

Children's Access to Play in Schools

The Play-friendly School Label

A Training Guide



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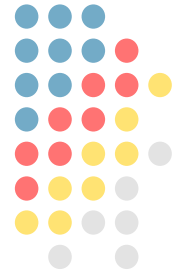


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Introduction to the pack

WELCOME to the trainer’s guide for the course that supports schools towards achieving the Play-friendly School label. It has been developed as a part of the CAPS (Children’s Access to Play in Schools) project, funded through the European Union’s Erasmus+ programme. More information on the CAPS project and the Play-friendly School label can be found in the Play-friendly School Handbook that accompanies this guide, together with further information on the topics covered in the course. The Handbook’s aim is to provide all the information schools will need to help them become, and sustain being, a Play-friendly School. The Play-friendly School label has five Quality Criteria that schools will need to show how they meet. The Quality Criteria and the Handbook are available on the project website: <http://www.playfriendlyschools.eu/>.

This guide presents a 30-hour course divided into ten 3-hour modules, each with their own learning outcomes. The course is in two parts: part one (15 hours) is a general introduction to the label and the ideas supporting it. Given that becoming and staying a Play-friendly School should be a whole-school issue, we recommend that as many staff as possible undergo part one as core training. As a minimum, all staff should attend the first 3-hour module. Part two (also 15 hours) is aimed more at those working directly with children. A range of activities are suggested that both explore the theories and research informing the approach and offer practical activities to help schools work towards the Quality Criteria. Trainers should feel free to adapt the material according to the groups they are working with: some groups may want a formal course, others may prefer to ‘workshop’ with individual schools. Different countries will have different contexts for the delivery of children’s education, and different groups will have different requirements for support. The bottom line is that support is there for schools to meet the five Quality Criteria.

CORE TRAINING

Modules 1 - 5

Target group: the whole school staff (including leadership, teachers, assistants, lunchtime staff, caretaker, etc.): everyone who is around the children, who has an effect on children's school lives

15 hours

Module 1: What is a Play-friendly School?



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. demonstrate an understanding of the CAPS project and the Play-friendly School label
2. describe the benefits of a Play-friendly School
3. show a basic understanding of play and play-enabling environments
4. demonstrate an understanding of the Quality Criteria
5. demonstrate an understanding of why whole-school approach is necessary

Session Summary

This session introduces key topics for the course and for the Play-friendly School label. It can be offered as a stand-alone session and as such covers most of the key topics explored in more detail throughout the course.

Trainer Notes

Be aware of who is attending the session, especially in terms of who will attend future sessions (this module can be offered as a stand-alone introduction).

Participants may be all from the same school, or they might be from different schools. You will need to make judgements about when it is better for participants to work with colleagues or others.

Suggested plan for module 1: What is a Play-friendly School?

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO 1	15 minutes	Welcome, introduction: Object: to welcome participants, introduce the CAPS project and the training course	Whole group; talk	
Activity 2	10 minutes	Ice-breaker, paired introductions, 'drawing on the head': Object: getting to know each other, beginning to think about play	Paired activity; whole group	Sheets of A4 paper, something hard to lean on, pencils/pens
Activity 3 LO 3	25 minutes	Mapping play memories: Object: activating personal memories of spaces of play, beginning to think of play from a spatial perspective	Individual activity; whole group	Sheets of paper, pens, pencils, markers, etc., prompts
Activity 4 LO 3	10 minutes	Discovering play opportunities: Object: to experience the environment from a child's perspective	Paired activity	
Activity 5 LO 3	30 minutes	Barriers to play: Object: to consider the contemporary barriers to children's self-organised play	Individual activity and plenary	Washing line and pegs, post-its, pens, scissors
Break	15 minutes	Break		

Activity 6 LO 2	25 minutes	Benefits of play in schools: Object: to consider the benefits of supporting play in schools	Video and/or talk with PowerPoint; group discussion	Computer, projector, sound system PowerPoint presentation / video about the benefits of play in school
Activity 7 LO 1, 4	20 minutes	Quality Criteria: Object: to introduce the Quality Criteria and the label for a play-friendly school	Talk; whole group	Copies of the Quality Criteria
Activity 8 LO 5	25 minutes	Whole-school approach: Object: to stress the importance of everyone in the school being involved as far as possible in any changes made towards becoming a play-friendly school, including staff, children and families/caregivers.	Small group activity; discussion	Flipcharts, markers
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up	Plenary	

Activity 1: Welcome, introduction and Activity 2: Ice-breaker, personal introduction

Learning outcomes:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the CAPS project and the Play-friendly School label

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Introduction

The object of the opening session is to welcome the participants, introduce the training course and the CAPS project and set the right tone for the whole course.

Ensure that the room is comfortable and chairs are arranged in a semi-circle. Dress the room appropriately with photos, images, resources so that it looks playful. Provide refreshments and chat to learners as they arrive.

Introduce yourself and run through the house-keeping and evacuation procedures for everyone's safety. Give a brief introduction to the project and how it has developed and the partners involved.

Give an overall description of the course they are attending, times, refreshment breaks and deal with any initial queries (some of this may be possible when talking to learners as they arrive).

Paired discussions

Ask participants to find a partner. They will talk with this person for two minutes, then change partners. They will have three rounds of this. Give them topics/questions to discuss about, for example:

- How did you get here?
- What is your motivation for participating in this course?
- What are your concerns about the course?

Ice breaker: drawing on the head

Ask participants to stay with the partner from the last round of the two-minute discussion. Give them a piece of white paper and a pen or pencil, and something firm they can lean on. Tell them, that they are going to have to draw their partner's portrait. Ask them not to start until you have given the final instruction; explain they should draw each other at the same time. If there is an odd number, the activity works in threes too. If you like, you can build up the suspense ('we can keep these portraits as a memento of the course', etc).

Then give the final instruction: ask them to position the paper on the top of their head (demonstrate this), saying that they should draw the portrait in that position (i.e., drawing above their head, so they can't see what they are drawing).

When they have finished, say they can have a look at the portraits.

Watch and listen throughout: be aware during giving the instructions, especially when you first introduce the task, when you say they should do it on the head, and when they show each other.

Once the laughter has died down, ask them how they felt when first given the instruction, and what changed once they knew they should draw on their heads. Draw parallels with play, e.g. process over product, 'as if', moments of nonsense, positive affect.

Resources

Papers, pencils/pens, something hard for each participant to lean on (e.g. clipboard, book)

Activity 3: Mapping play memories

Learning outcomes:

3. show a basic understanding of play and play-enabling environments

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Let participants know that this is going to be a personal exercise. Ask them to sit in a comfortable position, within easy reach of the paper and pens, and think back to the time when they were 9 or 10 years old. Ask them to think about a favourite place where they played, preferably outside, but it doesn't have to be.

Give them a few minutes for thinking, then ask them to draw a map of the space, paying attention to features of the space, including people and material objects who were often there. They can also use some prompts to make the drawing more vivid, for example, whether they had names for specific places, what the overall feel was of the space, whether they were playing somewhere they shouldn't, etc.

After they have finished drawing, ask them to share their drawings with the group and explain a little about their play memories, with special focus on the environment. Discuss together how similar or different the play spaces are in their memories. Discuss also about what this tells us about how we might define play.

At the end of the session, draw attention to the definition of play:

'Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.'

Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group, Cardiff 2005

Play is also a child's right according to the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states:

'State parties recognise the rights of the child to rest and to leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child'

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child Article 31

Tutor Notes

The object of this session is to activate situated play memories, so that participants can get into the right mind-set, appreciating the importance of play for children through their own experiences. It is also leading up to the issue of space and play, starting to think about how everything in the space comes together to produce moments of playing.

It is not specified what kind of memories they should think about, they can choose one specific memory of playing, or maybe a series of plays that went on for a longer period of time (eg. every time they came home from school on the way...). When mapping their spaces and memories, be clear this is from what they remember as a child, a child's perspective, not an adult view point.

For drawing the map of the play environment, they can also use some prompts, eg. cut out cardboard shapes to illustrate objects on the map / stick some glitter on the paper / etc.

Resources

Papers, pens, pencils, markers, etc., prompts

Activity 4: Discovering play opportunities

Learning outcomes:

3. show a basic understanding of play and play-enabling environments

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Ask participants to get into pairs. Tell them, that now they are going to become children again – give them a few moments to get into the mind-set of a child, who has just arrived in this space and to whom everything is new, unknown and very-very interesting. Ask them to move around in the space for a couple of minutes with their partner, discovering the space with new eyes. Tell them to look out for opportunities to play, find things that are interesting and show them to their partner.

After a few minutes of playing around, ask some of them to share their impressions of the activity. Very briefly talk about the concept of affordances (revisited in Module 4) and atmosphere as key elements of a play-enabling environment. If you have no preconceptions of what the objects in the room are for, then what potential do they afford? If no restrictions were placed on how objects were used what might result?

Tutor Notes

You can also ask the participants to do this exercise without talking and only show each other play opportunities – this way the activity becomes more intimate.

Resources

None

Activity 5: Barriers to play

Learning outcomes:

3. show a basic understanding of play and play-enabling environments

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Ask the group if there are any differences between their own play memories and how children play now?

Give each participant a couple of post-its and a pen. Ask them to think for a few minutes about what might be a barrier to children's free play nowadays and write each idea on a separate post-it. While they are working, prepare a washing line / string with pegs attached and stretch it out somewhere in the room. When they are done collecting the barriers, ask them one by one to read out loud what is on their post-its, then come forward and attach each post-it with the pegs to the washing line. When everybody has put their barriers up, discuss these issues with the group. After the discussion, take a pair of scissors and cut the washing line – symbolically demonstrating that we can cut through all barriers in order to support children's right to play.

Tutor Notes

Talk about country-specific societal changes, statistics (e.g. obesity and mental health) and issues about children's ability to play out, to find time and space for play, and the impact on their lives.

Unpick some of the fears – are they real or perceived?

Ask how many of them are based on adults' lack of understanding of play?

For schools, it is important to remember omission as the largest barrier to play. The failure to have a strategic value-based approach, to state how much you value it, to plan, staff, resource and evaluate its quality does more harm than anything else.

Resources

Washing line and pegs, post-its, pens and scissors

Activity 6: Benefits of play in schools

Learning outcomes:

2. describe the benefits of a Play-friendly School

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Present the benefits of play in schools through a PowerPoint and/or a video. Lead a discussion with the group about the benefits of play in schools, and encourage them to share their own experiences from their childhood and also from an adult-perspective.

Tutor Notes

Use the information in the handbook, including links to videos, to support this activity.

Resources

Computer, projector, sound system

PPT presentation / video about the benefits of play in school

Activity 7: Quality Criteria

Learning outcomes:

1. demonstrate an understanding of the CAPS project and the Play-friendly School label
4. demonstrate an understanding of the Quality Criteria

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Present the group with the five Quality Criteria for a Play-friendly School. Describe each criterion, the rationale behind them and what the three different grades mean. Lead a discussion with the group about these criteria and encourage them to share their opinion on them, particularly what this might mean for their school.

Tutor Notes

You can encourage them to reflect on their own schools but let them know that in Module 5 they will have a chance to think about their own school situation in more detail.

Resources

Copies of the Quality Criteria

Activity 8: Whole-school approach

Learning outcomes:

5. demonstrate an understanding of why whole-school approach is necessary

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Ask participants to brainstorm the different stakeholders for their school and make a quick list of them. Get the participants into small groups (with 3-5 members in each group) and ask them to think about one of the stakeholder-groups (so that all groups are covered). Ask them to think about their perspective, and the importance of working together with them. Brainstorm in the small groups about possible ways of involving them.

After about 15 minutes of brainstorming, ask the groups to get back together, and each of them to share what they have been discussing.

Tutor Notes

Some of the important stakeholders are school leaders, teachers, non-teaching school-staff, children, parents/caregivers, etc. Some may not be obvious, such as the caretaker, the cleaners, the elected members of the education board, the health and safety team, the serial complaining parent - all need engaging.

Each of these groups might need a different approach to getting involved and motivated for supporting a Play-friendly School. The topic of children's participation is explored in more depth in Module 9 in the second part of the course. Those attending these core modules may not come to the second half of the course, so make sure you are familiar with the issues around children's participation from the handbook.

Resources

Flipcharts/white board, markers

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

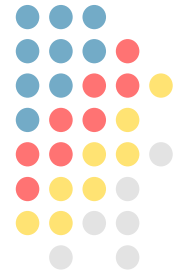
-

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of the first module. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 2: Making time and building a culture that supports play (1) – strategic/policy issues



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles
2. discuss the three domains of a Play-friendly School (play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day)
3. show an understanding of risk in play and how to develop a risk-benefit approach to risk assessment
4. show an understanding of issues of access and equality in terms of time, space and permission to play

Session Summary

This session begins to look at Quality Criterion 2, the written statement that shows how the school supports children’s play. It uses the PARK principles (Policy, Access, Risk and Knowledge) to frame the discussions. Participants can begin to work on their own school’s written statement, bearing in mind that the process of developing the statement should be a whole-school one.

Trainer Notes

We are grateful to OPAL UK (Outdoor Play and Learning) for the PARK analysis. Make sure you reference OPAL and have the information ready at hand if participants would like to know more. You can find more information at the following website: <https://outdoorplayandlearning.org.uk>

Suggested plan for module 2: Making time and building a culture that supports play (1) – strategic/policy issues

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1	5 minutes	Introduction: to the module, energizer	Whole group talk and activity	
Activity 2 LO 1	5 minutes	The PARK principles: Object: to introduce the four principles of Policy, Access, Risk and Knowledge	Plenary	PowerPoint resources PARK principles
Activity 3 LO 1, 2	20 minutes	Policy: Object: to discuss the importance of developing and having a public written statement on how the school supports children’s play (QC 1) that considers time, space and permission to play across the three domains of a play-friendly school, which are: play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day	Plenary	Flipchart, markers
Activity 4 LO 1, 4	20 minutes	Access – odd one out: Object: to encourage participants to experience different abilities and exclusion.	Whole group activity	String/fabric/blindfolds Soft balls Role cards
Activity 5 LO 1, 3	20 minutes	Risk in play and the risk benefit approach: Object: to introduce the idea of risk-benefit analysis and the importance of risk in play	Whole group activity	Video Stick Two buckets Balls
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 6 LO 1	20 minutes	Knowledge: Object: to think about what knowledge we need to be effective facilitators	Small groups	Flipchart, markers

		of children's play		
Activity 7 LO 2	25 minutes	Playful pedagogies: Object: to explore how play might be introduced into the classroom	Small group discussion and plenary	Props for the scenes
Activity 8 LO 1	45 minutes	First steps towards your school's written statement: Object: to allow time for participants to reflect on learning so far and begin to think about what could be in their school's written statement Participants are divided in four small groups. Each groups takes one from the four topics (PARK) and work out initial policy ideas regarding their school. What can be done in your school? After it they share the main points of their discussion with the others.	Small and large group work	Flipcharts, papers, markers
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and Activity 2: The PARK principles

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Start the module by an energizer and introduce the topic of this module.

Give a short presentation of the four PARK principles: Policy, Access, Risk and Knowledge. Be sure to credit OPAL (Outdoor Play and Learning) with the PARK analysis and explain the role of OPAL's expertise knowledge behind the CAPS project. Let participants know that we will spend time on each of these in the module.

Tutor Notes

You can use the Handbook for detailed information on the PARK principles.

Resources

PowerPoint presentation on the PARK principles

Activity 3: Policy

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles
2. discuss the three domains of a Play-friendly School (play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day)

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Lead a whole group discussion on the first principle of PARK: Policy. Discuss the key points the statement should address: how the school supports time, space and permission to play across the three domains of a Play-friendly School, which are: play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day. Discuss also the importance of whole-school involvement in the development of the statement.

Clarify differences between policy, strategy and action plan:

- A policy is a statement of beliefs, values and principles
- A strategy is a long term plan of achievable goals
- An action plan is a description of detailed steps of how a strategy will be delivered

During the session encourage the group to share their perspective on this issue.

Make notes of the discussion on a flipchart.

Tutor Notes

Use the information in Quality Criterion 2 and the handbook to support this discussion, making sure you cover the indicators in QC 2. Some countries may not have a tradition of developing policy at school level, which is why it is called a 'written statement' in the Quality Criteria.

