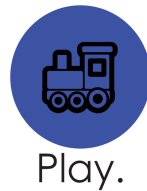


# PLAY & LEARN:

## *PLAY WITH ME* book



Sing.



Play.



Love.®

Young children develop and learn in the context of relationships and through play. In our busy, scheduled world, it is important to create time devoted to interacting with the children in our lives, along with time for them to be with others their own age. It is essential for children to learn how to communicate with their friends so they can feel confident with others and learn how to make and keep friends.

Children first learn social skills by watching the caring adults in their lives interacting and modeling the words and actions they observe. They notice how adults handle their emotions, actively listen to others, communicate to get their needs met, resolve conflict, and work with others to accomplish a goal. Importantly, they learn to express and act with empathy and compassion toward others.

When children have the opportunity to play with other children their age, they first play alongside one another without much interaction. This is called *parallel play*. With maturation and experience, they begin to use words to ask a friend to play or to join friends who are already playing. These play situations allow them to practice and experience success by listening to others, noticing cues, and sharing ideas and feelings.

Here are a few easy activities that will help your children learn how to join others in play.

- **Can I Play with You?** Borrow the familiar melody of “The Farmer in The Dell” song to create an opportunity to practice the language for asking a friend to play. The lyrics can go like this: “Can I play with you? Can I play with you? I would – I really would – like to play with you!” You can make a poster of the words and show your child how to use a pointer to point to the words of the song as you and your child – or your child and a friend – sing along!
- **Model It.** Frequently ask your child if you can join his play by asking, “Can I play?” You don’t have to stay long. Play for a little bit and then move on. Later in the day when you observe your child playing something else, ask your child if you can play. The more you model this skill, the easier it will be for your child to use it himself. And you are your child’s favorite play partner!



Together we will help your child learn and grow. **SingPlayLove.com**