



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey Report

Canadian Public Health Association

2018

SUMMARY OF KEY FINDINGS

Background

Unstructured child-led play is integral to healthy child development and provides experiences that can equip children with risk management skills necessary to thrive as adults. However, this type of play is becoming increasingly limited. The purpose of this survey was to understand parent/guardian perceptions and concerns around play.

The survey was available via social media from April 25 to August 1, 2017 and surveyed 492 parents/guardians who had at least one child between the ages of 5-12. Respondents were primarily a middle-class, post-secondary educated population, mostly residing in an urban or suburban neighbourhoods. Majority of parents/guardians were between the ages of 35-44 with the average age of participant being 40 years old. The survey did not capture responses from those residing in northern Territories and there was a low response rate from the Maritime Provinces. Other limitations to be noted are that as an online survey, an in-depth understanding of respondent perceptions cannot be fully captured. Disseminating the survey via social media outlets utilizes convenience sampling and is thus subject to bias. Given the sample population, findings may not be reflective of all Canadian parent/guardians.

Access to play

- Almost all respondents agreed or strongly agreed that unstructured child-led play is important for their child's development.

How often does this child participate in unstructured child-led play? Do you supervise this child's unstructured play?

- Slightly more than half of respondents indicated their child participates in unstructured child-led play every day and most indicated that they provide supervision less than once per week or never.
- Parent/guardians of younger children (5-8 years old) indicated participation in unstructured play more frequently while older children (9 and 12 years old) received less supervision.

When this child participates in unstructured child-led play, on average how long does this child play?

- Those aged 9 to 12 years old were more likely to play for a longer duration of time (1-2 hours to more than 2 hours), while those aged 5 to 8, who were more likely to play for 30 to 60 minutes.



In my opinion, this child *most prefers* spending their time playing:

- Most parents/guardians indicated that their child most enjoyed playing in green/nature space.

The farthest I would let my child play without adult supervision is:

- Parents/guardians most frequently indicated that their child is allowed to play either within the yard or driveway, or on their street.
- Respondents with a male child were more likely to allow him to play within their yard/driveway, while parents with a female child were more likely to allow her to play within their street.
- Parents/guardians who had an older child (9-12 years old) were more likely to allow that child to play unsupervised father distances from home, compared to those with a younger child (5-8 years old).
- Parents/guardians whose child had an older sibling were more likely to the younger child to play unsupervised father distances from home, compared to those without an older sibling.

Please state your level of agreement with the following: My child enjoys playing at...

- Respondents had high agreement with all settings (nature spaces, open school playground, community playground/park, open fields, indoor play spaces), although open fields were viewed as less desirable.

When this child travels to these play spaces they: (Check all that apply)

- The majority of respondents indicated that their child usually travels via active transportation **with an adult**, or are **driven** to play spaces.
- Parents/guardians with an older child (9-12 years old) and those who had an older sibling were more likely to permit their child to travel **alone** via active transportation to play spaces.
- Those who live in urban neighbourhoods were the least likely to permit their child to travel **alone** to play spaces, and most likely to travel **with an adult**.
- Those who live in rural areas were the most likely to drive their child to play spaces.

Injuries in play

In my opinion, this child is at a higher risk of *being injured*/ encountering a *severe injury* while playing:

- The setting most perceived as resulting in **injury** was participation in organized sport, followed by play in the street.
- The setting most believed as resulting in a **severe injury** was in the street, followed by organized sport.
- Playing in nature/green space or indoors was perceived as resulting in fewer injuries.

Parent concerns in play

Do you have any concerns about safety when this child engages in outdoor unstructured child-led play?

- Most respondents indicated that they 'sometimes' have concerns about safety.
- Parents/guardians were most likely to be concerned if their child was male or aged 9 to 12 years old, while those whose child had an older sibling were less likely to be worried.

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

- Respondents indicated they were the most worried when their child played in the street; those with a male child or whose child did not have an older sibling were more likely to be worried.
- Parents/guardians of younger children (5-8 years old) were less worried when their child played in organized sport, and more likely to be worried when playing in the street compared to parents/guardians of older children (9-12 years old).

What concerns do you have? Please rate your concern for letting this child play for each of the following:

- The fear of nearby traffic was the greatest concern. Aside from traffic, most parents were not worried. Of those who did have concerns, kidnapping was second. Most respondents were not worried about community violence or crime, the occurrence of an injury or bullying.
- Of those who had worries, concerns for kidnapping, bullying, and community violence or crime was highest among respondents from rural locations.

Do any of the following influence these concerns?

- Most parents/guardians were not influenced by stories in traditional media or social media, being judged by other parents, or by insurance or legal claims. Of those who were influenced, the factors the most likely to limit unstructured play were stories in traditional media followed by stories in social media and being judged by other parents.

What would reduce these concerns? Please identify your top 3:

- The majority of parents indicated that traffic calming measures would reduce their worries. These include: more traffic lights; cross walks; sidewalks; reduced speed limits; and speed bumps. This concern was greatest among those from urban neighborhoods.

Restrictive play rules at school and in the community

Does this child's school have any of the following rules in place that you are aware of:

- Most parents were aware of at least one rule that limited unstructured play.
- Weather restrictions were the most commonly known limitation, followed by: prohibiting certain games/activities on play structures, and jumping from heights.

Parents were asked if they agreed with the rule(s) at their child's school, first in terms of **safety**, and second in terms of **opportunities** for unstructured, child-led play:

- Parents/guardians generally supported rules that prohibited play due to weather conditions (i.e. rain, ice, snow), or jumping from heights.
- Respondents more frequently agreed with weather rules when considering child **safety**.
- **The majority of parents disagreed with all other rules they were aware of such as:** restricted use of play spaces after school hours; prohibition of running on the playground; restricting loose parts play; limiting recess as a disciplinary action; and prohibiting certain games or activities.

At your community playgrounds, are you aware of any of the following rules:

- The majority of respondents were not aware of any rules.

Parents who were aware of at least one rule were asked if they agreed with the rule(s) at their community playgrounds, first in terms of **safety**, and second **opportunities** for unstructured, child-led play:

- Respondents most frequently disagreed with rules that limited loose parts play, the removal of playground apparatus/structures and limits on sledding/tobogganing, on both accounts.
- Most respondents disagreed with most rules, except for those that required mandatory adult supervision (when considering **safety**).
- Parents/guardians were more likely to disagree with rules concerning tree climbing and jumping from heights when they considered their implication on **opportunities** for unstructured play.

