

Higher Childcare and Development Project

What are the benefits of play to the holistic
development of children and young people?

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INTRODUCTION

In this project I will explain what the benefits of play to the holistic development of children and young people are. No primary research has been carried out and the information I have used is on a fictional character, I will refer to him as Tom.

CASE STUDY

Tom is a 5 year old child who lives in town in a block of flats on the top floor with his Mum and newborn brother. He is currently in Primary 1 at the local Primary School, loves to dress up and play superheroes and also loves to play outside at the park which is only minutes away from his home.

ASPECTS OF DEVELOPMENT AND INTER-RELATIONSHIP

PHYSICAL AND COGNITIVE DEVELOPMENT

Physical development is how a child grows and gains control over their body. This includes development of Gross Motor Skills and Fine Motor Skills. Development progresses proximodistal (inner to outer), meaning the spine strengthens working out to arms and fingers and Cephalocaudal (head to toe), meaning there will be control over the head before the rest of the body. Other parts of physical development include hand eye coordination, reflexes, puberty, balance, changes of size and shape of the body, growth of muscles, strengthening of bones and Control of the bowel and bladder.

Tom weighs approx. 19.5 kg and is 107cm tall. Although he is the right height he is slightly overweight which could be fixed with a change in diet and more exercise. With more coordination he is able to walk up and down stairs by himself and is able to ride a bicycle but with stabilisers. Tom's fine motor skills will be more developed as he can copy shapes such as a circle, triangle and square.

Cognitive development is the growth of the thinking part of the brain which processes all information. Children need to use their brain for learning, organising thoughts, concentration, problem solving, memory, paying attention and to use all five senses. Problem solving is important for a child as they may need to assess a situation and come up with a reasonable solution.

(Minett, 2010, p 188)

Tom, at 5 years old knows the alphabet and can recite it but he is unable to spell at this age and is being taught to recognise different words. Tom is able to name up to 8 colours if you ask him what they are and is able to count up to 20 using items such as coins but is not aware of the value of each coin.

In relation to the brief, vigorous play can benefit holistic development by riding a bike. This will improve Tom's gross motor skills from exercising his larger muscles in his legs by peddling which will strengthen his muscles and bones.

In relation to the brief, play can benefit cognitive development when he is cycling as he will be outside so the fresh air will help him concentrate for using his brain to coordinate the bike in which way he is going so that he doesn't hurt himself.

INTER-RELATIONSHIP

Physical and cognitive development are inter-related. Whilst Tom is playing superheroes, an inter-relationship of aspects of development means that while the child is doing this activity two or more aspects are being developed at the same time which is called holistic development.

Tom's gross motor skills in his legs will have better control by running around the house or park and his arms by picking things up and throwing them. His pincer grip can be developed as he is trying on different costumes and tying the buttons or using zips.

At the same time the child's cognitive development will be advancing as he will be using his thought processes to take in information, evaluate and problem solve. This will also help develop his hand eye coordination and is very stimulating. Tom's imagination will also be developed as he makes up situations in his head that would maybe happen in a superhero movie.

In relation to the brief, play will benefit holistic development as Tom will use his memory while picking the costumes he is going to wear as he will remember what each character wears and using hand eye coordination to tie buttons which is improving cognitive development as well as using his fine and gross motor skills while dressing himself improving his physical development.

FACTORS THAT INFLUENCE DEVELOPMENT

ENVIRONMENT – ACCESS TO PLAY FACILITIES

Research shows that there are numerous benefits to children's development by taking them to the park. The park is a great place for holistic development as the research shows that children will understand that learning doesn't always have to be in school and they are able to have fun

while doing this, also children's development will happen faster as all aspects will be holistic and parents are able to bond with their children during this experience.

(irec_admin, 7th November 2017)

In relation to the brief outdoor play will benefit Tom's holistic development, being outside in fresh air will improve his cognitive development as he will be able to concentrate more and also use his imagination to make up scenarios when playing. His physical development will be improved as exercising will keep him healthy by strengthening his bones and muscles, develop his gross and fine motor skill and improve coordination. Tom will develop his social and emotional development as he will interact with other children, social cues, socially acceptable behavior, understanding different emotions and build his self-esteem. Lastly Tom's language development will improve as he will be conversing with other children, learning body language and new words. Nonverbal communication can be learnt through a game of football if one of the other children is telling Tom to go to a specific place by pointing for the ball to be passed to him.

