

Let's Make Believe!

Learning to play dress up will help your child to:

- Try on different roles for himself
- Learn about different types of people and things
- Use his imagination every day



Ideas to try with your child:

- Encourage your child to dress up like different people: a particular professional, a favorite character, or a family member. Wear what that person wears: a special mask, make up and jewelry, and tie or a hat. Have them try acting like that person too!
- Turn a part of the house into a make believe area. You can have a tea party, look at and sort books like a librarian, write letters and mail them like a letter carrier, cook food like a chef, or pretend to take care of toy animals as a veterinarian.
- Take empty food boxes (like cereal) and tape them to construct a play kitchen or other buildings. Get low-cost costumes at thrift stores or use clothes you don't wear anymore.

If your child is struggling:

- Bathe or dress up dolls or stuffed animals. Have your child create jobs, names, and voices for these animals.
- Some children don't like to dress up and that's ok. Offer a hat or small props first like a briefcase or apron.
- Books to check out:
[Big Frank's Fire Truck](#) by Leslie McGuire

Going further:

- Dress up and act out a scene from a favorite book, such as Little Red Riding Hood. Give your child a red cape and a basket, and you pretend to be the wolf. Use different voices for different characters.
- Read a book about a job, like a doctor, and use and explain new words that are used in that job like temperature, illness, antibiotic, weight and height.
- Books to check out: [Every- Day Dress Up](#) by Selina Alko; [Tea Party Rules](#) by Ame Dyckman; [Daddies](#) by Janet Frank; [It's Check-Up Time Elmo!](#) (Sesame Street) by Sarah Albee; and [Career Day](#) by Anne Rockwell



The WA State Department of Early Learning and the Richland School District believes that parents, families, and caregivers are young children's best teachers. This resource guide, part of *Strong Foundations for School: Resource Guides for Parents of Young Children*, highlights a key developmental skill for **children Ages 3-4 years** that parents can help improve at home.

Adapted from *WA State Early Learning and Development Guidelines, 2012*: "Explore, practice and understand social rules through play. Adopt a variety of roles and feelings during free play." *Building Relationships: Social Behaviors, Ages-3-4 years*, pg. 59