


---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---


  
*From Play to Practice:*  
*Connecting Teachers' Play to Children's Learning*  
  
 Walter F. Drew  
 INSTITUTE FOR SELF ACTIVE EDUCATION  
 Dr. Drew's Blocks

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"Self activity implies not merely that the learner shall do all himself, not merely that he will be benefitted only by what he himself does; it also implies that at all times his whole self shall be active, that the activity should enlist his entire self in all phases of being. The law of self-activity demands not activity alone, but all-sided activity of the whole being, the whole self."*

Friedrich Froebel, (1826) *The Education of Man*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Strengthen self active play as Developmentally Appropriate Practice at all levels of education

1. Develop and strengthen strong relationships with families using play.
2. Enhance use of open-ended materials in professional development.
3. Strengthen teacher's creativity and vision of self as play advocate.
4. Deepen understanding of the teacher's role in the learning process.
5. Evaluate strategies for building relationships with local businesses.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**LEADERS OF PLAY IN HUMAN DEVELOPMENT**

- **Friedrich Froebel:** Self activity, freedom, spirit of the child
- **Maria Montessori:** Arouse interest, whole child
- **Jean Piaget:** Invent & discover, concrete to abstract
- **Albert Einstein:** Imagination, highest form of research
- **Lev Vygotsky:** Social construction, scaffolding
- **Erik & Joan Erikson:** Wisdom of the senses, "gerotranscendence"
- **Abe Maslow:** Self actualization, hierarchy of needs
- **Elizabeth Jones:** Play across human life span, diversity
- **Brian Sutton-Smith** Source of "Origination & Optimism"
- **Karen VanderVen** Translating play theory into practice
- **Edgar Klugman** Intergenerational play
- **Parker Palmer:** Authentic self, heart open, inner journey
- **Stuart Brown:** Brain function, emotion, healing
- **Tom Hendricks:** Play as self discovery, self realization

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**"Play is first and foremost an expression of freedom"**

*Peter Gray, Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self Reliant, and Better Students for Life*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



***"I'm putting little rocks in my socks...."***

Sarah, 3 years old

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



"I make a sleepy house for my dinosaur."

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

***“Children are designed, by nature to play and explore on their own, independently of adults. They need freedom in order to develop; without it they suffer. The drive to play freely is a basic, biological drive. Lack of free play may not kill the physical body, as would lack of food, air, or water, but it kills the spirit and stunts mental growth.”***

Peter Gray, *Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self Reliant, and Better Students for Life*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

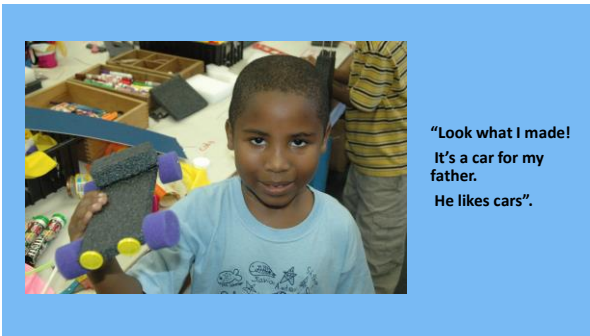
---

---

---

---

---



**"Look what I made!  
It's a car for my  
father.  
He likes cars".**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**Wisdom of the Senses  
*I hear and I forget,  
I see and I remember,  
I do and I understand***

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"What the teacher presents does not always absorb the whole attention, sometime not at all. The child has its own interests. Some knowledge it strongly desires, and therefore will seek this of its own free will, and throw its whole soul into the search. The will stimulated by self activity of all the faculties, prompts the child to spontaneous activity"*

Johann Heinrich Pestalozzi, (1894). *How Gertrude Teaches Her Children*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"Teachers and parents who are knowledgeable about the purposeful use of materials, the process of constructive play, and intentional strategies for interacting with children, succeed in helping children develop essential life skills and concepts in all content areas."*

