① **Station one:** the play facilitator will draw as many circles as participants on the ground with different coloured chalks.
- ② **Station two:** it must be approximately 20 metres away from the first station. The same coloured circles will be drawn, but this time, a stone will be placed inside each one.
- ③ **Station three:** it must be approximately 10 metres away from the second station. Only one circle will be drawn here, and a pile of little pieces of paper will be placed inside it. These papers will have indications on how to get to the next station namely, *walking backwards, crawling, whistling, singing, jumping on one leg, and more.*
- ④ **Station four:** it must be approximately 10 metres away from the third station. Instead of circles, this station will have bumps, fringes or obstacles made with different materials like branches, leaves, jumpers or stones.
- ⑤ **Station five:** a zigzag path—approximately 30 cm wide—will be traced with two pieces of rope or yarn. At the end of it, there will be a little piece of paper with the location of station six.
- ⑥ **Station six:** this is the finish line of the obstacle race and adults will wait for the runners here. Every time a runner gets to the finish line, they will cheer them on.

## Instructions for the race

- ① Children—with their caregivers—are placed each inside a circle. They must remember the colour of their circle.
- ② On the count of three, participants must head to station two. Once there, they will look for a circle of the same colour they started off with, and they will take the stone inside. All participants—at the same time—will make a collective sculpture.
- ③ Adults must let the children put the stones in the sculpture on their own.
- ④ Before starting, they must all be together.
- ⑤ **Be careful!** The sculpture should not fall over. Did they do it? If so, they can now move to station three.
- ⑥ Every participant will take a piece of paper and, as indicated in it, they will head to the next station.
- ⑦ Children and caregivers will jump over the bumps or go down the paths to get to station five.
- ⑧ Once at station five, they will go down the path, in the middle, without touching the rope or yarn. At the end of the path, they will read the little piece of paper indicating where the finish line is.

## Materials

- Yarn or rope, chalk in different colours, leaves, small pieces of paper in different colours (for station three), stones, branches, jumpers.



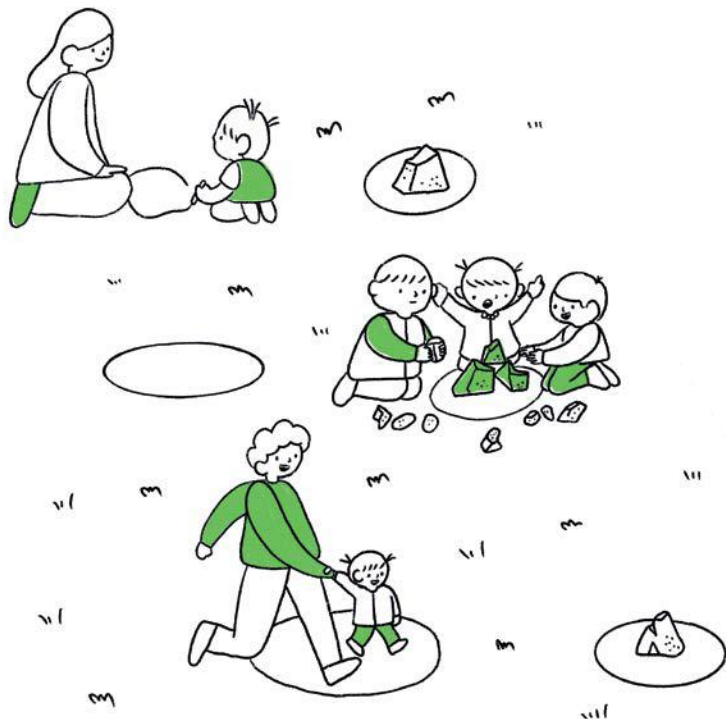


## Considerations for children with disabilities

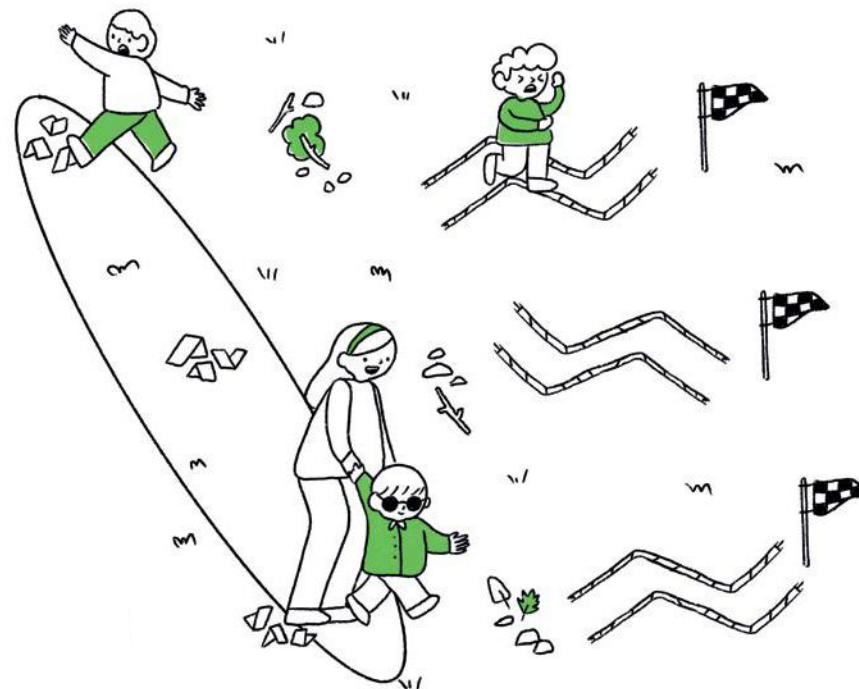
- For wheelchair users, or participants who need any other type of technical aid, the size of circles will be proportionate to these aids. Also, the distance between obstacles will need to be measured in order to allow wheelchairs to go around them easily.
- For visually impaired participants, an adult will serve as a guide throughout the course.

## 0 to 3 years old

- At station one, the babies and toddlers will draw their circles, not paying attention to whether or not these are perfect. They will keep the chalk to hold it and feel the texture.
- The adults will ask children what colour the circle they are drawing is, and will ask them to take them to the next station. There must be caregiver-child language interaction.



- At the next station, children will take the stones and place them—on their own—in the collective sculpture. Adults should not interfere in this activity.
- In between stations, adults will encourage children to walk or jump so that they continue the race on their own. If necessary, adults will hold children by the waist.
- At every station, or when something is achieved, caregivers will be very cheerful and expressive.
- Caregivers will show children the colours of the circles, the shapes of the stones and the materials the bumps are made of, while also encouraging them to experiment with the different textures they will find at the stations.





# Social development activities



~March 2020

## **Adaptations to play inside the house**

### **Duck, duck, feather**

It is played in a circle. Contact will be made with a soft object (e.g. a brush) touching the shoulders or backs of children and caregivers.

### **Dancing chairs**

If it is possible, inside the house, use chairs to carry out the activity. If not you can use cushions or other material for participants to sit on.

### **Smelly shoe**

Form a circle with the participants. Each one will select a number from 1 to 10. At every turn, a random number will be shouted and the player who chooses it will mention an imaginary character and what his or her shoe would smell like. Yuck! Babies can smell a piece of fruit when it's their turn.

### **Earthquake**

It is played the same way inside the house. It requires at least 4 players to be carried out.

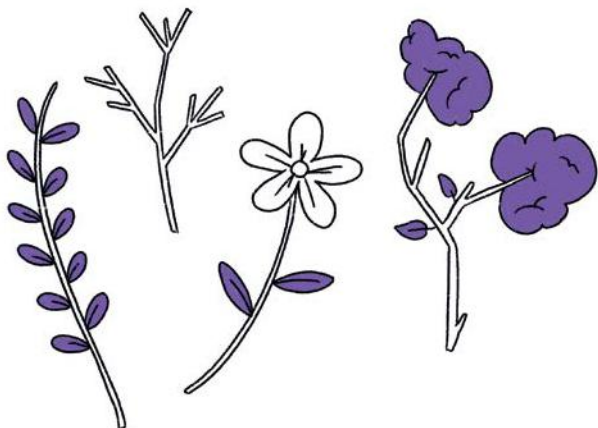
### **The stone soup**

Soup ingredients can easily be found at home and taste delicious. A glass could contain seawater, a napkin could smell like cinnamon and a clean garment could taste the same as exotic flowers.



# Duck, duck, feather

- ① All participants—including adults and caregivers—form a circle, and one person stays outside the circle. The person who stays outside will hold a leaf, flower or small branch. The rest sit down facing the circle centre.
- ② The holder of the natural element walks outside the circle using the branch or flower to stroke an ear or cheek at random of one of the participants sitting in the circle. Every time that person strokes an ear or cheek, he or she says: “duck”.
- ③ When the holder says “feather!” instead of “duck”, it's time to run.
- ④ The selected person gets up and runs in the opposite direction of the holder, going around the entire circle and trying to sit back in their place, before the holder does.
- ⑤ Whoever gets there last holds the leaf or branch, and a new round starts.



## Materials

- Natural elements: a soft leaf, flower or small branch taken from the ground.

