

Making toys by yourself!

A workshop on the importance of play and how to make your own toys



Reference: Siyakhwazi, 2019

- Disclaimer: Photo may be replaced with photos that are retrieved earlier.

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Outline Workshop

Preparation	20 min
Icebreaker	15-20 min
Aims	5 min
What is play?	15 min
What are our senses?	20 min
Skills	5 min
Toys	10-15 min
Starting position for play	5 min
Useful materials	15 min
Making toys	45 min

Preparation

This section covers what preparation tasks need to be considered before the workshop starts. It is the duty of the facilitator to ensure the following items:

1. Availability of a room/place available which is big enough for the participants, the materials and to make the toys.
2. There are enough materials available for the participants to make the toys
 - a. For example empty cereal boxes, match boxes, plastic cold drink bottles and lids, brightly coloured material, clothes pegs, tin cans, plastic containers, stones, seeds, beans or rice, plastic cups, floppy doll, examples of home-made toys.
 - b. Also ensure there is paper (flipchart or small), pens and markers.
3. Ask the participants, who are attending to bring toys they are currently using at home and/or to let them think of useful materials.
4. (***Optional***) A handout is printed so participants can take one copy home and have the opportunity to review the information at a later time.

Icebreaker



First, it is important to let the participants introduce themselves so that they can get to know each other. Despite the fact they may not know each other, they still all have one thing in common; this workshop. They all have their own reasons why they are following this workshop and to 'break the ice' it would be good to share these reasons.

After the introduction, the facilitator will place random daily items in the room and ask the participants what children might do with these products*. Summarize the outcomes and **Emphasize that all children enjoy play/toys and that their creativity allows them to find ways to play with random objects** (Hambisela, n.d.).

NOTE: Motivate the participants to not only tell what a child might do, but encourage them to actually play with the materials. Or let them show what a child may do with this.

* Products that could be used are: rocks, pan, spoon, rattle (could be self-made), plastic bottle, branches, seeds and leaves.

Set the aims

It is important to set aims since these provide clarity for the participants and it allows the facilitator to 'check' if the participants understood the main messages. The two aims of this workshop are:

- The importance of play for their (disabled) child;
- How to make toys by yourself;

Activity 2



Besides the main aims, it is important to ask the participants what their personal aims are, as well as their expectations. There are two ways to do this:

1. Grab a flipchart paper and write down what participants say;
2. Ask all participants to write down their aims/expectations and fold it. They will put it away and at the end of the workshop they can share what they have written down and see if the mission is accomplished.

Depending on the group, the facilitator could make a choice between both options.

What is play?



1. Reference: Siyakwazi, 2019

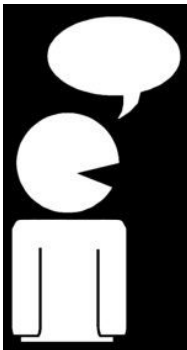
Activity 3



Before the facilitator will share the definition of play, **FIRST** ask the participants what their definition is of play. Two question that might be helpful are:

- What are your thoughts on play?
- Examples of (own) play activities or activities of your child?
- How do you offer play to your child?

Encourage the participants to share their own experiences!



After this, the facilitator will give the definition of play: *“Play is any activity that a child **CHOOSSES** to do, and has **FUN** whilst doing. Through play, a child uses her **SENSES** to explore and learn” - Getting to know Cerebral Palsy training.*

NOTE: The words that are written in capital are the key elements on the definition of play and therefore need to be mentioned.

Activity 4



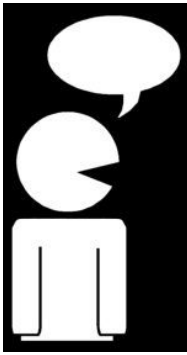
- Why is play important for all children?
- Does a child with disability need to play?

Allow participants to discuss with one another, no correct answers.

The following picture could be used as visual material.

2.Hambisela, n.d.



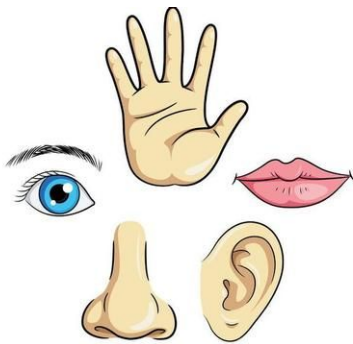


Explain why play is important.

- It gives the child an opportunity to explore and therefore learn about things in their environment;
- It gives opportunities to use and develop their senses;
- When a child is having fun they will be motivated to move;
- It gives opportunities to interact with other people and to learn to communicate;
- It gives the opportunity to think and learn;
- Play is **FUN**, and every child has a right to it.

In short: **Play stands for physical and brain development!**

Senses



3. Gezondheid, 2018

After the definition of play has been giving, ask participants **what our senses are**.

Write down the answers that are being given on a flipchart, to make it visual for the participants.

