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### Play activities and materials: What is safe and suitable for young children

**Mridula Gautam and Indu Bansal**

#### Abstract

Playtime is one of the most fundamental parts of childhood development. Children play in a variety of ways with a number of different toys. Each activity has a different affect on development. Toy and other objects are important extension of a young child. Playing, in general, helps children to develop their senses and motor skills in the early stages. It also helps the kids enhancing their creativity, thinking, problem solving skills and language. So playing with educational toys means learning and mastering various skills.

Blocks and constructive play help develop crucial skills including patterning, sequencing, visual discrimination, strategy and eye-hand coordination, apart from math, science, physics, learning about levers, prepare children for life, when they are grownup.

Toy can never take the place of parents. Toy can never be substitutes for the love, care and attention that only parents and dedicated caregivers can give. That is why, even though you provide your kid with abundant educational toys, it is still very important that play with him, guide him and support him during this playtime adventures.

Games can not only be fun, but an excellent teaching aid in making children understand remember and retrieve the concept they pick up while playing.

The following are some suggestions for suitable toys for children of various ages. They are offered as a guide to help in your selection, but remember that all children are different study your child and get to know his or her interests, abilities and limitations Not all children enjoy the same kinds of play interests, abilities and limitations. One child will be interested in building with blocks or, another may prefer riding bikes or playing ball, your child may enjoy pretending with a doing puzzle doll house or playing board game.

**Reminder:** Be sure to keep all small items out of the hands of children who mouth objects, especially children under the age three.

**Keywords:** Play time, childhood, different, creativity, thinking, educational toys, crucial skills, patterning, sequencing, visual discrimination, strategy

#### Introduction

Throughout the first year of life the child is constantly feeling and touching, handling and playing with materials such as rattles, small blocks, spoons, cups, clothing and his mothers parson, and in this way gain valuable experience. To the child, play is the equivalent of real work, and the adult should appreciate this fact. Play is vital to growth of all kinds, physical, intellectual, emotional as well as social, and not merely a pastime or recreation.

It is argued that discovery, reasoning and thought grow out of children's spontaneous activity which may take the form of bodily skill and movement, Imaginative play, or direct concern with the physical things around them, (Kathleen Manning and Ann Sharp 1974-1978). It is now the accepted fact that play is the starting point for all the developments. Play is the natural instinct; a natural activity for every young children and according to Froebel play is the work of the children. Play provides many opportunities for children to learn and grow-physically, mentally, and socially.

**Toys:** Objects for to play with typically a model or miniature replica of something (Collins English (dictionary), gadget or machine, regarded as providing amusement and pleasure.

A large proportion of a child's development and learning is done through play. Most of the attempts of young children at play revolves around body and the immediate thing around them.

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It is essential for the adult to stimulate the curiosity by providing attractive and colorful materials within easy reach of the child and at the same time to make encouraging noise, which will satisfy and drive him to greater efforts, as he senses that everybody is pleased with his exploits.

Play with experience, gives the child self confidence, as he learns to control his muscles, and obtain balance, as climbing, jumping, running and other types of out door activities.

Playtime is one of the most fundamental parts of childhood development. Children play in a variety of ways with a number of different toys. Each activity has a different affect on development. Toy and other objects are important extension of a young child.

Young children explore objects in their environment by "mouthing" them. Children can choke to death on such-items. These items include toys (Such as balloons and small balls) and household and food items such as popcorn. Peanut, coins etc.)

Playing, in general, helps children to develop their senses and motor skills in the early stages. It also helps the kids enhancing their creativity, thinking, problem solving skills and language. So playing with educational toys means learning and mastering various skills.

Toys that boost up cognitive development should be even more popular in the next five year, as media stresses too much on the relation ship of the brain and academic success. For example, well before kindergarten age, the use of fine motor skill should be encouraged.

Simple, inexpensive supplies like crayons, construction paper, paste, scissors, and modeling clay encourage their creativity, Sidewalk chalk and play sand are the examples of low cost supplies that will get their creative juice flowing on long summer days.

Traditional board game can be purchased both new and gently used. Playing games with family and friends not only strengthens social skills, but enhances color and letter recognition in young children while increasing strategy and sequencing skills in older kids.

Blocks and constructive play help develop crucial skills including patterning, sequencing, visual discrimination, strategy and eye-hand coordination, apart from math, science, physics, learning about levers, prepare children for life, when they are grownup.

There are certain toys that would encourage children think are use their motor skills and make them related to other children or to other sibling like a doll house.

