



SUPPORTING THE NETWORK OF OUT-OF-SCHOOL PROGRAMMES
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OSCAR Network
Christchurch



**THE SIX CORE
STRENGTHS FOR
HEALTHY CHILDHOOD
DEVELOPMENT
A WORLD WITHOUT
PLAY
TEN THINGS YOU CAN
DO ABOUT BULLYING
LEARNING ABOUT RULES
AND FAIRNESS
WHEN GOOD KIDS PLAY
THE BAD GUY**



I recently had the privilege of delivering two boxes of pillows to children at Freeville School. What a great bunch of children!

They were rapt to receive such wonderful gifts that had been made by OSCAR children aged 5 - 12 years in the North Shore, Glenfield Primary, Forrest Hill, Sunnybrae, Marlborough Primary and Mairangi Bay Kids Klub.

This fantastic project was co-ordinated by the wonderful Dee Roberts.

These are some of the caring children who made the pillows... and below, here are some of the recipients at Freeville School.



THE OSCAR NETWORK IN CHRISTCHURCH INC.

We are an organisation dedicated to providing information to O.S.C.A.R. (Out of School Care And Recreation) programmes.

Our Aim is to support, promote and network safe quality, accessible OSCAR services which are professional and centre around the needs of the child and their whanau.

The OSCAR Network provides information on training, development, mentoring, funding & finances, research, advocacy, management and staff support, resources and the general running of an Out of School programme. The OSCAR Network in Christchurch encourages OSCAR providers to operate quality services, however it is not a function of the OSCAR Network to accredit or assess OSCAR services.

The OSCAR Network in Christchurch has a well-earned reputation for working co-operatively alongside other groups and agencies. We work as a team in an environment based on mutual respect and

trust. It is the combination of skills, ideas and energy, which achieves results from the consensus decision-making process. We enjoy our work by 'thinking differently'.

THANK YOU

We would like to thank our funders. The OSCAR Network could not operate without the generous support of the following funding agencies:

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- Christchurch City Council
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HOW MANY RELATIONSHIPS can we maintain?

Humankind is a social species. For thousands of generations we lived in small hunter-gatherer bands - multifamily, multigenerational groups of relatively small size, say 50 to 60 members. This relationally-dense social structure characterized the majority of humankind's history.

In the last several thousand years, however, humankind has been undergoing an increasingly rapid sociocultural evolution - the modern world is characterized by urbanization, mobility of populations, changes in family demographics, technologies that allow rapid and widely distributed relational communication. The number of "friends" on a child's Facebook site is hundreds. Yet there are neurobiological and time constraints that must limit the number of meaningful social interactions that any one person can have.

In a brilliant body of research and scholarship, British anthropologist, Robin Dunbar, speculated that the human neocortex was, in large part, a product of the evolutionary pressures of social complexity. Complex social communication and interactions required more "brain" power. He then conducted an elegant study in which he compared the size of the neocortex in various primate species and plotted that against the size of their social groups. Simply stated, bigger brains allowed bigger social groups but ultimately effective management of social group size and relationships was limited by brain volume.

And from this he calculated that the number of meaningful relationships - "friends" - that a human could maintain was about 150! (*R. I. M. Dunbar. Neocortex size as a constraint on group size in primates. J. Human Evo., 22:469, 1992*).

This has been labelled "Dunbar's Number." Several similar studies have since confirmed this general number. In a very interesting recent study, a group led by Bruno Goncalves and colleagues analyzed Twitter communications and arrive at the conclusion that while social communication networks have changed the manner in which we communicate, the basic social capacity and capabilities of humans do not. Even on Facebook or Twitter we can only maintain meaningful reciprocal social communication with about 150 people! It's worth thinking about. Do we really rob precious minutes away from forming and maintaining meaningful relationships with family and friends by superficial and continuous "communication" with thousands of "friends" on Facebook?

*From Child Trauma Academy website
B.D. Perry*

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**SEE THE CALENDAR ON THE BACK
COVER FOR TIME AND PLACE DETAILS
OF OSCAR NETWORK TRAINING
AND EVENTS.**

The ability to respect oneself and others is the last of the six core strengths that are an essential part of healthy emotional development.

“My gramma is so old she knows everything” - a 5-year-old whispering in awe to her teacher.

Respect - the ability to see and celebrate the value in ourselves and others - is the sixth core strength. This is the most complex of the core strengths. It requires the emotional, social, and cognitive maturity that comes from developing the five previous strengths (attachment, self-regulation, affiliation, awareness, and tolerance).

Developing the capacity for respect is a lifelong challenge. Our sense of self tends to be fragile. It rises and falls as we face life's challenges with varying degrees of success.

The development of self-respect, or, in essence, self-esteem, is guided by how we see ourselves. The people in our lives act as a mirror in this process. When people who are important to us give us attention and encouragement, we see positive images of ourselves. At other times, our interactions with others may make us feel unattractive, incompetent, or even invisible. As with adults, young children build their sense of self-respect from their interactions with others. When they are made to feel special and valued, children grow to respect themselves. A positive sense of one's self allows the maturing child to respect others.

Self-respect is at the heart of respecting others. When you can identify and appreciate your strengths and accept your vulnerabilities, it's easier to truly respect the value in others.

VALUING OTHERS

We respect people who have traits we admire. Young children begin to respect

things they see in the adults who are present in their lives-both good and bad. What a child respects, in other words, is determined in large part by what the child is exposed to. Young children raised in antisocial homes may actually respect and admire antisocial acts. They aspire to be just like Mum or Dad! Young children who watch hours of television and have few adult role models may begin to value persons in the media-with all of their distorted values and unrealistic traits. This becomes a trap for young children. They will never be able to be as athletic, beautiful, powerful, and popular as the false images they see on television. And, unable to meet these ideals, they will feel inadequate and unattractive.

Hopefully, through many quality experiences with attentive adults, the child begins to see more realistic qualities to admire. Consistency, predictability, grace under pressure, humour, and kindness are among the qualities that caring and competent adults model for young children.

In the classroom, children see how respected adults--their teachers--solve problems and cope with challenges. If their teachers handle conflicts by listening, thinking, staying calm, and reaching thoughtful solutions, the child comes to respect these behaviours.

