

## **Learning and Cognitive Development: Play**

### **Teaching Tips:**

- It may be helpful to teach play after having introduced the concepts in the overview of pillar three, Learning and Cognitive Development.
- Most parents feel like they understand play and its value for their child, however, they may not understand how play support learning in all four pillars.
- To introduce this topic, have parents think back to their own childhood and describe their best memories of play. What did they do? How did their parents participate in play?
- Use the key messages below as a focus for teaching this topic as well as a summary of the content.

### **Learning Objectives for Parents and Caregivers**

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After learning about play, parents and caregivers will be able to:

- 1) Describe six different types of play that encourage learning
- 2) Understand the benefits and function of play in the developing child
- 3) Give examples of age appropriate play for children birth to five

### **Key Messages for Parents and Caregivers**

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- 1) Play has many benefits for children. It encourages brain development, helps children learn important social skills, increases communication skills, enhances language skills, and promotes self-confidence and self-esteem.
- 2) Early child-initiated play lays the foundation for future learning and academic success.
- 3) Play helps children experience, explore, and learn about the world around them.
- 4) Play promotes healthy child development and can provide the opportunity to develop strong parent-child bonds.
- 5) Parents and professionals have an instrumental role in helping to encourage the social and emotional development of a child through play.
- 6) Research shows there is a direct correlation between the amount and quality of early childhood play and children's overall healthy development and well-being in later years.

