



ENGAGING FAMILIES

Young children learn wherever they are! Families play a big part in supporting children's learning through routines and play at home. Here are some ideas to support families as they engage in make-believe play with their children.

- During socializations, invite parents to be guest speakers. If a parent has expertise or works in a particular role that you would like to include in your socialization play theme, invite them to come speak about the topic. This is a fun way to include families and their unique backgrounds and experiences!
- Focus on make-believe play during one of the group socializations. Work with parents to set a theme for the make-believe play socialization. Have the families bring items from their home that relate to the theme. Support parents as they engage in make-believe play with their children during the socialization event and encourage them to follow their child's lead (even if only for 5-10 minutes). If a family member cannot attend the socialization, encourage them to do the make-believe play theme at home with their child and tell you about it at the next home visit or socialization.
- Create a journal with new play themes for each week or expand on play themes the children are interested in. While we want children to persist in their favorite scenarios, we also want to broaden their skills and introduce new ideas. Encourage parents to write in the journal about how they played out the theme. Have them include photos or draw pictures of their make-believe play.
- Help families identify objects in their home or making make-believe props for make-believe play. Put different play-themed items in a box (or shoebox) that is labeled with that theme!

