



# ENGAGING YOUR AUTISTIC CHILD IN PLAY AND EVERYDAY ACTIVITIES

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# Housekeeping...

1. Please switch your camera off and microphones on mute during the presentation
2. Feel free to ask questions in the chat or save them at the end
3. Feel free to share your thoughts, questions and examples, but please be mindful of confidentiality



# Today we'll discuss...

- A brief overview of play, stages of play
- Caveat and Take away message
- An insight on everyday activities for children 0-4 years
- An Occupational Therapist's thought process
- Strategies to support engagement
- Your questions

# Different types of Play



Sensorimotor – encompasses use of our senses



Organising – Cause and effect, matching, sorting, pouring, etc



Functional Play – understanding the purpose of objects e.g. kicking a ball



Pretend Play – consolidating their understanding, memory and using it with their own imagination e.g. teddy bears picnic



# Social Play



Solitary Play



Spectator Play



Parallel Play



Associative Play



Co-operative Play



**“Even for parents of children  
that are not on the spectrum,  
there is no such thing as a  
normal child.”  
-Violet Stevens, Mom**



Celebrate their strength and uniqueness rather than their differences



# Age-Appropriate Everyday Activities

- Children typically start to show purposeful interest and engage in everyday at around 9-12 months
- They usually start with feeding, dressing, grooming, tidying up, mark-making etc
- Engagement in everyday activities in a meaningful context is just important as play for Autistic children.







- Removing socks
- Pushing arms and legs through openings
- Putting on wellies and slippers
- Pulling up bottoms and pulling down t-shirt from head
- Putting on coat and pulling up zip not engaging zip
- Putting on shoes and socks
- Fastenings – buttons, zips and shoelaces

# Person-Environment-Occupation



# Promoting Engagement

- Observe your child's interests and the stage they are at i.e. Sensorimotor, functional, etc
- Gain attention – Ready Steady, ..., using visual aids, Now and Next board, etc
- Introduce/enrich 'back and forth engagement' in play e.g. when a song starts/stops, emphasise expressions, wait for them to ask for more,
- Manage sensory stimuli and behaviours by co-regulating and/or allowing sensory strategies to promote self-regulation.
- Consistency and Predictability for them to feel in control of themselves and their surroundings
- Taking their lead, add a small element to progress their play



# Strategies to promote engagement

## Environment:

- Sensory strategies – enhance or dampen down the sensations in the environment?
- Use Visuals

## Activity/Play:

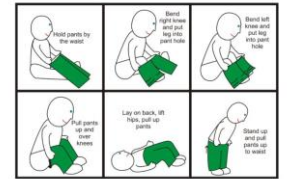
- Meaningful context – practice putting on shoes when going out
- Backward or forward chaining – start where the child is at and gradually work back or forward

## Person:

- Hand over hand – it is the body's language to understand what is being requested
- Poor transfer of skills – each new play activity/everyday task will be novel to the child and may require the skill to be re-taught
- Repetition, repetition, repetition!

## Dressing Skills

Step By Step Visual Directions to Teach Children How To Dress



Your Therapy Source Inc



Do you have  
any  
Questions? 