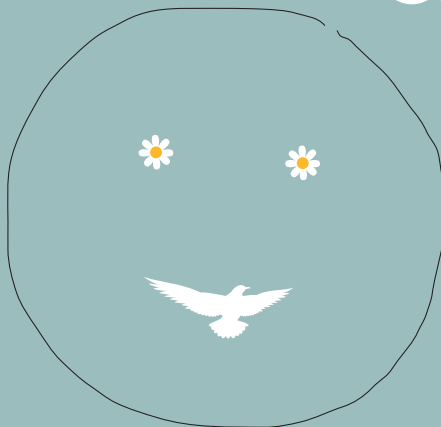




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Fit for kindergarten
Englisch

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Children need tasks that enable them to grow, role models who they can follow, and communities in which they feel safe.

Prof. Dr. Gerald Hüther

Dear parents,

Your child will soon be starting kindergarten. This is a very important time because children of this age are able to learn easily and quickly. We would like to give you some tips on how you can support your child's development.

Emotional ties are vital for small children. This is true for all cultures and families. Children naturally want to learn new things and discover the world around them. The emotional security within the family lets them take their first steps in the world.

Many children have already experienced playing in groups. For example, they have been playing with their brothers and sisters, with neighbours' children or with other children in play groups they attend; in those situations they also get to know a new attachment figure, for example and they get to know the play group leader. They return home to their parents with smiles on their faces, full of questions and things to tell them.

