

# The Healthy Mind Platter



*The Healthy Mind Platter, for Optimal Brain Matter*

“You can't use up creativity. The more you use, the more you have.” Maya Angelou

This week, we will look at the importance of creativity and play.

## Why do young children need to play?



Play helps our brains develop, and continual brain development keeps our minds healthy and happy.

Neuroscience research confirms the importance of play for infants in developing children's brains and minds. It has also been shown that exposure to metaphor and symbols, as used in play, has a beneficial effect upon the development of the brain.

# Everyone needs play in their lives



## **Relieves stress.**

Play is fun and can trigger the release of endorphins, the body's natural feel-good chemicals. Endorphins promote an overall sense of well-being and can even temporarily relieve pain.

## **Improves brain function.**

Playing chess, completing puzzles, or pursuing other fun activities that challenge the brain can help prevent memory problems and improve brain function. The social interaction of playing with family and friends can also help ward off stress and depression.

## **Stimulates the mind and boost creativity.**

You'll learn a new task better when it's fun and you're in a relaxed and playful mood. Play can also stimulate your imagination, helping you adapt and solve problems.

## How can I keep inspired enough to play and be creative?

“We don’t stop playing because we grow old; we grow old because we stop playing.”



# The world is full of ways to be creative

- There are hundreds of ways to play and be creative – you don't have to be an artist.

- *Sing*
- *Invent songs and rhymes*
- *Act*
- *Write stories, films, blogs and reviews.*
- *Daydream about how you would spend a lottery win*
- *Plan holidays with your friends*
- *Play an instrument – play all the instruments*
- *Paint*
- *Sculpt*
- *Sketch and draw*
- *Make amazing photos – dress up! Be original!*
- *Invent a dance routine*
- *Design a videogame*



I bet you can think of some more, too 😊

## Reflecting on play time

- Being creative reduces stress
- Being creative improves mental wellbeing
- In order to feel creative, be inspired by the wonders of the world and don't imitate-create!
  
- Most importantly, have fun!