It is important not to tear plants.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

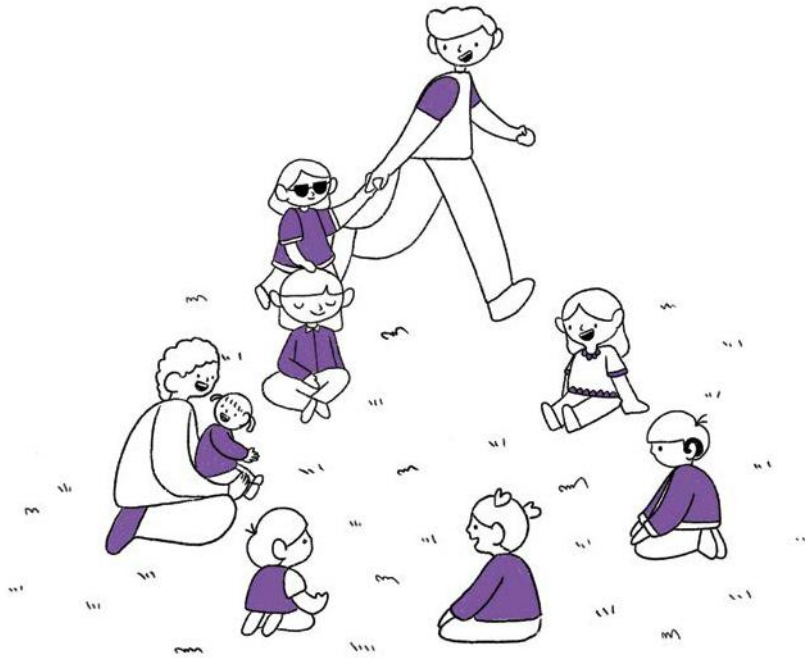
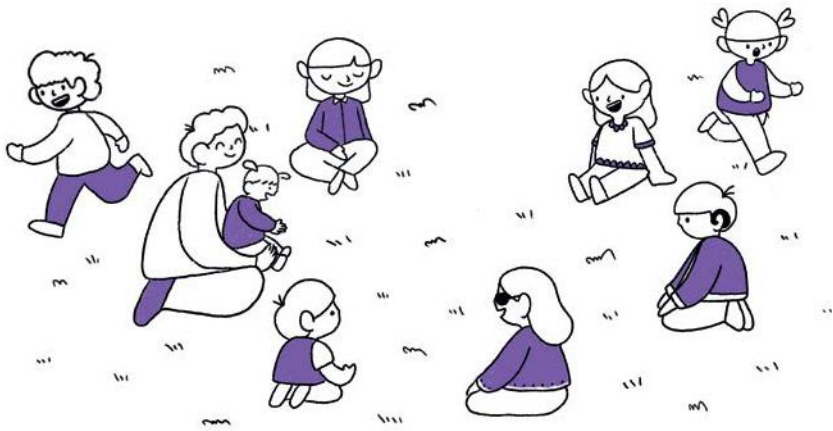
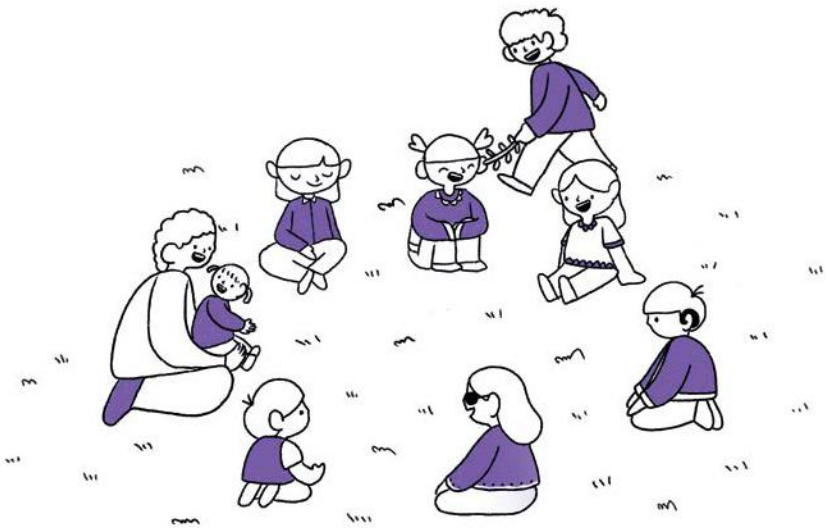
- If a wheelchair user is selected, the person with the leaf or flower must walk backwards in the race.
- If a visually impaired child is selected, the person with the branch will give time to the selected child to stand up and start the race. Additionally, the person that has been selected will walk and touch participant heads to serve as guides, and if necessary, an adult or caregiver will help them around the circle.
- If a deaf child participates, other participants will need to tell the child that he or she was selected by waving their hands to get the child's attention.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- The child will be on the caregivers' lap facing the participants.
- The person holding the flower or branch will touch the child's ear or cheek.
- If the baby crawls, the caregiver will guide the child to go around the circle until they get back to their spot. The person holding the branch will also crawl to make the race fair. **Note: even if the baby does not walk or crawl, he or she can be selected. Instead of standing up, the caregiver will make a sound of surprise or joy.**

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- If a child in this age range is selected, the person holding the branch or flower will walk backwards in order to make the race fair.





# Dancing chairs

- ① The play facilitator will draw circles—the number of participants minus one—in different colours on the ground.
- ② Participants will sing or play a song on the speaker and dance around the space, without touching the circles.
- ③ When the music stops or the play facilitator shouts “pause!”, children and caregivers must go inside a circle.
- ④ Participants who did not find an empty circle will help the play facilitator by singing until someone wins.
- ⑤ After every turn, a circle must be crossed out. The music or singing can then continue with one less participant.
- ⑥ There will be as many rounds as necessary until one circle and two participants are left. The winner will come out of the final round.

## Materials

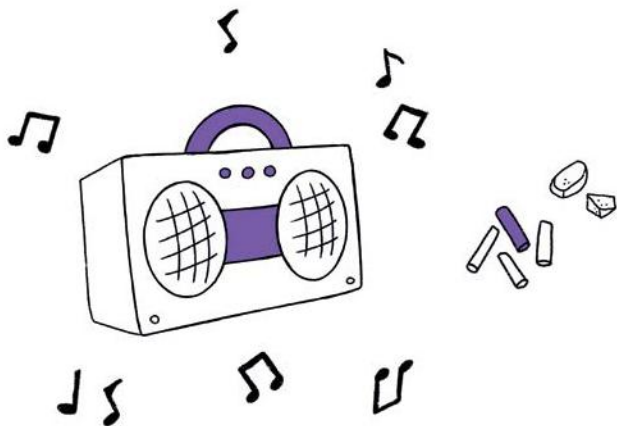
- Chalk in different colours (or a stone to write with) and if possible, speakers.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- For children using wheelchairs, their caregivers or peers may help them move, with prior consent.
- If children with a hearing impairment participate, a sign will be agreed on for when the music starts and stops.
- If visually impaired children participate, their special needs aide, or another child will help them at all times.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Caregivers will dance with babies and toddlers holding hands so that they do so standing, if possible.









# Smelly shoe

- ① Participants will form a circle and sit down.
- ② It's time to pass the smelly shoe from hand to hand and count to 10!
- ③ **Nine... Ten!** Whoever has the shoe will have to smell it.
- ④ **"What does it smell of?"** participants will ask.  
The participant with the smelly shoe will mention a yucky smell.
- ⑤ Everybody counts to 10 again while the shoe goes around the circle, so that all participants get to smell the shoe. **Yuck!**

## Materials

- Shoe belonging to a play facilitator or an adult.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

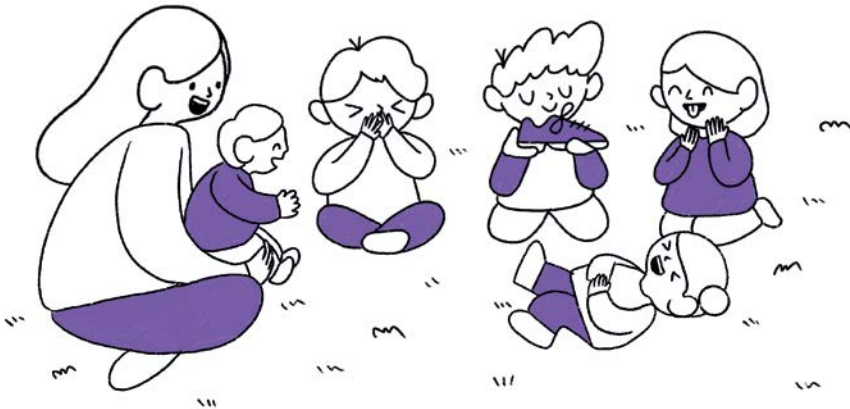
- Children with a hearing impairment may use sign language or writing to share their impression of the yucky smell. Caregivers will count with signs, their fingers or by tapping their foot.
- All participants will try to learn at least one yucky smell in sign language by the end of the activity.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers will sit with the babies facing the centre of the circle.
- When it is their turn, babies will be given time to smell the shoe and will be encouraged to explain the smell. It is important for babies to participate in this activity and smell the shoe.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- When forming the circle, toddlers will sit between two adults who will help them sit and maintain their posture.







1:10



15 min.

# Earthquake

- ① The number of players cannot be a multiple of 3.
- ② Participants will be in groups of three: two will put their hands together to form a “house”, while the other person, who will be inside the “house”, will be the “tenant”.
- ③ At the beginning of the activity, one participant will have no “house”.
- ④ On the count of three, the play facilitator will shout, “**tenants!**” All “tenants” must leave their “house” and look for another one, including the person who had no “house” at the beginning. One participant will always stay outside.
- ⑤ When the play facilitator shouts, “**houses!**”, all “houses” must change partner. The person who has no house also participates.
- ⑥ When hearing, “**earthquake!**”, “tenant” participants will look for a partner, and “house” participants will try to become “tenants”. Again, one person will be left out.
- ⑦ This is repeated as often as children want.

No materials are needed for this activity.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

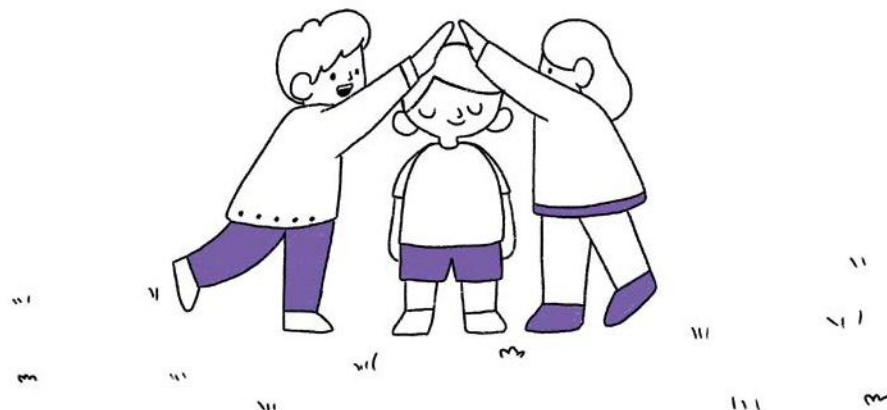
- Visually impaired children will always have a partner to become a “house” with and will get help—if necessary—to become a “tenant”.

