



[News about the 17th IPA World Conference 2008 Hong Kong](#)

[Who We Are](#)

[What We Do](#)

[Membership](#)

[Donations](#)

[IPA and the UN](#)

[IPA Declaration](#)

[History of the IPA](#)

[Events](#)

[Playday](#)

[Recess](#)

[Links](#)

[Playwork](#)

[Newsletter On-Line](#)

[Play Shelf](#)

[IPA/USA Board](#)

[Web Master](#)

[See this web site made by concerned parents Fair Play for Recess](#)

Former web manager Mike Lee has posted a FREE version of his program Animal Exercise Fun online at [AnimalExerciseFun.org](#)

IPA/USA NEWSLETTER ON-LINE
The American Association for the Child's Right to Play
Sharon Schneider and Tom Reed, Editors

Spring, 2006

IN THIS ISSUE:

- Message from the President
- Beyond the School Board by Joyce Hemphill, Ph.D.
- Spotlight on IPA/USA Member- Georgianna Duarte, Ed.D.
- Get Out and Enjoy- A Trip to a Park or Playground! by Michell Muldoon
- Just Let's the Kid's Play: Organized Sports VS. "Playing" by Bob Bigelow
- Once Upon a Time by Audrey Skrupskelis
- Upcoming Events

- Play in the USA by Sharon Schneider
- Rescuing Recess
- A Case Study of Classroom Change in Three Texas Schools: Recess Policy and Practice in a Context of High-Stakes Testing by Hutchinson, Ed.D.
- Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play in Daycare by Michelle Tannock, Ph.D.
- Letters to the Editor
- IPA/USA Membership Information
- Advertising Rates and Conditions

Message from the President:

Dear Friends.

We have had much going on the last couple of months. Cartoon Network's Outreach Program Rescuing Recess was launched a few weeks ago (remember the website) and since then Rhonda, Olga, and I have been contacted by many reporters from newspapers across USA for information about recess issues and opinions. Evidently, our web site is doing a great job in getting our message across! Thanks to Mike Lee for keeping it p-to-date! If any of our members have a recess article appearing in the newspapers in their areas would you mind mailing them to me, so that we could keep an current list of IPA/USA articles. Thank you so much for doing this.

I would like to share with you another piece of encouraging news about how valuable our web site is. It is a letter from Rick DeWitt from Washington state, information from our website to score 3 victories for children at the Snohomish County (Washington) democratic convention. He wrote. "When I stood up as the maker of this amendment, my first words were, 'I stand for the Child's Right to Play.' " These are the amendments/additions that he was successful in getting passed. Education, Foreign Policy, and Human Rights planks:

1. "We believe that: Children need appropriate and adequate physical activity and unstructured play during the school day.
2. Added: United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child to the list of international treaties which are supported by them.
3. Added the phrase, "Children's Rights are Human Rights"

Congratulations Rick! You have just emphasized how important it is for all children's advocates to attend their local political caucuses, review party platforms, and propose amendments that address the rights of the child. Grass roots politics does work if we unite and do our share!

On these happy notes, I'll end this letter by wishing you all a beautiful spring. Don't forget to stop and smell the flowers!

Audrey Skrupskelis

Beyond the School Board

Joyce Hemphill, Ph.D.
Department of Educational Psychology
University of Wisconsin at Madison

Beginning in Fall 2000, the local school district eliminated outdoor morning recess and replaced it with an indoor ten-minute break. One 4th grade boy didn't like the change and asked his teacher what could be done. The response was basically, "There's nothing really you can do other than perhaps write a petition." That is the beginning of how the students of two classes at Crestwood Elementary became the "Recess Rebels". From 2000-2003 these young boys fought to reinstate recess. They wrote Letters to the Editor, sent petitions to the school board and the department of public instruction, appeared on television news programs, met with school board members, met with the Assistant State Superintendent of Schools, conducted surveys, and presented twice to the school board over a 3 year period. After 3 years of work, the school board decided that the teachers' union should vote on the issue. The vote took place the last week in October 2003. If the vote had been in favor, recess would have been reinstated that following week. The teachers' union voted it down. The students who had worked so hard felt the system let them down. We got others interested in the recess issue, but a lack of support by key individuals stifled their enthusiasm to directly fight for recess.

Although Recess Rebels do not directly take on the recess issue, they continue to spread the word on the importance of free and unstructured play. They took them a trip to participate in a civics national showcase sponsored by the National Conference of State Legislators. There they talked with legislators about recess. What perplexed these students was how many of the state representatives did NOT view recess as a public policy issue. If these lawmakers didn't think it was a policy, then what did they think it was? These youth then began to explain to the lawmakers why recess constitutes a public policy issue and then why it should be reinstated.

And that is the approach this group of youth, now eighth graders, continue to spread the word on the importance of recess and unstructured play. Instead of just talking about recess, they speak on the importance of active citizenship and use their experience with recess as the example. Since 2003 the "Recess Rebels" have been Presented at the Wisconsin Statewide PK-16 Service-Learning Conference sponsored by the Wisconsin Department of Public Instruction (September 2003), Presented at the National Council for the Social Studies Great Lakes Regional Conference (March 2004) on the importance of service learning in civics education. Regarding recess were the focus.

Were the focus of an article in the University of Wisconsin School of Education Alumni newsletter, Campus Connections (Spring 2004). This article focused on the youths' involvement, but also the importance of recess.

Created a display for the Dane County Fair (July, 2004), which outlined the steps involved to implement a change in public policy. The public policy was recess.

Were the focus of presentations at a Project Citizen Coordinators National Conference (October 2004). Although the youth did not present at this conference, they took a civics curriculum and directly apply it to a real situation was the focus of the talk.

Led a two-hour long panel discussion with UW-Extension Northern District youth development coordinators (November 2004). During this discussion, the importance of youth involvement in public issues and used recess as the example.

Were the focus of a presentation at the Wisconsin State Youth Development Coordinators' Conference (May 2005). Although the youth did not present, their efforts to take a civics curriculum and directly apply it to a real situation was the focus of the talk.

Served as consultants for "democracy it is!", a K-12 multi-media civics curriculum being developed by the Wisconsin Education Communication Board (Summer 2005). Although their media efforts will not be part of the video series, their experiences are to be included in the accompanying video. Are highlighted in a new civics textbook published by Holt, Rinehart, & Winston (Spring 2006). Their story in trying to reinstate recess is an opening chapter on "Civics in Action".

And will be leading a workshop at the National Service Learning Conference in Philadelphia this coming March (2006). As eighth graders, they are sharing their experiences and how they have been affected by them. During their workshop, they will instruct others on ways to implement changes in public policy. Recess is the example. They will also include how active citizenship has had an impact on their lives.

"Getting involved in politics at a young age is very helpful in a person's life. One reason is that when there is an issue at hand, the interest to do so is much larger at a young age, because youth really care about things that can affect them. Kids also learn important lessons about peer pressure and standing up for what's right even when others don't agree with them. Another positive aspect of getting involved at a young age is that youth won't put the same limits on themselves and others. Kids aren't afraid to take an issue to a higher authority such as a school board member, mayor, or even state representative. The last and most important reason is that youth can realize that they have a voice in public policy, which is probably the number one thing the group learned in this process. This also gets kids interested in politics and makes them want to vote when they are older, and make a difference all their lives. We found that youth involvement is very helpful in many different ways, more than we ever expected." (Ben)

Editor's Note: Dr. Joyce Hemphill was a Keynote Speaker at our April 2004 Baltimore Conference. As a relentless advocate for each child's right to play, recess, and for teaching children how to become their own activists, we commend her for her unending work and dedication to our youth. She also works with youth organizations and local government agencies to assist in providing play opportunities and developing playdays within her community.

Spotlight on IPA/USA Member- Georgianna Duarte, Ed.D.

Dr. Georgianna Duarte is a play advocate and champion of children, known through her work here in the United States and in other parts of the world. At the University of Texas at Brownsville, Dr. Duarte is a member of in Early Childhood Education, coordinator of undergraduate and graduate level programs for bilingual teachers, and works with local federal programs such as Migrant Head Start. Her work as a member of the American Association for the Child and Adolescent Development includes serving as Student Membership Chair, National Membership Chair, representing our organization at conferences, assisting with our IPA/USA committees.

