

# The Value of Play

The term “**value of play**” is a new concept of play-based learning that encompasses many new pathways of thinking and understanding. It means that there are many areas of play that children receive information and value from. Value of play includes **categories of play** and **types of play experiences**. How we learn from these aspects of play is unique to each child.

The new terminology is not to be intimidating because **families are already preparing their children for kindergarten in the things they do naturally at home.**

The explorations in **Types of Play Experiences** and **Categories of Play** are to highlight what children are learning as they play. Also, they demonstrate the need for a balanced connection between child and land, animals, environment as well as others. The explanation shows the academics children are benefitting from these types/categories of play.



Play is valuable to educational growth. By going through the different pathways of play experiences and labelling them to demonstrate that **play is educational**. It is a fundamental component to academic success in school.

Play is essential to a child’s development because it contributes to their physical, cognitive, social and emotional well-being.

***“Most of children’s early learning takes place through play.”***

**Indoor Play** is activities like puzzles, science experiments, playdough, fort building, drawing and painting. Children are playing and learning many developmental skills that prepare them for future academic success.

**Outdoor Play** allows children to connect and build relationships with plants, animals, water, land and weather. Children express, explore and extend what they have learned through their five senses.



**Physically active play** develops endurance and control of body movements. It benefits all aspects of learning, behavior and health. Regular physical activity through play allows children to release their energy so they can be calmer during the day and sleep better at night.

Children learn through a variety of play based activities that include physical movement, music and the arts. When they are given opportunities for **hands-on activities**, they explore, create and play with the materials. They make choices, reflect on thinking and talk about their learning. For example, when children experiment with print, they develop literacy and mathematical skills.

It is important to allow **children to enjoy the curiosities and wonder around them.** Through play, children are able to practice accountability, cooperation and respect for others, nature and the environment.

# Putting Theory into Action...

“Play enables children to develop a greater understanding of their environment which help them make sense of the world.”



On a high tide day by Mayne Island in British Columbia, this newborn seal was found stranded on land. The children wondered if they should help the seal or let nature take its course. These children chose to help the seal to the ocean level, away from predators and dehydration. At this time, government agencies were closed and animal rescue options were unavailable.

**How does this relate to play and Living Inquiries of Social Responsibility and Engagement with the World?** It is the experience and connection the children have with nature, the land and the animal.

It is important to note that when a newborn seal is touched by people, a human scent is left on it. When reunited with its mother, she may not accept the newborn because of the unfamiliar scent.

**So, how can we get the seal to safety?** Learning involves recognizing the consequences of our actions. It also requires patience and time. One of the children took off his shirt so his father could use it to carry the newborn seal to ocean level. The family watched the seal (who they named Lucky) swim off and reunite with its mother. Many times after, the family went back to the area and saw the mother seal with her pup.

This is a **holistic learning experience** for the children. They developed a connection with the animal, the ocean and the land. It is these connections that guided their sense for well-being and social responsibility.



## References

Play Today BC Handbook—For Educators. <https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/early-learning/teach/earlylearning/play-today-handbook.pdf>

Play Today— A Guide for Families. [https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/early-learning/teach/earlylearning/play\\_today\\_family\\_guide.pdf](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/assets/gov/education/early-learning/teach/earlylearning/play_today_family_guide.pdf)

Vancouver School Board Brochure: Importance of Play. <https://www.vsb.bc.ca/School/School-Registration/Documents/ready-for-K-web-brochure.pdf#search=importance%20of%20play>

VSB