

# Chapter Summaries

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## 1 What is Play?

### Summary

This chapter has:

- offered a genealogy of play highlighting prominent cultures and scholars and their contributions in helping provide an answer to the question, what is play?
- examined the cognitive, creative, emotional, physical, and social benefits of play.
- explored current societal factors devaluing children's play and their impact on child development.
- touched upon the argument that the field of playwork and its guiding principles seemed well suited to address the societal factors devaluing children's play and provide the means to help rethink children's play.

## 2 Play and Schools

### Summary

This chapter has:

- explored how the role of play in schools has evolved over time.
- examined how to implement a playful pedagogy in a standards-driven society.
- argued for the inclusion of child-initiated, unstructured play during the school day.

# 3 Play and Other Institutional Settings

## Summary

This chapter has:

- explored whether children should be required to pay for play.
- examined how children play in hospitals.
- considered how children play in prisons.

## 4 Play in Informal Settings

### Summary

This chapter has:

- explored the theory that explains children's preference for the outdoors.
- examined the benefits of the natural environment in the play experiences of children.
- analyzed the decline in children's use of the outdoors in their play.
- examined the problems that may arise as a result of the reduction in children interacting with the natural environment while playing.

# 5 Play Deprivation

## Summary

This chapter has highlighted the following points:

- Play deprivation may be viewed as a spectrum of play deficit.
- The child's right to play is enshrined in law, but that right is often ignored.
- It is possible for a child to recover from the ill effects of play deprivation.
- It is not clear whether there is a connection between play deprivation and other forms of disadvantage.
- Society ignores play deprivation at its peril.

# 6 Playwork

## Summary

This chapter has highlighted the following points:

- Playwork is a well-established profession in the UK, with its own unique set of values.
- Playworkers focus on the freely chosen, personally directed, and intrinsically motivated aspects of play.
- In practice playwork generally involves identifying and removing the barriers to play, and then enhancing the children's play environment.
- Playwork improves the confidence and competence of children, not least by allowing them to engage with risk and challenge.
- A unique sort of child/adult relationship lies at the heart of the playwork approach.
- Playworkers help to enhance children's self-esteem by treating children with respect, and placing their agenda at the heart of all decisions.
- Playwork has wide-ranging benefits for both individual children and the wider community.