Contact Information

Bliss Letang
Director of Early Learning Program Engagement, Trying Together
bliss.elrc5@alleghenycounty.us

Serena Washington
Family Engagement Specialist, Trying Together
serena@tryingtogether.org
Trying Together supports high-quality care and education for young children by providing advocacy, community resources, and professional growth opportunities for the needs and rights of children, their families, and the individuals who interact with them.
Stay Up To Date

**Newsletter Sign Up**

**Follow Trying Together On Social Media**
Facebook: @Trying Together
Twitter: @Trying_Together
Instagram: @Trying_Together
LinkedIn: @Trying Together
It’s More Than Just Play:
The Role of Play in a Child’s Life
Play Is...
It’s More Than Just Play

Play allows children to use their creativity while developing their imagination, dexterity, and physical, cognitive, and emotional strength. Play is important to healthy brain development. It is through play that children at a very early age engage and interact in the world around them.

Kenneth R. Ginsburg, ; and the Committee on Communications and ; and the Committee on Psychosocial Aspects of Child and Family Health
Types of Play

- Physical Play
- Pretend, Symbolic, and Object Play
- Games with Rules
Physical Play

- Strengthens muscles and bones.
- Develops coordination and motor development.
- Relieves stress and improves sleep.
- Play is linked to social development.
- Includes activities such as, but not limited to, running, tumbling, jumping, and dancing.
Pretend, Symbolic, and Object Play

Pretend/Symbolic and Object Play is when a child uses objects to stand in for other objects. Here are a few examples:

- Speaking into a banana as if it was a phone.
- An empty cereal bowl becomes the steering wheel of a spaceship.
- Some chairs and a blanket are transformed into a tent.

Pretend Play:

- encourages creativity and imagination, and
- develops problem solving and thinking.
Benefits of Play

vimeo.com/103169732
Games with Rules

- Teaches about rules and the importance of rules.
- Introduces children to “Life Lessons”.
- Increase the ability to focus attention.
- Allows children to practice social skills.
“Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.”

– Fred Rogers
Benefits of Play

Learning
- See and experience the world
- Developing language and math skill
- Problem Solving

Reduce Stress
- Allow children to explore their feelings and how to deal with those feelings.
- How to self-regulate

Teach Social Interaction
- How to Share and Negotiate
- Compassion and Empathy
Early Learning: Myths vs Facts

Exposé children to new experiences:

[Link to website](tryingtogether.org/dap/early-learning-myths-vs-facts)
How to Encourage Play

Be face-to-face.

Observe the child’s interest and interactions.

Don’t put out too many toys.

If a child doesn’t know how to play yet, you should roleplay for them.

Imitate the child’s play to support their growth socially, emotionally, and developmentally.

Keep play simple.

Don’t just watch from the sidelines, join in.

Take turns.

Introduce the child to new play ideas.

Expose the child(ren) to new experiences.
“When we treat children’s play as seriously as it deserves, we are helping them feel the joy that’s to be found in the creative spirit. It’s the things we play with and people who help us play that makes a great difference in our lives.”

– Fred Rogers
Be An Advocate

**Start Strong PA**
Advocate for affordable high-quality child care: startstrongpa.org

**Pre-K for PA**
Advocate for increased access to high-quality pre-k: prekforpa.org

**Childhood Begins at Home**
Advocate for evidence-based home visiting: childhoodbeginsathome.org

**Support Our Public Policy Agenda**
Receive advocacy alerts right in your inbox: bit.ly/advocacy-alert
Additional Resources

- playfulpittsburgh.org/recess-resource-archive
- tryingtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/DAP-One-Pager_FIN.pdf
- zerothethree.org/resources/158-power-of-play-building-skills-and-having-fun
- tryingtogether.org/dap/creating-play-rich-environments-incorporating-dap-at-home
- tryingtogether.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/05/DAP-One-Pager_FIN.pdf
- tryingtogether.org/dap/early-learning-myths-vs-facts
- playfulpittsburgh.org
- csefel.vanderbilt.edu/documents/make_the_most_of_playtime2.pdf
More Resources from Trying Together

Allegheny Child Care - [www.alleghenychildcare.org](http://www.alleghenychildcare.org)

Early Learning Resource Center Region 5 - [elrc5.alleghenycounty.us](http://elrc5.alleghenycounty.us)

The Homewood Early Learning Hub & Family Center - [www.tryingtogether.org/community-resources/hub-and-family-center](http://www.tryingtogether.org/community-resources/hub-and-family-center)

Developmentally Appropriate Parenting (DAP) Series - [https://tryingtogether.org/parenting-resources/](https://tryingtogether.org/parenting-resources/)
Share Your Feedback!

Fill out this survey to receive DAP Series cards via mail - http://bit.ly/parentingtogether
Contact Information

Bliss Letang

Director of Early Learning Program Engagement, Trying Together
bliss.elrc5@alleghenycounty.us

Serena Washington

Family Engagement Specialist, Trying Together
serena@tryingtogether.org
Thank you.