NAEYC *Young Children*, July 2008

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“When we play, we are engaged in the purest expression of our humanity, the truest expression of our individuality. Is it any wonder that often the times we feel most alive, those that make up our best memories, are moments of play?”*

Stuart Brown, *Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, And Invigorates the Soul*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PLAY EDUCATION**

*“Play serves the serious purpose of education, but the player is not deliberately educating himself or herself. The player is playing for fun; education is a by-product. If the player were playing for a serious purpose, it would no longer be play and much of the educative power would be lost.”*

Peter Gray, *Free to Learn: Why Unleashing the Instinct to Play Will Make Our Children Happier, More Self Reliant, and Better Students for Life*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Self Active Play Process**

- **Encounter....The Play Experience**
  - Solo
  - Cooperative
- **Reflection**
  - Journal
  - One to one sharing
- **Synthesis**
  - Debriefing
  - Photo review

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Outcomes: Self Active Education,.....Self Active Play**

1. Focus the mind, concentrate, one pointed attention
2. Develop the capacity of expansion, elaboration, imagination, wideness of vision, as well as the ability to reason with compassion, complexity and richness.
3. Develop the ability to organize ideas around inspiring or higher ideals, or supremely luminous ideas or vision that will serve as a guide throughout life.
4. Develop self control of the mind, that is the ability to control ones own mind, to direct attention in a positive direction and to remain detached from troublesome thoughts or negative influences.
5. Develop mental silence, perfect calm, so that we are more receptive and readily available to inspiration arising from deep within our heart and soul.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*“How do we discover who we are? How do we determine the character of the world in which we live? And how do we decide what we can do in a world so configured? Such questions, each connected to the lifelong quest for self-realization...we learn about ourselves and the world - and about the intersection of these two realms- through acts of play.”*

Tom Henricks, *Play and the Human Condition*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



*“Being creative does usually involve playing with ideas and having fun; enjoyment and imagination. But creativity is also about working in a highly focused way on ideas and projects, crafting them into their best forms and making critical judgments along the way about which work best and why. In every discipline, creativity also draws on skill, knowledge and control. It’s not only about letting go, it’s about holding on”*

Sir Kenneth Robinson, *Out of Our Minds: Learning to be Creative*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

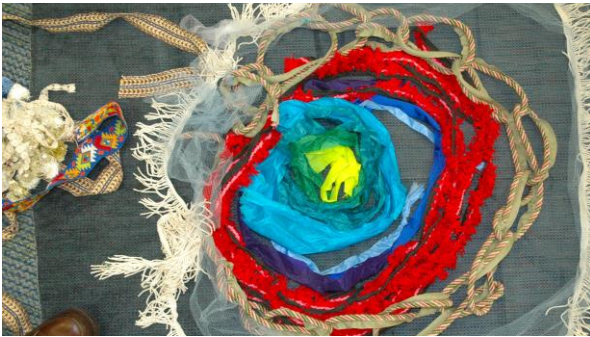
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

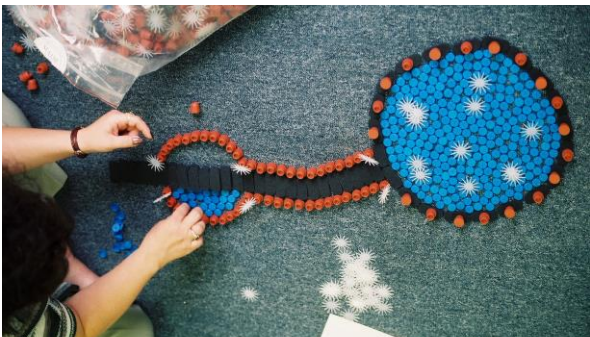
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

