



# ROLE OF PLAY IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Ananda Majumdar

E-Mail Id: [anandamajumdar2004@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:anandamajumdar2004@yahoo.co.uk), [ananda@ualberta.ca](mailto:ananda@ualberta.ca), [ananda.majumdar@epsb.ca](mailto:ananda.majumdar@epsb.ca)

Faculty of Education, University of Alberta, Edmonton, Canada

**Abstract:** The purpose of the paper is to find various play through which children can be developed from the beginning of their life. The outcome of the paper shows various play with examples and make a content that children's are most important for future strategy in everything because they are the future leader of every nation, therefore their appropriate development in mentally and physically, and spiritually is important for the wellbeing to a human being. Therefore a strategy has created through various ideas and examples through this paper to follow the way for child development; this is the outcome. The question is; how can children be safer environmentally and thus playing freely and decide independently? The future activity is to precise more about child knowledge in developing countries and more development of motherhood for their child development.

**Keywords:** Free Play, Cognitive Development, Hard and Soft Motor Skill, Sensory Play, Theory of Loose Parts.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

Play is important for a child's health and development. Sensory play is one of its important part of child development. It covers most of the child's cognitive parts from brain, body, and life, therefore sensory play and its various patterns and examples have been discussed here. The play has different forms; the free play has been given priorities in the western countries such as Britain, Germany, Finland, Denmark etc. where the child has given rights to play by his/her own for own creational things. It is his/her independence for further lifestyle. It is the child's creation along with minimal guidance by an adult caregiver, educator and elementary teacher. Play on the other side is called the power of play; which provides both gross and soft motor skills such as physical development and mental development. Play is a pediatric role for the development of children which explains to play with parents and peers to build brains, bodies and social skills to become a social individual in today's world. Pretend play is another way of child development to let baby's know or feel them about materials and learn about many things such as drinking from an empty cup. Child's right to play and participate are recognized by the UN and it has been assured every part of the world that children have the right that is played and participates they like based on a friendly and secure environment. In the 21<sup>st</sup>-century skillful play is to engage actively and discover their world which is a child's natural urge to play. Baby's first smile starts through their playful learning, it is a stage of their birth to 6 months. In this stage, they smile, and it is a form of play. It is baby's reaction, a response that they smile, this smile is their social and emotional skill. In this stage, it is the parent's responsibility as a primary friend that they imitate their baby's coos and babbles and have a conversation (baby's linguistic development) by using the baby's sound. It is also recommended that they show their baby's interesting objects such as bright things (toy, materials etc.). Place baby in different angels, so that he/she can see the world from different angles. At the age of 1 to 3 years it is recommended for unstructured playtime (during 80's children played in street but today's children's play in child care centre because of environmental changes, so make sure in the centre environment they have given natural environment as much as possible), Playful learning is another way to develop children of this stage (1-3 years). Play with peers is another strategy to make the environment social and become a social element. For a creative role, children should be given empty containers, blocks, Lego's puzzles, wooden spoon etc. to make the play environment fully accessible along with enough sources. Body movement is another important development in this stage, so helping the child to explore their body through different movements is necessary such as; walking, jumping, standing on one leg (hard motor development). Pretend play is another way of learning. Singing and play rhythm is an important strategy in this age of child development. At the age of 4 to 6 year's children needs to be taught how to sing and dance, telling stories, asking questions for the skill of remembering are important tools for their development at that age. Interaction with peers, playful movements (climbing, hopping, swinging are examples of movements) are necessary for child development at the age of 4 to 6 years. Playing with an object like toys is called toys and object play through which baby's are using their sensory-motor skills. The gentle thrill of the playground is called a physical play through which children build emotional intelligence (soft-motor development). Countryside children play outdoor more than indoor play and thus develop their academic success along with the adjustment with nature in a sustainable way, the success continues in their older life. They also learn how to manage the critical situation through the outdoor game. It is called outdoor play. Experiment with different social roles in pretend play, it has been discussing above through an example of empty glass.

