

The toys and play noted in this guide are a general guideline for play. It is important to keep in mind the suitability of toys as they facilitate areas of development and learning: gross motor, fine motor, language, problem solving, imaginative play, social interaction and independence.

RESOURCES:

Lakeshore

<http://www.lakeshorelearning.com>

A range of toy products for the infant/toddlers, early childhood, kindergarten and early elementary.

Beyond Play

<http://www.beyondplay.com>

A range of early intervention products for young children with special needs.

South Paw Enterprises, Inc.

<http://www.southpawenterprises.com>

Abilitations – Multisensory

<http://www.abilitations.com/multisensory>

Integrations

<http://www.integrationscatalog.com>

These sites offer a variety of products for sensory processing and integration.

Learning Resources

<http://www.learningresources.com>

An educational resource for PreK – 6th grade. A look into products used in the classroom.

Pocket Full of Therapy

<http://www.pfot.com>

Offers select pediatric and school based products geared towards occupational therapy.

Notes: _____

The Alcott Montessori School

A Resource Guide to Skills Building & Developmentally Enriching Toys



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Learning Through Play

The act of playing is an important tool that influences a child's life. The primary goals of childhood are to grow, learn, and play. It is often through play that children learn to make sense of the world around them. It is a child's "job" or "occupation" to play to develop physical coordination, emotional maturity, social skills to interact with other children, and self-confidence to try new experiences and explore new environments.

American Occupational Therapy Association (2001)

Toys are the basic tools used for play. As early as infancy and through much of a child's school age, play is the format that parents, caregivers, teachers, therapists, etc., utilize to engage with children.

Selecting the 'right' toys can be a challenging task with the immense choices available to us. Toys are often chosen based on age level and area of development.

This guide was developed by school based occupational therapists to provide a look into the selection of toys used to help children learn and develop.

Zero to 12 months

Toys/Play	Purpose
Rattles	cause & effect
Mobiles	visual tracking
Play gyms	fine motor
Mirrors	visual stimuli
Musical toys	auditory stimuli
Teething toys	oral stimuli
Squeeze toys	hand strength
Container with objects	grasp & release
Infant swing	movement
Peek-a-boo	exploration
Pat-a-cake	bilateral skills

2 – 3 years old

Toys/Play	Purpose
Crayons	grasp
Magna doodle	grasp
Legos	bilateral skills
Beads & string	bilateral skills
Blocks	bilateral skills
Beans/Rice in a bin	touch stimuli
Play dough	hand strength
Cars	imaginative play
Wooden puzzles	problem solving
Books	visual stimuli
Sensory balls	touch stimuli
Music/Songs	auditory stimuli

1 – 2 years old

Toys/Play	Purpose
Push & Pull toys	walking
Tunnel	balance
Riding on toys	balance
Rocking horse	movement
Picture cards	visual stimuli
Cardboard books	visual stimuli
Interactive books	eye hand coordination
Large beads	eye hand coordination
Large pegboard	eye hand coordination
Wooden puzzles	problem solving
Shape sorter	problem solving
Nesting blocks	problem solving
Soft blocks	bilateral skills
Hand paint	touch stimuli
Shaving cream	touch stimuli
Pop up toys	cause & effect

3 – 5 years old

Toys/Play	Purpose
Lacing	bilateral skills
Musical instruments	bilateral skills
Scissors	bilateral skills
Dress up	imaginative play
Kitchen/cooking	imaginative play
Train/cars	imaginative play
Dolls/puppets	imaginative play
Water/Sand play	touch stimuli
Toss/Catch games	visual motor
Interlocking puzzles	visual motor
Puzzle/Maze	problem solving
Scooter board	gross motor
Tricycle	coordination
Drawing/Painting	grasp
Chopsticks	hand strength