

# COME PLAY WITH ME

WHAT IS PLAY AND WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Presented by Kecia Adams-Wright, M.Ed., BCBA  
& Christina Martin M.S., CCC-SLP, BCBA

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**AGENDA**

- What is play
- Why is it important
- How to assess
- Tools to expand play

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# PLAY...WHAT IS IT?

TO ENGAGE IN ACTIVITY FOR ENJOYMENT AND RECREATION RATHER THAN A SERIOUS OR PRACTICAL PURPOSE.

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## WHAT IS PLAY?

What does it look like?

- Children interacting with toys or items
- The characteristics of play all have to do with motivation and mental attitude
- For instance two children may be typing on a computer keyboard with a game on the screen or kicking a ball back and forth to one another...




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## WHAT IS PLAY?

- It is a child's "job" or "occupation" to play in order to develop physical coordination, emotional maturity, and social skills to interact with other children, as well as the self-confidence to try new experiences and explore new environments.

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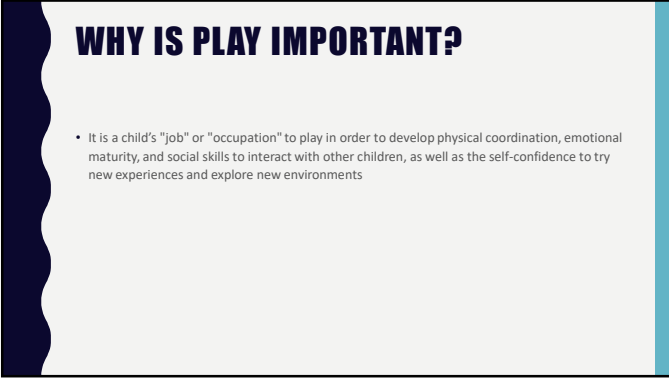
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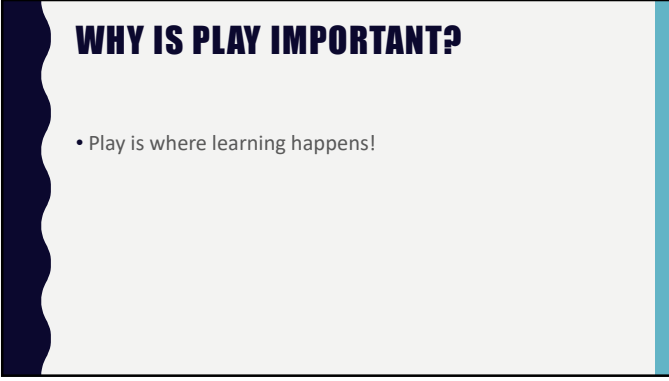
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# PLAY...HOW CAN YOU ASSESS IT?

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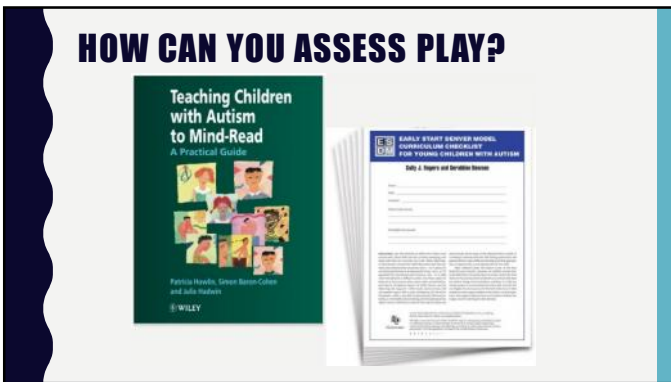
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- ## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?
- Early Start Denver Model (ESDM) Checklist
  - It was created by Sally Rogers, Ph.D. and Geraldine Dawson, Ph.D.
  - ESDM is an approach to work with young children with Autism.
  - The ESDM is an extension of the Denver Model, but focuses on the age range of 12-48 months.
    - The model can be implemented up to the age of 60 months.
  - The program focuses on the integration of Applied Behavior Analysis, Pivotal Response Training and a natural development pattern.
  - Intervention team may be comprised of a combination of the following:
    - ESDM certified therapist, psychologist, behaviorist, OT, SLP, early intervention specialist, developmental pediatrician, and parents.

