



What's the smartest thing a young child can do with a computer or TV? Play with the box it came in! Computers tend to insist on being just computers, programmed by adults. But an empty box becomes a cave, a canoe, a cabin, a candy shop—whatever and whenever the child's magic wand of imagination decrees.

The Benefits of Play

Child-initiated play lays a foundation for learning and academic success. Through play, children learn to interact with others, develop language skills, recognize and solve problems, and discover their human potential. In short, play helps children make sense of and find their place in the world.

- **Physical development:** The rough and tumble of active play facilitates children's sensorimotor development. It is a natural preventive for the current epidemic of childhood obesity. Research suggests that recess also boosts school children's academic performance.
- **Academics:** There is a close link between play and healthy cognitive growth. It lays the foundation for later academic success in reading and writing. It provides hands-on experiences with real-life materials that help children develop abstract scientific and mathematical concepts. Play is critical for the development of imagination and creative problem-solving skills.
- **Social and emotional learning:** Research suggests that social make-believe play is related to increases in cooperation, empathy, and impulse control, reduced aggression, and better overall emotional and social health.
- **Sheer joy:** The evidence is clear—healthy children of all ages love to play. Experts in child development say that plenty of time for childhood play is one of the key factors leading to happiness in adulthood.

From the Alliance for Childhood brochure *Time for Play, Every Day: It's Fun - and Fundamental*

Online Booklets for Staff and Parents

What Young Children Learn Through Play
<https://www.ag.ndsu.edu/pubs/yf/famsci/fs1430.pdf>

The Power of Play: Learning Through Play from Birth to Three
<https://secure2.convio.net/zttcfn/admin/DocServer/ThePowerofPlay.pdf?docID=161>

Play in Children's Development, Health and Well-Being
<http://www.ornes.nl/wp-content/uploads/2010/08/Play-in-children-s-development-health-and-well-being-feb-2012.pdf>

The Importance of Play in Promoting Healthy Child Development and Maintaining Strong Parent-Child Bonds
<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182.full>

The Wisdom of Play

Order Free Printed Copies: <http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources/literature/booklets-and-cds/wisdom-of-play>

Books available to borrow from CCIC

1. *The playful adult: 500 ways to lighten your spirit and tickle your soul.* Sue Baldwin. Stillwater, MN: Insights Training and Consulting, 2002. 178 p.

2. *Einstein never used flash cards: how our children really learn - and why they need to play more and memorize less.* Kathy Hirsh-Pasek. Emmaus, PA: Rodale, 2003. 302 p.

3. *Play: how it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul.* Stuart Brown. New York: Avery, 2009. 229 p.

4. *The power of play: how spontaneous, imaginative activities lead to happier, healthier children.* David Elkind. Cambridge, MA: Da Capo Lifelong, 2007. 240 p.

5. *Play: the pathway from theory to practice.* 2nd ed. Sandra Heidemann. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2010. 240 p.

6. *When play isn't easy: helping children enter and sustain play.* Sandra Heidemann. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2014. 87 p.
 "When children have difficulty joining play or participating in group play, it's important to pinpoint the challenges that are occurring. This book focuses on the reasons why play might not be easy for children - due to language delays, shyness, special needs, or trauma, for example - and provides specific language and activities to facilitate play and help children improve their play skills."

12. *Magic capes, amazing powers: transforming superhero play in the classroom.* Eric Hoffman. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2004. 208 p.

13. *The origins of free play.* Éva Kálló. Budapest, Hungary: Pikler-Lóczy Társaság, 2005. 64 p.
 "Describes modes of free play from an infant's discovery of his hands to manipulation and experimentation with objects, to the stage of building things."

14. *The play's the thing: teachers' roles in children's play.* 2nd ed. Elizabeth Jones. New York: Teachers College Press, 2011. 152 p.

15. *A mandate for playful learning in preschool: presenting the evidence.* Kathy Hirsh-Pasek. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2009. 121 p.

16. *Play, the foundation that supports the house of higher learning.* Lisa Murphy. Rochester, NY: Ooey Gooney Inc, 2009. 181 p.