Describe the importance of a written school statement on how the school supports play. The statement should be about values and beliefs: this is different from a strategy and an action plan. Stress that it should be developed collaboratively, so that all stakeholders have a chance to give their input so they feel involved and motivated to work with any changes introduced.

The statement should describe how the school intends to make time and space, and give permission for children to play during school time. Having a clear, written statement helps stakeholders to understand what this means for them. It also counteracts negative pressure, enables schools to state

the reasons for their actions, and allows for consistency. It is also the reasoning behind approaches to risk.

Develop the discussion further to the three domains of a Play-friendly School: play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day.

Resources

Flipchart, markers

Activity 4: Access – odd one out

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles
4. show an understanding of issues of access and equality in terms of time, space and permission to play is necessary

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Prepare the cards beforehand from the tutor notes.

1. Arrange the group in a circle and select 7 people to be ‘differently abled’ as per the list below. Meanwhile give the rest of the group a card and ask them all to position themselves accordingly.
2. Explain that ‘we are going to play catch’ and that you will throw the ball to individuals and they must throw it back to you. Throw the ball to individuals having some very obvious favourites and deliberately ignoring others.
3. Continue the game and for those who have their backs turned to you or are otherwise physically impaired show your attitude by saying they are not trying or they are not good enough!
4. As the group begin to understand what you are doing, finish the game and talk to them about how they felt, both those that were included and those that were not as people will often start to feel discomfort at seeing others excluded and treated badly (some people may start to break the ‘rules’ and throw the ball to these people rather than back to you!).
5. Finish off by explaining how important people’s feelings are and when working with children we must be inclusive, supportive and fair. We have to aim for providing access to play for all children, without excluding any of them due to various factors.

Tutor Notes

With regards to schools, access to play can mean different things.

- **Time:** All children should have equal access to playtime. Care routines for disabled children should not take away from their time for playing. We must not use play as a reward system or in other words, the lack of play as a punishment. Children should know that they have access to playtime that is not affected by their behaviour or other factors.
- **Space:** There should be various play spaces available, appropriate for all children, including those with physical or mental impairments. Children are different and want to play different things – therefore they should have access to the full range of play types (for example: to “hide” in a den, to climb, to play football, to run, to playfight, to dress up and make-believe, to use different materials, etc.)

For 7 people do the following:

- Tie one hand behind their back
- Tie two hands behind their back
- Blindfold them
- Place ear muffs over their ears
- Place ear muffs on and turn them away from the circle
- Tie their legs together
- Tie arms to sides by elbows

For the rest of the group hand out a card with an instruction on it

Photocopy sheet twice and cut up the cards:

KNEEL DOWN	STAND FAR AWAY FROM THROWER
STAND VERY CLOSE TO THROWER	TURN AND FACE AWAY FROM THROWER
KNEEL DOWN WITH ONE ARM BEHIND YOUR BACK	SIT ON A CHAIR IN THE CIRCLE AND DO NOT MOVE OFF THE CHAIR
SIT ON THE FLOOR	STAND CLOSE TO THROWER
STAND AS FAR AWAY AS POSSIBLE	HOLD THE HAND OF THE PERSON NEXT TO YOU

Resources

String/fabric/blindfolds

Soft balls

Role cards

Activity 5: Risk in play and the risk-benefit approach

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles
3. show an understanding of risk in play and how to develop a risk-benefit approach to risk assessment

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Introduce learners to the Risk – Benefit scales. On one end of a pole is a bucket labelled ‘RISKS’ and on the other end is a bucket labelled ‘BENEFITS’

1. Ask the group to reflect back on their play memories from Module 1 and remember some of the riskier and more challenging play that they engaged in as children. Ask them if they felt competent to take those risks as children, and what it felt like. Ask them to think about what was it about the adults in their play memories that made those things possible – maybe trust, belief in the competency of the child?
2. Choose one of these examples or a specific example such as tree climbing, lighting fires, playing in water, playing in the dark.
3. Ask a member of the group to come and stand with you to ‘help’ with the bag of balls.
4. Taking one of their examples of risky play ask the group to define what the risks are for that particular play opportunity. For each risk the ‘helper’ places a ball into the bucket.
5. Then ask the group what the benefits for this play opportunity might be for children and young people. The ‘helper’ places a ball for each benefit in the other bucket.
6. It should be clear that the benefits outweigh the risk without influencing the group with their answers.
7. Ask the learners what this demonstrates? That there are great benefits to children taking risks in their play. Be sure to mention to benefit of experiencing the thrill of risk-taking. Stress that we are not talking about dangerous activities such as children playing on railway lines, but this is about them stretching their abilities and risk assessing for themselves.
8. Summarise by stressing that we must ensure children’s safety from hazards, so we would prevent them climbing on unsafe equipment or using broken tools etc. But we must ensure they are supported to engage in risky play opportunities.

Tutor Notes

To introduce the topic of risk in play, start by differentiating risks from hazards.

- A hazard is something that can cause an accident or harm to someone.

- A risk is the chance of an injury or harm occurring. Risks are integral to play opportunities. Outdoor play that incorporates appropriate risky challenges is desirable.

Give an example: the hazard is deep fast running water and the risk could be a person drowning. Make sure all learners are confident about the differences before moving on, by asking learners to identify potential hazards and likely risks. There are several other examples in the following table:

Risk	Hazard
Drowning	Large hole
Burns	Trees
Tripping up	Chairs
Falling over	Playground
Cuts	Knives
Losing eyesight	Lasers
Run over	Road
Bruising	Football
Choking	Swimming pool
Broken bones	Slide
Hair falling out	Cliff
Dirty clothes	Paint
Poisoning	Wild berries and fungus

Resources

Stick

Two buckets

Balls

The Risk – Benefit scales exercise (previously used in the [VIPER](http://www.playfriendlyschools.eu/uk) project) can be viewed here in this training video <http://www.playfriendlyschools.eu/uk>

Activity 6: Knowledge

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Finally, the fourth PARK principle is knowledge. Divide participants into small groups (3-6 people/group) and ask them to brainstorm together about what kind of knowledge is needed to be able to facilitate children's play. Ask them to make notes of their discussion.

After about 10-15 minutes of discussion, ask them to come back to the large group where they share the main points of their discussions. See if there are similar ideas in the different groups. Make notes to summarize their ideas.

Tutor Notes

Some of the ideas to facilitate the discussion regarding knowledge are: understanding childhood and children, knowledge of how and why play is happening, reflective practice (reflect on yourself while facilitating play, be aware of how you as a person affect children's play). Remind participants that the school's written statement on play should also include how the school will support those involved to develop the necessary knowledge continuously.

Resources

Flipchart, markers

Activity 7: Playful pedagogies

Learning outcomes:

2. discuss the three domains of a Play-friendly School (play-time, playful pedagogies and openness to playful moments in the school day)

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

This activity focuses on how play can also be used within the classroom. Explain to the participants that a play-friendly school needs to consider “letting playfulness in” to the classroom as well as supporting it at play times.

Divide participants into small groups. Ask each group to choose a school subject (maths, literature, science, etc.), and think about a specific topic within that subject. Ask them to brainstorm together how these topics might be taught in playful ways. They can use ideas from their own practices – acknowledging the fact that some teachers do use playful techniques in their teaching already, and they do not necessarily have to come up with new methods all the time, if there is something that works for them already. (It doesn’t mean of course, that they shouldn’t try new things!)

After about 5-10 minutes of brainstorming, ask them to create a little dramatic scene about a classroom situation where this subject is taught in a playful way, then ask them to present the scene to the others. They can use prompts to the scene as well.

After the presentation sum up the different ideas and lead a discussion on playfulness in pedagogy.

Tutor Notes

There are countless ways to make classroom activities playful. Many times what happens is that teachers teach in the way they have learnt and practiced to teach and don’t think playfulness and teaching can go hand in hand. When leading the discussion about playful pedagogies, make sure not to be too judgmental about this attitude, as it can become counterproductive if teachers feel attacked for the methods they use. Explain that traditional/frontal teaching is not a bad thing that should be eradicated, but rather we should be open to considering changing our attitude to be able to include playfulness when it’s appropriate. The Play-friendly School label recommends that playful pedagogies are used when appropriate, but it does not require schools to do so., it does, however, require schools to consider using them.

Resources

Props for the scenes

Activity 8: First steps towards your school's written statement; and summing up

Learning outcomes:

1. describe the PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge) principles

Time: 45 minutes

Activity

Let participants know that this is their time to summarize their knowledge regarding the PARK model and to reflect on their own school with regards to the four principles. Set up four tables, each of them will host one principle (policy, access, risk or knowledge). Divide the participants into four groups and ask each group to work with the principle of that table. Ask them to work out some initial ideas about that principle regarding their own school and make notes on this.

After about 10 minutes of group work, ask them to move to a different table, to work with another topic. Make four rounds of this, so that everybody can work on all four principles. When they are ready, ask them to come back to the large circle and summarize the main points of their discussion for the others. Make some notes of this discussion and remind participants we will return to this in Module 5.

Take 5 minutes at the end to sum up the session, ask if there are any queries/thoughts/issues, or if anyone has something they would like to share, and confirm arrangements for the next session.

Tutor Notes

If there are several participants from one school, they should work together so that they can brainstorm together and take the first steps towards their own written statement (QC1). If the participants are from different schools, they can work for some time alone, and then share their ideas with their group mates who can give feedback and further ideas.

Resources

Flipcharts, papers, markers

Module 3: Making time and building a culture that supports play (2) – practice issues



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of the playwork approach to supporting children's play at play-times
2. discuss how the Playwork Principles might be used in supporting children's play at play-times

Session Summary

This module begins to introduce the (mostly) UK model of playwork. The playwork approach to supporting children's play and to helping to co-create the conditions that support play underpins the ethos of the Play-friendly School label. Much of this is about exploring how adults can support the playwork definition of play as freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. The session begins by introducing the Playwork Principles and also Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (the right to play), with a discussion on how these might apply to schools where the participants work. It introduces the theory of loose parts as a key tool in the playwork toolbox. It ends with an extended activity exploring how different stakeholders in the school might respond to scenarios of children playing.

Trainer Notes

Make sure you have a range of loose parts (both big and small, if possible) available as examples. Participants will vary in their response to the material in this module, given that the ethos is one of stepping back and trusting children to play in their own way. This is a key aspect of the Play-friendly School label, but it has to be acknowledged that schools will respond in different ways.

Suggested plan for module 3: Making time and building a culture that supports play (2) – practice issues

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO	10 minutes	Introduction: to the module, energizer	Whole group	
Activity 2 LO 1, 2	60 minutes	Playwork Principles + Right to play: Object: to introduce the Playwork Principles and Article 31 playoff the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child	Whole group; presentation and discussion	Video Handouts
Activity 3 LO 1, 2	10 minutes	About Permission: Object: to explore issues around adult attitudes towards play	Whole group discussion	
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 4 LO 1,-2	30 minutes	Loose parts theory: Object: to introduce loose parts theory and its relevance to play-friendly schools	Group discussion	Loose parts
Activity 5 LO 1, 2	50 minutes	Continuum lines: Object: to explore stakeholders' attitudes toward children's play	Whole group activity	List of statements
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and Activity 2: Playwork Principles and Right to play

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the playwork approach to supporting children's play at play-times
2. discuss how the Playwork Principles might be used in supporting children's play at play-times

Time: 70 minutes

Activity

Start the module with an energizer and introduce the module.

Explain to participants that this module focuses on the Playwork Principles and the children's right to play. To begin with, show a video about the Playwork Principles, then ask them to get into pairs (or small groups, depending on the number of participants) and ask each pair to think about one of the principles or Article 31 and discuss with each other what they think it means. Give them 5-10 minutes to discuss, then ask everybody to come back to the large circle and lead a discussion about them. Give them handouts of the Principles, as well as about Article 31 on the right to play. Ask for the participants' own approach to each principles and Article 31.

Tutor Notes

This is a longer discussion, which provides opportunities to really get deeper into the underlying ideas behind play. Use this time to make sure that participants understand correctly the principles and reflect on their own approach to them.

It is recommended the Playwork Principle posters be displayed in the training room for easy reference throughout the course. These principles establish the professional and ethical framework for playwork in the UK. They describe what is unique about play and playwork and provide the playwork perspective for working with children and young people. They are based on the recognition that children and young people's capacity for positive development will be enhanced if given access to the broadest range of environments and play opportunities.

We suggest using the videos on the following links (they are in English):

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=-VGq83lPPn8>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DSuJtZpSj84>

The Playwork Principles¹

1. All children and young people need to play. The impulse to play is innate. Play is a biological and psychological necessity, and is fundamental to the healthy development and well being of individuals and communities.
2. Play is a process that is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. That is, children and young people determine and control the content and intent of their play, by following their own instincts, ideas and interests, in their own way for their own reasons.
3. The prime focus and essence of playwork is to support and facilitate the play process and this should inform the development of play policy, strategy, training and education.
4. For playworkers, the play process takes precedence and playworkers act as advocates for play when engaging with adult led agendas.
5. The role of the playworker is to support children and young people in the creation of a space in which they can play.
6. The playworker's response to children and young people playing must be based on a sound up to date knowledge of the play process, and reflective practice.
7. Playworkers must recognise their own impact on the play space and also the impact of children and young people's play on the playworker.
8. The playworker must choose an intervention style that enables children and young people to extend their play. All playworker intervention must balance risk with the developmental benefit and well being of children.

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child

The course is underpinned by The United Nations Convention on the rights of the child that states:

'State parties recognise the rights of the child to rest and to leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child'

[The UN Convention on the rights of the child Article 31](#)

Resources

Videos, handouts

¹ Playwork Principles Scrutiny Group, Cardiff 2005

Activity 3: About permission

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the playwork approach to supporting children's play at play-times
2. discuss how the Playwork Principles might be used in supporting children's play at play-times

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

A play-friendly school is all about developing a culture that supports children's self-organised play. The Quality Criteria talk about this in terms of three key aspects: time, space and permission to play. Having looked at the Playwork Principles and Article 31 of the UNCRC, facilitate a brief discussion with the group about the idea of permission to play, and what this might mean for their schools.

Explain to the group that children's sense of having permission to play is largely affected by the culture of the school, which includes both the attitude of the adults working with the children (including both teaching and non-teaching staff, as well as the leadership of the school) and the space, the physical environment as well: if a space supports playing, it is felt in the atmosphere, and this develops from a sense of licence and permission that it is ok to play.

Tutor Notes

For schools, there is a link between permission and resilience. Schools and adults often lament the loss of resilience in children but actually, most schools do not demonstrate institutional resilience and so cannot pass it on. Schools should learn to be resilient to weather, hurt and dirt. This will translate into permissions to experience weather, the experience dirt and hurt.

Resources

None

Activity 4: Loose parts theory

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the playwork approach to supporting children's play at play-times

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Introduce the activity by saying that the theory of loose parts is an illustration of the playwork approach to supporting children's play. Briefly introduce the theory and have some examples of both small and large loose parts available and invite them to 'play' with them. If they struggle to know what to do, you might have to prompt, perhaps talking about different types of play (e.g. symbolic).

Lead a discussion about what kind of loose parts might be suitable in order to support ALL children's play in small groups. Ask participants to reflect on their own school: whether they already use some kinds of loose parts, what the issues might be with having these available to children. Brainstorm together with the participants possible sources of obtaining loose parts for their schools (eg. ask parents to bring objects, make an agreement with factories to receive their leftover materials, discuss with recycling centres about possible cooperation, etc.).

Tutor Notes

Use the material in the handbook to inform this activity. Stress the importance of having plentiful amounts of loose parts of different sizes that can be easily replenished. You might also want to discuss issues of health and safety with resources, referring back to the difference between risk and hazard, and how to carry out risk-benefit assessment on donated resources that will be used in a multitude of ways.

Resources

A range of loose parts, both big and small, if possible.

The section in the handbook on loose parts

Activity 5: Continuum lines

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the playwork approach to supporting children's play at play-times
2. discuss how the Playwork Principles might be used in supporting children's play at play-times

Time: 50 minutes

Activity

Participants take the roles of different "stakeholders" of the school (there can be several from the same stakeholder group, possibly representing different attitudes):

- teacher
- lunchtime staff
- support worker
- caretaker
- school principal
- parent
- local government
- child
- school infrastructure (corridor, wall, fence, etc.)
- animals and plants in the school yard
- people living near the school
- etc. (You can also ask the participants to come up with further "interested parties")

Read out each statement (see tutor notes below – if the discussions become too long, you don't have to read each of them, you can choose those statements that you consider being the most appropriate) one at a time, and ask each participant to stand in a continuum line according to how happy/unhappy they are with that statement (according to their roles!).

