

Theraplay Games and Others for Dyads & Groups

Theraplay® (www.theraplay.org) offers a wonderful way to connect with your young child, teen, or groups of children through simple games that will have all of you laughing. Caregivers should not attempt the following games with children who have been abused or who exhibit a negative reaction. If your child does not enjoy these games, however, please discontinue and seek guidance from a Theraplay® therapist.

Activities are meant to provide opportunities for eye contact, shared enjoyment, playful interaction, and nurturing touch. They are meant to allow the parent and child to develop memories of positive interactions, encourage trust, and allow them to relax with one another. Theraplay® focuses on the positive aspect of the child and call the parent to do the same thing. This is different from other types of therapies that are problem-saturated. Building up the parent-child relationship itself will lead to other changes in both the child and the parent.

A selection of games follows - for a more complete list, Theraplay® Activities Volume I (can be ordered through www.theraplay.org.) Additional activities are found in Fun to Grow On by Virginia Morin (available commercially.) Teen games and group games appear below as well:

Young Children Theraplay® games

(Thank you quackenbaby.blogspot.com for writing these up!)

Some of these indicate a therapist but most can be done at home, too, but as noted above, stop if your child seems distressed and do not attempt with a child who has been abused in any way.

Scene/Supplies:

First, you want to set up a blanket on the floor with a bunch of pillows around for comfort and for some of the exercises. A bean bag is a great thing as well because it will give the children a "special" seat.

You might want to get a small plastic container to hold the supplies. It's great to be able to grab a box and get to work.

The main things you will need are: **A large throw blanket, 4-5 pillows, lotion, cotton balls, feathers, stickers, bubbles, play-doh, powder, a baby blanket, small stuffed toy, comb/brush, construction paper, crayons, yarn/toilet paper/streamers and snacks that**

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kids like gummies, gold fish, M&M's, Skittles, etc.

Exercises:

Popcorn/Jellybeans: When we first get into therapy we need to take our shoes off. So we sniff the air and we smell popcorn or jelly beans. Then we start to hunt around the feet to see if that is where the smell is coming from. Then we take off the shoes and socks to find popcorn/jelly beans. Then we pretend to eat the food/tickle her feet.

Lotion on our Boo-Boos: Next we ask if she has any boo-boos/freckles/etc. we need to look at. And we put lotion on the "boo-boo" (as long as it wouldn't hurt her).

Climbing Up the Mountain/Childs Name: Next we rub a TON of lotion on our hands, and take her arm into our grip, we then use our hands wrapped around her arm to "climb the mountain". We sing a little song... "I'm climbing up the mountain, I'm climbing up the mountain, I'm climbing up, and climbing up, and climbing up the mountain". Then at the top of the mountain (arm pit) we lose our grip and sliiiiiiiiiide down and then we boom and thrash around.

Taco Girl: She lays in the blanket aka taco shell. Then we put all of the toppings with different sounds for each. Hamburger, lettuce, tomato, cheese, sour cream, salsa, then we wrap her up in the blanket. Next, we pretend to "eat" the taco. Tickling and saying, "this is one very yummy taco" the whole time.

Twinkle Twinkle: Since our Taco Girl is already laying in the blanket, one adult grabs the corners on their end, the other adult grabs the corners on their end, we lift her up and sing, "Twinkle, twinkle, little star WHAT A SPECIAL GIRL YOU ARE, up above the world so high, like a diamond in the sky, twinkle, twinkle, little star, what a special girl you are".

Weather Report: She sits facing away, and you sit behind her facing her back. Then, you basically draw out the weather on her back. Tickling, swishing, circling along the way. "Right now it is dark (hands down back) and there is a moon in the sky (draw the moon) there are also lots of twinkling stars (dot out the stars), and some clouds too (clasp fingers together and blot clouds into the sky), OH LOOK, the sun is rising (draw the sun around the bottom of her

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back like it would be on the horizon, then it rising into the sky) and the wind is blowing (breeze fingers left and right across her back). You can get fun and creative with it.

Mirror: Mirror is pretty simple, one of you is the person, the other is the mirror, and you mimic the person's actions. Do funny faces, wave hands, etc. Personally, I love to do the "I love you" where I point to my eyes, make a heart, and point to her.

Basketball: Get a little stuffed toy/beanie baby and put it on your head, then she makes a basketball hoop with her arms. Then you try and bend your head down to make the toy fall into the hoop.

Hide the Cotton: Take five cotton balls and have your child hide them on herself. Then you try and find them while making funny actions in the process. I love to look in her ears, at her belly button, in her mouth, up her nose... etc.

Cotton Ball Hockey: Take a standard sized pillow, and each of you hold one end. Then you put a cotton ball in the middle and blow it to knock it off. You do this back and forth to try and score points.

Push and Pull: This is where you sit on the floor, knees bent in front, and she holds your hands and pushes you back, while she lands on your shins and you can lift her in the air or just rock forward and put her feet back on the floor. Another variation could be lifting her on your feet like an "airplane" zooming in the sky.

What's That?: In this activity, you need a feather, cotton ball, and maybe one other soft item. Then you have the child close their eyes, and you touch them with the item, and they guess what it was that you used to touch them with.

Lotion Spots: For this you have a dab of lotion, the child closes their eyes, and you put the lotion on them. Then you tap around to "fake" them out. Before they open their eyes, they guess where the lotion is on their body.

Drum Copy: For this you need a drum, or a plastic bowl will work. You tap a tune, then the

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child copies you. You can trade off with the child. It really gets you in-sync with one another.

