

DRAMATIC and PRETEND PLAY

When Children:

- Talk to each other
- Give voices to dolls, animals
- Decide who will be who
- Scribble on a chalkboard
- Write on paper; take an order or make a list
- Read a story
- Call someone on a phone
- Rock a baby
- Be a monster
- Change a diaper, push a stroller
- Drive a car
- Go to work
- Have dinner and tea parties

Children Are Learning:

- How to communicate
- To take turns
- Literacy: reading and writing
- About roles and responsibilities
- About their environment
- About relationships
- Care and compassion- empathy
- Patience
- Symbols: how to represent things
- To use imagination
- To influence their world
- To build their vocabulary
- To negotiate
- To problem solve



When Children:

Stack blocks high	Knock blocks over
Build towers	Create scenes
Dump blocks in and out	Balance blocks on top
Build together	Make a fort

Children Are Learning:

Balance	Space
Counting	Math Skills
Shapes	Cooperation
Patience	Literacy
To problem solve	To Imagine
To take turns	About science
To plan steps ahead	To use motor skills
Symbols: how to represent things	
How to use muscles in their hands	

*Simpler the toy is the more complex learning takes place –
the more complex the toy is the simpler learning takes place!*

PLAY = ACADEMIC & LIFE SKILLS

Social Skills

When children:

Play pretend house, restaurant, store, library and others	Play hide and seek
Play with blocks, water, sand and other toys near other children	
Play on the playground with other children	Play outside with others
Complete puzzles in library near and with other children	Go to story times in library
Sing nursery rhymes, songs, and finger plays in a group	Play board games
Tell stories	Play with puppets and dolls
Decide who will be who when they play pretend	Make up rules to a game

Children learn: how to interact with others, recognize other people's feelings and emotions, talk about feelings, make friends, problem solve, cooperate with others, share with others, and build self esteem

Physical Development

When children:

Roll over and sit up	Crawl, pull and stand
Climb, walk, and run	Dance and jump
Ride a bike	Pull and push a wagon
Throw balls	Walk on edge of sidewalk to balance
Hold and turn object	Play in sand
Pour water in bath	Play with food with fingers
Play with puzzles	Build with blocks
Use a spoon or fork	Draw or color with crayons or markers
Turn pages in a book	Cut paper
Button pants	Make beaded necklaces
Lace sneakers	Zipper a jacket

Children learn: how to use their small muscles, fine motor skill, and their large muscles, gross motor skills, improve coordination, train eyes and hands to work together,

Creative Skills

When children:

Play pretend games	Play dress-up
Build forts and houses	Build with blocks
Draw, color and paint	Make pictures
Play with puppets	Tell stories

Children learn: to solve problems, think logically, plan for future, understand cause and effect, remember past events to apply to present events, and learn how to act in real-life scenarios.

Emotional Development

When children:

Play with other children	Negotiate rules for a game	Act out things experience in life		
Play house, restaurant, dolls, and other pretend play	Tell stories	Talk about events	Read books	
Climb on playgrounds	Jump off the stairs	Argue over toys	Finish a puzzle	Build towers
Help make dinner	Pump on the swing	Play dress-up	Color and draw	

Children learn: to build self esteem, confidence, how to express feelings, how to relate to others, understand other people's feelings, build morality, about roles people have in life

PLAY = ACADEMIC & LIFE SKILLS

Children learn many things while they play!

Unstructured, free play helps a child become a smart, successful adult!

All areas of a child's development grows while playing!

Math

When children:

- Put blocks in containers and dump them out
- Set the table in kitchen area with cups, plates and utensils
- Separate toys during clean up time and put in proper places
- Sort out pictures, blocks, and toys based on different categories
- Pour water in and out of containers
- Share toys with friends
- Play cashier at stores

Children learn:

size, weight, measurement, numbers, adding, subtracting, grouping and matching, & problem solving.

Language and Literacy

When children:

- | | |
|-----------------------------|--------------------|
| Play dress-up | Play with puzzles |
| Play pretend | Draw pictures |
| Color and paint | Cut paper |
| Make necklaces | Scribble notes |
| Listen to stories | Talk to people |
| Tell stories | Play outside |
| Sing songs & nursery rhymes | Turn pages in book |
| Play with dolls and puppets | Hold objects |

Children learn: to communicate with others, express feelings, about thoughts and ideas, about reading and writing skills, understand and use symbols, read from left to right, build memory, about happy experiences with books and reading, to use eyes and hands together.

Science

When children:

- | | |
|---|--------------------------------|
| Play with paint, markers, crayons, pastels | Mix colors and using water |
| Make playdough | Pretend cook in a play kitchen |
| Make cookies with adults | Make Bubbles |
| Eat ice cream and talking about it melting | Play in nature |
| Play with water and making things sink and float | |
| Talk about seasons, people and places | |
| Make musical instruments with pots and pans, beans in bottles | |
| Play catch or throw items off a high chair | |

Children learn:

size, weight, measurement, numbers, that materials and substances can change, about cause and effect, how to make observations, water and food can change the form it is in, & about gravity.

