

Want to get your kids into college? Let them play

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houses at Harvard College.

(CNN) -- Every day where we work, we see our young students struggling with the transition from home to school. They're all wonderful kids, but some can't shake anxiety as easily as others do. Some always see that actions have consequences; a few suffer terribly from separation anxiety.

and advise. They all know how to work, but some of them haven't learned how to play.

These two kinds of curricula are often pitted against one another as a matter of course. If

before bed.

We think it is quite the

In fact, we wonder why play is not encouraged in educational periods later in the developmental life of young people.

Why do this? One of the best predictors of school success is the ability to control impulses. Children who can control their impulse to be the center of the universe, and -- relatedly -- who can assume the perspective of another person, are better equipped to learn.

Psychologists call this the "theory of mind": the ability to recognize that our own ideas, beliefs, and carefully constructed block castle or a 20-year-old belligerently monopolizes the class discussion on a routine basis, we might conclude that they are unaware of the feelings of others.

The beauty of a play-based curriculum is that very young children can easily learn to share from others' emotions and experiences. Skills-based curricula, on the other hand, often

curriculum meaningful in the social isolation required for such an approach.

