

Teaching Through Play



1. Let me touch and explore first because I'm curious.



2. Then, use words and actions to teach me what to do.



3. Give me a chance to try. I might not do it perfectly. That's okay.

Wow, you put the piece in the puzzle!



4. Celebrate that I'm trying even if I don't get it right.

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Opportunities for teaching your child can happen naturally when you are playing with your child. For example, if you and your child are doing a shape puzzle, you can talk about the puzzle shapes, label the colors, and, if needed, help your child find the correct place for each piece. You can give your child just enough help to be successful with the new skill. Children really want to feel like they can do it. Sometimes that means that we let them do it their way even if it's not correct. Older children can get embarrassed when trying something new. During these times it is important to send the message that sometimes they will get it right and sometimes they will not, but they are accepted either way. It is important to watch for whether your child is getting frustrated, overwhelmed, or discouraged. Sometimes when your child can't do the activity, your child may look away, use the toy in a different manner, or look distracted. This is your child's way of telling you that this activity might be finished. Your child might need your help in moving on to something else.

