

Play: Putting the Pieces Together

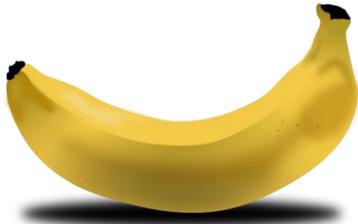


The Work of Play

Presented by Dr. Betsy Diamant-Cohen

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Go Bananas!



Developmental Tips are Your Tools To Help Parents

A few short and simple sentences with 3 parts

- 1. **WHAT?** – Identifies what the action is
- 1. **WHY?** – Tells parents why it is important
- 1. **HOW?** – Explains how it might be replicated at home

play

/plā/ 

verb

Engage in an activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.

noun

Activity engaged in for enjoyment or recreation, especially by children.



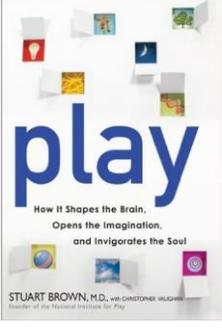
Dr. Stuart Brown

- Founder, National Institute of Play
- Trained in general and internal medicine, psychiatry and clinical research
- Instigator and Executive Producer of the three-part PBS series, "The Promise of Play."

The desire to play is a powerful instinct



from "Play is More Than Just Fun"
https://www.ted.com/talks/stuart_brown_says_play_is_more_than_fun_it_s_vital



play
How It Shapes the Brain,
Opens the Imagination,
and Invigorates the Soul

STUART BROWN, M.D., with CHRISTOPHER VAUGHAN
Member of the National Academy for Play

“The opposite of play is not work – the opposite of play is depression.”

Dr. Stuart Brown

Dr. Brown’s 7 Properties of Play

1. Apparently purposeless (done for its own sake)
2. Voluntary
3. Inherent attraction
4. Freedom from time
5. Diminished consciousness of self
6. Improvisational potential
7. Continuation desire





Engaging in play helps to build survival skills!

Mock combat builds emotional intelligence skills. Players learn how to perceive other's emotional state and adopt an appropriate response.



Play is an essential part of a child's life.



- Enables perspective-taking
- Builds social and linguistic competence
- Builds relationships

Play affects mental and physical health

- Emotional control
- Social competency
- Personal resiliency
- Continuing curiosity





Research supports the value of play; It builds skills in many domains

- Relieves stress, confronts fear
- Fine & gross motor skills
- Language & communication skills
- Math skills
- Science Skills
- Social skills

Think to yourself for a moment, why do YOU think play is important?

Now, think of a Developmental Tip!

- Pretend you are talking to a parent who complains to you that their child "only wants to play?"
- What can you say to that parent to convince them of the value of play? Use the information we have just covered.
- Use five sentences AT MOST.
- Use informal language and a friendly tone.
- Tell the parent why their child's play is important.

A is for Apple...

Write down as many words, experiences, activities and concepts that can relate to a real apple.

Describe how it looks, smells, feels, tastes...

Describe what you can do with it...

Describe what you can know about apples...

A Photograph



Cross off what can not be known/done with a photograph.

A Picture



Cross off what can not be known/done with a picture.

A Drawing



Cross off what can not be known/done with a drawing.

The Written Word

apple

Cross off what can not be known/done with the word "apple".

Direct Experience Leads to Understanding

- RIGHT ON, PIAGET!!!
- "Hands on, minds on, feelings on" experiences are the foundation for the development of symbolic understanding



Stages of Developmentally Appropriate Play

- Birth to 12 months
- 12 months to 24 months
- 24 months to 36 months
- Ages 3 – 5
- Age 6 and above



From birth to 12 months, children use ALL of their senses.



Babies enjoy:

- Exploring the world by using all of their senses, sense of self-worth grows during pleasurable play interactions with parents and other people.
- Being entertained with songs, books and conversations, the beginning of reading readiness.

From 12 months to 24 months, children build relationships and discover what their bodies can do.



They enjoy:

- Playing peek-a-boo,
- Handing an item to someone and taking it back,
- Waving and blowing kiss,
- Following one-step directions and getting appreciation.
- Hearing stories, looking at pictures and saying what they are.

