Parents@play

encouraging parents to lead the early learning of their children at home in creative and playful ways

Margaret Irvine
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Parents@play – two projects

• Takalani Sesame Eastern Cape WASH project with households
• The Ukonga Project ‘Growing children’s brains for their amazing futures’
Thinking about the key terms

- **encouraged parents** (primary caregivers AND fathers)
- **who lead** (are conscious of what is at stake and act)
- **the early learning** of their children **at home** (not leaving learning to the school- tooooooo late! toooo little!)
- using **creative** ways (problem solving)
- using **playful** ways (fun)
Parents who feel encouraged and strong and confident (brave enough to try new things with faith in their knowledge and abilities)

Schooling knowledge (economic)

Scientific knowledge e.g. growing brains (transformative)

Local and traditional knowledge (wisdom)

How do we do this?
...who lead their children (their disciples - followers) in enabling early learning through play knowing how to grow brains-

combining the new scientific knowledge with local and traditional practices. 

Doing it.
Using African approaches to early learning

1. **local knowledge, attitudes and practices** especially in rural areas

2. social apprenticing

• In the four spheres of life
  1. self
  2. household
  3. network and
  4. public

How do we use this idea?
And looking at Play also through our African eyes

- **Critical importance of Mother-child play for children’s linguistic and cognitive development** is very much a Western white middle-class value often imposed on other cultures.

- **Play is often not planned and directed** by adults in the African context - older children are perhaps more significant.

- Play is based in the culture of the family, neighbourhood, country, world as children see it and they model play on adult activities.

- Children learn a complex range of social, linguistic, cognitive, and ethical functions that are valued in adult life.

- **Work and play are not two separate activities**. A great deal of children’s play occurs in the context of work and chores.

- **In the home**.

How do we do this?
Encouraging creative ways

How do we enable problem solving and creativity?
For parents who lead their children and for children learning at home

• Information is power
• Make the information
  • Short
  • Sweet
  • Social
  • Fun
• Give opportunities to practice and to explore
• Encourage questions and answers
• And support changes in the ways we do things.
Building parents who are encouraged to LEAD their disciples-children

Start with local and traditional knowledge

• Honour a child and she will honour you.
• Work the clay while it is still wet.
• A child who asks questions is not stupid.
• Add in ‘scientific’ knowledge in an exciting short way
• Did you know that babies can hear when they are 25 weeks in the womb?

• Demystify ‘school’ knowledge
• How to read a book together
• Reading print in the environment
Social apprenticing

Recognise the **parental role as model** to the child, who is **the observer of behaviour and follower (copying EVERYTHING and practising through make believe play)**

Model and talk about activities
1. self – care (routines)
2. household (routines and chores)
3. Network (extended family and friends)
4. Public
Creativity and problem-solving where we are
We will report back on how it all went after July 2016....