

## PLAY – The Serious Work of Childhood

Play is the work of childhood, it is the occupation of children, and for good reason! Through play, children learn to think about what they want to do, and how to get their bodies to cooperate. Play prepares the mind and the body for higher development and academic learning. Children cannot be ready to learn in school until they have had enough opportunities for play.

During play, young children learn to:

Sit up, stabilize trunk, neck, shoulder girdle

Use arms and hands for reach and grasp

Coordinate movements between the 2 sides of the body

Move in space and become familiar with over, under, on top of, inside of, through

Shift between different positions and hold one position for longer periods of time

Develop more precise and accurate ways of grasping and holding things

Imitate and copy movements and body positions as well as visual models

Develop muscles all over the body, including hands and mouth

Hold and use utensils, tools

Coordinate eye movements to hand activities

Find things quickly with eyes, track moving things smoothly with eyes

Discriminate differences between size, shape, weight, colour, and other qualities

Shift attention and interact with materials

Explore different ways of doing things and observe the results

Pay attention to things for longer and longer

Tolerate frustration when doing things that are challenging

Solve problems that arise

Understand cause and effect

Label all kinds of things in the environment with words and sentences

Ask for things, negotiate, protest, talk about what they see and do

Notice differences in quantity and amount

Work together and share

Ask for help as needed

**PLAY is most meaningful and effective when it is FUN, but being fun does not mean it is NOT important.**

After good food and good health, **PLAY** is the most important thing you can provide that will influence your child's **SUCCESS** in the future!! Play in the morning, play in the afternoon, play more quietly in the evening too!