

Go Play Outcome and Evaluation Framework



Grounds for Learning, photograph by Malcolm Cochrane

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Play makes a tremendous contribution to children having a happy and healthy childhood.

The right of children to play is recognised in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child as a fundamental part of their lives. It is seen as a basic part of their rights as human beings, and a fundamental building block towards developing the social skills to participate fully in all stages of later life. Play makes a tremendous contribution to children having a happy and healthy childhood. In turn this makes them much more likely to grow up into happy and healthy adults who can make the most of their lives. Not only does this enable people to use their talents and make positive choices about their lives, it also helps them make a significant contribution to society.

Inspiring Scotland has been delighted to deliver the Go Play programme in partnership with the Scottish Government. To date we have worked closely with the play sector through a portfolio of 27 ventures. We have applied our venture philanthropy principles to meet the Government's objectives for the programme, namely increasing the opportunities for children to play freely and working with the play sector to support its development. A key part of the work with the portfolio of play organisations which have been invested in has been the development of this pack.

It is vital that we gain a clear sense of what works and the outcomes achieved through support. This pack has been written with this very much in mind. It describes what the play sector does, how it makes a difference and how it links to local and national outcomes. It identifies ways that play organisations can realistically demonstrate their difference through use of evidence and, lastly, it begins to help us to identify some common ground to assess when play organisations can have the most impact.

The work has been developed through the portfolio and with input from experts in the play field. Whilst commissioned by the Scottish Government, both local and national government can use it to understand the case for play and the play sector. Funders can also use it to understand the case for play, the context for particular grant applications, and what can be done to evaluate play projects at a community level.

Within the Go Play programme, Inspiring Scotland will use the pack and the logic model to understand and report on the impact of the two-year programme. However, most importantly, the pack is for the play sector, to use as a framework for presenting and articulating why play is so important for children in Scotland.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Andrew Muirhead', is written over a faint, light-colored oval background.

Andrew Muirhead
Chief Executive - Inspiring Scotland

Background

In 2009, Inspiring Scotland received funding to support a portfolio of play organisations over a period of 2 years. The aim of ‘Go Play’ was to help the play sector in Scotland grow and offer increased opportunities for play to children in Scotland aged 5 to 13 years.

As part of this process Go Play commissioned a baseline report from New Philanthropy Capital (NPC)¹ in order to identify areas where funding could have most impact. NPC suggested that Go Play:

- Support the play sector to create a more robust infrastructure
- Make play services better in areas of greatest need
- Explore new and creative approaches to play

27 charitable organisations in 9 local authority areas were chosen for funding to reflect these priorities. This includes organisations directly providing play opportunities, organisations improving play spaces and organisations supporting others involved in providing play (including schools, out of school clubs, play and youth groups). Play Scotland, as the national support body for play also received funding to develop their work.

The baseline report also identified that measuring the impact of charities is crucial, enabling charities and their investors to better understand what works (and does not). They suggested that this will help charities to ensure that successes can be repeated and failures prevented leading to better outcomes for everyone.



Grounds for Learning, photograph by Malcolm Cochrane

The report noted however, that it is particularly challenging to demonstrate outcomes for play for a variety of reasons. They suggested some outcomes and indicators set against the broad benefits of play, plus some indirect measures based around opportunities for play and measuring the quality of inputs (eg SVQs to measure staff competences). They concluded that:

‘In isolation, indirect approaches to measuring results can only provide a limited indication of how successful a project is likely to be. Where possible they should combine with more direct measures. Inspiring Scotland could explore the possibility of developing a framework which combines these approaches. Helping to improve the evidence base could be one lasting legacy of Inspiring Scotland’s funding.’

This recommendation formed the basis of developing this framework.



¹ New Philanthropy Capital (2009) Go Play baseline report <http://www.inspiringscotland.org.uk>

Section 1: The model

A key part of developing the outcomes framework was to build a logic model that described the work of the play sector and why play is important. The model is a diagram that describes the need that the play sector is trying to address, what it does and how it makes a difference. In this section we outline what the model is about, the assumptions that underlie the

What the model is about

It's focused on free play: For the purpose of this model we have focused on those organisations involved in providing or promoting 'free' play. This is based on Bob Hughes² definition, which defines play as

Behaviour which is freely chosen, personally directed and intrinsically motivated. Is performed for no external goal or reward.

Directed play can be used for therapeutic and educational purposes, but organisations that focus primarily on this are not included here.

It includes all children: Although we have drawn on organisations working with children aged 5 to 13, this model should be able to describe the activities and outcomes for organisations working with younger and older children.

Each child is unique and encounters different barriers to playing freely. We recognise that some children may have additional barriers for example because of their disability or income. We decided not to highlight those particular barriers, because every child should have the opportunity to play freely, regardless of their situation. Inclusive approaches benefit everyone and should be universally available to all.

It's a collective model: The model does not tell the story of individual organisations, although they should be able to see where they fit in the bigger picture. It describes the range of activities and outcomes across the play sector. Individual organisations will target the participants, activities and outcomes that are relevant to the situation in their own chosen area.

At the end of this pack we give you four case studies which hint at the richness and variety of needs and approaches undertaken by individual play organisations.

model, an overview of the model, the diagram itself and a short section describing the model in words.

In Section 2 'Evidencing our outcomes' we use the model to discuss where evidence might come from, both of the benefits of play and the role of organisations in helping play to happen.

Nor does the model tell the story of individual children. Each child takes their own very personal experience from play, and has outcomes that are unique to them. In one model it is difficult to capture all the outcomes that children may gain through play. Here we have focused on the outcomes we believe happen most often.

As a collective model, it links free play with longer term and national outcomes. Although play is not the only factor affecting those outcomes, the model suggests that play can and should contribute. The particular outcomes for individual organisations will depend upon the children, the families and the communities they are working with.

It tells a story at this given point in time: The logic models tell a story, but sometimes that story needs to be adapted for different audiences and in different times. For example if government changes its local or national outcomes, the play sector will need to adapt the wording or thinking to show how their activities and outcomes contribute to those changed priorities. As the context changes, so too will the model.

In many ways, the process of developing the model is as important as the model itself. It helps people to be clearer about what they do and why. We see this as a contribution to the debate about the importance of the play sector, not something that should be set in stone.

It provides a framework for evidencing the work: We use the model to help us to think about how we can 'measure' or evidence the outcomes of the play sector, to identify and address particular difficulties and to consider how more general research can be drawn on, where individual measurement is not possible or problematic.

² Bob Hughes, PlayEducation (1982)

Assumptions in the model

In developing the model we identified some shared assumptions (below). There is insufficient space in this pack to describe all the evidence for each of these assumptions, but for more information about play and play provision, you can access the Play Scotland website at www.playscotland.org.

In particular, the literature review *'The Power of Play – An Evidence Base'* a 2011 Play Scotland publication funded by the Go Play programme³, gives a comprehensive overview of the academic literature and evidence base around play and play provision.

Play has intrinsic benefits: Much has been written about the benefits of play. Play is an important part of childhood and brings about immediate benefits for children, aside from any longer term benefits for children's development and society in general. Wendy Russell and Stuart Lester⁴ argue that play acts across a number of adaptive systems to contribute to health and well being, providing

- Pleasure and enjoyment
- Emotion regulation
- Stress response systems
- Attachment
- Learning and creativity

A childhood without play is therefore a 'deprived childhood'. It is for this reason that the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, Article 31 states that all children have the right to play.

Play should be 'freely chosen': Free play is spontaneous and unpredictable. In the model we have identified some general outcomes that come from any type of play. However, some outcomes depend on what a child chooses to do. For example, not every child will choose to be physically active, therefore improving their physical fitness.

We have to be careful about utilising play to achieve specific outcomes, such as health or educational outcomes. We know that play does contribute to these, but that depends on the play chosen.

There are many layers to the reasons children choose to play. The primary drive to play may stem from a biological, brain development basis, but it may also be chosen for other reasons e.g. to maintain a particular friendship group, or to play out themes that have caused them concern. It provides scope for children to explore or nurture aspects of themselves of their own choosing.

Play happens everywhere: Play does not happen only in designated play areas, or over prescribed periods of time. It is a natural behaviour, where children respond to their environment in ways that suit them. Play can be indoors or outdoors. We recognise that there are particular barriers to and benefits from outdoor play. But indoor play is also good and has benefits for children.

The role of the play sector: Given the opportunity children will naturally play. Unfortunately barriers to play stop that. The play sector brings an expert understanding both of the benefits of and the barriers to play. This is explored further in Section 2.



³ For further information on the publication contact Play Scotland.

⁴ Lester, S. and Russell, W. (2010) Children's right to play: An examination of the importance of play in the lives of children worldwide. Working Paper No. 57. The Hague, The Netherlands: Bernard van Leer Foundation



Main photo - East Ayrshire Community Play Forum
Inset photos - PEEK

The need being addressed by the play sector

We started by looking at the problem we are trying to solve. This helps to make sense of the participants, the activities undertaken and the outcomes selected.

The problem tree on the next page attempts to summarise the need that the play sector is trying to address.

In brief it shows that children are being deprived of opportunities to play (the trunk of the problem tree).

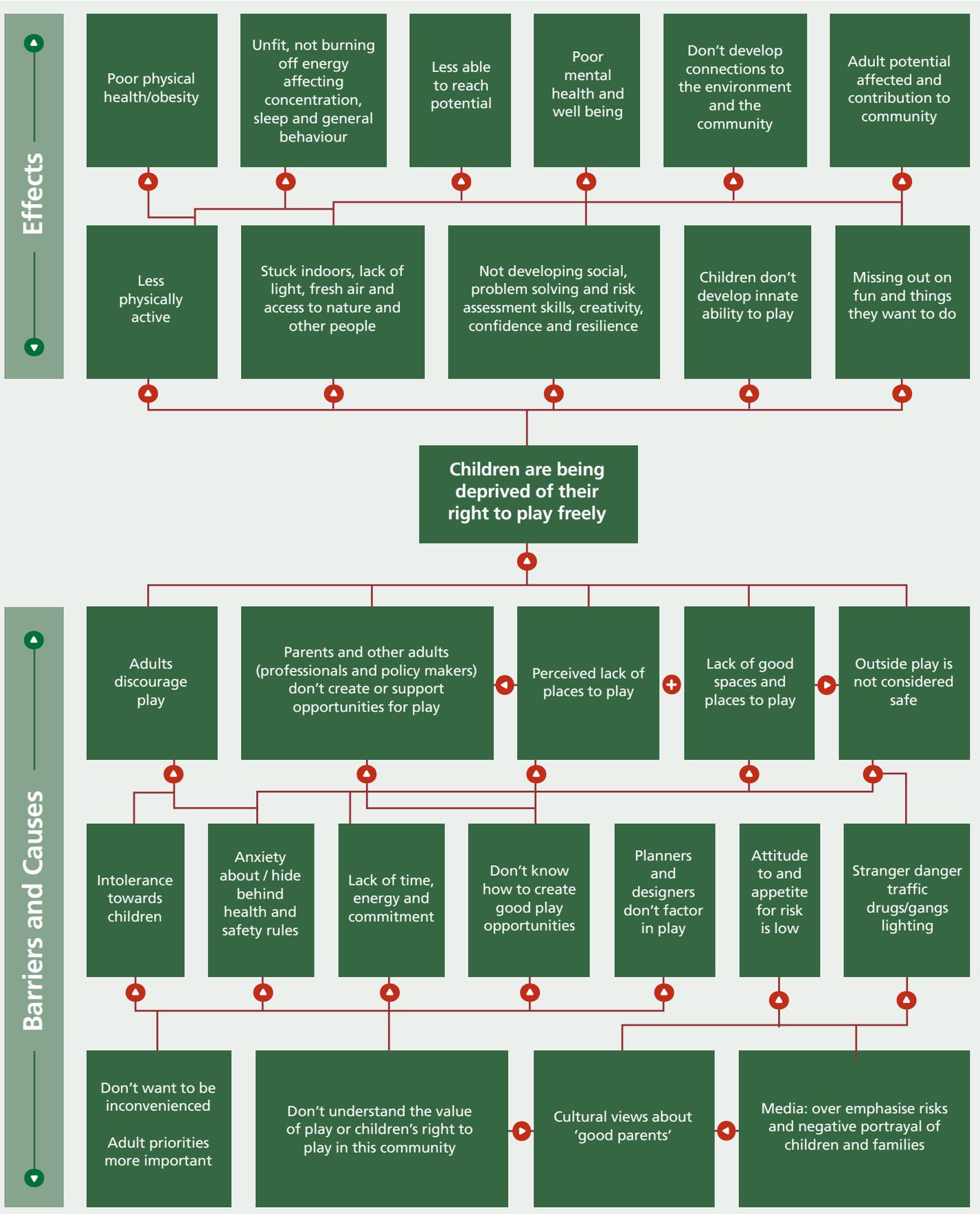
This in turn disadvantages children themselves, their families, communities and to society as a whole (the branches and leaves of the problem tree).

The root causes of this are complex and include institutional, attitudinal, physical and regulatory barriers at many different levels including,

- the physical, funding and policy environment
- professionals working with children
- others who affect the design or use of space
- communities
- parents and families
- children

This problem tree was developed from the experience of the play organisations in the Go Play portfolio. There is a range of research and literature that backs up this picture. In Appendix 2 we have identified some of the main evidence quoted in a number of recent literature reviews including 'The Power of Play – An Evidence Base', a Play Scotland publication (2011)³.

