Numbers, Numbers, 1, 2, 3. How Many Do You See?

Ages 2+

1-20 players

5-10 minutes

Materials: fingers and hands

GOAL of the game:

to immediately recognize
finger combinations and to
name how many fingers
are being held up.

VOCABULARY words:

numbers 1-10
many (how many)
same
different

QUESTION prompts:

What did you notice
about the fingers I
held up?
Can you show me a
different way to make
that many fingers?

Setup:

Hold your hands behind your back
Play:

Chant, “Fingers, fingers, 1, 2, 3. How many do you see?” Hold up three fingers on one hand.

Wait for children to say “three” or show three using their own fingers.

Put your hands behind your back. Continue playing using different numbers of fingers. Start with 1-5 fingers. As children progress, move to 6-10 fingers on two hands.

Try to vary the ways you hold up your fingers! You can show three:

- on one hand in different ways: or using two hands:

Variation: Hold up a number of fingers on your hand(s) and ask children to hold up the same number of fingers in a different way!

What children are learning:

- This is a great game to play when you have just a couple of minutes.
- Numbers can be composed (made) in many different ways! You can make 5 with five fingers on one hand and zero on the other, or with four and one, or with three and two. These different combinations all make 5.
- This game helps children recognize that smaller numbers are part of larger numbers (e.g., that 3 and 1 are two parts of 4).