

imagine if

# Helping Kids Connect with People Games

## Building Communication with People Games

*Increase your toddler's engagement and language skills*

### What are People Games?

People games are simple games that can be played with – you guessed it – just people! No materials, toys, or special items are needed because communication happens best between people!

Some examples are tickles, songs, and peek-a-boo.

I am willing to bet you are already playing many people games with your child. But often parents miss this key thing: **Creating opportunities to communicate.**



### How to Play?

Here are the four easy steps:

#### 1) Start the game

Begin by playing the game with your child. For example, start tickling them. Repeat this a few times, as long as you have their interest.

#### 2) Wait

Then stop and wait. Look at them expectantly (smile, eyebrows up).

#### 3) Model a word

Say a word that they could use to ask for more. E.g. "more," pause for a couple seconds and repeat "more." You are providing an opportunity for them to say the word.

#### 4) Continue

If your child copies the word, great! Keep the game going. If they don't, no worries! Keep the game going. We are creating opportunities for them to say the word eventually—it likely won't happen right away! The more you practise, the more learning opportunities your child will have.



**Pro Tip:** Make sure you are not waiting too long that your child gets frustrated. It's hard for them to learn if they're upset! Just pause for a couple seconds, and then keep the game going.



## Benefits of People Games

- Can be played anytime, anywhere.
- No prep required!
- Fun for the child and parent.
- Can play the same games often, as long as your child is interested.
- Provides authentic communication opportunities. Your child is naturally motivated to communicate because they want the game to continue.



## 5 People Games to Try



### 1) Tickles

Get face to face. Begin tickling them for a few moments and then stop and wait. Model "more" (pause), "more" (pause), and continue tickling them.



### 2) Chasey

Start chasing your child. Begin to slow down and wait for them to notice. Model "go" (pause), "go" (pause), and then continue chasing them.



### 3) Jumps

Lift up your child to help them make some big jumps. Then stop and wait. Model "ump" (pause), "ump" (pause), and then continue jumping with them!



### 4) Spinning

Pick up your child and spin them around. Repeat a few times, then stop and wait. Model "spin" (pause), "spin" (pause), and then pick them up again and spin them.



### 5) Swing

Push your child on the swing. After a few moments, hold the swing back, and wait. Model "go" (pause), "go" (pause), and then let them swing.