

# Share your story using data

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# What makes a good story?

**Left side of room**  
Listen for story

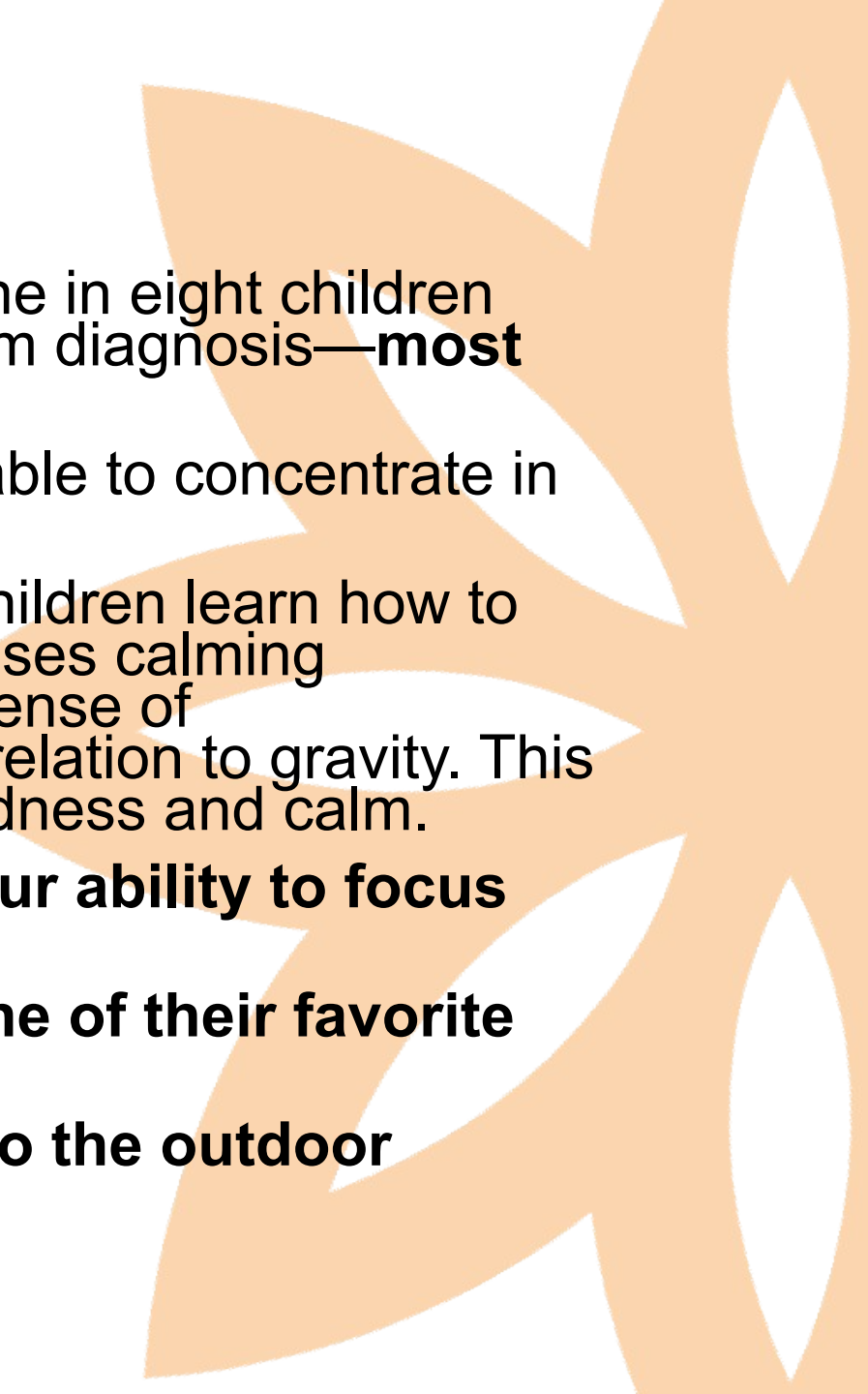
**Right side of  
room**  
Listen for facts



Story?



