

HEAD START BODY START NATIONAL CENTER FOR PHYSICAL DEVELOPMENT AND OUTDOOR PLAY



National Association for
Sport and Physical Education



Presented by **Bethe Almeras & Meg Greiner**
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2010 AAHPERD Convention & Exposition

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Learning Outcomes

1. Increase knowledge of research regarding the benefits of outdoor play and time in nature.
2. Increase understanding of the adults' role in preparing the outdoor play space to promote play and movement opportunities.

Learning Outcomes Continued



3. Increase understanding of the adults' role in facilitating unstructured/child initiated play in outdoor play spaces.
4. Increase understanding of the adults' role in facilitating structured play in outdoor play spaces.

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“Go Outside and Play!”



- Today’s children spend less time outdoors than **ANY** previous generation
- Free play and discretionary time has declined more than 9 hours a week over the last 25 years

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Outdoor vs. Indoor Play

Outdoor play = more opportunities for:

- moderate to vigorous physical activity
- testing their physical skills & abilities
- building strength & coordination
- increased mental stimulation from interacting with a changing landscape filled with the scents, sounds and textures of the outdoors



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Activity: Step Up for Outdoor Play!



- ✓ You make time in your own life to connect with nature
- ✓ You believe that outdoor play has cognitive, developmental, physical, & emotional benefits
- ✓ You had a skinned knee as a kid
- ✓ You have heard of the term *Nature Deficit Disorder*
- ✓ You believe adult's attitudes can be a barrier to outdoor play
- ✓ You can whistle with a blade of grass
- ✓ You feel as confident with your ability to facilitate play OUTSIDE as you do inside the classroom
- ✓ You know how to skip a stone!

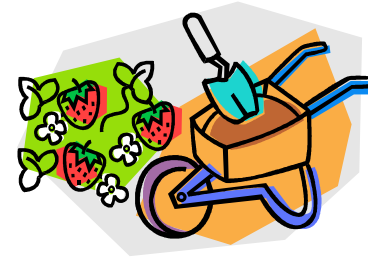
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Play Memory Field Trip!



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Putting Your Knowledge to the Test



Time for the
Let's Get Dirty
Pop Quiz!!

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What Are The Facts?

1. True
2. True
3. True
4. True
5. False
6. False
7. True
8. False
9. False
10. False



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Let's Talk Research



“Play is the only way the highest intelligence of humankind can unfold.”

~ Joseph Chilton Pearce

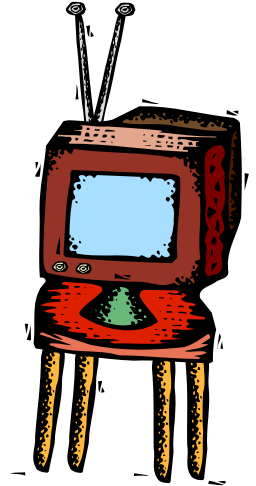
- Six out of 10 overweight/obese preschoolers will be overweight or obese when they are 12 years old!
- The evidence suggests an association between obesity at an early age and early on-set Type II Diabetes and high blood pressure.



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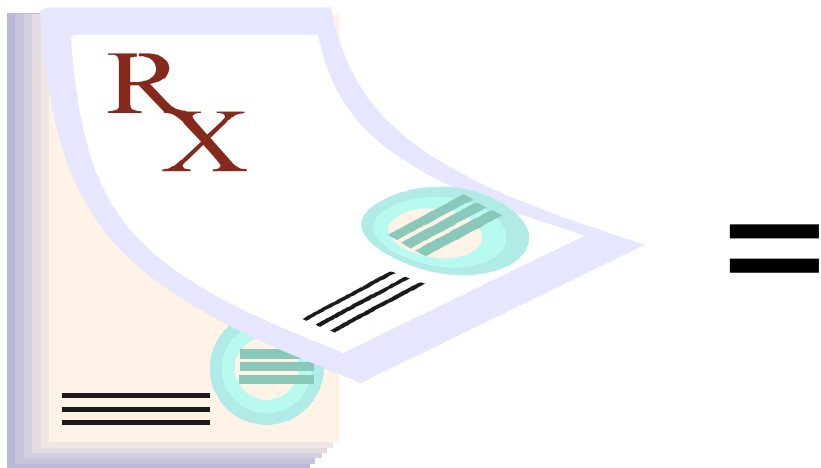
Unplugging Childhood

