

## Imaginary Play

Why encourage imaginary play:

- It's fun.
- It helps develop language skills, including thinking of ideas and organising them, developing vocabulary and expressing ideas.
- It develops confidence.
- Children can act out worries or work out and rehearse ways of dealing with things.
- It develops thinking skills.
- It develops social skills.
- It's fun!

"Research has shown that children who are active in imaginary play are usually happier, more cooperative, better able to share and take turns, and have bigger vocabularies."

What do I need?

Nothing, apart from the time and willingness to join in your child's story. Remember you are trying to encourage your child to use their imagination; shop bought dressing up clothes are nice but can restrict your child to one idea. A Harry Potter costume will turn your child into Harry Potter, a black piece of material might turn them into a wizard or witch, batman, a spider, a robot etc. A few props can help to encourage ideas: Dressing up clothes such as old hats, bags, beads, scarves, old mobiles A large cardboard box can become a house, car, Tardis, rocket, shop, aeroplane, fort ..... Smaller boxes could be turned into miniature worlds such as farms, houses, castles etc. An old sheet or blanket can be a den, cave, spaceship etc. A few plates and old food boxes can become a kitchen, café or shop.