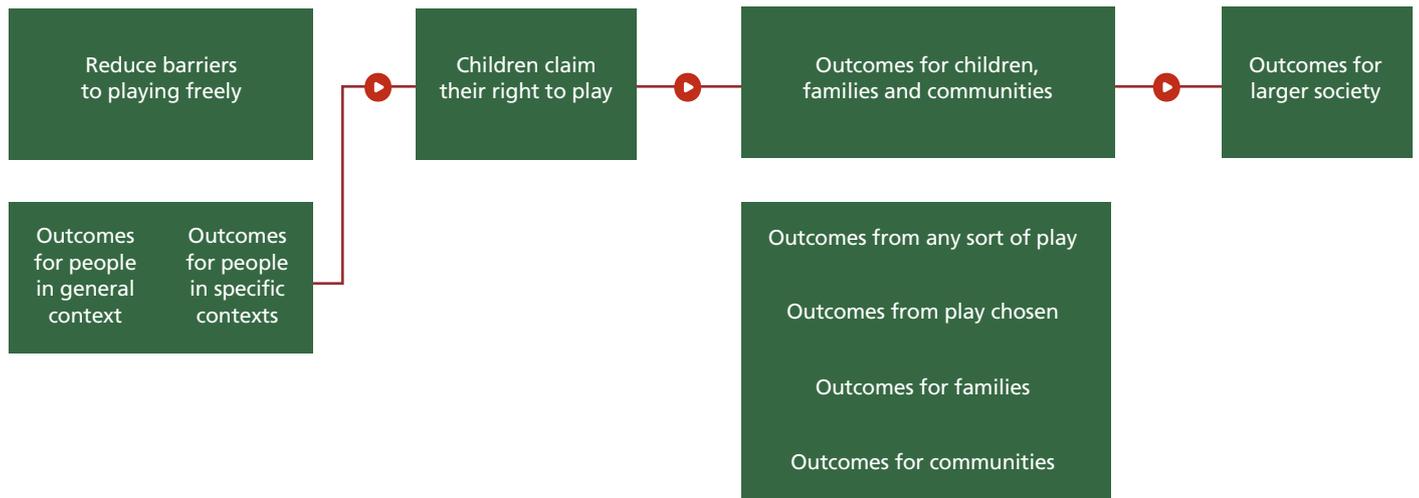
Problem tree for play



The model of activities and outcomes

In summary

The main model can be found on page 10. Before moving on to that, we summarise the model in the diagram below.



Broadly the model suggests that the sector addresses the barriers to play at two levels

- the general funding, policy and educational context (curriculum for teachers, planners etc), which those in turn influence
- the specific context (local areas and communities)

As a result better or more play happens as children claim their right to play. In turn this leads to outcomes for children, some of which come from any form of free play and some of which relate to the specific type of play chosen by the child.

Families and communities also have outcomes that come from more and better quality play, leading to wider societal benefits.

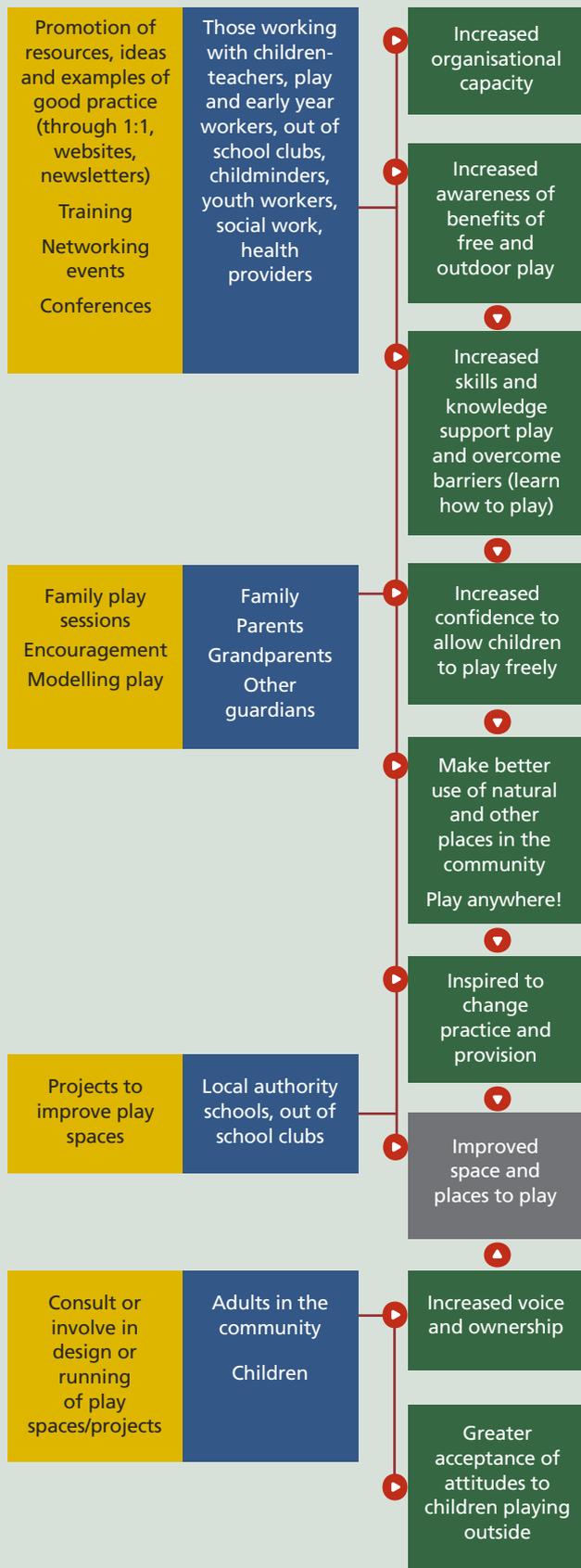
In this model we have used the final column to link to the National Performance Framework, but equally this could be linked to Local Outcome Agreements, the Curriculum for Excellence or other policy frameworks.

Reduce barriers to playing freely

Activities and outcomes for people who influence the general context



Activities and outcomes for people who influence a specific context



Key

Activities

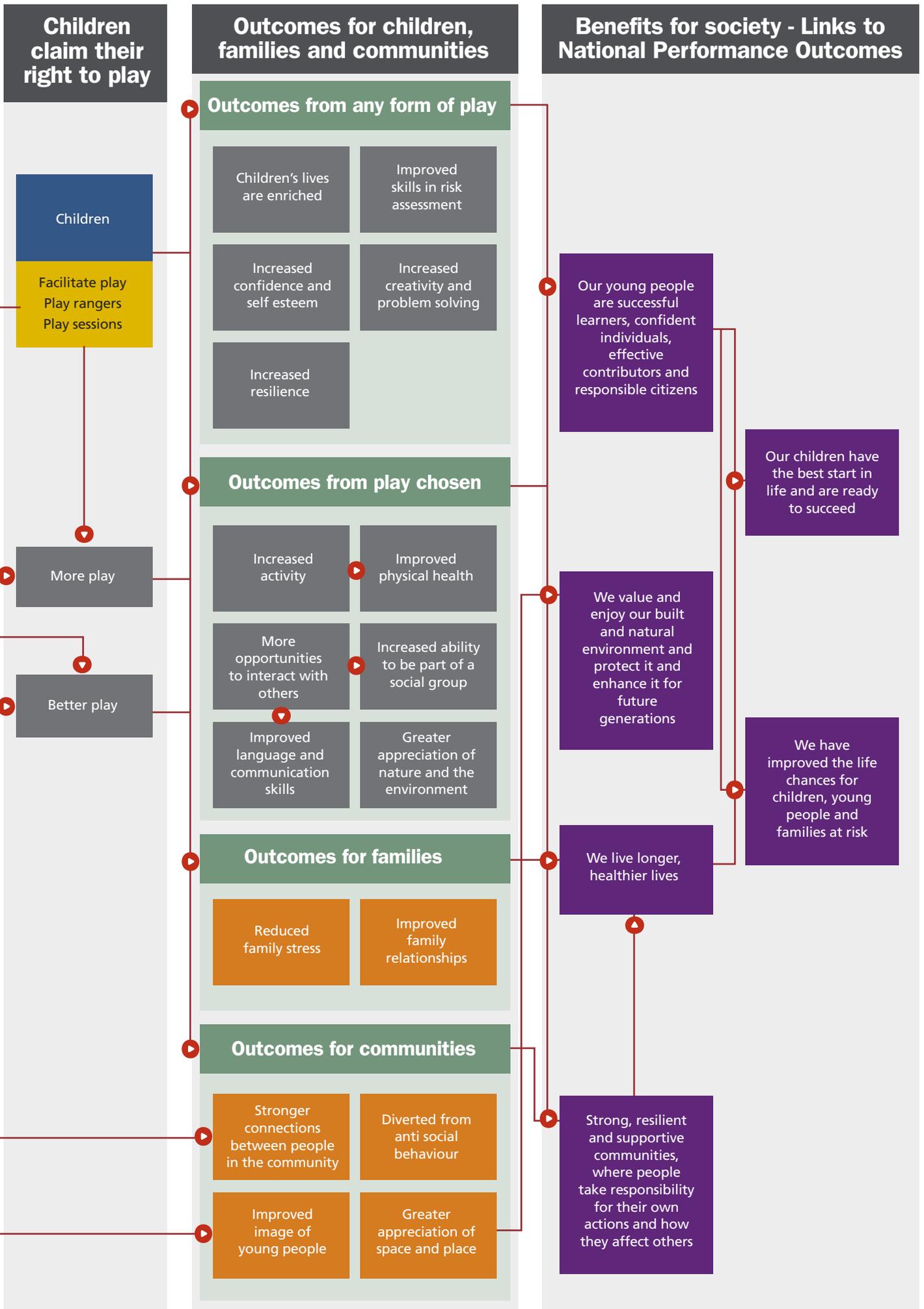
Participants

Outcomes along the way

Outcomes for children

Other outcomes

Longer term outcomes



The model in words

Activities and outcomes for people who influence the general context

This section of the model looks at the general context, the backdrop for play opportunities and provision.

The model shows that play organisations may take actions to increase understanding of the benefits of play and to create positive attitudes to creating play opportunities amongst policy makers, funders, training institutions and professional support bodies. They may also try to create a positive view of children and play in the general public's mind through the media.

This in turn influences play opportunities in specific context.

Activities and outcomes for people who influence a specific context

This section of the model is about people who directly relate to children and therefore influence whether and how they play.

Play organisations can take action at a local level to build awareness of the benefits of free play, increase confidence and motivation to let children play out, and develop skills and knowledge to support free play.

In terms of 'play space' two complementary approaches are taken. Firstly encouraging better use of existing spaces (home, school, out of school care premises, natural and built up spaces). Secondly improving designated play spaces, such as a playground, a park or a natural area. Consulting with children and the local community to 'create ownership' is an important part of this.

Some organisations also help community groups and organisations to 'build their capacity' so that they can provide play schemes and other free play opportunities. This might include help with running the organisation, funding advice or training, supporting staff and volunteers or providing resources and ideas for play.

Children claim their right to play

Changes in attitudes and practice, improvements in space and places to play and play projects like 'play rangers' and play schemes lead to children playing out more, claiming their 'right to play' and enjoying better 'free play' opportunities.

This leads to outcomes for children, families and communities.

Outcomes for children

The model identifies two types of outcomes for children, those which come from any sort of play and those which come from the type of play chosen.

There are some general benefits of play that tend to happen for all children, given enough opportunities for free play. We know that play is a natural behaviour and children want to play. Allowing them to play freely enriches their lives and brings them a chance to enjoy some freedom, to play out issues that are affecting them on a daily basis, to try things out in a way that suits them. We know that through play, children generally increase their confidence, and their resilience as well as developing skills in assessing risk and problem solving.

This is not to say that all play is 'fun'. Play can have a dark and serious side and children are not always nice to each other, but even that can teach children important lessons.

Other outcomes come from the type of play chosen. The model specifically identifies three types of outcome: increased physical activity leading to health benefits (physical play), improved social and communication skills (play which involves social interaction with peers) and a greater appreciation of nature and the environment (play in natural settings or with natural resources).

The model could identify many other outcomes for children dependant on the type of play chosen but those in the model happen most commonly.

Outcomes for families

There are two main outcomes for families. Firstly, reduced stress which may come from a variety of factors, for example children getting rid of excess energy, sleeping better or being less fractious. Secondly, improved family relationships which come from families playing and interacting together – and communicating in different ways through play.

Outcomes for communities

Providing play sessions diverts children from anti-social behaviour. Some organisations also help community members to recognise children's needs so that 'play' is not perceived as 'anti-social'. This improves the image of young people.

Children playing in the community can build stronger connections between children, families and generations. It can help all of us to greater appreciate community spaces and places.

Benefits for society: Links to national outcomes

The National Performance Framework for Scotland is necessarily broad and the play sector could argue that play contributes to most, if not all of the 15 national outcomes. Indeed Skills Active, along with Play Scotland⁵ have produced a mapping document which shows how play links in with all national outcomes.

However to keep things simple in this model we have identified six national outcomes to which play most contributes. Three revolve around children and young people, one is about stronger communities, one is about enjoying built and natural environments and one is around health.

Particular organisations may be able to show good links to other national outcomes, depending on the focus of their work.



Section 2: Evidencing the outcomes from Play

Why evaluation is important

Evidencing the impact of our work is critical for two reasons. Firstly, organisations need to be accountable for the public money that they spend. Funders want to know that their funding is making a difference. They will also want to gain some deeper understanding of the effectiveness of different approaches. Secondly, organisations themselves will want to reflect upon how they can learn and improve their provision and approach.

Scotland's Funders Forum has developed 'The Evaluation Declaration'. This includes five statements about why evaluation is important and what it should achieve. This suggests that: evaluation should be valuable, relevant, and proportionate, supported and involve looking from inside and outside.⁶

These principles should inform our consideration of how we evidence the impact of play.