Once they have positioned themselves, 'interview' some of them across the spectrum to say why they are standing where they are and lead a short discussion about each statement.

Now get them to blow up a balloon to the size that relates to their power to change an influence the quality of play in schools. Where does the power really lie?

At the end, summarize the main points of the discussions and relate them back to the Playwork Principles and children's right to play.

Bring the module to a close asking for any thoughts or questions and confirming arrangements for the next module.

Tutor Notes

The aim of this activity is to continue the reflection/discussion about the different perspectives of different stakeholders, particularly regarding the school culture in supporting children's play.

List of statements for the continuum line (you can come up with further statements as well):

- A child plays in the mud
- Children are playing tig in the school corridor
- Some children are playing "Truth, kiss or dare"
- Two children are playing rough and tumble during the break
- Some children are climbing a tree in the school yard
- Three children are cutting up worms
- Some children are egging another child to jump off a fairly high wall
- Children are talking excitedly and swearing
- A group of children are having a snowball fight in the schoolyard
- Some children pull together school desks to make an obstacle course
- A group of children create a "band" and make music with different "instruments" (hitting objects with other objects)

Resources

List of statements

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

-

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of the first module. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 4: Space for play



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of how space/time/culture work together to support and/or constrain play
2. show an understanding of the concept of affordances
3. describe key elements of a quality environment for play that can support a range of play forms
4. describe methods that can be used to map the space and account for how it supports children's play

Session Summary

This module introduces ideas about how space works to support and/or constrain children's self-organised play. It moves away from understanding play as a discrete time and space bound activity towards appreciating that a 'playspace' can emerge anywhere and anytime. Children will play anywhere and everywhere if conditions are right, and this module works with tools to help adults pay attention to those conditions. It introduces the idea of affordances (from environmental psychology), revisits the theory of loose parts, and offers a simple practical way to create an open-ended space for playing using everyday resources. It then introduces an in-depth exercise that can form the basis for space audits for schools, an exercise that considers content and ambient indicators for a space designed to support a wide range of play forms. Finally, if time, the session can briefly introduce ways of documenting how space works using mappings and other creative approaches, revisited in more detail in Module 9.

Trainer Notes

Although this session focuses on space for play, it should be stressed that this does not work in isolation from time and culture (QC 3 and 5). Bringing a spatial perspective to play offers a different way of thinking about play from traditional psychological perspectives, and this may offer up a challenge to the idea of play as freely chosen and personally directed. The supporting sections of the handbook should help. The cane den building activity (Activity 6) requires resources that may need time to pull together.

Suggested plan for module 4: Space for play

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1	10 minutes	Introduction: Object: time to settle and pick up any thoughts and queries from previous sessions or practice; introduce the module	Whole group discussion	PowerPoint
Activity 2 LO 1	20 minutes	Guess How Many: Object: To demonstrate that a 'play space' is not necessarily a designated space (or time), children play wherever and whenever conditions allow	Small groups/large group game; group discussion	Flip chart/whiteboard and pens, questions
Activity 3 LO 1	10 minutes	Play as an emergent disposition rather than a time/space-bound activity: Object: continuing the same theme, to move attention away from 'providing play' to looking at the conditions that support its emergence	Illustrative story; brief lecture	PowerPoint; relevant section in handbook
Activity 4 LO 2	10 minutes	Affordances: Object: to introduce a useful conceptual tool that helps us think away from 'providing play' towards conditions that support it	Lecture	PowerPoint; relevant section in handbook
Activity 5 LO 1, 2	35 minutes	Cane den building: Object: A practical demonstration of creating a space where children can play in a non-prescriptive way. Throughout, bring in the conceptual tools introduced (affordances, loose parts, different uses by different children, play as self-organised).	Large and/or small group practical activity Facilitation regarding the conversations during the building	25 bamboo canes (garden type), 50 large paper clips, insulating tape, string for the den, pegs; then a range of 'dressing' resources Relevant handbook sections (inc. instructions)

Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 5 6 LO 3	60 minutes	Key characteristics of a quality play space: towards an audit tool: Object: To begin to build a way of evaluating how the space supports/constrains play. This activity comes from Hughes (1996) 'A Question of Quality'.	Extended small group/large group exercise	Questions/processes; sheets of paper; flip chart or white board Write up the indicators
Activity 6 7 LO 4	10 minutes	Brief introduction to critical cartography: Object: to introduce ideas for documenting the space as an organisational development tool. Introduction only at this stage, to be picked up again in Module 9	Talk; if time, begin a map of the outdoor or indoor space for play time	PowerPoint; For full exercise - paper, coloured pens, post-its, play dough, tin foil
Activity 8 LO 1, 2, 3, 4	5 minutes	Space audits: how does your space measure up?: Introduce the idea, using the indicators from the 'Question of Quality' activity and ideas from critical cartography. They can begin to work with this in their own school/s	Talk	Pick up again in Module 9
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and Activity 2: Guess how many?

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of how space/time/culture work together to support and/or constrain play

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Introduction to the module: this provides time to settle and pick up any thoughts and queries from previous sessions. To facilitate a discussion, ask open questions, for example, any thoughts, queries, or ‘aha!’ moments from previous sessions? Any issues arising for your school? (5-10 minutes)

Guess How Many? (20-25 minutes)

The object of this exercise is to demonstrate that a ‘play space’ is not necessarily a designated space (or time): children play wherever and whenever conditions allow.

Tutor Notes

Divide group in 3 or 4 smaller groups of about 4-8 people. Explain you will ask a series of questions about other people in the room, and the group agrees their answer. They should write down their answers. So, for example, for the question ‘how many people in the room have children?’ the group guesses how many people in the room they think have children.

Questions:

- How many people in the room do you think have children?
- How many people in the room do you think broke a bone while playing?
- How many people in the room do you think did something they knew they shouldn’t while playing?
- How many people in the room do you think have a responsibility for children’s play?
- How many people in the room do you think live within two minutes’ walk of a play space?

Write the questions up on the board/flipchart, with columns for the responses from each group. Ask people for their answers and record these on the board. If time, allow the conversation to develop around the topics. Facilitate this playfully as if there are right/wrong answers and a winner.

But the real point of the exercise is to say that everyone has a responsibility for children’s play (because they all have a responsibility for children) and that everyone lives within 2 minutes’ walk of a play space: a play space is where children play, and since children will play anywhere and everywhere if conditions are right (e.g., the car, the supermarket), then everywhere is potentially a play space. This is to broaden out people’s thinking that play does not only happen in designated

times and spaces, but is a disposition to the world. As illustrated by the opening story in the following activity

Resources

PowerPoint

Flip chart/white board and pens,

Questions

Activity 3: Play as an emergent disposition rather than a time/space-bound activity

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of how space/time/culture work together to support and/or constrain play

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

This activity uses a story as the basis for illustrating how play can emerge whenever the conditions are right. You may wish to give your own story of a moment of playing that emerges in a space not designed as a 'play space'. Here is one story:²

I am travelling on a train through central London. It is the kind of train with sliding doors that open on to a large vestibule with a pole in the middle. It is early afternoon, so the vestibule area is empty of its rush hour commuters. A young girl boards the train. She is about 6 or 7 years old, and she is wearing a full skirt and sparkly shoes. The pole in the middle of the vestibule area is irresistible. She grabs it and does a little twirl around it, then lets go and does a full twirl and her skirt billows. I was so enchanted by this that I tweeted the story with the hashtag #momentswherelifefeelsgood. This is an everyday moment of embodied joy, infectious for people like me who pay attention to the ways that children move through their environments. And it matters. Greatly. It is very ordinary, so ordinary in fact that usually adults pay very little attention to such moments. And in its very ordinariness lies magic.

Use the story to illustrate two things:

1. Children will play anywhere and everywhere if the conditions are right. Their approach to the world is different from adults', and this will be explored further in the next section of the module. The train vestibule was not designed as a play space, yet the momentary combination (what some people term an 'assemblage') of the girl's embodied desire to feel the twirl, the empty space, the pole, the knowledge that her skirt will billow and her shoes sparkle if she twirls, and the anticipated pleasure that offers – all this comes together to produce a play space for that moment. This means moving away from seeing space as an inert and neutral container for action towards something that is produced through such assemblages and encounters. Generally, children are alert to such possibilities for enlivening life (what we might call 'play') in the cracks left behind in adult orderings of time and space. These moments are both very ordinary and very important.

² From Russell, W. (2018) Thinking a little differently about resilience and play, in Russell, W. and Schuur, K. (eds) *The Strength of European Diversity for Building Children's Resilience through Play and Drama: A collection of articles from the EU Erasmus Plus ARTPAD project 2015-2018*, Gloucester: University of Gloucestershire, available at <http://artpad.epraxis.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ARTPAD-A-Collection-of-Articles-Final-28-08-18.pdf>

2. The story also illustrates the power of storytelling: this is what brings things to life. We can have all the scientific evidence we can muster, but stories can enchant, can give examples, can focus on the detail of everyday life. They touch people differently from the way scientific evidence does. Stories are an important way for school staff to share how their spaces are working to support moments of playing like the twirling girl on the train.

Tutor Notes

The purpose of this activity is to move attention away from ‘providing play’ to looking at the conditions that support its emergence, together with illustrating the power of stories and examples.

Resources

PowerPoint if desired, not essential

Activity 4: Affordances

Learning outcomes:

2. show an understanding of the concept of affordances

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Introduce this brief lecture by saying that the idea of ‘affordances’ is a useful conceptual tool that helps us think away from ‘providing play’ towards conditions that support it.

The concept comes from environmental psychology, and originally from the work of James J Gibson³, with more contemporary researchers such as Marketta Kyttä⁴ working specifically with children. Give a brief talk on the concept.

Ask the group to think of features of their playgrounds and what they might afford (whole group brief discussion).

Tutor Notes

Use the handbook to inform your brief presentation. You can use terms such as possibility, potential, variety to help. Make sure that you stress that affordances cannot be assumed, they are not the same as intended use by designers: providing a ‘stage’ in your playground will not necessarily mean that children will use it to enact plays or other performances. The concept is about the unique environment-individual dynamic and perceptual relationship at that moment. Similarly, when talking about Kyttä’s fields of action, stress that adults cannot provide a field of free action, as this would turn it into a field of promoted action. This thought is crucial for understanding the relationship between planning and children’s play.

You may want to extend this activity and ask participants to go outside and consider affordances for play in the outside space.

Resources

PowerPoint, relevant sections of the handbook.

³ Gibson, J. J. (1979) *The ecological approach to visual perception*, Boston, MA: Houghton, Mifflin and Company.

⁴ Kyttä, M. (2004) ‘The Extent of Children’s Independent Mobility and the Number of Actualised Affordances as Criteria for Child-friendly Environments’, *Journal of Environmental Psychology*, 24, pp. 179-198.

Activity 5: Cane den building⁵

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of how space/time/culture work together to support and/or constrain play
2. show an understanding of the concept of affordances

Time: 35 minutes

Activity

This is a simple and effective practical tool for creating a potential 'play space', and also allows for an ongoing discussion throughout on the concepts of play (Freely chosen? Relational? Emergent? Self-organising?), loose parts, affordances, the playwork approach of leaving space open for whatever might emerge.

- Demonstrate how to make the den.
- If sufficient time and resources, small groups then make their own dens; if not, they can play with the resources available to adapt the basic framework to see how they might afford different interactions or create a different feel. If appropriate, the activity can be done outside.
- Throughout, encourage discussion on key concepts of playing, loose parts, affordances, adapting resources for different children (equality/diversity).
- Talk also about space being more than the physical features: flag up how different resources (for example, fairy lights, or black bin liners) would give the den a different 'feel'.
- How might they use this in their own schools?

Tutor Notes

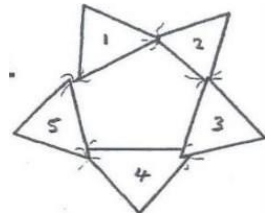
This activity is practical and also affords the opportunity for discussion of key concepts as participants engage with the resources. The completed framework is sturdy, lightweight and can be used indoors or out. Instructions for building the frame:

- Pick a cane size to suit your space and children. For example, 1.2m canes create a den with an internal floor diameter of about 2 m. Canes that are 2.4m will create a den tall enough for adults to stand up inside. You will need about 5 people to make the frame.
- Prepare your canes: tape a paper clip to the end of each cane with the insulating (or masking) tape so that it creates a loop.

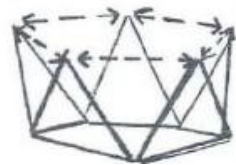
⁵ This activity is adapted from the *Play Way* trainer notebook, developed as part of the European-funded VIPER project (University of Gloucestershire), first published in 2012 and devised by PACT Birmingham/Play Resource Co.

- Take 15 canes and use them to make 5 flat triangles by tying the corner loops together using the string.

- Lay the tied triangles out on the floor so that the inner space makes a pentagon. Tie the inner touching corners together re-using the loops.



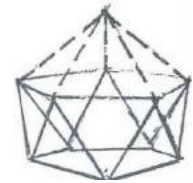
- Take 5 more canes. Hold the triangle upright by their tips, so they are leaning out slightly from the base. Re-using the loops, tie one end of a cane from the tip of one triangle to the next. Repeat until all the tips have a cane between them. The structure will now be free-standing – just!



- Take the remaining 5 canes and tie together at one end in a bunch.



- Stand in the middle of the structure (you may need a tall person for this bit). Holding the tied end uppermost, open the canes like an umbrella and tie the ends of the canes to the tips of the triangles. The structure is now complete and free-standing. It is sturdy, but not strong enough to climb or swing on.



- Decorate the den with whatever is to hand. Experiment with different materials for making spaces that are, for example, relaxing (cushions, fabrics), dark (black bin liners), etc.

Resources

- 25 bamboo canes (garden type)
- 50 large paper clips,
- insulating tape
- string
- pegs
- a range of resources such as fabric, parachute, large black bin liners, fairy lights, balloons, cushions, natural materials (leaves, twigs, etc) etc etc

Activity 6: Key characteristics of a quality play space: towards an audit tool

Learning outcomes:

3. describe key elements of a quality environment for play that can support a range of play forms

Time: 60 minutes

Activity

This activity is adapted from Bob Hughes' (1996) *A Question of Quality*⁶. It introduces IMEE (Intuition, Memory, Experience, Evidence) as planning and auditing tools. A series of questions from a children's and adults' perspectives build towards developing content and ambience indicators for a quality play environment.

Introduce the activity with a quick recap on key ideas introduced so far, i.e., play emerges from encounters with whatever is to hand (people, material and symbolic objects, desire, etc.) and whenever conditions allow; children's responses to the environment are different from adults; adult planning for play needs to take this into account and be comfortable working with uncertainty, etc.

Briefly pose the question about what happens when we ask children about their play preferences (it seems democratic, but just leave the question hanging – ask them to keep it in mind when going through this exercise).

Introduce IMEE (Intuition, Memory (or our own childhood playing), Experience (of working with children at play) and Evidence (what the evidence and literature say). All four are important.

Set up **List One**: a child's perspective. Working at first individually, and using IMEE, come up with 20 or so ends to the sentence: The play space I want would be where I could ...'. For example, it may be 'run', or 'hide', or 'feel safe'. Allow 15-20 minutes for this.

Ask for feedback and compile a single list from this feedback.

Identify conceptual themes from List One to create **List Two**. This might be things like variety, a sense of safety, a sense of excitement, time, etc.

Suggest that participants can use these lists to audit the designated play spaces in their school, using 'child-based questioning', for example, 'Can I run here?', 'Will I be bullied?', etc. (**List Three**). Then use the answers and what we have covered so far to devise **List Four** (in two parts): attractions to play and constraints to play. [To do outside of the session.]

⁶ This activity is one small part of the process in the book. The book can be purchased from Play Education: <http://www.playeducation.com/>

The final **List Five** draws on the previous lists one and two (and later, three and four) to devise **Content Indicators** (for example, 'physical challenge' might be a CI for climbing, taking risks, running, etc.) and **Ambience Indicators** (for example, a sense of security, an overall playful feel, etc.).

