

# "Plays Well With Others"

by Scott Brouette, Barb Gallick, Lisa Lee,  
and Pam Morbitzer

**"Plays well with others."** You'll find that criteria on most early childhood developmental checklists. Early childhood educators have always focused on social development when implementing programs and curriculum. Helping young children develop strong social skills is essential for them to be successful throughout life.

When looking around our classroom, we realized that some of the play areas promoted more social interaction between children than others. We identified the block area, dramatic play center, sensory table, and outdoor play space as areas where social development opportunities abound.

In any of the four play areas, children will use many different social skills: problem solving, discussing play themes, cooperation, compromise, teamwork, negotiation, creating stories, listening to others, and respecting others' opinions. We have created a list of materials that

stimulate social development in each of these classroom areas. To keep them fresh and enticing to children, it is important to rotate materials regularly. Different materials will invite children to explore a classroom area, thus setting the stage for continued social interactions.

## **Block Area**

Provide a large space that will allow children to build large block structures. When possible, locate the block area in a low traffic area so block buildings can be left up for extended periods of time. A good

block area may include any of the following items:

- Wooden unit blocks — (required) a large assortment of blocks in a variety of geometrical shapes.
- Railroad track and trains — wooden tracks that can be arranged in a variety of configurations encourage discussions



*The authors are all head teachers at the Illinois State University Child Care Center. They have worked as a team for over seven years. Scott Brouette has been with the ISU Child Care Center for 13 years and has bachelors degrees in early childhood education, psychology, and mass communication. Barb Gallick has over 20 years of experience teaching preschool children. She has a masters degree in early childhood education. Lisa Lee has been teaching in the early childhood field for 19 years and has a bachelor of science degree in physical education. Pam Morbitzer has a bachelors degree in child development and has been a teacher for seven years.*

---

about the layout of the rail line. A variety of engines and train cars.

- Large and small bulldozers, trucks, cranes, cars, buses, and emergency vehicles.
- Plastic zoo or wild animals — all sizes and more than one of each species.
- Plastic farm animals — large and small and a wide variety of each.
- Small figures of people — children and adult figures.
- Doll house furniture.
- Platforms — providing elevated platforms for children to build upon encourages children to leave block buildings standing so that they may return to them at later times to continue social interactions.
- Toilet paper tubes, colored tape, and railroad board can be used to create houses and other buildings in conjunction with the wooden blocks.
- Legos and a Lego table — purchasing Legos with wheels and people included in the kits adds to the variety of experiences the children can have sitting together and building at the table.

## Dramatic Play

Dramatic play kits can be used to transform the dramatic play area into new worlds in which children can interact. Provide enough props in each kit for at least two children to increase opportunities for social interaction.

The lists of materials in the kits are suggestions; use your imagination, get ideas from the children, and use what you have available. Kits should include items children believe are needed to add reality and fun to the experience.

**Doctor Kit** — stethoscope, thermometer, reflex hammer, bandages, pen light, lab coats, scrubs, socks (toes cut out to make casts), white gloves, doctor bag, pad of paper, pencil/pen, magazines, medicine bottles, telephone.

**Hair Stylist Kit** — curlers, barrettes, combs, brushes, head bands, small spray bottles (for water), mirrors, curling iron, blow dryer, scrunchies (for pony tails).

**Restaurant Kit** — menus, aprons, chef hats, play food, plates, spoons, knives, forks, cups, pad of paper, pencil/pen, tablecloth, cookware.

**Firefighter Kit** — red coats, boots, fire hats, hoses, first aid kit, bell, oxygen tanks (made from 2 liter plastic bottles), telephone.

**Grocery Store Kit** — small toy cash registers, play money (coins and bills), plastic food, small baskets, pads of paper and pencils, grocery store ads from the newspaper, coupons and coupon organizers, small paper sacks.

These are just a few ideas. There are many other dramatic play kit possibilities: office, police, dancer, pilot, astronaut — wherever the children's imaginations can travel!

