References and Suggestions Readings

Hardacre, J. (1995). Play and problem solving: What's the connection? *Canadian Children* 20(1), 11-13.

United Nations (1991). *Convention on the right of the child*. Ottawa: Minister of Supply and Services Canada.

Young, N. (1993). *Caring for play: The school and child care connection*. (Draft Edition) Toronto: Exploring Environments.

Wassermann, S. (1992). *Serious players in the primary classroom*. New York: Teachers College Press.

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The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989) recognizes "the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts," Article 31,p.16.

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For more information:
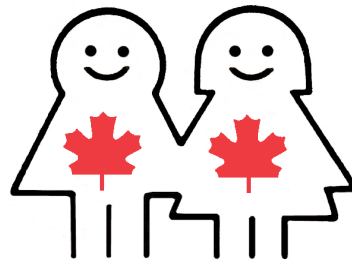**phone:** *403-932-4124*
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What is the CAYC?

The Canadian Association for Young Children (CAYC) is the only national association specifically concerned with the well-being of children, birth through age nine - at home, in pre-school settings and at school. Members of this multi-disciplinary association include parents, teachers, caregivers, administrators, students and all those wishing to share ideas and participate in activities related to the education and welfare of young children.
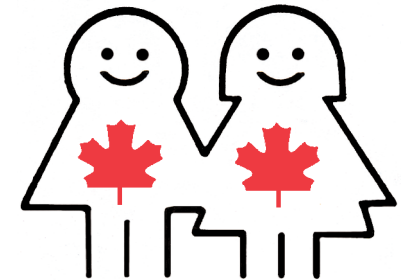
The Aims of the CAYC

- To influence the dimension and quality of policies and programs that affect the development and well-being of young children in Canada.

- To provide a forum for the members of Canada's early childhood community to support one another in providing developmentally appropriate programs for young children.

- To promote and provide opportunities for professional development for those charged with the care and education of young children.

- To promote opportunities for effective liaison and collaboration with all those responsible for young children.

- To recognize outstanding contributions to the well-being of young children.

PLAY
for
School Age

The Canadian Association for Young Children

L'Association Canadienne Pour Les Jeunes Enfants

Federal Charter Granted, 1974

Through Play Children Create Meaning About the World in Which They Live
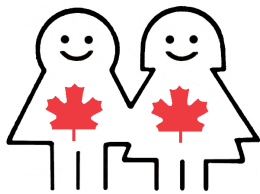
2001

The Canadian Association for Young Children exists to provide a Canadian voice on critical issues related to the quality of life of all children and their families (CAYC Mission Statement). Recognizing that play is essential in promoting children's healthy growth, development and learning, CAYC has created the following position statement on play for children 6-12 years in home, community, school, and recreational settings.

Developmentally, school age children are seeking mastery and success. They want and need to acquire relevant knowledge and to learn specific skills. They enjoy testing their capabilities in realistic situations. School age children also are developing social values and attitudes.

Play is widely recognized as a vehicle for constructing personal and collective meaning. Physical, social, intellectual, emotional, creative and spiritual development is enhanced through play. Play enables children to internalize the concept taught in subjects such as literacy, math, science, and social studies. Play also develops empathy and tolerance between and amongst the players.

If growing up means learning to be responsible, it is through play that children practice responsibility. In their play, children initiate and create both ideas and relationships.In the process, they encounter problems and develop confidence in their capacity to solve them (Young, 1993).

CAYC believes that play for school age children is:

*   natural
*   stimulating, invigorating, complex
*   exciting, adventurous, open-ended
*   self-directed, self-selected
*   multi sensory
*   interactive
*   inquisitiveness, wonder and joy
*   enjoyable and fun
*   endless possibilities
*   energetic and exuberant

Play fosters:

*   active learning
*   control by players
*   decision-making, collaborating
*   problem solving, negotiating
*   critical thinking
*   creativity
*   hypothesizing, questioning
*   predicting, evaluating
*   risk-taking

In school settings and out-of-school centres, teachers and child care professionals have the responsibility for creating an environment which promotes play.

There is pervasive evidence that play has a significant role in the development of problem-solving skills as well as other capabilities that are related to the academic and socio-personal outcomes valued by educators and the public. By implication, teachers and caregivers can become informed and adept observers and assessors of the quality of children's play, and justify its place in educational programs (Hardacre, 1995, p.13)

For quality play to occur school age children need:

*   uninterrupted time
*   partners
*   rich, stimulating environments that children can help plan and rearrange
*   a wide variety of materials
*   supportive, responsive, knowledgeable adults who are partners in the learning process
*   repeated opportunities for exploring materials and ideas

[Play] encourages flexibility and openness; it asks them to be involved for the sake of the experience, for the sake of the play, rather than for any external reward or approval. Play is generative. It is satisfying (Wassermann, 1990, p.17).

Play amongst school age children might be:

*   creating, writing, producing and acting out plays of their own making, re-creating everyday experiences
*   imagining themselves in a variety of roles to see what fits and works for them
*   negotiating the rules, solving problems and enjoying success and satisfaction from participating in cooperative experiences
*   creating and re-creating play spaces both indoors and out

Play is at the heart of children's lives and learning, preparing them for becoming worthy, productive citizens of tomorrow - today......

The Canadian Association for Young Children / L'Association Canadienne Pour Les Jeunes Enfants   2001