

A Letter to Families About Toys and Games

Dear families,

When you hear the words *toys* and *games*, you might think that children are “just playing.”

Playing? Yes. *Just?* Never!

In our classroom Toys and Games area, children will have opportunities to use puzzles, small building materials, board and card games, and collections containing such items as buttons, bottle caps, and shells. So, while the children will indeed be “playing,” they will also be counting, sorting, solving problems, strengthening their fine-motor skills, gaining coordination, and building persistence.

When you visit our classroom, ask your child to show you what he enjoys most in our Toys and Games area. Meanwhile, you can extend the many benefits children reap in the classroom Toys and Games area right in your home.

What You Can Do at Home

- Play age-appropriate card and board games with your child. As you play, talk with your child about what you are doing and what you are thinking as you make decisions in your play. Talk about what it means to share materials and take turns.
- Start a collection with your child! Buttons, seashells, rocks, and lids from jars and bottles can all be collected, sorted, played with, and displayed—either as is or as part of an ongoing art project—for little or no cost.
- Look for puzzles that will interest, but not frustrate, your child. Points to keep in mind include the number and size of puzzle pieces, the appeal of the picture or item being put together, the durability of the puzzle material, and the ease of manipulation. For example, some puzzles are made of cardboard while others are made of wood. Some puzzle pieces come with knobs attached that make them easier for small hands to pick up.
- Yard sales, thrift stores, and discount stores are great places to find inexpensive toys and games. Better yet, ask your child if she wants to help you set up a “toys and games exchange” with friends and family!