Challenges

In relation to play, evidence can be practice based or come from more formal research. The particular emphasis on each has to be based on what is practical and doable and will meet the needs of all parties.

Over the course of Go Play, Evaluation Support Scotland and Go Play Performance Advisors have helped organisations in the portfolio develop more systematic approaches to collecting data on their outcomes. During the process we identified some practical difficulties for the play sector in evidencing its impact. These we discuss below, in the light of the principles outlined in the funders evaluation declaration.

The outcomes for children are one step removed:

Where organisations are enabling others to improve opportunities for free play, it is difficult to measure the difference to the end user, the children themselves. This is true for play associations and network or membership bodies such as Youth Highland, where long-term changes to provision are not in their direct control. They can however evidence the change for 'play organisations' in knowledge, skills, and attitudes and can explore the extent to which these lead to a change in practice and provision.

Similarly organisations working to improve designated spaces for play can check children's satisfaction but cannot observe or measure the effect on individual children and the way they play. They have to make the logical assumption that this will lead to the outcomes for children, families and communities that are suggested in the model.

Some small scale sampling and follow up is possible and can be used to test the assumptions being made. Nevertheless organisations will have to rely on the evidence from formal pieces of research.

Development happens internally: The literature⁷ suggests that play works on the architecture and organisation of the brain. Clearly play practitioners are unable to measure that development. They might be able to see changes in behaviour, for example acting in more socially acceptable ways or taking different approaches to solving a problem. These 'proxy indicators' are useful as an alternative to more complex forms of measurement. However, even this may be difficult if you are working with many children in a light touch way, for example open play sessions.

Some organisations note 'types of play' as an indirect indicator, using research evidence to back up assumptions that this will lead to development. Using this method they can track changes in play patterns for example less football and more social play, or more interaction with nature. They then make the assumption from this that children develop across a broader range of areas.

Showing cause and effect: A couple of problems arise here. If play happens anytime, anywhere, with anything, it is very difficult to isolate play provided by or through the organisation, from any other play.

In addition, research suggests that environment, health, well being and development are interconnected. Isolating the impact of play as a sole factor is tricky, when other factors can also be significant (for example, family circumstances, levels of income, other activities available for children in the area).

This problem is compounded when you look long term at the impact of play. Many government outcomes are long term and require a variety of interventions, not

⁶ See www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk – Scotland Funders Forum 'The Evaluation Declaration 2006'.

⁷ See Lester, S. & Russell, W. (2008) Play for a Change: play policy and practice: a review of contemporary perspectives - www.playengland.org.uk

just play. It is impossible to identify precisely the extent to which play contributes, as opposed to other factors. In these circumstances, it is better to reframe the evaluation question. Instead of asking *'to what precise extent does play contribute?'* we can ask *'in what circumstances do we tend to have best and least impact?'* The evidence may be more qualitative, but there is more scope for organisational learning and for considering how play interacts with other factors.

Evaluation methods have to be sensitive to the work and the participants: Evaluation methods should not be intrusive to play. Some methods and measures are not appropriate. For example, it is probably not a good idea to measure waist size before and after attending a group of play sessions as an indicator of health. This could put children and their families off using your organisation!

Luckily there are lots of inventive and fun ways of getting feedback from people. Organisations don't have to rely on 'boring questionnaires' or inappropriate methods. Organisations can use a variety of ways to get the information. This tends to give the organisation more qualitative evidence which is harder to collate. On the plus side it can give both organisations and funders a richer view of the impact that they are making.

Getting a baseline: It can be hard to get a baseline, when you can't specify the outcome in advance. Children can play in many different ways, for many different reasons and with many different outcomes. Unless you are working intensively with a small group of children, it is disproportionate to collect a baseline on every aspect of each child's personality and behaviour.

It is also inappropriate to start to direct play, in order to achieve specific outcomes, since this undermines the benefits that accrue from free play.

Some organisations follow a sample of children and collect information at the beginning and at key points. However it's tricky knowing who is going to come back! Others make a note of significant events for children as they happen, for example when a child really begins to share for the first time or start to speak up for themselves. This becomes a retrospective baseline, based on the changes that occur.

Measuring the impact of play organisations in practice

Each project or organisation has to consider the need they are trying to address, their activities and products, who benefits from these and what outcomes they have in the short, medium and long term. In other words they have to think through the logic of their own particular work.

Once they have a clear set of outcomes, they can think about what success and failure would look like. This helps them to develop 'indicators' around which they can collect information at key points in the journey of the child or the project. They can then design appropriate methods that fit well with the work and are sensitive to the people they are working with.

Organisations will want to prioritise what they measure. They will want to ensure that 'evaluation' does not take over from the 'real work' and that evidence collected is valuable and can be used for learning and improving services. Identifying key information, making use of existing information, fitting evaluation into everyday systems and finding simple ways to record feedback such as 'personal testimony' all help to 'keep it simple'.

In appendix three we have included a list of indicators for the different types of outcomes in the model. These have been drawn from the monitoring and evaluation plans of organisations funded through the Go Play portfolio. They provide examples of the types of indicators that can be used to measure outcomes. It is not an exhaustive list and individual play organisations may come up with different indicators, suited to their own particular circumstances. Play organisations certainly should not try to measure all of the indicators we have identified. They should be encouraged to be critical, pick out the most relevant or useful, discard those which are not, adapt them or come up with better ones for their own settings.

Organisations will employ a broad range of methods. The table on page 16 includes some of the more common methods.

Common methods to evaluate the outcomes of play organisations

Method	Use
Baseline and follow up survey of providers, parents, children and others	To establish broad attitudes, current provision, play patterns (how much, where, type of play).
Format for collecting a range of evidence about the current situation	<p>Good for organisations working with a given community or school for a specified time period. For example play rangers, or organisations developing play spaces. Evidence may include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • photos of current state or use of spaces for play • views from steering group • conversations within community/school • statistics around crime, numbers using parks, clubs etc <p>This can be revisited at the end of the work with that school or community.</p>
Using existing records eg. attendance, activities provided, resources borrowed or used	<p>Participation may be an indicator of many outcomes, for example children's enjoyment, parents' confidence, play organisations' awareness.</p> <p>Resources borrowed may indicate the type of play encouraged or increased capacity to provide free play.</p>
Training and event evaluation sheets	To get information on attitudes, knowledge and skills prior to and after the event or session. Follow up can establish what changes participants have made to practice or provision as a result.
Observation sheets used during play sessions	To record type of play engaged in, changes in behaviour or achievements and factors affecting that.
Children's feedback sheets	Getting feedback about type of play and what they got from it (enjoyment, new skills, friends etc). Should be child friendly!
Feedback exercises <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making a picture • Physical game • Mapping 	<p>Useful as a good alternative to questionnaires.</p> <p>There are lots of good tools to consult people; these can be adapted for evaluation purposes. See Evaluation Support Scotland www.evaluationsupportscotland.org.uk and Highland Children's Forum: Tool box (listen to us) www.highlandchildrensforum.org</p>
Hurrah or good news book or folder	Good for keeping together a range of unsolicited or unexpected feedback and evidence such as comments, letters, press cuttings.
Visit record sheets (or excel sheet)	Keeps in one place the support you provided to organisations and evidence of current situation or change.
Telephone record sheets (or excel)	To note enquiries, action taken and possible/actual use of information.
Formal assessments of children or of play provision	Where you are working more intensively with a child or organisation.
Website hits and surveys	To identify use and value of web based resources.
Facebook or Bebo	To allow children to make their own comments.

Section 3: Case Studies

Midlothian Association of Play (MAP)



Background information

MAP wants a world in which every child can exercise their right to play and access quality play opportunities, within their community, that meet their play needs and support the child to flourish.

MAP's mission is to strongly influence, support and promote play and the child's right to play in Midlothian – and when relevant beyond.

The organisation was set up in 1996 and at that time was run by a voluntary committee of local people who represented Midlothian on the Lothian Play Forum Committee. The strong emphasis of those groups was promoting local parent led playschemes, which were very common at that time. MAP has since grown to take in a wider play focus and in 2002 became a Registered Charity (no. SC025474) and a Company Limited by Guarantee (no. 240729).

The office and play resource base is in Gorebridge, Midlothian, and MAP works throughout the local authority area. MAP has two part time development managers and one part time administrator, and from time to time utilises sessional workers, freelancers and volunteers.

Strategic aims for 2011-2014 are to:

1. Improve and increase opportunities for play in Midlothian and when relevant beyond
2. Increase awareness and understanding of play and the child's right to play
3. Increase the capacity of MAP in order to better work towards these goals

Activities and outcomes

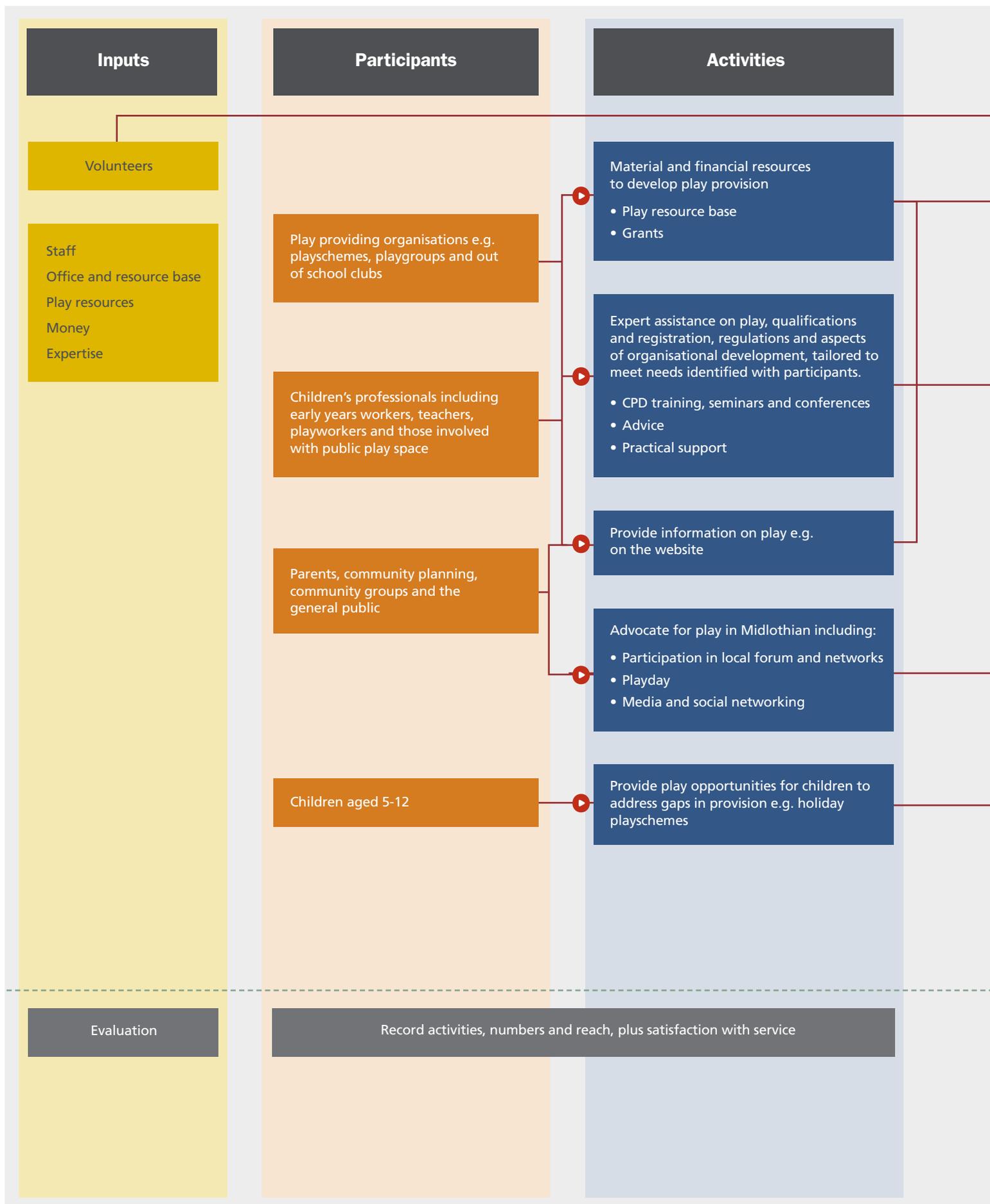
MAP's key services aim to:

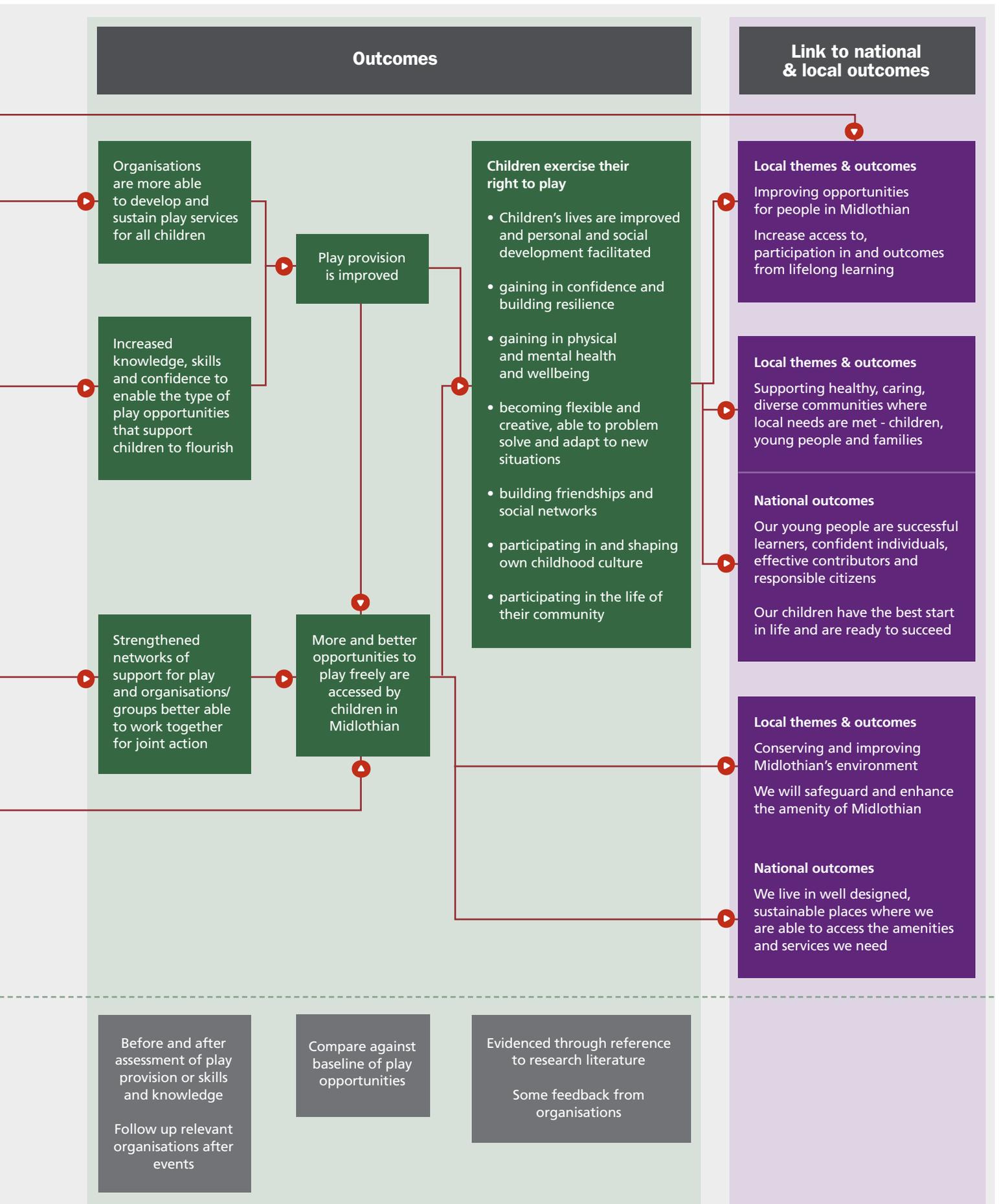
- Deliver expert assistance to play providers
- Provide grants and other financial assistance to play providers
- Advocate for play
- Provide play opportunities for children aged 5-12 years

Play providers that MAP assists – across the public, private and voluntary sectors – include playgroups, playschemes, out of school clubs and other community based projects. MAP's strategic aim with sufficient support available is to extend services and influence to schools and to others with a remit for play such as landscape architects or town planners.

Assistance is through training, hands-on support, signposting and advice including by phone or email. Support to any one group is often delivered across multiple topics and utilising a range of methods.

Logic model for Midlothian Association of Play





Method of collecting information: Discussion with settings

Ongoing discussion with settings has two main purposes

- To gather relevant information for evaluation
- To facilitate a development process as part of support offered by MAP

With this method, evaluation is not something that is separate from normal ways of working. Through discussion it is possible to establish the needs of a group and how these are changing over time, support that would be appreciated, and the ongoing impact MAP is having on that setting. The process of discussion itself supports the development of knowledge, skills and confidence.

Relevant points from the discussion are noted on the evaluation spreadsheet when back at the office. The notes help with planning future training and support tailored to that setting. Case studies about individual settings can be developed, with their consent, to contribute to reporting to funders on outcomes.

Advantages

- Easy to build into day to day work
- Provides participants the opportunity to put things in their own words
- Enables a richer picture to emerge
- Supports triangulation, ensuring a shared picture of the ways things are developed
- Tied into the development process and therefore more rooted in the learning from that process (e.g. as opposed to finding something to say for the purposes of evaluation)

Disadvantages

- Can be tricky to ensure the discussion is focused enough for evaluation purposes
- Remembering to input the notes onto the spreadsheet as there may be no physical reminder (unlike a pile of evaluation forms)

How to get the best out of the method

- Plan for the discussions in advance even if the discussion is to be informal – what do you wish to find out?
- Follow up anything you need more information on post discussion
- Use it alongside other approaches e.g. occasional surveys



Grounds for Learning (GFL)



Background information

Grounds for Learning is a charity that enriches the lives of Scotland's children by helping them to connect with nature, become more active, learn outdoors, develop social skills and have fun.

GFL encourages young people to have a say in the way their grounds are used and improved. As a result they learn to create and look after something valuable; their self-esteem grows and their behaviour improves, along with their potential to learn and achieve.

GFL do this by helping schools and early years settings to:

- transform their outdoor spaces - from uninspiring stretches of asphalt and grass to active, friendly, natural spaces that enrich learning and play.
- transform learning – bringing learning to life in their outdoor spaces, however small or uninspiring they may be.

The main strands of work are:

- working alongside schools and nurseries to help them implement practical projects that transform their outdoors and children's school experiences.
- supporting schools and settings across Scotland through our inspiring resources (in print, online and in film), training programmes, advisory visits, membership and bespoke services to Local Authorities and other partners.
- advocating the importance to children of quality outdoor spaces and experiences in their schools and nurseries.

Focus on Go Play funded projects

GFL were funded to work with 14 schools – in 6 focussing on encouraging use of nearby woodlands for play and in 8 developing 'natural' play spaces and features within the school's grounds. The logic model on page 24 describes in simple terms GFL's main activities and outcomes.

Through these projects GFL want to demonstrate that developing and making use of natural spaces is practical, doable and worth doing because of the benefits for children. GFL will showcase these projects and the learning that comes from them.

The key outcomes GFL see for children are that their lives are enriched in diverse and complex ways, including opportunities for creativity, imagination, socialising, relaxing, enjoying nature and being more active.

GFL is careful not to direct children in the way they play because unstructured free play provides the richest benefits for children. This means that they don't know in advance which outcomes will be experienced by which children. Some children may choose to be active and so get fitter, others may choose to watch a butterfly and enjoy nature while others will want to collaborate with their friends in a game. However, GFL assume that all children will benefit from playing freely in a natural environment.

How GFL evaluate

There are 4 main aspects to the evaluation of this work:

1. Baseline and follow up: GFL are looking at accidents and 'problem incidents' before intervention and after. GFL hope to see less fighting but don't know what they'll see in terms of accidents. Their hope is that there won't be any increase - as the fear of accidents is something that puts schools off doing this kind of thing. In similar projects in Germany they had more minor accidents and less serious ones.

GFL are assessing children's sense of 'connection' with nature before and after and observing play patterns before and after.

2. Regular monitoring of play by supervisors

Using a simple monitoring framework, GFL will assess how many children use the new facilities and how they play. Importantly, it will be a useful management tool, allowing schools to monitor what works, identify issues that need addressed and the impact of any changes to play supervision or policy.

3. Capturing stories

Because of the diverse and unpredictable range of outcomes, GFL's approach is to give children, parents and teachers opportunities to tell in their own words how natural play has benefitted them. Methods include structured interviews, questionnaires, video diaries and workshop exercises.

4. Measuring interest

An important part of this project is demonstrating that natural and woodland play in schools is not just beneficial but achievable. GFL will share the lessons from the project through case studies, film, a study tour and a short publication. GFL will evaluate their effectiveness in promoting the concept of natural play in schools by the extent to which these resources are accessed on our web site.

Method of collecting information: Creative writing exercise

Here GFL focus on one method for getting feedback from children. It is a creative writing exercise that can be used by teachers to assess children's connection with and understanding of nature. The notes given to teachers can be found in the text box below.

Descriptive writing exercise

Purpose: to evaluate children's experiences of, and connection to, nature.

Think of a natural space or place that you know well. It could be your garden, a park, a local wood – or maybe somewhere further away like a beach or countryside spot.

Imagine that you're in that place now.

1. What do you like best about your natural place? Try to give as much detail as you can. Think about what you can hear and smell, as well as what you can see.
2. What do you like to do when you're in your natural place? Try to write as much as you can about the different sorts of things you like to do there.
3. What do you feel like when you're in your natural place? And what do you feel about the place itself? Try to describe your feelings in as much detail as possible.

Teacher notes

Responses to each question will be assessed - for example, no. of descriptive phrases in Q1, no. of different activities in Q2 and statements describing a sense of connection with nature in Q3. The idea is to repeat the exercise after around 6 months of having access to natural play opportunities in school to see if there are any changes.

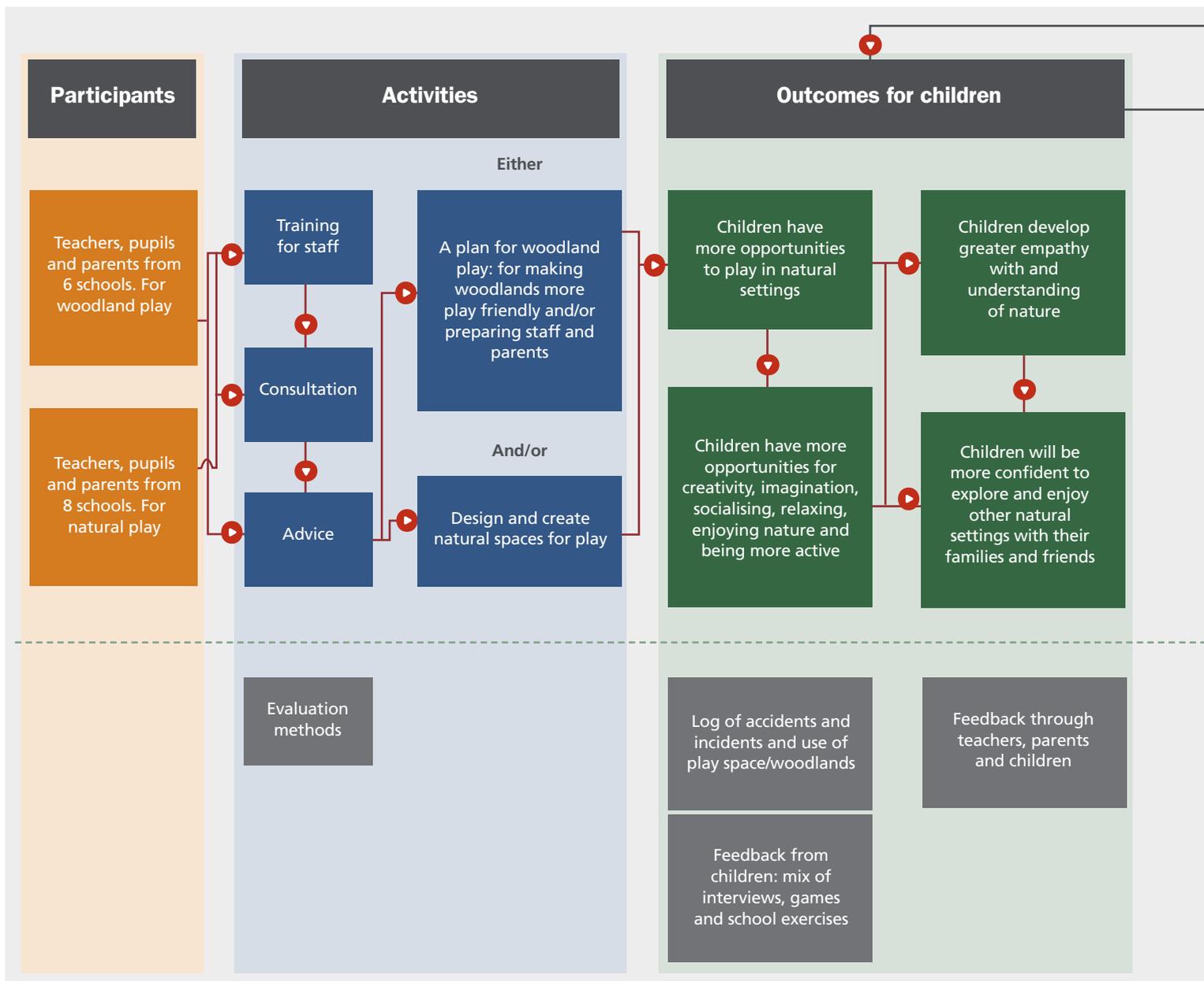
Pros

- As far as we are aware, no attempt has been made to evaluate this before - we can't find any examples and our network hasn't been able to either. So, it's trying to do something very new. That's also a con!
- Can be done by the teachers - doesn't need GFL input.
- Has educational value to pupils and teacher - not just taking up their time to please us.
- Can be objectively assessed.

Cons

- Big one is that not every child can express themselves well through writing. So - will need to set up to make sure they know that it's the number of ideas, not quality of prose that we are looking at. Tool can also be adapted to do the same exercise by drawing - which will help other pupils to contribute.
- Children's skills in writing develop over time - so would expect some development of ideas regardless of the play space.

Logic model for Grounds for Learning



Situation and Assumptions

Children and young people's contact with nature has halved in a generation. Unless children have regular positive experience of nature and the outdoors they are unlikely to visit, enjoy, understand or value our natural heritage as adults.

Children spend up to 4 hours per week in their school playgrounds. Encouraging them to be more active during this time is one of the simplest ways of meeting WHO guidelines of at least one hour of moderate activity on most days of the week.

Teachers report that outdoor active play at school improves focus and attention in class.

Natural playgrounds support the development of social skills and friendships.

Children in urban areas often lack the opportunities to enjoy nature that is available in suburban or rural areas. Many of them spend more time in their school playgrounds than any other outdoor environment.

