

# PLAY THE GAME... MAMA, I NEED DRAMA!



Experts agree that dramatic play is an integral part of a well-rounded preschool program as it is healthy for early childhood development. Here are just a few of the many incredible benefits of dramatic play.

## DRAMATIC PLAY TEACHES SELF-REGULATION

Preschoolers are known for acting with impulse, so dramatic play is a great stepping stone for learning to self-regulate their emotions and actions. Interestingly, when children assign and accept roles in dramatic play they are motivated to stick to them, thinking of them as rules to follow. Their own rules, this helps them develop the ability to coordinate and plan with others as well as control their impulses.

## DRAMATIC PLAY ENCOURAGES LANGUAGE DEVELOPMENT



Dramatic play teaches and encourages expressive language. Children are motivated to communicate their wishes to their peers and therefore must learn to speak from the perspective of their pretend roles. Dramatic play is often a very comfortable place for children who are shy or withdrawn to participate in a group.

## DRAMATIC PLAY TEACHES CONFLICT RESOLUTION

Both unstructured and structured dramatic play offer teachable moments about conflict resolution. Inevitably, disagreements will naturally arise during dramatic play, which offers children a chance to work through their differences and arrange a compromise. It also encourages children to consider alternate perspectives as they recognize various roles of people in their lives and communities.

## DRAMATIC PLAY TEACHES MATH & LITERACY

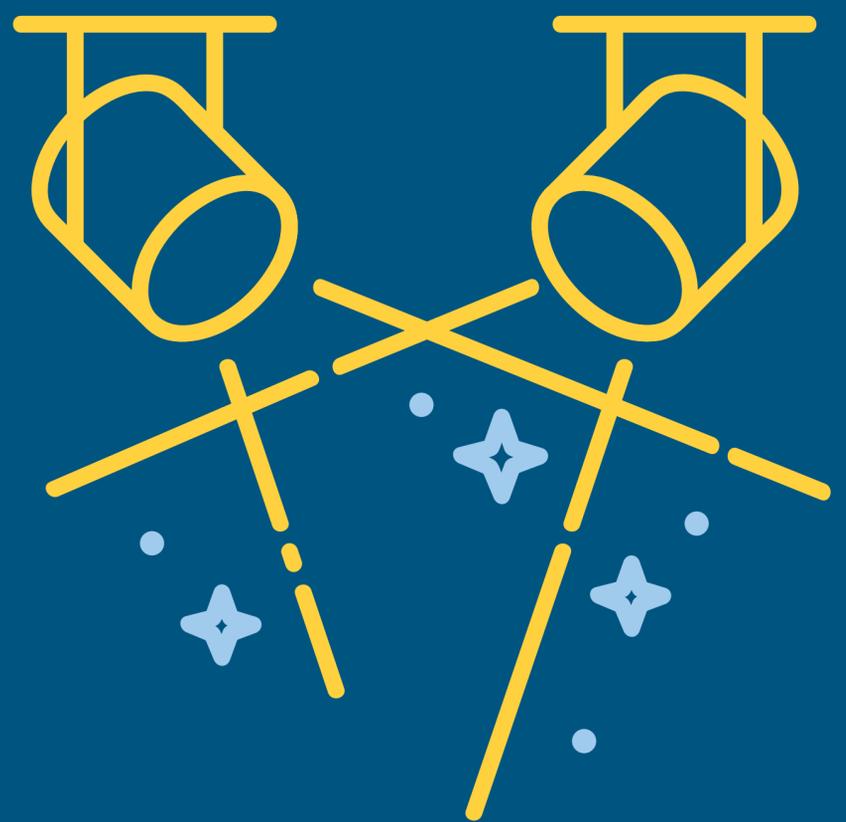
Dramatic play provides the perfect play setting for children to interact with functional math and print. Consider the child who is playing server at a restaurant. He will interact with both print and numbers as he takes orders, fills them and then rings up the total owed for the meal. Dramatic play is also known for increasing comprehension as children love to act out their favorite storybooks.

## DRAMATIC PLAY RELIEVES EMOTIONAL TENSION

Dramatic play offers a safe place for children to act out real life situations. Adults tend to cope with dramatic events by retelling it again and again. Children cope with dramatic events by acting them out. With the current pandemic situation, dramatic play can help children work through to shine a light on some of the stressors they are experiencing.

## DRAMATIC PLAY IS EMPOWERING TO CHILDREN

This is not only because children can assign and accept their own roles in the play setting, but also because dramatic play offers a safe play for children to act out traumatic experiences. Typically, when children act out dramatic or frightening experiences they place themselves in a powerful role. They choose to play mommy or daddy, two important figures in their lives, or a superhero with great powers. A child who has lived through real trauma, like a car accident, for example, might choose to be a paramedic or doctor.



CHESTERMERE