

Age Appropriate Toys

Jackie Schrader

Play time is a very important time for children. It is fun and it is a time for learning about themselves, others and the environment. They learn valuable lessons, sharing and life skills needed for everyday challenges.

Children develop in four main areas:

- Physical--growth
- social—getting along with others
- intellectual—learning and brain function
- emotional—dealing with feelings

Toys and games that are not age appropriate can be quite frustrating and can lead to issues with the child or between children. For example, a toddler could get injured trying to ride on a toy that is too large or requires the use of muscles that have not been developed. They could also become upset if given a game with rules they do not understand or with pieces they can not handle.

It is necessary that the care giver be mindful of the child's age and developmental level when supervising play activities. Fun could quickly turn into a frustrating, upsetting event that possibly could have been avoided. Below is a list of age appropriate toys for children. Just understand that all children develop at a different rate within a few guidelines. If the child is developmentally ahead of his or her age, they can be given toys from an older age range. However, this should be supervised closely.

Infants

Rattles
Mobiles and safety mirrors
Large blocks of wood/plastic
Musical and chime toys
Soft washable animal dolls or balls
Nesting or stacking toys
Busy boards
Simple pop-up toys
Crib gyms
Picture books
Pots and Pans

Toddlers

Small Tricycle
Push and pull toys
Wagons
Large Balls
Stacking toys/nesting blocks
Cloth books
Rhythm instruments
Crayons, markers
Kiddy cars
Toy telephones
Washable stuffed animals
Pots and Pans



Preschoolers

Books
Simple puzzles
Art supplies
Tea party utensils
Dress-up dolls
Blackboard/chalk
Tricycles
Kiddy Cars
Wagons