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

FULL SUMMARY REPORT

Background

Canadians are increasingly concerned about managing the challenges that their children assume, and tend to limit their access to the benefits of unstructured child-led play. This type of play is where children follow their own instincts, ideas, and interests without a defined purpose or outcome. It is not initiated in an organized, planned, or formal way, and may include thrilling and exciting forms of play that provide opportunities for challenge while allowing the child to determine their own limits.¹ Categories could include: 1. play at great heights, 2. play at high speed, 3. play with dangerous tools, 4. play near dangerous elements, 5. rough-and-tumble play, and 6. play where the children can “disappear”/get lost.² Unstructured child-led play is integral to healthy child development and provides experiences that can equip children with risk management skills necessary to thrive as adults.³ Parent’s beliefs play an important role in their children’s access to unstructured child-led play. Despite the benefits, participation has dropped and children are reported as spending less time outdoors than their parents did as children. Literature suggests that perceptions concerning neighbourhood safety,⁴ and worries about traffic and “stranger danger” limit children’s opportunities for this kind of play. The literature also indicates a decrease in a child’s independent mobilityⁱ over previous generations, while overprotection and societal pressures have increased.⁵

Survey details

To gain a deeper understanding of the societal shift in tolerance for this kind of play, CPHA developed an online parent/guardian survey to investigate concerns and beliefs around unstructured child-led play. The survey had a particular focus on:

1. Access to play, preferred settings, and independent mobility
2. Play settings and the risk of injury
3. Factors influencing concerns that limit play
4. Awareness and agreement with restrictive play rules at school and in the community

The target population for this survey were Canadian parents/guardians/step-parents who are responsible for at least one child between the ages of 5 and 12 years old. The survey was available via social media for approximately 4 months and surveyed 492 respondents. **Limitations** to be noted are that as an online survey, an in-depth understanding of respondent perceptions cannot be fully captured. Disseminating the survey via social media outlets utilizes convenience sampling and is thus subject to bias. Respondents were primarily a middle-class, post-secondary educated population, mostly residing in urban or suburban neighbourhoods. Additionally, the small sample size (492 partially complete and 397 complete) calls into question the generalizability of results. Thus, findings may not be reflective of all Canadian parent/guardians. There was unequal representation across provinces with the highest response rate in Alberta. The survey did not capture responses from those residing in northern Territories and there was underrepresentation from the Maritime Provinces, Quebec, and Saskatchewan. See Appendix 1 for methodology information.

Reading this report

All charts and graphs display the frequency of participant responses as a percentage of the total who indicated a particular choice.

ⁱ *Independent mobility* is the extent to which children can travel and play away from their home unsupervised. (Schoeppe S, Duncan MJ, Badland H, Oliver M, Curtis C. 2013. Associations of children's independent mobility and active travel with physical activity, sedentary behaviour and weight status: a systematic review. *Journal of Science and Medicine in Sport*. 16(4):312-9).

Survey Results

Participant characteristics

A total of 492 parent/guardians answered at least part of the survey, and of these 397 individuals completed it (81% completion rate). 28 respondents were excluded from the survey: four individuals were not living within Canada, and 24 individuals were not responsible (a parent/step-parent/guardian) for a child between the ages of 5 and 12. Respondents were asked to complete the survey for their oldest child within the age category of 5-12 years. 54% of participants were answering the survey for a male child and most children were between the ages of five and seven years old, (Figure 1). The age of participant’s child decreased from five until 10 with a slight increase in those aged 11 and 12 years old. 98.22% of respondents indicated that a long term physical condition or health problem did not limit the amount or kind of physical activity their child could do. Over 78% of survey respondents indicated that their child did not have an older sibling. Of those who had an older sibling, most (39%) were between the ages of 12-14 years.

61% of survey respondents reported a combined household income of \$100,001 or more, while 14.63% reported a combined household income between \$75,001- \$100,000. 87% had completed post-secondary education; most respondents had completed a university graduate (41.85%) or under graduate degree (33.42%). Figure 3 shows the distribution of respondents in Canada.

23% of participants identified their area of residence as **rural** (a small town or municipality with a low population outside of a large city); 37.64% live in an **urban centre** (a large city, high population and many buildings); and most, 39.64%, live in a **suburban area** (residential area or a mixed land use area, either existing as part of a city or as a separate residential community within commuting distance of a city) (Figure 2). See Appendix 2 for additional participant figures.

Figure 1. Age of oldest child between 5-12 (count)

