

Often we are asked why we would put play items in our children's section of the library. Play is a legitimate right of childhood, representing a crucial aspect of children's physical, intellectual and social development. The Public Library Association's *Every Child Ready to Read* initiative has FIVE components to build literacy: Talk, Sing, Read, Write, and PLAY. Our Community Engagement Coordinator, Angela Reynolds, has been trained in the concepts of the *Every Child Ready to Read* initiative, and is available for a presentation on the topic if your group would like more information.

Besides being developmentally appropriate, play spaces create community. Parents can relax and chat with other parents. Some children may not have access to safe, comforting spaces in their homes. The library is a place where everyone can visit and feel at home. We want children to feel at home, too, and play is a big part of childhood. Below are some links that can help you to understand why play is one important component of library service.

Every Child Ready to Read:

<http://www.everychildreadytoread.org/>

How libraries reach kids before they learn to read:

<http://www.npr.org/2014/12/30/373783189/talk-sing-read-write-play-how-libraries-reach-kids-before-they-can-read>

Play is one of the building blocks of literacy:

<http://www.thisisliteracy.ca/resources/sing-talk-play-read-and-love-building-blocks-early-learning>

Play in literacy development:

<http://www.child-encyclopedia.com/play/according-experts/plays-potential-early-literacy-development>

Creating play spaces in libraries:

<http://publiclibrariesonline.org/2014/05/babies-in-the-library-creating-a-truly-baby-friendly-early-literacy-play-space/>

Modern Youth library spaces:

<https://americanlibrariesmagazine.org/2012/02/28/library-design-showcase-2012-youth-spaces/>

Design library spaces with kids in mind:

<http://lj.libraryjournal.com/2012/10/buildings/lbd/how-to-design-library-space-with-kids-in-mind-library-by-design-fall-2012/>

Toronto KidStop early literacy spaces in libraries:

<http://www.torontopubliclibrary.ca/ready-for-reading/kidsstop-early-literacy-centres.jsp>

