

Book Time

Smartphone & Tablet Screen time:
Good or Bad for Children

Eye Contact

Play Based Learning

Routines: Important for Young Children
Encouraging Children to

Pretend Play and 'Make Believe'

Thumbs & Pacifiers

No need for FORMULA MILK & BOTTLES
beyond the age of 1



TOYLAND

ALL ABOUT KIDS! BEST PLACE IN DISTRICT 2



Fun & excitement all in one place at TOYLAND



Variety of high
quality toys



House of many
famous toy brands



New arrivals
every month



UNLIMITED PLAYING TIME AT tini WORLD



Playland



Babybox



Sandbox

GIFT VOUCHER 5%

- Discount on all PNC products
- Applicable at TOYLAND and tini WORLD nationwide
- Expiry date: 31/10/2016
- Voucher is not to be used in conjunction with other promotions

Free or Discount 50%

- Voucher is applied for individual (1 kid and 1 adult)
- Voucher can not be used on tini Holidays (31/10, 24/25/12)
- Voucher is not to be used in conjunction with other promotions
- Voucher is not applicable for tiniZen and under 75cm kid entrance ticket

PLU:0086

Hotline: 0908 04 04 11 - www.tiniworld.com - www.facebook.com/tiniworld

This Parenting Magazine is an internal magazine for parents with children enrolled at International Child Care Centres SmartKids and is part of our childcare service.

With this magazine we will provide suitable guidance on general issues regarding early childhood challenges from around the world but using the individual child's social and emotional development as the main compass.

Parents around the world want what they believe is best for their children. However, parents in different cultures have different ideas of what is best. Italian parents value social and emotional abilities and having an even temperament. Spanish parents want their children to be sociable. Swedish parents value security and happiness. Dutch parents value independence, long attention spans, and predictable schedules. Vietnamese parents want to step away from the state schooling.

Differences in values cause parents to interpret actions in different ways. Asking questions is seen by American parents as a sign that the child is smart. Italian parents, who value social and emotional competence, believe that asking questions is a sign that the child has good interpersonal skills. In Asia parents and teachers are authorities, not to be argued with, or questioned.

For questions, contributions or advertising contact:
parenting@smartkids.edu.vn

Electronic copies of all previous articles can be found at:
<http://www.smartkidsinfo.com/parentingMagazine/parentingMagazine.html>

Early-Language development

Book Time

Children can learn new words and concepts from pictures in books. To promote vocabulary comprehension, remember that photos are the best representation of an object; life-like drawings are second.

Cartoon pictures do not give the most accurate description of an object but will hold your child's interest. Look for books with colorful, clear pictures that are not busy. Young toddlers need to see pictures with only a few objects on a page. Don't worry about the words and sentences written in the book. You can ignore the printed material while looking at pictures and naming them. Ask your child to find an object on the page and help him/her to develop pointing skills. Here are helpful hints for book time.



Helpful Hints for Toddler Book Time.

- Let your toddler choose a book from a group of two to four.
- Board books with thick pages do not tear easily. Note during reading time there are also other behaviours and fine motor-skills trained
- Let your toddler help turn pages.
- Toddlers love books with flaps inside that can be opened to reveal a hidden picture. It is best to read these books together to avoid tearing the flaps.
- Practice finding pictures on the page. "Where's the puppy?" Help your child learn to point with one finger.
- As your child begins to use words, ask, "What's this?" "What is he doing?" "Is that a duck?"
- Children love to cuddle when reading a book. Occasionally, sit across from your child to allow face-to-face contact, while looking at the pictures. Watching a person's mouth form a word helps a toddler say the word accurately. Try sitting on the floor in front of a chair or sofa where your child is sitting to look at a book. This will put your face at the level of the book.
- Point to your mouth when you say a word in the book.
- Put together some props that go along with a storybook. If your book is about a teddy bear that eats his dinner and goes to bed, find a bear, spoon, cup, and blanket. Reenact the story with your props.

by Linda Mawhinney & Mary Scott McTeague



Smartphone and Tablet Screen Time: Good or Bad for Children

By Kathy Kinsner

The American Academy of Pediatrics released new recommendations for children's use of "screen media." Is screen time educational, distracting, or some combination of the two?



Screens Are Everywhere

Everywhere you look, there's a screen with bright pictures and interesting noises—phones and computers, tablets and TVs. You may wonder if all this technology is good for babies and toddlers. Is it educational, distracting, or some combination of the two?

It turns out that's a great question to ask.

Recommended Screen Time

The American Academy of Pediatrics has recommendations for children's use of "screen media." Here's what the Academy says is best for each age:

- **Birth through 18 months**
Avoid all screen media—phones, tablets, TVs and computers. (It's OK to video chat with grandparents and far-away friends.)
- **18 months to 2 years**
It is OK to introduce young children to high-quality children's media if you watch it with them and help them understand what they're seeing.
- **2 to 5 years**
Limit screen use to one hour a day of high-quality programs designed for children. Watch with your children; explain what they're seeing and how it applies to the world around them.

