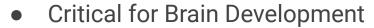
# Play!!!

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### What is play?

Play is children's work!



- Brain uses all five senses during play
- Sound, sight, taste, touch and smell
- Experiences create foundation for future learning



### Common myths about play



- Play wastes time and prevents learning
  - Play is a fundamental tool for helping children develop relationships and understand their environment
- Play is really nothing more than fun and games
  - It is fun! It is also the ideal environment for helping children understand how to live happy, healthy lives.
- Play isn't important until children are older
  - Play helps infants develop relationships with their caregivers
  - Simple games like Peek-a-boo stimulate a baby's brain!
- Children only benefit from structured play directed by adults
  - There is a role for structured play; however, independent play help children develop interests and imagination.

### Six Types of Play

- 1. Solitary or independent play
- 2. Parallel play
- 3. Cooperative Play
- 4. Skill Mastery play
- 5. Sensory Motor play
- 6. Rough and tumble play



### Solitary or Independent play

- Child plays alone
- Promotes independence
- Children build self-esteem
- Helps develop creativity

#### How parents can support...

- Let them know it's okay to play alone sometimes
- Encourage them to choose their own activity
- Give your child enough time to organize play without interruption





### Parallel Play

- Child plays alongside another child but not with them
- Teaches children
  - Observation skills
  - How to get along with others
  - Work independently

#### **What Parents Can Do!**

- Play alongside of your child and comment while you are playing
- Be a Bridge- Watch your child to see if they are mirroring others- if so, encourage them to get closer and share materials



### **Cooperative Play**

- More organized play
- Play with a larger group for a common goal
- Ex. playing restaurant with defined roles

#### How parents can support...

- Be an example
- Play games with turn taking
- Talk about roles
- Encourage communication



### Skill Mastery play

- Child is learning something new
- Uses trial and error to do something over and over
- Ex. Throwing a ball, riding a bike, swimming...



#### How can parents support?

- Encourage them to keep practicing
- Support them if it gets hard
- Don't force them- if they are tired let them move on

### Sensory Motor Play

- Using the five senses and motor skills
- More interested in exploring the toy than playing with it
- Ex. Playing with sand, mud, water, clay

#### How to support...

- Encourage your child to explore all aspects of the toy
- Play with them and talk about the ways you can use the items
- Allow them to explore and follow their lead

## Rough and Tumble Play

- Large movement activities
- Activities with intensity and energy
- Dads are more likely to engage
  - Ex. throwing the baby in the air
  - Spinning the child around

#### How parents can support...

- Provide a safe area to play
- Watch your child's reactions and follow their lead



### Stages of play

- Unoccupied Play (Birth- 3 months)
- Solitary Play (Birth- 2 years)
- Spectator/ Onlooker (2 years)
- Parallel Play (2 + years)
- Associate Play (3-4 years)
- Cooperative Play (4+ years)

### Five Essentials to Meaningful Play

#### 1. Children make their own decisions

- Experience freedom making choices
- Open-ended materials can provide more meaningful choices (ex. Ribbon, wood sticks)
- Ex. Child can decide how to use a block

#### 2. Children are intrinsically motivated

- Play comes from a natural desire to understand the world
- Impulse is as strong as desire for food or sleep
- Learn self-control as desire to play with friends grows

### Five Essentials to Meaningful Play

- 3. Children become immersed in the moment
  - Become so fully engaged they lose awareness of their surroundings
  - Opportunity to experiment
- 4. Play is spontaneous, not scripted
  - Totally unplanned
  - Child makes changes
- 5. Play is enjoyable
  - Has an emotional response attached to it
  - Enjoyment is the direct result of play!

### How to select toys...

- Is this toy safe? Any potential hazards?
- It it fun? It should be enjoyable and provide skill practice.
- 3. Is it age-appropriate? Will it hold the child's interest? Will they be happy?
- 4. Is it well-designed? Easy to use?
- 5. Is it versatile? Is there more than one use?
- 6. Is the product durable?
- 7. Is the product engaging to the child?
- 8. Will the product expand creativity?
- 9. Will the toy frustrate or challenge the child? Will they know how to use it?
- 10. Will the toy nurture childhood?
- 11. What will the toy teach?
- 12. Can it be cleaned and reused?