Lullaby: Parent cradles child in arms in such a way that eye contact is fully maintained. Parent sings lullaby to child, inserting, wherever possible, child's name and descriptions of his or her features. Example: "Twinkle, twinkle little star, what a lovely boy you are. Nice brown hair and soft, soft cheeks. Big brown eyes from which you peek. Twinkle, twinkle little star. What a lovely boy you are."

Peek-a-boo: With hands, feet, towel, blanket, hood of coat, behind pillow or door.

Where's the Baby?: Where you have the child pretend they are in your belly and cover them with a blanket. You can get descriptive too.

This little piggy went to market.

What Will Happen When I Push This Button?: Parent gently presses nose, ear, toe and "beeps," "honks," etc.

"Pop" Cheeks: Parent fills own cheeks with air and guides child's hands to push gently on parent's cheeks with fingers to pop out the air, encourage child to fill up cheeks and parent pops. Toes can also be used to pop cheeks.

Patty-Cake: Played with hands or feet!

Various experiences with touch and textures: Lotioning, making hand or foot prints in powder, pressing hands or feet into play dough or shaving cream, baby oil for back rub with the child facing you. Be aware of possible sensitivities to odors. You can put lotion on the child's feet/hands and then sprinkle powder on it. Then have them stamp their feet or hands onto a piece of construction paper.

Find the Sicker: Parent puts sticker on own nose and helps child pull it off, can do on other areas (watch out for hair).

Blow the Cotton Ball: Parent puts cotton ball on nose with a dab of lotion, child blows it off.

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Pillow Tower: Place on pillow and have you child stand on it. Then cheer for them keeping their balance (with assistance if needed). Next, have them step off and you will add another pillow. You keep repeating this and having the child step on them until you get about 4 or 5 pillows high.

Belly Balance: After you have those pillows in the "Pillow Tower" exercise stacked up to 4 or 5, have the child lay on the top pillow on their stomach, and then hold their hands while you pretend they are flying like a bird, airplane, etc.

Bubbles: Blow bubbles in front of child and help him pop with fingers or toes. You can also have the child alternate and wait their turn as you switch back and forth popping the bubbles.

Lotion Pass: The Parent puts lotion on nose, passes to child's cheek, helps child pass it back to parent's forehead, rubs lotion on child.

Comb Hair: With child facing you, commenting on special color, texture, etc.

Tower of hands: Put lotion on parent's and child's hands and make a hand stack, alternating slippery hands. Move from bottom to top and top to bottom.

How Long Are You?: You measure the child out with yarn, toilet paper, party streamers, to do this, hold the "string" up to each body part, legs, arms, face, feet, hands full length of their body and tear off a section for each body part. Then you can have them guess which pieces match to which body part!

Any song or rhyme paired with movement: such as dancing, bouncing, rocking, moving limbs, finger plays. Personalized wording, as in Twinkle above, is preferred. Examples: Rock a bye baby, Patty cake, Itsy bitsy spider, Ride a horsie, The wheels on the bus, Rub a dub dub, I'm gonna get you.

Snack Time: Each therapy session we have a snack. Favorites are Goldfish, Fruit Loops, and Fruit Gummies. Mom needs to feed, and then child can feed mom too. Then we pretend to be an animal or thing. For Goldfish, you could be a whale, or dolphin... and when you want another bite, you make the sound that animal makes. For Fruit Loops, you can be any animal, but a bird is fun. I hold her in my arms and ask if the little birdie wants a snack. She chirps. I feed her

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the various flavors and describe them as fruits. "Here comes a cherry little birdie", "Chirp, chirp" "Here comes a blueberry", "Chirp, chirp", "Here comes a lemon, lime, orange grape" etc.

I also like to pretend I am picking the gummies from a fruit tree and feeding them to my baby. So I will say, "Oh a patch of strawberries, I bet my baby likes strawberries". Repeat for every type of fruit the gummy represents.

Shoe Race: At the end of therapy, the therapist and I do a sock and shoe race and see who can get the shoe and sock on the fastest.

Theraplay® Activities for older children and teens

"Theraplay® offers a number of features that can be attractive for the adolescent. It emphasizes building up a child's self-esteem (adolescents need a lot of this). It is nonverbal (the child does not have to talk about his/her problems or feelings). It enhances the parent/child relationship or attachment (most common referral problem), and it is engaging and playful (appealing to adolescents because it is fun" (Evangeline Munns, 2005, p.30). For positive Theraplay® sessions with teens:

1. Keep sessions structured.
2. Use challenging activities.
3. Sexual awareness is heightened in an adolescent, so keep that in mind when doing physical touch.
4. Adolescents need acceptance and praise, but they generally recognize false praise so don't overdo it.
5. Be patient, use humor, and be non-judgmental.
6. Be prepared for rejection at first. Theraplay® can seem 'babyish' for an adolescent focused on being an adult.
7. Be confident, upbeat, and full of fun.
8. Learn their language to minimize misunderstandings.

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9. Don't allow physical hurts and do not get into physical power struggles.

Cotton ball hockey Position yourself on either side of the table. Take a cotton ball from the basket and try to blow it across to the other person. See who can get 5 goals first. You may play this twice if you like.

Future telling Pretend to read one another's palms to tell the future.

What I want to be

The child can tell the adult what he/she would like to be or do when grown up.

