

# Play

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# Editor's Letter

From coast to coast to coast, Canadians are coming together to support children's play. In 2017, thousands of communities across Canada celebrated National Family Week, hundreds of family support practitioners gathered in Ontario for FRP Canada's national conference and over 700 stakeholders met in Alberta for the International Play Association's world conference. What did these three events have in common? They had the same theme: 'the power of play.'

But why are people coming together to talk about play?

Research shows that play—especially outdoor play—is crucial for children's healthy development.

Canada's outdoor play movement has been growing rapidly in the last few years. The Lawson Foundation, in particular, has been an outdoor play champion. To date, they have committed and invested nearly \$4,000,000 in their *Outdoor Play Strategy* which supported the development of the *Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play*, funded 14 projects across Canada, and shared their projects' findings for the benefit of everyone working with families and children.

Thanks to the generous support of the Lawson Foundation, in this inaugural issue of FRP Canada's *Play* magazine you will hear from experts on the forefront of Canada's outdoor play movement, discover

what's happening with play across the country, and take away tips to use in your work with children. On behalf of FRP Canada and the Lawson Foundation, we hope you will find new ideas between these pages, feel inspired to champion outdoor play in your local community, and join the Canada-wide conversation.



Rebecca Balcerzak  
Editor and writer



Image via Dr. Mariana Brussoni, used with permission

## Outdoor Risky Play

Dr. Mariana Brussoni, a developmental child psychologist, discusses why outdoor risky play is so important, parents' perceptions of outdoor risky play, and how family support practitioners can support parents who are uncomfortable with outdoor risky play.

### Why did you start working in child development and risky play?

I graduated with a PhD in developmental psychology in 2000. I've been working in child development with a focus on injury prevention since then. As time went on, I had my own kids and gave more thought to play. Essentially, I became increasingly concerned that our approach to injury prevention—focusing solely on getting injury numbers down—didn't consider the fact that children actually need to experience risk in play. As I started researching further, I became more and more convinced that this approach could have unintended negative consequences on children's

health and development, hence my current research focus.

### What are the benefits of outdoor risky play for children?

We did a systematic review with support from the Lawson Foundation a couple of years ago. From that research, we found risky play was positively associated with children's physical activity, negatively associated with sedentary behaviour and positively associated with social health and social development. Kids who are allowed to play without being micro-supervised meet other kids, establish whatever rules for the games they are playing, figure out

who's going to play, how they're going to play and all that kind of stuff. There are suggestions that risky play promotes risk management skills, resilience, self-confidence and a variety of other child developmental needs.

### **Are children being provided with enough outdoor risky play opportunities in Canada?**

We don't actually know because nobody's collecting data on a population level, but studies on specific populations suggest not. So the short answer is no.

### **What kinds of injuries are 'okay' for children to incur during play?**

That's a question I've been spending a lot of time thinking about. For a lack of a better word, what are acceptable injuries? There's been quite a bit of debate in the injury prevention journals.

The most extreme view is any injury, no matter how minor, is an injury to be prevented. The reasoning behind that is how do you know if a fall from a bike will result in a minor scrape or a broken leg? So their reasoning is we should prevent every injury—every single injury—just in case, so that we can prevent the really catastrophic ones. But it's impossible to prevent every injury. If you don't want any injuries then no one should be biking, running or getting into cars, right? Plus, it doesn't take into account what we've discussed in terms of child development. Kids need to have these experiences; you can't hover around them trying to prevent every little thing.

An alternative view is that acceptable injuries shouldn't cost health care dollars. This view makes more sense, but can also capture too many minor injuries, such as the child taken to the emergency department as a precautionary measure. I would go further to suggest that serious injuries are those that lead to hospitalization in every circumstance. Ian Pike, a colleague of mine, worked with trauma surgeons to come up with a list of 'se-

### **WHAT IS RISKY PLAY?**

Risky Play is thrilling and exciting forms of play that involve a possibility of physical injury. Risky play provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury risk.

*Definition provided by Outdoor Play Canada*

Risky Play can be categorized as:

- » play with great heights
- » play with high speed
- » play with dangerous tools
- » play near dangerous elements
- » rough-and-tumble play
- » play where the children can 'disappear'/get lost

rious injuries' that we should try to prevent. For example, broken arms. There are very specific kinds of broken arms on the serious injuries list, but most kinds of broken arms are not on the list because they don't lead to lengthy hospitalization and longer-term repercussions. The vast majority of injuries don't, and that's what people need to realize. Children are not dying from playing. So we're going to huge amounts of effort to prevent pretty minor injuries without giving any thought to the effect of those injury prevention measures on children's health and development.

