

5 Ways to Enrich your Little One's Playtime

1 Set the scene: loving, safe, enjoyable environment.

Children are masters of play and creativity. They are natural artists and scientists. Our main contribution as adults is to offer a space where they feel loved, safe and curious – in this order.

2 Free Movement

Offer as many opportunities as you can for free movement and free play. When young children are learning to move, they are not only learning how to sit, crawl, walk, jump, run, but they are also learning how to learn. As Emmi Pikler said: “He learns to do something on his own, to be interested, to try out, to experiment. (...) He comes to know the joy that is derived from this success, the result of his patience and persistence.”

3 Young children love reality - more than toys

Young children love reality more than toys because they are on a mission to become adults, as described by Montessori and as soon they are able to start mastering their own body, they are on a tenacious effort to understand and conquer the world. All “real toys” need to be safe and age appropriated. Wooden spoons and pans are a great hit. Toy boxes too.

4 Breath In, Breath Out

Rudolf Steiner described the children's play as being as dynamic as our breath – taking the air in, blowing it out. Breath In activities are introspective ones, require concentration and allow the child to be in contact with him/herself. (eg. drawing, puzzles, lego, reading). Breath Out are active and energetic activities and allow the child to release energy and allow children to explore the world around them (eg. running around, jumping, play with a ball). Children need both dynamics and to be able to vary them throughout the day. When boredom or restlessness strikes, checking if it's time to change to another dynamic, sometimes can make real miracles.

5 Play in Nature

Nature offers the best sensorial experience, as it has an incomparable richness and diversity. Regular contact with natural environments highly enrich children's play and creativity and supports general well-being, not only for little ones but for big ones too.