

Why Play in Kindergarten? Parent Guide #7

There are many ways to learn. Children and adults learn best when they are encouraged and interested.

Many years of research show that play is more than just fun and games.

Play boosts strong growth in many areas, including:

- **Mental:** There is a close link between play and strong brain growth. It lays the groundwork for later school success in reading and writing. It provides experiences that help children develop.
- **Social:** Play is important for the imagination. It also helps to develop creative problem-solving skills.
- **Emotional:** Make-believe play improves teamwork and compassion. It also helps children learn to control their behaviors.
- **Physical:** The rough and tumble of active play helps children's muscles develop, and brain growth.

Play has other benefits for learning:

- Most kindergartners are not ready to sit and listen for long periods of time.
- Research shows play works better when the teacher uses the child's strengths and interests. The teacher can then provide chances to learn through experience.
- A young child's play is his/her work. A kindergarten classroom should be filled with chances to learn through play.
- Children love school when the teacher supports their learning both in and out of class and when their parents are interested in their school day.