

FACT SHEET

play Grows Confidence



Children naturally seek opportunities to try new things or challenge themselves, which is an essential part of self-learning. By mastering small challenges in play, children grow confidence and resilience.

In addition, by interacting and connecting with others through play, children develop adaptable responses to a diversity of environments, thus reducing anxiety.

Adults must provide time, space and freedom for children to challenge themselves and make independent judgements, so they can get the most benefit out of their play every day.

CLIMB TREES



64% of adults said they climbed trees as children, compared to less than 20% of their children

RISK LEVEL



Playground risk is extremely low in terms of fatalities, and in terms of lesser injuries far lower than for traditional sports and about the same as the risk encountered at home



Challenges we face

- Growing anxiety around perceptions of children's safety can often limit children's experiences of play outdoors
- Children who don't develop risk competency in childhood often have difficulty with confidence, decision-making and problem solving later on
- Many demands on adults attention means that children are not always adequately supervised in public playgrounds and there is an assumption that children's safety is someone else's responsibility



What You Can Do

THREE YEARS & UNDER

- Direct very young children towards play activities suitable to their age and competency level and spend time supervising them. Remember your mobile can wait!
- Respond appropriately to situations – remember children watch your cues. Tumbles and bumps are a normal part of childhood learning

FOUR YEARS & OVER

- Encourage children to try and challenge themselves when playing outdoors
- Wait to be invited in – supervision means watching and responding when needed, not directing play
- Talk to children about potential risks and discuss suitable ways they can manage these. Get them to suggest ideas!
- Respond appropriately to situations – remember children watch your cues. Tumbles and bumps are a normal part of childhood learning
- Don't pad or place helmets on children for play. It is important that a child's whole body is free to practise different skills in play

Definition of Risk

Risk applies to any situation where the outcome is unknown. It is commonly used to apply to a negative situation outcome, but when applied to the play behaviour of children or to the design of playgrounds, there are positive implications to risky situations and risk-taking behaviour.

Definition of Risk Competency

Risk competency refers to a child's capacity to make suitable judgements around managing risky situations for a beneficial outcome.



make time today for outside play



PlayAustralia.org.au