

THE VOICE



"Soaking up the last vestiges of summer"

Housekeeping

1. Break day, no school: Friday, October 8th
2. Thanksgiving, no school: Monday, October 11th
3. Picture Day: Tuesday, October 19th
4. Pro-D-Day, no school: Friday, October 22nd
5. Spirit Day: Thursday, October 28th
6. Halloween Celebration: Friday, October 29th



A Message From Our School Principal

Dear Family, Friends, Teachers & Staff,

Over the last year and half, we have all been vigilantly following protocols in order to limit the spread of COVID-19. The good news for our community is that it worked. Our Centre has not had a single exposure event in the last year and a half. This success was due to strict safety protocols and precautions taken by Centre staff and families alike.

We now have the vaccines to further assist us in preventing the spread of COVID-19. At the same time, many restrictions in the community at large have eased. People are travelling again, meeting up with friends and family again, and attending events that have been off limits for a very long time. While the vaccine is doing a great job of protecting us from COVID-19, they will not protect us from the more common winter illnesses such as the common cold and flu. Public health has warned that we can expect to see a strong return of these viruses this fall and winter.

Staying home when you are not well continues to be just as important now as before so that we can stop the spread of the more common viruses as well as COVID-19. When children first come to a childcare centre or school, they are always exposed to germs that are new to them, making them more susceptible to illness until they build up some immunity. This is even more true this year, as most children haven't had experiences outside of the home environment for several months.

In order to limit the spread of illness in the school, we are reminding staff and families that if you are sick, you need to stay home. If your child is coughing, has a fever, and excessive runny nose, a bad cough, they need to stay home until their symptoms are gone. If your child's classroom doesn't have enough staff to run safely, we may have to cancel school for that group. If your child comes to school and is too ill to be here, we will call you to pick them up. If you are unsure whether to send your child to school, contact us to discuss.

So this fall, let's all be extra cautious so we can all stay safe!



Loretta Richardson
Principal



Promoting Risky Play

by Leela Downton

Risky play has recently become a popular term because of studies that show the physical, cognitive, and social benefits risk-taking offers (Herrington & Brussoni, 2015). It is important to remember that in the early years, risky play is about child-led unstructured play. Research is not suggesting that forcing children to take risks has the same benefits or develops these skills. The goal is to give them a chance to practice overcoming age-appropriate challenges.

What Is Risky Play?

Play is risky when it is thrilling and exciting (see examples below):

1. Experiencing great heights by climbing a tree or a ladder
2. Playing with speed on the slide or tricycle
3. Using dangerous tools such as a hammer and nail



Why Is Risky Play Worth the Risk?

To really understand why engaging in risky play is beneficial, take a step back and look at the long-term goal of their development: self-regulation and independence. For a moment, think about the qualities a person needs to take a risk. Kleppe (2018) summarized Miller and Byrnes (1997) Self-Regulation Model (SRM) to the following five tendencies that are necessary to succeed in taking a risk, and they are the ability to:

1. Strategize
2. Coordinate multiple goals
3. Handle uncertainty
4. Change strategies and correct mistakes
5. Learn from experience



Risk taking helps children to (Kleppe, 2018):

- Get to know their strengths and abilities and improve them
- Learn to plan and problem solve as they face new situations
- Learn to understand different situations and be able to compare
- Learn when to ask for help
- Learn life skills such as how to cross a street
- Reduce fear as a hindrance for performance as exposure to and overcoming new and uncertain situations can improve self-regulation
- Be situated in a stage of growth—what Vygotsky called the zone of proximal development (ZPD)



Promoting Risky Play (Cont'd...)

How to Support Your Child's Risky Play

Supporting risky play requires a comprehensive approach as several factors need to come together for risk taking to be safe. Here is how you can provide your child the support and opportunity to manage risk for themselves while they gain new important skills:

Your image of the child: The image you hold of the child will determine what you think the child is capable of and the activity you provide or allow them to engage in (Moule, 2020). If you see them as capable, then try practicing Brussoni's 17 second rule (Toole, n.d.). The next time you are tempted to say "Stop! That's not safe," Brussoni says to take a step back and count 17 seconds and see how the child is handling the situation before you interrupt and stop them.

