



PLAY: Symbolic 6 [S6]

Child uses pretend objects in play

Purpose

- To expand your child's pretend play to include imaginary objects.

Description

This occurs when the child pretends that s/he has an object that is not actually present. Using imaginary objects in play shows the child is beginning to understand that s/he can pretend with something that is not represented directly by an object.

- Forms hand in the shape of a cup when pretending to drink juice
- Pets an imaginary puppy
- Makes a ringing noise and picks up an imaginary phone

Activities

- *Dressing:* Pretend to dress a stuffed animal and use a pretend comb to brush its fur
- *Bath Time:* Use play boats and pretend that there is a storm or that the boat gets stuck
- *Around the House:* Have your child pretend to fix a broken door knob using pretend tools (or blocks). Have your child pretend to cook food while you make snack or dinner.
- *Playtime:* Gather, stir, and pour imaginary ingredients into a bowl to make a cake. Feed a doll an invisible pizza or have an action figure drive around in an invisible car.



Strategies

- *Model play with animation* – be loud and silly as you demonstrate using imaginary/pretend toys/objects while playing (for example, “call” your child on the phone using your hand, stir in bowl of pretend cereal/oatmeal). Take turns in play with your child and be an active participant in their play.
- *Expand to show my child the next developmental step* – while playing with imaginary objects, remove a few toys to encourage your child to imagine that they are there (for example, if you’re pretend cooking with your child, remove the pretend salt shaker, then ask if the food needs some salt)

Suggested Toys

- This goal involves using imaginary objects in pretend play

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