

When Safe Can Become Too Safe

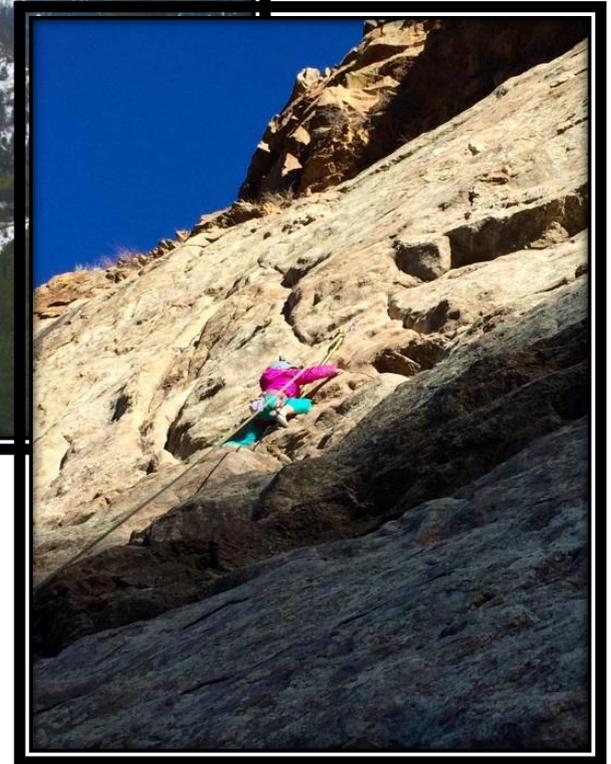
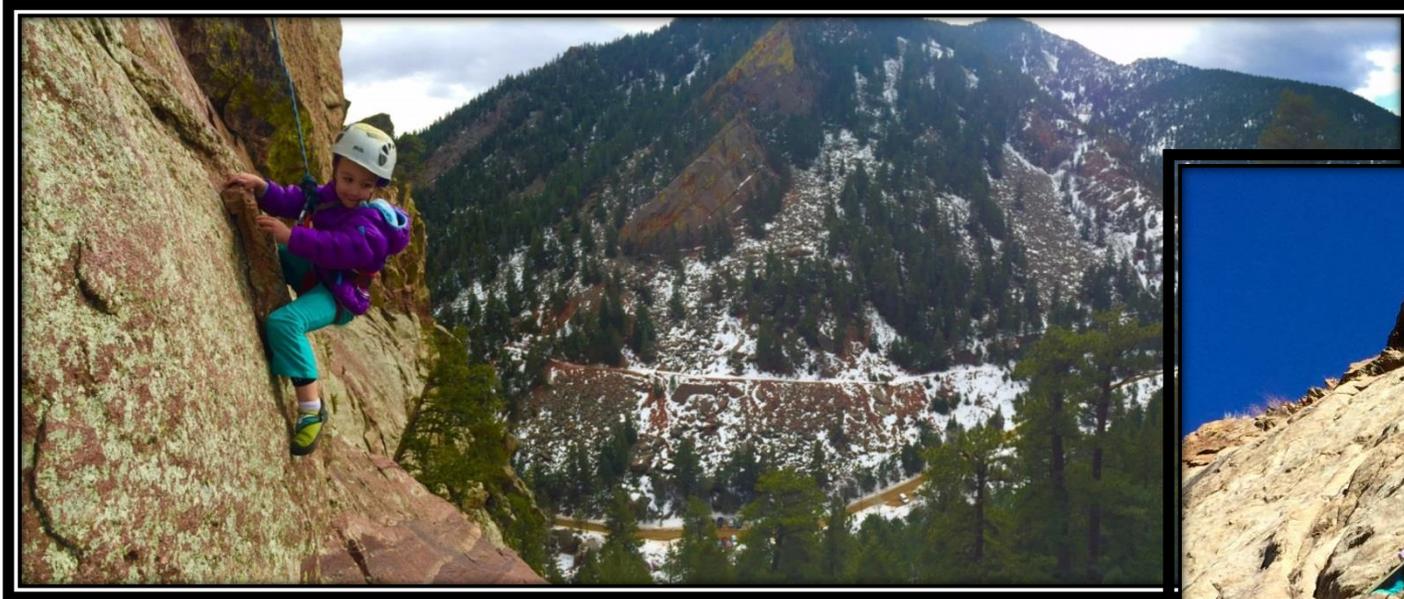


The Need for Risk In
Children's Lives



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Risk Is An Essential Element In Children's Development.



