

Child and Youth Outdoor Play

November 3, 2022

Canadian Injury Prevention
Conference

Megan Zeni & Emma Raaflaub



What OPAL
looks like in
schools





Loose Parts Play



Not intended to replicate indoor learning





Why outdoor play
& learning matters
in schools





How can we make
playful learning
visible in more
equitable ways?



Learning in community





What is

Risky Play?

WHY RISKY PLAY MATTERS, AND
WHAT THE 8 KNOWN CATEGORIES OF
RISKY PLAY CAN LOOK LIKE IN OUR
SCHOOLS

Megan Zeni
playing. growing. learning

- Emerges authentically in unstructured play
- Thrilling or exciting activities freely chosen by the participant that involve uncertainty and a risk of physical injury
- Provides opportunities to test limits, build resiliency and confidence
- A pedagogical stance that children are competent and capable of making their own decisions about how they use their own bodies



- Play from heights
- Play with speed
- Play with tools
- Play near or with dangerous elements
- Rough & tumble play
- Play away from direct supervision (feeling lost)
- Play with impact
- Vicarious play

Examples of risky
play in our schools

What risky play is not

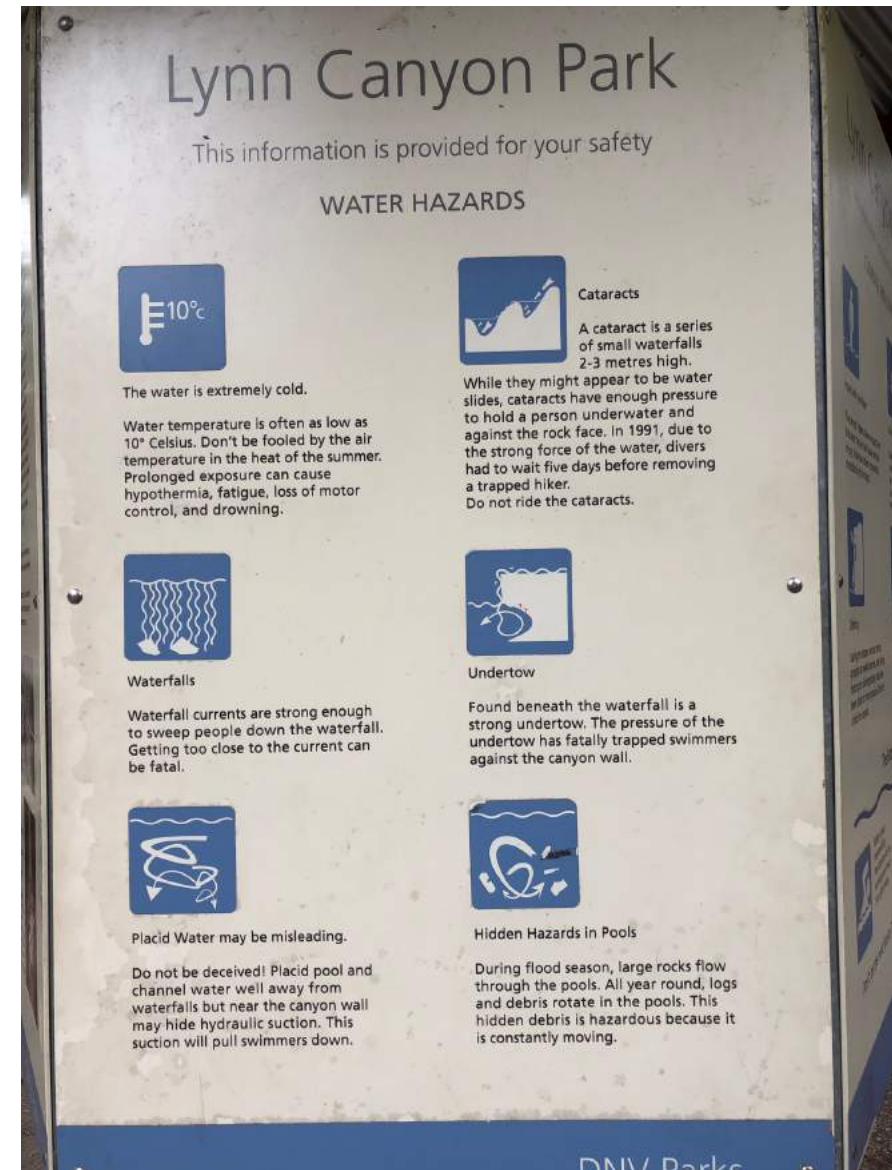
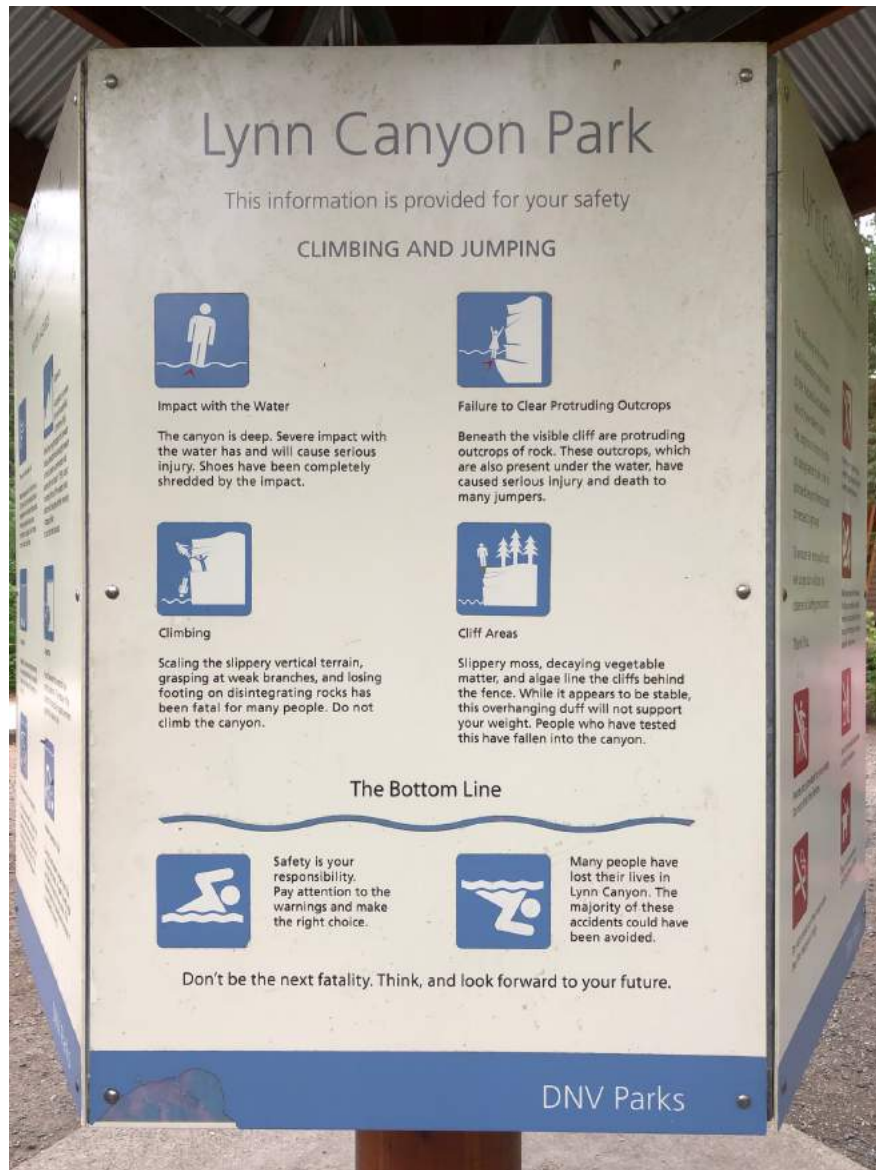
- Neglect
- Recklessness
- Encouraging children to participate beyond their own limits, abilities, interests, or comfort
- Not a lesson or specific objective



Risky Play is not
unsupervised
neglect

Hazards are
different than
risks







Time, space and freedom to play with loose parts leads to divergent thinking and improved problem solving



