

## Mildred Parten's Developmental Stages of Social Play

Unoccupied Behavior  
engaged

Children are not playing, but are  
in "unoccupied behavior".

Onlooker Behavior

Children watch other children at play.  
they may verbally interact, but do not  
join in the play.

Solitary Play

The child engages in play by him/herself  
The play is totally independent.

Parallel Play

The child plays near other children.  
The child is involved in his/her own play.

Associative Play

The child plays with others in a group.  
He may exchange play materials, but  
there is no planned purpose to the play.

Cooperative Play

The child plays with other children and  
the play has an intended purpose or  
goal. The children plan and take roles.

