

tender leaf

for growing minds

diaries

meet
esme, 4,
florist

also in this issue



come
rain or
shine



watch
them
grow



for growing minds

Greenhouse
Dolls House Collection

Amy, 5,
botanist

Inspiring creative play for generations to come

Spring is all about new beginnings – planting seeds, tending young shoots and spending time outdoors. At Tender Leaf, we're inspired to shape sustainable rubberwood into new toys that nurture a child's love of nature. We design every piece in our London studio before they are brought to life in our family-run factory in Indonesia. Every detail is considered, making sure that these toys will spark stories, bring joy and be cherished for generations.

FSC Certified Plywood

Tender Leaf toys have always been made using SVLK, sustainably-produced Indonesian rubber wood, but we're delighted that we now have an extra badge to prove that our plywood also comes from certified forests.



Q&A

Take a glimpse into ordinary yet learning-packed days with Libby and her son, Rohan.



Rohan, 4

What's your favourite thing to play with?

My toy kitchen. I like making food and giving everyone ice creams and chocolates. Mummy buys chocolates from my chocolate shop and a lot of funny flavours of ice cream!

What do you and Mummy play together?

We make potions, cook things and make towers and dens. We build train sets, then turn out the lights and watch them go round. Mummy pretends to be my cat. She meows and purrs!

What did you do with the Fire Engine set?

I played 'Emergency'! I blocked off the roads and the fire engine drove so fast to the fire. I shouted 'Nee-Naw' and the firefighters put out the fire. I like all the bits that are in the fire engine.



Libby

How do you like to spend time with Rohan?

Sharing a piece of cake and chat in a cafe with Rohan is a real treat! At home we like to build imaginary worlds with blocks, bricks and magnets. Being silly with him is my favourite thing. I love making him laugh and being his playmate as well as his mum.

What did he think about the fire engine?

Rohan started singing as soon as he saw the set - a sure sign that he was happy! He loves to figure things out, so I let him unpack it and work out how the hose, vehicle and firefighters fit together. I can imagine Rohan adding the fire engine to larger imaginary games involving

other vehicles, towers and maybe even dinosaurs.

Are diverse toys important to your family?

I would choose a toy that shows diversity over one that doesn't, but I also don't want to filter too heavily what my children play with. I think they would start to notice if none of their toys looked like them, and that providing diverse toys means they're less likely to focus on anything different about themselves. I like the diversity in the fire engine set - it normalises that firefighters can have different genders and skin tones.



Fire Engine
Transport Collection

the power of play

Many small children repeat the same type of play over and over again.
But what can we learn from watching their play?



Schemas are a playful way of testing how the world works.

Psychologists call repeated actions within play 'schemas'. They're a child's way of learning, exploring and discovering the world around them. Tucking toys into bed or adding carriage after carriage to toy trains is schema play in action.

These playful experiments help them understand how objects, spaces and their own movements work together. Open ended and low stimulus toys are crucial for giving children the freedom to practice schema play.

Find out more about some of the nine schemas here.

**CHILDREN
EXPLORE,
experiment
and learn through
SCHEMA
PLAY**

Make a change

Turning things from one state to another - like flipping Granny's wardrobe into a bed - is part of the **transformation schema**, which can help children to work out all sorts of change.

Follow the path

If you know a little one who loves to move their toys backwards and forwards along a path, they're learning about direction, and distance through the **trajectory schema**.

Safe places

Popping toys into boxes or areas bordered by fence, blocks or toys shows the **enclosing schema** in action. Children explore their own boundaries through the boundaries they create in play.



You might also spot

Positioning: Arranging toys in lines and patterns can help children feel a sense of order.

Orientation: Peering at toys from different angles tests new ways to see the world.

Enveloping: Tucking toys into bed and making dens helps kids work out what makes them feel safe.

rain or shine

Fresh air can transform the mood of even the grumpiest little people (and their grown ups!). But how can you harness the magic of being outdoors even when it feels like it's too wet to play?

noah, 4,
racing driver



Stuffing tiny feet into muddy boots to tramp about in the rain can feel like a chore, but the benefits make it seriously worthwhile.

Keep it simple

We asked Forest School expert Rowan Wynne-Jones for her advice. "You don't need to overthink outdoor play," she says. "You can set some guidelines as to how to stay safe, but generally you're just allowing them to explore. It's so worthwhile – simply being in nature is calming for the nervous system."

