



Setting the Foundations:

for Children to Become Experts at Play

- **Connection** – establish a safe and secure bond. Find a special way to check in for their circle of security... a thumbs up, a passing high 5, a knowing smile or wink. Make each drop off and pick up child focussed, warm and welcoming.
- Make each day's **rhythm familiar and predictable**. Allow big chunks of free play time (inside and outside).
- **Allow time** – it takes children a long time to master small things, putting on shoes, transitioning smoothly between tasks. It also takes about 45 minutes for children to settle into deep uninterrupted play. The play that develops creativity, problem solving skills and social/emotional learning.
- **Encourage independence** to build a curiosity and a sense of 'being able'... can you try and put this sock on while I help Jo.
- **Fuel and hydrate them** – provide healthy food with high protein options early in the day to sustain physical and cognitive energy. Quality child led play is exhausting.
- When instructing or correcting – **always explain why**... Just walk across the rock so we don't trip and fall, they are extra slippery when they're wet.
- **Role model** entering and exiting play. Give verbal suggestions of ways to join play... Would you like to deliver some fruit to the café for milkshakes?
- **Don't be too quick to 'fix' a problem** – allow children space to try options... learning by doing creates stronger neuro pathways than being told what to do.
- **Look busy** – if you are too available, they will draw you into play and adults often then take over.
- When you are playing 'with' the children, **position yourself so you are not leading**... be the baby, the dog, the customer. Make sure the children lead the play and give yourself an out... "you guys keep playing while I change Jo's nappy"

Contact Steph



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I am always happy to assist anyone who is on a mission to bring their best for the children.

All children deserve the best we can provide. Please feel welcome to make contact with me at any time.