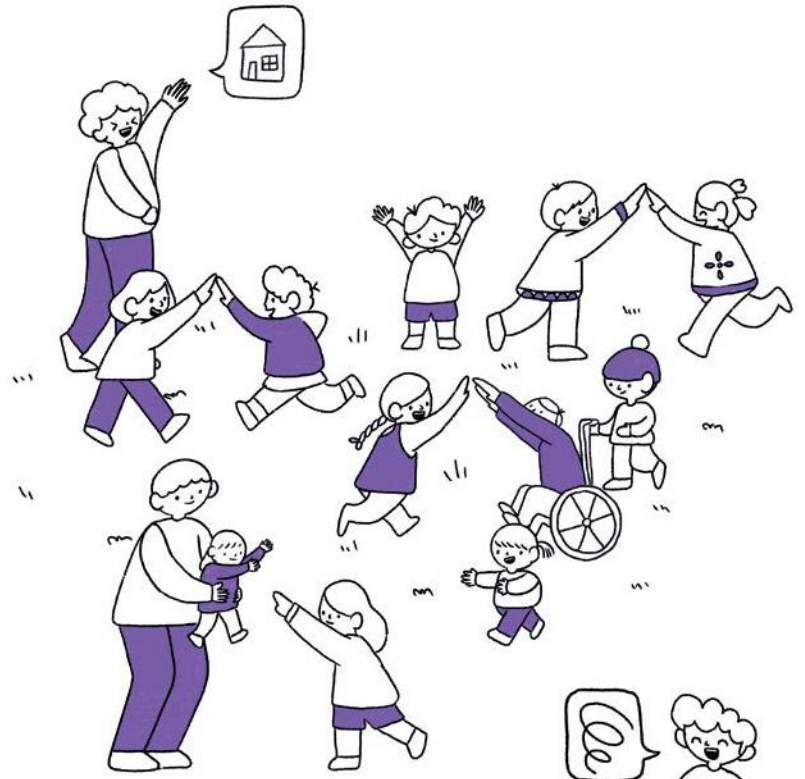
## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers must help so that babies take their partner's hands to form a “house”. If the baby is a “tenant”, caregivers will help them enter the “houses”.
- Older children will form “houses” with babies.
- Regardless if they are “houses” or “tenants”, caregivers will ensure children are motivated by making faces, noises or saying what is happening.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

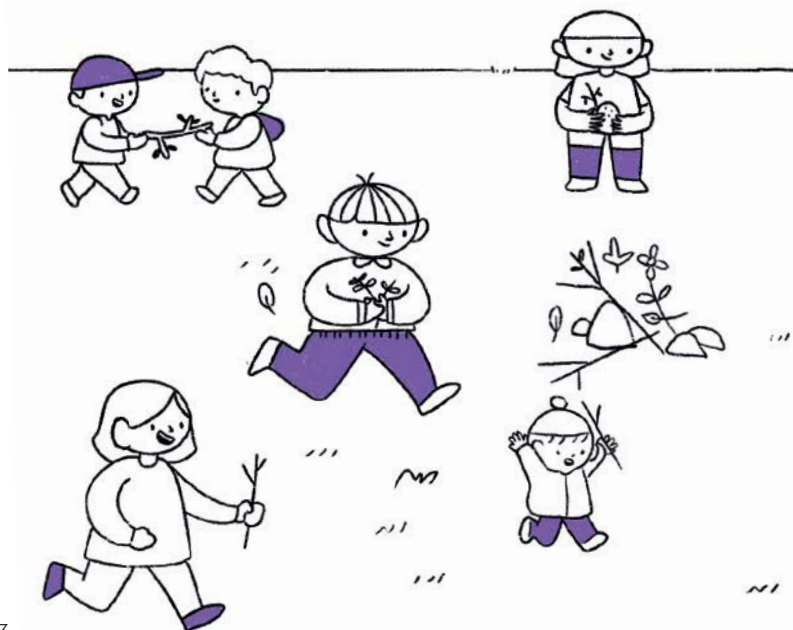
- Caregivers will help toddlers become a “house” or a “tenant”.





# The stone soup

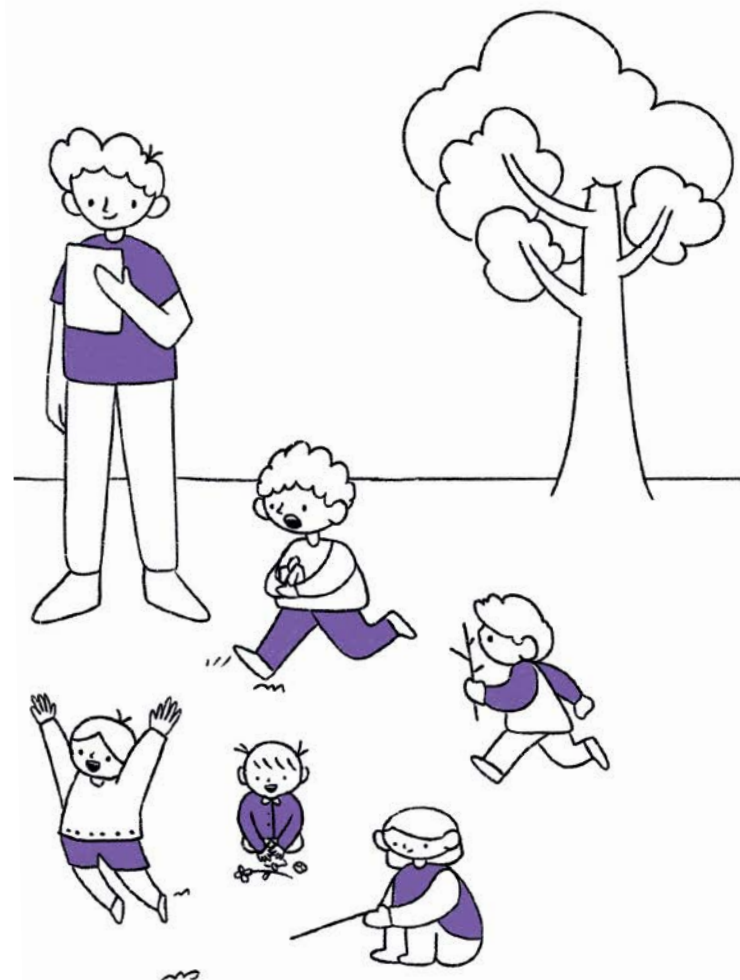
- ① The play facilitator will tell the Portuguese fable The Stone Soup:\*
- ② Once the storytelling is over, the play facilitator will invite participants to imagine the most delicious soup in the world with fantastic ingredients they can find around them: a handful of soil, three litres of seawater, some green leaves, petals from an exotic plant, stones in all sizes, etc.  
It is important to only take things found on the ground and not to tear plants.
- ③ Every participant will bring an ingredient and say, "I will add \_\_\_\_\_ to the communal soup".
- ④ Once the soup is ready, caregivers and children will pretend to eat it and enjoy it.



## Materials

- Any material found on the play space and it will depend on the ingredients—real or imaginary—children will decide to use.

\* Luna de cuentos. [Mundo primaria]. (2018, 4 February). *La sopa de piedra* (The Stone Soup). [Video]. Retrieved on 23 October, 2019: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CLH78OI2AUw&t=182s>



A kindly, old stranger was walking through the land when he came upon a village. As he entered, the villagers moved towards their homes locking doors and windows.

The stranger smiled and asked, “Why are you all so frightened? I am a simple traveller, looking for a soft place to stay for the night and a warm place for a meal.”

“There's not a bite to eat in the whole province”, he was told. “We are weak and our children are starving. Better keep moving on”.

“Oh, I have everything I need”, he said. “In fact, I was thinking of making some stone soup to share with all of you”. He pulled an iron cauldron from his cloak, filled it with water, and began to build a fire under it.

Then, with great ceremony, he drew an ordinary-looking stone from a silken bag and dropped it into the water.

By now, hearing the rumour of food, most of the villagers had come out of their homes or watched from their windows. As the stranger sniffed the “broth” and licked his lips in anticipation, hunger began to overcome their fear.

“Ahh”, the stranger said to himself rather loudly, “I do like a tasty stone soup. Of course, stone soup with cabbage—that's hard to beat”.

Soon a villager approached hesitantly, holding a small cabbage he'd retrieved from its hiding place, and added it to the pot.

“Wonderful!!” cried the stranger. “You know, I once had stone soup with cabbage and a bit of salt beef as well, and it was fit for a king”.

The village butcher managed to find some salt beef . . . And so it went, through potatoes, onions, carrots, mushrooms, and so on, until there was indeed a delicious meal for everyone in the village to share.

The villager elder offered the stranger a great deal of money for the magic stone, but he refused to sell it and travelled on the next day.

As he left, the stranger came upon a group of village children standing near the road. He gave the silken bag containing the stone to the youngest child, whispering to a group, “It was not the stone, but the villagers that had performed the magic”.\*



# Cognitive development activities



~March 2020

## Adaptations to play inside the house



### Hanging forest

The yarn with bottles tied to it can be hung from tables, shelves, bookshelves, etc. Small objects like marbles, earrings or small toys can also be used instead of stones in bottles. This musical play activity can also be carried out through the Internet in order to increase the number of participants.

### City fossils

Instead of exploring the natural surroundings, children can be encouraged to look for textures at home that they can combine to make unique fossils (rough walls, fabric, wood, etc.). They can mould the paste in their hands during the exploration and print in it different textures.

### Animal memory activity

It is played the same way inside the house.

### Swappaton

The goods will be personal objects: a pencil, a photo, a keyring, etc. When doing the swappaton, every child or caregiver will say what they like the most about the object he or she will receive and why.

### Colours

While playing this activity inside the house, the minimum distance is the maximum that can be given without leaving the house. Buckets or sheets of paper in different colours can be used instead of drawing squares on the floor, and children can be asked to look for all objects in the one colour they find in the house. The winner will be the participant with the most objects.



# Hanging forest

- ① Bottles are filled with stones, dry leaves or branches, to make musical instruments. Don't forget to close them! Also, make sure each bottle has only one type of material.
- ② Sections of yarn of different sizes are tied to the bottle necks.
- ③ There can be various bottles—one over the other—with the same yarn. A maximum of 3 is recommended.
- ④ When all the bottles are tied, they are hung from branches on a tree—preferably—although other alternatives can be used, like a rope.
- ⑤ The bottles should be distributed at eyesight height for all children, so they can reach them.
- ⑥ **Done!** The hanging forest has been created!
- ⑦ Children will go through the hanging forest balancing bottles and making music with branches and sticks.



