



PLAY: Functional 4 [F4]

Child includes other people in simple pretend play with toys

Purpose

- To help your child learn to include other people in pretend play.

Description

This occurs when the child uses a toy to act on another person. Playing with toys in a functional way directed towards others shows the child is starting to understand that other people can be included in play.

- Serves pretend food to another person
- Brushes another person's hair
- Uses stethoscope to listen to another person's heart

Activities

- *Bath Time:* When playing with animals or boats in the bath, ask your child for a turn and wait with a hand extended to ask for a toy. Once you are involved in the play, you can suggest a new idea to see if your child will follow your lead (e.g., pretend a tunnel is coming or a wave is starting in the water)
- *Playtime:* Tea parties/picnics are a great chance to start this type of play. Doctor kits are good also; you can bring an animal for your child to give it a check-up. If your child is pretending to make a snack, ask them to make one for you or a sibling also, then you can sit down and continue the play.



- *Playtime with blocks:* When your child is building with blocks, you can say "my turn" or "can I try" to join in the play. Ask child to hand you items ("the blue block"), to add to what you've built, and to expand on play ideas ("Let's build a castle! Should we build a tower?")
- *Bedtime:* Your child can pretend to tuck you in or read to you. Try asking for a turn to hold, or rock, a favorite toy.

Strategies

- *Wait with anticipation* – demonstrate to your child with gestures (e.g., holding out your hand to show that you want a toy or a turn playing) and facial expressions that you are waiting for him/her to invite you to play
- *Follow my child's lead* - Show interest in what your child is doing with toys. Comment and show enthusiasm for the play to motivate him/her to include you (e.g., "I see you listening to the puppy's heart! Does he need medicine?")
- *Act as a playful/partner* – be silly and animated as you play alongside your child to encourage him/her to invite you to play

Suggested Toys

- Bath toys/boats
- Toy foods
- Toy doctor kit
- Play phone
- Grooming toys

Goal Mastery

An ASAP Goal is mastered if your child meets ALL of the following criteria:

- Shows the skill at least three times
- Shows the skill during different activities or in different settings such as during snack time, during playtime, or at the grocery store.
- Shows the skill with minimal help or support from an adult