Summarise key design elements, e.g. material richness and physical diversity, spaces within spaces, networking of spaces, flexibility, seasonality and access to nature, the playwork curriculum (see the handbook).

Refer back to ideas of space as relational and constantly being produced through encounters between bodies, objects, expectations, perception, etc.

Suggest that participants use the lists to carry out audits on their designated play spaces.

Tutor Notes

This is a fairly intensive exercise and to be done properly probably needs more than 60 minutes. The focus should be on using what has been covered to date to generate the series of lists that can function as a basis for questioning existing spaces. Space is more than the physical features and content, focus also needs to be on the ambience, the atmosphere of the space, which links closely to the culture of the school.

You will need to find a way of making the lists available for all participants. If the main ones are written up on the board, then they can be photographed. Consider whether or not they need to be typed up and distributed to participants.

Resources

Questions/processes; sheets of paper; flip chart or white board

Section in the handbook on IMEE and space audits

Activity 7: Brief introduction to critical cartography

Learning outcomes:

4. describe methods that can be used to map the space and account for how it supports children's play

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Object: to introduce ideas for documenting the space as an organisational development tool. Introduction only at this stage, to be picked up again in Module 9.

Introduction: given what we have said about the ongoing and relational production of space, it is important to devise ways of documenting how the space works. Critical cartography works with a range of 'more-than-representational' methods that can pay attention to spatial and affective aspects of designated play times and spaces.

Explain that 'more-than-representational' methods aim to look beyond accurate representations of objective facts, towards working with messiness, unpredictability, relations and affect. It works with methods that can attune to movement and affect and focuses on the particular rather than the general. Note that the audit tool (the lists) themes and generalises: this is useful but may exclude particularities. This approach pays attention to them.

Introduce one example: ask them to think of the main play space in their school. If they were to take three photos of significant places in the space, what would they be? Ask for a few examples or use an example from the handbook. The point is to illustrate affective relationships with areas of the play space, both positive and negative (and usually a confusing mix of both), and to show how these spaces are experienced differently by different people.

Explain that a good starting point is to draw a map of the main play space – the process of drawing the map is as important as the finished product, and we will do this in Module 9. Drawing a map individually and then coming together to draw a collective map stimulates discussion and stories, usually very lively – and it is that liveliness that matters. It shows the affective aspects of space, and the importance of attachments to space as well as people.

The map can be used as a basis for all sorts of documentation. It can be large and pinned to a board and kept in the office, and smaller photos can be used for other approaches to documentation.

Approaches to documentation include stories (focusing on everyday moments that arise rather than peak incidents that need addressing); lines of movement of people (children and adults) and objects; creative use of video, audio and photography.

Tutor Notes

You will need to make a judgement about how much time to be saved for this. It is important at this stage to introduce the ideas, but there may be little time to do anything else. This is revisited in Module 9, and is also described in some detail in the handbook. The starting point for introducing critical cartography is usually through drawing a map of the relevant spaces. This will be done in Module 9. The focus here is on introducing the concepts.

Resources

PowerPoint

For full exercise - paper, coloured pens, post-its, play dough, tin foil

Activity 8: Space audits: how does your space measure up?

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of how space/time/culture work together to support and/or constrain play
2. show an understanding of the concept of affordances
3. describe key elements of a quality environment for play that can support a range of play forms
4. describe methods that can be used to map the space and account for how it supports children's play

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

This activity is for summing up the key ideas and encouraging participants to use them to audit their own designated play spaces (and perhaps non-designated ones as well).

Suggest that they use the lists generated in Activity 6, together with the conceptual tools introduced, and particularly the idea of space as relational rather than a neutral container, to try out an audit. If you have time, and if you are working at the school, participants may want to go outside to begin a space audit.

This can feed into the next module looking at the school's strategy and action plan. They should also continue to work on this approach to their space audit and bring their work to Module 9, where it will be picked up again.

Allow time for questions and discussion.

Suggest people take photos of their significant spaces and bring these to Module 9. Finish by summing up and ending the session.

Tutor Notes

This is a pulling together of the ideas introduced, particularly the audit tool and the idea of affordances.

Resources

None

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

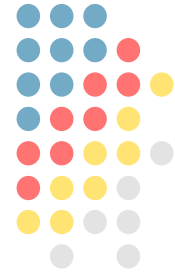
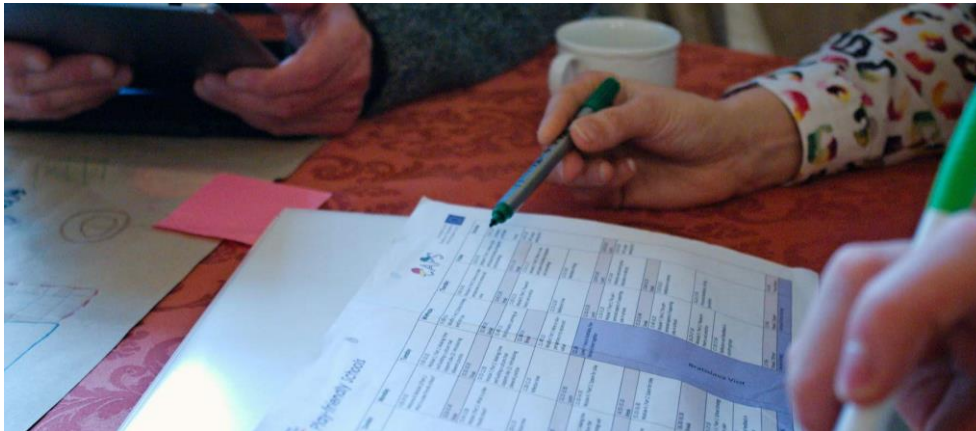
-

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of the first module. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 5: School strategy and action plan



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of the CAPS Quality Criteria
2. show an understanding of how the Play-friendly School label can be implemented
3. appreciate the importance of the whole-school community working towards the changes to be made
4. discuss how their school may start making changes
5. identify ways of working with parents to support the development of a Play-friendly School
6. identify key elements of the written statement
7. identify processes for developing the written statement (whole-school approach)
8. draw up an initial action plan for next steps

Session Summary

This module brings together all the material to date, reviewing it and supporting participants to begin taking actions towards becoming a Play-friendly School. Participants will have the chance to integrate separate bits of information they have worked with in the four previous module (M1: List of stakeholders, how to involve them; M2: PARK (Permission, Access, Risk, Knowledge); M3: How different “stakeholders” are affected; and M4: Space-audit).

Trainer Notes

This is the last module of the Core Training, so make sure it is clear for all participants who of them will continue to the second 15 hours of the training. Say goodbye to those who are leaving at this point.

Suggested plan for module 5: School strategy and action plan

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO 1	10 minutes	Introduction, energizer and Quality Criteria: Object: to remind participants of the Quality Criteria and setting the scene for the module.	Whole group activity	
Activity 2 LO 2, 3	40 minutes	What do we have so far? Objective: to identify and reflect on what has already been developed/collected in previous modules	Small and large group activity	
Activity 3 LO 4, 5, 6, 7	25 minutes	School-level objectives: Object: drawing on the previous activity, to identify their school's objectives	Small groups; plenary	Flipcharts, markers
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 4 LO 3, 4, 5	25 minutes	Trying on different CAPS: Object: to review their objectives from a range of perspectives	Whole group activity	Flipcharts, markers
Activity 5 LO 8	45 minutes	Action plan: Object: to start to create a strategy and an action plan for their school	Small groups or whole group activity	Flipcharts, markers
Summary	20 minutes	(Mid-way) evaluation, summing up: Object: to evaluate the (first) part of the course	Plenary	

Activity 1: Energizer and Quality Criteria

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the CAPS Quality Criteria

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Start the module with an energizer and introduce this module. Let participants know that this is the last session of the core training, and you will use this time to summarize what has been covered in the previous modules and use this knowledge to start creating an action plan for their own school.

Remind participants about the 5 CAPS Quality Criteria.

Tutor Notes

Refer back to the Quality Criteria.

Resources

Quality Criteria Booklet

Activity 2: What do we have so far?

Learning outcomes:

2. show an understanding of how the Play-friendly School label can be implemented
3. appreciate the importance of the whole-school community working towards the changes to be made

Time: 40 minutes

Activity

The object of this module is to look at what they have already developed/collected in previous modules:

- M1: List of stakeholders, how to involve them
- M2: PARK (Policy, Access, Risk, Knowledge)
- M3: The playwork approach; perspectives and engagement of different “stakeholders”
- M4: Space audit

Ask them to work together as a whole group. Go through all the four topics above, using their own notes and the common notes made on flipcharts during the discussions. Ask them to collect key words and arrange them in a mindmap, indicating how the different elements feed into each other. This can serve as a map to summarize all the important elements that are needed for becoming a Play-friendly School. Give them about 20 minutes for this brainstorming session.

After they have done this, divide them into small groups and ask them to reflect on their own school’s situation. Look at the mindmap and think through what it is that they already have/use in their school, and identify the gaps that need to be filled or overcome. Finally ask them to come back to the large group to share the main points of their discussion with others.

Tutor Notes

If there are several participants from the same school, they should work together in a small group. If the participants are from different schools, they can think a little about their own situation, then share their ideas with their group members for feedback/further ideas.

Resources

None

Activity 3: School-level objectives

Learning outcomes:

4. discuss how their school may start making changes
5. identify ways of working with parents to support the development of a Play-friendly School
6. identify key elements of the written statement
7. identify processes for developing the written statement (whole-school approach)

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

For this activity everybody will work with their own school, so if there are several participants from one school, they should work in a group, and if participants are the sole representative of their school, they should work by themselves. If all the participants are from the same school, then this should be a whole group session.

Ask them to think about their own school and use the previous exercise and the Quality Criteria as a guide to work out their school-level objectives. Tell them to look at the gaps they have identified and create a list of objectives that the school can realistically aim for. They should look at each criterion and identify the objectives connected to them.

Finally, if they have worked separately, get the group together again and ask everyone to briefly present their ideas.

Tutor Notes

Before the activity, explain the difference between objectives and actions, as sometimes it's easy to confuse these. Objectives are goals that the school will aim for (e.g. "Create a more friendly atmosphere in the schoolyard"), while actions are very concrete "to do"-s (e.g. "Buy 10 big flower pots and place them next to the little road. + "Paint the walls colourful." + "Build a wooden structure the children can climb on."; etc.). Tell participants, that now they should work on their objectives, and they will have time later to focus on the specific actions that are needed to reach that objective.

Resources

Flipcharts, markers

Activity 4: Trying on different CAPS

Learning outcomes:

3. appreciate the importance of the whole school community working towards the changes to be made
4. discuss how their school may start making changes
5. identify ways of working with parents to support the development of a Play-friendly School

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Ask participants to get into small groups and take their identified school objectives from the previous exercise. Explain that now they will look at the objectives from different perspectives, and to see if they are realistic aims.

Present them with different characters, who are wearing different CAPS of responses to the objectives. First present one character, and ask the group to imagine themselves in the position of that person and imagine how this person would react to the objectives. Spend a few minutes in this character's shoes, then move to the next character.

Make notes during the discussions on a flipchart, pointing out the different ideas.

After going through all the viewpoints draw the attention of the group to the notes you have made and ask them to look at the list. Ask them to go back to their objectives with a clear mind (that is, no longer in their characters) and see if there is anything that they would like to change in them, based on the list of reactions from the characters.

Tutor Notes

You can make this activity a fun, light-hearted one. Ask the group to imagine this person's mindset deeply and act/talk in an exaggerated manner, using their bodies as well. If they like something, they should be very loud and expressive about it! They can also stand on the chairs if they want. If they really don't like an idea, they should express that as well in a very vivid way. You can also go outside for this activity, as the change of scenery might help participants to change their mindsets as well; being outside is also useful to refresh after the previous long discussions.

The different characters are:

- An idealistic young teacher, who has just finished university and is enthusiastic, wanting to do the best for children.

- The school principal, who is generally supportive of innovative ideas, but has to keep in mind all the bureaucratic/administrative issues, take account of the interests of different stakeholders (parents, local government, etc.) and know exactly how this change can be managed.
- A very involved and well-respected caretaker. This is a practical person who wants to know what each change means from a practical standpoint. The school does pay attention to his/her viewpoints, as it has been proved time and time again that s/he knows what s/he is talking about.
- A grumpy, sad teacher. This teacher doesn't have illusions: s/he knows that in the end all ideas fail, even if they are not entirely useless, and actually nothing really changes. S/he is very good at pointing out the flaws of a plan and is not shy in giving voice to these concerns.
- A parent of two children in the school, who has only just heard about this idea and wants to know the ideas and information behind it and why the school is doing this.

If the participants have been working in small groups/individually, ask everyone to choose a couple of their objectives that they would like the group to look at.

Resources

Flipchart, markers

Activity 5: Action plan

Learning outcomes:

8. draw up an initial strategy and action plan for next steps

Time: 45 minutes

Activity

Tell the group that the time has arrived to summarize all previous exercises. Now they have reflected on their school situation from several different perspectives and should be able to create an initial action plan for their school.

Ask them to look at the previous materials they have prepared (the mindmap from this module, the Quality Criteria and the school-level objectives) and make a “to do” list. Ask them to prioritize the actions when drawing them up.

Tutor Notes

Tell participants the action plan should be concrete and realistic.

Resources

Flipcharts, markers

Summing Up - (Mid-way) Evaluation

Learning outcomes:

-

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Get the group back together for summing up the first 15 hours of the course. For some people this might be the end of the course, while others will continue to the second part as well.

Summarize the topics you have worked with through the core training modules, and ask participants to share their ideas and feelings regarding the course. Make sure that everybody has the chance to express themselves.

Ask those who are coming to the next session (the second part of the course for those working directly with children at play) to bring an observation of play: an observation or story that pays attention to playful moments as they arise at school or elsewhere (for example, in the supermarket, the back of the car, the pavement). Ask for as much detail as possible.

Tutor Notes

You can also use more creative ways for the evaluation. For example, you can ask them to draw their impressions and then explain their drawing to the group. You can also ask them to write the most important feedback they want to give on post-its, and then they put them up on a flipchart one-by-one, explaining what they meant.

OPTIONAL TRAINING Modules 6 – 10

Target group: professionals who are working directly with the children in the school, who need more concrete ideas on working directly with children to support their play

15 hours

Module 6: More on play – perspectives on its nature and value



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play
2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play
3. discuss changes in opportunities for children to engage in self-organised play
4. talk about the value of children's play in a school context

Session Summary

This module opens the second half of the course and sets the foundations for an in-depth exploration of policy and practice in schools. It revisits ideas about play and looks both at traditional theorisations of play and alternative perspectives. The key point to make is that there are different perspectives on theorising play, and often these say more about adults' intentions and desires for children than they do about children's own experiences of playing. This may be particularly relevant for schools given the focus on educating children and the ways in which different pedagogical theories understand childhood, learning and play. The module revisits some of the themes introduced in the opening module and extends them, drawing on material covered to date.

Trainer Notes

Activity 3 works best if participants bring with them an observation of play. Make sure that participants are either asked at the end of Module 5 or in some other way before they come to Module 6, asking them to bring an observation or story that pays attention to playful moments as they arise at school or elsewhere (for example, in the supermarket, the back of the car, the pavement). Ask for as much detail as possible. You will also find it useful to have any write-ups or material from Module 1 on play memories and barriers to play. You may need to adapt some of the material so that it fits with your own country's approaches to teaching and to children's play in schools.