## Materials

- PET bottles in different sizes, yarn in different colours, dry leaves, stones in different sizes, and small branches.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

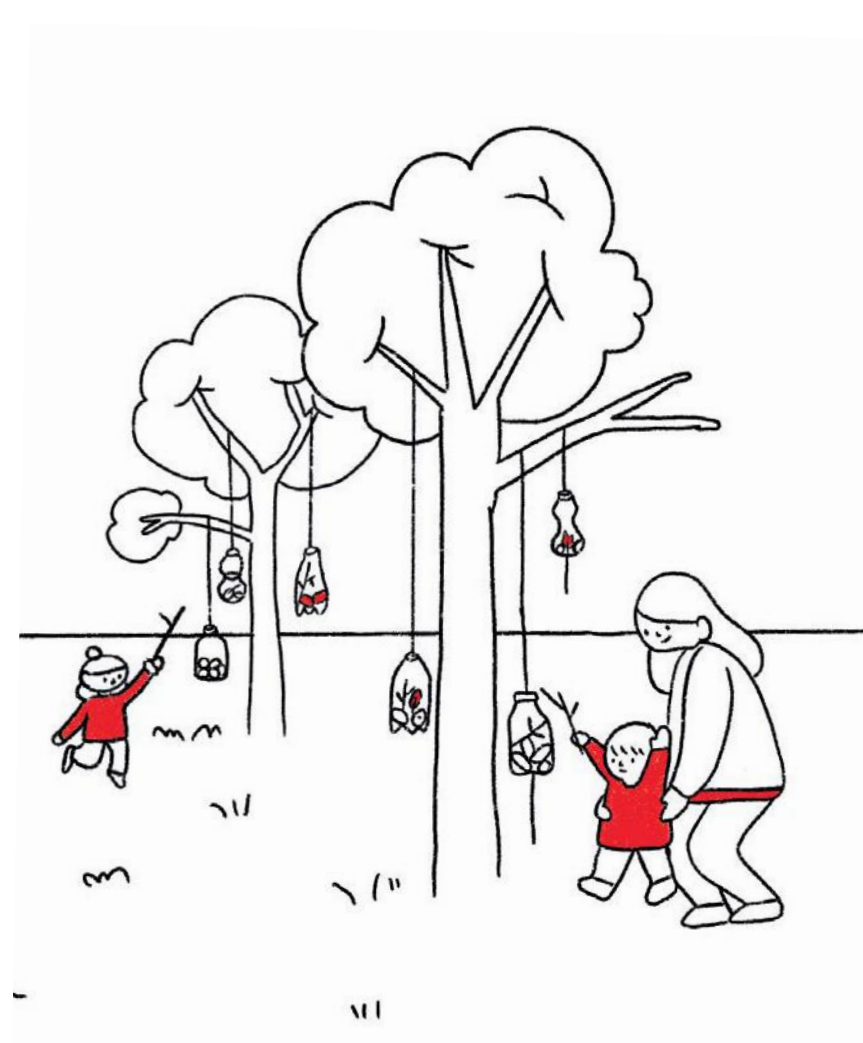
- Caregivers of visually impaired children will help by guiding them through the hanging forest. Likewise, they should encourage the children to guess the material inside the bottles.
- If a child has a physical disability, his or her special needs aide will be required to support fine motor skills.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers will hold the children by the waist so that they can move—on their own—the bottles, hear the different sounds, and make music with branches when balancing the hanging instruments.
- Adults or caregivers should encourage children to mention or guess the materials inside the bottles.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Children will go around the hanging forest balancing the bottles and trying to make melodies when touching the bottles with branches.
- Caregivers will guide the children when they crawl and help them stay standing or walk through the hanging forest.

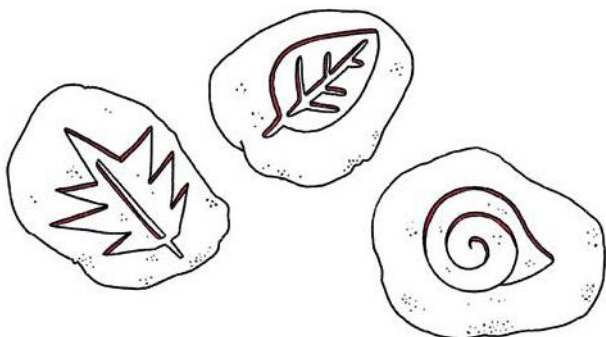




# City fossils

- ① The play facilitator will give every participant a portion of play dough (or soil and water mix) equivalent to a 7 cm stone.
- ② Every participant will choose a partner. One of the two can be an adult.
- ③ The dyad will explore the surrounding area and look for something that could be a city fossil\*. Anything from nature can work!
- ④ **Warning!** No killing or hurting animals or plants. All future fossils must be in a natural state of decomposition.
- ⑤ The play facilitator may help the exploration by asking questions: what type of leaf is it?, how long do you think it has been under the sun?
- ⑥ Every participant will mould the dough that will receive the natural element to create the fossil.
- ⑦ The dough, with the fossil, is left to dry until it gets hard.
- ⑧ Once the dough is dry, every participant will own a city fossil.

\* See Fossil in the Glossary.



## Materials

- Soil or sand and water, or play dough.

### Play dough recipe:

1 portion of table salt

1 portion of water

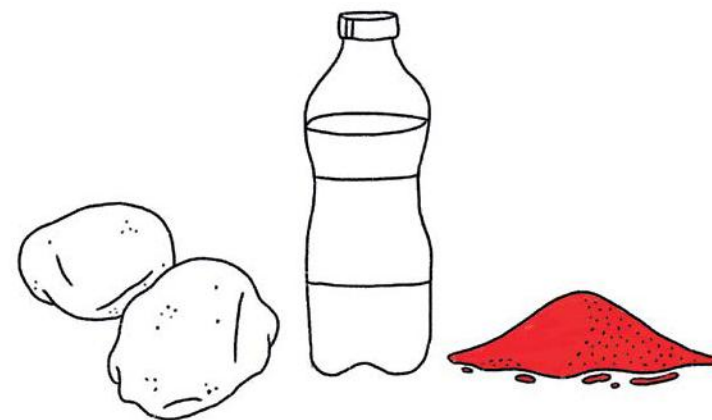
2 portions of flour

Food colouring

- ① If you want the dough to be a particular colour, dissolve the food colouring in the water before mixing all ingredients.
- ② Mix the salt and flour, and slowly add the water.
- ③ Once the play dough is ready and has received the city fossil, let it dry.
- ④ If the dough is white, it can be painted once dry.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers will be with the babies at all times.
- Babies must play around with the dough since it is important for them to feel the texture on their hands.
- Caregivers will make gestures and sounds of surprise every time a baby finds a fossil candidate.





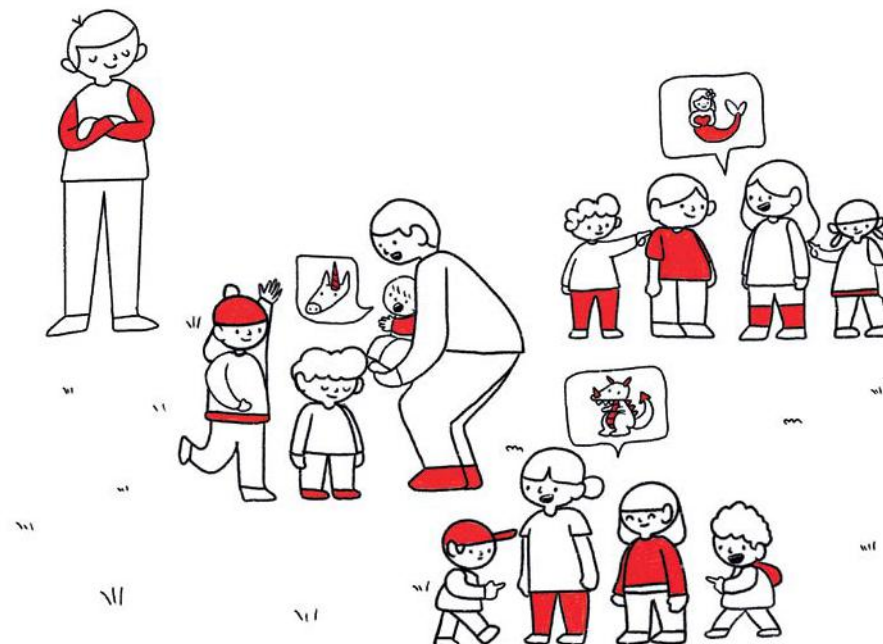
# Animal memory activity

- ① The play facilitator will randomly select two children who will step away from the group. They will be chosen for a special task: **to guess sounds**.
- ② The remaining participants will be placed in pairs in a single line.
- ③ The play facilitator will tell each pair what animal they could be: **horse, sheep, dog, cat, lion, rooster, pig, donkey, cow, turkey, frog, pigeon, monkey, wolf, hyena, whale, elephant, etc.**
- ④ Every pair will agree on the sound their animal makes.
- ⑤ Once they have agreed, everyone will separate and mix around in the play area.
- ⑥ The two participants selected in instruction 1 will join the group to start the animal memory activity.
- ⑦ In turns, they will touch two people who will have to make their animal sound.
- ⑧ They have to find, in every turn, the animal pair according to the noise they make.
- ⑨ Every time they find a pair of animals, they can have another turn and touch two other people.
- ⑩ The winner will be the one with the most pairs.
- ⑪ The play facilitator and caregivers must encourage children to participate if they do not want to try.

No materials are needed for this activity.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Caregivers will encourage babies and toddlers to repeat the sounds.
- They will also say the name of the animals they were assigned and then motivate the children to repeat it.



# Swappaton\*

- ① Children and caregivers will look around the play environment to choose the goods for swapping, such as stones, leaves, soil, branches, flowers, and more.
- ② Once every participant has gathered their goods, they will all sit in a circle with their products in front of them.
- ③ The play facilitator will say who will begin swapping. This participant will choose some goods from another participant and will trade them with some of their own.
- ④ The participant who accepted to swap with the previous child gets his or her turn now.
- ⑤ **Warning!** All caregivers and children must participate in the “swappaton” and nobody must run out of goods.
- ⑥ The play facilitator may participate by asking questions: what other goods would you like to barter? what would be the most treasured good?
- ⑦ The activity ends when participants get bored or want to play something else.

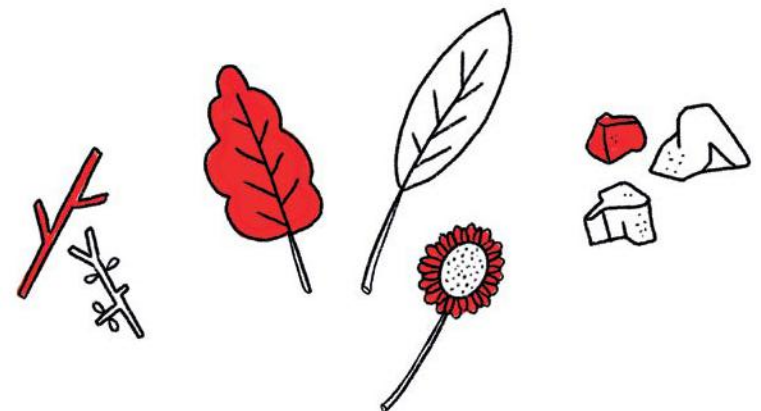
\* See Swappaton in the Glossary.

