

People Play - With Toys

This play is about helping your child learn to share toys or games with you. Because this play is simple, fun and repetitive, there are lots of opportunities for your child to communicate and share with you.




Why do we do it?

Your child is learning to interact and share with you. Sharing toys with you will help them to develop important skills they need for communication:

- Sharing attention between a toy and a person
- Anticipating what will happen next
- Making simple requests (using eye contact, gestures or words)

What do I do?

Choose toys that your child enjoys and can not work by themselves.
Sit opposite them on the floor so they can see your face easily:

Activity:	Example words:
Balloon: Slowly blow up a balloon. Pause so your child can show they want it bigger. Pause to let them show you they want the balloon to fly around the room.	“Balloon” “Bigger... bigger” “Wheeee!” 
Wind up toy/ Spinner: Show your child how the toy moves when it has been let go. Next time, after winding it up, pause and wait to let them show you they want you to let it go.	“Spinner” “Wind it “Ready steady go!” 
Bath play: Hold a wet sponge above your child's body. Pause then say “Ready... steady ... go!” Squeeze a little water then pause to see if they want more.	“Ready steady go!” “Squeeze!” 

Play Routines

These people play activities can be developed into play routines by using the same words, actions and fun ending each time. Here is an example;

- **Play**— Blow some bubbles for your child to pop.
- **Pause** – Stop blowing bubbles and wait.
- **Watch** – See how your child reacts. Do they show you they want more?
- **Continue** – Say “bubbles!” and blow some more.



Things to remember

- Play together in this way for up to 10 minutes once or twice every day at home and at school/ nursery.
- When you pause and watch to see how your child reacts, notice any way your child shows you that they want more of the play;
 - Do they look at you? Do they make a noise or say a word?
 - Do they move your hands? Do they make a gesture or action?
 - Do they bring you the object/toy to ask for the game again?
- Remember to use simple language throughout the play and repeat the same words again and again.
- Some children find it more difficult to share their favourite toy, so start with toys they are willing to let you use.
- Keep control of the toy, for example, hold the bubble pot yourself. If the child takes the toy, they will have less reason to communicate with you.
- Where possible, have a quiet environment without lots of distractions. Turn the television off and put phones and favourite toys out of view.