Your child will spend a lot of time with other children in kindergarten. This will be something new and exciting for him or her. In a group, children sometimes have to wait their turn to speak. Your son or daughter will learn that not all people think or feel the same (or are the same) and that different things are important to different people.

Children of this age learn by playing and are quite capable of understanding relationships and rules. Small children imitate the behaviour they see around them. The behaviour and conduct of their parents and other adult attachment figures is therefore very important. By setting a good example for your son or daughter by letting other people finish what they have to say, you will foster your child's powers of attention and concentration.

Dealing with themselves and others

Umgang mit sich und anderen

Your child wants to be with other children.

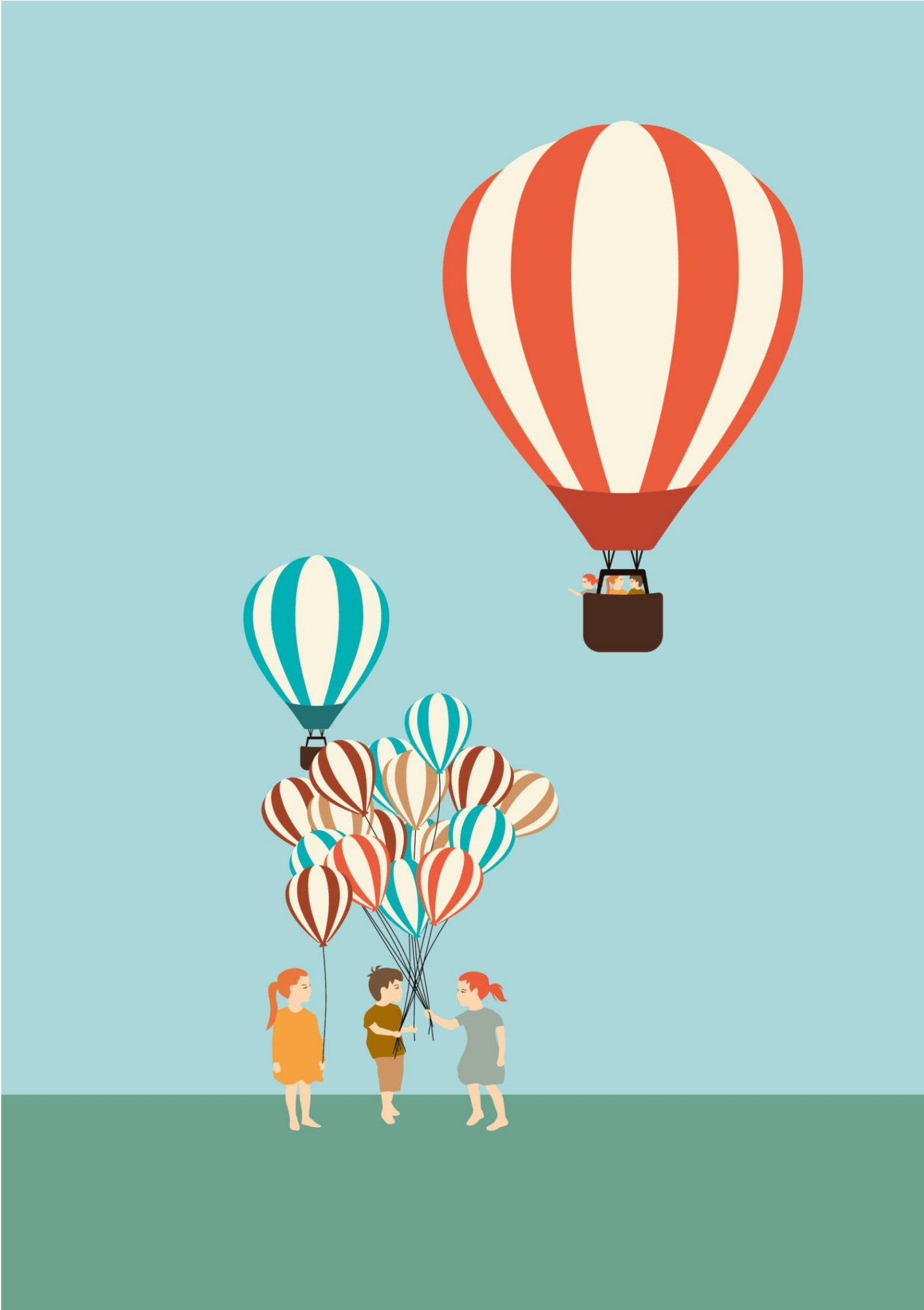
How to reach an agreement, show consideration, find their way around, wait: this is what children have to learn in order to be able to find their bearings within a group. In a play group or day care facility for children, your son or daughter can learn how to get on with other children of his or her own age. Let your child play with other children on playgrounds too, or invite other children to your home to play.

