

NOVEMBER 3, 2020

# UNDERSTANDING THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAY FOR YOUNG CHILDREN

*Intensive Family Coaching Project  
Lunch n' Learn Sessions*



*A crucial component of Intensive Family Coaching is enhancing the parent-child relationship. The primary way this is done is through child-directed play.*

## WHAT IS CHILD-DIRECTED PLAY?

Child-directed play is any play interaction with an adult where the adult follows the child's lead. It is an opportunity for the adult to watch and learn more about the child's interests and a chance for the child to have a sense of control. Such play can help improve the child's self-esteem, behavior, social skills, and independence. Because of the focused attention of the adult, child-directed play can also increase opportunities for positive parent-child interactions.

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*Stronger Collaboration with Intensive Family Coaching: A Pilot Project*

*A joint project with:*

*University of Pittsburgh, School of Social Work*

*Wesley Family Services*

*Allegheny County Office of Children, Youth, and Families*

*While children learn through playing, many of us learn best by reading, watching, or listening. Pick a resource or two from the lists below to deepen your understanding of the power of play.*



**Quick Read: 5 Proven Benefits of Play (NPR.org)**  
<https://tinyurl.com/y2ty6z3d>

**Longer Read: The Power of Play  
(American Academy of Pediatrics)**  
<https://tinyurl.com/y3xunj4p>



**Building Babies' Brains Through Play:  
Mini Parenting Master Class  
(developingchild.harvard.edu)**  
<https://tinyurl.com/yy69lqub>



**The Power of Play (Emerging Minds Podcast)**  
<https://tinyurl.com/y45elpx3>

**Say Yes to Play (Bright Horizons Podcast)**  
<https://youtu.be/Q0EV9QrfBwo>

