

Component 2: Learning Through Play

Stages of play

Unoccupied Play: 0-3 months
Where babies kick and jerk around.

Solitary Play: 0 – 2 years
not curious about what others are doing.

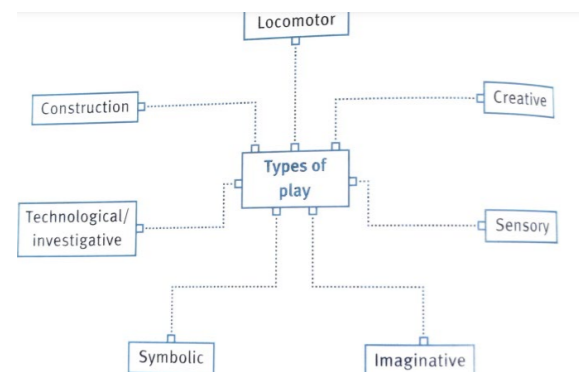
Spectator Play: approx. 2 years of age.
Where they watch other children play.

Parallel Play: 2-3 years old
Play alongside another child

Associative Play: Between 3 and 4 years old
begin to interact with other children.

Co-operative Play: from 4 years old onwards
begin to play with other children.

Types of play



How can play be organised?

Adult-Led Play

- Requires an adult to plan and lead the activity.
- Children often do not see this as play.
- Children can do more high-risk activities with adult supervision.

Adult-initiated Play

- Adult created the activity but does not lead it.
- Children develop **Independent Learning skills**.

Child-initiated play

- Can be called "free play"
- Children can choose their own activity.
- Children may not learn new vocabulary.

0-18 months

Physical Play

- Babies have very little **spatial awareness**.
- Babies begin to use large **Gross Motor skills** e.g kicking
- Children will begin to be able to hold objects at around **6 months old**.

Cognitive/Intellectual play

- By 4 months babies begin to use their senses and become interested in **problem solving**.
- By 8 months children begin to use their **imagination**.
- Babies start to move their heads towards familiar noises.
- Children will be able to understand if they want more or less of something.
- Children pay close attention to all of their environment e.g sounds and smells as they explore.
- At around 9 months children understand basic **technology** e.g toys with buttons.
- They do not understand differences in culture.

Communication and language play

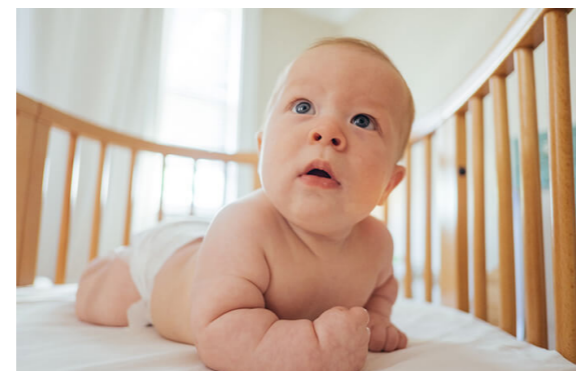
- By 9 months a child will understand what words like "no" mean.
- Children will start to babble by 6 months.
- Small children find it difficult to express feelings.
- By 12 months children will start to use language that is more recognisable.

Social play

- Will develop strong bonds to primary care givers e.g parents.
- They find it difficult to share.

Emotional play

- Find it hard to express feelings.
- At around 15 months they begin to get a sense of who they are.



18 months- 3years

Physical Play

- Begin to understand where objects are in relation to them.
- Start to become picky eaters.
- Can begin to use the toilet independently but do not understand why they need to wash hands.
- Are much more coordinated in their movements can use their **gross motor skills** to squat and stand up.
- Can do more **dine motor** activities such as scribbling with a crayon.

Cognitive/Intellectual Play

- Children are more likely to have a tantrum and show their frustration.
- Will use their imagination to create pretend scenarios.
- They often struggle to listen as their brains are in overdrive with new information.
- Will begin to show how old they are using their fingers.
- Children are interested in the size and weight of objects when exploring their environment.
- can begin to use a tablet or other technology to draw.
- Children still have limited knowledge of other cultures.

Communication and language Play

- Children enjoy listening to story books.
- Children are learning lots of new vocabulary.
- Can match sounds to objects such as "moo" for a toy cow.



Social Play

- Through parallel and associative play children interact with peers.
- Limited sharing of toys.

Emotional Play

- Children begin to develop empathy and will help others.

3 years – 5 years

Physical Play

- Have developed good **Spatial awareness**.
- Have developed good foot and leg coordination and can now kick a ball with force.
- Can now use large **Gross Motor Skills** by doing movements such as jumping from a low step, run and balance on one leg for a moment.
- Have developed **fine motor skills** and are able to button and unbutton clothing.



Cognitive and Intellectual Play

- Problem solving skills are more developed and children less likely to have anxiety over new situations.
- Imaginative play and pretend scenarios are a way of acting out emotions.
- Children can usually count accurately up to 10.
- Children enjoy things such as woodland walks to help them experience new smells sights and environments.
- Attention span has increased, and children are able to sit for longer periods of time.

Communication and language Play

- Struggle pronouncing more difficult words such as spaghetti and say pasgetti instead.
- Can follow two step instructions.
- They can understand words such as "under" or "inside".

Social Play

- Have begun to build bonds with other students and begin to make friendships.
- Sharing has become easier.

Emotional Play

- Children are more aware of how to self-manage their feelings.

The role of adults in promoting play

- Explaining and demonstrating how equipment works.
- Adapting activities to meet personal needs such as linking it to what they're interested in.

Things to consider when choosing equipment.

- Will it motivate children to take interest.
- Will it promote exploring new experiences?
- Does it encourage questions to be asked?
- Is it age appropriate.
- Is it safe?

Children often like to mimic behaviours be sure to...

- Model effective communication
- Join in with play activities.
- Be aware of health and safety.

How can play be promoted

Organising activities

- **Indoor/outdoor activities**
Could include messy areas book reading areas.
- **Group activities**
Allow children to socialise with other children.
- **Sensory activities**