Your child wants to be part of a group.

In the large kindergarten group, your son or daughter will have to learn to share the teacher's attention with the other children in the group. Sometimes your child will have to put off a need or wait his or her turn.

Your child wants to express his or her feelings.

This is a good thing. Help your child recognise, express and come to terms with emotions. You should also teach your child that there are limits as to how one can treat other people. Just as your son or daughter wants to be respected, he or she has to learn to respect other children and adults too.



Independence and confidence

Selbstständigkeit und Vertrauen

Your child wants to do things on his or her own.

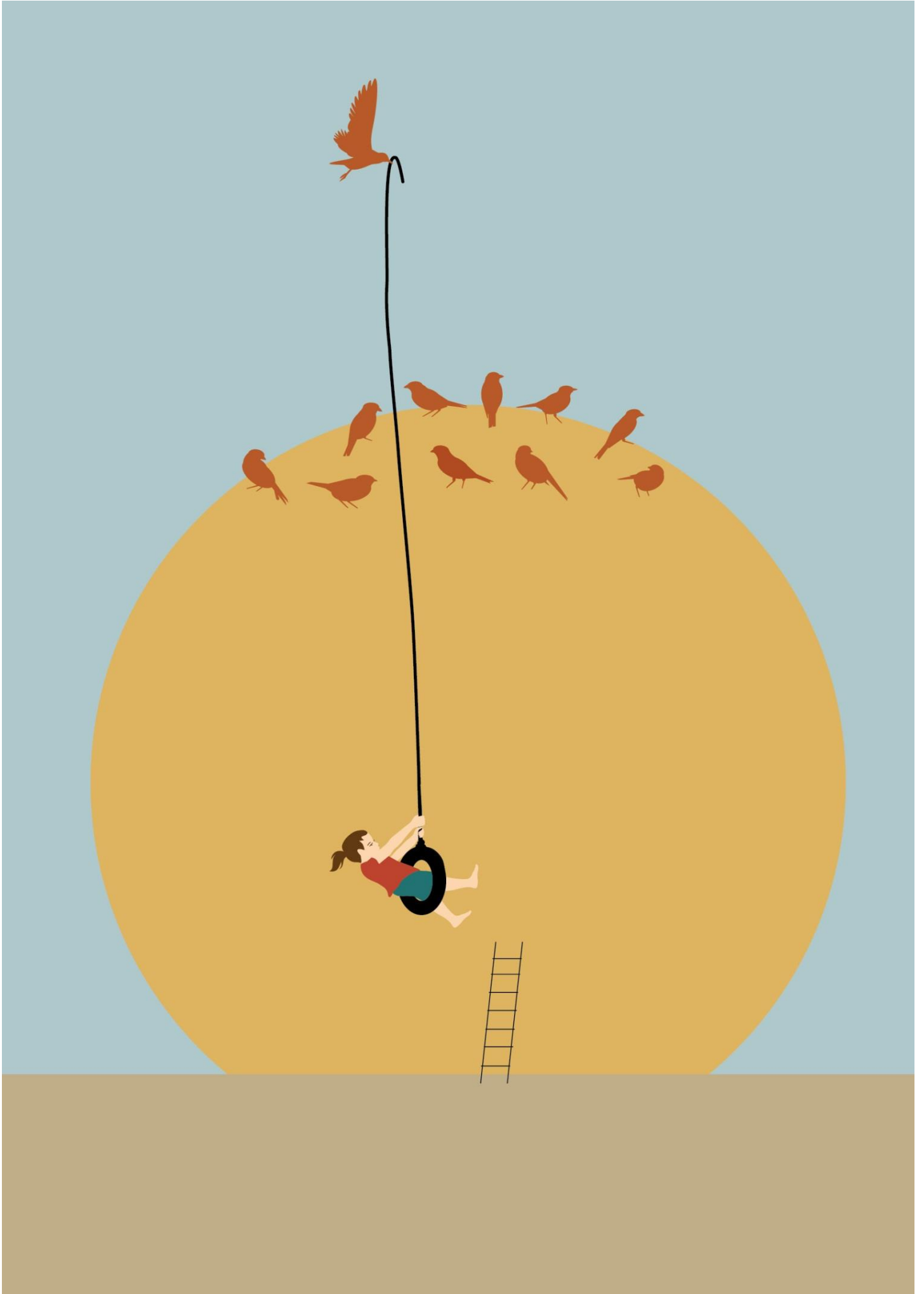
Give your child the chance to try things out and do things on his or her own. For example, give your child time to get dressed and undressed independently. Going to the toilet alone is another thing your child should practise, so that he or she can manage without help in kindergarten. Only help where help is really needed.

Your child wants to be independent.

Have confidence in your child. Encourage him or her to try again if things don't work out first time and share in their happiness when they do succeed. For example, teach your child the best way to get to kindergarten. Or set simple tasks like collecting the post from the letterbox or putting away cutlery in a drawer.

Your child wants to try things out and experiment.

Provide materials like coloured pencils, paper, chalk, glue, sticky tape or scissors for your child to play with. Letting children help with household chores or in the kitchen – preparing, cutting, stirring, washing salad – are also ways of training their skills and letting them gain experience.



Playing and learning

Spielen und Lernen

Your child wants to play.

