



Radio Stations : **All Community Radio Stations**
Subject : **Early Childhood Development**
Audience : **Parents, caregivers and educators**
Program Topic : **Different types of play (LOVE)**

Guidelines to the presenter

- Presenter – please familiarize yourself with the brief and the use the facts effectively by referring to them from time to time during the show.
- You should be seen as a peer rather than an authority.
- Offer guidance or opinion rather than telling people what to do.
- Encourage people to seek further information
- Always keep the objectives and outcomes in mind and drive these.

Topic:

Different types of play – what children learn

Objectives:

- To reinforce the importance of play for children’s wellbeing, development and learning
- To inform parents some of skills, concepts and life skills children learn through different types of play
- To emphasize the holistic nature of learning through play
- To encourage parents to play a significant role in providing space, time and opportunity for their children to engage in a variety of play activities.
- To encourage parents to play with their children

Introduction

For the last couple of weeks we have been discussing some of the rights of children, including the child's right to play. Last week we looked at why play is so important for children, especially young children, and that, as play is a right for children, we as parents, have a duty and a responsibility to ensure our children can exercise that right to play. We learned how we need to make sure our children have safe spaces, indoors and out, enough uninterrupted time, play materials and adult oversight to ensure child safety. We also started learning that there are many different types of play that children engage in. So today, we are going to look in more detail into different types of play and improve our understanding of what our children are learning through these different types of play.

Questions	Facts/Information
<p>1. <i>Last week we learned that there are different stages of play that children move through as they grow and develop. Tell us about baby play and what babies are learning through play.</i></p>	<p>You are so right! Even tiny babies play! Baby learns her first social interactions as mum cuddles and feeds her little one, looking into his eyes, smiling at him and talking or singing to her. Tiny babies love the physical contact with mum and dad, preferably skin on skin. As you bath and dress or change baby's nappy, she becomes more conscious of her body, touch and movement. Newborns and small babies love physical play – being touched, stroked, tickled and rolled over – that's why bath time is such good playtime! As baby gains control of her head, tummy time gives her a different perspective on her world. Games, songs and rhymes that involve counting fingers and toes are a great favourite, as are clapping games. Baby learns about social interaction with the familiar adults in his life by copying sounds and</p>

facial expressions. As baby gains control over his little hands and can grasp objects, you can make rattles using plastic juice bottles with a little sand, rice, seeds or shells inside. When baby shakes the rattle, she learns that her actions produce results, as well as learning to distinguish different sounds. As baby plays a favourite game of dropping or throwing objects or toys on the floor, he learns principles of gravity and cause and effect. Rolling a ball shows baby's growing control of his muscles and he is learning that round things roll. Babies play using all their senses of sight, smell, touch, hearing and taste. These are the baby's tools for learning and finding out about what's around him, including his significant adults, and for learning about himself.

2. *So what happens as baby develops into a toddler?*

As the baby grows and develops into a toddler and child, her physical activity increases and she explores the environment through touching, feeling and manipulating, as well as developing language to express feelings and make further meaning of her world. He does this by using these developing skills to play and by playing to develop the skills further. And it's important to understand that children develop holistically, so playing allows them to use all their senses, physical skills, mental capacity, social skills and emotions together.

<p>3. <i>I also don't see children playing outdoors as much as they used to. Is it important for children to play outdoors and what do they learn?</i></p>	<p>Yes outdoor play is really important for children's development and should be encouraged everyday - even when the weather is bad! Children need to experience all types of weather, so don't allow bad weather to stop outdoor play. Just dress appropriately. Look for places where your child can play outside, even if you don't have a backyard. Think about local parks or open spaces as long as children can be seen and supervised by an adult.</p> <p>Outdoor play provides children with opportunities that develop their muscles while also introducing them to the world around them and interactions with other children.</p> <p>Exercise and developing the habit of maintaining good physical health is extremely important. Using their muscles while running, jumping, climbing or throwing develops large motor skills and they are experiencing their bodies and movement in relationship to other objects. Children learn creativity during outdoor play as they invent games of tag or hide-and-seek, and their outdoor adventures build social awareness and risk-taking skills. Outdoor play helps children learn and develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Balance and coordination through jumping, climbing, skipping, kicking a ball etc.• Strength in all muscle groups and refined large motor or movement skills• Healthy lifestyle and activity habits• Social interaction skills through taking turns and inventing outdoor games, etc.
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4. *What about art and craft activities? Are these just important to develop the small muscles of the hands and fingers, or do children learn other things from art and craft activities?*

- Creativity
- Awareness of the world around them and nature (sun, trees, wind, etc.)
- Observation and use of their senses (seeing, hearing, feeling, smelling, moving etc.)

Art and craft activities are important for developing little hands and fingers, but they are also an important way for your child to explore his understanding of his world and to represent some of that understanding. While you may not recognize the drawing or painting, the chances are very high that your child can tell you a whole story behind his choice of colours and shapes and placement of certain lines. They mean something in your child's world. Cutting and drawing develops the muscles in his hands and fingers that will later button his shirt, write his name and do any number of hand activities. Children learn cooperation while sharing materials. When working on a collage with shapes, children can sort and classify items into groups based on shape, size and colour. Sorting and classifying objects are skills needed to learn to read or do maths. The pride a child shows in his artwork is a boost to a developing sense of self. If you show interest in her artwork, you really boost your child's self-esteem. Remember, with art and craft activities, the **process of making the art**, not the **product** (or finished picture), is most important! Ask your child to tell you about her art and craft