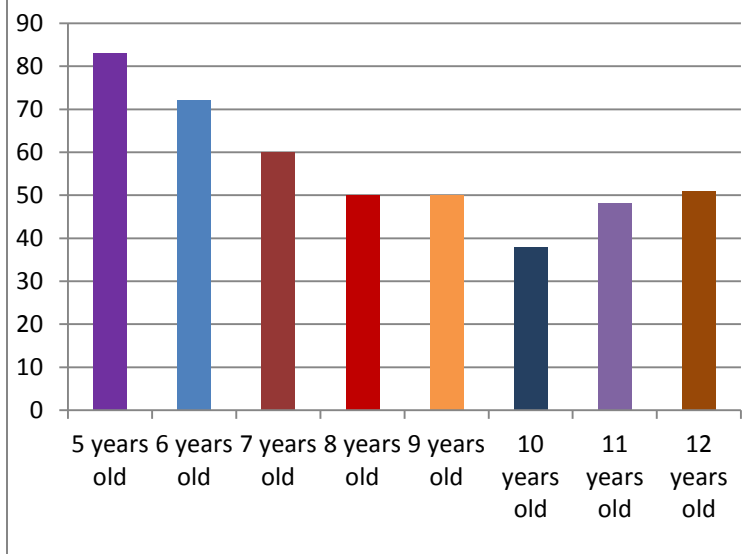
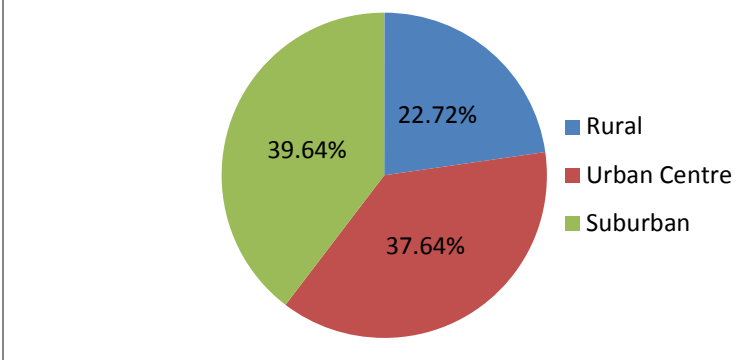
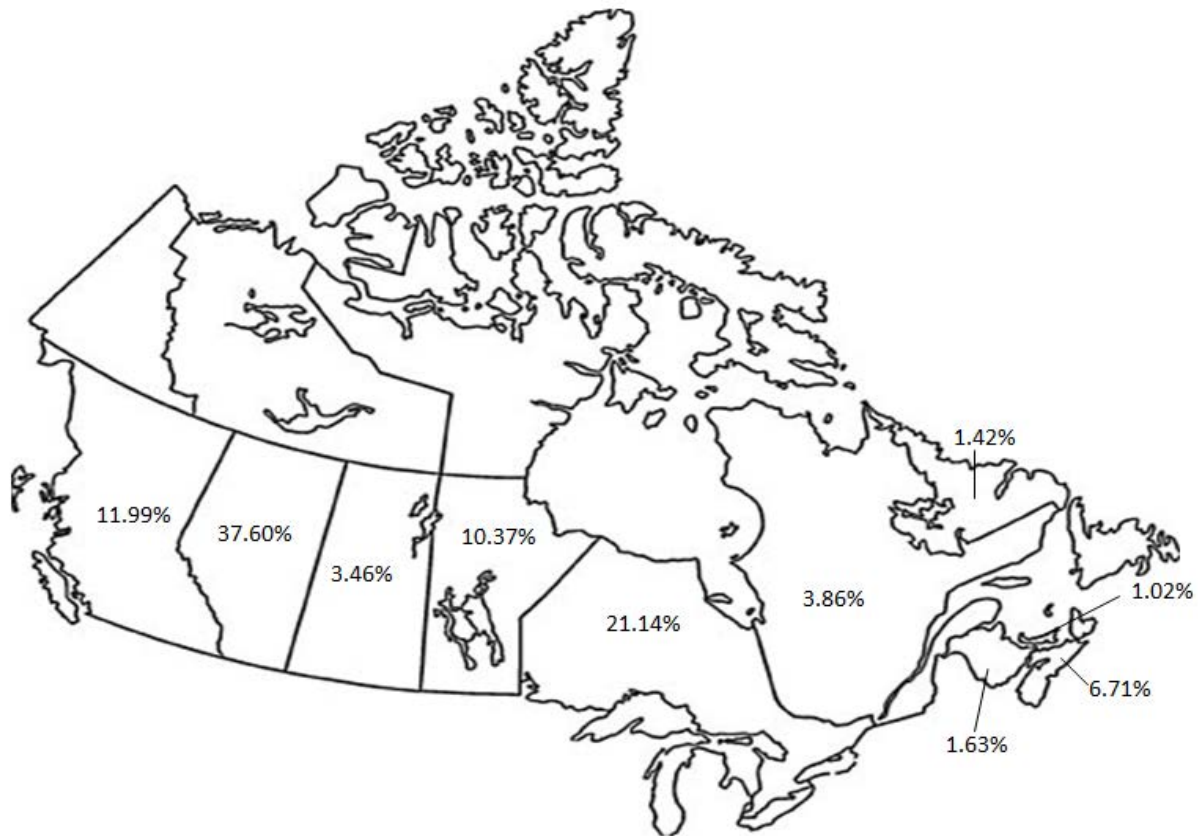


Figure 2. Participants’ area of residence



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Figure 3. Distribution of survey participants by province.



ACCESS TO PLAY SPACES

Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: unstructured child-led play is important for this child's development.

Almost all (99.76%) respondents (N=403) agreed or strongly agreed that unstructured child-led play is important for their child's development.

How often...

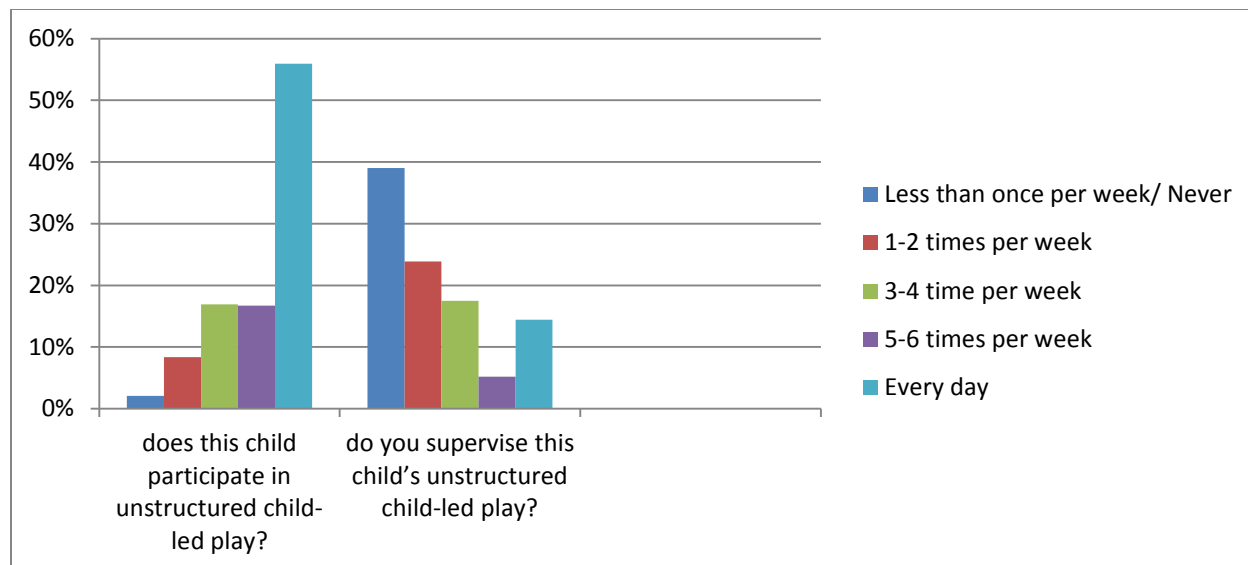
Does this child participate in unstructured child-led play?

About 56% of respondents (n= 431) indicated their child participates in unstructured child-led play every day. 16.71% indicated 5-6 times a week, and 16.94% 3-4 times per week. 10.43% indicated their child participates 1-2 times per week or less (Figure 10).

Do you supervise this child's unstructured play?

Most indicated that they provide supervision less than once per week or never (39%), 24% supervised unstructured play 1-2 times per week, while 14% supervise play every day (Figure 10).

Figure 10. Frequency of unstructured child-led play and parent/guardian supervision.



Parents/guardians of younger children (between 5-8 years), indicated participation in unstructured play more frequently (80% 5-6x per week or more) compared to those aged 9 to 12 (63% 5-6x per week or more) (Table 1). Respondents of older children (ages 9 to 12) indicated the lowest amount of supervision: 85% provided supervision 1-2x per week or never (Table 2).

