



# IMPORTANCE OF PLAY IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT



# WHAT IS PLAY

- Play is state of mind that one has when absorbed in an activity that provides enjoyment and a suspension of sense of time.
- Play is self-motivated so you want to do it again and again.
- It is through play that children understand each other and make sense of the world around them.
- It is a process of observing, testing, trying, imitating, and enjoying the environment they are in and people they are with.
- Play encompasses children's behaviour which is:
  - Freely chosen
  - Personally directed
  - Intrinsically motivated





# WHY IS PLAY IMPORTANT

- Play is essential to development because it contributes to the cognitive, physical, social, and emotional well-being of children and youth
- Through play, children learn about the world and themselves.
- Play allows children to use their creativity and develops their imagination.
- Undirected play allows children to learn how to work in groups, to share, to negotiate, to resolve conflicts, and to learn self-advocacy skills.
- When play is allowed to be child driven, children practice decision-making skills, move at their own pace, discover their own areas of interest, and ultimately engage fully in the passions they wish to pursue.
- Play is integral to the academic environment. It ensures that the school setting attends to the social and emotional development of children as well as their cognitive development. It has been shown to help children adjust to the school setting and even to enhance children's learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills.



# PLAY DEPRIVATION

- When children are deprived of play, the consequences are catastrophic.
- The emotions of children were in turmoil. Research conducted on this topic on a group of children who had suffered from chronic neglect and abuse found that the children just stared vacantly into space, rocking to and fro in a rolling motion.
- They generally looked several years younger than their actual age.
- The children's gross motor skills were poorly developed, and they possessed hardly any fine motor skills.
- They were incapable of meaningful social interaction.
- They showed few signs of cognitive functioning. In the first few months, the slightest disturbance was deeply frightening and resulted in a return to the rocking motion





# STAGES OF PLAY



1

## **UNOCCUPIED PLAY (0-3 MOS)**

This type of play can be characterized by your child making seemingly random movements, such as relatively uncontrolled movements of the arms, legs, hands and feet. Tummy time can also be considered a form of unoccupied play. Although unoccupied play may not look like it, it is actually considered play in very young children

2

## **SOLITARY PLAY (3 MOS - 2 YRS)**

During this stage, children play alone and do not interact with other children. They engage in activities that are self-directed, such as playing with toys or exploring their environment. Children begin to display an increased level of focus during this stage. They also sustain play for longer periods of time than in the unoccupied stage.

3

## **ONLOOKER PLAY (2 YRS)**

At this stage, children will tend to watch other children playing, but won't engage with them. Children showing interest in others and observing them is a totally normal part of development. This stage is important for children to learn about social cues and to understand how others play. As your child watches, they are learning to understand the boundaries of others and the rules around social play.



# STAGES OF PLAY



4

## PARALLEL PLAY (2+ YRS)

Parallel play occurs when children are playing side-by-side but not interacting with each other. They'll be playing with similar toys, but not playing together. This stage of play helps children further develop social skills. Although they aren't directly interacting, they will often share toys without playing together directly. At this stage, your child starts learning to understand social cues.

5

## ASSOCIATIVE PLAY (3- 4 YRS)

This is the stage in child development where children start to collaborate and share toys and resources in a more deliberate way. This is where your child learns to cooperate and collaborate with other children. Although they will be engaging with peers, the play won't be organized, and the children won't be focused on a common goal.

6

## COOPERATIVE PLAY (4+ YRS)

The main difference between associative play and cooperative play is that the child begins to play with others in a way that is directed toward a common goal. Cooperative play is a more advanced form of social play. Often at this stage of play development children engage in imaginative or pretend play where they take on different roles. They will often create imaginative worlds and recreate familiar scenes or scenarios.



# IMPORTANCE OF PARENTS IN PLAY



- Even before your child can walk or talk, providing regular opportunities to move freely and interact with people forms a foundation for lifelong physical, social and intellectual skills.
- When parents observe their children in play or join with them in child-driven play, they are given a unique opportunity to see the world from their child's vantage point as the child navigates a world perfectly created just to fit his or her needs.
- During most parent-child interactions, parents are in charge. They decide the rules their children follow and what their kids can or can't do. When playing, however, that hierarchy breaks down. Kids are free to tell their parents what they want and how they want to play.
- Parents who have the opportunity to glimpse into their children's world learn to communicate more effectively with their children and are given another setting to offer gentle, nurturing guidance.
  - Less verbal children may be able to express their views, experiences, and even frustrations through play, allowing their parents an opportunity to gain a fuller understanding of their perspective.





# PLAY VS. SCREEN TIME



## PLAY TIME

It is a holistic and effective method to support children in their journey to physical, emotional and cognitive well-being. It is also a medium for them which develops creativity, imagination and problem-solving skills, as well as motor skills, coordination, and develops strong muscles and bones

## SCREEN TIME

Generally, prolonged use of electronic devices is seen to be associated with problems with vision, disruption in sleep patterns, decreased academic performance, increased sedentary behaviour, obesity, muscle weakness, aggression, anxiety, depression, dependency.





