

# Music for Children, Music by Children



Smithsonian Folkways Recordings

# SFW CD 45081

Compiled and annotated by Patricia Shehan Campbell  
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## Music for Children

- 1. Go Vaggaloo – Sarah Lee Guthrie 3:27**  
(Words by Woody Guthrie/Woody Guthrie Publications, BMI—music by Sarah Lee Guthrie/Sweet Milk Creek Music, ASCAP)
- 2. Little Liza Jane – Elizabeth Mitchell 2:27**  
(Arr. Elizabeth Mitchell / Last Affair Music, BMI)
- 3. Did You Feed My Cow? – Ella Jenkins 3:12**  
(Ella Jenkins/Ell-Bern Publishing, Inc., ASCAP)
- 4. Hop Up My Ladies – New Lost City Ramblers 2:27**
- 5. Shake Sugaree – Elizabeth Cotten and Brenda Evans 4:59**  
(Elizabeth Cotten/Figs D. Music, Inc. a/b/o Stormking Music, BMI)
- 6. Race You Down the Mountain – Woody Guthrie 2:26**  
(Woody Guthrie-Marjorie Nazia/TRO–Folkways Music Publishers, Inc., a/b/o Woody Guthrie Publications, Inc., BMI)
- 7. ¡Que llueva! – Suni Paz 1:03**
- 8. Botana – José-Luis Orozco 1:44**  
(José-Luis Orozco/Arcoiris Records, BMI)
- 9. Go In and Out the Window – Jean Ritchie :57**
- 10. Yomi, Yomi – Ruth Rubin 1:35**
- 11. Jim Along Josie – Pete Seeger 2:34**
- 12. Kaa Fo – Dennis Allen, A. Kdjo Tettey, and W.K. Amoaku 1:13**
- 13. Bring Me a Little Water, Silvy – Lead Belly :48**
- 14. Here We Go Loopy-Loo – Pete Seeger 2:22**  
(Huddie Ledbetter–John A. Lomax–Alan Lomax/TRO–Folkways Music Publishers, Inc., BMI–Global Jukebox Publishing, BMI)

## Music by Children

- 15. Loop de Loo – children in Lilly’s Chapel School, Alabama 1:40**
- 16. Charlie Over the Ocean – children in Brown’s Chapel School, Livingston, Alabama :52**
- 17. I Must See (Amasee) – children in East York School, East York, Alabama 1:30**
- 18. Here We Go Willowby – children in New York City 1:32**
- 19. London Bridge – children in New York City 2:01**
- 20. Twenty-Four Robbers – children in Chicago :55**
- 21. Al citron – children in Uruapan, Michoachan, Mexico 1:17**
- 22. Gypsy in the Moonlight – children in Trinidad 2:01**
- 23. Jump Shamador – Caribbean children in PS 48, Bronx, New York 3:03**
- 24. Arroz con leche – children in Cuenca, Ecuador 1:55**
- 25. A la rueda de San Miguel, Tierras morenas, El puerquito – children in Uruapan, Michoachán, Mexico 1:02**
- 26. Ambos a dos – children in Loiza Aldea, Puerto Rico 4:47**
- 27. Camp Songs: Bill Bones – children in New York City 1:44**
- 28. The Fox – six boys in New York City 1:10**

# Music for Children, Music by Children



# Introduction

By Patricia Shehan Campbell

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This collection of children's music invites you to slip into the playful musical world of children through an earful of treasured children's songs. The curiosities and explorations of childhood, the hopes and dreams, the roller-coaster rides through the early years of children's lives are portrayed in melody, rhythm, and verse, and the singing voices of both adult singers and children themselves are featured in this rich and varied compendium. There are songs for celebration and sleep-time, for counting and capering, dancing and dialoguing, hand-clapping and rope-jumping, storytelling and straightforward singing for the sake of singing. These 28 songs offer a sense of children's joy and wonder, whether expressed by children or those adults who fondly recall their childhoods, and the repertoire is replete with rhymes and rhythms, tuneful melodies, and colorful musical ways of knowing the world.

Increasingly we realize that the wellsprings of humanity are found in the babbling of infants and toddlers, the songful features of children's emergent speech with its pitched inflections and varied durations, and the musical ways in which children are socially interactive at play. The music that children make reflects the families and neighborhoods in which they grow; their songs, rhythms, and rhymes are colored by what they hear and how they have been enculturated. They are their own agents, however, and do not necessarily accept lock, stock, and barrel what has been thrust upon them by adults. They choose which musical parts to preserve, revise, or discard altogether, and they are wondrously creative with words (and syllables), rhythms, and melodies.

