

## Not Just Child's Play

When you see your child or grandchild absorbed in playing, what you're seeing is a child embarking on a lifelong journey of learning how the world works.

Play teaches children what it means to be a team player: how to negotiate with and respect others, the importance of rules and limits, and what it means to lose, win, and dream.

There are different types of play, all which enhance the social, emotional, and language skills of a child.

- Quiet play involves reading a book, coloring, working on puzzles.
- Active play entails movement—running, building and knocking down structures, playing on a team.
- Dramatic play includes dressing up and role playing, puppets and dolls.
- Creative play engages the child's imagination! This may include playing with empty boxes, crayons, construction paper, dance, music, and movement.
- Cooperative play is social and needs other children or adults. Teams and tea parties are examples.
- Manipulative play furthers hand and eye coordination skills and is usually solitary. Cutting, pasting, and coloring are examples.

One way to strengthen the bond with your child is by playing and learning together in the hands-on exhibits at the San Antonio Children's Museum. Let your child take the lead, make this time free of interruptions, and take the time to learn from your child, just as she or he learns from you. Who knew learning could be so much fun for you and your child?