



www.1stfoundationstherapy.com email: contact@1stfoundationstherapy.com

Helping Your Child Learn Through Play

Play Is Your Child's Most Important Job!

Children don't just play for fun—they play to learn. Through play, they develop communication, thinking, social, motor, and problem-solving skills that build the foundation for lifelong learning.

The best part? You don't need expensive toys. **You are your child's favorite play partner.**

Why Is Play So Important?

Play helps children learn to:

- 🗣️ Communicate
 - 🧠 Think and solve problems
 - ❤️ Build relationships
 - ✋️ Develop fine motor skills
 - 🏃 Strengthen gross motor skills
 - 😊 Understand emotions
 - ✨ Use imagination and creativity
-

10 Simple Ways to Encourage Learning Through Play

1. Follow Your Child's Lead

Notice what captures your child's attention and join them.

If they're interested in blocks, play with blocks.

If they're fascinated by bugs, explore together.

Children learn best when they're interested.



2. Get Down on Their Level

Sit on the floor beside your child.

Face-to-face interactions encourage:

- Eye contact
- Communication
- Turn-taking
- Shared attention

Being at their level makes play more meaningful.

3. Let Your Child Take the Lead

You don't have to direct every activity.

Allow your child to:

- Explore
- Experiment
- Pretend
- Make choices

Your role is to encourage—not control—the play.

4. Talk During Play

Describe what your child is doing.

Instead of asking lots of questions, try commenting:

"You're stacking the blocks."

"The car is going fast!"

"You found the blue ball!"

Children learn language by hearing it used naturally.



5. Read Together Every Day

Books are another form of play.

Point to pictures.

Make animal sounds.

Act out the story.

Ask simple questions.

Reading builds language and imagination.

6. Sing Songs and Use Movement

Music makes learning fun!

Try:

- Wheels on the Bus
- Head, Shoulders, Knees, and Toes
- Old MacDonald
- Itsy Bitsy Spider

Add hand motions whenever possible.

7. Encourage Pretend Play

Pretend play helps children develop:

- ✓ Language
- ✓ Creativity
- ✓ Problem-solving
- ✓ Social skills

Ideas include:

- Cooking
- Grocery store



www.1stfoundationstherapy.com email: contact@1stfoundationstherapy.com

- Tea party
 - Doctor
 - Farm
 - Restaurant
-

8. Limit Screen Time

Children learn best from people.

Choose:

- ♥ Conversations
- ♥ Reading
- ♥ Outdoor play
- ♥ Building
- ♥ Creating
- ♥ Pretending

These experiences build stronger communication than passive screen time.

9. Play Outside

Nature provides endless learning opportunities.

Look for:

- Bugs
- Birds
- Flowers
- Rocks
- Clouds

Run, climb, jump, dig, and explore together.

Outdoor play supports both physical and language development.



www.1stfoundationstherapy.com email: contact@1stfoundationstherapy.com

10. Have Fun!

Learning happens naturally when children feel safe, connected, and joyful.

Laugh together.

Be silly.

Celebrate curiosity.

The memories you create are just as important as the skills your child learns.

Great Toys That Encourage Learning

Some of the best toys are also the simplest.

Try:

-  Blocks
-  Books
-  Bubbles
-  Puzzles
-  Cars
-  Dolls
-  Play food
-  Crayons and paper
-  Building toys
-  Musical toys
-  Balls
-  Sand and water toys

You don't need batteries or flashing lights to inspire learning!



www.1stfoundationstherapy.com email: contact@1stfoundationstherapy.com

Everyday Activities Count Too!

Some of the richest learning happens during everyday routines.

Talk, sing, and play while:

-  Cooking
-  Folding laundry
-  Grocery shopping
-  Bath time
-  Riding in the car
-  Taking a walk
-  Bedtime

Everyday moments are powerful learning opportunities.

Remember

Children learn best through loving relationships—not perfect lessons.

A few minutes of playful interaction each day helps build language, confidence, creativity, and connection.

Play together often.

Laugh together often.

Learn together every day.

When Should I Seek Help?

Talk with your pediatrician or a developmental specialist if your child:

- Rarely engages in play with others.
- Doesn't imitate actions or sounds.
- Shows little interest in toys or people.
- Has limited eye contact or shared attention.
- Isn't meeting developmental milestones.
- You have concerns about their development.



www.1stfoundationstherapy.com email: contact@1stfoundationstherapy.com

Early support can make a meaningful difference.

1st Foundations Pediatric Therapy

Helping children build strong foundations for lifelong success through expert virtual speech and feeding therapy. Serving families across Virginia and North Carolina

Parent Tip

You don't have to buy more toys to help your child learn.

The greatest gift you can give your child is **your time, your attention, and your willingness to play together**. Those everyday moments build the strongest foundations for communication, learning, and lifelong success.