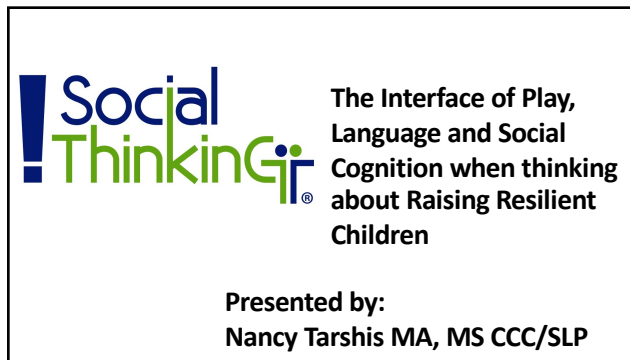




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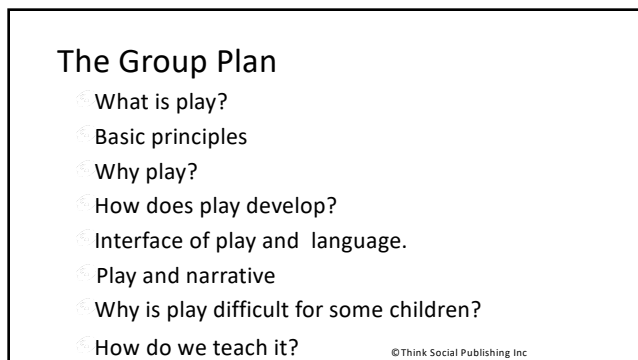
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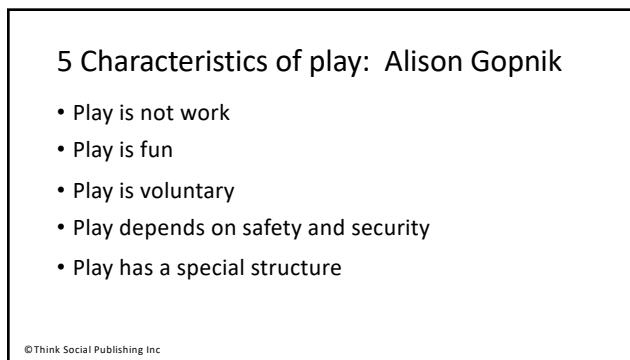
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6

A few more...

- Play is usually spontaneous
- It requires active engagement of the participants
- Early play is intrinsic and self-motivated
- Play is systematically related to language and learning

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And...

- Children are born with brains that are ready to play.
- Play is related to language and learning.
- Play tells us a lot about how children are developing.
- Play is non-literal without constraints of the here and now

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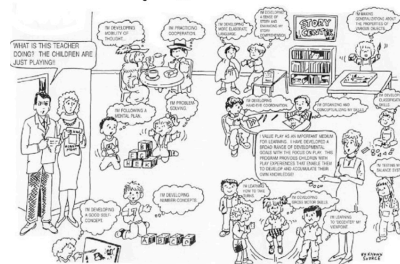
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Why are we talking about play?

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Playing to learn?



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10

Play for young children is not a recreational activity...It is not leisure time activity nor escape activity...Play is thinking time for young children. It is language time. Problem solving time. It is memory time, planning time, investigating time. It is organization of ideas time, when the young child uses their mind and body and social skills and all their power in response to the stimuli they have met.

-James Hymes
Educating the child under six

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“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”

-Fred Rogers

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“Free play is critical for becoming socially adept, coping with stress, and building cognitive skills such as problem solving”

-Stuart Brown

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“One of the things we’ve learned is that when children engage in pretend play, have imaginary friends, or explore alternative worlds, they are learning what people are like, how people think, and the kinds of things people do”

-Alison Gopnik

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Through play we develop empathy

- When a young child is “being” a daddy ...they are limited by all the rules of daddy-ness. What they do and say-how they act.
- In their minds, they are creating a personal narrative
- Without even realizing they are developing the habits of self-control

-Vygotsky on play

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More Vygotsky

- When they are a truck driver, they are limited by those rules too!
- Make-believe isn’t as stimulating and satisfying - it simply isn’t as much fun – if you don’t stick to your role.

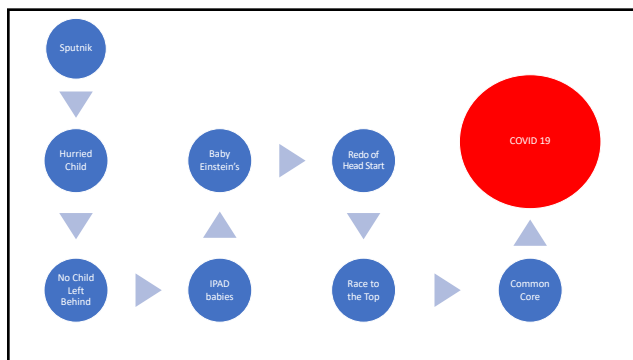
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Why do we need to talk about play now?

