

What's a fun way to help kids build better brains?

The Serve and Return Origami Game

Scientists say the way to help kids build better brain architecture is through “serve and return” interactions. A child reaches out for interaction (“serves”), and the caregiver responds (“returns”). Here's a serve-and-return game to play with toddlers and up. Find a small friend and have some fun!

Cut along edge of game and fold using instructions on back.

1 Have a thumb wrestling match.

2 Tell a knock-knock joke.

3 Try not to smile for 30 seconds. **NO SMILING!**

4 Make up a song about your friend and sing it to them.

5 Make up a secret handshake.

6 Have a staring contest.

7 Act like an animal. Ask your partner to guess what.

8 Play a game of Tic-Tac-Toe.

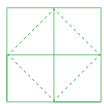
Let's

Brains

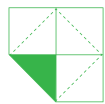
Better

Build

How to fold



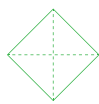
Cut the game out and place face down.



Fold all corners to the centre.



You now have a square.



Turn the square over.



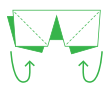
Fold corners to the centre to make a small square.



Like this.



Crease the paper lengthwise and then widthwise.



Insert your fingers.



Ta-da!

How to play

1. Get a partner.
2. Ask your partner to pick a word (Let's, Build, Better, or Brains).
3. Spell the word. As you say each letter, open and close the game frontwards and sideways to show the numbers inside. (Ex. "Let's" goes frontwards, sideways, frontwards, sideways.)
4. Ask your partner to pick one of the four numbers.
5. Count up to the number out loud while opening and closing the game.
6. Ask your partner to pick a number.
7. Open that number. Read the instructions to your partner.
8. When your partner is finished, switch roles!

