

# Reading Cues

## Primary Objectives

2a. Forms relationships with adults

## Why It's Important

In order for your child to pretend and make believe with objects, he might need your help to get started. Through imitation and participation, he will begin to pretend using toys or objects that interest him.

## Materials

None

## What You Do

1. If your child likes to play in the sandbox, this is a perfect opportunity to provide toys that he would find interesting to explore. Play next to your child and set up some toys around him. Watch closely to see what he does. Does he begin to play with the toys? Does he imitate some of your pretend actions such as stirring a pot of sand?
2. Demonstrate how to use the toys without taking over the play situation. Model simple movements. Watch for your child to engage with the toys. At the moment of engagement, imitate him to reinforce his attempts. For example, if you model shoveling the sand, and your child decides to pat the sand with his hand, you can stop shoveling and imitate patting the sand. Ask, *What else can we do with the sand?* Reinforcing your child's play and development requires you to read his cues.
3. Change the items that go into the sandbox to create different pretend situations. You can put pots and pans in the sandbox on one day. On another day, fill it with farm animals, tractors, and gardening tools. Make your child's experience rich and motivating so that he can develop his ability to interact with objects with your support.