Suggested plan for module 6: More on play – perspectives on its nature and value

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO 1, 2	15 minutes	Introduction: to the module; time to settle and pick up any thoughts and queries from previous sessions. Quotes from play scholars: Object: to show how despite centuries of studying play, there is no agreement on its nature and value.	Talk	PowerPoint Quotes from play scholars
Activity 2 LO 1	10 minutes	Defining and categorising play: Object: to show dominant ways of defining the characteristics of play; to introduce Hughes' 16 play types	Talk	PowerPoint
Activity 3 LO 1, 2	40 minutes	Critiquing the definitions: Object: to explore the limits of fixing and defining.	Individual activity; small and/or large group discussion	Large sheets of paper, coloured pens, post-its, play dough, tin foil, a range of arts and crafts materials
Activity 4 LO 1, 2	15 minutes	Jack and the Beanstalk: who is the hero? Object: to show how life emerges through the entanglements of all the 'characters'; no one character can be said to be more important than any other. To introduce the idea of entanglements and assemblages.	Small groups; group discussion	Characters on small pieces of paper
Activity 5 LO 3	20 minutes	Now and then, here and there: changes in opportunities for self-organised play Object: To bring a critical eye to stories we tell about what has changed about children's play	Small/large group discussion	

Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 6 LO 1, 2	10 minutes	Rhetorics of play: Object: to show the range of ways that play has been theorised, to include the differences between ancient and modern rhetorics, how theories have been rationalised in modern times; also show how some rhetorics are more powerful than others (play as progress).	Talk	PowerPoint
Activity 7 LO 2, 4	25 minutes	The value of play in schools beyond the dominant rhetoric: Object: to show immediate rather than just deferred value, appreciating the embodied/emotional aspects of playing	Talk and group game	
Activity 8 LO 4	30 minutes	What does this mean for our school? Object: to think about how this can be applied in participants' own schools	Small group carousel and plenary. Summing up	3 flipchart sheets with domains, flipchart/whiteboard and pens
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and quotes from play scholars

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play
2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play

Time: 15 minutes

Activity

Use the quotes from play scholars (in the handbook)⁷; you could have these on a PowerPoint loop as people arrive and settle, and as you introduce the module.

Start off explaining this is the first module of the second half of the course, aimed at looking more deeply at practice and policy with practitioners.

Facilitate a brief discussion on where they are with action planning and changing practice.

Explain this module revisits ideas about play and looks both at traditional and alternative perspectives.

Alert people to the many contradictory statements that have been made about play on the slides and ask if any stand out for them. The key point here is that there is much disagreement about the nature and value of playing.

Tutor Notes

This is the first module of the second half of the course, aimed at those more directly involved in working with children to support their play (teachers, teaching assistants, midday supervisors, playworkers, etc). There is some revisiting of key themes in the first 5 modules, going into more depth and considering implications for practice.

Resources

PowerPoint quotes from play scholars

⁷ These quotations come from Burghardt, G. (2005) *The Genesis of Animal Play: Testing the limits*. Ma.: MIT.

Activity 2: Defining and categorising play

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Explain that you will be introducing key definitions of play and ways of categorising types of play, and that these will be explored in more depth using their own stories of playing. Acknowledge that they will have discussed some of this in the first part of the course.

Use information in the handbook. Begin with Ralph Feezell's⁸ five conceptualisations of play (as behaviour, attitude, structure, meaningful activity, or separate phenomenon). Introduce three ways of defining play: Catherine Garvey⁹ (the 'Garvey five'), Gordon Burghardt¹⁰ (the 'Burghardt five') and the UK's Playwork Principles.

Then do a brief introduction to Bob Hughes' 16 play types¹¹. Refer back to aspects of this presentation throughout the module.

Tutor Notes

This is a brief lecture introducing key ways of defining and categorising play, including from the playwork literature.

Resources

PowerPoint

⁸ Feezell, R. (2010) 'A Pluralist Conception of Play', *Journal of the Philosophy of Sport*, 37, pp. 147-165.

⁹ Garvey, C. (1977) *Play*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

¹⁰ Burghardt, G. (2005) *The Genesis of Animal Play: Testing the limits*, Cambridge, MA: The MIT Press.

¹¹ Hughes, B. (2002) *A Playworker's Taxonomy of Play Types*, 2nd edition, London: PlayLink.

Activity 3: Critiquing the definitions

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play
2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play

Time: 40 minutes

Activity

Check that everyone has an observation/story of children playing. If some do not, they can work in pairs with others who do. If there are none, work with some of the stories in the handbook. The guidance for the observation was to pay attention to playful moments as they arise at school or elsewhere (for example, in the supermarket, the back of the car, the pavement), and to recall as much detail as possible.

Ask participants to produce an account of their observation/story using the resources available: you should have a range of paper, coloured pens, craft supplies (e.g., play dough, tin foil, etc). They can draw, construct or perform their story.

Ask people to share their stories/observations. As they do so, pay attention to how the play emerged from whatever was to hand. If people's stories are too general ('the children were playing football'), try and elicit some detail (e.g., what were they saying? How did they deal with issues that arose such as fouling or breaking rules? Did one particular moment stand out for you?). Try to bring out details of how the playing progresses and what/who else was involved (the ball, goalposts, rules, friendships, famous footballers, etc).

- Once everyone has shared their creations and stories, ask these questions:
 - How do the definitions introduced earlier fit what you saw? Could children 'freely choose'? Was it always personally directed? What was the role of physical objects and landscape features?
 - What play types do you think you saw? Does what you saw fit neatly into single categories?
 - What does this tell us about the uses and abuses of defining and categorising play? These can be very useful (for example, in responding to adults who wish to control children more, or in terms of appreciating the variety of play forms and how to support them); however, they can also be limiting. They perform a particular cut on the world and this may exclude other ways of thinking about play.

Talk also about the value of using creative ways to present the stories: these can allow for working with feelings and details that cannot be captured in language; language becomes habitual and so can perpetuate habits of thought.

Tutor Notes

The key purpose of this activity is not to show that traditional definitions are wrong, but to explore the limits and exclusions of fixing and defining play. Traditional definitions are useful, AND they exclude some ways of thinking about play (see the notes in the handbook).

Resources

- PowerPoint
- Large sheets of paper, coloured pens, post-its, play dough, tin foil, a range of arts and crafts materials
- Some stories/observations available if they don't have any
- Handbook

Activity 4: Jack and the Beanstalk: who is the hero?¹²

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play
2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play

Time: 15 minutes

Activity

In advance of the activity, write out the following characters onto small pieces of paper and fold them over: Jack, Jack's mother, the beans, the beanstalk, the cow, soil, rain, the giant, the hen that lays the golden eggs, the axe.

Make sure everyone knows the story of Jack and the Beanstalk. If not, tell it briefly: *in this fairy tale, Jack lives with his widowed mother, and when their old cow stops giving milk (their only source of income), Jack's mother tells him to take it to market to sell. On the way, he meets a man selling magic beans and swaps the cow for some beans. When he returns home, his mother is so cross that she throws the beans out of the window. In the night, a tall beanstalk grows and next day Jack climbs the beanstalk and finds a giant's castle. He waits until the giant is asleep and steals some gold coins. On return visits, he steals a hen that lays golden eggs and a magic harp, but this last visit, the giant wakes up and chases Jack down the beanstalk. Jack calls to his mother to fetch an axe and chops down the beanstalk and the giant falls to his death.*

Depending on numbers, people can work in groups of 2-5. Hand out the characters (folded so others cannot see them) and ask groups to prepare an argument as to why their character is the most important.

Start with a volunteer to argue their case. Ask if others agree. Encourage playful competition in the game.

Eventually, when everyone who wants to has made their case, point out that of course everyone has realised that the story needs all the characters in order to progress in the way it did. Talk about the concepts of assemblages as described in the handbook.

Return to their stories of play. How might the concept of assemblages offer another way to think about defining and categorising play?

¹² Thanks to Stuart Lester for this activity.

Tutor Notes

The purpose of this activity is to show how life emerges through encounters with other people, things and elements. The story of Jack and the Beanstalk could progress in any number of ways, and every 'character' matters in terms of how it does progress. This decentres humans (adults and children) and brings other players into the picture: material objects, feelings, elements, histories, etc. You will need to prepare small pieces of paper with the names of characters on it.

Resources

Characters on small pieces of paper

Handbook

Activity 5: Now and then, here and there: changes in opportunities for self-organised play

Learning outcomes:

3. discuss changes in opportunities for children to engage in self-organised play

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Initiate a discussion about how the stories of playing that have been discussed in this module differ from how participants played when they were young. Remind them that they looked at this in the first module. Listen to the ways in which the stories are told. (If appropriate you can do this in small groups and take key points from each group as feedback.)

Remind participants about the value of looking beyond play as a time and space-bound activity, seeing it as what emerges whenever conditions allow. From this perspective, it becomes easier to see that children do still play in ways that are woven into everyday routines; changes that are recounted tend to be about dedicated times for playing. This refocuses attention away from 'providing' play and towards paying attention to those conditions. Remind them also of the concepts of space as relational and produced and of assemblages (Jack and the Beanstalk). How might these ways of thinking affect the way we tell stories about changes in children's play?

What changes have happened over time to the way adults organise time and space both within and outside of school? (This will vary both within and between countries.) This might be, for example, issues such as cuts in dedicated times for play, a stronger focus on measured achievements, more testing, less space/time/support for playful pedagogies.

Given all the research into the benefits of play for children, ask why it is the poor relation of structured learning and sport.

What might be the role of schools now in looking to co-create conditions that support playing?

Tutor Notes

This activity revisits some of the changes in children's lives and the ways we talk about how play has changed. You may find it helpful to have material from Module 1 where these ideas were first explored.

Resources

None

Activity 6: Rhetorics of play

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of different ways of defining and categorising play
2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Give a brief presentation on the seven rhetorics of Brian Sutton-Smith¹³ using the relevant sections of the handbook. Start with the modern rhetorics and then introduce the ancient ones.

These seven rhetorics show how there are some narratives that are more dominant than others, and how ancient rhetorics have been rationalised in modern times. Show how the progress rhetoric is by far the dominant. Ask what the value is in looking beyond the progress rhetoric to other ways of thinking about childhood and play. What about forms of playing that make adults feel anxious or offended?

Point out that although some rhetorics may be contradictory, we can accommodate multiple perspectives.

Tutor Notes

This is a brief presentation/lecture on Brian Sutton-Smith's rhetorics of play – see the relevant section in the handbook on this.

Resources

PowerPoint

Handbook

¹³ Sutton-Smith, B. (1997) *The Ambiguity of Play*, Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Activity 7: The value of play in schools beyond the dominant rhetoric

Learning outcomes:

2. show an understanding of different perspectives on the benefits of play
4. talk about the value of children's play in a school context

Time: 25 minutes

Activity

Following on from Activity 6, ask the group to say (or you can briefly summarise if short of time) how the benefits of play are presented within the progress rhetoric (for example, play helps children to learn and develop, it prepares them for future adult life). Point out that these are mostly instrumental ways of expressing value, very much through an adult lens that says play must be useful for something other than play (i.e., of more value than 'only play').

- Play 'electric finger'¹⁴:
 - Ask the group to stand in a circle facing inwards (or 2/3 smaller circles depending on space).
 - Each player holds their left hand out to the side towards their neighbour, palm upwards. They then position their right hand over their neighbour's upturned palm, with the index finger hovering over (not touching) the palm.
 - Explain that when you say 'Go!', each player has to do two things: they have to catch their neighbour's index finger before they pull it away, and they also have to pull their own index finger away before their other neighbour catches it. Stress that players should try and catch fingers gently (we have had a broken finger playing this game).
 - Once everyone has understood what they must do, have a trial run. Say, 'Ready ... GO!', building the suspense. Note the laughter that will happen.
 - Play a few more rounds. You can say that people have three lives and then are out, but generally three rounds is sufficient to get the point of the game across. Players can also lose a life if they move before the 'Go!' command. So, you can elicit a premature movement by going 'Ready ...' and then moving suddenly but not saying anything. Again, note the laughter.
 - Ask people to return to their seats. Ask what the value of the game was for them as individuals. Point out the key points of the game: the embodied feelings of anticipation and release; laughter; the entangled nature of the game and attunement to others. Ask how this experience might fit with traditional descriptions of both the nature (freely chosen, personally directed) and progress rhetoric benefits of play (what skills were you developing for the future?).

¹⁴ Thanks to Stuart Lester for this game

Give a brief talk on the immediate (rather than deferred) benefits of playing: children seek out moments that enliven life, that make life more worth living; this is of value in itself and can also affect well-being in terms of immediate benefits of positive affect, attachments (to peers and place as well as adult caregivers), stress response systems, emotion regulation, openness to learning – all aspects of resilience.¹⁵

Reminding people of their earlier ideas about the value of play within the progress rhetoric, introduce Holland's value triangle¹⁶: instrumental, intrinsic and institutional (see handbook). Ask them in small groups to list the value of play under each heading. Take feedback.

Point out that all forms of value are important, but that without intrinsic value, the other two are diminished.

Tutor Notes

The purpose of this activity is to revisit the argument for supporting play in schools, bringing in perspectives other than the dominant progress rhetoric. The activity includes a game that will need enough space for the whole group to stand in a circle (or 2/3 smaller groups).

Resources

PowerPoint, space to play electric finger.

Handbook

¹⁵ You can read more about this in Russell, W. (2018) Thinking a little differently about resilience and play, in Russell, W. and Schuur, K. (eds) *The Strength of European Diversity for Building Children's Resilience through Play and Drama: A collection of articles from the EU Erasmus Plus ARTPAD project 2015-2018*, Gloucester: University of Gloucestershire, available at <http://artpad.epraxis.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/08/ARTPAD-A-Collection-of-Articles-Final-28-08-18.pdf>

¹⁶ Holden, J. (2006) *Capturing Cultural Value and the Crisis of Legitimacy*, London: Demos.

Activity 8: What does this mean for our school?

Learning outcomes:

4. talk about the value of children's play in a school context

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

- Prepare beforehand three sheets of flipchart paper with the following headings:
 - play time (recess)
 - playful pedagogies (using playful approaches in the classroom) and
 - openness to moments of playfulness throughout everyday life in school.
- Introduce the activity saying the purpose is to explore what alternative ways of looking at the nature and value of play might mean for their schools, both in terms of being able to argue the value of supporting play in schools and also in terms of everyday practice. Explain they will be looking at value and practice across three domains, and that the exercise is a carousel (they will be swapping sheets).
- Split the group into three groups and give each group one sheet and ask them to discuss and record their thoughts for 7-8 minutes.
- At the end of the time, swap the sheets round and ask groups to read what is already written and add any further ideas. Allow about 5 minutes for this.
- Swap the sheets one more time.
- At the end, ask groups to feedback the ideas from the sheet they currently have. Others can contribute clarifications and further thoughts.
- Bring the session to a close. Ask participants to continue to keep a look out for moments of playfulness they see at school (across these three domains) and to keep a record of these. They may also want to begin collecting photos and video/audio recordings (check consent issues). These will be revisited in Module 9.

Tutor Notes

You may need to have a few prompts here to help the discussion, for example, the value of the pleasure of playing, its immediate rather than deferred benefits, and that happier children makes for a happier and more successful school environment (see the handbook for further information).

Resources

Sheets of flipchart paper with headings, pens.

Handbook

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

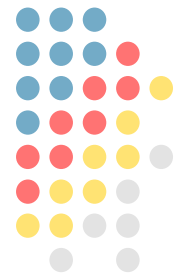
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Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of the first module. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 7: The self – personal aspects of supporting play in schools



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an appreciation of the importance of feeling empowered as a teacher/professional working with children
2. experience themselves as competent supporters of play
3. show an understanding of how their own personality is an important part of supporting play
4. identify their own role in supporting children's play
5. show an understanding of the importance of having supportive colleagues as part of the whole school approach

Session Summary

This module introduces a range of activities aimed at experiencing emotions of connection, trust, leadership and so on. It emphasizes the importance of feeling empowered as professionals working with children. These professionals face several situations, which activates those internal models, templates which are built into them based on their own childhood and adult development - any time when they work with children, these templates and models are activated whether they know or not. Therefore, it is important to reflect upon themselves, to get to know themselves better. The exercises of this session - which can be changed according to the trainer's own experience in this area - triggers participants to reflect on themselves and on emotional issues which also occur during play - trust, uncertainty, fears, and others. These activities aim at developing deep communication and self-reflection.

Trainer Notes

Be aware that some participants may not be comfortable with some of the games. Encourage but do not force full participation; if people are clearly uncomfortable, make it easy for them to opt-out. Choose games you have experienced yourself (even if they are not in the guide) – don't experiment on people.