The senses are:

- Seeing
- Hearing
- Touching/Feeling
- Smelling
- Tasting
- Sense of body
- Sense of movement

Here, the facilitator could mention that movement works very closely with our senses.

Activity 5



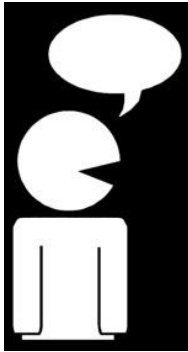
Ask participants to split up into pairs (2).

When they are together, ask them to think of two examples of play for each sense. So, 2 for seeing, 2 for hearing, however,

Sense of body- movement, might be too difficult so this could be optional.

When everyone has done this, ask participants to share their outcomes. If participants are willing, you could also ask them to demonstrate their examples.

Skills



Explain the following skills (Singakwenza, n.d.):

- **Gross motor;** Abilities which are required to control the big muscles
 - e.g. rolling over, crawling, rolling a ball, standing
- **Fine motor;** the control of small movements of the hand and fingers
 - e.g. Grab something, building/construction
- **Eye-hand coordination;** Ability of the eyes to guide the movement of the hands.
 - e.g. Reaching to objects in the mobile, stringing beads
- **Finger isolation;** Ability to move each finger one at the time
 - e.g. pick up a small object, counting on fingers,
- **Pincer grasp;** Ability to pick up small items using the thumb and 2nd/index finger
 - e.g. grasping small objects
- **Bilateral coordination;** Ability to use both sides of the body at the same time in a controlled and organized way.
 - e.g. drumming, tearing paper, catch/throw games, clapping
- **Spatial awareness;** ability to be aware of the space you take up and where you are in relation to other people and objects.
 - body awareness, crawl around the room and explore, hide and seek, fill items and take them out

NOTE: Children with disabilities also have potential to develop their abilities and skills, one way to do this is play. Although different to children without disabilities it is important to offer children with disabilities the opportunity to play and develop their skills as well as abilities. It is important to also enlighten the participants that these skills contribute to school activities.

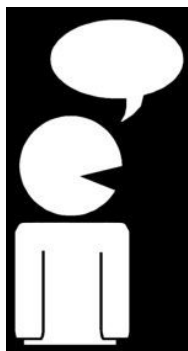
Toys

Activity 6



ASK:

- Does your child play?
- What do you observe at home about your child playing?
- Does your child need help in play?
- Do children need expensive toys to play?



Explain:

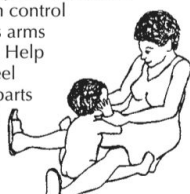
- Play itself is more important than toys;
- Children with disabilities may need help in play;
- Favourite toys are most often household items

Every child has different preferences regarding what they like for play and which material they prefer. It is therefore important, to be aware of this and seek for the preference of a child to implement this. For example: some children prefer soft sounds while other prefer louder music. Another example would be touching since some children dislike some items to hold which others may not dislike these items.

Starting position for play

So, how do you offer the help a child needs? It is important to start in a proper sitting, standing or lying position. This makes play accessible. Below are pictures which could be shown to the participants. Children could sit with help of their parents and assistive devices. Assistive devices that are usually used are devices made out of 'Appropriate Paper-based Technology' or wood, and it supports the child to find a supported position.

For the child with spasticity who has trouble sitting, you can control his legs like this. This leaves your hands free to help him control and use his arms and hands. Help the child feel and grasp parts of his face.



If the child does not have enough control to reach out in this position,

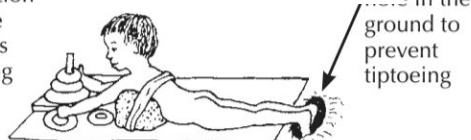


sit him with his legs apart and turned outward.

Also lift his shoulders up and turn his arms out.



help position him so he can lift his head using his arms.



Reference: Disabled village children, Werner 2009



Useful materials for self-made toys

Activity 7



Ask the participants to take a walk (outside) for ±10-15 minutes and bring back what catches their eyes and might be useful as play materials. Or, which could be used to make toys.

Afterwards, let the participants share their findings with each other.

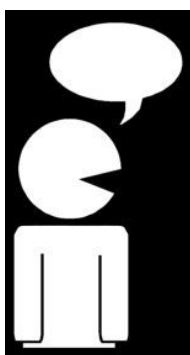
- What did you bring back inside?
- How do you think a child might play with this?



Activity 8 '10 ways to play with...'

Form a circle with all participants and pick an item that sparks the most interest. Ask each participant to present one way how to play with this item. Together find ways to play with this item, how many outcomes, depends on the group size.

Explain: There are several ways to play with items, use your imagination.



