

# A Consideration on the General Stages of Different Kinds of Play and Adult Guidance for Preschool Children

학령전 어린이의 놀이와 지도에 관한 일고

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어린이의 생활은 놀이의 생활이라고 말할 정도로 대부분의 시간을 놀이를 하고 있다고 할 수 있다. 놀이란 어린이의 생활에 정상적으로 따르는 것이며 어린이는 놀이를 통하여 모든면의 성장발달이 이루어지고 있다. 즉 놀이는 어린이의 성장발달에 매우 중요한 것이다.

어린이를 접하고 다루게 되는 어른들은 어린이의 놀이에 관한 충분한 지식을 가지고 잘 지도하여 어린이의 건전한 발달에 공헌하여야 한다.

본 논문은 학령전 어린이의 놀이를 중심으로 하여 놀이의 중요성과 성장발달에 미치는 영향을 보았고 어린이들이 주로 하고 있는 놀이의 일반적인 발달단계와 여러놀이를 위한 어른들의 지도를 다루었다.

어린이를 기르고 있는 부모들 어린이를 지도하는 교사들 또 앞으로 부모가 될 사람들에게 다소나마 도움이 되코자 한다.

## Introduction

Play is very important in the growth process of every child. It contributes to his physical growth, skill and motor development and to his mental, intellectual, and emotional development. In Addition play activity promotes social interaction, and healthy personality development.

A young child plays much of the time except during the period of sleeping and eating. He grows through play activities and develops in various ways. play is valuable to a child's growth. Through play he learns to live in our world of meanings and values, of progressive striving for deferred goals, at the same time exploring and experimenting and learning in his own individualized way. The child practices and rehearses endlessly the complicated and subtle patterns of human living and communication which he must master if he is to become a participating adult in our social life.

In any situation, any nation, any place, whatever we may do, wherever we may go, we will come into contact with children and need to know about the play of children because if the child is to be a vital, growing, creative individual, he needs play. Play is his life. If we have a knowledge of play and of its applications, we can contribute to the child's play life and to his healthy development.

The main body of this paper consists of three chapters. I am going to concentrate mainly on the play of preschool years. In chapter one the value of play or its importance for different kinds of development is stated. Chapter two includes general stage of different kinds of play. The third chapter contains suggestions for the general guidance of play activities for parents and for teachers who work with children. Adults should help children to find and select the opportunities and activities that will yield maximum satisfaction and profit in their play.

### I. Value of Play or Importance for Different Kinds of Development

Preschool years are crucial, intellectual, emotional, and social growth. Play is very valuable for these kinds of development. Play can strengthen and facilitate the use of the child's large and small muscles, build coordination, and develop sound, strong bodies. Children grow intellectually through play. They can get concepts, operational knowledge, and auditory, tactile and visual sensory stimulation. Children are curious and they explore, observe, and experiment in the environment, thus discovering many things about the world and their own abilities. They delight in problem-solv-

ing through reality testing. Also, fantasy and imagination are developed. Children can enjoy self expression and feel accomplishment through play. In play, children learn sharing, taking turns, accepting regulation, and property rights. Children have the opportunity to learn control of their emotions through safe outlets, and to learn sympathy for others. Play is very important for promoting sound growth in a period when growth is rapid and important. Personality is formed by the integration of physical, intellectual, emotional, and social development. Play contributes to all aspects of growth significantly.

### **A. Physical development**

Through play, certain aspects of physical growth are attained, such as whole body coordination and balance, eye-hand coordination, and kinesthetic development. Skills through large and small motor activities are strengthened by play. The young children's need for activity is increasing. Play contributes to children's physical growth and health.

#### **1. Large motor development**

Read<sup>21)</sup> describes the preschool child as a child in the large muscle stage of development. The promotion of the growth of strength and skill is probably the most obvious of the various functions of play in the development of children. Children are perfecting their large muscle growth and coordinations through play.

Certain types of outdoor and indoor play have particular value for large motor development. The following are some examples of play for this purpose. Building with large blocks is important for the development of muscle and coordination, through the way the children handle and control the blocks. Blocks and various construction sets which the child can build up, tear down, and rebuild, for example, and toys which call for muscular activity such slides, swings, see saws, locomotion toys, and the like afford good motor development. A jungle gym is another piece of equipment offering many climbing possibilities on play grounds. Many other pieces of equipment such as packing boxes, boards and barrels offering climbing possibilities promote large muscle development. Running and rolling with a rubber ball are other sources of satisfaction and activity for large motor development. Riding the tricycle, and jumping also achieve large motor growth. Through engaging in these motor activities in play, the child builds coordination and skill in large motor activities, strengthens muscle and promotes a healthy body.

#### **2. Small motor development**

Children improve their finer motor skills through play. The hands are very valuable in the performance of many motor activities. Arm and hand movements need to be coordinated with such sensory activities as vision, touch, and the kinesthetic

sense. They are developed by repeated action in play activities.

Manipulation of certain play materials aids in developing small motor skills. For example, children string beads, put the pegs on the peg boards, build towers with unit blocks, handle the brushes for painting, manipulate play dough, play instruments, use puzzles, hammernail sets etc. Such motor skills as grasping, throwing, painting, and using tools and implements require both gross movements and finer muscle coordinations, thus leading the children to handle materials more skillfully. The children then are able to use their skills to enlarge their play activities.

After a long period of correct practice through play, the child acquires speed, precision or accuracy, steadiness or control, and strength of response: he possesses a high degree of skill. Play is valuable for small motor development. Physical control and its skill make a child feel better about himself.