It offers physical, social,
emotional and intellectual
challenges needed for
healthy development.



**Our U.S. Culture Has Worked Very
Hard To Remove Risk From Children's
Lives.**

**We Have Now Created Environments,
Policies, & Rules That Are "Too Safe"
To Be Safe For Children.**

(free range parenting-PS, pencils, out of sight, germs, school pick up)

**Many Other Countries Have
Done A Much Better Job of
Sorting Out Beneficial Risk
From Danger.**



**Their focus is on risks
worth taking and their
recognizable benefits.**

They Know That Risk ...

Teaches children to be
comfortable with
challenges.

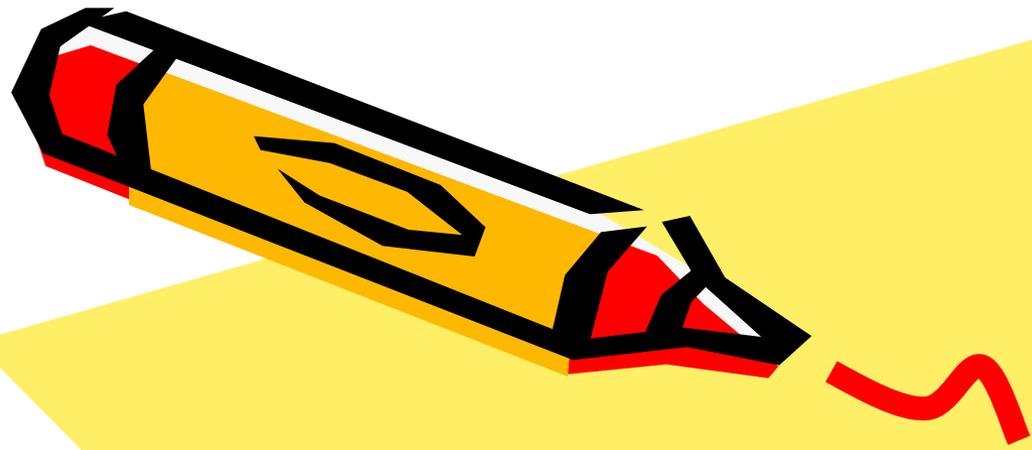
Children innately go
only as far as they are
comfortable.



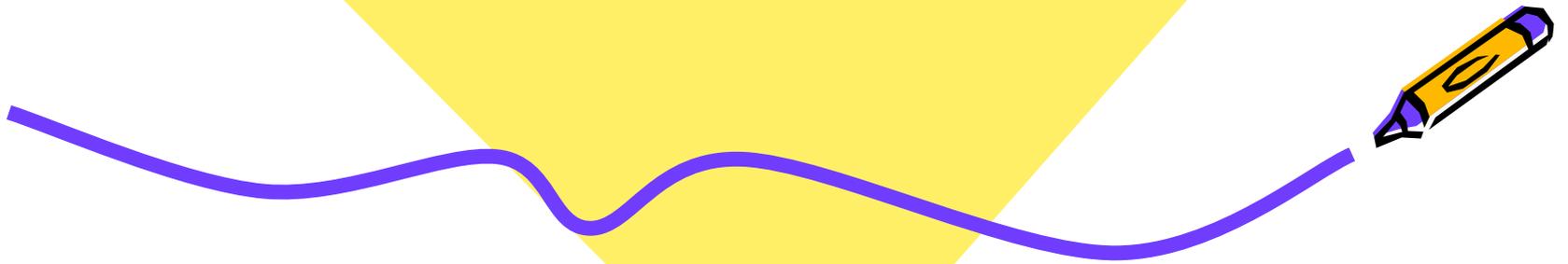
- Math, reading, venturing a guess, etc.



