



Specialist Play

East Anglia's Children's Hospices (EACH)

East Anglia's Children's Hospices provides a range of activities for children of all ages, including siblings. EACH Play Specialists may visit children at home and/or spend time with them during their stay at the hospice.

As with any other of the EACH care services it is not a condition of referral for specialist play that a child must access hospice based short break care.

“Children with complex and continuing health care needs have the same right to pleasure, play and developmental opportunities, and to choose the activities they want to engage in as other children” (Hewitt-Taylor, 2008).

THE ROLE OF THE PLAY SPECIALIST IS TO...



build a relationship with the child or young person and their family



assess development and needs, and focus on the skills the child/young person has



work with families to learn and adapt new ways of playing as the child's needs change



provide appropriate play activities that may promote development, maintain skills, provide experiences and most of all, be fun!



observe reactions to play activities in order to establish likes and dislikes



help to create memories



link in with other professionals involved with the child or young person



use play and distraction tools as part of the child/young person's pain management



develop a range of communication methods through play



advise on suitable positioning for each play activity.



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THE DIFFERENT TYPES OF PLAY ACTIVITIES

All play sessions are relaxed and flexible. The following list gives examples of types of activities that can be offered and adapted to suit the individual needs of the child or young person:



Stories – tactile, musical, sensory story sacks, tapes and CDs



Food play – jelly, corn flour and pasta



Construction – lego, k-nex, duplo, stickle bricks



Music – instruments, action rhymes, karaoke



Cooking



Sand and water



Sensory equipment – bubble tube, fibre optics



Sensory toys – space blanket, treasure basket, bubbles



Technology – switches, computers, game consoles



Physical play – outdoor play, ball pool, parachute, dancing



Art and craft – painting, collage, face painting, card making, modelling



Outings – park, beach, swimming, bowling, cinema, zoo, shopping



Imaginative play – dressing up, puppets, train track, farm, role play, playmobil

...and many more!

