



5 ways that play helps kids succeed in school

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Summer may be over, but that doesn't mean kids should stop playing. Play builds active minds as much as it builds active bodies, and by playing together, children gain social competence that is vital to their development and growth. In short, play helps to build the 21st-century skills that children will need to thrive in the workplace and to navigate our complex, ever-changing world.

These five studies illuminate just how integral play is to children's learning, achievement, and success:

1. According to a 2012 study published in the *Journal of Applied Developmental Psychology*, **peer play has a direct positive concurrent relationship on learning outcomes**, particularly for preschool children exhibiting problem behavior.

2. The *American Academy of Pediatrics* has reported that in an academic environment, **play helps children adjust to the**



school setting, thereby fostering school engagement, and enhances children's learning readiness, learning behaviors, and problem-solving skills.

3. *Pediatrics* also published the results of a 2009 study that found **play and recess may increase children's capacity to store new information**, as their cognitive capacity is enhanced when they are offered drastic change in activity.

4. A 2011 review of 50 studies conducted by the Center for Disease Control and Prevention found that **increased physical activity during the school day can help children's attention, classroom behavior, and achievement test scores**. Eighty percent of principals who participated in a 2010 Gallup Survey reported that recess has a positive impact on academic achievement.

5. As a result of a German educational reform movement, some German kindergartens threw out their play-based curricula in order to become



"centers for cognitive achievement." Research comparing students who continued to attend play-based kindergartens instead of the so-called cognitive centers found that at age 10, **play-enriched children performed better in reading and mathematics, were better adjusted socially and emotionally, and excelled in creativity, and oral expression**.

Featured pictures were taken at the Children's Museum of the Lowcountry during camp; children were encouraged to PLAY.