

# Risky Play: Does it Belong in Child Care?



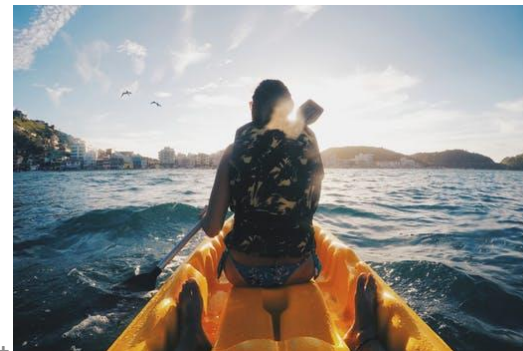
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[www.earlyyearsphysicalliteracy.com](http://www.earlyyearsphysicalliteracy.com)

Inaugural Calgary Play Summit, November 2018



# Extreme Sports: Adult Play!



# Young Children and Extreme Sports





# Calgary's Adventure Playgrounds



# How Active Should our Children Be?

<http://www.csep.ca/CMFiles/Guidelines/CSEP-InfoSheets-child-ENG.pdf>

	Physical Activity	Sedentary Behaviour
Infants (under 12 months)	Active several times a day Tummy time and interactive floor play	Limit sitting (high chair, stroller, car seat) to no more than 1 hour at a time Screen time <b>not recommended</b>
Toddlers (1-2 years) and Preschoolers (3-4 years)	At least <b>180 minutes</b> a day spread throughout the day - structured and unstructured play	Screen time limited to no more than <b>1 hour per day</b>
School age (5-11 years)	At least <b>60 minutes</b> a day – structured and unstructured play	Screen time limited to no more than <b>2 hours</b> a day Encourage outdoor play every day

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**Canadian 24-Hour Movement Guidelines for the Early Years (0–4 years): An Integration of Physical Activity, Sedentary Behaviour, and Sleep. Available at:**

<https://www.participaction.com/en-ca/thought-leadership/benefits-and-guidelines/0-4>

# Meeting the Challenge!

- Almost impossible for parents to provide 180 minutes during the week
- Child care stepping up to meet the challenge – indoors and out!



# Canadian Consensus Statements

Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play – 2015

Council of Chief Medical Officers of Health – 2018

"Access to active play in nature and outdoors-with its risks-is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children's opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings-at home, at school, **in child care**, the community and nature."



# Does Risky Play Belong in Child Care?

- Spectrum Tolerance Activity:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=okZpg3hEy30>



# Risky play is **thrilling exciting** play

That encourages children to:

- **push themselves** by running faster, climbing higher, and jumping farther,
- **explore their physical limits** and **comfort levels**,
- **learn life skills** such as:
  - using construction tools such as hammers and saws, and kitchen utensils such as knives,
- navigate ice, snow, water, hills, ditches, and other **natural elements**.

# Types of Risky Play

Heights: Climbing, jumping from still or flexible surface, balancing on high object, swinging at great heights.

Speed: Swinging, sledding, running, cycling, skating, skiing

Tools: Using knives, saws, axes and ropes

Elements: Playing around cliffs, deep or icy water, or fire pits

Rough-and-tumble: Wrestling, fencing with sticks, play fighting

Getting Lost: Exploring alone, playing alone in unfamiliar environments



# Why in Child Care?

## Our Children are **not** Active Enough!

- 35% of 2-5 year olds in Canada are overweight or obese.
- 30% of 3-4 year olds are **not** meeting the daily recommended 180 minutes of physical activity.
- 85% of children five and under are **not** meeting the daily screen time recommendation of one hour or less.



# But is Risky Play the Answer?



# Is Risky Play Too Risky? Safety? Liability? Confidence?

A Catch-22: Our desire to see that no harm comes to our kids is causing harm to our kids.

(Marche, 2018)

Keep our children as safe as necessary, not as safe as possible.