Baby Time Programs



From 24 months to 36 months, children learn problem solving.



They enjoy:

- Showing that they have minds of their own,
- Experimenting with independence,
- Puzzles
- Moving- crawling, leaping, running and walking
- Often wanting to do things "by myself."

At age three, children participate in pretend play.



They enjoy:

- Playing dress-up and make-believe games,
- Sharing toys with others,
- Listening to stories (while seated!),
- Playing games with playmates.

From ages three to five, the world of play expands!



Preschoolers enjoy:

- Storytelling with others during imaginary play,
- Conversations,
- Somersaults and tumbling,
- Painting,
- Counting,
- Word play.

Preschool Storytimes

- Expose children to books
 - Build vocabulary
 - Introduces other people's point of view through stories
- Incorporate play experiences
- Awaken imagination



Children ages six and up enjoy more formalized play



School age children enjoy:

- Playing games with rules,
- Creating these rules,
- Writing letters and numbers,
- And board games and strategy games.

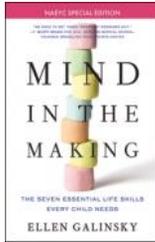
The need for 21st century skills



Creative thinking, being able to go outside of the box, is developed through play experiences.

Seven Essential Life Skills Every Child Needs

1. Focus and self-control
2. Perspective taking
3. Communicating
4. Making connections
5. Critical thinking
6. Taking on challenges
7. Self-directed, engaged learning



The Six Skills That Help Children Become Ready to Learn to Read

- Print awareness**
- Letter knowledge**
- Phonological awareness**
- Vocabulary**
- Narrative skills**
- Print motivation**



ECRR2: Five Practices that Help Children Become Ready to Learn

- Talk
- Sing
- Read
- Write
- Play



Storytime is not a performance



Welcoming Comments remind parents that it is participatory and explains why it is valuable.

Different types of play can strengthen a variety of skills and lead to literacy.



- Role-playing, storytelling, and fantasy play
- Physical / Rough and tumble play
- Competitive play
- Puppet play
- Arts and crafts play
- Music play
- Constructive play and STEM play
- Book play

Storytelling



Role-playing, Storytelling, and Fantasy Play

- Uses original language
- Develops imagination
- Encourages a natural mode of learning
- Allows children to construct meaning in their worlds
- Strengthens psychological, intellectual and social development



EVERY CHILD READY TO READ @ your library 2nd version

- Pretend play
- Dramatic play
- Make-believe play



- Builds oral language skills
- Builds up children's self-confidence
- Gives practice using imagination to solve problems



Body Play



Physical Play



- Builds fine motor skills
- Entices children to exercise
- Promotes health

- ✓ Infants kicking and waving,
- ✓ Babies rolling and crawling,
- ✓ Toddlers pushing and walking,
- ✓ Children climbing, running, hugging, tagging, jumping, leaping, hopping, turning, and dancing.





Rough and Tumble Play



Competitive Play

- Teaches rule-following and turn-taking
- Builds self-confidence when a child wins
- Teaches how to accept losing with grace (hopefully!)
- Involves functioning as part of a team.



Social Play



Social Play



Puppet Play

- Encourages children to attempt independent learning experiences
- Helps children explore ways to communicate ideas and feelings
- Can illustrate new vocabulary words



Using puppets:

- Gives children practice communicating
- Prompts children to use words and sentences
- Builds narrative skills
- Is a natural platform for using the imagination



Children love puppets.

Puppets can put shy children at ease.
They easily capture children's attention.



Anything can be a puppet



**Arts and Crafts
Play**

- Helps to build fine motor skills which are later used for writing
- Encourages creativity
- Exposes children to a variety of materials
- Enhances visual literacy



Music Play – Using Musical Instruments



- Teaches cause and effect
- Gives children and opportunity to express themselves non-verbally
- Strengthens listening skills



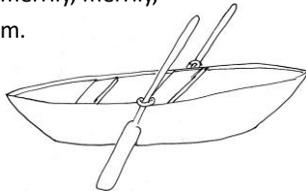
Music Play - Singing

Singing is great way to teach vocabulary words and to recognize emotions.



