

**Anti-bullying - Character Education - Classroom & Playground
Management - Structured Activities Programming**

Healthy Play IS a Solution

Website: www.healthyplay.us Facebook: www.facebook.com/HealthyPlay
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Play is not a frivolous pastime of childhood. It is absolutely vital to a child's personal, social, emotional, and physical health. In fact, the most natural way children learn is through play.

Children have, overtime, spent less time playing with each other and instead become passive consumers of entertainment sitting solitarily in front of electronic devices. Because of this, many have lost the ability to focus on academics, get along with each other, organize their thinking well, be kind or compassionate; self-regulate their behaviors, express delayed gratification, or demonstrate traits of good character. This negative shift harmfully impacts school culture and poses challenges to parents, teachers, staff who want to teach and to those students who want to learn. Classroom and playground management behavior problems such as bullying, aggression, non-cooperation and lack of focus have become serious barriers to academic learning.

Healthy Play IS a Solution!

A five-year longitudinal research project of 29 schools on Healthy Play show that 85.5% of teachers who used it in their curriculum 3 - 5 times each week reported a behavioral problem reduction average of 75% in acts of aggression, bullying, threats, non-cooperation and teasing. Teachers, whose students have 75% less behavior problems, are less stressed and have 75% more time for teaching academics.

Empathy, self-regulation and problem solving skills are essential for personal and social success. Children will not perpetrate acts of aggression and violence against each other if they learn to become empathetic and solve their problems peacefully. Children who can self-regulate put the control of the classroom back into the hands of teachers and the most cooperative students.

Via Healthy Play, (HP) the paradigm of the most unruly child running the show is replaced as that child learns skills of success instead of disruption. The new paradigm is one of optimal learning by the creation of a positive school culture where healthy social/emotional behaviors are taught, practiced, nurtured and, most importantly, internalized in a naturally joyous, social-bonding manner that students resonate with the most. The character skills they learn when they play on the playground transfer throughout the school day and will grant them personal, emotional, academic success that they will take throughout their lives.

Core Healthy Play Philosophy:

The most natural way children learn is through play.

The philosophical HP message of “People are the most important part of the Game” quickly transfers to, “People are the most important part of *everything*.” How we play reflects who we are and how we live. Children want/need to play. The desire to play is highly motivational. Through play we “live” and internalize our actions, behaviors, self and other awareness. Play reflects our authentic self.

Healthy Play Methodology:

Facilitating an effective four point program (via full staff trainings, classroom/playground consultations with students and teachers), Healthy Play teaches empathy, anti-bullying, self regulation and problem-solving skills through repetitive opportunities in a natural and developmental learning style that resonates with and motivates students. What students learn (kindness, fairness, personal responsibility, etc.) and practice during play transfers throughout the school day.

By utilizing the two HP rules children/students learn and practice social skills. Multiple practice opportunities provide a framework for all interactions, social/emotional learning experiences, and appreciations throughout the entire school day.

Additionally, through an understanding of the three types of HP game activities teachers and other youth-serving staff learn how to creatively change activities and games to meet the needs of children emotionally, socially, behaviorally, while supporting and enhancing academics and physical health.

Why Healthy Play creates success:

HP works because it reaches children on their own developmental playing field. HP creates real time naturalistic awareness, activities and interventions to repeatedly experience and practice social skills. **HP puts empathy, self-regulation and problem-solving into action.** It also quickly bonds children with the significant adults responsible for their care. A Healthy Play training also bonds adult staff and is an excellent team building and morale boosting experience. Most teachers rank their Healthy Play training as the best staff development training they have ever experienced. Acting cohesively, within the elegant, joyous and easy to implement HP model, heightens a positive learning environment and increases sustainability.

Finally, HP addresses the areas where most bullying problems occur - playground and unstructured time at school, while also supporting physical as well as emotional health. Kids like to play so our methodology is a motivating one for positive change in children. Healthy Play internalizes abstract character education concepts effecting positive behavioral change. HP makes school a fun, safe, and joyous place to be.

To receive more information or request a Healthy Play training and consults for your school:



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KUDOS for HEALTHY PLAY IS A SOLUTION

We began use of *Healthy Play is a Solution* at one elementary school in 2002. It was so overwhelmingly supported by staff at that school that the remainder of the 15 elementary schools in our district requested the training and support during the subsequent years. Healthy Play continues to be an important component of our support programs in every Chico elementary school.