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What predicts academic success?

- Self regulation is a remarkably strong indicator of both short-term and long-term success
- In some studies, **self-regulation skills** predict academic achievement more reliably than I.Q. tests.
- Engagement in pretend play is significantly (and positively) correlated **with text comprehension and meta-linguistic awareness.**
- Children educated in play-based environments have the added advantage of being **strong problem solvers, more flexible thinkers, and better at collaboration.**

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And...

- Peer election and peer rejection are significantly impacted by the ability to read someone else's plan.
- Good players are more likely to be chosen as playmates and will spend more time experiencing and practicing social interactions that facilitate their ability to read other people's plans.

Slaughter, Dennis and Pritchard

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How Does Play Develop?

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Why spend time here?

- Gain a deeper understanding of how shared collaborative play develops
- Helps us to have a greater appreciation for the complexity of language and play
- To help us to set realistic expectations for programming, teaching and learning.

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Types of Play

- Exploratory
- Cause-effect
- Constructive
- Pretend / Fantasy
- Games with rules

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Exploratory Play

- Finding out about objects
- 0-8 months
 - Looking, touching, mouthing, banging, shaking, dropping
 - e.g. mobiles, rattles, mirrors
- 8-12 months
 - Flipping switches, pressing buttons, rolling car, throwing a ball, nesting cups, stacking rings
 - Develop object permanence
- 13-17 months
 - Purposeful exploration of toy (e.g. trial-and-error)
 - e.g. shape-sorter
- 2+ years
 - Arts & crafts (get dirty), water play, sand boxes, PlayDoh

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Exploratory Play

<p>What I am doing?</p>	<p>What I am learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Language <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects • Actions • Describing words • Properties <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Round things roll • If I let go, things fall down • Different things make different noises when they go bang • Spatial concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Objects fit inside other ones
-------------------------	--

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Cause-Effect

- If I act, it will happen
- 0-8 months
 - Shake toy → make sound, splash water → face wet, cry → get help
 - e.g. peek-a-boo, pop-up toys, pull toys
- 1-2 years
 - e.g. build a tower and knock it down, bang fork on various surfaces
- 2+ years
 - Making guesses
 - e.g. see bandaid on knee → ask 'what happened'

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Cause-Effect

<p>What I am doing?</p>	<p>What I am learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actions have consequences • When I do something, there is a response • Precursor to 'When I talk, people respond'
-------------------------	--

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Constructive Play

- Carrying /dump and fill
- Horizontal-laying things out in rows
- Stacking-building up and knocking down
- Bridging
- Making buildings
- Making buildings for play (realistic)
- Making buildings for play (creative/imaginative)

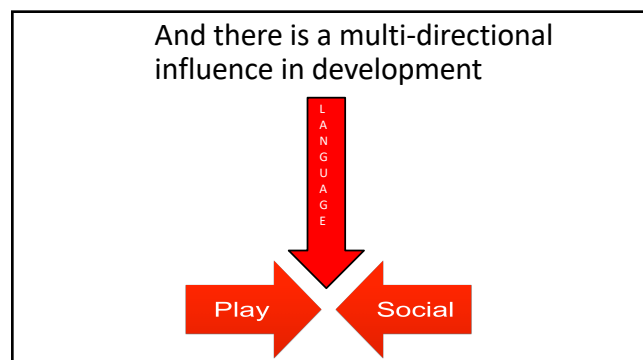
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Constructive Play

<p>What I am doing?</p>	<p>What I am learning?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Trial and error <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • That didn't work, try another way • Creative thinking • Flexible thinking • Problem Solving <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do I make this building stand up? • How do I make this bridge fit across? • Other concepts <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Balance/ Weight • Length / Size
-------------------------	--

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Pretend Play

- I do it on me
- I do it on a doll
- I am someone else
- I make a plan
- I make a plan and then I can pretend to be someone or something else
- I need things to look real
- I can pretend a stick is a horse

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Pretend Play

- What I am doing?
- What I am learning?
 - Social Skills
 - Inhibition
 - Self-control
 - Self-regulation
 - Resilience
 - Abstract thinking
 - Narrative language
 - Reading comprehension

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Social Skills that develop through play

- Thinking about and observing what others are doing
- Predicting what they might do next
- Communicating and meshing our ideas with those of others
- Setting a goal and seeing it through
- Reading another person's plan
- Self regulation
- Resilience

