

Risky Play

Relevant Satellite Accreditation Standards

IV. Supporting Children's Development

B. The provider supports the development of positive self-esteem by helping children understand and appropriately express their feelings and needs.

4. The provider reacts calmly to children's needs for dependence and independence.

O. The provider helps children learn skills and habits that contribute to their safety.

1. The provider helps children learn to consider the safety implications of their actions and play.



The Basics

What is risky play? Risky play is unstructured play that involves some risk of injury. Risky play typically involves children experimenting with height, speed, tools, and nature. This unique type of play helps children develop self-confidence and self-regulation skills by pushing boundaries and joining body and mind during challenging tasks. Children's risky play is an outlet for independence and an opportunity for learning!

How can I keep children safe? Allowing children to engage in risky play can be uncomfortable for many caregivers, especially ones that have been entrusted with the care of another's child. The risk of substantial injury is low when precautions are taken, including removing environmental hazards and matching the available equipment with the children's developmental level. Above all, adult supervision during risky play is an essential component of keeping children safe while supporting their growing independence. Adults provide necessary support bases for children engaging in risky play. You can help children foster an awareness of their surroundings by making comments that begin with, "Do you feel..." and "Notice how..." You can also help children problem solve during risky play by asking questions that begin with, "How will you...?" or "What can you use...?" This type of intervention can help build mutual respect and trust between children and caregivers.

I want to learn more!

- [Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#) (Research Article)
- [What is the Relationship Between Risky Outdoor Play and Health in Children?](#) (Research Article)
- [Children's Risky Play from an Evolutionary Perspective: The Anti-Phobic Effects](#) (Research Article)
- [Eliminate Barriers to Risk Taking in Outdoor Play](#) (Article)
- [Risky Play and Children's Safety: Balancing Priorities for Optimal Child Development](#) (Research Article)