### Literature Review

Play is the most important element for child development. Finland, Denmark, Germany have such a structure where children grow through play by their own, scientifically called free play. However; because of social-economic and

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pg. 9

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environmental changes parents are not interested to permit their children to play on the street, or side or in open natural space. It is because of accidents, crime and many more social harmful situations. It can not be denied that why parents and schools are not interested at present to make a natural environment or to extend outdoor play for their children. Children are electronically educated through their indoor games and it makes negative impacts such as violent activities through videogame (war). It is absolutely a negative effect on the normal development of children. They are not allowed much to meet socially with their peers. Peer culture in an open environment is eliminating day after day. They are getting self-centred instead of social and helping minded. In the United States estimated 30 percentages of children no longer have recess. These are not good for child development and barriers are coming out one after another in this present world than children played in the '80s in the countryside safer.

### Result and Discussion

This resource was developed for the child development. Throughout, we will provide an introduction to play and its benefits, then move into the specifics of sensory play. What is sensory play? As well, we will outline the benefits of sensory play among young children, and children with special learning needs. Next, we will provide examples of different sensory play activities. Lastly, we will end with the conclusion of the resource, and provide our references. What is play? There are many different definitions, because play can be defined in a multitude of ways. One commonly accepted definition was presented by Hughes (2012). It suggests that play is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. Freely chosen means that the child decides how, when and what to play. Personally directed refers to the child governing the rules and regulations surrounding their play. Intrinsically motivated talks to children playing for the sake of playing, not due to any external motivators. This definition involves a very free form of play, but can be integrated into many play activities. If given the opportunity, children will take control of their play and shape it into what they want it to be. Play is an imperative part of childhood. Although there is not a single definition that is one aspect of play that is universally agreed upon. The child's right to play is outlined in Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. There are two main components of Article 31, as described by the International Play Association ("Article 31," n.d.). One is that everyone should recognize the child's right to play, and the child's right to participate in various leisure, recreational and cultural activities. Second, we should respect and promote opportunities for children to participate in said activities. All children should have an equal opportunity to participate in meaningful play. Lastly, play can take many different forms. Play can be indoors or outdoors, it can be creative and messy, it can be independent or with others, it can be educational or just for fun, and a whole host of other things. Hughes (2002) defines 16 types of play. For example, he defines social play and play that involves other children. Creative play is another type. This type of play involves a variety of materials, along with potentially getting messy. As well, Hughes defines deep play, in which the child encounters various challenges and risk. Overall, in all of its forms, play is a source of fun and enjoyment for children. While playing, children have the opportunity to laugh, create, move and accomplish many other tasks, all while developing important and life-long skills. Beyond providing children with the opportunity to have fun, play contributes to children's development. Bowne and Patte (2013) outline 5 main developmental benefits. They are as follows. Physical Benefits engaged in play is critical for children's physical development. While playing, they gain gross and fine motor skills, develop their sense of balance, learn how to overcome challenges and manage risk, and so on. On top of this, locomotor play can improve a child's overall health and well-being. Playing can aid in preventing obesity and diabetes, as well as help children build stronger muscles, improve their bone density, and increase their heart and lung functions ("Benefits of Play," n.d.). Play provides children with a good start towards a healthy, well-balanced life. Emotional Benefits is one of the important parts of child development. Emotional development occurs during play. Children have the ability to experiment with, and release, various emotions. Therefore, they have the chance to learn how to manage their emotions. Children also increase their emotional intelligence through play. That is, they gain the ability to read others emotions, and respond in an appropriate manner. Lastly, play helps children build their self-confidence and self-esteem. For example, when a child overcomes challenges in play, such as climbing a tree, they feel a sense of accomplishment and therefore, build their self-esteem. All of these aspects of emotional development aid children in facing, and overcoming future life challenges. Children with the ability to regulate their emotions respond to stress more positively, and gain resiliency due to the challenges that they encounter. Creative Benefits is another important parts of play with no predetermines rules encourages children to be creative. They have to develop the rules and regulations surrounding their play, determine the direction they want their play to go, and take on new roles. Dansky and Silverman (1973) found a direct connection between play and creativity. Children were given objects, and allowed to interact with the objects in various ways, depending on which group they were in. In the end, the children that were allowed to freely play with the objects that they were given developed three times as many non-standard uses for the objects. This is compared to the groups that were more restricted in their use of the objects. Overall, free play, and the creativity it develops, is important to children in future schooling, their future occupations, and in a whole variety of other ways. Cognitive Benefits is another part of child development. Play actually affects neurological development, and can