## Sensory Table

Sensory tables purchased through classroom equipment catalogs can be used for inside and outside play. If the budget doesn't permit such a purchase, a kiddie pool makes a

great substitute. Sensory tables are an inexpensive way to add more opportunities for children to interact with one another.

Use your imagination as well as the children's interests and suggestions to create new sensory table experiences.

**Water:** plastic containers and lids, cups, mugs, measuring spoons, plastic liter bottles, water wheel, eggbeaters, whisks, basters, sponges, plastic eyedroppers, funnels of various sizes, brushes of different shapes and sizes, sieves, plastic tubing, plastic boats, plastic animals such as turtles, jellyfish, whales.

**Sand:** small shovels and racks, funnels, sieves, spoons, small trucks and cars, water wheel, plastic dishes and containers, measuring cups and spoons.

**Additional items to try in a sensory table:** rice and beans, bubble solution and bubble wands, snow with shovels for digging, mud and plastic dinosaurs for a dinosaur habitat, paper scraps and scissors to practice cutting and strengthen fine motor development, cotton balls.

## Outdoor Space

Play houses, tree houses, and even climbers can set the stage for social interaction. We've found sandboxes and wooden lawn swings lend themselves especially well to blossoming peer relationships.

The sandbox should be big enough for at least four children at a time (the bigger the better)! Build up a supply of toys and equipment (and never stop adding to your collection!). Sandbox play will be richer and more involved if the toys and equipment change from day to day.

- Buckets of varying sizes, small hand shovels, sifters, water wheels, small plastic cups, empty plastic food containers of various sizes and shapes, old plastic bowls (large and small), molding shapes (fish, letters, animals), serving size spoons, old soup ladles.
- Child-sized garden shovels, rakes, and hoes.
- Plastic dinosaurs (large and small), plastic animals (farm, jungle, zoo).
- A water source nearby with garden hose, buckets, or watering cans.
- Plastic loaders, dump trucks, bulldozers, cranes, graders (both large and small).
- Small plastic cars or trucks.
- A supply of small sticks to use as birthday candles.

Add a wooden lawn swing — like those used on home porches (to seat up to three) — to your outdoor play space. Lawn swings can be mounted on a freestanding frame or hung from a sturdy tree branch. Our swing is a favorite spot for the children in our center. Together they talk, sing, laugh, read books, and take turns pushing each other. Many interesting conversations have occurred while children and adults relax to the swing's soothing rhythm. A large swing under a shade tree provides a perfect spot for children to spend quality time developing friendships and relationships.

## Learning Materials Directory

This directory is a partial listing of companies manufacturing or selling learning

materials. Companies were included free of charge. Inclusion does not imply endorsement by *Child Care Information Exchange*. Request free information about these companies by circling the number for each company on the Product Inquiry Card (between pages 72 and 73).

Lou Haller  
**Ampersand Press**  
 750 Lake Street  
 Port Townsend, WA 98368  
 (800) 624-4263  
 www.ampersandpress.com  
 Circle 70 on Product Inquiry Card

*Everyone will learn more about nature, science, and the amazing world we live in from these unique educational games which are fun to play for both children and adults. These award-winning games are used in countless educational settings. The wonderful illustrations from the games are also available in rubber stamps.*

Sharon Turnbough  
**Angeles Group**  
 9 Capper Drive  
 Pacific, MO 63069  
 (800) 346-6313 / (314) 257-0533  
 Circle 71 on Product Inquiry Card

*Angeles manufactures innovative, high quality products: BaseLine® Furniture — tables, chairs, cubbies, lockers, bookcases, and bookracks. Angels Rest® Cots — heat sealed seams, seven year unconditional warranty. Bye-Bye Buggies — safely transport four or six infants/toddlers. With a 40 year history of reliability, the Angeles SilverRider™ is most preferred.*

