



## The All-Party Parliamentary Group on a Fit and Healthy Childhood

Chair: Steve McCabe MP Co-Chair: Baroness Floella Benjamin OBE. Vice-Chairs: Julie Elliott MP, Diana Johnson MP, Lord McColl of Dulwich, Adam Holloway MP

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# APPG Meeting 29 March 2022 Misunderstanding the value of Play – how to educate policy-makers Chat Stream

00:12:53	Alison Morag Murray:	Afternoon all.
00:13:20	Dr Kathryn Peckham:	Hi everyone, great to be with you all.
00:36:09	Francis McGlone:	Worth a read - <a href="https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429453083-2/impact-play-developing-social-brain-emily-jackson-francis-mcglone">https://www.taylorfrancis.com/chapters/edit/10.4324/9780429453083-2/impact-play-developing-social-brain-emily-jackson-francis-mcglone</a>
00:36:30	Francis McGlone:	I can send the paper to anyone who wants it
00:37:42	University Educator- Pamela:	Looks like a worthy read Francis. Thanks for the share.
00:37:59	Carolyn Silberfeld:	Could you please send the paper to me - I do not have access. <a href="mailto:carolyn.silberfeld@btinternet.com">carolyn.silberfeld@btinternet.com</a>
00:38:02	Alison Morag Murray:	Yes go on thanks Francis. Otherwise it is just the abstract.
00:38:33	Katie:	Hello Roots of Empathy is an experiential learning programme and where children observe the playful and loving relationship between a parent and baby. We are recruiting schools to participate in an RCT If you can help spread the word that would be fantastic <a href="https://uk.rootsofempathy.org/host-school/">https://uk.rootsofempathy.org/host-school/</a>
00:38:35	Cheryl:	Looks interesting , I would love to read it could it be email to <a href="mailto:Cheryl.freeman@brighthorizons.com">Cheryl.freeman@brighthorizons.com</a>
00:39:29	Alison Morag Murray:	<a href="mailto:Alison.murray@roehampton.ac.uk">Alison.murray@roehampton.ac.uk</a> - hope we can avoid inundating.. ;0)
00:39:49	Rekha Bassi:	Thank you Francis, yes please. <a href="mailto:Rekha@thegapclub.com">Rekha@thegapclub.com</a> .
00:40:15	Alicia Drummond:	Please can you send it to me Francis <a href="mailto:Alicia@teentips.co.uk">Alicia@teentips.co.uk</a>
00:40:19	Neil Coleman   OPAL:	I visit between five and seven primary schools every week and in the past 3 months I have seen covid vaccination centres, Ukranian forts and many other amazing structures built in OPAL playgrounds as



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		children try to make sense of the world around them.
00:40:56	Katie:	That sounds great
00:42:24	Dr Kathryn Peckham:	The trouble is focus will always sit with the elements that are being measured and judged against... early learning goals and lesson objectives. We know early childhood is profoundly more important than this - to the child's lifelong learning, development and well-being. We do then need to be opening everyone's eyes to this "something more". That is the focus of my work at Nurturing Childhoods.
00:42:30	Dr Aric Sigman:	Please
00:42:54	Ian Lewis:	Play - the main purpose of childhood - supporting upgrowing through personal adventure often with others? Play - that great asset in life, especially if it is away from parents and, if really lucky, is also away from one's family, school and community. Residential are a special key.
00:43:50	Michael Follett:	<a href="https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Case-For-Play-In-Schools-web-1-1.pdf">https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2021/10/The-Case-For-Play-In-Schools-web-1-1.pdf</a>
00:44:03	Louise Lord Trustee Play England:	I really welcome BPS position that removing childrens playtime should not be used as a means of behaviour management - has this had any impact?
00:46:12	Dr Kathryn Peckham:	Nurturing early childhoods for our tomorrow - <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-52G8PPI3ew&amp;list=PLzkw-lv-oIY3W_gJP8fJpa7fZxliAwMeh&amp;index=18">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-52G8PPI3ew&amp;list=PLzkw-lv-oIY3W_gJP8fJpa7fZxliAwMeh&amp;index=18</a>
00:46:20	Vivian Hill:	Certainly, in my experience schools are thinking differently about removing break times as a means of punishment
00:46:44	Sean Delaney:	In terms of potential policy mechanisms for raising profile/including accountability for provision of play then yesterday's Education White paper and the health and Care Bill going through parliament at the moment would seem opportunities to influence
00:47:04	frances morrison:	not in a school I visited today. I had to run sessions in a room used for sanctions during lunchtime.
00:49:01	Alison Morag Murray:	Thank you all speakers. The magic of play does require facilitation, ironically when discussed and set up by



