

The Development of Play

Age by Age

Here's a look at how children's play progresses from playing side by side to playing interactively.

0
to
2



- * like to look at other babies.
- * love the company of other children.
- * laugh at the antics of siblings.
- * join in activities which are centered around them.
- * engage in parallel play, offering toys but not playing together with other children.

2
to
3



- * begin to play with other children.
- * enjoy simple games.
- * squabble and fight with others.
- * not share toys and can become possessive and uncooperative.
- * increasingly converse with other children.
- * still not be able to play with others if they have had little social experience.

3
to
4



- * play more complex and interesting games.
- * form stronger friendships.
- * tease and taunt siblings.
- * make and break friendships easily.
- * copy other children.
- * not switch easily between pretend and reality.

4
to
6



- * firm up friendships as they reach school age.
- * become more independent, not all doing the same thing at the same time.
- * take on separate roles in complex games.
- * explain games to other children.
- * describe other children as "best friends."
- * indicate to others when to "pretend" and when something is "real."