



TREETOP TALK



**Anna Shaw
Children's Institute**

December 2020

Play is the Work of Childhood

Fred Rogers (aka Mr. Rogers) describes play as the work of childhood. Play is essential to development as it contributes to the cognitive, physical, and social emotional abilities of children. It helps young children develop language and communication skills and explore different concepts such as big, little, under, over, etc. Simple games such as stacking skills help to develop those early math and science skills such as counting, balancing, shapes, and the effects of gravity. Play allows children to learn about themselves and the world around them.

There are two different types of play: structured and unstructured. Structured play is set up and guided by adults. It requires that a child follow direction or rules. This includes play with puzzles, board games, or organized classes, or sports.

Unstructured play allows children to do whatever interests them without directions or guidelines. This may include play with items such as dress up, use of household items, or outdoor play. Toddlers should spend at least one hour a day in free, unstructured play and at least 30 minutes engaged in active, adult led play. As a child grows, they need even more time to play each day.

You do not have to spend a lot of money on toys. We often hear parents and grandparents react that children love the paper or box more than the toy that it contained. There are many natural items that you use to promote play and learning. There are many websites that promote use of items found in a typical household or outdoor environment that can be used for play. Simple things such as stacking pillows or couch cushions, using ice trays, or muffin tins as sorting bins are fun and creative ways to encourage play.

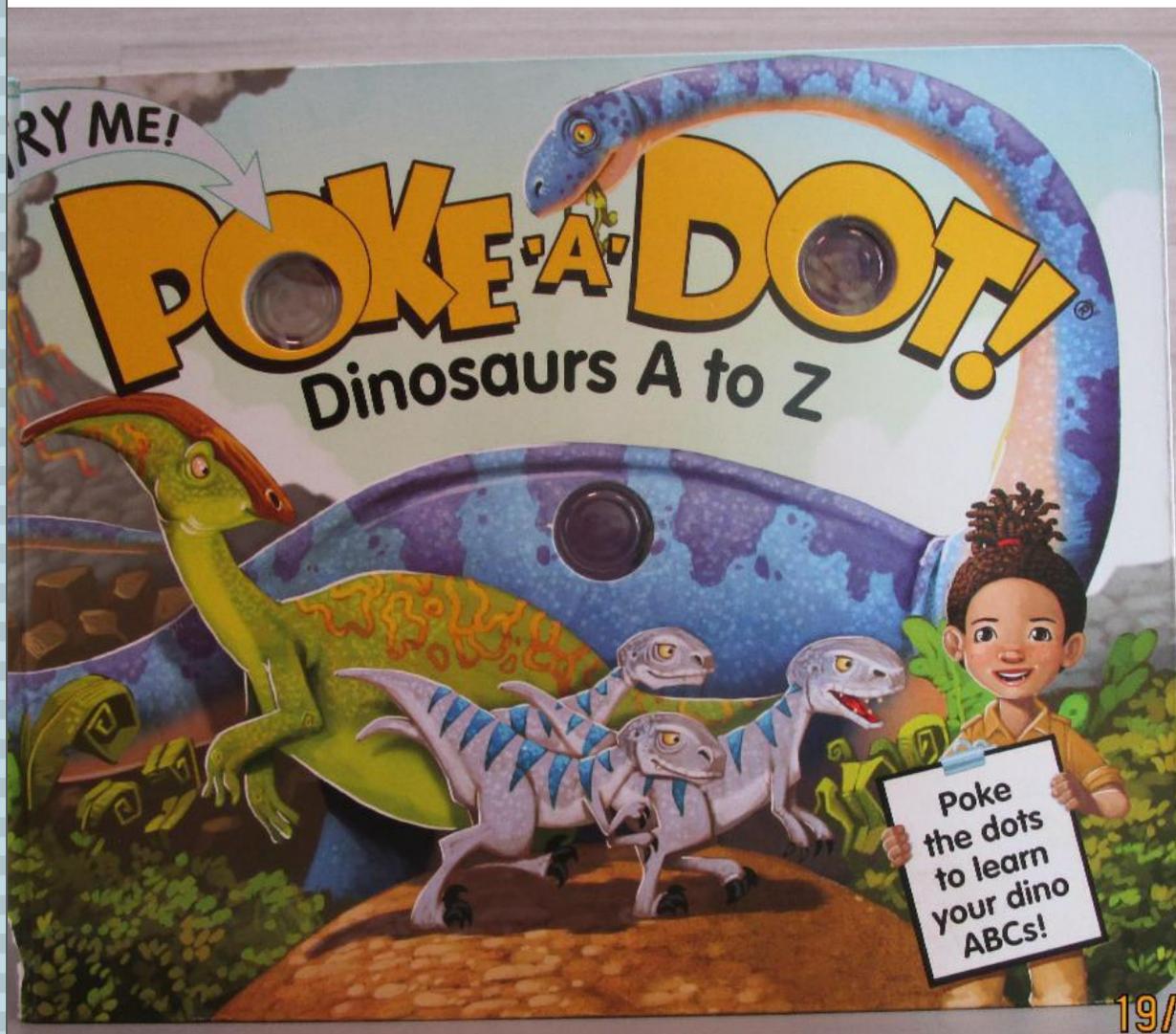
Screen Time

In a world of digital media, parents wonder what is appropriate screen use for young, developing children. The American Academy of Pediatrics recommends that parents

