



3-4 years old

Outdoor Activities to Promote Praxis and Play

What is praxis and what does it have to do with play?

Praxis...what an odd word! Although it is a strange word, it is extremely important in childhood development. Praxis is defined as the ability to conceptualize, plan, and carry out an action (Ayres, 2005). In other words, praxis is the ability to think of how your body is going to complete a task, create a plan in your mind, and then carry out the action. Praxis is used during play because children will decide they want to play with an object and will form a plan of how to play with it. However, some children are unable to create an idea in their mind of how to play with toys.

When a child has a difficult time forming ideas of how to play, they are having trouble with ideational praxis. Ideational praxis is the first step of thinking how an action can be completed (May-Benson, 2001). By encouraging ideational praxis in children, they can learn how to better move their body and how they can play with the same object in many different ways (May-Benson, 2001).

Play at the age of 3-4 years old

Imaginary play becomes common as the child will act out roles they view in their life. Children at the age of 3 years old will play with others their age by sharing and talking about what they want to play. Ideational praxis is now developed and will continue to be used as the child plays and develops throughout the years. Fine motor skills develop, which involve the hands and the ability to complete tasks that were once difficult for the child (such as putting a puzzle together) (Case-Smith & O'Brien, 2015).

Outdoor Play

Allowing children play outdoors encourages imagination, builds strong bones, and helps them better understand their body (Hanscom, 2016). Remember that play does not need to be completed a certain way or length of time. Letting your child explore the outdoors near your home is a great way to start.

References

Ayres, A. J. (2005). *Sensory integration and the child* (Rev. ed). Los Angeles, Calif: Western Psychological Services.

Case-Smith, J., & O'Brien, J. (2015). *Occupational therapy for children and adolescents* (7th ed.) St. Louis, Missouri: Elsevier.

Hanscom, A. J. (2016). *Barefoot and balanced*. Oakland, California: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.

May-Benson, T. A. (2001). A theoretical model of ideation in praxis. In Roley, S. S., Blanche, E. I., & Schaaf, R. C. (2001). *Sensory integration with diverse populations* (163-181). Austin, Texas: PRO-ED, Inc.

Created by: Alyssa Tilstra, OTDS





3-4 years old

Growth at 3-4 years old		
Social	Emotional	Physical
What to expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Participates in singing and dancingShares toys and takes turns with others	What to expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Shows many different emotionsAffectionate to other friends without promptingMay have difficult time when change happens in routines	What to expect: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Easily runsWalks up and down stairs using one foot on each stepClimbs over objects with ease

*Please keep in mind every child develops differently. There may be a few items that your child is unable to complete or some that do not apply.

I am concerned about my child. What should I do?

If you are concerned for how your child is behaving, you may want to contact your child's provider. They will be able to guide you in how to best help your child. The provider may recommend an occupational therapist for your child. Occupational therapists help children learn how to better move their body and become more independent. They can teach your child how to create their own ideas and how to use objects in different ways (May-Benson, 2001). Occupational therapists are a great resource for how to help your child develop at home and at school. They will give you tips and tricks to test what works best for helping your child grow. Their goal is to work with your child during therapy sessions and provide you with the tools and resources to support development at home.

References

Ayres, A. J. (2005). *Sensory integration and the child* (Rev. ed). Los Angeles, Calif: Western Psychological Services.
Case-Smith, J., & O'Brien, J. (2015). *Occupational therapy for children and adolescents* (7th ed.) St. Louis, Missouri: Elsevier.
Center for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009). *Your child at 3 years* [Fact sheet]. U.S. Department of Health & Human Services.
https://www.cdc.gov/ncbddd/actearly/pdf/checklists/CDC_LTSAE-Checklists-with-Tips-3year-P.pdf
Hanscom, A. J. (2016). *Barefoot and balanced*. Oakland, California: New Harbinger Publications, Inc.
May-Benson, T. A. (2001). A theoretical model of ideation in praxis. In Roley, S. S., Blanche, E. I., & Schaaf, R. C. (2001). *Sensory integration with diverse populations* (163-181). Austin, Texas: PRO-ED, Inc.

Created by: Alyssa Tilstra, OTDS

