



# "Giving Childhood back to children"



21<sup>st</sup> Century Families is a Charity Registered in Scotland No: SC042725



### ***Who we are!***

**'21<sup>st</sup> Century Families'** is a group of mums, dads, and other carers who have joined forces with educational professionals in the East Kilbride area in response to the challenge of raising a healthy, happy and resilient child in the 21<sup>st</sup> century. We were inspired by Sue Palmer, educationalist and author of 'The Toxic Childhood' who gave an inspiring presentation at The Village Centre on 21<sup>st</sup> Century factors which affect children's development.

In an electronic, media rich age, children are being fast tracked through childhood by marketing forces which influence children's diet, games, fashion and accessories. More children in Britain are being diagnosed with learning disorders (e.g.: ADHD), obesity and depression, while crime rates are rising.

The group want to stress to people that they certainly aren't anti-computer / TV etc. We know that they can be a fantastic source of learning and information for children.

What we are about is trying to strike a **BALANCE** of old and new and produce healthy balanced children in the process!

**'21<sup>st</sup> Century Families'** believe it is everyone's responsibility to nurture and protect our children and their motto is "**Giving Childhood back to Children**". The group aim to meet up with as many other parents and carers as we can and share our thoughts and provide some down to earth advice and ideas for other parents and carers in helping to reclaim our children's childhood and improve their well-being in the future. We are looking to involve as many similar-minded parents and carers in our 21<sup>st</sup> Century Families initiative.

# **The importance of play**

**By Lisa Cunningham**

**(Educational Psychologist)**

Living in the 21st Century can often leave parents finding it difficult to engage in more traditional play with their children and parents can lack confidence in letting their children play outdoors alone.

Over the last few years, DVD's and MP3's have replaced storytime and activity books while consoles and electronic games have reduced the incidences of children playing with each other in person and role playing different situations.

Play is fundamental to help children explore their environment, different issues in life and begin to understand the world around them. This is how children learn information and develop skills; it's what children do naturally and when they do their thinking.

Play helps children to take ownership and be active participants in the learning process. As a result, children discover that learning is something that happens with them and not to them.

If you can play a story, you can tell your story and through play, youngsters have the opportunity to try language out.

Reports from children, parents and school staff are indicating that increasingly children feel bored and spend more and more time in front of computers etc. which in turn limits the more traditional imaginative and creative play and reduces the face-to-face interactions with others. This comes at a time when more and more parents report that their children experience sleep problems, obesity and social, emotional and behavioural difficulties.

## **What parents can do**

As adults, we listen to children's play with all our senses, we watch, listen, name, question etc. Parents can help children to learn by planning for their play and entering the child's world through play.

Parents spending time with their children is important in order to scaffold and encourage their child's learning and help them achieve their full potential. It's amazing what a child can achieve with a little help from an adult compared to what they can achieve on their own.

In the first few years of life, the brain is very plastic. This plasticity is the capacity of the brain to change with learning and research has shown that, in fact, the brain never stops changing through learning. Play is the activity through which children learn the building blocks of reality. It provides pathways to love and social connection and is vital for cognitive, emotional and social development.

Spending time with our children and helping them explore their environment through play and building relationships, helps our children grow up healthy, happy and resilient despite the pressures of living in the 21st Century.

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# Play is good for you!

Play is vitally important to a good childhood and one of children's basic human rights. Children need to be free to run around, use their imagination, have adventures, make new friends and simply have fun. Play is the way children and young people explore the world around them and develop practical skills, allowing them to learn through curiosity, invention and persistence.

The benefits of outdoor play include:

- Increases physical activity
- Helps burn off energy
- Increases the body's vitamin D levels
- Reduces anxiety and improves mood
- Improves concentration and focus
- Enhances imaginative and creative play
- Promotes problem solving and leadership skills
- Helps develop stronger immune systems
- Helps promote creativity and free play
- Learn to interact and understand nature
- Increases social interaction
- Develops powers of observation and risk assessment
- Builds a strong link between physical health and outdoor play at a young age
- AND ITS FUN!!!