What you were like

Guide the parent in coming up with positive stories about the child when he/she was a baby and toddler. Stories can stress positive attributes of the child or ways the child was successful.

Manicure

Give the child a manicure or pedicure.

Weather report

Have the parent tell a story about the weather while rubbing the child's back. You may start with the sun coming up for the day and end with the sun going down and stars coming out. Rain could be a soft patter. Lightning could be a jagged mark across the back. Snow could be soft pattering across the back. Wind could be big sweeps across the back, etc.

Pillow walking

Place one or more pillows between the parent and child as they face one another. Allow the parent to nod his/her head in the direction they are supposed to step. One nod means one step. Child has to follow the parent's lead. Then reverse, with child leading.

Cotton ball toe race

Allow the parent and child to take as many cottonballs as possible and place them under their toes, then race across the room. The person who winds up with the most cottonballs still in their toes at the end wins.

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Cotton ball war

Take a bag of cotton balls and divide between parent and child at two ends of the room. Allow them to throw the balls at one another. When you call time, you see who has the most at the end. You could also play against the parent and child to allow them to act as a team.

Thumb wrestling

Play thumb wrestling. Hold hands so that fingers are locked and thumbs are up and able to move around. Say, "1, 2, 3, 4, I declare thumb war!" and start playing. Whoever pins 2 out of 3 wins the round. You may play several rounds.

Visual recall

For both the teen and the adult, close your eyes and recall as many items in the room as you can. (Adult first)

Trying on hats

Have a variety of fun hats and a mirror available. Allow the parent and child to put hats on each other.

Mirror

Parent and child take turns being the leader and having the other match all movements as if looking in a mirror.

Peanut butter and jelly

Parent says peanut butter in a funny voice or rhythm, child says jelly in the same voice or rhythm. Can reverse and have child say peanut butter and parent match with jelly.

Beanie on Head

Everyone puts a beanie baby or bean bag on their head. They move around in a circle with the leader suggesting ways to move (hopping, skipping, swimming, etc) that will cause the beanie to fall. When the beanie falls, its wearer freezes; he/she can only unfreeze when another group member places it back on his/her head. Alternate rule: a hug unfreezes the other.

Aura palm to palm

Two people stand face to face about a foot apart and put their right palms together, then close eyes and notice the connection; others stand around in a circle to observe and guide them. The leader says for the two to keep their eyes closed, each take a big step backwards and turn around twice. Group members point the person back in the right direction. Then the

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two extend their right palm and move forward slowly, trying to match palms again. Group members help them by making suggestions.

Reversing the Gauntlet

Form 2 lines facing each other; each member takes a turn walking down the middle. Instead of paddling or insults, the gauntlet is "reversed" and people in line call out encouragement/compliments/nice things they'll remember about the person coming down the middle.

Hands like a spoke

Group members make a circle and extend their right hands into the center, stacking the hands so it makes the "spokes" of a wheel. Try to keep a balloon in the air with the stacked hands.

Ball on 2 ropes

Two members hold two ropes tautly between them and try to roll a large, light ball back and forth on the ropes.

11 fingers (looks like rock-paper-scissors)

Three to five players stand in a circle and make a fist with one hand. Shake the fist 3 times, counting 1-2-3. On the fourth shake each player displays 0-5 fingers. Keep doing until the group displays 11 fingers.

Nose to Nose (for a parent and younger child)

The parent and child sit close together. The parent closes their eyes and tries to move forward gently to make nose to nose contact. The child is allowed to make snuffling sounds to cue the parent. Reverse once the parent is successful.

Beach Ball/Balloon Train

With beach balls or large balloons, form a train with the balls/balloons pressed between the participant's chests and backs. Try to move the train around the room.

Big bag of Balloons

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Fill up a large plastic garbage bag with inflated balloons and tie it off. This becomes a giant balloon to bat back and forth.

Rubber band and string

Take a large, strong rubber band and tie 5-6 equal lengths of string (approximately 3' long) to it at equal distances around the rubberband. Each person has an end of the string. The group must work together to pick up a paper cup(s) with the string and place it elsewhere in the room, make a stack of cups, etc.

Eye Signal on Pillows

Stand in a circle, change places when you make eye contact with another person (all members do at the same time). Add complexity to this game by having each member stand on one pillow and members jump to the other's pillow.

Imaginary Toss

Stand in a circle. Members take turns, call out a name and pretend to toss an item to that person (various kinds of balls but also, a slippery fish, an egg, an ice cream cone, etc.). The catcher must "catch" the way you would catch that item.

Cotton ball blow on long scarf

Using a long scarf about 12" wide and 24-48" long, the players hold the long ends tautly and blow a cotton ball or bounce a balloon back and forth. Can eliminate need to get down on floor or the frustration of the cotton ball falling off a pillow, etc. If the scarf is wide enough, parent and child can team up at one end. Two teams of two can try to toss or pop a cotton ball back and forth between their scarves.

Beanie Toss

Group of 3-5 with equal number of beanie babies or bean bags, sit in a circle on the floor. Members toss to each other to the right at the same time when leader says "toss", develop a rhythm. Toss left when the leader says "switch", toss up in air when leader says "flip", and (with equal # players) toss across the circle when leader says "cross". Keep going back to the basic rhythm of passing to the right on "Toss."

Straws and feathers/cotton balls

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With 36' long, fat straws and large feathers or cotton balls, have a race of picking up the feathers/cotton balls with the straw and depositing them in a box or area. Can be played family against the therapist(s). Can be played on a table top with regular length straws but the long ones are more fun.