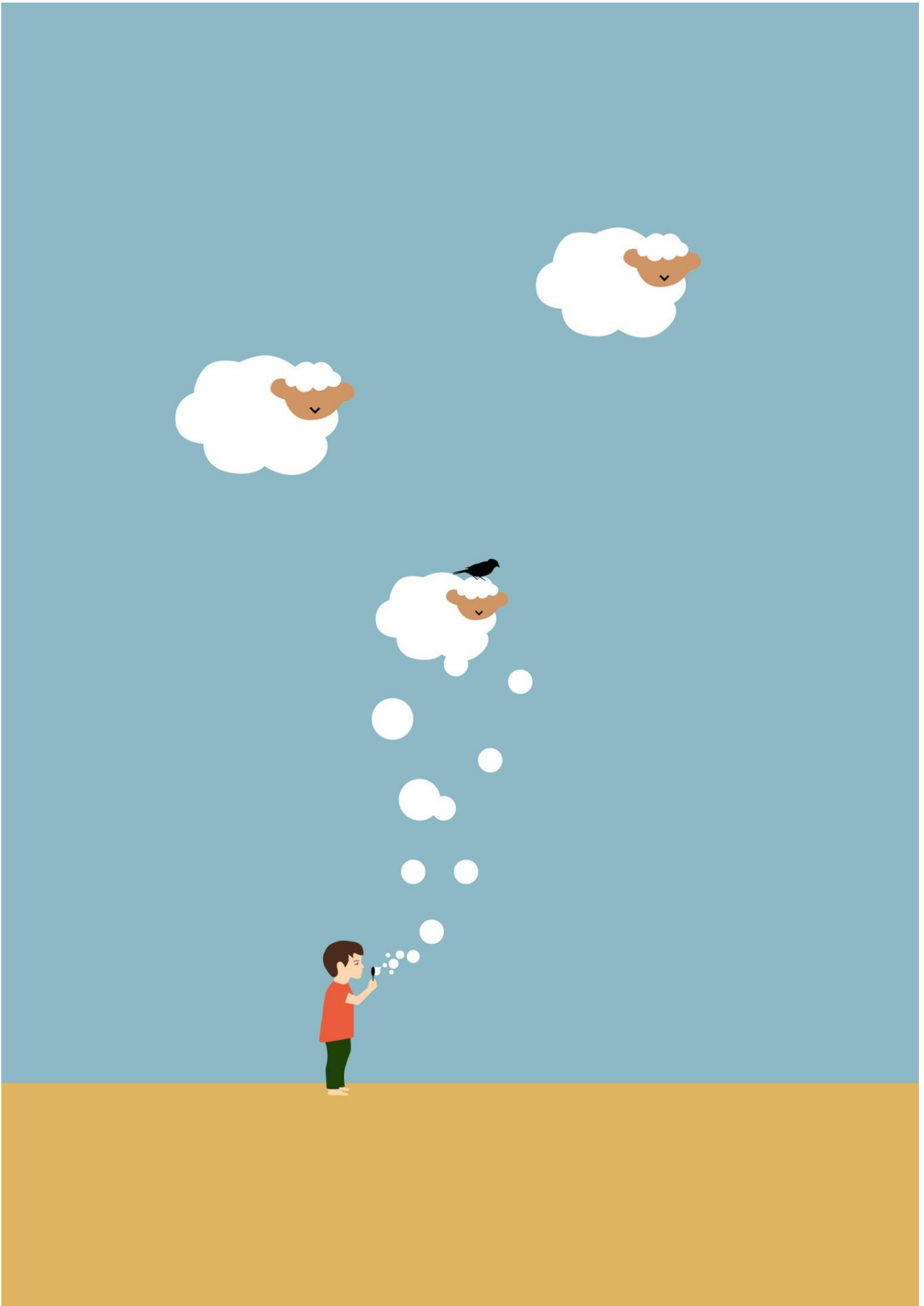
Your child wants to get enthusiastic about things and wants to be able to forget themselves when playing. Whilst playing, your child will learn how to become engrossed, how to plan something and to stick with this for a longer period of time. Give your son or daughter this freedom. Let him or her play and experiment with a variety of materials, including everyday objects. Time in which you and your child play together is also very valuable.

Your child wants to learn.

Learning means that some things work out and others do not, and this experience has to be trained and absorbed. Your child learned to walk because he or she kept getting up again after falling over. You can help by strengthening your child in everything he or she does, by praising achievements and by encouraging your child to try out new things.

Your child has wants.

It is important to want. But children do not always get what they want. Children have to learn to wait and to deal with disappointments. Frustration and anger are normal emotions. But people or material should not suffer or be damaged as a result of these emotions. The ability to put aside his or her needs at times will make your child stronger.



Communicating and being understood

Sich verständigen und verstanden werden

Your child wants to communicate.

Take an interest in what your child does and experiences and listen to what he or she has to say. Talk to your son or daughter about everyday things and explain what you are doing or what your child is seeing.

Your child wants to listen.

Look at picture books with your child, tell them stories and sing songs together. In this way children experience closeness and learn a language. Talk to your son or daughter in your mother tongue. It is much easier for children to learn a second language if they have a good grasp of their mother tongue.

Your child wants to learn language.

Small children cannot remember new words if they have only learnt them from electronic media. Children need familiar people around them who talk to them. They learn new things and words more easily from a person close to them and can use these faster.



Physical activity and sleep

Bewegung und Schlaf

Your child wants action.