Most recently, Georgianna devoted her recent six month sabbatical to the people of Ayachucho, Peru. She worked with the PRONOEL, Programa Nacional de Promoción y Fomento del Juego, Ministerio de Educacion, and collaborated with the PRONOEI Coordinators of the state. During this time, she provided training based on the value of play, engaged in onsite visits through numerous villages, and shared many aspects of play with the people. Working with three parent groups, and educating about large parks for the district of Quinua, and the village of Huasachura. Both projects are natural ecological parks using only regional materials, and recreational exploration incorporating the ideas of families and community members. Georgianna also taught courses at Universidad Nacional de San Cristobal-Huancayo on the Value of Play and Outdoor Learning. Additional outdoor projects included advocacy for internet cafes to save paper products for play and early childhood education, park, planting trees in local parks, and encourage the need for outdoor play and learning environments. She met with the president's wife to discuss getting down on the floor and play with children has created lasting memories for many.

As a compassionate human being, Georgianna provides ongoing assistance, training, and assessment of playgrounds for Head Start, Migrant Head Start, and Head Start Programs. She has designed over 20 Head Start Playgrounds just in the state of Texas. As a consultant for local school districts, she has provided guidance on the value of providing safe, interesting, and appropriate play spaces for 0-5 years of age. Her expertise has helped to create separate infant, toddler and preschool playgrounds considering age and stage appropriateness. University students learning about play environments participate as advisors and advocates of play through designing indoor and outdoor play spaces for local Head Start Programs and public schools. Her play designs continue to incorporate local cultures, encourage participation and access for all children. These designs incorporate parent and family zones for interaction, reflection, as well as a community.

Georgianna's commitment to the value of play, and play environments permeates all she does personally and professionally. As a resident of a small town, she has contributed to the redesign of local parks. As a professional, she continues to teach, serve and research in the area of play, as a national and international speaker, she commits through presentations, articles, studies, and projects. Her work has been duly noted as the recipient of numerous grants and awards in these areas.

Most importantly, her humor, outlook in life, dedication to the betterment of all children regardless of AGE, lends itself to her quote, "I'm off to head to work. Dr. Georgianna Duarte continue to touch other lives in her own style, she truly does HEART-STOMP. Keep on STOMPIN'!"

Get Out and Enjoy a Trip to a Park or Playground!

Michell Muldoon
President
Fun PlayDates, LLC

Make a Trip to the Park or to the Playground

Even on bright sunny afternoons in early spring it's hard to find more than a sprinkling of kids playing on the recreational grounds of Miller Park in Philadelphia, Pa. I hear this is true in San Francisco, London and even in Naples, Florida, where days of good weather are more the norm than in other parts of the country.

As I consider all of the beautiful, fully-loaded, fantasy-like parks and playgrounds I have visited over the past 10 years, I am beginning to notice that the number of kids playing outside on spring, summer and autumn days is on the decline. This is also true for warm days in winter when sunshine is the best Rx for even the coldest of us.

Where are the children? Too often, kids are sitting at home, alone or with parents and siblings, doing housework, homework, watching TV and playing video games rather than playing outside. They are also at sports practice, religious classes and other kinds of structured activities. Rarely are they enjoying the freedom of play.

A big part of the problem is that the demands on our lives have changed. We are overworked, very often not in touch with our neighbors and, often, too busy with all the running around we do to keep our families going. We are also less likely to let our kids run off freely, unsupervised.

The way kids used to play has changed. Other generations of kids flew out the door to a world of imaginative and physical free-form, spontaneous play.

an option for so many of our children. As a general rule, we, as parents, do not allow our kids to just take off for the afternoon. If they are going to

Make a Day Memorable

Schools and community centers have spent countless hours meticulously campaigning for, and voting on, great places and spaces for young kids to spend their time with grace and style. They have also added tracks for bicycles or skating. Some even have ponds for boating, even in New York City's Central Park. But going to these great places does not seem to suggest that kids are getting out enough. We, as parents, need to make a greater effort to take our kids out and to spend time together as families, away from passive and electronic play.

Plan Ahead of Time

Talk about the fun you are going to have and consider going with another family. When there are other kids for your children to play with, naturally keep an eye on them, but with a bit of distance, and grab a little fresh air and exercise for yourself.

Pack a Picnic!

Playgrounds may be located in parks, on school properties and in housing developments. They are usually well maintained and are a special way to escape homework or finishing Saturday afternoon chores. Because everybody's lives are over-scheduled and stressful, even making a playdate to go to a playground is a challenge. Plan ahead and pack a picnic.

This is also a perfect opportunity to introduce healthy foods to kids. They are usually more interested in playing, rather than eating. When they do go to eat, they are likely to want to grab a quick lunch and return to play, rather than spend time eating. When you plan a picnic, include fresh veggies on the sandwich, some fresh grapes or other easy-to-eat fruit. Bananas are great because they are nature's candy bar.

Consider Time of Day- 10:00 AM to 4:00 PM

Of course there are concerns about too much sun exposure. If you live in a place where the sun is especially strong between the hours of 10:00 AM and 4:00 PM, going to the playground later in the day. Make it a picnic dinner instead of a picnic lunch. Allow the kids to play until dusk, that is always a special time at home, the kids are more likely to have a good night's rest.

Get a Little Exercise Yourself

While the kids are running around, seize the opportunity to keep moving yourself. If you go with a friend, try to use this valuable time to walk while watching the children. Even if you are walking back and forth, you are moving. The other option is to take turns keeping an eye on the kids, and take a quick, brisk walk or run. Then give the other parent a break when you are done, so they can grab a little exercise as well.

Michell Muldoon is the President of Fun PlayDates, LLC, an online resource for healthy and creative play.

Copyright 2006 Fun PlayDates, LLC

For fun ideas, free crafts, and healthy recipes, visit <http://www.funplaydates.com/>

Just Let's the Kid's Play: Organized Sports VS. "Playing"

Bob Bigelow

Author, Advocate, Researcher,

National Speaker on Youth Sports

"The purpose of IPA/USA is to protect, preserve, and promote play as a fundamental right for all humans. Play makes possible maximum development and facilitates creativity, individuality and, social, physical and intellectual growth. Play encompasses experiences that provide enjoyment and emotion and ultimately lead to productive and contributing members of society. Specific interests include environments for play emphasizing universal access, leadership programs that develop the whole child..."

My name is Bob Bigelow and I have been a long-time advocate of providing kids the right to play in a way many of us adults were accustomed to in the school yard at recess, climbing trees, running around the backyard, and how we learned and played sports on the local sandlot. My focus has been on changes in how we currently operate most youth sports programs around the country, so more kids play for fun and are free from the excess pressure of parents and coaches typically bring. In fact my 2001 book is titled "Just Let the Kids Play." In it, among other things, I urge programs to adopt what works for youth sports.

There are three principal areas from my experience where children get exercise and fun from physical activity. One, formal and informal activities in school (and recess), two, youth sports programs, and three, simply playing at home outside of any program run through school or town facilities. My mission is to be the leg of this stool. The stakes are high indeed. Obesity, diabetes and in general being just plain out-of-shape literally plague America's children. Near and dear to my heart is the fact that when youth sports as they enter their teenage years, a critical period where sports can contribute immeasurably to their physical and emotional development. I promote positive values such as teamwork and sportsmanship. Most of this attrition happens with kids in The above quote is part of IPA/USA's mission to ensure that all children have the opportunity to have recess in school, so they can develop skills outside the classroom and keep active and physically fit. My mission is to infuse today's youth sports programs, with all of their myriad shortcomings, with an empowerment for kids that takes much of the activities back to the way it once was, at least the way the world will allow.

Unfortunately many youth sports programs simply fail to meet children's needs. Research studies consistently show the number one reason kids quit youth sports is way down the list (source: MSU Institute for Study of Youth Sports, 1992). Yet winning is often a much higher priority for the adults involved. A common out-of-whack situation in differences between adults' and kids' needs from youth sports, over 70% of kids quit organized youth sports by age 13! (source: MSU Institute for Study of Youth Sports, 1992)

Today's recreational programs, let alone "travel" sports which have become over-competitive, selective and focused on winning beyond belief.