Q-Tips and straws

Use the long straws to blow a Q-tip against the wall or into a corner or designated spot. Protect everyone's eyes!!!

Bubble wrap

Most children like to pop the bubbles of bubble wrap. Place it on the floor, hold the child's hands and jump on the sheet, popping the bubbles; fold the sheet in $\frac{1}{2}$ so you get closer together. Therapist and child each take an end of a length of bubble wrap; twist it between them to pop the bubbles. Put the bubble wrap between hands for a popping handshake (S. Korea).

Balloons around ankles

Tie 3 balloons around all members' ankles with string; try to pop other's balloons by stamping on them. Remember: No hurts!

Shakes

All stand. The leader gently clasps his/her hands together as if holding a ball and holding hands in front of the body encourages all to copy and explains "I have the shakes, you have the shakes, we all have the shakes, (continue for a few seconds) now we are going to put the shakes in our left leg" (all shake the left leg only) "now we are going to take the shakes out of our leg (return to shaking hands again for a few seconds) "now we are going to take the shakes and put them in our right arm" (continue in this way, putting the shakes in various body parts i.e. shoulders, head, whole body etc) aiming to make the whole activity last for a few minutes only. Finally say, when the shakes have returned to your hands only, and it feels right to end, "now we are going to toss/blow the shakes away", raise your hands holding the shakes, fully extending your arms and all toss/blow the shakes away.

Balloon Pairs Walk and Transfer

A game for a dyad, a family or groups: Materials: A large balloon, inflated; a transparent balloon is best so the players can see through it. Therapist/Parent & Child: Stand facing each

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other and place a balloon between your faces; hold the balloon between you with your noses and foreheads and hold hands. Keep the balloon between your faces (without hands) while moving around the room. If possible, try to maintain eye contact through the balloon.

For families or groups: All stand in a circle. The leader starts the activity by directing two members to hold hands and keep the balloon between their faces while moving about within the circle. The leader points to two others who approach the balloon pair. These two go under the first pair's arms and place their noses on the balloon and hold hands. The first pair let go of the balloon, raise their arms and release hands and move back to their places in the circle. The second pair then move within the circle until the leader chooses another pair to take the balloon.

Animal/Musical Sounds

The leader assigns one of a selected 3-4 animals or musical instruments to group members by whispering the word in their ears or handing out a picture or word. On a cue from the leader, all group members begin to make the sound and movement associated with their animal/instrument and find the other members who are doing the same thing. The leader can "conduct" a chorus of sounds by pointing to the various groups.

Car Wash

The group forms 2 lines facing each other. One person at a time from the top of the line goes down the middle, declaring the kind of car they are. The first third of the line sprays water by pretending to squirt water at the car, the middle third waves their hands to wash the car and the last third blows the car dry. The amount of contact depends on the needs and comfort of the group members. The 3 jobs of the people in the line changes as the person going down the middle joins the end and all move closer to the head of the line.

Zoom-erk-splash

When our usual zoom-erk game bogs down in one pair of the circle, a person can put their hands together in a diving movement and point with the hands across the circle to another person, saying, "Splash;" that person says the next "Zoom."

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More Games for Teens

Activities

1. For both the teen and the adult, close your eyes and recall as many items in the room as you can. (Adult first)
2. Position yourself on either side of the table. Take a cotton ball from the basket and try to blow it across to the other person. See who can get 5 goals first. You may play this twice if you like.
3. Adult: Teach the child something he/she doesn't know.
4. Play thumb wrestling. Hold hands so that fingers are locked and thumbs are up and able to move around. Say, "1, 2, 3, 4, I declare thumb war!" and start playing. Whoever pins 2 out of 3 wins the round. You may play several rounds.
5. Adult, tell the child what it was like for you in preparation of him/her first coming to live at your house, and what it was like when you first saw him/her.
6. Put hats on each other. (See basket for the hats.)
7. Adult: leave the room for one minute.
8. Adult: Draw something and have the child try to draw it as well.
9. Apply lotion to one another's hands.
10. Child: tell the adult what you would like to be or do when you grow up.

Games for Groups

(Thank you Rockwood, MO, school district early education program, for writing these up!)

1. Feather touch: Peer tickles the child next to them with a feather. The child who is being tickled has their eyes closed. The child has to guess where their friend tickled them.

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2. **Funny Bones:** Leader pairs kids up and calls out "elbow to elbow, knee to knee," etc. and the partners have to touch body parts.
3. **Stand up, hold hands and listen for the cue to walk, hop, etc. in a circle.**
4. **Over & Over:** Children stand in a line and pass a bean bag over their head to the person in front of them. You can also adapt the game to make it over and under and the child has to listen for the cue "over" or "under."
5. **Bean bag on head of leader:** Leader sneezes and each child tries to catch beanbag. Leader moves around the circle.
6. **Guess who is hugging you:** A child sits in the middle of the circle. Cover child with a blanket and have another child hug them. Child has to guess who it is. This game is more about the hug than the right guess.
7. **Musical hoops:** The children stand in a circle holding hands. Place 3 hula hoops in center of the circle and play music. When the music stops, the children have to put a foot in a hoop. Remove a hoop each time until there is only one hoop left.
8. **Bubble pop:** The teacher blows the bubbles and each individual child gets to pop them. This is a challenge for the other children wanting to pop but a good way to exercise self-control and turn taking. The child will be told to pop the bubbles with their hands or feet or elbow, etc.
9. **Newspaper punch:** Leader holds up a piece of newspaper for each child. On the count of three, the child punches a hole through the paper. The children then roll the paper up in a little ball and take turns throwing it in a "hoop." This could be the trash can, or another peers' arms.
10. **Balloon balance:** Partners must balance a balloon between a body part and walk across room without using hands.
11. **Shoe find:** Each child takes one shoe off, puts in middle of the circle under the blanket. The leader mixes them up. With their eyes closed, the children take turns picking a shoe and find the match.

