



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

PROMOTING POSITIVE
WELL-BEING FOR
CHILDREN
KEEPING SECRETS - IN
DEFENCE OF CHILDREN'S
PRIVACY
MARBLES & MACHIAVELLI
TAMING TANTRUMS;
MANAGING MELTDOWNS
TRAUMA AND GROWTH
YOU'VE BEEN WARNED!



ENHANCING CHILDREN'S PLAY : WHAKAREWA / TE TAAKARO TAMARIKI



WELL-BEING, HAUORA

WELL-BEING

The concept of well-being encompasses the physical, mental and emotional, social, and spiritual dimensions of health. This concept is recognised by the World Health Organisation.

HAUORA

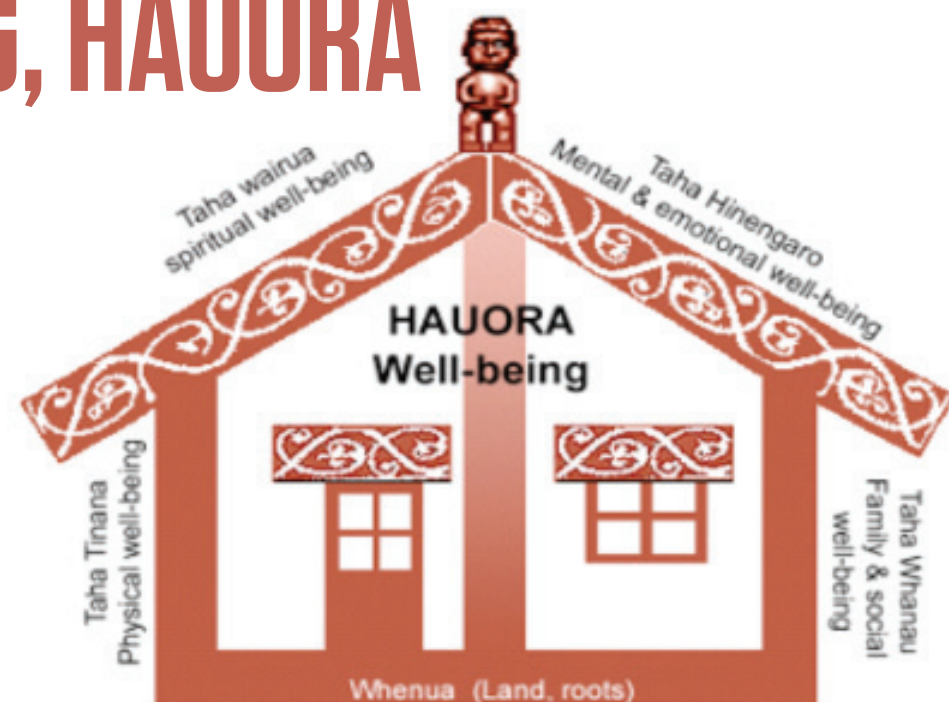
Hauora is a Māori philosophy of health unique to New Zealand. It comprises taha tinana, taha hinengaro, taha whanau, and taha wairua.

TE TAHA TINANA (PHYSICAL WELL-BEING)

The most familiar dimension in healing is the physical; for Māori, physical wellbeing of both land and body are desirable.

TE TAHA WAIRUA (SPIRITUAL WELL-BEING)

Spirituality is acknowledged to be the most essential requirement for health. It is believed that without a spiritual awareness an individual can be considered to be lacking in wellbeing and more prone to ill health.



TE TAHA HINENGARO (MENTAL & EMOTIONAL WELL-BEING)

Thoughts, feelings and resultant behaviours are vital to health in Te Ao Maori (the Māori world). Communication through emotions is important and more meaningful than the exchange of words.

TE TAHA WHANAU (FAMILY & SOCIAL WELL-BEING)

Family is the prime support system providing care, not only physically but also culturally and emotionally. For Māori, whanau is about extended relationships rather than the western family concept.

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:

- Ministry of Social Development
- Christchurch City Council
- Canterbury Community Trust
- Lottery Grants Board
- Community Organisation Grants
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- Mainland Foundation
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A RICH PLAY ENVIRONMENT



A rich play environment is one where children and young people are able to make a wide range of choices; where there are many possibilities so that they can invent and extend their own play. This could be any space or setting, either outdoors or inside, and may include: local play areas, parks, play centres, staffed adventure playgrounds, out of school care, mobile play provision, playgroups and nurseries, and schools.

It is a varied inspirational and interesting physical environment that maximises the potential for socialising, creativity, resourcefulness and challenge. It is a place where children feel free to play in their own way, on their own terms.

Quality play provision offers all children and young people the opportunity to freely interact with or experience the following:

- Other children and young people – with a choice to play alone or with others, to

negotiate, co-operate, fall out, and resolve conflict;

- The natural world – weather, the seasons, bushes, trees, plants, insects, animals, mud, etc;
- Loose parts – natural and man made materials that can be manipulated, moved and adapted, built and demolished;
- The natural elements – earth, air, fire and water;
- Challenge and risk taking – both on a physical and emotional level;
- Playing with identity – role play and dressing up;
- Movement – running, jumping, climbing, balancing, rolling;
- Rough and tumble - play fighting;
- The senses – sounds, tastes, textures, smells and sights;
- Feelings – pain, joy, confidence, fear, anger, contentment, boredom, fascination, happiness, grief, rejection.

