

6 BENEFITS OF PLAY

Play isn't all fun and games — it's also an important teaching tool! Through play, kids learn how to interact with others and develop critical lifelong skills. These 6 benefits all play an important role in raising well-rounded children.

PHYSICAL

Active play is critical for kids' physical development. It helps children hone their coordination, balance, gross-motor skills (large movements like crawling and walking) and fine-motor skills (smaller movements like picking objects up).

There's tons of research about the health benefits of living an active lifestyle, and the same is true for our children. Research has shown that physically active kids tend to be leaner and healthier, while an inactive childhood can lead to a sedentary lifestyle in adulthood. Plus, physical play helps children use up their natural stores of energy (a must!), and promotes better eating and sleeping habits.

EMOTIONAL

It's children's way of creating imaginary worlds, characters, and plots that match their emotional state, helping them learn to express and regulate their feelings. Through play, kids learn to cope with their emotions as they act out fear, frustration, anger, and aggression in a situation they control. It's also a chance for them to practice empathy and understanding. By giving kids a sense of accomplishment and satisfaction, play can help build kids' confidence and self-perception.

SOCIAL

Cooperative play helps kids hone their social skills as they figure out how to negotiate group dynamics. It helps them learn how to collaborate and compromise with others, recognize and respond to others' feelings, share, show affection, resolve conflicts, and adhere to the rules. In turn, these important early lessons help children understand the roles and rules of society!

Social skills are critical not just for forming relationships, but also for supporting academic success! A study found that the best predictor of academic performance in 8th grade was a child's social skills in 3rd grade. And, according to research, third graders who have 15+ minutes of recess a day are better-behaved in school than those who have less.

COGNITIVE

One of the best ways to stimulate brain development and reinforce these valuable skills is by playing with your child as they explore objects and

physical spaces, and learn to process sights and sounds.

Self-directed play gives kids the opportunity to hone their decision-making skills. Selecting a game, focusing on that activity, and seeing it through to the end, is an important element of cognitive control, and helps sharpen their planning skills and attention spans.

When children are faced with a problem during play, it tests their reasoning and judgment, and their ability to find a solution. Brain-teasers, puzzles and strategy-based games help reinforce critical thinking skills.

CREATIVE

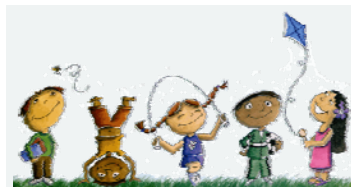
Play gives kids a chance to truly let their imaginations run wild and create worlds of their own that they have control over. Whether it's a make-believe game or an arts & crafts activity, play provides children the freedom to explore new possibilities and think outside the box ... to come up with unique ideas as well as creative solutions to challenges they face.

An active imagination will continue to serve kids throughout their lives. According to a recent survey of more than 1,500 Chief Executive Officers from 33 industries around the world, CEOs believe that successfully navigating an increasingly complex world will require creativity more than any other skill.

COMMUNICATION

By playing with others, children learn the art of communication. They come to recognize facial expressions and body language. They figure out how to strike up and carry on conversations, and how to express their thoughts and desires in a way that won't cause problems and put a stop to the group game.

Pretend play is especially important for children's communication development and literacy. The idea that a letter represents a sound is based on symbolism — a concept kids come to understand when they pretend that a cardboard box is a castle, or that a shoe is a race car. Role-play also gives children a chance to use words they've heard adults and other kids use, and helps improve their vocabulary. As they grow older, word-based games help reinforce language and literacy skills.



From:
6 Benefits of Play
thegeniusofplay.org

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From the Director's Desk

Access to quality, affordable child care has become increasingly difficult in our area. In New York State most areas are being called "child care deserts." A child care desert is when the demand for child care slots is approximately three times higher than the supply. This means that for every open slot there are three children who are competing for it. What are parents to do when they cannot find child care?

Parents in New York have limited regulated care options to meet their child care needs and these options often come at a high cost to parents. There are two types of regulated child care in New York. Licensed and Registered child care programs which include Day Care Centers, School Age Child Care Programs, and home-based Family and Group Family Child Care Providers. Regulated child care is overseen by the New York State Office of Children and Family Services. Knowing that there is only one regulated slot available to every three children in need of care, how are parents meeting their needs?

