What is my role in my child's play?

Your attitude towards play is very important. Be encouraging and your child will develop self-confidence and mastery in learning through play.

Play with your child and together you will enjoy experiences that enrich and foster the bond between you and your child.

Observe your child at play to see what his/her interests and concerns are. Provide adequate space for both outdoor and indoor play and allow your child time for uninterrupted play.

Teach your child to put toys away after use. This fosters responsibility and prevents falls or injuries from stepping on toys.

Play should be enjoyed for its own sake. Give your child the freedom to play, to enjoy his/her childhood and to enhance his/her growth and development.

A service provided by

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Learning Through Play

Learning
Through Play

MCYS
Ministry of Community Development,
Youth and Sports

What is child's play?

Play is a special activity that is fun and enjoyable. It requires active, voluntary and spontaneous participation from a child. It aids in the development of language, motor, creativity, problem solving and social skills.

Generally, there are four types of play:
a) Imitation play (e.g. child copies movement of teacher);
b) Practice or mastery play (e.g. swinging on a rope for the pleasure it gives);
c) Symbolic play (e.g. the swinging rope now becomes a rocket travelling to the moon);
d) Games with rules (e.g. hide-and-seek, simple card or board games).
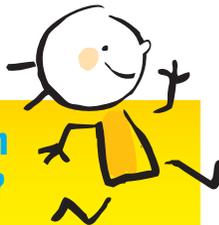
Why is play important in my child's development?

Without the stimulation of play, virtually every aspect of your child's development will be affected.

Children get to explore their surroundings and learn how things function through play. Your child can imitate the roles that adults undertake and learn interactive and social skills.

Play helps your child discover his/her limits and special talents. In the process, he/she also learns how to deal with emotions such as happiness, sadness, fear and anger.

The physical development of a child is also aided through play. He/she will acquire co-ordination, motor skills and learn about teamwork.

I would rather my child spend time learning the alphabet than waste time playing. Is it a good idea?

A child learns best through play. Play helps a child develop concepts and understand how things and ideas are connected. It also helps to develop basic skills in reading, writing and communication.

Children naturally love to learn and would do so at their own pace. To impose a strict classroom format for learning before a child is ready, may inhibit his/her creativity and willingness to try things out on his/her own.

Play makes learning enjoyable because it allows a child to develop and explore the world. By learning through play, a child's self-confidence and self-worth begin to grow as he/she masters the chosen tasks.

What kind of play activities are conducted by child care centres? How do they help my child?
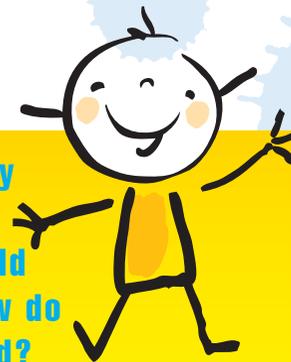
The play activities conducted by child care centres are developmentally appropriate and organised to cater to the children's individual differences, pace and style in learning.

Play activities would complement the learning environment and be integrated with the centre's curriculum approach. The following are example of concepts acquired through play and learning:

Curriculum Areas	Concepts Acquired (some examples)
Mathematics	Sorting objects using attributes (colours, shapes, size, patterns etc)
Music and Movement	Appreciate music (rhythm, beat, tempo) and movement (use of body parts in relation to space)
Science	Acquiring knowledge through direct experience, self-exploration and discovery
Language	Appreciate the beauty of language through stories, poems, songs and rhymes
Art and Craft	Working with paints, crayons, pencils and materials to create objects of aesthetics and creativity
Social Studies	Through interactions with adults and peers, social skills are acquired when children role play and emulate the people around them (dress-up and dramatisation)
Physical Activities	Children gain physical confidence as they develop their gross and fine motor skills.