HOMMA SCHOOL LEARNING GARDENS

Improved
ability to
focus in class



Rough play
teaches what
consent
looks like
and feels like



Photo credit: Keri Stranger, EKO-logy

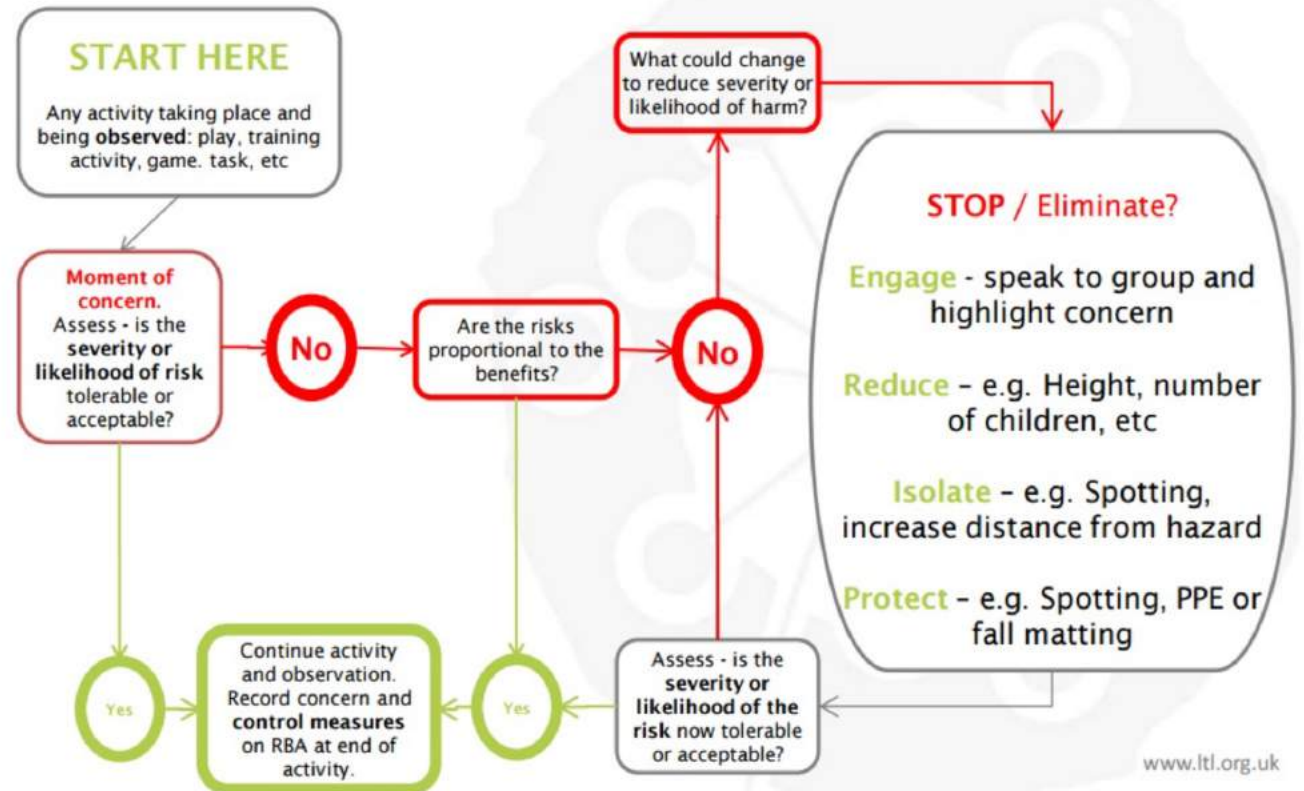
Play with
impact



Understanding the differences between risks & hazards in the school context

Dynamic Risk Benefit Assessment Procedure

Learning Through Landscapes believe that not every risk can be pre-judged. Therefore we operate Dynamic Risk Benefit assessments, through our staff members, to support the Risk Benefit Assessments in place. The process for these dynamic judgements is below.



Dynamic Risk-Benefit Assessment Process

OPEN OBSERVATION

- Playing alongside
- Trust and caring interest
- Non-intrusive

FOCUSED ATTENTION

- Some warning signs, play and risk escalating
- Proximity and Check-ins
- Dialogue and reflection
- If improves, go back to open observation