We desperately need to change this paradigm. The stakes are high. A school with proper recess and gym time should provide at least 6 hours per week of play outside the classroom. Recreational youth sports can add up to another 3 hours each week for a single sport (three practice or game activities each week). That's one-half of the total time school's should be providing, a significant amount. Add to that "backyard play" and kids should be playing and getting at least 3 hours each week. Twelve hours of play each week may not solve all of the problems today's kids face, but it certainly can go a long way!

What's Happening to Our Kids?

Picture the typical youth sports game – a blur of motion and sound. Some parents are busy cheering or chatting among themselves. Other are prowl and prowlers mean business. These parents become field generals, barking orders and commanding their children to excel.

In this world of high volume and hyperventilating, some parents unfortunately stand out. You can easily hear them. "Mark your man," one screams and another faces and nearly breathless, this father runs up and down the sidelines, keeping pace with every play. The louder he screams, the more he seems to care about the ball. Play your game."

He may well be the reason his wife doesn't enjoy going to the games anymore. Today, as she listens to him bellow, she finally asks: "Do you think he

you're telling him out there?"

"Of course he does. I've been telling him this all year. Stay within yourself!" the father shouts again. Just then, an opposing player steals the ball from around him and heads straight toward the goal. Score!

That pushes the father to the edge. As the boy walks off the field, the father makes a beeline for his son. "Why didn't you do what I told you to?" he listening to me?"

"I'm listening, Dad, but I don't know what you're talking about."

Such is often the case in youth sports. There is a disconnect between what adults say versus what children want and need to hear. What adults want sports is often not what children want and need. More dramatic and disturbing examples of how far adults stray from their proper roles in youth sports assaults on coaches and officials to brawls among parents, even a fatal fight between two hockey dads a few years ago.

I'm Committed to Helping Kids (and Their Parents) Get a Better Sports Experience

I don't offer this guidance lightly or without the credentials to back it up. I was a first-round draft pick and played in the National Basketball Association to-toe and elbow-to-elbow with the stars of the game. I played basketball at an Ivy League college, in high school and in the driveways of my home. My generation got the best education in sports there is: from each other.

Today I'm a lecturer, an occasional professional scout, a youth sports coach and an administrator. I'm the father of two sons who have played youth sports. These days I travel the country talking to parents, coaches and other youth sports administrators about what is wrong and how to give youth sports better travel to cafeterias and lecture halls, wherever schools and sports organizations can find a room. I look parents and coaches straight in the eye and tell them they are doing IS wrong.

During these talks, I ask the audience tough questions, questions that I also ask you now. Can you read the headlines about assaults and brawls at youth sports? Do you believe we have created healthy systems for all children? Can you look at the startling numbers of children who get fed up or burned out and who quit at an early age, and still believe we're doing right by them?

Please Give Back the Games to Our Kids! Keep Kids Playing to Promote health, Fitness and Having FUN!

Organized youth sports involve an estimated 30 to 35 million children, and also their parents. Youth sports are second only to school in the amount of time and involvement of parents on behalf of their children. Youth sports can be a wonderful experience. Consider the joy a child feels learning a sports skill. Youth sports, operated with children's best interests at heart, can offer some of the most delightful and memorable experiences of childhood, not to mention the benefits that exercise provides.

But in many ways, and on too many days, organized youth sports need to be saved from themselves. They have a disturbing side, where troubling mistakes and choices made by adults hurt the children who play.

Most of the changes I offer in my talks, and in my book "Just Let the Kids Play," are fairly easy to make. In fact, they require significantly less adult oversight than the organized systems already in place. Yet these changes carry might. These changes can re-create the world of youth sports for our kids!

The Heart of the Problem

Despite many, many initiatives devoted to adult education and training, the overall youth sports environment has not fundamentally improved over the years. Doug Abrams knows this all too well. Doug is a professor specializing in child law at the University of Missouri, and he has tracked youth sports in newspapers and magazines around the country for over a decade. He compiles media reports of these incidents and distributes them in his free daily e-mail, simply Today's Articles. Hundreds of people across America who are interested in youth sports receive Doug's daily e-mail.

From his years as an expert observer, Doug maintains that negative examples of adults misbehaving have not lessened in either quantity or severity. The worst high-profile incidents (such as the deadly fight in 2000 between two parents at an informal Massachusetts youth hockey scrimmage) to the more common misbehavior many of us see on sports fields every weekend.

Why haven't all of the money, time and effort we have invested in coach training and parent education helped? The answer lies in the fundamental lack of experience of coaches, and other adults experience when they see their kids participate in today's organized youth sports. This insight is provided best by Dr. Shanley, a youth sports psychologist with over three decades of experience at all levels of youth sports, from recreational play to Olympic training and development. What Dr. Murphy says in his watershed book, *The Cheers and the Tears*:

"There are deeper motivations behind the involvement of families in youth sports....[P]arents have a deep and powerful love for their children. The love can be underestimated. In my experience, this love leads parents to adopt certain attitudes when it comes to their child's involvement in youth sports: the child; they want to protect their child from harm; they hope that their child will excel; they fantasize about what might be.

The result of these attitudes is that parents usually become very emotionally involved in the youth sports experience ... because the parent identifies with the child. There are few life experiences that can generate the anxiety and tension of watching your own son or daughter participate in a sporting contest. It is a visceral and emotional connection because of the adult's identification with the child. This process of identification helps us understand what happens as they become more involved in their child's endeavors." (1999, pp. 49-52).

The key point Dr. Murphy makes is that many over-involved adults are responding to fundamental, visceral emotions that they find very difficult to control. These emotions are very normal for virtually all parents who care about their children. The implication is that more fundamental solutions are needed than more training in order to really change how adults behave at youth sports events.

I believe that to remedy the ills of youth sports in America, we need to change the very structure and goals of today's youth sports programs. We must move away from traditional competition as the chief goal, and rather promote youth sports as a central aspect of education and fitness for every child who wishes to play. I call for is "The Recess Model", i.e. applying similar principles we try to provide children in school to organized youth sports programs in the community.

The Recess Model

This model focuses on how kids used to play sports, before adults began over-organizing just about everything our kids do. The Recess Model gives kids a greater role in how they play rather than having adults running the whole show.

Kids used to pick their own teams, resolve their own disputes (most of the time), and make sure scores were as close as possible by balancing their play. It was more fun for children. "Teams" were also fluid from game to game, formed from groups of kids in the local neighborhood. Kids could play with different groups and gain the benefits of greater socialization. Ideally, local organized youth sports programs for children under the age of 12 should also have fluid teams. Coaches make new relationships throughout the year in an environment that de-emphasizes individual wins and losses, and promotes healthy competition on behalf of the kids.

Communities Must Get Involved

The community's role is crucial in creating change. In 2001, the National Alliance for Youth Sports sponsored a symposium on how to improve youth sports. Educators from all over the country attended. They developed a series of ground-breaking recommendations for communities on how they could support youth sports.

realign youth sports programs to fit an educational model. Central to this model is recasting the role of coaches to that of mentors similar to the teacher. Sports should become an extension of a child's education with the focus on learning rather than pure athletic competition.

We believe that community leaders can help drive educational change, and thereby provide an effective alternative to relying on youth sports programs. Most youth sports organizations have entrenched cultures that rely on adult-oriented models to interact with kids. This frame of mind puts competition

How can communities sponsor and promote change? Frankly, communities hold the "power of the permit" to the fields and other facilities operated by parks departments and the school districts. Community leaders have a moral and ethical responsibility to ensure safe and positive experiences for all children well established in the classroom, and it should extend to our youth sports programs in our community facilities as we move toward an educational model that replaces adult-oriented models that perpetuate youth sports' most serious problems.

Implementing the use of fluid teams in local programs for children 12 and under is a good place to start. An online survey that I have been conducting shows that almost half of all people believe that there should be more involvement by community officials in improving youth sports programs (www.bob-bigelow.com)

Communities and their leaders must step up and take a forceful role in how these programs are run. Examples of success stories are out there. I can help you get involved and create more positive youth programs that keep kids playing in a positive environment where fun is always first! I can help. Please visit www.bob-bigelow.com to learn more about what you can and your community can help!