Parents are asking friends and family to care for their children, they are making changes to their work arrangements so that one parent can be available in the daytime and the other in the evening or they are piecing their care together with several different programs and people. Parents may also be using child care providers who are not regulated. Some of them do not provide care for the number of children that require them to have a license or registration; however, some unregulated providers may actually fall under the requirements for having a license or registration. Without good, quality licensed and registered care options available, parents are forced to make choices that they otherwise would not make. The shortage of quality programs along with the high cost of child care make it extremely difficult on parents who must rely on child care programs so that they can work.

The cost of child care is particularly harsh for parents whose household income qualifies for child care subsidy but they do not receive it or whose income is marginally over the allowable amount to qualify for subsidy. The cost of care in New York State varies by region and is determined by a survey of programs and the amount that they charge, the average of which is the market rate. The market rate is the cost that the local department of social services will pay for child care. Otsego County is in a region where the cost of care is between \$143 and \$200 per week. With the cost of care so high, why is there a shortage of child care programs?

Looking at the cost of child care mentioned above, let's look at the cost of care compared to the cost of providing care. We will use Family Child Care for our comparison. A Family Child Care provider has six full-time slots, paid for at approximately \$150 per week, per slot. The provider is paid \$900 per week for caring for children for ten

hours per day, five days per week. The provider makes \$18 per hour for 50 hours of work. But, the provider also has to spend two hours each day preparing and cleaning, increasing work time to 12 hours per day, five days per week. Plus, the provider spends two hours grocery shopping each week, two hours completing required paperwork each week, and an hour each week attending professional development. This extra time brings the provider to 65 hours for the week, making the hourly wage \$13.85. In New York State the minimum wage for fast food workers is set to be at \$13.75 per hour by December 31, 2019. In addition to the number of hours, day care providers are expected to meet the standards set by the regulations and improve upon them. From their payment for providing care, providers must pay for groceries, heat, electricity, water, housing, and all of the other living expenses that we all have, provide program materials, take training – the list adds up quickly. While the requirements on child care providers continue to increase, pay does not. This is also true for day care centers. They have more children but they have more bills too, as employers and businesses. The people who get into child care do not do it to get rich. They do it because they love children and want to work with them and help them to learn and grow. Why is the cost of care so high when child care providers make so little?

We need to have additional state and federal funding invested in our children. We need people who want to work with children, to stay home with their own children and we need people who want to learn and grow to be able to offer the best child care available. These types of people invest their time, their energy, and their resources into their programs. Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies across the state are advocating for these issues. We are also recruiting the new flow of people who have an entrepreneurial spirit and would like to open their own programs. But we cannot do this alone. If you are interested in advocating for the availability of quality, affordable child care programs in Otsego County please think of writing to your legislators and telling them what it would mean to you to have more quality choices for children!

How do you contact your legislators?

NY State Assembly: nyassembly.gov
NY State Senate: nysenate.gov

Winning Beginning New York

Winning Beginning NY is a statewide coalition working toward the goal of high-quality, affordable and accessible early care and learning for all New York families. Its members include parents, employers, children's advocates, service providers, labor unions, educators, pediatricians, law enforcement, research and community groups.

**View the Winning Beginning New York State's
Executive Agenda for 2018-2019:**
winningbeginningny.org

**What is a
Child Care Resource & Referral**

The Child Care Resource and Referral (CCR&R) program works in your community to develop quality, reliable, and affordable child care by recruiting, training, and providing technical assistance to all modalities of child care. Child Care Support Services, a program of Catholic Charities of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties is the CCR&R for Otsego County. Our services include:

- Referral to child care/early childhood programs
- Registration for Family Daycare and School Age Child Care in Otsego County
- Training and technical assistance to all modalities of child care
- Sponsorship of the Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP) for day care homes
- Start up grants for new child care providers
- Circulation of reference materials through the Lending Library
- On-site workshops to determine child care needs for employers and their staff

**Otsego County Public Health
Nursing Services**

Immunization Clinic services are open to the public. Children under 18 years of age must be accompanied by a parent or legal guardian (for informed consent). It is very important that you keep track of your child's shot record and bring it with you every time you come to the clinic. Please call Public Health for clinic dates or if you have any questions. (607) 432-4410 in Oneonta or (607) 547-4230 in Cooperstown.