## Materials

- Any materials found in the play environment.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers must encourage babies to choose and gather their goods.
- It is important they ask the babies to mention the name of the materials for the “swappaton” and to motivate them to touch them.
- Once they have their goods, caregivers will sit on the ground with the babies, making eye contact at all times.
- If babies refuse to share their goods on their own, caregivers will encourage them otherwise.







# Colours

- ① The play facilitator will draw squares on the ground in the same colours as the screw lids using the chalks or the yarn in different colours.
- ② Children will be paired up with their caregivers.
- ③ Every dyad will be given 15 screw lids in different colours.
- ④ On the count of three, every pair will place the screw lids in the squares of the same colour.
- ⑤ The first dyad to finish wins.

## Materials

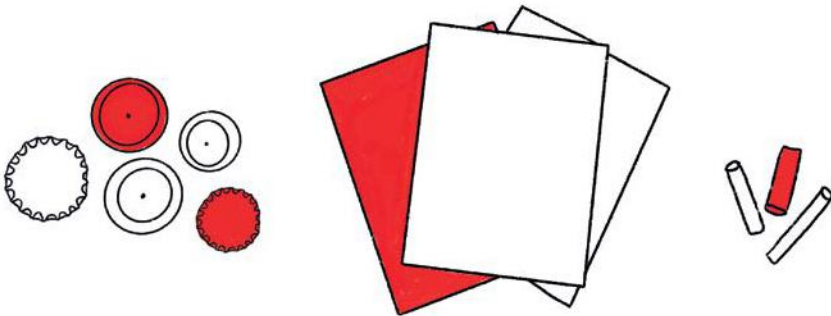
- Chalk, yarn or screw lids in different colours.

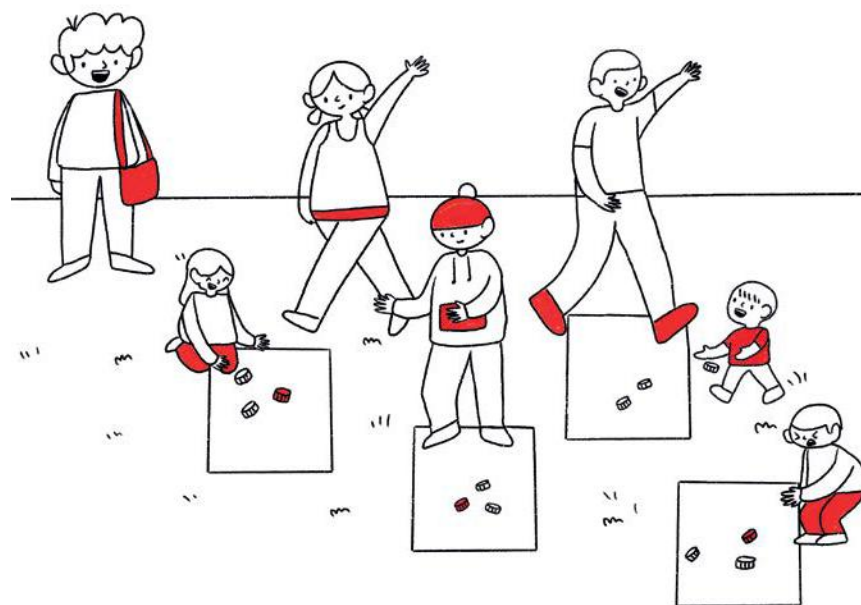
## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers will encourage babies to link the screw lids with the squares.
- It is important to mention the colour of every object and make eye contact with babies and toddlers.
- Every time a baby places a screw lid in the right coloured square, they will be warmly cheered on.

## 4 to 6 years old

- The play facilitator will draw squares at least 15 steps apart in order to encourage children to run.







# Emotional development activities





~March 2020

## Adaptations to play inside the house



### Sensory activity gym

A caregiver will ask questions to make participants think, and a boy or girl will touch their knees or hair with soft materials that can be found inside the house. Avoid touching the face and cheeks.

### Cradles

It is played the same way inside the house. There needs to be a minimum of 3 participants for this activity to be carried out.

### Bugs

One can find many patterns of fabric and surfaces at home. Every family member will look for a pattern they like the most for a bug and will draw it, imagining their eyes, legs, wings, etc. They will also have to make up a scientific name for the new bug!

### Hugs

It is played the same way inside the house with the constraint on the amount of family members inside the house.

### Silly walks

When played at home, there will be a different "silly walk teacher" every day. Children and caregivers will take turns in this role. The "teacher" will show a funny walk in the morning, and if throughout the day the two players come face to face, they will need to do the silly walk that was taught in the morning.

# Sensory activity gym

- ① Children and caregivers are invited to sit down in a comfortable position and close their eyes.
- ② Before starting, participants take three deep breaths, breathing in through their nose and out through their mouth: *Try to fill your lungs as much as possible, as though they were balloons!* When breathing out, try to make a noise with the air coming out.
- ③ The play facilitator encourages children and caregivers to focus on their breathing.
- ④ The play facilitator walks around the space and touches participant cheeks or hands—with a dry leaf, a small branch or a flower—and asks them questions to make them think: *what sounds do you hear?, what smells are out there?, how do you feel?* Participants may, if they wish, answer the questions.
- ⑤ After a few rounds of questions, participants are instructed to press their cheeks with their finger tips and pretend to yawn, as wide as possible. This exercise is repeated three times.
- ⑥ As the activity progresses, the play facilitator will mention the importance of keeping eyes closed and focusing on breathing.
- ⑦ Now, children and caregivers have to find their belly button with one hand, and find the place where the clavicle and sternum meet with the other hand.
- ⑧ With the index and middle fingers of both hands, participants will be asked to do clockwise movements around the corresponding part of the body and count to 10.
- ⑨ Now, with their eyes still closed, they will roll and unroll their ears with their fingers for 10 seconds.

- ⑩ The play facilitator will then mention three feelings\* or emotions\*\* that children and caregivers will represent through their body: love, joy, surprise, anger, sadness and fear, among others.
- ⑪ Children and caregivers will then stand up and stretch their arms up as though they wanted to reach the sky.
- ⑫ Participants will finish with three deep breaths, like at the beginning of the activity, and will slowly open their eyes.

\* See Feeling in the Glossary.

\*\* See Emotion in the Glossary.

## Materials (optional)

- Natural elements: a soft leaf, a flower, a branch or shrub stick from the ground.  
*It is important not to tear plants.*

## Considerations for children with disabilities

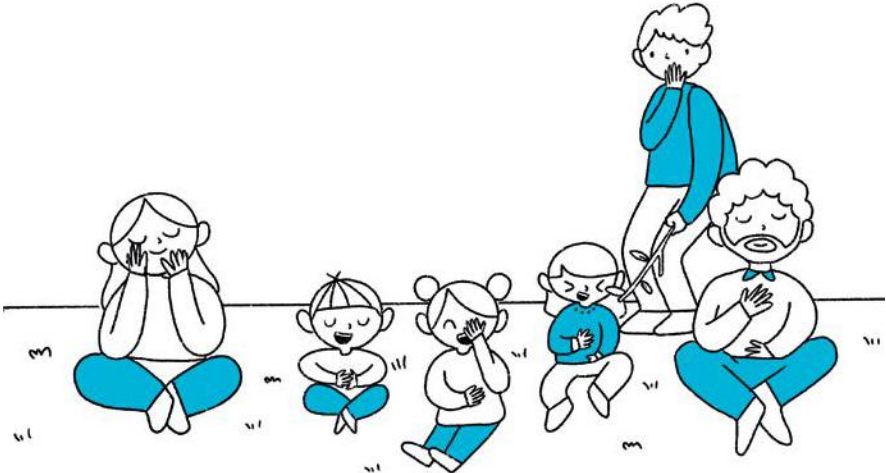
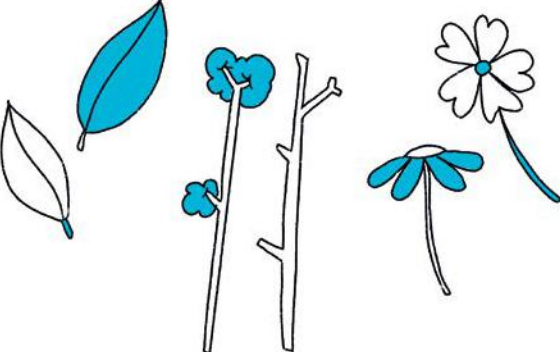
- With the help of one of the adults or caregivers, children with motor skill disabilities will do as much of the exercises as their body allows them or they feel comfortable with.
- Hearing impaired children can open their eyes after each activity for instructions from their caregiver or any other participant.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Adults and caregivers will yawn to encourage children to imitate them.
- Whenever squeezing a part of the child's body, care must be taken so as not to inflict pain.
- For the touching-the-sky part, caregivers can remain seated and stretch the child's arms.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Children and caregivers should sit alternately.



# Cradles

- ① Participants will be divided into groups of three, aiming to have similar weights and heights in each group.
- ② In turns, one of the participants in each group will sit on the ground. The other two will take him or her by the ankles and the wrists. An adult must always hold the head.
- ③ Once secured, they will cradle the child from side to side, until another participant wants to be cradled.
- ④ There will be as many rounds as children want to have.

No materials are needed for this activity.

