

Contents

Part One. Developing a Philosophy of Play

1. THE IMPORTANCE OF PLAYING 2
2. ATTITUDES AND POINTS OF VIEW 6
 - Points of View, 7
 - Guidelines for Adults, 11
 - Guidelines for Children, 13
 - Overall Goals of
the Creative Play Program, 14

Part Two. Creating the Play Environment

3. PHYSICAL INFLUENCES 18
 - Creating the Play Environment, 18
 - Arrangements, 19
 - Ground and Floor Surfaces, 21
 - Textures and Materials, 22
 - Directional Factors, 23
 - Colors, 25
 - Lighting, 27
 - Sounds and Acoustics, 28
 - Odors, 29
 - Weather, 30
 - Ventilation, Smog, Fresh Air, and Temperature, 31

CONTENTS

4.	HUMAN INFLUENCES	33
	Density, 33	
	Personal Space, 35	
	Age, 36	
	Ordinal Position, 38	
	Size, 39	
	Nonverbal Communication, 39	
	Verbal Communication, 43	
	Rhythms, 45	
	Sex Differences, 46	
	Economic Backgrounds, 47	
	Racial and Cultural Backgrounds, 48	
	Personality, 49	

Part Three. IMPLEMENTING THE CREATIVE PLAY PROGRAM

5.	MOVEMENT EXPERIENCES: GROSS MOTOR ACTIVITIES	52
	Climbing, 53	
	Rocking, Teeter-tottering, and Swinging, 58	
	Tires, Hoops, Spools, and Other Things That Roll, 63	
	Boxes, Boards, and Other Buildables, 66	
	Planks, Walking Boards, Plywood Panels, and Other Level Raisers, 70	
	Crawl-Through Places, 76	
	Jumping, 79	
	Wheel Toys, 82	
	Balls, 87	
	Punching Bag, 92	
	Vigorous Movement Games, 95	
	Creative Movement, 96	
6.	MOVEMENT EXPERIENCES: FINE MOTOR ACTIVITIES	104
	Manipulative Materials, 104	
	Tactile Materials, 110	
	Water Play, 114	
	Sand Play, 120	
	Dirt and Mud Play, 125	
7.	REST AND RELAXATION	130

CONTENTS

8.	CONSTRUCTION EXPERIENCES	133
	Cardboard Blocks, 134	
	Unit Blocks, 139	
	Hollow Blocks, 143	
	Cardboard Boxes, 147	
	Carpentry, 150	
	Wood Gluing, 153	
	Cardboard Construction, 155	
	Styrofoam, 156	
9.	NATURAL SCIENCE	159
	Plants and Gardens, 160	
	Animals, 161	
10.	PHYSICAL SCIENCE	164
	Magnifiers, 165	
	Magnets, 167	
	Dry-Cell Batteries, 170	
	Stethoscope, 171	
	Cooking, 173	
11.	LETTERS AND NUMBERS	180
	Letters, 180	
	Numbers, 181	
12.	CREATIVE EXPRESSION	186
	Art Experiences, 187	
	Music Experiences, 194	
	Dance and Body Movement, 196	
	Dramatization, 198	
	Language and Storytelling, 203	
	Poems, 209	
13.	DRAMATIC PLAY AND OTHER FORMS OF MAKE-BELIEVE	214
	Evaluating Children's Needs, 217	
	Expressing Feelings and Emotions, 218	
	Space and Materials for Dramatic Play, 228	
	Appendix, 241	
	Bibliography, 252	
	Index, 255	

1 The Importance of Playing

When Debra comes to nursery school each day, she is ready to play. When Jimmy arrives, he says, "I'm gonna play with my friends." Another time he says, "Play with the dumper." I asked Katie's mother what she expected Katie to do at school one day. Her reply, somewhat resignedly, was, "Well, I expect she'll just play." When Joey and Jennifer arrive too early, I say to them, "Your teacher isn't here yet. You may go to Miss Alyce's room and play until she comes." When their teacher arrives, she says, "I'm going to put out the red clay to play with today." When Betsy is ready to go home, I ask, "What are you going to do after you have your lunch?" "Play-ay-ay-ay!" she says, drawing the word out with relish as though she hadn't played for weeks. When any parent who has ever had a child in nursery school or a kindergarten that is not trying to emulate first grade asks "What did you do today?" he or she hears on many occasions, "Oh, nothing—just played," even though the child knows full well that the mother's face will reveal tremendous feelings of disappointment. On the other hand, as Eric was leaving school one day, one of the teachers asked him, "Eric, did you do anything special today?" His eyes lit up with enthusiasm as he said, "Yeah! I played!"

One day, I asked a group of eighty-five experienced nursery-school and kindergarten educators at a university seminar, "What in your collective opinion is the reason children want to come to your schools?" "To play!" they shouted in unison, as though the answer had been rehearsed. This answer was given in spite of the fact that over half of those educators worked in situations where play was downgraded because the emphasis was on teaching language and concepts, with tightly structured formats to follow.

The common denominator in these incidents is the free and natural use of the word *play*. That is how it should be. No matter what the program, no