

Parent 2 – Questionnaire, Parents and Teacher’s Understanding and Practices of Play and Learning

Questionnaire : Parents and teacher’s understanding and practices of play and learning

1. What you understand by term the play for 3-4-year-old children?

Play is a means through which children learn. Currently my 3.5 year old engages in various types of play which allows her to explore under supervision, with assistance or independently which gives her the opportunity to learn about herself and her surroundings.

2. How do you engage your child in play and learning ?

The entire days routine involves learning through play and sometimes through assisting with household chores (setting the table, closing curtains).

In the past most play activities were adult directed but currently at her age, she decides what she would like to do on a daily basis, this allows her to make choices and thus learn independence.

Listed below are some examples of her daily activities:

- She enjoys playing outside, riding her bike and picking up things or asking questions about her surroundings, thus exploring and learning new vocabulary
- Baking is a new task she enjoys and will assist with the stirring and adding of the ingredients- this allows her to learn to be involved in the kitchen
- Playing with sand or play dough or Lego- allows her to sensory explore and be involved with imaginary play by making her own items
- Colouring and painting- this is more structured play as it usually involves us as parents having to assist her by guiding her with writing/drawing/painting and colouring in the lines
- Watching tv- she is allowed to watch educational tv episodes for an hour a day- she has picked up a number of words through this
- Reading- we have instilled in her the love for reading, although she cannot read yet, every night she goes to bed with a 3 to 4 books which we have to read to her. She has started to recognize some of the words and knows some of the books by heart.

3. Do you consider play as learning ? Explain

Yes as can be seen from the activities listed in question 2. Children learn through play during their early years and I have seen a remarkable change in my daughter from age 2 to 3. She does not only learn new vocabulary through play but imaginary and problem solving as well.

4. Do you think play is more important than learning ? Why ?

I think at her current age- the means to learning is through play, so they go hand in hand. As she gets older play will still be very important but she will need to attend school and will need to learn through a more structured learning environment as well.

5. Do you think learning is more important than play ? Why ?

With a 3 year old- they go hand in hand and neither one is more important than the other as play is the means for them to learn and explore.

6. Do you prefer that your child plays and learns? Why?

Yes because play is the means to learning

7. Does your child like to play ? Why ?

Yes, that is basically what her life is made up off at the moment: A routine of eating, sleeping and playing.

8. When you go shopping with your child , do you allow your child to choose his/her own toy? Why?

Yes she is only allowed to choose one item. This gives her the opportunity to be involved in decision making and the understanding that although there are many toys she must choose the best one for her. I see her little mind working very hard weighing the pros and cons of the various items before making a decision.

9. How do you ensure that your child is happy/delighted with the learning activities ?

Tasks/activities are self-directed by her so she is usually always happy with the outcome. If she experiences failure/difficulty for example while painting or building a puzzle she will get upset ask for help and with a few motivational words and some minor guidance she will go back and try again.

10. Does learning take place inside or outside the house ?

Learning takes place everywhere, in the house, outside or driving in the car. She is continuously being stimulated and is always asking or talking about her surroundings.

11. Describe how you set up the play learning environment for the child?

The lounge which has carpet and is where she plays. All her toys are easily accessible to her so she can take what she wants to play with when she wants it. From a young age she has learnt that after playing with one toy she needs to put it away and then move to the next. This reduces any form of overstimulation to avoid a tantrum or frustration. She also knows that she has to ask if she is allowed to play with certain toys as she has a little brother and smaller toys are not allowed when he is awake because he may choke. It is rather amusing to see the minute he sleeps how she will quickly pack and ask if she can take out the smaller toys. Tv remotes and the iPad are kept away and she only gets to watch for a bit before her afternoon nap.

As she has some sensory seeking behaviours, OT tasks such as playing with jelly, making bubbles, jumping on the trampoline take place outside when my husband and I are not working. These are thus more structured activities with specific aims to address her sensation seeking behaviours.

12. From the pictures explain which picture best depicts learning ? Explain

All the pictures represent some form of learning. At every age a different format of learning is required for the child to learn optimally. At her age I can see that she prefers to learn and play on her own so picture 5 is the best representative of her way of learning at her current age. However each picture is just as important for her to learn optimally.

Picture 1 is parent directed which encourages letter recognition, early literacy development and thus reading. This can be seen as a structured play activity which can assist with school readiness.

Picture 2- my daughter is very independent but occasionally enjoys having us around as indicated in picture 2 which is usually the case with a new toy. We model the required task/behaviour and in future activities she can play independently.

Picture 3 is a very important form of playing and learning- it teaches her to socialize and interact with individuals her age. She loves playing with others and I have noticed at her age she prefers to play with her peers than in isolation.

Picture 4- at age 3 I feel that she is still too young to be with an educator but learning with an educator maybe 2 times a week can assist her to start getting ready to learn in a more formalized manner

13. Do you consider certain play activities to be risky activities? Explain

Yes playing outside alone or on the jungle gym or trampoline is risky at her age as she tends to not know the use/limit of certain items and thus it needs to be supervised.