STRUGGLING WITH RESPECT

There are two ways in which children struggle with respect. One is overt noncompliance and defiance. In this case, there is a lack of respect for classmates and for you and your authority as a teacher. This is almost always associated with a poor sense of self, despite the fact that these children will often brag and distort their strengths and capabilities. This bragging is merely

a protective shell over a very fragile sense of self. Often these children have not had much attention or structure when they are away from school.

The other way in which a child struggles with respect is when he begins to say, “I’m bad,” “I can’t do that,” “I’m stupid,” “He’s better than I am.” Children with this type of poor sense of self start to limit their opportunities. They don’t try as hard, and as a result, they may end up creating self-fulfilling prophecies. Because they don’t try new things, they don’t learn as fast. They fall behind. This negative cycle can be very destructive for young children.

WHAT YOU CAN DO

Children will come to respect the traits and values of the adults in their lives. Let children see how you show respect for all people, including the elderly, authority figures such as police officers, and people who are different from you in terms of ethnicity or religion.

Strive to live what you teach. Be patient, consistent, caring, honest, and attentive.

When a child is struggling, give him opportunities to succeed. Match his social and learning challenges with his stage of development. Slowly help him master new, but not overwhelming, challenges.

Use positive comments and rewards to shape and reinforce behaviours. Remember the intense power of negative comments. Intervene and stop negative comments that are being used by any of the children against other children.

By Bruce Duncan Perry, M.D., Ph.D.

THE SIX CORE STRENGTHS FOR HEALTHY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT

DEVELOPING POTENTIAL

There are six core strengths that provide a child with the framework for a life rich in family, friends, and personal growth. Teaching children these core strengths will allow children to learn to live and prosper together with people of all kinds - each bringing different strengths to create a greater whole.

ATTACHMENT

The template for future relationships. The cornerstone to all other core strengths, Attachment is the capacity to form and maintain healthy emotional bonds with another person. Healthy attachments allow a child to love, to become a good friend, and to have a positive and useful model for future relationships. As a child grows, other consistent and nurturing adults will shape his ability to develop attachments.

SELF-REGULATION

The capacity to regulate internally. Developing and maintaining the ability to notice and control primary urges (hunger, sleep, frustration, anger, fear) is a lifelong process. Its roots begin with the external regulation provided by caregivers. Its healthy growth depends on a child's experience and the maturation of the brain. Pausing a moment between an impulse and an action is a life tool but it's a strength that must be learned—we are not born with it.

AFFILIATION

Joining in. Affiliation is the glue for healthy human functioning. It allows us to form and maintain relationships and to create something stronger, more adaptive, and more creative than the individual. Human beings are biologically designed to live, play, grow, and work in groups. The family is a child's first and most important

group. Most other groups they will join are based on circumstance or common interests. Children will have thousands of brief emotional, social, and cognitive experiences in these groups that can help shape their development.

ATTUNEMENT

Being aware of others. Awareness is the ability to recognize the needs, interests, strengths, and values of others. Infants begin life self-absorbed and slowly develop awareness - the ability to see beyond themselves and to sense and categorize the other people in their world.

An aware child learns about the needs and complexities of others by watching, listening, and forming relationships with a variety of children. He sees ways in which we are all alike and different. With experience, he can reject labels used to categorize people, such as skin colour or the language they speak. The aware child will be much less likely to exclude others from a group, to tease, and to act in a violent way.

TOLERANCE

Accepting differences. Tolerance is the capacity to understand and accept how others are different from you. This core strength builds upon another - awareness (once aware, what do you do with the differences you observe?). To become tolerant, a child must first face the fear of differences. This can be a challenge because children tend to affiliate based on similarities - in age, interests, families, or cultures. But they learn to be more sensitive to others by watching how the adults in their lives relate to one another.

With positive modelling, caregivers can insure and build on children's tolerance. The



tolerant child is more flexible and adaptive. When a child learns to accept difference in others, he becomes able to value the things that make each of us special and unique.

RESPECT

Respecting yourself and others. Appreciating one's self-worth and the value of others grows from the preceding five strengths. An aware, tolerant child with good affiliation, attachment, and self-regulation strengths gains respect naturally. The development of respect is a lifelong process, yet its roots are in early childhood.

Having respect enables a child to accept others and to see the value in diversity. He can see that every group needs many styles and strengths to succeed and he can value each person in the group for her talents.

When children respect - and even celebrate - diversity, they find the world to be a more interesting, complex, and safer place. Just as understanding replaces ignorance, respect replaces fear.



CHILDREN 'GETTING WEAKER BECAUSE THEY DON'T CLIMB TREES'

Children have become weaker and unable to do physical tasks that previous generations found easy, a study has found. Experts said today's 10-year-olds had less muscular strength than children born a decade before, because instead of spending time climbing trees and ropes, their leisure time is spent indoors playing on computers. The findings, published in the child health journal *Acta Paediatrica*, found children could do fewer sit-ups and were less able to hang from wall bars in a gym.

As well as the decline in arm strength, the study found they were less able to grip an object firmly. The study led by Dr Gavin Sandercock, a children's fitness expert at Essex University, studied how strong a group of 315 Essex 10-year-olds in 2008 were compared with 309 children the same age in 1998. It found the number of sit-ups 10-year-olds can do declined by 27.1 per cent, arm strength fell by 26 per cent, grip strength by 7 per cent. While one in 20 children could not hold their own weight

while hanging from the wall bars in 1998, a decade later, one in 10 could not manage it. Dr Sandercock said: "This is probably due to changes in activity patterns among English 10-year-olds, such as taking part in fewer activities like rope-climbing in PE and tree-climbing for fun." "Typically, these activities boosted children's strength, making them able to lift and hold their own body weight." The fact that 10 per cent could not do the wall bars test and another 10 per cent refused to try was "really shocking", he said. "That probably shows that climbing and holding their own weight was something they hadn't done before."

