Engaging Families Through Play in Programming

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Why is Play Important?

- Play is the work of the child!
- It stimulates their brain with touch, sight, movement, and sound
- Benefits of Play:
  - Builds vocabulary
  - Develops fine and gross motor skills
  - Builds confidence and social skills
  - Creates an open-ended environment for exploration
- Play in Libraries
- For parents:
  - It helps them bond with their child
  - They’ll hopefully be inspired to bring those play experiences home
  - Importance of child-directed play
  - A better understanding that play = learning!
How Do We Incorporate Play?

- 3 to 5 activities
- Try to fit theme
- Kinds of play: art, dramatic play, sensory bin, big body, fine motor, etc.
- Places to find play ideas:
  - Google “(theme) preschool theme”
    - [www.pre-kpages.com](http://www.pre-kpages.com)
    - [www.preschool-plan-it.com](http://www.preschool-plan-it.com)
    - [www.prekinders.com](http://www.prekinders.com)
  - Pinterest
  - Library storytime blogs
Other Things to Consider:

- **Loose Parts!**
  - What are loose parts?
  - Books by Lisa Daly & Miriam Beloglovsky
  - Appeals to a child’s stage of development
  - Gender neutral
  - Inexpensive and simple to replicate
  - Safe for babies
- **We don’t break our budgets**
  - We beg, borrow, steal from home and others
  - Use recyclables
Our Top 10 Play Experiences:

- 1. Obstacle Courses/Big Body Play
- 2. Bringing the Outdoors In/Using Nature
- 3. Process Art
- 4. Box Play
- 5. Sensory Play
- 6. Baby Pool Play
- 7. Group Dramatic Play
- 8. Hands-On Science Exploration
- 9. Forts
- 10. Dramatic Play
Obstacle Courses/Big Body Play
Bringing the Outdoors In
Process Art
Sensory Play
Sensory Play: Bins!
Baby Pool Play
Group Dramatic Play
Hands-On Science Exploration
Forts
Dramatic Play
Questions?

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Resources

- Books: **The Power of Play: Designing Early Literacy Spaces** by Dorothy Stoltz, Marisa Conner, and James Bradberry

- Websites/Articles:
  - [https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-things-every-parent-play](https://www.naeyc.org/our-work/families/10-things-every-parent-play)
  - [https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182](https://pediatrics.aappublications.org/content/119/1/182)
  - “We Play Here: Bringing the Power of Play into Children’s Libraries”: [https://go.aws/2ViAytS](https://go.aws/2ViAytS)
Thank you!