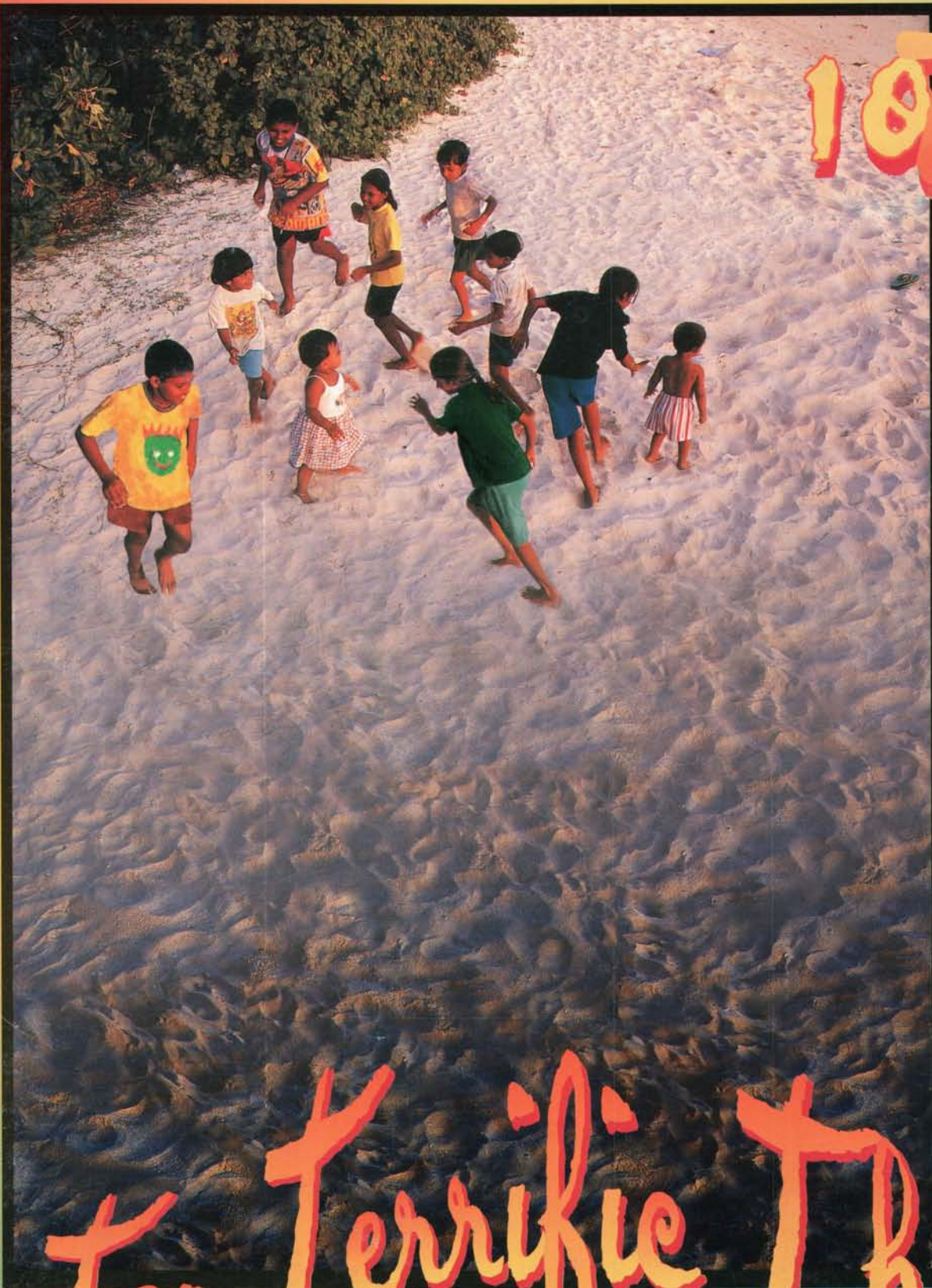


10#



Ten Terrific Things

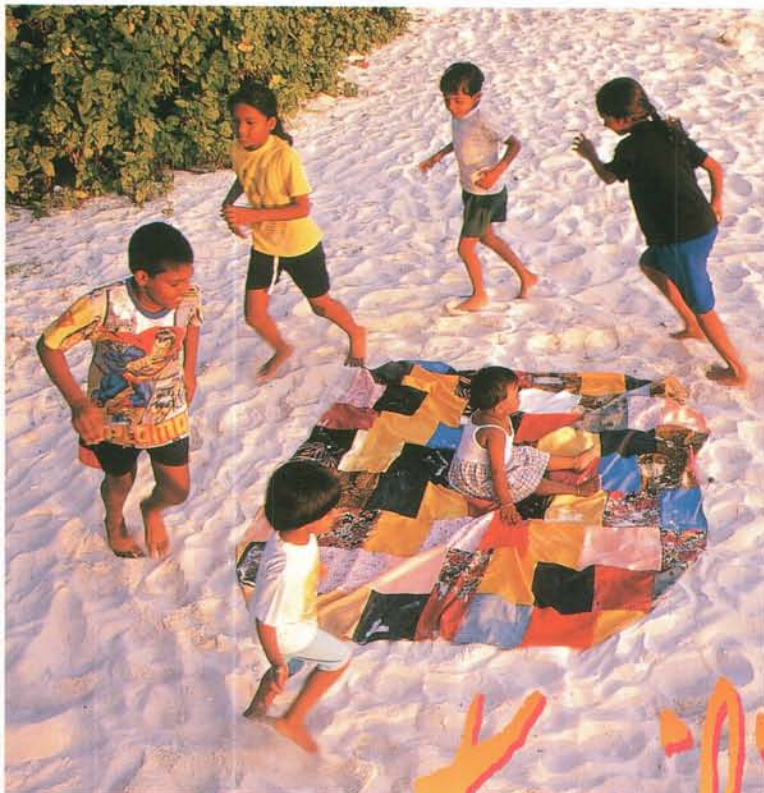
for BIG kids to do with LITTLE kids

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ



Note for BIG Kids who Care for Little Kids

This book is part of a series called **First Steps – Maldives**: an information campaign and set of materials for Maldivian children between the ages of 0-5 years and their caregivers. It is all about infants and young children and the magical first years of their lives. It is also about the critical importance of these years in developing the foundation for the child's life. What happens, especially from conception to three years of age, will determine how healthy a child will be in her mind and body for the rest of her life.



Ten Terrific Things

for BIG kids to do with LITTLE kids

You are a big sister or brother. One of the most important things you do to help your family is to watch over your younger sisters and brothers. We want to tell you the stories about Maldivian kids like you who made "watching over" lots of fun for themselves as well as for the little ones. And while the little ones were having fun, they were learning many things as well. You see, babies and all children learn while they play. And you can help your sisters and brothers get a "head start" in this world by playing games and doing simple things with them that will help their brains, bodies, hearts and souls to grow. You have a **very important role to play** and we are sure that you will be one of the most positive influences in the lives of your little sisters and brothers!

First Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

I am 11 years old and people call me the "sail girl" on the island where I live. Do you know why this is my nickname? Well – I have younger sisters and brothers. And I know it is important for children to play and move around a lot because that helps them learn many things. So – one day I had an idea. I asked my parents and neighbours for old pieces of material and I stitched a **BIG SQUARE** together to make a "sail". It is almost six feet wide. It looks so cool and colourful and didn't cost one rufiah!