The study found the two groups of children had the same body mass - meaning that the current group of 10-year-olds must have had more fat and less muscle than their predecessors. Tam Fry, of the Child Growth Foundation, said: "Climbing trees and ropes used to be standard practice for children, but school authorities and 'health and safety' have contrived to knock the sap out of our children." "Falling off a branch used to be a good lesson in picking yourself up and learning to climb better. Now fear of litigation stops the child climbing in the first place." *The Telegraph.co.uk*

As a small aside from the us when Pam and Jan travelled recently to the Australian Network Conference Pam learnt that because of the removal of jungle gyms in all New South Wales playgrounds, children's writing had been affected, as they did not have the same strength in their wrists.

BOSSY-BOOTS TAKE-CHARGE KIDS LIKE TO SET THE RULES

TERESA PITMAN

One day last summer, six-year-old Lynne came stomping into the house to complain to her mother, Amanda Peterson,* that her friend was "being mean" to her. When Peterson heard the full story, she discovered that they'd been playing hopscotch and Lynne decided they'd play by her rules. The friend, however, wanted to stick to the regular rules. "So Lynne felt her friend was mean because she wouldn't do what Lynne told her to do," explains Peterson. Angela Penney's daughter Sarah also has bossy-boots tendencies. At school, when the teacher asks the children to line up, Sarah often takes it upon herself to organize the kids and make sure they follow the teacher's instructions. "She also gets quite bossy with her younger sister, Kaitlyn," Penney adds. If they're playing, Sarah has usually already imagined how the game will go and what each person's role will be, and she proceeds to tell Kaitlyn what to do.

Some kids, it seems, just want to be in charge. "We're all born with certain personality traits, and being a leader can be one of them," says Calgary parenting coach



Barbara Desmarais. “But if it translates into bossiness, then it needs to be addressed.” She points out that bossy children can have a difficult time making and keeping friends. Bossiness can also turn into bullying if the child uses force to get another to comply.

SOME TIPS TO DEAL WITH BOSSINESS:

- Offer your child choices to give him a sense of control. However, keep the choices simple (for example, “Do you want your sandwich cut in half, or in four pieces?”)
- When a play session has gone badly because of your child’s bossiness, sit down with her and go over what happened. Ask how she thinks the other child felt. It might help to remind her of how she felt when another child was bossy toward her.
- Remember you’re a role model. Do you cringe when your child sounds just like you when he talks to his younger siblings or friends? You may be able to modify your approach to something you’d be more comfortable with him imitating.
- Look for opportunities where your child can be a leader in a healthy, positive way, says Desmarais. Penney was pleased when Sarah’s teacher decided to have a “helper for the day.” Peterson’s empathetic around this issue because she recalls being a little bossy-boots herself. She says: “If I had a great idea, I wanted to see it come to fruition, and so I wanted people to listen to me and do what I said because I thought my idea was valuable. I wonder if bossiness is one of those traits that we find challenging in children but admire in adults. If there weren’t bossy people, we wouldn’t have amazing movie, TV and theatre directors, or people who run and manage big corporations.”

WHEN YOUR CHILD GETS BOSSY WITH YOU

A child who orders his or her parents around is looking for boundaries, says Calgary parenting coach Barbara Desmarais. “If a child feels he is in control of his parents, he won’t feel safe and secure,” she explains. “Children want to know that someone is in charge.” Amanda Peterson, who sometimes has to deal with a little bossing from her daughter, Lynne, says: “I gently remind her that I’m the mother, and I make the decisions. It’s not up to her to tell me what to do. And that usually works.”

**Names changed by request.*

Originally published in Today’s Parent, June 2009

A WORLD WITHOUT PLAY

It’s a frightening fact that play may now be viewed as an ‘unaffordable luxury’ in our society with children now attending organised activities which are thought to be more educational. As professional OSCAR workers we understand the importance of play and are able to explain to parents that playing is not an optional extra but should be the very foundation of childhood.

We want to be able to provide “the freedom of play that allows children to develop and demonstrate a sense of themselves and to meet their need for the peace of a long, slow-paced, active and engaged childhood”. This freedom and independence means that it is our role to provide opportunity for, but not to interfere in or lead play. An environment where children have free choice in play helps children to develop a sense of their own uniqueness.

Play is an essential part of normal childhood development that helps to develop a child’s co-ordination, strength and social skills. Through play children learn to negotiate, take risks and overcome obstacles, develop friendships and to have that sense of belonging to a group. There is research that indicates as well as the direct relationship between physical activity and children’s health it also increases cognitive function, and improves academic achievement. Young children are innately active, but this natural tendency is easily overridden by external constraints, including adult supervision.

Piaget and Vygotsky, two of the most influential 20th century theorists of cognitive development, both emphasised the essential role of play in children’s development. They explain that play provides children with extensive opportunities to interact with materials in the environment and construct their own knowledge of the world making play one of the most important elements of cognitive development.

Like their parents, children often don’t have enough time to play. When they could be playing they are expected to sit down and do homework. There is a misguided belief that



if children have produced something they have been doing something worthwhile. It is often hard to explain that playing is itself intrinsically worthwhile, the knowledge learnt is immense.

Children often talk about being bored and it is a sad reflection on our society that children’s minds are set for a quick fix rather than the fabulous slow unfolding of time and events. OSCAR staff often feels pressured into filling this “boredom” but this is a slippery slope where children may come to expect entertainment and this certainly does not encourage children’s self-sufficiency. I would strongly encourage staff and parents to get children to use the time to lie around and contemplate the world – remind them that sometimes, doing nothing is the most important thing in the whole wide world to do – boredom is a fundamental component of play!

Let’s give children the opportunity to experience the world through their own eyes, leave them to sort out their own problems, to learn how to overcome some of those obstacles in their way. As well as doing, we should be persuading parents to practice “benign neglect” of children, not to fill their spare time with planned classes but to give them space.

We run the risk of doing more harm to our children by planning their time rather than by letting them have free play. It is this play that teaches children how they will cope with and live in our wonderful, dangerous, beautiful world.

Pam Hughes

Thanks to Play England’s ‘A world without play’

Ten things **YOU** can do about bullying

LEAD BY EXAMPLE

Children watch adults' behaviour closely. If we model respectful and empathic behaviour and positive conflict resolution strategies, then children are more likely to adopt similar behaviours in their peer relationships. On the other hand, if our interactions are critical, demeaning, or aggressive, how can we expect the children around us to behave any better?