Row, Row, Row Your Boat

Row, row, row your boat,
 Gently down the stream.
 Merrily, merrily, merrily, merrily,
 Life is but a dream.



Music Play with Scarves



Playing with colored translucent scarves ignite everyone's imagination. They can be waved, blown, scrunched up, and thrown.

STEM Play

- Involves experimentation
- Introduces children to science, technology, and math in fun ways
- Encourages children to recognize science in the world around them
- Models enjoyable learning activities for parents



Soakers

- Pop-up programming
- “Soak up” time
- Works with all ages





Diffusion Butterflies



Floam!



Bag of wonder

Simple Steps for Soakers

- 1. Portable.
- 2. Simple (not too many “props” involved; easy to set up and disassemble).
- 3. Safe (only use non-toxic materials and never leave the table unattended).
- 4. Age appropriate.
- 5. Unusual (not something that a child is likely to do at home or at school).

Soakers can involve science experiments, arts and crafts, and even hairdressing!



Rapunzel's Hair Styling Salon

Exploring Size -- Moving Molecules

Can you make the pinwheels spin?



What's Inside? *Using the clues to form a hypothesis*



Making snow *(sodium polyacrylate)*



<http://www.thinkgeek.com/product/79ea/?cpg=cj&ref=&CIURL=&CID=1215086>

Soakers can go along with books



Write your own story



Make woolly sheep



Try origami

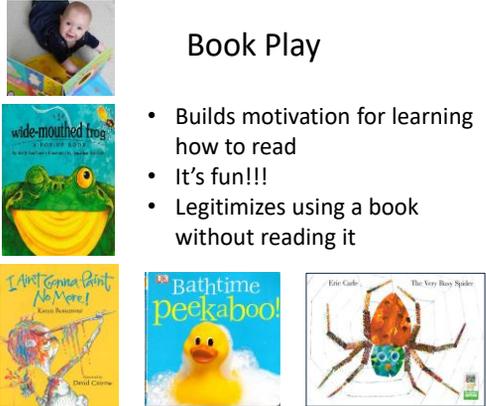


Pet a Rabbit



Book Play

- Builds motivation for learning how to read
- It's fun!!!
- Legitimizes using a book without reading it



Following this with play in a public library's early literacy play center will enrich and expand the book experience.



Create temporary early literacy spaces!

During Children's Book Week, section off part of your library and make a children's book come alive.

Choose a book.
Create stations with activities.
Use signs.



Rosie's Walk



Rosie the Hen walked across the yard...





Around the pond





Over the haystack



Past the mill...





Under the hive



Back in time to play!



Dog and Bear by Laura Vaccaro Seeger



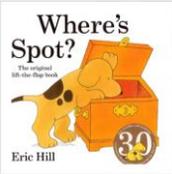
Acting out the story of
"The Three Little Pigs"



(with puppets, too!)



Where's Spot?





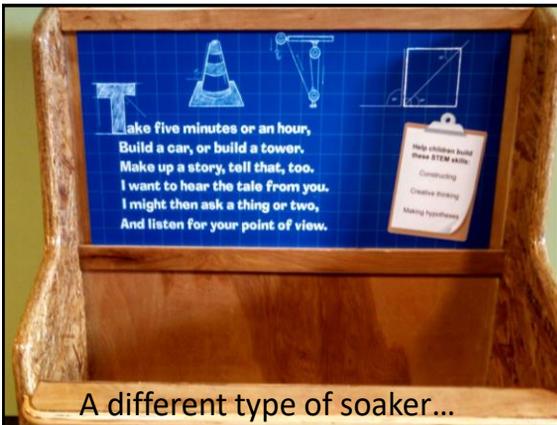
Using a simple plastic bucket, a ladle, shredded paper, a bowl, and a stuffed animal dog makes the story come alive.





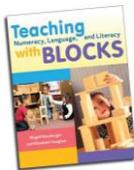
Constructive Play

- Learning through action and observation
- Practices engineering skills: manipulation, building, and fitting things together.
- Applies cognitive and motor skills



A different type of soaker...