### **How should family support practitioners address parents' fears and concerns about outdoor risky play?**

Well, there's a few ways. We created [outsideplay.ca](http://outsideplay.ca); it's an online tool that uses health-behaviour change theory to help parents gain the confidence to allow their kids to engage in more outdoor play. Practitioners can encourage parents to check out that site. We also have an in-person workshop version of [outsideplay.ca](http://outsideplay.ca). It's two hours long. We provide all the slides, materials and the practitioner guide for running the workshop.

But there's homework that family support organizations have to do before all of this. First, they have to agree amongst themselves that this is a practice that they want to

support. Everybody has to be on board. Then they should develop some sort of charter so that it's really clear to everybody what they're doing and why they're doing it. The charter could be displayed on a wall, so everybody can see it.

**“We're going to huge amounts of effort to prevent pretty minor injuries without giving any thought to the effect of those injury prevention measures on children's health and development.”**

And practitioners need to have conversations with parents not when they pick up Johnny who has a scrape because he fell; have these conversations when you're enrolling that child. Explain, “this is what we're doing. And this is why we're doing it and why we think it's so important. And check out [outsideplay.ca](http://outsideplay.ca) to understand why it's good that Johnny took a risk while playing outside.

**"It's important to help parents see how capable their children actually are."**

It's important to help parents see how capable their children actually are. For example, some childcare centres will invite parents to come and observe the children and explain to them what they are seeing so they don't automatically react and jump in. They'll say, "yeah, Johnny is trying to climb the tree, and look how he's using his risk management." You really have to meet the parents where they're at. Some parents are more risk-adverse than others, you have to be sensitive to that. Parents are just trying to do the best they can and

you just have to gently guide them along with information.

**What trends have you seen in how parents view outdoor risky play?**

We didn't have a word for 'risky play' when I was younger. It was just 'play.' It was typical for kids to just go out and spend the entire day in their community, hanging out with friends until the street lights came on, doing their thing. But over time, attitudes towards parenting have changed. With all the new child development research out there, parents are now hearing so much parenting advice. It's also shifted society—parents are now expected to pay attention to this advice and do everything they can to raise productive citizens and anything wrong with children is seen as a reflection on the parent. Parents are feeling a lot of stress about this so they're scheduling their kids into classes, making sure they're doing all sorts of different things

to develop their brains, eating the right things and so on. They're just reacting to this social pressure. It's totally understandable.

**Any final advice for family support practitioners who may be hesitant about encouraging outdoor risky play?**

Go to [outsideplay.ca](http://outsideplay.ca) and make your way through that. You'll come up with one manageable thing that you can change. It could be something as simple as: "I'm going to count to 30 before I step in so I can just give it a little more time for all of this to play out to see what happens." It doesn't have to be huge things. You can make small changes that build on each other. But wherever you work, you really need to feel supported by your entire organization.

*This interview has been edited for clarity and length.*

## Canada: The State of Outdoor Play

Shawna Babcock, Executive Director of KidActive and Coordinator for Outdoor Play Canada, discusses Canada's outdoor play movement and how practitioners can support outdoor play.

**Why is outdoor play so important?**

In the last eight years or so, research has shown that outdoor play is essential to healthy child development because it crosses mental health, cognitive development, physical, emotional and social health. We know kids are healthier, more resilient, stronger, more active, and show more prosocial behaviour when they have access to open spaces and supports for unstructured play. Today, children and youth are facing complex and unprecedented issues. But we know kids are competent, capable and

able to develop their independence, risk management and conflict resolution skills when they have permission to explore those issues on their own, especially in natural environments.

**What are some recent milestones in Canada's outdoor play movement?**

The *Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play* is a significant milestone. It built a strong, rigorous foundation of evidence. It's a seminal piece.



Image via Shawna Babcock, used with permission



## "The *Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play* provides us with the evidence base to directly connect healthy child development with the value of outdoor play and the issues and barriers that most often prevent children from going outside to play."

I think the other recent milestone is the Lawson Foundation investment; they've recognized that play is critical to children's healthy development and brought organizations and good work from across the country together. If we're going to address outdoor play comprehensively and collectively and actually move the needle on how outdoor play is supported across Canada and across sectors, then we all need to be standing in the same place and be sharing the same messages. In addition, the Ontario Trillium Foundation has also invested significantly in outdoor play to catalyze positive change.

