Risk Benefit

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Risk Benefit Assessment

Or some would say the BENEFIT should come first!

There's much debate about children playing outside; risky play, the benefits of fresh air and physical exercise and the imaginative opportunities outside gives, as well as the feeling of wellbeing that we all experience when we're

connecting with the natural environment. Practitioners sometimes feel they need a little back up explaining those benefits to other staff and parents. This short pdf brings together some of those references but is by no means exhaustive. It will









Striking the right balance does mean:

- ☐ Weighing up risks and benefits when designing and providing play opportunities and activities
- ☐ Focussing on and controlling the most serious risks, and those that are not beneficial to the play activity or foreseeable by the user
- ☐ Recognising that the introduction of risk might form part of play opportunities and activity
- □ Understanding that the purpose of risk control is not the elimination of all risk, and so accepting that the possibility of even serious or lifethreatening injuries cannot be eliminated, though it should be managed
- ☐ Ensuring that the benefits of play are experienced to the full

Health and Safety Executive 2012

point you in the right direction to begin using RBA.

Lord Young highlighted the need for some common sense in his 2010 report Common Sense, Common Safety stating that we need to "Shift from a system of risk assessment to a system of risk-benefit assessment and consider reviewing the Health and Safety at Work etc Act 1974 to separate out play and leisure from workplace contexts."

The Health and Safety
Executive has long been
blamed 'It's elf and safety'
for the removal of all risk
from play and the sucking of
joy from just about
everything. They fought back
with the fabulous Myth of the
Month and finally their
Promoting a Balanced
Approach to Play which in

my mind should be stuck on the wall in every early years setting and school in the country. Michael Follett has tackled risk benefit with his OPAL project and tells the wonderful tale of children on a playground jumping out of the way of bouncing tyres. Staff decided that this was a real benefit rather than a risk as usually tyres are attached to a car or lorry so learning to get out of the way was crucial.

Last Year a team at Bath and North East Somerset Council put together a fabulous Risk Benefit Toolkit which has example forms and a wealth of information and links.

Going back a little further the Government produced

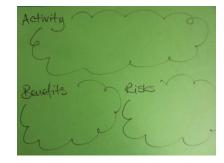
Managing Risk in Play

Provision which had a

photograph on the front of children sat around a small fire.

In the first instance sit with your staff team or children and log what you want to do, the risks and the benefits.

Then put this information into one of the more comprehensive forms if you feel the risks are great enough to warrant that.



Links

Play England - http://www.playengland.org.uk/resources/managing-risk-in-play-provision-a-position-statement.aspx

Tim Gill – Author of No Fear, Growing up in a Risk Averse Society http://rethinkingchildhood.com/no-fear/

Playtime Revolution -

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=r1SkzHu3LoQ&index=8&list=PLBoL p7QII8d3SMWYhruI3M7fbsYp 5O K

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