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pg. 10

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influence neural circuits in a child's brain. Play can teach children decision making and problem solving skills, help them understand strategy, rules and objectives, and contributes to the improvement of their judgment and reasoning skills. A famous child developmental theorist, Jean Piaget, said that "the role of play in constructing knowledge is the most clearly articulated avenue of children's development ("Benefits of Play," n.d.). Social Benefits is another important parts of child development. Often, children look forward to play because it gives them a chance to interact with their friends, and to meet new peers. Play aids children in developing relationships with their peers, friends and family. Also, play teaches children how to negotiate with many different types of people, it allows children to learn social and cultural rules, it helps develop their cooperation and teamwork skills, and perhaps most importantly, it enhances their communication skills. While children are playing and having fun, they are learning skills that are foundational and will allow them to become socially- adjusted, and well-adapted adults. Overall, we are beginning to observe a trend, where children are spending less time playing. Children are spending more time in academic settings and at organized activities, and less time engaging in free, self-directed play. Given its many benefits, it is important that we protect and promote play. Spending time engaging in play, on top of more organized activities, will ensure that children's lives are balanced and is essential to a child's development. It will be helpful for their work-life balance as well in their lifetime as a good citizen and thus turn into a global citizen as well. Sensory Play; Gascoyne (2012) identifies internal and external senses. The internal, or 6th senses, that she identifies are vestibular (balance), proprioceptive (position in space), kinaesthetic (movement), baric (weight), and thermal (temperature). However, we will focus more on the 5 external senses. They are visual (sight), olfactory (smell), auditory (sound), tactile (touch), and gustatory (taste). In play, we can use different materials to stimulate these senses. Here, we will touch on various materials, or objects, and the associated external sense. Visual; to stimulate our sense of sight, we can use objects with different colours, patterns, shapes, and sizes. Olfactory; our sense of smell can be stimulated by many different scents. The outdoors has many different scents, from animals, trees and other plants. Baking, and other cooking play, can produce different scents. As well, we can add artificial scents to playdough, slime, and other sensory play activities. Auditory; in regards to our sense of hearing, there are many ways to stimulate this sense. Children can listen for different pitches, tones and volumes of sound, which can be created from a variety of materials. Tactile, To stimulate our sense of touch, we can use objects with different textures, such as hard, soft, slimy, rough or smooth objects. As well, we can use materials with different loose parts to sift through, so children can encounter different shapes, and feel smooth, round and pointy edges. Gustatory; our sense of taste involves sweet, sour, bitter, salty, and umami foods. Umami is a savory taste imparted by glutamate, an amino acid. As well, the texture of a food influences our sense of taste. So, crunchy and soft foods will taste different to us. Any play activity that stimulates one, or multiple senses in a child can be classified as sensory play. Sensory activities are easily facilitated in the natural environment. Leaves, trees, snow and many objects found outside look, smell, sound, feel, and taste differently. With that said, all of these senses can be stimulated indoors as well, through different materials and loose parts. For example, finger painting allows preschool-aged children to feel paint on their hands, while mixing different colours and forming different patterns. Or, children can make kinetic sand. Kinetic sand has an interesting texture, may be used to create different shapes, and can involve different colors and scents. All in all, sensory activities encourage children to discover, and explore their surroundings. Sensory play allows children to learn, and gain understanding about the world around them. It is important for all children, and invaluable for younger children and children with special learning needs. Sensory play has all of the same benefits that we mentioned earlier, with some added features. That is what we will touch on here. There are many leading educators who believe in sensory play, as a medium for learning (Gascoyne, 2012). For example, Friedrich Froebel laid the foundations for much of our modern education system, and he emphasized sensory play, and first-hand experiences, as a main teaching tool in his kindergartens. Sensory play allows children to explore and investigate the materials that they are playing with, and the world around them. Children use the scientific method of observing, experimenting and making conclusions. This helps children's brains develop ("Exploring the benefits of sensory play," 2016). They receive sensory information, and their brains learn to decipher which information is, and is not important, and therefore, which information can be filtered out. For example, some children are fussy with food, due to certain textures. While playing, children can touch, smell and interact with many textures, in the environment and in the materials that they are playing with. They can interact with different textures in a safe, and stress-free environment. This allows children to develop a positive pathway in their brain, and can aid in broadening the number of foods that they will consume. Next, children with special learning needs, specifically autism, have much to gain from sensory play. Children with autism often have difficulty processing sensory information. This can cause them to become overwhelmed, by various visual, olfactory, auditory, tactile and gustatory information. Sensory play can aid in calming, and comforting a child with autism. They can play with a sensory bin, move around objects in a sensory bag, or even interact with play dough, if they are feeling overwhelmed by their settings. Sensory integration therapies also use sensory play, to improve daily functioning in children with autism. A study, led by a team of occupational therapists, found benefits associated with sensory integration therapies (Schaaf et al., 2014). In this



