

Public Health

Play contributes to community growth. Playgrounds and the promotion of street play aren't simply an opportunity for children to play together. They reduce feelings of loneliness in adults, positively affecting health and wellbeing. Children can form connections and friendships through Street Play.



Play Builds Stronger Communities

Play Streets provide residents with a low-pressure, safe environment, allowing them to connect with their local community. Communities whose residents participate in Street Play are more inclusive and accessible.



Nature and Environment

Playing outdoors increases overall physical activity through active play and promotes mental wellbeing. Children who play in nature develop a close connection with the natural environment, resulting in environmentally responsible behaviour, and higher interest in sustainability issues.



Why is Play Important in Oxfordshire?

As 'Play' is not a statutory requirement, it has seen drastic cuts to its staff, resources and its importance across Oxfordshire since the 'age of austerity' in 2008. The provision of play opportunities has been neglected across the county, both in urban and rural areas.



This report reviews evidence from academic and non-academic sources highlighting the importance of play and the importance of supplying resources to support play across Oxfordshire. Play positively impacts children's lives, including their physical and mental wellbeing and within their communities.

Planning and Play Habitat

Play in the built environment is crucial as it promotes the science of learning, placemaking and community cohesion; it allows children and adults to pause and interact. Playful landscaping, planting and community art installations in green spaces transform everyday public spaces into engaging learning hubs.



The Benefits of Intergenerational Play

Play promotes stronger intergenerational relationships, which, in turn, results in children and adults learning respect for each other's knowledge, values and strengths. Different generations playing together improves both their social and communication skills.



The Importance of Play in Education

Integrating play in schools promotes children's development through expression, building resilience and encouraging self-regulation. Unstructured play allows children to let off steam, refresh and eventually return to structured learning activities with a clear mind.



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Download the full report here: www.gchu.org.uk/reports/