

“And We All Fall Down” Facilitating Inclusive Play in Early Childhood Settings

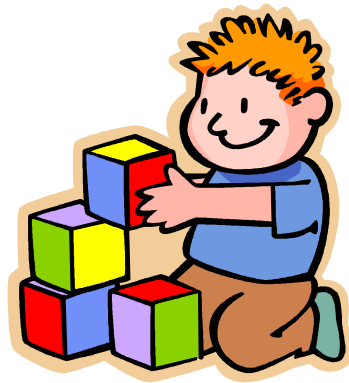
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CONESTOGA
Connect Life and Learning

Arts Express

- Video diary presented from the Arts Express summer program jointly hosted by:
 - KidsAbility
 - Wilfrid Laurier University, Faculty of Music and Music Therapy Program
 - University of Waterloo, Carousel Dance Centre
 - Conestoga College, Early Childhood Education Program



*Play is a powerful form of activity that fosters
the social life and constructive activity of
the child.*

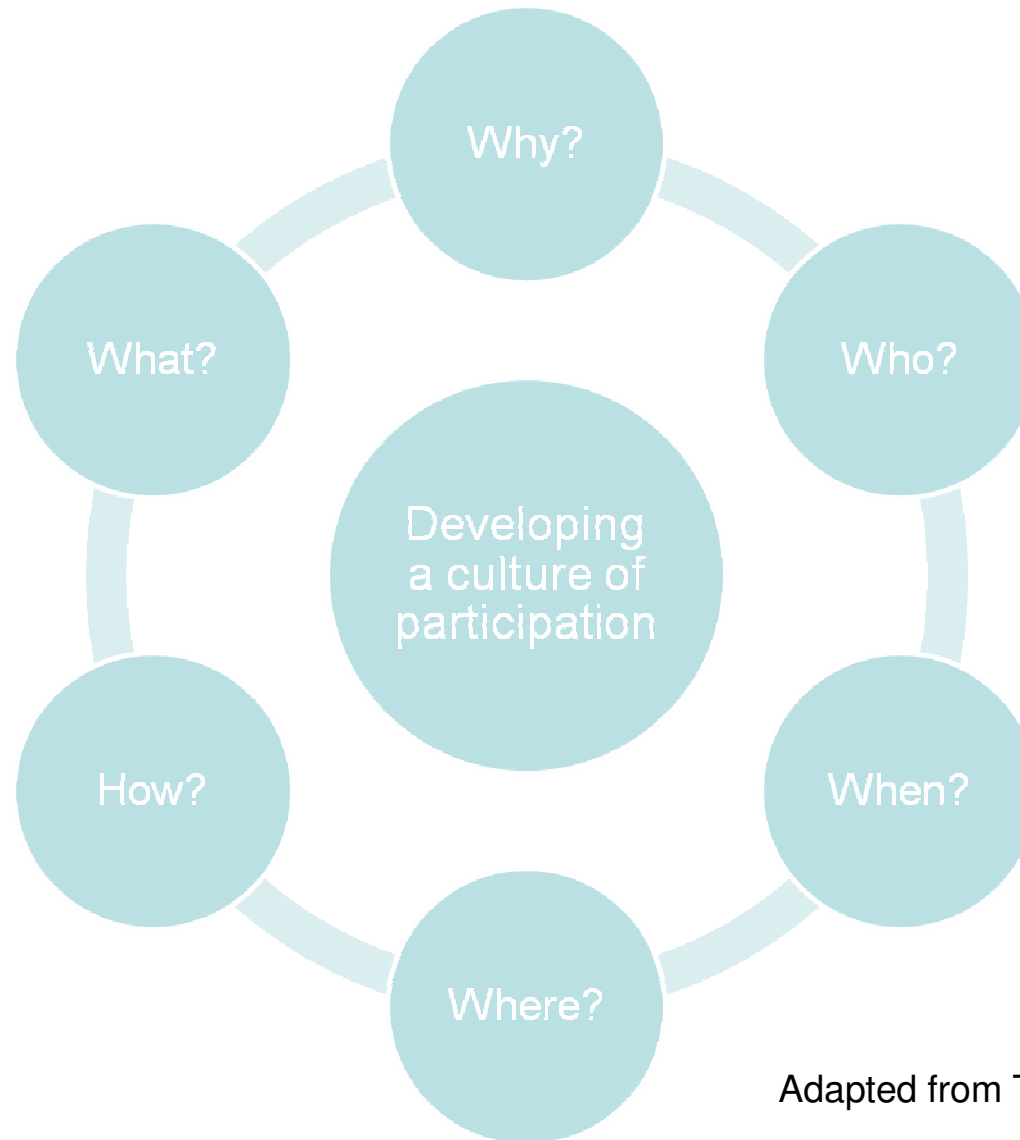
Jean Piaget, 1980

Inclusive Play

- All children are welcome.
- All children have a sense of belonging.
- All children are supported through physical, social, and temporal adaptations to sustain play.



The Value of Inclusive Play



Adapted from Teresa Casey, 2005

Planning for Inclusive Play

1. Observation of the individual child
2. Observation and adaptation of the physical environment
3. Observation and adaptation of the social environment
4. Observation and adaptation of the temporal environment



Observe and Record

1. The child in different settings and at different times of day.
2. The child's strengths in all areas of development.
3. The child's interests.



Physical Environment

Observe the child

- ✓ in play settings (inside and outside)
- ✓ manipulating materials
- ✓ using props and tools





Social Environment



Observe the child

- ✓ in one to one interactions with peers
- ✓ in group interactions
- ✓ in interactions with adults
- ✓ in solitary play



Temporal Environment



Observe the child

- ✓ participating in different experiences
- ✓ at different times of day
- ✓ during and after transitions



Experiences

1. Spontaneous and planned
2. Use the child's strengths
3. Consider the child's interests
4. Include all areas of development
5. Simplify or enhance
6. Adapt for successful participation

Facilitating Inclusive Play

1. In the daily schedule, plan to balance time for both spontaneous and planned play opportunities
2. Select toys and materials that can be adapted to maximize the experience
3. Choose toys and materials that are developmentally appropriate for all ages and abilities
4. Teach and model social skills
5. Focus on the interaction rather than the activity

Recommendations for Promoting Inclusive Play

1. Set up a safe and secure environment
2. Value and respect all children
3. Use early identification and assessment to determine strengths and interests
4. Identify and remove all barriers to inclusion
5. Promote access to all play experiences
6. Be developmentally responsive to each child
7. Set-up ongoing planning and review of the child and the play environment

Recommended Policies for Inclusive Play

- *It is not always the amount of money that makes the best play environments, but the quality of time and energy in planning for play opportunities of children of all ages.*

Hartle & Johnson, 1993

Recommended Policies for Inclusive Play

1. Evidence base practice based on research
 2. Ongoing professional development
 3. Staffing resources opportunities for observation, recording, planning, collaboration with colleagues and families, and facilitation
 4. Qualified and well paid staff who practice an inclusive philosophy
 5. Physical and social accessibility to play, both indoors and outdoors
 6. Support services for individual children and programming
 7. A shared responsibility of funding by families, communities and ALL levels of government
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Inclusive play facilitates children to construct knowledge about themselves, others, and the world around them.

Erin Cameron and Lana-Lee Hardacre, 2008



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