Reading Together

Reading books together can be a wonderful experience for both your child and you as a parent or caregiver. Books can be filled with rich illustrations and descriptive text or simple drawings and one or two words per page. They can be laugh-out-loud funny, introduce a new concept, or give a new spin on an old fairy tale. Your child, and maybe even you, probably have at least one favorite book that can be recited from memory. You may even say 'this book, again?' I urge you to keep reading those beloved favorites and let your child read them to you. Act out the stories with props, make up new stories for the characters or imagine what happens after the book is finished to add new excitement to your family favorites! As Dr. Seuss says: "You're never too old, too wacky, too wild, to pick up a book and read to a child."

If you are looking for a new book, check out the winners of the Children's Book Council Children's and Teen's Choice Book Awards. <https://www.cbcbooks.org/readers/reading-lists/ccba/>.



**Are You In Need of
Winter Weather Wear?**

The Family Service Association, located at 277 Chestnut Street in Oneonta, provides services that help meet the needs of families in Otsego County. Along with clothing for everyone in your family, Family Service Association is also able to supply winter weather gear. The FSA is dependent on donations and holds clothing drives to ensure that they have hats, gloves, snow boots, snow pants, and coats available to anyone who may need them. To ensure that they have the items you need in stock, you may want to call before you stop in. If you have gently worn winter items that you no longer need please consider donating your items to FSA so that others in our community will have a warmer winter.

If your child resides in the Oneonta School District, the Oneonta Clothing Guild is able to provide new sneakers, new snow boots, and new snow pants. Please call Family Service Association to fill out an application (607) 432-2870.

Free Online Child Care Referrals!

Are you a parent searching for child care in Otsego County?

You now have the ability to search for child care any time of the day or night!

Access to our online referral packet which includes information to help you make an informed child care decision!

Visit our Website!
www.CharitiesCCDOS.org

Beat the Winter Blues! Get out of the house!

If it is too cold to play outside, a great kid friendly alternative is your local library. Most towns have a library with monthly or weekly activities for all members of your household. To find the library closest to you head to the Four Counties Library System Website: www.4cls.org and click Library Information at the top of the screen.

SUNY Oneonta's A.J. Read Science Discovery Center and Planetarium is a free, hands-on museum for people of all ages and abilities. Head out for "Science on a Saturday" or to one of the Public Planetarium Nights! Visit <https://suny.oneonta.edu/school-sciences> for more information and a schedule.



Professional Development

Training Resources

- **Family Enrichment Network**
(607) 723-8313 | familyenrichment.org
- **Capital District Child Care Coord. Council**
(800) 521-5437 | cdcccc.org

Health and Safety Competencies For Becoming a FDC/GFDC

This competency based 15-hour training provides a foundation for practices that promote and protect the health and safety of children in home-based child care. This is required training for becoming a Licensed/Registered Day Care Provider. This training spans multiple days and all days must be attended. You will receive 15 hours of training credit if your day care application is in process at the time of the training.

- **Delaware Opportunities - Hamden**
(607) 746-1620 | delawareopportunities.org
- **Family Enrichment Network - Johnson City**
(607) 723-8313 | familyenrichment.org
Mar. 5, 7 & 12- 8:00 am – 1:00 pm
- **Capital District Child Care Coordinating Council - Albany**
(800) 521-5437 | cdcccc.org

Child Development Associate

CDA Council - The Child Development Associate (CDA) Credential is the most widely recognized credential in early childhood education (ECE) and is a key stepping stone on the path of career advancement in early childhood education - cdacouncil.org

Accreditation

National Association for the Education of Youth Children - NAEYC's two quality assurance system levels equip programs with the tools to provide the best learning experiences for young children and provide the highest quality professional preparation of educators by meeting national standards of quality - naeyc.org

National Association for Family Child Care - NAFCC sponsors the only nationally recognized accreditation system designed specifically for family child care providers. Accreditation is awarded to family child care providers who meet the eligibility requirements and the Quality Standards for NAFCC Accreditation - nafcc.org

