REST STOP BODY ROCK: 5 GAMES TO GET ACTIVE

Road trips and plane rides make for cramped, cranky kids. These quick and easy games are a great way to get bodies moving during rest stops and layovers!

1. **Mother, May I?** This variation on the classic game can be played with one or more child and involves continual participation. Facing your child, stand about 20 feet away. Give an instruction for your child to take a certain number of a certain kind of movements, such as “Take 5 steps on tiptoe” or “Take 3 jumps backward.” Your child then asks, “Mother, may I?” before doing as directed. The game continues until your child reaches you. Start again with your child acting as “Mother!”

2. **Soda-Bottle Bowling** Chances are, you’ve got empty soda and water bottles galore. Reuse them for a fun game that takes the fun of bowling outdoors! All you need are 3 or more empty plastic bottles and a ball (you can experiment with different sized balls and discuss which worked best). Fill each bottle with some water so that it has the desired weight (preschoolers and teenagers will have different levels of ability) and arrange them at a distance. Take turns “bowling” by rolling the ball to knock over the “pins.”

3. **Duck, Duck, Goose Reinvented!** This variation of Duck, Duck, Goose is played in pairs, which means a lot more activity for participants! All you need is two space markers (you can use jump ropes, chalk, or even sweatshirts and jackets). Arrange your space markers in two parallel lines, about 10 to 15 feet apart. These are the designated “safe zones.” The two players stand in the center of the space and take turns tapping each other on the shoulder, saying either “duck” or “goose.” But when says, “goose,” that player has to turn around and run toward her safety zone, with the other player chasing her. If the second player tags her before she gets to the safety zone, that partner gets to start the next round. If not, the chasing player gets to start the next round.

4. **Play Simon Says!** Simon Says is a classic outdoor game that young children love. All you need are two space markers. Invite your child to stand on one of the space markers and explain that she or he should do as you say only when the command is preceded by the words “Simon says.” Issue commands such as “Stand on one foot” and “Make a funny face”, sometimes saying ‘Simon says,” and sometimes not. If your child obeys a command not preceded by “Simon says,” he or she moves from one space marker to the other.

5. **Elbow Tag** In this challenging game of tag, players pair off, and all but two link arms. Of the two without arms linked, one is “It” and the other is the person “It” is going to chase. The child whom “It” is chasing tries to hook onto one of the linked pairs: if he succeeds, he and the child he’s linked with become a new pair and the child on the opposite side of them is set free to become the child being chased!