Here are some of the things my friends and I do with the sail while I am watching over and playing with the little ones.



Some of my friends and I take our little sisters and brothers who are over two years old and we all hold onto the cloth. In the middle we put a big ball. Then we swing the cloth "sail" up and down while we try to keep the ball from falling off the cloth. Sometimes we put more than one ball in the middle and ask the little ones to count the number of balls that are **on** and **off** the sail. While they are playing they are learning a lot of concepts (like "on" and "off", "up" and "down") and even maths!

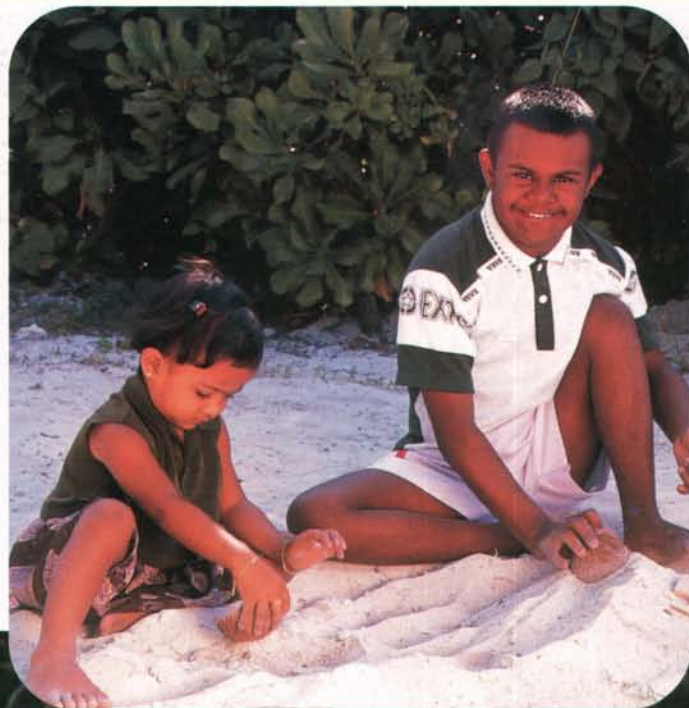


We all hold onto the cloth and make it "sail" up really high. Then we ask the little ones to run under it and not get caught when we pull it down to the ground. But even if they do get caught, we make sure that they still have fun. This game helps their bodies develop and teaches them to play with others.

What are YOUR ideas for sail games?

Second Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

I am 12 years old and I live in Vilingili. Everyday I have to watch my little sister for at least one or two hours. This is tough sometimes. But I figured out some games that we could play that are fun for both my sister and me. She likes to play with sand and we often make *boakibaa* (fishcakes) with the sand.



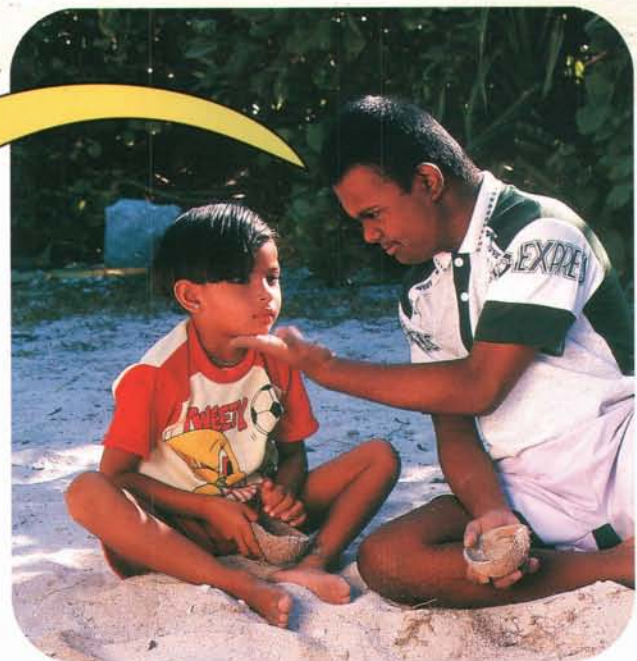
The other game we play is called **"I Spy"** and as my sister grows older, I slowly make it more difficult so that she learns new things all the time. My mother calls this the "game that grows with you". Sometimes it is colours **"I Spy"** for her and other times it is things around our house, neighbourhood or on the beach. It could be shapes, people, and things high or low like birds or ants.

I say **"I spy with my two eyes something..."** and then she has to guess what it is. There are so many wonderful choices on this beautiful island of ours.

What are the things that you can "Spy" with your little sisters and brothers where you live?

Here are some examples:

- **"I Spy..."** something made from wood" (dhoni)
- **"I Spy..."** something that makes a sound in the ocean" (waves)
- **"I Spy..."** something that is high in the sky" (bird, plane)
- **"I Spy..."** something that is white like the sand and crawls" (crab)



Third Terrific Thing *for BIG kids to do with little kids*

I have two sisters younger than me. When the first one was born I was still a little kid myself and so I didn't pay much attention to her. But now I am 10 years old and getting big. So when my baby sister was born, my father asked me if I could take on a big job and help him and my mom make sure that my sister was growing healthy and strong and smart like me and my other sister.