CARDBOARD BOXES



It is a truth universally acknowledged that a child will play more happily with the box than with the present that came in it. Perhaps this is why the Strong National Museum of Play inducted the cardboard box into its National Toy Hall of Fame.

“Cardboard City” is an experiment that you can try. Give a group of children some time, some cardboard boxes, tape, and a supportive but not directive adult, and they will create all the wonders of the world.

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

Promoting *positive* well-being for children

A GOOD CHILDHOOD

Children's well-being is central to that of society as a whole. Promoting children's well-being is not only important in order for children to have a good childhood, but also as a solid foundation for their future well-being as adults. In order to achieve this goal it is vital that we understand the key factors that affect children's lives. Listening to children's own views and experiences is at the heart of developing this understanding. The report (a Good Childhood 2012 Children's Society) is about children's subjective well-being. The research evidence has enabled the identification of six priorities for children's well-being.

There is no agreed definition of the term 'well-being' but it is generally used within the research literature as an over-arching concept regarding the quality of people's lives. It is also 'best thought of as a dynamic process, emerging from the way in which people interact with the world around them' (Michaelson *et al*, 2009)

THE SIX PRIORITIES FOR CHILDREN'S WELL-BEING

Factors affecting these six aspects of children's lives determine their well-being. They are all influenced to varying degrees by the external environment, including policy changes.

1. THE CONDITIONS TO LEARN AND DEVELOP

Children need to be given the conditions to learn and develop. This includes cognitive and emotional development, fostered through access to play in the early years and high quality education in school, and physical development, for example through

a nutritious diet. School is a key area of children's lives where experiences vary greatly and negative experiences have a significant impact on well-being.

- The majority of children enjoy school activities (63%) and feel that they learn a lot at school (72%). However one in 10 children is unhappy about their relationships with teachers, and one in six is unhappy about the amount they feel listened to at school.
- Children who felt they had been unfairly treated by their teacher on more than one occasion were four times more likely to have low levels of happiness at school than children who did not feel unfairly treated.
- Children are twice as likely to rate their health as bad or very bad if living in poorer households. Children who self-report having a long-standing illness or disability are twice as likely to have low well-being than those who do not.

2. A POSITIVE VIEW OF THEMSELVES AND AN IDENTITY THAT IS RESPECTED

Children need to see themselves in a positive light, and deserve to feel, and be, respected by all adults and other children. Our evidence shows that how children feel about their appearance, whether they are being bullied, and whether they believe that their voice is being heard and opinions respected, are key drivers of their well-being.

- Feelings about appearance are strongly associated with well-being. Children who do not have clothes to fit in with their

peers are over three times as likely to have low well-being.

- Children who were bullied two or three times in the space of a few months were nearly four times as likely to have low wellbeing as those who had not been bullied.
- Children who feel their views are taken seriously and are treated fairly in key areas of their lives have a more positive view of themselves, resulting in greater well-being.

3. HAVE ENOUGH OF WHAT MATTERS

Children's well-being is affected by 'having enough' and 'fitting in' rather than being rich or accumulating material goods purely for its own sake. Family circumstances, household income, and parental employment are key factors which determine whether children have access to those items and experiences.

- We developed a child-centred 10-item deprivation index by asking children what they needed to lead a 'normal kind of life'.

The items and experiences in the index with the strongest association with well-being were having access to a garden/outdoor space, clothes to 'fit in' with friends, and monthly trips out with their family. Children lacking three of the 10 items were three times as likely to experience low well-being.

- Children who have a lot less, or even a lot more, pocket money than their friends have lower levels of well-being. They need enough to 'fit in' and participate in activities with friends, but no more.
- Children who live in poorer households, households experiencing sudden shocks to their economic circumstances, such as an

adult losing their job, or households with uncertainty about their economic future are twice as likely to have low well-being as children who live in households that are more economically stable.

4. HAVE POSITIVE RELATIONSHIPS WITH FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Children want and need positive, loving relationships with the people closest to them. Overall, the strongest driver of low subjective well-being is where children experience weak and uncaring relationships with their family or carer. The structure of the family itself has only a small effect on a child's well-being. Children also need positive, stable, relationships with their friends, with social isolation a strong driver of low levels of well-being.

- The quality of relationships between children and their families is 10 times more powerful in explaining levels of well-being than specific family structures.
- Children having an active say in decisions that affect them within the family is also a key driver for their overall life satisfaction.
- Children who feel isolated from their friends are four times as likely to have low well-being as those who do not. Friendships become more important as an aid to social and emotional growth as children reach adolescence.

5. A SAFE AND SUITABLE HOME ENVIRONMENT AND LOCAL AREA

Children need safe and suitable environments at home and in their local area. Where children are unhappy in these environments, often through feeling unsafe, feeling that they have a lack of privacy, or feeling that their home or local area has inadequate facilities, this has a strong association with lower levels of well-being.

- Almost a quarter (23%) of children who had moved home more than once over the past 12 months had low levels of well-being, compared to the average of around 10% in the survey.
- Children who experience a change in



the family members or carers that they live with are twice as likely to have low well-being as those that have stable living arrangements. However, in circumstances of change and upheaval, quality of relationships remains a strong driver of well-being.

- Around 14% of children aged 10 to 15 who shared a bedroom had low levels of well-being, compared to around 9% of those who had their own bedroom. This impact increases with age; 14 and 15 year olds who share a bedroom are twice as likely to have low well-being as those that do not.

6. OPPORTUNITY TO TAKE PART IN POSITIVE ACTIVITIES TO THRIVE

A healthy balance of time use is as important for children as it is for adults. The need for a balance that suits the individual needs of children means that they should be actively involved in decisions about how they spend their time.

