

making time for

toys

A family
guide on how
to enjoy
making time
to play

BRITISH
**TOY &
HOBBY**
ASSOCIATION

the value of

play

Have you considered the benefits of play to you and your family?

Like the food we eat, we need a diet that includes play, an essential ingredient for a healthy family life and child development.

This leaflet is a guide as to how busy families can make time to play together and reap the benefits without fuss and great expense.

In our busy, ever more structured lives, time is increasingly short. Everyone's routines start earlier - children participate in organised activities such as swimming or music lessons and just have less time to be kids!



Less time to play means they are missing out as a result.

Playing together is a vital element of sharing family life. It can

involve everyone, be lively or quiet, planned or spontaneous. Above all it benefits all those involved - parents, grandparents, children of all ages.





what good does it do?

Play is good for all senses and age groups. It combines a whole host of mental and physical benefits to individuals and families alike. Apart from just being enjoyable, it is:

- **Healthy**
- **Educational**
- **Sociable**
- **Recreational**
- **Great for family bonding**
- **Fun !**



Psychologists have identified numerous ways that play helps childhood development. It enhances:

- **Thinking power**
- **Mental fitness**
- **Practical knowledge**
- **Personal & emotional well-being**
- **Physical development**
- **Social skills**

As a child we bet you didn't realise how much good you were doing yourself just by playing!



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The most important message of this leaflet is to encourage you to make time to play.

Parents and grandparents should remember that 3 factors assist kids get the most from play:

- 1 Create a safe, secure environment for play.
- 2 Let kids be free to direct their own play.
- 3 A wide variety of toys permits many types of play (rather than a few expensive toys).

“Children are more inclined to play, and will play longer, when toys are available. A well-selected range of toys will encourage children to explore the world around them in different ways, stimulating development of all the senses”

Professor Jeffrey H. Goldstein
University of Utrecht, Netherlands

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“Toys are an inexpensive and time-efficient means to help families make time to play together. Short, frequent spells of play are an easy way to help your child’s development. Whether you buy or borrow them from your local toy library, make time for toys”

Helen Goodman

Director - National Association of Toy and Leisure Libraries

As a parent you can provide ideas and time to play, join in games already underway and show how much fun play can be. Use toys as props how and when you want to.

REMEMBER

Look out for the Lion Mark to ensure you use or buy toys that meet the exacting British safety standards and choose toys suitable for the age of the children playing with them.



For further information, please write to:
The BTHA, 80 Camberwell Road, London SE5 OEG,
or email us at: admin@btha.co.uk - enclosing your name and address.
Please state the nature of the information you seek, and **always quote the reference ‘Making Time for Toys’**.

30 ways to spend 30 minutes

Whether you are a parent, grandparent, sister or brother, you can initiate and encourage these activities – or better still join in yourself.

creative

- **DRESS UP** Create an entire look, from outfit to make-up, for how they want to look when they grow up.
- **FASHION SHOW** Whether it's the kids themselves or boys' or girls' dolls, the models must remember to wiggle when they walk down the cat walk!
- **FINGER PUPPET** Pick a favourite character and make a finger puppet to look like them.
- **MODEL MAKING** Have a go at model making using clay, playdough, or plasticine.
- **DESIGN** Design your own board game together.
- **DRAWING** Hold a competition using crayons, paint, potato prints or finger painting.
- **NATURE TRAIL** Try pressing flowers, making petal perfume and leaf rubbings.

- **JEWELLERY** Make using buttons, beads, or a jewellery kit.
- **POPSONGS** Ask kids to choose their favourite pop song then invent a song and dance routine for the family.

imaginative

- **ACTING** Why not use your toys to re-create a soap opera like 'Neighbours'?
- **ROLE PLAY** Try doctors or nurses, teacher and pupil or shopkeepers.
- **LOOK AFTER SOMEONE SPECIAL** Dolls can be dressed up, nursed through injury or illness, read to or taken on journeys.
- **MODEL TRAINS/CARS** Drive them! Give them personalities and adventures.
- **PLAY 'TELEVISIONS'** A cardboard box is a fun and easily made television set.
- **BIG BROTHER** Make up a game by choosing 9 toys and gradually 'voting them out'.

outdoors

- **ASSAULT COURSE** Create an activity assault course in your garden.
- **HOPSCOTCH** Chalk up a Hopscotch grid on your driveway. Be creative with its shape to test their skills.

- **PLAY BALL** From simple 'catch' to more complicated games like skittles with old cans or rounders.
- **WATER** In hot weather, you can't beat water games. Use water pistols, paddling pools or hosepipes!
- **HIDE & SEEK** Play Hide and Seek or Sardines?
- **TAG** Burn off loads of energy with Tag, Mr Crocodile and Simon says.

competitions

- **COMPUTER** Set up a computer game knock-out with your kids' friends.
- **BUILDING BLOCKS** Construct the biggest building using blocks – or the funniest one.
- **BOARD GAME** Host a board game championship.
- **MARBLES** Organise a mini marbles or Jacks or table football tournament.

thinking

- **WHO AM I?** Play celebrity Who am I? or 20 questions – remember only answer yes or no!
- **WORD GAME** Start with famous people. Think of a name, next to go says another name beginning with the initial of your choice's surname.
- **STORY** Concoct a group story using the order of the alphabet "My auntie went to China and bought...an armadillo, a balaclava, a Cadillac".
- **HOLIDAY DIARY** Keep a holiday diary using used tickets, receipts and anything else to make a collage.
- **TREASURE TRAIL** Think of really tricky clues to lead them to the coveted prize.

