

Development of Play Skills for Infants and Toddlers

Age	Play
Birth to 3 Months	• Responds to caregivers • Coos and smiles • Responds to familiar voices • Focuses on objects
4 to 7 Months	• Enjoys social games with caregiver • Likes exploratory play supported by caregiver • Plays some games with caregiver like peek-a-boo and patty cake
8 to 12 Months	• Begins to imitate play actions or behavior of others, especially caregiver • Plays hiding games, songs and rhymes with caregiver • Plays alone without caregiver for short periods
13 to 24 Months	• Enjoys play with objects • Increased interest in watching other children play (onlooker) • Primarily plays alone (solitary) • May offer toys to caregiver or other children • May choose independent play close to other children (parallel) but not interact with them
13 to 24 Months	• May play with other children but in an occasional or limited way (associative) • Some cooperation and talking with other children • May take leader/follower roles in play • Some pretend play • Still plays alone frequently • Interactive level moving toward (cooperative play)