Children and young people in urban environments [1]

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Author: Ball, D.J. & Hansen Sandseter, E.B.
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Abstract

It has been hypothesised that children, through play, reduce their natural anxiety of situations which once were a danger to them when younger. Play thereby provides an essential developmental opportunity for both younger and older children, and consequentially failure to provide appropriate play opportunities may lead to a lack of competence in physical activities and social behaviours, and even to anxiety disorders. The majority of children now live in urban environments and play provision for them has followed certain paths which are heavily influenced by modern adult perceptions of play and also by notions of safety. After several decades there is a growing view that the path chosen has not been correct and that many play environments lack appropriate challenges for the developing young person. Moves have been made to rectify this situation. Much remains to be done.

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