# Facts

- In our school district of 25,000 students, roughly one in eight children receiving special education services have an autism diagnosis—**most experience sensory challenges**
  - **Reports from teachers**—students able to focus, able to concentrate in ways they cannot typically
  - Occupational therapists use **heavy work** to help children learn how to organize their nervous systems. The exertion releases calming neurotransmitters, and a child must engage their sense of proprioception—determining where their body is in relation to gravity. This often helps literally bring them a sense of groundedness and calm.
  - 20 minutes in a natural environment can **restore our ability to focus attention**.
  - Students talked about the outdoor classroom as **one of their favorite places to learn at school**
  - A simple log of visits showed more than **75 visits to the outdoor classroom in the following six weeks**.
- 



# Domains of impact

for nature play & learning

- Physical health & activity
- Mental & emotional wellbeing
- Cognitive development & educational outcomes
- Social & behavioral development
- Nature connection & environmental attitudes

**1** What is your  
communication  
goal?



2 Who do you  
want to  
influence?



People  
\_\_\_\_\_ in  
ways  
they did not  
before.



People  
understand  
things in ways  
they did not  
before.  
[ knowledge ]



People can do  
things in ways  
they did not  
before.

[ skills ]



People recognize  
things in ways  
they did not  
before.

[ epiphany ]



People value or  
believe  
things in ways  
they did not  
before.  
[ attitudes, beliefs ]



People **approach**  
**things** in ways  
they did not  
before.

[ behavioral intent ]



People **do**  
**things** in ways  
they did not  
before.

[ behavior ]



Under **3** on your worksheet,  
choose one priority domain

If your organization focuses on  
systems change, see other side of  
sheet



10:00

- 1 Identify one communication goal.
- 2 Identify an audience for your message.  
Share briefly with a partner.

# What is data?

**FACTS**

figures  
observations  
symbols

we process and  
interpret  
to gain  
**information**

to use to  
**make**  
**decisions**

# Sources of data and information

**Research  
findings**  
and promising  
practices

[Children & Nature  
Network Research  
Digests](#)

**Local data**  
Population data  
Education & health  
indicators

[Santa Barbara County  
Community Health Needs  
Assessment](#)

**Your data**  
Quantitative data  
Qualitative data

# Local data

Population data, education & health indicators

Give context, show change, help people zoom out &

## CHILD & FAMILY OUTCOMES

## CHILDREN ARE HEALTHY & SUCCESSFUL (2 of 3)

	Indicator	Available data	Source and year data were collected
Physical health and well-being	6 Children are physically active.	<b>25.9%</b> of 7th grade public school students met all fitness standards, compared to 28.2% in the state. <b>37%</b> of 9th grade public school students met all fitness standards, compared to 33.0% in the state.  In California, 90.9% of 6 to 17 year olds exercised, played a sport, or participated in physical activity at least one day for at least 60 minutes in the last week. <sup>1</sup>	<a href="#">KidsData</a> , 2019  <a href="#">Child and Adolescent Health Measurement Initiative</a> , 2021-22
	7 Children spend time outdoors.	<b>76.3%</b> children aged 5 years and younger were taken out somewhere at least 3 days a week, for example, to the park, store, or playground, compared to 73.4% in the state. <sup>2</sup>	Frequency of taking child out of the house, years to 2023, Child <a href="#">California Health Interview Survey</a> , 2020-2023 pooled (requires free login)
	8 Children have a healthy weight.	<b>42.4%</b> of teens were of a normal weight (5th up to 85th percentile), compared to 61.3% in the state.	Body Mass Index - 4 level (teen only) <a href="#">California Health Interview Survey</a> , 2020 - 2023 pooled (requires free login)
	9 Children are free from chronic health conditions or the conditions are managed.	In the United States, 13.7% of children and adolescents with special health care needs were receiving care in family-centered, coordinated systems.	<a href="#">National Survey of Children's Health</a> , 2020-21

Finch, B et al. 2024 Children's Scorecard: Santa Barbara County. Healthy Kids Network of Santa Barbara County. April 2025.