Healthy Play is easy and enjoyable to implement. I have received repeated reports from teachers, principals, and classified staff (aides) that this is “the best training I’ve ever had.” These words do not come easily from teachers. The training is focused, thorough, and incredibly engaging. Teachers can implement the strategies immediately. While the overall concepts taught in *Healthy Play* seem relatively simple, the impacts are deep.

Relationships, conflicts, and bullying: Improving school climate and reducing conflict and bullying require positive relationships and opportunities for positive engagement. Healthy Play activities provide opportunities to address these issues through play activities that, with a bit of adult (or older peer) facilitation, engage all students in the common joys of play and compassion for all participants. In short, when students notice that the “nerd” or the “bully” or the “different” student can actually be fun to play with, relationships and tolerance are increased. Facilitators are able to subtly shift rules or types of games used to further focus on successful participation of those who might otherwise feel left out.

It is obvious that I enthusiastically endorse the use of *Healthy Play is a Solution* as a primary component of any classroom, school, or community development and prevention program. It creates situations in which *all* students are successfully engaged, conflicts often arising during competitive play and recess are eliminated, students are moving, brains are working, and relationships among participants are developing. Please feel free to contact me regarding our experience with this program (slindstr@chicousd.org; 530-891-3000 ext.162).

Scott Lindstrom, PhD
Student Support Coordinator, Chico Unified School District
Technical Consultant, Early Mental Health Initiative, CA Dept. of Mental Health

***“Thank you for the support in improving student interactions and relationships. The training and on-going support was crucial in changing our culture for the better. Thornydale Thunderbirds Love Healthy Play!!!”
Sarah L. Clem, Principal, Thornydale Elementary***

“I’ll tell anyone that Healthy Play has made teaching for me one of the easiest and most rewarding jobs I ever could have. I set the daily expectations of the program with the students for the first month. After that, they run the process smoothly all day long for the rest of the year. And, this was a class of 27 children that had seven mainstreamed special education students attending. It made school a joy for all of us.”
Kay Ann Well, teacher, Warren Elementary

***“This is the most useful staff development I have ever attended. It is the best learning and management tool I have ever seen.”
Dave Mobley, Principal, Vanguard School***

“It is with pleasure that I recommend Healthy Play to others. Charlie Steffens and Spencer Gorin have produced a program, which impacted our total school. We are delighted with the transformation that we are seeing in our faculty and students. Kids are acting like kids again-- having fun and feeling happy while they learn.”
Annabel Crites, Principal, Gale Elementary School

***“We saw a real change in teacher and student attitude that has lasted long after the planned lessons. This is one program that has made the playground monitors and principal happy!”
Mary Belle Mitchell, Principal, Fort Lowell Elementary School***

“I believe that anyone interested in improving children's ability to problem solve, interact appropriately with peers and adults, staying on task, building self-esteem, developing cooperation and having fun would benefit from this approach.”
Steffie O'Neill, Program Director/Children, Arizona Center for Clinical Management

***“What FUN! Fruchthendler just completed training with Charlie Steffens and Spencer Gorin of Healthy Play. I don't think I have ever enjoyed an in-service so much. My staff participated without a grumble or groan. They joined in the fun willingly and I don't think I have ever seen them enjoy each other so much. In addition to this, they learned a LOT!”
Kathleen R. Hayes, Principal, Fruchthendler Elementary School***

“It’s great for kids! What else could you conclude when one of our district schools reduces its suspension rate from 119 down to 12 by using the Healthy Play program. It is a perfect fit for the enhancement goals of California’s Early Mental Health Initiative.”
Jan Thaxton, MVUSD Project Coordinator

***“The Healthy Play program has had the biggest impact on myself, my family and the children that I have been able to touch. The program really works! I can't stress enough on how blessed I feel to have this program at our schools.”
Rhonda Longueay, Playground Specialist, Special Friends, Moreno Valley Unified School District***

“It’s the workshop I’ve been waiting a quarter of a century for. It helps me stay focused on what’s REALLY important in education.”
Suzanne Pickering Teacher, Ellington Elementary

***“You two were phenomenal. I can honestly say that I’ve never walked away from an in-service feeling as confident about implementing a program as I do this one! Thank you!”
Andrea Czoka, Teacher, M.C. Cash Elementary***