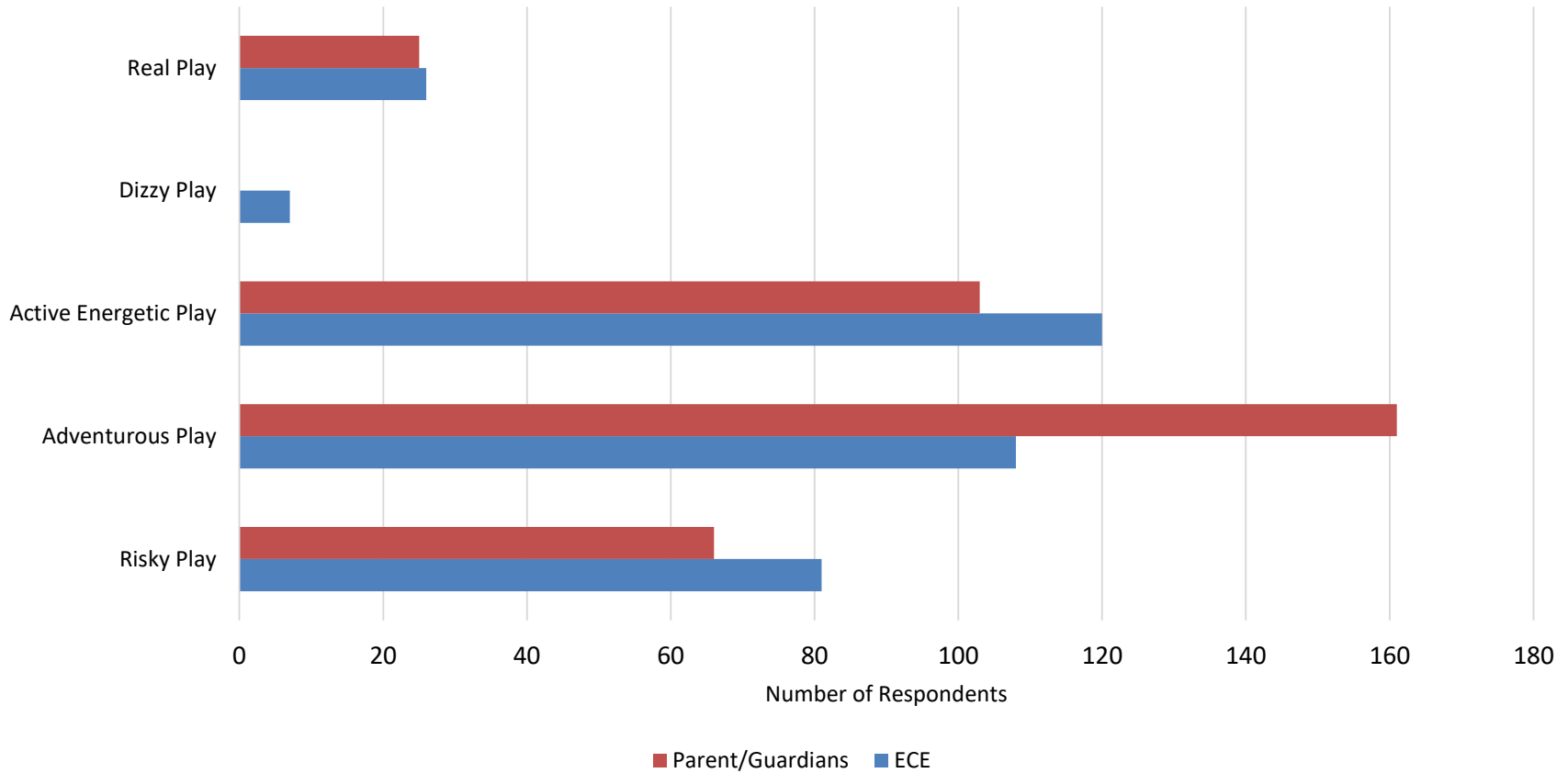
(Lasinsky, 2017)

Eliminate hazards; manage risks.

(Tannenbaum, 2015)

# Is the Secret Terminology?

What is the best name for play that is thrilling and exciting and where there is a risk of physical injury?



# Alberta Adventurous (Risky) Play Framework for the Early Years

Develop a common document to guide ECEs in understanding, explaining, planning, programming, and communicating

## Benefits

Regulatory support

Licensing

Accreditation

Curriculum Framework





# Process

- **Create** centre/program philosophy
  - Why is this play important? What do regulations say?  
Goals, measurement, strategies. Involve staff.
- **Educate**
  - All staff are able to appropriately program and explain how programming relates to philosophy.
  - All staff provide active engaged supervision.
- **Communicate**
  - Licensing, health, accreditation, other regulatory bodies
  - Families
- **Engage all stakeholders**

# The Key – Active Engaged Supervision

- What does active engaged supervision look like?
  - Why essential?
  - For different children?
  - In different situations?
  - Developmentally appropriate?
- Teach the children in small groups or one on one how to:
  - Know and understand boundaries
  - Safely use tools such as hammers and saws
  - Navigate elements such as snow, ice, and water
- Then supervise appropriately.

# Let's Get Outside and Play!

## Motivated, Confident, and Competent

