

**DOMAIN 1: APPROACHES TO LEARNING AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT****SUB-DOMAIN: COGNITION AND COGNITIVE PROCESSES****REPRESENTATIONAL THOUGHT AND PLAY****GOAL 15: CHILDREN PARTICIPATE IN PRETEND OR SYMBOLIC PLAY.**

| Age Range                     | Developmental Growth                             | Child Indicators   | Caregiver Strategies   |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| <p><b>16 to 38 Months</b></p> | <p>Use objects symbolically in pretend play.</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Uses one object as a symbol for another (holds blocks to ear to represent a cell phone).</li> <li>▪ Explores experiences by taking on family roles from within the family (declares "I'm the mommy!" and puts on a parent's shoes).</li> <li>▪ Moves from mostly solitary play to some parallel play.</li> <li>▪ Uses props in pretend play (dolls, animals, trucks, objects).</li> <li>▪ May have imaginary friends.</li> <li>▪ Reacts to people in costume as if they are the characters they portray.</li> <li>▪ Reacts to puppets as if they are real and not extensions of an adult or another child.</li> <li>▪ Sometimes uses play to address fears and to take risks.</li> <li>▪ Initiates play with another child through gestures, offering a toy, smiling, and eye contact.</li> <li>▪ Uses theme play when presented with props or prompts (animals go to the barn; babies are fed and put to bed).</li> <li>▪ Initiates favorite play themes with peer or adult.</li> <li>▪ Assigns emotions and language to dolls and other play characters.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participate in child's sense of imagination by engaging in make-believe play, with child leading.</li> <li>▪ Dispel child's fears that result from confusion over fantasy and reality.</li> <li>▪ Discuss child's dreams, ideas, and imagination with him/her.</li> <li>▪ When a child has imaginary friends, acknowledge the "friend."</li> <li>▪ Scaffold child's inclusion of peers into dramatic play scenarios; though do not expect children to play with common goals. Parallel playing is the norm.</li> <li>▪ Read fiction and nonfiction books and share family and traditional oral stories with child, and discuss how they are different.</li> <li>▪ Provide ample time and creation of imaginative play themes.</li> <li>▪ Provide props for creating play themes.</li> <li>▪ Acknowledge and respect a child's play with props for the sake of playing with the object (e.g. the child repeatedly opens and closes a cash register rather than playing store). Resist trying to turn the play into a theme. Wait for the child's waning interest to suggest a theme or add an element of a theme to the play.</li> </ul> |