Editor's Note: Bob Bigelow is one of the foremost youth sports speakers in the country. He advocates fully meeting the needs of children as the top priority in youth sports programs, and provides new approaches for positive change in youth sports. He is a former NBA first round draft choice and played four years for the Boston Celtics, and San Diego Clippers.

Once Upon A Time

Audrey Skrupskelis, Ph.D
University of South Carolina Aiken

Once upon a time there was a happy little boy. He liked to do what most young children like to do - play. He liked to play with balls. He liked to play with dinosaurs. He made up imaginative, wonderful adventures and spent hours in his fertile, imaginary playground. Lucky for him, when he started kindergarten in the "big school," he had a wonderful teacher who continued to enrich his cognitive experiences with creative activities, stories, music, and began to recognize the letters in his name. He began to count to sixty zillion. He began to make up silly words to rhyme. In general, life was as it should be for the five little boy. Unfortunately, his "big school" session was only in the morning, and after an early lunch, a little white van picked him up to take him home for the rest of the day.

The child care center, perhaps in a misguided, but well-meaning way, had also undertaken the task of educating the young children. And here was a highly qualified teacher and a person who was hired to "teach". The happy little boy began bringing homework every day and to earn a star, he had to complete every night. The adult in his life was puzzled by these worksheets because they did not seem to match what was happening in the big school. And the homework sheets were coming from the child care center. And what homework sheets they were! The children were expected to write five rhyming lines, (mind you); they were expected to write their numerals 1-10 (between the lines, of course); they were to practice writing their names 5 times (but needless to say); and a couple more worksheets xeroxed directly out of a 1st grade workbook. Remember, these young children were only 4 or barely 5 years old. Evenings at home became a hassle. The happy little boy became frustrated because the work was far beyond his capability. He wanted to do his "homework" but simply could not. His letters would not stay between the lines, his numerals were all crooked, and he kept forgetting to put the vowels in his name. Of course the adult in his life was frustrated too. She worked all day, and with the little time left in the evening wanted to spend some quality time with her child doing worksheets. Finally, she simply told the child care worker that her little boy was not going to do these work sheets, he was not ready for them and to announce that he did not get his star for not bringing the homework in. Good for her!

Another area of concern for the adult in the happy little boy's life was the fact that most of the time when she picked her little boy up was the television. During the "cognitive" development time, the children were expected to sit quietly and watch television. And not any of the good educational programs, but the ones that had a PG rating! The adult was in a dilemma because this was the only child care center that picked up the little ones from the "big school". Her husband was a single parent, who simply could not quit her job. And so the happy little boy continues to go to the same center.

The above story is true not only for the happy little boy, but for many young children across the United States whose parent(s) simply have little or no time to spend with their children go. Of course, there are many excellent child care centers that understand the importance of developmentally appropriate practice and do what is in their charges that is based on play, which is how young children learn and begin to make sense of their environment. The teachers in these centers are able to withstand the pressure from those who think that the only way young children learn is by "writing between the lines". How sad that child care centers are staffed by meaning adults who simply have had little to no education in child development.

Bodrova and Leong (2003) bring up an important fact that should be central to any early childhood program: play and learning are not mutually exclusive. An approach to teach young children all the cognitive skills that academic programs demand is simply a matter of using what we know about child development. Children naturally use their own power of play to learn. The concept of mature play is an important one for early childhood teachers to understand. Many researchers define mature play as play that gradually evolves into a complex event that is characterized by increasingly more sophisticated roles, language, and rules. Allowing children to sit in front of a television does not promote the development of mature play. Allowing children to develop play themes and expand their vocabulary of language for decision-making, problem-solving, and vocabulary expansion. These are all skills that are needed for being successful with academic work in the nucleus of school curricula.

A fascinating book, *The Play of Man*, by Karl Groos (1901), talks about playfulness with sounds, playfulness with body movements, playfulness in general, and how essential to sound and healthy development of skills that, in modern terms, can be translated as academic skills. He states, in discussing sounds, that a child who practices he could not become master of his voice, and the imperative impulse to imitation which is developed later would lack its most essential foundation. The "essential" which Groos uses is a much more forceful one than "basic" because it means that certain things/events are indispensable in order for something to be the case of healthy child development (cognitive, for the purposes of this article), it is the essentiality of play that forms the basis for the development of skills. Apart from the cognitive benefits of play, it must also be understood that, children best retain what they have learned through physical activity. Movement is essential for young children as breathing. Early childhood programs that necessitate children sitting in group time for long periods of time in order to "learn" vary from counterproductive both for their cognitive and physical development. Jensen, Rechis & Luna (2002) write that long periods of sitting, "...can increase breathing, strained spinal column, stressed lower back nerves, poor eyesight, and overall body fatigue." (6). I think all of us can relate to the fact that our capability to perform tasks is minimized; we simply do not have enough fresh energy to perform. And we are adults! What makes us think that young children stands to reason that all early childhood programs must be based on movement and play. Sometimes we just don't think of how harmful to overall health sitting at desks or in front of televisions can be. And how do the latter two "activities" develop phonemic awareness, letter recognition, and numeral recognition? The so-called academic programs are providing?

No how is how!

Learning is about making connections. In young children these connections are made through play. I remember, several years ago, spending a morning with young children were learning, in developmentally appropriate structured play activities, a variety of language and math concepts. During their outdoor play, how often the new concept terms appeared in a number of different play situations which the children designed. It was evident that not only were they using the vocabulary, they were also experimenting with it in their natural environment. The teachers were equally encouraging and acknowledged the use of play. Through play, the children were processing the new concepts and trying them out in other contexts. They were making connections.

The essentiality of play in early childhood (and, I venture to think in all grades), is misunderstood and, in fact, usually completely overlooked, by the

policy. It is up to us to continue to educate both parents and policy makers that the kind of academic curriculum that is being pushed on young children is the opposite effect. The happy little boy in our story would benefit much more if the good learning experiences, which he has in the "big school" during the remainder of the day. He does not need to do five sheets of homework everyday. He does not need to be watching PG movies in the afternoon. He needs to be in an environment which encourages application of newly learned concepts. He needs to be interacting with adults and peers to develop proficiency in those concepts. He needs to be able to move, talk, build, sing, act, paint, pretend, imagine; he needs to be a happy little boy doing what he does best - play. In ending, I would like to suggest that early childhood teachers in public schools connect up with those who work in surrounding child care centers and preschools about what they are teaching, so that the same concepts would continue to be developed and reinforced in a natural, playful way in child care settings and preschool learning environments for our children. We want playful environments for our children. We want happy little children. We must work to achieve that. Groos (1901) states that adults have three important tasks, which are as follows: to incite children to play, to encourage play that is good and useful, and to correct that which is improper and injurious. He further states that, "...in the lower grades especially, it is a fortunate circumstance when he [the teacher] possesses the ability to lead a child again with the children in their plays and walks." (403). Let's remember that and let our children lead us as we gradually guide them into the world of learning. We'll all be happier for it. And more successful. And there will be many happy little girls and boys who will know their letters and numbers and use their natural powers to learn them through play.

References

Bodrova, E., & Leong, D.J. (2003). The importance of being playful. *Educational Leadership*, 0013-1784, April, V.60, Issue 7.

Groos, K. (1901). *The play of man*. New York: D.Appleton and Company.

Jensen, I., Rechis, R., & Luna, J.D. (2002). Learning through drama. In *Programs & strategies to develop cultural, linguistic, scientific early childhood care for very young children and their families*. (J. Cassidy & S. Garrett (eds.)). Center for Educational Development, Evaluation and Research (CEDER), University, Corpus Christi.

Upcoming Events

Fall 2007- The American Association for the Child's Right to Play will hold its Triennial National Conference in Rochester, New York. The Strong National Toy Hall of Fame has been kind in assisting us with the possibility utilizing some of their facilities and housing activities. We are also working with additional national and international play organizations to work out the logistics of a joint venture. Our board feels this joint venture will provide an opportunity for all attendees to experience the cutting edge of trends and information in the areas of play, children, and research as relayed by experts in their fields and to be forthright as plans become finalized.

