

## **Child's Play and Why You Should Play with Your Child**

**Play** is the **key way children learn**- about themselves and their world. Through a wide variety of play experiences, **they learn** important information **about their bodies** and **how they function**. They **use their five senses** to discover **new textures** and **tastes, scents** and **sounds, faces** and **places**. **Children** gain valuable practice in **sharing, compromise, and cooperation** through interactive play. Just as parents have a "job" they must do, **play is the "work" of childhood**. It **fuels the developmental process of growing**.

**Parents also "play" a valuable role in this "work."** **Putting aside** your own **priorities** and **focusing solely on playing with your child** sends him vital life messages. To a child, **time** with you **equals love**. Focusing your attention and being directly involved in an activity with him says, without words: "I care." "You are special." "I value you." "You are worth my time and attention." These messages **help to form** the core of a **child's self-esteem**.

Other **reasons to play with your child**:

- Playing with your child can **boost your child's chances of succeeding in school**.
- Playing can **enhance your child's vocabulary** and **IQ**.
- Playing can **boost your child's emotional IQ**.
- Playing can **improve a child's motivation** and **lead to a greater performance in school**.
- Playing with your child **can connect you emotionally**.
- Playing can **make life less stressful**.
- Playing can help **put learning into context**.

### **Resources:**

<http://centerforparentingeducation.org/library-of-articles/focus-parents/will-play/>

<http://www.rokenbok.com/sites/all/themes/custom/rokenbok/media/white-papers/eight-reasons-you-should-play-with-your-child.pdf>