



Sticks & Stones Education

Presents

The Value of Block Play

Blocks are a staple early learning resource that can be found in most, if not all children's care and education services. Blocks are an open ended learning resource that holistically support children's learning and development: physical, social, emotional, creative, and cognitive domains can all be nurtured and developed. Blocks in fact provide so many opportunities for learning that it cannot be contained on a single page! This is merely an introduction.

Children learn about science through block play. They discover gravity, balance, weight, trial and error, and cause and effect. Children develop an understanding of *mathematical* concepts such as shape, size, fractions, addition and subtraction, volume, area, depth, width, height, and measurement. Block play supports children's physical skill development: hand-eye coordination, manipulation as well as muscle development. Children can develop their language skills through conversations, naming, questioning, and exchanging ideas. When children play together, they develop social skills such as cooperation and negotiation, sharing resources and space as well as independence and autonomy.

While blocks support children's learning, they can also benefit from embellishment. By adding accessories, you provide children with opportunities to enrich their play. Some accessories could include:

vehicles: cars, planes,
trains & train tracks
people figurines
animal figurines
connecting blocks:
Lego/Mobilo/Duplo

fabric
knitted squares
upholstery samples
cardboard boxes
wooden boxes
cardboard

rocks
river stones
sticks & stones
pebbles
branches & leaves
potted plants

Stages of Block Play:

- Transporting: blocks by carrying them around
- Making vertical and horizontal rows with or without repetition
- Bridging: standing two blocks with a space between, connected by a third block
- Enclosures: blocks placed so they enclose a space (enclosures)
- Patterning: creating decorative patterns including symmetry
- Labelling: Naming structures connected with dramatic play
- Reproduction of real structures

© Sticks & Stones Education 2014

www.sticksandstoneseducation.com.au

