Play should be everywhere – from grassroots up!

Cynthia Morrison

A Chance to Play Southern Africa

ECD Knowledge Building Seminar

26 November 2015
Parents are the primary caregivers

• Play is an essential childhood activity through which children develop basic knowledge and skills.

• All children, everywhere in the world, instinctively play in specific ways at specific stages of their development, from babyhood.

• Parents need to understand why this happening.
Why do parents need to understand?

When they understand the importance of this play:

• They allow it – as long as it is safe. They realise the child isn’t being naughty or disobedient

• They encourage the play by providing time and even different opportunities

This provides an environment that encourages development in the 1st 1000 days and beyond
1. Once crawling – gets into everything
   * curiosity – wants to find out – gaining knowledge
   * goes back again and again - perseverance

Parents can encourage or discourage (lost opportunity)

2. Once balance improves:
   • wants to walk on every wall
   • likes walking on the lines in the pavement
   • wants to hop from stone to stone

Practising and improving balancing skills and confidence
The organization *A Chance to Play Southern Africa*, supported by international child rights organization *terre des hommes – Germany*, created a 24 page Booklet for parents.

Consists of photographs of children (from birth - 6 years) engaging in play activities. A few photographs show only the toy/game.

Very little text - (many official languages -11; illiteracy). The photos had to “speak” to the parents.

Simple information - English and 4 of the most spoken official languages

The keywords (main importance of the skill area) are in 10 of our 11 languages (with assistance from Cotlands, Lesedi, Letcee and Thušanang).
Small Muscle Play

BABY: A variety of safe things to hold, squeeze, shake and bang.
TODDLER: takes out and puts in, Playdough and scrabbling. Later, joining things together.
PRE-SCHOOLER: Threading followed by lacing, Colouring in, then dot-to-dot activities.

kleinspier spel

BABÁ: ’n Verskaffdeheid versigte Items om vas te hou, te duik, skaf en om mee te klap.
PEUTER: Haal uit en sit terug, Speelklen en krabbel. Later goed samettaant.
KLEUTER: Bring welg deur kry, inkry, en dan lees tot to col activitee.

papadi ya mesifa e menyane

LESA: Motswalo wa dimbo beso bohobohie
be ka nkolwa, bsa peteetse, bsa inklulhene le ho orentseya.


YA ESONG NO QALE SEKHOLO: O a hania ho
latelwa le ho keny kaeng leboseng la leb. Ho tša tselela, le diketsa ho kopanya mmebo.

umdlalo wamamasela amancane

INGANE: Izinto esthokholihlo esthiphile ingazi
bamba, iziphihle, izinokuse izithayi phansi.

INGANE ECATHUYO: yiithi ka ijafa, iijala
rendhlima izinha amasho phansi. Ngokahambika
kashekuhlisi, tshima izinto ndawo ne.

INGANE EINGAKENGENI: ESIRONI: iyituka
kunzelwe kwakhiphila ose isithethinzi. Ithala izihloko, sebe izazo
kubonakane yokhothwana amakhosi.

ukudlala kusetyenziswa izihlunu ezincincini

USANA: Imindi asinto ethokholikhile amahlo-
bamba, asinle azithatwele aze azibekela.

UMNTWANA OMNCANE: ngokubeka izinto
amathila londlela laphila izinhloko amakhosi.

UMNTWANA OWAZUKALISA SEKHOLO: Ukhungulwana
ngokwenzela kunzelwe lehlihi, Ukhufeka
Imihla, tshindele imihla yamahloko
nyonohloko.
The photographs used show clearly to the parents what the play activity is like and because of the universal nature of play, should be useful to parents anywhere in the world.

Black and white photos were used.

The Booklet is introduced to parents by a facilitator who explains each development area and the activities in the photographs.

The Facilitator’s Booklet contains the script (English) for the Facilitators for each photograph.
Small Muscle Play

BABY: A variety of safe things to hold, squeeze, shake and bang.

TODDLER: Takes out and puts in. Play dough and scribbling. Later, joining things together.

PRE-SCHOOLER: Threading followed by lacing. Colouring in, then dot to dot activities.

kleinspierespel

BABBA: "A Verskiedeheid van item om oor te klo, sked en om mee na kap." 


KLEUTER: Hing goedig daar vasge. Inkleur, en dan lei tot lei uitklokt.

papadi ya mesifa e menyane

LESEA: "Ne le se le le bokubokhelo. Le a ksefeka, le a klublase, le a leloka ya letso." 

NGWANA E MKNYA: "O a mnta le ho konyo. O bapasta ka matana le ho ngapangwana. Ho moran, o kopa la dina mnta.

NYA ESONGLE HAO. OKALE OKOLO. O homb w la letseka le ho konyo. "Lopangwana ka ke. Le tata ka mma, le dientza le ho kopa la mma.

umdlalo wamasale amancane

INGANA: izinto zonsehele noma izikhathwa engakatsha, izitsho, izinokuthula iziyabo phansi.


INGANA EMGANKENI EKHLONI: yazi kalatse okalala akhali, fla kuthi, bese kusa imbwe kwiyinzi amakhathazifwe.

Importance of Small Muscle Play

Through this play your child learns to use the muscles of hands and eyes used for writing and jobs like sewing, carpentry, car mechanic and so on.

ukudlala kusetyenziswa izihlulu ezincini

USANA: Lindhlo izinto ezikhulakhe izinkhakanzi, szikobo, zizikhulumiso za sibholo.

UMNIVANA: OMOCINAWA: Uzikhapha izinto zinyalo. Izikhulakhe izokuthula amanhlophe. Izima, izinhlosa izinto nce-

wqina.