ACTIVE INTERVENTION

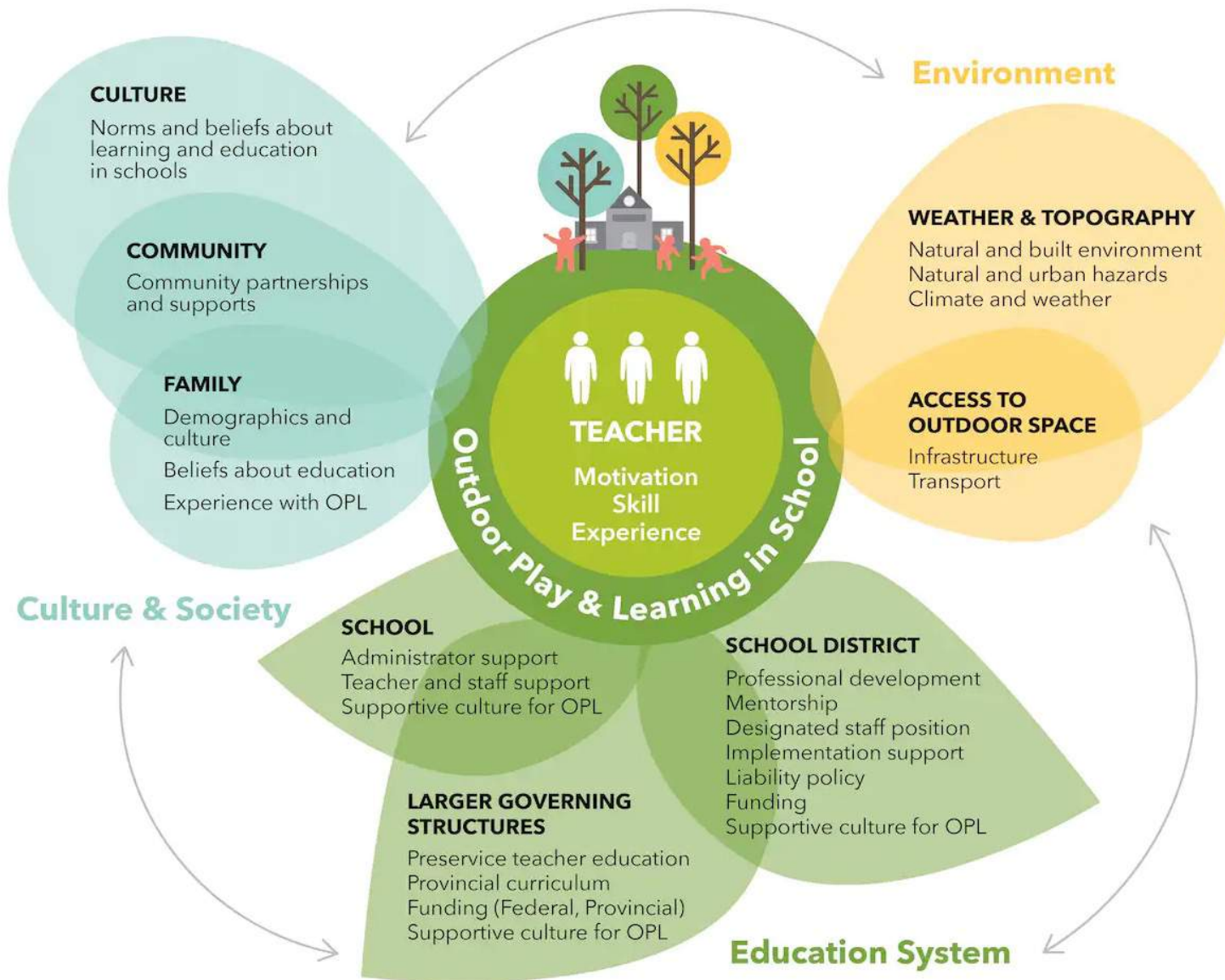
- Immediate change, steps to reduce risk
- Empowering language
- Safety Prompts