**Childhood is a period of glorious exploration and expression, and music plays an important part in that process.**

For every age, children's music is meaningful. Adults enjoy children's songs, singing and listening to them for their simplicity, for their lightness of being, for nostalgic reasons. Some songs bring back fond memories of childhood, and to hear them is to recall experiences with family and friends at home, in school, on the playground, at camp, before and after team sports, in scouts and other social organizations, and on the bus. For adult singers, the songs have the power to connect with children, to allow young and old to join together in expressive merry-making. Songs tell stories, and as every good teacher knows, songs are vehicles for children's learning a little something of the world. It's no wonder that professional singers take to singing children's songs: The melodies sit well in every singer's range, and they give pleasure to those who sing and those who listen.

## Part I: Music for Children

Adult artists are increasingly crossing into the world of children, performing clever and lively songs that fit into playtime, car-time, family-time, and bedtime. Starting in the 1950s, coinciding with the postwar baby boom, Moses Asch proved himself as much a popularizer as a producer of songs for children and their families. He helped Pete Seeger to shape a repertoire of beloved songs for children, among them "Jim Along Josie" and "Here We Go Loopy-Loo." He was convinced that Lead Belly had a fitting repertoire of songs from his childhood, such as "Bring Me a Little Water, Silvy," that were well worth sharing, and that Woody Guthrie's interest in action songs like "Race You Down the Mountain" was genuine. Asch identified the unusual talents of Ella Jenkins as a childsong-singer extraordinaire, and saw her work as a teacher in Chicago's urban neighborhoods as relevant experience for her ability to adapt songs to the sociomusical needs of very young children. Jenkins went on to release 36 Folkways albums for children, including the call-and-response of herself with children in "Did You Feed My Cow?" Along the way, Asch produced recordings of artists like Elizabeth Cotten, Suni Paz, Jean Ritchie, Ruth Rubin, and the New Lost City Ramblers. To these he added a collection of African songs and rhythms selected and performed by Dr. W. K. Amoaku and friends. With every vinyl record that was pressed, provisions for children's music grew all the richer, in that many of the songs were circulating within families and in classrooms of singing children.



The Folkways legacy of children's music continued under the direction of curator-directors Anthony Seeger and Daniel E. Sheehy. In particular, the winsome recordings of singer-songwriters Elizabeth Mitchell and Sarah Lee Guthrie have added immeasurably to the treasury of songs that families enjoy in the home and out and about town. There's much more of the musical gifts of the two singers worth knowing, but "Little Liza Jane" and "Go Waggaloo" make for a good taste of their vibrant musical offerings. Their renderings of old and new tunes at family concerts have given them "star status" in many young families.

## Part II: Music by Children

Children sing because they must. The Smithsonian Folkways catalogue features songs that children sing in their very own voices—songs that are preserved, transmitted, and newly invented by them. Many of these children's songs have lasted for centuries, such as "Ambos a dos," a singing game that was known in Spain before it surfaced on the playgrounds of Spanish-speaking children in Puerto Rico, Mexico, and elsewhere in Latin America. The slapping sound of the jump rope is audible in song selections such as "Twenty-Four Robbers," in which children rhythmically chant to the lore they have created. Likewise, the pounding of stones, passed from child to child, can be heard alongside their singing voices in "Al citron." The exuberant vocal expressions of children from as long ago as the 1950s, '60s, and '70s are documented in the Folkways collection, thanks to the recognition by Moses Asch of the fieldwork efforts on streets and playgrounds of such pioneer collectors as Harold Courlander, Edna Smith Edet, Tony Schwartz, E. Richard Sorensen, and Henrietta Yurchenco. Children's songs are alive and well today, too, in children's daily lives: Listen and be awakened to the music they make.

# Music for Children

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The following 14 children's songs are masterfully rendered by Folkways artists, all adult singers with a commitment to preserving and transmitting children's songs to children and their families. They are "childsong-singers" in these renderings, and their renditions are genuine manifestations of strong musicians committed to the nature of songs to which children are drawn for their melodies, rhythms, and topical issues. These singers give life to old songs even as they invent new songs, all intended to animate, inspire, and draw children into the vital human need to sing, dance, and play, to enjoy the power of music that makes us human.



## **1. Go Waggaloo – Sarah Lee Guthrie** **From *Go Waggaloo* (SFW45069), 2009**

The whole family joins in on this lively song, featuring the talented singer-songwriter Sarah Lee Guthrie, her husband Johnny Irion on 12-string guitar and sitar, and the several sweet-voiced children who sing on the chorus. The song is based upon verse that Sarah Lee's grandfather, Woody Guthrie, had penned and that was preserved in the Smithsonian Folkways archives until Sarah converted it to the sprightly sung melody that it is. The words roll easily along, the rhythm is contagious, and the toy piano adds a delightful timbre. What's a "waggaloo"? The word cannot be translated, but that doesn't stop just about anyone within listening distance from adding their voices to the line-by-line invitation to respond with the spirited phrase, "Hey, hey go waggaloo."

