

Home-Based Opportunities for Floortime

- **dressing and undressing:** giving child choices about what to wear or not or what to take off first, is following the child's lead.
- **mealtime:** chose one meal a time with enough time - talk may focus around food preparation, different foods being served, which foods are particularly enjoyable or any topic relating to the child's life.
- **car time:** engage child in a relaxed conversation in which child takes the lead, or sing-along for which child chooses songs
- **coming and going time:** plan to have at least a little time to get child settled on arrival to a classroom or in switching and transitioning from one activity to another by reading a short story, visit pet in classroom or at home, or look at special toy in classroom or at home. Show child support through your interest and warm clear good-bye if leaving in classroom. On picking child up from classroom give the child a chance to tell you something important about the day while you are still in the school setting.
- **bath time:** Bath toys are wonderful props as they float, get dunked, and come into contact with each other. The water is a great opportunity for play. The child will naturally relax in the water.
- **book time:** Read the book with the child on your lap or next to you on a chair or bed. As you read, be aware of responses and questions that you can extend. (If the child is totally absorbed, however, it is best to continue reading and simply enjoy the sense of shared interest)
- **bedtime:** Bedtime is often accompanied by a ritual, but is also a moment to feel close and loving. Children sometimes share important thoughts and feelings during the last moments before falling asleep. Although you will not want to rev-up the child up prior to sleeping, you can respond with empathy and stay close until the child is calm and feels safe enough to sleep.

Turning Every Day Activity into Problem Solving for Child

- chair not close to table, in the child's spot, when meal time arrives
- bottle not open when you are trying to pour juice
- bathtub empty of water when you tell child it is time to take a bath
- shoes hidden from usual resting place
- changing the shelf locations of favorite books, tapes etc.
- putting two socks on same foot
- putting shirt on feet
- give child adult shoes instead of their own
- use rubber band to hold together a spoon and fork when giving child tool for eating
- being sure cup is upside down when offering child a drink
- put markers in a new container which child has not yet learned to open
- mix puzzle pieces of two or three puzzles together

Strategies for Engagement and Two-way Communication

- Give child seemingly random actions new meanings by responding to them as if they were purposeful.
- Use sensory-motor play -- bouncing, tickling, swinging, and so on -- to elicit pleasure.
- Use sensory toys in cause-and-effect ways: hide a toy, then make it magically reappear; drop a belled toy so that child will hear the jingle; bring a tickle feather closer, closer, closer until finally you tickle child with it.
- Play infant games, such as peekaboo, I'm going to get you, and patty cake.
- Play verbal Ping Pong with child, responding to every sound or word the child makes and continue the ping pong match to expand the number of circles closed.
- Pursue pleasure over other behaviors and do not interrupt any pleasurable experience.

- Use gestures, tone of voice, and body language to accentuate the emotion in what you say and do.
- Try to be as accepting of child's anger and protests as you are of child's more positive emotions.
- Help child deal with anxiety (separation, getting hurt, aggression, loss, fear, and so on) by using gestures and problem solving.

Strategies for Helping Child Build Symbolic World

- Identify real-life experiences child knows and enjoys and have toys and props available to play out those experiences
- Respond to child's real desires through pretend actions
- Allow child to discover what is real and what is a toy (e.g., if child tries to go down a toy slide, encourage child to go on; if child tries to put on doll's clothes, do not tell it doesn't fit; if child puts foot in pretend pool, ask if is cold)
- If child is thirsty, offer an empty cup or invite to tea party
- If child is hungry, open cardboard-box refrigerator and offer some food, pretend to cook, or ask if the child will go to the pretend market with you to get things.
- If child wants to leave, give pretend keys or a toy car
- If child lies down on floor or couch, get a blanket or pillow, turn off the lights, and sing a lullaby
- Encourage role playing with dress-up props, use puppets - child may prefer to be the actor before using symbolic figures
- Use specific set of figures/dolls to represent family members and identify other figures with familiar names
- Give symbolic meaning to objects as you play:
- When child climbs to top of the sofa, pretend child is climbing a tall mountain
- When child slides down the slide at the playground, pretend the child is sliding into the ocean and watch out for the fish
- Substitute one object for another when props are needed. Pretend that the ball is a cake or the spoon is a birthday candle.
- Resume use of gestures for props along with toy objects and substitutes
- As you play, help child elaborate on personal intentions.
- Ask who is driving the car,
- where the car is going,
- whether child has enough money,
- did child remember the keys to the car,
- why is child going there,
- why not somewhere else, etc.
- Expand as long as you can. (Use all of the Who, What, Where, Why, When questions, and keep them open ended)
- Make use of breakdowns.
- When a problem crops up during play, create symbolic solutions.
- Get the doctor kit when the doll falls so child can help the hurt doll, tool kit for broken car etc.
- Acknowledge child's disappointment and encourage empathy.
- Get involved in the drama.
- Be a player and take on a role with your figure.
- Talk directly to the dolls rather than questioning child about what is happening or narrating
- Both help the child and be your own player.
- Talk as an ally (perhaps whispering), but also have your figure oppose or challenge child's ideas.
- Insert obstacles into the play. (e.g.: make your bus block the road. Then speaking as a character, challenge child to respond. If necessary, get increasingly urgent (whispering to child to encourage to deal with the problem, offer help if needed by becoming an ally).