SUNY Training Strategies Group

Funding for Training
(518) 443-5940

- Medication Administration Training Grant Program
www.tsg.suny.edu/matgrant.shtm
- NYS Educational Incentive Program
www.tsg.suny.edu/eip.shtm

Online Learning

www.ecetp.pdp.albany.edu

Select sign up for early childhood e-learning

www.tsg.suny.edu/elearn.shtm

Various childcare learning opportunities to choose from

www.carecourses.com

Book & Online Training for Early Childhood Professionals

Regulatory Information

Group Family Day Care / Day Care Center

Office of Children and Family Services

155 Washington Ave., Albany, NY 12210

(518) 402-3038 | Fax: (518) 473-0492

ocfs.state.ny.us

Family Day Care / School Age Child Care

Child Care Support Services, Catholic Charities

176 Main Street, Oneonta, NY 13820

(607) 432-0061 | charitiesccd.org

New York State Credentials

NYAEC - Promoting excellence in early care and education services for New York State children and families, through education, advocacy and the support of the profession (Family Child Care, Infant/Toddler Care, Children's Program Administrator) - nyaec.org

Network for Youth Success - The New York State Network for Youth Success administers the New York State School Age Care (SAC) Credential, which promotes quality services to children and families by providing specific standards, training, and evaluation for afterschool professionals - networkforyouthsuccess.org

Find a Degree Program

Earlychildhood.org - Find a college near you that offers Early Childhood courses and degrees.

SUNY Learning Network - Find an online degree program - sln.suny.edu

News, Updates and Training Opportunities

Save The Date!

NYAEYC 2019 Annual Conference

SAVE THE DATE!
 April 4 – 6, 2019
 Turning Stone Resort
nyaeyc.org

Fingerprinting for Child Care Settings

L1 Identity Solutions
IdenToGo.com
 (877) 472-6915

SCR Clearance Fees

Prospective Daycare providers and applicants for employment in day care programs will be charged a \$25 fee for any SCR database check. Payment can be made by certified check, postal or bank money order made payable to “New York Office of Children and Family Services” and submitted with the SCR form DSS-3370.

Questions? Call Cindy at (607) 432-0061

Health Care Consultancy & Medication Administration Training

Child Care Support Services has partnered with Otsego County Public Health Nursing to provide Health Care Consultancy Services to child care providers in Otsego County, as well as the Medication Administration Training/MAT Renewal Training.

To contact the HCC/MAT Trainer:
 Matt Johnson, RN, CHN
johnsonm@otsegocounty.com
 (607) 547-7518

Regional Infant/Toddler Technical Assistance Center

Serving:

- Child Care Resource and Referral Agencies
- Family Child Care Homes
- Group Family Child Care Homes
- Child Care Centers
- Legally Exempt Programs
- Families
- Agencies serving families and children

Contact an infant/toddler specialist:
 518-426-7181
www.cdcccc.org

Enrolled Legally Exempt Providers...

The New York State Department of Health’s **Child and Adult Care Food Program (CACFP)** pays for meals and snacks served to children up to age 13 enrolled in Legally Exempt homes. The major focus of CACFP is to serve nutritious meals and snacks in day care homes which care mainly for children from low income households. However, all Legally Exempt providers meeting eligibility guidelines may take part in CACFP! Please call our office for more information!

(607) 432-0061.



ITA Projects

An Intensive Technical Assistance Project promotes professional development and higher quality early care and learning.

ITA is provided following a training to assist providers in implementing change in their programming. Participating providers will receive an incentive upon successful completion of the project to help support the new skills acquired.

For more information call Kim!
(607) 432-0061

ASPIRE

Have you signed up to the ASPIRE registry, yet? The ASPIRE registry allows you to highlight what you have done to become a great Early Childhood Professional in an efficient and organized way. As we all know, licensed and registered child care providers are required to have 30 hours of trainings every two years, 15 hours each year. Using the ASPIRE registry will help you keep all of your education, professional experience, and training history together in one place. For those providers who are responsible for supplying proof of trainings to your licensor you will be able to upload your documents directly to the ASPIRE registry for review. The registry also has a training calendar that will let you search by OCFS training topics, region, or type of training (in person, web-based or a combination of the 2).

