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” it’s 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 than 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.
AHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHHH
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 worked 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 then “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

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Non Risk</th>
<th>Risk</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>• “Only Build as high as your eyes”</td>
<td>• “How high can be build it?”</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Go up the ladder and down the slide”</td>
<td>• “Go up the slide and down the ladder”</td>
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<tr>
<td>• “Be Careful”</td>
<td>• “Use both hands”</td>
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<td>• “You can hurt someone”</td>
<td>• “Stand Back Everyone”</td>
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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

- **Managing Superhero Play — Tip Sheet** This brief from the Media Awareness Net- work 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 child- dren’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)