- The American Academy of Pediatrics urges parents to **avoid** TV and other electronic media for children two years of age and under.
- Children ages two-five years old spend **more than 32 hours a week** on average in front of a TV screen (2010)
- School-aged children spend 6.5 hours a day on electronic media



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But, It's Not ALL Bad News...



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Healthier, Happier, Stronger Kids!

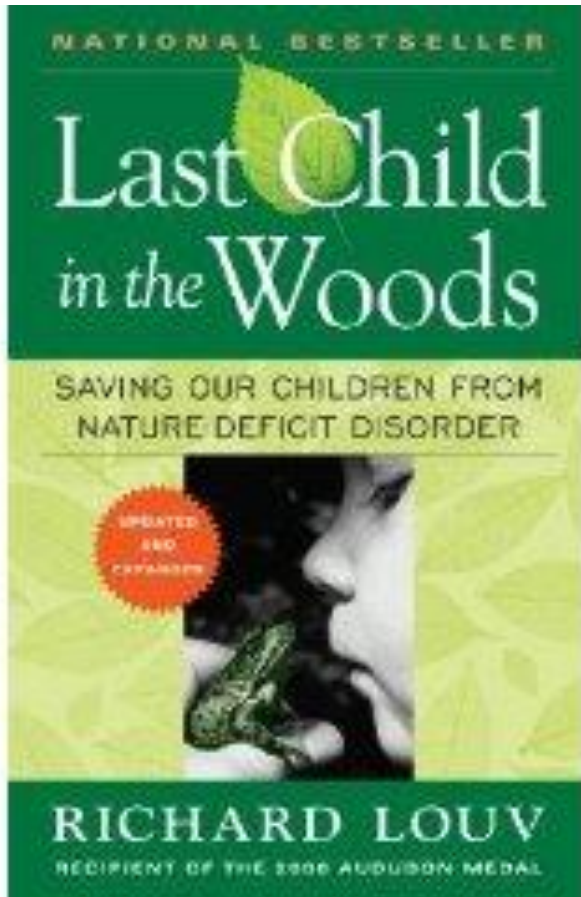
Children who play outside regularly:

- Become fitter and leaner
- Develop stronger immune systems
- Have more active imaginations
- Have lower stress levels
- Play more creatively
- Have greater respect for themselves and others



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The Importance of Nature



“I like to play indoors better ‘cause that’s where all the electric outlets are.”

~ A 4th Grader in San Diego, quoted in Last Child in the Woods

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The Importance of Nature

Nature inspires in children a sense of wonder...



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Play in Nature



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The Outdoor Play Environment

Outdoor play provides more opportunities for moderate to vigorous physical activity (**MVPA**) and whole body exercise.



Source: Brown et al, 2009; Burdette, H. & Whitaker, R., 2005.

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The Importance of Design



Health benefits and opportunities for academic and social development are associated with well designed outdoor play spaces which promote play and interaction with natural elements.