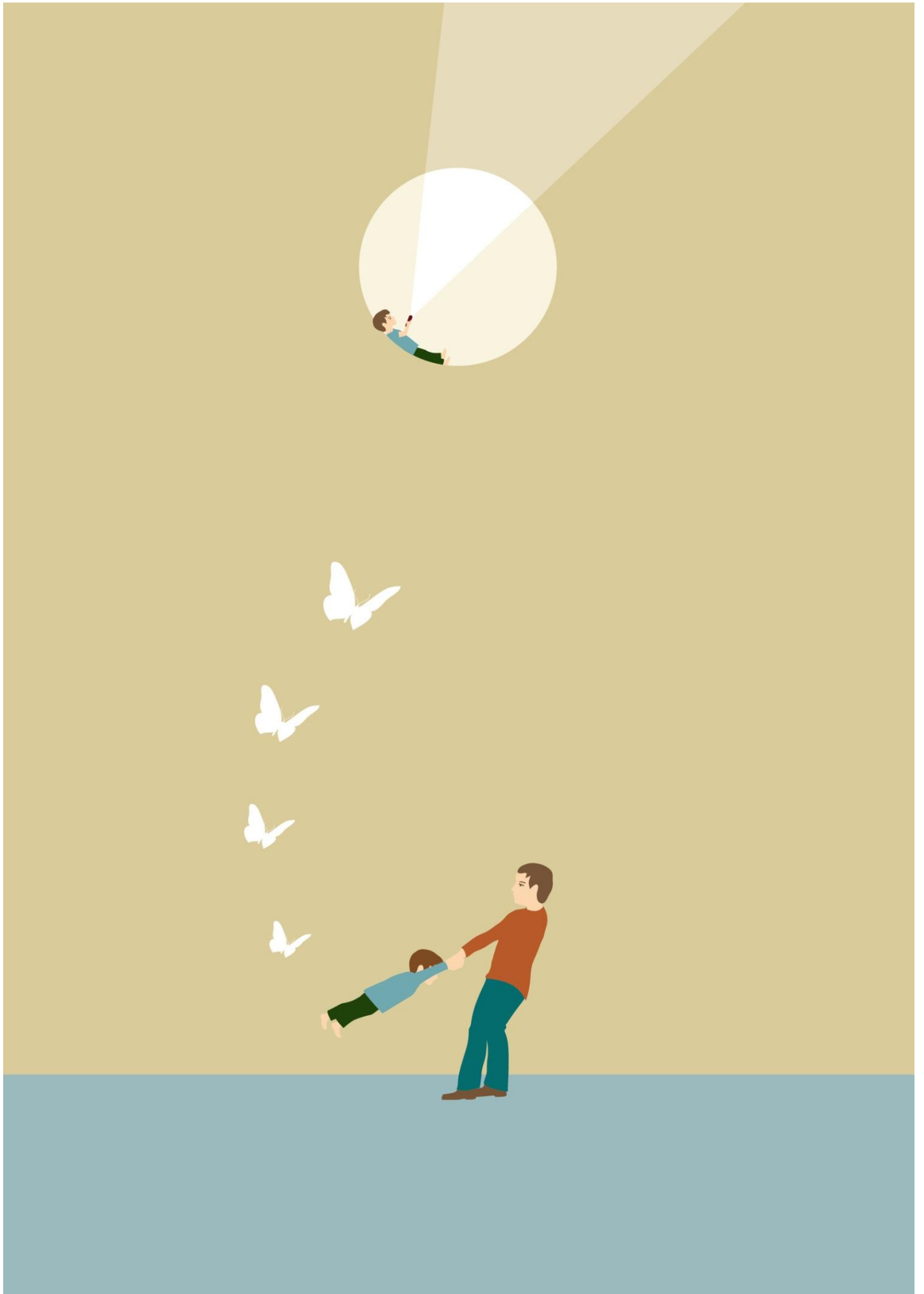
Let your child climb, balance, turn somersaults or play ball. Go outside and discover nature with your child, even if it is raining.

Your child wants to be able to get enough sleep.

To cope with the normal kindergarten routine, it is important that your child enjoys between ten and twelve hours of undisturbed sleep at night. A healthy and filling breakfast is the best way to build up their strength in the morning.

Your child wants rituals.

A regular daily routine with unchanging rituals, for example at meal times and at bedtime, gives your child a sense of stability and security.



If you would like to learn more, further information can be found at:
www.be.ch/volksschule-mediacenter

We wish both you and your child a good time in pre-school.