17. *A child's work: the importance of fantasy play.* Vivian Gussin Paley. Chicago, IL: University of Chicago Press, 2004. 111 p.

18. *101 life skills games for children: learning, growing, getting along (ages 6 to 12).* Bernie Badegruber. Alameda CA: Hunter House, 2005. 176 p.
 "Collection of games aimed at enhancing children's self-awareness and social and emotional skills, helping them understand and deal with problems in daily interactions with other children and adults."

Almost all creativity involves purposeful play.

~ Abraham Maslow ~

7. *Developmentally appropriate play: guiding young children to a higher level.* Gaye Gronlund. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2010. 190 p.

8. *When play isn't fun: helping children resolve play conflicts.* Sandra Heidemann. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2014. 87 p.
 "This book will broaden your knowledge about the important topic of play, and it will help you explore common challenges children might experience in play. Hands-on techniques, assessments, reflection questions, and exercises are included to help you more effectively support and strengthen children's play."

9. *Let them play: an early learning (un)curriculum.* Jeff A. Johnson. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2012. 223 p.
 "Playtime is focused, purposeful, and full of learning. This (un)curriculum is all about fostering children's play, trusting children as capable and engaged learners, and leaving behind boxed curriculums and prescribed activities."

10. *Let's play: (un)curriculum early learning adventures.* Jeff A. Johnson. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2014. 170 p.
 "Let's Play provides a variety of budget-friendly, child-centered experiences that lead to countless learning opportunities. Each chapter outlines an open-ended play adventure with instructions, photographs, and fresh ideas for children to explore everything from worms to magnets."

11. *Let's all play: a group-learning (un)curriculum.* Jeff A. Johnson. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2015. 154 p.
 "Let's All Play provides all-new adventures that support children's social skill development through thoughtful group play, interaction, and conversation. This book also encourages you to reflect on the value of children's play through deep thinking activities."

19. *101 more life skills games for children: learning, growing, getting along (ages 9 to 15).* Bernie Badegruber. Alameda CA: Hunter House, 2005. 162 p.

"A resource that can help children understand and deal with problems that arise in daily interactions with other children and adults. These games help children develop social and emotional skills and enhance self-awareness."

20. *Under deadman's skin: discovering the meaning of children's violent play.* Jane Katch. Boston, MA: Beacon Press, 2001. 131 p.

21. *The war play dilemma: what every parent and teacher needs to know.* 2nd ed. Diane E. Levin. New York: Teachers College Press, 2006. 124 p.

22. *Planning for play, observation, and learning in preschool and kindergarten.* Gaye Gronlund. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2012. 270 p.
 "With intentional planning frameworks, *Planning for Play, Observation, and Learning in Preschool and Kindergarten* provides tools and strategies to organize and develop curriculum around high-level, purposeful play. Practical application techniques help you create a cycle of planning and observation as they use a play-based curriculum to help young children thrive in your classroom."

23. *Prop box play: 50 themes to inspire dramatic play.* Ann Barbour. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2002. 160 p.

24. *Loose parts: inspiring play in young children.* Lisa Daly. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2015. 219 p.

25. *Do-it-yourself early learning: easy and fun activities and toys from everyday home center materials.* Jeff A. Johnson. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2006. 218 p.

Books available to borrow from CCIC

26. *Everybody wins!: 100 social-emotional learning games that children should play.* Rev. ed. Dianne Schilling. Wellington, FL: Innerchoice Pub, 2010. 155 p.

27. *The learning power of laughter: over 300 playful games, activities, and ideas that promote learning with young children.* Jackie Silberg. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2004. 136 p.

28. *Outdoor play, every day: innovative play concepts for early childhood.* Karyn Wellhousen. Albany, NY: Delmar/Thomson Learning, 2002. 274 p.

29. *Achieving learning goals through play: teaching young children with special needs.* 2nd ed. Anne H. Widerstrom. Baltimore, MD: P.H. Brookes Pub, 2005. 239 p.

30. *Tumbling over the edge: a rant for children's play.* Bev Bos & Jenny Chapman. Roseville, CA: Turn the Page Press, 2005. 161 p.
This is a book about play environments for young children in their homes, schools, childcare facilities and gathering places.