Your relationship with the child: A supportive and responsive relationship is essential to promote social-emotional development (National Center for Pyramid Model Innovations, n.d.) When the adult trusts the child and knows what the child is capable of and the child trusts the adult, you can feel more confident letting them take a risk, and it will be much easier for you to intervene and give direction when necessary.

Your own curiosity, interest, and tone: Especially with younger children, you need to provide the right physical and effective environment to take risks. Your positive attitude toward risky play and calm tone can turn a situation that might have had a negative outcome into a positive learning experience.

Providing physical and emotional support: The support could simply be encouraging the child to pay closer attention to what they are doing by asking inquiry-based questions or making eye contact and standing closer to increase their confidence. If a child is too scared to do what another child is doing but is watching intently and seems to want to try, you can give them confidence to try by asking them if they want to first try it while holding your hand.

Conducting a risk-benefit assessment: The level of risk should always be age and stage appropriate. Even though the goal is child-led unstructured play, as the adult, you have the responsibility to ensure risky play is successful. Prevent interaction with known hazards and guide them through the decision-making process when necessary (Zeni, 2020). When appropriate, have the child do the risk assessment with you and focus on staying as safe as necessary (Toole, n.d.).

Perhaps one of the best reasons for allowing children to engage in risky play is that it provides parents and educators opportunities to praise effort and hard work, which increases motivation and helps to develop the habit of working hard and enjoying success.



Alternative Vocabulary to "Be Careful"

"Parents may want their children to "Be Careful!" What does that really mean?? Take a different approach with the words you use, and your child will start to think, plan ahead, and strategize about how they play, where they place their bodies, and look at their surroundings to be safer." (Lisa Labere).



When You Want to Say "BE CAREFUL"

Play with Great Heights

- Stay focused on what you're doing.
- What's your next move?
- Do you feel safe there?
- Take your time.
- Does that branch feel strong and stable?
- I'm here if you need me.

Play Near Dangerous Elements

- Please move slowly and carefully near the...
- Please give each other lots of space so that no one feels like they need to push, and no one gets knocked over by accident.
- Do you feel stable/balanced?
- Do you need more space?

Rough and Tumble Play

- Make eye contact before you tackle someone. Make sure they know you are coming so that they can get their body ready.
- Check in with each other. Make sure everyone is still having a good time.
- Ask them if they're ok.
- Ask them if they're still having fun.
- Did you like that? Make sure you tell them if you didn't like that.

Play Where Children can Get Lost

- If you need to run, meet me at the next trail marker!
- Let's check this cave/fort to make sure it's safe to hide in.

Play with Great Speeds

- Please find a safe spot for your stick while you're running.
- I've noticed that this is a really busy area and I'm worried that someone not playing this game might get knocked over. Watch out for other people and give them lots of space.
- Should we move this game to a more open area?

Play with Harmful Tools

- Sticks need space. Look around you – do you have enough space to swing that big stick?
- Please keep one end of your stick on the ground!
- What's your plan with that big stick?
- Rocks need space!
- Before you throw that rock, what do you need to look for?
- That rock looks really heavy! Can you manage it?





October is National Audiology Month!

Did you know that October is Audiology Month? "The goal of National Audiology Month is to offer to audiologists a special occasion to promote and support the profession of audiology in Canada" (Canadian Academy of Audiology).

Here at Children's Hearing & Speech Centre we are so very fortunate to have an AMAZING Audiologist on our team, Ning Hu!

Optimal access to sound is paramount for the development of listening and spoken language. Whether a child requires a listening device (e.g. hearing aid, bone conduction hearing aid, or cochlear implant) or amplification modifications in their learning environment, Ning is there to support the auditory needs of our students.

Here is just a small list of all the things Ning does at the Centre:

- Comprehensive audiologic evaluation (otoscopy, acoustic emittance, audiometry, speech perception testing)
- Hearing instrument selection, fitting, programming, verification, validation
- FM fitting, programming, verification, validation, troubleshooting
- Cochlear implant & remote assistant troubleshooting
- Ear impressions for ear molds and swim molds
- Ongoing partnership and collaboration with our onsite and itinerant teachers of the deaf and hard of hearing, our speech-language pathologists, various community audiologists, and the Provincial Resource Program – Auditory Outreach
- Liaise with the Provincial Resource Auditory Outreach Program to ensure FM/Roger systems are available



Halloween Bingo Activity

By: Rita Francis



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