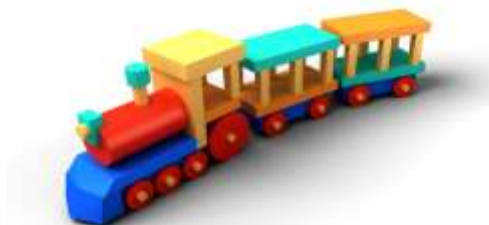


How can dramatic play help with my child's development?



Socially...

*Your child develops social skills that help him/her solve issues with conflict, assertiveness and sharing materials.

*Research (as cited in Swindells and Stagnitti, 2006, p 53.) finds that play is the primary means for young children to learn about themselves, attain fundamental

socialization skills, such as cooperative behaviors and team solving, experience emotions, and develop friendships.

*Your child is strengthening relationships through interactive play that can be carried over into other areas. For example, two children who have interests in being paleontologists in the dramatic play area will also have that same connection when they decide to share their thoughts about dinosaurs together in the writing area (where they influence each other's writing and art).

Cognitively...

*Your child will develop metacognitive skills more purposefully, meaning he/she will be able to think about his/her own thinking processes. "Children who engage in more social pretend play in general demonstrate a more advanced theory of mind." (From Children's Thinking by Robert Siegler and Martha Alibali, p. 329)

*Studies have shown that children who frequently engage in mature pretend play score higher on IQ tests. Strong connections have also been found between pretend play and language or language-related abilities such as reading. (From Early childhood Development: A Multicultural Perspective. By Trawick-Smith, J.)

* Your child finds purposeful reasons to count and use other academic skills in the dramatic play area. For example, a child who bakes 9 cupcakes in a tin and puts two birthday candles in each cupcake is looking at evenly grouping objects, simple one-to-one correspondence, beginning addition and multiplication principles and problem solving.

Representationally...

*Your child finds meaningful environmental print in the dramatic play area. Labels on food cans, books and print on boxes are examples of environmental print. Often tablets or clipboards are found in the dramatic play area where children can write out lab reports, take food orders, doctor's orders, etc. This can also be carried over into a book that is created by all of the children.

Physically...

*Your child has opportunities to write, manipulate small objects, try on dressups, crawl on four legs, etc. when using materials in the dramatic play area, increasing gross and fine motor development as well as self-help skills.