Jamie Seeley Kreisman  
**Beka, Inc.**  
 542 Selby Avenue  
 St. Paul, MN 55102  
 (888) 999-2352  
 www.bekainc.com  
 Circle 72 on Product Inquiry Card

*Flexible and durable hard maple easels, puppet theater/play spaces, unit blocks, and a variety of creative play products. Beka manufactures and distributes their complete line of school-quality products with no minimums and great service.*

Paul Patras  
**Bright Ideas/Perky Paint**  
 909 South Oak Park Avenue

Oak Park, IL 60304  
 (888) 883-7422  
 www.perkypaint.com  
 Circle 73 on Product Inquiry Card

*Perky Paint™ is the highest quality washable tempera paint available today! Bright Ideas is your only source for Perky Paint™ as well as other essentials for early childhood arts and crafts such as paper, glue, crayons, glitter, etc. All of these quality products are discounted and shipped within 24 hours.*

Paula White  
**Calendar Fun**  
 2504 Ridgmar Boulevard, #32  
 Fort Worth, TX 76116  
 (800) 635-4496  
 www.caldendarfun.com  
 Circle 74 on Product Inquiry Card

*Full color activity calendar kits designed for child cares. Initial sample kits are free to interested customers. These kits work without a computer or color printer. They come with 72 different clip-art stickers and colorful pre-printed sheets to be used with a black and white copier.*

Dan Zadra  
**Compendium, Inc.**  
 114 Second Avenue S., #105  
 Edmonds, WA 98020  
 (800) 914-3327  
 www.lunchmail.com  
 Circle 75 on Product Inquiry Card

*Winner of a 1998 Parents' Choice Award! Lunch Mail™ cards are a great way to send your children off to school with a piece of your love tucked inside their lunch, backpack, or pocket. Each miniature "pop-open" card conceals a "secret message." 30 cards per box — \$4.95.*

Melody M. Henderson  
**Consumer Products Enterprises, Inc.**  
 541 Buffalo West Springs Hwy.  
 Union, SC 29379  
 (864) 427-7900  
 www.cpe-felt.com  
 Circle 76 on Product Inquiry Card

*Consumer Products' Craft 100 Felt is made from the finest 100% acrylic fibers. Our felt has the look and feel of a more expensive wool blend and has outstanding color brilliance. We also carry this in a stiffened felt called Eazy Felt — easy to cut, glue, shape, paint, and color.*

Kathy O'Reilly  
**Cooking With Children  
Can Be Easy**  
1304 McCullough Avenue  
Huntsville, AL 35801-6251  
(256) 534-2155  
Circle 77 on Product Inquiry Card

*The only book for classroom cooking that cuts teacher preparation time by 75%. Single portion recipes allow each child to perform every step of the recipe "all by myself." Each recipe has: shopping list, picture/word direction cards, list of equipment, related books and activities. Written from 20 years experience.*

Nicole Benson  
**Delmar Publishers**  
3 Columbia Circle  
Albany, NY 12212  
(518) 464-3500  
www.delmar.com  
Circle 78 on Product Inquiry Card

*Delmar is dedicated to providing early childhood educational materials that meet the highest standards of current, accurate information presented in an attractive, bias-free context. Delmar continues to build a leadership position in early childhood education by offering thoughtful revisions of bestsellers and innovative new titles.*

Genny Silverstein  
**Dexter Educational Toys Inc.**  
PO Box 630861  
Aventura, FL 33163  
(305) 931-7426  
Circle 79 on Product Inquiry Card

*"I wanna be"... a doctor, veterinarian, chef, firefighter, police officer, postal worker, etc. Dress-ups for drama play — machine washable, velcro enclosures, easy to put on and take off. Machine washable hand puppets — over 100 types, picturing families, community helpers, professions, special needs, feelings, Old MacDonald's Farm. All multicultural.*

