

THE CALLY KIDS PLAY WORLD GAMES



by the team at islington play association 2010
with thanks to all the children and
families involved

MAMBA (SOUTH AFRICA)

Type of Game

Chase and collection game

Number of Players

At least 6, but the more the better

Best location

Outdoors, with plenty of space to run around

Resources

None

Setting up

None

A mamba is a big indigenous South African snake. There are green mambas and black mambas - both are poisonous.

First, one child is chosen as the mamba. The mamba tries to catch the other children one by one, and when caught they become part of the mamba's body by placing their hands on the snake's waist or shoulders. Each new catch joins at the end and has to hold on tight as the mamba runs. Any child who 'falls off' the mamba has to sit out the rest of that round and join in the next game.

Only the person at the front can catch new children, but as the snake becomes longer it can use its body to trap children within it. They are not allowed to go through or break the snake's body.

The last child caught becomes the next mamba!

VARIATIONS:

Something very similar is played in the United States but is called the Blob. In this version, children hold hands side by side, rather than in a long chain, and any member of the Blob can capture a child. Captured children join the Blob at whatever point they were touched and, as the chain becomes longer and longer, it is harder to run without breaking it but easier to trap children in its large reach.



“I was born in Africa. West Africa. I helped my mother at home and in the shop in the afternoon. When I was thirteen I went to Barcelona and saw things that were different. In Africa for me there is much less possibility (to play). Always look after house, after sisters. I would clean the house before school, walk the cows to water. Come back from school and get more water. We no have nothing for play. We have no play in Africa. The boys have to collect the water, look after the kids, help gather food. Life here and the life there, not the same.” (Afra)