study, the researchers set goals for each child, in conjunction with their families. These goals were associated with a specific sense, or a sense that the child often became overwhelmed with, whether it be a loud sound or touching food. There were groups of children who received sensory integration therapy, and groups of children who did not. In the end, the children in the sensory integration group showed a higher success rate, in terms of reaching their goals. In summary, sensory play has many benefits. Mainly, it aids children in gaining a greater understanding of the world around them. Therefore, sensory play is especially important in young children, and in children who are beginning to form connections and interpret their surroundings. As well, children with autism often thrive in sensory play activities. They are able to interact with various visual, olfactory, auditory, tactile and gustatory information in a safe environment, and on their own terms. Few examples of Sensory Play Activities such as; Sensory Bins, Sensory Bags, Playdough, Slime, Moon sand, Musical instruments, Baking/Cooking Finger Painting, Free Play Paint Activities, Bubble Activities, Scavenger Hunts etc. Sensory bins stimulate multiple senses in a child. Their senses of sight, smell, sound and touch all have the potential to be stimulated. In a sensory bin, there are materials that are different colours, shapes and sizes. Children will be able to touch and manipulate objects with many different textures, potentially different temperatures, and materials with varying scents and sounds. This will often lead to the creation of sensory bins, with an entire storyline attached. There are many different themes, materials and methods of facilitating the creation of sensory bins. Sensory bins are often beneficial to keep as well, if the appropriate materials are used. This way children can play with them again, if they need a break from another activity or game. The only required sensory bins material includes a bin, or container of some sort. This may be a Tupperware container, cardboard box, baking pan or anything else that is easily accessible. The rest of materials are dependent on the type of sensory bin you are making. You will want a base for each child's sensory bin, materials for each child's bin, and other props for the children to play with. For the base, potential options are water, snow, dirt, sand, rice, dry pasta, water beads, shaving cream, and coffee grounds variety of other materials. You can colour the base, or make it scented, using glitter, food colouring, Kool Aid, powdered paint, or other incense. The materials will be dependent on the theme of your sensory bin. However, materials may include natural objects like leaves, rocks, pine cones, stones, grass, and anything else found outside. Fabricated materials may include small toys, and craft supplies like buttons, beads, glitter, pipe cleaners, cotton balls, pom-poms, and feathers. Other props to play with can be items like shovels, spoons, bowls, ice cube trays, muffin tins, syringes, magnifying glasses, and other objects that can help manipulate the items in the children's sensory bins. Then, the child collected grass, pinecones, and rocks. A few good props may include a magnifying glass, shovel, and bowls. There is potential to add water to this bin, or add more natural materials, like sticks and berries. With access to many, different natural materials, the children can collect and organize the bin in whatever fashion they want. In this activity, children have a huge amount of voice and choice. It is good to keep this in mind, while facilitating the activity. For natural sensory bins, or those created outside, children have the ability to completely determine what their sensory bin will contain. They can bring their containers outside, then, given appropriate boundaries to ensure that they do not roam too far, you can let them collect whatever materials they would like and organize the materials in any way. As well, if desired, you can bring out extra materials and props. For sensory bins created inside, you can lay out many different materials, and each child can create their bin, depending on the theme that they have in mind. Or, you can lay out materials associated with certain themes, and let the children create from there. Either option allows the children to determine the direction that they want to do. You can ask the child different probing questions, about their bins and what they are creating. Or, you can help make the child's sensory bin, by cutting, gluing and helping in whatever way they have asked. For variations and progressions, you have the ability to modify it in whatever way you want. You can decide on any materials, or themes. Depending on the amount of materials given to the children and the size of their sensory bins, the activity can take varying amounts of time, from minutes to a couple of hours. As well, this allows the creation of a sensory bin to be a novel experience, no matter how many times you do it. Next, you can further extend this activity by adding a scavenger hunt component. Children can set off to find all of the materials on their list, and then add all of the materials to their sensory bin. This works especially well with the nature sensory bins, as children can first do an outdoor scavenger hunt, then move to creating their sensory bin. An outdoor scavenger hunt is our last activity in the resource. Sensory Bags; In essence, sensory bags are similar to sensory bins. They too have the ability to stimulate children's senses of sight, sound and touch. This is through the variety of colours, shapes, textures, and consistencies involved. Again, there are many themes and therefore, materials and storylines that may go along with each child's creation. Lastly, sensory bags will often last for a long time and are good for a child to refer back to, if they are feeling overwhelmed with their settings. Later on, they can still move around all of the objects in their sensory bag, and feel all of the different textures and shapes. Materials; Ziploc sandwich bags often work well, as a vessel to hold each child's creation. Then, you can again use a variety of different materials. You require a base, and then any number of other materials you have access to. For the base, hair gel, paint, water colours, shaving cream, and oil all work well. When using hair gel, body wash, shaving cream, or oil, colouring the base with food colouring, Kool-Aid, or sparkles often interests children. Similar to the sensory