Table 1. Cross-tabulation of age of child by frequency of participation in unstructured play

Does this child participate in unstructured child-led play?				
Age of Child	5-6 times per week +	3-4 x per week	1-2X per week- Never	N=
5 to 8	80%	15%	5%	250
9 to 12	63%	20%	17%	179

Table 2. Cross-tabulation of age of child by frequency parent/guardian supervision during unstructured play

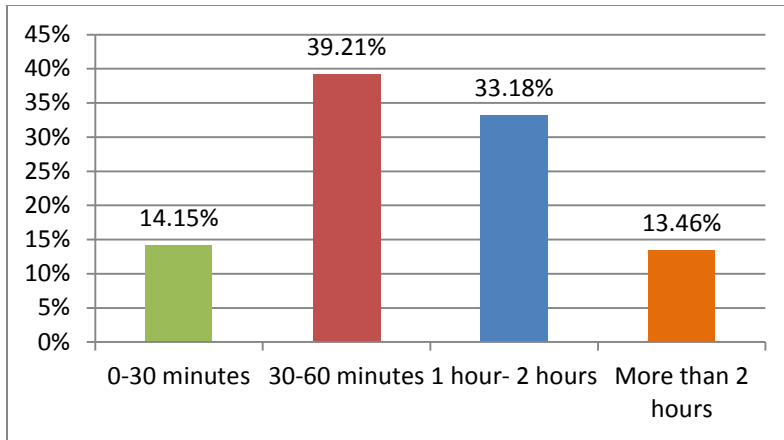
Do you supervise this child's unstructured child-led play				
Age of Child	5-6 times per week+	3-4 x per week	1-2X per week- Never	N=
5 to 8	30%	23%	47%	249
9 to 12	6%	10%	85%	176

When this child participates in unstructured child-led play, on average how long does this child play?

Most respondents (n=431) indicated that their child plays between 30-60 minutes per day (39.21%), while 33% indicated 1-2 hours per day (Figure 11).

Figure 11. Duration of unstructured child-led play

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey



Those aged 9 to 12 years old were more likely to play for: 1-2 hours (32%) to more than 2 hours (35%), compared to their younger counterparts who were more likely to play for 30 to 60 minutes (Table 3).

Table 3. Cross-tabulation of duration of play by age

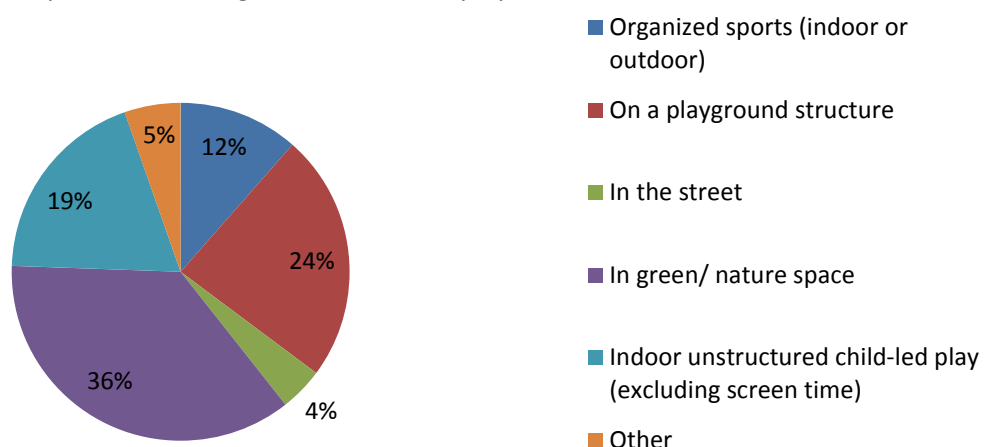
Age of Child	0-30 minutes	30-60 minutes	1 hour- 2 hours	More than 2 hours	N=
5 to 8	13%	45%	29%	13%	252
9 to 12	16%	17%	32%	35%	179

In my opinion, this child *most prefers* spending their time playing:

About 36% of parents/guardians (n=403) indicated that green/nature space was the play space their child most enjoyed. A playground structure (23.72%) was rated second, following by indoor play spaces (excluding screen time) (19.07%), organized sport (11.49%), and in the street (4.16%). “Other” responses listed included:

- All the above or a mix of the above
- Reading

Figure 12. Children's preferred setting for unstructured play

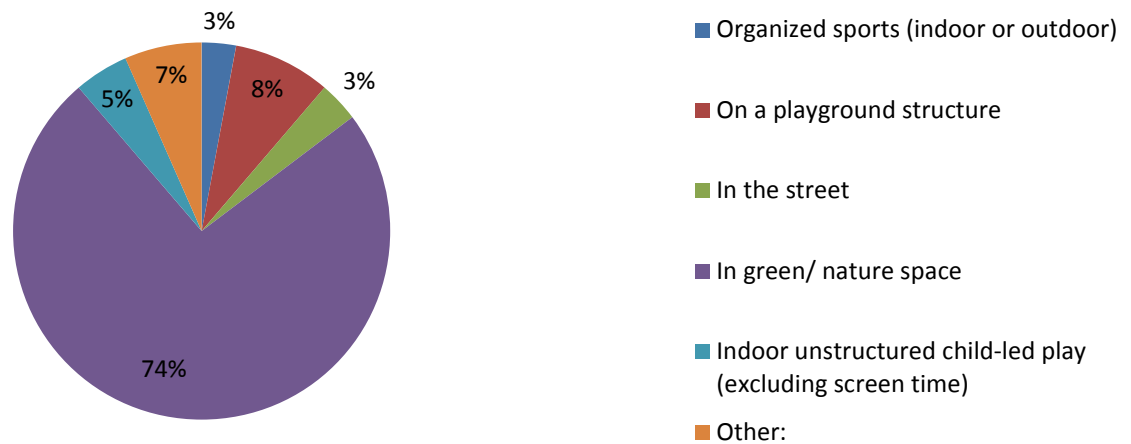


In my opinion, the setting most important for play is:

Among parents (n=408), most (74%) believed that nature/green space was most important, followed by outdoor playground structures (8%) and indoor play (excluding screen time) (4.66%). Play in the street (3.43%) and organized sports (2.94%) were rated of lowest importance (Figure 13). “Other” text responses included:

- Anything outdoors
- A variety of spaces are important
- Wherever the child is happiest playing
- Where the child can use their imagination