## B. Intellectual development

Intelligence is considered as a multi-determined functional capacity made up of those perceptual and cognitive functions through which the individual learns about the things, people, and situations around him. The building of concepts and ideas, of reasoning and problem solving, of imagination and creative action, is an important step in the improvement of the quality and usefulness of intelligence. The development of language is one of the most important human means of improving and of expressing intelligence, since the child learns to interpret and to react to the world about him far more rapidly when he has the help of verbal communication with people more experienced than he is.

Intellectual development is affected by the richness of the learning opportunities in play situations. An enriched environment can positively affect achievement, whereas a deprived environment can interfere with such development.

### 1. The development of perception and conceptualization

Read<sup>21)</sup> explains that concepts result from sensory perceptions to which labels have been attached. They come from experiences of seeing, touching, smelling, tasting, hearing and using one's body. They come from experiences of making things happen, building tower and knocking it down or molding clay and shaping it. These perceptions in play are classified by labels or names. They are stored and then used by recall and association and later by identifying properties or parts, likenesses or difference particular aspects, and by coming to conclusions and testing them through experience in play situations.

Perceptions of sensory, form, color, size, position and distance, quantity and number are developed by practice in the play situation. Children who lack the chance to practice and the stimulus to learn may not develop well intellectually.

a. Sensory perception

Sensory perception comes from experiences. The child can only know hot, cool and cold temperatures by sensory experience through the four seasons, and the difference of temperature of inside and outside the room. Through using the paste for their collage construction, they know the paste is sticky. They know the degree of stickiness by the experience of touching and manipulating different kinds of things. They can compare the paste and clay or play dough which they stained their fingers with. Through the manipulation of clay and play dough, they know which one is more stiff. Such experiences in play are very important for the development of sensory concept.

b. Perception of form

Form discrimination can be measured at different ages in terms of the differences in dimension that can be made successfully. Discrimination increases with age, with intelligence and with practice through play. For example, in play, children have the chance to face blocks of different geometric forms: circle, triangle, square, cone, etc. Blocks cultivate a sense of form. Sometimes children find some small stones on the play ground. Some are smooth, others rough, and some are flat and some thick. The child perceives the differences and similarities. In clay molding, the child makes forms and attaches them together, and thus understands forms. Play tiles and form boards also contribute to form conception. Landreth<sup>15)</sup> says that form can be tactually as well as visually discriminated by young children. With practice in play, the children can make finer form discriminations. The ability to verbalize differences is a factor in discriminating between forms.

c. Perception of color

The child learns color in his play situations. The objects in a young child's environment have color as well as form. He has different colors to paint with and to mix. He draws with various colors of crayons. He cuts colored paper and pastes the pieces. The teacher and/or parent prepares play-dough with different colors for the child. The child may also have the chance to thread all sorts of colors of wooden big beads. He has opportunities to play with design blocks, puzzles, and various kinds of "take-a-part" toys with many different colors. Through such different opportunities the child can see the colors and their likeness and difference. Color matching and color naming increase with age and practice in play.

d. Perception of size

Perception of size is becoming more accurate early in the preschool years but is still in the process of being perfected so that equipment which has size as a variable is of interest to the child.

In block-building, the different size of blocks such as hollow blocks or unit blocks.

cultivate the children's perceptions of size. Carrying the blocks, the child learns which ones are big, which ones are middle and which ones are small. The child experiences women's big shoes and hats in doll play. Thus, children's perceptions of size can be improved by practice in play.

e. Perception of number

The child first responds on a one-and-many or this-and-that rather than a numerical basis.

At a prenumerical level a child gains considerable experience in aggregation by assembling cubes, collecting gravel, counting blocks, accumulating beads and in isolating, dispersing, and separating them. From these simple experiences through play, a child progresses to numerical characterization of objects and events.

The notion of numbers is developed out of experiences of more and less, of breaking one thing into parts, of building a whole out of pieces, etc.

f. Perception of distance, position and spatial relationships

Young children's perception of distance, position, and space relationships is affected both by developmental factors and experiences in play.

Judgment of distance is related to accurate vision, and play helps the development of perception of distance. For example, through the child casting the ball in the play ground, he has the conception of near, nearer, far, or farther. He jumps and he understands more about distance and height.

The children can learn perception of space when they have blocks placed in a line, and then they put them back on the shelves after the play. When children dig in the ground, they discover where the worms live. When they give food to the birds, they find out where the birds live. In doll play, children get the perception of space when they set the table for the doll.

Children's perception of position of an object in relation to other objects is dependent on their ability to symbolize. This ability is improved in matching objects such as puzzles and games. For example, puzzles are fitted parts to a whole. Children come to know that each piece of the puzzle has its own position and place. children can learn the up and down position on a see-saw. The game called fox and geese gives the children the experience of changing positions.

g. Perception of time

Development of a sense of time in early childhood is marked by a progression from understanding time in relation to activities to understanding divisions of time, such as morning or afternoon, in terms of customary activities. For example, "It is time to eat lunch." "It is juice time." "It is time to play outside." "It is the noon siren." Etc. And toy clocks can be used for learning time concepts. In a game situation, taking turns helps the child to develop time concepts. The child first grasps

concepts of the present, the immediate past, and the immediate future.

For, all of these perceptions and conceptualizations, it is very important that different kinds of play activities and play equipment are available for the children.

## **2. Reasoning and problem solving**

Play is the child's way of thinking over experiences. Reasoning and problem solving are achieved through experiences. Through play, he learns how to handle things so that they will do what he wants them to do. Free play situation offers many opportunities to reason, to solve problems and to make choices.

Opportunities to make choices between alternative and undertakings give a young child experience in balancing their respective merits, an essential element in problem solving. Children are also helped in establishing meaningful links between associated circumstances by being encouraged to respond to cues rather than to depend on detailed directions.