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Adults' Role: Improving Outdoor Play

Improving **outdoor play** quality is as easy as **1- 2 - 3**:

1. Design spaces *intentionally*
2. Provide manipulatives & appropriate equipment
3. Facilitate active play



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1. Intentional Design

Keep in mind:

- ✓ Mixed-use & open space
- ✓ Sensory experiences
- ✓ Risk-taking opportunities
- ✓ Safety
- ✓ Natural elements



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2. Manipulatives & Equipment

Keep in mind:

- ✓ Variety
- ✓ Numbers
- ✓ Multi-use
- ✓ Children's interest



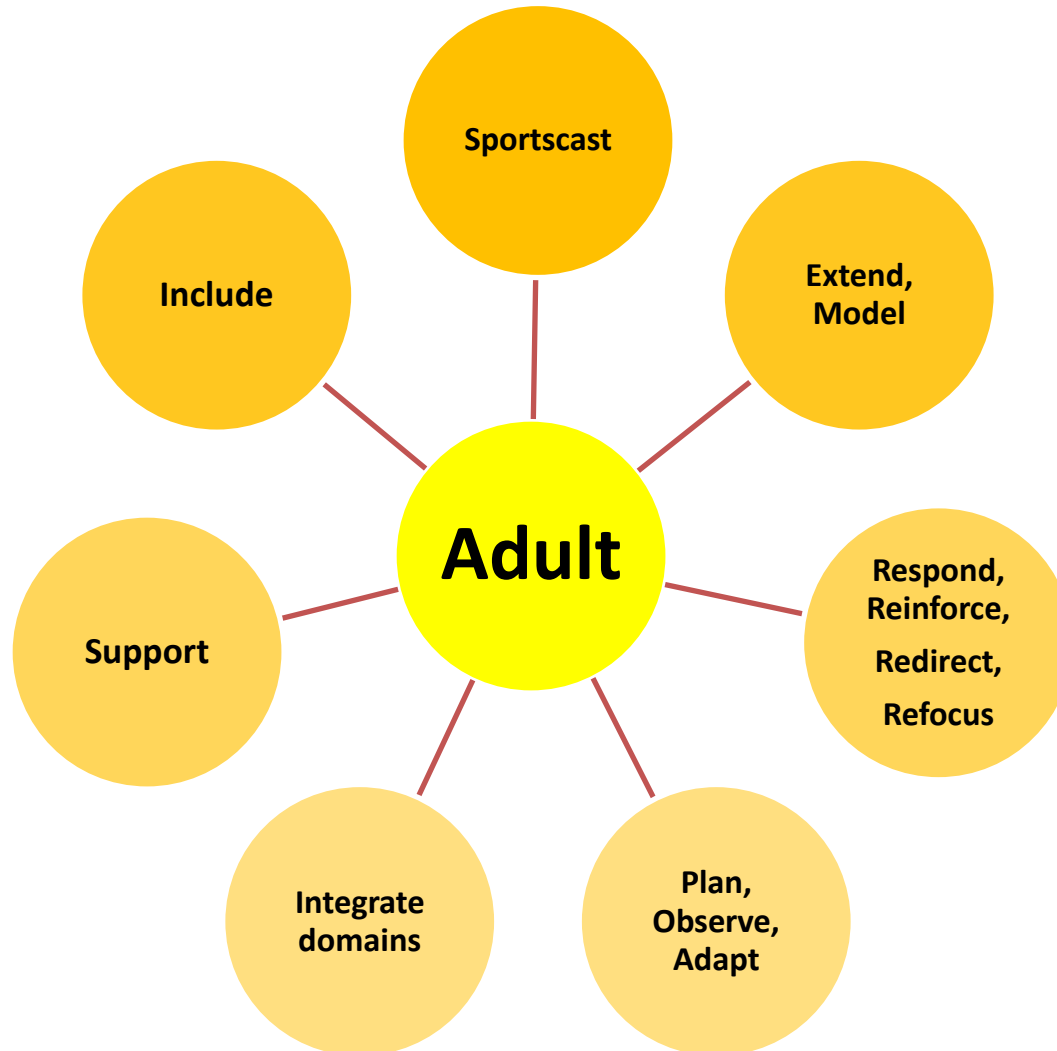
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3. *Facilitating Active Play*



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Be a Successful Facilitator of Play!