## **2. Little Liza Jane – Elizabeth Mitchell** **From *You Are My Little Bird* (SFW45063), 2006**

Elizabeth Mitchell sings traditional children's songs in ways that are fresh and fine-tuned to the interests of young children. With seven albums of children's music (and counting), one of which was voted Best Children's Album of 2006 by Amazon.com, she has the gift of a vibrant voice. "Little Liza Jane" heralds back to the turn of the 20th century, and is popular not only as a children's song taught in school music programs but also as a standard piece performed by brass bands and folk, bluegrass, and jazz groups. This rendition begins with a little patting on the lap and a clapping of the hands, over which rides Elizabeth's clear voice on melody. Then comes a vocal harmony supplied by her husband Daniel Littleton, and finally the sound of their daughter Storey on the refrain, "Oh little Liza, little Liza Jane, Oh little Liza, little Liza Jane."

### 3. Did You Feed My Cow? – Ella Jenkins From *Get Moving with Ella Jenkins* (SFW45073), 2013

A childsong-singer all her life, Ella Jenkins, deemed “the First Lady of children’s song,” is widely known for her style of call-and-response singing that invites every child (and adult) to sing along. A singer, player of guitar, ukulele, and harmonica, and an educator, Ella Jenkins all of her 90-plus years has been singing songs from near and far, including African American folk songs and international songs. One of her classic tunes is “Did You Feed My Cow?” in which she talks to the children as she engages them in understanding the meaning of the verses she sings. The children are immediately responsive, and right on target in their tunes and timing of short phrases like “yes, ma’am,” “corn and hay,” and “squish, squish, squish.”



#### **4. Hop Up My Ladies – New Lost City Ramblers From *Old Timey Songs for Children* (FW07064), 1959**

The old-time string style comes shining through in this rendition of “Hop Up My Ladies” by members of the New Lost City Ramblers, with John Paley on banjo and Mike Seeger on fiddle. The banjo and the fiddle give a lilt to the melody that stays true to the spirit of the song as it was captured on 78 records of rural singers out of old Virginia. The built-in redundancy of the song’s lyrics affords a familiarity with the song, and there is a carefree sense conveyed with the recurring line, “I don’t mind the weather so the wind don’t blow.” The melody surfaced as a fiddle tune in the Ozarks, while the opening line (“Did you ever go to meeting?”) refers to a church meeting that drew groups of people in their Sunday finest to gather for not only prayer but social exchange.

## **5. Shake Sugaree – Elizabeth Cotten and Brenda Evans** **From *Shake Sugaree* (SF40147), 2003**

American blues and folk musician Elizabeth “Libba” Cotten and her 12-year-old great-granddaughter perform the song. Left-handed Cotten was known for playing a right-handed guitar “upside down” so that she played the melody with her thumb and bass line and chords with her fingers. Her alternating bass and chords were signature to her style, too. Brenda Evans is featured on this old-time traditional song that suggests that despite the worries of hard times, even when “everything I got is done and pawn” and used as collateral, or sold to make ends meet, one can still “Shake Sugaree”—dance with joy and abandon. In fact, “sugaree” refers to throwing sugar on the floor and then dancing percussively on the sugared floor. The chorus beckons singers to join in: “Oh Lawdy me, didn’t I shake sugaree. Everything I got is done and pawn.”

## **6. Race You Down the Mountain – Woody Guthrie** **From *Nursery Days* (SF45036), 1951 and 1991**

Folk song legend Woody Guthrie is widely known for the standards he contributed to group singing, such as “This Land Is Your Land,” “Roll On, Columbia,” and “So Long, It’s Been Good to Know You.” He also wrote and performed songs for children, recorded in the 1940s and early 50’s by Folkways founder Moses Asch. “Race You Down the Mountain,” like “Riding in My Car,” “Put Your Finger in the Air,” and “Howdido,” encompasses words and melodies that settle well in children’s ears and understandings of the world. Playing his harmonica and well-worn guitar, Woody Guthrie sings with high enthusiasm for children. He calls for adults to “join right in, do what your kids do” and let the songs “be a little key to unlock and let down all of your old bars,” fears, and uncertainties.