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Self Regulation: The ability to maintain personal homeostasis in the face of a challenge

Infant: learning to wait for a feeding, changing, or something else you want

Toddler: it is learning to accept limits imposed by others and by your own abilities

Preschooler: waiting your turn

Early elementary child: all of these things and controlling your emotional reactions and your desires to keep your friends wanting to play with you

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Self-regulation and Play

- Mental representation- ABSTRACTION
- Rule-bound, based on social understanding

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Resilience

- Bounce back
- Coping when things don't go your way
- Feeling confident you can solve the problem
- Knowing when to "let it go"
- Seeing a mistake as an opportunity

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Why do we care?

Resilient People are:

- healthier
- likely to live longer
- more successful
- happier in relationships

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Crucial aspects of Resilience

- Self Regulation
- Impulse control
- Problem-solving
- Realistic view
- Perspective-taking
- Positive Self Esteem

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Games with Rules

- Teaches children about
 - social contracts/rules
 - cooperation
 - solving problems
 - communication
- Usually involves some competition
- More organized, as compared to pretend/dramatic play

Examples:

- Follow the Leader
- Red Rover
- Simon Says
- Board games – Candy Land, Chutes and Ladders)
- Card games
- Sports – soccer, baseball, basketball

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A little more about play and language

- Early games
 - Planning
 - Predicting
 - Vocabulary
 - Sentence Structure
 - Narrative
 - Literacy
- Development of skills in:
 - Perspective taking/Theory of Mind
 - Sharing
 - Negotiation
 - Cooperation
 - Empathy
 - Role-taking
 - Conflict resolution

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Let's look at how play and language are parallel tracks of development

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Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage I 8-12 months	
*awareness that object exists when not seen	*joint attention
*means ends play	*show and gives
*does not mouth all toys	*communicative intent-request
*explores moveable parts	-command
Stage II 13-17 months	
*awareness that object exists separate from location	*Context dependent single words
*in-ness	*Numerous communicative functions
*asks for assistance	
*points to desired object	

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Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage III 17-19 months	
*Self as agent (autosymbolic) *short isolated schema *internal mental representation *familiar everyday events	*True verbal communication *functional and semantic relations *directing *self-maintaining *commenting
Stage IV 19-22 months	
*activities of familiar others *short isolate schema combinations *acts on doll	*word combinations *refers to objects and people not present

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Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage V 2 years	
*Elaborated single schema *Reverse roles	*Comments on activities of self *comments on doll *phrases and short sentences *appearance of morphological markers
Stage VI 2.5 years	
*represents less frequently occurring events (especially those that are memorable) *talks to doll *complimentary roles	*asks and answers questions

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Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage VII 3 years	
*compensatory play *evolving episode sequences *takes a role *associative play	*Reporting *Predicting *Emerging narrating *Past tense *Future aspect
Stage VIII 3 to 3.5 years	
*pretend activities with replica toys *substitutions and imagination *represents observed events in which they were not participant *assigning roles, doll as player	*descriptive vocabulary *projecting *indirect requests *register *reporting, reasoning, *metacommunication

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Westby Play Scale

Play	Language
Stage IX 3.5 to 4 years	
*uses language to set the scene *builds 3D structures with blocks *improvisations and variations on a themes *scripts are planned *hypothesizing *Multiple roles	*uses language to take role *modals emerge *conjunctions
Stage X 5 years	
*Can use language to set scene, actions and roles *highly imaginative integrated schema, for non-experienced events *several sequences and scripts simultaneously	*relational terms

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Play and Literacy

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- Why is play important for learning to read?
- Thinking skills: imagining, categorizing, solving a problem, making one thing be another, understanding stories, making friends
 - Learning that “this stands for that”: if a box can represent a ‘house’, then a (written) word can represent a concept
 - Fantasy play and acting out stories (“I’ll be the mom, and you be the baby”) helps children to understand stories
 - Literacy-enriched play centers (written signs) help children to develop literacy skills

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Play with others? What does that do?

- Thinking about what others are thinking
- Cooperation and planning
- Getting along with others
- Solving problems
- Working out themes and conflicts

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Why is play is difficult for some kids?

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What does it look like when play is difficult?

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- Delayed play vs Atypical play
- Social Interaction differences
- Communication differences: delays in language development has an adverse effect on their development of symbolic play skills.
- Restrictive and/or Repetitive Interests and Activities

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To be a successful player we need to...