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12. Shoes off: Children take their shoes off and touch each other's feet under the blanket. You can have them try to touch a specific friend.

13. Pass the message: One child starts with a message he passes around the circle. Then the children can take turns passing a silly face around the circle.

14. Balloon tennis: Children stay seated while trying to hit the balloon in the air without letting it drop. Use ping pong paddles or racquets made out of paint stir sticks and paper plates.

15. Toilet paper bust out: Partners take turns wrapping each other up in toilet paper and then on cue, they bust out.

16. Face painting: The children pretend to paint hearts, mustaches or anything on each other's face with a paint brush.

17. Walk around the circle hugging: Children partner up and take turns walking around the circle with pillows between the partners.

18. Pillow punch/ Pillow hug: The children identify something that makes them happy and hug the pillow. They identify something that makes them mad and punch the pillow.

19. Blanket swing: Leaders swing each child in the blanket while the others count to 10.

20. Shape find: Each child walks around in a circle to music until the music stops. When the music stops, they grab the shape on the floor closest to them and try to find the person with the same shape.

21. Name Switch: Children stand in circle and take turns calling out a friend's name. When a child calls out a name, he then switches places with that friend and then that friend takes a turn.

22. Cotton ball blow: Children lie on tummies facing one another (2 lines of kids) and we put cotton balls in the center. The leader gives a cue word (like "pickles") and the kids try to blow the balls to the other kids across from them.

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23. Cotton Ball Fight: When we finish the blow, kids sit on bottoms in the same spot, gather up the cotton balls and when leader gives a cue word, they throw the balls at each other.
24. Blanket and Ball: All children hold the edge of the blanket with a ball in the middle. The children take turns calling a friend's name. Then everyone has to work together to get the ball to the person without letting it fall off.
25. Row, row, row your boat: Children sit with legs straddled and pretend that they are rowing a boat. Have them pick if they want to row fast or slow, loud or soft.
26. Ping Pong Blow: Children lay on the floor on their tummies in a circle. They call out a friend's name and blow the ping pong ball to the child.
27. Balloon tennis/Hot balloon: The kids glue feet down and hit balloons back and forth to the other team. Have music play and when music stops, goal is to not have balloon on your team.
28. Duck, Duck Goose: Children play the original game only instead of chasing the peer who touches them; the children walk in separate directions and give one another a hug when they meet.
29. Blanket Merry Go Round: One child sits in the middle of the blanket while the rest of class walks in circle trying to move child.
30. Tug of War: The traditional game only children are sitting down.
31. Blindfold friend guess: Blindfold child. Have another child come up and the blindfolded child can feel the person's hair, clothes, etc. Then gets to guess who it is. Give clues with the help of class if necessary.
32. Cotton ball nose blow: Put cotton balls on each child's nose with lotion and have the neighbor blow it off.
33. Swinging Statues: Have kids partner up and swing each other around. On a cue, have then let go and form a statue.
34. Big Snake: Children get into a crawling position and hold onto the ankles of the child in

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front of them. They can start out in pairs and grow bigger and bigger until they make a giant snake. Then they try to move around the designated area in one piece-they can try moving backward, or "going to sleep" anything that snakes do. Keeping together is the real task.

35. Popcorn: Children squat, pretending they are kernels of corn waiting until they hear the number 10. You start counting 1, 2, 3, 4...At 10; they go off, going from a squat to a full jump and then jump all around, forward and backward until you start a new batch of popcorn. Then you can eat them all up.

36. Spoon and Ping Pong Ball: Children pass a ping pong ball from one spoon to another between teams.

37. Animal Match: Pairs of animals will be given out. Kids have to walk around and make the animal noise to find their match.

38. Tunnels: The children bend over on hands and feet, each child takes turns going through the tunnel.

39. Duck walk: Duck walk; crab walk; frog jump; kangaroo hop; elephant walk; lobster walk; inchworm glide; chicken walk; bunny hop; seal walk.

40. Balance beanbag on feet: Kids lie on their backs with beanbags on their feet and try to balance them. Leader counts to 3. Next, try one foot.

41. Spider web: Children sit in and take turns passing a ball of yarn between them until they make a spider web.

42. Jump on the right feeling: Kids line up to take turns jumping on a feeling/color the leader calls out.

43. Bean Bag catch: Divide kids into partners. Have one child throw the beanbag to their partner who has to catch it in the basket. Have the kids start closer together and try, then spread farther apart. Then switch to have the other child hold the basket.

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44. Toesies: Partners lie down and touch toes and try to roll across room keeping their feet touching.

45. Hot Dog Wrap: One child lies in the blanket. The other children put the requested "toppings" on the child. They then wrap the child up and get to "nibble" the child with their fingers.

46. Magnets: The children sit in circle and sing a song...each time song stops, everyone moves in closer until can't move in any further then group gives one another a hug.

47. Musical instruments: Have each child start to play an instrument when they see the "green light". Stop with "red light". When stop, have them pass the instrument to their right.