A succession of problems are met and solved in work and in play. A child seeks new experiences and new answers to problems. The richer the environment, the more curious the child can become; the more curious he is, the more he can discover in his environment.

## **3. Language**

Language is an important avenue of self-expression, not just an avenue of communication. The ability to communicate with others through the utilization of the spoken word is encouraged by playing with others. While the children communicate each other in the free play situation, their speech and vocabulary are developed and increased.

Much practice in language takes place when play children play with other children. In dramatic play, the children have opportunities to talk to each other and to use the phone for conversation between children or adults. At the clay table, the children listen to others talking and then they talk to each other. Through nature experiences and through card games, when the children have something interesting to talk about, they have opportunities to develop vocabulary and language ability. Music offers another avenue of expression closely related to that of language. The music of the voice is an important medium for communicating feeling. Singing gives a child practice, and value as a means of self-expression.

In referring to the significance of experiences in communication, Breckenridge<sup>4)</sup> emphasized that language is important for adapting to and controlling one's environment; it is a medium of learning; there is emotional value in being able to express oneself clearly and effectively and, conversely, there is frustration if one is deficient in this ability; language habits and personal adjustment seem interrelated.

The richness and variety of his vocabulary, the fertility of his ideas and the

accuracy of his expression all reflect the child's opportunities for learning. Play that is rich in varieties of experience provides for further differentiation in language development.

#### 4. Imagination

Child's play is an important part of make-believe and imaginative development. The imaginative play of the child is full of active fantasy in which he tries himself out and learns to use his environment, and he is able vastly to extend the reaches of his world. In his imagination he performs feats beyond the limits of his actual strength. Through pretending, and through reliving his experiences in play, the child goes over what he sees and does in reality, thus gaining in understanding and becoming familiar with the world around him. This is something we want to encourage.

Most people recognize that the child is very imaginative and that there is much in their pretending. Children pick up imaginary objects by going through the motions of taking the food and the toys out of their picture books. And they begin pretending that they are trains, boats, cars, or animals. Sometimes a child also likes to play that he is a baby again, pretending he can't walk, pretending to drink out of a bottle. And the child shows his imagination in such situations as using a row of blocks for a train, pretending that he is eating sand pies, playing with dolls, as if they were real babies, and so on.

Much of a child's play is an imitation of what he sees his parents and older brothers and sisters doing. The small child's first attempts to be mother taking care of the baby or preparing food or cleaning the house are often clumsy and awkward. But through repetition in play, he develops skills.

In dramatic play, the child plays out real life roles in a real way. Dramatic play is one way to handle the problem of being "little". This type of play makes children feel less helpless, more powerful.

A child's imagination plays an important role in all aspects of his development. In the intellectual sphere, he is able through his imagination to experiment and explore, to work with ideas without being bound by the rules of logic. In the emotional sphere, he can give play to desires, fears, hopes, and aggressive impulses. He frequently uses his imagination in his social development, for much of his play with other youngsters takes place in make-believe settings. And there is interaction also between a child's imaginative activity and his motor development. Make-believe also often supplies the plot or purpose when the children practices such motor activities as climbing, swing, or riding a bicycle.

Hartley and Goldenson say that the child needs materials to practice his imagination, to create fantasies, and to translate them into tangible playthings. Thus he



learns to discipline his imagination and to curb his private fantasies; and so gradually he can enter into the adult world created by the imagination.

### 5. Creativity

Play is one very good way to develop creativity. Creative development will be related to cognitive growth and both these functions will be integrated in play, which is the business of the preschool child. Experience through play can contribute to the creative process. In the creative act an individual reorders, reconstructs, and reorganizes existing and known elements into patterns new and satisfying to himself. Imagination is essential to any creative act.

Here are some examples of how play contributes to creativity. Grasping a piece of reality, like mother's high heels and hand bag, Daddy's briefcase or a doctor's kit, he creates the experience he wants, trying on the role of mother or father or doctor contemplating what these adults do, imagining how it would be if he himself were doing it. In musical activities the values that we seek are those which come with creativity. Music and dance have their greatest value for young children as avenues of self-expression. Setting patterns for musical expression will serve to block the use of music as a means of self-expression. If a pattern for a rhythmic activity is set by direction, the creative possibilities of the experience for the child are decreased. Instead, children should have expression of their own feeling in rhythmic responses. Children can practice creativity through songs, body movement, playing instruments, and in listening. Creative rhythms involve those physical activities of children which freely express their feelings. Blocks are good as creative material. Blocks as a fantasy symbol may represent something in play. Blocks sometimes can be a piece of pie or a chimney. They may be combined with other toys or materials in fantasy play. A child builds a church or zoo with blocks. Finger painting also encourages creative expression for it offers novel or different effects and there is a lack of arbitrary standards to limit its use. Clay is approached as a raw material to be made into something else. The child may start with manipulation, and then create an object. Outdoor play equipment, such as ladders, boards, barrels, slide and tools for digging also serve as good materials for creativity.

For the preschool child it is the process of using these materials that is important rather than the end product. Therefore, adults should avoid making models for the children to copy or imposing their ideas on them as to how or what they should make. In free play situation, the child should make his own choice, have his own idea, and his own way to respond. The creative process can grow only out of experience. The opportunity for the child to create constantly with his present knowledge is the best preparation for future creative action.

### C. Emotional development

Play is valuable for the development of children's emotions. They learn to understand and control their emotions through contact with people in daily life, and with playmates and toys in play situations.