Suggested plan for module 7: The self – personal aspects of supporting play in schools

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO	5 minutes	Energizer and introduction: Object: being aware of ourselves as people working with children and supporting their play is essential		
Activity 2 LO 1, 3	55 minutes	Dyad: Object: to provide a rare opportunity to experience the undivided attention of someone else	Activity in pairs and full group discussion	
Activity 3 LO 1, 5	20 minutes	Trust games: Object: to experience trust / games to be chosen by trainer.	Whole group activity and discussion	Blankets Music
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 4 LO 1	5 minutes	Human machine: Object: to demonstrate what it's like when we are just functioning as "machines".	Whole group activity	
Activity 5 LO 2, 5	30 minutes	Tuk-tuk game: Object: to demonstrate and experience leadership – how we are as leaders, how it feels to be led.	Activity in pairs and full group discussion	Scarves/blindfolds
Activity 6 LO 2, 3, 4	40 minutes	Wheel of emotions: Reflecting on teachers' own experiences and emotions regarding their work with children. Participants sitting in a circle, everyone turns the Wheel of emotions/pulls an emotion from a sack and tells a story when s/he felt that emotion during her/his work with children.	Whole group activity	Wheel of emotions / emotions written on pieces of paper and a bag

Summary	10 minutes	Summing up: Object: to identify their own strengths and areas for improvement in supporting children's play	Individual and pair activity	
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Activity 1: Energizer and introduction; Activity 2: Dyad

Learning outcomes:

1. show an appreciation of the importance of feeling empowered as a teacher/professional working with children
3. show an understanding of how their own personality is an important part of supporting play

Time: 60 minutes

Activity

Start the module with an energizer game and introduce the topic of the module to the participants.

Tell participants to get into pairs and sit down facing each other. Explain that they are going to talk to each other in rounds: for 5 minutes only one person talks, the other listens, then for the next 5 minutes the other talks. There are 4 rounds of these, so all together they are going to speak for 40 minutes, 20 minutes each.

Choose one of the following questions and ask them to ask it to each other at the beginning of the first rounds (so both of them will get asked for the first time). After the first round, they are going to continue with this topic.

- Talk about yourself as a teacher/educator/someone who works with children.
- Talk about your relationships with children.

After the 4 rounds of speaking, bring them back to the large group. Ask how they are feeling now after the exercise, what their experiences were. Address their ideas during the discussion.

Tutor Notes

Introduce the module by explaining that being aware of ourselves as people working with children and supporting their play is essential. For one, we are also part of the environment that we are creating with the children. But it is also very important that we are able to appreciate ourselves and our colleagues in this process as human beings.

This dyad activity provides an opportunity for people to share their inner dialogue with someone who listens. On one hand this can make their own ideas about this topic clearer, as often when you say something out loud it becomes clearer. On the other hand it is also a rare experience, that you have the undivided attention of someone else for 20 minutes.

For many people this activity seems scary at first, as they might think that they can't talk for 20 minutes about a topic. Encourage them to try it anyway, as it is a very gratifying experience in the

end. Usually the feedback of people doing this exercise is “Wow, I didn’t know that I have so much to say about this topic,” or “I don’t remember the last time someone listened to me so attentively.”

If they are worried about staying on the topic, you can tell them that they should follow their own chain of thoughts. If they move away from the initial question, it is not a problem. Share what is important to them about this topic.

Emphasize that the ones who are listening really shouldn’t say anything in response. It is often difficult to not react verbally to what you hear, but there is a reason for this: at this time, it is not a traditional discussion with people responding to each other. This way the speaker can organize their thoughts, instead of starting an idea, to which the other responds and so shift the attention away from the topic s/he wanted to talk about. The listener can react with gestures (nods, smiles, etc.), but not with words.

Resources

None

Activity 3: Trust games

Learning outcomes:

1. show an appreciation of the importance of feeling empowered as a teacher/professional working with children
5. show an understanding of the importance of having supportive colleagues as part of the whole-school approach

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Tell participants that now they are going to do several non-verbal exercises. So emphasize that they shouldn't speak during the exercises! Introduce the games one by one and make time to discuss experiences after each game.

These are some ideas for trust games, but you can use your own games too.

1. Eye to eye

Ask participants to get into pairs. Tell them to look into each other's eyes for the next 5 minutes. After the five minutes, ask them how this experience was for them. Explain that it is very rare that we look into someone's eyes for so long without any specific aim – it is sometimes ok in romantic relationships, but even then it's not usual. Discuss why it might be so difficult sometimes.

2. Rocking blankets

Use strong blankets. One person lies on the blanket, and about 8-10 people hold the blanket. They lift up the blanket with the person (about 20-40 cm from ground, not higher, only that s/he is not touching the ground), and rock the person for about a minute or two. Change roles, so that people can experience. Discuss the feelings which occurs.

3. Gaze-gate

Next, ask participants to stand in a circle. Ask someone to be a volunteer to leave the room. When this person is outside, decide with the group which two people standing next to each other are going to be the "gaze-gate". They are going to be the gate, while others are the wall – people can only enter or leave the circle through the space between these two people.

When they are decided, the person comes back from outside and stands in the middle of the group. S/he has to find the gate by looking at people's faces. The two "gate-members" should communicate kindness, love and acceptance on their faces, but they cannot consciously make gestures, like smiling, or raising eyebrows. While the rest of the group should communicate (again, without gestures) that they don't want this person to cross there. The person in the middle should look at the faces, guess where the gate is and try to cross there. If s/he is right, the gate should open and let them out. If s/he is wrong, then people shouldn't let him/her out.

You can play several rounds of this.

At the end, ask them briefly how this exercise was for them.

4. Sound bell

For this activity, divide the groups to smaller groups of around 8 people who are standing in a circle, as close to each other as they can. One person should stand in the middle and close his/her eyes. S/he starts to lean in a direction, while the people standing in the circle catch him/her and gently push him/her in another direction. They can go on for some time, then a new person can come in the middle.

Again, at the end of the exercise, ask participants how it felt for them. Ask them whether they were able to let go and trust their teammates to catch them.

If you know other non-verbal exercises, you can also use them.

Tutor Notes

Non-verbal exercises are difficult for some people, as they are different from the usual training exercises, where people engage with their minds rather than their emotions. These exercises provide an opportunity for creating a very intimate, warm atmosphere with trustful relationships. Encourage participants to try the exercises and let themselves enjoy them.

Make sure you address their experiences after each exercise (as seen in the descriptions), but during this process do not go any further. After the whole non-verbal session is over, address the relevance of this session: being able to experience emotionally intimate, trustful relationships can help us as individuals to feel more empowered, and relate to each other, their colleagues (in case they are from the same school) on a different, much deeper level. Make the point that adults who are working with children need to be aware of their own attitudes, and it is very important that they develop a self-reflective attitude – and non-verbal exercises can create self-reflection on a deep level. Also, make sure to emphasize to participants, that they should be mindful of introducing these kind of exercises to the children, making sure that they only use activities that they are comfortable with themselves and are ready to handle it if one or more children have a difficult experience during these.

Resources

Blankets

Music

Activity 4: Human machine

Learning outcomes:

1. show an appreciation of the importance of feeling empowered as a teacher/professional working with children

Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Ask everyone to think of a nightmare job. What does it mean for them? How might they imagine a job they would hate?

After a few moments ask one person to go into the middle and make a movement with a sound connected with the nightmare job he or she has imagined. Then the next person joins in with his or her movement and the sound of the nightmare job machine. Finally, all the participants are in the synchronized machine. You can ask the first person to accelerate or slow down and all the parts of the machine should match the pace and rhythm to the pace of first person.

Tutor Notes

The aim of this exercise is to demonstrate what it's like when we are just functioning as „machines“, just repeating monotonous tasks, as opposed to living as whole human beings.

Resources

None

Activity 5: Tuk-tuk game

Learning outcomes:

2. experience themselves as competent supporters of play
5. show an understanding of the importance of having supportive colleagues as part of the whole-school approach

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

1. The group stands in a circle in a large open space (having furniture around is not a problem, but there should be enough space for moving around).
2. Everyone chooses a partner, with whom they start the exercise. One of the pair will be blindfolded.
3. The trainer gives the instruction:
 - a. It is a non-verbal exercise, all verbal communication is forbidden during the game (including sounds).
 - b. One of the pair will be the leader: s/he is the driver of the “tuk-tuk” (rikshaw), while the other person will be the “tuk-tuk”.
 - c. The driver will lead the blindfolded other in the following way: s/he stands behind the other person, and puts his/her hands on the other person’s shoulder.
 - d. They can discuss how the first person will lead the other, but it is not necessary.
 - e. After about 1minute to a minute and a half, the trainer shouts “change”, and all pairs stop. The drivers will change partners in silence (so that the new chosen “tuk-tuk” will not know who is behind and experience the losing control of the situation). There will be two changes, so everyone will be led by three different people, two they will not know.
 - f. After the third round the pairs stop, and there is a debriefing.
4. In the debriefing, ask the “tuk-tuk”s first about their experiences, then the drivers. After sharing personal feelings, draw out some key themes.
5. After debriefing the first round, people change roles, and a second game is run (with those who were drivers, becoming tuk-tuks), also with debriefing.
6. Write up the generalised findings onto a board or flip chart.

Tutor Notes

Before the exercise, ask the participants if they are ok to be blindfolded. Never force anyone into being blindfolded; if they are not comfortable, they can be observers and share their observation at debriefing, or their personal reflection on why they do not like being blindfolded. There is also the option to play this game with eyes closed instead of being blindfolded.

The exercise is easier with two facilitators, as if there are odd-numbered participants, one of the facilitators can join the game as a participant.

The aim of the debriefing session is for the participants to become aware of their experiences during the game and through sharing personal experiences generalize how it is to be in a situation in which they are not in control and what is needed to feel safe in these situations. Some of the possible generalizations that may come up are the following:

- the driver should be confident
- the driver's instructions (even non-verbal) should be clear and straightforward
- the driver should be responsive to the needs of the person being led (e.g. adjust the speed of walking to the need of the one being led as opposed to follow his/her own rhythm).

Questions to ask:

1. How did you feel in the driver / being led position?
2. What makes you feel good in those positions?
3. What can we generalize for personal mentoring relationships and the supporting attitude of an adult when working with children?

Resources

Scarves/blindfolds

Activity 6: Wheel of emotions

Learning outcomes:

2. experience themselves as competent supporters of play
3. show an understanding of how their own personality is an important part of supporting play
4. identify their own role in supporting children's play

Time: 40 minutes

Activity

Ask participants to sit in a circle. Put the wheel of emotions in the middle and ask someone to spin the wheel (if you don't have a wheel, write the names of emotions on pieces of paper and put them in a sack, and ask participants to pull one out).

The person who spun the wheel / took a piece of paper should share a story from his/her work with children when s/he felt that particular emotion.

After the game, allow 10 minutes for summing up the session: ask participants to write down their thoughts (just a few sentences) on "My strengths as a playworker/teacher" and "Areas for improvement". Once they have done this, they should get into pairs and share what they have written with their partner.

After this sum up briefly what has happened in the module.

Tutor Notes

The wheel of emotions is a wooden round you can spin, with some emotions written on it – if they spin it, one emotion should point to the person spinning. You can write the following emotions on it: happiness, shame, anger, gratitude, depression, mourning, love, guilt, rage, anxiety.



An example of a Wheel of Emotions from Austrian partners Gesellschaft für Sozialforschung und Bildung (GeSoB)

If you are working with a larger group, prepare more Wheels / Bags and create smaller groups to work together. Generally it is ideal if there are not more than 10 people in a group who are sharing, as otherwise this activity could go on very long. If there are two small groups, it's useful to have two trainers present, so each can join a group and facilitate the process if necessary. If you are alone and you are not joining the groups for the discussion, emphasize to the participants, that they should only share stories that they are comfortable with (usually people can self-regulate and don't go deeper than they want to, but it is still possible that it happens - so make sure that you ask people how they are feeling after the exercise and if they need any support at this point).

Resources

Wheel of emotions

Emotions written on pieces of paper and a bag

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

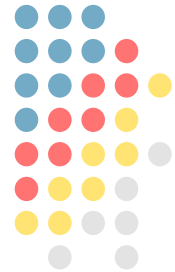
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Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of Module 7. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. If necessary, revisit the relevance of these exercises, as they are different in nature from the previous ones, and it might confuse some of the participants. Explain that working on ourselves is a key element of becoming more confident in our role as adults working with children, and that experiencing our colleagues from a more “human” perspective (as opposed to “roles as colleagues”) can enhance our everyday experience. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 8: Playwork theory and practice



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of the UK model of playwork
2. discuss the application of the Playwork Principles to school play times
3. describe playwork approaches to intervention
4. discuss the tensions inherent in a playwork approach

Session Summary

This session revisits the UK model of playwork, and looks at a particular model of playwork, that of psycholudics. There are a couple of activities looking at when, why and how to intervene in children's play. This is not always straightforward, and time should be given to explore the tensions inherent in the playworker role, especially in a school setting.

Trainer Notes

You will need to make sure that you are familiar with the psycholudics model, including the basic tenets, the play cycle and the hierarchy of intervention. It is also worth stating that this is only one model, from a depth psychology perspective, and that other models also exist. Module 9, for example, looks at a spatial model for supporting children's play.

Suggested plan for module 8: Playwork theory and practice

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1	10 minutes	Introduction to the module, energizer	Whole group	
Activity 2 LO 1	35 minutes	Psycholudics part one: the play cycle: Object: to introduce the play cycle as a way of understanding the play process and adults' role in it	Whole group talk, small and large group activity/discussion	Flipchart/whiteboard, markers or PowerPoint; scenarios Playwork Principles
Activity 3 LO 3	30 minutes	Psycholudics part two: levels of interventions: Object: to introduce different levels of adult engagement in play frames	Whole group talk and small group scenarios with feedback	Flipchart, markers; scenarios
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 4 LO 2	40 minutes	Interventions 2.0: Object: to explore other ways of intervening than the usual "say something, do something".	small group activity	Flipchart, markers
Activity 5 LO 3, 4	20 minutes	Supportive and inhibitive communication: Object: to introduce techniques for supportive communication	Whole group presentation	
Activity 6 LO 2, 4	20 minutes	Playwork Principles in the school - discussion	Plenary	
Summary	10 minutes	Summing up + For next time: Think of significant spaces (of joy, wonder, anxiety, conflict, rest, anything of significance) in their school's dedicated play spaces. They should take three photos of significant spaces and bring them to the next session (on a phone is ok, or they can print them)	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and Activity 2: Psycholudics part one: the play cycle

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of the UK model of playwork

Time: 45 minutes

Activity

Start the module with an energizer, then explain the content of this module: playwork practice according to one UK model of playwork, known as psycholudics. Remind people of the Playwork Principles (which could also be displayed on the wall).

Then give a lecture about the Play Cycle, using the handbook as a reference.

1. Explain that the Play Cycle forms a part of a theoretical model of playwork called 'psycholudics'; 'ludo' is the Latin for 'I play' and so 'psycholudics' means literally the study of the mind at play. This understanding of play and playwork (which is one among many) is rooted in depth psychology and particularly the work of Carl Gustav Jung. It suggests that play is a source of healing and that children can play out unconscious material that is troubling them, preventing the formation of neuroses or even psychosis. Children are unlikely to be consciously aware that this is what they are doing, and the role of the playworker is to support children in expressing this material through an understanding of the Play Cycle.
2. Explain the Play Cycle according to Sturrock and Else¹⁷ using a flipchart or PowerPoint presentation inputting on play cues, returns, flow, play frames (including narrative, physical, musical and emotional examples), annihilation and display.
3. Use the appropriate symbols from the handbook.
4. Refer participants back to their own play memories or any observations they have had of children playing to give them concrete examples of all aspects of the Play Cycle.
5. Ask the group to arrange themselves into small groups or pairs and give them on a handout with the two play scenarios/observations of children playing (but without the Play Cycle elements – see tutor notes). Give learners time to look at the observations and identify components of the Play Cycle.

¹⁷ "The Play Cycle" by Gordon Sturrock and Perry Else available on CD-rom via www.commonthreads.co.uk

Also described in "The Value of Play" by Perry Else : Continuum 2009, ISBN 978 0 8264 9565 5 and "Reflective Playwork" by Jacky Kilvington and Ali Wood : Continuum 2010, ISBN 978-0-8264-9764-2

6. Give them about 10-15 minutes to consider the scenarios and identify elements of Play Cycle. Encourage participants to think of their own examples as well.
7. At the end of the exercise, take feedback and discuss with the whole group. Ask them, if it was easy or difficult to identify the different elements of the Play Cycle.