Less time playing outdoors is linked to:

- Obesity
- Type II diabetes and high blood pressure
- High cholesterol
- Anxiety disorders and depression
- Attention deficit disorder



# Bubble Rap

Blowing bubbles is good fun

Rainbow balls that dance in the sun

Floating, twirling in the sky

Then they go

POP

And I don't know why



## Bubbles

*½ a cup of washing up liquid*

*¾ of a cup of cold water*

*5 drops of glycerine*

*(available in chemists)*

# **12 Steps to healthy, happy children**

**Play**

**Nurture**

**Family Time**

**Sleep**

**Exercise**

**Listening**

**Talking**

**Healthy Eating**

**Healthy Living**

**Fun to Learn**

**Balance of Old & New**

**Communities Together**

***'It takes a Village to raise healthy,  
happy children'***



# Useful Websites

## **TV**

[www.mediawatchuk.org.uk](http://www.mediawatchuk.org.uk)

[www.safermedia.org.uk](http://www.safermedia.org.uk)

## **FAMILY LIFE**

[www.dadcando.com](http://www.dadcando.com)

[www.mumsnet.com](http://www.mumsnet.com)

[www.aboutparenting.org.uk](http://www.aboutparenting.org.uk)

[www.familylives.org.uk](http://www.familylives.org.uk)

## **PLAYTIME**

[www.fairplayforchildren.org](http://www.fairplayforchildren.org)

[www.playscotland.org](http://www.playscotland.org)

[www.spell-lanarkshire.webs.com](http://www.spell-lanarkshire.webs.com)

[www.playtalkread.org](http://www.playtalkread.org)

[www.naturedetectives.org.uk](http://www.naturedetectives.org.uk)

[www.woodlandtrust.org.uk](http://www.woodlandtrust.org.uk)

## **INTERNET SAFETY**

[www.thinkuknow.co.uk](http://www.thinkuknow.co.uk)

[www.cyberangels.org.uk](http://www.cyberangels.org.uk)

[www.chatdanger.com](http://www.chatdanger.com)

[www.kidsmart.org.uk](http://www.kidsmart.org.uk)

[www.getnetwise.org](http://www.getnetwise.org)

[www.childnet-int.org](http://www.childnet-int.org)

## **FOOD**

[www.fabresearch.org](http://www.fabresearch.org)

[www.choosmyplate.gov](http://www.choosmyplate.gov)



# Play Roadshow Developmental Facts



# Dressing - up corner

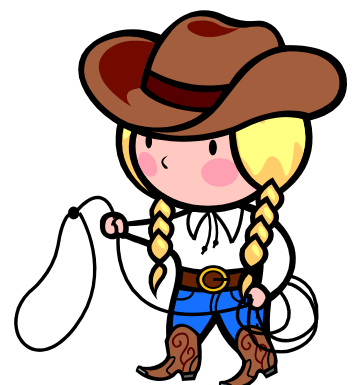
**Social Development** - dressing up allows the child to socialise with other children and adults in a way that is free and casual. It allows the child to take part in role play and act out any situations in their life in a non-threatening manner. They also learn to share and empathise with others during the play.

**Physical Development** – dressing themselves helps to develop children’s fine motor skills and gross motor skills i.e. putting the items on and off, tying scarves.

**Intellectual Development** – children have to think about what they are going to wear for their dress up experience, deciding on who they want to be at that time, whether it be a fantasy character or someone close to them that they know. This normally depends on many factors i.e how the child is feeling at the time, what their friends are dressing up as etc. The child is allowed to express their own ideas or run through scenarios from their experiences at the time in order to understand the world around them better.

**Creative Development** – dressing up encourages children’s creativity through allowing their creativity and imagination to be free, to be someone else for a while. The child is allowed to express their own ideas and to fantasise while dressing up.

**Emotional Development** – dressing up and role playing allows a child or children to understand, recognise and deal with their emotions through the play experience. This in turn helps with their mental health as they sort out problems by going over scenarios over and over again during dress up.



# Story Telling

**Social Development** – story telling is hugely important in a child’s social development as it is one of the first social activities the child normally takes part in. When a child is just a baby, story telling encourages eye contact with its carer (first steps to listening and understanding). Children are encouraged to listen to people attentively, not to speak or interrupt when the story is being told and therefore encourages the first steps to a conversation i.e. the child learns through story telling that a conversation is a two way process and they have to understand the other persons point of view.

**Physical Development** – story telling encourages a child to be patient and to relax at times. If a child does not have time to relax and re-energise then they will not have the energy to do more physically demanding activities.

**Intellectual Development** – story telling helps to develop a child’s intellectual development by encouraging their memory and concentration skills, children learn through the repetition of the pictures and words as well as through the content of the book.

**Creative Development** – children learn that they can use their creativity and imagination during storytelling, they learn all about fantasy and make believe and that these are all okay to engage in themselves.

