What’s a Play Partner to Do?

1. Play more on the floor with the children. Watch the children as they build before adding gentle suggestions to help the play develop.

2. Tell the children what they can do with blocks rather than what they can’t do. “The blocks stay on the table.” “Take apart your tower with your hands.” “The blocks are for building.”

3. TALK, TALK, TALK. Talk about what your child is doing. Talk about what you are doing. Describe what you see. Use interesting vocabulary.

4. Use open-ended questions to allow a child to explain a situation. “Tell me about your building…” “What do you think the people are talking about in your house?” These questions encourage your child to think about what they’re doing and encourage them to talk about it.

5. Help children to solve their own problems. Give general problem solving ideas rather than specific solutions. Suggest, “This is one way to build a gate. Will that work for your project?”

6. Vary the clean-up routines to involve children in the process.
   ♦ Give the children a warning that clean-up time is coming. *We can play for 5 minutes and then we’ll clean up.*
   ♦ Give the child a choice about how he wants to accomplish the task. *Are you going to first put away the long blocks or the short blocks?*
   ♦ Join in with the child and make it a game. *Do you have strong muscles? Show me your muscles when you help pick up the blocks.*
   ♦ Sing a clean up song together. *This is the way we pick up our toys, Pick up our toys*  
   *Pick up our toys*
   *This is the way we pick up our toys before we go to bed.*
Blocks are a tool for learning

NEW WORDS
AND BUILDING
PRE-READING SKILLS!

same

different

match

count

patterns

sort

shapes

add

1 + 1 = 2

MATH!

count

1 = 2 = 3 =

GROUP

Together

Share

alone

create

take turns

help

self control

listening

ask

Car

Train

Pretend

listening

listen

Car

Train

Pretend

GROUP

Together

Share

alone

create

take turns

help

self control

Blocks are a tool for learning

SOCIAL SKILLS!

together

alone

take turns

self control

Blocks are a tool for learning