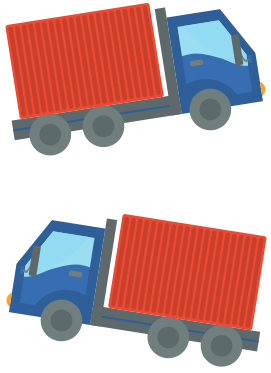


A Practical Guide to Understanding Parallel Play in young children

What is parallel play?



Parallel play occurs when children are playing near each other with similar toys and in similar ways. The children do not interact or talk with each other about their play.

Why is parallel play important?

- Children learn to play in different ways by watching other children
- Provides a context for children to begin to practice and learn new play skills



Begins in the toddler years and continues through the preschool years

How does parallel play support children's development?

Parallel play promotes the development of:

- imitation,
- confidence,
- more complex play,
- cooperation,
- social skills,
- self-esteem,

and much more!

How can adults support parallel play?

- Provide several similar, age appropriate toys the children can play with near each other
- Ensure the toys can be easily shared
- Encourage children to play near one another by staying close and commenting on their play
- Rotate toys to keep the experience new and fun for the children
- Provide the child with plenty of time and adequate space to engage in parallel play

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