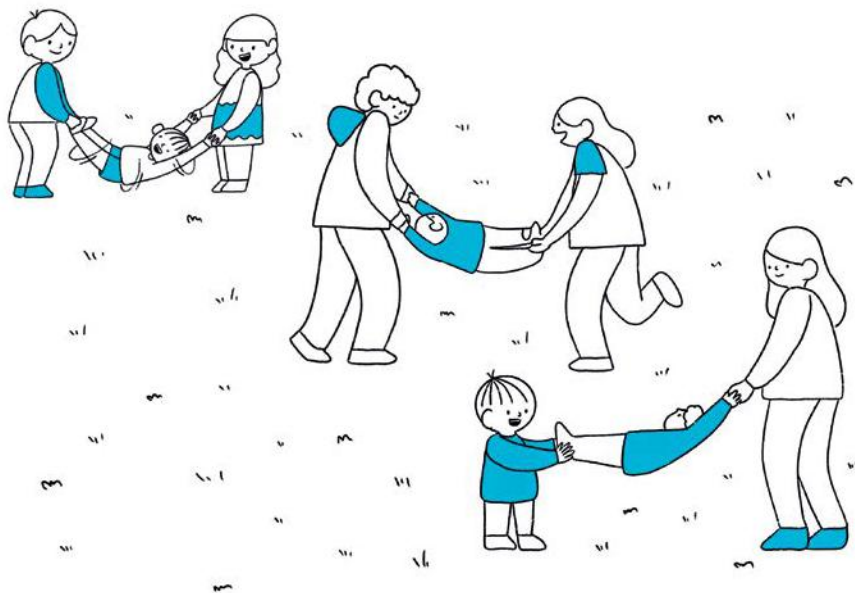
**Safety consideration:** This activity must only be carried out on grass or with adult supervision.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- For participants with a motor disability, the activity will be carried out on a case-by-case basis. It is important to determine the appropriate cradling speed in order to ensure the child's comfort. Caregivers will provide support at all times.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Caregivers are encouraged to be with babies they do not know.
- The groups will be made up of a baby, an older child, and a caregiver.
- When children carry babies, it is recommended they do so from the ankles so they can face each other and exchange smiles. An adult must always hold the head of children.





# Bugs

- ① Participants will be in groups of four.
- ② Every group will explore the surrounding area to look for bugs.
- ③ Once they find them, they will draw them, paying attention to their colours, the number of legs they have, whether or not they have wings, what their eyes are like, what their teeth are like, etc.
- ④ If the participants know the bugs (and they are not poisonous), the play facilitator will invite children to touch them by setting the example naturally and without making a fuss. It is important that children feel the bugs' skin, shell or hairs.
- ⑤ Participants must also be invited to describe the feeling they get when the bug is in contact with their skin.



## Materials

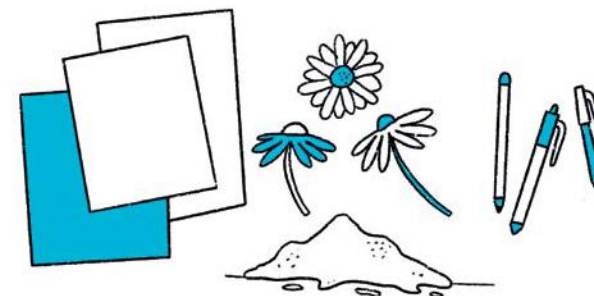
- A surface to draw on (white sheets of paper or cardboard), coloured pencils or markers.

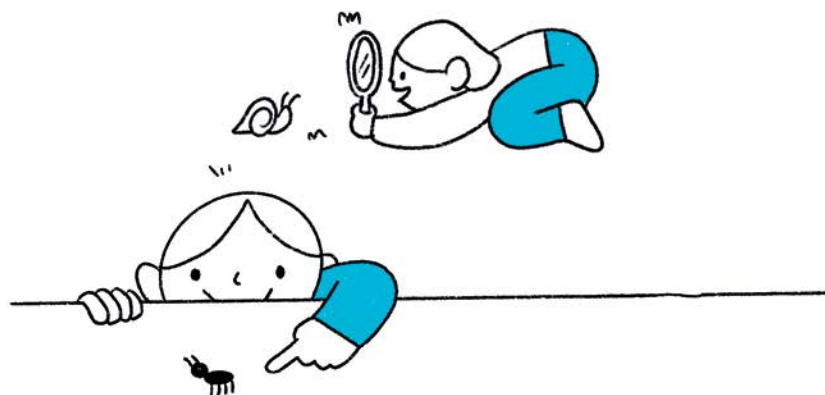
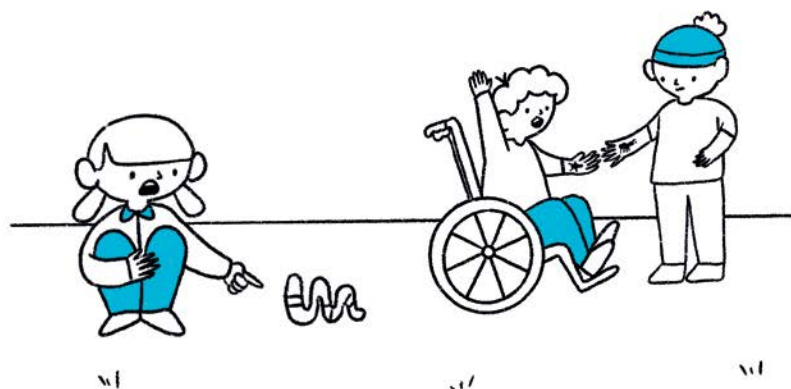
## Considerations for children with disabilities

- For wheelchair users, or children with any physical disability that limits their exploration capacities, other children will bring the bugs to them.
- Visually impaired children will touch the bug, feel it on their skin, and describe what they think the bugs look like. The other children will draw what they describe.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Under caregiver supervision, children will place a bug on the arms of babies and toddlers.
- Caregivers will encourage babies and toddlers to observe the bugs, describe them and try to draw them.





# Hugs

- ① All participants gather around the play facilitator.
- ② The play facilitator will say a number corresponding to the number of persons who will participate in a group hug.
- ③ All group hugs must have a girl, a boy and a caregiver.
- ④ The play facilitator will keep proposing different numbers in order to create group hugs, until the children want to play something else.

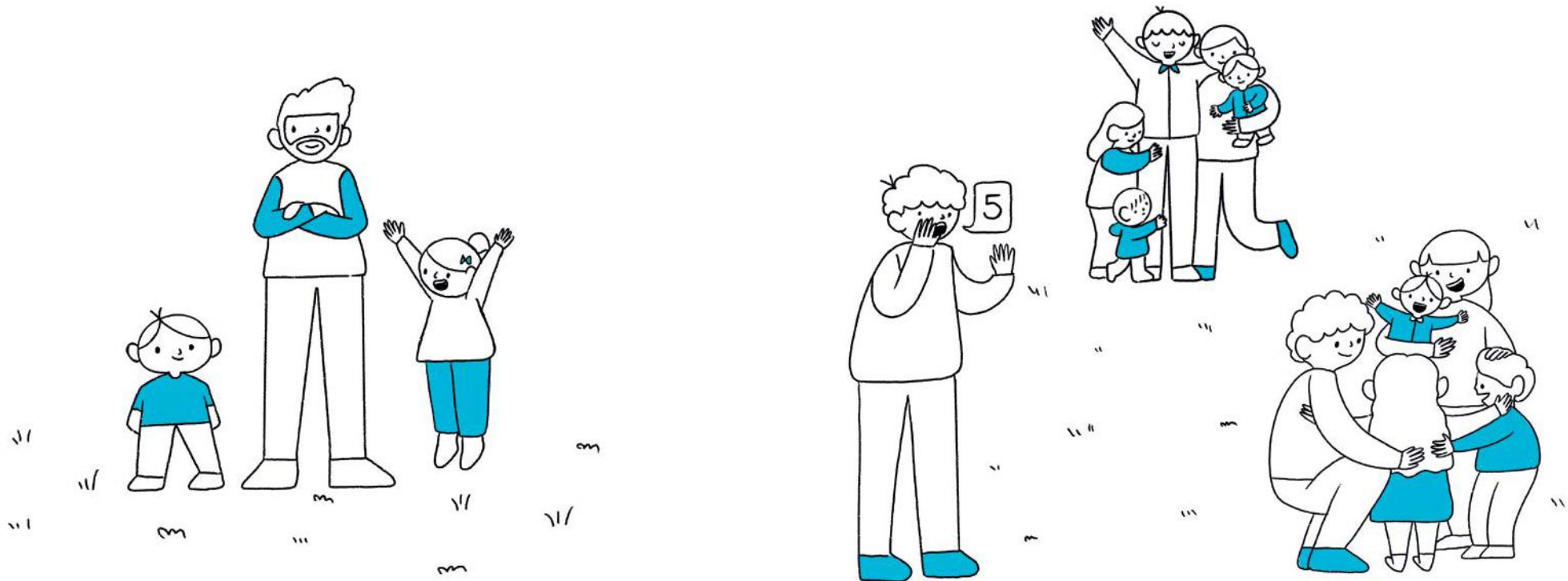
No materials are needed for this activity.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Caregivers will invite children—with gestures, sounds and questions—to look for other people to hug.
- Care should be taken so as not to squeeze or push any baby.
- Caregivers should make enthusiastic sounds when participants hug, and clap at the end of the group hug.

## 3 to 6 years old

- The play facilitator can propose doing simple sums and subtractions. The hug groups will then be created depending on the results.







1:15



8 min.

# Silly walks

- ① Children and caregivers stand shoulder to shoulder in a straight line.
- ② The play facilitator invites children to make up a funny or “silly walk” to show their peers.
- ③ If children feel embarrassed to be the first ones to start, adults or caregivers must give an example.
- ④ After that, all participants will imitate that “silly walk”.
- ⑤ The activity continues until all participants have had their turn and the rest of the group has imitated them.
- ⑥ If a child does not participate because he or she is shy, the play facilitator may say things like: “Everything is allowed! Remember it's OK to look silly! Try to make up the funniest walk in the world!” or “Show us and we'll do it together!”

No materials are needed for this activity.

## 0 to 3 years old

- Children and caregivers will imitate enthusiastically all laughs and sounds babies and toddlers make.







# Creative development activities



~March 2020

## **Adaptations to play inside the house**

### **Free play construction**

It is played the same way inside the house.

### **Stone sculptures**

To play inside the house, participants can gather and use small and big objects that they can find around the house to build the sculpture.

### **Masks**

It is played the same way inside the house.

### **Surprise egg**

It is played the same way inside the house. More players can join virtually.

### **Free play**

To do this activity at home we recommend that every day caregivers allow themselves a time slot to explore free play with their children. It can be the ideal time to connect to each other and to follow your child's initiative.



# Free play construction

- ① Children and caregivers—in groups or pairs—must build whatever comes to mind with the materials at hand or with what they find in the environment.
- ② The play facilitator must encourage children to use their imagination and should not say directed instructions like, “You can make a house or a castle”. They must allow participants to be creative.
- ③ When everybody has finished building, children and caregivers will present their creations.
- ④ It is now time to play with what they've built!

## Materials

- PET bottles, cardboard boxes, string or yarn, sheets of paper in different colours, chalk, glue, stones, markers, branches or shrubs found on the ground, pieces of fabric and PVC pipes and elbows.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- Children with fine motor skills disabilities can tell other participants what to do.
- Children will describe what they are building to visually impaired children.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- It is important for every caregiver to make eye contact with babies and encourage them to touch and play around with materials.





