



Telephone Play



Type: [Games](#) Skills: [Language & Literacy](#), [Social & Emotional Skills](#)

In this activity, you can create a dramatic play area that incorporates old phones, or kids can make a telephone out of paper cups and string.



What We Learn

Develops language skills

Encourages fantasy play

Improves communication & conversational skills

Supply List

Telephone play area:

Old telephones

Old telephone books

Message pads

Pencils

Cup and String Telephone:

Two plastic or paper cups

Yarn or string

How-To

Telephone Play Area:

Ask friends and relatives to donate old telephones or cell phones. Try to find an interesting variety of phones, such as old rotary dial phones.

Safety comes first, so remove batteries from any old cell phones kids might play with. If you're letting kids play with corded phones, then cut or remove the cords so they don't pose a choking hazard for infants and toddlers. Always be sure to check for any sharp edges.

Set the old phones in an area that is accessible to children and enhance the play area by adding telephone-related props, such as old phonebooks, message pads and pencils.

Finally, let children play with the phones. Young children have likely seen adults speaking on the telephone, so they'll want to mimic their behavior. Infants and toddlers can develop their verbal skills by talking or just

babbling into the phone. Incorporate other children into the play, so they can pretend to have a conversation on the phone. They can use the phonebook as a prop in their dramatic play. Toddlers that can hold a writing instrument can even try scribbling down imaginary phone messages on a notepad.

Cup and String Telephone

Older children (four- and five-year-olds) can try making their own telephone the old-fashioned method - using two cups and a string.

Start by poking a small hole in the bottom of a disposable paper or plastic cup. Feed the string or yarn through the small hole. Tie the string or yarn into a big knot on the inside part of the cup. Make sure the knot is large enough so that it can't be pulled back through the hole.

Poke a hole through the bottom of the second cup. Pull the string from the first cup through the hole in the second cup. Again tie the string or yarn into a big knot on the inside part of the cup, making sure the knot is large enough.

Two children can now play "telephone." One kid speaks into one end of the cup while the other kid holds the cup up against his or her ear.

In order for this type of phone to work, the string must be pulled tightly so the sound waves can travel from cup to cup. Make sure kids don't pull so tightly that the string gets pulled all the way out of cup.