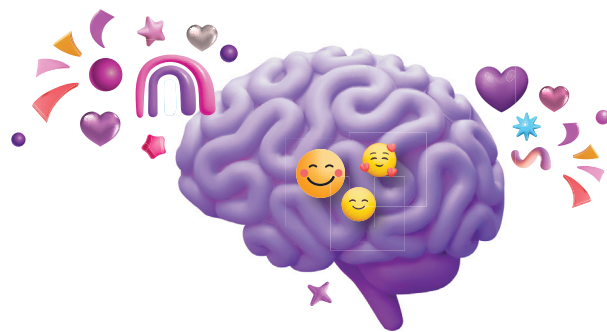


LET'S PLAY!



social play

Social play lays the foundation for positive relationships. When children have opportunities to play with adults and children, they build language skills and can practice emotional control, problem solving, and conflict resolution.



Children often learn best when they play together! Plan for social interaction during group activities and allow children free time to interact with other children. Teach social skills like sharing, taking turns, and resolving conflict, and provide visual signs to support these skills.



Social play focuses on interactions and might include simple back-and-forth exchanges, games, songs and fingerplays, or working with objects. All types of play can be social, and when interacting with others, learning opportunities expand.



infants



Your role

Engage in “serve and return” by copying or responding to babies’ movements, expressions, or sounds. Play simple games like peek-a-boo or make silly faces to encourage them to respond to you. Allow supervised interactions with other children.

When, where, what

Make it social! Interact with babies during daily routines. Social play is at its best when babies are alert and calm. This could be during changing time, feeding time, or floor time.



toddlers



Your role

Join in children’s play, whatever it is! Play with children, engage in similar activities, and talk with them. Build off of their interests and expand on their words and actions. Point out what other children are doing and encourage imitation.

When, where, what

Sing songs, do fingerplays, look at books, push a truck or ball back and forth, or play make-believe with dolls or stuffed animals. Provide multiple items to encourage parallel play with other children.



preschoolers

Your role

Provide time and space for children to interact with other children for extended periods of time. Encourage small groups of children to work and play together. As much as possible, allow them to work through problems. Interact with children as well, allowing them to take the lead.

When, where, what

Provide materials that are developmentally appropriate inside and outside, and promote interactions. Make sure there are enough materials for children to play and explore together. Arrange materials and centers to promote social play.



Visit ctoec.org/play to see how these ideas connect to the CT ELDS, Sparkler, and other OEC Resources.