bins, other materials may include natural objects and craft supplies. Securing the bag with tape, after the children are done creating, ensures they last. We would facilitate this activity in a way that promotes children's voice and choice. So, facilitating this activity as described above, for sensory bins, will work well. Another variation is using sensory bags to teach children about the colour mixing. Children can also create letters, numbers, pictures and shapes using their bags. To facilitate this, you can lay out the base you are using, and multiple colours, if the base itself is not coloured already. Then, you could encourage, and help, children add all of the colours to their bags. Color mixing sensory bag is another child's play example; paint is used as the base. Neon and glow-in-the-dark paints are also a fun variation. You can mix primary, or secondary colours together. The colours are added to the bag, so each child can mix them and see what colours are created. Afterwards, you can teach about letters, numbers, and so on. Play Dough; is a modelling compound, used by children for arts and crafts projects. Play Dough can be squashed, squeezed, rolled, flattened, chopped, cut, and used to create many things. The act of making play dough, as well as engaging with it after, can stimulate many senses. Play dough can be many different colours, have sparkles, contain different scents, and has a unique texture. It is especially good at developing children's fine motor skills, hand-eye coordination, and overall concentration. Play dough keeps for multiple days. There are many different recipes that can be used to make play dough. I have included a few here. Beyond the ingredients in these recipes, other objects that can be used to manipulate play dough are an asset. This may include rolling pins, and cookie cutters. 1 cup plain flour, ¼ cup salt, 1 tablespoon cooking oil, A few drops of food colouring, ½ cup water. Then mix the dry ingredients in a large bowl, pour the oil into the dry ingredients, add a few drops of food colouring to the water, stir to combine, add the coloured liquid, a little bit at a time, to the flour, salt and oil, knead, and continue adding the coloured liquid until the desired consistency is reached. Ingredients of Sparkly Scented Play Dough are; 1 cup all-purpose flour, ½ cup salt, 2 teaspoons cream of tart, ½ teaspoon glitter, 1.23 ounce packet Kool-Aid in your choice of color 1 cup water, 2 tablespoons vegetable oil. Then in a small pot, mix together the flour, salt, cream of tartar, glitter, and Kool-Aid, mix in the water and oil and heat over medium heat, stir until a ball forms in the center of the pot, the dough is ready when it starts to toughen and darken in color. It is not ready if it's stick. Remove from heat and place the play dough on a clean surface. Allow to cool for a few minutes. Knead 8-10 times until the dough smooths out and stays together, then store in an airtight container. This depends on the recipe that you are using. For the first recipe, you can lay out the ingredients, with measuring utensils beside them. As well, you can have water and food colouring mixed already. Then, each child gets to measure out their own ingredients, add their own coloured water, and mix their own play dough. If you have tablecloths accessible, participants can pour flour right on the table to aid in mixing, and get even messier. Staff can then be around to help measure and mix, when the children need it. If the children all require extra assistance, you can all work through the same steps, then move onto the next steps together. For the second recipe, the children can help measure and mix all of the ingredients for the first two steps. However, then a staff member would have to cook the playdough. Children are often curious as to what they are making, and what the ingredients are, and this way, they get to see and feel all of the different ingredients. Lastly, depending on the amount of ingredients that are accessible, play dough can be made individually, or in groups. Once, the play dough is made, probing questions about what each child has created help to continue the activity. As we add other loose parts, the benefits associated with play dough grow. If you have a wide range of additional materials to add, the play will get broader and more creative. This is the "Theory of Loose Parts," as described by Nicholson (1971). For example, boxes and containers, or various shapes and sizes, can enhance the play. Other materials that you can add include natural materials. Children love to make leaf imprints, and explore with different textures and shapes, using play dough. As well, various craft supplies may prompt children to create play dough monsters, or sculptures. Lastly, play dough can be used for learning various topics. Children can form letters of the alphabet, numbers, create shapes, and learn these important topics in a more interactive fashion. There are various versions of slime. There is slime that is fluffy, and others that are foamy. Similar to play dough, slime is a multi-sensory experience. Slime can be various colours, contain glitter, have different scents, and many different textures, depending on the recipe that you use. Here, we will include one, basic slime recipe called; Saline Solution Slime Recipe; ½ cup white or clear washable PVA School Glue, ½ cup water, ½ tsp baking soda, tbs. saline solution, containing sodium borate and boric acid Food Coloring and Glitter (optional for creating fun themes). Then add glue to mixing bowl, add water to glue and stir to combine, sprinkle baking soda into mixture and stir to combine, add food coloring and glitter as desired, add saline solution and stir quickly to form the slime, finally store in an airtight container. Facilitating this in a way similar to play dough works well. You can lay out measuring utensils, and then aid children in measuring and mixing their slime. It often works well to sit around the same table, and work on the same steps all at once, while still letting the children take the lead on their own slime. Slime requires you to knead, and mix a lot. So, staff can help mix, as well as aid extra saline solution, if the children require a bit more. This recipe often requires you to add extra saline solution. Experimenting with multiple different slime recipes, depending on the materials that you have accessible, allows children to interact with a whole variety of different textures. If you want to make a different variation of slime, there are many more on the