- Children who do not have access to a garden or local outdoor space to play in are over three times more likely to report low well-being than those that do.
- Nearly a third (30%) of children who were not satisfied with any of the six aspects of time use (time with family, friends, to themselves, being active, doing homework, helping at home) had low well-being, compared to only 1% of children who were satisfied with all six of these aspects.
- Choice and autonomy are vital for well-being in all aspects of children's lives. Children who have greater deprivation

of experience, for example no access to a garden or outdoor space to play, experience lower levels of choice than other children, compounding lower levels of well-being. Those children who lacked four experiences and items from our child-centred index of material deprivation are also four times as likely to be unhappy with their level of choice.

CROSS-CUTTING THEME: STABILITY

Cutting across the above six domains, the research has highlighted the extent of stability and change in children's lives as a key theme in helping to understand variations in subjective well-being.

Survey work provides evidence that changes in children's lives, particularly in relation to family and home – such as a change in family structure, moving house and changes in household income – have a discernible negative impact on children's well-being.

Other ongoing life events, such as problems with friendships and positive and negative experiences of school life, appear to have an impact which may be cumulative.

These findings demonstrate the dynamic nature of children's subjective well-being and also provide useful pointers as to how well-being can be enhanced. Levels of subjective well-being are changeable and low subjective well-being is not fixed or inevitable. It should be possible to prevent low well-being and avoid some of the potential longer-term repercussions, by providing support for children during key transitions in their lives, and when they are facing particular challenges and adversities. It may also be possible to support children to develop the capacity to withstand shocks and negative life events and the research provides some tentative indications that children's sense of autonomy and choice may be important factors in this context.

For a fuller look at the report visit

1. The Good Childhood Report 2012

2. Promoting positive well-being for children

A report for decision-makers in parliament, central government and local areas

www.childrengovernment.org.uk

NEWS AND INFORMATION

“REVENUE ALERT” FROM IRD

The Inland Revenue Dept has highlighted their concerns that some people are claiming tax credits for “donations” where there may not have been a true gift of money to a charity.

The arrangements that have come to their attention involve smaller, locally-based charities, and typically involve a payment being made in the expectation that the donor will receive something in return.

Any payment of over \$5 to a charity can potentially qualify for a donation tax credit if it is a gift. To be a gift it must:

- be made voluntarily;
- provide a material benefit to the recipient without imposing a countervailing detriment;
- be for no consideration; and
- provide no material benefit or advantage to the giver in return.

You may wish to read IRD’s “Revenue Alert” to be sure that your charity is complying with tax laws, and (if your charity is also a donee organisation) that your donors are able to claim tax credits when they make donations or gifts.

Full information can be found at www.ird.govt.nz/technical-tax/revenue-alerts/revenue-alert-ra1101.html. For more information about donee organisations, see www.ird.govt.nz/non-profit/np-donee/

CCS DISABILITY ACTION HAS A NEW LOOK WEBSITE.

<http://www.ccsdisabilityaction.org.nz/> is designed to give you better access to information regarding what CCS Disability Action is able to offer clients and if you visit <http://www.mobilityparking.org.nz/> you can now download application/renewal

forms and obtain information on mobility parking permits.

ONE STOP SHOCK.

The latest One Stop Shock has been revised and distributed to Healthy Christchurch signatories. It is also available on the Healthy Christchurch website. This is an essential list for recovery information and contacts. It is a great resource for you to print out and share with your community and clients. It covers key contacts (phone numbers and websites) as well as all the earthquake related funding and grants available and a comprehensive list of counselling & support. <http://www.healthychristchurch.org.nz/>

RECOVERY GUIDE.

Community and Public Health have produced an excellent resource about the process of recovery. If you have any involvement or interest in the work that is happening to rebuild our communities, then the Integrated Recovery Planning Guide is an essential document. You can download it from <http://www.cph.co.nz/Files/IntegratedRecoveryGuideV2-Jun11.pdf>

THE TINDALL FOUNDATION

The Tindall Foundation provides funding for providers of services to young children, families, youth development, Maori and minority ethnic groups, adult literacy, budgeting or community services and development. There is no closing date. See the Tindall Foundation website at www.tindall.org.nz

CHARITABLE TRUSTS:

The Public Trust administers quite a few grants and scholarships. See their website <http://www.publictrust.co.nz/grants-and->

[scholarships/how-do-i-find-one.html](#) to find out if some might be relevant to you.

POSITIVE PARENTING TRIALS LAUNCHED IN DHBS

Trials are under way for a programme training child health and development professionals to support parents who want to improve their parenting skills.

Health Minister Tony Ryall says “we’re spending nearly \$4 million over three years to trial this programme, which is described as one of the world’s most effective parenting programmes.

Four District Health Boards (DHBs) are trialling the Triple P Positive Parenting Programme: MidCentral, Bay of Plenty, Counties-Manukau and Waitemata.

“Research shows that providing parents with information and support reduces parental distress and social and health problems in children.”

“This programme doesn’t tell parents how to parent, it gives them practical advice and skills they can use to help them manage the challenges we all face when we’re raising our children.”

“Parents often talk to a range of professionals involved in the care of their children, such as GPs and early childhood teachers, about the stresses of parenting or concerns about their child’s behaviour. Once they have completed the Triple P training, these professionals can now offer support and information to parents.”