Think carefully about the words you choose and the way you behave.

ESTABLISH A CODE OF CONDUCT

Involve children and youth in developing a code of conduct about what they consider to be acceptable and unacceptable behaviour during recreation activities.

If children are responsible for creating a group policy around bullying, they are more likely to follow and enforce it with their friends. Post the code of conduct to remind children (and adults) about what will and will not be tolerated in your organization.

USE CONSEQUENCES THAT TEACH

These are consequences that are designed to send the message that bullying is unacceptable while also providing support for children who bully to learn the skills and acquire the insights they are lacking. For example, a child who bullies may have to sit out of an activity but uses that time to write a letter of apology or draw a picture of what it feels like to be bullied.

Children who bully need help understanding the impact their behaviour has on others.

ENCOURAGE CHILDREN TO REPORT

Convey the message that it is the leaders' job to deal with bullying and that you want to know about all incidents. Clarify the difference between tattling and telling: Tattling is what you do to get someone into trouble, telling is what you do to get someone out of trouble. Providing alternative ways to report bullying, such as an anonymous bullying box, can help reduce the discomfort children feel around reporting bullying.

ACKNOWLEDGE POSITIVE BEHAVIOURS

You can encourage positive connections among children by praising respectful and cooperative behaviour whenever you see it. The more you praise a behaviour, the more often it will happen. Children love praise and they will work hard to get it from you. Try and focus on the positives of children and youth in your organization, even when they need correcting.

Remember, children are works in progress - they can't always get it right.

REDUCE THE CHANCES FOR BULLYING

Organize activities so that the child who is being bullied is always surrounded by children who will stand up for him/her. How do you do this? Leaders should always select children's teams, groups and seating arrangements. If children are allowed to make these decisions, those children who are bullied will always be left out and teased. Break up groups of children who may act aggressively together.

TEACH THE SOCIAL SKILLS CHILDREN LACK

Children who are bullied often have difficulties standing up for themselves. Leaders can help them practice this skill through role plays and modelling assertive behaviour. Help children to determine if their behaviour may be exacerbating a bullying situation. Children who bully need help with learning different problem solving skills and resisting peer pressure to bully. Give them frequent reminders of these strategies and share your optimism that they'll successfully avoid bullying others.

BUILD ON CHILDREN'S STRENGTHS

Children who are bullied often have low self-esteem. Encouraging them to participate in activities they enjoy can help these children feel good about themselves. Highlighting their talents for other children to see can change their reputation in the peer group.

For children who bully, provide opportunities for them to use their natural leadership skills in a positive way (e.g., teaching younger children a new sport or skill).

TRUST YOUR INSTINCTS

If you suspect that a child is being bullied, you are probably right. Children will often deny bullying out of shame or fear. If it looks like bullying and feels like bullying, it most likely is, even if children and youth deny it. Trust your instinct and intervene.

BE READY TO LISTEN AND HELP

If a child reports being bullied, be ready to listen right away. Don't put it off. Thank the child for having the courage to come forward and explain that it is his/her right to feel safe. Ask for details about the incident and convey your concern.

Be willing to respond to all reports, even the seemingly trivial ones such as name-calling. Consistency matters!

Learning About Rules and Fairness

How kids explore rules through play

Kids in the middle years are often very interested in rules and fairness. When confronted by this new-found passion, you might be tempted to say, "Sometimes life isn't fair." But kids this age believe it should be, and they can be pretty upset when the fairness rule has been broken. Just try cutting your seven-year-old's birthday cake into less than perfectly equal pieces.

Play is vital to learning at this age and is about both fun and fairness. "Games with rules become part of children's play from about age six onward," says Christina Rinaldi, an associate professor of educational psychology at the University of Alberta in Edmonton. "Being fixated on the rules is completely developmentally appropriate at this age," she says. Kids are still learning how rules work and applying them quite literally.

Following the rules is not easy. Say you're playing a board game with a seven-year-old. Everyone has to roll the dice to see who gets the first turn, and it falls to someone else. "But I wanted to go first," she says. She may have understood the rule about rolling the dice, but dealing with the disappointing outcome requires some self-regulation. It takes time and practice for kids to be able to control their emotions, pay attention and delay gratification, says Rinaldi.

EXPLORING RULES

Some examples of the ways in which kids explore rules and how they work at this age:

- Rules can be changed. Imagine a gang of year ones playing duck, duck, goose, when one of the players runs backwards when it's his turn. Some of the children will know this is wrong and may be so thrown that they'll leave the game. Others might laugh and decide that everyone has to run backwards. But this change in the rules will cause a few to complain: "That's not the way to play it!" "Temperament is a big factor here," says Rinaldi. Someone who has difficulty with change will find this upsetting, while an easygoing child will be more flexible and able to move on.

- Rules can be broken. You're waiting on the subway platform and your six-year-old notices people standing past the dotted 'Do not cross' line. "We're not supposed to do that," he says. "They shouldn't be there."

At this age, skills like negotiation, justification and rationalization are continuing to



develop, says Rinaldi. "Kids are learning how rules are applied beyond their own personal world." You might say, "It's important that you follow the safety rules, even if other people break them."

- Rules can be created. Two seven-year-olds are playing with animal figures. "How 'bout the pig is a dog," one suggests. "OK, but how 'bout all the animals are dogs and they're chasing the people," the other says. "OK, but this girl is in the barn and they can't get her. The barn is the safety zone..." Child's play at this stage can still include make-believe, says Rinaldi, but it's more structured - there are more rules. So much so, in fact, that if you tune in you're likely to hear more making and remaking of rules than actual playing. They're trying to make sense of the game, says Rinaldi, so that they can follow the rules. "And they're also learning to take the other person's perspective. So there's quite a bit of give-and-take."

How should you respond to a child whose upset because someone broke the rules? Help him calm down first, says Rinaldi. Then let him explain what's bothering him and acknowledge his feelings: "You didn't get to have your turn when you should have." You may decide to go back and explain the rules. Your goal is to help him either succeeds in playing by the rules or to adapt to a change.

Learning to follow rules and treat each other fairly is an important life lesson: Fair play.