Outcomes for other schools

Providing natural and woodland play in schools will be established as a beneficial and practical application

Other schools will be inspired and motivated to provide natural play for their pupils

Schools will have greater access to information and advice they need to provide natural play for their pupils

Other schools provide natural and woodland play opportunities for their children

Monitor use of website resources

Parent Action for Safe Play (PASP)

**Parent Action for
Safe Play
Kirkshaws**



Background information

Parent Action for Safe Play is a recognised charity, which is based in Coatbridge. This is an area of deprivation, which is typified by high unemployment, low income, poor health and social conditions, drug/alcohol abuse, and high levels of crime.

The organisation works with children and young people and aims to improve provision of safe play and recreational facilities, improve educational, training and learning opportunities and help children and young people to make positive lifestyle choices.

Parent Action for Safe Play believes that all children have the right to play, regardless of the area in which they live. Research consistently shows that play is essential for physical, social, emotional and cognitive development. It is therefore imperative that all children are given the opportunity to play in order to allow them to make positive lifestyle choices, which will inevitably improve their life chances.

Activities

PASP have a wide variety of activities for children and young people both within their Children and Youth Development Centre and Outdoor Play Area. These include essential play, sport, youth and recreational facilities for children and young people aged 0-25 years including play and youth work themed programmes, recreational and physical programmes, trips and outward bound opportunities, environmental projects and community events.

Go Play Project

Go Play funding enabled PASP to install renewable energy street lighting through the play park allowing them to extend the hours of play throughout the year. PASP are also delivering and facilitating free play sessions in 3 areas of play deprivation within Coatbridge. Through the sessions PASP aim to overcome barriers that stop children and young people aged 5-13 years playing in open spaces and demonstrate the importance of play at a local level.

By being present in the streets and open spaces in all weather conditions children will become empowered by the free choice and 'openness' of the activity. The play will provide an opportunity for them to be challenged and take risks but not pushed beyond their capabilities. This will aid the development of children and young people's social skills, improve physical development and provide alternatives to or divert from anti social behaviour.

PASP recognise that 'free play' is not widely understood or valued and therefore actively promote the benefits. PASP believe that play is a doorway to learning, stimulating children's imaginations, helping them adapt and solve problems. Play arouses curiosity, which leads to discovery & creativity.

How PASP evaluate

Baseline Information: PASP collect baseline information when they start work in a new area. A steering group discusses the issues in that area. They interview parents about their attitudes to children playing out and assess the numbers of children playing out and where they play. They assess the condition of places where children might play and take photographs of current use. PASP reassess this information after a period of time, where they hope to see an increase in the number of children playing out.

Ongoing monitoring of play sessions: PASP use a variety of evaluation methods to capture the impact they are making on children's lives including observations, feedback from children, parents, and play rangers, recording sheets and a range of physical and visual methods.

Case Studies: By observing individual children and young people PASP are able to monitor their social and physical development over a period of time. This method allows them to record improvements in levels of interaction, communication, participation, ability to take on/master new challenges in a way that creates a diary of individual distance travelled.

By collecting evidence through these processes PASP will be able to use it and determine what worked and why, what we would do again and what we would do differently.

Method of collecting information: Reflection Tree

This method provides a simple visual tool for children and young people to feed back both on how they feel in general, and how they feel about the play sessions. As with any method of evaluation this is repeated over time to show change.

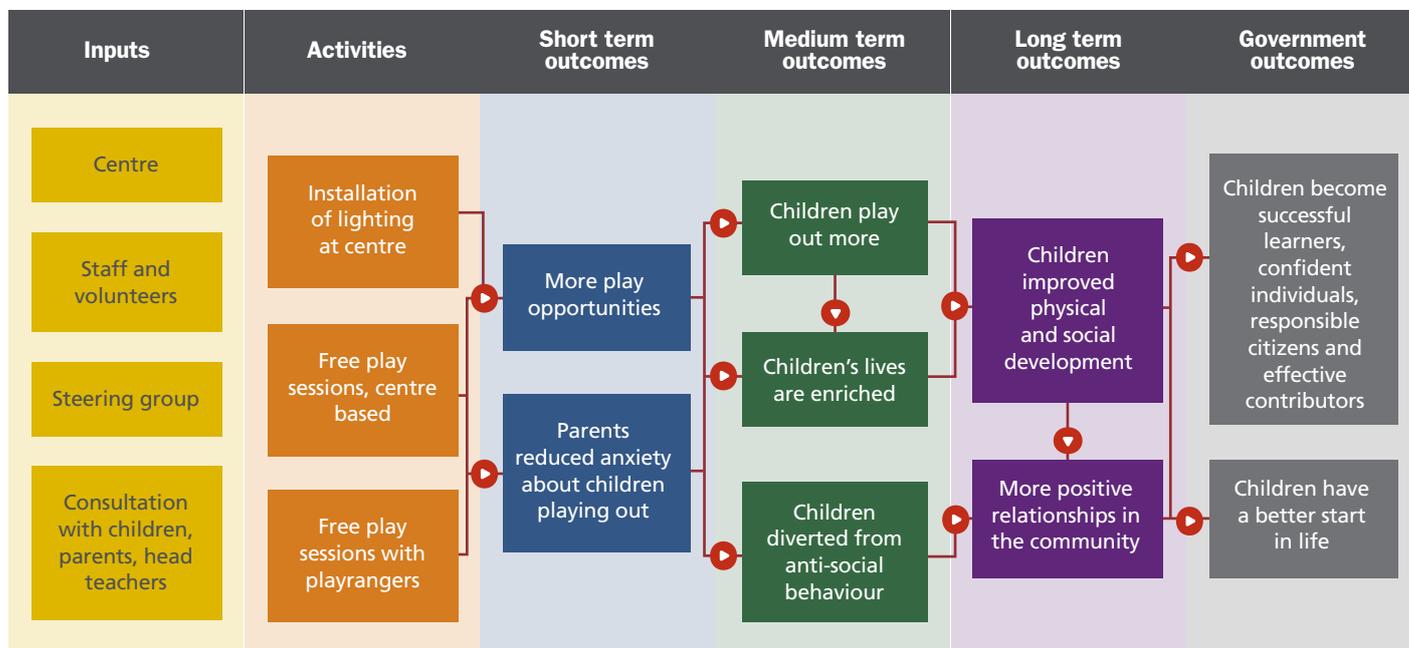
Pros

- Simple and effective
- Can be adapted to suit age and needs
- Gives prompt feed back, can also be a con

Cons

- Can only be reflective of current situation

Logic model for Parent Action for Safe Play



The Situation

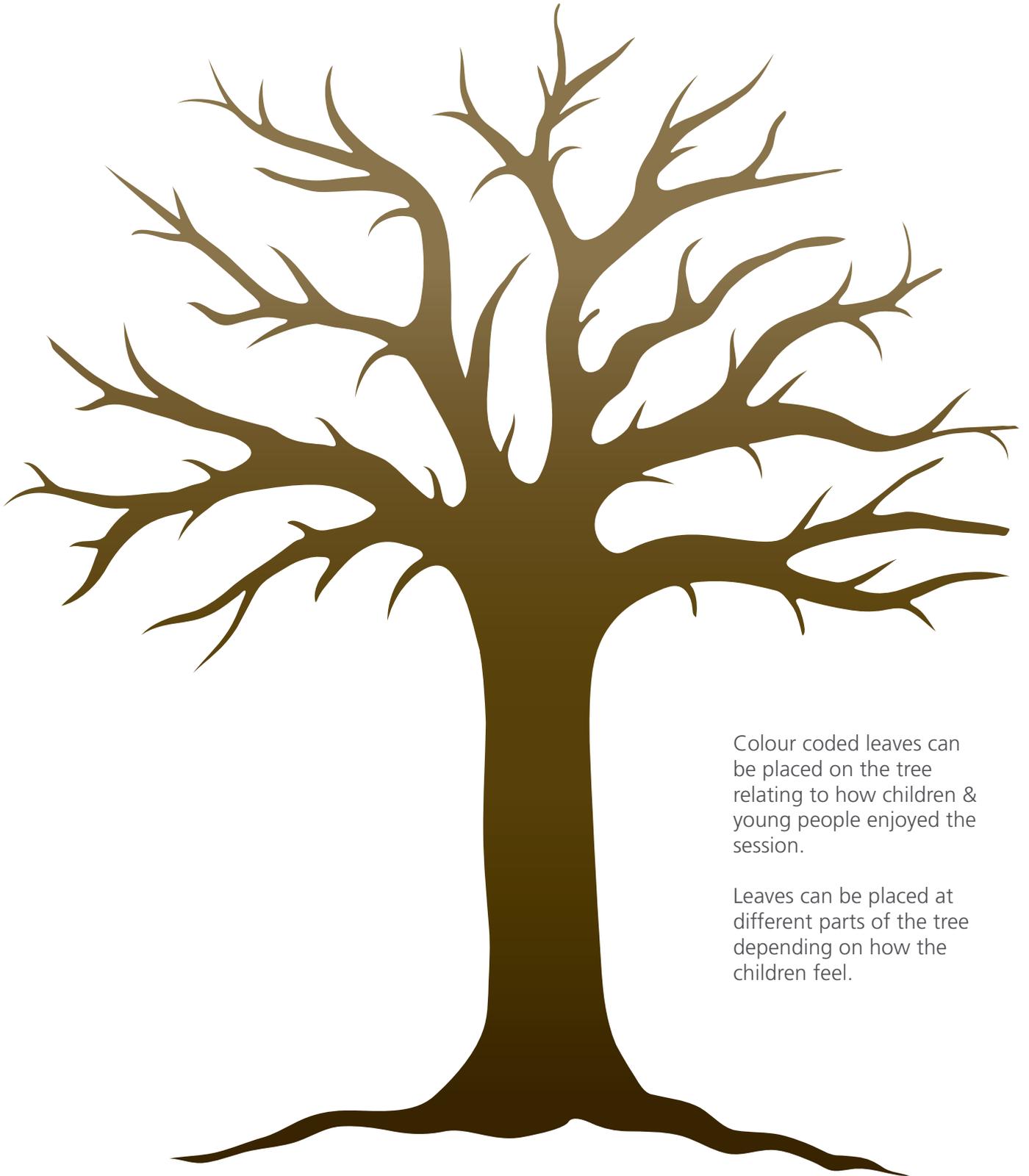
- Fewer children play outdoors.
- Insufficient play facilities, lack of green space, closed school play grounds.
- Lack of free play opportunities for children.
- Outside play not considered safe by parents because of anxiety around stranger danger/traffic.

Assumptions

- Parent Action for Safe Play's definition of Safe Play is "a stimulating and challenging environment free from inappropriate risk, which allows children and young people to explore themselves and the world through freely chosen play".
- UNCRC Article 31 states that children have the right to play.
- Play is a doorway to learning, stimulating children's imaginations, helping them adapt and solve problems, play arouses curiosity, which leads to discovery and creativity.
- Play is a vital ingredient of a happy and healthy childhood, supporting children's physical, emotional, social and educational development.



Reflection Tree



Colour coded leaves can be placed on the tree relating to how children & young people enjoyed the session.

Leaves can be placed at different parts of the tree depending on how the children feel.

Family Support Projects (FSP): The Nature Nurture Project



Background information

Nature Nurture Project is part of the charitable organisation, Family Support Projects, based in Camphill School Aberdeen. FSP's vision is to provide vulnerable children from disadvantaged backgrounds with opportunity for free play in natural environments and nurturing support from specially trained staff. FSP presently have three members on the team. Social Services staff are offered places on the project to help support the children and to also receive training in the approach.

Activities

Nature Nurture has run as a successful early intervention project with preschool children for two years. Through investment from the Go Play initiative Nature Nurture has provided early intervention for vulnerable children aged between 5 and 11 years. These children have been nominated by social service staff due to the very challenging circumstances they each face at home and/or at school. All the children have problems with attachment disorders, most come from families affected by substance misuse, alcohol abuse, domestic violence and poverty. Many experience high stress and anxiety levels and as a consequence present challenging behaviours that cause problems at school. Some have faced exclusion.

The children participate in weekly half day sessions and five whole day sessions in the holidays. In these sessions, irrespective of the weather, the children have opportunity for adventurous and exploratory free play in beautiful natural surroundings. They are also given the opportunity to build relationships with other children, attuned staff and well trained, gentle animals (dogs, donkeys and horses). The sessions are structured through a journey around the estate with stopping off points for play. The route stays the same each session providing security for the children, but the children fill the journey and stops with their self initiated play. The adults facilitate the play by providing the resources the children need, offering guidance in health and safety, and when invited, by joining in with play and problem solving. Staff receive training in sensitive observation and attuned, nurturing interactions.

Children are encouraged to assess risk, challenge themselves, persevere and practise. Every effort is acknowledged and children are helped to reflect on their achievements and their development. Most importantly the children are helped to have fun, to relax and to discover more about themselves as growing and developing individuals.

The logic model on page 32 identifies the key outcomes that come from their work.

Outcomes, assessment and evaluation

Nature Nurture is an outcome focused approach to promoting the development of resilience. Nature Nurture has developed an outcomes model for assessment and evaluation based on the 'building blocks' of resilience as identified by Daniels and Wassell (2001) and Grotberg (1994). This identifies 7 domains that can be developed through exposure to nature, nurturing interactions and free play, leading an individual from a state of vulnerability to one of resilience.

The approach to evaluation is outlined on the next page.

Advantages

This model of assessment/evaluation provides detailed evidence of development towards resilience. It also helps highlight areas where further work and support is needed. It is straight forward to use and is simple to understand. Professionals and parents have found the baseline easy to understand and fill in.

