Teaching by role playing

One of the most favorite things for a child to do is play dress up. Whether it may be a police officer, a chef, or even a princess; you will always find children pretending to be someone else. This is why role-playing is such an easy way to teach your children about certain situations that are too hard to explain in words. It is also a great way to teach your child to express himself/herself when they are feeling out of sorts. Below are some examples of ways to role-play with your child at home.

- How to get up to speak in class or in front of a group: family members can play different students in class with the child who needs to learn to speak up practicing in front of their family.
- How to resolve conflict between siblings: parents can take on the role of children and vice versa.
- How to call 911 in an emergency.
- How to order food in a restaurant: parents and caregivers can take on the role of waiters and take the orders. Older children who are good readers can help younger children select from take-away menus to practice. This also encourages cooperation between siblings.
- How to greet someone when they first meet.

Tips to use when role playing

- “Work on clear ideas and simple scenarios for younger children. All children in the family can take on different roles; for example, younger children playing older children, parents playing children, and even grandparents or family friends taking on roles if they are available.”
- “Use toys or the idea of ‘pretending’, especially with younger children.”
- “Make role playing a positive experience by giving constructive, encouraging feedback and not judgment or criticism.”
- “Don’t force children to engage in role playing if they don’t want to. They might feel awkward, shy or embarrassed to begin with.”
- “Encourage children to initially take on the roles of adults. This is usually a very revealing perspective on how children see the world.”

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