Team sports help kids learn to play by

the rules. But there's a long tradition of children's games that you can draw on to encourage fair play around the kitchen table or in your own backyard:

TABLE GAMES

- junior versions of Scrabble, Boggle or Bingo
- memory games like Concentration
- strategy games like checkers and Chinese checkers
- card games like Uno
- word games like hangman

GROUP GAMES

- tag and variations like frozen tag
- capture the flag
- hide-and-seek
- Mother, May I?
- Simon Says
- Red Light, Green Light

Originally published in Today's Parent, May 2009 by Susan Spicer

FOLLOW THESE SIMPLE TESTS BEFORE YOU DECIDE TO HAVE CHILDREN

TEST 1: PREPARATION

To prepare for children:
Go to a local chemist, tip the contents of your wallet onto the counter and tell the chemist to help themselves.
Go to the supermarket. Arrange to have your salary paid directly to their head office.
Go home. Pick up the newspaper and read it for the last time.

TEST 2: KNOWLEDGE

Find a couple who are already parents and berate them about their methods of discipline, lack of patience, appallingly low tolerance levels and how they have allowed their children to run wild. Suggest ways in which they might improve their child's sleeping habits, toilet training, table manners and overall behaviour.

Enjoy it. It will be the last time in your life that you will have all the answers.

TEST 3: NIGHTS

To discover how the nights will feel:
Walk around the living room from 5pm to 10pm carrying a wet bag weighing approximately 4 - 6kg, with the radio turned to static (or some other obnoxious sound) playing loudly.
At 10pm, put the bag down, set the alarm for midnight and go to sleep.
Get up at 11pm and walk the bag around the living room until 1am.
Set the alarm for 3am.
As you can't get back to sleep, get up at 2am and make a cup of tea.
Go back to bed at 2.45am.
Get up again at 3am when the alarm goes off.
Sing songs in the dark until 4am.
Put the alarm on for 5am. Get up when it goes off.
Make breakfast.

TEST 4: DRESSING A SMALL CHILD

Buy a live octopus and a string bag.
Attempt to put the octopus into the string bag so that no arms hang out.
Time allowed: 5 minutes.

TEST 5: CARS

Forget the BMW. Buy a practical 5-door wagon
Buy a chocolate ice cream and put it in the glove compartment. Leave it there.
Get a coin. Insert it into the CD player.
Take a box of chocolate biscuits; mash them into the back seat.
Run a garden rake along both sides of the car.

TEST 6: GOING FOR A WALK

Wait.
Go out the front door.
Come back in again.
Go out.
Come back in again.
Go out again.
Walk down the front path.
Walk back up it.
Walk down it again.
Walk very slowly down the road for five minutes.
Stop, inspect minutely and ask at least 6 questions about every piece of used chewing gum, dirty tissue and dead insect along the way.
Retrace your steps.
Scream that you have had as much as you can stand until the neighbours come out and stare at you.
Give up and go back into the house.

You are now just about ready to try taking a small child for a walk.

TEST 7:
Repeat everything you say at least 5 times.

TEST 8: GROCERY SHOPPING

Go to the local supermarket.
Take with you the nearest thing you can find to a pre-school child – a fully grown goat is excellent.
If you intend to have more than one child, take more than one goat.
Buy your groceries without letting the goat(s) out of your sight.
Pay for everything the goat eats or destroys.

Until you can easily accomplish this, do not even contemplate having children.

TEST 9: FEEDING A 1 YEAR-OLD

Hollow out a melon.
Make a small hole in the side.
3. Suspend the melon from the ceiling and swing it side to side.
Now get a bowl of soggy cornflakes and attempt to spoon them into the swaying melon while pretending to be an aeroplane.
Continue until half the cornflakes are gone.
Tip the rest into your lap, making sure that a lot of it falls on the floor.

TEST 10: TV

Learn the names of every character from the Wiggles, Barney, Teletubbies and Disney.
Watch nothing else on television for at least 5 years.

TEST 11: MESS

Can you stand the mess children make? To find out:
Smear peanut butter onto the sofa and jam onto the curtains.
Hide a fish behind the stereo and leave it there all summer.
Stick your fingers in the flowerbeds and then rub them on clean walls.
Cover the stains with crayon.
How does that look?
Empty every drawer/cupboard/storage box in your house onto the floor and leave it there.

TEST 12: LONG TRIPS WITH TODDLERS

Make a recording of someone shouting "Mummy" repeatedly.
Important note: No more than a 4 second delay between each Mummy. Include occasional crescendo to the level of a supersonic jet.
Play this tape in your car, everywhere you go for the next 4 years.

You are now ready to take a long trip with a toddler.

TEST 13: CONVERSATIONS

Start talking to an adult of your choice.
Have someone else continually tug on your shirt hem or shirt sleeve while playing the Mummy tape listed above.
You are now ready to have a conversation with an adult while there is a child in the room.

TEST 14: GETTING READY FOR WORK

Pick a day on which you have an important meeting.
Put on your finest work attire.
Take a cup of cream and put 1 cup of lemon juice in it.
Stir.
Dump half of it on your nice silk shirt.
Saturate a towel with the other half of the mixture.
Attempt to clean your shirt with the same saturated towel.
Do not change (you have no time).
Go directly to work.

YOU ARE NOW READY TO HAVE CHILDREN. ENJOY.



It can be unsettling to see a 5 year old bite his biscuit into the shape of a gun, point it into the air, and shout, “Pow! Pow!” But “good guy versus bad guy” play is a natural part of a child’s social and moral growth. Indeed, it’s common for dramatic play to centre on themes of good and bad, friends and enemies, power and vulnerability, particularly as young children work to learn the difference between right and wrong, to understand rules, and to control their impulses. Power play helps them make sense of these confusing issues and gain a better understanding of themselves and their place in the world.

When a child acts out good and bad roles, he is actually trying on power from both perspectives: the frightening negative aspects of the bad guy and the heartening positive aspects of the good guy. He can actively gain control over the things that frighten him by experiencing both sides of the power play equation.

POWER PLAY AT EACH AGE

The most intense good-versus-evil play occurs between the ages of 4 and 5 and usually tapers off around 6.

