The Joy of Discovery and the Power of Play

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Play is brain building
Play facilitates the normal developmental progression from dependency to independence
Pre-school curricula must emphasize informal, play-based learning
Adult success is enhanced by play in childhood
Out of Balance?

**Prefrontal Cortex**
- Cold Cognition
- Judgmental
- Reflective
- Calculating
- Think about it

**Amygdala**
- Hot Cognition
- Emotional
- Reactive
- Impulsive
- Just do it

Biological maturity by 24

Biological maturity by 18

Adapted from Ken Winters, Ph.D.
• Attunement
• Hands-On Play
• Physical Play
• Imaginary Play and Storytelling
• Guided Play
Fostering Self-Regulation

ÂTools of the Mind

- Mature make-believe play
- Planning play
- Teacher scaffolding
- Peer interactions; buddy reading, doing and checking
- Use of mediators
- Self-regulation games
CREATIVITY

INNOVATION

COLLABORATION
PLAY

Â MOMA: Century of the Child, 1900-2000

Play is to the 21\textsuperscript{st} century what work was to industrialization; it demonstrates a way of knowing, doing and creating value.
Boston Children’s Museum engages children and families in joyful discovery experiences that instill an appreciation of our world, develop foundational skills, and spark a lifelong love of learning.
Boston Children's Museum at 100

Cognitive Science  Creative Play  Active Learning
Prescription for Play