Adapted from Omer's Model of Vigilant Care, 2011



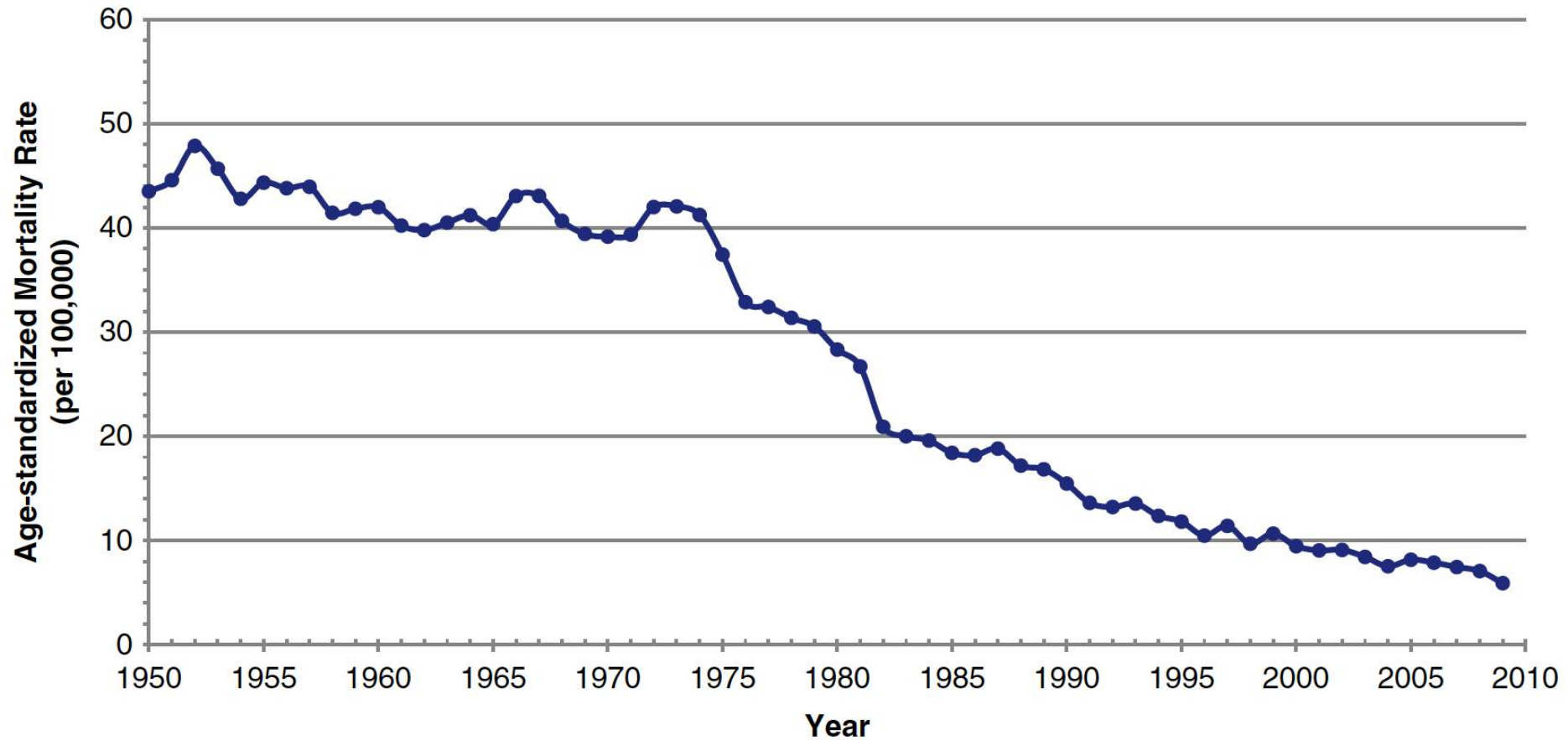


Role of the teacher in risk assessment



Systemic model of outdoor play and learning in school shows how many factors shape how a teacher can be empowered to lead outdoor learning: Protocols and training in education systems, attitudes in culture and society, and environmental factors like access to outdoor space. (The Human Early Learning Partnership/The University of British Columbia), Author provided

Canadian mortality rates for all unintentional injuries, ages 0-19 years (1950-2009)



Richmond et al., 2016, CJPH, 107(4-5), e431-7



0

Statistics Canada, 2015



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Outdoor Play- related Fall Injuries

Statistics Canada, 2021

Hapa Collaborative

Outdoor fall-related hospitalizations 0-14 year olds, BC, 19 year average (2001/02 – 2019/20)

Cause of Injury	Number of Injuries	Rate/100,000 Population
<div>BC INJURY</div> <div>research and prevention unit</div>		
Fall involving playground equipment	267	38.4
Fall on same level	206	29.6
Fall from one level to another	166	23.8
Fall involving skates, skis, skateboards	129	18.5

90% fractures:
99% extremities (arms & legs)

≈ 690,000 children

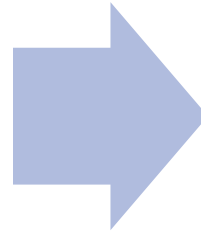




Novelty reduces risk of
injury

Injury by Exposure Time

Systematic review



Medically treated injuries, ages 6-12 years:

- Active commuting
- Sports participation
- Leisure time (recreation, play)

Nauta et al., 2014, Sports Medicine

Injury by Exposure Time

Systematic review

Medically treated injuries, ages 6-12 years:

- Active commuting: 0.15-0.52/1000 hours
- Sports participation: 0.20-0.67/1000 hours
- Leisure time: 0.15-0.17/1000 hours

A child would need to play 3 hours/day for \approx 10 years

Helping parents, caregivers and educators gain the **confidence**
and **skills** to support children's outdoor play.



Click to watch video!



Questions and Discussion



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