



AUTISM AND PLAY



Introduction

The way that children with autism play is often called unusual because it's different to what you see in typically developing children – there's less role playing, they can become obsessed with a particular type of toy or just one part of it, and often play with objects that aren't traditionally considered to be toys. But is that a problem? Spinning the propeller on a toy helicopter over and over might seem boring and purposeless to you, but for some children it's really exciting.

So where do they need help?

The goal for helping children with autism in their play isn't necessarily to change the things they play with or teach them to play in the same way that their peers do, but to help them use the way they play and the things they find engaging to progress through the developmental stages to develop other more complex skills.

How can you help children with autism develop their play?

Join in - Let the child know that what they're doing is interesting to you. Get down on the floor and make your own line of cars, talk to them about what they're doing at an appropriate level of language.

Forget what you know about toys - Be accepting of the things that they find engaging. There's no point in trying to encourage joint attention and social interaction without showing respect for the things that they choose to play with. How can they feel safe enough to explore in a space where the things they find interesting are wrong?

Widen their horizons - Instead of trying to replace the objects they want to play with, show them new ways to play with those things. Show them what the correct function of the object is, and then expand on that. If they enjoy sorting, provide lots of things that they can group and show them different ways to do that (by size, colour, shape). Make a picture book of all the different things that they can make from play dough or blocks, help them with ideas that build on what they've already discovered. Give them as much support as they need to risk moving out of their comfort zone.

Children with autism can and do play, and doing so in a way that's different to other children or uses unusual objects doesn't automatically make it dysfunctional. Just like all children, they need support and encouragement to progress and get better at playing so they can develop more complex skills. And as is the case with other types of learning, this help might need to be provided in a comprehensive and structured way.

AWTISTIAETH A CHWARAE



Cyflwyniad



Yn aml, mae'r ffordd mae plant ag awtistiaeth yn chwarae yn cael ei alw'n anarferol am ei fod yn wahanol i'r hyn a welwch mewn plant sy'n datblygu fel arfer – mae llai o chwarae rôl, gallant fod ag obsesiwn â math penodol o degan neu ddim ond un rhan ohono, ac yn aml maent yn chwarae â gwrthrychau nad ystyrir yn draddodiadol yn deganau. Ond ydy hynny'n broblem? Mae troelli'r propelor ar hofrennydd plentyn drosodd a throsodd yn gallu ymddangos yn ddiflas ac yn ddibwrpas i chi, ond i rai plant mae'n gyffrous iawn.

Felly ble mae angen help arnyn nhw?

Nid yw nod helpu plant ag awtistiaeth yn eu chwarae o reidrwydd yn ymwneud â newid y pethau maent yn chwarae â nhw neu â'u dysgu i chwarae yn yr un ffordd ag y mae eu cyfoedion yn ei wneud, ond i'w helpu i ddefnyddio'r ffordd maen nhw'n chwarae a'r pethau sy'n ennyn eu diddordeb er mwyn symud ymlaen drwy'r camau datblygu i feithrin sgiliau mwy cymhleth.

Sut gallwch chi helpu plant ag awtistiaeth i ddatblygu eu chwarae?

Ymunwch â nhw - Rhowch wybod i'r plentyn fod yr hyn mae'n ei wneud yn ddiddorol i chi. Ewch i lawr ar y llawr a gwneud eich llinell eich hun o geir. Siaradwch â nhw am yr hyn maen nhw'n ei wneud gan ddefnyddio iaith o lefel briodol iddyn nhw.

Anghofiwch am yr hyn rydych yn ei wybod am deganau - Ceisiwch dderbyn y pethau sy'n ddiddorol iddyn nhw. Does dim pwynt ceisio annog sylw ar y cyd a rhyngweithio cymdeithasol heb ddangos parch at y pethau maen nhw'n dewis chwarae â nhw. Sut gallan nhw deimlo'n ddigon diogel i archwilio mewn amgylchedd lle mae'r pethau sy'n ddiddorol iddyn nhw yn anghywir?

Ehangwch eu gorwelion nhw Yn hytrach na cheisio disodli'r gwrthrychau maen nhw eisiau chwarae â nhw, dangoswch ffyrdd newydd iddyn nhw o chwarae gyda'r pethau hynny. Dangoswch iddyn nhw beth yw swyddogaeth gywir y gwrthrych, ac yna ymhelaethwch ar hynny. Os ydyn nhw'n mwynhau rhoi pethau mewn trefn, rhowch iddyn nhw lawer o bethau y gallan nhw eu grwpio a dangoswch ffyrdd gwahanol iddyn nhw o wneud hynny (yn ôl maint, lliw, siâp). Gwnewch lyfr lluniau o'r holl bethau gwahanol y gallan nhw eu gwneud o glai neu flociau chwarae a helpwch nhw gyda syniadau sy'n adeiladu ar yr hyn maen nhw wedi'i ddarganfod yn barod. Rhowch gymaint o gymorth ag mae ei angen arnyn nhw i deimlo'n ddigon mentrus i symud y tu hwnt i'r hyn sy'n gyfarwydd ac yn gyfforddus iddynt.

Mae plant ag awtistiaeth yn gallu chwarae, ac nid yw gwneud hynny mewn ffordd sy'n wahanol i blant eraill neu sy'n defnyddio gwrthrychau anarferol yn ei gwneud yn gamweithredol yn awtomatig. Fel pob plentyn, mae angen cymorth ac anogaeth arnyn nhw i wneud cynnydd a gwella wrth chwarae fel y gallant ddatblygu sgiliau mwy cymhleth. Ac fel sy'n wir am fathau eraill o ddysgu, efallai y bydd angen darparu'r cymorth hwn mewn ffordd gynhwysfawr a strwythuredig.