## **7. ¡Que lleuva! — Suni Paz**

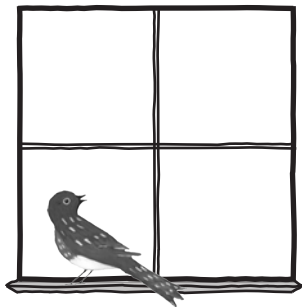
**From *Alerta Sings and Songs for the Playground / Canciones Para el Recreo* (SFW45055), 2000**

Suni Paz has collected, composed, sung, and played hundreds of songs for singing with children and their families, and pioneered the singing of Spanish-language songs as a curricular component to foster multicultural understanding. “¡Que lleuva!” (Let it rain!) is a traditional children’s song known throughout Latin America. Suni pronounces “lleuva” as “jooay-vah,” and sings of a strong rain shower’s impact on sprouting wheat even as the rain is followed by the sun’s rise again amid the singing birds. Listen for the repetition of the last line, “Que pronto grane el trigo/Que luego luzca el sol” and notice, too, that there is an alternation of solo and dueting voices across the lines of the song.

## **8. Botana — José-Luis Orozco**

**From *¡Come Bien! Eat Right!* (SFW45077), 2015**

There’s a lively Mexican flavor to the song that musician, composer, and educator José-Luis Orozco sings about a snack, or “botana”—part of a series of songs that he performs in schools for children and their families to encourage children to keep a healthy and well-balanced diet. Set in the style of a Mexican *son jarocho* folk dance out of Veracruz, the sung melody is shaped by the rhythmic sounds of plucked and chorded lutes called *leona*, *jarana*, and *requinto*. The lyrics make the point of “botana” as a healthy snack for children to enjoy at home, school, and in the park: “botana para todos/botana, tana, tana.”



**9. Go In and Out the Window – Jean Ritchie**  
**From *Children's Songs and Games from Southern Mountains***  
**(FW07054), 1957**

As a singer and player of Appalachian mountain dulcimer, autoharp, and guitar, Jean Ritchie performed and preserved the folk songs and ballads of her large Kentucky family from generations as long ago as the 18th century. Known as “the Mother of Folk,” her renderings of “Amazing Grace,” “Tender Ladies,” and “Pretty Saro” were models for emulation by many singers during the folk song revival. She collected and recorded children’s songs and singing games, too, many which have made their way into the canonized school music repertoire. “Go In and Out the Window” features guitar and Jean’s uniquely high singing voice, with verses suggesting the movement of a singing game: to weave in between and under the arms of a circle of dancers, to stop and face one individual, to drop to a bended knee, all “since we have gained this day.”



**10. Yomi, Yomi – Ruth Rubin**  
**From *Jewish Children's Songs and Games***  
**(FW07224), 1957**

The lilting voice of folk singer and folklorist Ruth Rubin and her guitar-chording accompaniments charm the listener, and this mother-daughter song is one of over 2,000 Yiddish love songs, ballads, lullabies, and singing games that she collected from the 1930s onward. The mother wonders of her daughter's wishes: A dress? A pair of shoes? A hat? Earrings? To which the daughter responds: "Nayn mameshi, nayn, Du vayst nit vos ich mayn, Du kenst mich nit farshtayn" (No mother, no, you don't know what I mean, you do not understand me). In the final verse, at the mother's suggestion of a bridegroom, the daughter responds enthusiastically that "you now understand me!" The melodic repetition is contagious, particularly the refrain and the opening line, "Yomi, Yomi, zing mir a lideleh" (Yomi, Yomi, sing me a little song).



**11. Jim Along Josie – Pete Seeger**  
**From *American Folk, Game and Activity***  
***Songs* (SFN45056), 1953 and 1962,**  
**and 2000**

Pete Seeger's golden tenor voiced tones and his banjo compel toe-tapping, hand-clapping, and singing along. He aimed to get people singing, and his renditions of "This Land Is Your Land," "If I Had a Hammer," "Michael Row the Boat Ashore," "Wimoweh," and children's songs like "All Around the Kitchen" and "Abiyoyo" are familiar favorites. His rendition of "Jim Along Josie," a children's song dating to the 1830s, calls attention to an African American dance step, a "josey." The song's melody surfaced in fiddle tunes, and a play-party version hails from the early days, too. Pete's version adds options for children to hop, jump, run, tiptoe, crawl, sing, and row along.

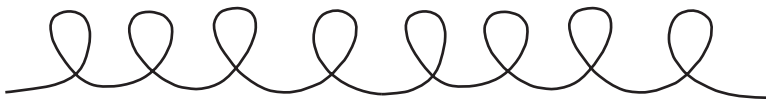


**12. Kaa Fo – Dennis Allen, A. Kdjo Tettey, and W.K. Amoaku**  
**From *African Songs and Rhythms for Children (SF45011)*, 1990**

From the repertoire of the Ga people of Ghana (many of whom live in the Ghanaian capital city of Accra), W. K. Amoaku drew a cradle song with percussive rhythms sounding prior to and alongside singing. The rhythms layer in at the start of the song, beginning with the recurring three steady beats of an iron bell, then a clapping rhythm that fits in between the iron bell beats, and on to the drum's simple and repeated syncopation. A clear treble voice enters, singing "Kaa fo. Kaa fo. Kaa fo nee mo ko kaa daa," and is soon joined by a second, much lower voice. This cradle song and its rhythms illustrate the phenomenon of infants listening to and learning their musical traditions. The complex fit of singing and playing urge participation by all within earshot.

