



Northumberland
County Council

Risky Play



www.northumberland.gov.uk

What To Expect This Evening

- Lots of fun and activities
- Some Theory
- Taking small risks
- Dialogue and engagement
- Exploration and sharing collective knowledge



Risky play can be **defined** as a thrilling and exciting activity that involves a risk of physical injury, and **play** that provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury risk (Sandseter (2007; Little & Wyver, 2008).



Why is Risk Taking Important?

EYFS guidance Development Matters states that an effective learner is willing 'to have a go' through:

- Initiating activities
- Seeking challenge
- Showing a 'can do' attitude
- Taking a risk, engaging in new experience and learning by trial and error

Evidence states that risk in a supportive environment is positively linked to:

- Emotional well-being
- Resilience
- Mental health
- Protection against the negative effects of future failure
- Improved perception - height, depth etc.
- Physical strength and motor competence



Human Barcharts

Are you comfortable with?

- Children chopping fruit/veg?
- Children climbing trees/walls?
- Children balancing on walls or narrow beams?
- Children using tools?
- Children playing out of direct sight?
- Children using play equipment in a more daring way?
- Children building their own obstacle courses?
- Children building high structures to jump off?
- Children cooking on an open fire?
- Children wrestling and play fighting?

Types of Risky Play

- Great heights
- High speeds
- Dangerous tools
- Dangerous elements
- Rough and tumble
- Getting lost



Managing Risk vz Dangers of Safety

- Clear well-understood policy
- Adults perceptions of risk - staff and parents
- What play value does the risk have?
- Children's ability to self assess risk
- Appropriate environments
- Risk assessments vz Health and Safety
- Getting the balance right - As safe as necessary not as possible
 - Physical risks
 - Emotional risks

Risk Benefit Analysis - example

Using a Risk Benefit Analysis approach means you need to consider how to mitigate risk using solution focused approaches to dealing with them. Benefits of particular experiences are weighed against possible risks!

Activity	Benefits	Possible Risk	To whom	Precautions/Solutions	Risk Rating H/M/L
Tree Climbing	<p>The pleasure it gives to children and young people. Health, confidence and well-being. Regular contact with nature in promoting environmental awareness. Extending boundaries Building resilience Supporting development of child's own risk assessments</p>	<p>Risk of minor injuries and long bone fractures. Lesser risk of more serious injuries. Risk of damage to trees. Risk of complaints from some residents. Risk of claims, litigation and loss of reputation.</p>	Child	<p>1. Leave trees as they are, and allow climbing. 2. Remove some weaker branches and allow climbing. 3. Remove trees and/or lower branches to prevent climbing. No new information: options need to be discussed and pros and cons weighed up. 68 4. Try to stop children from climbing through enforcement and education. 5. Talk with children about making their own judgements about strength and safety of branches.</p> <p>In general benefits outweigh risks but these need to be managed so leave trees as they are, and allow tree climbing. Monitor carefully at different times of year and review decision in one year or earlier if change in situation.</p>	L

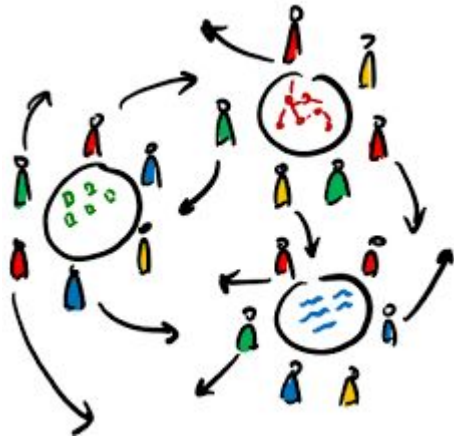
More Information - benefits risk assessment

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2015/10/psf-risk-benefit-assessment-form-worked-example.pdf>