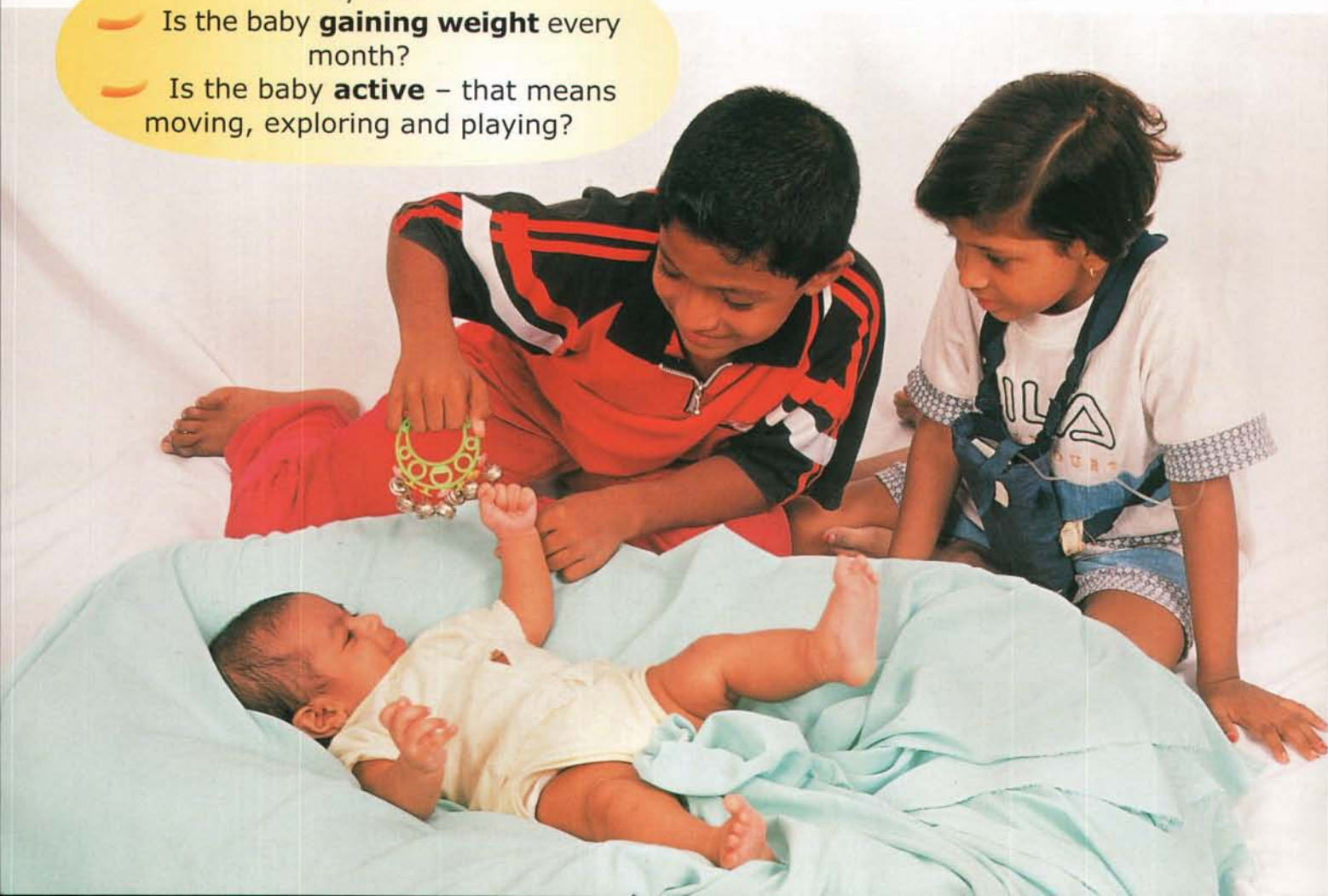
My father told me that there were two things I was responsible for – and that these were two of the most important things that tell us if a baby is growing in a healthy way in her mind and body. Do you know what they are? I will tell you if you can't guess.

They are:

- Is the baby **gaining weight** every month?
- Is the baby **active** – that means moving, exploring and playing?

So, I keep track of my sister's weight by looking at the **Growth Chart** that my mother and father keep at home and take with them when my sister gets weighed at the health centre. When she drank only breastmilk, my sister gained weight almost every month.

But one month, when she was around six months old she started to eat "solid soft food", her weight remained the same. I got worried. But my mother told me not to worry because my sister's stomach was just getting used to the new foods. Well, her stomach learned very fast because now she loves almost everything we give to her, even lots of vegetables and fruits! And once again, she's gaining weight every month! It's fun to watch my sister grow.

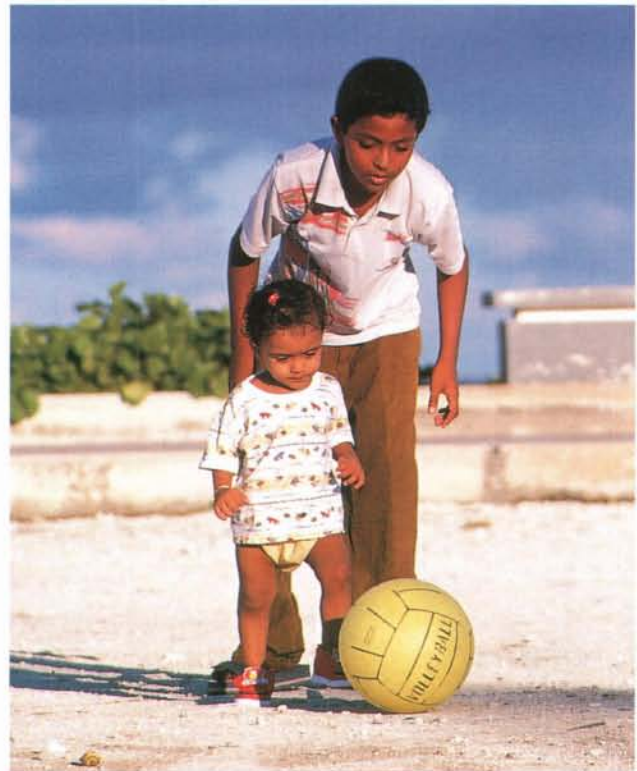




As my sister grew and grew, I began to teach her more difficult things. Now she is learning to kick a ball and to run. Sometimes I let her catch me when she runs and I tell her what a good football player she will be when she gets older.

I used to think that these were little things that didn't mean a lot. But my family tells me that I am the best teacher my little sister has and that she will be stronger and brighter and able to learn more **just because of me**. Isn't that terrific?

The second thing I watch is how many new things my sister is learning to do with her body. I help her to learn these things. When she was tiny, I held a bell on one side of her body and rang it until she turned her head to that side. I did the same thing with her eyes when I held a toy on one side and watched her eyes move as I moved the toy to the other side of her head. My sister did both of these things. But if you try this with your little sister or brother and they can't do it – please tell your parents and they can get the baby's eyes or ears checked.



Can *YOU* keep track of your little sister's and brother's weight and how much they move and learn?

What games can *YOU* play with them?

Fourth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

All
three
of us
are
friends...



In school, we talk about
how we all want to **be
creative.**

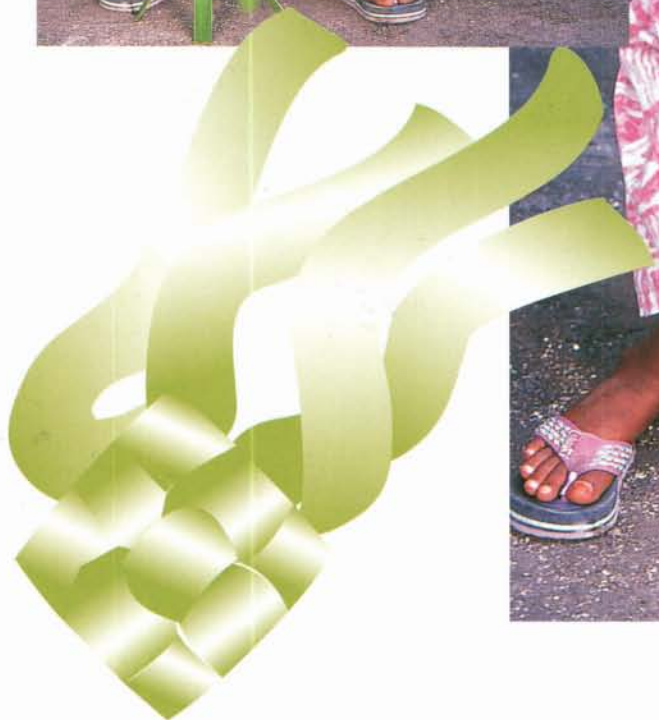
And do you know what?
**We are already
creative.**

We all share our creative ideas of what
we do with our little sisters and brothers.
We think of a new thing every week.
But we have one rule: we can only think
of ideas that **don't require any money.**

Here are some of our creative ideas:

🍌 I make up new "**juha**" stories. I
love to watch my sisters and brothers
giggle and enjoy these stories. It is
important for everyone to laugh
sometimes, you know!





