

Skill:

Pretend to engage in every day activities without using the actual objects.

Materials Needed:

None needed– we are imagining!

Targets

- ☐ Drinking
- ☐ Brushing Teeth
- ☐ Licking Ice Cream
- ☐ Sleeping
- ☐ Driving a car

WHY TEACH THIS SKILL?

Teaching these skills will help develop abstract thinking, as well as working on **social skills, imaginary play skills**, imitation skills and following directions.

HOW TO TEACH:

1. Sit down with your child and say, **"Let's pretend to"**
2. Model the action and make any appropriate sound effects/ phrases.
3. The child should immediately imitate your action (or similar).
4. If your child doesn't respond right away, use hand-over-hand prompting to assist.
5. Each time the child completes the action, provide immediate praise and reinforcement (hugs, high 5s, a few seconds of a preferred video, a small edible reinforcer, a token, etc).
6. Continue to repeat the activity 5 to 10 times before taking a break.
7. Repeat frequently (a few times throughout the day, several days in a row) until your child is very consistently imitating your action.
8. When action is mastered, then go on to teaching the next one.
9. If you think of more ways to imagine actions, add those as well.
10. Have fun while teaching! It is "play" after all!

STUFFED ANIMAL PLAY

- **Pretend to Drink:** Curve your hand as if you are holding a cup. Bring it up to your mouth and pretend to drink. Make drinking sounds. Feel free to add language such as, "I'm so thirsty!"
- **Pretend to Brush Teeth:** Hold imaginary toothbrush in hand. Pretend to squirt on toothpaste. Pretend to brush.
- **Pretend to Lick Ice Cream:** Pretend to hold ice cream cone and lick it. Talk about what flavor you have, say things like, "Yum!" that will be simple for your child to imitate.
- **Pretend to Sleep:** say, "I'm so tired!" or similar. Lay head down, close eyes, and make snoring sounds. You and your child can take turns pretending to wake each other up.
- **Pretend to drive a car:** Pretend to hold a steering wheel, and steer the car.

Model Language appropriate for the activity, even if your child does not repeat it.
Praise any language approximations that your child makes.