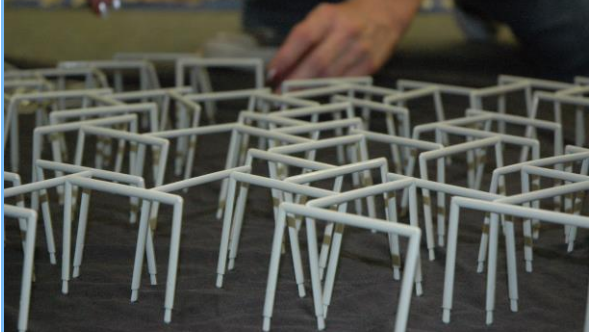
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

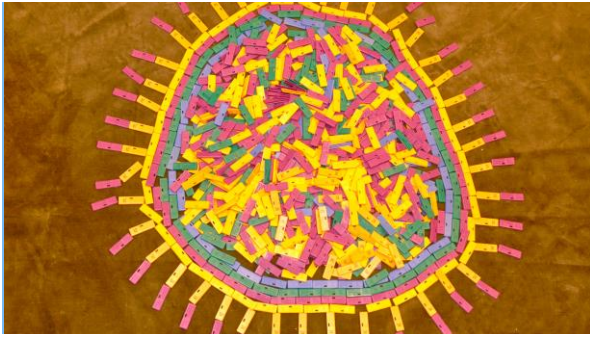
---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**United Way Center for Excellence**

Family Engagement with Dr. Drew's Blocks & Reusable Resources

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**MATERIALS**

- Open-ended/loose parts
- Stimulates curiosity
- Creative, innovative
- Abundance
- Variety
- Age appropriate
- Recycle/Green

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



Dairy Road Discovery Learning Center

Parent Play Workshop

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**“Other parents might not see it as important. I know I didn’t until I was a part of this study”.**

Parent

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

POLL

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

South Florida Association for the Education of Young Children

Play with Paints Workshop

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"The object, which is in back of every true work of art, is the attainment of a state of being, a state of high functioning, a more than ordinary moment of existence. In such moments activity is inevitable, and whether this activity is with brush, pen, chisel or tongue, its result is but a by-product of the state, a trace, the footprint of the state".*

Robert Henri, (1926). *The Art Spirit*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"Professional development experiences that feature hands-on play with open-ended materials are the best way to deepen understanding of developmentally appropriate practices in meeting early learning standards."*

NAEYC *Young Children*, July 2008

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**Approaches to Learning**

**Constructing & Gathering**  
Curiosity & initiative  
Risk Taking  
Stages of Play

**Applying Knowledge**  
Creativity  
Representation  
Invention

**Organizing & Understanding**  
Engagement & Attention  
Task Analysis  
Persistence  
Patterning  
Memory

**Learning Through Experience**  
Making Connections  
Resiliency  
Problem Solving

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Bright Star Center for Children and Families  
Suffering from Sudden Traumatic Loss

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"I am the Foster Care Coordinator. I deal with serious trauma and I see how play with these materials opens people up, it opens a channel for talking. Somehow I listened more focused. Usually my head's going around with many things. This is very therapeutic. A resource for integrating previous training, to deepen understanding, for remembering what you know from long before. Play is a big part of foster care training"*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---





---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**What is a Reusable Resource Center?**  
*A unique Business, Education, Environmental Partnership modeling innovative sustainable waste management to benefit creativity children, teachers, parents, artists.....whole community*



A woman with long brown hair, wearing a red top, is smiling and holding two young children. The children are also smiling. They are holding several brown paper bags filled with various items, including what looks like paper and other reusable materials. The background is a blue wall.

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*A Special Place where high quality, safe, unwanted donated business by-products, over runs, and reject materials, once destined for the landfill, are collected and redistributed for creative reuse by teachers, children, parents, artists.*



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

### Who Values & Uses the Center?

- Teachers, children, parents, artists
- Pre K Programs
- Child Care Centers
- Boy and Girl Scouts
- Head Start Programs
- Home school families
- After School Programs
- Artists & Art Centers
- Early Learning Coalitions
- Public, Private, Parochial Schools, K-12
- Summer Camps & Vacation Bible Schools
- Senior Centers & Assisted Living Communities
- Neighborhood Youth Centers/YMCA/YWCA/PAL
- College and University professors
- Business & Industry Community!

