

Play Types	Descriptions and Examples
Symbolic Play	play which allows control, gradual exploration and increased understanding without the risk of being out of one's depth. For example using a piece of wood to symbolise a person, or a piece of string to symbolise a wedding ring.
Rough and Tumble Play	close encounter play which is less to do with fighting and more to do with touching, tickling, gauging relative strength. Discovering physical flexibility and the exhilaration of display. For example playful fighting, wrestling and chasing where the children involved are obviously unhurt and giving every indication that they are enjoying themselves.
Socio-dramatic Play	the enactment of real and potential experiences of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature. For example playing at house, going to the shops, being mothers and fathers, organising a meal or even having a row.
Social Play	play during which the rules and criteria for social engagement and interaction can be revealed, explored and amended. For example any social or interactive situation which contains an expectation on all parties that they will abide by the rules or protocols, i.e. games, conversations, making something together.
Creative Play	play which allows a new response, the transformation of information, awareness of new connections, with an element of surprise. For example enjoying creation with a range of materials and tools for its own sake.
Communication Play	play using words, nuances or gestures for example, mime, jokes, play acting, mickey taking, singing, debate, poetry
Dramatic Play	play which dramatizes events in which the child is not a direct participator. For example presentation of a TV show, an event on the street, a religious or festive event, even a funeral.
Deep Play	play which allows the child to encounter risky or even potentially life threatening experiences, to develop survival skills and conquer fear. For example leaping onto an aerial runway, riding a bike on a parapet, balancing on a high beam.
Exploratory Play	play to access factual information consisting of manipulative behaviours such as handling, throwing, banging or mouthing objects For example engaging with an object or area and, either by manipulation or movement, assessing its properties,

	possibilities and content, such as stacking bricks.
Fantasy Play	play which rearranges the world in the child's way, a way which is unlikely to occur. For example playing at being a pilot flying around the world or the owner of an expensive car.
Imaginative Play	play where the conventional rules, which govern the physical world do not apply. For example imagining you are, or pretending to be, a tree or ship, or patting a dog which isn't there.
Locomotor Play	movement in any or every direction for its own sake. For example chase, tag, hide and seek, tree climbing.
Mastery Play	control of the physical and affective ingredients of the environments. For example digging holes, changing the course of streams, constructing shelters, building fires.
Object Play	play which uses infinite and interesting sequences of hand-eye manipulations and movements. For example examination and novel use of any object e.g. cloth, paintbrush, cup.
Role Play	play exploring ways of being, although not normally of an intense personal, social, domestic or interpersonal nature. For example brushing with a broom, dialing with a telephone, driving a car.
Recapitulative Play	play that allows the child to explore ancestry, history, rituals, stories, rhymes, fire and darkness. Enables children to access play of earlier human evolutionary stages