As to part of the programme, parents will be able attend free community workshops to discuss common parenting issues or have one-on-one sessions. If additional support is required, they can also be referred to

specialist services. Independent evaluation of the programme in Australia found more than 90 per cent of parents who took part are more confident in their parenting, and six months after parents had been part of the programme children were behaving significantly better.

ACTIVE VIDEO GAMES DON'T MAKE KIDS MORE ACTIVE

US: Children who play active video games such as boxing and tennis are no more active overall than those who play games while seated. An American study, which followed around 80 overweight nine to 13 year olds for a three month period, found "no evidence that children receiving the active video games were more active in general, or at any time, than children receiving the inactive video games."

UNDER 10S SPEND AN HOUR A DAY PLAYING WITH GADGETS

UK: British children are spending almost an hour a day using technology products in their home. A survey of 2,000 parents by toy company Leapfrog found that almost two thirds of children now own a camera, gaming or mobile device. Some 16% of children own their own computer and 6% of children have a personal tablet such as an iPad.

DISABLED CHILDREN DO MATTER

Many disabled children fail to reach their full potential because they continue to be marginalised in schools, health and social care, according to new research. "We found that disabled children often experience discrimination, exclusion and even violence," say Professor Dan Goodley and Dr Katherine Runswick-Cole, who implemented the study. "The biggest barriers they meet are the attitudes of other people and widespread forms of institutional discrimination."

"Disabled children are seldom allowed to

play and act like other children because of concerns about their 'leaky and unruly' bodies. But our study shows that many children who don't fit the narrow definition of 'normal' have untapped reserves of potential and high aspirations which can be fulfilled when their families receive effective support. There are also many amazing families who should be celebrated for the way they fight for their children," continues Professor Goodley.

The findings, which are based on a series of interviews with disabled children and their families, reveal numerous barriers to these goals, for example:

- Disabled children are often perceived by educational and care professionals as "lacking" and as failing to fit in with the image of 'normal';
- Families who do not match the norm are frequently excluded from friendships, education and work;
- The support system is complicated and there are gaps in provision, particularly during the transition to adulthood;
- Physical access and transport barriers to sport and leisure activities result in segregation, while participation in art and creative activities is limited;
- Widespread discriminatory attitudes threaten to create a culture of bullying;
- Families of children with life-limiting/threatening impairments often experience isolation and poverty

The researchers call for a change of attitude towards disability so that diversity is not only valued, but promoted. "There is an 'epidemic' of labelling children as disabled," Professor Goodley and Dr Runswick-Cole warn. "Parents are repeatedly under pressure to talk about what their children can't do in order to access services and support, but sometimes the label can obscure the individual. Families should be asked what support their child requires, not what is the 'matter' with him or her."

Their report recommends that policy should prioritise enabling disabled children to break down barriers by supporting their participation in education, the arts, leisure and their communities and by meeting their communication requirements. "We need to re-think the culture of individualism and performance which pushes disabled children out" continue the researchers. "Pressures on schools are getting worse. We

found a case where parents of non-disabled children petitioned to exclude a disabled child. What does this say about the meaning of education and community?"

The study found that bullying is often accepted as inevitable when disabled children are perceived as vulnerable. There were several layers of violence, from manhandling in school to psychological bullying, which often goes unnoticed by adults. Some children do however stand up to bullies and refuse to be limited by labels that are imposed upon them.

One young person insisted on attending Brownies meetings alone, despite health and safety rules that required her mother to accompany her. "Kids seem to enjoy challenging people's expectations about their limitations," the researchers commented.

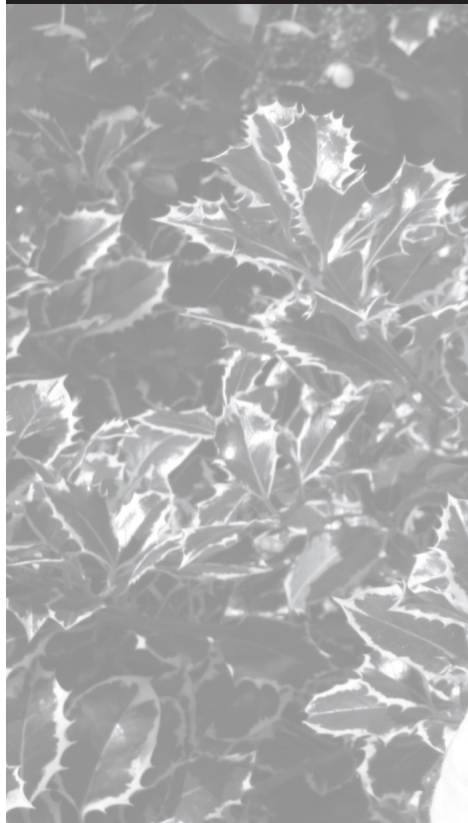
This release is based on the findings from 'Does every child matter, post-Blair? The interconnections of disabled childhoods' funded by the Economic and Social Research Council and carried out by Professor Dan Goodley and Katherine Runswick-Cole at the Manchester Metropolitan University.



"HAPPINESS COMES OF THE CAPACITY TO FEEL DEEPLY, TO ENJOY SIMPLY, TO THINK FREELY, TO RISK LIFE, TO BE NEEDED."

