



Loose parts play



ROCHDALE
BOROUGH COUNCIL

Why is play important?

Play is not only fun, it is also the best way for young children to develop, learn and feel good about themselves.

Through play, children are able to develop all the skills they need to be happy and successful. For example, when your child is playing he/she is developing their:

- Creativity and the ability to come up with new ideas
- Physical skills
- Vocabulary and ability to use language in different ways
- Decision-making, independence and problem-solving skills
- Ability to keep going when things get hard
- Social skills and ability to get along with others
- Ability to share resources and ideas
- Emotional wellbeing, confidence and self-esteem

Why is it important to play with our children?

When we play with our children it gives them the message that they are important to us and they are central to our world. Playing with our children enables us to re-connect with them so that they feel happier and calmer. When children feel a stronger connection with us they are also more able to be co-operative.

Children can also use the play as a way of telling us about what they are thinking and feeling.



Loose parts play

What is loose parts play?

Loose parts play means playing with 'stuff'. Loose parts can be anything that you have lying around at home: toilet rolls, old bits of carpet, blankets, towels, cardboard boxes, spoons, pans etc. When children do not think that there is a set way to play with an object they can usually find lots of different ways to play; this encourages them to problem solve and use their imagination.

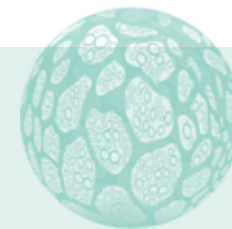
How does it help my child?

Loose parts play encourages children to be curious and investigative. It enables children to set their own goals, meaning they are more likely to persist and keep trying even when things don't go to plan. There is no correct way to do it so it feels easier and more relaxed which is vital for wellbeing. Children learn to reflect on what they are doing in their play, to think about what will work and what won't work and adapt their plan as they go. Loose parts play gives children opportunities to see that there are different ways of doing things.

Playing with loose parts can also encourage motivation, independence, flexibility and resilience; it can support children to develop their social skills through turn taking, sharing and negotiating with others. These skills and qualities support children's development and learning in nursery, school and at home.

What can I do to encourage loose parts play?

- Encourage your child to play with loose parts at home. For example:
 - Get old clothes out for them to dress up in or use as blankets, materials to make dens or as fabric to make a picture with.
 - Put pans and baking trays on the floor along with other objects, these may be used as role play items for cooking or as a home for a dinosaur or a place to sort beads.
- Collect sticks, twigs, leaves, stones etc. when you are out. These can be used to play with at home.
- Play with your child. Allow them to decide what to do with the materials and act as their friend in play, don't worry about 'teaching' them, just follow their lead.
- Be curious, excited and interested in your child's play.
- Try to enjoy playing yourself and let your child know you are enjoying your time together.



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