ECONOMIC

Research shows that children that have a background of low income will have disadvantages when it comes to education. A negative economic factor on Tom's holistic development would be his mother's low income. As Tom's mother does not work she only receives Employment and Support Allowance, Housing Benefit and Child Maintenance for Tom. If Toms Mother had a better income to afford toys and books that support holistic development then Tom would be able to learn through play at age and stage appropriate levels for a 5 year old. If Tom isn't supplied with toys or opportunities that aren't beneficial to his development, then he will not be learning new things to further development.

(Cooper & Stewart. 2013)

Tom may miss out on play opportunities that his friends may be attending such as the messy play area which might affect his emotional and social development as his self-esteem may be low, he will not have his friends to interact with and he may also use bad behavior as he is not getting to do what he wants. Language development could be stunted at home due to his mother not being able to afford new books, if she can't then he will not be learning new words and trying to read. Physical development can be affected due to low income as Tom is more likely to be ill if his mother is running out of gas and can't afford more the house will be cold meaning his illness will not improve.

Although a low income has its disadvantages, in relation to the brief that play benefits holistic development this can be true. Tom's mother could keep old things such as cereal boxes and

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encourage Tom to participate in junk modelling which will improve imagination, fine motor skills and problem solving.

FAMILY

Tom's newborn brother could have a negative factor on his development. After Tom's younger brother was born, this meant that he felt he was getting less attention from their Mother. This had a negative impact on his emotional and social development as he was becoming jealous of not receiving enough attention so he started to act out to try and get that attention. This also meant that Tom wasn't getting to go to the park as much or relied on other family members to take him out as his Mother wasn't up to it after giving birth. As Tom wasn't able to get to the park this meant it affected his physical development as he wasn't getting the exercise that he was used to so at night time he had trouble sleeping which meant it was harder for him to get up in the morning for school. Tom felt that he wasn't getting enough time to play with his mother as well so he wasn't getting the usual praise that he would of if they had been.

(MentalHelp.net. 2019)

Although this is a negative impact on development, in relation to the brief, play would make a positive impact on Tom's holistic development. This can be done by Tom's mother including him in play with his sibling which will make Tom feel like he is being helpful, will give him enjoyment and boost his self-esteem.

THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT

ABRAHAM MASLOW'S HIERARCHY OF NEEDS

Abraham Maslow believed that there was an order in needs that need to be met to achieve an individual's self-actualization which means they meet their full potential, this is applicable to children and adults. Maslow created a pyramid with five different needs which are from the bottom: physiological, safety, belongingness and love, esteem and self-actualization which is shown in Appendix 1. Every level of the pyramid has to be met and cannot be skipped to achieve self-actualization but Tom will not stay at this stage and will regress as his needs will always change.

(Saul McLeod. 2017)

In relation to Tom, the theory means that if he has had a good night's sleep, has had breakfast is clothed appropriately and warm. The weather is not great so his mother has made sure that he is inside and protected from the wind and rain. This will have a positive impact on development as Tom will not catch a cold from being outside in the wet weather.

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Tom's mother says that she is going to go through to the kitchen to do some housework so she gives him a hug and kiss which makes him feel trusted to be on his own and leaves him in the living room to draw but insures that he knows to get her if anything is wrong. This has a positive impact on his development as it

In relation to the brief, play can benefit holistic development as Tom has been drawing a picture of his family and finishes it, he wants to show his mum so he goes through to the kitchen and she tells him how great his picture is which will raise his self-esteem and he has had the freedom to draw what he wanted. Now that he has fulfilled all his needs this means that he has achieved his full potential and reached self-actualization.

TINA BRUCE: LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Tina Bruce believes that children learn more through play and practice what they have learnt in free flow play. She believed there were 12 features of play which is shown in Appendix 2. Being able to provide free flow play would be offering structured and unstructured activities where children will be able to use their own initiatives meaning that their interests are included and they can build on their confidence and independence. Free flow play should also incorporate different environments so that children are offered indoor and outdoor play, it should also not make a child rush through development as they are individual to the rate at which they develop.

(Early Learning HQ. n.d)

The theory explains that Tom learns through play when he is playing he pretends he is Captain America and uses a plastic plate as a shield but when pretending to be a villain he will use the plate as a weapon (playfully). This would identify as Bruce's 3rd feature of play which is shown in Appendix 2. This has a positive impact on development as he will develop hand eye coordination in where he is placing the plate. When Tom is not feeling very well he doesn't want to play and will refuse to which identifies as the 4th Feature. As Tom says that he would like to be a police man when he is older he will act this out by pretending to arrest other children or driving a police car which identifies as feature 5.

THEORIES OF DEVELOPMENT ANALYSED

MASLOW ANALYSED

In relation to the brief, play that develops holistic development can be related to Abraham Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory.