Ages 5 and 6: Imaginary heroes (often superheroes seen on TV or in movies) appeal. You may notice that kids’ roles are absolute: A child will choose to be either the good guy or the bad guy — there’s

no in-between. 5-year-old Billy suggests that he and Ian play Spiderman. “You be Spiderman,” says Billy, “and I’ll be the Green Goblin.” After settling on the roles, the two boys excitedly burst into a pretend chase scene around the backyard. It is apparent by watching their body language who is the hero and who is the bad guy. Billy as Green Goblin is surreptitious, while Ian as Spiderman triumphantly strides across the yard. Not only do they know their roles, but they also grasp the underlying emotional state of each character!

Older children can quickly shift out of a pretend role to a real one because they know the difference - in fact, 5s and 6s love to switch between the two.

USING POWER PLAY TO ADDRESS FEARS

Although power play is natural, it is good to have discussions with children about the meaning of real and pretend and keep the lines of communication open so they know that when they are worried, they can come to you.

Here are some ways to assure your child that his feelings of anger or fear are normal and manageable:

- Set rules about superhero play. Young children are attracted by the loud drama of good versus bad, but you need to find comfort levels with this sort of play.

- Limit exposure to violent images. When a child does see a movie or TV show with aggressive action, talk about what is happening and even how it was created. Sometimes a visit to the movie’s website will show that people made the animation for entertainment.
- Stress peaceful problem-solving. Say, “In our programme, we talk about our problems; we don’t fight them out with guns.” Ask a question: “If the good guys lost their weapons and couldn’t fight, how could they still win?”
- Provide alternative outlets for expression. Clay is excellent for pounding away anger. Or you can paint or put on music and dance it out! You will be saying that it’s okay to be angry, but it is not okay to hurt yourself or others.
- Encourage your child to verbalize his feelings. Take a quiet moment (not during play) to talk about what you observed in his play and invite him to share his feelings. You might say, “When I see you make an explosion with your toys, I wonder what you are feeling. It’s okay to have angry or frustrated feelings, and it helps to talk about them.”
- Highlight what it means to be a friend. Talk about accepting differences in others. Ask: If your friend plays the bad guy, does that mean he is bad? Encourage ending the games as friends.

By Ellen Booth Church



ARE BEST FRIENDS BAD? SOME SCHOOLS THINK SO. AND THEY'RE COMING BETWEEN FRIENDS.

DIANE PETERS

LITTLE OBSESSIONS

The intensity of boys' role-playing games is a natural stage in their development.

When 7 and 8 year old boys get together, talk often turns quickly to fantasy games such as Pokémon, Yu-Gi-Oh, or other worlds of collectible cards and characters. Some boys seem absolutely obsessed with these action-fantasy adventures. (While some girls play, the vast majority of players are boys.)

Young boys love role-playing games like Pokémon because the games allow them to explore worlds their parents don't understand, which gives them powerful feelings of independence. Playing these games also allows them to exercise newly emerging cognitive skills: the ability to categorize, organize, and memorize. Seven and eight year-olds have prodigious memories and love to show them off; reciting the names of fantasy game monsters and their skill points is a real challenge. The games also appeal to a boy's strivings to be heroic, strong, competent, and dominant. The fact that it's not a "girl's game" is just another plus.

These games are a safe outlet for competition, especially for non-athletic boys, and they provide for shared connections that support a child's friendships. Even playing on Gameboys, connected by a "game link cable," brings kids closer.

TOO OBSESSED?

On the downside, the games can come close to being addictive. Some boys develop an insatiable appetite. A boy may become so obsessed with showing off his collection that he lacks empathy for boys whose families can't afford to or choose not to buy them endless gear. For boys who have learning disabilities, the games can be a demoralizing reminder that they lag behind other kids. Bad trades can lead to fights, disrupted friendships, and tears.

It is very hard to draw the line between an excited, obsessive interest and an addiction. If the cards are causing conflict for your child, then you should intervene, the way a teacher might in the classroom. If your child is hooked on buying more and more cards, it may be time to set stricter limits.

You may find that you start out mistrusting these games that generate such intensity, but end up supporting your son's enthusiasms. If the dangers of excessive competitiveness and envy can be avoided, along with over-the-top materialism, there is nothing harmful in these games. Eventually a boy outgrows them and moves on to new interests, new games, and heroic adventures of his own.

By Michael Thompson PhD

When I was in primary school, my best friend and I were nearly inseparable. We held hands on the playground and spent our weekends together - hanging out, reading books, listening to records. The relationship contributed to who I am today, and we're still pals. So I was surprised to learn that some schools are discouraging close friendships in the hopes of preventing bullying.



FROM "CLICK" TO CLIQUE

It's not that concerned educators are "out to get" best friends. But they are trying to nudge close pals apart a little bit, so that they don't become too insular. Twosomes can turn into threesomes, and such cliques are often behind bullying. "When three or four kids get together, they can decide someone is not good enough to join their

NGA TUPEA

group. They can ramp each other up to do worse and worse things,” says Debra Pepler, a psychology professor at York University in Toronto, who is an expert on bullying and helps to run PREVNet.ca, a bullying information website.

Buddies who always sit beside each other and spend playtime in their own little world don't always build relationships with other kids. And that's a growing concern in today's classrooms, which often include students with special needs (ranging from kids with autism to those who use wheelchairs) and children from various ethnic and religious backgrounds. To make sure students really get to know one another and prevent discrimination, teachers take existing friendships into consideration and seldom allow kids to choose their own groups or teams so as to avoid the “picked last in gym” phenomenon, which is a set-up for making kids feel like outcasts.

Meanwhile, just as adult relationships aren't always healthy or turn sour over time, kids can also get wrapped up in negative dynamics. Pepler says some close friends actually bully each other: They know each other's secrets and can make a pal upset with a few choice words - whether about chubby ankles or that time he wet his pants last year.

THE “BEST” OF FRIENDS

Still, most of the time, kids who have best friends derive huge benefits, both socially and emotionally. “Friendship is overwhelmingly associated with good outcomes,” says Kelly Schwartz, an associate professor of psychology at the University of Calgary. Best friendship teaches kids how to be intimate with someone who is not a family member. It teaches them about trust and give-and-take. It's a rehearsal for grown-up friendships and romantic relationships.