### Considering electronic toys

- Often electronic toys take over attention and we forget to interact with others
- Cannot replace the need for real human interactions
- Playing a computer game vs a board game
- Social interaction is most important for full human development and

well-being

### Types of toys

#### Activity toys

- Develop coordination
- Improve small and large motor skills
- Ex. balls and beanbags; jump ropes as they get older

#### Creativity toys

- Stimulate self-expression
- Learn to follow directions
- Ex. finger painting, making musical instruments

#### Learning toys

- Help to create knowledge
- Ex. Books, puzzles, board games, puppets



### **Open-ended Toys**

- Encourage your child to use a variety of toys
- Provide materials to support their creativity
  - Blocks
  - Puppets
  - Dolls
  - Art supplies
- Turn off the TV and Turn on playtime for more fun, memorable, and meaningful family time



### Prop-Boxes

- You can create learning centers in your home!
- Use plastic bins or shoe boxes with materials related to one topic





### Prop Box Ideas

- Blocks
  - Variety of block with clipboard, paper and crayons
- Pretend play
  - Variety of clothes and accessories
  - Can create separate boxes ex. Going to the office
- Art
  - Paper
  - Writing utensils
  - Scissors
  - o glue



### Prop Box Ideas

#### Math

- Board games and puzzles.
- Empty egg cartons or ice trays for sorting items like buttons or bottle tops
- o Paper, crayons, and dice
- Pennies
- o rule, tape measure or other items to measure

#### Reading

- Fiction and non-fiction books
- Use a basket that children can carry around the house
- Add some of your books to their book shelves





### Prop Box Ideas

- Writing center
  - Markers, pens, pencils
  - Notebooks or stationary
  - Envelopes
  - Ruler
  - Note cards
- Water play
  - Use bathtub, kitchen sink, small basin
  - Sponges, basters, colanders, strainers, pitchers, measuring cups
- Cooking (bottom drawer in kitchen)
  - Child size apron
  - Recipes
  - Bowls and utensils





### Prop Box Idea

#### Music

- Use oatmeal containers
- Yogurt cups
- Google making instruments with kids

#### Science

- Tools
- Magnifying glass
- Prism
- Magnets
- Binoculars
- Paper and pencil
- Collect items around the house or yard (leaves, rocks...)





### Playdough Power

- Social-emotional development
  - Let's them feel confident
  - Inviting others to join their creations
- Creativity and imagination
  - Symbolic thinking by using the playdough to be something else
  - Older children- more detailed play
    - Ex. construction workers or pastry chefs
- Language and literacy
  - Variety of ways to play (roll, pound, squish, etc...)
  - Inventing stories about the playdough
  - Making playdough together- reading recipes





### Playdough Power

#### Math

- Measuring and counting when making dough
- Shapes, sizes
- Counting objects
- Sorting

#### Physical development

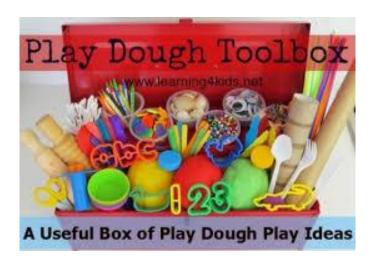
- Develops small muscles in hands and fingers
- Eye-hand coordination

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### Playdough

- Keep a variety of props to add to the playdough (many recipes available)
  - Birthday candles
  - Blocks
  - Bottle Caps
  - Cookie Cutters
  - Combs
  - Garlic press
  - Large buttons or other objects
  - Feathers
  - Leave, twigs, pebbles
  - Plastic utensils
  - Rolling pin or bottle
  - Small people or animals



### Including child in chores

- Weeding the garden
  - Exploring the dirt, discovering sticks, watching for bugs
- Folding laundry
  - Sorting objects, Colors/ textures, Toss an object to see how it fall
- Sweeping the floor
  - Let them have a small one
- Watering plants
  - Watch how the water falls into the plant
  - Let them help
- Washing dishes
  - Provide a drawer of storage containers they can stack



### Play in Puddles on Rainy Day

- Puddle jumping
- Floating and sinking
- Puddle music
  - Songs: Row, row, row your boat
  - It's raining, it's pouring
  - There's a hole in the bucket
  - Singing in the rain
- Puddle soup



### Takeaways...

- Repetition may be boring for you but not your child
- Make time to play!
- Get involved but let your child take the lead.
- Let your child determine the pace
- Take time to watch and listen
- Say what you see- instead of "good job"; You did it! Wow, look at that! The water made the wheel turn!
- Extend play- offer other materials
- Play alongside your child
- Remember it's fun!

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