Tips on Using Media to Support Early learning

- **Your child learns most from her experiences in the real world.** She learns by exploring, using her whole body and all her senses. A bird hopping along the sidewalk, a crackly leaf or a juicy red apple are easier for her to understand and remember than the objects

she sees on a screen. Help your child connect what she sees on-screen with what she sees in the real world. Point out and name objects in real life that she's seen on the TV, phone or tablet.

- **Your child learns most from his interactions with you.** The conversations you have with your child are far more educational than mobile apps—even those designed for learning. Your child points to something that interests him, and you talk about it. "Yes, that's a duck. What does the duck say?" You describe the new thing in relation to something that interested him the day before or the day before that. "Remember when you went to the park with Grandma? Did you feed the ducks?" Learning is connected to the feeling of being loved and supported as you discover the world together. Watch TV or use media with your child. Ask questions and talk about what you're watching.
- **Your young child gets distracted by television, even when it's on in the background.** TVs offer loud voices, flashing lights and noise! Young children already have to sort out and make sense of so much information. Focusing is easier without the TV. Try to limit TV in the background when young children are playing and make sure to turn off the TV when no one is watching.
- **Your use of media shows your child what's important and valuable.** Everybody's got friends who are attached to their phones—texting, updating social media and watching videos. It's easy to feel left out or unimportant when the person across from you is looking down at a screen. This is not the message we intend to give our children, but it happens. The take-away? Shut off or silence your phone when you can. Use that time to connect with your child and experience the world together.



Early Language Development

Eye Contact



Eye contact is one of the earliest means of communication. It begins when parent and baby look at each other. Eye contact is used to request, greet, or direct attention. Often children with language difficulties do not look at the speaker. One of our first goals is to help your child develop eye contact.

- To establish eye contact, sit face to face with your child. Attempt to place your child higher than you. Examples of possible positions are:
 - sit your child on your lap,
 - sit in a chair and place your child in a high chair or booster seat,
 - place your child on the couch or chair and sit on the floor in front of him/her. If your child has physical limitations, a Physical Therapist, Occupational Therapist, or Speech-Language Therapist can give you more ideas.
- To draw your child's attention, hold objects near your face to help guide your child without verbalizing. Often words do not have meaning and for other children, a verbal cue could cause him/her to tune you out.

- Tap your child's nose and then your own nose. After the child looks, even for a brief second, reward him/her and say "Good looking!"
- Put your child's hand on your face to gain attention before giving him/her a direction to follow or a choice.
- Eliminate or reduce auditory and visual distractions, like the television, radio, etc. This helps your child focus on you.
- As your child increases eye contact with you, give him/her the verbal cue, "Look." When your child looks at you, respond.
- Play "funny face" games in the mirror. Your child can establish eye contact with you in the mirror.

by Linda Mawhinney & Mary Scott McTeague

Freeze-dried Fruit Snack

Real healthy snack

100% natural

oil free

for healthy and blissful life!

www.exim-vn.com/welB/

Our Products

Quality is the core of Wel-B's philosophy. All products have passed a strict quality control, in terms of raw material selection, production efficiency, cleanliness, and safety. Our factory is certified by Good Manufacturing Practice (GMP), Hazard Analysis and Critical Control Points (HACCP).

And more...
Apple
Lychee
Banana
Mangosteen
Pineapple

Vacuum Freeze-dried

Frozen at -40°C

Manually and freshly selected from the field

Freeze-dried

Preserve nutrition and flavor at most

NASA

The best preservation technology chosen by NASA in preparing foods for the astronauts.

EXIM Co., Ltd.
Ho Chi Minh City
Vietnam
+84 (0)93 488 9492
+84 (0)90 588 2883
+84 (0)93 562 2882
info@exim-vn.com

PLAY BASED LEARNING

Written by Debbie Cole

As adults we all have memories of childhood play, times when we could pursue our own interests, create adventures and explore new ideas. Our play was both planned and spontaneous, and utilised a vast range of natural, found, man-made and bought materials. Through these experiences we gained new skills, tested our abilities, formed friendships and became increasingly adept at navigating our way through the world.

Children today are immersed in technology and have increasing expectations placed on them regarding academic achievement. This places greater pressure on care and education environments to provide programs that focus on and maintain academic pursuits. However the importance of play as a vehicle for learning cannot be underestimated. Early childhood education has a long history of valuing play and this understanding is becoming more prevalent in primary education. It is also emphasised in the new national and Victorian frameworks for early years education and is being revitalised across many children's services.

Promoting play-based learning requires adults to rethink their notions of play and develop programs that integrate play and learning into the curriculum.

'Research shows that children are playing-learning individuals. In an open and tolerant atmosphere, where children are free to make their own choices, both play and learning dimensions will be present. Children do not separate play and learning unless they are influenced by adults.' (p.3 Pramling Samuelsson, 2008)

What is play based learning?

