



Pretend Play

What is Pretend Play?

When children are playing pretend, they are playing as if something or someone is real.

The three key thinking skills that children use during pretend play are:



Use objects as something else

e.g. Pretends the blocks and orange sticks are fish and chips



Attribute properties to objects

e.g. Pretends the doll's leg is injured, the tea is hot or the teddy is sleeping



Pretend objects are there when they are not

e.g. Pretends to light a candle with an invisible flame

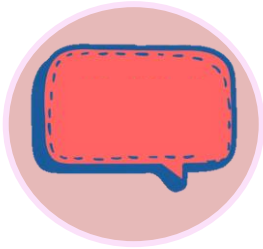
How do I know what play themes to choose for my child?

Pretend play starts from 18 months and continues to develop in the child's preschool years.

With exposure and support from caregivers, children can join in pretend play from as early as 12 months.

Why is Pretend Play important?

Language development



Pretend play and language both involve the use of symbols. Words are symbols by which we convey meaning to one another. In pretend play, children practice the use of symbols when they use objects, actions or ideas to represent other objects, actions, or ideas. Pretend play is also an excellent way for children to learn and use new words to represent their thoughts, actions and feelings.

Cognitive development



Play involves many thinking skills. Children are required to organise their thoughts, relate to familiar or unfamiliar events and understand abstract ideas. These are skills that children will need to understand sequence in a story, and narrate events in a logical way. When problems are introduced in pretend play, children learn how to think creatively, and problem solve.

Social development



Pretend play is a good way to build cooperation and back-and-forth interaction. Children learn to listen to and expand on others' ideas or collaborate and compromise to come up with a shared idea.

When children take on a pretend role, they imagine what it is like to be another person. This helps develop their ability to take others' perspectives and develop empathy.

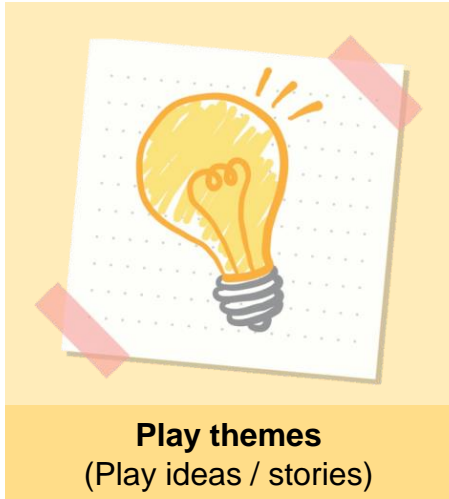
A way to strengthen caregiver-child bond



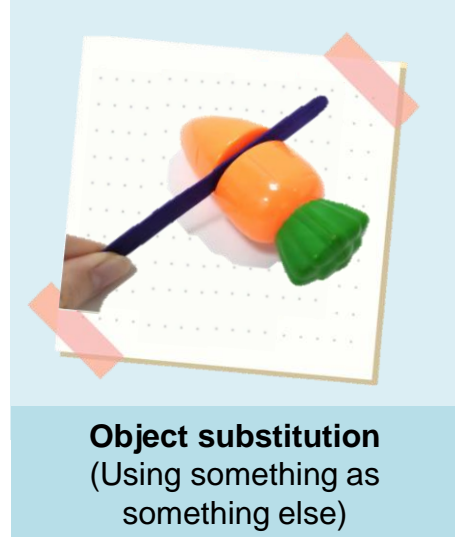
The importance of playing with children is not only to facilitate their acquisition of various skills.

Most importantly, playing together is a great opportunity for caregivers to develop a relationship with their children. Through play, children have fun and build a positive bond with their caregivers. They learn to trust their caregivers and have a safe space to resolve conflicts and regulate their emotions.

What are some things to consider for Pretend Play?



Play themes
(Play ideas / stories)



Object substitution
(Using something as something else)



Doll / Teddy Play
(Using characters in play)

How do I play with my child?



For practical tips on how you can engage your child in play and develop their play skills:

You can click on the link below or scan the QR code on the right

<https://youtu.be/2hkp9-67frl>