# Stone sculptures

- ① Every participant will gather stones in different sizes and shapes.
- ② Children will pair up with their caregiver or one of their peers.
- ③ With the stones they have gathered, every dyad will create a 15 cm high sculpture with at least 3 stones.
- ④ *Be careful, the sculpture should not fall over!*
- ⑤ Branches, dry leaves or a plant can be used to decorate the sculpture.



## Materials

- Natural elements: shrubs or dry leaves from the ground, stones and branches.

*It is important not to tear plants.*

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Caregivers will help children look for and collect the stones, branches and leaves for their sculptures.
- It is important for babies to feel the texture and shape of the stones and to make a sculpture with them, regardless whether it is stable or not.





# Masks

- ① A kraft-paper bag will be given to every child.
- ② If necessary, adults can help mark the holes for the eyes, nose and mouth.
- ③ Children will make the holes for the aforementioned areas.
- ④ The sheets of paper in different colours, markers, dry leaves or branches will be used to make the mask.
- ⑤ The play facilitator can spark some ideas by asking questions: does the mask have hair?, what size will the teeth be?, do you like using many or few colours?, will you glue something on your mask?
- ⑥ It is important for adults not to take over the mask design since the activity is not aimed to making them perfect.
- ⑦ Have you all finished? Now it's time for everyone to put on their masks!



## Materials

- Water, PET bottles, kraft-paper bags, coloured pencils, sheets of paper in different colours (preferably recycled), dry leaves, pencils, glue, paint brushes, paint in different colours, markers and branches.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

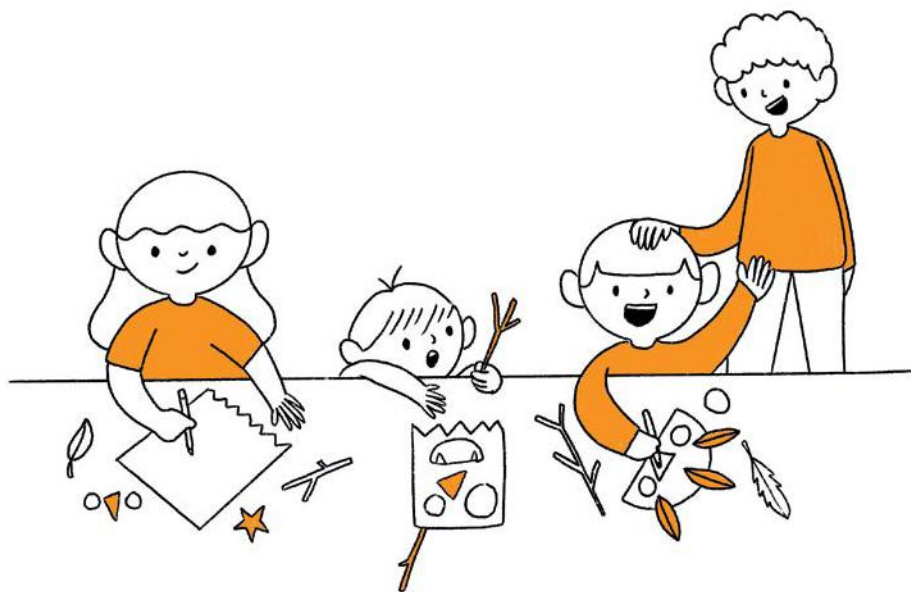
- For children with physical disabilities or any kind of fine motor skills condition, caregivers will help as guides in the activity without taking it over.
- Each step of the activity as well as the possible materials to use will be explained to visually impaired children. Care will be taken to ensure they have understood and are able to carry out the activity.
- If children have hearing, intellectual or psychosocial disabilities, visual aids may help to carry out this activity.
- If necessary, help will be provided when gluing the materials.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- It is important to invite children to touch the material used for the mask.
- Adults can guide the activity but not take it over. They must invite babies to make their own masks.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Caregivers can help decorate the mask. They should not forget that the aim of the activity is for children to express their creativity. Play facilitators must ensure that adults are not taking over the design of the masks.







1:15



15 min.

# Surprise egg

- ① Children and caregivers will walk freely throughout the play space.
- ② When it's time, the play facilitator will shout, "surprise egg!" All participants will crouch down simulating the shape of an egg.
- ③ When everybody is in that position, the play facilitator will shout once again: "and the surprise is... a ballerina!" Other examples for the surprise egg include: animals, flowers, vegetables. Anything can be the surprise egg.
- ④ Participants will do their best impression of a ballerina or any other surprise mentioned.
- ⑤ When all children are in the surprise position, they must be cheered warmly.
- ⑥ The activity ends when children get tired, bored or want to play something else.

No materials are needed for this activity.



## 0 to 1.5 years old

- Adults must create integrated poses with babies.
- It is important to make enthusiastic sounds, make eye contact, clap and cheer every time babies and toddlers do a pose.

## 1.5 to 3 years old

- Caregivers can help children who need to balance.







# Free play

- ① The play facilitator will encourage participants to make up a play activity.
- ② **Warning!** The rules of the activity must be set by the children. Caregivers can only help if participants ask for it.
- ③ The activity indications and rules must be followed as long as they are completely safe for all participants
- ④ Any play activity is valid if it is inclusive and integrates\* children with any type of disability.

\* See Integration in the Glossary.



## Materials

- Those chosen by the children.

## Considerations for children with disabilities

- It is essential that any activity proposed is carried out with equal opportunities for all children.

## 0 to 1.5 years old

- It is important for babies to touch, explore and handle the materials that will be part of the activity.
- Adults must include babies in all activities and encourage them to participate with their peers.
- Adults will be enthusiastic with and reciprocate every gesture or sound made by babies and toddlers.
- Older children will form groups with babies who do not walk or crawl.



# Filters to select activities

## Materials

w	w/o		Natural	Synthetic	Found
*	P1	Ants			
*	P2	Human pyramid			*
*	P3	Skipping rope	*	*	
*	P4	Lemon spoons	*	*	
*	P5	Obstacle race	*	*	
*	S1	Duck, duck, feather	*		
*	S2	Dancing chairs	*		
*	S3	Smelly shoe			*
*	S4	Earthquake			
*	S5	The stone soup	*		*
*	C1	Hanging forest	*	*	
*	C2	City fossils	*	*	
*	C3	Animal memory activity			
*	C4	Swappaton			
*	C5	Colours		*	
*	E1	Sensory activity gym			
*	E2	Cradles			
*	E3	Bugs	*	*	
*	E4	Hugs			
*	E5	Silly walks			
*	R1	Free play construction	*	*	
*	R2	Stone sculptures	*		
*	R3	Masks	*	*	
*	R4	Surprise egg			
*	*	R5 Free play	*	*	*

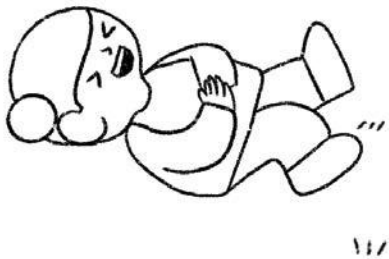


## With particular sounds

S2 Dancing chairs  
C1 Hanging forest  
C3 Animal memory activity  
R4 Surprise egg

## For babies who still do not crawl

P4 Lemon spoons  
S1 Duck, duck, feather  
S3 Smelly shoe  
C1 Hanging forest  
C2 City fossils  
C5 Colours  
E1 Sensory activity gym  
E3 Bugs  
E4 Hugs  
R1 Free play construction  
R2 Stone sculptures



## That trigger laughter

P1 Ants  
P4 Lemon spoons  
S3 Smelly shoe  
C3 Animal memory activity  
E5 Silly walks  
R4 Surprise egg

## Skills developed

\* \* Skipping rope  
P3

\* \* Sensory activity gym  
E1

\* \* \* Ants  
S2 Dancing chairs  
S3 Smelly shoe  
E2 Cradles

\* \* \* Free play construction  
R1

\* \* \* The stone soup  
S5  
R3 Masks

\* \* \* City fossils  
C2  
C3 Animal memory activity  
E3 Bugs  
R2 Stone sculptures

\* \* \* \* Human pyramid  
P2

P4 Lemon spoons  
P5 Obstacle race  
S1 Duck, duck, feather  
S4 Earthquake  
E4 Hugs

\* \* \* \* Hanging forest  
C1  
C5 Colours

\* \* \* \* Swappaton  
C4  
E5 Silly walks

\* \* \* \* Surprise egg  
R4  
R5 Free play

## Per time available

### 🕒 10 minutes

P3 Skipping rope

S1 Duck, duck, feather

S2 Dancing chairs

S3 Smelly shoe

E1 Sensory activity gym

E2 Cradles

E4 Hugs

E5 Silly walks

R5 Free play

### 🕒 15 minutes

P2 Human pyramid

P4 Lemon spoons

S4 Earthquake

C2 City fossils

C5 Colours

R2 Stone sculptures

R4 Surprise egg

R5 Free play

P3 Skipping rope +

E5 Silly walks

S1 Duck, duck, feather +

E2 Cradles

S2 Dancing chairs +

E1 Sensory activity gym

S3 Smelly shoe +

E1 Sensory activity gym

### 🕒 30 minutes

P1 Ants

P5 Obstacle race

S5 The stone soup

C1 Hanging forest

C3 Animal memory activity

C4 Swappaton

E3 Bugs

R1 Free play construction

R3 Masks

R5 Free play

P2 Human pyramid +

R2 Stone sculptures

S2 Dancing chairs +

S3 Smelly shoe +

P3 Skipping rope

P4 Lemon spoons +

E4 Hugs

E1 Sensory activity gym +

E2 Cradles +

E5 Silly walks

S4 Earthquake +

R4 Surprise egg

### 🕒 60 minutes

R5 Free play

P1 Ants +

S1 Duck, duck, feather +

E2 Cradles +

E5 Silly walks

P2 Human pyramid +

S4 Earthquake +

C5 Colours +

R2 Stone sculptures

P4 Lemon spoons +

E4 Hugs +

R3 Masks

C2 City fossils +

E1 Sensory activity gym +

E3 Bugs

P5 Obstacle race +

P3 Skipping rope +

S2 Dancing chairs +

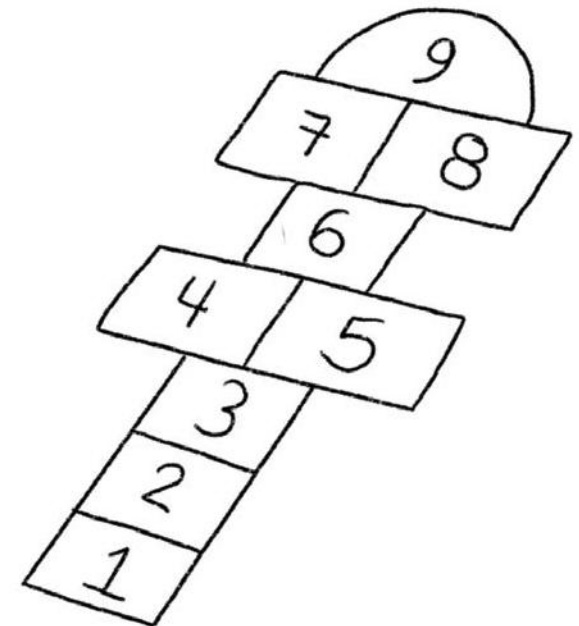
S3 Smelly shoe



# Traditional games

Here is a list of traditional play activities that many children ask to play during playtime.