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		adults. What about children and how society situates play for them? What and how does the research situate the right for child play and what that envisages as reflective of current societal takes on play ? How do we keep this intrinsically value filled and led space/construct without undue marketisation alongside the tension of avoiding potential marginalisation of those regarding access and attitude to play affordances?
00:49:56	Louise Lord Trustee Play England:	Is your response available Vivienne?
00:50:29	saschamcolgan:	I think what we might need is a huge cultural shift...lots of adults have never learnt to play...These adults become parents and teachers and in my case, medical doctors!....There needs to be more outer "inner children"...
00:51:29	Neil Coleman   OPAL:	Just one example of what 600+ OPAL schools across the UK offer children every day of the year <a href="https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cm7lfAEsjqI&amp;t=19s">https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cm7lfAEsjqI&amp;t=19s</a>
00:52:11	Ian Lewis:	My point is, of course, about free time to play, adventurous or otherwise. The Summer Camps Trust is all about play, but not specifically about adventure. We need to talk about Summer Camps - accessible to all.
00:52:48	Kristy Howells:	Thank you for all the speakers today, and for raising play as an area to refocus on. <input type="checkbox"/> An action question - Do we need to have an APPG response or report on this? <input type="checkbox"/> Could PEDAL or OPAL perhaps lead on this? - could this lead on as next steps from the children's alliance reports that the APPG published last year as there was a focus on play within the last two reports,
00:54:28	Alison Morag Murray:	I love that idea and suggestion Kristy. This is clearly a superbly crucial area and all the passion and knowledge here can surely move us forward.
00:56:02	Kirsty Wilson:	Play England are in early conversation with the DoE about the importance of play. There was a 4 nation play symposium recently where we had government official from all 4 nation, the play safety forum, the childrens play policy forum alongside Play England, Play Wales, Play Scotland and PlayBoard Northern Ireland.
00:56:16	Melina Healy:	a 100% Kim that's absolutely the point
00:57:03	Kristy Howells:	Thanks Alison - there are so many people on this call that could help push this forwards, and contribute to a



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		written report, that might help the multiple voices be heard.
00:58:33	Melina Healy:	There has been lot of work done on the benefits of PE in the curriculum and how physical movement effects learning. The APPG looked at this a few years ago. PE is as vital as science and maths.
00:58:46	Alison Morag Murray:	Thank you Kim. PE is reinventing itself. It's just got to be appropriately captured as it emerges. Being holistic (PE) the linear core-wider argument is arguably limited, yet this is a proactive value-sharing step which is to be celebrated as much as it is advocated.
00:59:22	University Educator- Pamela:	In reacting to the notions - The RAF reviewed their fitness strategy in 2000 so the notion of a 'beasting' e.g. press-ups for light and often characterful admonishment such as "give me 10!" idea, was finished. The value of play was cherished at the heart of a Service discipline. Also the notion of withdrawing physical activity at a clinical eating disorder clinics for folks not adhering to their food plans, was ended. It reinforced lack of agency and seemed to infringe of people values. It's hard to listen to any kind of informed (supposedly) establishment withdrawing a human right of movement from people of any age. Whose right is right...or wrong..(just a couple of perspectives from where I have worked).
00:59:49	Michael Follett:	Kim - Much of play is active and so promotes many kinds of exercise. We have had success building a relationship with Sport England on the understanding that outdoor play is the single biggest contributor to physical activity
01:01:08	LEADBEATER, Kim:	Thanks everyone. Really helpful comments and feedback.
01:02:14	Alison Morag Murray:	Fair point Louise. But that is inappropriate practice and ought not to be proffered or offered.
01:03:15	Neil Coleman   OPAL:	Kim, you are always welcome to visit an OPAL school (unofficially, at the invitation of the local MP if there isn't one yet in your constituency) to see the difference.
01:04:36	Michael Follett:	At OPAL we have lots of discussions about the removal of play. It is not that widespread, and some schools use the time for positive interventions. We find that inefficient use of the allotted play times have more impact on playtimes.
01:04:45	Dr Kathryn Peckham:	It also allows them to explore the difficult emotions and