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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

- ESDM Checklist skill level ranges from the 9-12 month period up to the 48 month level
- It is organized into 4 levels which roughly correspond with the following developmental age periods
  - Level 1: 12-18 months
  - Level 2: 18-24 months
  - Level 3: 24-36 months
  - Level 4: 36-48 months

\*\*The curriculum checklist was developed specifically for children with ASD and reflects their typical developmental profile with relatively more advanced visual motor skills and relatively less advanced social and communication skills than other children of their same developmental age.

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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

ESDM Checklist

Play		Level 2	Observed	Parent Report
1	Fits behavior to the qualities of five different objects.			
2	Plays independently and appropriately with 10 one-piece toys.			
3	Plays independently with toys requiring repetitive skill objects (ring stacker, nesting cups).			
4	Demonstrates appropriate play behaviors on a throws ball, stacks blocks, pegs in holes, rolls car.	1		
5	Plays independently with toys requiring two different tasks.	2		
6	Plays independently with toys requiring several put in, open, remove, close.	3		
7	Demonstrates conventional actions on self with	4		
8	Completes play task and puts away.	5		
		Play: Representational		
		1		
		2		
		3		
		4		
		5		
		Play: Independent Play		
		6		
		7		
		8		

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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

Teaching Children with Autism to Mind Read

- Level 1: Sensorimotor Play**- the child simply This includes banging and ritualistic
- Level 2: Emerging Functional Play**- the child uses way (as they are designed to be played 2 examples in 10 minute play period.
- Level 3: Established Functional Play**- children are scored at this level if they demonstrate 3 or more examples in 10 minute observation.




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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

- **Level 4a: Emerging Pretend Play**- (check if child SPONTANEOUSLY produces 1 or 2 examples of any of below during 10 min observation of play)

Includes:

- **Object substitution:** where one object stands in for another (block is car, banana is a telephone)
- **Attribution of pretend properties:** example, child cleans doll's face as if it were dirty
- **Use of imaginary objects/scenarios:** child is seen to use imaginary objects in play and behaves as if objects are present. (drinks from imaginary cup, car has imaginary collision)




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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

- **Level 4b: Pretend-Real Distinction**-The teacher performs an action and asks the child if teacher is REALLY doing it. If child answers correctly check here.
- **Level 5: Established Pretend Play**- This level is scored if the child SPONTANEOUSLY produces at least 3 or more of TWO examples of any of the types of play listed in 4a, during a 10 min observation.

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## PLAY...HOW TO EXPAND IT?

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

- Look at where your child falls in their assessment
- The level at which teaching begins will be the level above that spontaneously reached by the child

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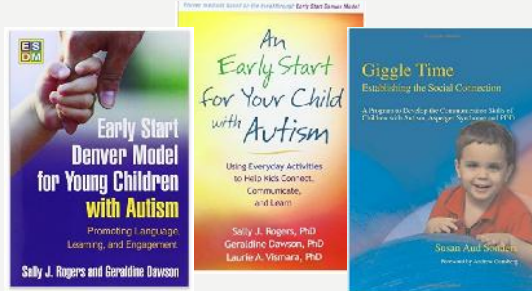
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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### ESDM- Combination of Treatment Practices

#### DENVER MODEL PRINCIPLES

- Modulate Arousal
- Dyadic engagement
- Quality of JA elaborated routines
- Combine objectives
- Communication in all activities, varied functions
- Emphasize novel communication
- One word up rule

#### PRT PRINCIPLES

- Follow Child's lead
- Give choices
- Take turns
- Maintenance interspersed with acquisition
- Reinforces child attempts
- Direct response-reinforcement relationship
- ABA Principles

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**ABA PRINCIPLES**

- Attention
- ABC Format
- Efficacious application of behavioral teaching techniques
- Number of Repetitions
- Management of problematic behaviors

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**HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?**

