

Parent and Child Together (PACT) Time® at Home

Play Throughout the Day

What We're Learning

PACT Time is about sharing quality time with your child through an activity or playing together. PACT Time is also a time to support your child's learning and development. Children are always learning about the world around them; parents should follow their child's lead during PACT time to play and learn together. Parents are their children's first and most important teacher and PACT Time is an opportunity to intently engage with their child daily.



Parents, Did You Know?

Children learn best when they actively engage with something that interests them. This can happen through play. Children are more likely to engage in play with their families if the adult notices how the child is playing and joins them. They could also ask their child how they would like to play. When the parent watches and joins in the play without changing it, or asks for the child's input when beginning play, they are following the child's lead. This shows the child that you are interested in their play and the view of the world. Families can engage and bond with one another during PACT Time at home with playful interactions. Uninterrupted one-on-one time and following your child's lead are key components to successful PACT Time at home.

Together Time

Plan: Plan an activity or time for play with your child. Planning with your child can be as simple as a short question or conversation. Ask something like:

- “Which game are we going to play?” or
- “Remember when you wanted to color earlier? Would you like to color with me now?”

This helps your child to think about what is about to happen. Every time you take time to plan together, you are creating a special time between you and your child. Try to increase the amount of times per day that you plan activities or engage in play with your child. By asking your child how or what they want to play is following your child's lead.

Extend Play

As you increase these times together, you can extend your child's play. Children notice when families respond to their needs during their play.

- Try asking a new question that you haven't asked before.
- Try changing the schedule to fit your child's needs.
- Try adding a new material like a box into the play area.

Hints for Success

There doesn't always have to be an outcome or final product when you play with your child. Games, activities, and fun projects are all wonderful ways to enjoy time together. Simply being present to play is powerful. Use open-ended questions like:

- What do you like about...?
- When was the last time...?
- What is your plan?
- What would you do differently and why?



Reflections and Next Steps

Practice skills that you learn about children's learning during Parent Time—keeping in mind that they will engage most when they choose the play and when adults take their lead. Think about what you're learning about children's topics like:

- Language and number concepts,
- Social skills like taking turns and sharing, and
- Exploring nature.

Use what you are learning. Encourage your child. Create a place to play and be present. Follow your child's lead, this is not a time to quiz or test them but connect and guide them. Have FUN!