**13. Bring Me a Little Water, Silvy – Lead Belly**  
**From *Where Did You Sleep Last Night: Lead Belly Legacy, Vol. 1***  
**(SF40044), 1996**

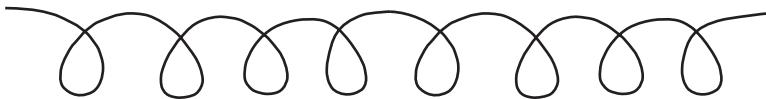
The legendary songster Lead Belly paid musical tribute to incidents he recalled from his childhood growing up in Louisiana in the late 19th century. "Bring Me a Little Water, Silvy" is a rendering of his Uncle Bob's work in the hot summer sun. He would holler to Lead Belly's Aunt Sylvie, calling for cool water to quench his thirst. While Lead Belly sang the blues, prison songs, protest songs, and "Negro Folk Songs as sung by Leadbelly" (the title of a book by folklorist John Lomax), he enjoyed the nostalgic songs of his childhood that became central to the recordings Folkways founder Moses Asch produced. With his slightly out-of-tune 12-string guitar and a voice that never tired, Lead Belly carried forth with songs of the African American experience that have appealed to adults and children alike for many decades.



#### **14. Here We Go Loopy-Loo – Pete Seeger** **From *Song and Play Time* (SFW45023, 2001), 1960**

An example of shared song ownership by a child-singer and adult childsong-singer is “Loopy-Loo,” here in two variants (tracks 14 and 15). The song dates back to the late 19th century, when it was sung in England in a playful way in which children move their arms, legs, and head in accordance with the lyrics. It’s likely that children sang the song at the time of their Saturday night bath, when they would climb into a small tin tub (“I put my (right hand, left leg, whole head) in” to the water), to wash up from a week’s worth of play until they are squeaky clean for Sunday morning church service.

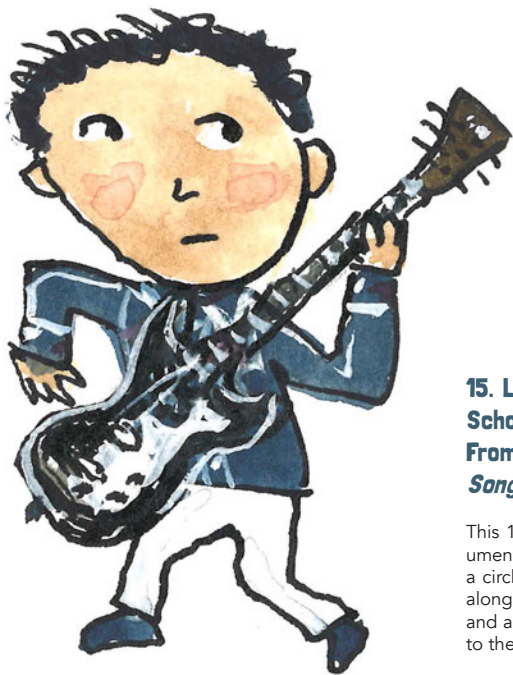
Powerful song-leader Pete Seeger performs this song in a style that is light, easy-going, even buoyant, and with the vocal clarity that rouses others to join in. The play of the plucking banjo counterbalances his smooth-as-silk vocal quality, and even the “shake shake shake” lyrics come across as soft and effortless.



# Music by Children

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Fourteen songs follow that feature children singing “songs by children,” that is, songs that are “owned” by children. Ownership results as children embrace songs that were passed down to them by older siblings, friends, or others in the family; or when children break up and refashion familiar melodies, rhythms, and poems they have encountered into a patchwork-piece; or when they create brand new songs to fit their particular interests and needs. Because it is their nature to express themselves in song, chant, and voiced rhythms, children will do so at play and at work, at home and in school, solo and in groups, in games and as ritual, and mostly without the need for instrumental accompaniment. Children sing out as they hop, jump, skip, slide, and swing, and as they clap hands, snap fingers, and tap the surfaces of just about anything within reach. The songs children call their own offer them a sense of safety and stability, and satisfaction that these are the songs they have chosen to mark their identities.