**CORE FEATURES OF ESDM**

- Naturalistic applied behavior analytic strategies
- Sensitive to normal development sequence
- Deep parental involvement
- Focus on interpersonal exchanges and positive affect
- Shared engagement with joint activities
- Language and Communication taught inside a positive, affect-based relationship

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**HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?**

**Joint Activity Routines**

- Follows child choice or interest
- Both partners engage in activity
- Targets multiple objectives from different domains
- Activities are brief
  - 2-4 minutes in length




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building Onto JARs

#### Step 1: Set Up

- Develop a theme

#### Step 2: Theme

- Take turns, collaborate, teach objectives

#### Step 3: Add Variations

- Increase play complexity
- Expand child repertoire
- Target multiple objectives
- Build up flexibility

#### Stage 4: Close the activity and transition to a new one

- Organization
- Temporal sequences




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Types of Joint Activity Routines

#### ROUTINES WITH OBJECTS

- Alternate attention
- Triadic engagement
- Joint attention
- Objectives:
  - Communication
  - Cognition
  - Imitation
  - Motor
  - Self-care
  - Joint attention
  - Social

#### SENSORY SOCIAL ROUTINES

- "Find the smile"
- Dyadic engagement
- Positive affect
- Reciprocal, social exchanges
- Modulates child arousal, attention
- Objectives:
  - Communication
  - Cognition
  - Imitation
  - Motor
  - Self-Care
  - Joint Attention
  - Social

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Examples of Joint Activity Routines

#### ROUTINES WITH OBJECTS

- Blocks
- Legos
- Play-Doh
- Puzzles
- Books
- Gears



#### SENSORY SOCIAL ROUTINES

- Tickers
- "Ride a Little Horsie"
- Crashing into Pillows
- Nursery Rhymes
- Peek-a-boo
- Chase




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Primary Goals of Routines with Objects

- Building rapport by following child lead
- Natural way to incorporate many different skills into 1 social back and forth game
  - Initiation
  - People are fun, interesting; I get something when I interact
  - Communication
    - Intraverbals
    - Manding
    - Tacting
  - Imitation
  - Play skills
  - Social skills

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Components of Routines with Objects

- Opening and set up: follow child's interest, put out some toys on the floor, when you see motivation toward item, opportunity to request
- Theme: What routine will be done? Back and forth, put in, take out, up down, I do you do, here's a piece take a piece.
- Elaboration: How can I incorporate flexibility, creativity; What else can I do with this toy that is fun!!
- Closing: clean up and put away and transition to next activity.

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building onto Routines with Objects

- Step 1: Set Up
  - Develop a theme
- Step 2: Theme
  - Take turns, collaborate, teach objectives
- Step 3: Add Variations
  - Increase play complexity
  - Expand child repertoire
  - Target multiple objectives
  - Build up flexibility
- Stage 4: Close the activity and transition to a new one
  - Organization
  - Temporal sequences




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Primary Goals of Sensory Social Routines

- Foster social relationship
- Draw child attention to other people's social communication cues
  - Eye contact
  - Facial expressions
  - Physical gestures, postures, anticipatory movements
- Natural way to incorporate many different skills into 1 social back and forth game especially increasing social communication
  - Initiation
  - People are fun interesting  
I get something when I interact
  - Communication
    - Intraverbals
    - Manding
    - Tacting

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Components of Sensory Social Routines

- Child motivated but may be chosen by adult
- Each SSR has a beginning middle and end and is then repeated
- Made up of predictable series of turns
- Lasting anywhere from 1 round or 1-10 min
- Adult assigns meaning to the child's ordinary actions by making them turns; adult conditions eye gaze, movements, sounds to build a social game

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building Sensory Social Routines

- Repeat routine up to 3 times
- Read child's verbal and nonverbal cues
- Turn-taking via body language
  - Movements
  - Gestures
  - Eye contact
  - Sounds
  - Words
  - Other actions
- Build up repertoire
- Alternate with object-focused routines




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# ADAPTING TEACHING APPROACHES TO ENSURE SUCCESS

**Reinforcement**

- ❖ Natural + social activity
- ❖ Extrinsic but related + social activity
- ❖ Unrelated toys + social
- ❖ Non-social toys (electronic) + social
- ❖ Edibles + social

**Structure**

- ❖ Embedded, naturalistic child-initiated activities
- ❖ Joint activity, 5-10 opportunities interspersed w/other tasks
- ❖ Seated, familiar requesting format w/same materials, 5-10 opportunities interspersed w/other tasks
- ❖ Seated, mass trials, 5-10 opportunities w/same materials

**Visual Supports**

- ❖ Visual antecedents (schedules)
- ❖ Visual cues (templates)
- ❖ Sorting boxes
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Picture activity schedule
- ❖ PECS, ASL

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# THANK YOU!!

