



PLAY: Symbolic 8 [S8]

Child suggests pretend roles in play to self or other people

Purpose

- To have your child start giving you a role to play in pretending.

Description

This occurs when the child begins to assign his/herself or other play partners to be certain people or characters in play routines. Suggesting roles in play themes to self or other people shows that the child is beginning to understand that s/he can have some control in the play routines.

- Suggests that a peer be a customer while playing grocery store
- Asks a teacher to be the veterinarian as the child brings an animal to the vet
- Tells a friend to be the princess while pretending to live in a castle

Activities

- *Playtime:* Using a pretend doctor kit, have a sibling/friend or yourself “complain” about being sick to encourage your child to give you a “check-up”
- *Cash Register or Grocery Store Play* – Set up a pretend grocery store and ask your child if you can shop at his/her store.
- *Dress Up Clothing and Accessories* – You can use hats or other dress up clothes to start play. Give you child a choice of how they would like to dress, then ask them to help you choose clothes for a role too (fire hats, animal tails, etc.)



Strategies

- *Get into my child's world* – play alongside your child in similar ways and encourage him/her to assign a role to you. Bring out doctor play toys and wait for child to suggest roles
- *Act as a playful partner* – be silly as you play alongside your child (for example, put the play stethoscope on upside down to see if your child corrects you and assigns you to wear it the right way)
- *Wait with anticipation* – with words, gestures, and faces, let your child know you are expecting him/her to give you a role in play

Suggested Toys

- Cash register
- Toy foods
- Dress up clothes
- Toy doctor kit
- Kitchen 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