- Play based learning draws from children's natural desire to engage in experiences based on their interests, strengths and developing skills. When children initiate play, they are more motivated to learn and develop positive dispositions towards learning. The educator's role in supporting play-based learning

is vital. Belonging Being and Becoming, The Early Years Learning Framework for Australia (2009:15) outlines the many roles educators take in play and the range of strategies they use to support learning. These include:

- Engaging in sustained shared conversations within play experience to extend children's thinking
- Providing a balance between child led, child initiated and educator supported learning
- Creating learning environments to support learning
- Interacting with babies and children within play to build attachment
- Supporting the inclusion of all children in play
- Recognising spontaneous teachable moments as they occur and using intentional teaching strategies such as demonstrating, and engaging in shared thinking and problem solving

A play-based program;

- Incorporates children's ideas and interests into planned experiences and routines
- Utilises children's ideas and interests to extend and create new experiences
- Utilises indoor and outdoor areas to facilitate play and learning
- Offers a variety of play spaces, e.g. art, dramatic play, sensory, construction
- Offers a range of open-ended experiences and materials
- Enables children to self-select materials and play independently
- Enables children to transform play spaces



- Allows children to play for extended periods of time without interruption
- Allows children to extend their play and projects for extended periods
- Allows children to work alone or with others
- Caters for different abilities and learning styles
- Connects experiences to children's lives
- Links children's investigations to key learning areas or outcomes
- Offers flexible routines that have minimal disruption to children's play

Benefits of play based learning

'Play provides the most natural and meaningful process by which children can construct knowledge and understandings, practice skills, immerse themselves naturally in a broad range of literacy and numeracy and engage in productive, intrinsically motivating learning environments. (p.21, Walker, 2007).

A play-based program has many benefits for children as it facilitates the development of skills, dispositions and knowledge. An effective play-based program can assist children to develop lifelong learning skills that will stay with them beyond the early learning environment. Engaging in play-based learning enables children to use and develop thinking skills such as problem solving, reasoning and lateral thinking. It offers opportunities to interact with others, develop communication strategies and work in collaboration with peers and adults. It can foster literacy, numeracy and the development of scientific concepts. As children are empowered to make decisions

and initiate play, they become confident and motivated learners.

This in turn fosters responsibility and self-regulation. Play also provides children with many opportunities to resolve conflict, challenge unfair play and embrace diversity.

What does play based learning look like in practice?

The aim of the play-based program is 'to promote a sense of wonder, exploration, investigation and interest in a rich range of materials, resources and opportunities in which the child can engage. (p. 30, Walker, 2007) The child is viewed as being instrumental to the way in which materials and equipment are selected and organised within the environment. Such environments are often described as child focused as children are constantly engaged in meaningful learning experiences.

While children's interests form the basis of the program, the environment needs to be carefully planned and presented in ways that are inviting to young children. All experiences are based on supporting a balance of child and adult initiated ideas and investigations and utilise the indoor and outdoor areas equally. Specific play spaces or areas may be arranged to within the environment to engage children in different areas of learning such as art, literacy and construction. Within each area children should be offered a range of open-ended and loose materials that can be used across different abilities and diverse interests. This is particularly important for mixed age grouping however within a single age group, it also enables children to explore their interests using their individual strengths and skills.

A play based program does not limit or reduce the role of the adult in children's play. Although children are less likely to want adult intervention in their play as they become older, an interested adult can still play a critical role in enhancing children's play and learning.

As these aspects can differ greatly between children, an effective play- based program actively supports and includes all children.

A key element of the play-based program is the opportunity for children to pursue their interests for extended periods of time. Many programs for children rely heavily on themes, pre-planned activities and constant change.

Regardless of how often children attend the program, it is vital for play spaces and experiences to be offered over extended periods. This enables children to fully explore materials and master new skills through repeated practice. When guided by children, the educator will soon become aware when experiences and materials need to be changed, extended or removed from the program.

It is also important to consider aspects such as storage and how children's play and learning will be displayed and shared with families. As children becoming increasingly competent, it is essential to offer more opportunities for self-selection and independent play. Children should be free to move equipment and select materials from open shelving and storage areas. These opportunities empower children to construct their own learning and scaffold the learning of others. An effective program also supports self-regulation and encourages children to become more responsible for their own play and learning.

The role of the adult in play-based learning

A play-based program does not limit or reduce the role of the adult in children's play. Although children are less

likely to want adult intervention in their play as they become older, an interested adult can still play a critical role in enhancing children's play and learning. Effective play-based learning requires adults to have a strong image of the child and view them as capable, competent and co-constructors of the learning environment. The adult develops positive relationships with children and families and uses their observations of children, information from families and colleagues, and meaningful interactions with children to determine the curriculum. As this knowledge changes, the program is also adapted to mirror children's changing interests and skills.

