



Joyful songs for lycra play in the early years

Introduction

As part of our Let's Play programme our programme lead and early years music specialist Kate Maines-Beasley has recorded several songs that she uses when working with lycra in the early years. This resource is for early years practitioners, teachers, music practitioners, parents, family members and anyone with an interest in early childhood studies.

We hope you enjoy using these resources with the babies, toddlers and children that you work or care for.



Lycra swing

Rock-a-bye baby (trad lullaby)



Original words:

Rock-a-bye *baby on the tree top
When the wind blows, the cradle will rock
When the bough breaks, the cradle will fall...
(Pause, let anticipation build)
And down will come *baby, cradle and all

Adapt:

*Adapt for the child in the lycra, sing their name instead of the word baby

What you do:

You need to know the child well to offer this. Work with another adult. Protect your back, and do not do this activity if it will cause you pain/damage. Remember that it requires huge bravery and trust in you, for a child to decide to have a lycra swing. They are literally placing themselves in your hands.

Spread the lycra onto a soft flooring, I find padded mats are ideal. You need a larger sheet for this. Ask the child to lie in the middle. Ensure there is lycra underneath their head and feet. One adult at their head, one at their feet, gently pick the child off the floor, using the lycra bunched in your hands.

Sing rock-a-bye baby slowly as you gently swing the child from side to side. Encourage other children to hold on, only if they are able to do so gently and with care. Leave a pause after the line 'when the bough breaks the cradle will fall', then gently and slowly lower the lycra, supporting the child's head on the way down if required. Make sure you give the child lots of praise for being brave and having a go.

This works with all ages 0 - 5 yrs. Take extra care with babies. I have used this to help to settle babies who are experiencing separation anxiety in their setting. We got a baby off to sleep doing this, as they felt safe and 'held' by the lycra. This provided more security for them than an adult in this instance.

Lycra song (tune of comin' round the mountain)

(Uke chords F maj, C maj, B \flat maj)
(^age 3 +)



Learning benefits:

Working with a group of children with a piece of lycra offers opportunities for:

- Communication
- Turn-taking
- Sharing
- Physical development
- Shared focus and attention which supports speech and language development

Original words:

There are *lots of stars bouncing on the cloth* x 2
There are lots of stars bouncing,
lots of stars bouncing,
lots of stars bouncing on the cloth

Singing aye aye yippee yippee aye x 2
Singing aye aye yippee, aye aye yippee,
aye aye yippee yippee aye

Choose different things to put in the middle and bounce on the lycra. Soft is best for safety. One soft toy/puppet works well too.

I find that this activity works best with a smaller group. I need an extra adult to make it work. It requires strength and dexterity in both hands to hold on to taut lycra.

We have fun working together and counting how many bounces it takes until every last star has bounced right off the lycra. This usually leads to lots of laughter and smiles.

Age suitability

You could do this song with younger children, but I have found that it is very hard for two year olds to keep holding onto a taut piece of lycra. This makes the physical act of bouncing an object on top impossible. Trust your judgement. You know your children best. When working with two year olds, I am more likely to play peekaboo, do ring-a-roses, or follow the child's lead, as they rarely want to sit in a circle and hold onto the edge of the lycra.

Let's go underneath lycra song

Tune of brown girl in the ring



Words:

Ruby goes underneath, tra la la la x 3
Now what shape will she make?

change name depending on who is under the lycra. With a larger group and piece of lycra, more than one child can go under, provided they each have plenty of space

What you do:

Go to a separate, clear space and work with a small group, keeping to EYFS ratios. The younger the children, the more adults you need. I only get the lycra out when I am working with another adult. I work with two year olds, who often need lots of extra support to hold onto it.

Get shoes and socks off to encourage better movement play. There are so many receptors in the skin on the base of the foot, this gives children physical feedback about where they are in relation to the world around them.

Encourage the children to push up with different body parts. Have fun seeing if you can identify what they can see. This skin contact with taut lycra is great for the child's developing proprioception.

It requires courage to go underneath and have a go, so big up each child as they come out after their turn. I usually offer a high five or ten.

Can you stretch the lycra?

(tune of Whole World in His Hands)

Uke chords C/G7



Words:

Can you *stretch the lycra, in and out*? X 3

Stretch it in and out

Change words to reflect how you are moving the lycra. Take children's ideas.

Ways to move: sway side to side, wiggle fast, in and out, lift it up high and say hello (wave underneath)

What you do:

Go to a separate, clear space and work with a small group, keeping to EYFS ratios. The younger the children, the more adults you need. I only get the lycra out when I am working with another adult. I work with two year olds, who need lots of extra support to hold onto it.

Get shoes and socks off to encourage better movement play. There are so many receptors in the skin on the base of the foot, this gives children physical feedback about where they are in relation to the world around them.

Sit in a circle, encourage the children to hold on to the lycra and stretch it out so it is taught. Much younger children will find this hard, so patience is required.

Give lots of eye contact to individual children, and smiles. This physical resource is connecting them all to each other and you. Encourage laughter.

Take the children's ideas about how to use the lycra.

Encourage the children to explore how it feels on different parts of their body: hands, feet, faces, arms. Can you come up with totally different ways to play this game? Lying on your backs perhaps, or sitting on top or underneath it?

Have fun and be curious!