

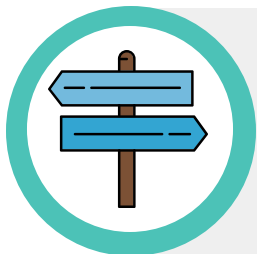
The benefits of everyday items in play

Children, particularly infants, benefit from engaging with everyday items instead of more traditional toys. Toys are often limiting in how they can be engaged with yet every day items such as utensils, clothing, pegs etc. have the following benefits...



Awareness of properties

Through play children can explore the properties of the items in a safe and supported way that allows them to be more familiar. Young children often mouth items as part of this exploration which is more appropriate during play than when trying to complete a task or experience with them.



Transference of skills

Once children have explored the properties of items through play they can then transfer the knowledge they have gained of these items into different experiences to support their needs. Often children know exactly what tool they need for a certain task based on their prior exploration.



Laying the foundation

Once children have had the opportunity to explore a range of different everyday items in play you have laid the foundation for them to use these items for their intended purposes as the children are very familiar with the items and how they work so only need to learn a new use.



Creative ways to use items

Adults are conditioned to use certain items for certain tasks and this can limit the amount of other applications we can think of. Children who have played with items can see all sorts of ways to use them and therefore do so creatively. Avoid limiting this creativity with your own expectations.



Supporting future agency

The more familiar children are with items from their play the more independently they can use them in their real world applications. For example if a child has played with cutlery, bowls and bibs then they are more likely to confidently feed themselves at meal times.