



Family Talk: Indoor and Outdoor Play

Indoor Play nurtures creativity, problem solving, and exploration.

- Introduce words that describe emotions, and support children by naming feelings.

Outdoor Play encourages active play — along with fresh air and exercise.

- Share new words with your child that describe the things they see, smell, hear, feel, and do.



Infant

Encourage action! Babies can kick their feet or swing their arms even if they aren't mobile yet. Use specific, descriptive words.

- Instead of "Kick, kick, wiggle," try "Bend your knees, kick your legs, and wiggle your toes!"

Encourage turn-taking activities such as playing peek-a-boo. Name features as you play.

- "I'm hiding behind the blue blanket. Can you find me?"

Toddler

Help your toddler learn how some words can describe similar things, or can compare things. Ask your child to find things based on color, shape, texture, or size.

- "This sand feels rough. Can you find anything else that feels rough?"
- "How many toys do you see that are smaller than your bear?"

Use verbal cues to prompt turn-taking. Using names rather than pronouns, like "it," is less confusing for young toddlers. Help them learn to take turns using names.

- "Mommy's turn. Daddy's turn. Josh's turn."

Preschool

Playing often involves telling stories. Make up a story together! Start with a simple idea, then ask your child to add on.

- "A dog went to school. What happens next?"

Describing how they feel can help your child understand and manage their emotions. Help them learn words to describe their feelings.

- "You are upset because your friend didn't want to play."