

Risk Benefit

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May 2014

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 life-threatening 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

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_p7QII8d3SMWYhruI3M7fbsYp5O_K

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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.



*Type information a summary of the information in this newsletter or
provide more information about your company.*