- Generate Ideas
- Communicate them to others
- Be flexible with our ideas
- Stay in our role
- Solve problems

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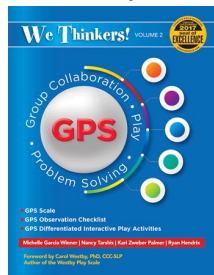
Sometimes that is very very very hard to do.

55

So what do we do?

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Social Thinking® Group Collaborative Play and Problem Solving Scale (GPS)



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CORE SUMMARY OF THE GPS PLAY SCALE

ME	ME & YOU	ME TO WE	WE	SCIP
GPS Play Level 1	GPS Play Level 2	GPS Play Level 3	GPS Play Level 4	GPS Play Level 5
Play is very singular and is object or action focused. Children at this level tend to play alone. They will attend to an adult if the adult is actively seeking their attention.	Play is still quite singular but children will attempt to engage the adult to play their way. With a lot of work on the part of the adult, the child will briefly attend to a peer during play.	Adult directs the play, providing the structure, ideas, and context. Peers take a role and enact the play within that structure.	With minimal adult facilitation (providing props, materials, and initial ideas), peers can begin to create structured play together. Adults may step in to resolve conflicts and keep play moving along.	Shared Collaborative Imaginative Play (SCIP). Peers provide ideas, decide on a theme and choose roles, negotiate, and problem solve on their own. Low adult facilitation, if any.

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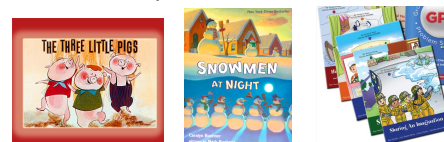
Level 2 Players

- Activities designed to get children to come together to do something.
- Goal= begin to more actively attend to each other, share space, and share materials with adult instruction.
- Play is structured so students work together, each in his or her own defined role with close adult coaching.

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Level 3: Act Out Stories

- Adult chooses a scene from a story
- Adult determines roles for students
- Adult narrates story.



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Level 4 Players: Act out stories with less structure

- Students choose which scene of the story to act out.
- Students compromise and negotiate to determine roles.
- Act out stories but add a “twist” in order to create opportunities to work on flexible thinking and problem solving.

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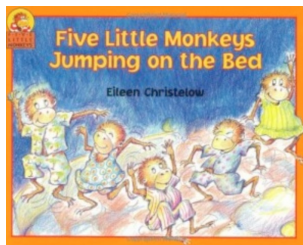
We make Play plans

Organizing kids for narrative play:

- Preload the information
- Help them structure themselves
- Practice practice practice

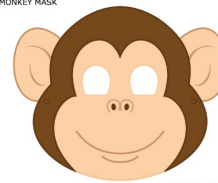
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Provide Context



63

MONKEY MASK



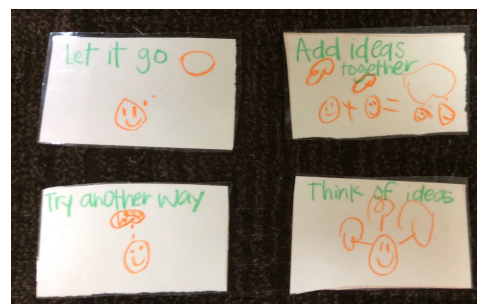
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We teach flexible thinking

- Flexible thinking is being able to adapt across places and people in the moment.
- We can change our plan, change what we are thinking or give up what we want based on the plan of the group.
- Stuck thinking is being unable to change what we are doing or thinking based on what is happening around us.

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Social Thinking GPS®

Level 2-set up	Level 2	Level 3	Level 4
	<p>Doctor says</p>  <p>doctor</p> <p>of the doctor. The doctor said,</p>		<p>Plan it out:</p> <p>What are the roles?</p> <p>What are your props?</p> <p>Do you need anything else?</p>

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Three Parts of Play

- Set-Up
- Play
- Clean-Up



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Clean-Up

- Important executive function skill to be able to participate in the planning, execution and follow up of any activity.
- Great time to reinforce the concept of working together, everybody plays and then everybody cleans up as a group.
- Completing all three parts of play together means we are sticking to the plan.

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Other Programs

- Brady the Storybraid
 - <http://mindwingsconcepts.com>
- Tools of the Mind: Using socio-dramatic play to foster literacy.
 - <http://www.ibe.unesco.org/publications/inno07.pdf>
- Read, Play and Learn
 - <http://www.brookespublishing.com/onlocation/topics/RPL.htm>

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We can suspend reality!

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Take Home Messages: Play with your children because...

- It is the most important platform for learning in young children
- It is connected to narrative and how children learn to tell "their" stories.
- It is how and where they learn to understand other people.
- It is a strong contributor to self-regulation and resilience
- It's fun!

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