links attached. Moon sand can be made in a variety of ways. It is a very tactile activity due to how mouldable it is. Children can create anything that they want. But, it also stimulates children's senses of sight and smell. Moon sand can be stored for many days, so children can play with it multiple times. There are three recipes included here, all of which work well. It just depends on which ingredients you have accessible to you. Sand and Cornstarch Ingredients are; 3 cups cornstarch, 1 ½ cups water, 6 cups sand. Flour and baby oil ingredients are; 9 cups flour, 1 ¼ cup baby oil. And Cornstarch and vegetable oil ingredients are; 4 cups cornstarch, ¾ cup vegetable oil. In all cases, consider adding powdered tempera paint, Kool-Aid, glitter, and/or spices, like cinnamon or cocoa, to the dry ingredients. As well, food colouring, liquid watercolours, paint, or vanilla extract can be added to the wet ingredients. This will give the slime a different visual, and scent. Then, combine the wet and dry ingredients, and mix. In the first example, combine the cornstarch and water, then add the sand. All three recipes are quite simple, and accessible for the children to make. Staff can facilitate the creation of moon sand at a couple of different tables, throughout the classroom. They can provide children with the measuring tools, and ingredients. The children can then measure and dump the ingredients into a big bowl. This way, everyone can get their hands in, and help to make the mixture. This activity is also good for the outdoors, so there is no risk of getting sand all over the classroom. Similar to play dough, children will get more creative in their play with moon sand if they are given extra materials. Sand toys, cookie cutters, rolling pins, craft supplies, and boxes are all loose parts that can be added. As well, if you are outside, children will add natural materials to enhance their play. Often times, children will create entire stories, associated with the village, castle, or whatever it is that they have made. Homemade musical instruments are a fun activity, and another multi-sensory experience. Using a variety of different materials, you can create instruments with different tones, pitches, and volumes. As well, the children will get to interact with materials with different colours, shapes and textures, stimulating children's senses of hearing, touch, and sight. Maracas is a wonderful musical instrument. To make maracas, many different materials will work. We have attached a few examples above. With that said, the required materials are fillings, such as rice, pasta, and buttons. Then, you will require a vessel to hold these fillings. To finish off, children can decorate their instruments, with paint, markers, sparkles, stickers, and so on. To make tin can drums, all that is required is balloons and the tin cans. Mallets, or dowels, are an extra prop that the children can play their drums with. To decorate, children can use paint, markers, paper, ribbon, and any other craft supplies. This activity often works well if you set-up various stations. One staff member can facilitate the maracas station, another one can lead the tin drums, and another can help make the tambourines. For the maracas, the children can choose what they want to make and fill their maracas with, depending on the materials that you have available. Then, they can decorate. For the drums, due to the sharp edges on cans, you can cover the edges with balloons before the children start. Then, they can choose the can and colour of balloon that they want, and start decorating. Lastly, the tambourines can be decorated however the child wants. The staff can just be around for assisting children with adding the bells, or bottle caps, if needed. You can bring extra props to this activity. You can prepare some extra musical instruments beforehand. As well, if you have access to any brought instruments, those are fun to add in. This way, each child can experiment with different sounds. Next, younger children will have fun doing a parade. You can bring materials, so the children can get all dressed up. Then, you can do a parade around the school, or outside if it is too loud. Each child can select a couple of their favourite instruments, and you are good to go. Baking with kids can be lots of fun and rather messy, but among all the mess, there are so many benefits that children can gain from the whole baking experience. They get to touch, smell, taste, and interact with a variety of different ingredients. This helps children to develop their bilateral coordination, strengthen their hands, practice their math skills and learn language associated with measuring, combining, mixing and baking ingredients. Crunchy Drop Biscuits ingredients are; 3 cup all purpose flour, 2 tbsp. granulated sugar, 5 tbsp. baking powder, 1 tbsp. salt, 1 cup butter/margarine, 1 cup Egg, beaten milk. In a large bowl combine flour, sugar, baking powder and salt. Put melted butter or margarine. In a small bowl beat egg with spoon, add milk and pour into well. Put everything together and make round biscuits by hand and put it in the pan. Bake in 350 degree Celsius oven for 10-12 minutes until it goes browned. Try your biscuits. You can set out all of the ingredients, around a table large enough for all the children to fit. Because each child cannot work on their own, letting children take turns measuring, mixing, and rolling out the balls of dough is a good way to facilitate this activity. They can then help you carry the trays over to the oven, where a staff member can put them in and take them out, when they are cooked. Then, enjoy your creation. The children would benefit and enjoy any recipe, of which you have all of the ingredients. It is a fun way to do the morning, or afternoon snack. They may also really enjoy decorating cookies, muffins, or cupcakes, if you have icing, sprinkles, and those kinds of ingredients. Finger painting is a fun way to make a craft. The children get to make a picture, while touching paint and getting a little messy. This activity mainly stimulates the visual and tactile senses. As well, it is particularly a good gift idea for parents, grandparents and other special people. Paper, cardboard, or a surface for the children to paint on Paint are materials for finger paint. Facilitating this activity is relatively easy for the staff. The children will need paint set out, and then refilled when they are running low. The staff can ask about each child's creations, and if they are in need of any more colours to continue on the activity. Each child can then create