SPICE IN YOUR PLAY

“S.P.I.C.E.” in your play

makes learning happen every day!!

An easy way to remember all things learned in play is the acronym SPICE!!

SOCIAL: play offers opportunities to create relationships, communicate, negotiate, cooperate, compromise, experience trust and friendship, take turns and share.

PHYSICAL: play helps children develop gross motor and fine motor skills, through trial and error, and master many physical tasks.

INTELLECTUAL: play helps children learn to solve problems, to use their imagination, create new ideas, make sense of their world, learn about their environment, how things work, how objects and symbolize other things, develop language and vocabulary, and prepares them for school.

CREATIVITY: free und-directed play allows child to learn through curiosity, imagination and develops creativity.

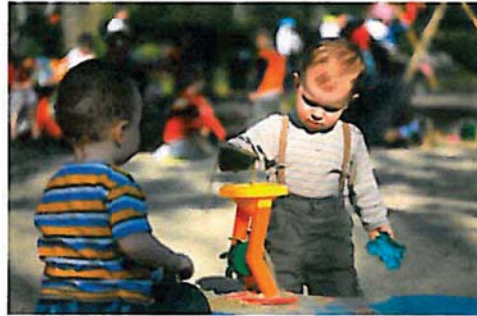
EMOTIONAL: as children play and master their play activities, they learn patience, attention skills, self worth, competence, and learn to express feelings to adults and other children, understand other people’s feelings, develop empathy, and deal with difficult situations.

*adapted from Toni Liebman and Alice Brown, Early Childhood Consultants

Developmental Progression of Play

Through different stages of play, children grow and develop skills in many areas.

Important to remember that children will play in various ways at different ages—just because they get older it does not mean they do not continue to use earlier learned forms of play!



COOPERATIVE PLAY:

Child talks to and interacts with others to play

ASSOCIATIVE PLAY:

Child shares toys with other person, copy play next to them

PARALLEL PLAY:

Child plays next to other person

ONLOOKER PLAY:

Child watches others play

SOLITARY PLAY:

Child plays alone



DO YOU KNOW HOW I CAN GET SMART?

By playing and playing and playing!

For real...playing is the way I learn and grow.

My brain grows every time you talk to me, every time I giggle, and every time I play!

Play:

- provides opportunity for children to learn about their world.
- is the purpose of childhood.
- is what helps your child develop, master and conquer their world.
- builds curiosity and imagination, helps children make friends and understand their feelings and feelings of others.
- fun and provides pleasure.

When you play with your child: BE FUN!

Be happy and involved.

Exercise your mind and try to think like them.

Follow their rules.

Understand your child might need some solitary play.

Nurture their interests.

90% Child + 10% Toy = Growing Brains in Children

A "simple" toy that does not do much on its own, and does not need batteries to work, allows children to *use their brains*.

Soccer Practice, Piano Practice, Dance Time – How about Play Practice?

Make time for your children to practice playing too– so they can build the skills they need to become successful adults!

Literacy, Language and Little Ones

Children are learning about reading, writing and language from the day they are born!

There are many simple things to do to help your child's literacy grow-

This can lead to success later in life.

You can:

Talk, Talk and Talk more to your child from the moment they are born!

The more you talk the more WORDS your child will learn.

Sing songs and nursery rhymes.

Songs and rhymes add WORDS to your child's language.

Read and Tell Stories.

Your child will associate reading with good feelings and learn about communicating.

Ask questions and listen to responses.

This will open your child's mind, imagination, curiosity and get them thinking. They will feel valued.

Provide time to play.

Play lets all parts of language and literacy to be explored!!

Your children will:

Use Books:

Babies will look at pictures, play with books, and listen to you talk.

Toddlers will sit and listen to a story either told by you or read aloud. They can talk about the pictures and tell their own short stories.

Speak back to you:

Babies will imitate and listen to you talk to them. They make babbling noises.

Toddlers will talk with you, share ideas, discuss stories and think about what you say.

Singing with you:

Babies will listen to your voice to be calmed, and soothed.

Toddlers will sing along, enjoy the music and have favorite ones to sing.

Begin writing skills:

Babies will grasp toys and different objects building their fine motor skills.

Toddlers will play with different manipulative toys building fine motor skills. They will also scribble, draw and pretend to write.

LOOKING FOR A GOOD EDUCATIONAL TOY?

There are so many toys out there for children. Some are great, some are ok and some are not so good. Believe it or not, good toys do have things in common.

Good Toys.....

- Can be used in many different ways.
- Can be taken apart and put back together in different ways.
- Don't have many little parts in order for it to work.
- Are made of easy to handle materials, and are not easy to break.
- Are appropriate for the child's age.
- Are safe- no sharp edge, non-toxic, and washable.
- Don't do all the work for the child and their play.
- Encourage imagination, creativity and the need for interaction with child, the child must play with the toy- not watch the toy!