Splish splash

Everyone's going to get wet, so embrace the chaos, jump in those puddles and let the kids play freely. Some people really don't like getting wet and muddy, but wrapping up in warm, waterproof clothing can make a huge difference. Keep rainy day trips short and sweet, and make sure you have a good plan for how to get everyone cosy and dry afterwards.

Under cover

If conditions are safe and calm, head for the woods (where trees provide natural shelter) or to a park where you can play in a bandstand or under play equipment.

A pocket full of toys

Pick up a few figures or vehicles before you head out into the gloom. Little ones can build stick dens for animals, roll cars down slides or design mix-and-match robots under the shelter of a tarp or a tree.



from supporting mental & physical health to boosting IMMUNITY & DOPAMINE the benefits of outdoor play are endless

Let's play

Simple games (think hide and seek, noughts and crosses and worm spotting) and challenges like 'Who can make the biggest splash?' can engage children of all ages.

Snack time

Packing snacks or even a flask filled with a warm drink can extend outdoor play for a few precious minutes as well as keeping everyone's spirits up. Make sure you head home to get warm and dry before anyone gets fed up – aim to end on a high!



Forest Trail Kit

Open Ended Play Collection



We are Family Dolls

Dolls House Collection

From muddy digging to watching tiny seeds transform, there's magic in gardening. These blooming gorgeous playsets let little gardeners explore nature and nurture curiosity, all while copying the grown-ups in their gardens.



Garden Centre
Market Day Collection

Let's get growing! These shelves are fully stocked with everything a young gardener could need (including Mr and Mrs Gnome!) Plant seeds and seedlings, then give them a drink using the watering can and mister. It'll soon be harvest time.



Garden Wheelbarrow Set
Market Day Collection

Wheel plants, flowers and tools round and round the garden.



watch
them
grow

ella, 4,
trader

Strawberry & Blossom Flowerpots
Market day Collection

Why should little ones have all the fun? Children love taking the magnetic leaves and petals on and off of these botanical pots – but they also make whimsical, pretty additions to adults' desks and shelves.



hide a little note in the base

Greenhouse
Dolls House Collection

Help dolls tend tiny plants



Flowerbed
Market Day Collection



ABC of play

A



Fill an ARK with stories. It can be a boat, a rescue mission, a floating zoo and so much more!

B



BUGS are endlessly fascinating. Learning their shapes and names is just the start of a lifelong love for the natural world.

M



MARKET SCALES turn play into an exploration of both cause and effect and numeracy.

N



Build a tunnel, stack, sort by size... there's no single way to play with an open ended toy like a NESTING RAINBOW.

Q



QUIET MOMENTS happen unexpectedly when a child is completely absorbed in their play.

C



There's a quiet focus to loading and unloading a CAR TRANSPORTER. It's a fun way for little hands to develop fine motor skills.



It's more than just a mini home. A DOLLS HOUSE is an imaginary world entirely shaped by growing minds.

E



With binoculars in your hand, every trip is a chance to become a curious outdoor EXPLORER.

O



Group, sort and practise colour recognition with wooden ORCHARD FRUITS.

P



A sweet PET SET encourages kindness, gentle hands and a sense of responsibility.

S



Bring literary characters like SWIFTY BIRD to life with Merrywood Tales.

F



Add tractors, animals and fences to build a small world FARMYARD. What will happen in the yard today?



Digging, watering and planting - GARDENING play is often about copying what the grown ups are doing.

H



Small animal figures, like this HARE, can be the start of the story, or a quiet friend within one.

R



RAILWAY TRACKS are built and rebuilt over and over again, improving each time.

T



TEA PARTIES are as much about conversation and friendship as they are about tea and cake.

U



Investigate the unknown with the strange shapes and new names of UNDERWATER CREATURES.



Practice showing love and care with a play VET SET.

Playing ICE CREAMS isn't just about serving food. It's also about taking turns, inventing flavours and sharing joy.



J

Spark curiosity about the animal world by introducing some JUNGLE ANIMALS into everyday play.



A KITCHEN is where play becomes collaborative. Just listen to those little voices taking orders, cooking side by side and serving favourite dishes.

That moment when you fit the final piece... There's nothing like the satisfaction of completing a puzzle, one of the original LEARNING toys.



