

the culture of risk in play

by

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Calgary Stampede?

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Good design
for children
SutcliffePlay



- Chairman UK Play Safety Forum
- Chairman Children's Play Policy Forum
- Chairman of Sutcliffe Play Ltd

Risk thread through Conference

“Advocacy and public policy: making the case
for risky play, and challenging the blame
culture”

Led by Tim Gill

How we did it in the UK

Lessons for success

Managing Risk in Play

“Children need and want to take risks when they play. Play provision aims to respond to these needs and wishes by offering children stimulating, challenging environments for exploring and developing their abilities. In doing this, play provision aims to manage the level of risk so that children are not exposed to unacceptable risks of **death or serious injury.**”

2003 Play Safety Forum launch

Managing risk in play: A position statement

Good design
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SutcliffePlay

Launched at Bruges Child in the City
Conference

Resulting in launch of
European Play Safety Forum
From Portugal to Norway
and Scotland to Italy



Why was the Position statement so powerful, relevant and accepted?

1. Strength of Play Safety Forum
 - Consensual
 - Breadth of representation
2. HSE Research supporting the statement
 - David Ball research into efficacy of standards for HSE
3. Absolutely of its time
 - Many from the play sector globally recognised the problem and saw this as a way of tackling it
 - Published immediately after the European Standard

Strength of Play Safety Forum

Consensual

- No decision has been taken on the basis of a vote
- Different forms of straw pole useful as guide

Breadth of representation

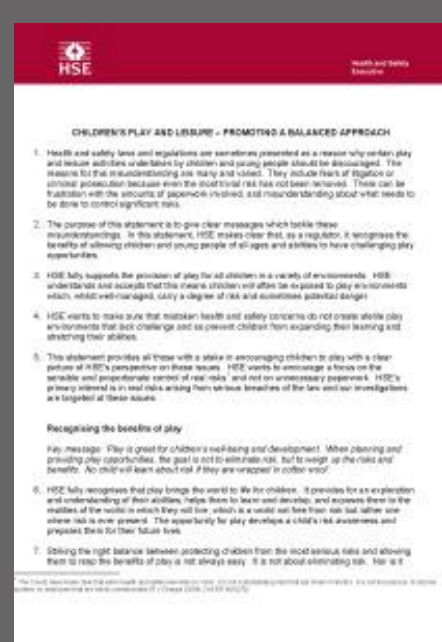
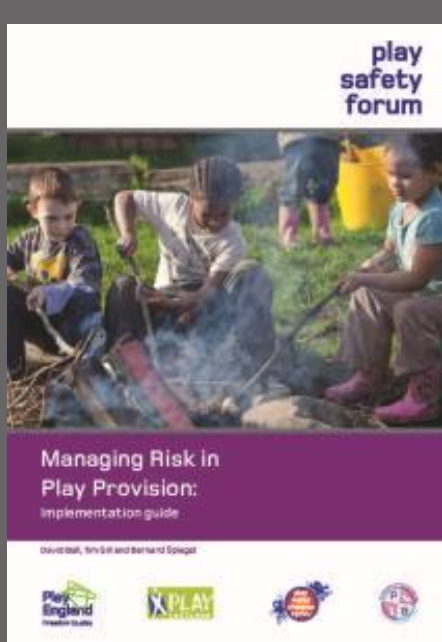
- All sectors represented:
 - National: The four UK Nations
 - Public: Health & Safety Executive
 - Voluntary: Fields in Trust, Learning through Landscapes etc.
 - Private: Association of Play Industries, Inspectors, etc.

Advocacy and research

- 1989 King and Ball: A holistic approach to accident and injury prevention in children's playgrounds
- 2003 David Ball: research into efficacy of standards for HSE
- 2007 Tim Gill: No Fear
- 2015 Mariana Brussoni et al: systematic literature review on 'risky play'

Absolutely of its time

- By 1999 many from the play sector globally had recognised the problem of increasing legislation creating cotton wool places for children to play
- Debate over safety, risk and injury developed during period of writing the CEN European Standard
- Published immediately after that standard, *Managing Risk in Play* crystallised views and encouraged debate.



PSF achievements

- Position statement (launched at CinC Bruges in 2002)
- Managing risk – implementation guide (2008)
- Risk –Benefit Assessment (2012)
- High level statement from HSE (2012)

Risk Benefit Assessment

Runs through all the work of the Forum

Moves away from concept of risk as always negative

Recognises the benefit of risk in all recreational and creative activities

Allows risk to be balanced against benefits

Professional Reputation

If children are to be given the opportunity to manage risk that they need and deserve, then the first risk that has to be taken is the risk to reputation.

In the UK this is perhaps the biggest barrier to rewarding and exciting playgrounds.

Risk Benefit Assessment is the method by which reputation can be protected

Need for International Play safety Network (IPSN)

The need for international consensus raised at
Ghent CitC Conference

The PSF invites conference delegates to join it in
this debate.

49 members from 14 countries, from USA to Japan
via Europe, Russia and Australia

Suggestions for making successful change

- 1 Bring together a broad spectrum of organisations from Manufacturers, Health and Safety organisations, and inspectors to playworkers, public providers and academics.
- 2 Work consensually, no votes other than straw polls.
- 3 Consensus between Technical, Practical and Intellectual
- 4 Be clear about what you want to achieve and agree this across your group.
- 5 Make sure you include your own standards organisation and maintain dialogue with them

Thank You

Any Questions?