Figure 13. Most important unstructured play space indicated by parent/guardian

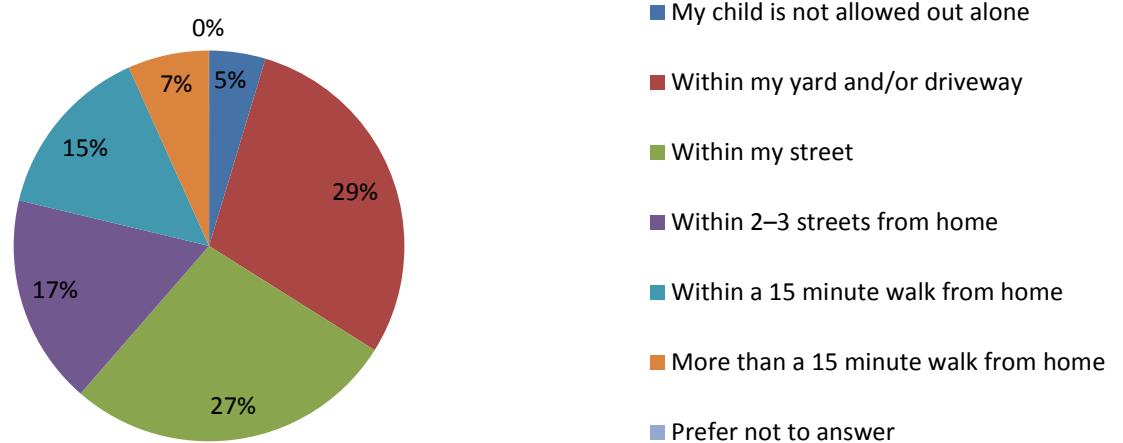


The farthest I would let my child play without adult supervision is:

Of parents/guardians (n=386), 29% of parents would allow their child to play without adult supervision as far as their yard or driveway, and 27% within their street. 17% of respondents allowed their child to play unsupervised within 2–3 streets of home; 15% within a 15 minute walk; and 7% more than a 15 minute walk. Only 5% indicated their child was not allowed to play away from home without adult supervision (Figure 14).

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

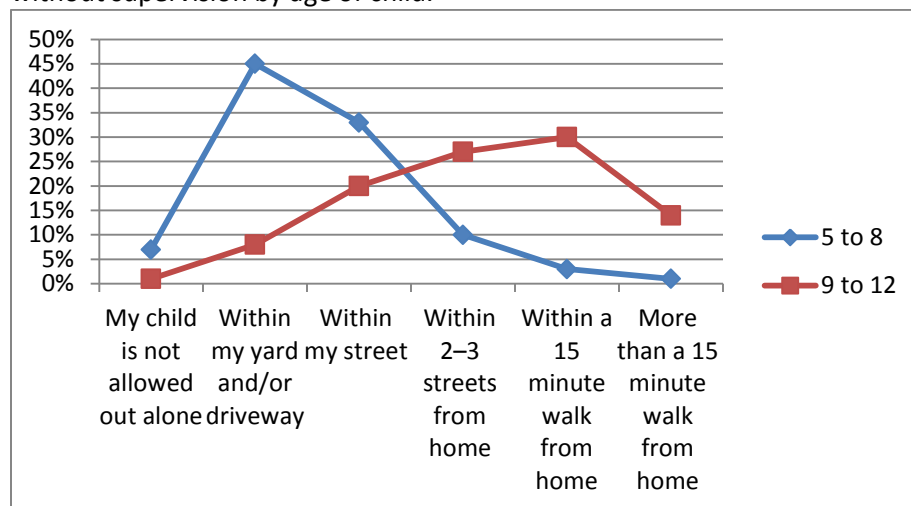
Figure 14. Independent mobility: the farthest distance parents/guardians allow their child to play freely from home



Age of child

Parent/guardians **with a younger child** were more likely to allow their child to **play shorter distances** unsupervised (within their yard and/or driveway (45%) or in the street (33%)) compared to those with an older child (8% and 20%, respectively). Those with **an older child** (between ages of 9-12) were more likely to allow their child to **play farther distances** from home unsupervised (27% within 2-3 streets and 30% within a 15 minute walk) compared to parents/guardians with a younger child (10% and 3%, respectively). See Appendix 2.1 for cross-tabulation table.

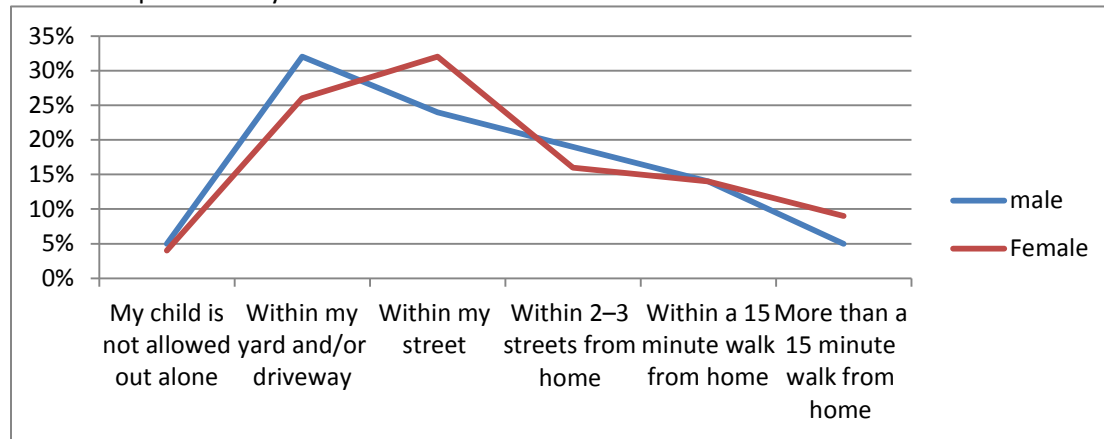
Figure 15. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by age of child.



Sex of Child

Respondents with a male child were more likely to indicate that their child is allowed to play within their yard/driveway unsupervised (32%), while those with a female child were more likely to allow them to play within their street (32%). Otherwise, both sex's independent mobility decreases as distance increases. See Appendix 2.1 for cross-tabulation table.

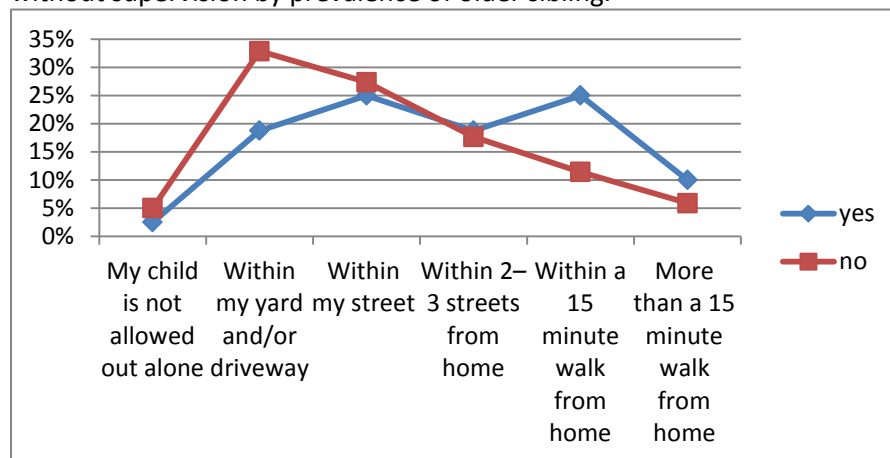
Figure 16. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by sex of child.