31. *Playing to learn: activities and experiences that build learning connections.* Carol Seefeldt. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2001. 208 p.

42. *Block play: the complete guide to learning and playing with blocks.* Sharon MacDonald. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2001. 240 p.

43. *Exploring mathematics through play in the early childhood classroom.* Amy Noelle Parks. New York: Teachers College Press, 2015. 147 p.

44. *Come and play: sensory-integration strategies for children with play challenges.* Aerial Cross. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2010. 178 p.

45. *From play to practice: connecting teachers' play to children's learning.* Marcia L. Nell. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2013. 123 p.
These play workshops are designed to help teachers to better understand and promote play-based learning for children.

46. *Ants in their pants: teaching children who must move to learn.* Aerial Cross. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2010. 209 p.

47. *Nurture through nature.* Claire Warden. Perthshire, Scotland: Mindstretchers, 2007. 100 p.
This book explores the connection that very young children have to nature. Each chapter celebrates a natural element such as mud. Practical ideas are detailed for taking children under three outside to play.

Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity.

~ Kay Redfield Jamison, Contemporary American Professor of Psychiatry ~

32. *Sand and water play: simple, creative activities for young children.* Sherrie West. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2001. 127 p.

33. *Play, projects, and preschool standards: nurturing children's sense of wonder and joy in learning.* Gera Jacobs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2007. 159 p.

34. *Reaching standards and beyond in kindergarten: nurturing children's sense of wonder and joy in learning.* Gera Jacobs. Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press, 2010. 148 p.

35. *A moving child is a learning child: how the body teaches the brain to think (birth to age 7).* Gill Connell. Minneapolis, MN: Free Spirit, 2014. 324 p.

This book explains the learning link between the body and the brain and what early childhood educators and caregivers can do to guide it. The authors discuss children's movement and introduce the Kinetic Scale: a visual map of the active learning needs of infants, toddlers, preschoolers, and primary graders. Includes tips, activities, and PowerPoint presentation.

36. *Literacy play: over 300 dramatic play activities that teach pre-reading skills.* Sherrie West. Beltsville, MD: Gryphon House, 2004. 240 p.

The Creative Curriculum® learning games. Joseph Sparling and Diane Trister Dodge. Washington, DC: Teaching Strategies Inc, 2007-2008.
(Also in Spanish)

37. Volume 1: Birth - 12 months (34 games)

38. Volume 2: 12 - 24 months (33 games)

39. Volume 3: 24 - 36 months (33 games)

40. Volume 4: 36 - 48 months (50 games)

41. Volume 5: 48 - 60 months (50 games)

48. *Babies in the rain: promoting play, exploration, and discovery with infants and toddlers.* Jeff A. Johnson. St. Paul, MN: Redleaf Press, 2010. 160 p.

49. *Big body play: why boisterous, vigorous, & very physical play is essential to children's development and learning.* Frances M. Carlson. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2011. 103 p.

Increasingly researchers and practitioners are identifying the value of big body play—also called rough-and-tumble play, roughhousing, horseplay, and play-fighting. After years of increasingly restrictive playground and classroom physical activity with prescribed fall zones, ladder heights, and no-touch rules, the pendulum is slowing shifting to again recognize the need for children to learn to self-regulate while building social and physical skills.

50. *Great group games for kids: 150 meaningful activities for any setting.* Susan Ragsdale. Minneapolis, MN: Search Institute Press, 2010. 223 p.

Provides instructions for games that help encourage teamwork, cooperation, social interaction, communication, problem-solving, integrity, responsibility, and positive self-image in children kindergarten through fifth grade.

51. *The game and play leader's handbook: facilitating fun and positive interaction.* Rev. ed. Bill Michaelis. State College, PA: Venture Pub, 2004. 205 p.

52. *The ooey gooey handbook: identifying and creating child-centered environments.* Lisa Murphy. Rochester, NY: Ooey Gooley Inc, 2001. 132 p.

53. *Natural playscapes: creating outdoor play environments for the soul.* Rusty Keeler. Redmond, WA: Exchange Press, 2008. 313 p.

