

Imaginative play with babies

Babies are born ready to explore and make sense of the world around them. High quality imaginative play offers opportunities to nurture cognitive, social and emotional explorations of individual babies, their attempts at interaction with adults and other children and their attempts at making choices. Babies do not need kitchen units or dressing up clothes instead resources that support them to explore, experiment and recreate opportunities experienced in their own homes.



Role of the adult

Create a consistent space for domestic play that is undisturbed from other play areas. Make it cosy and comfortable with tactile resources that enable them to use all their senses to play and explore.

Notice how babies communicate with you through smiles, waves, cries, facial expressions, body movement and eye contact. Place yourself at your baby's level and look around to see what they may be seeing.

What do your babies like doing? What schemas are they beginning to display? What resources can you provide that support schematic play?

Babies love looking at themselves and people who are important to them. Create a display with photos of their loved ones for babies to look at and to remove during the session independently.

Offer resources that reflect the cultural and religious backgrounds of your babies. Find out from your families what items they would like to see for babies to explore in their play.

Ensure resources support a growing sense of independence using open, accessible storage that are clearly labelled with photos in transparent trays or open top baskets.