There's also the recent media uptake. Even prior to the *Position Statement* being released, the media was picking up on stories about risk aversion and letting our kids play outside and how it's being perceived, how we're reacting to it, responding to societal fears and where those came from.

### **Let's say someone working in the family support field missed the release of the *Position Statement*. How would you describe it to them?**

The *Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play* provides us with the evidence base to directly connect healthy child development with the value of outdoor play and the issues and barriers that most often prevent children from going outside to play. We define outdoor play as unstructured, child-directed play, including risk and with access to nature. The *Position Statement* isn't about sport or structured contexts.

### **What needs to be done to build on the *Position Statement's* progress**

### **and who needs to be involved in that work?**

All sectors need to be involved. When we look at this comprehensively, it's very clear that play is a multisector issue. Anyone who influences where children play, or how much free time they have to play, needs to be involved. Even how we interact with children can create either a positive or negative space to allow for free play to happen.

### **Do influences on children's free time include computers and social media? Is screen time part of this?**

It's absolutely a huge barrier to play; it's a huge competitor for children's free time. I know the Kaiser Family Foundation came out with some statistics—children spend around 7 to 8 hours on average per day in front of a screen. But if we translate that and look at what our children are not doing, that screen interaction is affecting their development. It's replacing human interaction, relationship building with the natural world through play, and the skills they develop through outdoor play. When we add up the hours they are spending in front of screens, we know something is definitely out of balance.

### **What can family support practitioners working in organizations big and small do to encourage kids to play outdoors?**

I think increase their knowledge and awareness of the issue, and understand local barriers. It's really important to listen to children and adults, understand risk aversion and fears, and address them with a balanced approach and evidence—

the *Position Statement* can help with this. Advocate for what you feel strongly about, and be confident to make the case for play as a high-priority children's health issue.

### **Where can practitioners turn for support if they're not sure where to start?**

Outdoor Play Canada is in the early stages as a multi-sector network that will support all outdoor play stakeholders. We know stakeholders need evidence, training, knowledge, tools and accessible evidence-informed resources—and we'd like to fill that gap with an online hub ([outdoorplaycanada.ca](http://outdoorplaycanada.ca) is launching soon!) that supports a strong and co-ordinated community of practice. We'll need practitioners' input on what they need. We want to be the trusted, single point of contact that people can go to if they want to support outdoor play in their local community or their family.

*This interview has been edited for clarity and length.*

### WHAT IS OUTDOOR PLAY?

**Outdoor play is play that takes place outside and includes concepts of risky play and nature play. The principles of child directed and unstructured are assumed in this definition.**

*Definition provided by Outdoor Play Canada*

# Digging into Nature Play

Grab your gardening gloves! Ecosource—an Ontario-based environmental education non-profit—piloted a new program to encourage children to play in nature. As cities grow, children increasingly have less opportunities to play in nature and lose out on opportunities to support their healthy development. Funded by the Lawson Foundation, Ecosource’s “Dig into Play” program bridged this gap by inviting children ages 0-12 to play in community gardens across Mississauga.

## WHY NATURE PLAY?

Stephanie Rivera, an Ecosource Garden and Play Educator, helped prepare and facilitate play sessions and supported project evaluation. While many family support practitioners may be familiar with the benefits of outdoor play on children’s development, Stephanie knows nature play brings something extra to the table. “It engages all of the senses... [It] is just so versatile and a really great place for discovery.”

## HOW COMMUNITY GARDEN PARTNERSHIPS SUPPORT NATURE PLAY

Through partnerships with schools, neighbourhoods and community organizations, the “Dig into Play” program engaged families across Mississauga and turned community gardens into places where children could experience self-directed play in a natural setting. Each session, children and parents roamed between garden play stations that offered a variety of activities. From ‘mud laboratories’ to ‘zen zones,’ there was something to appeal to every child. The play activities were “completely self-directed,” said Stephanie. “The children were able to choose where they would like to go and how long they would like to stay there. Of course, there

was a natural pull to the gardening when they saw the watering cans or when they saw harvesting.” Ecosource staff empowered the children to use their imaginations as they explored the gardens.

## INCORPORATING INDIGENOUS PERSPECTIVES

The Peel Aboriginal Network (PAN) advised on program delivery. When Ecosource incorporated Indigenous creation stories into several sessions, “PAN suggested ways of talking about the Anishinaabe creation story ... that [respected] cultural understanding,” said Stephanie. PAN also helped Ecosource develop a land statement they could use organization-wide. Stephanie recommends that organizations wanting to learn more about Indigenous knowledge and traditions should reach out and engage with their local Indigenous networks and community members.