**15. Loop de Loo – Children at Lilly’s Chapel School, York, Alabama**  
**From *Ring Games: Line Games and Play Party Songs of Alabama* (FW07004), 1959**

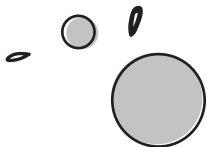
This 1953 recording of children of York, Alabama, documents children enthusiastic and intent on performing a circle game as they sing, joining hands and skipping along. A young girl’s strong lead voice can be heard, and also clapping, and the voices of other children add to the dynamism of this rendering of the song.

**16. Charlie Over the Ocean – Students from Brown’s Chapel School,  
Livingston, Alabama**

**From *Ring Games: Line Games and Play Party Songs of Alabama*  
(FW07004), 1959**

In rural Alabama, in a playfield in 1953, folklorist Harold Courlander gathered children together to sing songs that were meaningful to them and he recorded them. “Charlie Over the Ocean” is sung in a circle, frequently with a group of singers following the leader line by line. The leader roams the outside of the circle, tags one child, and the chase begins when the tagged singer runs to catch the leader before he (or she) arrives back to the vacated space.





**17. I Must See (Amasee) – Students from East York School, East York, Alabama  
From *Ring Games: Line Games and Play Party Songs of Alabama*  
(FW07004), 1959**

Well over 60 years ago, children in rural Alabama opted to sing “I Must See,” a phrase that sounded more like “Amasee,” thus the alternate title. The call-and-response form fits the dance, so the lead singer calls out instructions such as “Take your partner down the line” and “Swing your partner, swing again,” to which comes the response by the group, “Amasee.” Two lines of children face one another, and the couples sashay and swing their way down between the lines.

**18. Here We Go Willowby – Children from Minisink Day Camp  
From *Songs for Children from New York City* (FW07858), 1978**

One of eight variants collected by Edna Smith Edet in 1978 within a ten-block area in New York City, this song is sung in a two-line formation where children face partners, extend crossed hands, and pull back and forth to the melody. As the song continues, they step and clap, mime aches and pains, walk “down the alley, alley, alley” together between the lines, and perform a fancy turn at the close of the maneuvers.



### **19. London Bridge – A children’s circle**

**From *Songs for Children from New York City* (FW07858), 1978**

Children converge in a circle to sing their expressive variant of the traditional English singing game. If they once scooted under the arches made by the extended arms of a pair of players, in this rendition the children are rhythmically moving in freestyle, shaking down to the ground on “bouncing down,” and wiggling their hips to interpret the phrases “she’s got the hips” and “rock and roll.”

### **20. Twenty-Four Robbers – Children in a Chicago schoolyard**

**From *Skip Rope* (FW07029), 1955**

The sound of the jump rope can be heard as children’s voices rhythmically chant the verse in a Chicago schoolyard in 1955. The opening section is descriptive of a rousing group of 24 robbers who arrive to a house and are invited in. This is followed by a counting of the birthday month and day of the soloist rope-skipper. As jump rope routines go, this one is straightforward, ending with the arrival in the chant of the skipper’s birthday and grade level.



## **21. Al citron – Children in Uruapan, Michoachán, Mexico** **From *Latin American Children Game Songs (FW07851)*, 1968**

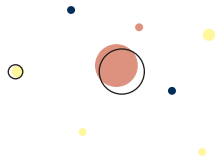
Children enjoy “passing games” in Mexico and elsewhere in the world, in which they sing as they rhythmically pass a stone, a ball, a seed, or a small stick around a circle, or even “air” as one hand touches another. The sound of stones can be heard amid the singing voices, including at the high-speed phrase “triki, triki, tron,” and children’s laughter, too, as they work in tandem to keep the game going. There is no translation for the chant, and yet it is always intact and unchanged in this rendition recorded by Henrietta Yurchenco.