Schwartz says that while the ebb and flow of childhood friendships (few endure longer than a school year or two) may be heartbreaking for kids, the experience of moving on is important too. “They learn that some friends are replaceable and that the good ones stick,” says Schwartz.

Friendly Advice Originally published in Today's Parent, January 2011

There are many games that incorporate ‘calculation, mental alertness and memorizing-powers’. Because tribes throughout NZ have different dialects, kawa, tikanga and traditions the names for such games collectives can also differ.

Some areas place such games in a category called ‘kai’ - this term also encompasses fast imitation movement games and puzzles. The term ‘kai’ means ‘food’ in Maori language - ‘kai’ in this games sense is used to describe ‘food for the mind’. However ‘Tupea’, derived from a game of the same name, has become the most popular term for describing all games that require abstract cognitive ability and ‘intelligence’.

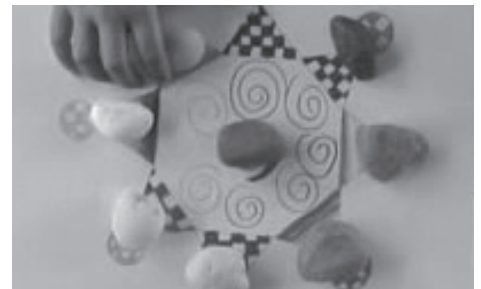
Below is a “morse code” type of game. Children will enjoy the planning of their messages just as much as playing the game.

TUPEA:

This is an information transmission game. One player holds a specially shaped rock and gently twists, turns or tugs a fine knotted flax rope (the ‘tupea’), as it is deftly pulled by their partner (who is blindfolded), over the rock's long (15 – 20cm) slit groove. The rope (or tupea) cannot be taken off the rock and is always in motion, whether in one direction, or in a ‘back-and-forth’ movement. Elders devise the messages that the players send to each other.

The object of the game is to pass a ‘secret’ message to your ‘blind’ team mate using the rope and rock only (no noise or other communications permitted!). She then ‘feels’ the vibrations, rope tensions and twists and through deciphering the pre-arranged coded ‘moves’ then guesses aloud what the message is or whispers it to one of the kaumatua (elders) for acknowledgement.

Messages could be single words, well known proverbs, instructions or intricate storylines - the more skilled players, who devise and learn hundreds of ‘coded movements’, are set more difficult messages to encode and decipher.



Players are usually in teams of two; however there are many common game variations and some competitions have player rotations (in teams of 10 or more) and time limits. Such games as tupea were played extensively in pre-European times by those tribes' people who were charged with memorising their tribal knowledge.

PE adapting: have students find suitable rocks in an outdoor environment - they can be found ‘ready made’ or suitably ‘soft’ rocks could be shaped. These could be ‘stored’ in a decorative rock garden around the school somewhere. Rocks can be ‘personalised’ (decorated), so there is scope for inter-curricula co-operation between faculties. Have students pair off (or get into small groups) to devise their own codes.

Have a list of ‘key words’ that will be used in the phrases - start simple, have them just transmit one word at a time initially, and then advance to 2, 3, 4 at a time. In the gym, tables can be setup along the centre line, for the problem solvers, and the rest of the group can do sprints as a method of time control for the opposing team. Huge letter/word cards and large boulders can also be integrated into this game - so the options for combining mental and physical activity are numerous.

<http://pazz.tripod.com/nzgames.htm>

DRAFT POLICY STAFF WORKING WITH OWN CHILDREN IN AN OSCAR PROGRAMME

Some OSCAR programmes are committed to providing a flexible work environment for staff members who have school-aged children attending their programme. In order to ensure a smooth working environment for all, there needs to be a policy around staff working with their own children/close relation.

The policy and procedure should include:

- How individual staff members work with their children e.g. it may state that because staff should remain neutral and treat all children with the same concern it is not always appropriate for staff to discipline their own children whilst working.
- The initial consultation process – this would be for other staff members, parents using the service and the feelings and needs of the staff members child.
- The process that will be followed if a staff members child becomes unwell at the programme e.g. the staff member must be conscious of the staffing ratio's and wait until appropriate cover can be found.
- The staff ability to fulfil the needs of all the children and adhere to their job description at all times.
- The process that will be followed if staff have a concern over the quality of care their child is receiving.
- The process that will be followed if the situation is not working or is impacting on the care of other children and or staff members.

INFORMATION WEBSITES AND HELPLINES

Information about the structure and powers of the Canterbury Earthquake Recovery Authority (CERA) can be found at:
www.cera.govt.nz

www.newzealanders.org has been developed for the disability community. It aims to provide quick access to information and bring some collaboration to all of the supports for people with disabilities.

Whats Open in Christchurch:
<http://www.whatsopen.co.nz/>

Stronger Canterbury:
<http://www.canterburyearthquake.govt.nz>

Good information on coping with the psychological impact of the earthquake is available on the MoH website:
<http://www.moh.govt.nz/moh.nsf/indexmhl/coping-with-stress-factsheets>

<http://canterburyearthquake.org.nz> is being updated regularly by the Christchurch City Council and has information on services, cordons, and all the essential links to quake-related sites.

Where is everyone?
Latest contact details. Find out where your colleagues and agencies are on:
www.ngoupdater.org.nz

Let everyone know where you are and how you're doing by adding your agency's details. Thank you to the NZ Council of Christian Social Services for having this set up for Chch within days of the quake.

Be. Accessible.

Be. Accessible is a framework for accessibility and a social change campaign with the vision to inspire and enable a 100% accessible society. Through an integrated communications approach, it will inspire and inform New Zealanders of opportunities to provide better access to those of us who may be temporarily or permanently disabled or in need of additional support in order to contribute fully to society.
<http://www.beaccessible.org.nz/>

Donated IT software.

Remember if you require additional Microsoft Software, affected organisations and those supporting affected communities may be eligible for a special Microsoft donation with no administration fees. These are available through TechSoup New Zealand. Find out more about the special Microsoft donation policy for Christchurch at <http://www.techsoup.net.nz>.

