
A Letter to Families About Toys and Games

Dear Families,

Toys and games include puzzles; various table blocks; small construction materials such as small plastic building blocks; board games; and collections of objects (including shells, bottle caps, and buttons). When children use toys and games, they explore how things work, use their imaginations, strengthen and control the muscles in their hands, work cooperatively, solve problems, and learn content area concepts.

When children use toys and games in the classroom, we encourage them to talk about what they are doing. For example, we might say,

“Tell me about the design you made.”

“How did you get those rings to fit together?”

“Can you tell me how the blocks you picked out are the same?”

Such questions and comments help children develop thinking skills.

What You Can Do at Home

You play an important role by selecting toys and games that are safe, interesting, and appropriate for your child. More importantly, research shows that the most creative children are those who have had adults involved in their play. Here are a few ways that you can be involved in your child’s play with toys and games:

Observe. Watch as your child plays and notice his or her abilities and interests.

Play. Follow your child’s lead and join his or her play.

Imagine. Keep in mind that there is more than one way to play with a toy. Be creative!

Enjoy. This isn’t a time to drill your child or test what he or she knows. Just have fun being together, talking, and playing.

Good toys do not have to be expensive. You might collect various small objects such as buttons, seashells, rocks, and plastic bottle tops. Make suggestions, such as “Put all of the buttons that are the same color in a pile,” or “Group all of the beads that are the same size.” Encourage your child to tell you about the design he or she is making or to explain why things belong together.

Playing with toys and games at home promotes your child’s development in many ways. We welcome you to help us in the classroom by playing in our Toys and Games area with the children. You can see for yourself how much your child is learning there.