# Your data

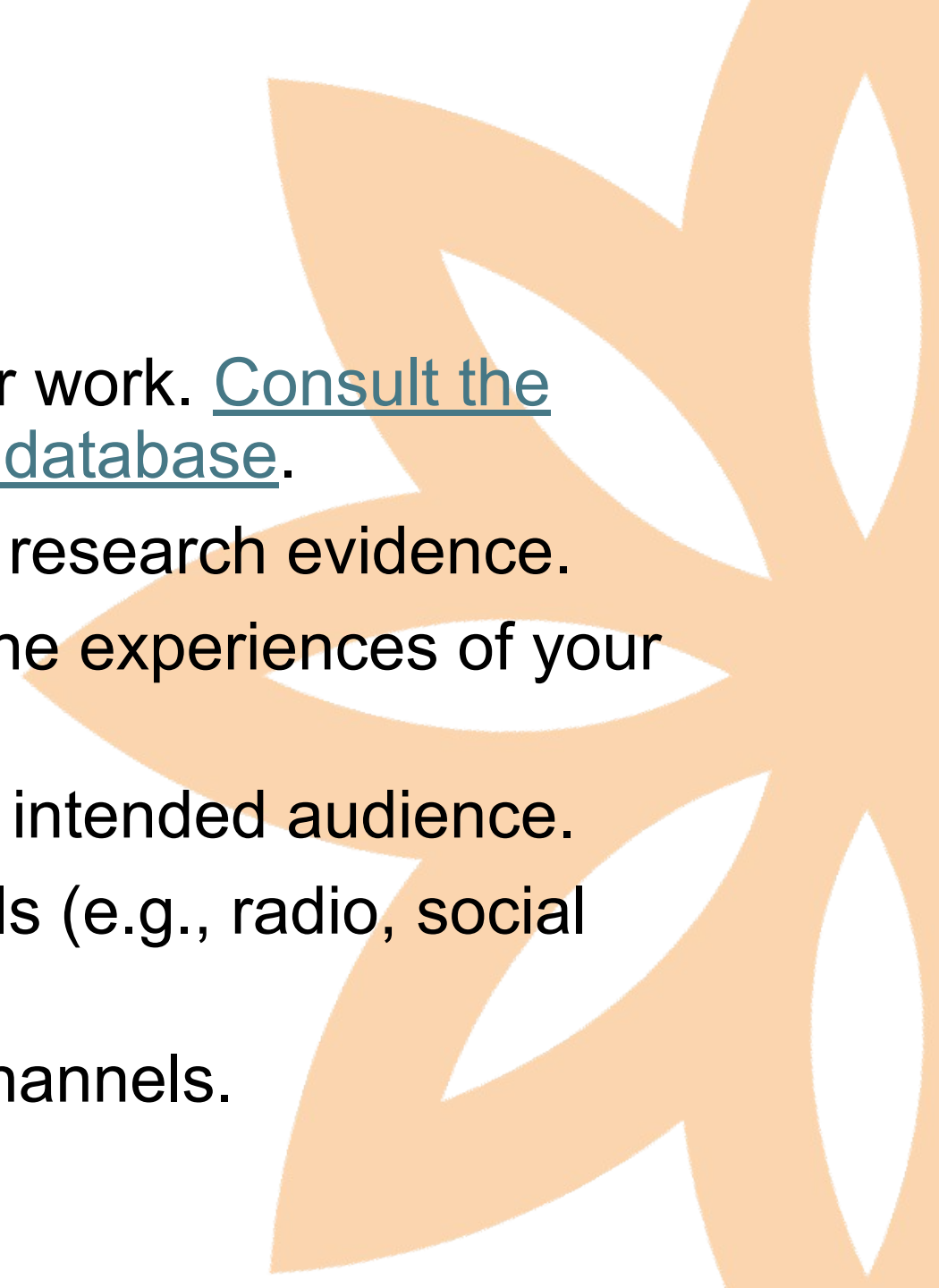
- Demonstrates value
- Capture parent observations
- Set up a story booth and ask children to describe their experiences in the outdoors

**Example:** Estimate time children spend in cognitive/social activities and physical, sensory or gross motor activities. Why? Tell people a story about that. Use evidence

GR 4-5 · EARTH CAMP HALF DAY	
8-8 <sup>30</sup>	FREE PLAY OUTDOORS <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• movable parts 15</li><li>• attention restoration 15</li></ul>
8 <sup>30</sup> -9 <sup>30</sup>	GROUP GAMES <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• heavy work: climb, jump, lift 30</li><li>• social skills 10</li></ul>
9 <sup>30</sup> -9 <sup>50</sup>	SNACKS! <sup>→ apples</sup> (BIG CHEWING) 15 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- fine motor/gross motor</li><li>- nutrition game 10 <sup>social/cognitive</sup></li></ul>
9 <sup>50</sup> -10 <sup>30</sup>	LIFE EXPLORERS <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>- heart rate monitoring 10</li><li>- Gross Motor → Self-reg 15</li><li>- Breath awareness 10</li><li>- How do other organisms exchange oxygen? 10</li></ul>
10 <sup>30</sup> -11am	FREE CHOICE 15 or SIT SPOT 15
11-noon	LUNCH PREP! <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>20 COOKING SKILLS</li><li>20 Fine motor, motor planning, observation</li></ul>
TOTALS: min.	
90	COGNITIVE, SOCIAL
120	PHYSICAL, SENSORY, GROSS/FINE MOTOR

# Your homework!

- Revisit the evidence that supports your work. [Consult the Children & Nature Network's research database.](#)
- Identify 3-4 key talking points from the research evidence.
- Craft a 200-300 word story based on the experiences of your staff, families, and youth.
- Test your story with someone from the intended audience.
- Revise, and tailor it to multiple channels (e.g., radio, social media, print).
- Share using your audience's trusted channels.