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Nine Primary Facilitation Roles

1. Plan
2. Observe
3. Model
4. Extend
5. Respond



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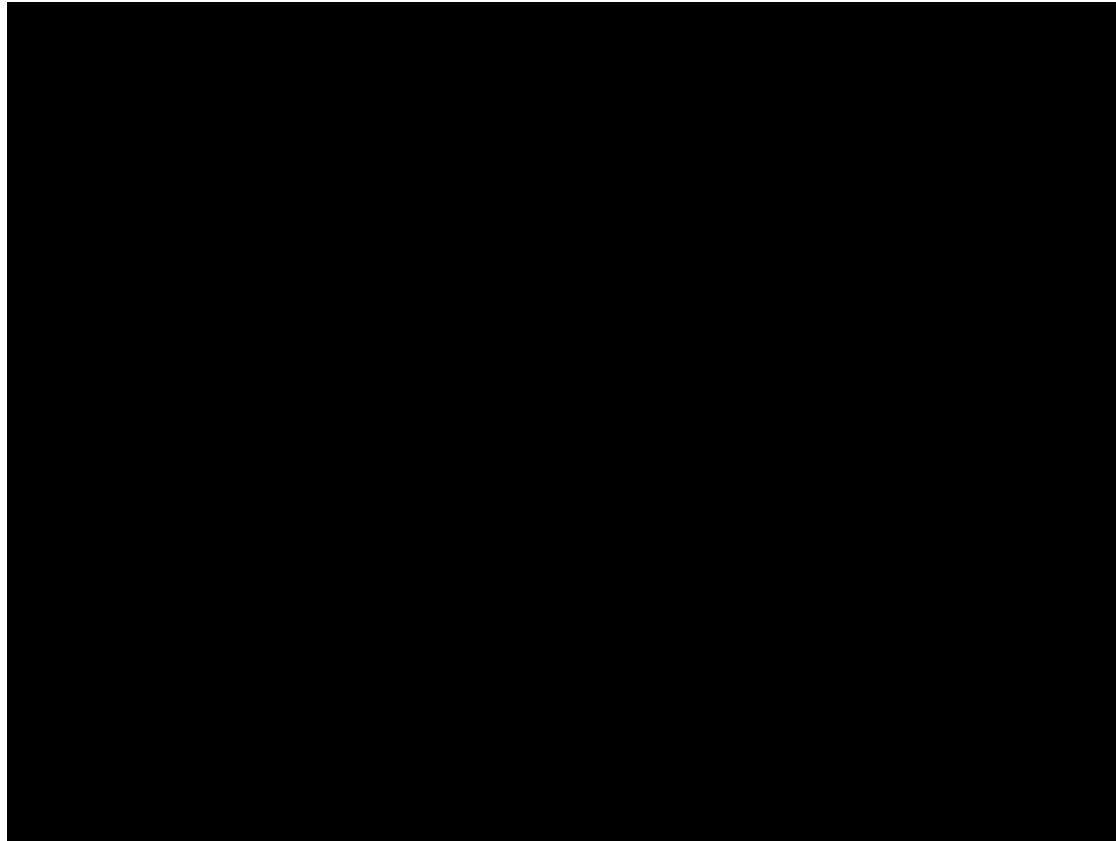
Facilitation Roles Continued

6. Sportscast
7. Integrate
8. Include
9. Support



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Observe & Comment



Source: Videatives, Inc. www.videatives.com



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Partner Share: Facilitation Roles

*How would **you** facilitate the activity?*



1. What role(s) would you use?

- ***Demonstrate!***

2. What could you add to extend the play?



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Putting it ALL Together: Let's Play!



**Let's brainstorm
some fun ideas!**

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Creating Activities



Keep in mind:

- ✓ Developmentally appropriate
- ✓ Focus on **movement & MVPA!**



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Group Share: Activity Ideas

What were our **BRIGHTEST** ideas?!





Final Thoughts

Questions & Answers



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Contact Information



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