**STORM JAMESON (1891-1986),
BRITISH WRITER**

KEEPING SECRETS - IN DEFENCE OF CHILDREN'S PRIVACY



A bright green path runs the length of a playground's back wall, draped all over with low-hanging ivy. Dense as the jungle, the path veers around a tree, under another arch, and then bursts out suddenly into a broad clearing. Tall trees stand on three sides and the ground underfoot is stamped down to bare dirt. Bits of cloth swing from the branches above, moving slightly in the damp autumn breeze. In the clearing is a table that was dragged from the main building, with two chairs tucked conversationally alongside. One is turned over, as if a small party was abruptly disbanded.

I returned to this spot at the adventure playground regularly after my first sighting, making careful charts of changes there at the close of every day. I was cataloging evidence of a culture enacted out of sight of adults and out of their control.

Private places offer so much that we consider essential to play, and to childhood. In a world of strident marketing tactics, high pressure academic regimes, endless testing both scholastic and social, as well as 'helicopter parenting' and CCTV, genuine privacy is under threat - and more necessary than ever. A place to be voluntarily alone allows the individual child to learn and practice techniques of solitude and independence, to explore the potential of solitude for relaxation, contemplation, refuge and experimentation.

Carl Jung spoke of the private place as a 'fortress' for the emerging individual, as a testing ground for techniques of selfhood. More recently the notion of privacy and secrecy has been argued as 'closely related to the achievement of self-identity and self-esteem' (R. Bechtel et al, *The Handbook*

of Environmental Psychology, 2002) and associated with 'independence, personal power and positive autonomy' (Manen, Max van and Levering, Bas. *Childhood's Secrets: Intimacy, Privacy and the Self Reconsidered*, New York Teachers College Press, 1996). Time spent with the self in a place of shelter and safety is central to the individual's creation of boundaries, and the concurrent sense of one's own value that is necessary to maintain them with others.

A study of dens or camps made on the fringes of play space demonstrates how the best hiding places are opportunistic, offering play value in the seeking out and creation of places of privacy. In sneaking to places 'beneath and behind' fixed equipment of their worlds, children are practicing skills of subterfuge and secret-keeping as they find, inherit and create new worlds. Children's

private places of community offer the opportunity to build and enact culture, to share information and participate in secret-sharing, illicit consumption, experimentation with language and social strategies. This is the development of a world within playspaces, but also apart from it. Offering children the chance to learn and negotiate all this for themselves, privacy is also one of the most difficult play needs to provide, and to advocate.

The playground itself is a physical and social framing of space, and forms the context for the play within it. Dens and forts are usually tucked away in sub-locations bounded and screened off by trees, hedges and fixed play equipment. Ideally they offer both refuge and vantage point, being able to see without being seen. Loose parts such as furniture and fabric are often included. How do we create a system of place that provides for, even encourages its own creative subversion? Our observation of hidden areas, the 'cleaning up' loose parts from the site at the end of the day; these choice have direct implications for children's rights to privacy on site.

Adult fears around sex and violence say more about our anxieties than children's behaviours. This is for us to come to terms with, because without opportunities to learn and practice techniques of being alone and being alone with others, how are children to become adept social agents? How are they to learn and maintain the boundaries of their growing selves?

How to trust, how to be trustworthy, how to be brave in untested company, how to make and keep friends - this is all learned between children when we are not around. The most frightening situations will generally happen when adults are not watching, so how much better it is to provide 'spots' of privacy, opportunistic openings for experimentation with privacy, within a structure of sympathetic and responsible adults. This, and our long-standing commitment to children's rights and needs, is why adults in play are ideally located to advocate also for children's rights to privacy.

This article was written by Morgan Leichter-Saxby, a US playworker, researcher and consultant working in the UK. She works with a variety of groups to promote free and inclusive play. You can read more of her interesting writing at playeverything.wordpress.com



NATURE IS GOOD FOR CHILDREN.

Why do we even need to say something that seems so obvious? In the past 20 to 30 years, without most of us realizing what was happening, lifestyle changes have accumulated with powerful and pervasive detrimental effects on children. Obesity, Attention Deficit Disorder, impaired social skills and even what some, including Richard Louv, are calling a "culture of depression" are adding to the stress levels and severely impacting our young. Those are physical and psycho-social characteristics of the changes. And then there is more—less time outdoors, more time with electronic technology, little free and unstructured time, and even a 30% decrease in bicycle riding!

Well-intended parents drive themselves literally in circles to take their children to and from school, after school activities, sports events, dance class, clubs, church and social events. All of these activities have the potential to be of value, but things are out of balance.

The result? Children have little free time. Their lives are structured, organized, and timed nearly to the minute. When they are home, and could be playing outdoors, they are often tied to electronic umbilica. Technology is not the culprit. Things are out of balance.

These are just a few of the major findings to be found in a review of the research concerning the beneficial effects of the natural environment on children's health and well-being.

Children are smarter, more cooperative, happier and healthier when they have frequent and varied opportunities for free and unstructured play in the outdoors.

For an amazing array of resources and academic reports on this topic have a look around www.childrenandnature.org



Marbles & Machiavelli

THE ROLE OF GAME PLAY IN CHILDREN'S SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT
DAVID F. LANCY AND M. ANNETTE GROVE

THE AUTHORS REVIEW SEVERAL CASE STUDIES OF CHILDREN ENGAGED IN RULE-GOVERNED PLAY AND CONCLUDE THAT THE PROCESS OF LEARNING RULES – AND OF BREAKING THEM AND MAKING NEW ONES – PROMOTES WHAT THEY CALL GAMESMANSHIP.

They link the development of gamesmanship to the theory of Machiavellian intelligence, which considers social interaction primary in the evolution of human intelligence. They also question the benefits of adult-managed child play and assess the impact it may have on the ability of children to develop gamesmanship.

