



# PLAY MORE!

## Enhancing Your Relationship with Your Child

By Cathy Canfield, MSW, LCSW, LICSW

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“It is a happy talent  
to know how to play.”

*- Ralph Waldo Emerson*

It's very concerning presently that children are losing their connection to play, toys and childhood all too early. There are many forces that we have to balance with our children as parents. This includes busy schedules, electronic devices and games, as well as family obligations that keep us busy. I want to invite you to try something new. Simply play with your child.

Stay home; dust off the toys and play. Let's play!

# “You will enjoy any activity in which you are fully present...”

- Eckhart Tolle

Close the laptops, put away your cell phone and your iPad. Turn off the television and put down your books and magazines. Give full attention to your children. Invite them to play with their toys-toys that don't require batteries, being charged, or that have an on-and-off switch. Basic toys powered by imagination and creativity are the avenue towards becoming closer to your child.

The key is to be fully attentive to them and let your child be the creator. Just this little bit of special time means so much to them. If you can spare 30 minutes a week, the benefits to your relationships will become evident over a short period of time and last a lifetime.

Through playtime with your child, you will see your child become more responsible and take initiative in decision-making for themselves. Children live in systems where they are constantly directed, instructed and corrected. A big part of starting school for a child is learning the rules and regulations set by teachers. Children have to learn how to behave in school. Because of this, they have less of an opportunity to explore their selves. When your child is experiencing playtime with you, they are in the driver's seat.

## Inexpensive and Easy-to-Find toys:

Baby dolls

Army men

Legos/building blocks

Hot Wheels

Crayons, markers and paint

paper, glue and scissors

balls

dress-up clothes

Nerf guns

bubbles

outside elements, such as sticks, rocks,  
dirt, and water



“Parents can only give good advice or put them on the right paths, but the final forming of a person’s character lies in their own hands.”

– Anne Frank

Set some basic limits for him. These limits are to protect you and your child or from anything being broken or damaged. Outside of these limits, he will be able to invite you into their world of imagination and play. He will show you their feelings and thoughts, all through play.

She will have fun as well as feel your complete love and attentiveness. You are playing with her, not peering occasionally over your laptops, not correcting them or instructing them on how to do things. The same way adults love to feel that someone is listening to them; not providing advice or judgment. Feeling understood, capable and empowered-what we all want. Use the guiding statements on the following pages to jump-start having a better relationship with your child today!









I will schedule play time on...

A series of horizontal dashed lines for writing.





## About Cathy Canfield

Cathy Canfield, MSW, LCSW, LICSW, is a psychotherapist with a background in child-centered play therapy and EMDR; treating anxiety, depression, transitions and trauma. She works towards helping clients find their way to healing, whether a child, adolescent or adult.

Cathy has seen the powerful transformations made by children and adolescents in movement, through art and play during their sessions as well as through EMDR (Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing). She has seen incredible results in extending this offering to adults in addition to traditional talk therapy.



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