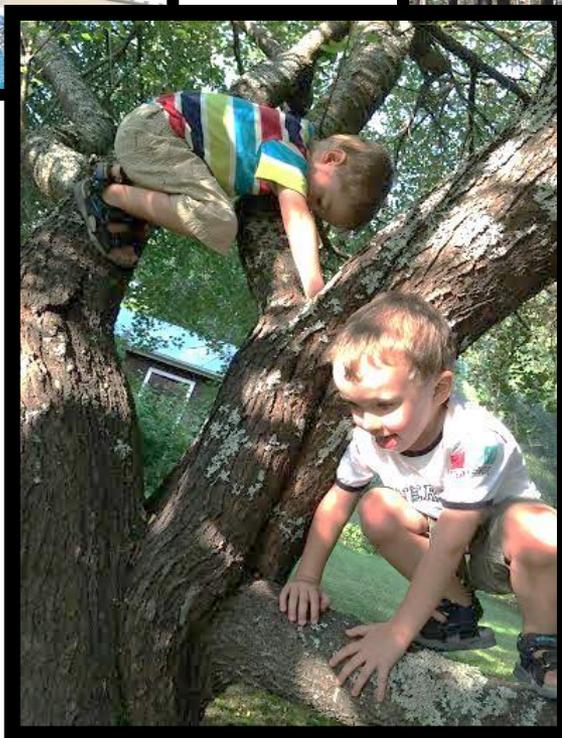
**Risky Activities
Are A Natural
Part Of
Children's Play.
It Is Critical
That We
Support Risky
Play.**



Categories of Risky Play

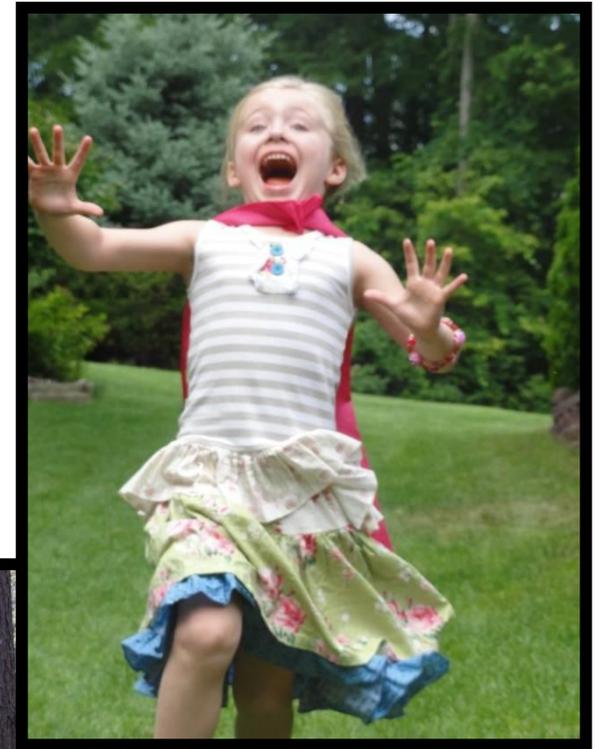


1. Great Heights





2. High Speed



Moving at high speed-
chasing,
biking,
running, etc.

3. Rough and Tumble/ Big Body Play



4. Dangerous Tools



5. Dangerous Elements



6. Disappear/ Get Lost



Finnish Child Care Center

**Unfortunately,
Many Licensing
Programs Have Also
Moved In The
Direction Of
Removing All Risks
And These Types
Of Play.**

From a few rules to
100's of rules.

Promulgate pages
of rules based on
one incident.

See possible
danger wherever
we look.

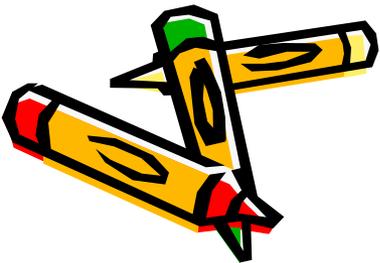


In sight, cold days,
commercial age
appropriate equipment,
ignore children's innate
Developmental need and ability.

Individual Licensing Staff Have Also Added Their Own Assessment Of What Is Dangerous.

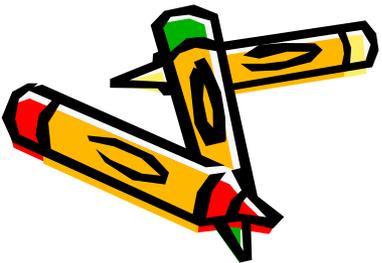


Only play with equipment designed for a given age	No rough and tumble play	No handling of bugs and worms-no dogs	Size of food pieces
No knitting needles	No teacher's pencils or scissors on the desk	All plastic wrappings removed	No going up slides or climbing on top of structures

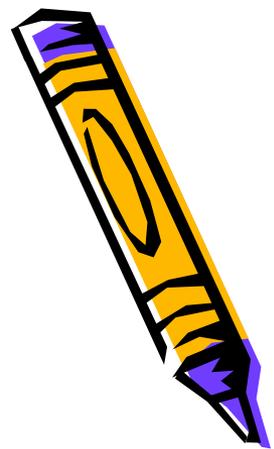


Child Care Licensing's Purpose...