- Use symbolic figures child knows and loves, such as Barney, Disney or Sesame Street characters, to generate symbolic play. Reenact familiar scenes or songs, create new ideas, and notice characters and themes child may be avoiding or fear.
- Use play to help child understand and master ideas/themes which may have been frightening. Work on fantasy and reality.
- Let child be the director. Child's play need not be realistic (child may still be a magical thinker) but encourage logical thinking.
- Focus on process as you play; which character to be, what props are needed when ideas have changed, what the problem is, when to end the idea, etc. Identify the beginning, middle and end.
- As you play, match your tone of voice to the situation. Pretend to cry when character is hurt, cheer loudly when your character is happy, speak in rough or spooky tones when you are playing the bad guy. Remember, drama, drama, drama to give child affect cues.
- Reflect on the ideas and feelings in the story both while playing and later on as you would with other real life experiences
- Discuss child's abstract themes such as good guy/bad guy, separation/loss, and various emotions such as closeness, fear, jealousy, anger, bossy, competition, etc.
- Remember symbolic play and conversation is the safe way to practice, reenact, understand and master the full range of emotional ideas and experiences.

Strategies to Develop Abstract Thinking

- Follow child's lead, build on child's ideas
- Challenge child to create new ideas in pretend play
- Heighten affect and engagement
- Practice and expand rapid back and forth interactions and conversations (gesturally and verbally)
- Carry on logical conversations all the time (e.g.: while driving, at meals, during baths etc.) Content does not have to be realistic
- Encourage understanding of fantasy-reality:
- child will use toys as real objects for self as if real (e.g.: puts feet in play pool, tries to go down toy slide, tries on doll clothes, etc.)
- child may prefer to start with role play and puppets
- child will use toys in pretend fashion
- child will use symbolic solutions for problems and fears
- child will find safety to experiment with themes of aggression and power
- Recognize fears and avoidance of certain feelings, themes and characters.
- During play and conversations get beginning, middle and end of story or idea - identify problem to be solved, motives and feelings - accept all feelings and encourage empathy
- Select books to read that have themes, motives and problems to solve - discuss alternative outcomes, feelings

Encourage abstract thinking:

- ask why questions
- ask for opinions
- compare and contrast different points of view
- reflect on feelings - come back to experiences again later
- don't ask questions you know the answer to
- don't tell child which dimensions to use
- Use visualization - picture yourself
- avoid rote, fragmented, academic questions
- Be creative
- if child puts foot in pretend pool, ask if it's cold.
- if child is thirsty, offer an empty cup or invite child to a tea party

- if child is hungry, open toy refrigerator and offer some food, pretend to cook, or ask if child will go to pretend market with you to get things to eat.
- if child want to leave, give pretend keys or a toy car
- if child lies down on the floor or couch, get a blanket or pillow, turn off the lights, and sing a lullaby.
- Encourage role playing with dress-up props, use puppets - child may prefer to be the actor before the child uses symbolic figures.
- Use a specific set of figures/dolls to represent family members and identify other figures with familiar names.
- Get involved in the drama. Be a player and take on a role with your own figure. Talk directly to the dolls rather than questioning child about what is happening or narrating.

19. Strategies to Develop Motor Planning Abilities

- Encourage "undoing"
- cover desired object
- put puzzle piece in wrong place
- bury desired object(s) under other toys and very different objects
- hide desired object from the place where child last put it etc.
- Provide destinations for actions - treat as intentional and symbolic
- child throws - catch it in basket
- child holds figure (little person, animal) -bring over toy slide, school bus, food (if child does not use spontaneously, ask if the figure would like to... give choices if needed...ask figure directly...try not to direct)
- child taps - bring over drums (can be plate, plastic toy, sticks etc)
- child rolls car - bring over garage, crash into it, block with figure
- child reaches for hand - play give me five, variations, dance
- Create problems to solve - require multiple steps
- put desired objects in boxes to open, untie, remove tape or rubber band
- pretend object needs to be fixed using tools, tape, rubber bands, Band-Aids (symbolic)
- create obstacles to child getting around or mor or restore to correct position
- hold book to read upside down and/or backwards
- offer pens/markers which do not work
- sit in child's special place
- get to where the child is running first
- hide object child desires in one hand or the other so that the child can choose
- when child seeks your hand instead of using own hand, put your hands on your head or in your pocket
- put socks on child's hands instead of feet
- give child your shoes to put on
- make desired toy/object a moving target (move from place to place)
- Be playful and supportive as you encourage and expand these interactions
- Change environment frequently to encourage flexibility, create problems and expand discussion
- move expected objects (change drawer content, change content in baskets)
- rearrange furniture and create problems (child find chair upside down, or is told to sit down when chair is across the room)
- hang up pictures from magazines at eye level and change frequently
- Encourage child to initiate/continue action
- Ready, set, Go!
- put toy which child was using back in child's hand. (Oh, you dropped, forgot)
- provide cues - uh oh, knock, knock, help
- use indirect prompts (call the figures to come, where are you?)
- bring over next step (puppet to eat pretend food, mirror to see the hat etc.)
- trade objects, positions etc.