- ① Hopscotch - *Hinkerude*
- ② Tag - *Fangeleg*
- ③ Hide and seek - *Gemmeleg*
- ④ Sow and grow
- ⑤ Wolf, are you there?
- ⑥ Bowling
- ⑦ Limbo
- ⑧ Races - *Kapløb*
- ⑨ Cops and robbers - *Politi og røvere*
- ⑩ Red light, green light 123 - *Rød, gul, grøn stop*
- ⑪ Cat and Mouse
- ⑫ Steal the bacon
- ⑬ Blind man's buff - *Blindebuk*
- ⑭ Stop
- ⑮ Stop dance



# Glossary and related terms

## A

**Ant's nest:** An area within the play space to bring fallen ants back to life.

**Assistive devices and technologies:** Any material (including devices, equipment, instruments, and software, custom-made or available in the market) used by people with disability to: facilitate participation; protect, support, train, measure or substitute body functions/structures and activities; or prevent impairments, activity limitations, or participation restrictions.<sup>1</sup>

## B

**Barriers:** Obstacles faced by people with disabilities in the different settings in which their life takes place, limiting their mobility, circulation, possibility of being informed, of communicating or understanding messages or any type of information. These obstacles affect negatively their rights on an equal basis with others and their quality of life.<sup>2</sup>

## C

**Caregivers:** Adults who take care of children in their first years of life. These can be the biological parents, legal guardians, relatives or needs aide.

**Community:** A social group that shares interests, habits, customs, relationships and/or history in an urban or rural setting.

## D

**Disability:** This concept evolves and results from the interaction between people with impairments and attitudinal and environmental barriers that hinder their full and effective participation in society, on equal terms with others.<sup>3</sup>

## E

**Early childhood:** The period of time from birth until the age of 6 years.

**Emotion:** A complex brain reaction to internal or external stimuli. Its duration is transitory, but it can evolve to a feeling as the person becomes aware of it.

**Emotional connections:** Affectional bonds between children and caregivers.

**Environment:** A set of social, cultural, physical, and natural elements and factors that surround a person.

## F

**Feeling:** A subjective state of an individual in which a sense of awareness and a judge usually intervene.

**Fossil:** A natural element that has been petrified over time.

## H

**Hacking:** To fix, modify or transform something in order to improve or complete it under different perspectives.

**Hearing and visual impairment:** Resulting from sensorial deficiencies in eyes and ears that range from moderate to severe including deafness, hearing loss, blindness and decreased vision. The barriers this population faces are related mainly to information, communication and attitude (fear and prejudice) problems. Other barriers include people not knowing sign language or the Braille system, and other elements that make information accessible, such as subtitling, audio description and describing texts, paintings or other artistic works that are difficult to access.<sup>4</sup>

**Holistic development:** A balance between physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skills and how these complement each other and interact with one another.

## I

**Inclusion:** Considers the diversity of users and their different characteristics, as well as the different sectors of society (civil society, academia and government) that will be part of public spaces.<sup>5</sup>

**Inclusive design:** Considers the whole spectrum of human diversity regarding ability, language, culture, gender, age, individual experiences and all types of human differences, in order to create solutions with increased social impact.<sup>6</sup>

**Inclusive space:** An integration space designed for all people, recognising them as diverse individuals, and generating healthy interactions. It aims to guarantee equal opportunities, in an environment that fosters physical, emotional and intellectual development.

**Integration:** The action and effect of promoting social cohesion and coexistence among generations, taking into account the limitations and diversity among them.

**Intellectual disability:** This is manifested in learning difficulties. People with this condition tend to have a difference between their cognitive and chronological development. This group includes people who, due to brain lesions or injuries, have a slower learning rate than expected. This population group regularly faces information, communication and attitude (fear and prejudice) problems. Pictographic elements are of great help for children in this condition.<sup>7</sup>

## L

**Learning ability:** The process through which knowledge, skills, attitudes or values are acquired.

**Learning experience:** Any interaction, course, programme or experience where learning is the main objective. It may take place in formal or informal environments.<sup>8</sup>

## M

**Materials:** Physical or natural elements, in a public space, that build community identity and drive coexistence across generations and different users, through sensory experiences. They can respond to weather conditions and community habits.

**Multiple or associated disability:** When a person has more than one disability like visual and hearing impairment, cerebral palsy and visual-hearing impairment, psychosocial disability and visual impairment, among others. Technical aids required for this condition to overcome physical and socio-cultural barriers tend to be more specialised, and can range from specific technological devices to animal or human assistance.<sup>9</sup>

## N

**Nature:** Elements of nature in the environment that stimulate exploration and trigger curiosity in people.<sup>10</sup>

**Neural connection:** A pathway or circuit between neurons that receives signals or learning. It records activity depending on stimuli or experiences.

## O

**Openness to play:** Willingness to accept persons, activities or ideas that foster a culture of play and a child perspective, from a non-adult centered position.<sup>11</sup>

## P

**Park:** Public space for coexistence, of different scales, for the inhabitants of a neighbourhood or city.

**Personal space:** A buffer zone around a person's body in order to make them feel comfortable.

**Physical barriers:** Obstacles that hinder people with disabilities in terms of personal mobility in public or private places, indoors or outdoors, as well as in the use and enjoyment of community services.<sup>12</sup>

**Play:** "All behaviour, activity or process initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves; it takes place whenever and wherever opportunities arise. It is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and undertaken for its own sake, rather than as a means to an end".<sup>13</sup>

**Play facilitator:** A person that drives activities that aim to enhance free play among children and foster their skill development. These activities can happen in public spaces for this purpose. Additionally, a play facilitator can raise awareness in adults regarding multi-generation emotional connections that can arise from playing with children.

**Playful experience:** Any practice that encourages learning through play. It requires active engaging in order to get the interest and concentration needed for the task at hand. It promotes ongoing interaction.

**Psychic apparatus:** All processes that take place in the human mind like memory, reasoning, perceptions, and sensations, among others.

**Psychosocial disability:** One of the least visible and most marginalised group of people, mainly due to social prejudice. This type of disability includes people with Autism and Asperger's syndrome as well as people with psychiatric conditions such as depression, bipolar disorder, schizophrenia or paranoia. This population faces social or attitudinal barriers, and its needs range from adjustments of spaces or procedures, to medication that contributes to effective functionality.<sup>14</sup>

**Physical disability:** Neuromotor or motor involvement resulting from a genetic condition, disease or accident. It includes users of prosthetics, orthotics, support canes, crutches or wheelchairs, due to mobility impairments or amputations, as well as people of short stature. This population faces mainly physical barriers.<sup>15</sup>

**Public play space:** An open and flexible place (with no specific architectural program), where the main objective is to promote free play, imagination and exploration in children and in the general public. It allows autonomous exercises, behaviours or voluntary activities. Public play spaces have the possibility of transforming into infinite configurations, spaces or narratives. It drives multi-generation interaction through an holistic design, which responds to the physical and social context of its location.<sup>16</sup>

**Public space:** A place where people carry out—individually or in a group—activities regarding commerce, mobility, recreation, play and culture that are shared with others. It is a space where everybody has the right to be “without being excluded due to personal, social or economic factors”.<sup>17</sup> These are areas of the city—delimited by buildings or natural elements—such as streets, squares, avenues, walking paths, gardens, forests, public parks, and others. In brief, they include all structural elements for common use and enjoyment.<sup>18</sup>

## R

**Right to Play:** The natural capacity, freedom and skill children have to explore their surrounding environment, including stimuli and fascinations. Living “an experience of that is rare in life, that of measuring himself alone with the complexity of the world. With all his curiosity, with what he knows and can do, and with what he does not know and wishes to learn...”.<sup>19</sup> At the same time, the right to play establishes the obligations and responsibilities that governments and societies have to create in order to have the right conditions, environments and platforms for play.

## S

**Sensory experience:** Knowledge of the environment through all the senses. It allows the development of physical, cognitive, motor, emotional and social skills.

**Social and cultural barriers:** Rejection, indifference or discrimination attitudes towards people with disabilities, due to prejudices from society that prevent their inclusion and participation in a community and ignore their fundamental rights and freedoms.<sup>20</sup>

**Stimulus:** An internal or external signal that triggers a reaction or response in humans or living beings.

**Swappaton:** Exchanging or bartering things.

**Symbiotic experience:** A set of circumstances, practices and knowledge acquired through mutual support between two factors, people or entities.

## T

**Technical aids:** Technological devices and materials that enable, support or compensate one or more functional, motor, sensory or intellectual limitations of the person who uses them.<sup>21</sup>

**Transitory impairments:** Physical health conditions that require technical aids on a temporary basis including walking canes, wheelchairs and prosthetics. Transitory impairments should not be considered as permanent disabilities due to their temporary nature.<sup>22</sup>

## U

**Universal design:** The design of products, environments, programmes and services for all persons that, to the greatest extent, do not need a specialised design or adaptation. This type of design does not exclude assistive devices for people with disabilities, when they need it. The principles of universal design include equitable use, flexibility in use, simple or intuitive use, perceptible information, tolerance for error, low physical effort, and size and space for approach and use.<sup>23</sup>

**Urban barrier:** An obstacle that segments or divides the city temporarily, partially or in perception, making personal mobility difficult for pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users.<sup>24</sup>



## Notes

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- 7 National Commission on Human Rights. (n.d.). *Personas con discapacidad: Transformando barreras en oportunidades*.
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*Playing Together* is a handbook to enhance play in public spaces.

The activities proposed are designed to boost physical, social, cognitive, emotional and creative skill development in children and to foster the creation of emotional connections among babies and toddlers, and their parents and primary caregivers.