DVD's available to borrow from CCIC

54. Block Play: Constructing Realities. 20 min DVD - Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1993.

As we watch children happily construct and reconstruct block creations, we see that they are also constructing knowledge and developing skills they need to grow and negotiate their way through more complex learning experiences.

55. Child's Play: How Having Fun Turns Kids Into Adults. 23 min DVD + guide - Lake Zurich, IL: Learning Seed, 2004.

Play, especially the kind that's freely chosen and totally involving, is the engine that drives child development. It's the most important activity children do. Play is how they try out roles, test limits, develop basic physical and mental skills, and rehearse for adulthood.

56. Developmentally Appropriate Practice: A Focus on Intentionality and on Play. 178 min DVD-ROM - Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children, 2009.

This professional development resource features the video segments from NAEYC's two online programs, *DAP and Intentionality* and *DAP and Play*, produced by NAEYC with the 2009 release of the 3rd edition of *Developmentally Appropriate Practice in Early Childhood Programs Serving Children from Birth through Age 8*. Each video includes scenes depicting developmentally appropriate practice in action -- in classrooms for infants, toddlers, preschoolers, kindergartners, and primary grade children. *DAP and Intentionality* (92 min.) addresses ways in which teachers intentionally use a variety of learning formats and teaching strategies to support children's learning. *DAP and Play* (86 min.) focuses on the characteristics and types of play and the teacher's role in supporting high-level play. Includes PDF versions of handouts for each video that highlight the key message of the programs.

57. Dramatic Play: More Than Playing House. 30 min DVD - Rifton, NY: Community Playthings, 2000.

Shows the many ways in which children's development benefits from dramatic and sociodramatic play across the curriculum. Gives ideas for prop boxes and thematic play and examines the important role of adults in supporting dramatic play.

58. Foundations: The Value of Unit Block Play. 30 min DVD - Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1997.

Educators discuss the benefits of using wooden unit block play with young children.

Video is available free online at: <http://www.communityplaythings.com/products/blocks/video/video.html>

In play a child always behaves beyond his average age,
above his daily behavior.
In play it is as though he were a head taller than himself
~ Lev Vygotsky, Russian psychologist ~

59. Lisa Murphy Presents Ooey Gooley Squishy Plop! 51 min DVD-ROM - Rochester, NY: Ooey Gooley Inc, 2012.

In this workshop Lisa Murphy, the Ooey Gooley Lady, demonstrates six tables of hands-on art, science, and sensory play activities as well as the "wolf words" that support their use in your classroom.

60. Lisa Murphy Presents the Importance of Early Experiences: How Playing IS School Readiness! 77 min DVD-ROM - Rochester, NY: Ooey Gooley Inc, 2012.

In this workshop Lisa Murphy, the Ooey Gooley Lady, reinforces the importance of hands-on, play-based learning in the early years and discusses how play is "getting them ready." She identifies the seven things we need to do with children each day in order to encourage a love of lifelong learning and to create the foundation that will support future school success.

61. Literacy in the Preschool Years: A Play-based Approach. 28 min DVD + guide - Oakland, CA: BlueSkies for Children, 2010.

This DVD shows how pre-literacy develops in children's play, building their capacity not only to learn to read but also to become enthusiastic lifelong learners. Scenes of small groups of children and the teacher's activities in a busy classroom show how teaching pre-literacy skills and working with second language learners are interwoven among activities in the classroom.

62. Play: A Vygotskian Approach. 26 min DVD - Davis, CA: Davidson Films, 1996.

Presents Lev Vygotsky's early childhood learning theories and demonstrates them in a classroom. Examines play and how it benefits cognitive and social skills and fulfills emotional needs.

63. Play That's Real: Fostering a Sense of Identity in Toddler Programs. 35 min DVD + guide - Van Nuys, CA: Child Development Media, Inc, 2002.

Discusses how caregivers can promote play that is authentic for toddlers, through building on everyday experiences and routines. This self-paced learning package shows practice at Lady Gowrie Child Centre in Adelaide, Australia.

64. Sensory Play: Constructing Realities 18 min DVD - Washington, DC: NAEYC, 1994.

Sensory play is a natural and concrete means of supporting each child's individual learning style, whether auditory, visual, or kinesthetic. This video examines how a child's first-hand experience with sensory exploration contributes to overall development.

