

SUPPORTING YOUR CHILD'S PLAY



A Practical Guide for Parents

Learning through play comes naturally for children. That makes a parent's job super easy: Simply give kids *time, space and freedom* to play.

To make play even more powerful, try out these tips:

ASK OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

- "Why do you think...?"
- "How did you...?"

MAKE OBSERVATIONS

- "I noticed how you flipped the piece over so it would fit"
- "I see you connected the tubes to make the water flow"

POSE CHALLENGES

- "I wonder what would happen if..."
- "What would you do if...?"

TALK, TALK, TALK! START CONVERSATIONS

- "Tell me about that time..."
- Use new and unexpected words

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

- Show you're eager to learn, too
- Model confidence, cooperative behavior and flexible thinking

SLOW DOWN

- Don't rush an activity
- Observe with purpose – notice details

ATTITUDE IS EVERYTHING

- Remind yourself: Children are capable people
- Focus more on the process, less on the outcome
- Avoid imposing one "right way" of doing things
- Embrace repetition – give children time to do something again and again
- View a child's failures (and your own!) as learning opportunities
- Try not to get frustrated – you've had more practice than they have!
- Make play a priority – for your children and yourself



GUIDE WITHOUT TAKING OVER

Be a great sidekick during any activity by asking questions to spark your child's thinking:

- "What have you tried so far?"
- "Why do you think that happened?"
- "What new ideas do you have?"
- "What do you think would happen if...?"