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"We sought for years to find organizations that would use our frame cutoffs and mat board,...then we learned about the Reusable Resource Center and we are happy to contribute knowing our discards will be used by children and organizations throughout the county."*

Tom Ridley Ridley Custom Framing, Palm Bay, Florida



---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**REUSABLE RESOURCE CENTER**

*"Makes sense for children and so developmentally appropriate. Makes sense for business which can contribute to a cleaner environment for all of us. Just good common sense. Makes financial sense. It ought to happen everywhere."*

David Lawrence  
Chair, Children's Movement of Florida

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

*"What does such play have in common with the arts in adulthood? The answer given here is that all of these expressive systems generate optimism about our life in this world; and they get this by displaying original ways of putting aside our pessimisms and depressions and boredom and innovating a virtual life that is primary a lot of fun. Their plays are for them real originality and this is what improves their feelings about the ordinary present day life and sometimes promises a future, where their own innovations will be central. The opposite of play is not work, as we have told ourselves since the dawn of industrial slavery, it is depression."*

• Brian Sutton-Smith, (1997). *The Ambiguity of Play*

---

---

---

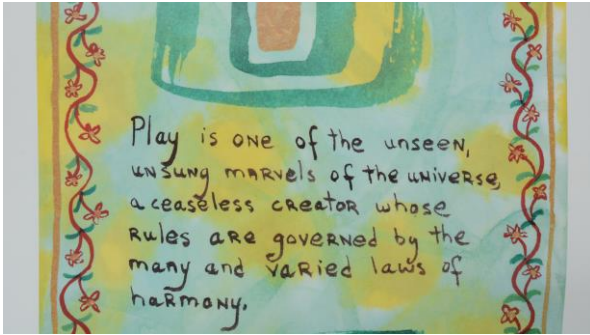
---

---

---

---

---




---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

Walter F. Drew, Institute for Self Active Education  
[www.ISAEplay.org](http://www.ISAEplay.org)  
[www.drtdrewsblocks.com](http://www.drtdrewsblocks.com)  
[www.reusecenterbrevard.org](http://www.reusecenterbrevard.org)  
[www.reuseresources.org](http://www.reuseresources.org)

Teaching Young Children: Silent Solo Play with Open-ended Materials  
<http://youtu.be/HZk2UGVt9zo>

Cultivating Creativity in Young Children  
<https://youtu.be/TFNumCCAwk>

The Recycle Center 1 "Hands, Heart, & Mind"  
<http://youtu.be/Aj5Vg58hpe0>

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #1**

**Play is a source of creative energy, a positive force, and a safe context for constructing meaningful knowledge and revitalizing the human spirit.**

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---



**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #2**

*Hands-on play and art making with open ended materials reconnect the individual with earlier stages of human development, spontaneously balancing and strengthening, hope, will, purpose, competence, fidelity, love, care, and wisdom.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #3**

*The play space is a state of being which is self constructed or co-constructed based on the players' previous experiences and their perceptions of the levels of safety and trust leading into the play space.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #4**

*Experiences within the play space elicits strong affect toward the play space such as feelings of protectiveness, a yearning to return, and desire for further exploration of higher levels of understanding and self-awareness.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #5**

*The creative energy released within the play space is accelerated as players assume new pretend roles and as players thrill in discovering "Who will I be next?" and "What will I do next?"*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLES OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #6**

*Self active play is a source of energy for rekindling love, passion, intimate relationships with other people and between players. These feelings are pervasive not just isolated to the play space but rather move forward as the player moves beyond the play space in their realities.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

**PRINCIPLE OF SELF ACTIVE PLAY: #7**

*Self active play's intrinsic qualities include spontaneity of the spirit, thinking deeply, feeling intensely, and building trust in one's intuitive Self.*

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---