Although in 1970, Abraham Maslow had amended his theory to include Cognitive needs as the 5th level which would include knowledge and understanding, having curiosities and being able to explore. Aesthetic needs were added as the 6th level meaning having appreciation for beauty in the world. Later on Transcendence needs as the final level were added meaning the person has a sense of values in life including having spiritual beliefs. It was found that his research may have been biased as he referred to men from a higher class such as Albert Einstein, he didn't refer to a lot of females and no samples from lower class men or women were taken.

(Saul McLeod. 2017)

BRUCE ANALYSED

Sue Grieshaber and Felicity McArdle had been quoted in Nursery World that they believed that play is not always the best way for a child to learn, it isn't always a positive and fun experience as there are politics, morals and ethics involved. They also stated that all children are individuals meaning that not all children can learn from the same kind of play experience which can be missed by staff and that they need to look at what is actually being learnt.

(Early Learning HQ, n.d)

In relation to the brief, this theory will have a benefit on holistic development as it has been used within settings to let teachers understand how a child is going to be learning within different activities. Teachers are also making activities available so children can play how they like without having to follow rules but they can make up their own.

(HCEfareham. 2017)

While Tom is in school and unwell the teacher who has planned an activity to include everyone such as using the parachute in the gym hall, Tom has shown that he isn't interested. The teacher will try to get him to get involved but realizes this will not benefit him as he will not be enjoying it and he isn't choosing to be a part of the activity.

STRATEGIES AND INITIATIVES

PLAY STRATEGY

In relation to the brief a strategy that benefits holistic development through play is The Play Strategy for Scotland. It was introduced to the Scottish Government in June 2013 and it was Scotland's first play initiative. The strategy was formed by using the views of children and young people, parents and carers. The Play Strategy is in place to make sure that all children have fair opportunities to play either actively learning or free play at home, in nurseries, schools and the whole community. The strategy makes sure that all children from different backgrounds or

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children with disabilities are all included and will not be left out. The strategy relates to Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as all children to the age of 18 have the right to play.

(Play Scotland. n.d)

In relation to Tom, The Play Strategy insures that he will and until the age of 18 be provided with opportunities to active and free play when he is attending school and other services but also at home. As Tom grows older his needs will change and he will have different ways of learning which should be catered to as much as possible. Tom should be given opportunities to play indoors or outdoors, with or without adult support depending on his needs, be valued and know they have the right to play.

The school will provide outdoor activities supported by The Play Strategy that Tom can participate in such as Hop Scotch printed on the tarmac.

GETTING IT RIGHT FOR EVERY CHILD

In relation to the brief a strategy that benefits holistic development through play is Getting it Right for Every Child. Getting it Right for Every Child is an approach in Scotland that will be used by schools and in partnership with other services which supports parents and the wellbeing for children and young people. This strategy is used so it allows different services such as education, health care and others to work in partnership so that all needs of the child are met. There are eight factors that are the basis of making the child center of everything (also known as the SHANARRI wheel). This was developed by people who work with children and have based everything on the feedback of parents. This strategy means that information is shared between Tom's doctor, head teacher, other school staff and also his mother.

One of the eight factors that would benefit Tom's holistic development through play is "Healthy". Healthy is stated so that children are able to not just have access to healthcare but to be physically healthy which can be done by using exercise while playing. An example of this is the school using physical education as a lesson which Tom will have the opportunity to take part in.

(Gov.scot. n.d)

SERVICES THAT SUPPORT

RECREATIONAL

A recreational sector are facilities that are provided for children to learn and enjoy things such as arts and entertainment. The / / Play Centre is in /) and is a private service. It

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is open from 9.30am – 5pm on week days and 10am- 5pm on weekends, it can be used as an after school club. They run different sessions throughout the week, have a soft play area which costs £3.50 per child with no time limit and they have a café for adults to relax while their children play.

(Caithness Business Index. n.d)

The play center supports Tom by providing different activities for him to play such as a painting class, this is part of creative play and will help develop his fine motor skills by holding the brush, hand eye coordination, develop social interaction by sharing with other children and raising his self-esteem by his work being praised.

In relation to the brief, this type of service will give Tom the opportunity to express his emotions through enjoyment and facing his fears throughout a range of play activities.

EDUCATIONAL

Education in Scotland can be a statutory or private agency which includes nursery, primary and high schools. A statutory agency means that schools are provided by the local council which in would be the Highland Council. Schools are funded by a mix of central taxation and has to follow legislation that is put into place to ensure that the service is run to a high standard. They use the curriculum for excellence as it is a framework to guide members of staff to support the needs and learning of the children.