Check out nyworksforchildren.org/ for more information and to create your account.

Save The Date!

Family Child Care Association

2019 Annual Conference
 March 15-16, 2019
 Saratoga Springs
fccanys.org

Child and Adult Care Food Program

Food for Thought

How to Handle Picky Toddler Food Jags

Maybe your toddler has always been a picky eater, but lately it's gotten extreme. She's insisting on the same food, over and over, refusing anything else. You're worried about her nutrition. You're making separate meals for her. Or maybe you can't even leave home to eat.

Your child is likely having a food jag. Find out what it means and what tactics you can use to get your toddler's eating habits back on a healthier track.

About Food Jags

What they are: Your child is having a food jag when she wants to eat the same food at every meal, every day. While it might be normal and common, there are ways to help her enjoy a healthier variety.

Why they do it: Toddlers want some control over their lives. Restricting their food choices is a way to assert their independence.

Who's in charge of what?

When your child goes on a jag, he has totally taken charge of mealtime. So the key to feeding picky toddlers is finding the right balance of control. Remember your roles:

- You're in charge of setting a meal schedule, with three meals and two to three snacks at around the same time each day.
- You're in charge of deciding what to serve. Aim for a balanced meal with a variety of healthy foods. Pair a preferred food with something new or previously refused.
- Your child is in charge of deciding if he will eat, what to eat (based on what you serve) and how much to eat.

How to regain control

Food jags rarely last long enough to cause harm, but there are things you can do to help:

- When he asks for his food jag food, calmly say, "We're not having PB&J for dinner, but we can have it tomorrow for lunch. Want to try some chicken or broccoli?" If he says no, don't force it. If he chooses not to eat, don't worry, but don't offer him something else until the next meal or snack time.
- Be sure to serve the preferred food later, as promised, without making it seem special.
- Be patient. Your child will be persistent, but once he realizes you won't cave in, he won't let himself go hungry.

Continued...

- Follow an eating schedule, and give only water between meals/snacks. This helps ensure your child is hungry at mealtimes.
- If the behavior continues beyond a couple of weeks, talk to his doctor.

How to Prevent future food jags

- Keep exposing your child to a variety of flavors and textures.
- Regularly provide new foods, plus foods he's refused.
- Let your toddler help pick out and make foods. He can wash produce, stir ingredients and scoop food onto plates.

From: Strong4Life.com

Slow Cooking

Crockpot cooking is certainly not a new idea, however it is one that you may overlook. The crock pot is a great appliance for any meal. All that is required is a little bit of prep work and the push of a button! Try out this kid friendly recipe.

Crockpot Cool Ranch Shredded Chicken Tacos

Ingredients

- 2 pounds boneless skinless chicken breasts
- 3 tablespoons olive oil
- 2 tablespoons vinegar
- 1 taco seasoning packet (or this homemade version: 1T chili powder, 1tsp pepper, and 1/2tsp of each of the following – salt, ground cumin, red pepper flakes, paprika, oregano, garlic powder, onion powder)
- 1 dry ranch seasoning packet (or this homemade version: 1T dried parsley, 1tsp garlic powder, 1tsp onion powder, 1tsp dried onion flakes, 3/4tsp dill, 1/2tsp pepper, and 1/2 tsp salt)

Instructions

- Combine all ingredient in crockpot and cook on "low" setting for 6-8 hours.
- Shred chicken and mix with sauces and spices left in crockpot.
- Serve with whole wheat tortilla or whole grain rice, tomatoes and peppers.



The Parent Corner

Community Maternity Services

(607) 432-0061 ext. 113

CMS is an agency which has provided home-based support services to families and their children in Otsego County since 1971. Today, they have three types of educational programs: Maternity Outreach, Parent Education, and NYS Parent Education and Awareness Program.

The Maternity Outreach Program

Designed for pregnant and/or parenting teens and young adults. Some of the services we offer in this program are: goal directed counseling, childbirth preparation, adoption, advocacy for education, life skills, parent education, referrals for pre and post natal care, nutrition education, child development education, and milestone testing for children. Referrals for this program can come from any entity.

