

Simple Pretend play



What is pretend play?

When children are playing pretend they are **playing 'as if' something is real**. They are creating a situation where there is more going on than what is literally happening. For example, a child might be placing a cup to the doll's mouth: the doll is 'alive' and really drinking; and when the doll is put in the bed: the doll is really sleeping.

Strategies to Ensure Success:

- **Provide new ideas** by modelling and adding new pretend play actions to the child.
- **Show your child** an action and see if they will copy you.
- **Hand over hand support** e.g. helping the child to pick up the toy themselves.
- Backward chaining; adult models all of the sequence and encourages the **child to complete the last action**, slowly encouraging the child to take on more and more of the sequence
- **Repetition** of familiar actions.

Activity Ideas to encourage pretend play



Everyday routines

Involve a doll, teddy or toy figure in everyday situations and provide appropriate matching objects; for example, the child can wash teddy's hands, brush hair, make teddy tidy up, or brush spider man's teeth.

Puppets

Use puppets in the same way. Stick to everyday routines that the child understands or has experienced e.g. shopping, washing, dressing.



Tea Party

Set up a teddy bear's or doll's tea party and encourage the child to hand out the plates, put the food on the plates, stir the drink with a spoon etc.

Animal Farm/Zoo

Set up a farm, encourage the child to carry out actions, e.g. making the animal sounds, walk, eat, or run around the farm / zoo

Car Town

Place people in the cars and make them drive around the town. Stop and get the figures out to play in the park, or eat an ice cream.





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