DVDs available to borrow from CCIC

65. *When a Child Pretends*. 27 min DVD - New York: Jonathan Diamond Associates in collaboration with the Child Development Institute at Sarah Lawrence College, 199-?.

Young children plan, negotiate, collaborate, take roles, and develop narratives in these lively scenes of pretend play. We see how pretend play aids their intellectual, social, emotional, and imaginative development.

66. *Where Do the Children Play*. 57 min DVD - Ann Arbor, MI: Michigan Television, 2007.

This public television documentary began in 2001 with the work of Dr. Elizabeth Goodenough. It examines the disappearance of play and nature from the daily lives of children. The loss of free play in the natural world impacts children's mental and physical health and development. The program combines the research of urban planners, health experts, educators, and environmentalists — and commentary from children themselves about their perception of play — to explain the realities of childhood in urban, suburban, and rural areas. (Also Included: 266-page book *A Place for Play: A Companion Volume to the Michigan Television Film "Where Do the Children Play?"*)

***Outdoors: Play, Learning & Development*. 3 DVDs + books** - Newcastle upon Tyne, England: Siren Films, 2010.

The many ways being outdoors fascinates young children and helps their physical, cognitive and emotional development.

67. Volume 1: *BABIES OUTDOORS*. The outdoors is as valuable for babies as it is for older children. The close adult can bring the outside world alive for them and help them enjoy the many brain- and sense-building opportunities the outdoors provides. **53 min DVD + 58 pg. book by Jan White**

68. Volume 2: *TODDLERS OUTDOORS*. Toddlers thrive outdoors as they move, explore, and develop brain and body inseparably with the vital help of adults. **65 min DVD + 47 pg book by Jan White**

69. Volume 3: *TWO YEAR OLDS OUTDOORS*. Two-year-olds' outdoor interactions -- with the environment, natural materials, other children, and adults -- promote deep learning and shape their language, imagination, social skills, and holistic development. **63 min DVD + 60 pg book by Jan White**

70. *Developmentally Appropriate Play Stories*. CD-ROM + users guide + book - Gaye Gronlund. Corallles, NM: Media Designs, 2011.

An interactive video program to accompany Gaye Gronlund's book *Developmentally Appropriate Play: Guiding Young Children to a Higher Level*. Includes video clips of children at play for viewing, stories about children at play for reading, questions to guide reflection and discussion, and expert commentary on key points.

The Power of Play Posters

Dept. of Education and Early Childhood Development, Early Childhood Learning Division,
Government of Newfoundland Labrador, Canada

Visit <http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/power.html> to see these charming posters and **MUCH MORE!**

Sylvie: Future Horticulturalist.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/Play_Posters5.pdf

Mark: Future Air Traffic Controller.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/Play_Posters.pdf

Manian: Future Carpenter.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/Play_Posters3.pdf

Sophie: Future Scientist.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/english_poster_sofie.pdf

Logan: Future Hotelier.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/english_poster_logan.pdf

Ephraim: Future Accountant.

http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/Play_Posters4.pdf

Online Resources

71. Back-to-Basics: Play in Early Childhood

Jill Englebright Fox. *Early Childhood News*

"Research indicates that children learn best in an environment which allows them to explore, discover, and play. Play is an important part of a developmentally appropriate child care program. It is also closely tied to the development of cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical behaviors. But what exactly does it mean to play and why is play so important for young children?"

72. Let the Children Play: Nature's Answer to Early Learning

Jane Hewes. *Early Childhood Learning Knowledge Centre*

"While some play advocates maintain that children should be left alone to play without adult interruption, there is good evidence to support the positive benefits of some active adult involvement in children's play. When skillfully done, adult involvement results in longer, more complex episodes of play."

73. Playdough: What's Standard About it?

Mallary I. Swartz *Young Children*, March 2005.

