



# What's Dramatic Play and why does it matter?



**What is Dramatic Play:** We've all seen a child pick up a stone and use it as a race car or turn an empty wrapping paper tube into a light saber or use stuffed animals as patients for a hospital. That's dramatic play. Taking some simple objects, letting them represent something else, and building a story around them. It's really that simple.

**Purpose of Dramatic Play:** Dramatic Play encourages children's imaginations and creativity, gives them safe opportunities to practice social skills, improves language and communication skills as a big part of dramatic play is acting in a role you have assigned yourself, develops critical thinking and problem-solving skills as they need to work out situations in their play and with other children, keeps them engaged and away from passive screen time activities.

**Setting up a Dramatic Play area:** A little imagination and some things pulled from around the house and a dramatic play area is good to go. In the Spring be a detective - grab a magnifying glass and look for clues that Spring is coming. In the Fall as gardens start to die down, put some trucks and shovels and buckets in the garden and let your child have a construction site or farm or moon-based science center. Throw a blanket over a table, toss in some pillows and your child can be a bear in a cave. A small table with some plastic dishes, 2 folded sheets of paper (menus), and some stuffed animals and you have a restaurant. A paper plate can be a plate in a restaurant, a steering wheel on a car or jet or boat, or Wonder Woman's shield. An appliance box can become a house or space station or the bat cave.

**Your options are endless!** Have fun playing together as a family.