The role of the adult in the play based program is to;

- Interact with and observe children to gain insights into their interests, skills and knowledge
- Be responsive to children's cues and the way they use the environment and materials
- Seek information from families and colleagues to better understand children and plan for their learning
- Create inviting play areas with open-ended materials
- Create an unhurried environment where children have time to explore and extend their investigations
- Seek out resources and information that will extend children's interests and learning
- Provide modelling and instruction when required
- Offer suggestions and encourage children to learn from each other
- Modify play areas as children's interest change
- Be an active learner



Documenting and assessing play-based learning

Regulations and quality assurance require all children's services to plan and document the program. While this is a valid reason for documentation, it should not be the sole purpose for the methods chosen to record information. More importantly, documentation should make children's play and learning visible to the child, family and wider community. It should capture children's interests, skills and knowledge and highlight changes as children grow and develop. Children should be active contributors to individual and group documentation, and families should also be encouraged to share and exchange information with educators. Documentation should enhance children's learning and provide positive accounts of children's participation in the program.

The documentation used to assess children's learning can take many forms, however the methods selected needs to meet accountability requirements, reflect the service philosophy, be meaningful for the intended audience and manageable for educators. When all of these aspects are considered, documentation is more likely to offer a real insight into children's play and learning.

Both the national and Victorian early years frameworks discuss the importance of assessment for learning and highlight key elements of effective assessment.

High quality documentation captures children's learning on a regular basis and uses a systematic approach to ensure the learning of all children is made visible. Educators need

to consider factors such as time, the availability of resources and the experience of staff when determining methods of documentation. Families should also be engaged in ways that reflect the diversity of each community.

Conclusion

Play is vital to children's wellbeing and sense of belonging and forms the basis of who they become in the future. When play and learning are woven together, children are more likely to develop positive dispositions towards learning and real understandings of the world around them. This enhances their sense of self and gives them a strong foundation from which they can become competent and capable individuals in a changing world.

References

Department of Education and Early Childhood Development, Pramling Samuelsson, 'The playing-learning child in preschool', *Every Child*, Vol 14 No 2, p. 3. Walker, *Play Matters*, ACER, Melbourne.

Routines: Important for young children

Children (and adults) feel the most secure when their lives are predictable. When adults provide environments that feel safe, children learn that they can trust others to take care of them and meet their needs, so they become free to relax and explore their world. Therefore, one of the most important things that you can do to make your young child feel safe is to establish as much routine in his life as possible.

Young children do not yet fully understand the concept of time, so they do not order their lives by hours and minutes, but rather by the events that happen. When events happen in the same order every day, children have a better understanding of their world, and therefore feel more secure. A regular schedule gives children a way to order and organize their lives. When young children know what to expect, they become more confident in both themselves and the world around them. They know they will not be confronted with unfamiliar tasks for which they are unprepared.

A young child's brain is still undergoing major development, especially the part of the brain that is able to plan ahead and make predictions about the future. A routine helps kids practice making these simple predictions, as well as understand concepts such as "before and after." Routines also help children develop self-control because they know they have to wait until a certain time to do a particular activity. A regular schedule fosters responsibility and independence because

children will be able to perform more activities on their own if they have done the same activities many times before in the same environment.

A routine is especially important during particularly difficult times of day, such as bedtime or getting dressed in the morning. When there is a routine in place, there can be little argument because the expectations for behaviour are taken for granted. Therefore, a major benefit of establishing routines is that you will cut down on stress for yourself. Keeping to a routine may sound like an impossible task when you are overwhelmed with balancing a constantly changing schedule for multiple members of your household. However, even implementing the smallest routine can make a big difference. Here are 5 ideas for starting a routine in your home:

1. Plan at least one meal per day that you have together as a family. This meal does not have to be dinner; even a 15-minute breakfast where everyone gets to share their plans for the day can be effective. Turn off the television and do not answer the phone during your family time. This is a great way to start a routine that allows children to take responsibility, even for something small, such as carrying the silverware to the table.
2. Have a bedtime ritual, which will help children slowly calm down, and allow them to associate certain activities with getting sleepy. Think about what calms your child. Is it taking a bath? Reading a story? Listening to soft music? Always do the bedtime preparation in the same order, and ask your child questions such as, "What do we do after we put on our pajamas?" A great item to include in the bedtime ritual is that of talking about your day. Let your child tell you what he did that day, and prompt him if he forgets. This part of the routine not only helps children with memory, time orientation, and language skills, but it also shows them that you care about what they did that day.

DUTCH LADY ACTIVE 20+™ MILK ENERGY FOR ACTIVE FAMILY

3. Include preparation for transitions in the routine. For example, say, "We have 10 minutes left before we start getting ready for bed. When the big hand gets to the 12, it will be time to put on your pajamas."
4. Work together to make pictures that indicate each step of the routine, put the pictures in order on a colourful sheet of paper, and hang the finished product in your child's room. You will not only be helping build creativity in your child, but you will also promote self-sufficiency, as your child will be able to look at the pictures to identify what step comes next.
5. Although routine is very important for young children, do not be too rigid. Children do need to learn how to be flexible and deal with minor changes. If there is an interruption to the routine, tell your child, "I know we usually do x, but today we are going to do y because (reason). Tomorrow we will go back to our usual schedule." If most of their day is predictable, young children will be able to deal with small changes, especially if they are prepared for the changes and see you modelling calm behaviour as you deal with problems that occur.