*Simpler the toy is- the more complex learning takes place –
the more complex the toy is – the simpler learning takes place!*

LOOSE-PARTS FREE-PLAY

This recipe produces: 1 happy child with an exercised body and imagination.

Free, Fun Activity All Year Round!

You will need:

TIME: at least 20 minutes- the longer the better

BIG PERSON: A responsible adult near-by who is separate from the play

1 CHILD OR MORE: any age, birth to 14 years

LOOSE PARTS: stuff to make and play with, are often recycled materials and natural materials, child-safe objects and materials found around a house that can be used by a child for their own purposes.

Recipe:

1 child-safe area, any size -living room, dining room, kitchen, bedroom, porch, driveway, backyard, park, playground, or other area you can think of

Add **Loose Parts:**

- child-safe recycled materials
- boxes large and tiny, cardboard rolls, plastic food containers/clean and empty, empty cereal boxes and oatmeal containers, paper towel rolls, yarn and string, boxes, pine cones, branches, stones, shells, other things from home
- a large piece of cloth, other assorted pieces of fabric
 - old scarves or clothes you no longer wear
- a small number of non-motorized or non-electronic toys from home
- Anything the child asks for that is child-safe
- Indoors: sofas, chairs, and tables
- Outdoors: wagons, wheel barrows, pull carts, pails, buckets, sand, and water

Educational Purpose:

- The child develops **gross motor skills** (big-body movement) and **fine motor skills** (hands and fingers).
- The child uses **concrete problem solving skills** and learns about their **interaction** with the surrounding environment.
- The child exercises **imagination** for **creative thinking, problem solving, building language and social skills.**

****FREE-PLAY** is self directed play when children have space and time to explore and play with

NO DIRECTIONS, NO HOW-TO'S or ADULT-MADE PLANS.

For more free, fun and learning activities visit our website www.eji.org

Hey There, Grown-Up!!

Thanks for bringing me to the library to play today!

I am excited to be out and about in the world.

I like the library – the toys, the other children.

I especially like that you will be with me and help me play!

Let's make this a special time together.

- Please stay with me at all times. I feel safe being with you, and I need to know you are by me.
- Please shut off your phone – then I can have all your attention.
- I know this is not a place for eating – I'm much too busy. If I get hungry, a snack on the trip home would be good.
- If I don't feel good on library day, please stay home with me – I might be getting sick and it would not be good for the other children if I go.
- Please don't bring my toys and things to the workshop – there are so many things to play with there.
- With your help, I can clean up one little area before we leave. I can put a puzzle together and put it on the shelf.

Thanks for making this a happy time together!

Songs for Success

Did you remember to sing the warning rhyme today?

I look at my watch and what does it
say...five more minutes left to play!

Clean Up Song!

Clean up, clean up, everybody,
everywhere!

Clean up, clean up, everybody do
their share!

Singing makes everything fun!

HOMEMADE PLAY DOUGH

This recipe produces: 1 happy child with play dough!

Not Cooked Play Dough:

1 1/4 cups flour
1/4 cup salt (4 tablespoons)
1/2 cup water
1-2 tablespoons flour (if needed)
Food coloring

1. In a bowl, add 1 1/4 cups flour and salt. Mix.
2. Mix the water and some food coloring together.
3. Pour water mixture in the flour mixture. Mix together with a spoon (or your hands).
4. If it is too sticky, add more flour.
5. Keep in a covered container or sealable plastic bag in the refrigerator.

Cooked Play Dough:

1 cup flour
1 cup boiling water
2 tablespoons cream of tartar
1/2 cup salt
1 tablespoon oil
Food coloring

Mix and knead together. This play-dough is not sticky and does not dry out.

Some ideas to make the best play dough and keep it in good shape:

- If the dough is too sticky, knead in more flour, cornstarch, or baking soda.
- If dough becomes too dry, add a few drops of water.
- Keep in container or plastic bag to not dry out.

For more free, fun, learning activities visit our website www.earlyyearsinst.org

HOMEMADE BUBBLES

This recipe produces: 1 happy child with bubbles!

Liquid dishwashing detergent or tearless shampoo (1 part water)

Mix with water (6 parts water)

Experiment with your brand for the best proportion of water.

Twist one end of a pipe cleaner into a ring for the wand.

Songs to sing:

*“One little, two little, three little bubbles
Four little, five little, six little bubbles,
Seven little, eight little, nine little bubbles
Ten little bubbles go pop, pop, pop!
Pop, pop, pop those bubbles
Pop, pop, pop those bubbles
Pop, pop, pop those bubbles
Pop those bubbles, pop, pop, pop!”*

*“Blow, blow, blow the bubbles
Gently in the air
They float, they fly up in the sky
Bubbles everywhere.”*

**Songs taken from Bright Beginnings Workshop*

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