1) **Playing With Puzzles, Blocks May Build Children's Spatial Skills (2015)**

Children who play frequently with puzzles, blocks, and board games tend to have better spatial reasoning ability.

Children who played with puzzles, blocks, and board games often (more than six times per week) had higher block design scores than did children who played with them sometimes (three to five times per week), or rarely/never.

J. J. Jirout, N. S. Newcombe. **Building Blocks for Developing Spatial Skills: Evidence From a Large, Representative U.S. Sample**. *Psychological Science*, 2015

data from 847 children, ages 4 to 7

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/01/150128131323.htm

2) **The Importance of Children At Play (2016)**

The importance of how children learn in preschool is through interaction with their peers: How do they share? How do they negotiate while playing? Do the children build together or engage in pretend play? All of these interactive play scenarios support learning in the classroom especially during early childhood.

Researchers found that children displayed a high level of interactive peer play in positive learning environments; the children were engaged, motivated and social.

Rebecca J. Bulotsky-Shearer, Lisa M. López, Julia L. Mendez. **The validity of interactive peer play competencies for Latino preschool children from low-income households**. *Early Childhood Research Quarterly*, 2016

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/01/160120120057.htm

3) **Risky Outdoor Play Positively Impacts Children's Health, Study Suggests (2015)**

New research from UBC and the Child & Family Research Institute at BC Children's Hospital shows that risky outdoor play is not only good for children's health but also encourages creativity, social skills and resilience.

Play environments where children could take risks promoted increased play time, social interactions, creativity and resilience.

Mariana Brussoni et al. **What is the Relationship between Risky Outdoor Play and Health in Children? A Systematic Review**. *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health*, 2015 DOI:

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2015/06/150610131808.htm

4) **New Evidence Links Exclusive Breastfeeding, Early Play/Stimulation to Children's Later Success (2016)**

Children stimulated at home, such as through play, were one third (36 percent) more likely to have higher executive function scores.

At age 4, children who received the responsive stimulation intervention were, to varying degrees, more likely to have a higher IQ, better pre-academic skills (in sizes and comparisons and shapes), better executive functioning and more pro-social behavior.

Tamsen J. Rochat, Brian Houle, Alan Stein, Hoosen Coovadia, Anna Coutsoudis, Chris Desmond, Marie-Louise Newell, Ruth M. Bland. **Exclusive Breastfeeding and Cognition, Executive Function, and Behavioural Disorders in Primary School-Aged Children in Rural South Africa: A Cohort Analysis**. *PLOS Medicine*, 2016

Aisha K Yousafzai, Jelena Obradović, Muneera A Rasheed, Arjumand Rizvi, Ximena A Portilla, Nicole Tirado-Strayer, Saima Siyal, Uzma Memon. **Effects of responsive stimulation and nutrition interventions on children's development and growth at age 4 years in a disadvantaged population in Pakistan: a longitudinal follow-up of a cluster-randomised factorial effectiveness trial**. *The Lancet Global Health*, 2016

Data from 1,500 children in South Africa

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/06/160621193106.htm

5) **Engaging in Fantasy Play Could Benefit Creative Thinking in Children (2016)**

Evidence shows that engaging in play that involves imagining increasingly unrealistic scenarios is associated with thinking more creatively. Children who enjoy fantasy play are subsequently more creative, and it's equally possible that children who are more creative subsequently engage in more fantasy play.

British Psychological Society (BPS). **"Engaging in fantasy play could benefit creative thinking in children."** ScienceDaily. ScienceDaily, 15 September 2016

Data from 70 children ages 4-8

https://www.sciencedaily.com/releases/2016/09/160915085731.htm