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		behaviours that are getting them in trouble in the first place.
01:04:54	LEADBEATER, Kim:	Thanks Neil. Please do drop me an email and it would be great to try and sort something out kim.leadbeater.mp@parliament.uk
01:05:00	Fraser Brown:	I wish we could get away from the phrase 'learning through play'. That implies the function of play is to create a future adult. Instead we should be talking about children 'learning while they are playing'. i.e. children learning in the here and now to help them cope with their everyday issues.
01:05:15	Alison Morag Murray:	Great point Kathryn.
01:05:46	Kirsty Wilson:	Completely agree Fraser
01:05:56	Neil Coleman   OPAL:	Fraser, you are correct and we see it every day
01:05:59	Carolyn Silberfeld:	Very much agree Fraser
01:06:05	Linda Maurice:	Totally agree Fraser
01:06:06	University Educator- Pamela:	a phrase I have heard in play therapy "Families that play together, stay together"...
01:06:26	Kate Smith:	@Fraser - yes!
01:06:30	Ian Lewis:	Coming from the other end, where free, creative and adventurous play is not experienced, one remains uncertain and not knowing one's potential. Great and almost always new experiences need new playmates, new locations and new activities.
01:07:59	Dr Kathryn Peckham:	We also need to remember how important play and socialisation is at every age - secondary schools can typically offer 20 minutes "lunch" breaks that see children choose between food and using the bathroom... let alone all these rich opportunities we are talking about.
01:09:12	Michael Follett:	Fraser - The more we try to get outcomes from play the less we get and the less outcomes we try and get, the more we end up with!
01:09:13	Alison Morag Murray:	Isn't the EYFS situated through this nuanced approach - we may lose emergent possibilities through the England curricular pathway- potentially other home nations offer more potential for a play ethos. So how might we complement the curriculum as is? Curriculum, extra curriculum and community. A holistic companionable



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		(non versus) approach.
01:09:56	University Educator- Pamela:	University students love a play in class too! And we can label it a team development activity or a desk top exercise...it increases rapport, engagement, trust and the notion of risk changes with advancing literacy in emotional awareness. Few downsides from childhood onwards perhaps...
01:10:34	Ian Lewis:	The Summer Camps Trust (represented at this meeting by Chris Green and Jeremy Quarrie) believes that well-run residential summer camps can make a uniquely valuable contribution to helping children learn / re-learn to play. At a good camp, children are away from their social media and I-pads, learning children's games, outdoor and indoor, also puzzles, handicrafts, and all sorts, all as part of a happy holiday. Many children have been helped to loosen up and find their playing selves again. We should have, as many countries have, a national summer camps sector. Such a sector would also help many more teachers develop play ideas and skills. Do people agree?
01:11:39	Rekha Bassi:	Children need to feel 'safe' ( maslow) before they can play, that means they need to feel it is important , that their needs are being met, that the adult will meet them where they are at and respect them for who they are. Play must be part of the school curriculum
01:11:40	saschamcolgan:	"Life must be lived as play." Plato
01:11:43	Debs McCahon, Woodcraft Folk (She/her):	I strongly agree - historically Woodcraft Folk was part of a similar group. Our summer camps teach co-operation, life skills and environmental sustainability
01:12:25	Viki Veale:	hear hear
01:12:29	Alison Morag Murray:	Sumer camps are amazing affordances Again, if socially just- it is a for all approach.
01:12:42	Ian Lewis:	Love this @Sashamcolgan
01:13:07	LEADBEATER, Kim:	This has been very interesting. Thanks everyone, Kim
01:13:08	Rekha Bassi:	If you look at the teaching standards is play really introduced from the start ?
01:13:18	Course Director 1:	Fascinating discussion, thank you everyone. That play is a natural medium for learning, developing and rehearsing social and emotional skills for young children is central to



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		Play & Creative Therapies. That psychological growth and well-being can be accessed creatively with a Therapist. Play is vital to helping our children thrive. <a href="http://playtherapy.org.uk">playtherapy.org.uk</a>
01:13:39	Rachel Bassett-Dubsky:	Thank you all for a really interesting and engaging discussion.
01:14:50	Alison Morag Murray:	Thank you Stephen and Phil, Helen, panel and all other equally amazing colleagues. What an informative and inspirational afternoon.
01:14:54	Ian Lewis:	HRH Prince Philip -in memorium today over the road - The danger is not that we take risks, it is that we do not take enough risks.
01:14:57	Rekha Bassi:	Edu Larp is effective
01:15:54	Jeremy Quarrie:	Well said Michael - let's free the P word!
01:15:56	Alison Morag Murray:	Ian- well written.
01:16:44	Michael Follett:	Play is not a four letter word!
01:16:44	Fraser Brown:	When the Government consult children in advance of the (eventual) 'Every Child Matters' approach, 81% of children asked for "more places to go" - more than everything else put together. When the ECM was produced that had completely disappeared. One wonders whether we can trust our politicians and civil servants.
01:19:48	University Educator- Pamela:	Thank you everyone. Super inputs. Yes wonderful.
01:19:50	Ian Lewis:	Thank you - all. an amazing discussion