I make different toys for my sister with the plants, trees and shells from our island. See this ball that I made with coconut leaves? And I put some small shells inside it too. This is because my sister will be more interested in things that make sounds – and she will have her own musical instrument to play!

Fourth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids.....continued

I can't see or hear. I take my sister out and show her how I learn about things without using my eyes and ears. I touch, smell and use my body and brain to learn.

And my sister helps me with many things too – like being safe.

We both need and help each other.



What are the creative things that don't cost money that **YOU** can do with your sisters and brothers? How do **THEY** also help and teach you?

Fifth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

I have a little sister and brother and everyday I watch over and play with them. They are difficult to handle sometimes so I try to think of new and exciting games to play with them.



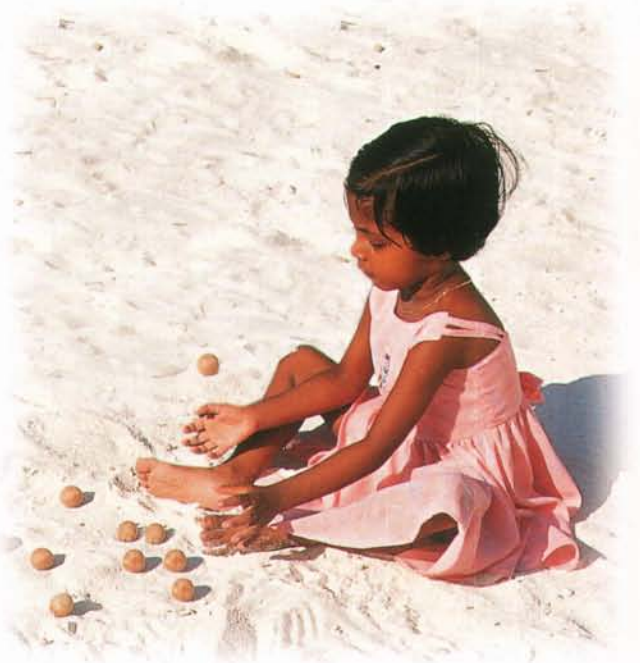
🍌 We all pick shells and old coral of different shapes and sizes. Then we practice sorting them by size, colour and shape. Sometimes we find pieces that are already in the shape of letters and some face or animal. Then I let my sister or brother "be responsible" for keeping them safe so that we can play with them again. This helps to build up their self-confidence when they know that it is their job to take care of something on their own. Sometimes they ask me to find their "secret hiding place" and I pretend that it takes me a long long time to find it.



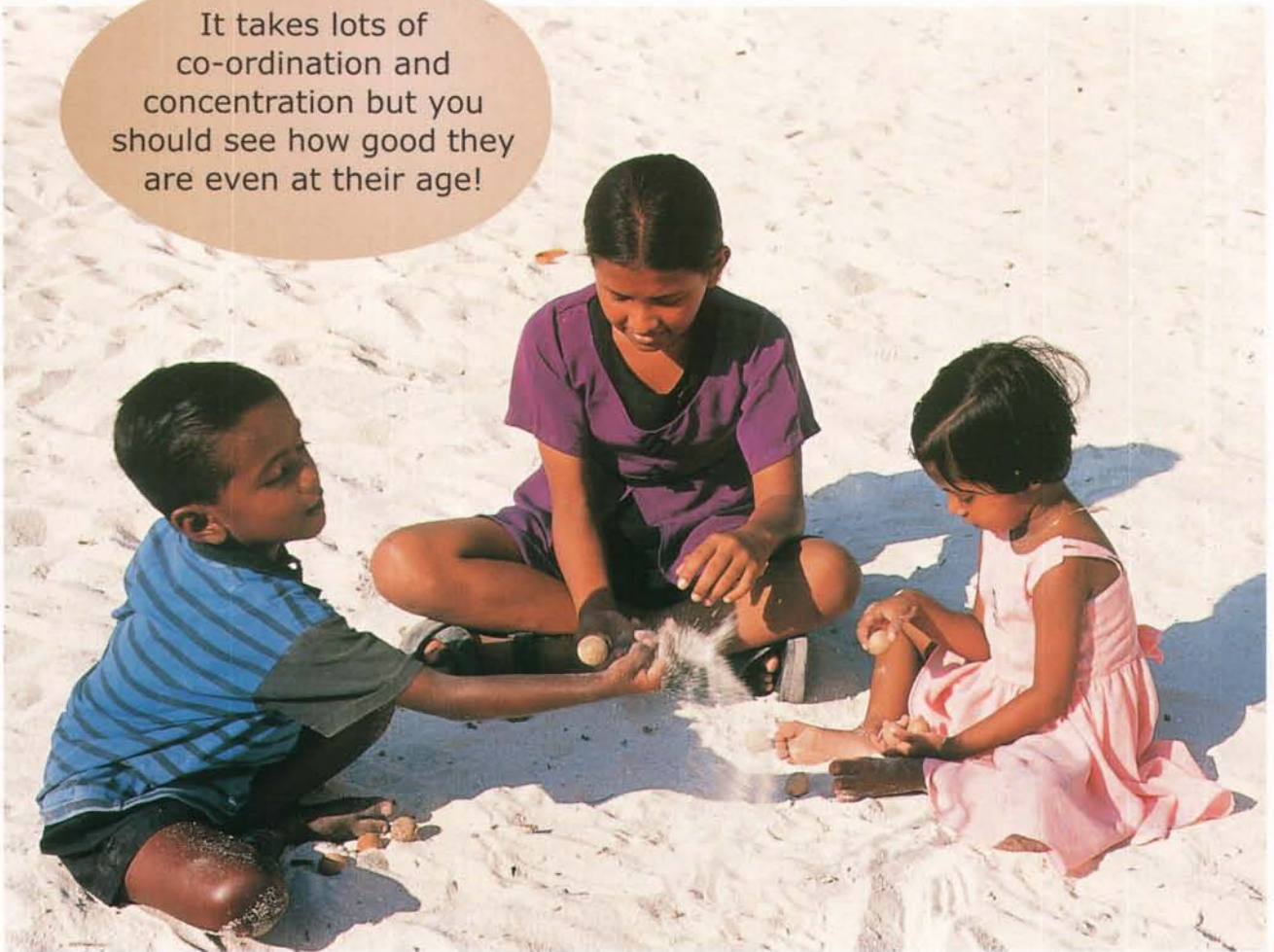
Fifth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids.....continued

We play a game of "**fas-oh**" with the seeds we collect. My brother and sister are now four and five years old but when they were smaller, my mother told me not to use really small things when I played with them because they could choke on them.

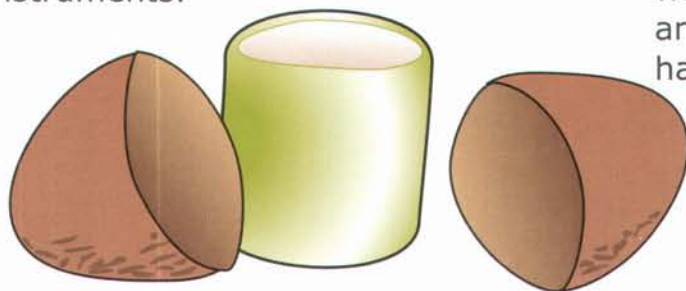
To play "**fas-oh**", one seed is thrown up in the air and we have to pick up one of the seeds that is lying on the ground and then catch the seed that we threw up in the air. Then the next time we throw the seed in the air, we pick up two seeds from the ground before we catch the one in the air. We continue with three or four or however many we can do.