Explain:

There are several materials which could be used to make toys:

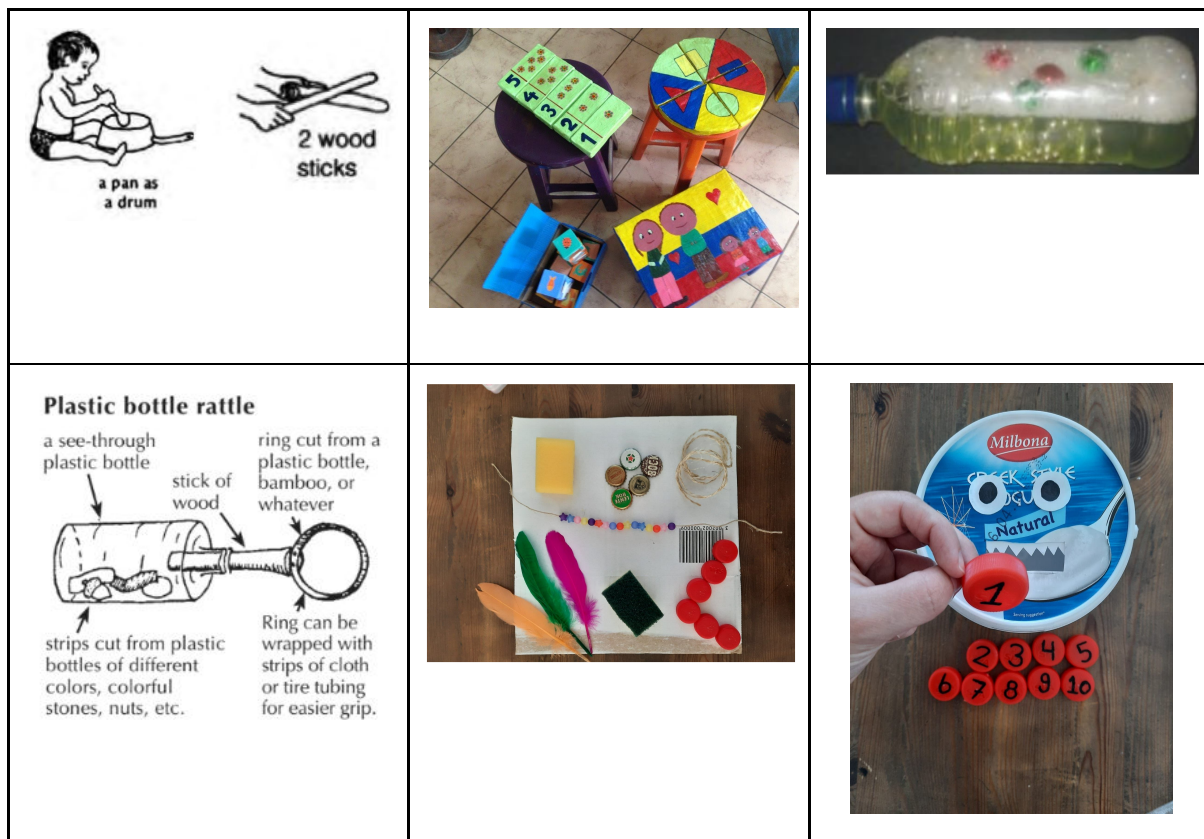
- Wood;
- Plastic;
- Branches;
- Fabrics;
- Cardboard;
- Newspaper;
- Seeds
- Banana leaves

Start making toys!

Activity 9

Below are examples provided as inspiration. Of course, participants are free to create their own! Try to stimulate the participants to share their findings with others, outside of this workshop course.

As a facilitator try to take photos of the toys that are created as a resource and as final keep it sustainable.



Example: Create your own ball (Singakwenza, 2020)



Ball



What you need:



- 5 bread bags (or 1 plastic bag and damp magazine pages, or newspaper, or chip packets) to make a small ball, 20 bread bags to make a soccer ball
- netlon bag from onions or tomatoes (optional)
- scissors



What to do:



1. Scrunch each bread bag one at a time (or scrunch your damp paper into a ball) and put it inside a bread bag.
2. Squeeze as much of the air as you can out of the bag, pushing the inside bags (or paper) as far down as you can to make a small, firm, round ball.
3. Only then close the opening of the bag. The less air you have, the less likely the ball is to pop.



What to do:



4. Tie a knot in the bag, making sure that you pull it right down onto the ball to stop the air from getting in.
5. Cut off the tail, right next to the knot.
6. The netlon bag is optional, but it does make your ball stronger and less likely to pop. Turn your netlon bag inside out, so that the knot is on the inside.
7. Put the ball in so that the knot of the ball is on the side.



What to do:



8. Cut your netlon into 2 equal pieces, right up to the edge of the ball (don't pop your ball!).
9. Tie the two pieces together with 3 knots to make it very secure.
10. Cut the ends off and your ball is ready to play with!

Evaluation



There are many ways to check if the participants are satisfied with this workshop. You could ask them to look at the folded paper with expectations, have a look on the flip chart with the items they have written down at the start. Below are also written down some supporting questions.

ASK:

- Did this training meet your expectations?
- How will you implement the things you have learned today?
- Are you satisfied with the outcome?
- Do you have anything for improvement?
- Which tip and which top do you have for this workshop?

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