#### 1. Emotional control

The infant does not, at birth, express any specific emotions. However, his emotional behavior develops with increasing age, and emotional development is determined in part by his experiences with other people in his environment of play. In play activity the child can learn to behave and to feel in ways which are acceptable to himself and to society. The child experiences pleasant or unpleasant emotional feelings. It is essential to his general well-being that he acquires intelligent understanding of the role of emotions in his life and uses them for his own benefit as well as for the welfare of others. Children need play to achieve such control and understanding. Play activities furnish excellent situations for the emotional training of children.

Read<sup>21)</sup> explains that child plays to master impulses as well as ideas. He often expresses aggressive and hostile feeling in play and thus can manage them without doing harm to others or himself. For example, when there is a new baby at home, the child's feelings often spill out in his behavior at nursery school. He will act them out in the doll corner, perhaps, spanking the dolls, smothering them with blankets, or throwing one on the floor and stamping on it. In this way he relieves himself by draining off some of the hostility he may be feeling, making it easier to face the real situation. A direct draining off of feeling in this way may be about the only means a child has of expressing the conflict he is feeling. He plays to master anxiety. In dramatic play the child has a chance to drain off hostile feelings and release his anxieties. A child might play out being sick, going to the doctor, and having shots. Through play he can recover from his fears and the feeling of helplessness which often overwhelms him. Taking adult roles in play also gives the child the chance to feel in control of situations. He can be the one to put the baby to bed, to do the scolding and spanking, to make the decisions. Through play he makes amends for actions or thoughts for which he suffers feelings of guilt. He tries to make things right again. It is necessary to let the child know it is all right to be sad, angry or frightened, just as it is necessary to be happy and joyful.

#### 2. Tensional outlet

In everyday life, the normal child needs some release from the tension that the restrictions imposed on him by his environment give rise to. Play serves this purpose.

There is need of opportunities for draining off negative feelings in play. Vigorous physical activity like pounding, or throwing will serve as an outlet for feeling<sup>21)</sup>. Throwing against the wall helps relieve aggressive feeling. Using a punching bag, pounding at the work bench, hitting a soft material like clay, beating on a rubber toy, even running and digging, serve other possibilities for release of tensional feelings that do no damage to anyone. Water play, sand, mud, and finger painting are also a valuable avenue of release for a tense child. Water play frees an inhibited child. The withdrawn child can enjoy its mildness. It is a good way to express aggression. Clay also offers a good outlet for aggressive impulses. It is also an outlet for forbidden interests. In the use of blocks children have emotional release because they are completely non-threatening. The timid child can work alone or in cooperation with others.

Language is another valuable outlet for feelings. Read<sup>21)</sup> says that the crying child relieves himself of a lot of feeling. So does the child who hurls angry words at an offender. The child uses verbal expression to express the delight he feels as well as anger and resentment.

Music in the form of beating drums, or ringing a bell, can offer a means of release for feelings. The toys which give to children ample outlets for expression of their interests and energies may also serve as wholesome means of release for pent up feeling and emotional moods. To accomplish this children must have free experiences in which self expression is encouraged, and in which the child uses the medium in his own way.

Jersild<sup>11)</sup> says that many of the play activities of children provide a socially accepted outlet for impulses that would be forbidden if they appeared in raw form. In a play setting a child will reveal desires, fears, grievances, and other disturbing conditions. In the process of play a child may be able not only to formulate and reveal but also to work through and to receive help in working through problems that are supremely important in his private life.

#### **D. Social Development**

The child seeks in his play and creative activities to discover himself, to learn who and what he is, what he can do, and how he can relate himself to things and situations, to persons and groups. Much of the basic orientation to social life is achieved in the preschool years through play activity. From his play with others, he learns to share, to give and take, to cooperate and to merge his personality into that of the group. He learns to behave in a social manner through his contacts with other children in his play.

Through play activities, children learn about the roles of others and of themsel-

ves. Children find their place in the group step by step. In group activity, the child sometimes plays as a leader, follower or helper. For example, block-building is an aid to social integration and social growth. One child builds the blocks with leadership, other children are followers, and the others carry the blocks for them as helpers. They cooperate with each other. Card games are another example of this. Here children can learn taking turns. They learn to wait for their turns in order. The child learns that he is an individual and can feel accepted at each stage in his growth. Most preschool children have relationships with other children that are temporary or shifting. Two children may play together for a morning or for a few days, drawn by a mutual interest in digging a hole, or playing firemen, or setting up housekeeping somewhere.

Following are some examples of social activities in play. Children at all stages of development turn to the sand box and find it offers them some type of activity. It brings quiet children together in parallel play-play which requires few adjustments and enables them to find success with others before they are ready to meet the social demands of more complex situations. (The sand box can become a setting for conflicts in social relations too.) There is a value for socialization at play activity. A child can be a member of a group without much; if any, threat of social interaction. In dramatic play, a child sometimes takes adult roles, plays out real life roles in a realistic way, imitates adults and reflects relationships and experiences. Play equipment can be a media for social development, e.g. one ridding in a wagon while the other pulls, or swinging one another, or playing together on the see-saw, or building blocks together. Through such play, a child's social growth is developed.

If there is too much play equipment, children will not learn to cooperate or take turns. On the other hand, if there is not enough equipment, it is hard for children to wait for their turns, and there will be more quarreling and hoarding. The proper amount of equipment is needed for the children to have a valuable social learning experience in taking turns and sharing.

Read<sup>21)</sup> says that one of the most significant values for the child in being a member of a group of equals lies in the fact that he has a chance to find out more about what kind of person he really is through this experience. He has an opportunity to build a more realistic concept of himself as a person apart from his membership in a family. Play expresses the inner life of a child, his struggle with problems and conflict, his need for free exploration and for developing relationships with peers and adults.

