



Dramatic play

Children begin very early to dramatise in their play. They pretend to be other people and act out their feelings and events.

In self-directed dramatic play, children have an opportunity to re-enact their own life experiences. In doing so they help make sense of what is happening in the world around them.

Dramatic play enhances children's development

Children who have a wide variety of life experiences can take on many roles and play in many themes.

In dramatic play, children can share their combined knowledge. It is this exchange of knowledge and understandings that contributes to their intellectual growth.

Dramatic play helps children:

Develop their understanding about new experiences

Develop and practise language

Express fears and feelings

Develop social skills, such as learning to cooperate, share and take turns

Practise problem solving

Setting up the dramatic play area

Dramatic play is best situated near the dough and block play areas.

Adults can help

Provide a selection of materials and equipment

Stimulate ideas by reading stories, taking children on outings etc

Support children to put their own ideas into practice, without taking over

Help children sort out problems constructively

Encourage children to help tidy up after the session.

Equipment for dramatic play

A selection of dress-up clothes, with accessories for role playing both men and women. Include clothes representing more than one culture

Male and female dolls representing different cultures

Dolls' clothing, beds and bedding

A table, chairs, kitchen utensils, and furniture

A clothes line with pegs

A selection of boxes and lengths of material

Mirror at child height

Props as necessary for other types of dramatic play, e.g. shops or medical play.



Ideas for literacy and numeracy

Talk with the children using the language that goes with the play

Provide writing materials for children to use in their play, e.g. making menus for a restaurant, money for a shop, signs for a road, invitations to a party, etc.

Talk about the mathematical elements of their play, e.g. with money, number, shapes