



PLAY



"You can discover more about a person in an hour of play than in a year of conversation" ~ Plato

WHAT IS 'PLAY'?



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WHAT IS 'PLAY'?

Remember your
play memories
from yesterday.

How did you
know that you
were playing?



WHAT DO OTHERS SAY?

"Play is the work of the child"
~ Maria Montessori

"Play is the highest form of research" ~ Albert Einstein

"The creation of something new is not accomplished by the intellect but by the play instinct." ~ Carl Jung

"Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in the child's soul." ~ Friedrich Froebel



THE RIGHT TO PLAY..

Article 31 of the UN convention on the Rights of the Child states:

“...the right of the child to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child...”

Play is defined as:

“behaviour which is **freely chosen**, **personally directed** and **intrinsically motivated**.”

FOREST SCHOOL IS... FREELY CHOSEN

- Balancing structure & freedom
- Nature's abundance stimulates curiosity
- Observing individuals
- Offering choices
- Planning for next steps
- Flexible – open to 'in the moment opportunities'
- Risk Management systems



FOREST SCHOOL IS... PERSONALLY DIRECTED

- Nature provides open ended resources
- Freedom to try things – real life feedback
- Balance of power



FOREST SCHOOL IS... INTRINSICALLY MOTIVATED

- Nature models uniqueness
- Leaders model authenticity
- Time & Space to be
- Non-Judgemental
- Community support



PLAY IN NATURE IS ESSENTIAL...

- Increases neural growth (particularly in amygdala & prefrontal lobes)
- Increases emotional & social regulation functions
- Increases ability to cope with stress (opioids)
- Increases cognitive focus & reduces fatigue
- Improves physical health
- Essence of creativity
- Increases self esteem & resilience



PLAY DEPRIVATION

“Play Deprivation is the name given to the notion that not playing may deprive children of experiences that are regarded as developmentally essential and result in those affected being both biologically and socially disabled.” ~ Bob Hughes

- Increase in violent & anti-social behaviour
- Repressed emotions & social skills
- Increased risk of obesity
- Depression & anxiety
- Smaller & malformed brain
- Unaware of social norms



“The most effective kind of education is that a child should play amongst lovely things.”

~ Plato