Skylight offers services to those facing tough times of change, loss, trauma and grief - whatever the cause, and whatever their age.

Their website at www.skylight.org.nz offers information, downloads, support resources and options, extensive links and hope and encouragement for those facing tough life situations - and for those caring for them.

CANTERBURY COMMUNITY TRUST CLOSING DATES:

SECTOR	CLOSING DATE	DECISION DATE
Welfare & Social	20 June	August
Education	20 August	October
Infants & Children	20 August	October
Community Services	20 September	November
Heritage	20 September	November
Hospital & Medical	20 November	February
Recreation & Leisure	20 November	February
Sport	20 December	March
Economic & Employment	20 December	March
Environmental	20 December	March

Further information from the trust at ph 335 0305 or call free 0508 266878.

Email enquiry@commtrust.org.nz.

www.commtrust.org.nz

FOLLOWING A PROBLEM-SOLVING PROCEDURE

Ignoring a problem and hoping it will go away, often only leads to bigger problems later. Delays can also create added frustration and “avoidable distress”, with productivity, legal and cost consequences.

As noted, a process for issue resolution should be outlined in any employment agreement. A clear problem-solving procedure can help protect people’s rights, and provide information to support decision-making. It can also help ensure that the problem doesn’t get worse through inconsistencies or misunderstandings.

In some cases, process problems themselves can cause the breakdown of the employment relationship and lead an employee to claim unfair treatment, so it’s important to get the process right.

FIRST STEPS IN DEALING WITH A PROBLEM

If either side believes that there is a problem, it should be raised as soon as possible. Everyone should try in good faith to resolve any problems themselves before looking for outside assistance.

It is critical that no one jumps to conclusions when an issue is first raised. Everyone should

make any decisions fairly and consistently. This is usually not complicated – but each side should investigate, gather information and think before acting.

In all cases, everyone should be treated with respect and consideration. Sensitive issues should be dealt with in a confidential manner – for example, by not conducting interviews in public or open-plan spaces. Both sides should try to set aside emotion and concentrate on identifying and addressing the underlying reasons for the problem.

It may help to have a third party present as a witness when a problem is discussed, to prevent misunderstandings. For instance, an employee may wish to have a support person, union delegate or other representative present. Both sides should keep notes of any meetings and any agreements reached.

In general, it is a good idea to:

- Be clear about the facts. Make sure that what each side thinks has happened or is happening is not just based on an assumption or a misunderstanding. Employees or employers may get help to clarify the issue by talking to the Department of Labour or their own representative organisation such as a union or employer or industry association.

- Talk to each other. Employers and employees should try to resolve the problem by discussing it with each other. Both parties are responsible for this. Union members can ask their union, and employers can ask their employers’ association, to approach the other party for them.

If an employee believes they have a personal grievance, they must raise it with their employer within 90 days of the action complained of, or the date they became aware of it, whichever is the later.

- Clarify whether there is a problem, and if so, what it is. This shouldn’t be delayed. The problem should be fully discussed to clarify what the problem actually is.

- Consider what assistance is needed to help resolve the problem. Parties may consider whether mediation assistance might be useful at this stage.

It’s a good idea to know what the law is and what the employment agreement says and, if necessary, to consult an advisor.

<http://www.dol.govt.nz/>

“IT IS THE HIGHEST FORM OF SELF-RESPECT TO ADMIT OUR ERRORS AND MISTAKES AND MAKE AMENDS FOR THEM. TO MAKE A MISTAKE IS ONLY AN ERROR IN JUDGMENT, BUT TO ADHERE TO IT WHEN IT IS DISCOVERED SHOWS INFIRMITY OF CHARACTER.”

DALE E. TURNER

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OSCAR NETWORK TRAINING AND EVENT CALENDAR TERM 3 2011

EVENT	BRIEF RUN-DOWN	DATE	TIME & PLACE	COST (GST INCLUSIVE)
Core Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Behaviour 2 Older Children 10+ Health & Safety 2 	Tuesday 9th August	10am - 12.30pm KNOX Centre 28 Bealey Avenue	\$30 staff members \$75 non-members
Affects of the earthquake on children's behaviour	Informal discussion session for all staff	Tuesday 16th August	10am - 12 noon or 7pm - 9pm OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street Addington	Free
Evening Training	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Child Protection Management Forum Strategic Funding 	Thursday 18th August	7pm - 9.30pm KNOX Centre 28 Bealey Avenue	\$30 members \$75 non-members Forum: Free
Inclusion Workshop	Suitable for all Staff and Management	Wednesday 31st August	10am - 12 noon OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street Addington	\$30 members \$75 non-members Limited to first 15
Training Day	Suitable for all Staff and Management. Brochure sent out nearer to time	Saturday 3rd September	9.15am - 3.15pm KNOX Centre 28 Bealey Avenue	\$50 members \$150 non-members
Open Polytechnics Certificate in OSCAR	This is suitable for all staff. You do not have to be already doing certificate.	Tuesday 6th September	10am - 12 noon OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street Addington	Free
Earthquake Support Meeting	Informal discussion session for all staff	Tuesday 13th September	10am - 12 noon OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street Addington	Free
Cluster North West	Suitable for all Staff and Management	Tuesday 20th September	10am - 12 noon Whakaoranga 319 Pages Rd, Aranui	Free
Joint OSCAR Foundation & Network Cluster South East	Suitable for all Staff and Management	Wednesday 21st September	10.30am - 12.30pm Papanui Youth Trust 1A Harewood Rd, Papanui	Free
Cluster Selwyn	Suitable for all Staff and Management	Thursday 22nd September	10am - 12 noon BOOST 3 Freyberg Rd, Burnham	Free
New to OSCAR Workshop	Overview of OSCAR for all staff	Tuesday 27th September	10am - 12 noon OSCAR Network 25 Disraeli Street Addington	\$30 staff members \$75 non-members
Cluster & Training Rangiora	Suitable for all Staff and Management *to be advised	Thursday 29th September	Cluster: 10am - 11am Training: 11am - 1pm Rangiora War Memorial Hall Albert Street, Rangiora	Cluster: Free Training: \$30 staff members \$75 non-members