L

W

Groups of WOODLAND CREATURES inspire gentle stories of families and friendships.



A XYLOPHONE invites experimentation - bang, ting, toot and clack!



It's time to tell YOUR STORY. Retell familiar tales with this Red Riding Hood set.



Connecting words and pictures, like in this ZEBRA puzzle piece, helps children recognise shapes.

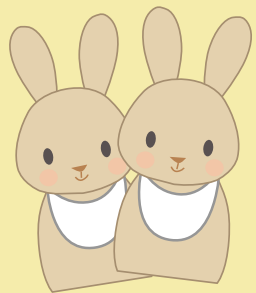
STORY TIME



Bobbin



Binky



Twix Twinkle

A sweet surprise

'Let's bake a surprise for Binky's birthday!' said Bobbin, tucking Twix and Twinkle into the bicycle-powered pram. They cycled to the farm and Bobbin popped speckled eggs, fresh milk and golden butter alongside the twins. When they got home, Binky peeked inside the pram. 'Don't look!' cried Twix, hiding the goodies. Bobbin, Twix and Twinkle crept to the vegetable patch and pulled a feathery carrot top. But – splish splash! There was Binky with her watering can! 'Oops, I didn't see you there!' she giggled as three drenched bunnies popped up from between the plants. They dashed away, dripping wet and dragging a large carrot. Binky wondered what was going on. In the kitchen, Bobbin, Twix and Twinkle measured, melted and mixed. Sweet smells wafted through the window and across the garden. Soon, the bunnies surprised Binky with a huge carrot cake and a birthday song! It had been a busy, happy day, and before long, all four bunnies snoozed softly beneath their cabbage leaf blanket.



Bunny Carrot Patch
Merrywood Collection



Emma, 2,
vet

Stacking Farmyard
Animal Collection

Play can help
children to express
themselves in their
own way.



more than play

Elaine Holiday is an Integrative Relational Counsellor who specialises in working with children

Talking and play therapy is my way of helping children explore issues that lead to behavioural, social or emotional problems

Children can struggle to understand how they are feeling or find it hard to put their experiences into words.

I watch their play and notice them communicating this way. I choose the toys I provide carefully. I like things that trigger imagination, that can be a story. Simply holding a soft toy can be comforting.

Playing together helps create a trusting relationship, so I use matching games and stacking toys to build connection with children. Stacking toys are brilliant because they are challenging.



Stacking toys reveal imagination while building determination and resilience

I encourage children to slow down, breathe and have a go. There's no pressure to balance the toys. There's no right or wrong way to do so. Many children want to do better each time and realise that they can succeed if they keep trying. I love sets that feature different characters, they really appeal to children.

They can name them, decide if they are happy or sad, draw around them, bury them or hide them.

While many of the toys I provide say they are for 18 months and over, children up to age 16 will choose to play with them. Be led by the child - they may be drawn to something colourful and calming, regardless of the age on the box.

Playing together is the best way to build a trusting relationship and rapport without the pressure of conversation.

My advice TO PARENTS is simple:

PLAY WITH YOUR CHILD AND LISTEN to them

inspiring ways to grow their play

Izzy, 4,
Artist



Ways to play with your Botanical Press

Lay flowers and leaves into this wooden press, screw on the lid and leave it for two weeks. You'll find pressed, preserved beauties to use in projects like these...

Flower Vase Cards

Draw a vase shape on a folded piece of card. Arrange and glue pressed flowers and leaves into place to create a beautiful bouquet that can fit through a letterbox!

Magical Wand

Cut a star frame out of cardboard then add sticky back plastic and trim it to fit. Decorate the wand with pressed flowers and leaves, then attach it to a stick and add ribbons. Abracadabra!

Window Decorations

Make a frame in the shape of an animal from cardboard. Add sticky back plastic over the open part, then add pressed flowers and leaves to create a stained glass effect.



Extend the fun with Tender Leaf's printable activities!

We've created over 200 thoughtful crafts, games and projects. They're ready to download, print and enjoy, simply add basic craft supplies and a little imagination!





Threadbear Toys & Gifts and Tender Leaf Toys
Working together to create and distribute beautifully designed wooden toys and textile gifts in the UK, provide global distribution and maintain the highest ethical standards of manufacture for all our products.

Discover more at www.threadbeardesign.com.
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