2008- International Play Association Conference in Hong Kong. Details to follow.

Play in the USA

Sharon Schneider
National Chairperson Afterschool Play- IPA/USA
Department of Curriculum and Teaching
Hofstra University, Hempstead, New York

Mountaindale, New York:

The community of Mountaindale, New York, is located in the Town of Fallsburg, Sullivan County, in the heart of the Catskill Mountains. The residents of this one mile hamlet truly value family, children, creativity and the right of all people to play, regardless of age. Their recent surge in growth and development has led to the creation of many programs and activities designed to encourage maximum participation opportunities for all residing in Mountaindale and neighboring communities. Many local zoning boards, businesses, and special interest groups have dedicated their services to help design recreational facilities, park-like settings and the growth of play activities.

One newly designed facility is the Mountaindale Music Park with a PVC pipe organ, Sisyphus piano, Junk Jammin' Bicycle, and a musical note bench. It was built and built by a local high school technology class. This park was the site of a Junk Jammin' festival last summer and is considered to be another form of play. This event had plenty of "junk" to use creatively to invent musical sounds to accompany local musicians, movement and dramatic play activities, group spontaneous dances, opportunities to design and take home musical instruments built from recyclables, and plenty of free play in building, painting, and more. The mini Mountaindale village consisting of assorted cardboard boxes. Families spent hours together as children of all ages enjoyed all aspects of free play. A woman roamed around spreading her charm as she offered inspirational quotes and riddles to be selected from her decorative basket.

Additional facilities in this newly growing community include an art center and sculpture garden, rails to trails outdoor fitness areas, bicycle trails, nature center, and the creation of the Sandburg Creek RiverWalk which will have picnic areas, walking paths, environmental education, play spaces to play in, and the natural beauty of the area.

You can read more about Mountaindale, New York and upcoming events by exploring on www.mountaindaleny.com

Wannado City, Sunrise, Florida:

Children explore what they wannado and become what they wannabe in this pretend city. Located in Florida's Sawgrass Mills Mall in Sunrise, Florida, this theme park is the first of its kind in the United States. The idea originated in Mexico where two similar theme parks are located. Wannado City is the first of its kind in our country. Children ages 3-14 can have the opportunity to experience adult roles in a scaled down child-sized city, complete with cobblestone streets, a square foot where children are known as "kidizens" and parents are placed in jail if being mean or not smiling. Children can discover the wonders of the world through child choice. Kidizens choose from over 100 occupations to explore and become. Some choices include airplane pilot complete with flight simulator, professions, television and radio production, theatre, archeology, paleontology, the circus, newspaper, firefighting, court system, restaurants, glamour modeling, and more. Children even receive wages for their work in the form of Wongas and can deposit their earnings in the bank or can use their money to purchase goods and entertainment. They can also use their ATM card for withdrawals. Participants also have the option of joining the Wannado City Chamber of Kids and receiving discounts on spending their Wongas.

The owners believe that Wannado City helps children to connect through play, utilizing pretend play based on reality. They have attempted to place a comprehensive city as youngsters look at the world through their own eyes. The experience is an absolutely incredible one. Visitors can take tours and view the located viewing sites for parents of children who are Kidizens. To assist in tracking your child's activities, each member child wears an identifier located on their back as WannaFinders. Safety is also a critical concern of the establishment.

Plans for expansion into ten additional markets will take place over the next several years. A model of a Secaucus, New Jersey Wannado City is located at Sunrise, Florida. For additional information, please visit www.WannadoCity.com

Alliance for Childhood:

The Alliance for Childhood is a partnership of educators, health care professionals, researchers, and other childhood advocates who are working to improve the health and well being of all children. They recently prepared a statement entitled, "A Call to Action on the Education of Young Children." As an organization, it emphasizes the deep concern that current trends in early childhood combined with political pressure, are leading to an emphasis on unproven teaching methods, unreliable standardized testing which can both undermine learning and damage young children's healthy development. Their statement was well written and supported by many international and nationally recognized professionals in the fields of children and education.

Two calls for action that would particularly interest our membership include:

Early education that emphasizes experiential, hands-on activities, open-ended creative play, and caring human relationships.

Teacher education that emphasizes the full development of the child including the importance of play, nurtures children's innate love of learning, and develops capacities for creativity, autonomy, and integrity. This second call for action is supported by the stating that creative play that children can control is essential for emotional, and cognitive growth. It contributes greatly to their language development, social skills, and problem-solving capacities, and lays an essential foundation for academic learning. Yet many children do not have the opportunity to develop their capacity for socio-dramatic play. Preschool is the place to intervene with play.

For more information regarding this call for action and to learn more about this organization, please contact Alliance for Childhood at www.allianceforchildhood.org

Editor's Note: At a recent New York City meeting of the IPA Board, UNICEF, and international early childhood specialists, Nurper Ulkuer, Ph.D., of the Integrated Early Childhood Program Division stated that school environments should be friendly toward interactive play.

UNICEF:

UNICEF has been bringing the healing power of play to traumatized children in areas of natural and human devastation throughout the world. The kits of sensitive play kits have been distributed throughout the world. These kits may include footballs, crayons, pencils, markers, dolls, drawing boards, balloons, inflatable balls, toy cars, building blocks, soft toys, sponge balls, treasure boxes, rope, guide booklet on how to make own play materials. Each kit works for 30 plus children with a cost of approximately \$300 each. Kits are designed for early childhood, school-age and for recreational use. If you would like to order these kits, please visit www.unicef.org and type in the words "play kit" under the search box.

Editor's Note: Sharon Schneider did attend Mountandale's Junk Jammin' festival as well as tour Wannado City. Members of IPA/USA who were in attendance at the New York City meeting of the IPA Board, UNICEF and international early childhood specialists included Tom Jambor who is also an IPA Board member, as facilitator, Rhonda Clements and Sharon Schneider who were invited participants.

Rescuing Recess

Cartoon Network has started the national initiative, Rescuing Recess as a community outreach program to help all recognize recess as an essential element of the well-being of children and to connect educators and parents as advocates to bring back or keep recess in their schools.

Created to combat childhood obesity and the drastic reduction of recess at elementary schools throughout our country, Rescuing Recess will help parents and teachers to unite all members of each school community to advocate for recess and physical activity as critical components of their school wellness council and curriculum.

The Rescuing Recess Advisory Board is comprised of several national organizations and groups including American Association for the Child's Rights, Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC), CNN, Kids' Health, Inc., National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE), National Education Association (NEA), National PTA, New Leaders for New Schools, and the President's Council on Physical Fitness and Sports.

Our membership should be pleased to know that we were asked to share our expertise in the field of recess as Rescuing Recess was in its infancy stage. Members Rhonda Clements, Olga Jarrett, Audrey Skrupskelis and any of our other member experts who took so much of their time to assist with this research, knowledge, as well as our efforts in achieving recess as a mandated component in the school day in three states and in the city of Atlanta, are recognized throughout our country and worldwide.

Tracy Johnson of the National PTA's Information Center has been kind to share the following:

The National PTA has joined with Cartoon Network and several national organizations to emphasize the importance of recess. The goal of the campaign is to promote unstructured break time as an essential element of the school day and to connect educators, parents, and kids as advocates to bring back or keep recess in their schools.

We invite you to visit the National PTA website for more information and to obtain more tools to get involved with Rescuing Recess, http://www.pta.org/ne_press_release_detail_1142028998890.html.

The article, Think Recess is Just Child's Play? http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1142027724093.html, which can be found in PTA's Health and Wellness section, http://www.pta.org/archive_article_details_1142027724093.html or please visit the Cartoon Network website, <http://www.rescuingrecess.com> to join the rescue recess campaign in your school.

The National PTA is the largest volunteer child advocacy organization in the United States. A not-for-profit organization of parents, educators, students, and community members active in their schools and communities, the PTA is a leader in reminding our nation of its obligations to children. Membership in the National PTA is concerned with the education, health, and welfare of children and youth. For information on National PTA membership, please call the Membership Department at 670-6782, or visit the National PTA website at <http://www.pta.org>.