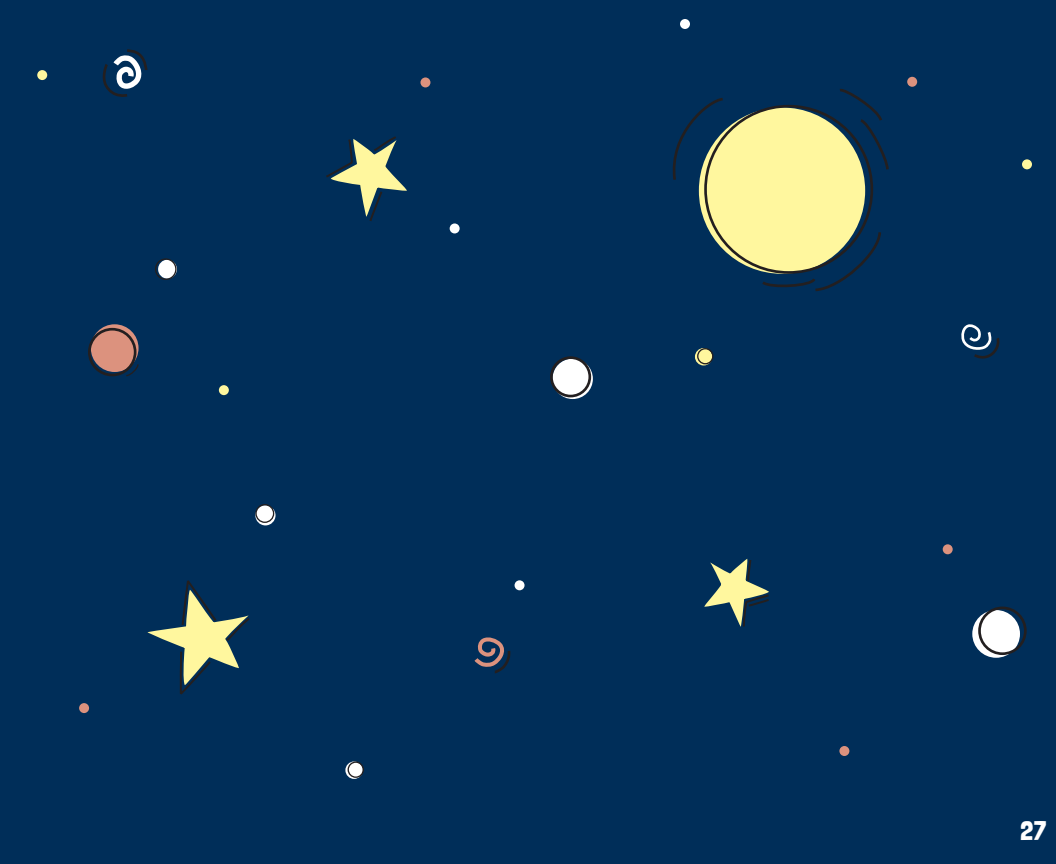




## **22. Gypsy in the Moonlight – Children at St. Belmont’s home, Trinidad** **From *Caribbean Songs and Games for Children* (FW07856), 1978**

Children in Trinidad are featured singing as they play this circle game (one of many collected by Edna Smith Edet), offering their distinctive Caribbean turns and twists to the English-language words. The form is simple, the melody tuneful, and the subtle syncopation of the rhythm suggests a gently swinging island flavor. In the game, one child enters the circle as “the gypsy,” then chooses a partner to dance with freestyle (who becomes the new gypsy), and the song begins anew.





**23. Jump Shamador – Children in PS 48, Bronx, New York**  
**From *Caribbean Songs and Games for Children (FW07856)*, 1978**

The sounds of solo and group singing come through in the performance by Jamaican children of a call-and-response dialogue on the topic of career goals. The mother asks her daughter's professional intention, the daughter offers responses such as "doctor" or "teacher," and the group sings a chorus that breaks into a whispered chant of "jump shamador." ("Shamador" is a Jamaican reference to a dance or caper.) For every career each daughter (or son) offers the questioning mother, the mother's response is a head shake, a foot stomp, or a wagging finger of "no," as if no career can be good enough for her child.

**24. Arroz con leche – Children in Cuenca, Ecuador**  
**From *Children's Songs and Games from Ecuador, Mexico, and Puerto Rico (FW07854)*, 1977**

In 1977, Henrietta Yurchenco collected a wide array of Spanish-language songs from Ecuador, Mexico, and Puerto Rico from children who are parents and grandparents today. This song of rice and milk, and marrying a senorita who knows how to "sew...embroider...go out and play," is especially familiar to Spanish-speaking children, as is the practice of children dancing around a center-circle child who selects a new child at the song's end.





**25. A la rueda de San Miguel, Tierras  
morenas, El puerquito –  
Children in Uruapan, Michoachán, Mexico  
From *Children's Songs and Games from  
Ecuador, Mexico, and Puerto Rico*  
(FW07854), 1977**

Children hold hands as they sing this song of a "circle dance of San Miguel" that is widely known in Mexico, across many generations, and is related to the popular children's song in Spain, "A la víbora de la mar." At the close of every verse, one player turns around to face the outside of the circle. The game ends, and the song is well learned, when all children are facing outside.



**26. Ambos a dos – Children in Loíza Aldea, Puerto Rico**  
**From *Children's Songs and Games from Ecuador, Mexico, and Puerto Rico***  
**(FW07854), 1977**

This playful call-and-response song from Puerto Rico affords an opportunity for children to imagine life among royalty in 18th-century Spain. Two facing lines of children step forward and back on the chorus, and a queen selects one page after another, on whom she confers a job such as teacher, cook, or doctor. The sung syllables are not directly translatable, but they are sung well and fully in tune by the children.