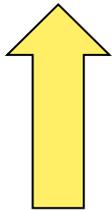
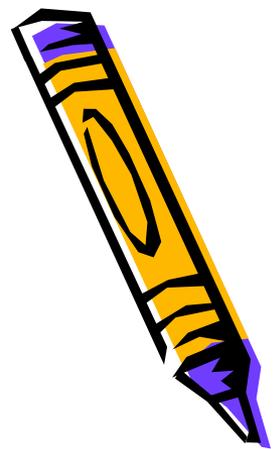
- To provide **protection through prevention;**
- By establishing a **minimum floor of protection** below which children could be seriously harmed or die.



1868, NY Foundlings' Hospital -1
527 infants received in 11 months.
All but 80 died in 11 months.

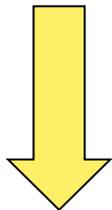


Rules are to be developed to address the minimum floor level and below.



Higher Quality

Minimum Floor of Care



Harm- Serious injury and death

Gun, fire exits, ratios, play surfaces, pools, traffic, etc.



We Need To Distinguish Between

Hazard—

any situation where there is an inherent danger of death or serious injury.



Risk —

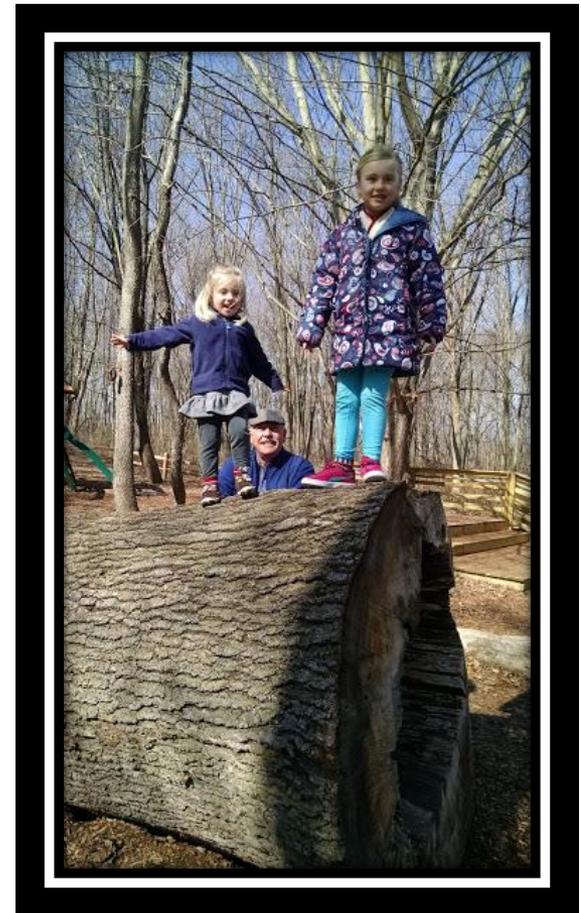
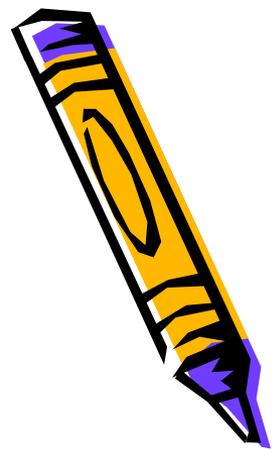
any situation where there is a balance between safety and challenge where the children are not in danger of serious injury.

Risk Is A Balance Between Safety And Challenge

The benefits outweigh the risk of minor injury from which children learn quickly.



When Determining Risk Vs Hazard, We Need To Consider the Differences In Children



Children have to experience the natural consequences of their own limitations.

This may mean "little hurts".



"Bandages" are not a sign of a unsafe environment.

(Bandages, brush it off, ice)

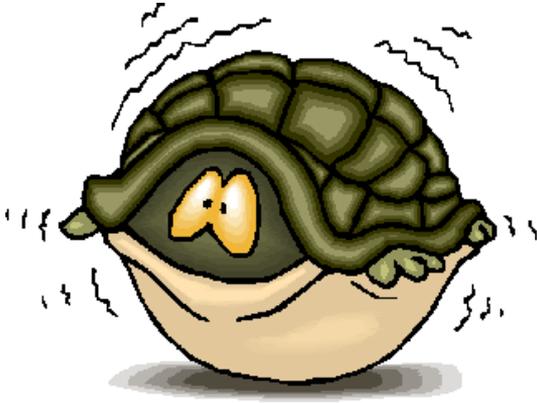
Research shows **“Risk Awareness”** is learned in the early years and lessens as children grow older.