It is never too late to start a routine. You set a good example for your child when you tell her, "The way that we have been doing things has not been working. We are going to try something new. Here is our new schedule." While you should definitely be open to the fact that the schedule may need some adjustment, you also need to be firm in sticking to the new routine. At first, your child will try to get you to break the routine, but do not give in to old habits. Young children need both consistency and limits. Know ahead of time that your child will have difficulty adjusting and be prepared with how you will handle this resistance.

The earlier that you begin to order your child's life, the easier it will be. When you stick to a routine, you teach your child how to arrange her time in a manner that is efficient, productive, and cuts down on stress.

This sense of order is not only important for making your young child feel secure at this moment, but it will also allow your child to internalize an automatic sense of how to organize her own life as she grows up.

<http://www.education.com/magazine/article/impotence-routines-preschool-children/> by Lisa Medoff.



EARLY DENTAL VISITS FOSTER A LIFETIME OF GOOD HABITS!

KIDS GROW UP FAST!

Visit your dentist every 6 months



Our dedicated and caring team of dentists promote cavity prevention and good dental habits.

VISIT US AT OUR CLINICS

Norfolk Mansion
17-19-21, Ly Tu Trong Street,
District 1 (848) 38 256 999

Thao Dien
27 Nguyen Ba Lan Street,
District 7 (848) 35 191 777



WIN WIN TOYS

THUMBS & PACIFIERS

Toddlers (ages 1-2)

Most toddlers naturally give up their thumb-sucking or pacifier habit by the time they're two years of age. If your toddler hasn't kicked the habit by then, you'll want to encourage him to do so as soon as possible in order to prevent orthodontic problems down the road. A recent study at the University of Iowa College of Dentistry and the Tokyo Dental College found that sucking a thumb, finger, or pacifier beyond age two increases the likelihood that a child will develop overhanging (protruding) front teeth or a crossbite (a narrowing of the upperjaw relative to the lower jaw).

To discourage your toddler from sucking his thumb, try to come up with creative ways of keeping his hands busy at those times of day when his thumb tends to find its way into his mouth. If, for example, your toddler is in the habit of sucking his thumb while you read him a bedtime story, give him two small toys to hold onto—one for each hand. This approach tends to be more effective than putting a bandage or a bitter substance on your child's thumb or constantly nagging him about his behaviour—strategies that can actually backfire by reinforcing the thumbsucking behaviour.

To discourage your toddler from turning to his pacifier each time he's upset (which, by the way, prevents him from learning other methods of managing his emotions), make an effort to keep the pacifier out of sight and your toddler's mind on other things. Some parents keep the pacifier in their toddler's room so that he has to go and retrieve it if he wants it. Others limit pacifier use to nighttime only.

You'll probably find that your toddler's pacifier use will decrease as he starts to develop other ways of comforting



himself when he's upset, when he's able to communicate more effectively, and when he notices that other children his age no longer have pacifiers.

A gradual process of weaning a child off his pacifier generally works best. Forcing a child to give up his pacifier before he's ready can actually cause him to become more dependent on it than ever.

Here's another other important point to consider: excessive pacifier use can interfere with your toddler's speech. Not only will he have fewer opportunities to practise his speech, but overuse of a pacifier can also interfere with his articulation skills. He may tend to replace his "t" and "d" sounds (which require that the front of the tongue brush up against the back of the front teeth) with "k" and "g" sounds (sounds produced at the back of the throat). The solution? Let your toddler know that you can't understand what he's saying when he tries talking with his pacifier in his mouth. Over time, he'll learn to take the pacifier out of his mouth while he's speaking.

<http://www.canadianparents.com/article/thumbs-and-pacifiers>



AN CAFE SAIGON
Vietnamese Fusion

Vietnamese Fusion Café /Restaurant
10 Tran Ngoc Dien / Thao Dien / D2 /
HCMC / 0903 050 710 /
www.ancafesaigon.com



Vietnamese -Pan Asian Food
Café /Restaurant
94 Lý Tự Trọng / Đà Lạt / 0938 781 146
<https://www.facebook.com/biangbistro>



BANYAN
house

Boutique 'farm' hotel
in an original french villa
94 Lý Tự Trọng / Đà Lạt / 0983 138 141
www.banyanhouse.com.vn

Bring this add
& get 10%
discount

NO NEED FOR FORMULA MILK or BOTTLES BEYOND THE AGE OF 1

Many toddlers become attached to their bottles. Besides providing nourishment, bottles also mean comfort and security.

It's important for parents to start weaning (discouraging) babies from bottles around the end of the first year and start getting them comfortable drinking from cups.

The longer parents wait to start the transition, the more attached kids become to their bottles; the more difficult it can be to break the bottle habit. Longer bottle use may lead to cavities or cause your child to drink more than needed. Switching from bottle to cup can be challenging, but these tips can make the change easier for parents & kids.

