

# PUTTING RISK INTO RECESS

## SUPPORTING ADVENTUROUS PLAY



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The Gradual decline of physical activity in primary aged children has made outdoor play areas more relevant today than they have ever been.



# PHYSICAL ACTIVITY



## Physical Activity



59%

Primary  
boys



73%

Primary  
girls



90%

Secondary  
girls

Did not meet the guidelines



# AUSTRALIAN CHILDREN SPEND UNDER 2 HOURS OUTSIDE EACH DAY



2005 Growing Up in Australia: The Longitudinal Study of Australian  
Children



# IMPACT OF REDUCTION IN CHILDREN'S PHYSICAL PLAY ACTIVITY

2008 study undertaken through Essex University and reported in the medical journal Acta Paediatrica.

Looked at the strength in a group of 10 year olds in 2008 compared to the same age group in 1998.

In 2008:

- \* Arm strength fell by 26%
- \* Grip strength declined by 7%
- \* Number of sit-ups 10 year olds can do declined by 27%
- \* In 2008 only 1 in 20 could hold their own weight while hanging from monkey bars. In 1998 1 in 10 could.





Need areas for sport, socialising,  
privacy, adventure, physical  
challenge.



Are we providing enough challenge,  
interest and risk?





















Risk and challenges are part of everyday life,  
part of children's play, part of learning.



If we try to eliminate risk we inhibit a  
child's potential





More children aged 2 – 7 are getting injured in playgrounds because they don't know how to take a calculated risk





All children's play  
involves the risk of injury!



Too little challenge for a child can result in inappropriate risk taking behaviour





More boys than girls engage in risk taking behaviour





# RISK TAKING POSITIVES

- Taking risks allows children to understand the concept of trial and error
- Success will build a child's self esteem
- Children gain a sense of accomplishment which fosters greater confidence
- The more practice children have with identifying risks and acting accordingly, the more prepared they will be to handle dangerous situations and problem solve



# DEFINITION OF AN ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND

- An Adventure Playground is a specific type of playground for children. The first opened in Emdrup, Denmark in 1943.
- Where children engage in the full range of play types using junk materials to build a range of equipment.

(early examples were known as "junk playgrounds" or "bomb-site adventure playgrounds")







# DEFINITION OF A NATURAL PLAYSCAPE

- The natural playscape (or natural playground) is defined as a space with as little man made components as possible. Using native plants, rolling hills, lots of trees; playscapes represent a natural place such as a forest. Playscapes are designed with the intent of bringing children and people back to nature.





# UK STUDY 2008-2011

## REDUCTION IN PLAYTIME ACCIDENTS, INJURIES, BULLYING AND OTHER INCIDENTS

Tarmac & Turf Playground – 130 incidents over a 14 day period in 2008

(76 accidents, 1 bullying, 53 'other' incidents)

92 considered moderate on the severity scale, 37 slight and 1 severe

Nature Play Space – 8 incidents over a 14 day period in 2011

(6 accidents, 2 bullying)

All considered 'slight' on the severity scale

[http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/NaturalPlayStudyfull.pdf/\\$file/NaturalPlayStudyfull.pdf](http://www.forestry.gov.uk/pdf/NaturalPlayStudyfull.pdf/$file/NaturalPlayStudyfull.pdf)

A longitudinal study of the Forestry Commission-Merrylee Primary School  
Glasgow City Council partnership 2008-2011





# AS4685.2014 PART 1

## FORWARD

**Risk taking is an essential feature** of play provision and of all environments in which children legitimately spend time playing. Play provision aims to offer children **the chance to encounter acceptable risks as part of a stimulating, challenging and controlled learning environment.**

Play provision should aim at managing the balance between the need to offer risk and the need to keep children safe from serious harm.



# NICHOLSON'S THEORY OF LOOSE PARTS

- ❑ Loose parts are materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways.
- ❑ Materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials.
- ❑ Environments that include 'loose parts' are infinitely more stimulating and engaging than static ones.
- ❑ Stones, stumps, sand, gravel, fabric, twigs, wood, pallets, buckets, baskets, crates, boxes, logs, stones, flowers, rope, tyres, shells and seedpods.

Simon Nicholson 1971





- ❑ Children can use these materials as they choose.
- ❑ Children would often rather play with materials that they can use and adapt as they please.
- ❑ They provide a wider range of opportunities than one that is purely adult led.
- ❑ Children playing with loose parts are using more creativity and imagination and developing more skill and competence.
- ❑ Play comes from things that allow children to play in many different ways and on many different levels.
- ❑ It allows children to develop their own ideas and explore their world.



# LOOSE PARTS



















**LIFE IS ALL ABOUT  
TAKING RISKS.  
IF YOU NEVER  
TAKE A RISK,  
YOU WILL NEVER  
ACHIEVE YOUR  
DREAMS.**

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PICTUREQUOTES.COM





# Kidsafe WA

## Playground Advisory Service

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Presentations, workshops, training, consultations, playground safety audits