NYS Parent Education and Awareness Program

A program designed to provide information to assist the parent and children through the changes created by a separation or divorce. This is a fee based service and costs \$35. The course is approximately 2 hours long and referrals can come from any entity.

Early Care and Learning Council

The Early Care and Learning Council (ECLC) is a statewide, not-for-profit membership organization that represents the 35 Child Care Resource & Referral (CCR&R) programs across New York State.

ECLC wants to hear about...

Quality

- How has the quality of care affected your child care options?
- How has the quality of child care impacted your child(ren)'s social, emotional, physical or cognitive development?

Cost of care

- How has the cost of care influenced your ability to find child care?
- How do child care subsidies support your family?

Availability/Flexibility of care

- How has the availability of care in your area affected your work or home life? Are there wait lists or insufficient supply in your area?
- How has the availability or lack of child care options affected your work or home life?

Where do these stories go?

Testimonials are shared during visits with lawmakers in Albany to advocate for better early education policies. They help illustrate the difficulties that families in New York go through, or the positive effects that a high quality early learning experience has had on their child.

Share your story:

earlycareandlearning.org/share-your-story.html

Parent Training Resources

Family Service Association

Family Service Association provides information, advocacy, and referral services for individuals and families in need.

277 Chestnut Street, Oneonta | (607) 432-2870

Family Resource Network

The Family Resource Network Inc. (FRN) provides family support services to families who have a child with special needs.

46 Oneida Street, Oneonta | (607) 432-0001

Noah's World

A unique indoor play center for the recommended ages of children 10 years and under.

Noah's World combines academics, enrichment, and recreational activities. Children will have a variety of educational, sensory stimulating, and skill building activities to choose from in our clean 3800 square foot space.

For more information or for upcoming events:

144 Roundhouse Road, Oneonta

607-432-PLAY

noahsworld.net

Upcoming Parent and Child-Friendly Event

Ice Harvest Festival

Hanford Mills Museum

February 2, 2019, 10 am – 3 pm

Come enjoy a day of hands-on history and winter fun.

hanfordmills.org

Try CDC's FREE Milestone Tracker app today...

Because milestones matter!



Milestone checklists for 2 months to 5 years



Summary of your child's milestones



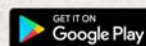
Activities to help your child's development



Tips for what to do if you have concerns



Appointment reminders



cdc.gov/MilestoneTracker



Child Care Support Services
A Program of Catholic Charities
of Delaware, Otsego and Schoharie Counties
176 Main Street
Oneonta, New York 13820

Important News for Schools and Child-Care Facilities

What: Pursuant to New York State Public Health Law (PHL) § 613, schools and child-care settings are required to post influenza educational material, in plain view, within their facilities. **Information must be posted starting now.** Influenza season begins in early fall and can last through May.

Outreach to parents and guardians of children ages 6 months to 18 years must be directed to those whose children attend:

- Licensed and registered day-care programs
- Nursery schools
- Prekindergarten
- Kindergarten
- School-age child-care programs
- Public schools
- Nonpublic schools

Purpose: To ensure that families of these children receive information on influenza and the benefits of influenza immunizations in connection with efforts to raise the immunity of children against influenza.

Information regarding influenza and the benefits of influenza immunizations is free:

NYSDOH: www.health.ny.gov/diseases/communicable/influenza/seasonal/child_care_and_schools/



Skip Hop Recalls Convertible High Chairs Due to Injury and Fall Hazards



This recall involves Skip Hop's Tuo convertible high chairs with charcoal gray or silver/white with clouds fabric. They have a reversible seat pad, removable tray, 5-point harness, beechwood footrest and legs. The high chairs can be converted into a toddler chair.

Description: This recall involves Skip Hop's Tuo convertible high chairs with charcoal gray or silver/white with clouds fabric. They have a reversible seat pad, removable tray, 5-point harness, beechwood footrest and legs. The high chairs can be converted into a toddler chair .

Remedy: Consumers should immediately stop using the recalled high chairs and contact Skip Hop for a full refund or an e gift card of equal value.

Contact: Skip Hop toll-free at 888-282-4674 from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m. ET Monday through Friday, or online at www.skiphop.com and click on "Recalls" for more information.