



Bring Back Play

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Childhood Memories of Fun

Remember the good ol' days ... back when you were a child and your biggest decision was what you were to play that day? What memories come to mind when you think of FUN, PLAY, and FRIENDS? Walking barefoot to the corner store? Rollerblading with friends? Skipping for hours in the front yard? Playing tag or hide and seek until it was dark and you HAD to come inside?

What memories will your children have?

Whether it was making up a new game or playing an old favourite like hide and go seek, the last thing on our minds was being physically active. Looking back, those moments were about spending time with friends, enjoying life, using our imagination and having a chance to just be a kid. We didn't have to worry about being active on purpose.

Today, children 5-11 years old only get about 4 hours of unstructured physical activity or free active play per week, that's only 30 minutes a day! While many children take part in organized sport and physical activity, many are missing out on developing movement skills and confidence that comes with playing games and unstructured

play. Organized sport is just that, organized with a start, finish and rules. Although there is a need for organized sport, unstructured physical activity can be part of everyday - anytime, anywhere, for 5 minutes or an hour. Free play gives children the chance to choose what fun activity they feel like doing in that moment, use their imaginations and explore new places and things to do.

As participACTION reminds us - playing outside kept us happy and healthy when we were kids. Children are not spending as many hours skipping, playing tag or on a bike as we did when we were young. Without these experiences, what will their fun childhood memories be?

It's time to Bring Back Play! www.participaction.com

Head outdoors for the "outside advantage" as active play in nature has added benefits.

For information and ideas on connecting your children to nature - visit Children and Nature Network at www.childrenandnature.org

How to Bring Back Play!

Make "free-time" a fun, regular time for active play.

- Make after school and weekend free time active play time.
- Support your kids to have fun using their imagination! Give them items to build a fort, music to dance to or costumes to dress up in.
- Think about other spaces they can play in! A field or nature area can be a new play environment to keep your child interested.

Be aware of screen time.

- Screen time includes computer, smart phone, TV or video games.
- No screen time for children under two.
- Less than one hour per day for 2-4 year olds.
- Maximum of two hours for kids five and up.
- Don't turn on the tv when you get home from school/work - head outside for some active play instead!

Lead by example –
play with your children!

- Show your kids that you have fun being active and spending time outdoors.
- Actively play with your kids after school. Ride bikes together, jump rope, throw a ball around or play hopscotch.
- Set time for family play in the evenings and on weekends.



Check out these activities! Leisure Guide

Programs for your child to play actively and learn basic movement skills.

- Creative Movement - pg.16
- Over, Under Through - pg.15
- Running Amok - pg.17
- Zumbatomic - pg.22
- Adults - call upon your inner child and try out a beginner dance or martial arts class!



For information about the City of Winnipeg's Free programs, including Children's Free Play Drop-in check out the Priceless Fun guide! Winnipeg.ca/cms/recreation/LeisureGuide.stm