Editor's Note: Please note that the website for Rescuing Recess www.rescuingrecess.com is continually being upgraded to provide new information.

A Case Study of Classroom Change in Three Texas Schools: Third-Grade Recess Policy and Practice in a Context of High-Stakes Testing

Karen L. Hutchison, Ed.D.
Texas A&M – San Antonio System Center

The existing literature has shown that state standards have dramatically transformed educational practices today (Amrein & Berliner, 2003; Kohn, 2000) and become the single most important measure of how well schools are performing in many Texas high-stakes school districts (Harkham, 2001; Johnson & Sambar, 2001), the place of recess in the elementary curriculum has become a topic of controversy (Hart, 1993; Jarrett et al., 2000; Sutton-Smith, 1997). Information about school recess policies associated with the elementary school curriculum (Associated Press, 2003; Blatchford, 1998; Pellegrini, 1998) does not have a formal policy relating to school recess.

Methodology

As Gay (1992) said of qualitative research, "behavior occurs in a context and a more complete understanding of the behavior requires understanding the context in which it occurs" (p. 209). The focus of this study centered on teachers as the recess policies of three schools within the same district espoused the belief that

measured with standardized tests (Mazzeo, 2001).

The recess policy was perceived and implemented differently at each of the three participating schools in the study. Abernathy Elementary, a Texas academic year 2003-2004, maintained an established recess policy; Bowman Elementary, a Texas Recognized school in the academic year 2003-2004, modified version of recess as an extended lunch period; and Cruz Elementary, also a Texas Recognized school in the same academic year, eliminated recess (2003).

Significance

It is important to understand the teachers' perspectives on the issue of standardized testing and what changes have occurred in the classroom, such as the elimination of recess from the elementary school curriculum. Teachers can collectively influence their own campus and district administrators, the local and state legislatures to reconsider the needs of the whole child (Selakovich, 1984).

Implications for Policy and Practice

Despite the demands of a high-stakes environment, the majority of teachers and principals in this study believed in the value of recess, but were torn between the demands of testing. Based on the data that emerged from the study, there are four areas of research that warrants further discussion. The issue of determining whether recess impacts curriculum or whether curriculum embedded movement is a viable substitute is worthy of further examination. A second issue to be examined is school leadership and knowledge of child development as it appears to be correlated with the increased value of recess. A third implication for further research is understanding of the impact of recess on teachers in relationship to the apparent increase in medical problems associated with a high-stakes environment and medication. Since only a limited number of studies have examined unstructured play and recess in elementary schools (Evans, 1989; Jarrett et., 2000), the physical, academic, psychological, and social impact on children is warranted as policymakers act on assumptions not supported by research.

Recess and Curriculum

According to Clements (2000), physical education is a teacher-structured academic subject with standards, goals, and objectives. As data from this study suggest, recess was minimally accepted and accommodating to movement embedded in curricular studies if the activity could be related to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). Physical education classes and recess serve different roles in the lives of children (Jarrett, Maxwell, & Dickerson, 1998). However, both are important for effective learning. An examination into the connection between exercise and brain functioning is warranted as the focus on increased creativity and learning expands mental capacity, which enhances the ability to apply concepts in another context.

Elementary Leadership

The National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) reminds educators that children have needs for physical activity that are different from extended periods of inactivity developmentally inappropriate (NASPE, 1998). This study suggests that leadership training and child development knowledge for elementary school principals are to make developmentally and age appropriate decisions. Therefore, this study challenges taken-for-granted assumptions about learning and testing and recess.

The Impact of Recess on Teachers

With little research examining the benefits of recess on teachers, the participating teachers acknowledged multiple benefits for them as they supervised their classrooms. Physiological health concerns were not the only issues, as teachers experienced situations that weighed heavily on their consciences, particularly those who failed TAKS and were retained. Additionally, the special needs students who were forced to take the TAKS without the normal staff support caused some. One teacher explained how saddened she was to force a special needs child to practice and drill for testing when she believed it was not developmentally appropriate.

Only a handful of studies specifically explore teachers' perceptions of state-mandated testing and the impact on teaching practices. Based on the review, it is unaware of any study that examines the relationship between prolonged physical health of teachers and the presence or absence of recess. Additionally, the claims of school nurses' that teachers are increasingly prescribed medications for stress-related illnesses and the consequences of high-stakes testing are problematic than currently believed.

The Impact of Recess on Students

According to Jarrett (2001), a 20-minute recess in the morning and in the afternoon is optimal as children are better able to maintain focus, control disruptive behaviors, and accomplish more in a day than without recess. There is no study that supports not having recess.

Without recess, this study is suggestive that students were inclined to internalize their frustration, stress, and feelings of failure and were more likely to experience related health problems, such as headaches and stomach ailments. For those children who were more likely to experience TAKS failure, they faced consequences such as tutoring, Saturday school, compulsory summer school, early morning practice sessions, and loss of recess. Combining these practices demoralized the students and the potential for negatively affecting their sense of self-worth and confidence. This is suggestive of Sacks' (2000) conclusion: "focusing exclusively on individual accountability may have precisely the opposite of [their] intended outcomes" (p. 93).

Conclusion

As the data suggest, children's recess as a curricular tool is undervalued, but occupations of today (technology, science, international business) require risk-taking ideas (Bergen, 1998). An increasing body of literature and data from this study suggest that learning occurs during recess that simply cannot be replicated in the classroom (NAECS/SDE, 1999). By participating in unstructured activities, children are able to develop the social, emotional, physical, and cognitive skills that are successful in both school and society (Clements, 2000).

References

- Amrein, A. L., & Berliner, D. C. (2003, February). Student motivation and learning. *Educational Leadership*, 60(5), 32-37.
- Associated Press. (2004, September 17). Washington school official puts halt to recess. Retrieved October 5, 2004, from <http://www.msnbc.msn.com/id/6027346/>
- Bergen, D. (1998). *Play as a medium for learning and development*. Olney, MD: Association for Childhood Education International.
- Blatchford, P. (1998). *Playtime in the primary school*. Windsor, UK: NFER-Nelson.
- Clements, R. L. (Ed.). (2000). *Elementary school recess: Selected readings, games, and activities for teachers and parents*. Lake Charles, LA: American Press.
- Evans, J. (1989). *Children at play: Life in the school playground*. Victoria, Australia: Deakin University Press.
- Gay, L. R. (1992). *Educational evaluation and measurement: Competencies for analysis and application*. Columbus, OH: Merrill.
- Harkham, J. (2001, August). High-stakes testing: Debating the standards movement. *Educational Leadership*, 37, 16-24.
- Hart, C. H. (1993). Introduction: Toward a further understanding of children's development on playgrounds. In C. H. Hart (Ed.). *Children on playgrounds: Research perspectives and applications* (pp. 14-42). Albany, NY: State University of New York Press.

Jarrett, O. S. (2001). Play during recess and the effect of recess on classroom Behavior. *Play, Policy, and Practice Connection*, 6(1), 11.

Jarrett, O. S., & Maxwell, D. M. (2000). What research says about the need for recess. In R. L. Clements (Ed.), *Elementary school recess: Selected readings, games, and activities for teachers and parents* (pp. 20-29). Lake Charles, LA: American Press.

Jarrett, O. S., Maxwell, D. M., Dickerson, C., Hoge, P., Davies, G., & Yetley, A. (2000). The impact of recess on classroom behavior: Group effects and individual differences. *The Journal of Educational Research*, 92(2), 121-126.

Johnson, D. D., & Johnson, B. (2002). *High-stakes: Children, testing, and failure in American schools*. Lanham, MD: Rowman & Littlefield.

Kohn, A. (2001). Emphasis on testing leads to sacrifices in other areas. *USA Today Editorial/Opinion*. Retrieved August 21, 2001, from <http://www.usatoday.com/news/opinion/front.htm>

Mazzeo, C. (2001). Frameworks of state: Assessment policy in historical perspective. Retrieved May 14, 2004, from <http://www.tcrecord.org>

National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC), & National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in the State Department of Education (NAECS/SDE). (1991). *Guidelines for appropriate curriculum content and assessment in programs serving children ages 3 through 8*. *Young Children*, 46, 21-38.

