Creating Safe and Trusting Places to Live and Learn

Wilma Gold
Sharon Davisson
Marilyn Shelton
and The Susan Hopkins
A little PEACE

by Barbara Kerley
Setting the Stage
Brainstorm expectations for what you would like to get out of this institute.
Setting the Stage: Connecting Play, Learning and Nonviolence

Marilyn Shelton
Venn Diagram: Play, Peace Education, and Teacher’s Role
Definitions of Play

Erik Erikson, “Play provides model situations in which aspects of the past are re-lived, the present represented and renewed, and the future anticipated.”

Lev Vygotsky, “The child engages in an “imaginary, illusory world in which...unrealized desires can be realized”

from Hirsh, 2004
Definitions of Play (continued)

Maria Montessori, “Play is the child’s work” from Hirsh, 2004

Elizabeth Jones and, “Choosing what to do, doing it, and enjoying it.” Renatta Cooper from Jones and Cooper, 2006
Characteristics of play

- intrinsically motivated,
- freely chosen,
- actively engaged in,
- pleasurable,
- and nonliteral (symbolism)

Hughes (1989) from Hirsh
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

- Sensory: scribbling stage
- Motor Play: functional play stage
- Level I Representation: cognitive/manipulative
- Level II Representation: creative/expressive
- Level III Representation: language-mediated
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

Sensory: scribbling stage

“Sensory experiences coordinate brain functioning and create synapses. Sensory experiences are necessary for the development of higher-level functioning.”

Hirsh, pg 184
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

Motor Play: functional play stage

Stage is characterized by movement.

Child utilizes motor movements to manipulate toys and tools in very functional ways
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

Level I Representation: cognitive/manipulative

- creation of symbols or their use in nonliteral aspects of play
- beginning of nonliteral or pretend characteristic of a true play experience
- mental organization and use of symbols
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

Level II Representation: creative/expressive

- Dramatic play stage,
- Express ideas and feelings through verbal and nonverbal use of symbolism.
- Child’s symbol becomes a theme or storyline.
- Drawing, role-play, or play with miniature life toys.
- Theme/storyline will have sequence and will last for a significant time.
Piaget’s theory of symbolic development

Level III Representation: language-mediated

- Games with rules
- Words are used in place of actions. “lets pretend...”
- Play not dependent on props.
- Can indicate when a child is ready for formal symbol systems
Vygotsky

Zone of Proximal Development
Social Levels of Play (Parten 1932)

- Onlooker Play
- Solitary Play
- Parallel Play
- Associative Play
- Cooperative Play
Social Levels of Play  (Parten 1932)

Onlooker Play

- watching others play
- only observing
- not interacting
Social Levels of Play  
(Parten 1932)

**Solitary Play**

- Independent

- Not influenced by those around them
Social Levels of Play  (Parten 1932)

Parallel Play

- Use of similar toys and/or engaged in similar activities
- But not playing together
- They notice what others are doing and may get ideas for their own play.
Social Levels of Play (Parten 1932)

Associative Play

- Similar, somewhat organized activity
- No joint effort
- Do talk to each other
Social Levels of Play  (Parten 1932)

Cooperative Play

- Joint effort toward common purpose
- Different roles
- Organized play themes
- Play takes shape from contributions made by all players
“Play scholarship appears to coalesce into seven broad rhetorics...”

belief systems adopted by fields of scholarship,

underlying ideologies,

values of those who participate in such scholarship

### Rhetorics of Play and Their Respective Disciplines and Theories

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# Rhetorics of Play and Their Respective Disciplines and Theories

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<td>Stewar Welsford</td>
<td>Opie &amp; Opie (1959)</td>
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Leisure play
Frivolity
Play in the Early Years:

Key to School Success

A Policy Brief

© Bay Area Early Childhood Funders
May 2007

Based on the work of the late Dr. Patricia Monighan Nourct and dedicated to her memory

Edited by Jean Tepperman, Executive Director, Action Alliance for Children
CAN WE PLAY?

Play is essential to positive human development, but kids are playing less and less, says psychologist David Elkind. What can we do to build a new culture of play?
Time for Play, Every Day: It's Fun — and Fundamental

There was a time when children played from morning till night. They ran, jumped, played dress-up, and created endless stories out of their active imaginations. Now, many scarcely play this way at all. What happened?

- Over four and a half hours per day watching TV, video game, and computer screens;¹
- Academic pressure and testing, beginning with three-year-olds;
- Overscheduled lives full of adult-organized activities;
- Loss of school recess and safe green space for outdoor play.

Decades of research clearly demonstrate that play—active and full of imagination—is more than just fun and games. It boosts healthy development across a broad spectrum of critical areas: intellectual, social, emotional, and physical. The benefits are so impressive that every day of childhood should be a day for play.

THE BENEFITS OF PLAY

Child-initiated play lays a foundation for learning and academic success. Through play, children learn to interact with others, develop language skills, recognize and solve problems, and discover their human potential. In short, play helps children make sense of and find their place in the world.

