



TOOLS  
OF THE  
MIND



## How do I use these with my child?

Look at the different book choices together with your child, and encourage your child to pick a book that interests him or her. You can ask, “What would you like to pretend . . . would you like to be working in a flower shop or pretend to be in a hospital? You could be a patient, or a doctor or a nurse, or a customer or a cashier and flower arranger in the flower shop – what sounds fun?”

# Let's Pretend

## Make-Believe Play Experiences

My purple text has cues for making the experience interactive!



When the dragonfly is present and you see **purple text**, you will pause the story and your child will pretend or talk with you about what's on the page.

### Talking is thinking!



For young children, talking is thinking! By encouraging your child to talk and practice what he/she will say and do in different roles in make-believe play as you read, you are helping your child ‘talk to think’, helping your child learn how to learn, and remember. You’ll read the book together, pausing often when you see the purple text to encourage your child to talk with you about what you are reading. You’ll be building your child’s understanding of the different roles in the play theme, and what they say and do, building a strong foundation for the kind of play that supports self-regulation development.





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## What next?

Tips for supporting children's make-believe play:

**PROPS**—While they can be great fun, children don't need expensive toys like a toy doctor's kit or a toy cash register to engage in make-believe play. But they do need props to help them remember what to do and say. A shoebox can be a cash register in a store, an examination table for a doll at the hospital, or a brick oven in a pizzeria! A paper towel tube can be a vase for flowers, a cast for a broken doll's arm, or cut into rings, pepperoni or onions for a made to order pizza. Simple home-made props are all you need to support high-level make-believe play! Save things like cereal and packing boxes—with some paper, markers, yarn, tape and scissors, you'll have everything you need to play any theme!

**ROLES**—What does a baker wear? A doctor?

When a child puts something on to pretend to be someone else, something magical happens. Children use more mature language and behavior when they are pretending to be doctors, groomers, sales clerks, pizza-makers, cashiers – adults! Think about what children might put on to 'transform' into another role. A piece of fabric can be an 'apron' for a cook; an old white t-shirt with a sticker on the pocket can be a lab coat for "Dr. Jorge" or a mechanics work shirt. Even a paper headband that reads 'mom' or 'dad' can set children up for pretending to be, and acting older and more mature than they are—building self-regulation as they play!



Investing in your child's make-believe play is building the skills that will support her/his later success in school . . . and will be fun and make lasting memories for you both!

Learn more.  
Watch our video:  
[bit.ly/Toolsplayathome](http://bit.ly/Toolsplayathome)