Playing with blocks encourages imagination



It also builds math and language skills

Block play can build self-esteem



Block play strengthens early literacy skills

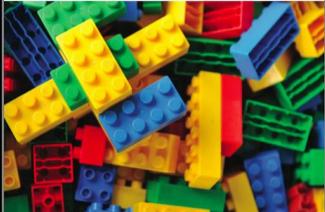
I just built the biggest castle in the world!



This is a castle. Girls only!

Block play builds problem solving skills.

The **IMPORTANCE** of **PLAY**.
 Particularly **CONSTRUCTIVE** Play.
 IN **PUBLIC LIBRARY PROGRAMMING**



ALSA
Written for the Association for Library Service to Children by Sue McClend Hespaco
 Adopted by ALSC's Board of Directors, September 10, 2012

Let's Build!

1. Divide into groups.
2. Group A builds while Group B observes and takes notes.
3. Group B observes while Group A observes and takes notes.

What kind of play are these children engaging in?

1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9 10

“Learning” according to Mr. Rogers

- Self-esteem
- Sense of trust
- Capacity to look & listen carefully
- Curiosity
- Capacity to play
- Times of solitude

A photograph of Fred Rogers, known as Mr. Rogers, sitting in a wooden chair. He is wearing a red cardigan over a white shirt and a dark tie. He is smiling and looking towards the camera.

A parent is a child’s first and best teacher

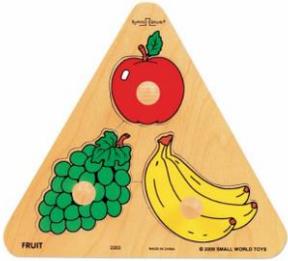
A photograph of a woman in a dark blue dress holding a baby in a white outfit. They are both looking down at the baby.

The way parents act with their infants and toddlers can impact them for the rest of their lives.

A photograph of two women smiling and looking at each other. They appear to be in a close, affectionate relationship.

And, playing together is an important way for parents to build strong and healthy relationships with their children.

Puzzle guided play



“What Babies Know About Physics and Foreign Language”

The new information economy, as opposed to the older industrial one, **demand more innovation and less imitation, more creativity and less conformity.**

New studies show that explicit instruction, the sort of teaching that goes with school and “parenting,” can be limiting. When children think they are being taught, they are much more likely to simply reproduce what the adult does, instead of creating something new.

- Alison Gopnik, NY Times, July 30, 2016



Scaffolding

“Zone of Proximal Development”



New knowledge builds on previous learning.

Ideal learning takes place when adults look at where children are and then **scaffold** them!



Mom is scaffolding imaginative play by creating a "spider web" and then letting them use their imagination to build their own game!



If an adult asks more questions, the child may need to use more words to answer.



I want windows!

Why don't you add in some windows?

This is NOT an example of scaffolding!



Take that block and put it over here.

This is NOT scaffolding either.

What letter is on that beanbag?



Labeling is not scaffolding.

~~What a nice tower you are building~~

What a nice structure you're building.

What structure do you have here?



The most rewarding play experiences are child initiated and directed.



- Self-directed
- No time limit
- Children create their own rules
- Everyone is engaged

Despite the enormous benefits of play, genuine play experiences for many children in the United States today are limited.



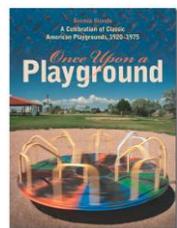
“Monkey bars” were once considered standard playground equipment



Picture by Nels P. Olsen, creative commons:
<http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-sa/2.0/deed.en>

Carousels were also popular, since they helped children build many skills

- Develops muscle integration and strength
- Improves balance
- Gives children experience with taking risks
- Involves working together as a team



These types of risky play involved



- Goal-setting
- Determination
- Persistence
- Coordination
- Strong muscles
- Conquering fear
- Learning through mistakes
- Building sense of competence & self-confidence



Playground equipment today

- Strengthens muscles
- Promotes safe, fun activity
- Tries to inspire imagination
- May include "academic games"



Play is disappearing!

