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The “Just Right Toy” for the Job: Helping Parents Enhance their Child’s Play

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Play is vital for a child’s healthy growth and development. Just as adults have “jobs,” children do also, and their job is to “play.”

When children play, they discover the effect they have on objects and people in their environment. Play provides an opportunity for children to explore their capabilities, to make decisions, to understand cause-and-effect, to learn persistence and to understand consequences.

As we know, when adults work they use a variety of “tools” such as computers or machines to get their work done. Toys are the tools that children use to play. Choosing a toy that is “a just right fit” is crucial for children to successfully participate in their play. If a child is given a toy that is too developmentally advanced, he or she may become frustrated and may refuse to play with it. On the other hand, if a toy is not challenging enough, a child will become bored easily. The best scenario is to present a toy that is designed specifically for the age of the child so that it will hold the child’s interest.

When a child is presented with an age-appropriate toy there are both physical and emotional benefits. For example, when an 18 month-old child is given a shape-sorting toy he completes the activity and feels a sense of accomplishment. He is at the stage of development when he is beginning to learn about shapes, which will further help him understand objects in the world around him. If it is given to him too early, he may be trying to fit the circle in the hole for the square, be unsuccessful and then lose interest quickly.

Children begin learning from the minute they are born. Parents take on the job of “teacher” and often need guidance in choosing age appropriate toys. Choosing the “just right toy” can be a challenging task for parents and they can benefit from the assistance and guidance of eBeanstalk.com to find toys that are developmentally age appropriate,

interesting, motivating and one's that spark their children's creativity. When a child plays with a toy that is a "just right fit," they have a feeling that they mastered something and this affects their self-esteem in a positive way.

When it comes to parents playing with their children, the sky is the limit! Learning is enhanced when parents play with their children. Playing with their child provides a great opportunity for parents to observe their interests and skills and then expand on these skills. For example, if a two-year old who is starting to enter the world of pretend play wants to build a tower with blocks, the parent can add to the play by suggesting they build a zoo for animals or a house for their family. **eBeanstalk's** in-depth expert instruction cards provide parents with ways they can play with a toy together. Parents can take the opportunity to have fun, be creative and model play skills while building strong bonds.

Exploration, mastery, decision making, achievement, increased motivation and competency are just some of the qualities that the right toys will bring out in children as they develop strong roles and become productive members of society.