Due to the fact that humans have survived because they shared food, defended against predation and aggression, and made groups responsible for the care of infants and toddlers,¹ human intelligence is profoundly social. The skills and habits required to do these things are known as Machiavellian intelligence (MI).² Previously, there has been little discussion about how MI emerges in children, however, this article explores the possibility that children develop MI through play; focusing primarily on behaviour deployed in game play. The game of marbles, for example, presents a particularly good example of how children may deploy Machiavellian Intelligence.

JEAN PIAGET AND MARBLES

In *The Moral Judgement of the Child*, Jean Piaget uses the game of marbles to illustrate a child's passage through various phases before arriving at a mature, fully moral understanding of social conventions. Piaget documented the primary dimensions of the game of marbles, and then began to probe the players' cognitive representation of the rules.

Marbles encourage the development of small motor skills, digital finesse, and the refinement of manual dexterity. Also observed is the development of social intelligence or MI in the gamesmanship of children as they play marbles.³ Children deploy such gamesmanship when they manipulate the rules of the game and bluff each other to enhance the quality of play and their own success.

GAMESMANSHIP AND MACHIAVELLIAN INTELLIGENCE

"The essence of the Machiavellian intelligence hypothesis is that intelligence evolved in social circumstances. Individuals would be favoured who were able to use and exploit others in their social group, without causing disruption and potential group fission liable to result from naked aggression. Their manipulations might easily involve co-operation as conflict, [and] sharing as hoarding."⁴

MI theory has steadily collected a wealth of empirical support⁵. One recent study pointed to the rigours of social intercourse (as opposed to climate or ecological variation) as driving hominid brain growth.⁶ This article therefore argues that if children have Machiavellian brains and if brains need to be exercised to fully develop, then marbles and similar games make a perfect mental gym. Children must be free to construct successful gaming sessions without adult guidance or interference.

ADULT-MANAGED PLAY AND VIDEO GAMES

Current child-rearing practices have largely expropriated the opportunities for children to exercise gamesmanship and MI through unsupervised play. Adults now thoroughly manage and script most children's activity. Even when adults do not actively direct the play, in preschools the presence of a teacher reduces the need for negotiation and compromise.

Despite worries and intentions surrounding this change, curtailing play initiated by children seems likely to attenuate – if not

destroy altogether – opportunities to develop the skills associated with gamesmanship.

Video games may also be partly to blame for this. The time allotted to these activities has declined as children now spend several hours a day engaged with video.⁷ The two obvious problems with this are that these are usually played solo or with limited unscripted interaction, and also that the rules or scripts cannot be easily altered.

In short, the authors believe that traditional games and make-believe play are less and less a part of modern childhood because adult-supervised recreation and play with socially isolating media have replaced the more fertile grounds for play – recess, neighbourhood play groups, and large families.

LOOKING FOR SOLUTIONS

Children who spend less time in unsupervised free play with peers may lack the social skills they need to engage in rule-governed play and to sustain game play successfully. However, there is hope. Parents, schools, and municipal authorities are addressing the issue. Some school districts and municipalities hire playground or recess coaches "who hope to show children that there is good old-fashioned fun to be had without iPods and video games and [who'll help] students learn to settle petty disputes, like who had the ball first or who pushed whom, not with fists but with tried and true 'rock-paper-scissors.'"⁸ Furthermore, social critics are warning parents to allow children greater freedom, particularly in play.⁹

1 Sarah Blaffer Hrdy, *Mothers and Others: The Evolutionary Origins of Mutual Understanding* (2009)

2 Sergey Gavrilovs and Aaron Vose, "The Dynamics of Machiavellian Intelligence," *Proceedings of the National Academy of Science of the United States of America* 103 (2006): 16823-28

3 David F. Lancy, *The Anthropology of Childhood: Cherubs, Chattel, Changelings* (2008), 192.

4 Richard Byrne's *The Thinking Ape: Evolutionary Origins of Intelligence* (1995), 196

5 Michael Maccohy, *The Gamesman: The New Corporate Leaders* (1976)

6 Drew H. Bailey and David C. Geary, "Hominid Brain Evolution: Testing Climatic Ecological, and Social Competition Models," *Human Nature* 20 (2009): 67-79

7 Mark Bauerlein, *The Dumbest Generation: How the Digital Age Stupefies Young Americans and Jeopardizes Our Future* (2009), 75

8 Winnie Hu, "Forget Goofing Around: Recess Has A New Boss", *New York Times* March 15, 2010, <http://www.nytimes.com/2010/03/15/education/15recess.html>.

9 Lenore Skenazy, *Free-range Kids: Giving Our Children the Freedom We Had Without Going Nuts With Worry* (2009)

Accessed from journalofplay.org



Unfortunately, there is no universally effective strategy for managing severe tantrums and meltdowns. However, the effective management of children's severe tantrums and meltdowns begins with developing an understanding of what is actually going on in the nervous system of a child prior to, and in the midst of, a severe tantrum or meltdown.

WHAT CAUSES TANTRUMS?

Most people believe that tantrums are a behaviour management problem. In fact, they are an arousal management problem. Understanding this is the key to effective management of melt downs and severe tantrums.



hard-wired to be highly reactive to sensory stimulation (i.e. sights, sounds, touch, taste, smell), perceived threats, and vulnerable to maintaining higher levels of arousal.

