

Encouraging Development Through Play

Created by Melanie Rosen, January 2010, for the Healthy Babies Healthy Children pre-conference workshop, Best Start Resource Centre

Note: The following suggestions are offered to inspire service providers when working with families. Service providers should exercise their judgment in their choice of equipment and activities to ensure the safety of the children and families.

<u>Things to Remember:</u>	
»	You are the most interesting toy! Bring your attention to the moment, be open, receptive and delight in the play experience.
»	Play involves multiple senses in a single moment.
»	Create the Shape of the Play Experience: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) Theme b) Developmental Focus c) Follow the Lead of the Child d) Encourage and Include the Parents / Caregiver(s)
»	Repetition. It is beneficial to begin and end in a familiar way (i.e. hello and good-bye song) every time you are with a child. Repetition allows the child to develop a sense of mastery.
»	Play is the symbolic language of the child that allows us to enter into their inner world.
»	Respect and honour the magic circle that you create together.

<u>Things to Save:</u>	
»	Aluminum foil, aluminum pie plates (various sizes), balls (golf, ping-pong, tennis), berry baskets, bottle caps, boxes, bubble wrap, buttons, candles, canning rings, cardboard, catalogs, cereal and pasta (dry), cereal boxes, chopsticks, empty food cans (clean), coffee cans with lids, coffee filters, coins, confetti, containers with handles, corks, cotton balls, cotton batting, cotton swabs, diaper-wipe containers, dried beans, dried pasta (different shapes and sizes), dried-up markers, egg cartons, eggshells, envelopes, fabric scraps, feathers, felt, film canisters, greeting cards (used), jars and lids (empty), junk mail, magazines, metal cookie tins, metal lids from juice cans, newspapers, old calendars, old clothes and costume jewellery for dress-up, old mittens, socks and gloves for puppets, old sheets, old telephone books, old toothbrushes, paint sample chips, paper bags, paper clips, paper muffin cup liners, paper plates/cups/bowls, paper scraps, paper towel/toilet paper tubes, photographs of friends and family, pine cones, plastic bowls, lids, and bottles, plastic jugs, plastic containers, popcorn, Popsicle sticks, ribbon scraps, rice (uncooked), roll-on deodorant bottles (empty), rubber bands, salt shakers or spice containers (empty), sandpaper, scarves (chiffon-type), shells, shoeboxes with lids, shoelaces, spray bottle, squeeze bottles, stamps, stickers of all kinds, string, thread, thread spools, tissue paper scraps, wrapping paper scraps, yarn scraps.

Things to Create a Play Box:

- » Doll furniture, bendable doll family, Gumby (bendable nondescript figure), dolls, doll bed, clothes etc., purse and jewelry, chalkboard chalk, eraser, dishes (plastic or tin), pans, pitcher, dishpan, plastic food, sponge, towel, crayons, pencils, paper, tape of all kinds and colours, glue (school), toy watch, building blocks, paints, brushes, Play-Doh, clay, Lone Ranger type mask, pipe cleaners, tongue depressors, truck, car, airplane, tractor, boat, bus, xylophone, cymbals, drum, toy soldiers and army equipment, hats, funnels, sieve, pail, shovels (plastic), zoo and farm animals, suction throwing darts, handcuffs, toy machine gun, balls (large and small), telephone (two), blunt scissors, construction paper, medical kit, play money and cash register, hand puppets.

Things to Make, Do and Expand Upon:

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| a) | Hello song that includes names of all the playmates (adults included). |
| b) | Making faces that encourage and include a wide range of emotional expression (i.e. happy, sad, angry, shy). |
| c) | Develop a repertoire of songs, nursery rhymes or chants that can be sung, used as knee bouncers, finger play, or used to integrate a sense of rhythm & beat. For example: ABC's, Twinkle Twinkle, The Grand Old Duke of York, Head and Shoulders, hello hands - good bye hands. |
| d) | The Ball - I roll the ball to you (clap clap)/ You roll it back to me (clap clap). As the child is ready you can add new gestures with the ball (i.e. lift it up, hand to hand, throw and clap). |
| e) | Two Little Birds - Sitting on a wall, one named Peter and one named Paul (hands in front of you)/ Fly away Peter and fly away Paul (one at a time go behind your back/ Come back Peter and come back Paul). |
| f) | The Box - Here is a box/ With a lid/ I wonder whatever inside is hid/ Why it's a surprise without any doubt/ Let's open the box and see what comes out. Delight in the surprise and the discovery of various objects you place in the box. |
| g) | Tubes - Different lengths, put objects through them (i.e. cars, balls). |
| h) | Shower Curtain Rings - tie ribbons to them for dancing! |
| i) | Make a bed for doll or teddy using cardboard box, towel for a blanket, pillow. |
| j) | High Chair - Attach string or boondoggle to high chair with toys tied to string so they can be throw down and retrieved by the child. |
| k) | Magnets - Using frozen juice cans place magnetic strip on the back. You can make magnets of different textures, photos, letters, for sorting and/or matching. |
| l) | Block Sorter - Create different shapes through a plastic container. |

