

# The Role of Play In Player Development



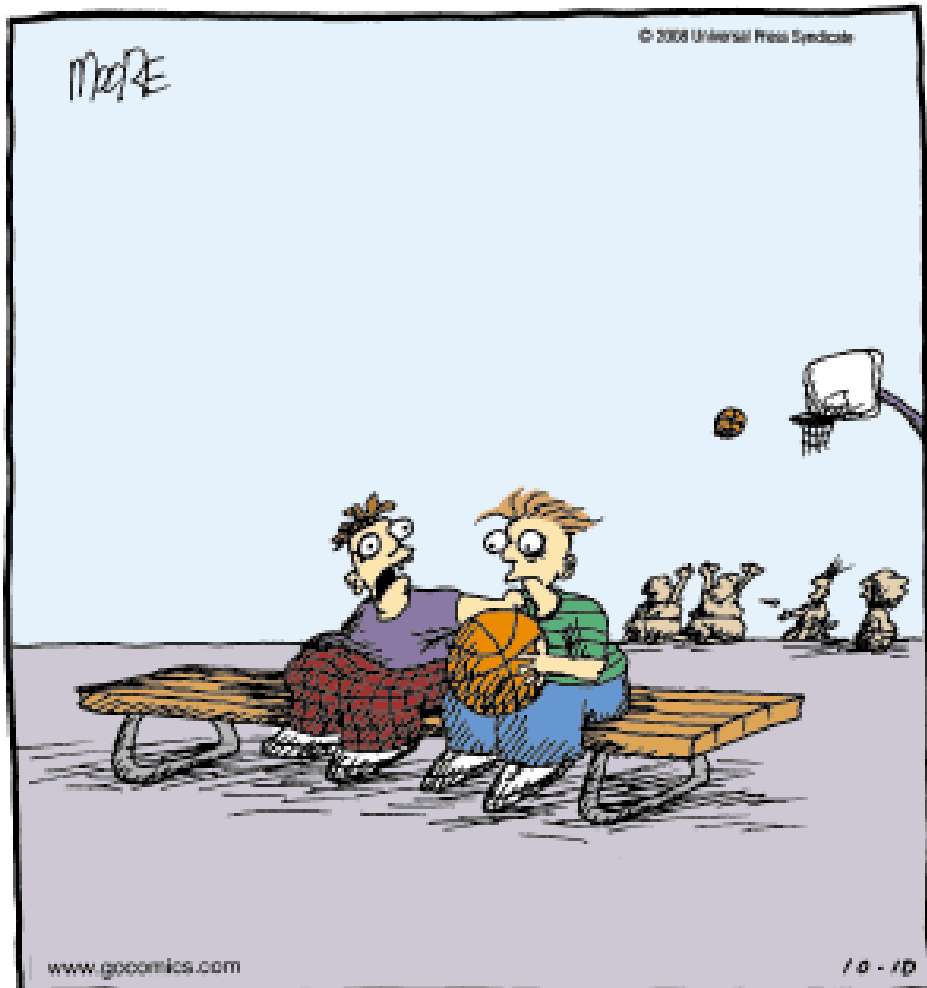
Virgil Stringfield

Director of Educational Services

## Born to Run? Little Ones Get Test for Sports Gene

- BOULDER, Co. — When Donna Campiglia learned recently that a genetic test might be able to determine which sports suit the talents of her 2 ½-year-old son, Noah, she instantly said, “Where can I get it and how much does it cost?”

## What is the role of play?



**“Don’t worry, Mikey. Lots of kids fail to get drafted into the NBA right out of sixth grade, and they go on to live happy and fulfilling lives.”**

## **“Play is the work of the child”**

**Maria Montessori**

### Essential Dimensions

- Voluntary, enjoyable, purposeful and spontaneous
- Creativity expanded using problem solving skills, social skills, language skills and physical skills
- Helps expand on new ideas
- Helps the child to adapt socially
- Helps to thwart emotional problem

### **Why Play = Learning**

**KATHY HIRSH-PASEK, PhD Temple University**

**ROBERTA MICHNICK GOLINKOFF, PhD University of Delaware**

- Play is a central ingredient in learning.
- Allows children to imitate adult behaviors, practice motor skills, process emotional events, and learn much about their world.
- Play is not frivolous.
- Research confirms that “play is the work of childhood.”
- Both free play and guided play are essential for the development of academic skills.