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Discussion

[Kecia.Adams-Wright@therapyandbeyond.com](mailto:Kecia.Adams-Wright@therapyandbeyond.com)  
[Christina.Martin@therapyandbeyond.com](mailto:Christina.Martin@therapyandbeyond.com)

Don't miss the Colleyville Center OPEN HOUSE!  
 Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> 6:00-8:00 PM  
 6203 Colleyville Blvd Suite 100  
 Colleyville, TX

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## WHAT IS PLAY?

What does it look like?

- Children interacting with toys or items
- The characteristics of play all have to do with **motivation** and mental attitude
- For instance two children may be typing on a computer keyboard with a game on the screen or kicking a ball back and forth to one another...




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## WHAT IS PLAY?

- Play is where learning happens!
- Play is the universal language of childhood.
- It is through play that children learn to interact, relate to peers and establish friendships.
- Play is a learning process, a social process and an emotional process.

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"Play is often talked about as if it were a serious relief from learning. But for **children**, Play is serious learning. Play is really the **work of childhood.**"  
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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

- It is a child's "job" or "occupation" to play in order to develop physical coordination, emotional maturity, and social skills to interact with other children, as well as the self-confidence to try new experiences and explore new environments

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?



Play is the platform for social interaction which ultimately leads to social success.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?



Play allows one to connect feelings and thoughts with events.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?



A lack of play skills can contribute to the social isolation.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

### DSM-5 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR AUTISM

- Deficits in **social-emotional reciprocity**, ranging, for example, from abnormal social approach and failure of normal back-and-forth conversation; to reduced **sharing of interests, emotions, or affect**; to failure to **initiate or respond to social interactions**.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

### DSM-5 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR AUTISM

- Deficits in nonverbal communicative behaviors used for social interaction, ranging, for example, from poorly integrated verbal and **nonverbal communication**; to abnormalities in **eye contact and body language** or deficits in understanding and use of gestures; to a total lack of facial expressions and nonverbal communication.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

### DSM-5 DIAGNOSTIC CRITERIA FOR AUTISM

- Deficits in **developing, maintaining, and understanding relationships**, ranging, for example, from difficulties adjusting behavior to suit various social contexts; to difficulties in **sharing imaginative play** or in making friends; to absence of interest in peers.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

### CHILDREN WITH AUTISM MAY EXHIBIT:

- Unusual eye gaze
- Difficulty shifting attention
- Lack of joint attention
- Weak imitation skills
- Ritualized object use
- Avoid peer interactions and/or no response to social initiations from peers

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?

### CHILDREN WITH AUTISM MAY EXHIBIT:

- Some children with autism do not give any indication that they want to play with others
- While some people view this as an indication that they prefer to play alone, that may be the case, or it may be that they **do not have** the social or communicative skills to seek out play interactions with others.

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## WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT?



### CHILDREN WITH AUTISM MAY EXHIBIT:

Solitary play in children with autism is often accompanied by a strong resistance to those who attempt to participate or disrupt their activity.

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## PLAY...HOW CAN YOU ASSESS IT?

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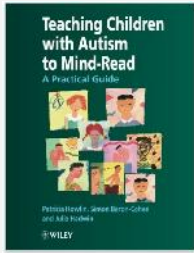
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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?



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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

Throughout your assessment process it is important to keep in mind:

- The play skills of children with autism serve as a window into what they understand.
- Toys and objects may be used in a rote or inflexible way.
- The repetitiveness of play is indicative of a limited understanding of how to use the toy appropriately.