48. Feather on Pillow blow: The children are standing in a circle. They take turns blowing the feather off the pillow to the friend next to them who tries to catch it.

49. I see somebody special: Take a hand mirror and drape a scarf over it, concealing the mirror. Tell the group that each of them will peek under the scarf and will see "someone very special." Tell them to look for two beautiful eyes, a soft squishy nose and a big wonderful smile, but not to tell anyone who it is. Make them promise not to tell! This builds the excitement.

50. 3 legged walk: Partners tie a rope between 2 legs and walk across the room. You can also set up an obstacle course with pillows.

51. Measuring: Measure each child's nose, smile, and ear with a tape measure. Enlist the other children's help with this. Let them know how big their smile, etc. is.

52. London bridges: Two adults hold arms up and children walk under. Each child gets a hug at end of the song.

53. Let's walk in a circle" Have kids walk in a circle and chant: "Let's walk in a circle, walk

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in a circle, walk in a circle and let's do it right now...Walk way down low...way up high...walk on your heels...walk on your toes...walk real loud...walk real soft...and let's do it right now." Say FREEZE in between movements to help with the transition.

54. Straw feather blow: Children lay in two lines across from one another. They take turns blowing the feather back and fourth through a straw.

55. Blind fold walk: One child is blindfolded (or has a towel over the head). While the rest of the class holds hands together and slowly walks the child around the room being reminded to make sure the blindfolded child does not hurt himself by bumping into anything.

56. Ball and blanket. Children sit in a circle holding onto a blanket. The children try to keep the ball on the blanket while bouncing the blanket up and down. They have to follow the cue to go fast or slow.

57. Guess who's the leader: One child leaves the room with an adult. The rest of the group picks a leader. The leader begins with a movement and the rest follow. This continues as the leader picks different movements. The child is called back in and asked to try to figure out who the leader is. A clue for the child is to see who the group is looking at.

58. Present wrap: Each child turns around or hides eyes while the leader picks a child to be wrapped as a present. When the child is hidden, the rest of the class gets to guess who it is and gently unwrap the child.

59. Cotton ball toe throw: The children stand in a line. They pick up cotton balls with their toes and flick them as far as they can.

60. Pass Frosty: The children sit in a circle and pass the snowman around to music. When the music stops the person holding the snowman has to say something nice about the person to the right.

61. Blanket blizzard: Children sit in a circle and hold the blanket. The leader will slowly put cotton balls (or have children wad up paper) on the blanket and the kids have to bounce the blanket up and down keeping the "snowballs" on the blanket. Once "snowballs"

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are on ground then everyone has a "snowball" fight.

62. Go over the rope: The rope is laid across the floor. The children will go over different ways (jump forward, jump backward, hop with one foot, pretend the rope is a snake and wiggle it and they have to jump over it without the snake "getting them". Hold the rope up and have the children go under it without touching it).

63. Balloon Volley Ball: Divide children into teams. A rope is strung to 2 stable objects to be the net. The children will play volley ball batting the balloon back and forth.

64. Snowflake walk: Have kids form 2 lines and walk across the room to a teammate on snowflakes they move with them.

65. Traffic Lights: Have the kids pretend to be cars and drive around the room. They have to watch for the Green light to walk, the yellow to walk in place and the red light to stop.

66. Tightrope: Have a rope across the room. Have children pretend to walk on the "tightrope" without falling. Once they are comfortable, have them walk sideways, tiptoeing, hopping or backwards for more of a challenge.

67. Sleeping giants: Have the children jump up and down in their own space until the leader calls out "sleeping giants". Then they have to fall to the ground and lie very still. When the leader calls out "walking giants" they get back up and jump again.

68. Pretzel & Unpretzel: Children sit with their legs and arms crossed. The leader calls out to "pretzel" or "unpretzel" and the children twist and untwist their bodies according to the cues.

69. Tummy laughing: Each child puts head on another child's tummy and everyone laughs.

70. Train: The children get behind one another and hold onto each other's waists and go around the room.

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71. Musical plates: Start with enough plates for all but two children. Ask for 2 volunteers. Have the 2 kids join in the middle and discuss something they have in common. As the leader announces it ("If you have on blue, change places with someone.") When the kids are changing places, have them try to find a plate to stand on. Remove a plate each time so there are more kids in the middle. Repeat until there are no plates left.

72. Red light (stop)/green light (go): The leader tells the kids something to do (jump, stomp, wave arms) and holds up a red or green sign indicating start or stop.

73. Who is it? Have children close their eyes while a child comes to the front of the room. Put a paper plate with eyes and mouth cut out in front of his/her face and have class guess who it is.

74. Motor boat: Have class join hands in a circle and call out: "Motor boat, motor boat, go so slow, motor boat, motor boat step on the gas, motor boat motor boat go so fast". Have kids gradually accelerate walking and then stop and repeat.

75. Find the feeling: Show the feeling faces and discuss the feeling for each one. Divide the kids into two teams and give each child on a team a feeling face. Upon the leader's cue, they need to find the match and once they have, tell the class what their feeling is.

76. Run to us: The group waits for the child to run to them as they have arms locked. Give a hug as the child gets there.

77. Bean Bag Relay Race: Divide kids into two teams. Have them walk across the floor and back balancing the bean bag on their head. They have to drop the bean bag into the hands of the next person in line and then that person has to walk across the floor and back.