## **The Power of Play**

### **David Elkind**

- “Over the past two decades, children have lost twelve hours of free time a week, including eight hours of unstructured play and outdoor activities.”
- “--- the amount of time children spend in organized sports has doubled and the number of minutes children devote to passive spectator leisure, not counting television but including sports viewing, has increased fivefold from thirty minutes to over three hours.”
- “--- the surgeon general also suggests that two thirds of the children in this country suffer at least one health problem. Thirteen percent of our children are obese.”
- “--- children in the twenty-first (century) have been transformed from net producers of their own toy and play culture to net consumers of play culture imposed by adults.”
- “Some children are born active, some children become active, and some have activity thrust upon them. The majority of children, however, fall into the category of those who learn to be active.”

## **Scientific American Mind: The need for serious Play**

### **Anthony D. Pellegrini PhD, University of Minnesota (contrib.)**

- “games have a priori rules—set up in advance and followed. Play, on the other hand, does not have a priori rules, so it affords more creative responses.”
- This creative aspect is key because it challenges the developing brain more than following predetermined rules does. In free play, kids use their imagination and try out new activities and roles.



## **Expert Performance in Sports**

**Jean Cote`**

### **The Player Development Process**

- The Sampling Years (7-12yrs)
- The Specializing Years (13-15yrs)
- The Investment Years (16+yrs)

### **The Sampling Years**

(7-12)

- Sample a range of different sports
- Develop fundamental motor skills

The MAIN Purpose

Experience fun and excitement through sports

### **The Specializing Years**

(13-15)

- Gradually decrease involvement to several activities and focus on one or two sports

### **The Investment Years**

(16+)

- Committed to achieving an elite level
- Strategic, competitive and skill development aspects of the sport emerge as most important elements



## Environments of Player Development

Dimensions	Free Play	Deliberate Play	Structured Practice	Deliberate Practice
<b>Goal</b>	Fun	Fun	Improve Performance	Improve Performance
<b>Perspective</b>	Process (means)	Process Experimentation	Outcome (ends)	Outcome (ends)
<b>Monitored</b>	Not Monitored	Loosely Monitored	Monitored	Carefully Monitored
<b>Correction</b>	No Correction	No focus on immediate correction	Focus on correction, often by discovery	Focus on immediate correction
<b>Gratification</b>	Immediate	Immediate	Immediate & Delayed	Delayed
<b>Sources of Enjoyment</b>	Inherent	Predominately Inherent	Predominately Inherent	Extrinsic

### The Sampling Years (7-12)

- High Frequency of Deliberate Play
- Low Frequency of Deliberate Practice

### The Specialization Years (13-15)

- Similar amounts of Deliberate Play and Deliberate Practice

### The Investment Years (16+)

- High Frequency of Deliberate Practice
- Low Frequency of Deliberate Play

## Distributed Practice vs Massed Practice

Learning is enhanced in “Distributed Practice”

- Motor Skill
- Cognitive Ability

There is less

- Physical Fatigue
- Mental Fatigue

NASPE recommends 30min K-2 & 45min 3-5

## Basis of Player Development: Passion = Love of the Game



### Credits

- The Power of Play by David Elkind, Ph.D.
- Expert Performance in Sports by Jean Cote`, Ph.D. et. al.
- Why Play = Learning by Kathy Hirsh-Pasek, Ph.D. & Roberta Michnick Golinkoff, Ph.D.
- *Play as the Work of the Child*: Child Development Institute
- Scientific American Mind: The need for serious Play  
Anthony D. Pellegrini PhD, University of Minnesota (contrib.)

Virgil Stringfield, Director of Education Services

Florida Youth Soccer Association

vstringfield@fysa.com