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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 1: Sensorimotor Play

The child simply manipulates toys. This includes banging and ritualistic or stereotyped behaviors.




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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 2: Emerging Functional Play

The child uses toys in a socially conventional way (as they are designed to be played with). Demonstrate 1 or 2 examples in 10 minute play period.



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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 3: Established Functional Play

Children are scored at this level if they demonstrate 3 or more examples in 10 minute observation.



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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

- **Level 4a: Emerging Pretend Play**- (check if child SPONTANEOUSLY produces 1 or 2 examples of any of below during 10 min observation of play)

Includes:

- **Object substitution:** where one object stands in for another (block is car, banana is a telephone)
- **Attribution of pretend properties:** example, child cleans doll's face as if it were dirty
- **Use of imaginary objects/scenarios:** child is seen to use imaginary objects in play and behaves as if objects are present. (drinks from imaginary cup, car has imaginary collision)



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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 4a: Emerging Pretend Play

(check if child SPONTANEOUSLY produces 1 or 2 examples of any of below during 10 min observation of play)

- **Object substitution:** where one object stands in for another (block is car, banana is a telephone)




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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 4a: Emerging Pretend Play

(check if child SPONTANEOUSLY produces 1 or 2 examples of any of below during 10 min observation of play)

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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

TEACHING CHILDREN WITH AUTISM TO MIND READ

### Level 4a: Emerging Pretend Play

(check if child SPONTANEOUSLY produces 1 or 2 examples of any of below during 10 min observation of play)

- **Use of imaginary objects/scenarios:** child is seen to use imaginary objects in play and behaves as if objects are present. (drinks from imaginary cup, car has imaginary collision)




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## HOW CAN YOU ASSESS PLAY?

- **Level 4b: Pretend-Real Distinction**- The teacher performs an action and asks the child if teacher is REALLY doing it. If child answers correctly check here.
- **Level 5: Established Pretend Play**- This level is scored if the child SPONTANEOUSLY produces at least 3 or more of TWO examples of any of the types of play listed in 4a, during a 10 min observation.



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- Look at where your child falls in their assessment
- The level at which teaching begins will be the level **above** that spontaneously reached by the child

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?





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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

**ESDM- Combination of Treatment Practices**

<p><b>DENVER MODEL PRINCIPLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Modulate Arousal</li> <li>• Dyadic engagement</li> <li>• Quality of JA elaborated routines</li> <li>• Combine objectives</li> <li>• Communication in all activities, varied functions</li> <li>• Emphasize novel communication</li> <li>• One word up rule</li> </ul>	<p><b>PRT PRINCIPLES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Follow Child's lead</li> <li>• Give choices</li> <li>• Take turns</li> <li>• Maintenance interspersed with acquisition</li> <li>• Reinforces child attempts</li> <li>• Direct response-reinforcement relationship</li> <li>• ABA Principles</li> </ul>
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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

- Attention
- ABC Format
- Efficacious application of behavioral teaching techniques
- Number of Repetitions
- Management of problematic behaviors

**ABA PRINCIPLES**



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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### CORE FEATURES OF ESDM

- Naturalistic applied behavior analytic strategies
- Sensitive to normal development sequence
- Deep parental involvement
- Focus on interpersonal exchanges and positive affect
- Shared engagement with joint activities
- Language and Communication taught inside a positive, affect-based relationship

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Joint Activity Routines

- Follows child choice or interest
- Both partners engage in activity
- Targets multiple objectives from different domains
- Activities are brief
  - 2-4 minutes in length




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building Onto JARs

- Step 1: Set Up
  - Develop a theme
- Step 2: Theme
  - Take turns, collaborate, teach objectives
- Step 3: Add Variations
  - Increase play complexity
  - Expand child repertoire
  - Target multiple objectives
  - Build up flexibility
- Stage 4: Close the activity and transition to a new one
  - Organization
  - Temporal sequences




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# HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

## Types of Joint Activity Routines

### ROUTINES WITH OBJECTS

- Alternate attention
- Triadic engagement
- Joint attention
- Objectives:
  - Communication
  - Cognition
  - Imitation
  - Motor
  - Self-care
  - Joint attention
  - Social

