



Strengthen our kids in every way. Play!

For kids, learning and playing are the same thing. They spend hours building, creating, pretending, exploring their surroundings, and solving problems. Every minute helps a child's brain and body grow stronger.

Play builds useful skills and creates healthy social and emotional bonds. That makes playing with a child one of the most important—and fulfilling—activities parents and other caring adults can do.



Playing builds lifelong skills by:



Getting kids active and practicing their motor skills



Giving children an outlet for stress, curiosity, creativity, and more



Strengthening a child's ability to learn, imagine, and use language



Encouraging kids to cooperate, share, and build relationships



Helping kids build confidence and the ability to bounce back

**Next up? Ideas for making
playtime purposeful and fun.**



Playtime tips for adults

- ◆ Set aside at least 5-10 minutes each day to play together.
- ◆ Let the child take the lead. It builds confidence and independence.
- ◆ Narrate your actions to help kids build language and learning skills.
- ◆ Be an enthusiastic playmate. It shows children they matter.
- ◆ Allow kids to make mistakes and support the learning that occurs from them.
- ◆ Mix it up. Make time for moving, making, puzzling, and pretending.
- ◆ Be spontaneous. You don't need toys, materials, or a plan to play together.

Fun ideas for daily play routines

- ◆ **Use open-ended toys** like blocks, dolls, crayons, or paint to promote creativity.
- ◆ **Read or look at books together.** Let children turn the pages or use the pictures to make up their own story.
- ◆ **Pretend the floor is lava**, that your sofa is a ship, or turn a pile of blankets into a bird's nest.
- ◆ **Engage all 5 senses** with objects that crinkle, sparkle, fluff up, or taste and smell differently.
- ◆ **Play dress-up** using objects from around the house, old clothes, and accessories.
- ◆ **Sing silly songs** and make up your own hand motions or dance steps to go along.
- ◆ **Grab old magazines** to cut up, color, glue, or crumple up into balls.

Quality early childhood education benefits everyone.

Find more ways to support quality early childhood education in your home and in your community at dcf.wisconsin.gov/strongece.