National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE). (1998). *Recess in elementary school [Brochure]*. Washington, DC: Author.

Pellegrini, A. D. (1995). *School recess and playground behavior*. Albany, NY: State University of New York.

Sacks, P. (2000, December). High-stakes tests are leaving schools and students Consumed by a "cult of measurement." *The School Administrator Web Edition*. Retrieved May 12, 2004, from http://www.aasa.org/publications/sa/2000_12/sacks.htm

Sambar, C. (2001). Pros and cons of standards and tests. Retrieved February 21, 2001 2003, from <http://www.Sambar.net/chuck/pros.htm>

Selakovich, D. (1984). *Schooling in America*. New York: Longman.

Sutton-Smith, B. (1990). School playground as festival. *Children's Environment Quarterly*, 7, 3-7.

Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play in Daycare

Michelle Tannock, Ph.D.
University of Victoria

Rough and tumble play (R&T) has become a topic of growing interest to researchers. This article provides results from a study which explored the thoughts of early childhood educators, and young children (5 year olds) on rough and tumble play. The study also included observations of children at play within their daycare.

Rough and tumble play has been identified as running, chasing, play fighting, wrestling, climbing, fleeing, and open-handed slaps including the 'playful' slaps. Children are smiling and laughing (Reed & Brown, 2000; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). This physical play, in the form of rough and tumble play, has been considered an important aspect of play" (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998, p. 577).

These previously identified elements of rough and tumble play can, based on the results of this study, be expanded to include grabbing and moving another player; pushing or pulling another player; banging their body into the body of another player or a fixed object; rolling on the ground with another player; making a loud or roaring voice; making hitting motions; hitting oneself; making large body motions; jumping on, throwing or kicking an object; crashing into another player and making crashing motions with a held object.

The educators, children and parents held similar thoughts on R&T in terms of how they respond to the play. These individuals indicated that the play was common in early childhood education centres. However, while young children commented that they were not allowed to participate in rough and tumble play at home, the educators and parents commented that they put restrictions on the play in an effort to ensure the safety of all children but in moderation. The parents of the children generally held the view that rough and tumble play is not an appropriate activity for the centre, but that that was appropriate at home. The most prevalent statement among all the children, parents, and educators, is the need to ensure that no one gets hurt.

Boys accounted for 79.5% of all rough and tumble play and girls for 20.5%. This supports previous research (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Monghan-Nelson & Lewis, 1985) which identified similar gender differences in the display of R&T. Educators were unaware of specific guidelines for the inclusion of R&T in their setting. Rather, guidelines for safety were articulated as educators had to be aware of the need to plan for the inclusion of R&T. This indicates a need for a set of guidelines on what forms of rough and tumble play are acceptable in the childcare setting. The development of guidelines would aid in alleviating the confusion, by educators and children, over the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood education.

This study found that the parents also lack information about R&T in general and, more specifically, about the inclusion of rough and tumble play in the early childhood setting. The inclusion of rough and tumble play in the early childhood setting is in need of parameters of expectation that are clearly understood by parents, educators, and children. Should an acceptable format for the inclusion of rough and tumble play be made, parents might support the play in their child's daycare.

However, parents and educators stated that rough and tumble play holds value in the physical nature of the play both in terms of a means to promote energy release. There was also recognition that rough and tumble play holds a social dynamic which aids in the development of social competence about themselves. Children learn about self-control; compassion; boundaries; limits to play; to adapt their play to the abilities of others; and to make decisions about their abilities in relation to other players as they engage in R&T.

As educators seek to develop programs that reflect the interests and support the development of young children, they need to develop a level of acceptance of all elements of play. It may be that rough and tumble play within early childhood settings has not been fully understood because rough and tumble play is a predominantly male form of play (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). Early childhood educators are predominantly women, which may lead to a lack of understanding of the patterns of play. With increased understanding of various patterns of play, educators may be better able to distinguish among play behaviours and be able to support the predominately male forms of physical play.

The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how early childhood educators, parents, and young children interpret rough and tumble play. The interviews of adults indicate that there is perceived value in rough and tumble play; the play needs to be supervised; the play is more acceptable at home than in daycare; and adults are unaware of formal policies or guidelines for the play. Results of the interviews with children indicate that adults place restrictions on the play.

important that no one is hurt; there are gender differences; and while all the children were observed engaged in the play, 60% of the children stated rough and tumble play at daycare.

The results of this study will have implications for the understanding of child development. It may be that rough and tumble play evolves as children into more, or less, complex play behaviours as they mature. This study also has implications for early childhood education. The parents and educators have knowledge about rough and tumble play. This finding highlights the need for the development of teacher and parent education resources.

References

- Monighan-Nourot, P. (1997). Playing with play in four dimensions. In J. P. Isenberg and M. R. Jalongo (Eds.) Major trends and issues in early childhood education: Challenges, controversies, and insights (pp. 123-148). New York: Teachers College Press.
- Pellegrini, A. D., & Smith, P. K. (1998). Physical activity play: The nature and function of a neglected aspect of play. *Child Development*, 69(3), 577-598.
- Reed, T., & Brown, M. (2000). The expression of care in the rough and tumble play of boys. *Journal of Research in Childhood Education*, 15(1), 104-116.
- Smith, P. K. & Lewis, K. (1985). Rough-and-tumble play, fighting, and chasing in nursery school children. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 6(3), 175-181.

Letters to the Editor

Editors Note: The following letter was written by IPA/USA Member, Amy Lux, from Chicago as part of her on-going effort to fight the elimination of physical education in schools.

March 31, 2006

Dear Senators Kennedy and Frist,

Thank you for the kind response about the Chicago Parent recess article I forwarded to you. Illinois is the only state in the country that has mandated physical education. When I got involved in this issue, academic leaders on the issue were told that the mandate was nothing more than pretty words on paper. Along with the mandate is legislative blubblers allowing waivers for districts that do not have physical education. Those waivers are now being taken away. The Illinois State Legislative education committee passed a motion last summer to get off the physical education waiver. Our school, Sutherland elementary, was notified. The response? "Yeah right." It appears that no one is excited about this. It is going to be an enormous challenge.

Physical education mandates can be met through organized PE classes and recess. Schools around the city are bringing in yoga, dance and karate in their recess periods. Sutherland's answer was to say "We do not have enough time in our school day." It is true. We currently take away one recess slot per week so that they can have "library" (our library is a rolling cart). Our music class is in place during recess one day per week for our 1st graders. Because of the budget, we do not have a music room either. The teacher walks from room to room with a portable piano.

Have you ever seen the music program for a school with an adequate length of school day? The energy rocks. The grasp and enjoyment is astounding. It is a struggle to dread through it. The need for young kids to stretch and run cannot be replaced by singing. I witnessed a 1st grade class during a beautiful spring day. They needed the recess slot. They were jumping out of their seats and fidgeting... not much interest in music.

Mandated time periods for language arts, math, and science are continually being changed. Computer classes are standard. Somehow, educational leaders are going to what is going to be mandated, add up the hours necessary, and see to it that ALL schools allow for the time to see that these educational requirements are met.

Chicago has schools taking on programs such as a second foreign language just for 'show'. I saw an elementary school with a French language program. The expensive virtual equipment received through a special grant. I asked the principal if it was being used. He shyly admitted, "No. There is no time for it in the curriculum." "Why do you bother having it set up in the classroom? You actually have space in your school to waste a classroom?" "We fought to get it." Basically, local school councils in Chicago differentiate their schools by having special, added programs as a method of drawing more families into the school.

State mandated requirements for physical education include 30 minutes per day for elementary and 45 minutes a day for middle school kids. Chicago has the shortest school day in the state. Taxpayers have something to complain about. We also have one of the largest teachers unions in the country. They are fighting for 180 days. One of the advantages of a small suburban community, is that the taxing authority is stronger than the teacher's union. That is, the taxpayers will do it, not the other way around.