Play is one of the most important forces in moral training of the child. He learns what the group consider right and wrong, in the home or in the peer group. The child knows that he must be fair, honest, truthful, a good sport, a good loser, and

self controlled if he is to be an acceptable member of the play group. He learns to make adjustments to others through play. Play is very meaningful and valuable for the social development of a child.

### E. Personality development

In summary, one could say that play influences the total personality. All parts of development are related to total personality organization. Because of the highly complex nature of the development process, physical, emotional, intellectual, and social components of development are not separate and independent. They are functionally related to one another.

In regard to physical development, as pointed out, play promotes such aspects as newly developing skills, physical fitness, coordination, balance, and health, which in turn build self-confidence, a sense of enjoyment and satisfaction over mastery of the child's body and his environment.

The emotional aspect of personality is furthered in play by developing feelings of security, confidence in ability to meet new experiences and freedom from frustration. But a certain amount of frustration will occur in the process of growing up. Play provides an outlet for feelings such as frustration, resentment, aggression, hostility, anxiety, and forbidden interests, and the child is freed from the emotional load.

Intelligence affects the pattern of personality. Such intellectual attitudes as curiosity, creativity, imagination, variety of interests, attention, alertness and perseverance are promoted by play and become parts of personality.

Play provides as means for acquiring important social aspects of personality such as self-concept, empathy, affectional and emotional closeness, understanding of the feelings and the roles of others and of themselves, cooperation, taking turns and sharing, giving and taking and relationships with peers and adults.

Thus, the variety and quality of the child's experiences in play affect personality development. If he has had happy experience in play, balance in different kinds of development, and has taken from his environment the things which fulfill his own inner needs in play, he will have a healthy personality.

## II. General stages of Different Kinds of Play

The play activities of the preschool age children are extremely varied. At this time, the child's play is manipulative, sensory-motor, creative, dramatic, repetitive, and inventive. The general stages of several different kinds of play will be illustrated.

### A. Block building

Breckinridge and Vincent<sup>4)</sup> in their "Child Development" say block building follows fairly definite patterns of development.

The first use of blocks among small children is not building proper. Blocks are carried from place to place or they may be manipulated, stacked or massed in irregular, conglomerate piles before the period of construction begins<sup>14)</sup>. Between one and two, a child merely carries blocks about and places them on top of each other<sup>14)</sup>. Breckenridge and Vincent<sup>4)</sup>, Johnson<sup>14)</sup>, and Hartley, Frank, and Goldenson<sup>8)</sup> explain that between two and three years of age real construction begins. The child places the blocks in regular rows or piles, building very simple structures like enclosures and towers. From three to four, he makes complex combinations such as fences, outlines for a house, or crude bridges. Following this, structures become more complex, and by four or five years children use blocks as part of dramatic play. The blocks become trains, chairs, or other items in pretend play. According to the increase of age, children become used to building structures, and they become skillful.

### B. Painting

For every child, art can serve as an outlet for feeling if the process is emphasized more than the product. They use art media as a means of self-expression. If a child can manipulate a brush and paint, he is ready for the experience. Most children are ready and eager for this at three. Each child should have his first art experience when he is ready for it. Naturally, this will not be the same for all children because no two children are alike, nor do they grow at the same rate.

Three year olds take pleasure in doing the same kinds of things over and over. Perhaps they do this in order to convince themselves that they know how or they may just be repeating an enjoyable experience. They often keep changing the colors on their paper by painting one over another until the result is a mass of brown paint. The value for the child has been his growing power to change colors. This is an important part of learning. Most three-year-olds interest will last only from about five to twenty minutes.

For the most part, four year olds concentrate longer than three year olds. Ten or fifteen minutes to half an hour is an average. They are less inclined to repeat and are not so apt to paint their hands as are the three year olds. They make more definite forms, enclosed circular shapes. For example, and they paint masses of color next to each other instead of over one another. A child may elaborate a shape by painting color within it or around it or by surrounding it with other shapes or dots

of color. A shape may suggest something representational to him; for instance, a circle as a head, which he may develop by putting features in it. Children at this age tend to use the whole paper, relating linear forms to it and often covering it completely with color. Sometimes they start with a specific idea of what they want to paint while at other times they improvise as they go along.

As children grow, their span of concentration increases. Therefore, five year olds usually concentrate from about fifteen minutes to half an hour. They are inclined to preplan their paintings and to make positive shapes, even when making what they call "designs". They mix colors with greater sureness and discrimination than they did in the earlier years. Some, however, still tend to manipulate paint and change their work by painting one color over another repeatedly.

### C. Clay

"The complete book of children's play"<sup>9</sup> explains that three year old children pat and roll clay, build it up into some form, squash it, then pat and roll it again; they make birthday cakes, admire them, and pull them apart and start over. A child of three begins to construct by sticking things into clay or any soft material. Most three year olds' interest will last only from about five to twenty minutes.

Most children at four make definite things, building and adding rather than pulling apart and redoing. Children of five years old are apt to combine forms and to build better constructed objects than those made by either three or four year olds. As they become familiar with the material, they make more complex clay pieces and are apt to select what ever they apply to the clay, such as swab sticks, buttons, straws, to embellish it as a planned part of the construction rather than for the mere satisfaction of sticking things in and taking them out again. Usually they do not repeat for the sake of manipulating the material as a three year old will, but tend to create some specific thing. What a child finally produces may develop from an idea he had at the outset.

### D. Cutting and Pasting

Landreth<sup>15</sup> explains that most three year olds are able to cut paper and they get a great deal of satisfaction from it. They cut paper into pieces for the sheer enjoyment of cutting or because they feel a sense of power in changing the sheet of paper from its original form. Cutting is an activity complete in itself and usually quite separate from pasting.