"Playdough invites children to engage in meaningful and creative play and offers teachers ways of seeing children's unique strengths, needs, and interests so as to build a solid foundation for future schooling. Teachers can best support and nurture a young child's interest and learning by providing creative play experiences and materials like playdough, by serving as facilitators and supporters of natural play, and by recognizing and advocating the importance of hands-on experiences in development and learning."

74. Let's Play! Using Play-Based Curriculum to Support Children's Learning Throughout the Domains

Cynthia Hoisington. *Early Childhood News*

"Play is an active, child-initiated process that supports children's learning throughout the domains of physical, social/emotional, creative, science, math, language, and literacy. By taking advantage of the highly engaging nature of children's self-sustained play, and using this as a jumping off point for a deeper exploration of the science concepts involved, teachers can generate curriculum units that both integrate child-centered play as well as maximize children's learning throughout these domains."

75. Assessing and Scaffolding Make-Believe Play

Deborah J. Leong and Elena Bodrova *Young Children*, January 2012

"Mature make-believe play is an important and unique context, providing opportunities to learn not afforded by other classroom activities. It should not be considered something extra that can be cut to accommodate more time for academic skills, nor should it be used as a means of adding "entertainment value" for inherently boring and decontextualized drills. Instead, play should be preserved and nurtured as one of the "uniquely 'preschool'" (in the words of Vygotsky's colleague and student Alexander Zaporozhets) activities that provide the most beneficial context for children's development."

76. Developing an Outdoor Classroom: Blending Classroom Curriculum and Outdoor Play Space

Mary L. Studer. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Summer 1998

"The play yard is a valuable resource too often overlooked and underused. The most active time of day is when the children are outside playing. It is also the time they are most eager to learn about and explore the environment. Setting up learning centers outdoors helps connect children to the influences of nature. Only by experiencing nature can they begin to truly understand the world in which they live."

77. Superhero Play in the Early Childhood Classroom: Issues in Banning Play from the Classroom

Brenda J. Boyd. *Early Childhood News*

"Superhero play has received a great deal of attention from parents and educators in the recent past. Teachers of young children have become an increasingly vocal group, voicing concern about superhero play in their classrooms. Teachers are experiencing real concern for the safety of children and themselves and many worry about the violence in the future lives of children engaged in superhero play. As a former child care provider and current teacher of teachers of young children, I too have concerns about reported increases in aggressive behavior in preschool classrooms. However, banning superhero play may not be the best way to deal with children's increasing exposure to inappropriate, low-quality television."

Blogging on Play

Play Empowers

<http://playempowers.blogspot.com.au/>

Let the Children Play - Blog Love

<http://www.letthechildrenplay.net/p/blog-love.html>

Play Stuff Blog

<http://www.museumofplay.org/blog/play-stuff/>

Play and Learning Blog

<http://www.communityplaythings.co.uk/learning-library/blog>

78. Science Is Wonder

Mike Huber. *Community Playthings*

"Science is mostly about the things we see every day but don't notice. Most of us probably couldn't explain why the sky is blue or what part of the branch leaves grow on and what parts they don't. And it's OK that we don't have the answers. What we need to do is help children ask those questions about the everyday things, and then help them figure out how to answer their questions. Science is about wonder."

79. Learning Centers for Everyone

Texas Child Care Quarterly, Winter 2012

"Learning centers are the environmental skeleton of early childhood programs. They are designed to actively engage children in their own cognitive, language, physical, social, and emotional development.

Whether the children are following a typical path of development or have special developmental needs, learning centers assert that every child can learn, every child can develop skills, and every child can engage socially. Teachers play an important role in early childhood classrooms. Through careful planning for individual children and for the group, teachers help children gain independence, learn how to help themselves, and accept that they are capable."

80. Tips on Playing with Babies and Toddlers

ZERO TO THREE, 2014

"Playtime is special. Not only is it fun, but it is critical to children's development. Play is their "work" and their way of learning about the world around them. Through play, babies and toddlers try out new skills, explore their imagination and creativity, and learn about relationships with other people."

Online Resources

81. Dramatic Play: Bring It on Back!

Tammy Benson. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Fall, 2008

"Today's experts agree that play is beneficial to children and their overall healthy development. The secret to keeping the balance in developmentally appropriate practices involves adjusting our curriculum to new trends and research suggestions without sacrificing the benefits of current practices that have proved beneficial for young children time and time again."