prioritize creative, unplugged playtime and hands on exploration. Avoid exposure to media other than video chatting for children younger than 18 months. Parents of children 18 to 24 months of age who want to introduce media should choose high-quality programming, and watch it with their children to help them understand what they are seeing. There is a difference between screen time that is educational and well-designed (such as Sesame Street and other PBS.org shows) and screen time that is not. For children ages 2 to 5 years, limit screen use to 1 hour per day of high-quality programs. Parents should continue to co-view media with children to help them understand what they are viewing and apply it to the world around them. For children ages 6 and older, place consistent limits on the time and type of media. Healthykids.org provides a tool to help families develop their own media plan. It is also important to designate media-free times, such as dinner and before bed. Parents need to role model by putting their own phones away during these times. Remember to read with your child. Children mirror their parents' behaviors.

Favorite Toys

Here are a few of our favorite toys that we have at Anna Shaw Children's Institute. Please contact us if you would like suggestions for toys or activities to help your child play.











Coping with COVID-19 Webinar Series

Holidays in the Time of
Coronavirus: How traditions
keep us connected
to what matters most



**Thursday,
December 17
1-2pm**

Presenter:
Lauren Buono, Ph.D.
Pediatric Neuropsychologist

Visit HamiltonHealth.com/asciwebinar
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Anna Shaw
Children's Institute

706.226.8900
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Parent Support Group



The Parent Support Group meets the second Tuesday of each month at 6:30pm.

All parents, grandparents, guardians, and other family members of children with special needs are invited to take part in a new parent-led Parent Support Group.

Anna Shaw Children's Institute follows social distancing and CDC safety guidelines.

- CHILDREN ARE WELCOME
- CHILDCARE IS PROVIDED
- FREE PIZZA, DRINKS, AND A FUN ACTIVITY

Southern Magnolia room on the lower level
Anna Shaw Children's Institute
1201 Burleyson Road
Dalton, Georgia

Call to RSVP
 **706.226.8911**



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GRUPO DE APOYO PARA PADRES LATINOS

Todos los padres, abuelos, guardianes, y otros miembros de la familia de niños con necesidades especiales están invitados a tomar parte en un grupo de apoyo para padres, dirigido por los padres.

Anna Shaw Children's Institute se apega a las guías de seguridad y recomendaciones de distanciamiento social de la CDC.



Anna Shaw Children's Institute
Southern Magnolia Room • Primer Piso

1201 Burleyson Road
Dalton, Georgia

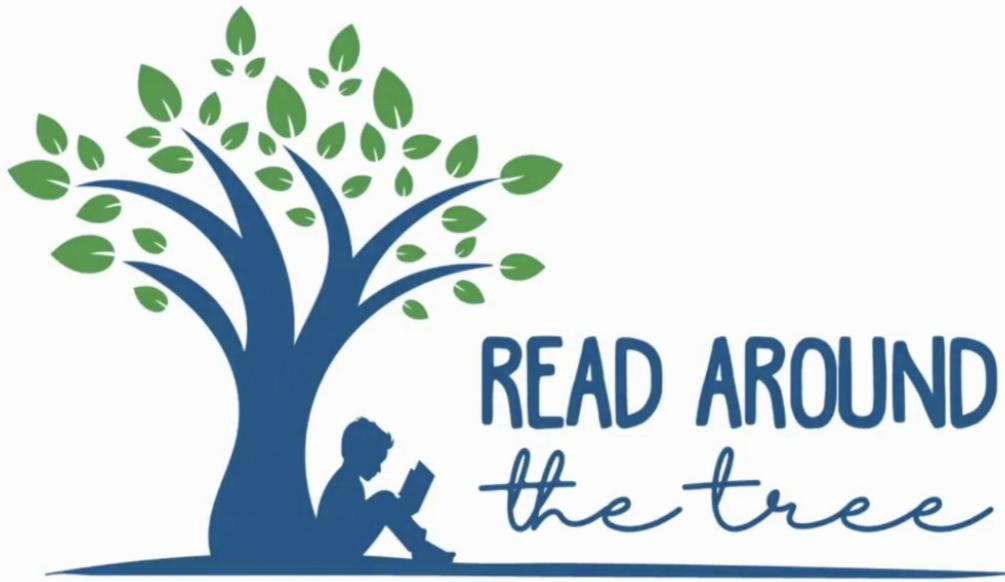
**SEGUNDO VIERNES
DE CADA MES**



8:30 - 10:00 am

HamiltonHealth.com/children

Join us each Wednesday on the [Hamilton Health Care System Facebook page](#) for a book reading around the tree by the Anna Shaw Children's Institute staff. There are also several pre-recorded stories on [Hamilton's YouTube channel](#). Click the picture below to watch Lynn Sams, a speech therapist at Anna Shaw Children's Institute, read *The Gruffalo* by Julia Donaldson.



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