**27. Camp Songs: Bill Bones – A 12-year-old girl leading other children**  
**From *1, 2, 3 and a Zing Zing Zing* (FW07003), 1952**

Tony Schwartz invited a 12-year-old girl to sing camp songs in the recreation room of a New York City housing project in 1953; she in turn convinced other children to join her. Fully accurate and pleasing to the ear, her sung phrases are immediately imitated by the group. The story unfolds of a man and his shirt-eating goat, and the recording documents how quickly children follow in singing a song without rehearsal, one that had been completely unfamiliar to them.









**28. The Fox — Six African American boys in  
New York City**  
**From *Street and Gangland Rhythms: Beats and  
Improvisations of Six Boys in Trouble*  
(FW05589), 1959**

An historic collection of song, spoken word, and rhythmic improvisations of 11- and 12-year-old African American children includes this highly rhythmic version of a folk song dating to 15th-century England. E. Richard Sorensen documented the “six boys in trouble” (through various run-ins with the law) who were living in a residential training school in New York City in 1959. They sing, chant, and tell the story of rival urban gangs, robbery, and violence in the streets, and of life spurred by absent parents and poverty. The boys might have heard covers of “The Fox” by Harry Belafonte, Pete Seeger, or Odetta. This is their version of the story of the fox’s hunt for food, and his children’s chewing on the bones of the goose.

## Read more about children's music in

- Campbell, Patricia Shehan. 2010. *Songs in Their Heads: Music and Meaning in Children's Lives*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Campbell, Patricia Shehan, and Trevor Wiggins, editors. 2013. *The Oxford Handbook of Children's Musical Cultures*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Gaunt, Kyra. 2006. *The Games Black Girls Play*. New York: New York University Press.
- Jones, Bessie, and Bess Lomax Hawes. 1972. *Step It Down: Games, Plays, Songs and Stories from the Afro-American Heritage*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Marsh, Kathryn. 2009. *The Musical Playground: Global Tradition and Change in Children's Songs and Games*. New York: Oxford University Press.
- Opie, Iona, and Peter Opie. 1985. *The Singing Game*. New York: Oxford University Press.

**For other children's recordings, go to [folkways.si.edu](http://folkways.si.edu) and search for "children's" under the genre heading. Long-standing and continuing, the commitment of Smithsonian Folkways to children is evidenced in the hours upon happy hours of recordings that capture the essence of children and the world they know. The songs they sing reflect their own identities as card-carrying members of children's culture, even as the songs of dedicated artist-musicians offer them windows on the wider world in which they are learning to live.**



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# Music for Children, Music by Children

Compiled and annotated by Patricia Shehan Campbell

## Music for Children

1. Go Waggaloo — Sarah Lee Guthrie
2. Little Liza Jane — Elizabeth Mitchell
3. Did You Feed My Cow? — Ella Jenkins
4. Hop Up My Ladies — New Lost City Ramblers
5. Shake Sugaree — Elizabeth Cotten and Brenda Evans
6. Race You Down the Mountain — Woody Guthrie
7. ¡Que llueva! — Suni Paz
8. Botana — José-Luis Orozco
9. Go In and Out the Window — Jean Ritchie
10. Yomi, Yomi — Ruth Rubin
11. Jim Along Josie — Pete Seeger
12. Kaa Fo — Dennis Allen, A. Kdjo Tettey, and W.K. Amoaku
13. Bring Me a Little Water, Silvy — Lead Belly
14. Here We Go Loopy-Loo — Pete Seeger

## Music by Children

15. Loop de Loo — Lilly's Chapel School, Alabama
16. Charlie Over the Ocean — Livingston, Alabama
17. I Must See (Amasee) — East York, Alabama
18. Here We Go Willowby — New York City
19. London Bridge — New York City
20. Twenty-Four Robbers — Chicago
21. Al citron — Uruapan, Michoacán, Mexico
22. Gypsy in the Moonlight — Trinidad
23. Jump Shamador — Caribbean children, Bronx, New York
24. Arroz con leche — Cuenca, Ecuador
25. A la rueda de San Miguel, Tierras morenas, El puerquito — Uruapan, Michoacán, Mexico
26. Ambas a dos — Loíza Aldea, Puerto Rico
27. Camp Songs: Bill Bones — New York City
28. The Fox — New York City

Like eating, breathing, and sleeping, children sing because they must. Music, the universal language, is learned in the earliest years of life and remains vital thereafter. This rich collection invites listeners of all-ages to revel and participate in the colorful world of Smithsonian Folkways' children's music collection, with both music created "for children," showcasing our most celebrated storytellers and songwriters, and "by children," featuring the unique ways children express and understand themselves and the world through song.

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