Older sibling

Parents/guardians, whose child had an older sibling, allowed them to play father distances from home unsupervised (25% within a 15 minute walk from home) compared to those without an older sibling (11% within a 15 minute walk from home). Those children without an older sibling were more likely to be allowed to play alone shorter distances from home with 33% allowed to play within yard or driveway, compared to 19% for those with an older sibling. See Appendix 2.1 for cross-tabulation table.

Figure 17. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by prevalence of older sibling.

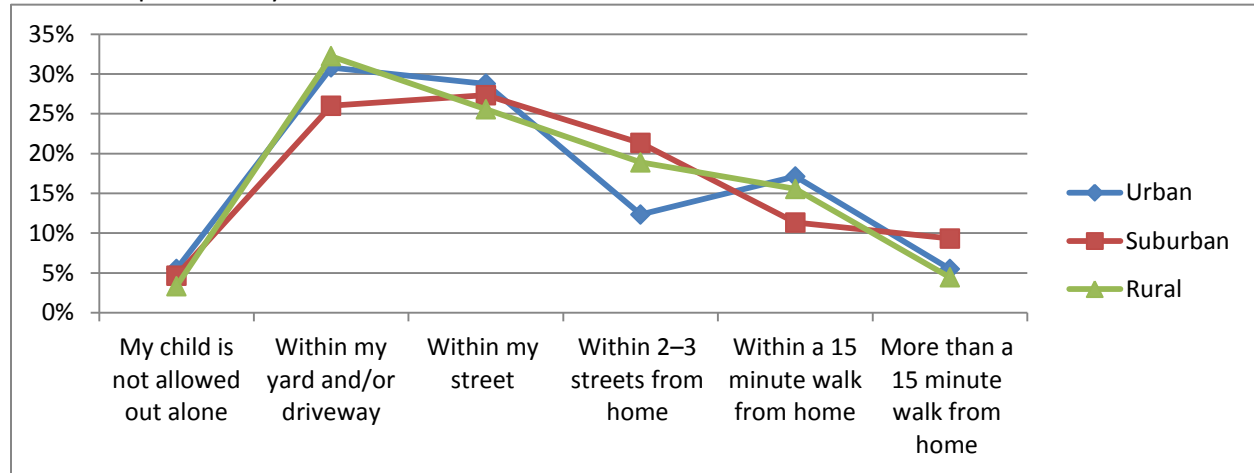


Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Location of Residence

The location of respondents residence did not make a notable difference in independent mobility, however, those living in an urban neighbourhood were the least likely to allow their child to play within 2-3 streets from home. See Appendix 2.1 for cross-tabulation table.

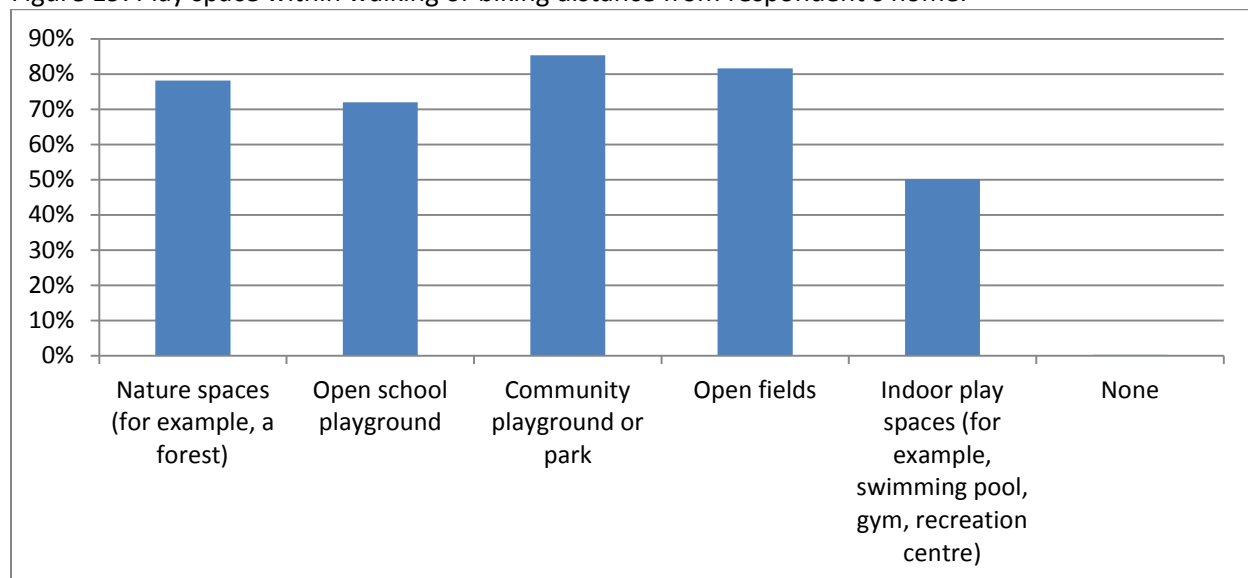
Figure 18. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by location of residence.



Which of the following play spaces are within walking or biking distance from your home? (check all that apply)

Almost all respondents (99.73%) indicated that they had access to at least one play space within walking or biking distance from their home. 85.33% had access to a community park or playground; 81.60% had access to open fields. Just over three quarters (78.13%) had access to nature spaces while just under three quarters (72%) had access to an open school playground. Half (50.13%) had access to indoor play spaces such as a swimming pool, gym, or recreation centre.

Figure 19. Play space within walking or biking distance from respondent's home.



Respondents who live in a rural neighbourhood were the most likely to have nature spaces (39%) or open fields (26%) within walking or biking distance, compared to those living in suburban and urban areas. However, those living in a rural area were least likely to have access to open school playgrounds (16%) or community parks/playground (18%). Compared to rural areas, those residing in urban communities were more likely to have access to indoor play spaces (17%).