The most important thing we should be doing is taking steps toward meeting mandates. Suburban schools are bringing in ping pong tables for break time. Physical education does not have to be structured for older ages. Just a fresh air break can be construed as physical education. One of the biggest challenges in separating buildings and gymnasiums for junior high, is SMELL. School administrations could care less what kids do for physical education as long as they are outside. Maybe simple fresh air breaks wouldnt be such a bad idea. I see the kids at the neighboring Catholic school letting older kids out in the teachers parking lot to talk. Boys throw nerf footballs.

For our younger kids, the challenge is structuring playground time. At Sutherland, our kids only get one PE class per week. The other days can be used for recess. How do you schedule recess for 400-500 kids without total chaos? This is what needs to be worked out. It can be worked out.

I hope that you will use your leadership in the United States Senate to bring a more healthy future for our country.

Getting children and young teenagers to play together in a monitored setting has so many positive run-offs. I see the most important being healthier relationships. Even in high school, how many co-educational casual sports are kids engaging in? Schools could open up the gym and grounds to various activities and competitions. Most kids at age 14 have not made the school athletic team of their choice. Most of these kids stop athletic endeavors entirely at this age. They are going home to empty houses at 3:00 and getting into things they should not be getting into. They need something more healthy to do together. Require them to sign up for some tournament or other to meet PE requirements. Bring back tether ball. Some kids smile on their faces. Kids just need guidance. They all want to feel good about themselves.

Mayor Daley a few years ago pushed the schools and park district to work together to build modern playlots in our schools. The schools response? "We will get sued." Lawsuits are rampant here. If a kid falls down and breaks his glasses, the parents sue. If a kid trips over a step on the new equipment, the parents sue. My school district is so paranoid about legal liability, they will not allow league footballs on the field. Baseball is quite limited.

How did we get new playlots in just about every school in our city? Mayor Daley Screamed "Do it! I do not care about legal liability! Get those playlots in! We are very fortunate for having such a caring mayor. So many cities have let their metal playlots go to rust and torn out because of the rampant lawsuits. The control goes on to adulthood as these children now have no balance in life and hurt their backs and fingers from overwork.

I think the 5 gym classes per week requirement for middle school and high school are a put-off at most. Much of the time is spent standing in line or

to change clothes/shower. I once had a gym teacher DRAG me into the shower when I was 11 years old. I had a very strong self-conscience about and didn't want the other girls to see.

A group of students at a University in Washington took some hastily put together research I had done on the need for recess and referenced it beautifully - "Time well spent".

http://www.simpleliving.net/timeday/pdf/newsletter_february_2006/Recess_Project.pdfhttp://www.simpleliving.net/timeday/pdf/newsletter_february_2006/Recess_Project.pdf

The National PTA is deciding to get on board now and is looking for suburban schools that are facing the issue of recess reduction. They are working with the Cartooning Network... "Rescuing Recess."

www.rescuingrecess.com

The group of students who worked on the paper above have referenced a website from an organization which is addressing the time poverty situation in schools. It is an interesting concept. They have all sorts of ideas and agendas. Bringing recess back is just one.

Take Back Your Time

Nationwide initiative to challenge the epidemic of overwork, over-scheduling, and time famine

www.simpleliving.net/timeday

Further note:

Last summer I researched current Illinois legislation on physical fitness. I was appalled that our educational leaders were taking on issues that I would not want my child to be exposed to. I do not have the bill references anymore, but basically, they require schools to talk to students about AIDS, transmissible diseases, and other lovely things. Basically, schools use classroom "health education" time to lower the need for gym time, especially for middle schools. I think it is best to keep kids from playing with one another... especially in city areas with huge differences in socio-economic classes. They do not want to play with others who may have a different accent (many have thick African - American linguistics), or exposed to more passionate play habits. Our school is in a large range of economic backgrounds. These kids are so much richer for their shared social and play experiences. It is the primary reason I have moved to a more affluent suburb.

You asked for comments!

Thank you so much for taking interest in this matter.

Sincerely,

Amy Lux
Coalition for Children's Health

Editor's Note: This second letter, written by Bob Bigelow, was forwarded by Marcy Guddemi, IPA/USA Officer and Board Member

Dedicated to Improving Youth Sports to Promote Fitness,
Sports as Education and Overall Youth Development

March 25, 2006

During the past year, I have conducted a survey about youth sports on my web site. As you know, you were kind enough to take this survey and I appreciate your valuable feedback. The survey's results to date can be accessed on the home page of my web site at www.bob-bigelow.com. This survey has provided many issues in today's youth sports programs, and opportunities for improving the experience for our kids.

I am now launching a second survey. My goal is to identify concrete programs that communities can implement to improve sports for kids, based on what you and others interested in youth sports provide. This new survey will only take a few minutes to complete. I hope many who took my first survey, as well as you, will provide their ideas for change in this new survey. You can take it by simply clicking on the link below. Results will be posted on my web site soon: <http://www.surveymonkey.com/s.asp?u=697881931443>

Attached also is a brief 90-second audio clip with highlights of my community talk. I believe this audio clip will help build broader awareness about youth sports and change in youth sports. You can also help by listening to this brief clip and letting me know what you think about it in the new survey. Simply clicking on the link will open in Windows Media Player in about 10 or 15 seconds.

Please also feel free to pass this information along to any friends and colleagues you believe share an interest in promoting better youth sports programs.

Thank you so much for your time!

Kind Regards,

Bob Bigelow

Editor's Note: The following information was submitted to us by one of our newest members, Malia Stenerson. Her website has links to various forms of art and playfully alive art.

Exhibit at the Pratt: An Invitation from Malia Stenerson

Hi! I am a new member and would love to extend an invitation to my master thesis exhibition at Pratt Institute in Brooklyn, New York. I have set up a documentary which excavates a deeper meaning into play. Please let me know if you would like any further information.
Malia Stenerson

Video/Immersion environments exploring play- www.maliaplay.com

IPA/USA Membership Information

We do appreciate your continue support in our efforts to advocate for the rights of children. Working closely with many international, national, state and local organizations, government officials, and professionals in the fields of health, education, recreation, play, recess, research, child development, media, and arts, we are striving to continue to place children in the forefront and protect, preserve and promote their right to play.

As a dues paying member, your benefits include:

Membership to IPA (the international parent organization)

PlayRights- the IPA tri-annual magazine/journal
 Access to a multidisciplinary network of people, IPA publications, media productions, and discounts on books stocked by IPA
 Reduced rates at IPA and IPA/USA conferences, workshops, and study tours
 On-line access to the PlayDay Handbook. IPA Declaration of a Child's Right to Play, Recess advocacy materials, and much more!
 E-mail updates of breaking news and events
 Access to IPA/USA Membership
 An invitation to the biannual board meetings of IPA/USA

If you are interested in learning more, please contact Marcy Guddemi our treasurer and membership processor at mguddemi@sbcglobal.net

IPA/USA NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING RATES AND CONDITIONS

The IPA/USA Newsletter circulates electronically to a national and international audience . These readers are committed to children's play, recreation, education

ADVERTISING RATES

Number of insertions	1	2	3
Banner (640 wide x 120 high)	\$80	\$150	\$215
Half-banner (320 wide x 120 high)	\$45	\$80	\$110
Business Card	\$25	\$45	\$62

Published quarterly. Only web ready .GIF, .JPG. Or .PNG advertisements are accepted. Includes one web and one email link. Advertising copy deadlines are September 1 and October 1. Advertisements are expected to conform to international standards of decency and honesty. All advertisements are subject to approval by editor.

CONDITIONS

IPA/USA is not held liable for any loss or damage occasioned by the failure of any ad to appear from any cause whatsoever. Acceptance of an ad does not constitute an endorsement of product or service. IPA/USA reserves the right to cancel or reduce any contract at their discretion. Placing of an order will be deemed an acceptance of the terms and conditions. For more information, contact the editor. Inquiries to IPA/USA Newsletter Editor.

IPA/USA NEWSLETTER ARTICLE CONDITIONS

All enclosed articles are the viewpoint of the author. Acceptance of an article does not necessarily reflect the opinions of IPA/USA.

Send articles and information to:
 Audrey Skrupskelis
 University of South Carolina Aiken
 471 University Pkwy, Aiken, SC 29801
 803-641-3240