Jo Ann Voytilla  
**Dixon Ticonderoga Company**

195 International Parkway  
Heathrow, FL 32746  
(407) 892-9000  
www.prang.com  
Circle 80 on Product Inquiry Card

*A manufacturer of a wide variety of art material for the classroom, including crayons, tempera and washable paint, color pencils, watercolors, markers, clay, black core writing pencils, colored paper chalks, blackboard chalks, and more.*

Mary Hampton  
**Environments, Inc.**  
PO Box 1348  
Beaufort Industrial Park  
Beaufort, SC 29901-1348  
(800) EI CHILD / (843) 846-8155  
www.eichild.com  
Circle 81 on Product Inquiry Card

*Environments, a supplier of equipment and materials for early education and child care, has a complete line of products for young children and their caregivers. Safe, stimulating, easy-care playthings for infants and toddlers; the NIFTYsystem™ manipulative system for natural investigations; dynamic classroom banners; colorful casework; SoftStages® play structures; and more!*

Frank Alexander  
**Front Row Experience**  
540 Discovery Bay Boulevard  
Byron, CA 94514  
(800) 524-9091  
www.front-row-ex.com  
Circle 82 on Product Inquiry Card

*Source of movement coordination activities, lesson plans, kits, sets, and equipment for pre-k through sixth grade.*

Perri Kersh  
**Hach**  
4994-D Indiana Avenue  
Winston-Salem, NC 27403  
(800) 624-7968  
www.computersforkids.com  
Circle 83 on Product Inquiry Card

*Hach provides comprehensive*

*computer learning centers, software, peripherals, and assistive technology for early childhood and special needs programs. We also provide everything you need for an infant/toddler, preschool, and early learning classroom including furniture, manipulatives, language arts tools, gross motor, science and math tools, and much more.*

Rich Brockmeier  
**Huntar Co., Inc.**  
473 Littlefield Avenue  
South San Francisco, CA 94080  
(800) 566-8686  
Circle 84 on Product Inquiry Card

*Freddie Fridge Friend provides children with a friendly, fun path to learning ABCs, counting, and shapes. Paint cups and brushes — non-spill paint cups available in 12 colors, matching brushes are great for young hands to help develop motor skills.*

Catherine M. Schwarz  
**Jonti-Craft, Inc.**  
171 Highway 68  
PO Box 30  
Wabasso, MN 56293  
(507) 342-5169  
Circle 85 on Product Inquiry Card

*Jonti-Craft is the leading manufacturer of the finest wooden early learning furniture available. Complete line of storage units, including cubbie trays, computer desks, book displays, kitchen units, dramatic play furniture, puppet/play centers, easels and art equipment, mirrors, and toddler size furniture. Drop ship — no minimum order.*

Leah Davies  
**Kelly Bear Press, Inc.**  
20493 Pine Vista Drive  
Bend, OR 97702  
(800) 755-7899  
www.kellybear.com  
Circle 86 on Product Inquiry Card

*The Kelly Bear character building materials foster children's social and emotional development. Over 200,000 are used in centers,*

*schools, and homes. They enhance communication and increase bonding between teacher/parent and child. They include books, puppet, songs, video series, and curriculum. Find reproducible handouts at website under "Parent Tips."*

Shannon Stegmaier  
**Lakeshore Learning Materials**  
2695 East Dominguez Street  
Carson, CA 90749  
(800) 421-5354 / (310) 537-8600  
www.lakeshorelearning.com  
Circle 87 on Product Inquiry Card

*We've filled our 200-page early childhood catalog with the latest in learning materials for infants, pre-k, kindergarten, and special education — from books to blocks, outdoor play to arts and crafts. Plus we have a Grades 1-2-3 catalog with materials just for school-age children.*

Ken Hunt  
**LEGO DACTA**  
Bigelow Commons, #5100  
Enfield, CT 06082  
(800) 510-5773  
Circle 88 on Product Inquiry Card  
*The educational division of the LEGO group. Over 50 products designed for students from preschool to third grade. Products packaged for group use with optional curriculum and storage bins. Products include Primo, Duplo, LEGO, Toolo, play tables, wallboards, Early Simple Machines, Early Structures, Fun Time Gears, and more.*

