The Importance of Imaginative Play to the Future of Innovation

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Studies show that children control their impulses significantly better during pretend play than at other times.
Creativity is universal among children. The most successful adults tend to be those who embrace creativity.
“Let’s pretend” play exercises problem solving and language skills.

As children narrate their pretend play experiences, they train their minds to transform ideas into words.
Role play enhances children’s cognitive flexibility and develops critical thinking skills.

Children develop skills in thinking symbolically through pretend play.
Research shows that free play helps children to manage stress and become resilient.
Imaginative play in childhood is associated with creative performance years later.

Imaginative play allows children to innovate and to fantasize about their future.
Parents should encourage their children to continue to embrace their creative side more and more as they grow older.
Unstructured pretending allows children to role-play situations in which they will engage as adults or adolescents.

Unfortunately, a trend among growing children has been the gradual distancing from being creative.
Early childhood games about make-believe worlds were more frequent among Nobel Prize winners and MacArthur Foundation “genius grant” awardees than in the general population.
Unstructured free play benefits children’s social, emotional, and cognitive development.
Free play allows children to practice taking turns, clearly communicating, empathizing with others and their points of view, practicing conflict resolution skills and honing positive interactions with other people.
Play time gives children the chance to socialize, express emotions and practice motor skills.
Pretending to experience the emotions associated with a variety of situations helps children to develop skills to cope with difficult or undesirable situations.
Unstructured free play helps children to increase concentration and attention.