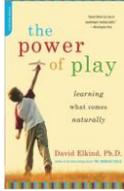


In 1981, a typical school-age child in the US had 40% of her time open for play. By 1997, the time for play had shrunk to 25%

In the last two decades, children have lost 8 hours of free play per week. *(Elkind, 2008)*

Problems with the State of Play

- In preschools
 - Some still mistakenly focus on academics
- In schools
 - Accountability has replaced creativity
 - Recesses have been shortened or eliminated
- In neighborhoods
 - Safety concerns keep children indoors
- In homes
 - Electronic games played individually often replace group board games



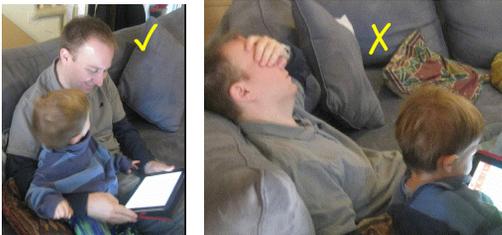
Most computer games are not open-ended

Electronic games often:

- follow a script
- involve repetitive actions to reach a goal without stimulating the imagination
- electronic games played individually often replace group or team games.



Technology itself is not good or bad, it is what is done with it that matters.



What's happening to creativity?



"The more our time 'digital native' kids spend on entertainment media, the more we lose the tactile intelligence critical to design and manufacture physical products. So let's encourage children to start physically building and tinkering again."

(Leonard & Bridges 2013)

Benefits of children's new media use

- Build's upon children's aptitude for technology
- Familiarizes children with technology.
- Gives opportunities for collaboration
- Encourages social interactions
- Enables some children to communicate better
- Allows non-writing children to express themselves in print



The Conversation Duet

Research Tidbits

Passive viewing does not stimulate the brain
Cell-phone interruptions reduce learning

BUT

Back-and-forth interaction matters
Video chats between people are the same as personal conversations





Felt-Board Mother Goose on the Loose

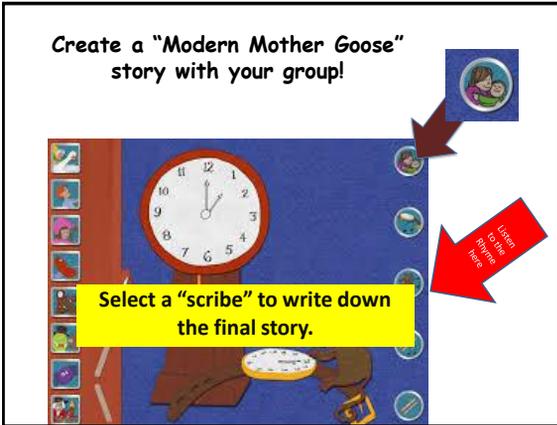
Felt Board – Mother Goose on the Loose

Felt Board - Mother Goose on the Loose is a nursery rhyme Felt Board app designed for young children to use together with parents and caregivers. Children can move felt pieces, sing, and tap along with popular nursery rhymes and songs.

Download on the App Store

<http://www.softwaresmoothie.com/app/felt-board-mother-geese-loose/>

Create a "Modern Mother Goose" story with your group!



Select a "scribe" to write down the final story.

Enter By the Fire

Let's use technology to build self-regulation skills!



Another Freeze Game

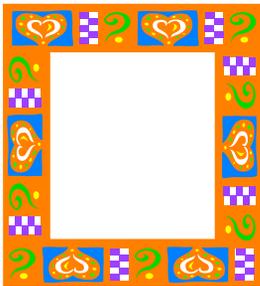


Why are freeze games important?

Think of a Developmental Tip!

- Pretend you have just played some freeze games in your storytime.
- What tip can you give to parents to convince them of the value of freeze games?
- How do you suggest they use this information at home?
- Use five sentences AT MOST.
- Use informal language and a friendly tone.
- Tell the parent why their child's play is important.

Where do children's librarians fit into the picture?



Free play is great, but.....

Intervention by an adult is occasionally needed for safety purposes or to redirect behavior.



Media Mentorship in Libraries
Serving Youth

Librarians are expected to give book recommendations to parents and children.

We can become media mentors, also, by familiarizing ourselves with new media products including apps and electronic games.

www.common sense media.org

<http://digital-storytime.com>

Adopted by the ASLC Board of Directors on March 11, 2016

BECOMING A MEDIA MENTOR
A Guide for Working with Children and Families

The best way parents can help their children prepare for the future is by talking, singing, reading, writing, and playing with them.