whatever they want. If it is a particular occasion, you can make this into a specific craft as well. For example, you can make the spring handprint craft, in which children paint their hands. Then, they can finger paint all the leaves around the tree. Here, we will present a variety of ways, to facilitate a painting activity. Children can paint in a whole bunch of different ways, using different body parts and materials. The paint can also be made using different ingredients, including regular paint, Kool-Aid, and sidewalk chalk. This will stimulate the children's senses of sight, smell, sound and touch. Paper, cardboard, or a surface for the children to paint on paint, paint brushes, syringes, bubble wrap, and straws are materials. This activity could be lead inside, assuming the paint is washable. However, it is ideal for outside, where the children can get as messy as they want. You can lay out all of the materials, and let the children play. As well, if you see that children are not using certain materials, you can jump in and start using them. This often sparks the children's interest in the material, and gets them to start using the materials. With that said, the hope is that the children will use the materials, and not necessarily in the typical ways. You want this activity to encourage creativity, via the "Theory of Loose Parts," (Nicholson, 1971). For example, they can step on the bubble wrap and paint with their feet. This will create a unique pattern on the paper, and the children will be able to hear and feel the popping bubble wrap. A variation of this activity is scented sidewalk chalk paint. For this activity, the children can use all of the same materials to paint, and even paint right on the sidewalk. Ingredients are; 1 cup water, Kool-Aid, Smashed up chalk, or 1 cup cornstarch. After collection of ingredients, Mix Kool-Aid and water, Add smashed up chalk, or cornstarch and then stir and play. Bubble is another outdoor activity. Here, you can make big tubs of bubbles and children can make bubbles using whatever they want. This is a good sensory activity, as children love seeing all of the different coloured bubbles, the bubbles are fun to chase and pop, and have a unique scent, when made with Kool-Aid and other ingredients. Bubble activities can stimulate the children's senses of sight, smell, sound and touch. Materials are; Dish soap, Kool-Aid, or food colouring to make the mixtures more colourful and have a scent. To make bubble snakes, you can put washcloths on the end of a cut water bottle, using an elastic. You can then put drops of food colouring on the washcloth, dip the bottle into the bubble solution, and fun colour bubble snakes will result. In big tubs, you can make the bubbles mixture with the children. As well, if you are using pipe cleaners, beads and other materials to make your own wands, that can be a craft prior to going outside. Otherwise, you can bring out all of the props, and let the children play. They will love putting their hands in the bubble mixture and feeling the slimy, soapy mixture, making different kinds of bubbles, and then popping all of the bubbles. Staff can again encourage the children to use all of the materials, by participating in the activity. Scavenger Hunter is an activity can be indoors, or outdoors. It is very multi-sensory, and can focus on whatever senses you want, depending on the items the children are seeking out. This activity will work inside the classroom, or throughout the school. However, it also works very well outside, and will be good for a walk in the river valley. Materials are; Scavenger hunt sheets, Items on the sheets, if you are doing the scavenger hunt inside, Bags, or containers, to collect items in. Nature Scavenger hunt can be an example. To start, you may need to hide various materials, for the children to seek out. This is applicable if you are doing an indoor, or different scavenger hunt, as compared to the example above. Next, facilitating this activity depends largely on the children's reading abilities. At this age, they may require help reading the items on their lists. In this case, the staff can split up and each staff member can go with groups of children. This way, staff can read the materials off of the list. Then, each child can go and find the item they are looking for, and put the items in their own bag. Or, the staff member and children they are with can all work together, to find the items. Another really good option is a picture scavenger hunt, where the children's sheets have pictures, instead of written words. If you want an indoor scavenger hunt, or another variation of a scavenger hunt, you can make, or find a different scavenger hunt list. This will allow participating in a scavenger hunt to be a novel experience each time. You could also do an alphabet scavenger hunt, where children have to find letters of the alphabet. Or, you could use a scavenger hunt to teach numbers, shapes, and so on.