The children enjoy the recorded reflective sessions and the dialogue during these sessions helps children to recognise their own growth and development as well as that of others. They learn to appreciate and respect the effort made by their peers. The final reports have been helpful in the child's reviews and professional assessment meetings. The recommendations that conclude each report are valued by parents and professionals involved with the child.

Disadvantages

The baseline and observation questionnaires are very long and detailed. It takes over 15 minutes to complete the baseline. FSP still need to find an effective way of including the children's own input in the baseline assessments.

The observation sheets have now been replaced by a recorded verbal reflection session where audio files are made of the reflective dialogue covering each

heading for each child. A team member types up these observations into a database during each reflective session. This is still time consuming but more effective in terms of quality of reflection.

There is a poor return rate on parental evaluation forms. This is despite enclosing stamped and addressed envelopes. Individual interview works better but this is time consuming.

Baseline	
<p>Assessment completed by primary caregiver and referring social worker.</p> <p>This measures strengths and areas for development in the 'building blocks of resilience'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and emotional wellbeing • Physical health and wellbeing • Social competence • Talents and interests • Positive values • Creativity and imagination • Knowledge and understanding

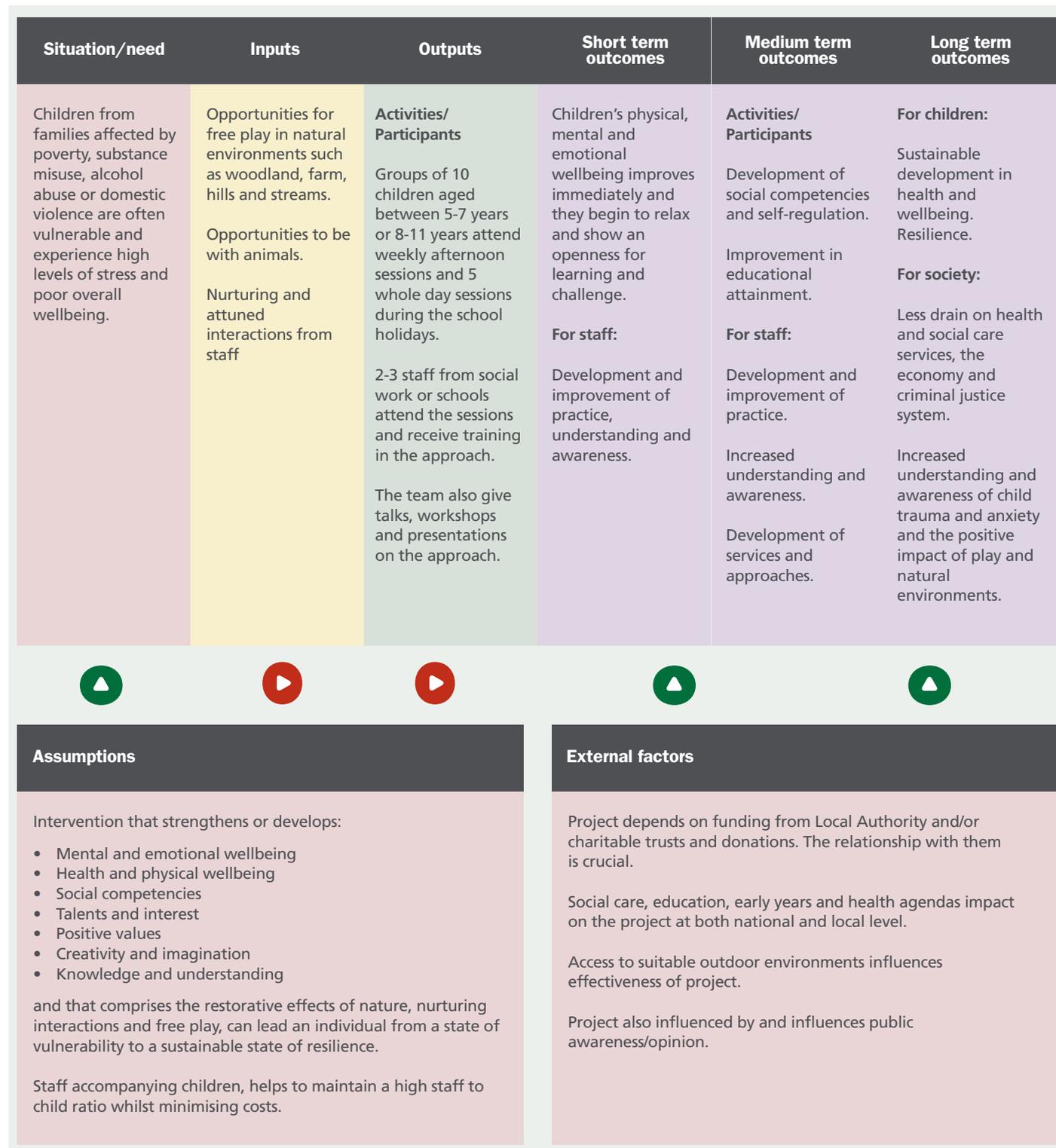


Assessment through observation and self assessment	
<p>Children verbally reflect on their achievements/areas for development at the end of each session. These reflections are scribed and recorded as audio files.</p> <p>Staff participating in sessions observe two children each and share their observations on each of the baseline measures in the 'building blocks of resilience'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and emotional wellbeing • Physical health and wellbeing • Social competence • Talents and interests • Positive values • Creativity and imagination • Knowledge and understanding



Evaluation	
<p>Children verbally reflect on the programme and talk about their achievements, learning processes and next steps. These reflections are scribed and recorded as audio files.</p> <p>Staff, primary care givers and other key professionals who work with the child complete an evaluation questionnaire on the 'building blocks of resilience'.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mental and emotional wellbeing • Physical health and wellbeing • Social competence • Talents and interests • Positive values • Creativity and imagination • Knowledge and understanding

Logic model for Family Support Projects



Acknowledgements

This pack has been produced by Evaluation Support Scotland for Inspiring Scotland's Go Play programme. We would like to thank Diane Kennedy and Steven Marwick for their work to develop the pack.

The pack was created to meet a need to articulate outcomes of play and play organisations and how to evaluate them. We believed the answer to the question already existed in the practical experience of play workers and volunteers and Evaluation Support Scotland's role was to unleash and make sense of that knowledge. We think the creation of the pack shows we were right and its success will be demonstrated in how the play sector use, adapt and develop from it.

In the meantime, thanks to all the organisations who were part of the 2010-2011 Go Play portfolio and contributed to the development of the pack. Special thanks go to the individuals who were involved in the action learning set and expert groups who were consulted in the production of this pack.

Julie Atkin *Parent Action for Safe Play*
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 Mary Miller
 Jessica Mills *Youth Highland*
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 Juliet Robertson *Creative Star Learning*
 Alastair Seaman *Grounds for Learning*
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 Alan Sutton *Play London*



Appendix 1: Process of developing the model

In developing the logic model we chose initially to work with a small, representative sample of the portfolio of Go Play funded organisations, using an action learning approach. The group met four times and each time brought intelligence from their own organisations about the need they were meeting, their activities and their outcomes.

We were able to test out the group's ideas, not only with the organisations they came from, but also with the larger portfolio. Short discussions were introduced at evaluation workshops (which were happening anyway) and a discussion was held at the September 2010 portfolio event for all Go Play organisations. We further surveyed volunteers from the portfolio, asking them to consider key comments made at the event and by others.

Inspiring Scotland's Go Play Performance Advisors played an important role. They:

- were able to get feedback from organisations as part of project visits
- mapped outcomes and indicators against the model to test the model
- compared the problem tree to the evidence from two literature reviews

A second group of people from play organisations in the Go Play portfolio finalised the model based on the feedback from Performance Advisors and the other funded organisations. They also incorporated the learning from a short paper about evidence and outcomes prepared by Issy Cole Hamilton (consultant to Play Scotland). They further commented on the main materials in the pack.

Lastly we looked for four case studies, which represented parts of the model – to better explain the types of organisation included in the play sector.

Why action learning

We wanted to ensure that the model reflected the real life experience of play organisations and the contexts in which they worked. We wanted to be clear about the real difficulties they faced in collecting evidence of change from play and to share ideas for overcoming those difficulties.

We wanted the portfolio of Go Play organisations to 'own' the model and to find it useful.

Why logic modelling

A logic model is a simple representation of a more complicated picture. It shows the links between the need you have identified, what you do and how this makes a difference for individuals and for communities.

In this context it allowed organisations to

- Share understanding of their differences and similarities and where they fit into a larger picture
- Identify common or critical activities and outcomes
- Begin to tell a collective story
- Begin to think about how they might evidence that story

Appendix 2: Evidencing the need

PROBLEM TREE FOR PLAY: External commentary on barriers and causes affecting children’s right to play freely

Comments & evidence from review of:

- Play Scotland (2011) *The Power of Play – An Evidence Base*, a Play Scotland publication
- Gleave J. (2008) *Risk and Play: a literature review*. Playday 2008 Give us a go!
- Gleave, J. (2009) *Children’s time to Play: a literature review*. Playday 2009 Make time!
- Gleave J. (2010) *Making it our Place: Community views on children’s play*. Playday 2010
- Gleave J. (2010) *Community Play: a literature review*. Playday 2010.
- Coalter F. and Taylor J. (2001) *‘Realising the potential of cultural services - the case for play’* Centre for Leisure Research at the University of Edinburgh

Adults discourage play

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Intolerance towards children mistrust, fear of children public space seen as for adults	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selby school cancels outside break in row over noise’ (2010) http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/uk-england-york-north-yorkshire-11340226 • ‘Grumpy adults stop kids playing’ (2003) http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/uk/3127495.stm • ICM Research (2010), <i>Playday 2010 opinion poll summary</i>. Playday 2010 Our place campaign 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outdoor play at break time cancelled as neighbours complained about the noise. • Children’s Society review/comment on research that says 80% of children have been told off for playing outdoors – half have been shouted at. Reports of ‘play bans’/no ball games signs. • 24% of children have been told off for playing ball games in their neighbourhood, (31% boys). 25% told off for making noise when playing outside, raising to 33% for 13-14yr olds. • Whilst 70% of adults would describe children as friendly, a large proportion also describe children as disrespectful (54%), intimidating (40%) and out of control (38%). 48% of adults believe that children now do not have the respect for the rest of their community compared with 16% when asked about children of their own generation. • 31% of adults think children playing outside increased anti-social behaviour and 25% stated that it doesn’t feel safe when there are kids around.

Adults discourage play cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>Intolerance towards children</p> <p>mistrust, fear of children</p> <p>public space seen as for adults</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Report concludes that a shift in attitudes towards children and young people is needed for them to become valued and active citizens... there is a need to improve public space for children, but they cannot be fully integrated into community life without support from other community members. Report also concluded that community members can be unwelcoming of children playing outside – parents receive complaints from other residents when their children play out in the streets near their home. Adults would feel uneasy about children socialising or playing in groups (although children do this to feel safe). Some adults have concerns that there are too many children outside – a view partially based on a prejudice that children should not be present in public spaces. Intolerant adults complaining about noise and nuisance can also prevent children from playing outside more (British Heart Foundation 2009).

Adults discourage play cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>Don't want to be inconvenienced – Adult priorities are more important</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cooper, J. (2000) <i>Listening to Children at Play</i>. London: Theories Landscape • Nursery told to get rid of children's play area http://www.lep.co.uk/community/nursery_to_ld_to_get_rid_of_children_s_play_area__ • Spilsbury, J.C (2005) '<i>We don't get to go out in the Front Yard – Children's Home Range and Neighbourhood Violence</i>' Children's Geographies • Mathews, H and Tucker F (2006) '<i>On the other side of the Tracks: The psychogeographies and everyday lives of rural teenagers in the UK</i>' in Children and their Environments: Learning, using and designing space • Gleave, J (2010) <i>Community play: a literature review</i> • Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Study found that parent's desire to minimise risk in playgrounds was at least partially for their own convenience. The adults wanted to relax and take their attention away from supervising the children so favoured playground design that presented high levels of safety. Safety is the highest priority for play provision – over enjoyment of the children. • Shelters for play area which enabled outdoor play in all weather were 'destroying the vistas for residents in the area'. • Public space has come to be recognised as 'adult space' – children are unwelcome because of the perceived dangers the world presents them. • Girls particularly struggle to gain acceptance in public space. Outside places that children and young people can use are often considered 'boys places' where boys play football and socialise. • Review of literature concludes that concerns about children in public space have contributed to the decline of community play in the UK. • Focus group findings – some children highlighted that their parent's commitments impinge on their opportunities to play as many of the children were reliant on supervised play.

Parents and other adults (professionals and policy makers) don't create or support opportunities for play

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>Anxiety about/hide behind Health and Safety rules</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thompson, C.W, Travlou, P., and Roe, J. (2006) <i>Free Range Teenagers: The role of wild adventure space in young people's lives</i>. Edinburgh: OPENspace • Ball in Thom, B. Sales, R. and Pearce, J (eds) (2007) <i>Growing up with Risk</i>. Bristol: Policy Press • Gill, T. (2007) <i>No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society</i>. London: Calouste Gulberkian Foundation • Wheway, R. (2008) <i>Not a Risk Averse Society, Play Action Online</i>, no 2. March 2008 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group study in England with young children aged 11 to 18 – Young people stated that parental or school teachers fears stood as a major barrier to allowing children to undertake adventurous outdoor activity. • Risk assessment requirement of UK Health & Safety legislation – standard part of play provision. Most common approach (for playgrounds) is to evaluate play facilities based on advice from the British & European Safety Standard. Not a legal requirement, but a recommendation of good practice. Insurance claims often request that these rules are followed in order for play providers to be covered regardless of their relevance to the setting. • Concerns about safety & litigation have led to a 'dumbing down' of playgrounds – play value is limited. More exciting opportunities being removed. • Concerns over safety arisen in part because of concerns of growing 'compensation' culture in Britain. The growth is a myth and accident claim levels have remained roughly the same in recent years. Despite this, a fear of legal action has caused play providers, schools and communities to avoid more adventurous or risky play opportunities. • Those responsible for health & safety responsible for imposing 'fear' culture upon general public. Simple alterations to procedures and practices could loosen grip of risk averse culture. Eg. Difference between 'good practice' and compulsory often misinterpreted because officials fail to provide clear guidance about the status & limitations of advice. Failure of health & safety guidance to indicate importance of various recommendations – as a result playgrounds are being closed unnecessarily over minor health & safety failures that could easily be resolved.