Phil Eklof  
**Miss Jo Publications**  
6131 Royal Crest Drive  
Dallas, TX 75230  
(800) 606-0694 / (214) 692-1658  
Circle 89 on Product Inquiry Card

*Miss Jo's picture book learning songs are colorful books with realistic pictures and large print words, designed as a tool for classroom teachers. Accompanying musical tape invites children to sing along. Books and tapes teach respect (for ourselves, each*

other, and nature) while enhancing language and reading skills.

Joseph Buffington  
**MYP Industries**  
PO Box 244  
Red Oak, GA 30272  
(404) 768-7715  
Circle 90 on Product Inquiry Card

MYP Industries carry a complete line of toddler mats, cots, puzzles, and puzzle replacement pieces. Specialist in custom wooden name puzzles and accessories.

Terry Lieberstein  
**Nature Watch**  
9811 Owensmouth Avenue, #2  
Chatsworth, CA 91311  
(800) 228-5816  
www.naturific.com  
Circle 91 on Product Inquiry Card

Exciting environmental education catalog filled with hands-on activities and programs. Games, resource books, interactive kits, field aids, and much more. Subjects include animals, ecology, earth science, Native American and pioneer history, outdoor living, rain forests, oceans, etc. Marilyn Warner

**Opening Pathways to Reading**  
746 West Shaw Avenue, #186  
Clovis, CA 93612  
(559) 292-9012  
www.opr4reading.com  
Circle 92 on Product Inquiry Card

A proven program with fun, effective methods for the beginning reader, speller, and writer. *Opening Pathways to Reading* is a cumulative phonic program. Previous knowledge of phonics is not necessary, teachers learn phonics right along with the students. Instruction video and audio tapes included in parent product.

Chris Gintz  
**Optimum Resource, Inc.**  
18 Hunter Road  
Hilton Head Island, SC 29926  
(888) 784-2592  
www.stickybear.com  
Circle 93 on Product Inquiry Card

Designer and publisher of award winning, high quality CD-ROM (Mac, Windows) and print based software for schools — Stickybear, MiddleWare, and Tools for Educators. Programs contain exercises which help teachers perform assessment, targeted learning, and reinforcement. Lesson plans, freely reproducible black-line masters, and built-in classroom management are featured.

Keith Beaty  
**PentesPlay by GameTime**  
1346 Hill Road  
Charlotte, NC 28210  
(704) 552-2428  
www.pentesplay.com  
Circle 94 on Product Inquiry Card

Over a decade ago, PentesPlay made one of the most significant contributions in the field of child development with the creation of soft contained play. Today, we have combined our resources with GameTime, one of the world's leading innovators in commercial outdoor play. PentesPlay will now be marketed and sold through Game Time.

Tina Mendivil  
**Peter Alsop's Moose School Music**  
Box 96095  
Topanga, CA 90290  
(800) 676-5480  
www.peteralsop.com  
Circle 95 on Product Inquiry Card

Laughter and fun with Dr. Peter Alsop's music will open doors for children and parents. Teaching notes included. Parent's Choice Gold Award for best kids' tapes and videos. Call for free brochure.

Todd Jennings  
**Play With A Purpose**  
6750 France Avenue S., #200  
Edina, MN 55435  
(612) 915-7285  
www.gophersport.com  
Circle 96 on Product Inquiry Card

Play With A Purpose has over 1,000 physical development

products perfectly suited for young children. Choose from a great selection of ride-ons, play-ground equipment, movement, balance, and active play products. Every product is unconditionally guaranteed!

