



Skills Developed Through Play

- Knowing what to do when no one is directing you
- Problem solving
- Creativity and imagination
- Interacting with others and negotiating
- Flexibility and adaptability
- Willingness to take risks and try different scenarios
- Processing emotions
- Understanding social situations
- Discovering interests

WHY PLAY IS IMPORTANT?

- Giving a child the opportunity, time, and space to play helps to foster many important life skills.
- Engaging in play allows a child to explore different interests, passions, and talents.
- Play is a wonderful educational tool that helps prepare them for life experiences.



How Much Play Time Does a Child Need?

- Toddlers should spend at least one hour a day in free, unstructured play, and at least thirty minutes engaged in active, adult led play.
- Older children need even more time to play each day.
- Think of play as a prescription from a doctor. It's something they need every day.



PLAY

IT'S MORE THAN YOU THINK!!

Play is "any spontaneous or organized activity that provides enjoyment, entertainment, amusement or diversion."

Play includes:-

- **Having fun**
- **Being creative and spontaneous**
- **Creating original ideas and acting on them**
- **Engagement and concentration**



Unoccupied Play (Birth-3Months)

At this stage baby is just making a lot of movements with their arms ,legs, hands,feet, etc. They are learning about and discovering how their body moves.



Solitary Play (Birth-2 Years)

This is the stage when a child plays alone. They are not interested in playing with others quite yet.



Spectator/Onlooker Behavior (2 Years)

During this stage a child begins to watch other children playing but does not play with them.



Parallel Play (2+ Years)

When a child plays alongside or near others but does not play with them this stage is referred to as parallel play.



Associate Play (3-4 Years)

A child plays side by side with focus in other person playing and start to interact with one another



Cooperative Play (4+ years)

When a child plays together with others and has interest in both the activity and other children involved in playing they are participating in cooperative play.

Stages of Play

Use Play to Help Meet Milestones
From birth, a baby will use play to explore the world around them and develop important life skills.



0-6 months

Show baby interesting objects such as a brightly colored mobile or toy
Talk to baby often to familiarize baby with your voice, respond when they coo and babble
Place baby in different positions so they can see the world from different angles
Let baby bring objects to mouth to explore and experience new textures
Vary facial expressions and gestures so baby has the opportunity to imitate them
Use a mirror or favorite toy to help your baby engage in and enjoy Tummy Time



1-3 years

Allow child to spend time with objects and toys they enjoy
Give child crayons or markers so they can practice scribbling
Encourage child to interact with peers
Help child explore their body through different movements, e.g. walking, jumping, and standing on one leg
Provide opportunities to create make-believe situations with objects, e.g. pretending to drink out of empty cup
Respond when child speaks, answer questions, and provide verbal encouragement

7-12 months



Play peek-a-boo
Use a mirror to show faces to baby
Provide baby with a safe environment to crawl and explore
Place baby in a variety of positions such as on tummy, side, etc.
Give baby opportunities to learn actions have effects, e.g. when they drop a toy and it falls to the ground
Expose baby to a variety of age appropriate toys, e.g. balls, shape sorters, music toys, or common household items like pots and spoons

4-6 years



Provide opportunities for child to sing, dance, and try a variety of movements, e.g. hopping, swinging, climbing, and doing somersaults
Tell stories to child and ask them questions about what they remember
Give child time and space to act out imaginary scenes, roles, and activities
Allow child to move between make-believe games and reality e.g. playing house and helping you with chores
Schedule time for child to interact with friends to practice socializing and building friendships

Tips to Make the Most of Play Time

- Limit screen time
- Promote outdoor play
- Allow for child to make mistakes
- Give child free time to play outside of school and organized activities
- Let child make choices about games, activities, and toys
- Encourage use of imagination
- Offer new challenges if child is bored or help if child is frustrated
- Provide encouragement and support