

BRAIN BENEFITS

- Play and exploration trigger the secretion of BDNF, a substance essential for the growth of brain cells (Greenough & Black, 1992; Gordon et al, 2003; Dewey, 2014)
- Movement fuels the brain with oxygen, but it also feeds it neurotrophins which increase the number of connections between neurons. (Jensen, 2005)
- Play and movement may increase catecholamines (brain chemicals such as norepinephrine and dopamine), which generally serve to energize and elevate mood. (Chaoulff, 1989; Jensen, 2005)

ACADEMIC BENEFITS


- We pay attention to academic tasks when given frequent, brief opportunities for free play. (Kesslak, Patrick, So, Cotman, & Gomez-Pinilla, 1998; Bjorkland & Pellegrini, 2000; Pellegrini & Holmes, 2006; Stevenson & Lee, 1990)
- There is a link between play and the development of language skills, particularly if the play is symbolic, pretend play such as theatre. (Fisher, 1992; Lewis et al, 2000)
- Many early cognitive researchers ignored play, assuming it disconnected from intellectual growth. They were wrong. In reality, play and play-oriented movements improve cognition. (Silverman, 1993)
- Play allows us to make mistakes without high-stakes consequences, thus enhancing learning (Fordyce & Wehner, 1993)

CREATIVE BENEFITS

- Play promotes creative problem solving. (Pepper & Ross, 1981; Wyver & Spence, 1999)
- Play builds imagination, which is necessary for empathy. (DeBenedet, 2018; Frank, 1978)
- Exercising your imagination through daydreaming increases your capacity for empathy. (DeBenedet, 2018; Frank, 1978)

SOCIAL BENEFITS

- Playfully intelligent people seldom form strong first impressions, therefore approaching social situations with a strong sense of egalitarianism. (DeBenedet, 2018; Kahneman, 2013; Tversky & Kahneman, 1979)
- Play enhances social skills, emotional intelligence, and conflict resolution ability (Jensen, 2005)
- Free play allows children to practice decision-making skills, learn to work in groups, share, resolve conflicts and advocate for themselves. It also allows them to discover what they enjoy at their own pace. (Ginsburg, 2007)

HELLO 

BENEFITS of play!