

Rewarding Family Time

by Stevanne Auerbach, PhD/Dr. Toy

Ever wonder why video games are so popular? Things happen really fast when electronics are involved. There seems to be a lot of excitement around these games, but maybe once in awhile you, your friends and your family would like to slow down, turn off the electronics and look for a different activity -- spend time that is less frenetic, still fun, and with plenty of benefits. In fact, the best benefit is you spend real time together and actually do something different - talk and laugh.

If you want a special prescription from Dr. Toy for time that enriches and rewards, you have come to the right place. Dr. Toy offers you a timely remedy for special, productive, and happy times together with your friends or as a whole family.

First, turn off the electronics, the video games and the television! Then, bring out a good assortment of board games. (At the end of this article Dr. Toy offers a great list of award winners for your consideration.)


Put your selections out on the dining room table. Bring out some fun snacks like chips and salsa or popcorn. Call everyone together.

Let each player pick a favorite game. Now select the first game to be played and get started. Sit down with the game you selected, read the directions, and begin the play. Before long you will all be having a great time. Time passes quickly and before you can empty the bowl of chips and finish the salsa everyone will be talking and laughing.

When friends or family plays games together everyone has a healthy, productive, and enjoyable time. Everyone benefits! Most of all, everyone enjoys those special game times and taking things a little slower than going all the time at the speed of light.

These play experiences are those times everyone will remember. The benefits are great and well worth the time it takes and whatever preparation that is involved. Games that are played with a group are usually inexpensive and can be used over and over again.

Many different and wonderful games are available for you to select at the toy or game store, or on the Internet.

Have fun! 

Dr. Toy's Tips for Successful Game Playing

1. Determine skill level. Look at games and find those that will be fun and challenging.
2. Find the right game and one that is not too easy or will offer too little variety.
3. Involve different groups of players and encourage interaction between friends and family.
4. Select games that can be played by two or more people.
5. Understand each player's needs and interests. Select games everyone will enjoy and want to play. This will be the best, most productive way to play.



Dr. Toy's Suggested Best Games

1. Alary Games, *Bloco*
2. Briarpatch, *Scooby-Doo! Where Are You?*
3. Bulls-Eye Creative, *Tieramid Spectrum™*
4. Cadaco, *All Star Baseball*
5. Educational Insights, *Space Faces*
6. Endless Games, *Password*
7. Front Porch Classics, *Raceway*
8. Fundex Games, *Tip of the Tongue*
9. Gamewright, *Leaping Lizards*
10. Hubbub, *Ruckus*
11. Lucy Hammett Games, *American Art Bingo*
12. Morning Star Games, *Pet Detectives*
13. Pressman Toy, *RummiKub*
14. Radica, *20Q Challenge*
15. University Games, *Anti Monopoly Game*
16. WizKids, *Pirates of the Crimson Coast*
17. WonderChess, *WonderChess Kit for Kids*
18. Zany World Game, *Zany World Game*

Stevanne Auerbach, PhD, known as Dr. Toy, is a speaker, author, and consultant, who has written 15 books, among them *Dr. Toy's Smart Play/Smart Toys: How to Raise a Child with a High PQ (Play Quotient)*, published by Educational Insights. Her web site, "Dr. Toy's Guide" (www.drtoy.com), was the first Internet web site that was an exclusive source of information on toys to parents, teachers, and retailers. The web site now has data on over 3000 toys and games and related materials.