Parents and other adults (professionals and policy makers) don't create or support opportunities for play cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Anxiety about/hide behind Health and Safety rules	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adults feel Health & Safety regulations make it harder to run communal activities. (Counterpoint Research 2008). Children are restricted in opportunities for outdoor and active play in staffed provision (Edgington 2004). Practitioners been found to limit outdoor play because they consider it to be dangerous.
Lack of time, energy commitment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Scotland's Commissioner for Children and Young People (2007) <i>Adult's Attitudes towards Contact with Children and Young People</i>. Edinburgh: Rocket Science 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Parents acknowledge not enough activities for children & young people in the local community but evidence suggests a general reluctance amongst adults to involve themselves in tackling the problem. In Scotland, adults felt they did not have the time to involve themselves in child play provision, despite supporting the idea of more activities for children & young people.
Don't understand the value of play or children's right to play in the community.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> '<i>Realising the potential of cultural services - the case for play</i>' Fred Coalter and John Taylor (2001), Centre for Leisure Research at the University of Edinburgh <i>Go Play baseline report</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Despite recent initiatives, it is argued that public investment in play facilities and services is proportionately less than other aspects of cultural services and, in some respects, is in decline. Go Play baseline report concluded that within the grant-making community, play and playwork are not well understood. Play sector has lacked the skills and tools to articulate the benefits of free play.

Perceived lack of places to play + lack of good spaces and places to play

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Perceived lack of places to play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ICM Research (2010), <i>Playday 2010 opinion poll summary</i>. Playday 2010 Our place campaign • Davey C. (2008) <i>What do they know? Investigating the human rights concerns of children & young people living in England</i>, London: Children's Rights Alliance for England • Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 90% of adults said they played out regularly in their street as children, 29% of children (aged 7-14) say they don't play or hang out outside where they live. • Research looking at children's views on local play facilities found a general feeling among children that facilities were poor. 75% of children reported there were some facilities in their area (such as a swimming pool, green space, playground) but 39% claimed the facilities were not readily accessible to them due to restricted opening times, they were run down, broken equipment or they were barred from using them, too expensive. 80% of younger children complained play space is poorly maintained, full of litter or with broken glass. • General agreement from focus group research that there is nowhere for children to go to play. Adults recalled that they would make use of the natural landscape to go out and play, but it was felt now that parents have to drive to find similar play as nothing is available locally. Children spoke of their area feeling 'squashed' & that there is nowhere with enough space to play games or ride a bike.
Lack of good spaces and places for play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Realising the potential of cultural services - the case for play</i> Fred Coalter and John Taylor (2001), Centre for Leisure Research at the University of Edinburgh 	<p>Studies on the loss of play space..... The loss of playing areas has been a longstanding concern of organisations such as the National Playing Fields Association (NPFA). For example, in 1989 the NPFA (1989) highlighted the scope of the problem:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1989, the Central Council for Physical Recreation indicated that approximately 800 sites covering in excess of 100,000 acres were at risk of development. • A survey by the West Midlands Council for Sport and Recreation revealed that over a 30 year period, 93 prime industrial and commercial sports fields had been lost. • In Bristol 69 acres of playing fields were lost over a 15 year period.

Perceived lack of places to play + lack of good spaces and places to play cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Lack of good spaces and places for play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Davey C. (2008) <i>What do they know? Investigating the human rights concerns of children & young people living in England</i>, London: Children's Rights Alliance for England 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> A study of young people in the Wester Hailes housing estate in Edinburgh found that redevelopment work had greatly reduced the amount of open areas for casual play. Play areas, such as ad hoc football pitches, had been destroyed and areas fenced off, resulting in increased numbers of complaints from residents about young people 'hanging about'.
Don't know how to create good play opportunities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Hendricks, B.E (2001) <i>Designing for Play</i>. Aldershot: Ashgate Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Concerns over H&S led to changes in natural surroundings of play facilities that are unjustified resulting in damage to natural landscape and to children's play experience. Approaches based on assumption that exposing children to the natural world is too dangerous for them to cope with. Parents can limit their children's play opportunities by ensuring they are frequently occupied in organised and educational activities (Veitch, J et al 2007). Parents used to be able to rely on neighbours and other people to watch their children, but they don't know their neighbours and how they would react if asked to keep an eye on their children. (Counterpoint Research 2008). Play spaces inappropriate for children. Many public places seen by children as boring and have become overregulated curtailing the imagination of designers. Dissatisfaction with play facilities (Valentine, G. and McKendrick, J 1997). In many areas there appears to be a deliberate attempt to 'design out' any possible opportunities for accidental harm – in some schools playground games are banned as staff are fearful of any proceedings that could be brought against them if a child is injured. Children consider risk-free environments boring (NICE 2010).

Perceived lack of places to play + lack of good spaces and places to play cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Planners and Designers don't factor in play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>New Charter for Children's Play</i> (Children's Play Council, 1998a) • <i>'Best Play: What play provision should do for children'</i> Published by the National Playing Fields Association, March 2000 • Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Highlights broad range of individuals and organisations who have responsibility for ensuring children have access to play opportunities. Including parents and carers, service planners/play professionals, politicians, planners and architects, public bodies, play services, schools, hospitals and health services etc. • Children's natural propensity to play has been impaired by the loss of suitable public space. • Loss of land to new developments robs children of their social spaces and it is not uncommon for children's needs in public space to be overlooked in planning and development. (Sutton, L et al 2007).

Outside play not considered safe

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Attitude to risk is low	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill, T. (2007) <i>No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society</i>. London: Calouste Gulberkian Foundation • Ball D. (2004) <i>Policy Issues and Risk-benefit Trade-offs of 'Safer Surfacing for Children's Playgrounds</i>. Accident Analysis and Prevention Vol 35, No 4 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gill argues that children are denied opportunities to play and explore risk and describes the development of 'risk aversion'. Argues that society is now incapable of dealing with risks and have implemented unnecessary safety measures to avoid them, often at the expense of freedom and enjoyment. Despite precautions, the public's fear surrounding the issue of risk has increased rather than decreased. • Latter half of 20th C saw shift in beliefs about risk and how they should be dealt with. In 1950's risk acknowledged as natural part of life and accidents random bad luck. Values replaced by a view that risk of any kind is unacceptable and accidents no longer misfortunes but predictable and avoidable events.

Outside play not considered safe cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>'Fears of' stranger danger, traffic, drugs/gangs, lighting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 • Mayall, B. (2000) <i>Negotiating Childhoods</i>, Children 5-16 Research Programme Briefing Paper No.13, University of Hull • Evans, J. (1995) <i>Where Have All the Players Gone?</i>, <i>International Play Journal</i>, 3, pp.3-19 • ICM Research (2010), <i>Playday 2010 opinion poll summary</i>. Playday 2010 Our place campaign • Spilsbury, J.C (2005) <i>'We don't get to go out in the Front Yard – Children's Home Range and Neighbourhood Violence'</i> Children's Geographies • Davey C. (2008) <i>What do they know? Investigating the human rights concerns of children & young people living in England</i>, London: Children's Rights Alliance for England • Thomas G, and Thompson G (2004) <i>A Child's Place: Why environment matters to children</i> London: Green Alliance and Demos 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research using 7 focus groups across England – found a decline in children's freedom to play from previous generations. Adults explain this is due to it not seen as safe for children to play in local neighbourhoods without adult supervision due to concerns of an increase in road traffic, an increase in crime, children carrying knives, gangs, drugs, paedophiles. • The increasing restriction of children from public places because of 'traffic danger' and 'stranger danger'. • The increase in car ownership and the desire to keep traffic flowing have resulted in the decline of street play. • Nearly half (47%) of adults think it is unsafe for children to play outside without an adult. Only 11% of adults think it was unsafe to play outside without an adult when they were growing up. 94% of adults believe there was freedom for children to go and explore when they were growing up, but only 40% think this is true for today's children. • Over a quarter of adults believe that children commonly face the threat of being followed or abducted by strangers when playing outside where they live. The biggest threat that adults think children will face when playing is road accidents (63% of parents and 55% of all adults). • High profile cases about child abduction or 'out of control' young people have led to a moral panic responded to by keeping children away from the public realm. • Concerns about children's safety are a prominent factor contributing to the decline of children playing in their communities. • Streets are often seen as the most dangerous place to be in terms of 'stranger-danger' and is uncommon for children to play in the street.

Outside play not considered safe cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>'Fears of' stranger danger, traffic, drugs/gangs, lighting</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Counterpoint 2008 research showing that 'although parents and carers remember some of the problems in the environment that existed when they were children, their view was that things had significantly deteriorated in recent times and their children's experience was very different to their own.' Research from other countries showing children have similar experiences. E.g. Research in Australia found children reporting busy roads, car pollution or lack of playground equipment as barriers to outdoor play. Bullying or the threat of violence can be a problem for children. A Glasgow play park study (Simpson, S et al 2009) showed 29% of young people could feel frightened in their parks. Younger and older children talk of fear of getting mugged in streets near their homes (NICE 2008).
<p>Cultural views about 'good parents'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 'Best Play: What play provision should do for children' Published by the National Playing Fields Association, March 2000 <i>Play Wales (2003) Play Deprivation briefing paper.</i> Cardiff: Play Wales 'Realising the potential of cultural services - the case for play' Fred Coalter and John Taylor (2001), Centre for Leisure Research at the University of Edinburgh 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The changing attitude of society towards children, reflected, for instance, in the increase in parental anxiety about child safety impairs children's ability to play. Although Play Wales has suggested that children who experience material/cultural poverty are among those who are most at risk of high levels of play deprivation, it also argues that children from modestly affluent backgrounds are at greater risk (than those from less affluent backgrounds) from low to moderate levels of play deprivation; this is as a result of parents inadvertently denying them the possibility of quality play experiences by protecting them from environments that are perceived to be 'hazardous' or unproductive for development. There is some evidence that opportunities for spontaneous, safe play are becoming limited by lack of provision and by parents'/ carers' more restrictive attitudes.

Outside play not considered safe cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>Cultural views about 'good parents'</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ICM Research (2010), <i>Playday 2010 opinion poll summary</i>. Playday 2010 Our place campaign Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children's freedom to play outside where they live seems to be prohibited by safety concerns. It would seem that confidence is affected by parent's concerns that children of other families are not playing out. An ethos of collectively allowing neighbouring children to play out together improves confidence. There is also an element of parental concern that their children may annoy neighbours, though further stats show that in general neighbours are more, rather than less supportive of neighbourhood play. 37% of parents worry that neighbours will judge them if they let their children play outside. 55% of parents worry that children making a noise might upset the neighbours. Parents thought their neighbours would think they were bad parents if they allowed their children to play outside – perceived judgement from others contributed to parents' reluctance to allow their children to play outside. The freedom that parents allow children seems to be influenced by the behaviour of others – parents seemed more inclined to allow their children out to play if they knew there were other children playing out too. Element of disapproval towards parents who allow their children to play outside – some judgements about too many children being allowed to stay out late and at too young an age. The disapproval of children playing in the neighbourhood seemed to prevent parents from allowing their own children to play outside, that is, they feared being judged by others. Public consciousness that letting children play or travel around neighbourhoods, unaccompanied is sometimes judged as an indication of irresponsible parenthood (British Heart Foundation 2009).

Outside play not considered safe cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
<p>Media: overemphasise risks and negative portrayal of children and families (young people)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valentine, G. (2004) <i>Public Spaces and the Culture of Childhood</i>: Aldershot Ashgate • Lindon, J. (1999) <i>Too Safe for their Own Good</i>. London: National Early Years Network • Gill, T. (2007) <i>No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society</i>. London: Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation • Spilsbury, J.C (2005) 'We don't get to go out in the Front Yard – Children's Home Range and Neighbourhood Violence' Children's Geographies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Two year study documenting perceptions of parents (children aged between 8 and 11) found evidence that risk, or perceptions of risk are socially constructed. Various 'distortions' in parental fears – eg. Majority of parents believed children are at more risk than they have been in the past & that their children are at greater risk in public spaces than within the home. This contradicts with 2004 stat's from NSPCC which show children are in more danger in private spaces. • Role of the media in the disjunction between children's actual safety and society's concerns about children's participation in risk taking. Media coverage focuses on what could go wrong with little regard for how likely or unlikely this outcome may be. Media takes an active role in manipulating the public's perception of risks. Stat's show that the risk of a car accident is significantly higher than the risk of a serious playground injury, but as traffic accidents are frequent they are not publicised in the way playground accidents can be. • Media tendency to bend the truth about risks. • Media sensationalism of rare murder and abduction cases distract attention away from realistic threats. • Negative perceptions of young people in the community may be, in part, a result of their representation in the media. • 2004 MORI survey found young people were presented negatively in 71% of media images where only 14% presented them in a positive light. • Adults believe children are represented negatively.