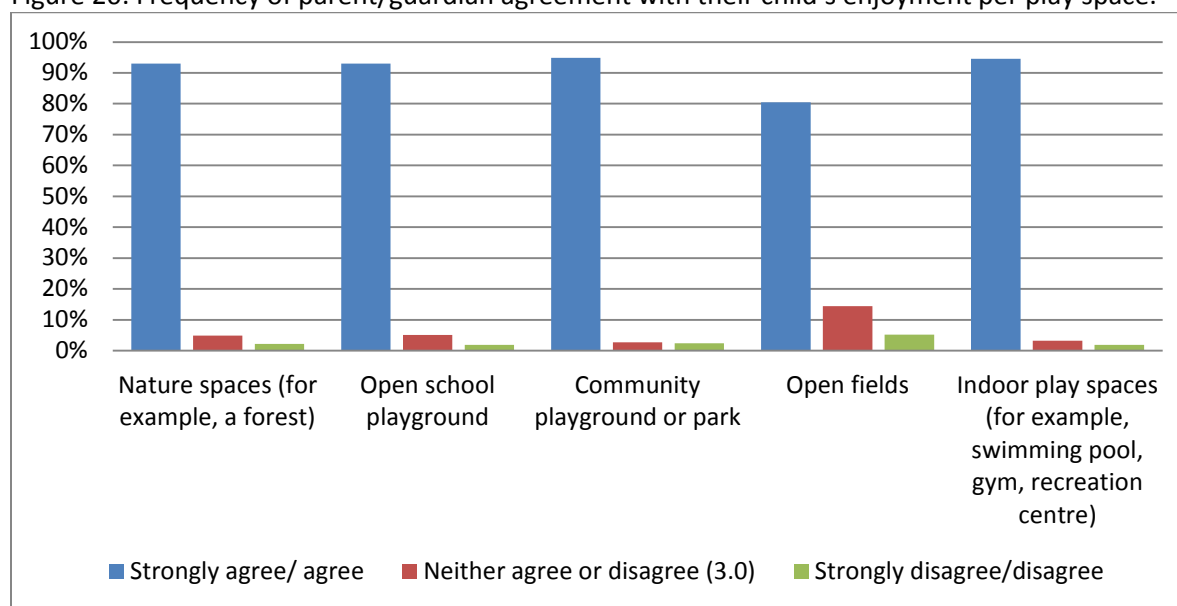
Table 4. Cross-tabulation of play spaces within walking or biking distance from respondent’s home by location of residence.

Location of residence	Nature spaces	Open school playground	Community playground or park	Open fields	Indoor play spaces	None	N=
Urban	18%	20%	24%	21%	17%	0%	572
Suburban	21%	20%	25%	22%	11%	0%	546
Rural	29%	16%	18%	26%	10%	0%	260

Please state your level of agreement with the following: My child enjoys playing at...

When ranking their child’s enjoyment of various play settings, respondents (n=372) had high agreement with all settings (nature spaces, open school playground, community playground/park, open fields, indoor play spaces), however, open fields were the least valued setting.

Figure 20. Frequency of parent/guardian agreement with their child’s enjoyment per play space.

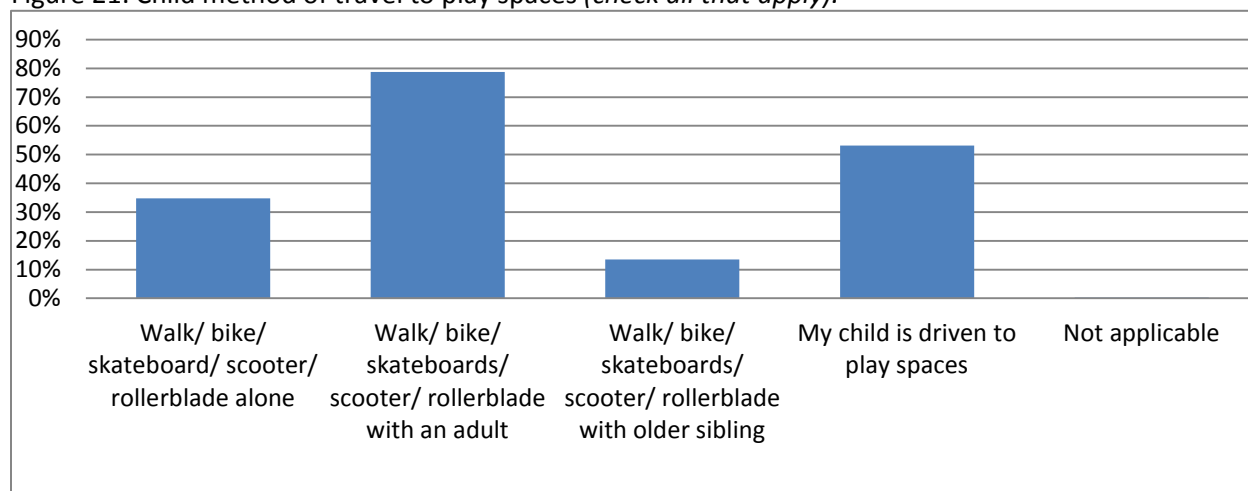


When this child travels to these play spaces they: (Check all that apply)

Of respondents (n=371), the most indicated (78.71%) method of transportation to a playspace was active transportation (walks/ bikes/ skateboards/ scooters/ rollerblades) **with an adult**. The second most indicated (53%) method was being driven by motor vehicle, while 35% traveled via active transportation **alone**, and 14% indicated their child travels via active transportation with **an older sibling**. This question asked respondents to choose all methods of transportation that applied to their child, thus the sum exceeds 100%.

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Figure 21. Child method of travel to play spaces (check all that apply).



Older children (aged 9-12) were more frequently permitted to travel **alone** via active transportation to play spaces (29%), compared to a younger child (5-8 years old) (10%). Conversely, 51% of respondents with a younger child traveled via active transportation **with an adult**, compared to 35% of respondents with an older child. Parents/guardians with a younger child were also more likely to drive their child to play spaces (35%) compared to those of an older child (23%).

Table 5. Cross-tabulation of child method of travel to play spaces by age of child

Age of Child	Walk/ bike/ skateboard/ scooter/ rollerblade alone	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with an adult	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with older sibling	My child is driven to play spaces	Not applicable	N=
5 to 8	10%	51%	3%	35%	0%	357
9 to 12	29%	35%	12%	23%	0%	312

Table 6. Cross-tabulation of child method of travel to play spaces by sex of child

Sex of Child	Walk/ bike/ skateboard/ scooter/ rollerblade alone	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with an adult	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with older sibling	My child is driven to play spaces	Not applicable	N=
Male	18%	43%	6%	32%	0%	361
Female	21%	44%	9%	26%	0%	297
Prefer not to say	18%	45%	9%	27%	0%	11

Respondents whose child did not have an older sibling were more likely to indicate that their child travels to play spaces via active transportation with an adult (48%) compared to those who had an older sibling (32%).

Table 7. Cross-tabulation of child method of travel to play spaces by prevalence of older sibling

Older sibling	Walk/ bike/ skateboard/ scooter/ rollerblade alone	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with an adult	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with older sibling	My child is driven to play spaces	Not applicable	N=
Yes	21.56%	31.74%	20.96%	25.75%	0%	167
No	18.26%	47.87%	X	30.83%	0.2%	493

Parents/guardians who live in urban neighbourhoods were the most likely to travel **with their child** (49%), followed by those in suburban areas (44%). Those who live in rural areas most frequently drove to play spaces (35%).

