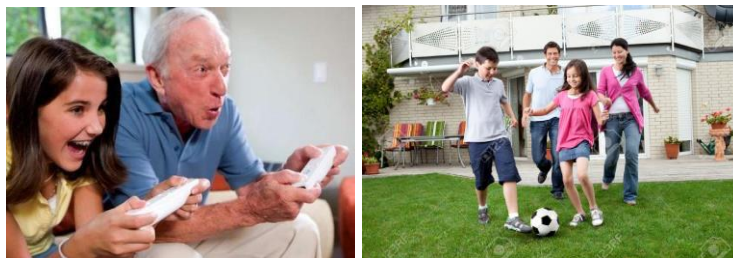


Non-directive Play Techniques and Ideas



- Non-directive play helps develop social and sensory skills.
- Simple toy materials are great for nondirective play. Blankets and chairs can be used to build forts, boxes become castles, building blocks unleash the imagination, non-competitive games can engage you both in a pleasurable experience and provide a focused activity (e.g., tumbling tower, lining up dominos). Dolls, other play figures, art supplies, and play dough allow children to express their creativity and their issues. As they are using them, remind yourself that there is no right or wrong way to play. Accept your child's creative play! Accept your own as well!
- Follow your child's lead in play. Boundaries may need to be set by you, but only for reasons of safety and respect for people and property.
- Imitate your children. Look for what is holding their interest, and engage in that activity with them. Imitation can lead into turn-taking activities. Imitation is a form of acceptance and understanding – just like active listening!



- For older kids, engage in the activities that they prefer to do. Play outdoor games with them (kicking a ball, Frisbee, playing catch, bike-riding, etc.). Play video games with your kids, where they get to explain the rules to you and how to play. Ask your kids to play some of their favorite music for you, and then listen to it without judgment, accept it, and thank them for sharing the experience with you.
- Do any activity in which your child teaches you how to do something. Try to approach the learning from a point of being intensely interested, not superior in

knowledge. Accepting our children's view of the world and rules for their games without correcting them does us no harm. But to constantly be correcting children's perceptions within the realm of play can be damaging to their sense of self-esteem. Remind yourself that they understand the world according to their ability to do so, and as they grow their cognitive abilities will expand to accept the new knowledge.



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Images from Google search.