Risky Elements in Play Design

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Find the CHALLENGE

Take A RISK

Have FUN

REPEAT

PLAY VALUE LOOP
Risky Play:
- Great Heights
- Rapid Speeds
- Dangerous Tools
- The Elements
- Rough and Tumble
- Disappearing/G etting Lost

Venn Diagram:
- FUN
- CHALLENGE
- PLAY
- VALUE
- RISK
RISK

Useful in play provision
Demands attention
Children engage thought processes
Risk levels are different for every person & every child

DANGER

No place on the playground
Hidden from knowledge
Encourage fear
Function of material or situation
Risky Elements create Play Value
Risk is very personal:

- Age
- Capability
- Experience
- Mood
- Perception

One size does not fit all!
Play value is held by things, places, and spaces, which are compelling and encourage children’s involvement.

Interesting places, changing objects, mutable materials, and objects that children can manipulate have high play value.

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Complexity

Scale Matters
Variety and complexity draw the observer in. Discovery awaits around every corner, so make lots of corners.
Moveable Parts
Tools

Sand
Physical Challenge
Defy Gravity

Rapid Speed

Rough and Tumble
Group Play

Boisterous
Nature and the Elements

Getting “Lost”
Structures can be built to reflect natural patterns.

Sometimes it is easy enough to just include some plants!
Children learn about themselves while they play.

Show them trust, and they will learn to trust themselves.