



# Ready for play? Then play!

**SOURCE:** Expertise Centre Childcare, 2025

**This tool is intended to inspire the creation of play opportunities for children and thereby increase their engagement in play.**

## **FOR WHOM**

Pedagogical coaches and pedagogical employees.

## **OBJECTIVE**

Providing guidance on how to create opportunities for play and prepare the space for play.

## **WHAT**

The tool contains examples of play prompts and a format for a conversation to arrive at a good play prompt.

## **WORKING METHOD**

The pedagogical coach or coordinator shows the photos to pedagogical employees during a team meeting or individual coaching session. They discuss the creation of play opportunities that are appropriate for the target group with which the pedagogical employees work. Once this has been tried out, the pedagogical employees reflect on it with the coach / coordinator using reflection questions.

## **GOOD TO KNOW / INTRODUCTION**

A play-ready environment encourages play and ensures high levels of engagement among children, enabling them to develop.

→ Examples



Theme space



Discover space



Theme space



House corner



Baby space



Material at child height



Robust workplace with authentic materials



Compact creative corner with materials at child height

## → Discussing the examples

Consider what experiences children can gain from each play activity. Ask about specific experiences. So if a person indicates that children can move, ask what movements the children can practise. Or if they describe a sensory experience, ask them about what the children can see, feel, taste, smell, and hear.

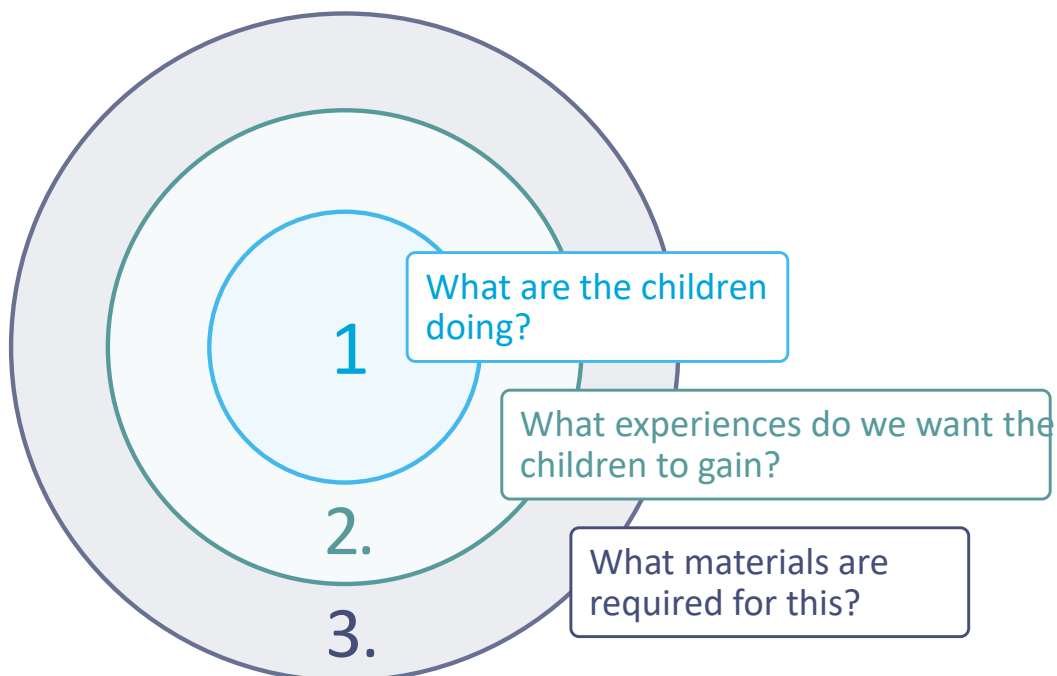
After viewing the photo series, ask the pedagogical employees what they noticed about the play prompts.

Supplement with:

- Various types of materials are combined: toys, natural materials, house, garden and kitchen materials, packaging materials.
- Extensive use of separate components
- Extensive use of sensopathic materials that provide a strong sensory experience
- Raised platforms are used for the play prompts, and there are (almost) no chairs.
- The materials are laid out in an inviting manner.
- There is no fear of getting dirty.
- Written language can be found in many play situations

## → Getting started: brainstorming

- Preparation by the pedagogical coach: Draw three circles on a flip chart as shown in the image below (if there are several groups participating, draw one for each group):
- Answer the following questions together and write down your answers in the appropriate circle:



## 1. What are the children doing?

- What interests the children in our group?
- What trends can we identify?
- What stage of development are the children at?
- What are they practising a lot?
- Which theme do we choose?

## 2. What experiences do we want the children to gain?

- What experiences do we want the children to gain from the new play prompt?
- Consider sensory, movement, language, problem solving, creativity, cooperation, etc., and make the experiences concrete.

## 3. What materials are required for this?

- What do we need? What materials do we have available?
- What materials should we purchase / collect?
- What is a suitable space to set up the play prompt?

Agree on a date for when the pedagogical employees will start working on this and when you will evaluate the play prompt using the reflection questions on the next page (provide these in advance so that the pedagogical employees have guidelines for their observations).

## → Reflection questions

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### Reflection questions after the play space has been rearranged:

What materials did the children play with?

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What experiences did the children gain?

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What can you say about the play involvement of the children?

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Which play did you see that you had not anticipated beforehand?

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Ideas for a subsequent play prompt based on the observation: