

# Supporting the Active Child

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# Signs that indicate ADHD

- Fidgets frequently
- Distracted easily
- Likes to talk often
- Daydreams
- Difficulty sharing
- Impulsive
- Difficulty completing tasks/activities
- Ignores Rules

This describes more  
then 95% of children  
you are working with....

Boys are more frequently  
labeled ADHD than Girls

(7 times more frequently, Moir}

# What to look for in Active Children?

- Move around a lot
- Prancers
- More non verbal
- Often do not understand consequences
- Sit on the edge of their seat
- Sometimes knocks over other children

# What often happens to the Active Child?

- Labeled ADHD
- In Time Out
- Separated from other children
- In Trouble
- Removes Recess
- Suspended

When you were invited to  
a party and attended.  
What did the People who  
invited you do to make you  
feel you should stay?

# Invitations to the Active Child:

- Come on in and move around a lot
- Come on in and and sit down



What invitations we send out  
gets different behaviors in  
children

# How to Celebrate the Active Child

Language/Literacy

Often Active Children are Loud  
Children.....

Do teachers give the message that  
“**loud**” children are not as good as  
“**quiet**” children?

**I often think**

**SO.....**

# Changes for active children:

- Provide “loud” areas
- Avoid expecting the book/library area to be quiet

# *Benji*

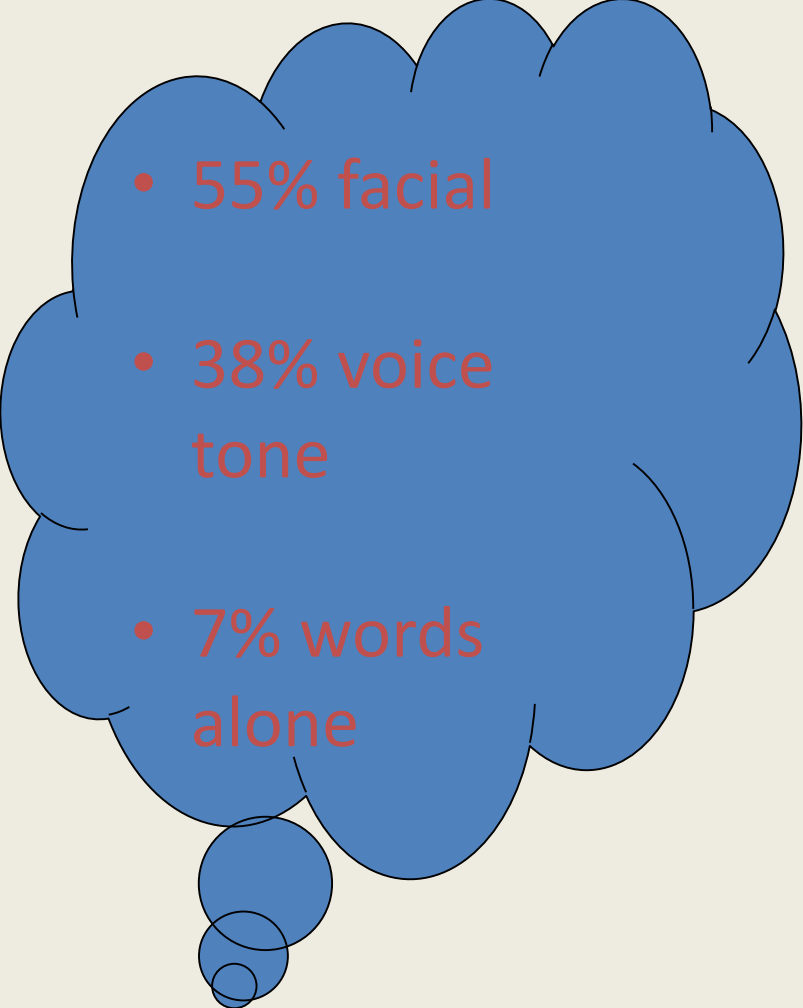
Benji met the BEAR

The BEAR met Benji

The BEAR was Bulgy

The Bulge was Benji.

# Communication Patterns for Males

- 
- 55% facial
  - 38% voice tone
  - 7% words alone



# Communication Patterns for Females

- 28% facial
- 18% voice tone
- 54% words alone

Girls often use words  
as soon as they hear  
them. “Rare” words

Girls by 5 can produce  
5 – 7,000 words

Boys by 5 years of age  
produce  
3 -5,000 words

*There is some research that reports  
that children are entering preschool  
with fewer words....*

**Perhaps it is because we are removing  
Family Rituals**

**Stop asking children to sit like a  
“Pretzel” or “Criss Cross  
Applesauce” its not normal.**

Keep Songs and Finger plays

REAL

# Scoot a Story Preschool/Kindergarten



# Scoot a Story

## First - Third Grade

# Act out Stories Frequently

Choose Books that Provoke  
Movement

# Language and Movement Increases Cognition by 90%

Jane Healy

For the Active Child, Integrating  
rather than separating Language  
Experiences is essential

# Books and Writing Tools in All Centers

Including the Bathroom

# Talking During a Story Reading Is Essential

Mem Fox

# Story Reading

- Allow talking and encourage asking questions by children
- Silence is Not Golden
- Avoid, “I am looking for Good Listeners”

# Include Natural Environmental Print

- Menus from Restaurants
- Maps
- Signs
- Newspapers/Magazines
- Recipe Cards
- Travel Brochures
- Writing Tables outdoors
- Take Apart and Put Together



# Creative Movement

Boys are often more active their  
girls....

Rubin Gur

# Testosterone Spikes

- Boys can have 2 – 10 spikes an hour
- Girls usually have 2 spikes a day
- Boys often have higher spikes in the morning
- Girls often have higher spikes in the late afternoon

# Hints for Creative Movement

- One task/movement at a time
- Help children recognize the space they are in
- Integrate movement throughout the day
- Keep movement natural

# Movement Assists with Memory Development

Mem Fox

# Movement Activities

- Paper Plate dance
- Straws Movement
- Pirates
- Baby Shark
- Washing Machine Chant

**Pirate Song**

When I was one, I had some fun  
On the day I went to Sea.  
I jumped aboard a Pirate Ship  
And the Captain said to me.  
Go this way, that way,  
Forward, backwards over the deep blue sea.

**Chocolate Candy and Jelly Beans**

Chocolate Candy and Jelly Beans  
Put them in my pocket, put them in my Jeans  
Mama washed the clothes and this is what she said.  
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH  
Chocolate candy and jellybeans all over the washing machine.

**Baby Shark**

Baby shark, doot, doot, doot, doot  
Mama shark, doot, doot doot doot  
Papa shark, doot doot doot doot  
Grandpa shark, doot doot doot doot  
Sharks swim, doot, doot doot doot  
Sharks attack, yell as loud as you can.

# Super Hero Play



I have not always been in favor of super hero play. In my earlier years as a teacher, super hero play represented a violent portrayal of society's influence on young children. Now, I am a "born again" super hero supporter. What happened? I began to read Vivian Paley's work on why children play super hero play. In her work titled, *Superheroes in the Doll Corner* (1984), she states, "Luke Skywalker and Darth Vader have the same domination as Mothers and Princesses.

# Why Do Children Play Superhero Play?

- Opportunities to Dominate
- Gives them opportunity to problem solve
- Demonstrate Physical Strength
- Speed
- Superhuman Traits
- Get to use Different Vocabulary

# Benefits of Superhero Play?

- Learning concepts of Good and Bad
- Recognizing both sides of POWER
- Building on Safety and Security
- Sense of Confusing Situations
- Helps Build Problem Solving Skills
- Children Learn Cooperation
- Develops Language Skills
- Creates Feeling of Belonging
- Develops Empathy
- Encourages Creativity
- Assists with Physical Development

# Common Types of Super Hero Play?

Escaping Villains

Solving Problems

Whatever is on the Movies

# Super Hero Props

- Capes
- Swords
- Belts
- Large Boots
- Boxes
- Blankets/Sheets
- Steps
- Tape
- Ropes
- Nets
- Rubber gloves

Superhero play only becomes a concern when the play is physically aggressive in nature, and there is an imbalance of power between the children who are engaging in the play.