## PARENT PERSPECTIVES

For those willing to try out a community garden partnership, the outcomes can be noticeable. For Stephanie, one mother’s story stands out.

“She didn’t realize how much [her son] really loved playing in the mud. It actually opened up for her a sense of nostalgia because where they are living now is in a high-density neighbourhood inside of an apartment building where she doesn’t have access to greenspace. [But she had memories] of growing up on a farm, and farming and gardening ... as a child. Those were

some of her really treasured memories that came back when she was in the community garden setting and seeing her son so engulfed in mud play.”

## MAKE YOUR OWN PARTNERSHIP

For practitioners who want to partner with community gardens, Stephanie suggests getting in touch with a community garden coordinator to talk about having “a complementary relationship.” Having children take care of gardens and gain exposure to the natural world supports their healthy development and “contributes[s] to this greater sense of community, which is what community gardens strive to do.”

For practitioners who can’t access community gardens, Stephanie has a few tips. “If there’s any outdoor space at all that you can utilize, I would ... suggest container gardening.” And for those who don’t have access to outdoor areas, “indoor growing is always an option.”

And her last piece of advice?

“If anybody wants to run a program like this, especially within a family resource setting, I would really suggest engaging the parent community. This can help across so many levels. You want to make sure that the parents are seeing the benefits of play, so you want to engage them in discussions ... You might have parents who are avid gardeners who would be able to help or might want to share something with the families.”

## WHAT IS NATURE PLAY?

**Nature play is play that happens primarily outside in a natural environment and/or involves play with natural elements and features, such as water and mud, rocks, hills, forests, and natural loose parts, such as sticks, pine cones, leaves, grass etc.**

*Definition provided by Outdoor Play Canada*





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# 7 Tips on Building Relationships with Families in Outdoor Play Programs

- 1 Relationships are best formed with repeat participants. Encourage them to come back!
- 2 Introduce new elements to the play program, like messy play components, to excite children and open up opportunities for conversation
- 3 Personalize the learning experience! Small things like remembering names and birthdays from previous conversations goes a long way
- 4 Make sure the family, not just the child, is having a meaningful experience
- 5 When working with English Language Learners, learn a few simple phrases in their language. Knowing how to say 'hi' or 'bye' or 'thank you' is really helpful.
- 6 Make eye contact with children so they know you're listening and paying attention
- 7 Smile!

*These tips were extracted from an interview with Stephanie Rivera, a Garden and Play Educator at Ecosource. They have been edited for clarity and length.*



# Loose Parts Play

What do bathtubs, pulleys and cardboard boxes have in common? You can find them in outdoor play programs across Canada! Thanks to funding from the Lawson Foundation, not-for-profits are using loose parts to let children's creativity run wild—and support their healthy development while they're at it.

## WHY LOOSE PARTS?

"Loose parts play contributes to children's overall healthy development," says Beverlie Dietze, Director of Learning and Teaching at Okanagan College. When children engage in loose parts play, they develop their "social connections with other playmates, self-regulation skills, and overall cognitive skills."

Loose parts play also promotes physical literacy. As Jane Cawley,

a consultant at the Atlantic Health Promotion Research Centre, explained, "just because children are outside doesn't actually mean they're moving ... You can go to a playground and see a bunch of pre-school-aged children and they're sitting around." Unlike static play equipment, moveable loose parts "naturally" expand children's physical literacy, said Jane. "They take a board and two other small stumps and they create a balance beam all on their own. And the next thing you know, they've created this climb-on jump-off activity that wasn't there 10 minutes ago."

## LOOSE PARTS IN ACTION

Unlike many traditional play structures, loose parts programs can be moved from place to place. With support from the Lawson Foundation, the City of Calgary's Recreation Department and Parks Department co-created a loose parts Mobile Adventure Playground that travelled around the city so that kids from different communities could take advantage of the program. And with the support

of Play by Nature and the Ontario Trillium Foundation, Earth Day Canada created a similar 'pop up' loose parts program in the Greater Toronto Area.

## D-I-Y LOOSE PARTS PROGRAMMING

For anyone wanting to try their hand at putting together a pop up loose parts program, experts have suggestions.

"I would first have a conversation with [your] risk department, or [your] risk lawyers," said Heather, Manager at the City of Calgary's Recreation and Community Services. "That's what we did right from the beginning. We involved our risk and liability folks to say, 'This is what we're thinking about doing—what advice do you have for us?'"

