Play is often talked about as if it were a relief from serious learning. But for children play is serious learning. Play is really the work of childhood.

— Mr. Rogers
**play by ages and stages**

- **toddler**
  - side-by-side independent play with friends

- **young preschoolers**
  - playing in a group but still “doing their own thing”

- **infants & young toddlers**
  - sensory exploration and cause-and-effect

- **preschool**
  - activities such as tumbling or making faces with other children

- **preschool to kindergarten**
  - group play involving rules
play will...

- develop brain power and imagination
- promote physical health
- build meaningful relationships
- reduce stress
- explore creativity
- improve communication
every day kids need...

- not to be still for more than 60 minutes at a time.

At least 60 minutes of active free play.

Active play contributes to muscle and bone development and helps prevent childhood obesity.

60 minutes of games or sports.
Through play, kids learn...

conflict resolution
resiliency
teamwork
confidence

Play helps children be school ready! Kids develop the skills to interact with others, turn thought into action, and create!
get outside!

At least 15 minutes of sunlight a day builds immune systems, produces Vitamin D, and encourages healthy sleep patterns.

Children spend 50% less time outside than they did just 20 years ago.
Play is the highest form of research.

-Albert Einstein
Want to play locally?
Here are some great parks, play spaces, and activity centers to check out!

City of Bloomington Parks & Recreation  bloomington.in.gov/parks
Monroe County Parks & Recreation  mcparksandrec.org
Monroe County Public Library  mcpl.info
Boys & Girls Clubs  bgcbloomington.com
Owen County Public Library  www.owenlib.org
Girls Inc.  girlsinc-monroe.org
Monroe County YMCA  monroecountyymca.org
Owen County YMCA  owencountyymca.org

Sources:
files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ877614.pdf
www.regardingbaby.org/2011/11/02/what-is-play
www.kidsource.com/kidsource/content5/studies.play.html
www.huffingtonpost.com/matthew-edlund-md/why-you-want-your-kids-to_b_698529.html
www.first5la.org/articles/just-how-much-do-kids-need-to-get-out-play