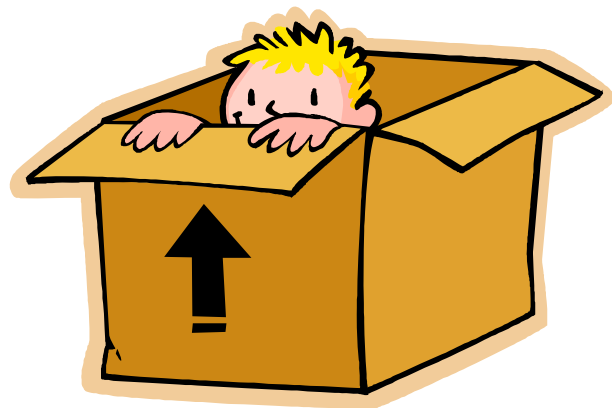


# When it comes to toys... the simpler the better

Young children learn about the world and how to get along with others by playing with toys and talking with other kids and adults. Their hands and bodies are active. Their senses are noticing things. They make plans, solve problems, pretend, and make things happen. All this active play develops their brains and social skills in an efficient, complex, and amazing way.



Now...if toys do most of the work or tell all the story--like many electronic games, TV programs and videos-- there's little chance for children to be active, social, and creative. That's fine every once in a while but not as a steady diet. Kids should be involved in active, social play most of time to develop all of their skills and abilities!

*A great toy lets kids be the most active part of the game and lets others join in the fun!*

**Here are some terrific toys that teach great skills and don't cost much:**

- ✓ Play dough and tools that roll, poke, & cut
- ✓ Water with plastic cups, sponges & soap
- ✓ Cardboard boxes big enough to get into
- ✓ Crayons, paper, scissors, & tape
- ✓ Dress ups, stuffed animals, and bags
- ✓ Balls of all sizes
- ✓ Cardboard blocks with trucks and dolls
- ✓ Blanket tent and flashlights
- ✓ And most important...an adult to explain, encourage, laugh, and know when it's time to read a story, and go to bed!

## **Recipe for Fantastic No Fail Play Dough**

3 Tblsp oil  
Some drops of food coloring  
2  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups flour  
 $\frac{1}{2}$  cup salt  
1 Tblsp alum (look in spice aisle)  
1  $\frac{1}{2}$  cups briskly boiling water

Put the food coloring into the oil. Add the boiling water and stir in all the rest quickly. Stir well and let cool before using. Keep in a covered container. Add drops of oil later if it dries out.

## **More Reading:**

Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Diane Eyer, Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, *Einstein Never Used Flash Cards: How Our Children Really Learn—And Why They Need to Play More and Memorize Less*. Rodale Press: 2003.