



WHAT IS ADVENTURE PLAY?

THE INTERSECTION OF **RISK**, **NATURE** AND **LOOSE PARTS** IN AN UNSTRUCTURED PLAY ENVIRONMENT.

Children Can...

- Explore boundaries
- Learn risk management
- Be physically active
- Develop cognitive and social skills

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT?

Adventure play is when **CREATIVITY**, **ENGINEERING** and **IMAGINATION** are highlighted.

It allows kids to take risks in an environment that can be monitored. ***The KIDS run the space!***

The focus is on an unstructured time where kids can “simply play”, rather than adult-led games and activities.

BALANCING RISK AND SAFETY

Adventure play gives kids the opportunity to take risk, but it does not sacrifice safety!

It is important to ensure the play space mitigates unnecessary risk.

Some examples include:

- Before your kids climb a tree, check around the tree to ensure there are no sharp branches or anything else that could be very dangerous.

OR

- Before letting your kids explore a pond, check the water depth.

RISK ≠ DANGER

Guidelines for Adventure Play:

- Get **MESSY**
- Get **CREATIVE**
- Get **BUILDING**
- Use the **ELEMENTS**





ADVENTURE PLAY

WHERE EXPLORATION AND CREATIVITY RULE!

ENCOURAGING ADVENTURE PLAY IN YOUTH:

Instead of saying “*Be careful*”, try inviting your children to **TAKE A CALCULATED RISK!**

Foster awareness and problem solving abilities:

“**Notice how...** These rocks are slippery, the cliff is high”

“**Can you hear...** the rushing water, the wind in the trees?”

“**What is your plan...** when you climb that tree, cross that stream?”

“**How will you...** get down from there, get across that log?”

LOOSE PARTS PLAY:

Loose parts are great and easy way to engage in adventure play!

“Just junk” reimaged:

Loose parts allow a child's imagination to run wild! An old tub could become a ship, some old car tires may become mission impossible, old cardboard and wood boards may now be a fort.

*Please be mindful of nature when sourcing materials for loose parts play! Using fallen or dead materials is always recommended over disrupting the natural environment!

AN ADVENTURE PLAY GAME:

Moving in All Directions, from the Be Fit for Life resource “*Orange Marks the Spot: An Introduction to Orienteering*”.

Purpose: Move and change directions quickly, while applying the cardinal directions.

Equipment: Cones, hurdles (optional), natural landmarks (optional)

- Choose 4 landmarks in the play environment where the game is taking place to represent the cardinal directions (N,S,E,W)
- Call a direction and locomotor skill for participants to move to. Call directions often to keep everyone moving and engaged.
- Change the locomotor movement throughout the game (ie: jumping, hopping, skipping, bear crawl, crab walk)
- An obstacle can be used in the middle for participants to jump over or climb under.

Option: Divide participants in 2-4 groups and have them move in opposing directions for an added challenge!

Find out more on adventure play in the updated 2019 PLAY Book! Visit www.mhc.ab.ca/PLAY for more info.