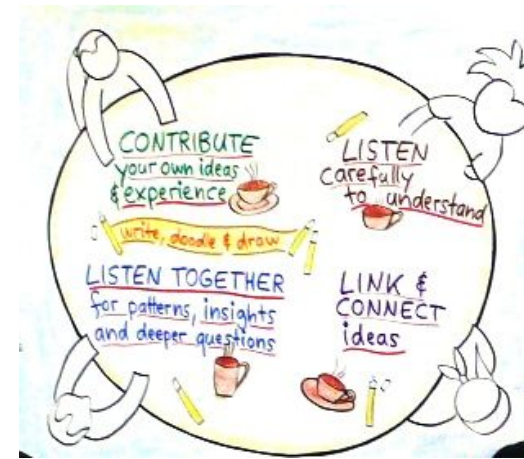
<http://www.cycj.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2014/11/FRAME-U18-FINAL-August-2014-2.pdf>

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/media/172644/managing-risk-in-play-provision.pdf>

https://www.nurseryworld.co.uk/digital_assets/291/LDAllaboutRisk.pdf



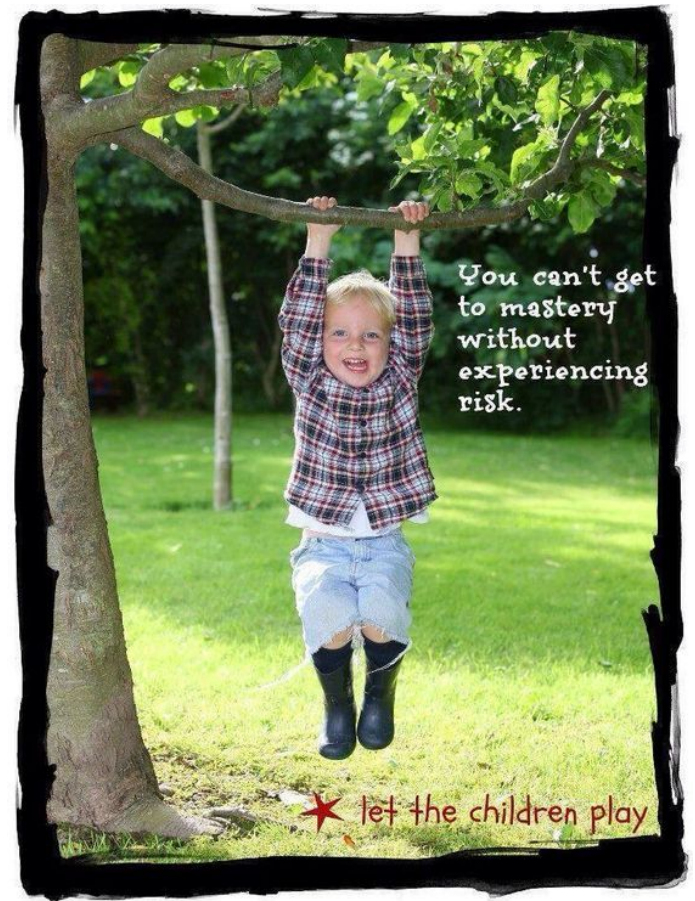
Risky Play Cafe



We have within us the wisdom to confront even the most difficult of challenges; the answers we need are available to us; and we are wiser together than we are alone!

“Childhood is that state
which ends the
moment a puddle is first
viewed as an obstacle
instead of
an opportunity.”

-Kathy Williams

















Mental Injury
 Indoors Resources
 Running Experience
 Exciting Chopping Benefits
 Resilience Fears Worry Safety
 Myths Fire Knives Rope
 Fun Tree Gun Building
 Limits Mud Wood Ice Team Tools
Danger Heights
 Confidence Stairs Forest Joy Boundaries
 Swings Water Play Craft Skills Health
 Testing Puddle Risk Cooperation Imagination
 Climbing Pleasure Ability Thrilling Environment
 Constructing Adults Wellbeing
 Assessment Challenge Deconstructing
 Development



Creating a Challenging Environment

Resources that allow for:

- Swinging/Sliding/Rolling/Rocking
- Speed/Spinning/Running
- Climbing/Balancing/Crawling
- Jumping
- Sawing/Hammering/Sewing
- Chopping/Cooking/Peeling
- Well organised storage
- Flexibility/Diversity
- Collaboration

For example:

- Rockers/Swings/Slides
- Bridges/Ropes/Trees
- Sea-saws/Hammocks
- Varied terrain/Uneven ground
- Fire pits
- Open space/Enclosed space
- Steps/ladders
- Crates/Bricks/Beams
- Variety of real tools etc

Final Activity and Evaluation