(The Highland Council, n.d)

Tom attends primary 1 of the local primary school Monday to Friday from 8.55am until 2.45pm which will include a 25-minute break and an hour long lunch. There are eight subjects that Tom will be taught among them are English and literacy which involves book and technology play.

In relation to the brief, teachers can involve this type of play to support Tom by reading a book to him which is age appropriate while pointing out certain words and then giving him a tin that has a range of words within so he can start to visualize what words look like.

ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF PROFESSIONALS

PLAY WORKERS

In relation to the brief a professional that benefits the holistic development through play are Play Workers. Play workers can be employed in a range of places including after school clubs, play centers, nurseries, holiday clubs and NHS settings. A play worker is expected to be able to offer a range of play experiences that cover all play types, planning and implementing activities

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and resources, reflection of practice and analyzation. All workers must have relevant qualifications, have a PVG and be a member of the SSSC. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that every child has the right to play which play workers can insure this is met.

Play workers can insure Tom has holistic development through play by being able to make planned play activities that are based around his needs but also around interests that he has which will make him enjoy what he is doing. They will carry out this activity with him and then reflect on it. They can do this by seeing if there was anything in the plan that could be amended if the outcome wasn't what they expected.

(Play Scotland. n.d)

HEAD TEACHER

In relation to the brief, a professional that can benefit the holistic development through play for children is a head teacher. The Head Teacher of [redacted] Primary School is the Named Person for Tom, this means that they give Tom's Mother advice on anything her or Tom want to know. They control management of staff and follow all current legislation including GIFFEC, the Children and Young People Act (2014), SSSC Codes of Practice, PVG and Health and Safety.

The head teacher must insure safety for Tom and the rest of the students and staff, provide supervision for Tom if he needs any and provide staff with knowledge of any relevant information that may affect his time within school.

The SHANARRI wheel which is a part of the Getting it Right for Every Child strategy states that children should be safe, healthy, achieving, nurtured, active, respected, responsible and included. The head teacher can insure that Tom is active by following the curriculum for excellence and providing the opportunity for active play during physical education lessons and free play during golden time.

(Fubra Limited. 2019)

EVALUATION OF PARTNERSHIP WORKING

In relation to the brief, partnership working can benefit the holistic development through play for children which is promoted by Getting it Right for Every Child. Within the strategy it makes the information shared between relevant services and the parents more accessible meaning that the child's needs can be met by everyone working together to achieve a positive outcome.

The head teacher has spoken to Tom's mother about how she could help him improve his writing but also that she can use the services outside of school that would help him further.

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Tom attends The _____ y Playcentre so when his mother brings him she will be able to speak to the play workers there and explain that Tom is needing help with his writing. The play workers can then use this information when planning activities to insure that Tom is getting the extra help to improve his writing while he plays.

(The British Association for Early Childhood Education. n.d)

CONCLUSION

In conclusion to the brief: what are the benefits of play to the holistic development of children and young people, I believe that play is supportive to the holistic development of children and young people.

Children are always learning through play whether it is free play or structured and this shows by adults observing and asking questions to see what they have learnt or what else they need to do to further that learning for them. Another reason play is beneficial is there are all different types of play to suit every individual child's needs and to help them develop. Theories are used within settings which show workers how a child learns through play and what they can do to make sure this happens. Strategies and initiatives are being successful as they are in place to make children's needs come first which they have been since legislation has been changed in recent years.

(Total 3995)

APPENDIX

APPENDIX 1

Self-actualization	Realizing self's full potential.
Esteem needs	Respect, self-esteem, status, recognition, strength and freedom.
Belongingness and Love	Friendship, intimacy, trust and acceptance, receiving and giving love and being part of a group.
Safety Needs	Protection from weather, fear, law, stability and security
Physiological Needs	Warmth, water, food, reproduction, sleep, shelter and clothing

Saul McLeod. (2017)

APPENDIX 2

Bruce identifies 12 "Features of Play":

1. Children use first hand experiences from life;
2. Children make up rules as they play in order to keep control.
3. Children symbolically represent as they play, making and adapting play props.
4. Children choose to play – they cannot be made to play.
5. Children rehearse their future in their role play.
6. Children sometimes play alone.
7. Children pretend when they play.

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8. Children play with adults and other children cooperatively in pairs or groups.
9. Children have a personal play agenda, which may or may not be shared.
10. Children are deeply involved and difficult to distract from their deep learning as they wallow in their play and learning.
11. Children try out their most recently acquired skills and competences, as if celebrating what they know.
12. Children coordinate ideas and feelings and make sense of relationships with their families, friends and cultures.

Durand, S. (201

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