



## PLAY

### Can my 2-year-old play a game?

Yes! Each game in the 2-year-old collection is designed so that your child will experience what it's like to take turns, play within the rules (even loosely!), and possibly learn a new skill like rolling a die. Unlike games for older children, however, you don't win or lose any of these games—you play to explore, you play to learn, and you play to connect.



*Your child learns through imitation. Be kind and your child will learn to be kind. Be curious and so will your child.*



*The intimacy of playing with your child releases serotonin in his brain. Serotonin can make him feel calm, optimistic, and focused.*

## LEARN

### Each game in the collection

focuses on specific skills in your 2-year-old's range of capability. Each child is different and each child develops at her own pace. What one 2-year-old can do at 25 months may not be what another can do until 35 months. Sometimes you might be surprised by what your child can do. Sometimes she might be!



*Resilience is as good as an apple a day. Children who learn to bounce back more quickly from emotions like anger and fear have fewer illnesses.*



*Emotions are important to the process of logical thinking. The content of an activity or event is easier for the brain to remember and process if it is connected to an emotion.*

## EXPLORE

**Set out the game** and introduce it to your child with no expectations. If she's not ready to follow the rules, don't force it. If she's frustrated with a particular task, let her stay with her frustration and try to work through it, experiencing the satisfaction of getting it right or making it work. It can be painful to watch your child struggle, but working through challenges is one of the ways she learns to be resilient and confident. Play is exploration and your 2-year-old is an adventurer!

## CONNECT

**Games for 2-year-olds** are meant to support focused time between you and your child—because undivided attention, without screens or distractions, is one of the most important building blocks for your child's social-emotional growth and well-being. At this age, your child's most important role model is you. By playing with him, you show him what it's like to communicate, to share, to problem-solve, to take risks, and to be kind. Your love and support is what gives your child a sense of safety, helping him to develop trust and empathy, and encouraging him to have the confidence to explore his world.



*Essential math skills like matching, counting, and making comparisons start early with your child's natural interest in putting things together and taking them apart.*

AGES

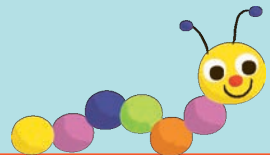
2+  
GAMES



### Heart & Brain Research

Learn what the research shows about the benefits of playing with your child in a warm, secure, and positive way.

From 24-36 months your child is growing and learning and changing. This **Developmental Skills** profile highlights some of the skills your child will most likely experience during her second year.



## GROSS MOTOR

- Stands on tiptoe
- Jumps with both feet
- Walks backward
- Balances on a curb or low ledge
- Kicks a ball
- Walks up stairs with alternating feet (but maybe not down!)

## FINE MOTOR

- Builds a tower of more than 7 blocks
- Holds and manipulates crayons with thumb and forefinger (pincer grasp)
- Turns single pages in a book (not necessarily from front to back!)
- Strings large beads
- Scribbles and can copy a circle
- Turns handles and opens lids



*Children who are taught social and emotional skills along with cognitive skills early in life have better social skills and fewer behavior problems later.*

## LANGUAGE

- Uses pronouns such as I, YOU, WE and ME
- Repeats words and phrases heard in conversations
- Sings simple lines of songs
- Asks questions
- Follows simple instructions
- Laughs at silly ideas, actions and images
- Understands physical relationships such as OVER, UNDER, IN and OUT



*Your child's brain is primed to learn language. An environment rich in language builds the listening and speaking areas of the brain.*

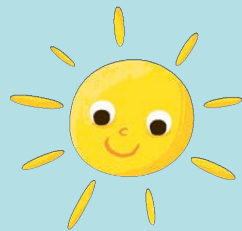
## COGNITIVE

- Matches and sorts by color and shape
- Follows one- or two-step directions
- Plays pretend
- Counts (not necessarily in order!)
- Knows where objects belong
- Points to and names body parts



## SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL

- Takes turns
- Understands sharing (though prefers "mine!")
- Likes to help
- Expresses a range of emotions
- Imitates behaviors of others
- Expresses pride in actions
- Understands rules
- Shows interest in engaging with other children



## Early Childhood Consultant

Ellen Booth Church contributed her expertise in early childhood development to Peaceable Kingdom's games for 2-year-olds. Ellen was a pre-k and kindergarten teacher before becoming an adjunct professor, educational consultant, international keynote speaker, curriculum/product developer, and writer dedicated to enriching the lives of young children and their families. Ellen's book, *Getting to the Heart of Learning* (Gryphon House), focuses on integrating social-emotional development in

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**This game** is part of a collection of simple games that encourage meaningful moments of connection between you and your 2-year-old.

# 2+

PLAY • LEARN • EXPLORE • CONNECT