Three year olds will cut many small pieces and then push them all aside and choose new materials when they decide to paste. Pasting, too, tends to be a separate activity enjoyed for itself. Children often cover what they have made by pasting

one piece of paper after another over it. They derive pleasure from manipulating the smooth slippery paste. Most three year olds interest will last only from about five to twenty minutes.

Four year olds are more selective, choosing materials for a collage and placing them with greater deliberation before pasting. They begin to cut and invent instead of only cutting and changing. A four year old enjoys making simple constructions and mobiles with wire or pipe cleaners. He needs help with tying or connecting but he can choose and combine materials that can be put together easily. A five year old chooses materials for collage thoughtfully and cuts them into interesting shapes. He can use scissors with more certainty and skill. He enjoys making constructions and mobiles and can devise ways of fastening materials together with wire, pipe cleaners, paper clips, or yarn, and begin to balance one shape with another. Like the four year old, he learns to look at materials in new ways, particularly as they affect each other. This gives materials a new dimension because the child sees them freshly, as elements that can be converted into original designs through his imagination. He can make constructions that stand by themselves or he can make mobiles, in which the enchantment of motion is an added element.

### E. Sand and water play

Water, sand and mud are the raw materials which children have enjoyed through the ages but they are used by different groups in very different ways because of the creative possibilities they offer.

According to Hartley, Frank, and Goldenson<sup>9)</sup>, two and one half year olds are completely absorbed in the manipulation of water and sand, unconcerned about their surroundings.

Three year olds imitate each other's play, hold conversations, and make plans about how to use the pots, etc. Three year old children play with sand, water, ladle, and vessels in a variety of ways. They put sand into the dish, mix it with water, and ladle the mixture from one vessel to the other. They make sandpies and shape various forms. They pour water from one pot to the other. They splash the water and hit the pots and boats with their flat hands and laugh as it splashes.

Four and five year olds have opportunities to wash doll clothes, to sail boats in the bathroom sinks, to play in the shower and large tub filled with water. They wash their hands and squeeze the suds through their fingers and fists. They fill pots and pans and empty them, sand pour from one to the other, and wash them.

### F. Dramatic play

Hartley, Frank, and Goldenson<sup>9)</sup> summarize Markey's descriptions of two year



olds make-believe uses of materials as follows: simple pantomime, calling a train, and some more elaborate pantomime with imaginative language, e.g. going to bed, setting the table, shining shoes, etc., in which the attributes of the materials used are expanded and elaborated; he also engages in pantomime or language indicating that inanimate objects are personified, as in talking to dolls, stroking and petting toys, etc. The two year old usually plays imaginatively by himself. He may be a bear, or a police-man, or a bus driver, but relatively seldom do others actively cooperate with him by assuming other imagined roles.

At the three year old level, in addition to make-believe uses of materials and make-believe situations, two different patterns are included in the typical repertoire of the child, namely: dramatic play, "we are bears," "I am the cop and you are the robbers," "mother and daddy," etc., in which the child is involved in acting out a specific role; and secondly, construction activities, creation of imaginative products with raw materials (sand, clay, blocks, paper, and paints), "I am making a barn," "this is a fire house." Identification of the product usually preceded or accompanied the activity.

As the children grow older, dramatic play increases in proportion and complexity and the number involved in a group will be larger. Through imagination, the child tries on the roles of the important people in his world, especially the part of the parent of the same sex. And more well-defined roles will be played by each child. One may be the doctor, another the nurse, and several others; there may be a mother and a father with several children and a grandmother and sometimes, aunts, and uncles.

### III. Adult Guidance of Play Activities

#### A. General guidance

Parents, teachers, and others who deal with young children have an important role to play in the preschool age child. Hartley and Goldenson<sup>9)</sup> says that children must be understood and guided in terms of individual growth patterns and developmental levels that will contribute to their optimum physical, intellectual, social, and emotional development, and that will result in more effective, more satisfying, and more responsible living.

Read<sup>21)</sup> suggests that several preliminary steps in good guidance are important: (1) a knowledge of how children grow; (2) careful consideration of the purposes of guidance; (3) the development of a program of activities for children that will promote these purposes; and (4) decisions as to what limits need to be established in

children's activities.

If adults were constantly giving a child direction in his play, it would prevent the child's creativity. Adults may leave the child to play alone and free to make use of all his capacities, But. for safety purposes, adults should make some suggestions. Adults should teach the child about the protection of materials.

Adults should try to avoid discouraging the child's play by merely stopping the play. When the child has social difficulty, he needs an adult's help. If adults notice that the child is tiring of a particular play situations, they may offer new arrangements of play materials with new ideas. The need to understand the child's readiness for an experience is as important with everyday experiences as with new experiences. Adults should have an awareness of the child's level of readiness. This differs in every age and, in fact, in every child. Adults should understand the complexity of children and the behavior activities to which each age is subject and guide them accordingly. Every child needs companions of his own age. If there is no other young child in the family, then a neighbor or relative must be brought in occasionally. Parents can provide play materials, equipment.

### **B. Guidance of different kinds of play**

Guidance of different kinds of play helps a child to find and select the opportunities and activities that will offer him maximum satisfaction and profit in his play. The teacher and parent should be sure to understand the child's own intentions so that they may implement them. If he gets into difficulty, hold back until they make certain that the child cannot solve the difficulty himself. This approach will minimize the risk of interfering with his private expressions of fantasy and of stifling his creativity or his sense of mastering things without help. The teacher and parent initiated activity is unsuccessful unless it is an extension of the child's own wishes.