m)	Plastic Bottles - For visual stimulation, water and baby oil, liquid, detergent, glue cap securely. - Rice, feathers, glitter, beads, put sea creatures inside, tempera paint, food colouring etc.
n)	Ring Fun - Use a tin coffee container, fill with play dough, put a long wooden spoon inside and cut a small hole in the lid of the container for the handle to extend out. Out of lids make rings that can be put or thrown onto the handle.
o)	Blanket Fun - Give the child a ride on a magic carpet. Place child or doll inside the blanket and rock them gently back and forth and say this chant: - Roll the dishes (rock one way) / Dry the dishes (rock the other way) / Turn the dishes over (roll child out).
p)	Jungle Animals - Hide them around the room, use a flashlight to spot them, feed them, take photos of them, and sing songs to them or about them.
q)	Natural Mobile - Use a branch and create a mobile of pinecones, or tie other toys to the branch.
r)	The Little Engine That Could - Sign out this book by Watty Piper from the library. Talk about how hard it was for the little engine to make it up the hill even though it did and what kinds of things you could try to do. For example "Do you think you can balance on one foot?" Say together "I think I can!" Take turns asking this question and presenting challenges.
s)	People Puppets - Use Popsicle sticks and glue or tape photos either from personal album or a magazine. - Socks or paper bags can be used to make puppets.
t)	Magic Mud – Magic mud feels like a solid but it drips through your fingers. Mix cornstarch and add just enough water to stir the mixture. You may want to add food colouring.
s)	Ocean Drum - <u>What you need:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Clear plastic round food container with a ridged lid - the larger the container, the better the sound 2) Small coloured beads, rice, tiny shells, small beans or seeds 3) Colourful electrical tape 4) Paper and paint or markers 5) Glue or tape 6) 2 pencils or chopsticks for mallets - <u>What you do:</u> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Cut the paper the same size and shape as the bottom of the container. 2) Paint or colour a design or picture on the paper. 3) Glue or tape the paper to the inside bottom of the container. 4) Fill with ¼ cup of tiny beads, rice, seeds or beans. 5) Place the lid on the container. 6) Tape the container shut using the colourful tape.
u)	Button Shaker- Gather buttons of various sizes, shapes and colours, thread strong string through the buttonholes. Create a handle and make the strings of buttons various lengths. The shaker can be held or go around the wrist or ankles and dance!

v)	<p>Rainstick</p> <p>- <u>What you need:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Paper towel tube • Aluminum foil • Glue • Tempera paints or markers • Paint brush • Coloured electrical or masking tape • Rice • Yarn, construction paper or foam cut-outs, or other decorations • Scissors <p>- <u>What you do:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make a construction paper cap and seal one end of the tube with tape, or fold one end of the tube over and staple it shut. • Make balls out of tin foil about the size of a golf ball or slightly smaller to fit in the tube. • Fill the tube with the foil balls up to an inch from the top. • Pour rice into the tube. • Seal or staple the other end of the tube. • Decorate by gluing yarn, construction paper, foam, or other decorations to the ends and sides of the tube.
w)	<p>Water Glasses or Stainless Steel Bowls - Fill glasses or bowls with various amounts of water and use a wooden spoon to taps the sides. Listen to various tones.</p>
x)	<p>Rattle Snake</p> <p>- <u>What you need:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • One tube sock • Markers, fabric, yarn or buttons • Plastic “fillable” egg • Rice • Coloured electrical or masking tape <p>- <u>What You Do:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Fill plastic egg with two teaspoons of rice. • Use tape to seal the egg shut. • Decorate the sock with eyes, nose (add mouth and tongue if desired). • Suggestions: Have the child hold onto the shaker while putting the sock on arm for an active rattling snake.
z)	<p>Egg Shakers- Plastic “fillable” eggs with rice, tape shut.</p>