78. Pass balloon using no hands: Have kids pick a body part (elbows) to hold balloon and pass it to the next person.

79. Row Boats: Pair kids up and have them sit with legs straddling each other. Have one child lie back as they pull the other up and then go back and forth.

80. Car, Car: Children pair up. One child stands behind the other with hands on the

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shoulders of the child in front of them. They guide the "car" around the room. The child makes the other child turn by pushing on one shoulder. They have to "steer" them around the room and keep them from hitting other cars.

81. Touch Colors: Children stand in a circle. The leader says, "touch blue" and the child has to find something blue on the child next to him and put his finger on it. Everyone keeps their finger on the friend until everyone is done.

82. Cooperative picture: The kids decide on a theme and then each child draws part of the picture, passing it around so all the kids have a turn. When finished, make copies and put a picture of the whole class on the back. Give these out to each child at the last.

83. Find the Color: Children spread out throughout the room. The leader calls out a color and the children have to find something that color in the room and put their finger on it. They have to keep their finger on it until everyone in the room finds the color.

84. Detective: Pass around a large hand-held magnifying glass. Look at each other's beautiful eyes, beautiful noses, etc. Admire! This develops great eye contact!

85. Giant Sandal: This is a growing partner game. Start with two children. They get two towels or pieces of construction paper, something they can walk on safely. They each put one foot on the one piece of paper and the other foot on the other paper and must walk together without coming off the papers. If couples can do it, increase to three people together. Also you can vary how the partners walk. 1. Partners face the same direction and walk forward and then backward: they can walk sideways also. 2. Partners face each other and try the same series of walks.

86. Group Balance: Children stand in a circle with their arms around each others shoulders. The leader will tell the group to lift their right leg, left leg, etc. The group has to all do it at the same time. The leader can also tell the group to sway to the left, to the right, etc.

87. Partner Body Check: Each person must feel his neighbor's hand (nose, cheek, chin, ear, etc.) and tell if it is warm or cold.

88. Feelings Hunt: Hang feeling face pictures up all around the room. Provide magnifying
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glasses and partners walk around looking for different faces. When they find one, they label it and tell a time they felt that way.

89. Hand Prints: Rub powder on neighbors hand and help him/hr put handprint on a dark piece of paper. Pass the paper round for everyone to do. Can the children remember which one was theirs?

90. Partner pull-ups: Kids sit on the floor and face each other with toes touching and holding hands. On cue, they try to pull each other up. Have them then try to sit back known holding hands.

91. Fast Firefighter: Each child places their coat on the back of a chair. Leader turns out the lights and asks the children to lay their heads on the table and pretend it is nighttime and they are firefighters. Leader rings a bell and turns on the lights to wake the children. Children move quickly to put on their coats, sip/button them up and sit down. Activity stops when all children have sat down.

92. Up We Go! Partners sit back to back, with their elbows linked, and try to stand up. Upon standing encourage them to sit back down while their elbows are still linked.

93. Basket of balls: Leader scatters balls across the floor. Each child (possibly paired, depending on class size) has a turn racing to put all the balls in the basket to a song before it finishes.

94. Musical bubbles: Leader sprays bubbles into the air while music is playing. The children begin popping the bubbles and when the music stops the children stop popping the bubbles.

95. Action cube/follow the leader: Each child gets a turn rolling the cube to determine what action to do. Three hula hoops are laid on the floor one in front of the other. The entire class will then act out the action from hoop to hoop.

96. Blanket feather blow: children sit in a circle holding tight to a blanket. Leader places a feather in the middle and everyone tries to blow the feather off the blanket.

97. Partner game: when the music starts, the group mingles. When the leader says, "find a partner", everyone finds a partner and holds hands. When the music stops, everyone

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lets go of their partner and mingles again. Encourage finding a new partner each time.

98. Car wash: Leader picks the first "car (child)". Divide the rest of the group into two lines facing one another. The "car" walks between the two lines while others pretend to "wash" it (bubbles and pom-poms), spray it, and dry it (towels). The car chooses the next car and takes its place. Repeat until all cars are "clean".

99. Roll around: Children stand in a circle holding a blanket with a hole in the center. Everyone works together to try to get a ball through the hold in the middle.

100. Eye contact: children sit in a circle. Each child makes eye contact with another child and they exchange place with that child. Silent activity.

101. Bicycle built for two: children lie in pairs on their backs with their feet touching in the air. The leader begins to play music and the children "pedal" their "bicycle". If time, the children will switch partners.

102. Band stop/start: children sit or stand in a circle and are assigned an instrument. Leader says start and stop - group follows along using their visual and listening skills.

103. Number ball: the children sit or stand in a circle and pass a ball around. The first child counts "one" out loud, and as the children pass the ball to the next person, they say the next consecutive number.

104. Touch it: with children scattered around the room, the leader call out a color, shape, letter, and object to touch and the children to it and touch it.

105. Limbo: Leader will play music while children line up and one at a time go under the rope. After everyone has had a turn the leader will lower it slightly and repeat.

106. This is my friend: Stand in a circle holding hands. Raise the hand of the child standing to the right and say, "This is my friend, _____". Then that child duplicates the activity to the next person until everyone in the circle has hands raised. When all hand are raised and everyone is introduced then the class takes a bow.

107. Musical chairs: Equal ratio of chairs to children is placed in the middle of the floor. Children walk around the chair to music and when the music stops they find an empty

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chair to sit.

