Risk in Play & Learning | UBUD-HÖÖR DECLARATION SEPTEMBER 2017

RISK-TAKING OPPORTUNITIES are an essential component of a well-functioning school ground. Adults and institutions have a responsibility to use common sense in providing and allowing risk-taking activities for children and young people.

Risk is Essential for Health and Well-Being

IF YOU DON’T TAKE A STEP you will never learn to walk. Children and young people need to take risks in order to develop cognitive, social, physical and psychological competencies.

CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE of all abilities have an equal need and right to have opportunities to take risks and realize these benefits.


Learning through Experience

RISK-TAKING ALLOWS children and young people to learn vital lessons about themselves and their world. These are lessons that cannot be taught and can only be learned through experience. Caution, resilience, courage, knowledge about one’s own abilities and limitations, and the self-confidence to reach beyond them are learned through self-chosen action.

SINCE THE WORLD IS FULL of risks, children need to learn to recognize and respond to them in order to protect themselves and to develop their own risk assessment capabilities.

Beneficial Risk

RESEARCH SHOWS that an indiscriminate ‘risk-minimization’ policy can be a source of harm, not benefit.

HURT CAN PROVIDE A POSITIVE experience. Children and young people learn by mistakes and therefore need opportunities to fail.

Call to Action: As Safe as Necessary

EDUCATORS ARE RESPONSIBLE for providing children and young people with opportunities to develop life competencies such as common sense, problem solving and confidence.

PARENTS AND ADULT FAMILY MEMBERS, school boards, administrators, legislators, legal authorities, and insurers should all devise policies and processes that permit schools to provide activities with beneficial levels of risk.

THOSE WHO PLAN, design, manage, supervise and maintain school environments should be encouraged to take benefits of risk into account.

SCHOOL GROUNDS should not be as safe as possible but as safe as necessary.

The International School Grounds Alliance (ISGA) is a global network of organizations and professionals working to enrich children’s learning and play by improving the way school grounds are designed and used. The ISGA’s Leadership Council convened in Oct. 2015 at the ARMA Museum in Ubud, Bali, Indonesia following our 4th international conference and in Sept. 2016 at Åkersberg in Hörö, Sweden, following our 5th international conference.

Below is a list of ISGA Leadership Council members and organizations who support and share the conviction that beneficial risk-taking is essential in children’s play and learning environments. These members represent 16 countries from Africa, Asia, Australia, Europe, North America and South America, and endorse the Ubud-Hörö declaration as individuals or in their organizational capacity.

INDIVIDUAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS:

Elizbeth Tolu Babalola
Lagos, Nigeria

Susan Boyd
Washington D.C., USA

Delaine Eastin
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Dr. Hoàng Thị Hà
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Hetauda, Nepal

Sam Ullery
Washington D.C., USA

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ORGANIZATIONAL LEADERSHIP COUNCIL MEMBERS:
Risk Is Essential For Health and Well-Being


Available at http://escalate.ac.uk/downloads/4725.pdf.


2011 [PMC free article] [PubMed] [PubMed]


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Learning through Experience


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Beneficial Risk


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