# Tips and Strategies: Playing with Others

- **Guiding Questions and Expected Responses:**
  - How should you ask people to play?
    - You can say "Do you want to play with me?" or you can suggest a specific game or activity to play.
  - How can you help friends when you are playing?
    - You can help friends set up toys or other materials for play and you can help them clean up.
  - How can you share and take turns during play?
    - You can take turns while playing games by going one at a time and you can share play materials or toys by letting your friends use them as you are playing together.
  - What are nice things you can say to someone you are playing with?
    - You can say things like "Good job!" or other compliments when someone does something good during play.
  - What should you do when you are done playing?
    - You should clean up all toys or play materials when you are done playing with them.

- **Tips and Strategies to Practice Playing with Others:**
  - Role-play with parent/caregiver
  - Practice with a sibling/neighbor/friend
  - Practice in the natural environments where the skills take place (school, community, etc.)
    - Examples of play activities: Pretend play (princesses, superheroes, etc.), dolls/action figures, blocks/Legos, games, sports, crafts
  - Use various cues/prompts:
    - **Verbal Cues:** Ask a question that suggests a response (e.g. "Can you help her stack the blocks?") or "comment on other people's actions" (e.g. "He is helping clean up the toys.") (Watling & Spitzer, 2018, p. 411)
    - **Visual Cues:** Picture prompts that demonstrate skills, Pointing to play objects, Gesturing toward another child (Watling & Spitzer, 2018)
  - Demonstrate how to appropriately complete skills (modeling) (Kramer & Hinojosa, 2010)
  - Ask higher order questions (e.g. "How do you think friends feel when you don't help them as you are playing?", "Why is it important to share during play?") (Kramer & Hinojosa, 2010, p. 245)
  - Give feedback (e.g. "You did a great job asking him to play and suggesting a game!") (Kramer & Hinojosa, 2010, p. 245)
  - Teach child to verbally instruct themselves on what to do (e.g. "I will ask him to play Legos with me.") (Kramer & Hinojosa, 2010)
  - Create a mnemonic for the child to use to remember skills (Kramer & Hinojosa, 2010)
  - Video feedback - record the child demonstrating the skill and allow them to watch the footage to analyze their performance

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- **Tips and Strategies to Practice Playing with Others (cont'd):**
  - Social Autopsies/Social Dissection (OCALI, n.d.):
    - Analyze social situations from the child's life to determine social errors and how to correct them
    - Analyze social situations in cartoons/movies
  - Continue to use other evidence-based interventions that are effective for your child (Social Stories™, scripts, etc.)

References


Kramer, P. & Hinojosa, J. (2010). *Frames of reference for pediatric occupational therapy* (3rd ed.). Lippincott Williams & Wilkins.

OCALI. (n.d.). Social autopsy. https://www.ocali.org/project/resource_gallery_of_interventions/page/social_autopsy

Watling, R. & Spitzer, S. L. (Eds.). (2018). *Autism across the lifespan: A comprehensive occupational therapy approach* (4th ed.). American Occupational Therapy Association, Inc.


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