Tutor Notes

This activity relies on the trainer having a sound knowledge and understanding of this theory, which can be found in the handbook. Ensure everyone understands your explanation and encourage questions to clarify.

We suggest using the video on the following link to help understand the Play Cycle and provide an idea of how you might deliver this activity (produced as part of the VIPER project trainer support materials): <http://youtu.be/6FNHa8gZ8CU>

Play Cycle Scenarios

Observations without Play Cycle elements:

1. A boy (10) rolled a tyre into the fence. He watched it settle, then with a flurry of activity, began to lug all the tyres out one by one and started placing them carefully next to each other. It was clearly hard work. A worker came over and stood nearby, but not too closely and watched and waited. He ignored her and seeing that he was utterly absorbed she moved away. He carried on placing these tyres for over half an hour without stopping. Other kids moved deliberately around the outside of the tyres but none of them interrupted. Finally, he stood back and looked. He then rearranged one or two tyres and stood back again. Then he dusted himself off and went inside and was later completely unconcerned when some other child moved a couple of tyres elsewhere.
2. A boy (8) was sitting at the organ looking at the keys. He looked around and caught the eye of another boy and nodded. The other boy (who was there for the first time that day), came shyly up to the organ and also sat down. They started pressing keys and got a background bass rhythm going. One of the playworkers started dancing across the room. One of the boys looked round and laughed and several other children whooped and cheered. Within a couple of minutes, a line of children had formed doing the conga around the building which swelled and moved outside and back in through a different door. The boys on the organ were delighted and kept playing. After about ten minutes, the line broke up and individual children danced back before involving themselves with something else. The boys on the organ petered out their playing but seemed happy to do so. The playworker clapped and said "that was great!" and the two boys spontaneously stood up, bowed and both ran outside.

Play Cycle Observations with elements:

3. A boy (10) rolled a tyre into the fence (**cue**). He watched it settle (**return**), then with a flurry of activity, began to lug all the tyres out (**cycle**) one by one and started placing them carefully next to each other (**frame**). It was clearly hard work. A worker came over and stood nearby, but not too closely and watched and waited. He ignored her and seeing that he was utterly absorbed (**flow**) she moved away. He carried on placing these tyres for over half an hour without stopping. Other kids moved deliberately around the outside of the tyres but none of them interrupted (**containment – children hold the play frames of other children too**). Finally, he stood back and looked. He then rearranged one or two tyres and stood back again. Then he dusted himself off and went inside (**annihilation**) and was later completely unconcerned when some other child moved a couple of tyres elsewhere.

4. A boy (8) was sitting at the organ looking at the keys. He looked around and caught the eye of another boy and nodded (**cue**). The other boy (who was there for the first time that day), came shyly up to the organ and also sat down (**return**). They started pressing keys and got a background bass rhythm going (**cue and return, establishing a frame – rhythmical narrative**). One of the playworkers started dancing across the room (**serves as both a cue and a return**). One of the boys looked round and laughed and several other children whooped and cheered (**response to worker's cue**). Within a couple of minutes, a line of children had formed doing the conga around the building which swelled and moved outside and back in through a different door (**overlapping frames**). The boys on the organ were delighted and kept playing (**flow**). After about ten minutes, the line broke up and individual children danced back before involving themselves with something else. The boys on the organ petered out their playing but seemed happy to do so (**annihilation**). The playworker clapped and said "that was great!" and the two boys spontaneously stood up, bowed and both ran outside.

Resources

Flipchart, markers, scenarios

See the section in the Handbook on the Play Cycle

Activity 3: Psycholudics part two: levels of interventions

Learning outcomes:

3. describe playwork approaches to intervention

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Continuing with the psycholudics model, remind participants that the playworker's role is to support children to express whatever symbolic material they need to, and so interventions in the Play Cycle can use an understanding of the Play Cycle together with a particular approach to interventions that are aimed at supporting the cycle rather than terminating or changing it. So, in this model, intervention is not to stop the children or redirect their play but to enter the frame and try to re-establish it if it is in danger of breaking down.

Use the notes in the handbook to introduce the four levels of intervention: **play maintenance**, **simple**, **medial** and **complex**. Make sure people have understood.

Ask participants to get into small groups, preferably with colleagues from their own school. Give each group one or two (depending on the number of small groups) scenario (see tutor notes) and ask them to discuss how they might intervene and why, and which level they think that might be.

Bring the group back together and ask for feedback.

Tutor Notes

Scenarios:

1. A boy starts pulling up wet grass and throwing it at a girl who screams and pulls some grass up and throws it back at the boy. He pulls up more grass and throws it towards the girl again. This time he misses and it hits a younger child who starts to cry.
2. A group of younger children have been engrossed playing a game of pirates for ages. They call the supervisor asking her to hold an imaginary flag. She does so but then sees something that needs her attention elsewhere.
3. Several children have been playing indoors, painting on large sheets of card, chatting and looking at each other's stuff. One child starts to paint her legs.

4. There is new student in the school. He is rather shy and hasn't yet made friends in the class. During playtime he approaches a group of his classmates who are building a den and smiles at them, but the others ignore him.
5. A group of children are having a dance contest in the school yard. Another group is playing football, close to site of the dance contest. The ball sometimes lands among the dancers, which makes them very angry and there is a clash between the two groups.
6. It is a rainy day, when the rule is children must put on their waterproof clothes before going out to the schoolyard. But some children are getting too excited and they run out to play in the rain before putting their waterproof clothes on.
7. There is a girl who has learning difficulties. She likes to stay by her own during playtimes and sing for herself while dancing to it. The other children ignore her, often giggling at her moves.
8. There are several large tyres fixed in the schoolyard. A group of children are using them for an obstacle course, climbing and jumping from one to another. There is one child in the group who seems hesitant to jump from one to another. The others are urging him to jump, calling him a "girl".

Resources

Flipchart, markers

Scenarios

Activity 4: Interventions 2.0

Learning outcomes:

2. describe playwork approaches to intervention

Time: 40 minutes

Activity

This activity aims to explore other ways of interventions than the usual “say something, do something”. Sometimes it’s enough to simply rearrange the space, add extra loose parts, etc.

Ask the group to list the reasons why they feel they might need to intervene in children’s play: what might trigger an intervention from an adult? E.g.:

- the children are not playing nicely (a group of children don’t let someone else play)
- there are conflicts over resources
- children are fighting
- children are playing dangerously

Suggest that we look at ourselves in these situations. As part of a reflective practice, ask ourselves the following questions:

- What was I trying to achieve?
- How well did I do?
- How can I do it better?

Ask participants to discuss this in small groups, and then share their thoughts with others.

Resources

Flipchart, markers

Activity 5: Supportive and inhibitive communication

Learning outcomes:

3. describe playwork approaches to intervention
4. discuss the tensions inherent in a playwork approach

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Give a short talk on communication techniques, looking at how to communicate in a supportive way and what the barriers are to communication. Use the resources in the handbook.

Tutor Notes

Explain to participants that when adults intervene in children's play, it can make a huge difference what kind of language/communication they use. Creating communication barriers for example when trying to resolve a conflict, is more likely to make some children feel put down. Using supportive communication techniques gives all children a chance to express themselves.

Explain also that there are some inherent tensions in the playwork approach, mainly regarding whether children are really able to choose freely all the time. Connect this to communication: using supportive communication can help children feel more involved and understand reasons for certain prohibitions better.

Remember also, that if you are using supportive communication, you are serving as a role model for children, demonstrating how can they use these techniques as well in certain situations.

Resources

None

Activity 6: Playwork Principles in the school; and summing up

Learning outcomes:

2. discuss the application of the Playwork Principles to school play times
4. discuss the tensions inherent in a playwork approach

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Introduce the activity by saying that playworkers in the UK work in a range of settings, but that there might be some issues with school staff using a playwork approach. Remind participants again of the Playwork Principles.

Ask participants to discuss as a whole group how each of the principles might be applied to a school setting and whether they pose any issues. Try and support the group to reach conclusions that both address concerns from a school perspective and still support self-organised playing. You may find it useful to refer back to the Quality Criteria for a Play-friendly School.

Ten minutes before the end of the session, bring the session to a close, summarizing key points. Give participants information for the next session (see tutor notes).

Tutor Notes

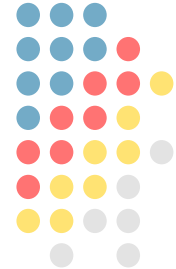
At the end of this session, you will need to ask participants to do some preparation for the next session and bring this with them. The next session returns to looking at how space works to support and/or constrain children's play. We will be introducing a way of documenting the space, and so participants are asked to do a bit of preparation. The idea of critical cartography was briefly introduced in Module 4, when you may have asked people to think of significant spaces: if you did, refer back to that now, as they will need to bring in their photos: Think of your school's dedicated play spaces (the playground, other outside or inside areas that are used at play times). Choose three areas that are significant for you in some way. This may be an area of joy where you delight in watching the children, it may be a space of anxiety because the children behave in ways that make you anxious, it may be an area of calm, or excitement, or conflict ... Take a photograph of each of these three areas and bring the photos with you to the next session. You can bring them digitally or printed.

Participants should also be asked to bring with them any work they have done on their space audits using the activity from Module 4 and any records of observations following Module 6.

Resources

None

Module 9: More on play and space



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of a spatial perspective on play and adult planning/support for play
2. discuss the issues involved in consultation with children and children's participation in the development of a Play-friendly School
3. use a range of methods of documentation to explore how the space can support children's play

Session Summary

This module revisits some of the work started in Module 4, using this as a basis for exploring ideas about how space is produced. It introduces the idea of critical cartography as a way to explore how the space works, and to document this for reflection and planning changes.

Trainer Notes

The ideas here differ quite significantly from traditional psychological approaches to thinking about children and play. They draw on ideas from philosophy and geography, and focus on how to help co-create conditions where play can emerge. If you are unfamiliar with these ideas, the material in Chapter 6 of the Handbook should help.

Suggested plan for module 9: More on play and space (including critical cartography and storytelling)

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO 1	20 minutes	Introduction: to the module; time to settle and pick up any thoughts and queries from previous sessions. The production of space: A useful conceptual tool from Lefebvre. Object: introducing a conceptual tool to help appreciate how space is not static/neutral but continually being produced; the tensions between intentions for space and its everyday uses	Talk, whole group discussion	PowerPoint
Activity 2 LO 1	30 minutes	Revisiting space audits: Object: as a reminder of the extended exercise from Module 4, revisiting the idea of content and ambience indicators as a basis for auditing space. Follow up their space audits.	Whole group discussion	Notes/write-ups from Module 4
Activity 3 LO 2	35 minutes	Children’s participation in planning for play; adult account-ability and response-ability: Object: to explore the uses and limits of rational, formal and verbal approaches to finding out about children’s play preferences; to introduce the twin process of accounting for children’s play and adult response-ability to leave space open for play to emerge	Small and large group discussion	Flipchart, paper and pens
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 4 LO 3	75 minutes	Critical cartography: approaches to documenting how the space works: Object: to introduce this spatial approach to documentation that looks at how the space works and forms the basis for development of the space and also evidence of how schools meet the Quality Criteria; to explore approaches to response-ability.	Small and large groups	Paper, pens, post-its, range of craft materials PowerPoint
Summary	5 minutes	Summing up:	Plenary	

Activity 1: Introduction and the production of space

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of a spatial perspective on play and adult planning/support for play

Time: 20 minutes

Activity

Allow time for settling and picking up any thoughts and queries from the previous session.

Check that people have brought with them their space audits, significant space photos (Module 4), and observations and any other recordings of the space at their school (Module 6).

Start off by setting the scene for a moment of playing:

The bedroom scenario: Imagine your 9-year-old has 3 friends over for a sleepover. They have had their pizza, watched their favourite film, cleaned their teeth and climbed into their sleeping bags and are ready for bed. You check everyone is ok, say goodnight, turn off the light and leave the room. And they go to sleep ... except that is very unlikely, as the participants will tell you. Ask them what they think happens next. There will be a range of suggestions, from giggling, to making rude noises, to pillow fights. The point is that we don't know exactly what will happen, but we know something probably will. The situation usually provides the right conditions for some form of play to emerge, and what that is and how it happens will depend on a whole range of variables. Discuss what makes those conditions, and make sure that expectations, affect, material objects are included.

The bedroom has become a play space, but was not necessarily designed as such. At this point, introduce another useful conceptual tool for understanding the production of space, from French philosopher Henri Lefebvre¹⁸. Use the handbook and PowerPoint slides to introduce his ideas of space as produced through the relations between three forms of space: conceived (the space of planners), perceived (everyday spatial practices) and lived space (where life is worth living – the space of art, love, play, etc.).

You can illustrate this with the example of a bus stop: bus stops are designed to keep the economy going, they transport people to work (produce) and to consume (conceived space). Mostly, this is how they are used (spatial practice). Here is another illustration of two boys at a bus stop, providing an example of lived space¹⁹:

¹⁸ Lefebvre, H. (1991) *The Production of Space*, Oxford: Blackwell.

¹⁹ This is from Lester, S. (2017) Children's right to play: from the margins to the middle. In M. Ruck, M. Peterson-Badali and M. Freeman (eds.) *Handbook of Children's Rights: Global and Multidisciplinary Perspectives*. New York: Taylor and Francis, p. 317.

Two children (boys, about 6/7 years old) are standing at a bus-stop with an adult. One child starts to walk around the adult, lightly holding her coat as he moves slowly in an anti-clockwise direction; the other boy follows slightly behind, holding on to the child's anorak sleeve. As the coat becomes twisted around the woman, she shrugs the child off – he lets go, but the other boy continues to hold his coat. The first child moves slightly away from the adult and begins to pivot on one leg; the increasing speed of this movement also spins the other child around. As the speed increases, so too does the volume of laughter and giggles before the child releases the sleeve and makes a grab for the hood of the anorak. The child dodges the lunge of the other child and spins away in an almost balletic movement. At this moment, another person arrives at the bus-stop and stands close to first adult, slightly apart from the children. There is a brief pause as both children become stationary before the second child starts to balance along a very faint line/crack in the pavement tracing a move away from the adults, walking with one foot in front of the other, and arms outstretched. The first child follows this movement but then stops and turns his body so he is standing sideways on the line. He traces a semicircle on the floor out from the crack with his right foot and returns to the line, at which point his feet/legs are crossed; he lifts his left foot and traces a semicircle to the rear and back to the line to uncross his legs and carries on along the line, repeating this sequence – after a couple of moves he is joined by the other child, who follows this pattern; again the tempo increases and on a couple of occasions they lose balance and brush against each other which provokes further bouts of giggling. Throughout this period the children have not spoken directly to each other, but seem to communicate through giggles, look, nudges and so on. A short while later the woman calls to the children that the bus is coming, and they meander over to where she is standing, and the child resumes a position of holding on to the adult's coat as they climb on board.

A key point to make about Lefebvre's triad is that these are not separate spaces but combine to produce space. As with Kytta's field of free action (Module 4), we cannot design or provide lived space, as that would make it conceived space. Appropriating space for moments in lived space often causes tensions between the intentions for space and its everyday and extraordinary uses. An example of this in the UK is teenagers' use of bus shelters: often, they are the only places to keep dry and for teenagers to congregate. They may graffiti the bus shelter or do other things that might be perceived as vandalism, or they may feel threatening to some adults. In the UK, playground equipment manufacturers noticed this as a problem and designed youth shelters (that look strikingly similar to bus shelters) and position them in parks in places where young people will not be seen as a threat to older people.

Ask what this conceptual tool might tell us about planning for play.

Tutor Notes

This activity uses stories/observations to illustrate a conceptual tool, illustrating the power of stories and of the example. The conceptual tool itself is helpful in understanding how space is produced through encounters between design intentions for space, everyday use and the appropriation of space for playing.

Resources

PowerPoint

Activity 2: Revisiting space audits

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of a spatial perspective on play and adult planning/support for play

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

This activity depends on what work participants have done on their space audits using the extended activity in Module 4. Check whether people have done (and brought) further work. Adapt the activity accordingly.

Remind participants of the IMEE reflective tools (Intuition, Memory, Experience and Evidence). Remind them also of the series of lists generated in Module 4.

