Moving from “safe” to “risky” play
Today’s Reality

Unstructured play
undervalued & feared

Children missing out
Childhood Fitness Study
Canada ranks D-

Frolic...Harder!!!
Role of Canadian and Provincial/Territorial Governments

- Leadership in connection to health & child protection
- Financial support to organizations such as ParticipAction – advocating for increased physical activity – “Make Room for Play” initiative
- Financial and moral support: National Recreation Statement – important position statement for recreation sector that recognizes that connection to nature and play are critical
- That’s it – that’s all
At a community level

- Venue provider
- Service/experience provider: programs and services
- Catalyst, connector, advocate
- Closest to residents
What’s in our way? (aka barriers)

• Attitudes (parents, children and others)
• Fear of litigation
• Some licensing and risk managers – ‘No Risk’ police
• School boards – unwilling partner or lacking capacity and leadership?
• Competing priorities for our time and resources
• Need to fill expensive indoor facilities
Extreme response to fears
TIME FOR CHANGE
We are working on it:

• Awareness – “Canada, we have a problem!”
  • listening, understanding, conversing, educating

• Taking a stand – being bold
  • Being clear on vision and intent
  • Challenging stupid rules and standards

• Truly listening to children

• Working together

• Trying, evaluating and trying again
What we’ve noticed...

• Awareness is heightened – people are talking
• Parents and children demanding better play opportunities
• Providers creating better play areas and opportunities
• Legal ruling in BC that “perfection is not the standard of care when minding school aged children.”
Cool stuff we are proud of:

• Canadian position statement on Active Outdoor Play (12 organizations)

• National recreation framework – inclusion of play

• 7 Cs: an informational guide to young children’s outdoor play spaces (UBC)

• Communities:
  • Child, youth and family friendly strategies
  • Exciting new outdoor play services and venues
Our Goal: From this

Messages

Kari

Are we still going out tonight?

Probably not =( I can't find a babysitter..

Seriously you need a sitter?? Just toss the kid in his room, leave him some milk, crackers, and a game. He should be set for hours.

WHAT!? I can't do that! He's my baby! How could you ever think I would do such a thing!

Kari... he's 17. I think he will be okay by himself for a few hours. He will probably be grateful.
To more of this
Thank you!

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