Development of Play Skills for Infants & Toddlers

Age	Play
Birth to 3 months	 Responds to caregivers Coos and smiles Responds to familiar voices Focuses on objects
4 to 7 months	 Enjoys social games with caregiver Likes exploratory play supported by caregiver Plays some games with caregiver like peek-a-boo and patty cake
8 to 12 months	 Begins to imitate play actions or behavior of others, especially caregiver Plays hiding games, songs and rhymes with caregiver Plays alone without caregiver for short periods
13 to 24 months	 Enjoys play with objects Increased interest in watching other children play (onlooker) Primarily plays alone (solitary) May offer toys to caregiver or other children May choose independent play close to other children (parallel) but not interact with them
25 to 36 months	 May play with other children but in an occasional or limited way (associative) Some cooperation and talking with other children May take leader/follower roles in play Some pretend play Still plays alone frequently Interactive level moving toward (cooperative play)

