

Dramatic Play in Family Child Care and at Home

Dear Families,

There are so many ways for children to enjoy dramatic play in child-care programs and at home. There is so much your child can learn from dramatic play. We can work together as partners to provide your child with dramatic play opportunities that will benefit their overall development.

Dramatic play can include pretend or make-believe play. It can also include fantasy and imaginative play. Dramatic play experiences give children a chance to interact in creative work. This work can be open-ended collaborative work. Social skills are at the center of dramatic play. Cultural awareness is also very important. Children practice turn-taking, negotiation, collaboration, and sharing of ideas, backgrounds, and experiences within dramatic play.

Dramatic play in the family child-care setting

Your child accesses dramatic play experiences every day in my family child-care program. Activities can include role-playing and make-believe. These activities can include real props, such as construction hats, and can also include an object that the child uses to pretend with, such as a small empty box to be a construction hat. The props and costumes that I provide are available to all of the children. They can include dresses, hats, ties, shoes, etc. Both boys and girls are encouraged to take on different roles even if it is not the same as their true gender. It is OK for children to do this, as they are trying out different roles of people they admire, including you. The family child child-care setting provides a safe place for them to try out these roles.

Dramatic play at home

Dramatic play experiences can happen at home just as they do in the family child-care program. You can provide props and you can play with your child. These props can be real or they can be recycled materials, such as boxes or old clothes. You can play along with your child and use phrases to encourage your child to imagine. For example, you can say, "Are you the postal worker in this area? I need to mail this letter." This encourages your child to create a play scenario with you. Pretending can happen anytime with little to no preparation needed because your imagination is always with you. Dramatic play can happen during meals, bath time, while cooking, and at other times. It gives you a chance to spend enjoyable times with your child while helping them learn and grow.

Together we can provide your child with dramatic play opportunities that will benefit their creativity and overall development!