Erica Pelavin

# Recognizing Red Flags

- Power over Play
- Fists go up
- Not asking participants
- Constant
- Hurting words

# Tips for Supporting

- Gather your thoughts before
- What are your limits and are they realistic
- Keep rules in the present
- Include children in the rule setting
- Use Model words or questions: “Did you ask?”
- Look at the space they are using
- Bring in local Heroes
- Help them feel powerful



There is no evidence that banning super hero play is useful or effective, and can simply cause children to hide this form of play from adults.

Dr. Sheila Degotardi

Gun Play is POWER PLAY not  
Violence

Avoid statements like, “Guns are dangerous”, “Guns hurt people”

Instead

“looks like you are having fun, tell me what you are doing?” “You are using a pretend gun, to have fun”

Exposure to violence on TV, etc. is  
more important to take on than  
“Gun Play”

Avoid, buying “toy” guns, it is not needed.

“Did you ask, if he wants to play  
dead?”

“Did you ask if he/she wants to play  
that game?”

Create a Target

*Children play at what concerns and worries them. They play at what causes them anxiety. Quite understandably most children will be anxious about the idea of particular types of gun-users in their world and consequently need to play at keeping safe and solving the problems that gun-use throws up.” ~ Diane Rich*



If you don't want superhero or  
gun play

What will you replace it with that is  
just as powerful?

“We’ve seen literally thousands of these kinds of episodes of zero tolerance since the early 1990s,” said Russell Skiba, a zero-tolerance expert at Indiana University’s Center for Evaluation and Education Policy, who authored a 2006 study that zero tolerance has not improved school security at all, the AP reports.

Bring Back Roughhousing!

# What is Roughhousing?

- Voluntary
- Invited too
- Very Active
- Often non-verbal
- Includes others

# Roughhousing:

- Red Rover, Red Rover
- London Bridge
- Motor Boat
- Billy Goat Gruff
- Boxes for Kicking
- Capes
- Tug of War
- Arm Wrestling

Remember that Roughhousing is  
not World Wide Wrestling...

# Environments that Support the Active Child

Plan for Safety, Children Cannot.  
They do not have that skill!



# Elements for the Active Child

- They need lots of opportunity for investigating and exploring
- Space to move
- Hiding Places
- A place to get higher
- Digging Experiences
- Standing up rather than Sitting Down
- Help setting boundaries
- Respect
- Moveable Parts
- Large Construction

# “Real” Choices for Active Children

Allow Risk Taking

# Risk Taking

## Non Risk

- “Only Build as high as your eyes”
- “Go up the ladder and down the slide”
- “Be Careful”
- “You can hurt someone”

## Risk

- “How high can be build it?”
- “Go up the slide and down the ladder”
- “Use both hands”
- “Stand Back Everyone”

# Real Choices for the Active Child?

- Do I have to sit down to eat?
- Do I have to come to circle time?
- Do I have to be quiet?
- Do I have to be Happy all the time?
- Do you like me even though I am Active?

How will you celebrate the  
Active Child?

# Celebrating the Active Child:

## Activity

- Meal time
- Small Group
- Nap time
- Large Group
- Arrival/Departure

## Change

# What Do You Believe About Active Children?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_



# What Practices Do I See that Reflect What I Believe About Active Children?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

# What Do I Need to Change to Support Active Children?

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

# New Rules for the Active Child

## Old Rules

- No Running
- No Climbing
- Use your Inside Voice
- Stop Throwing Sand
- We Share Our Toys
- Listen
- Did you Flush?

## New Rules

- Run a lot
- Climb Higher
- Use a louder voice
- Dig to China
- You Decide if you want to
- Only listen when it is relevant
- Look at it before you Flush it

*There is NO differences in what non active and active children can learn. But there are big differences in the best ways to teach them.*

# Resources

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- Smith, P.K., & Lewis, K. (1985). Rough-and-tumble play, fighting and chasing in nursery school children. *Ethology and Sociobiology*, 6, 175-181.
- **Managing Superhero Play — Tip Sheet** This brief from the Media Awareness Network offers tips for parents and teachers to help control the aggression that may arise in superhero play, while recognizing the important role that it can play in children's healthy development. [www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/tip\\_sheets/superhero\\_tip.cfm](http://www.media-awareness.ca/english/resources/tip_sheets/superhero_tip.cfm)