Protocol: Structured Play

The objective is to observe the child's highest level of spontaneous play

Child is seated at the table with experimenter opposite child.
Present each set of toys to child without any prompts for play.

First, allow for **spontaneous play**. If the child does not engage in spontaneous play acts, arrange the environment (ex. put the bottle next to the baby). If the child continues to display no play acts, the experimenter can use verbal prompts (ex. What should we play with?).

The experimenter can comment on the child's play. However, less talk and actions on the part of the experimenter is preferred. Be natural.

When we code, spontaneous play will be coded separately from prompted play. We are coding for types of play (i.e. variety of toys played with in different ways) and frequency of play acts (i.e. number of times played with one toy).

There is no set time for each toy set. Move along as fast as the child's play allows. When the child stops displaying new play acts, appears to be bored or engages in preservative play acts, move on to a new set. If the child actively displays new play acts, stay with the same toy set. An approximate time of 15-20 minutes is appropriate to complete the entire assessment.

Toy Set 1: Shape Sorter/Puzzle
Interlocking Puzzle   Shape Sorter (with 8-10 shapes)
Stacking Cups

Toy Set 2: Tea Set
Dolls (2)   Teapot (with lid that fits)
Cups (2)   Bowl
Spoon (2)   Knife
Forks (2)   Bottle
Plate   Substitution food 'junk items' (2 sponges, erasers)

Remove all items except dolls when presenting Toy Set 3.

Toy Set 3: Grooming
Dolls (2)   Telephone
Hairbrush   Mirror

Toy Set 4: Sleeping
Dolls (2)   Pillow
Beds (2)   Blanket
Chairs (2)   Table
Substitution blanket (tissue or paper)

Toy Set 5: Barn
Dump Truck   Animals (4 that will fit in barn and truck)
Barn (with garage)   Small doll (that will fit in truck)
Blocks (10)