In the event practitioners feel like a "lone champion trying to build support for a loose parts play program," Brenda Simon, Director of Play Programs at Earth Day Canada, suggested practitioners "start with a box of interesting things" and

*Image via City of Calgary Community Services & Protective Services, used with permission*





speak to other adults about loose parts play, while watching children play with the materials. “That’s what we do with our pop ups. Our pop ups are about educating the parent and social service community about play by having them see it.”

Once other people are on board, go ahead and try out loose parts play yourself. “It’s helpful for practitioners and parents to engage in loose parts play themselves before they introduce them to children,” said Christine Alden, Program Director at the Lawson Foundation. “Reconnecting with our own memories of making a fort out of a refrigerator box or building a sand castle often reminds of us of the joy of loose parts play.”

But providing boxes and other materials is only one part of planning a loose parts play program. “We have seen through these funded projects that adults have a critical role to play in creating environments where children are encouraged to explore their ideas and are supported to take risks,” said Christine. “Adults have a role in facilitating and monitoring loose parts play. The more adults understand play and how to support play, the better.”

## FINDING LOOSE PARTS

Creativity is key when it comes to sourcing loose parts. Asking parents to bring in items is a good place to start. Discount supply stores, such as Habitat for Human ReStores, can provide cheap lumber, tools, furniture and other materials and children can help gather sticks, stones, flowers and other natural materials at the beginning of program sessions.

The key, Heather stressed, is “looking for things that are of low monetary value but very high play value.” She recommends Value Village for sheer fabric and netting.

Jane found loose parts by showing people what she was looking for. “I put together a little binder with some photographs of children playing with loose parts because I was going to be approaching peo-

ple asking for either donations or really good deals who aren’t early childhood educators, who’ve never heard the expression ‘loose parts’ and wouldn’t have had a clue what I meant. So I could go in to Canadian Tire, Home Depot or Kent ... and explain who I was and say ‘this is exactly what I’m looking for.’ And they were fascinated—fascinated!—with the idea. And if I hadn’t had the visuals I wouldn’t have had any luck, I’m sure.”

## LOOSE PARTS IN WINTER

In Canada, children often spend too much time indoors during winter. But staff at the Glenora Childcare Society know that keeping children engaged in outdoor loose parts play is a year-round priority.

“A lot of winter play tends to get limited to things like shovels and plows and ‘working with snow with your hands,’ and those sorts of things,” said Adrian, an Early Childhood Educator at the Glenora Childcare Society. “But we found by incorporating ... more loose parts and ‘surplus’ materials in our play supplies, the quality of play and the style of play really changed ... We saw a lot more adventure play, a lot more risky play cropping up ... [Loose parts add] an extra dimension to winter play that you don’t typically have in the outdoors.”

Offering loose parts play programs in winter comes with challenges. “I think the biggest challenge for us was probably durability,” admitted Nicole Cedeno, Glenora Childcare Society’s Executive Director. Things that could stand up to extreme temperature changes, ice, “being dragged around and beat up” in

cold temperatures and wouldn’t get lost in the snow were often difficult to find.

To stand up to Canadian winters, Adrian collected multipurpose tough materials that were easy to manipulate through thick gloves. “[Winter] really changes the dynamic of how kids can work with those materials when they’re all bundled up,” said Adrian.

Not sold on outdoor loose parts play? Just remember: “Whatever you can do indoors, you can take outdoors,” said Adrian. “So if you’re doing art, you can take your art outdoors. You can take your loose parts play outdoors ... It really is about taking what you already know and what you do and just moving into a different environment.”

A final piece of advice for practitioners: “I think there’s no such thing as bad weather, only bad clothes. And we’re never too old to learn how to make a fire with steel wool and a rock. I did that this February, so you’re never too old to learn something new,” said Heather.

**“Thanks to funding from the Lawson Foundation, not-for-profits are using loose parts to let children’s creativity run wild—and support their healthy development while they’re at it.”**

**“Adults have a role in facilitating and monitoring loose parts play. The more adults understand play and how to support play, the better.”**



## 9 Ways to Encourage Families to Play Outdoors

Thanks to support from the Lawson Foundation, Play Ambassadors from Vivo for Healthier Generations built welcoming, engaging and enriching outdoor play environments across Calgary for children and families.

