

Stages of Play

Article 31 of The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child

“...every child has the right to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.”

Types and stages of play:

1. **Exploratory play** – exploring an object using a variety of senses, e.g., mouthing, feeling, and hitting or banging it against something.
2. **Relational Play** – making connections between objects or problem solving, e.g., putting a toy inside or on top of another toy, or banging two toys together to make a sound.
3. **Symbolic play** – Using one object to represent another, e.g., using a pencil to bang a drum or using a cardboard tube for a telescope. Playing alongside other children (parallel play).
4. **Pretend play** – Building sequences of play that is representative of their everyday and imaginary experiences often playing in association with other children but without a common goal, e.g., using a small world or dressing up clothes.
5. **Co-operative play** – Play becomes organised and there is evidence of teamwork and rules being discussed and used, e.g., games and structured role play.

Useful References and Links

McConkey (1994) Types and stages of play

[learningthroughplay_leaflet_june2017.pdf \(legofoundation.com\)](#)

[Go to Exploratorium.edu](#)

[Tinkering Project: Chain Reaction | Exploratorium](#)

[Stress and Resilience: How Toxic Stress Affects Us, and What We Can Do About It \(harvard.edu\)](#)

[Activities Guide: Enhancing & Practicing Executive Function Skills \(harvard.edu\)](#)

[Play to cope with change - The LEGO Foundation](#)

[BOUNCE BACK BETTER: the role of play in building more individual resilience and more resilient communities - Alison Woolf \(coursewedo.com\)](#)

[How to handle stress: teachers & education staff \(educationsupport.org.uk\)](#)

[What makes an effective TA? | Tes](#)

[The Importance of Play for Adolescents - Heather Hayes & Associates](#)

[Microsoft Word - Flexible Tools Seeking Pupils' Views 8th Feb-1 \(bath.ac.uk\)](#) Useful tool if you need to look a little closer at what a pupil is finding difficult in school.

[Facilitating and Supporting Children's Play: Suggestions for Teachers \(communityplaythings.com\)](#) Useful for Key Stage 1 Pupils

[A World of Learning Through Play](#)

[When the Chips Are Down with Rick Lavoie - YouTube](#) Brilliant way of looking at a child with low self-esteem and how risk-averse they are. Highly recommend this, it is a bit American in it still is good!

[Zones of Regulation Tips and Activities - WeAreTeachers](#)