87. But When Will You Teach Them to Read?

Anita Spainhower. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Spring, 2014

"This is my 35th year with preschool children, so I often find myself reflecting on my teaching, trying to align my experience with my formal education. My time in the classroom combined with my education has completely converted me to play-based instruction in early childhood education. May I explain why by sharing with you just one day out of my 35 years?"

We don't stop playing because we grow old,
we grow old because we stop playing

~ George Bernard Shaw ~

82. Supporting Constructive Play in the Wild

Francis Wardle. *Child Care Information Exchange*, May, 2000.

"Good playgrounds include environments that encourage a variety of play: physical/motor play, social/dramatic play, and cognitive/constructive play and games with rules. Each of these kinds of play are not only essential for the healthy development of young children but are also best supported and enhanced in the outside playground. Different play environments and equipment are needed to encourage each of these kinds of play. Constructive play teaches children important skills, develops critical cognitive concepts and is their favorite kind of play on the outside playground, but, constructive play is often the type of play least available for children in outdoor playgrounds, for a variety of reasons. How can this situation be rectified?"

83. Blocks: A Center for All Seasons

Rebecca Giles. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Spring, 2013

"Children's building becomes even more interesting when accessories are used to expand experiences and maximize learning potential. As with any learning center, available materials must be refreshed on a regular basis to maintain interest. Variety serves to motivate and challenge children by inspiring continued use."

84. Tomorrow's Architects and Engineers: They're Hammering and Sawing in Today's Classrooms

Dianne Pape and Barbara Hatcher. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Fall, 2008

"Woodworking is valuable for preschool and schoolage children for many reasons. Certainly it promotes mastery of basic woodworking skills such as measuring, hammering, sawing, and finishing. It can also be therapeutic for young children, and promotes skills in all five domains of child development."

85. What Is Big Body Play and Why Is It Important?

Frances Carlson. *NAEYC*, Winter, 2014

"Big body play supports children's physical development but it also supports the development of children's social awareness, emotional thinking, and language skills. Research shows that big body play comes naturally to children. Children all over the world play this way, and that is why it's so important that adults, both teachers and family members, understand and support it."

86. Loose Parts: Adding Quality to Outdoor Environments

Sandra McClintic. *Texas Child Care Quarterly*, Winter, 2014

"Open-ended materials—loose parts—on the playground can provide children with never ending ways to transform things into whatever they can mentally imagine. Loose parts are necessary for high-quality play experiences (Frost 1989). They allow children the freedom to be messy, make noise, move, tote, and construct."

88. Dolls and Doll Play: A New Look at a Familiar Prop

Texas Child Care Quarterly, Summer, 2004

"Pretend play, of which dolls are a part, benefits all areas of development. By dressing and feeding dolls, children enhance fine motor skills. By assuming roles and interacting with other children, they practice language and social skills, including sharing, cooperation, helping, and problem-solving. They learn the different roles people play and begin to see their own place in the world."

89. Loose Parts: A New Look at a Familiar Prop

Lisa Daly & Miriam Beloglovsky. *Community Playthings*, June 2015

"Children prefer loose parts. Anyone who has watched children play with toys or playground equipment knows that they quickly tire of things with a sole purpose. Once they've mastered the key function of an object—pushing the button to make a figure pop up or climbing a ladder, for example—they are ready to move on. The intrigue and the challenge are gone. In other words, children make their play choices based on how much variability those materials offer. A stick is a richer choice than a slide because it can become a fishing pole, a spoon for stirring a concoction, a magic wand, or a balance beam for snails. Loose parts offer almost numberless variables, prompting children to create their own stories."

90. Engineering Experiences in Early Childhood

Betty Zan & Beth Van Meeteren. *Community Playthings*

"The late Dr. Rheta DeVries often challenged teachers to critique children's activities with the question, "What is there in this activity for children to figure out?" This question helps teachers determine if the activity is a task for children to complete, or an open-ended exploration that allows children to figure out how the world works. When teachers ask themselves this question, they begin to recognize the value of areas of the classroom, previously neglected, because the centers "ran themselves" or were merely opportunities for free play. In reflecting on these centers, the teachers realized that children stayed engaged in the block area because there was so much for them to figure out. Activities involving blocks, ramps, water tables, shadow theaters, cooking, bubbles, and the like are examples of activities that offer opportunities for children to engage in engineering."