We shall examine the guidance of different kinds of play by the teacher and parent, such as block building, painting, plastic play, cutting and pasting, dramatic play, wood working, outdoor play.

#### **1. Block building**

Block building requires a certain amount of supervision. As in all play activities, the teacher and parent do not direct the building, but may offer appropriate suggestions. The adult should make positive suggestions instead of negative. A large floor area is needed for free block play of the group or individual. Movable screens or sets of shelves or even chalk marks on the floor, may be used to mark it off and to protect both builder and buildings<sup>8)</sup>. Another way of providing plenty of space is to allow indoor blocks to be used out of doors. They may need reminders to take out only what they need for building. Several block areas and storage places are

better than one, both to attract children to other activities such as household play and to prevent some of the depredations that occur when many youngsters are concentrated in one spot. The teacher might enclose a space for the timid child without limiting his freedom of movement. She might suggest that he play in an area somewhat apart from the others or with a group of the gentler and more passive youngsters. She might also suggest a role which would be acceptable to the other children, such as bringing them blocks or building a structure that would fit into their plans.

Constructive and imaginative aspects of block play are quite familiar to the teacher and parent. On the other hand, sometimes children may be permitted to use block for explosive purposes such as knocking down the building or kicking. This undeniable need must be examined in the light of the tasks that face them during the early years. It would seem to be a highly salutary precaution to permit the growing child to blow off steam when he seems to need it. The teacher and parent are frequently apprehensive about behavior that smacks of aggression, but it should be possible to keep aggressive activities within manageable limits by making it clear that blocks are not to be thrown at people.

A variety of accessories can enrich the block play of young children. Small cars, trucks, boats and other transportation toys, figures representing people, and animals that are used with the blocks may be placed near them on the shelves, and arranged in interesting combinations to stimulate the imagination and a variety of activities.

Storing by size and shape of blocks helps to keep the materials ready for use. In storing unit blocks, it is well to note that the ends of all shaped are the same and if stacked with ends toward the front they cannot be distinguished easily.

## **2. Easel painting**

It is usually best to start the child out with two or three colors. Clear, harmonious colors help him develop discrimination. Sometimes an interest in painting itself can be aroused by permitting children to help prepare the paint.

Painting may be the only means a child has for expressing certain emotional experiences he is going through. Therefore it is good to arrange conditions so that children can paint whenever they want to. An easel should be set up in a place out of the line of traffic. To increase the availability of this activity, the equipment might occasionally be taken to the play ground during seasonable weather.

Children should be equipped with aprons or smocks before they start painting. Usually it is wise to permit only one child at a time to paint at an easel. He must paint on the paper, not on the furniture or other children. The adult can help a child to learn to wipe his brush against the side of the paint jar and avoid dripp-

ing paint all over his picture. The teacher and parent also help a child to learn to put his brushes back into the right jar. Red brushes go back into the red paint not into the yellow. But a child sometimes needs to learn mixing the paints as a experience. For this purpose the teacher and parent may prepare the paint in a small jar at a separate place and separate time. It might be advisable to make this an accessory activity and provide paints specifically for those who like to mix and mess.

Children of preschool age are more interested in the process than in the finished product<sup>21)</sup>. So the teacher and parent should not force the production. In general, the teacher and parent should know that it is more important for the child to enjoy painting than to learn the best techniques or observe the rules about order and cleanliness. After the child has had a chance to experiment in his own way and has discovered the pleasure of the activity, suggestions might be made about handling the materials<sup>8)</sup>.

When a child has finished his picture, the adult puts his name and the date in one corner and pins it up to dry. If a child makes any interesting comments about his picture, the adult may want to write the comment in pencil in a corner of the paper. The adult should avoid asking him what he is painting<sup>21)</sup>. It is not necessary that a child paint a real picture, something that can be named. It is enough that he enjoys the experience and gains satisfaction from it. It is not wise to force the children who have painted to clean up the easel corner, for it may be precisely those who are not yet ready to enjoy painting who get the most benefit from this clean up activity.

### 3. Clay and play dough

Plastic materials such as clay and play dough are those which are pliable and are capable of being molded, yet also capable of hardening into a desired form. Clay requires careful preparation to obtain the consistency and texture. If clay is too dry, it will crumble and break when handled and if it is too damp it will stick to the hands and work surfaces and will be difficult to mold.

The clay table should be covered with formica or a similar material if possible. This makes cleaning easier.

Children should put on aprons or smocks and be seated. Usually a lump of clay about the size of a large apple is enough for each child. The child experiments with his clay in any way that interests him as long as he does not put it in his mouth, throw it on the ground, or interfere with his neighbor's work. Children should use their hands to manipulate the clay because the sensory experiences offered by it are important. Sometimes sticks, twigs, acorns, and other objects may be used as tools or accessories in molding the clay, although probably not when a child is having his first experiences with the material.

Adult may sit at the table and mold clay herself. This adds to the sociability. But she should not make objects for the children to copy. If a child makes something that he is especially proud of, put it away to dry, and then let him paint it with calcimine paints.

#### **4. Puzzles**

Puzzles give a child the opportunity of working with colors, shapes and forms, and heighten his awareness of relationships between them. All necessary pieces should be there and none from old broken puzzles. When the puzzles are put away, the pieces should be placed in their proper places. Children like familiar puzzles as well as new ones, and there is no harm in putting out the same puzzles day after day, since doing the ones they have mastered gives the children a feeling of accomplishment without too much effort.