**Emotional Development** – children can “transfer” many of their own emotions into a story telling this allowing them to play around with these emotions, recognise and deal with them



# Junk Modelling / Arts and Crafts

**Social Development** – children communicate with each other in order to share the junk for their model they also learn to work together in a team when deciding to do a communal model. During an arts & crafts activity, children chat about what they are doing, they learn to share their materials and to take turns with materials.

**Physical Development** – fine motor skills are developed hugely while undertaking junk modelling and arts & crafts, i.e using scissors, glue sticks, pasting materials onto models, lifting and shifting boxes and materials, holding pencils, pens and crayons.

**Intellectual Development** – children’s intellectual development is encouraged through junk modelling by deciding what they are going to make! Do they make their own or one with a friend? What will they make? How do they go about it? Children identify and solve problems during junk modelling and arts & crafts.

**Creative Development** – Creativity is encouraged throughout junk modelling and arts & crafts activities as children are free to choose their model or picture, they are able to express their emotions and feelings through building or painting etc. This process encourages the child’s independence and allows the children to follow their own ideas (no matter how it looks to adults!)

**Emotional Development** – a child is able to express many emotions through junk modelling and arts & crafts freely without having to try communicate them verbally. They can use the materials to express these emotions into the play.

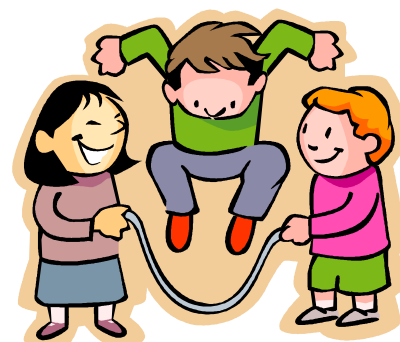


# Outdoor / Physical Play

**Social Development** – children learn to take turns, share and take each other’s feelings into consideration while playing outdoors as they have to socialise appropriately in order to join into the game.

**Physical Development** – the more children are outdoors playing the more they will develop their overall physical development. Outdoor play encourages all areas of their physical self i.e. they get to walk, run, hop, jump, climb etc., all of which helps with a child’s balance, co-ordination and growth. Their fine motor skills are also developed when playing outdoors in a game such as football, rounders, elastics, ropes, space hoppers, scooters etc as they use their hands to hold the ropes, hoppers, bats or their feet when playing football.

**Intellectual Development** – children learn and remember the rules of outdoor games that they play i.e. football, rounders, tig and “what’s the time mister wolf” etc. When children learn rules and direction through play, they remember and concentration in other areas in their lives.



**Creative Development** – physical play encourages children’s creative development as they can change the game as and when they want. During physical / outdoor play children can find their own talents by playing without any constraints which are normally found in other indoor activities.

**Emotional Development** – children’s emotional development is encouraged through physical / outdoor play by allowing the child to feel free while playing, they can express themselves in whichever way they want while outdoors i.e. by spinning around, skipping, running or just chatting with friends. Children learn to cope with disappointment and triumph through playing group outdoor games also by either losing or winning.

**COMMUNICATION** – verbal or non-verbal passing on of information through language, gestures and facial expressions.

**CO-ORDINATIONS** – this is linked to the way in which the brain is able to pass messages and take in information.

**CREATIVE PLAY** – where children develop and communicate their own ideas eg, art, dance and music, imaginative play.

**DEVELOPMENT**- children gaining skills and competence.

**DEVELOPMENT NEEDS** – what children require to move forward in their development

**EMOTIONAL RESPONSES** – children’s expressions of feelings

**FINE MOTOR SKILLS** – small movements involving the hands and fingers eg, holding a pencil, unscrewing a lid off a bottle

**GROSS MOTOR SKILLS** – large movements of whole limbs as well as the ability to bear weight on them eg, walking, crawling and climbing

**GROWTH** – growing in height and weight

**INCLUSION** – identifying, understanding and breaking down barriers so all children can participate and belong.

**LEARNING SKILLS** – children gaining new understanding and knowledge about something, acquiring a new skill or changing behaviour as a result of experience

**MENTAL HEALTH** – the strength and wellbeing of children’s minds

**PATTERN OF DEVELOPMENT** – rate and sequence of development

**RATE OF DEVELOPMENT** – speed at which development takes place

**REFLEXES** – actions that are done without thinking

**SEQUENCE OF DEVELOPMENT** – order in which development takes place



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