

## Street games

Children all over the world, in all sorts of situations, find ways to have fun together. For the young, and the young at heart, family groups and support bubbles, these street games are real games played by children who live, work, sleep (and play!) on the streets. Play some of them together and see which is your favourite.

For those of you unable to meet in person, please let us know if you have been able to adapt any of these games to play together online, and send us a screen shot!



### Hit the Coin – Brazil

You will need:

- A dowel rod or bamboo cane (Use anything that will stay upright by itself!)
- 10 coins
- 1 small object (bottle cap, toy soldier etc)

How to play

1. Stand the dowel or bamboo upright in dirt or sand.
2. Draw a 15 cm circle around the base of the dowel.
3. Carefully place the small object on the top of the dowel.
4. Players stand 1.5 m away from the dowel and take turns trying to knock the small toy off by throwing a coin at it.
5. The player who knocks the toy completely out of the circle wins.



### Big Snake – Ghana

1. The object of the game is for the snake to catch the other players.
2. Mark out a space 3 m x 3 m – this is the snake's 'home'.
3. Choose one player to be the snake – the snake stands in its 'home'.
4. The snake has to leave its home and try and catch the other players.
5. When a player is caught, he or she must join the snake in its home, join hands, and the two continue the chase.
6. As players are caught the snake gradually grows longer. Only the players on either end of the snake may tag a runner. The player first chosen to be the snake makes decisions as to which players should be at the end and who should be chased next.
7. Should the snake break because the players let go of their hands, the players being chased may tag the snake and thus force it to return home.
8. Once back home, the snake must regroup and begin the chase anew. The game is over when all players are caught.
9. When the snake becomes long enough it may try to encircle the players being chased. However, the runners who are encircled can break the snake, by tagging one of players who is not at either end, thus causing it to return home and giving them a chance to scatter.





## A Fight of Roosters (or the Rooster dance) – Brazil

### You will need:

- several handkerchiefs or pieces of cloth

### How to play

1. Ask the children to get into pairs.
2. Give each child a handkerchief or other piece of cloth, and tell them to tuck it into a pocket or belt loop so that it is hanging out.
3. The children then place their right arm across their chest, and hop around on their right foot.
4. They must use their free left arm to try to steal their opponent's handkerchief and so win the game.
5. If their left foot touches the ground, or their right arm unbends, they are disqualified.



## Little Parrot (Mexico)

### You will need:

- A small object to represent the "little parrot"

### How to play

1. The object of this game is to follow the pattern of passing the "little parrot" without laughing or making a mistake.
2. The leader and the children sit together in a circle.
3. The leader starts the game by turning to the player sitting on their left, offering them the object and asking, "Would you like to buy this pretty little parrot?"
4. The player then responds: "Will it bite?"
5. The leader answers: "Why, no, it will not bite!" and passes the "little parrot" to the player on their left.
6. This player then turns to the player on his or her left (the next in the circle), and asks: "Would you like to buy this pretty little parrot?"
7. The third player asks: "Will it bite?" When the second player is asked this question, he or she must not reply. Instead, he or she must turn to the leader and ask, "Will it bite?"
8. The leader answers: "Why, no, it will not bite." The second player now turns to the third player and repeats, "Why, no, it will not bite," and passes the "little parrot" to him or her.
9. The game continues with questioning always going back from player to player until it reaches the leader. The answer: "Why, no, it will not bite," is repeated to the player holding the little parrot. Should a player laugh or forget to pass the little parrot, he or she is disqualified.
10. To make this even more difficult, the leader can send two little parrots at a time – one to their left and one to their right.



## Semut, Orang, Gajah (Sumatra, Indonesia)

1. Two players pump their fist up and down to the count of three.
2. On four, they straighten their arm and give one of three signs:
  - a. Pinky out is “ant” (semut),
  - b. Index finger out is “man” (orang),
  - c. Thumb out is “elephant” (gajah).
3. The elephant beats man because it is stronger.  
The man defeats the ant because he can step on it and squash it.  
The ant beats the elephant by crawling into the elephant’s ear, biting it, and driving it crazy!
4. If players make the same signs, they go again.
5. Two out of three wins.

## Chat

Talk about the games. Did you enjoy playing them and why? Did you find them easy or difficult? If you go to school, could you imagine playing them with your friends in the school playground?

These games are played by children all over the world. Our children might play them in their school playground or in their back garden, but there are children around the world playing them on the pavements, under flyovers, on railways stations, or on rubbish dumps, in slums and in sewers.

## Pray

Spend some time praying for children around the world who have to live, work and sleep on the streets.

- Pray that they will know that God knows them and loves them.
- Pray that they would have food, water, clothes and somewhere safe and warm to sleep.
- Pray that they would be able to go to school, and learn and play with other children.
- Pray that they would have good friends and get to know adults who will help them and look after them.