

Play Checklist

Child's Name: _____ Date: _____ Date of Birth: _____

Check the highest level skills you consistently observe:

*1. Pretending with Objects

- Does not use objects to pretend
- Uses real objects
- Substitutes objects for other objects
- Uses imaginary objects

*2. Role-Playing

- No role play
- Uses one sequence of play
- Combines sequences
- Uses verbal declaration (for example, "I'm a doctor")
- Imitates actions of role, including dress

*3. Verbalizations about the Play Scenario

- Does not use pretend words during play
- Uses words to describe substitute objects
- Uses words to describe imaginary objects and actions (for example, "I'm painting a house")
- Uses words to create a play scenario (for example, "Let's say we're being taken by a monster")

*4. Verbal Communication during a Play Episode

- Does not verbally communicate during play
- Talks during play only to self
- Talks only to adults in play
- Talks with peers in play by stepping outside of role (for example, "That's not how mothers hold their babies")
- Talks with peers from within role (for example, "Eat your dinner before your dad comes home")

*5. Persistence in Play

- Less than five minutes
- Six to nine minutes
- Ten minutes or longer

*6. Interactions

- Plays alone
- Plays only with adults
- Plays with one child, always the same person
- Plays with one child, can be different partners
- Can play with two or three children together

**7. Entrance into a Play Group

- Does not attempt to enter play group
- Uses force to enter play group
- Stands near group and watches
- Imitates behavior of group
- Makes comments related to play theme
- Gets attention of another child before commenting

8. Problem Solving

- Gives in during conflict
- Uses force to solve problems
- Seeks adult assistance
- Imitates verbal solutions or strategies provided by adults
- Recalls words or strategies to use when reminded
- Initiates use of words or strategies
- Accepts reasonable compromises

9. Turn Taking

- Refuses to take turns
- Leaves toys, then protests when others pick them up
- Takes turns if arranged and directed by an adult
- Asks for turn, does not wait for a response
- Gives up toy easily if done with it
- Gives up toy if another child asks for it
- Proposes turn taking, will take and give turns

10. Support of Peers

- Shows no interest in peers
- Directs attention to distress of peers
- Shows empathy or offers help
- Offers and takes suggestions of peers at times
- Encourages or praises peers

Note: The developmental progression outlined in each segment of the Play Checklist can be used as a guideline when assessing most children's development. However, not all children will go through the same steps in development nor through the same developmental sequence.

*Smilansky, Sara. 1968. *The effects of sociodramatic play on disadvantaged preschool children*. New York: Wiley.

** Hazen, Nancy, Betty Black and Faye Fleming-Johnson. 1984. Social acceptance: Strategies children use and how teachers can help children learn them. *Young Children*. 39: 26-36.

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