HOW TO LOWER YOUR CHILD'S AROUSAL LEVELS

(a strategy for reducing the likelihood and frequency of severe tantrums and meltdowns)

- The simplest and most effective method is to play soothing classical music quietly in their bedrooms all night, every night. The rationale for this comes from the research into the so-called Mozart Effect.
- Maintaining consistent routines and

to severe tantrums and meltdowns.

WHAT DO I DO WHEN MY CHILD IS HAVING A SEVERE TANTRUM?

- Try to stay calm. If you are ranting and raving this will only further increase the child's arousal and exacerbate their meltdown
- If you are unable to do this then move away from your child (this is not the ideal option)
- If you can maintain a calm demeanour, be present and accessible to the child without further stimulating their arousal. Sit quietly in the same room as them.
- Drape a heavy blanket across their

TAMING TANTRUMS; MANAGING MELTDOWNS WHAT DO WE DO WHEN OUR CHILD IS HAVING A SEVERE TANTRUM OR MELTDOWN?

By arousal, the author means the level of activity in the child's nervous system;

- Arousal goes up and down during the day.
- Arousal generally is lowest when the child is asleep and highest when the child is in a state of high emotion
- It is regulated by the brain
- It is influenced by what the child is doing and what is happening in the child's environment
- It varies from child to child
- Each child's range of arousal is affected by genetic factors (e.g. temperament); early exposure to stress; ongoing maintaining factors and the interaction of these

Frequent exposure to stress and prolonged distress, particularly during the first year of life, is thought to result in significant development of the parts of the brain that are associated with high arousal and emotional distress. The result of this is that the central nervous system becomes

expectation of your child's behaviour from day to day also helps to lower arousal levels

- Furthermore, being accessible and empathetic towards your child, particularly when they are in distress
- Consulting with an appropriately qualified and experienced general practitioner, child development or mental health professional if your child's severe tantrums and meltdowns persist for longer than this, or they are having them once a week or more.

Children with sensory processing difficulties can be more prone to severe tantrums and meltdowns. The best resolution for this can be to send such children to an Occupational Therapist who specialises in providing parents and children with sensory activities to reduce the level of irritation to their nervous system, thereby reducing their arousal levels generally and their proneness

shoulders as weight is soothing to many children

- Put on their favourite DVD, as this is associated with happy feelings
- Play soothing music
- Offer them a bath or a shower
- If you do not add to their arousal levels the episode should be over within less than 15 minutes

While there is no known universally effective strategy for controlling meltdowns, in the author's experience, better managing children's arousal levels generally and during a severe tantrum, can reduce their frequency and intensity and duration.

Written by colbypearce

For more information, the author has written two books; A Short Introduction to Promoting Resilience in Children; A Short Introduction to Attachment and Attachment Disorder

TRAUMA AND GROWTH

DR FRAN VERTUE



While it's undoubtedly true that the chronic stress of the past 18 months has taken a massive toll on individuals and the community in Christchurch, there is also some good news. Over the past decade, researchers have moved away from an exclusive focus on the negative aftermath following traumatic events.

There is now a large and growing literature showing that people with cancer, parents of children with severe health problems, people who have suffered a heart attack, people who have served in war, and those who have survived natural disasters identify positive ways in which their lives have changed as a result of the traumatic events. The name that is generally assigned to these positive changes is "posttraumatic growth". The originators of the concept, Tedeschi and Calhoun said "Posttraumatic growth is the experience of positive change that occurs as the result of the struggle with highly challenging life crises".

The research from other countries (and now New Zealand) suggests that post-traumatic growth tends to occur in five general areas. First, people who must face major life crises can develop a sense that new opportunities have emerged from the struggle, opening up possibilities that were

not present before. We have seen so much of this in Christchurch where innovation is the name of the game and people have adapted to the changing landscape with exciting new projects.

A second area is a change in relationships with others. Some people experience much closer relationships with specific people, and they can also experience an increased sense of connection to others who have suffered in the community. Again, we have seen this as neighbours get to know each other and the community band together for mutual support. Unfortunately, there is also the risk that relationships that were troubled before the trauma, may founder completely in the face of the ongoing stress.

A third area of possible change is an increased sense of one's own strength – "if I lived through that, I can face anything".

My personal crusade with children and families is to have them celebrate their survival and strength after any shock rather than live in constant fear of the next one.

A fourth aspect of posttraumatic growth experienced by some people is a greater appreciation for life in general. We have also seen evidence of this, as people place more

value on the non-material – experiences becoming more important than "stuff".

There is lots of talk around about being mindful in our daily lives and loving the little things that we notice as we become more keenly aware of our lives. People make changes to their lifestyles as they stop to reconsider their priorities in the areas of work, leisure, relationships, and so on.

The fifth area involves the spiritual or religious domain. Some individuals experience a deepening of their spiritual lives. However, this deepening can also involve a significant change in one's belief system, and there are those who abandon their religious beliefs in their grief.

What is particularly exciting is that these possibilities are available for everyone. Remember that tiny changes can lead to large benefits, so even opening up a little window to see the world a little differently can bring wonderful rewards.

Fran Vertue is a clinical psychologist practicing in Christchurch. You can read more of her writing at: www.christchurchpsychology.co.nz.

YOU'VE BEEN WARNED!

By Marissa Johnpillai

MOST HOUSEHOLDS AND ORGANISATIONS HAVE BEEN ENCOMPASSED BY RECENT CHANGES TO THE COPYRIGHT ACT. IF YOU HAVE AN INTERNET ACCOUNT, IT IS NOW EASIER FOR YOU TO BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ANY 'INFRINGING FILE-SHARING' DETECTED ON YOUR ACCOUNT.