**If we have time...**



# Example: Beneficial risk [or risky play]



[Link to a starter kit of research references on risky play](#)

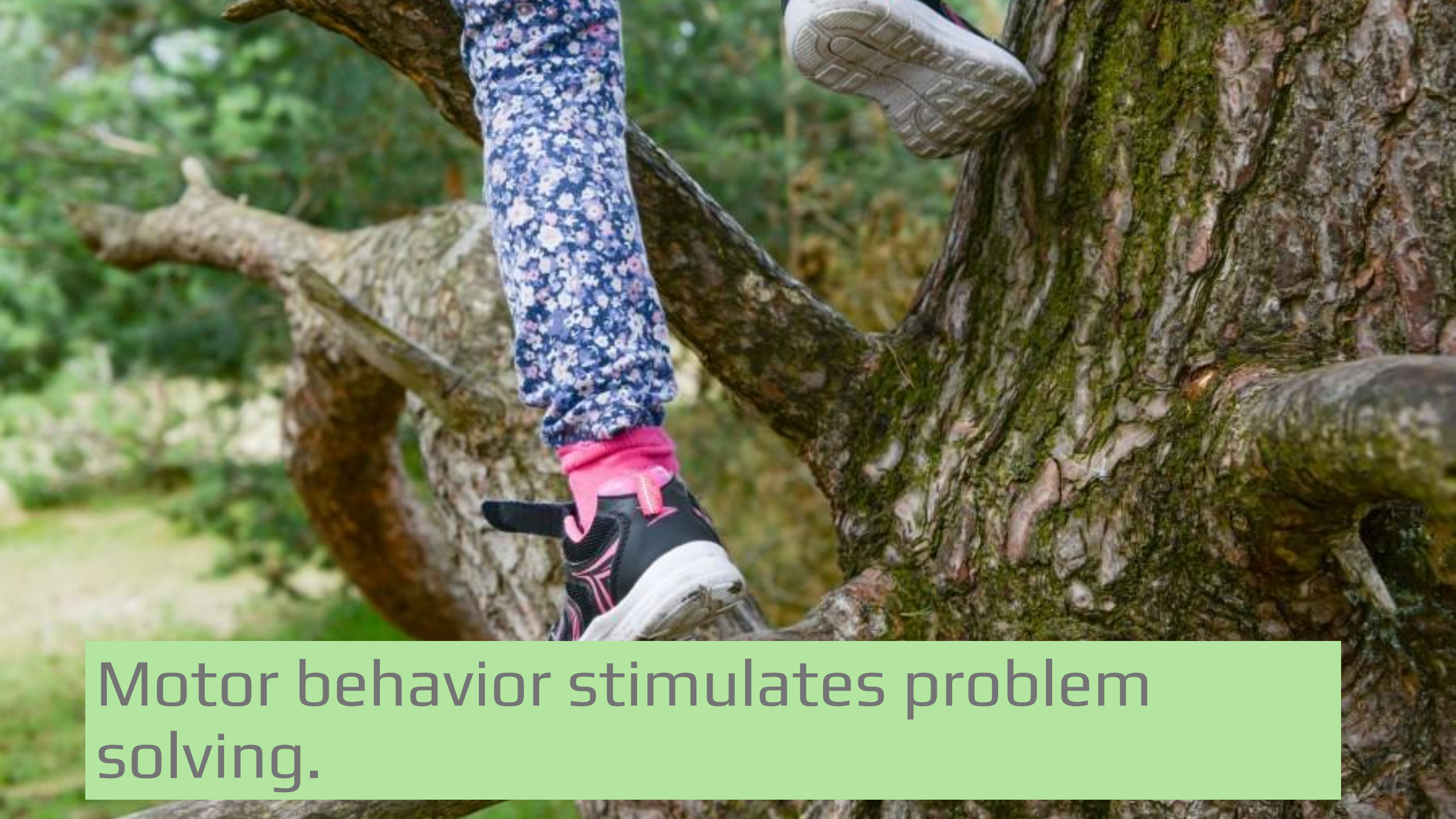
“Thrilling and exciting forms of play that involve a risk of physical injury. The risk can be real or perceived.”