Play Ambassadors increase parents' knowledge, understanding and participation in free, facilitated play programs. Matt Leung, Vivo's Team Lead for Active Play, has seen just how effective Play Ambassadors are. "We've seen positive attitudes and appreciation [from parents] that something so simple can have such a profound impact on their children," he said. Here are nine ways Play Ambassadors encourage families to play outdoors:

- 1 Welcome families into outdoor play spaces. Play Ambassadors invite children and families into play spaces.
- 2 Create inviting spaces for families to participate in play activities. Tents, music, bright colour and loose parts can make an otherwise empty park space more inviting.
- 3 Engage families in conversations. Being silly and playful can help break down participation barriers. Parents don't want to feel embarrassed. If they are around people they know and trust, they will be more like to step out of their comfort zone.

- 4 Ask probing questions. These are questions designed to either stimulate curiosity and creativity, or challenge children and adults to think about loose parts in terms of what they could be used for, not what they are.

- 5 Encourage parents to play. Children aspire to be like their closest role models. In most cases, that's their parents. When children don't see their parents playing, children are more likely to stop playing at an earlier age.

- 6 Actively promote the importance of play with parents. Parents look to practitioners for parenting advice; it's critical practitioners are able to speak about the importance of play.

- 7 Involve parents in play programming. This will help parents continue to encourage their kids to play outside every day.

- 8 Be willing to play yourself. When children see this, they'll feed off your energy and will be more playful themselves.

- 9 Encourage parents to make time for play. If they truly believe their children should be playing more, they have to be willing to make time for play in their lives.

*These tasks were extracted from an interview with Matt Leung, Vivo's Team Lead for Active Play. They have been edited for clarity and length.*



# Resources for Promoting Outdoor Play

## YOUR ONE-STOP SHOP

[Outdoor Play Canada's website](#) is a growing hub of evidence, training, knowledge, tools and resources for anyone who wants to support outdoor play. Visit [outdoorplaycanada.ca!](#)

## OUTDOOR PLAY STRATEGY

Want to know more about the work that the Lawson Foundation is doing with outdoor play? Check out their [Outdoor Play Strategy!](#) Find it at [lawson.ca](#).

## RISK RE-FRAMING TOOL

[Outsideplay.ca](#) is an online tool that helps parents and caregivers gain the confidence to allow their kids to engage in more outdoor play.

## LOOSE PARTS INSPIRATION

- » Pulleys
- » Rope
- » Buckets
- » Big cardboard boxes
- » Wooden planks
- » Tubing
- » Balls
- » Fabric
- » Rocks
- » Tires
- » Bathtubs
- » Hammers and Tools
- » Saws
- » Nails
- » Mallets
- » PVC piping
- » String
- » Costumes
- » Pots and pans
- » Kitchen utensils
- » Spades and shovels
- » Tires
- » Duck tape
- » Tarps
- » Sleds
- » Bricks
- » Sticks and stones
- » Seashells
- » Pinecones
- » Marbles

## YOUR EVIDENCE BASE

The [Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#) is your comprehensive evidence-base that directly connects healthy child development with the value of outdoor play and the issues and barriers that most often prevent children from going outside to play. Find it at [participation.com!](#)

## NATURE PLAY ACTIVITIES FOR GARDEN SPACES

The 10 activities in Ecosource's *Re-Rooted in Play* activity guide highlight how gardening can create healthier bodies and healthier ecosystems through play in an outdoor setting. See also the *Access Re-Rooted in Play* companion resource which can help educators provide hands-on active programming for children, youth and adults of all abilities. Both are available at [ecosource.ca/about-us/publications/](#).

## RISKY PLAY FAQs

Have more questions about risky play? Outsideplay.ca's [Risky Play FAQ page](#) has your answers. Visit [outsideplay.ca/#/faq](#).

## BUILD YOUR OWN NATURE PLAY SPACE

Looking to incorporate more nature-based activities in your learning environment? You can design and plan your own nature play space with Ecosource's interactive [Dig Into Play tool!](#) Find it at [ecosource.ca/digintoplay](#).

## ADVENTURE PLAYGROUND VIDEOS

Watch children make and play in their own Adventure Playground on [Earth Day Canada's website!](#) Visit [earthday.ca/programs/earthplay](#).

**“Access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks—is essential for healthy child development. We recommend increasing children’s opportunities for self-directed play outdoors in all settings—at home, at school, in child care, the community and nature.” – *The Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play***





FRP Canada  
The Canadian Association of Family Resource Programs  
[www.frp.ca](http://www.frp.ca)



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