



Guard the Shadow Treasure

The shade is your territory - protect the treasure!

Helps Your Child Grow



Gross Motor

Watching the boundary between light and shade while speeding up, slowing down, and stopping gives your child practice using visual information to control their body.



Cognitive Self-Regulation (Executive Functioning)

Remembering to stay in the shade, even while excited about the chase, gives your child practice following a rule and controlling an impulse.

Steps

- Find an outdoor spot with a clear boundary between sunshine and shade. Place several of your child's toys in different parts of the shade. Explain that these are treasures hidden in the shadows. Your child is the guard, and you are the thief.
- Agree on the rule: your child must stay in the shade. You begin in the sunshine and enter the shade to steal a toy. While you are in the shade, your child can chase you. Once you return to the sunshine, they must stop.
- Start the game. Dash into the shade, pick up a toy, and deliberately run around there for a moment so your child can chase you.
- As you approach the sunny area, remind them, "I'm in the sunshine now. You can't catch me!" This helps your child remember the rule and stop at the boundary.
- If your child runs into the sunshine while chasing you, say, "You ran into the sun, so your shadow power is gone! Go back to the shade, pat your shadow, and keep playing."

Tips

- While the rule is still new, give an early cue at an important moment: "I'm coming into the shade. I'm going to steal the monkey!"
- When your child chases you, run slowly enough for them to catch you. Return the toy and pretend your mission failed so they can enjoy their success and stay involved in the game.

Observations

- ☐ Stops before stepping out of the shade
- ☐ Stays in the shade while trying to catch you