### SENSORY SOCIAL ROUTINES

- "Find the smile"
- Dyadic engagement
- Positive affect
- Reciprocal, social exchanges
- Modulates child arousal, attention
- Objectives:
  - Communication
  - Cognition
  - Imitation
  - Motor
  - Self-Care
  - Joint Attention
  - Social

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# HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

## Examples of Joint Activity Routines

### ROUTINES WITH OBJECTS

- Blocks
- Legos
- Play-Doh
- Puzzles
- Books
- Gears



### SENSORY SOCIAL ROUTINES

- Tickle
- "Ride a Little Horsie"
- Crashing into Pillows
- Nursery Rhymes
- Peek-a-boo
- Chase




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# HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

## Primary Goals of Routines with Objects

- Building rapport by following child lead
- Natural way to incorporate many different skills into 1 social back and forth game
  - Initiation
  - People are fun, interesting; I get something when I interact
  - Communication
    - Intraverbals
    - Manding
    - Tacting
  - Imitation
  - Play skills
  - Social skills

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Components of Routines with Objects

- Opening and set up: follow child's interest, put out some toys on the floor, when you see motivation toward item, opportunity to request
- Theme: What routine will be done? Back and forth, put in, take out, up down, I do you do, here's a piece take a piece.
- Elaboration: How can I incorporate flexibility, creativity; What else can I do with this toy that is fun!!
- Closing: clean up and put away and transition to next activity.

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building onto Routines with Objects

- Step 1: Set Up
  - Develop a theme
- Step 2: Theme
  - Take turns, collaborate, teach objectives
- Step 3: Add Variations
  - Increase play complexity
  - Expand child repertoire
  - Target multiple objectives
  - Build up flexibility
- Stage 4: Close the activity and transition to a new one
  - Organization
  - Temporal sequences




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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Primary Goals of Sensory Social Routines

- Foster social relationship
- Draw child attention to other people's social communication cues
  - Eye contact
  - Facial expressions
  - Physical gestures, postures, anticipatory movements
- Natural way to incorporate many different skills into 1 social back and forth game especially increasing social communication
  - Initiation
  - People are fun interesting
    - I get something when I interact
  - Communication
    - Intraverbals
    - Manding
    - Tacting

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Components of Sensory Social Routines

- Child motivated but may be chosen by adult
- Each SSR has a beginning middle and end and is then repeated
- Made up of predictable series of turns
- Lasting anywhere from 1 round or 1-10 min
- Adult assigns meaning to the child's ordinary actions by making them turns; adult conditions eye gaze, movements, sounds to build a social game

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## HOW CAN PLAY BE EXPANDED?

### Building Sensory Social Routines

- Repeat routine up to 3 times
- Read child's verbal and nonverbal cues
- Turn-taking via body language
  - Movements
  - Gestures
  - Eye contact
  - Sounds
  - Words
  - Other actions
- Build up repertoire
- Alternate with object-focused routines




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## ADAPTING TEACHING APPROACHES TO ENSURE SUCCESS

### Reinforcement

- ❖ Natural + social activity
- ❖ Extrinsic but related + social activity
- ❖ Unrelated toys + social
- ❖ Non-social toys (electronic) + social
- ❖ Edibles + social

### Structure

- ❖ Embedded, naturalistic child-initiated activities
- ❖ Joint activity, 5-10 opportunities interspersed w/other tasks
- ❖ Seated, familiar requesting format w/same materials, 5-10 opportunities interspersed w/other tasks
- ❖ Seated, mass trials, 5-10 opportunities w/same materials

### Visual Supports

- ❖ Visual antecedents (schedules)
- ❖ Visual cues (templates)
- ❖ Sorting boxes
- ❖ Timer
- ❖ Picture activity schedule
- ❖ PECS, ASL

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# THANK YOU!!

- Questions?
- Comments?
- Discussion

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Don't miss the Colleyville Center OPEN HOUSE!  
Tuesday February 21<sup>st</sup> 6:00-8:00 PM  
6203 Colleyville Blvd Suite 100  
Colleyville, TX

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