Outside play not considered safe cont'd

Barriers and causes	Author & Information source	Evidence
Media: overemphasise risks and negative portrayal of children and families (young people)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gleave, J. (2010) <i>Making it our Place: Community views on children's play</i>. London. Playday 2010 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Research concludes that media were seen as a source of heightening hostility towards children. Participants in focus groups recalled media stories rather than experiences when referring to their concerns over children's behaviour. Parents also blamed the media for projecting an image that children are likely to be 'snatched' by strangers. Although many parents felt it was irrational they still found this fear difficult to overcome.

Effects of play deprivation

Results...	Leading to...	Author/Source	Information/Comment
<p>Less physically active</p> <p>Stuck Indoors, lack of light and fresh air and access to nature and other people</p>	<p>Poor physical health</p> <p>Unfit, not burning off energy affecting concentration, sleep and general behaviour</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The New Charter for Children's Play</i> (Children's Play Council, 1998a) Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> Huttenmoser et al, (1995) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play keeps children healthy and active - active children become active adults. Studies show positive relationship between outdoor play and physical activity levels – which in turn is linked to well-being and self esteem (Sustrans 2009 quoting Mutrie and Parfit 1998). Children kept 'incarcerated' because of traffic and parental fears of predatory adults – by age of five could be emotionally and socially repressed, fall behind educationally and a greater risk of obesity.
<p>Not developing social, problem solving and risk assessment skills, creativity, confidence and resilience</p>	<p>Less able to reach potential</p> <p>Poor mental health and well being</p> <p>Don't develop connections to the environment and community</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ball, D (2002) <i>Playgrounds: Risks, benefits and choices</i>. Middlesex University: HSE Books Play Wales (2003) <i>Play Deprivation briefing paper</i>. Cardiff: Play Wales 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> National Playing Fields Association argues that depriving children of access to play with an element of risk can deprive them of experience to carry out tasks effectively, decreased opportunities for physical activity, an inability to cope in stressful situations, problems managing other forms of risk, poor social skills. An inability to engage in play can only result in behavioural instability, neurological dysfunction, unhappiness and a lack of mental well-being in affected children. There is little doubt that children deprived of play suffer considerable physical and psychological consequences, consequences which may be devastating to those affected.

Effects of Play deprivation cont'd

Results...	Leading to...	Author/Source	Information/Comment
Not developing social, problem solving and risk assessment skills, creativity, confidence and resilience	Less able to reach potential Poor mental health and well being Don't develop connections to the environment and community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gleave, J. (2008) <i>'Risk and play – a literature review'</i> Playday – give us a go research Groves:1997 cited in Spilsbury, J.C (2005) <i>'We don't get to go out in the Front Yard – Children's Home Range and Neighbourhood Violence'</i> Children's Geographies Irwin, L.G, Johnson, A, Henderson, V.S. Dahinten and Hertzman, C (2007) <i>'Examining How Context shapes Young Children's Perceptions of Health'</i> Child: Care, health and development, 33 (4) Play Scotland (2011) <i>The Power of Play – An Evidence Base</i> Moyles, J.R. (1989) <i>Just Playing?: The Role and Status of Play in Early Childhood Education</i>, Milton Keynes, Open University Press Barnett, L.A. (1990) Developmental Benefits of Play for Children, <i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>, 22(2), pp.138-153 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The UK Mental Health Foundation has argued that a lack of risk in play is damaging for children's well-being and resilience, and has been linked to health problems requiring professional assistance (Mental Health Foundation, 1999). Evidence that limiting children's freedom in 'public' space can limit their opportunities to create social networks and hinder ability to build strong trusting relationships. Findings suggest children with poor play opportunities were less likely to have friends in the community and that this has an impact upon social well-being and identity construction. Researchers discuss the importance of physical environment where children live and play as making an important contribution to children's health (Foley, P. 2008). Play an important part of normal childhood development helping children develop – children have to play in order to develop normally. Children's understanding of and respect for nature may also be connected to their opportunities for outdoor play (Health Council of Netherlands 2004). It is claimed that the free, exploratory nature of play permits children to develop understanding and mental skills which are central to learning – exploring "situations, attitudes and responses, materials, properties, textures, structures, visual, auditory and kinaesthetic attributes". Social skills gained through play include co-operation, helping and sharing as well as social problem solving. It is also suggested that play helps to promote the ability to form long term interpersonal relationships.

Effects of Play deprivation cont'd

Results...	Leading to...	Author/Source	Information/Comment
Children don't develop innate ability to play	Adult potential affected and contribution to community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Gill, T. (2007) <i>No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society</i>. London: Calouste Gulberkian Foundation Ferguson, A. (1999) <i>Research Into Children's Play: An Executive Summary</i>, London, National Playing Fields Association 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Denying children opportunity to learn life skills through play could result in a society of risk-averse citizens unable to cope with everyday situations; or children simply finding more dangerous locations to carry out their risk-taking behaviour. Frost and Jacobs (1995) considered the increase in violent crimes as a result of play deprivation.
Children miss out on fun and things they want to do		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Barnett, L.A. (1990) Developmental Benefits of Play for Children, <i>Journal of Leisure Research</i>, 22(2), pp.138-153 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Play is regarded as providing both immediate benefits to participants (e.g. a sense of freedom, fun, release of energy) and longer-term strategic individual and social benefits, such as ensuring successful development into adulthood.

Appendix 3: Play outcome indicators

Outcomes for people who influence the general context	
Outcomes	Example Indicators
Increased awareness of the benefits of free and outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Media coverage of play (good vs bad stories) • Attendance at/promotion of public play events • We hear our key messages about play repeated back to us (verbally) • Attitudes of adults to children in public spaces • Number of complaints about children being outside
Policies and funding climate recognise value of and support play	<p>POLICIES</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play is referenced in Single Outcome Agreements • Local Authorities have play strategies with attached action plans • Local Authorities are reviewing & consulting on play provision • Play is in school estate management plans <p>FUNDING</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play specifically mentioned as a method for delivering outcomes • Play staff are funded by Local Authorities • Play sector assessment of funding opportunities available/money available for play outcomes
Increased recognition of the skill sets and attitudes to support play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to accredited training for play • Play-work promoted at school leaver/career guidance level • Professional job descriptions & requirements for play staff and volunteers • Pay-scales for play-work • Access to support for parents on 'how to play'

Outcomes for people in a position to provide or encourage play	
Outcomes	Example Indicators
Increased organisational capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strength of governing committee • Operational plans in place and used • Monitoring and evaluation plans in place and used • Relevant policies in place and used • Levels of funding • Training for/competence of staff and volunteers • Number of attendances (staff and volunteers) at organisational development training courses • Access to and use of free play toys and equipment • Children's/parents'/partners' satisfaction with service
Increased awareness of the benefits of outdoor play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/volunteers/parents can describe why outdoor and free play is important • Put awareness into practice (see below) • Free play is promoted by forum members and participants in training events • Number of children allowed out to play freely • Number of complaints about children being outside • Use by providers of risk/benefit assessments • Teacher discussions on the position of play in the curriculum

Outcomes for people in a position to provide or encourage play cont'd

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Increase skills and knowledge to support play and overcome barriers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staff/volunteers/parents can describe barriers and how to overcome them • Staff/volunteers/parents can identify what they can do better now to support play • Staff/volunteers/parents can assess and manage risk when supporting free play • Put knowledge and skills into practice (see below) • Number of articles giving info/support distributed to forum members and non-members • Number of people attending training workshop events
Increased confidence to allow children to play freely	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which children leading on their activities (being listened to) • Number of children taking part in outdoor play within their communities • Number of different settings/community spaces children use for play • Proportion of free time that children have OR ratio of free time to structured activities • Feedback “ I’m allowed to play out”, “ We let our children out now”, “ Before we were anxious about our child going out to play now we are not and see the benefits” • Change in practice (see below)
Make better use of natural and other places in the community – “Play anywhere”	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No and type of places where children are playing • Numbers of children playing • Enquiries about play opportunities available or developing play in public spaces • Enquiries about use of recycled or natural resources • Partnership working between play and environmental groups
Inspired to change practice and provision (Play practice and provision is improved)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Places parents/staff let children play • Make more space available (eg grass or playgrounds after school hours now available) • Changes made to layout of available space • Time allocated for free play • Use of risk benefit assessment • Changed use of resources for play • Extent to which children direct play • Extent children given input into programme or space design • Examples of children trying out ideas OR extent to which children try out ideas • Can do approach: less concern about barriers
Improved play spaces/more playable spaces	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Play Scotland indicators <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Participation – number of hours children playing outside – Access to a variety of facilities and spaces – access to at least 3 different types of space/facility (1 dedicated) – Quality of facilities and spaces – playable space quality assessment tool – Satisfaction – views of local children • LA use of audits for play (and green) space • People using public spaces for play • Numbers using play spaces
Increased voice and ownership	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent to which children, families and/or communities consulted • Ideas and choices honoured and included in sessions/design • Children’s voices heard in decision-making environments • Children facilitate and/or organise their own events • Number of children who participate in forums which discuss play

Outcomes for people in a position to provide or encourage play cont'd

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Greater acceptance of and attitudes to children playing outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Positive comments 'We are happy for the children to play there' • Extent to which children are discouraged from playing in particular areas • Attitudes to children and young people in public spaces • Number of adults involved in encouraging outside play • Number of children allowed to play freely and unsupervised outside

Outcomes for 'Children claim their right to play'

Outcomes	Example Indicators
More play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Spaces available for play (type and times) • Number of play sessions/schemes • Numbers attending (age range/gender and where from) • Time available for free play (eg golden time) • Time engaged in free play • Extent parents/others engage in free play (in or outdoors) • What would be doing if not engaged in free play • Children making their own decisions about playing • Number of groups offering free play in their activities • Number of times per week that children play outside (full population or children who play outside)
Better play	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Range of play engaged in: sensory, physical, imaginative, creative or emotional • Number and range of flexible loose part type resources available and used • Extent meets best play objectives <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Varied and interesting play environment – Providing challenge in physical environment – Playing with natural elements (earth, air, water, fire) – Movement – Manipulating natural and fabricated materials – Stimulating the 5 senses – Change in natural and build environment – Social interactions – Playing with identity – Range of emotions • Extent directed by children • Level of fun/enjoyment

Outcomes for children (from any form of play)

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Children's lives are enriched	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sense of freedom – children say they have opportunities to do what they want? • Level of fun/enjoyment – children say/are seen to be having fun for example by laughing, smiling, expressing fun? • Release of energy – proportion of time children run around/are positively tired?

Outcomes for children (from any form of play) (cont'd)

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Increased confidence and self esteem	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Willingness to try new things/take on new challenges • Extent to which take the lead • Extent to which express views and ideas/take part in discussions • Extent to which take part generally • Interaction with others • Inventing new games, ways to use resources • Ability to talk about achievements (and failures) • Parents and carers notice and freely offer view of child's increased confidence [adapted, this could be in every developmental outcome]
Increased resilience	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outlook on life • Independence • Recognise challenging situations • Acknowledgement of feelings • Levels of fun/enjoyment • Let off steam
Increased skills in risk assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of accidents (major and minor) <p>Extent to which:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise to or overcome challenges • Assess risks (ask questions during set up) • Take on new challenges • Try different approaches
Increased creativity and problem solving	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generate own ideas • Make own rules • Adapt equipment • Take on new challenges • Try different approaches

Outcomes for children (from play chosen)

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Greater acceptance of and attitudes to children playing outside	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Engagement in physical activity • Ability to take on/master new physical challenges • Physical confidence • Speed and competence at physical tasks • Children/parents says they have more energy • Engagement in physical activity • Report weight loss/gain - children say they feel fitter and stronger • Speed and competence at physical tasks • Participation in physically demanding tasks • Teachers, parents and carers observe increased physical skills in children

Outcomes for children (from play chosen) (cont'd)

Outcomes	Example Indicators
More opportunity to interact with others leading to increased ability to be part of a group	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Who and how often interact with (in and out of play sessions) • Help others • Play collaboratively • Number of friends • Extent involved in cooperative and collaborative play: degree to which <ul style="list-style-type: none"> – Share – Help others – Listen – Show empathy – Act aggressively
Improved language and communication skills	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ability to express views and feelings • Listening • Ability to talk about experiences • Empathising with others • Children playing collaboratively – level of intervention required by supervisors • Ability to analyse and articulate experiences
Greater appreciation of nature and the environment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognition of plants, animals, insects • Extent of fear/enthusiasm for wild areas • Amount of time spent in the outdoors (both in and out of 'play sessions') • Suggestions for outdoor/nature activities • Partnership working between play and environmental/outdoor projects

Outcomes for families

Outcomes	Example Indicators
Reduced family stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Children's behaviour patterns • Children responding to parenting requests – eating and sleeping better • Reports of changes in levels of anti-social behaviour • Low cost family fun – identify and use free/cheap family resources
Improved family relationships	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of interaction & communication between family members • Types of communication within family • Family engagement in community activities • Amount of time spent together as a family (playing) – requests for information on where to access play together

Outcomes for communities	
Outcomes	Example Indicators
Stronger connections between people in the community	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Level of interaction between families • Number of marginalised families participating • People say they feel less isolated/feel more connected • Number of parents, families, people attending community events • Families making friendships and socialising outside 'events' • Sharing of stories about play, ideas for play, where to play
Improved image of young people	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extent people speak positively/negatively about young people • Levels of fear about young people • Attitudes to children, young people being in public spaces • Interaction between different age groups • Reports of young people achieving from adults
Diverted from anti social behaviour	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number of sessions/children attending • Number of police incidents/complaints • Degree of vandalism
Greater appreciation of space and place	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attitudes to local spaces and what they can be used for • Attitudes to areas to play in local area • Participation in community events/local volunteering



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