Children over one do not need formula milk, experts say

Experts say the health benefits touted by formula milk are too often too much of a "marketing ploy" as the same nutrients can be found in everyday food. Referring to nutrients like docosahexaenoic acid (DHA), taurine and choline which have been promoted by milk manufacturers as giving health benefits like brain and eye development, healthy immune system and helping fat digestion, paediatric dietitian Meave Graham from Child Nutrition Singapore said: "These nutrients are found in breast milk and in normal balanced diets. Children do not need special supplements of these nutrients."

In fact, giving formula milk to picky eaters can worsen the situation.

"The higher sugar level (in formula milk) gives a sweet taste and can be very filling, reducing interest in trying other foods. Formula milk offers no nutritional benefit over a balanced diet," she said, stressing that formula milk is not recommended for children above 12 months.

An infant who weans well and is having excessive formula milk intake can become obese. This carries a negative impact on long-term health with the child having a higher risk of developing metabolic conditions such as adult obesity, diabetes and heart disease, she said.

Timing the Transition

Most doctors recommend introducing a cup around the time a baby is 6 months old. In the beginning, much of what you serve in a cup will end up on the floor or on your baby. But by 12 months of age, most babies have the coordination and hand skills needed to hold a cup and drink from it.

Age 1 is also when doctors recommend switching from formula to cow's milk. It can be a natural transition to offer milk in a cup rather than a bottle. If you're still



breastfeeding, you can continue feeding your baby breast milk, but you may want to do so by offering it in a cup.

Tips to Try

Instead of cutting out bottles all at once, try eliminating them gradually from the feeding schedule, starting at mealtimes.

For example, if your baby usually drinks three bottles each day, start by eliminating the morning bottle. Instead of giving a bottle right away, bring your baby to the table and after the feeding has started, offer milk from a cup. You might need to offer some encouragement and explanation, saying something like "you're a big boy now and can use a cup like mommy."

As you try to eliminate the morning bottle, keep offering the afternoon and evening bottles for about a week. That way, if your child asks for the bottle you can provide assurance that one is coming later.

The next week, eliminate another bottle feeding and provide milk in a cup instead. Try to do this when your baby is sitting at the table in a high chair.

Generally, the last bottle to stop should be the nighttime bottle. That bottle tends to be a part of the bedtime routine and is the one that most provides comfort to babies.

Instead of the bottle, try offering a cup of milk with your child's dinner and continue with the rest of your nighttime tasks, like a bath, bedtime story, or teeth brushing.

More Strategies to keep in mind:

- Spill-proof cups that have spouts designed just for babies (often referred to as "sippy cups") can help ease the transition from the bottle. Dentists recommend sippy cups with a hard spout or a straw.
- When your child does use the cup, offer plenty of praise and positive reinforcement.
- If you keep getting asked for a bottle, find out what your child really needs or wants and offer that instead. If your child is thirsty or hungry, provide nourishment in a cup or on a plate. If it's comfort, offer hugs, and if your child is bored, sit down and play!
- As you're weaning your baby from the bottle, try diluting the milk in the bottle with water. For the first few days, fill half of it with water and half of it with milk. Then gradually add more water until the entire bottle is water. By that time, it's likely that your child will lose interest and be asking for the yummy milk that comes in a cup!
- Get rid of the bottles or put them out of sight.

Encouraging Children to Pretend Play and 'Make Believe'

It is internationally widely understood that pretend play forms an essential part of a child's development. Children learn by observing, imagining and doing. We often think of "play time" as a time reserved for running around the playground and letting off steam between lessons, or for sitting down quietly with a few good toys to tinker with. These forms of play are important in themselves, but they are not the only forms of play. Learning through play is now widely recognized by practitioners as an essential method of learning and development for young children, and a number of theorists and researchers have identified the values of pretend or imaginative play as a vital contributor to the normal development of a child.

At modern Early Years settings and across Primary Schools, you will see children enjoying imaginative play; perhaps zooming a piece of paper around the room as if it were a racing car or a flying airplane or playing the part of a firefighter in their engine, a shopkeeper, a parent, a dentist or a nurse. Children use objects to represent something else or assign themselves and others roles and then act them out. It may seem very simple, but in pushing back the barriers of reality these children are learning and developing many different and important life skills. This pretend play, which allows different perspectives to be taken, and during which ideas and emotions are molded and rearranged, is a major feature of a child's social and cognitive (intellectual) development.

Let's have a look at 5 key reasons why it is good to encourage early childhood learners to get involved in the world of make believe and to participate in pretend play every day:

1. To encourage imagination and creativity

Research has identified that an important benefit of early pretend play is its enhancement of a child's capacity for cognitive flexibility and, ultimately, creativity. By absorbing themselves in an imaginative game, whatever it may be, children are given the opportunity to practice using their imagination, to exercise their brain and train it to think creatively, and to learn how to think for themselves. The ability to use our imagination is a cognitive skill that we all require throughout life, and we need to encourage children to learn how to do this from the start with frequent opportunities for imaginative play.