Facilitate a discussion on their space audits so far (either done before the session or during). If appropriate, you can go outside to do this. Bring in key spatial conceptual tools to date (IMEE, affordances, the production of space and Lefebvre's triad, etc.).

Finish with ideas for where to take the space audits: action planning, further audits, etc., and signpost to the extended activity after the break on critical cartography.

Tutor Notes

How this activity works depends on how much further work participants have done on their space audits. You may end up merely reminding them of the concepts and tools, and facilitating a discussion on how it might apply to their school. Or, if they have done further work, this can be used as a basis for further discussion. You will need to have the write-ups from Module 4.

Resources

Notes/write-ups from module 4

Activity 3: Children's participation in planning for play; adult account-ability and response-ability

Learning outcomes:

2. discuss the issues involved in consultation with children and children's participation in the development of a Play-friendly School

Time: 35 minutes

Activity

Remind participants of the brief discussion on children's participation in planning for play in Module 4. It is not a question of a binary good/bad, the issues are complex.

Ask participants to quick-list why children should participate in planning for play. Write the ideas up onto a flipchart, and display somewhere visible.

Then ask participants to suggest ways of consulting with children. This could include, for example, surveys asking them what equipment, resources or activities they want; discussions in class; using a school council structure; more creative methods such as maps, models, etc.

Split participants into small groups and ask each group to discuss one method in detail, asking them to list the advantages and disadvantages of that method and to discuss the kind of information that method might yield.

Take feedback from each group and facilitate a group discussion.

Tutor Notes

Key issues to bring up in the discussion (from the handbook) include:

- Children's participation feels democratic but is carried out within a formal adult-controlled structure (council meeting) which only attracts certain kinds of children. This is valuable, but should not be the only way of gathering information.
- Children can only make suggestions based on their own experience.
- If children's ideas are taken on board, they become responsible for the decisions ('well, you chose this tunnel slide...'), when the responsibility should lie with adults.
- Asking children about playing assumes that they know how they will want to play. The focus becomes one of equipment and physical design (perhaps with some aspects of the culture). It does not allow for play as emergent, contingent and opportunistic.
- Ask participants to think about Kytta's fields of action and Lefebvre's spatial triad and how this might affect planning for play in this manner.

- Introduce the twin concepts of account-ability (accounting for how space works to support play) and response-ability (holding habits and routines up to critical scrutiny to see how space might be left more open to support play). In particular, point to the power of observation as a participation tool: watching children at play can tell you more than asking them.

Resources

Flipchart, paper and pens

Handbook

Activity 4: Critical cartography: approaches to documenting how the space works

Learning outcomes:

3. use a range of methods of documentation to explore how the space can support children's play

Time: 75 minutes

Activity

Introduce the activity: this was first briefly introduced in Module 4. It is a way of documenting how space works, generating conversations about the habits and routines of spatial practices and if these can be changed to leave space more open for play to emerge in a variety of forms. See how many people have brought: photos of significant spaces, observations/stories, photo/video/audio recordings.

Begin by introducing the conceptual approach: this is about forms of documentation that focus on space rather than individual children. It is all about how the space works. It looks beyond the what and why of play (definitions and benefits) and looks instead at the how: what are the conditions that support the emergence of play. It sees space (and life, including play) as relational, as emerging from encounters between children's bodies, their desires, adult bodies and desires, material objects, expectations, histories, and so on; these all come together to produce what we might call a play space. The approach is one of developing the capacity to paying attention to how the space works. The resulting documentation can be used both as a developmental tool and as evidence for meeting the Quality Criteria of the Play-friendly School label. The documentation is also about moving beyond the limits of language, using a range of creative methods to 'map' the space. In addition, 'mapping' is also about possibility rather than truth, accuracy, representation (although some of it could be) and 'what if?' and 'what more?' are key questions asked.

Ask participants to draw, initially on their own, a representative map of the designated play area at their school. Allow 10 minutes for this. Then bring people together to combine their maps into one big one (how you do this depends on how many participants are from the same school: you should aim for one map per school). Pay attention to the process of doing this: listen to the conversations and the stories that may arise and feed these back as an important aspect of the mapping. It is through the dialogues that a greater understanding of how the space works can be developed. Ask participants to take a photo of the map: this can be printed off and used for further documentation. The large map can be attached to a wall or piece of card, and used to place stories using post-it notes, photos, etc. If it gets full, take a photo and then clear it and start again (although the map may need updating from time to time as changes are introduced).

Once the shared map is complete, ask participants to share their photos of significant spaces. If they have not brought photos, ask them to think of three spaces that are significant for some reason and share these. If the photos are printed, they can stick them on the map. Others can use post-its. The purpose of this is to show affective relationship to space: spaces of joy, anxiety, conflict, etc.

Then ask participants to share any other material they have brought and to place this (if possible) on the map. These may include observations/stories (written briefly onto post-it notes, or drawn on pieces of paper, or fashioned from any of the materials available); photos, and audio and video recordings. You may need to challenge participants as to what they see when looking at children playing. Where is the playability, do you see mess or do you see value?

Another key aspect of this form of documentation is the use of lines. Lines can track children, adults or objects, and are intended to show the movement and flows of the space. If there is time, you can ask participants to draw a line of their movements from entering the room to sitting down for that session. It is important to show the meanderings and encounters of movements: lines that take these into account will not be straight (see the handbook).

Introduce other forms of documentation that people can use (these are listed in the handbook). Stress throughout the importance of developing capacity to look at how the space works, and the importance of detail and single examples.

Facilitate a discussion about how to use these forms of documentation in their school.

Re-introduce the twin concepts of account-ability and response-ability. Both are embedded in this approach to documentation. The process of documentation should be a shared one: although people can add material to the maps, the real value is in talking things through and in holding up spatial habits and routines to critical scrutiny to see if they might support or constrain the emergence of playing. Often changes are made in the moment.

Ask what, if any, actions might be taken as a result of the process so far. You might draw on the photos of significant spaces for this (across the full range of feelings about spaces). Key questions to ask are 'What if ...?' and 'What more?' The idea here is to make small but experimental changes just to see what happens. What if we move the chairs to other areas of the space? What if we don't split children up according to age? These are just examples; the idea is to try changes that might disturb routines, not with any expectation of solving identified problems, but to see how they change the production of the space.

Tutor Notes

How this activity goes depends on how much preparatory work participants have done. Read the section on critical cartography in the handbook, including the twin concepts of account-ability and response-ability.

Resources

Very large and smaller sheets of paper, pens, post-its, a range of craft materials.

Summing Up

Learning outcomes:

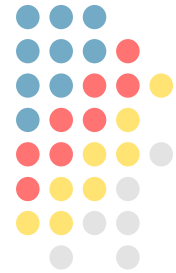
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Time: 5 minutes

Activity

Have the group sit together and tell them that this is the end of the first module. Sum up what you have done during the module and ask the group whether they have any further questions about the topics or if they would like to share something regarding them. Make sure they know arrangements for the next session if they are attending.

Module 10: Play beyond play time / action planning / closing



Learning outcomes: by the end of the session, learners will be able to

1. show an understanding of playful pedagogies and moments of playfulness beyond play time
2. show an understanding of the difference between self-organised play, games and playful pedagogies
3. develop further action plans for next steps towards a Play-friendly School
4. reflect back on the training course, and provide feedback to each other

Session Summary

This module has two main parts. In the first part, participants will reflect and learn about the difference between play, playful pedagogy and educational games. Based on this, participants will reflect on the course first in groups, and then individually. The individual exercise will be also a moment to plan the next steps.

The second part of the module focuses on feeding back to each other and the course. The module as well as the course is closed with a closing verbal feedback circle and a non-verbal saying goodbye.

Trainer Notes

As this is the last session of the whole 30 hour training course, be prepared to wrap things up by the end of the session. If there were questions raised during the course that were put on hold and not answered adequately, make sure you come back to them. You can also prepare people for the possibility for strong emotions, as for some people this might have been a powerful and important experience.

Suggested plan for module 10: Play beyond play time / action planning / closing

Activity & LO	Time	Content	Method	Resources
Activity 1 LO	5 minutes	Energizer	Small groups	Story cubes, story cards
Activity 2 LO 1, 2	25 minutes	Playful pedagogy Object: to explore how different tools can be used for playful teaching	Small Group Discussion	Flipchart paper, marker, different types of games (like story cubes, dobble, soft balls etc)
Activity 3 LO 1, 2, 4	15 minutes	Play and Games in Education Object: to explore the ways play is used in pedagogy	Presentation	Flipchart paper, markers, projector
Activity 4 LO 1, 2, 3, 4	30 minutes	Meditative writing: Object: to support participants in personal reflection on the course	Individual	Papers, pens, plastic tablets for writing, background music
Break	15 minutes	Break		
Activity 5 LO 4	45 minutes	Feedback to each other: Object: to give each other personal feedback	Whole group activity	Ball of yarn
Activity 6 LO 3, 4	35 minutes	Closing circle: Object: to share the most important feedback with each other about the course	Whole group activity	
Summary	10 minutes	Summing up: Saying good-bye to each other through a non-verbal activity	Plenary	Background music

Activity 1: Energizer and Activity 2: Playful pedagogy

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of playful pedagogies and moments of playfulness beyond play time
2. show an understanding of the difference between self-organised play, games and playful pedagogies

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Energizer: Ask participants to stand up in a line according to the size of their little fingers. When the line is finalized, cut the line into groups of 4-5 people.

Start the module with an appropriate game, such as Story Cubes, Story Card in the small groups, and let them play with the game.

Play and games:

- Have the small groups discuss how they could use this game (they just played) within educational context. What could they teach with it?
- Collect in plenary.
- Give all groups different games and tools, such as card games (like Dobble, Uno, others), soft balls, play parachute, board games. Ask them to think about in which subject they could use these games and for what. Discuss in plenary.
- Discuss why it is important and relevant.

Tutor Notes

You can use and refer to the relevant articles in the handbook.

Resources

Flipchart paper, marker different games

Handbook

Activity 3: Play and Games in Education

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of playful pedagogies and moments of playfulness beyond play time
2. show an understanding of the difference between self-organised play, games and playful pedagogies
4. reflect back on the training course, and provide feedback to each other

Time: 15 minutes

Activity

Lecture about the difference between playing and educational games

- After a short icebreaker, open the mini-lecture by brainstorming:
 - What is the difference between educational games and play? What is similar?
- Make notes of the responses on flipchart paper. Refer back to these notes throughout the lecture.
- Conceptualize the following: there are many commonalities between play, playful pedagogy and educational games and there are some very important differences as well. The common features between playing, being playful and games are:
 - Both are based on personal experience, personal participation
 - The experience happens in the “what if” world (transitional space / Winnicott²⁰)
 - Uses imagination
- Discuss what the difference is between educational games / serious games / gamification.
 - educational games are usually short, and having a direct educational aim
 - serious games / social simulations are complex and aim more at behavioural change and deeper insight. Several of them are IT-assisted.
 - gamification is a process, where the learning process itself becomes a games, like collecting points, develop characters, etc. by everyday learning activities.

Tutor Notes

Collect some examples for playing, games, serious games and gamifications from your country. (You can refer back to games used during this training course). Why might they not be considered freely chosen? The main difference is that educational games are usually not freely chosen, as the educator is the one choosing them. Also they reflect a conscious goal-setting on the part of the educator (the educator has specific development aims related to the exercises), while in freely chosen play children.

Resources

Flipchart paper, marker, maybe projector

²⁰ Winnicott, D.W. (1971) *Playing and Reality*, London: Tavistock Publications

Activity 4: Meditative writing

Learning outcomes:

1. show an understanding of playful pedagogies and moments of playfulness beyond play time
2. show an understanding of the difference between self-organised play, games and playful pedagogies
3. develop further action plans for next steps towards a Play-friendly School
4. reflect back on the training course, and provide feedback to each other

Time: 30 minutes

Activity

Ask the participants to sit in a place where they can write individually. If needed (for example there is not enough space around the tables), give them plastic tablets to write on.

Choose a calm instrumental background music, and have it at a low sound level.

Give each participant a blank sheet of paper or ask them to write in their notebooks.

Before they start to write, collect together with the group what has happened during the training course. What issues were discussed, what activities were played.

Give them about 15-20 minutes to reflect on the training course from their own personal perspective and to write this down. Assure them that, although they will be sharing general thoughts in pairs, they will not openly share or show their notes with others; this reflection is mainly for themselves.

You can give some assisting questions, such as:

- Were there any issues or moments when I was personally touched? Why do you think this was?
- Were there any issues or moments when you got angry or frustrated? Why?
- What do you plan to do the same or differently in the future?
- Are there any exercises / games you would like to use in the future?
- What are the next steps you plan to do regarding play and playfulness after the course?

After the time is up, ask them to re-read their own notes. You can encourage them to highlight or underline what they find most important.

Have them pair up with someone sitting close. In pairs give them about 5 minutes to share whatever they would like to about their personal reflections.

Tutor Notes

It is also possible to ask participants to write a letter to themselves in the future, for example in 6 months. You can even give them empty envelopes, where they can put their letters, seal, and write their names and addresses on the envelope, and the date when it is due to open. Optionally you can even collect the envelopes and send them back at the given date, or have them take it home.

Resources

Papers, pens, plastic tablets for writing

Loudspeaker for background music

Activity 5: Feedback to each other

Learning outcomes:

5. reflect back on the training course, and provide feedback to each other

Time: 45 minutes

Activity

Have the participants and trainers sit in a circle, as close to each other as possible.

Take a ball of yarn, and you can give it to a volunteer to start the exercise.

The goal of the exercise is to give positive feedback to one another. The one who starting the exercise puts the end of the thread of the yarn around his or her finger. Then they throw the ball of yarn to another member of the group, giving them personal feedback (for example, 'Anna, I really liked the way you could see how things might work in the school'). This participant catches the ball of yarn, and puts the thread around his or her finger, choosing another participant and throwing the ball to them while giving feedback. This way there will be a connecting line between participants (and after a while a lot of crossing lines, forming a spider web-like network).

Ask the participants to give feedback to those who have not yet been included. After everyone (including the starting participant) has received feedback, you can go on with free choice until the end of the activity.

Ask the participants to talk personally to the other person, not in general. (So not: "I enjoyed working together with Julia", but "Julia, I enjoyed working together with you")

When the time is up, ask them to stand up, and try to move the web by moving their connected hands. You can reflect on the number and strength of connections and interconnectedness within the group.

Tutor Notes

You can decide to participate in this exercise or not. If the trainer participates, it gives an opportunity to feed back to a participant you think might not get sufficient feedback. On the other hand, if you are for example working with a single school community it might be better to let them handle it for themselves.

At the end of the exercise you can either cut the thread so that everyone can keep a piece, or just remove it from their hands, and put down on the ground showing the network (and remove at the end of the course).

If the web is not cut, it might be a good time for reflection on the course for the trainer to rewind the yarn.

Resources

Ball of yarn, the more colourful the better

Activity 6: Closing circle

Learning outcomes:

3. develop further action plans for next steps towards a play-friendly school
4. reflect back on the training course, and provide feedback to each other

Time: 35 minutes

Activity

Stay in the circle. Starting with a volunteer, ask them to share feedback on the course and trainers. Ask everyone to say one thing they will take from the course and one thing they want to do towards making their school play-friendly. Make notes of the ideas for steps towards making their school play-friendly.

Tutor Notes

Make sure that everyone talks and shares some feedback, even if it's brief. Give feedback yourself.

When you are taking notes, make sure that you stay in the circle and don't disturb the intimacy of the moment.

Resources

None

Summary: Saying goodbye

Learning outcomes:

Time: 10 minutes

Activity

Move the chairs to one side to create as large and free a space as possible. Use soft music if possible.

Ask people to walk around freely, not in a circle. Ask them to turn their attention to the training room. Go around, and stop at some spaces where something good or meaningful happened to them. Reflect for themselves on their experiences.

After 1-2 minutes they walk again freely. After some time they are asked to become aware of all the other group members. When they meet with someone, silently they can say goodbye through eye-contact, nodding, handshake or embrace. Ask them to be careful to approach the other person in a way which the other seems to be open to.

After it seems that all could have said silent goodbye to all, stand in a circle, and catch hands. Everyone is invited to have a final eye contact with all others. Finally you shake the hands together.

Say goodbye to the group.

Resources

None

Loudspeaker for background music

