

THE POWER OF PLAY

PLAY IS SOCIAL AND FUN

- ø Kids play because they enjoy it;
- ø Improving motor skills, practicing new sounds, making connections with others are important benefits that happen through play – but the children are not consciously trying to improve in these areas;
- ø When having a good time playing with us, kids learn in a natural way

PLAY ENCOURAGES TAKING TURNS

- ø Communication is a two-way interactions;
- ø Taking turns with actions or words is an essential element of shared play and conversation

PLAY IS EASY TO RESPOND TO, EVEN WITHOUT WORDS

- ø Children will respond to play, even if they have a limited ability or desire to talk;
- ø The active side of play gives children who have limited talking a chance to take part;
- ø Helps kids connect physical actions with the words that describe those actions (a good way to reinforce understanding and learning)

PLAY INVOLVES REPETITION

- ø Can repeat words and actions more often in a play activity (e.g., can spend hours pouring water in the bathtub, having a pretend tea party, or singing “This is the way we pour our milk” where we may only have time to pour our child’s milk one time at breakfast)

PLAY INTEGRATES MANY OF THE SENSES

- ø Kids are more likely to learn and remember when they *see, hear, feel, smell and taste* (e.g., if a child hears the word “apple”, and see it, feel its roundness, smell and taste it, they are more likely to understand “apple” and use the word later);
- ø Learning is strengthened when several senses send the same message to the brain

PLAY IS ONE OF THE BEST WAYS FOR OUR CHILDREN TO LEARN HOW TO COMMUNICATE AND GET ALONG WITH OTHERS