File-sharing refers to uploading or downloading material via a network of multiple simultaneous users (known as a 'peer-to-peer' network; one example is BitTorrent). File-sharing infringes copyright if you do not have permission to upload or download the file. Material accessed through websites, such as streamed YouTube videos, is not included in this reform but is still covered by general copyright law.

A three-strike regime has been established to more swiftly resolve complaints about infringing file-sharing. 'Rights owners' (those who hold copyright, or groups representing them) have always been allowed to monitor file-sharing networks to detect infringing file-sharing. Now they are able to make a complaint to internet providers that copyrighted material (such as music or movies) has been illegally downloaded, and internet providers must then issue the relevant notice to the account holders identified.

The first two notices are a detection notice and a warning notice. These do not directly result in penalties, but serve to inform the

account holder that infringing file-sharing has been alleged.

There is a 28-day cooling off period after each of these, during which no further notice can be issued. Detection and warning notices expire after 9 months.

The third notice is an enforcement notice and following this, right owners can seek compensation through the Copyright Tribunal. The Tribunal must award penalties for every listed infringement they accept as true, up to a maximum of \$15,000. Account holders may challenge any notice in writing to their internet provider, within 14 days.

A challenge may be accepted or rejected by the rights owners. If the challenge is rejected, then the infringement notice stands for the time being, and will be determined by the Copyright Tribunal if it gets to the enforcement stage.

There have been some concerns about the wording of these amendments. One concern is that account holders could be liable for infringing file-sharing on their account

that they were not personally responsible for. In households with children, flatmates or visiting guests, the account holder may receive infringement notices triggered by other people's uploading or downloading.

The requirement for two strikes before the final enforcement notice will limit the impact of this, however, at least for ordinary domestic internet use.

Households or organisations with more open internet arrangements (for example, homestays or neighbourhood centres offering free internet access) are rather more vulnerable to taking the blame for unauthorised usage, but they may have a defence. If you provide internet access to other people, and other people use this provided access to upload or download in breach of copyright, you (as the provider) are protected by section 92B of the Copyright Act and are not held to have authorised the infringement.

This is an ambiguous area, though, and things will only become clearer as cases go through the Copyright Tribunal. Good practice to protect yourself as an account holder would be to ensure you have a secure password on any wireless internet, and that you check your internet billing address (whether postal or e-mail) frequently as this is how any infringement notices will be sent to you. You should challenge in writing any notices received that you think are incorrect or unjustified, and seek legal advice if you have further concerns.

PLAY CHAOS AND BEAUTY



The photos here show what happens when you let some small children loose in a white room with thousands of stickers.

This December, in a surprisingly simple but stunning installation for the Queensland Gallery of Modern Art, artist Yayoi Kusama constructed a large domestic environment, painting every wall, chair, table, piano, and household decoration a brilliant white, effectively serving as a giant white canvas.



www.KidTracker.co.nz



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OSCAR NETWORK TRAINING AND EVENT CALENDAR TERM 2 2012

| EVENT | BRIEF RUN-DOWN | DATE | TIME & PLACE | COST (GST EXCLUSIVE) |
|--|---|---------------------------|---|--|
| The OSCAR Foundation Conference 4 - 6 May – see www.oscar.org.nz for further information | | | | |
| North-West Cluster | Suitable for all Staff and Management | Tuesday 8th May | 10am - 12 noon Room 5 & 6, Fendalton Open Air School, 168 Clyde Road | Free |
| Cluster & Training Rangiora | Suitable for all Staff and Management • Inclusion | Wednesday 9th May | 10am – 11am (Cluster) 11am – 1pm (Training) Rangiora War Memorial Hall Albert St, Rangiora | Cluster: Free Training: \$30 members \$75 non-members |
| South-East Cluster | Suitable for all Staff and Management | Thursday 10th May | 10am – 12 noon 25 Disraeli Street, Addington | Free |
| Core Training | • Child Protection | Tuesday 15th May | 10am – 12.30pm 25 Disraeli Street, Addington | \$30 staff members \$75 non-members Limited to 12 |
| Evening Training | • Child Development 2 Older Children | Thursday 17th May | 7 – 9.30pm 25 Disraeli St, Addington | \$30 members \$75 non-members Limited to 12 |
| Training Day | Suitable for all Staff and Management. Morning: • Kiwi Kids & Mental Health - strategies • Mosaics Afternoon: • Autism • Treaty of Waitangi | Saturday 9th June | 9.15am – 3.15pm Waltham School Hall Cnr Vienna & Hastings St East Waltham | \$50 members \$150 non-members |
| Managing Conflict in Adults | Suitable for all Supervisors and Management | Wednesday 13th June | 10am – 12 noon 25 Disraeli Street, Addington | Free |
| Practical Strategies for Challenging Behaviour | Suitable for all Staff and Management | Tuesday 19th June | 10am – 12 noon 25 Disraeli Street, Addington | \$30 staff members \$75 non-members Limited to 12 |
| OSCAR Network Annual General Meeting | All welcome Morning tea provided | Tuesday 26th June | 10am – 11am 25 Disraeli Street, Addington | |

WHY PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT?

Because overall, 'professional development' is perceived as continuous learning that enables practitioners to affirm existing understandings as well as acquire new knowledge and skills and thereby remain up-to-date with evolving developments in the field. Some participants also associate professional development with their own personal growth.