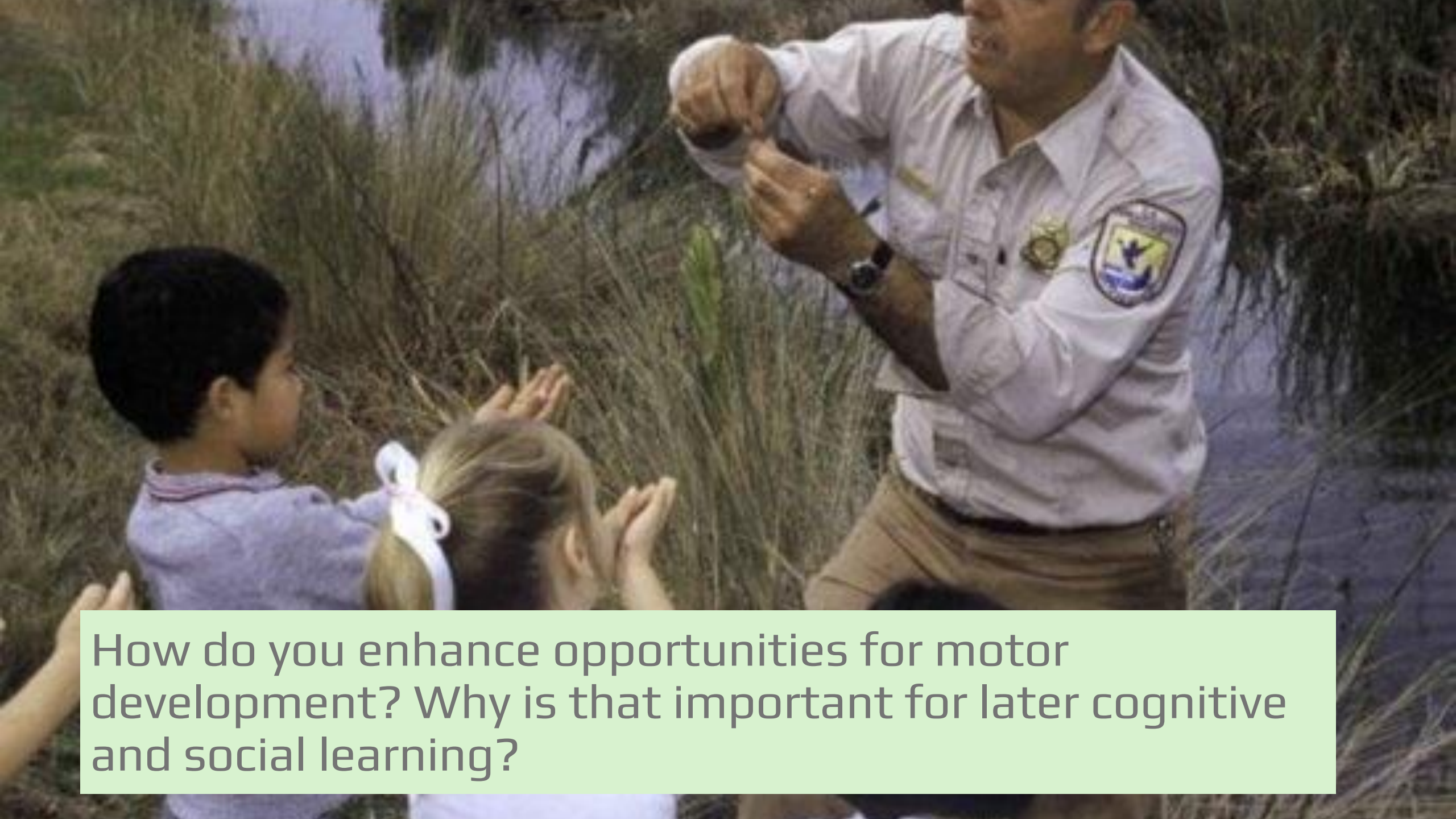
Brussoni, Mariana, Rebecca Gibbons, Casey Gray, et al. [“What Is the Relationship between Risky Outdoor Play and Health in Children? A Systematic Review.”](#) *International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health* 12, no. 6 (2015): 6423–54.



Motor skill development is related to later cognitive performance.



Motor behavior stimulates problem solving.



How do you enhance opportunities for motor development? Why is that important for later cognitive and social learning?

# Use data to help frame your story

- Start by identifying your communication goal and your audience
  - What do you want them to [do, think, approach] differently?
- Use research evidence to educate
- Use local data for context and comparison
- Use your data to craft the story of your value
- [Consult these resources](#) for more communication guidance