It is because of the development of the imagination during childhood that we as adults become capable of carrying out most of the tasks that daily life requires. Albert Einstein once said, "Logic will get you from A to Z; Imagination will get you everywhere." It is true! Adults have to use their imagination every day to help them solve problems, make plans, to prosper and discover or invent new things. Imagination is required to properly visualize and to be able to enjoy pleasures in life such as a good book or a film. It is an essential enabler for understanding other people's perspectives and for thinking creatively.

2. To support social and emotional development

When a child engages in pretend or imaginative play, by pretending to be different characters or by controlling objects in their own way and observing the result, they are essentially experimenting with the social and emotional roles of life. It's about learning who they are as individuals and how they fit into the world around them, how the world works and how to walk in somebody else's shoes. They develop empathy and learn how to co-operate, to become responsible and how to share responsibility.

All young children have moments of selfishness and this is normal (it's all about survival!). With maturity and opportunities for experimental pretend play, children begin to recognize and learn how to respond positively towards other people's feelings. Think of a role play situation where children are playing together. They have to agree on a topic and negotiate roles and rules. All of this requires co-operation, collaboration and an understanding of others.

The idea of "theory of mind", an awareness that a person's thoughts, opinions and feelings may be different from our own, and that we are all capable of taking on different perspectives, is closely linked to pretend play. For example, children who regularly take part in pretend play activities involving role play are better able to display empathy because they have effectively experimented with emotions and had a go at being "somebody else" for a while.

Pretend play also benefits children hugely in developing their self-esteem and self-awareness. There is a sense of freedom which flows from the realization that you can be anything by just pretending, and children love this! It's a safe and secure way to experiment and test boundaries and build confidence.

Through make believe, pretend play allows children to experience and express both positive and negative feelings. They learn how to modulate the effect of these emotions, how to deal with them positively, how to control their impulses, learn good manners and positive behavior, and in some cases how to reduce aggression.

3. To improve language and communication skills

It is fascinating to listen to children interacting with friends. They often come out with words or phrases that we had no idea they knew! They can do very amusing impersonations of their parents, caterers and teachers too! Pretend play allows children to experiment with and learn about the power of language, how it affects us and those around us. It also helps them to understand that words give us the means to re-enact situations, to put our point across and to make ourselves heard and understood.

Pretend play offers the perfect opportunity to expose children to new vocabulary, and the more different scenarios they are introduced to, the more scope there is for widening their vocabulary! They could spend a whole afternoon at the “airport” preparing them for a new experience, or a whole morning in a “hospital” learning all the different words associated with a potential visit. Not only does pretend play broaden their horizons in this way, but it helps to reduce anxiety as language and situations become more familiar. Personal vocabulary flourishes as they begin to use words appropriately and in context.

Through imaginative play and role play, children learn to choose their words carefully so that others can understand what they are trying to communicate. In turn, children learn to listen properly to what others have to say, as they have to do this in order to understand what is going on around them and how they fit in.

4. To develop thinking, learning and problem-solving abilities

By its very nature, pretend play presents children with a variety of different problems to solve and scenarios to think about carefully. Deciding what games to play, what roles to take on, who will be involved and how, what materials are needed for the game and what rules apply to the game, and how to overcome scenarios where something “goes wrong”, all require much thought and deliberation in one way or another. Participating in pretend play in such a way

requires a child to call upon cognitive thinking skills that they will find themselves using in each aspect of everyday life, and this will stay with them all the way through to adulthood. Pretend play helps children gain a better understanding of science, the wider world in which they live and important world events that occur around them. Whether they are discovering space and the solar system by acting out the role of Tim Peake blasting off to the International Space Station in his rocket or learning about prehistoric times by stomping around the school playground like dinosaurs, imaginative play has an essential part to play.

