



## Why is Play So Important?

*1516 Atwood Avenue · Johnston, RI 02919 · 401-785-2666  
www.theautismproject.org · info@theautismproject.org*

## *Play is so important for ALL kids because:*

- Development and learning begins at birth.
- Everyday experiences and relationships impact your child's development and create a pathway for your child's future.
- Typically, the majority of time in early childhood is devoted to exploration of one's environment through guided activities, exploration and play, both structured and free play.
- Children's "brain power", learning, thinking, and critical skills grow at an alarming rate each day. They are "sponges" and active learners and continuously "soak up" information through their observations and interactions with their environment. Developmentally appropriate play helps them build a strong foundation for life.
- Physical health, social and emotional well-being, and positive mental health are promoted through play.
- Play teaches infants, toddlers, and preschoolers about their bodies, how they feel when they do certain activities, and about the effects of their actions on the world around them (cause and effect).<sup>1</sup>
- Play promotes growth and development through movement and exploration.<sup>2</sup>
- Play is the beginning of representational thought and symbols.
- Play provides a motivating context in which to develop and practice new skills.

### **Sources:**

<sup>1</sup> American Occupational Therapy Association

<sup>2</sup> American Occupational Therapy Association

zerotothree.org

Medline Plus

National Library of Medicine

CDC.org