- Deal with consequences of actions symbolically
- baby doll fall (is dropped) - Uh oh! He's crying. Are you hurt? Get a bandage. Go to the doctor. Call an ambulance...
- car crashes - Oh no, it's broken! Can you fix it mechanic?
- Basket is dropped - What a mess! What do we do now?
- Model/mediate sequence of actions needed to solve problem
- Plan your idea - discuss what child will need for their idea
- get toys/props child will need
- identify setting and destinations
- while playing identify problems and sequence of solutions
- identify beginning, middle and end
- challenge, reason, negotiate
- Play interactive song-hand games
- Itsy bitsy spider
- one potato two potato
- slap my hand
- sailor went to sea, sea, sea etc.
- Play Treasure Hunt and use maps (use visual and verbal cues)
- Play games
- social playground/party games
- board games (cognitively challenging)
- cooking
- drama
- arts and craft activities
- Encourage athletic activities
- individual sports e.g. tennis, roller skating, shooting baskets, ice skating etc
- group sports e.g. soccer, baseball, basketball etc
- gymnastics
- Tae Kwon Do

20. Strategies to Address Processing Difficulties

| Child's Actions | Adult's Solutions |
|---|--|
| Stays stuck, does not know what to do next | Provide destination Return object of interest Use object in some way Expand, expand Give new meanings Use ritualized cues to start ("ready, set, go") |
| Uses scripts | Join in Offer alternative scripts Change direction of script |
| Perseverates | Ask for turn, join, imitate, help Make interactive Ask "how many" more times Set up "special" time |
| Protests | Act sorry, play dumb, restore, blame figure |
| Rejects, refuses | Provide more things to say "no" to Expand, give other choices or time |
| Says something unrelated | Insist on a response Notice change or bring closure |
| Becomes anxious or fearful | Reassure Problem solve Use symbolic solutions |
| Acts out, pushes, hits | Provide affective cue ("Uh, uh, uh"; "No, no, no") to encourage self-regulation Set limits. Reward for absence of negative behaviors |

Developmental Stages of Greenspan's Functional Emotional Assessment Scale (FEAS)

- Regulation and Interest in the World (by 3 months)
- Forming Relationships and Attachments (by 5 months)
- Intentional Two-Way Communication (by 9 months)
- Complex sense of Self I: Behavioral Organization (by 13 months)
- Complex sense of Self II: Behavioral Elaboration (by 18 months)
- Emotional Ideas I: Representational Capacity (by 24 months)
- Emotional Ideas II: Representational Elaboration (by 30 months)
- Emotional Thinking I: (by 36 months)
- Emotional Thinking II: (by 42-48 months)

22. Structural and Thematic Characteristics of Greenspan's FEAS Developmental Stages

| Stages of Development | Organizing Fantasies and Themes |
|--------------------------------------|---|
| Regulation and Interest in the World | Omnipotent control; being overwhelmed; falling apart |
| Engagement and Relating | Isolation; emptiness; inanimate objects; unconditional love |
| Intentional Communication | Part object pleasures or fears; chaotic, fragmented interactions |
| Complex sense of self | Narcissistic self-absorption; grandiosity; suspiciousness; somatization; global self deprecation |
| Emotional Ideas | Neediness, being taken care of and/or fear of separation and/or danger |
| Emotional Thinking | Power; being admired; respected; shame; humiliation; loss of love; injury or harm to self or others |

23. Greenspan's FEAS Levels of Functioning and Corresponding Floor Time Strategy

| Developmental Level | Child's Skills Needed | Floor Time Strategy |
|---|---|--|
| Regulation and Interest in the World (by 3 months) | Sense of protection, care and encouraged engagement in world | Provide one on one ping ponging and cuddling to set a pattern that is predictable and comforting |
| Forming Relationships and attachment (by 5 months) | Rich investment in human world; woos and is wooed | Provide secure relationship which evolves into an attachment that survives negative feelings |
| Intentional Two-Way Communication (by 9 months) | Reads and responds contingently to range of affective and behavioral cues | Provide experiences which help develop capacity to facilitate empathic reading of the "other" |
| Complex Sense of Self: Behavioral Organization & | Secure availability to others while admiring and supporting greater behavioral organization, initiative and originality | Provide experiences which encourage self-observing capacity and permits integration of affective opposites around dependency, aggression, passivity and assertiveness. |

| | | |
|---|---|--|
| Behavioral Elaboration (9-18 months) | | |
| Emotional Ideas: Representational capacity and elaboration (18-30 months) | Using evolving, representational (symbolic) capacities across a wide thematic and affective range | Provide experiences which work at the use and elaboration of fantasy and pretend play |
| Emotional Thinking: Representation, Differentiation and Consolidation (24-48 months) | Using of representational capacity and reality orientation | Provide experiences to shift between fantasy and reality and integrate wide range of affective and thematic issues |