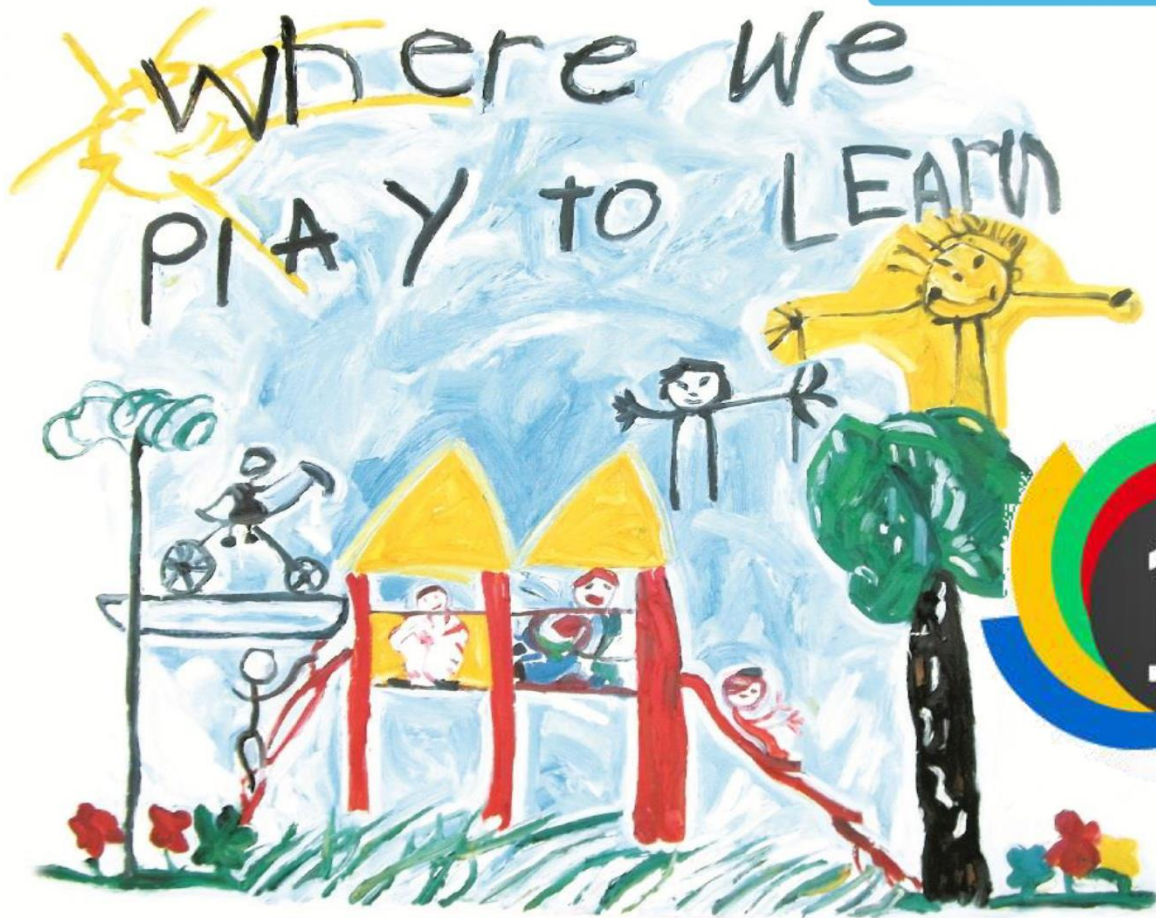
5. To enhance physical development

Aside from all the wonderful cognitive benefits that pretend play has to offer, it is important to remember that pretend play is very often physical and is a wonderful way for children to be active, to exercise and to develop their motor skills. Gross motor skills are put to good use as pilots run around flying their aeroplanes, fire fighters climb up ladders and whizz down slides throwing water everywhere, goodies run after baddies and chase them over play equipment, horses gallop across fields and over jumps and would-be Olympic athletes and gymnasts put their skills to the test in the school playground. Fine motor skills and hand to eye co-ordination are improved as children try to dress dolls with fiddly bits of clothing, dish out coins to pay for items they have bought in a shop, or make recipes with “ingredients” plucked fresh from the sandpit.

Even in situations where physical pretend play appears to become a bit too “physical”, evidence suggests that a role play game involving rough and tumble, provided that this is well monitored and doesn’t go too far, can help in the development of the frontal lobe, the front part of the brain, that regulates behavior. Rather than breaking it up too quickly, allowing children to play physically, if this is what they enjoy doing, helps them to learn self-regulation and to understand when this type of behavior is appropriate or actually when it is not.

And as if all that isn’t enough, pretend play is fun too! When we let our imaginations take over and when we really play together, as children want to do, there are no limits as to where their minds can take them and there is no chance of running out of things to enjoy and talk about with them!





Thao Dien Compound	1172, Street 55, Thao Dien, Distr. 2	Tel +84(0)28 3744 6076
Street 10	26, Street 10 (near ISHCMC), Thao Dien, Distr. 2	Tel +84(0)28 3898 9816
Tran Ngoc Dien	15, Tran Ngoc Dien, Thao Dien, Distr. 2	Tel +84(0)28 3519 4236

SmartKids International Kindergarten

WORLD-CLASS INTERNATIONAL PRE-SCHOOL/ KINDERGARTEN
WITH NORTH EUROPEAN PRINCIPLES

Contact us for a free in-class visit, so we can show you around and answer all your questions.

Kiddies - Pre-school / Early Childhood groups (max. 18 children);

for children from 18 months to 3.⁵ years old; participation minimum 3 mornings up to 5 full days.

Big Kids - Kindergarten groups (max. 18 children);

for children from 3.⁵ to 6 years old; participation minimum 5 mornings up to 5 full days.

Parent-Child groups for children from 12 months to 3 years old;

Parents will stay and play with their children for 1.5 hours, 1-2 or 3 times a week.

Children and parents spend quality time with their child, socialize with other children and parents, learn songs etc. and get guidance & feedback about typical child issues.

After School Activities (max. 18 children) for children from 3 to 6 years old;

This group offers a 1.⁵ hour fun activities in English.

English Language Centre (ELC) (max. 18 children) for children from 3-5.⁵ and 5.⁵ to 7 years old;

A 16-week course (twice a week 1.⁵ hours), offering our special program of Playful English.