

## Workshop 2

### Let my playing be my learning and my learning be my play - Pedagogy of Play

"It is paradoxical that many educators and parents still differentiate between a time for learning and a [time for play](#) without seeing the vital connection between them." -Leo F. Buscaglia

We see this paradox lived out every day in preschool classrooms across the country. The focus on academic rigor, the need to be "ready" for first grade, finishing curriculum and maintaining discipline often ensures that play is limited to a few minutes at recess, or worse, simply eliminated as superfluous.

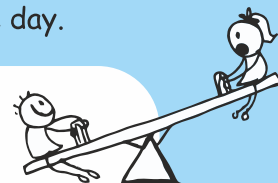
And yet, play in preschool is not only about having fun. It is serious work for the children. Play provides children ongoing opportunities to practice and master different skills by themselves or alongside their peers in a safe environment. Play has been shown to enhance creativity, thinking skills, language development as well as socio-emotional development. (Fromberg and Gullo, 1992). Play allows children to take risks, make mistakes and take ownership of their learning.

Despite the body of research on its importance, play is rapidly disappearing from our classrooms. It is up to teachers and parents to recognize how vital it is for their children and actively ensure time and space for play.

This workshop focuses on the role of play in preschool and will give teachers a chance to reimagine their preschool classrooms with play as an integral part of the day.

#### Objectives:

- Collaboratively define play for session and going forward
- Discuss different types of play
- Articulate existing barriers to play
- Explore different materials for play
- Identify specific components of play + materials to take back into your classroom



#### Workshop Facilitator Profile

Gauri Kirtane Vanikar has a doctorate in Education from the University of Pennsylvania and is passionate about the early years in education. She has worked with the Akanksha Foundation managing their non-formal education centers and has helped set up the initial KG curriculum in Akanksha Schools. Her work at Akanksha focused on curriculum development, teacher training and center operations. Gauri is currently working with FSG, a non-profit consulting firm, on their Program to Improve Private Early education (PIPE), which looks at improving the quality of teaching and learning in early years in affordable private schools.