# SCREEN TIME LIMITS

- 0-2: Best to avoid screen time altogether
- 2-5: 1 to 1.5 hours, educational content
- 6-9: 2 to 3 hours per day, while focusing on age-appropriate educational content
- 10-13: 3 to 4 hours, while ensuring proper internet safety is followed
- 14-17: 5 hours, including the time required for academics, as a lot of educational requirements have become online





# SIMPLE PLAY IDEAS AT HOME



1

**Scavenger Hunt:** Create a list of items for kids to find around the house or backyard. Scavenger hunts can boost cognitive abilities like problem-solving, memory, and observation skills. They also enhance creativity, critical thinking, and decision-making.

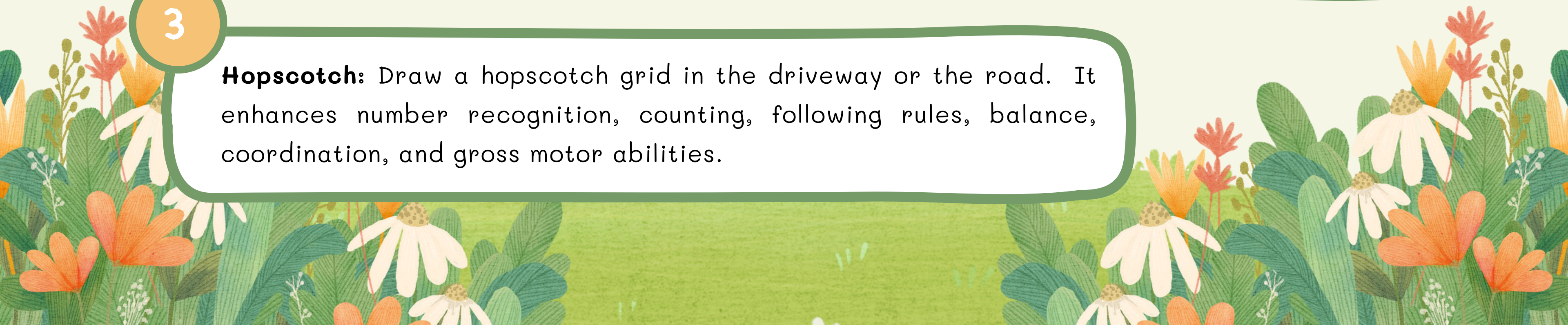


2

**Obstacle Course:** Use pillows, blankets, and chairs to create a fun course. They improve motor skills, balance, coordination, and agility, while also boosting memory, problem-solving, and strategic thinking.

3

**Hopscotch:** Draw a hopscotch grid in the driveway or the road. It enhances number recognition, counting, following rules, balance, coordination, and gross motor abilities.



# SIMPLE PLAY IDEAS AT HOME



4

**Pretend Play:** Encourage kids to role-play scenarios like a school, restaurant, airport, or doctor's office. It enhances language and communication, social skills, creativity and imagination, symbolic thinking, problem solving, and empathy.

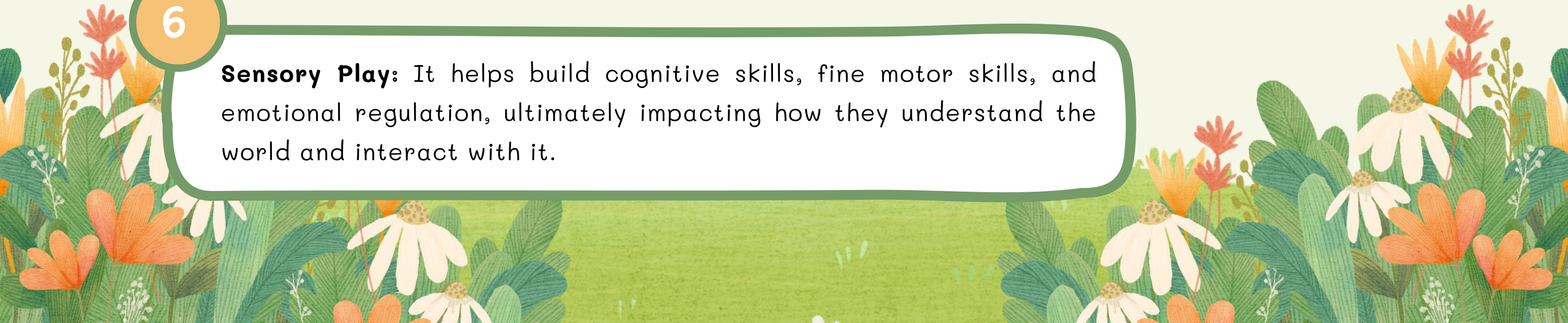


5

**Storytelling:** Have kids create their own stories or act out scenes from their favourite books. It enhances imagination, memory, language skills, and critical thinking.

6

**Sensory Play:** It helps build cognitive skills, fine motor skills, and emotional regulation, ultimately impacting how they understand the world and interact with it.





THANK  
YOU





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