108. Name exchange: Each child calls out another child's name and exchanges places with them.

109. Scoop game: See how quickly each child can pick up scattered balls on floor in milk jugs without using their hands. Or, pair children up and have them face one another with a scoop (gallon milk jug cut in half and taped for safety) in their hands while tossing a tennis ball to one another with using hands.

110. Happy/sad feeling game: Each child is given two small plates, one with a happy face and one with a sad face. The leader states a scenario and asks the children how they would feel. Each child then holds up a happy or sad plate without speaking.

111. Where's the bone: Children sit in a circle. Each child has a turn hiding a dog bone with other children's eyes closed. Everyone opens their eyes and sings "Doggie, doggie where's your bone? Someone stole it from your home! Who stole our doggie's bone?" Then the child with the bone says, "I do" then children close eyes again and that child passes it to another child who hides it and so on.

112. Dog Train: Children line up with hands on each other's waists. A handkerchief is tied through a loop of the last child's pants or another safe place. The child in front must work with the other children to take the tail off without breaking the chain.

113. Ice Skating: Leader tears off sheets of wax paper or plastic from laminator to place beneath feet. Leader plays fun music and children skate while taking care of self and others.

114. I Spy: (small group) Tell the children "I spy with my little eye, something that is green (or round, skinny, tall, or whatever)." Give the children a few moments, countdown from 10-zero while they walk quickly to touch the object before the teacher reaches zero. Take turns spying and walking.

115. Snake in the Grass: (4 rubber snakes) Hide the snakes in different places around the yard or classroom. When the teacher says, "Snake in the grass!" the child must walk quickly to find the snakes and bring them back to you before they slither away.

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116. Clean Sweep: (Toy rake or broom x2, leaves) Divide group into 2 teams or partner up. Give first child of each group a rake or broom. Scatter leaves and on the count of 3 each child rakes as quickly as they can the leaves into a pile and then scoops them into a trash can or basket.

117. Pretzel Race: Use a rope to mark a start and a finish line. Have children line up along the start line. At your signal, have each child lift one leg and wrap it around the other leg, cross arms in front of body, and hop to the finish line.

118. Inside, Outside: Use a rope to form a large circle. Place beanbags inside the circle. Choose 2 children stand inside the circle. All other children stand outside (must stay in one place - stuck) the circle. At signal, children inside the circle begin to toss the beanbags outside the circle. Children outside then try to catch them and throw them back. When time is up, count the number of objects inside the circle and outside.

119. Hoops: Lay Hula-Hoops on the floor in a row so they touch one another. Roll the Action Cube to select a movement and have child move through the hoops that way. Variation: Play music and have children move to the beat.

120. Body Bowling: Set pins or soda bottles so they form a circle or row. Children take turns lying down in the center of the circle and roll outward to topple the pins.

121. Towel Trampoline: Have children pair up and hold each end of a towel. Place a tennis ball on the towel and have them practice tossing and catching it in the towel. Have them count how many times they can bounce the ball on the towel before it drops.

122. Upset the Fruit Basket: Arrange chairs facing inward in a large circle. Choose one child to be the Farmer and have her stand in the center of the circle while all other children sit in the chairs. Give each child one of our fruit names: apple, orange, strawberry, or banana. The Farmer then calls out a fruit ie. Bananas. All the bananas scramble to exchange seats with other bananas while the Farmer tries to grab an empty seat. If she gets a seat, she becomes a banana and the banana without the seat becomes the Farmer.

123. Stack the Beanbags or toilet paper: Divide into 2 teams and have children sit side

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by side in a row. At one end place an equal # of beanbags. At your signal, the first child in each row picks up a beanbag and passes it to the next child - down the row. The last child stacks the beanbags. When the last beanbag is stacked the team sits. Variation: form lines - pass over heads or between legs.

124. Walking Fun: How many ways can children walk? Have them try walking like a robot, baby, speed walker, giant, and ballerina. Have them think of other ways to walk and do that, too.

125. Ball Exercises: Give each child a ball. Play lively music. Have them hold ball in front and run in place, hold ball above head and bend at waist and touch floor, hold ball above head and jump in place, hold above head and sway side to side, hold with straight arms and move it in a large circle, sit with legs stretched and touch ball to toes.

126. Music and Feelings: Play different styles of music and have children move in a way that matches the music.

127. Ball Monster: Cover up with a blanket or sheet. You are the hungry ball monster! Have children roll balls, one at a time, toward you. Snatch them up under the blanket. When all the balls are gone, roll them back out and select a child to be the "ball monster".

128. Hokey-Pokey: The traditional action song. Children follow along.

129. Touching Rhyme: Helps children learn body parts. "I'll touch my hair, my lips, my eyes. I'll sit up straight and then I'll rise. I'll touch my ear, my nose, my chin, Then softly I'll sit down again." "I'll touch my ankle, my heel, my toe. I'll jump up high then crouch down low. I'll touch my elbow, my wrist, my hand, I'll touch my head and then I'll stand."

130. Musical Hugs: Play some lively music and have children dance around the room. After a bit, stop the music and have each child find a partner to hug. Play again and again. Group hugs are good, too.

131. Hide and Seek: Leader counts to ten as the children walk to find a place to hide in the classroom. "Ready or not here I go...where, oh where is our friend _____?" Child

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called stands up, says "Here I am" and walks back to circle and sits down.

132. *Group Hula Hoop Game:* Ask children to stand in a big circle, slip a hula hoop onto one child's arm and have them all join hands. They must find a way to move the hula hoop all the way around the circle without letting go of each other's hands.

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