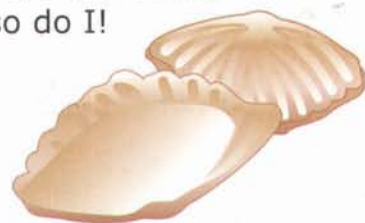
It takes lots of co-ordination and concentration but you should see how good they are even at their age!



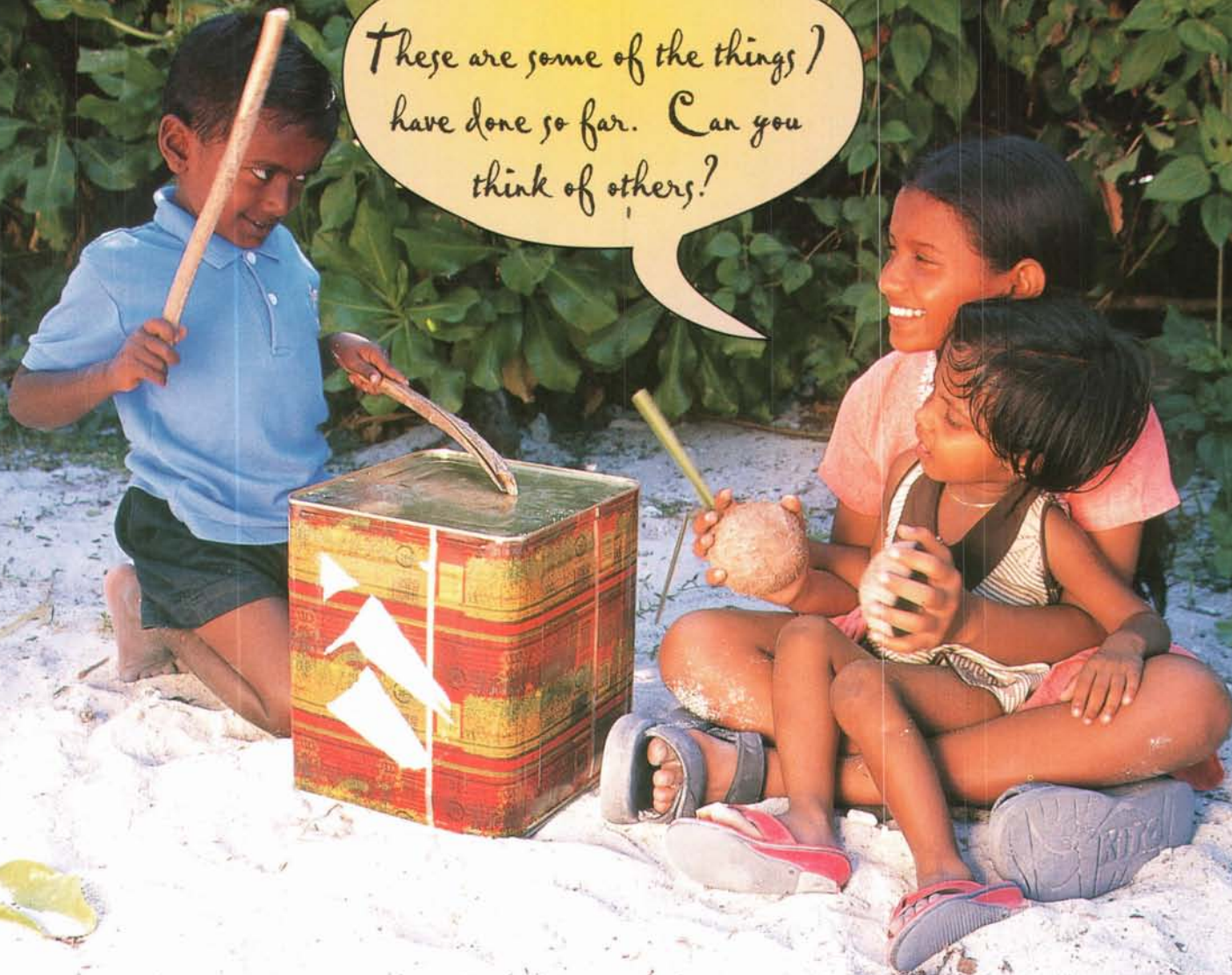
My teacher gave me some ideas one day when we were having a music class. She told me to look around our neighbourhood and find things that could be used to play games and make musical instruments.



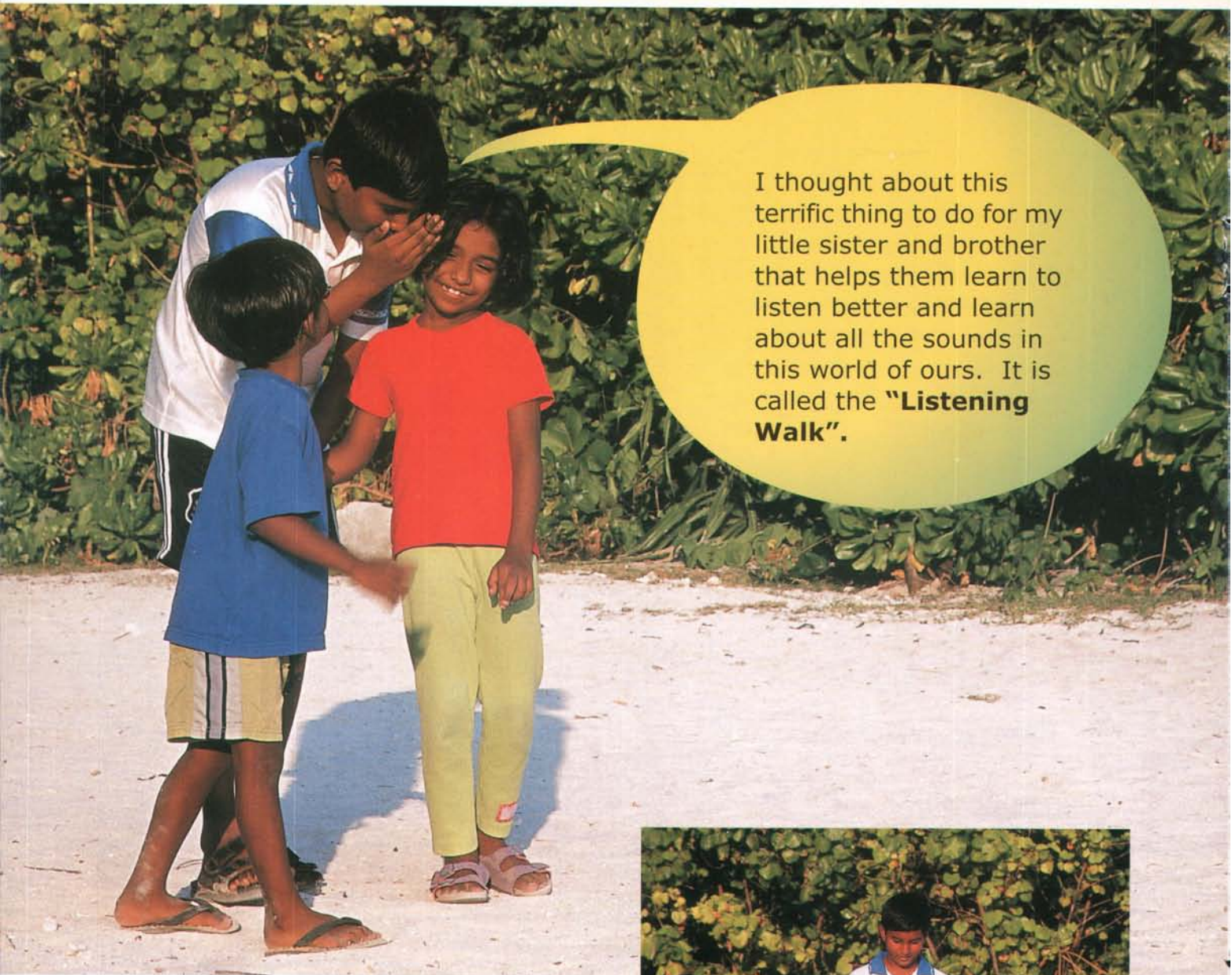
We make a **music band** with safe things that I collect – we did this at my school too. We use tins for drums, and coconut shells and banana stems to clap together to make different sounds. And we also use our bodies to clap our hands and snap our fingers. The kids really have a good time and so do I!