UMNIVANA OZIQUZISI ISIKETHE: Uzikhathwa nokhaphutha izikondelela izinto. Uzikhathwa imisho, izinkhakanzi iyisefikile ngaphambili.
The main objective: To convince parents that

- play is essential for children
- play develops important skills that will help with school, and even with life, later on
- play starts with babies and becomes more challenging as children get older

Parents discover

- that they are already instinctively creating valuable play opportunities for their children → parental confidence.
- why those activities are important in their child’s development.
Parents also realise that play with natural things in the environment is good, but that sometimes a more specialised toy or a book is needed to enrich and extend an older child’s learning experience.

Hence the need for community toy libraries with books.
Graded Nature of Play Activities (Developmental Stages)

Creative Play

• Activities tend to be in order of difficulty

• If a child finds an activity difficult, the parent can offer an easier one so that the child experiences success and gains confidence.
DEVELOPMENT AREAS COVERED IN THE BOOKLET

• Finding out Play (Keywords – Gaining Knowledge)

• Creative Play (Keywords – New Ideas)

• Small Muscle Play (Keywords – Writing & jobs)

• Large Muscle Play (Keyword – Confidence)

• Pretend Play (Keyword – Imagination)

• Looking Play (Keywords – Reading & Learning)

• Thinking Play (Keywords – Solving Problems)

• Communication (Understanding & Talking)

• Social Play (Cooperating & Negotiating)
Pretend Play
Looking Play

2D (semi-concrete)

Concrete 3D

Concrete 3D

2D (semi-concrete)

was – saw; 21-12

b - d
Communication – Talking
PILOT PROJECT

• 4 partners - Cotlands, Lesedi, Letcee and Thušanang – 15 facilitators held 28 Play Today Parent Information sessions in 7 of our 9 provinces.

• There were 454 participants – mainly parents but also a few community members, a home-based care worker, a child minder, some pre-school teachers, some grandmothers and a grandfather

Each participant was given a Parent Booklet.

• Feedback questionnaires were filled in directly after the sessions and again a few weeks afterwards to try and get some idea of impact
FEEDBACK - Facilitators

- Facilitator Booklet was easy to use and to understand
- Information is relevant and guides the session
- Parents were already doing some of the activities
- Should try to include some practical activities as well and bring improvised toys as examples
- Booklet will be useful as part of other training courses
- Parents want to change but.............they are used to children playing in the yard

Note: Need to ensure that playing in the yard is also seen as being important – but that children need a variety of experiences
**FEEDBACK - Parents**

**Immediately after session:**

- Most helpful was learning to allow children to play – don’t shout at them because they learn
- Now we know we can play with our babies and talk to them
- To know different kinds of play for different ages
- Some activities are the same as we are doing but we didn’t know they are important

**After some weeks:**

- We have shared with others in the community
- Pictures reminded us of what to do
- There’s a difference now – we try to play with children and talk to them
Both the Parent and Facilitator Booklets are available for free download from:

http://www.a-chance-to-play.de/home/actp-southern-africa/more-material.html

http://www.a-chance-to-play.org.za
Under Resources

In 2016, A Chance to Play Southern Africa will be holding its first training course for Facilitators of the Play Today Parent Information (PTPI) sessions
PLAY SHOULD BE EVERYWHERE – but it’s not!

• The UN Convention on the Rights of a Child, Article 31 – says Play & Recreation are a right.

They are essential to the health, well-being and holistic development of children.

• UN Children’s Right Committee published General Comment 17 because PLAY is one of the most neglected of all Children’s Rights – globally.

• In ECD, the main focus is often on play for holistic development.

• The General Comment states that PLAY is controlled by children themselves. Caregivers may contribute to the creation of environments in which it takes place, but play itself is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and is undertaken for its own sake, rather than as a means to an end.

Not much of that type of play around!!!
PLAY SHOULD BE EVERYWHERE – but it’s not!

Is this the sort of play provision our children deserve?

Your ECD programmes need better community playgrounds

Isn’t there a better place for us than the side of the road or amongst coffins?
QUALITY, SAFE PLAY SHOULD BE EVERYWHERE – but it’s not!

We have to do more....................

Regardless of the obstacle, play is an essential antidote to adversity for every child on the earth.
“A CHANCE TO PLAY” FORUMS - from grassroots up

• Community based – organisations, community & traditional leaders, councillors, local government departments, parents, children

• Map play provision for all age groups in a specified 2km square area – playgrounds, sports fields, natural veld and water areas for exploration and challenge, open spaces for group and ball games, toy libraries, suitable surfaces for skateboarding, venue for dance, play facilities at restaurants & nurseries, venues like Bounce, Acrobranch, sci Bono, Children’s Museum

• Also map possible future play areas e.g. school grounds or church spaces, for afternoons, weekends and holidays, suitable empty land

• Consult with children on their play needs. Educate them about their rights and responsibilities. Make sure they are aware of all possible play opportunities and then list their preferences – by age group

• Develop a realistic action plan and implement as much as possible. Involve parents in a roster for supervision, protection from external influences and care and maintenance of equipment
"A CHANCE TO PLAY" FORUMS - from grassroots up

This is one of A Chance to Play Southern Africa’s focal points for 2016.

JOIN US – let’s see what we can achieve together!

And please don’t forget WORLD PLAY DAY – 28 MAY

THANK YOU!
Play should be everywhere – from grassroots up!

Cynthia Morrison

A Chance to Play Southern Africa

ECD Knowledge Building Seminar

26 November 2015