The Assessment of What is **Safe** and What is **Unsafe**.

Today, Adults' Actions Threaten This Critical Learning.



When We Create "Too Safe" Environments, We Actual Put Children At Risk...



- Problem solving ability.
- Control over of their own environment.
- Formation of resiliency to face challenges.
- Ability to judge for themselves what is safe and unsafe.

Without Risk Taking, Children and Adults...



- Are reluctant to try new things.
- Are fearful.
- Have difficulty mastering problems.
- Can put themselves at greater risk by having a false sense of security.



(bugs, afraid to go out after dark/open windows, jump into a pool, will not drive, leave house, live on own, fearful of new people, can't manage finances, etc.)

Children Need Environments That Remove Hazards, And Not Risk.



- Wood chips
- Helmets and knee pads
- Extra clothing
- Places to throw

Examine Your Licensing Rules, Their Interpretations, And Your Own Biases-



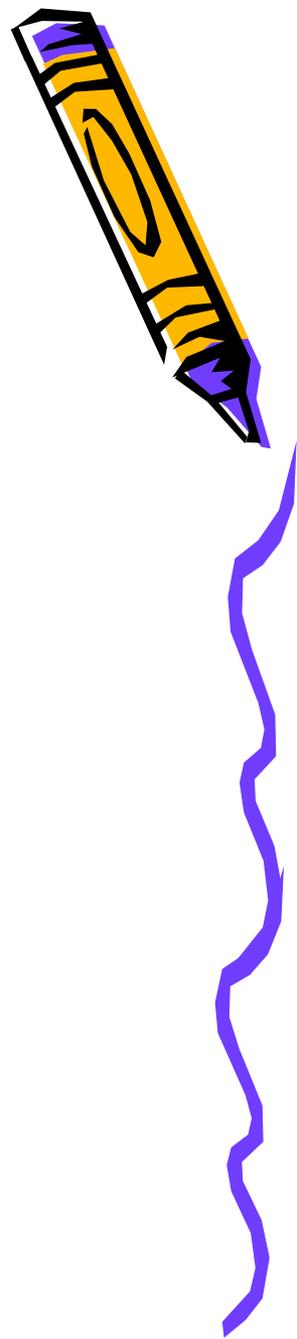
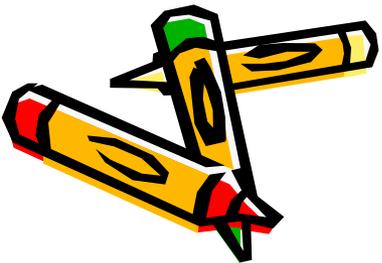
Which Ones..

- 1. Are Needed to Protect From Real Hazards?**
- 2. Discourage Risk Taking While Not Addressing Real Hazards?**
- 3. Go Beyond Your Legal Authority?**

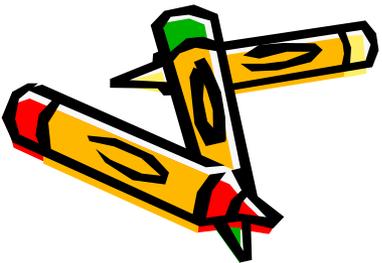
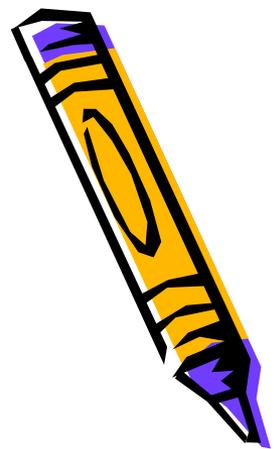
**Rewrite Rules During The
Promulgation Process Keeping
In Mind The Hazard/Risk
Balance.**

**Rewrite Interpretation
Guidelines**

Put Aside Your Bias



Explore The Value of "Risk Taking" With Your Licensees.





**Now
write on your bandage
1 way you can
encourage
your state/province
to support safe
risk taking in child
care programs.**

Now put on your bandage and show your bandage to others today.