



The Power of Play

Helping Your Child Grow and Thrive

For Parents of Babies and Young Children

Why Play Matters

Play is more than just fun — it's how children explore the world, learn new skills and build strong relationships. From the earliest days of life, babies and young children learn best through hands-on, joyful interactions with the people and environment around them.

Play helps children:

- Build brain connections for learning and memory.
- Strengthen muscles and coordination.
- Develop language and communication skills.
- Express emotions and build resilience.
- Learn how to solve problems and get along with others.



Learn more
about the
power of play.



What Does Play Look Like?

Babies (0-12 months)

- Making eye contact, smiling and cooing back and forth.
- Tummy time with colorful toys to reach and grasp.
- Playing peek-a-boo or patty cake.
- Exploring safe household objects like wooden spoons or plastic containers.



Toddlers (1-3 years)

- Stacking blocks and knocking them down.
- Pretend play with dolls, animals or play kitchens.
- Dancing to music or clapping games.
- Scribbling with crayons or painting with fingers.



Preschoolers (3-5 years)

- Dress-up and role play (pretending to be a firefighter, parent, etc.).
- Building forts or structures with pillows or boxes.
- Playing simple board games or puzzles.
- Exploring nature with sticks, leaves and rocks.

What Children Learn Through Play

Type of Play

- Physical play
- Pretend play
- Social play
- Exploratory play
- Music & movement

What Children Learn

Coordination, strength, balance
Creativity, empathy, storytelling
Sharing, cooperation, turn-taking
Curiosity, cause and effect, persistence
Rhythm, expression, listening skills



Simple Tips

- **Follow your child's lead** — let them choose what interests them.
- **Join in** — your attention and interaction make play more meaningful.
- **Limit screens** — real-world play is more beneficial for young brains.
- **Use everyday moments** — bath time, mealtime, and walks are full of play opportunities.



Remember: You are your child's first and favorite playmate. When you play together, you're building a strong bond and helping their development in every way.

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