A child may have help with a puzzle if he asks for it, but may work on only one puzzle at a time. When a child is discouraged in matching the puzzle pieces, verbal suggestions and instructions can be given to him, probably, it is usually better to say such as "you need big piece," or "turn it over," and sometimes the adult would hand the child a piece of puzzle. They should not interfere or stop the child's play until he finishes the puzzle tires of the play.

Backs of puzzles should be painted a color, so that when various puzzles get mixed, they can be readily separated again into sets.

#### **5. Finger painting**

Finger paint, like clay, can be easily manipulated. The joys of easel painting and clay modeling are combined in the experience of finger painting. Tables are covered with formica, linoleum, or oilcloth. Children are recommended to stand, not sit, for finger painting because if they sit at the table, paint might be slopped down to the elbow. Clothing needs to be protected. Running water or a bucket of water should be near the working table. Smooth, white and hard surfaced paper is good to use, or (if the surface is easily cleaned) children may work right on the table, because the sensory satisfaction of "messing" is more important than the production(21). For two year olds, a soap flake mixture is sometimes used since it is more easily cleaned up than the regular finger paint.

A tablespoon of each color is placed on the paper for the child. Let him choose the colors he desires. Let the child experiment as he wishes with the paint, using his finger and the palm of his hands or his wrists. When he has finished the adult will probably need to help him wash his hands.

#### **6. Cutting and pasting**

Scissors should really cut, and have comfortable hand holds and blunt or rounded ends. Older preschool children may profit from using pointed scissors. Heavy paper

is desirable because of offering some resistance.

Children usually need instruction in techniques for using scissors, how to hold them, what fingers go through the holes, how to open and shut the scissors, how to hold the paper with one hand and the scissors in the other, etc.

Making collages can be stimulated by having a variety of materials: interesting to feel and to look at: sandpaper, smooth and rough, cotton, feathers, shiny paper, fur, colored sponge, gift wrapping, bows, string, netting, cellophane, plastic, and such natural materials as bark, seeds, shells, leaves, etc. All of these collage materials could contribute to making design, appealing to the senses, and creative and imaginative activity.

Young children will need reminders that a small quantity of paste serves the purpose, to put paste on the back of small pieces and turn them over.

### 7. Wood working

Children need opportunities for carpenter work. Children should be allowed to be creative, but need careful supervision to prevent injury. The wood working table should not be crowded with a large number of children at once. This table should be set up in a more isolated area. An aggressive and explosive child needs an adult right there. This type of play, because of its difficulty and possibly dangerous nature, needs more demonstration and direction as to techniques in the use of the equipment than other types of play. And when the child becomes discouraged in making something for example, for doll house, the teacher and parent may need to guide how to achieve it.

Wood should be soft and knots should be avoided if possible. Nails should be large enough not to bend in the wood and suited to the wood to be used. When pounding in nails, nail should be shorter than the depth of the board. When nailing two boards together, the nail should be long enough to go through the first board and almost through the second.

### 8. Outdoor play

Hartley and Goldenson<sup>9)</sup> say that although the outdoor play yard is not divided into such specific centers of interest as the indoor play area. Similar activities may be engaged in both places. More flexibility of location is possible because of the greater volume of space.

All materials are usually prepared and set out before the children are brought into the room or yard. But it is sometimes desirable for the child to participate in choosing or arranging the equipment. The teacher needs to plan for several centers of interest, and for both quiet and active play<sup>21)</sup>. Free areas for use of wheel toys should be provided. Large equipment such as a slide, jungle gym and swings should not be too close together. And climbing apparatus should not be placed too close to

the fence. The teacher should consider where the sun and shade will, and arrange equipment accordingly. New arrangement and combinations of boxes and boards, or placing old things in new places can be as stimulating as new equipment.

physical activity is of major importance during outdoor play, but the teacher should also see that the play yard offers materials and equipment necessary for all the different types of play. She will then arrange them to foster a variety of activities such as large muscle activities, creative expression, dramatic and group play, and science. The teacher should be alert to any danger situations, and always plan for children's safety. Paint easels and clay tabs are placed in a more secluded place, away from wheel toys, swings, etc.

The climate of a region and the season will make a difference in outdoor play. In the hot summer, the metal outdoor equipment may be too hot to grasp. On a windy day, the teacher should provide shelter for the children. In cold weather, the teacher must be sure the children are dressed warm enough.

### **9. Dramatic Play**

Variety in dramatic play results from the introduction of materials which can serve many purposes; their use will be expanded by the imagination of the children themselves. The materials should be prepared for boys and girls.

Children need to act out what is important to them, with time enough, with materials which will stimulate them and enable them to carry out their ideas, and with freedom from interference.

Dramatic play tells us many thingy things about child, such as what the child's fears are, how he feels about things, and how he sees adults roles. It may be necessary for the adult to support a child in situations where he has not yet enough courage of his own, and help create an opportunity for him to play a role, for example to give him a chance to be the big mother or father or the important workman. Children can escape from being little through identifying themselves with the "big" role<sup>21</sup>). Taking adult roles in play also gives children the chance to feel in control of situations.

## **Conclusion**

Today practically everyone concerned with the growing child agrees that the early years are crucial in the development of children, and recognized the immense contribution that can be made by play experience. Adults should become aware of the potential ties of children's paly, play materials and expressive activities in order that may grow in their own understanding of young children, as a result of this

understanding, may provide children with opportunities to discover and express themselves.

Adults need to know basic facts concerning child's play because this knowledge will impart confidence in present and future contacts with children and adults, and because, as already mentioned, play experience is important in the early years of a child's life. This paper should help parents and teachers who work with children to become creative teacher and parents able to plan adequately for an educative environment and guidance, and to work cooperatively with all others interested in the welfare of young children. Moreover, this learning might help adults formulate their own personal philosophies of child guidance.

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