These are some of the things I have done so far. Can you think of others?

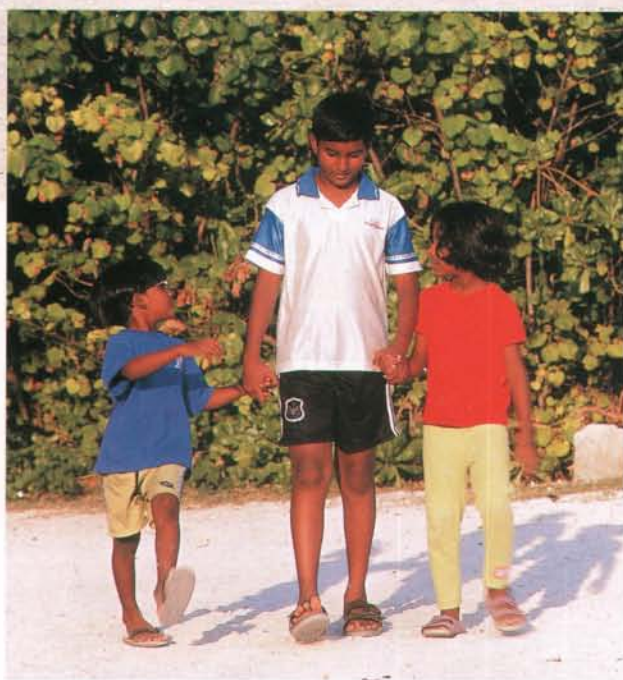


Sixth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids



I thought about this terrific thing to do for my little sister and brother that helps them learn to listen better and learn about all the sounds in this world of ours. It is called the "**Listening Walk**".

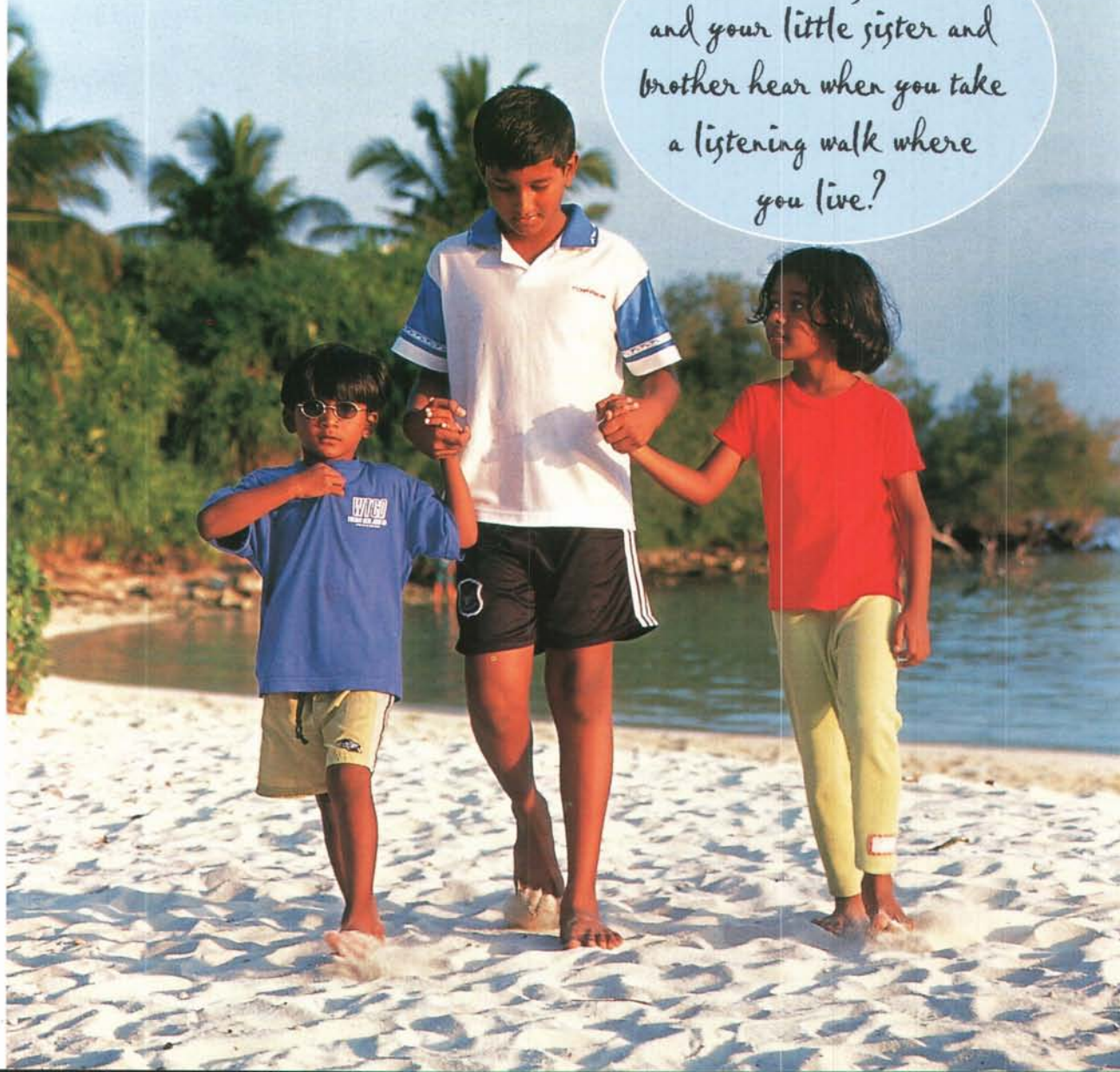
During the walk, my sister and brother and I don't talk at all. We just listen. When one of us hears something new, we stop and "freeze" and then whisper it into each other's ear. We live in Malé so when we take a walk, we hear lots of noises. Sometimes on our **listening walk** we hear a car passing, someone coughing, the prayers from the mosque, a hammer, a neighbour's voice or a door closing.



