

# Something Wonderful: Keep on playing

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John Carl and John Paul race together to their goal of being fully healed soon!

Oh, the joys of being back in Kindergarten! I had the opportunity to substitute in the K Class at the school where my kids attend. I love this. Back to sweet welcomes! I love seeing the kids peek through the window and wave (or have their stuffed animals wave), and then hearing one particular child announce it all over the nearby playground, “Mrs. Lehman is here! Mrs. Lehman is here!” I can’t help but smile from ear to ear. It got me ready for the morning!

The day started with circle-time sharing, centers, and then VeggieTales. There are so many great things about being in kinder: tangrams, memory, puzzles, and marble run. I think my favorite is the use of imagination. We talked about animal homes, and I loved how each child picked a different animal that they would like to be. They then wrote a short journal entry about their choice and what that animal’s home might be. I remember my own kids imagining all sorts of things, and then telling stories and just playing and pretending for hours. The fun has continued as they have grown. We are now at the stage of “would you rather” and the continuous hilarious story game with their cousins.

I see so many posts that urge individuals to embrace who they are, “Stay Young,” “Dance in the rain,” and “Dance like no one is watching,” reminiscing about childhood games of Spud, Kick the Can, and so on. I love looking back, but forward motion is just as important. Pondering one of our core values at CURE, I have really loved thinking about “child-likeness” in a new way. That amazing wonder that a child has, the millions of questions, and those awe-filled moments. My own kids still love to ask crazy questions and ponder different possibilities. I love that about them. I love that about me!!! So much to discover about life and the world around us and how we interact with others and with God. I have so much to learn and I love to learn much of it through play. New experiences are awaiting everyday; I need to be reminded sometimes, but this is my goal.

I love thinking about all of these stages of “play.” We don’t stop playing, it just changes and evolves. Isn’t that one way we learn about our world? Like trying to use a comforter as a parachute from the playset in the backyard. Trial by play. I most certainly remember my kids’ younger days, but I have grown to appreciate their youthfulness at all stages. Our “play” certainly looks a lot different now than sandboxes, squirt guns, and bubbles. Well, then again, B just bought a new squirt gun the other day, and, yeah, B spent a few hours on a trampoline, and I am still obsessed with bubbles. So, maybe not? I still love slinkies and Spirograph and, of course, B uses the Lite Brite when we visit PA for the summer. We still have a night set aside to play a game and we really love our times together. So funny! Payday was always one of my favorites, and it is B’s fav, too.

I could go on, but I think I painted the picture. We are still learning and growing. Play is important. It is something quite wonderful!