Toy can never take the place of parents. Toy can never be substitutes for the love, care and attention that only parents and dedicated caregivers can give. That is why, even though you provide your kid with abundant educational toys, it is still very important that play with him, guide him and support him during this playtime adventures.

Engage him in mind enriching activities where in you can participate and guide him. Assembling jigsaw puzzles are fun for any kid especially it he is putting together pieces of his favorite cartoon character. This is also an excellent mind stimulating activity where his visual discrimination, spatial and fine motor skill are being honed. Help him learn about shapes and sizes by guiding him with his puzzles solving adventures.

Shapes and colours are crucial for a good foundation and tag has released a line that caters to this specific area. They combine solid wooden shapes with bright primary colors in all kinds of toys. Puzzles are a wonderful to begin to distinguish shapes and tag gives several types with which to

do this.

"Building blocks" of learning to more advanced concepts. As long as he's in School, letters and numbers will be a part of his daily routine and this toy company can help introduce these concepts.

The special toys for babies or toddlers are designed to teach specific learning functions. For example, they may feature wheels that behave in a difference between left and right and that moving the toy wheel can affect the world.

The best way to teach a child is through play Children pick up alphabets, poem, maths, and many more subjects faster, when taught through games. You can incorporate many concepts in their minds, without even making them realize that these are the same boring subjects taught in school.

Games can not only be fun, but an excellent teaching aid in making children understand remember and retrieve the concept they pick up while playing.

There have been so safe, fun toys designed just for toddlers that today is a wonderful time to be shopping for kid learning toys, You can shop for toys that develop very specific skills in your Child, and you can find so many toys that there will be one for your child no matter what he or she like of dislikes.

The following are some suggestions for suitable toys for children of various ages. They are offered as a guide to help in your selection, but remember that all children are different study your child and get to know his or her interests, abilities and limitations Not all children enjoy the same kinds of play interests, abilities and limitations. one child will be interested in buliding with blocks or dooing puzzle, another may prefer riding bikes or playing ball, your child may enjoy pretending with a doll house or playing board game. Reminder: Be sure to keep all small items out of the hands of children who mouth objects, especially children under the age three.

1. Educational toys for infants/toddlers should not have any sharp edges, and small.
2. Don't allow the younger children to use toys meant for the older ones.
3. Keep the toys in a safe place.

#### **Check these toys at regular intervals for damage**

Always read the instructions before using the toy and game and keep the product literature safely, for future references. Choose toys that -

- Have pieces that are too large to swallow
- Are light weight for handing and grasping
- Are bright color
- Are non toxic
- Toy should be selected, not collected
- Safe for that child's age, well constructed and durable
- Appealing and interesting to the child.
- Suited to the child's physical capabilities and
- Suited to the child's mental and social development.

#### **Safety**

Toys have the distinction of being one of the most closely monitored and regulated products on the market. This is understandable, given that over 2.6 billion toys are purchased each year and parents are naturally very concerned about the products they give their children.

The toy industry and the government work closely together to ensure that toys are among the safest products brought into the home. In many developed countries Maryland, and the authority to develop and enforce safety regulations for toys and other children's products, monitor the marketplace for both domestically and foreign produced toys.

One of the most important safety tests a manufacturer conducts is for small parts. Since children under the age of three are very likely to put objects in their mouths, it is especially critical that toys intended for infants and toddlers be manufactured with oversized pieces which meet U.S. safety specifications. But unfortunately this is not true in our country where careful manufacturing methods and toy selection are not enough. Toys must be used, maintained and stored correctly to ensure that the safety built in at the factory continues in the home. There is no substitute, ever for sensible adult supervision.

Parents and others responsible for a child's care must be safety experts. Remember, too that youngsters learn safe play habits and responsibility from grownups. Read the instructions carefully to make sure that both you and child understand them.

Spot check toys regularly for minor damage and urge children to let you know when toys need repair.

Do not allow toys to remain outdoors overnight. Rain, snow and dew cause rust and damage that increase the risk of accidents.

Teach children to store their toys properly in a place specified for this.

Use recommended age labeling as a guide and look for warnings and other safety messages on toy packaging.

Be especially careful when selecting toys for children under the age three. Avoid toys with small parts that could be swallowed or inhaled, including small balls and balloons and those with sharp points or rough edges.

Toy labels -

Labels on toy packages make choosing safe, appropriate toys much easier. However, no package label can tell you exactly which toys are right for your child and not all toys are appropriate for every youngster. On the other hand, child development experts agree that children develop in a sequence of stages and toymakers use this information to indicate which types of toys are safe and appropriate for children of various ages.

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