- Physical development: The rough and tumble of active play facilitates children’s sensorimotor development. It is a natural preventive for the current epidemic of childhood obesity. Research suggests that recess also boosts schoolchildren’s academic performance.²
- Academics: There is a close link between play and healthy cognitive growth. It lays the foundation for later academic success in reading and writing. It provides hands-on experiences with real-life materials that help children develop abstract scientific and mathematical concepts. Play is critical for the development of imagination and creative problem-solving skills.³
- Social and emotional learning: Research suggests that social make-believe play is related to increases in cooperation, empathy, and impulse control, reduced aggression, and better overall emotional and social health.⁴
- Sheer joy: The evidence is clear—healthy children of all ages love to play. Experts in child development say that plenty of time for childhood play is one of the key factors leading to happiness in adulthood.⁵

What’s the smartest thing a young child can do with a computer or TV? Play with the box it came in! Computers tend to insist on being just computers, programmed by adults. But an empty box becomes a cave, a canoe, a cabin, a candy shop—whatever and whenever the child’s magic wand of imagination decrees.
Reclaiming play: helping children learn and thrive in school

By Nancy Carlsson-Paige
The Importance of Child-Initiated, Unstructured Play

By Sharon Davisson
Role or importance of play

- Play is a creative thinking process
- Play contributes to social, emotional and cognitive development, including literacy
- Play helps build synapses in the brain..
- Play meets a challenge and challenges the players to solve problems of their own creation
Role or importance of play

Play helps make sense of the world – the way things work:

- Mechanical
- Relationships
- Bodies
- Events
- Sensitive issues
  (divorce, war, domestic abuse, etc.)
Current issues around play

- NCBL – emphasis on LITERACY and testing
- Video games
- Violence/dangerous neighborhoods
- What else?
What is Your Sphere of Influence

- Classroom/home
- Children
- Families
- Administration
- Colleagues
At your tables, discuss the influence you see here
Venn Diagram: Play, Peace Education, and Teacher’s Role
Peace Education

The aim of peace education is to provide the tools and the framework to empower peaceful problem solving, conflict resolution, and decision making in ways that emotionally support individuals, the community and the world.
Goals of Peace Education

- Self Awareness
- Awareness of Others
- Cultural Understanding
- Conflict Management
- Creative Thinking
- Love of Nature
Concepts of Peacemaking

- begin with inner peace
- Safe-respectful-inclusive environment
- Sense of community
- Celebration of differences
- Advocacy
Integrating Peace Education with Play

- Appreciation of diverse perspectives and cultures
- Values of respect and inclusion
- Values freedom with responsibility
- Sense of community - “we-ness”
Integrating Peace Education with Play

❖ Competency

❖ Citizenship

❖ We can make things better, solve problems, change, take action

❖ Skill Building: problem solving; creative thinking communication of wants/needs

❖ Emergent curriculum
Six Steps in the Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

It is important to listen more than one talks,

“allow children the time to make mistakes and figure out solutions, and point out that a diversity of viewpoints is natural, normal and workable.”
Six Steps in the Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

1. **Approach Calmly**
   a. Use a calm voice and gentle touch
   b. Stop any aggressive behavior
   c. Place yourself between the children, at their eye level
   d. If needed, neutralize the object of conflict by holding it yourself

2. **Acknowledge Feelings**
   a. “You look really upset”
   b. Offer no judgments, values, or solutions
Six Steps in the Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

3. Gather Information
   a. “What’s the problem?”
   b. Draw out details; define problems
   c. Don’t direct questions toward pinpointing blame

4. Restate the Problem
   a. “So the problem is . . .”
Six Steps in the Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

5. Ask for ideas for solutions and choose one together
   a. "What can we do to solve this problem?"
   b. Give the children the job of thinking and figuring out the solution
   c. If any solution seems unsafe or grossly unfair, tell the children: “It is too dangerous for you both to stand on the trampoline. What is another way you can agree?”
   d. Try not to find a solution too quickly; give children the time to discuss their ideas and feelings
Six Steps in the Problem-Solving Approach to Conflict

6. Follow-up support
   a. ‘You solved this problem!’
   b. Stay near to offer follow-up support
Hearing Everyone's Voice

Educating Young Children for Peace and Democratic Community

Edited by Susan Hopkins
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<th>Anti-bias Perspective</th>
<th>Democratic Practice</th>
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<td>Identity: One’s self and group</td>
<td>Self Identity and Responsibility</td>
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<td>Awareness of Others</td>
<td>Groups: Similarities and differences</td>
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<td>Action/Advocacy</td>
<td>Shared Resources</td>
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Used with permission, *Hearing Everyone’s Voice*, edited by Hopkins.
Nurturing Healthy Growth:
Balancing Freedom & Responsibility

Teacher Role

Child

Roots:
Basic Needs
# KWL Chart: Philosophy

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<th>Know</th>
<th>Want to know</th>
<th>Learned</th>
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<td>List what is already known</td>
<td>List what you want to know</td>
<td>List what you have learned</td>
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Definition:

“A philosophy statement is a concise, written description of your beliefs and values specific to teaching and learning.”

Jones and Shelton, pg 42
In the KNOW column,
list what you know about
writing a personal professional philosophy statement
In the **WANT** column,

list what you want to know

about developing a

personal professional

philosophy statement
Maintaining one’s own integrity and remaining congruent while working with other groups, school systems, etc.

Being intentional and congruent so that your actions reflect your beliefs
Individual Philosophy of Education

What are your beliefs and values related to play?

How does play relate to cognition, learning, literacy?
Venn Diagram: Play, Peace Education, and Teacher’s Role

Teacher’s Role

Play

Peace Education