Robert Belter  
**Portage**  
PO Box 5500  
Akron, OH 44334-0500  
(800) 321-2183  
www.portagegraphic.com  
Circle 97 on Product Inquiry Card

Portage manufactures the Artwaxer repositionable wax adhesive system. The Artwaxer applies a thin coating of pressure-sensitive Artwax to the back of visual aids, room decorations, and students' artwork so that it will adhere to wall surfaces. Also available is Artwax Stick-'Ems double-coated waxed adhesive sheets.

Ruth White  
**Rhythms Productions/  
Tom Thumb Music**  
PO Box 34485  
Los Angeles, CA 90034-0485  
(800) 544-7244 / (310) 836-4678  
Circle 98 on Product Inquiry Card

Award-winning songs and games for learning through music. Cassettes, CDs, books for birth through elementary feature rhythms, puppet play, art activities, and more. Titles include Lullabies, Singing Games, Watch Me Grow® series, Mr. Windbag® concept stories, First Reader's Kit, First Math, Themes, etc. Free catalog.

Dan Ryan  
**Ryan's Trophies**  
19 East Main  
Belgrade, MT 59714  
(406) 388-0984  
Circle 99 on Product Inquiry Card

For all your educational needs including awards and recognition. Early childhood specialists. Catalogs available.

Customer Service  
**Scott Resources, Inc.**  
401 Hickory Street  
PO Box 2121  
Fort Collins, CO 80522  
(800) 289-9299  
www.amcp.com  
Circle 100 on Product Inquiry Card  
Scott Resources has many hands-on manipulatives for young children to teach early math skills that can be hard to grasp. Call our customer service department to help select the products that will work best for you.

Rich Maas  
**Screenflex Portable Partitions**  
585 Capital Drive  
Lake Zurich, IL 60047  
(800) 553-0110  
www.screenflex.com  
Circle 101 on Product Inquiry Card

Do you ever need to quickly and easily use partitions to set up separate learning, snacking, or napping areas in your center? Screenflex Portable Partitions can help! Please review our information in the "Exchange Marketplace" in this issue.

A. J. Gus Korman  
**Smarty Kat Kits**  
22916 Styles Street  
Woodland Hills, CA 91367  
(800) 995-1353  
Circle 102 on Product Inquiry Card

The Smarty Kat Kit includes 12 brightly colored, washable felt sets, a cassette tape and/or CD, and an 85 page lesson guide. The songs are sung in English and Spanish. Use this integrated kit as an introduction to the entire early education curriculum.

Gary Cole  
**SNAZAROO**  
1428 MacArthur Drive, #101  
Carrollton, TX 75007  
(800) 451-4040 / (972) 245-1143  
www.snazaroo.com  
Circle 103 on Product Inquiry Card

All SNAZAROO water based face painting products are FDA

---

*approved and non-toxic. Easy application. Washes off with mild soap and water. Kits for individual use as well as large volume kits for amusement parks. Many colors, as well as books and accessories for every face painting need.*

Jeff Primes

**Stik-ees**

1165 Joshua Way

Vista, CA 92083

(888) 784-5337

www.stikees.com

Circle 104 on Product Inquiry Card

*Fund raising programs made easy! Stik-ees® static cling window decorating, educational, and activity kits. Great for classroom decorations. Seasonal decorating, everyday items, and Success Tools for Kids™. No mess! Works on windows, refrigerators, white boards, more. Complete fund raising programs. Call for free catalog or more information.*

Juanita Newland-Ulloa

**Ulloa Productions**

PO Box 19111

Oakland, CA 94619

(510) 632-6296

Circle 105 on Product Inquiry Card

*Award winning and Grammy nominated line of CDs, cassettes, and matching songbooks that enhance the learning of Spanish through music — “Canta Conmigo” (Sing With Me), Volumes 1 and 2 — sung by vocalist/composer Juanita Newland-Ulloa.*

Jim Irvine

**Wizard of Ahhs Inc.**

2892 Polaris Street

Pollock Pines, CA 95726

(800) 354-3524

Circle 106 on Product Inquiry Card

*The original world famous Monkey Mitt and the new Monkey Tales storytelling board with props.*