

Play is the key way children learn about themselves, others and the world they live in. It is essential to their learning, development, health, and physical, mental and social well-being – and it's FUN! Play provides the building blocks to be ready for school.



## Songs & finger rhymes

**Singing simple songs is a great way to teach new words and phrases.**

### Did you know?

The repetitive, rhythmic pattern of nursery rhymes and action songs stimulates imitation, language and memory skills. Children learn through repetition.

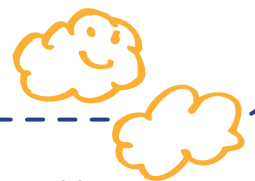
### Add Language

Songs with lots of repetition are easy to learn and remember and are a great way to learn and practise words and concepts. When the words and actions of a song match, your toddler learns those words from the repeated association e.g. in "Head shoulders knees and toes" your child is learning those body parts; in "The hokey pokey" your child is learning position words "in" and "out"; and in "Incy wincy spider" your child is learning "up" and "down". Watching Playschool can be helpful for parents to remember or learn children's songs and actions.

### Other Development

Nursery rhymes help children's early literacy and numeracy skills. Exploring new words with actions through song helps build children's word use and understanding of concepts. Many children's songs include number concepts e.g. 5 Little Ducks, 5 Little Monkeys, Baa Baa Black Sheep.

For toddlers reduce the number to 3. This is better for their level of concentration. Using a variety of children's songs gives practise at different skills. Some songs use small finger actions and develop fine motor skills e.g. Incy wincy spider; some develop gross motor and balance skills through whole body actions e.g. I'm a Little Teapot, Row Row Row your Boat, Hokey Pokey; and marching and movement songs e.g. The Grand Old Duke of York.



- Playgroup WA has a treasure trove of play activities for babies, toddlers and 3-5 year olds, for home and playgroup. These play activities cover a balanced diet of play across sensory, movement, language and thinking skill areas.

You can find them at [www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas](http://www.playgroupwa.com.au/playideas) or visit [www.facebook.com/playgroupwa](https://www.facebook.com/playgroupwa)