



Playing

- ★ Play is one of the best ways for children to learn language and literacy skills.
- ★ Play helps children think symbolically: a ruler becomes a magic wand, today becomes a time when dinosaurs were alive, a playmate becomes an astronaut exploring space.
- ★ Through play, children realize that one thing can stand for another. This also helps children understand that written words stand for real objects and experiences.
- ★ Pretend play helps children think symbolically and develop oral language skills. As children play store or pretend to be an animal, they talk about what they're doing. They practice putting thoughts into words.
- ★ Dramatic play helps develop narrative skills as children make up a story about what they're doing. This helps them understand that stories happen in an order: first, next, last.
- ★ Make-believe also gives children a chance to act out real-life situations, work through worries and fears, and use their imagination to solve problems.
- ★ Play helps children feel a sense of accomplishment and self-confidence. This motivates them to try new experiences and to not give up when something seems difficult.

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Many of the facts and tips that you will read throughout this packet are taken from the Every Child Ready to Read project from the American Library Association.

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