



# The Power of Playing Peek-a-Boo

**How can playing Peek-a-Boo benefit my child?** Peek-a-Boo lays the foundation for a vital cognitive concept known as "object permanence." In the early months, babies are still learning that objects continue to exist even when they are out of sight. When parents or caregivers hide their faces during Peek-a-Boo, infants experience the joy of rediscovery when the face reappears. Through repetition, babies grasp the idea that just because something is hidden, it doesn't cease to exist. This new-found understanding is essential for memory and problem solving later in life.

**Which skills can playing Peek-a-Boo help build?** Peek-a-Boo promotes essential social skills, including turn-taking and reciprocity. As babies develop, they learn that they can influence the game by hiding and revealing their faces or other objects themselves. This back-and-forth interaction fosters a sense of connection with the caregiver and enhances the child's social confidence. Additionally, the giggles and laughter during the game create positive associations with socialising, making children more receptive to future social interactions.

**Can playing Peek-a-Boo help with language development?** Language development is closely tied to early interactive experiences. Peek-a-Boo provides an excellent platform for introducing simple language cues. As you hide and reveal your face, use repetitive phrases like "Peek-a-Boo!" or "Where's Mummy/Daddy?"



Dr. Amanda Gummer  
Neuropsychologist

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Hearing these phrases consistently helps children associate words with actions, objects and emotions, supporting their language comprehension and expression.

**Cognitive benefits of Peek-a-Boo** Peek-a-Boo's dynamic nature encourages children to adapt to changing circumstances quickly. As they anticipate the reappearance of faces or objects, their brains actively process information and respond accordingly. This mental flexibility lays the groundwork for more complex cognitive skills, such as problem-solving, decision-making, and creative thinking.

The power of playing Peek-a-Boo with young children extends far beyond its entertaining nature. This delightful play pattern offers a myriad of developmental benefits, from building object permanence to fostering social skills and language development. By engaging in interactive games like Peek-a-Boo, parents can actively contribute to their child's cognitive growth while creating lasting bonds and cherished memories.

## About the author

Amanda is the CEO of the research consultancy [Fundamentally Children](#) and [Dr Gummer's Good Play Guide](#) - a consumer-facing review site for children's toys, apps, learning and baby products.

She has a PhD in neuropsychology, a Postgraduate Certificate in Higher Education, over 20 years experience working with children and families and is widely considered as the UK's go to expert on play, parenting and child development.



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