Claudia Haines, aka Campbell and the Association for Library Service to Children (ALSC)
FOREWORD BY CHIP SCHMIDT

Developmental Tips about Digital Media

Using apps in storytime



Developmental Tips

- As an “aside” during library programs
- As an “aside” during informal conversations with library visitors
- “Dropped into conversation” while speaking with a parent in the Early Literacy Play Area
- On signs

Use signs wisely

Too many signs clutter up the children's room and aren't read.

But a few simple signs with intentional words can help expand an activity and increase its benefits.



Other sign examples

- “Thank you for _____.”
- “What a good problem solver you are, you were able to _____.”
- “It’s so much fun to play with you; you are so good at _____.” (sharing, taking turns)
- “You were being so kind when you _____.”

The Center on the Social and Emotional Foundations for Early Learning

Early Literacy Areas in public libraries provide wonderful opportunities for parents and children to play together.



Early Literacy Activity Centers

- Promote early literacy skills;
- Inspire children to explore and learn through self-discovery;
- Demonstrate the purpose of reading and writing and inspire children to explore;
- Demonstrate the purpose and power of print;
- Encourage social interactions and oral language development;
- Invite children to gradually understand print concepts;
- Provide practice with real life experiences that require reading; and
- Add an element of fun to the library – kids learn when they are having fun.



Inclusive play for children of all abilities

- Multisensory
- Easy to use and/or easy to activate
- Kept in a convenient location that is easily accessible for children who are using wheelchairs or other devices
- Allows for experiencing success.
- Popular with children.



Extend play beyond the library



<http://librarymakers.blogspot.com/2016/06/let-wild-rumpus-start.html>

Scaffolding



Carissa Christner, Wild Rumpus, Week 3

Librarians can create a wide variety of play opportunities for children.



How can we promote play?
Let's think about it



Provide toys and games



Use Developmental Tips to Engage Parents!



Try memorizing one or two developmental tips, or keep them written on cards at your desk.



Intentionally Incorporate Play Into Programs



- Baby Time
- Preschool Storytime
- Temporary Spaces
- Soakers

Have fun!!!!

Be intentional with the adults, too



It's great that he's playing with blocks; he's problem solving.

Look! She's figuring out how tall she can get them and which shapes fit together.

When adults encourage children to role play, a child's ability to play gains significantly.

Since children learn by watching the adults they love, an adult who models working joyfully instills that attitude in their child.

Parents should reserve time for play with their child and for their child at home.

Giving space and time for play is vital, especially in our over-filled lives, as is offering simple play materials, often drawn from household objects.

Creative Movement

Leaping Lizards



++ It All Adds Up ++

Play is essential in the lives of children.

Playful learning can be in free and guided play.

Scaffolding is directed by the child, but initiated or guided by an adult.

++ It All Adds Up ++

Digital media, as well as books and toys, have a role to play in children's development.

YOU HAVE AN IMPORTANT ROLE TO PLAY!!!!

Our Goals



Helping children AND the adults in their lives.

Checklist

- Focus and self-control
- Perspective taking
- Communicating
- Making connections
- Critical thinking
- Taking on challenges
- Self-directed, engaged learning
- Talk
- Sing
- Read
- Write
- Play



Take-aways

1. Use your notes as sources for developmental tips.
2. Modify some of the games we played today and use them in your programs.
3. Create a hand-out, sign, or poster that encourage parents to be involved in their children's play in developmentally-appropriate ways.
4. Explore the hand-outs for further recommended resources on play.

Questions



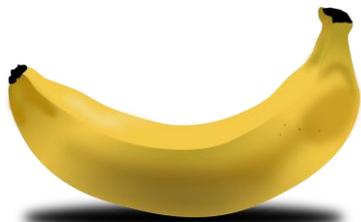
If we want to encourage learning, innovation and creativity we should love our young children, take care of them, talk to them, let them play and let them watch what we do as we go about our everyday lives.

We don't have to make children learn, we just have to let them learn.

-Alison Gopnik



Go Bananas!



Evaluation



Thank you for joining in today!



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Children's Programming & Early Literacy Consultant



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