



...and when they woke up, they were Monkeys!

## Improving children's self-regulation by playing games at home!

### Sleeping Game

Children use their mats as beds and pretend to sleep when the teacher sings or chants, "Sleeping, sleeping, all the children are sleeping." They will have a chance to pretend to be different animals and are encouraged to move around the group time area. Whenever the teacher sings the Sleeping Song, it is time to return to their beds and pretend to go to sleep. As children learn the game, teachers may call on children to suggest ideas for other animals and actions.

### Red Light, Purple Light

Like the traditional game, Red Light, Green Light, a teacher acts as a "stop light" by standing at the opposite end of the room from the children. The "stop light" holds up different colored shapes to represent stop and go. Children are asked to walk, hop, or tiptoe from one end of the room to the other. They should stop when the colored shape that means stop is held up, and perform the action when the colored shape that means go is held up. After playing the basic version of Red Light, Purple Light, the teacher will use different colors, such as purple for "go" and orange for "stop" and then ask children to perform opposite actions (e.g., "go" when they see orange and "stop" when they see purple).

**Note:** Red Light, Purple Light can be played with children standing in a circle if a large enough room is not available. Teachers can choose actions that allow children to move in place in response to the start and stop cues (e.g., jumping or marching in place). Teachers should also add opportunities for children to lead by serving as the stop light.

### The Freeze Game

Children and teachers dance to music and freeze when it stops. Teachers will use a range of slow and fast songs and alternate between them and encourage children to dance quickly or slowly along with the music. Once children have practiced the basic dance and freeze skills, teachers will have children dance to opposite cues: dance quickly to the slow songs and slowly to the fast songs.

### Conducting and Orchestra

Pass out one musical instrument to each child. Use a drum stick (e.g., wooden spoon) as a conducting baton. Let children know that when you wave the baton, they can play their instrument. When you set the baton down, they stop playing their instruments. Have children play quickly when the baton moves quickly and slowly when the baton moves slowly. Once children have had opportunities to practice this game, ask children to do the opposite. When you wave the baton, ask children to stop playing their instruments and when you set the baton down, have children play their instruments again. When the game is reintroduced on later days, allow children the opportunity to lead as conductor.

### Drum Beats

For this game, teachers will use a classroom drum. Children will move their bodies (e.g., stomping, marching in place, hopping) when the teacher beats the drum and freeze when the drum beats stop. Actions can be performed while children move around the room or in one place depending on the space available. Teachers will ask children to move quickly to fast drumming, slowly to slow drumming, and freeze when the drumming stops. Once children have practiced these skills, teachers will ask children to respond to opposite cues (walk slowly to fast drum beats and quickly to slow drum beats). For example, teachers can ask children to stomp their feet along with slow drumming and do jumping jacks along with fast drumming.

