

Crisis in kindergarten: A new report on the disappearance of play

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Author: Miller, Edward and Almon, Joan

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AVAILABILITY

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Description:

Kindergarten has changed radically in the last two decades in ways that few Americans are aware of. Children now spend far more time being taught and tested on literacy and math skills than they do learning through play and exploration, exercising their bodies, and using their imaginations. Many kindergartens use highly prescriptive curricula geared to new state standards and linked to standardized tests. In an increasing number of kindergartens, teachers must follow scripts from which they may not deviate. These practices, which are not well grounded in research, violate long-established principles of child development and good teaching. It is increasingly clear that they are compromising both children's health and their long-term prospects for success in school. New research shows that many kindergartens spend 2 to 3 hours per day instructing and testing children in literacy and math—with only 30 minutes per day or less for play. In some kindergartens there is no playtime at all. The same didactic, test-driven approach is entering preschools. But these methods, which are not well grounded in research, are not yielding long-term gains. Meanwhile, behavioral problems and preschool expulsion, especially for boys, are soaring.

Region: United States [4]

Tags: kindergarten [5]

curricula and pedagogy [6]

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