Other Resources

The Role of Play in Learning

The Community Playthings Resource pages are full of very well-written blog posts, articles and videos. Visit <http://www.communityplaythings.com/resources> for these and MANY more!

Role of Play in Learning

- Constructive Play
- The Power of Play
- Teaching STEM with Ramps
- Play Is a Child's Work
- Building 21st Century Skills Block by Block
- A Special Place for Play in Special Education
- Why Movement Matters
- Exploring Sand Play
- Let Them Play!
- The Role of Risk in Play and Learning

Classroom Design

- Creating a Yes Environment
- The Power of Purposeful Environments
- Clatter in the Classroom
- Homelike Environments
- Aesthetics in the Classroom Setting
- Places for Babies

Outdoor Classroom

- Ten Outdoor Winter Activities
- The Learning in Loose Parts
- What Is the Outdoor Classroom?
- Open the Door and Just Go Out
- The Wonder of Nature's Colors
- Nature Play as an Everyday Joy of Childhood
- Making a Mud Kitchen
- Gardening with Children
- Why Garden?
- Choosing What to Plant
- Risk
- The Project Approach Using Schoolyard Ecology
- Project Work and Nature
- We Need More Sticks and Grass! We Need More Beauty!

Webpages Devoted to Promoting Play

Wisconsin Early Childhood Collaborating Partners

http://www.collaboratingpartners.com/child_development_play_learning.php

Education.com - Play and Children

<http://www.education.com/topic/children-play>

Alliance for Childhood.org

<http://www.allianceforchildhood.org/home>

NAEYC: Play and Children's Learning

<http://www.naeyc.org/play>

Earlychildhoodnews.com - Play and Playgrounds

<http://www.earlychildhoodnews.com/earlychildhood/articles.aspx?ArticleID=202>

Zero to Three: Tips and Tools on Play

<http://www.zerotothree.org/child-development/play/tips-and-tools-play.html>

Math at Play

<http://www.mathatplay.org>

The Power of Play

<http://www.ed.gov.nl.ca/edu/earlychildhood/power.html>

PBS: Creativity and Play

<http://www.pbs.org/wholechild/providers/play.html>

The Power of Play - Play^x

<http://www.bostonchildrensmuseum.org/power-of-play>

Playworks

<http://www.playworks.org>

Other Topics Areas on the Community Playthings Website:

[Curriculum Approaches](#)

[Creativity and Literacy](#)

[Behavior & Development](#)

[Family and Culture](#)

[Learning Environment](#)

[Projects and Activities](#)

WISCONSIN EARLY CARE AND EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS!

The Child Care Information Center (CCIC) is a free mail-order lending library and information service for anyone in WI working in the field of child care, afterschool, and early education. CCIC has worked since 1986 to provide quality resources to match the needs of early care and education professionals, educators, and parents.

Ready to order?

1. Which newsletter issue are you looking at & what are the item numbers?
2. When do you need them?
3. Who are you? We will need your name, center name, address, and phone number.
4. Need something not on the list? Call us and let us find it for you!

ARTICLES ARE YOURS TO KEEP! BOOKS & VIDEOS ARE LIBRARY ITEMS YOU WILL NEED TO MAIL BACK TO CCIC

Library Loan periods: -1 week for DVD's -2 weeks for BOOKS

Busy, Busy, Busy? LET US DO THE RESEARCH & SAVE YOU TIME!

Just give us a call, tell us what you'd like to know more about, and let us customize a package from the resources CCIC has available as well as recommendations on where you might find further information regarding your topic.

USPS: Child Care Information Center

2109 S Stoughton Rd, Madison, WI 53716

EMAIL: ccic@dpi.wi.gov **WEBSITE:** www.ccic.wi.gov

PHONE: Toll-free 1.800.362.7353

Local 608.224.5388

FAX: 608.224.6178