<p>5. <i>What about music and dance?</i></p>	<p>activities. Ask not just about what it is, but about colours he has used, materials he chose or feelings he has tried to express. Engaging in art and craft activities helps children learn and develop:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Creativity• Pre-reading and pre-maths skills• Social skills• Emotional expression and exploration• Strength in hands and fingers (fine motor skills)• Self-esteem <p>Listening to music and dancing can be wonderful play experiences for children. Most young children enjoy this activity immensely. These activities provide great opportunities to talk about feelings, for example, “Does this song sound happy or sad?” or concepts such as opposites, for example, “Is the music fast or slow?” A discussion about what you see, think or feel when you hear a piece of music is a great way to expand storytelling skills and imagination. For children, listening to music and dancing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Connects the world of movement and sound with the inner world of feelings and observation• Helps them learn patterns, rhythm and differences in sounds• Expands a child’s imagination• Aids physical fitness, balance, coordination
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<p>6. <i>Children love to use their imagination and create pretend situations for their play. What are they learning in this dramatic fantasy play?</i></p>	<p>and movement abilities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• While finger plays and other nursery rhymes help develop language skills (verbal and listening skills) and small motor skills, as well as hand-eye coordination• Memory and rhyming skills• And develops self-esteem <p>They certainly do! Often you will see adult themes in a child’s play – taking care of babies, going to work, being a firefighter, driving or going to the shops. This is a child’s way of trying to understand “going to work” or other activities that parents do on a daily basis. The story lines are often very complicated when children are playing games with dress-up clothes or other “real life” items, especially with older pre-schoolers. They will assign everyone a role, describe the plot and explain who has responsibility for what. In fact children develop some key leadership skills in group imaginative pretend play. Coming up with all the pieces for the play really takes a lot of thought. Through such pretend play and interaction, children learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Practicing situations from the grown-up world in a setting that is safe and secure• Understanding the world around them and daily living activities• Concentration and attention skills• Imagination, independence and creativity,
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<p>7. <i>And what about block play? Children love to play with wooden blocks but what are they learning?</i></p>	<p>all of which are essential in school and in life</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sequential acts and story writing/telling• Flexibility, cooperation and compromise• Empathy and consideration for the feelings of others• Abstract thinking, planning and problem solving <p>When children are playing with blocks, the blocks must balance and be stacked in a symmetrical way to remain standing. And, of course, children talk to one another the entire time they are building with blocks. Children really do learn a variety of life skills from building with blocks such as fine motor control, cooperation and coordination, stacking and balance, as well as maths concepts. Playing with blocks can help children learn:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Scientific principles and concepts such as balance, gravity, cause and effect etc.• Mathematical concepts such as symmetry and geometric shapes• Small-muscle skills and hand-eye coordination• Feelings of competence and self-esteem• Life skills including concentration and abstract thought• Social interaction and cooperation with others• Creativity and organization of materials
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<p>8. <i>What about jigsaw puzzles and other board games. How do these help children learn?</i></p>	<p>In quiet play, children learn to concentrate and persist until they have completed a task. Jigsaw puzzles help a child understand how parts can make up a whole picture, as well as matching colour and shape. Many of the other board games are played by a small group of children, who learn to take turns and follow the rules of the game. The games often help them develop cognitive or perceptual skills such as sorting, matching, grouping, identifying similarities and differences, finding opposites or putting together things that belong together. Maths skills are developed as children play games using number, shape, size and colour. Many of these puzzles and games can be made using waste materials.</p>
<p>9. <i>And what about books and storytelling? Do these form an important part of children's play?</i></p>	<p>Yes. It's important for parents to provide opportunities for a variety of play, especially a quiet corner where children can find a cosy, comfortable place to enjoy looking at picture books. Quiet play is a wonderful way of calming children down after a period of boisterous play. Children love to retell favourite stories to brothers and sisters, parents or playmates and co-creating stories can be a fun family activity. One person starts and everyone gets opportunities to add to and change the story. Then you can get your children to draw the illustrations. Picture and story books expand your child's vocabulary, introduce her to new ideas, concepts, people, places and activities.</p>

<p>10. <i>Remind us again how we as parents can ensure we support our children's play?</i></p>	<p>Parents have a critical role in supporting their children's play. Once parents really understand and accept how important play is for their child's well-being, development and learning, they need to make sure that children have safe spaces, indoor and out, as well as sufficient blocks of time for play. Be patient and allow your child to finish a game or activity. Children get frustrated when play is interrupted or cut short. Parents can be imaginative in supporting children to find the materials and props they need for their play, as well as providing for a variety of play activities. And do respond to your child's invitation to play, letting him direct that play in his own way and with his own ideas. Your investment of time and energy will be wonderfully rewarded through the positive relationship you build with your child and the enjoyment you will get from seeing the joy your involvement gives your child.</p>
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<p>Conclusion</p>	
<p>Research shows that children who are active in pretend play and other types of play are usually more joyful and cooperative, more willing to share and take turns, more creative in their activities and have a larger vocabulary than children who are less involved in imaginative play or other play activities. Play provides the foundation for learning in a child's world and opens the door to a world of learning opportunities. You may have heard this: <i>"Play is children's work. If they are successful with this first job, it will lead to further success later in life."</i> Play opens the windows of learning in a child's life and acquaints him or her with movement, observation, relationships, emotions and much more.</p> <p>Support your children in their play. Understand the importance of play and how much your child</p>	

is learning. Engage in play with your children and provide opportunities for them to interact with other adults and other children in play. Build towers, dance, sing, paint, run, laugh together and watch your child's learning unfold.

Learning outcomes

After listening to this show the audience should:

- Be aware of the importance of play for children's wellbeing, development and learning
- Understand what some of skills, concepts and life skills children learn through different types of play
- realise the holistic nature of learning through play
- know that parents play a significant role in providing space, time and opportunity for their children to engage in a variety of play activities.
- Be aware of the importance of playing with their children