During Eid and school holidays, we go to visit our grandparents and family on the island. There our **listening walk** is really different. We hear the waves in the water, the leaves blowing on the trees, different birds, the soft scatter of a crab on the ground or the sound of a coconut being cut.

Do you know something else? I tell my sister and brother that when they are upset or angry, first they should tell me or our parents about how they feel and then we can take a **listening walk** together because it is nice and peaceful and calms us down. Yes, we all need to be quiet once in a while. And we hear so many new things every single time we take our **listening walk**.

What can YOU
and your little sister and
brother hear when you take
a listening walk where
you live?



Seventh Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

I love to play lots of games with my young sisters and brother, especially at Eid and on other holidays. The games that I play help them to learn many things: how to take turns, to use their bodies, to remember rhymes – and to have a good time.

I have my finger on has to be turned over so that the palm is facing the ground. We keep doing this until everyone's hand is facing down. Then, I start saying "*eloavalhin miloavalhin....*" again and touch each hand and this time each time I stop and touch a hand,



These are games that have been played in the Maldives for a very long time and it is important for us to remember them – and then one day, we will teach them to **our** children.

Eloavalhin Miloavalhin:

There are four steps to this game. We sit on the ground with our hands in front of us. Everyone has his or her palm facing up. I say "*eloavalhin miloavalhin saan saan bihaa bihaa naaguboa fangnagiree habeeboa eaih nagan miaih nagan pass kamah pees*" and touch each person's hand, one at a time. When I stop, the hand that

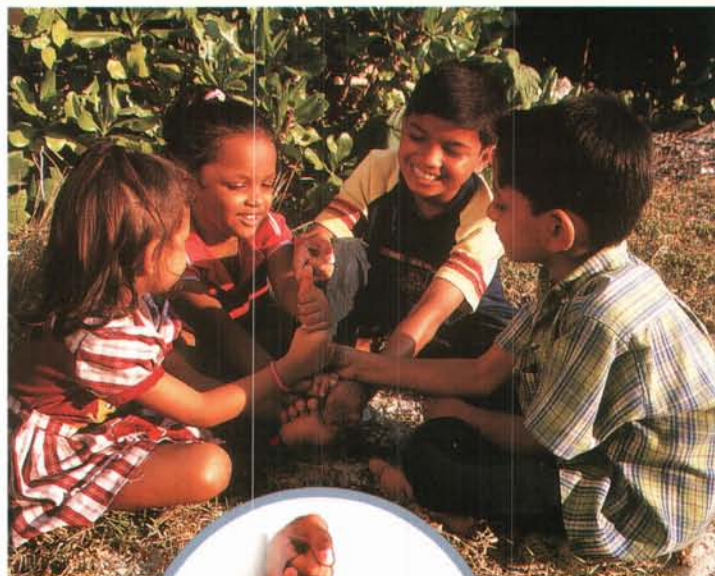
they must make a fist until everyone has made a fist.

I begin "*eloavalhin miloavalhin....*" again and this time everyone puts their hand behind their back.

Once everyone's hand is behind their back, I ask them "*koba ekkalakala*", they say "*konkalakala*" and then I say "*thage amaathakkala kala*".

After this, they must show their hands to me to "see if it is ripe or not". We repeat this over and over again until "everyone's is ripe".

Then we make a coconut palm by holding our hands together with our thumbs. My foot will be the base of the tree and one at a time, we put our hands on top of one another's. I point a thumb to each one and ask "*mikaaku rukeh*" and they will tell me that "it is mine". Then I ask "may I have one coconut?" and they say "no". Then I say, "even if you won't give one to me, I will pluck one". The top hand comes down pretending to be a coconut being plucked from a tree. Each child gets a turn "plucking a coconut" when their hand is on top.



We pretend to have a coconut scraper given by our grandfather and a coconut given by our grandmother. We pretend to scrape the coconut and it goes "*kurus kurus*". Now we all have ripe fruit that we mix with the scraped coconut. While we mix everything together we say "*modey modey*".

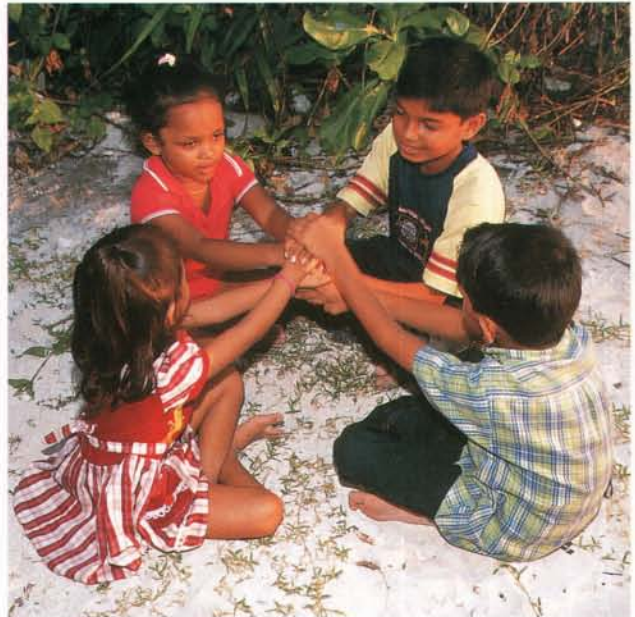


Seventh Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids.....continued

We pretend to be in grandma's kitchen which is very old. The roof is falling. We all make the roof with our hands. Then we say "*Maama maamaa badhige vettenee. Avahah nukumey*" over and over.

Then we drop our hands – grandma's "roof" has fallen down! But it "falls" on mama's leg and she gets hurt. We all give a good massage with oil to mama's leg saying "*maama faiga theyo dhamaa*" over and over. While we say this we keep rubbing one of our legs.

This is the end of the game.





— **Aleelaan Baleelaan:**

I start out as the leader of this game. I get a coconut leaf and stand in front of all the children saying "Aleelaan baleelaan faiy dhagabolhi fatheelaan fathigengos moodhulaan ariaydhoo gahuraiymaa maale mathin govaalihaa raih dhadi raih kakaakoa haalehtha kukulhetha".

Then the children say "vaththarakun joadeh" and they all run away from me.

I have to run and catch them or touch them with the leaf. The children whom I don't catch run back to the place where we began the game.



Eighth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

My parents just had a new baby. Everyday I watch while my mother and grandma give the baby a massage. I wanted to help too.

At first I would sing while he was getting a massage but then I wanted to massage him too. So, I was put in charge of his **feet!**



Do you know what I learned? I learned that a baby from the time he is born to around four months has a foot that opens and closes **like a flower!**

Really it does. When you put your thumbs in the middle of the baby's foot and massage up, their toes curl in tight – like the petals of a flower.



And when you massage on the sides of their feet from top to the bottom, their toes open wide like petals of a flower opening up.

Look at these photos if you don't believe me! It is amazing! The grown-up word for this is "**Babinsky reflex** or **sign**".

Why don't you try it too – but be gentle and make sure that your parent or grandparent is there to watch and keep the baby safe.

What interesting "job" can YOU be in charge of that helps your baby sister or brother?