## CONCLUSION

There are many types of play. We chose the sensory play, because of the huge amount of sensory play activities there are and its importance in childhood. Sensory play encompasses all of a child's body parts and enhances children's internal and external senses. Therefore, it has an infinite amount of benefits. Sensory play is essential for development in young children and children with special learning needs. Altogether, we hope that this resource has provided you with some extra background, and ideas for sensory play activities, on top of the vast amount of knowledge that you already possess. We encourage you to let the children have as much voice and choice as possible, in all of the activities. From the beginning to the end it has been discussing various aspects of child development, different forms of play and has given priorities on sensory development because of its all kinds of ways to develop skills. So the question arises that; how can children be safer environmentally and thus playing freely and decide independently? It depends on both parents and caregivers/educators. They have to understand how children develop and grow, they both have to provide children many ways to learn, have to be friendly adult, providing more access of space, no judgement, they have to be careful to listen to children and respect them,



encourage them for setting goals, they have to give them full independence, though it is not visible in the child care center highly training and development must be the requirement for child care employment to know all the rules and regulations for emergency requirements. Make sure child care environment is clean and has enough staffs for their care, a free play-based curriculum or programming where outdoor and indoor both gets similar importance, quiet environment, smoke-free environment, healthy nutritious meal, flexible programming, and Ensures that inactive screen time is not part of routine activities. These are a few steps to solve the developmental problem.

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