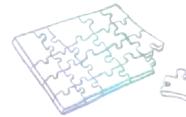


Research studies show that certain types of toys encourage and promote social play among young children.

The early childhood practice described in this brochure is based on findings presented in a practice-based research synthesis conducted at the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development by M. Raab (2003). Relationship between types of toys and young children's social behavior. *Bridges*, 1(8). Visit www.researchtopractice.info to read or download the research synthesis and/or a user-friendly, illustrated summary, *Bottomlines 1(8)*. Printed copies are available from Winterberry Press (www.wbpress.com). All opinions expressed are those of the Research and Training Center on Early Childhood Development and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U. S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education Programs, Research to Practice Division, funder of the work of the RTC (H324K010005).



Evidence-Based Practice Guides

Additional practice guides are available from the RTC for this and other important early childhood topics.

Related materials also are available as part of *Solutions* evidence-based tool kits.

Please see descriptions of these resources and information for ordering under "Products" at

www.researchtopractice.info

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Cornerpiece

Toys

Different kinds of playthings set the stage for interactions among young children at play

Find lots of ways for young children to have fun together!

**An
Evidence-Based
Early Childhood
Intervention
Practice**

Influence children's
social play using

TOYS

that bring children together!

What is the practice?

Providing certain types of toys to preschool-age children in group settings can encourage them to interact with other children during play.

“Social” toys are ones that:

- Involve turn taking or sharing,
- Encourage active, energetic play,
- Are toy-sized versions of everyday household objects,
- Can be used to represent other things as part of pretend play, and/or
- Can be used easily by two or more children.



Cars and trucks get children together ...
and down on all fours!



A set of child-sized dishes often prompts “mealtime” chatter and a fun opportunity to pretend family mealtimes.

How do we do it?

Increase opportunities for child-to-child interaction by making the following kinds of toys available and providing children many chances to play with “social” toys such as:

- Balls
- Building Blocks
- Cars and Trucks
- Dishes, Pots & Pans
- Dolls, Dollhouse & Furniture
- Dress-Up Clothes
- Housekeeping Items
- Pretend Food
- Puppets and Theater
- Tea Party Set
- Train Set
- Tricycles and other Riding Toys

“These can be our babies’ ice cream cones!”

Children use their imaginations to jointly plan how they can use musical rattles as special-treat props while playing “House.”



Take a look!

Try this idea:

Provide children wooden blocks, a set of dollhouse furniture, and an assortment of sturdy cars and trucks. Then enjoy the fun as young children come together — chatting, exclaiming, negotiating, planning, and compromising — as they create a fantasy town ... and relish hours of fun!



Is it working?

- Do children talk more with one another during their time together?
- Do children play with one another and use the toys together?
- Are children exchanging or sharing toys with one another?
- Are children doing things together cooperatively?