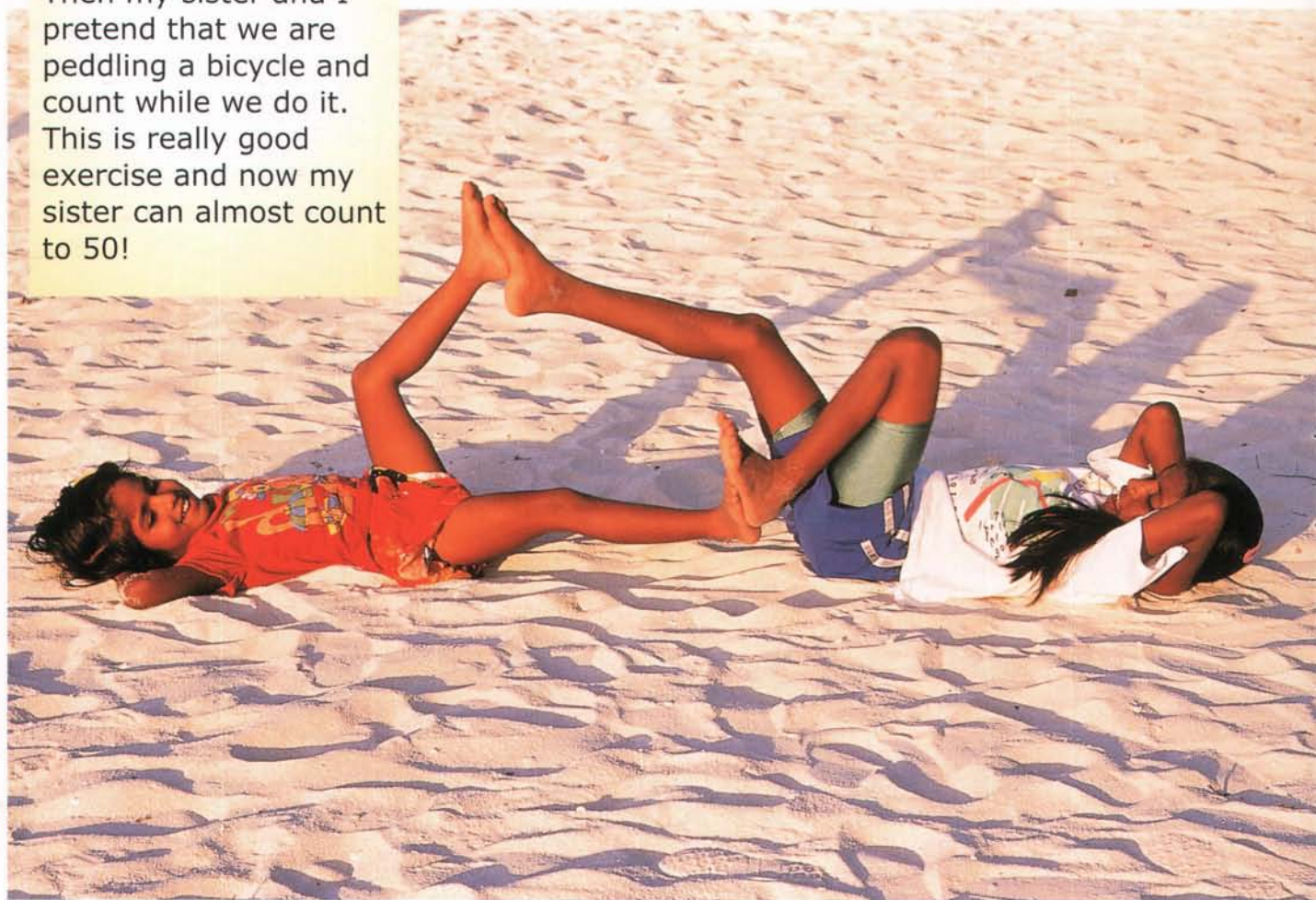
Ninth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids


I love to play sports and I hope that my sister does too when she gets older.

I learned that children's brains and bodies develop when they use the muscles of their bodies. So, just like my parents took good care of me, gave me good food and let me exercise – I do the same things now with my little sister.

I play lots of "body games" with her that teach her how to use the small and big muscles of her body. And we have lots of fun while we are doing these things.

My sister and I lie on the ground with our legs bent and feet touching each other's. Then my sister and I pretend that we are peddling a bicycle and count while we do it. This is really good exercise and now my sister can almost count to 50!



 We play **shadow games**. When the sun is out we go outside at different times of the day and run around and "catch" our shadows. We measure to see whose shadow is bigger or smaller. And I am also learning to make shadow animals with my hands and my sister loves them – as do all the kids in the neighbourhood.



I can't wait until my sister gets a little older. I am going to teach her to climb trees and play football.

What sport can YOU teach your little sisters and brothers?

Tenth Terrific Thing for BIG kids to do with little kids

My sister and I love living on our island. There are so many wonderful things that God gave us to enjoy.



And I help my sister appreciate them so that we remember to be grateful and take time to enjoy so many beautiful things. At least two or three times a week we sit on the jetty or lie on the sand and look up at the sky.

Sometimes we watch the clouds and find faces and animals in the clouds. Other times we walk around the island and find new flowers to smell, a new bird that is singing, or one person being kind to another.



And sometimes we walk on the beach and watch the sun go down – we talk about the colours and how much God loves us and how much we love each other.

Sometimes we lie under a tree and look at the sky at night and it looks like there is a star hanging from every branch.



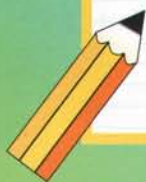
What do *YOU* love
and appreciate about
where you live?

Do you know that it is very important to tell your sisters and brothers how much you love them? This helps them feel safe and good about themselves. It also teaches them how to love you too.

More Terrific Things...

for BIG kids to do with LITTLE kids

Write down some of your ideas



This material has been developed by the ECCD production team working for UNICEF in cooperation with the Ministry of Education, Republic of Maldives.

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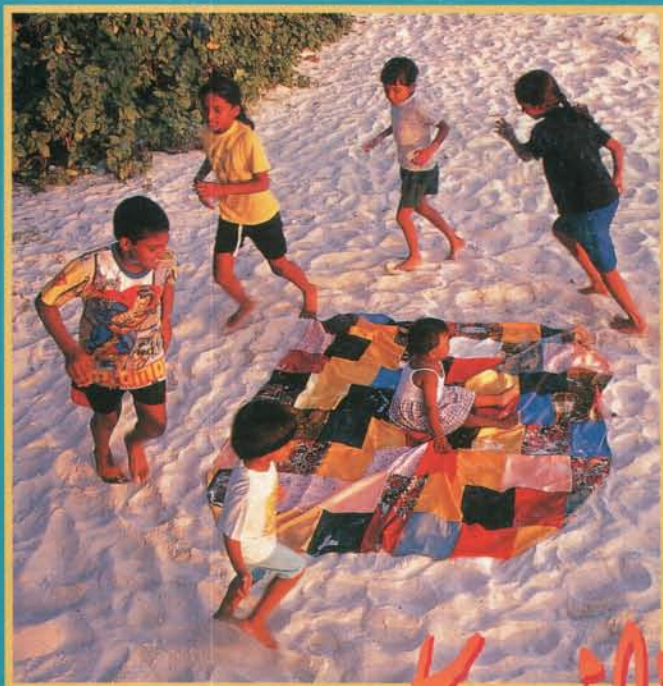
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