Table 8. Cross-tabulation of child method of travel to play spaces by area of residence

Location of residence	Walk/ bike/ skateboard/ scooter/ rollerblade alone	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with an adult	Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with older sibling	My child is driven to play spaces	Not applicable	N=
Urban	15.94%	48.61%	7.97%	27.49%	0%	251
Suburban	21.21%	44.32%	6.06%	28.03%	0.38%	264
Rural	21.43%	34.42%	9.09%	35.06%	0%	154

Table 9. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by location of residence.

Location of residence	My child is not allowed out alone	Within my yard and/or driveway	Within my street	Within 2–3 streets from home	Within a 15 minute walk from home	More than a 15 minute walk from home	N=
Urban	5.48%	30.82%	28.77%	12.33%	17.12%	5.48%	146
Suburban	4.67%	26%	27.33%	21.33%	11.33%	9.33%	150
Rural	3.33%	32.22%	25.56%	18.89%	15.56%	4.44%	90

INJURIES IN PLAY

Two questions regarding injuries in play were asked:

a. In my opinion, this child is at a higher risk of *being injured playing:**

b. In my opinion, this child is at a higher risk of encountering a *severe injury playing:**

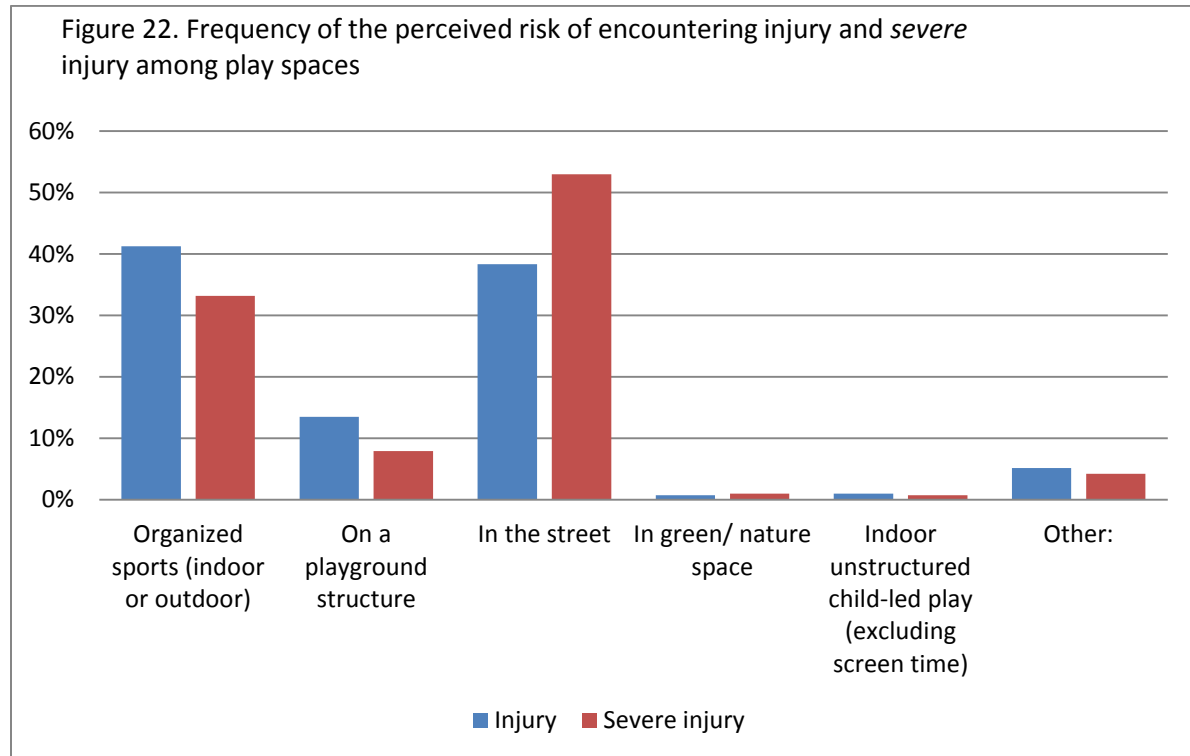
* While *injury* or *severe injury* was not defined, the contrast of the two questions allowed for a comparison between play spaces and perceived injury severity.

Organized sport (41%) was viewed as the most likely setting for **an injury**, followed by play in the street (38%). Respondents (n=404) also believed that a **severe injury** was most likely to occur in the streets

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

(52.97%), followed by organized sport (33.17%). Playing in nature/green space or indoors was the least likely place perceived for an injury to occur (Figure 14). “Other” text responses varied, but included:

- All the above
- Unsure or nowhere specifically
- In high risk activities (i.e. snowboarding)
- It depends on the child characteristics (i.e. physical literacy, confidence in abilities)

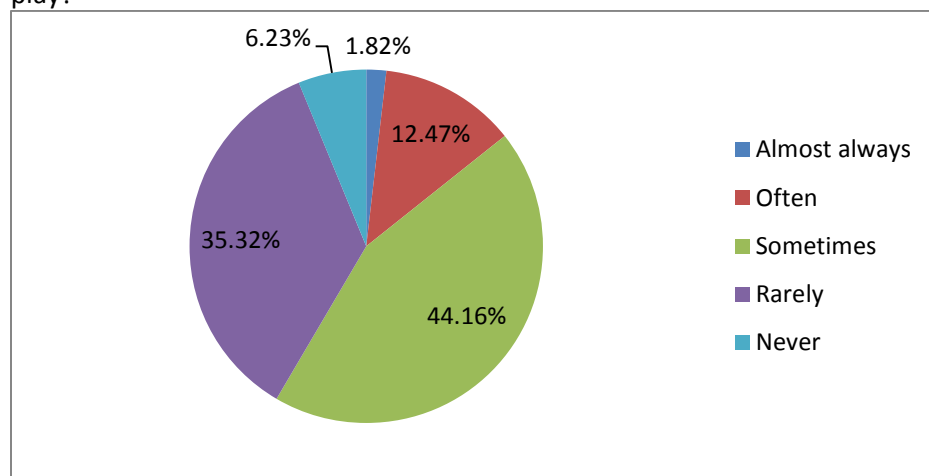


PARENT CONCERNS IN PLAY

Do you have any concerns about safety when this child engages in outdoor unstructured child-led play?

Most (44%) parents/guardians indicated that they ‘sometimes’ have concerns about safety, while 14% indicated they almost always or often have concerns, and 41.55% rarely or never have concerns (Figure 23). The mean Likert Scale score (1.0= never to 5.0=almost always) was 2.68.

Figure 23. Do you have concerns about safety when this child engages in outdoor unstructured child-led play?



Parents/guardians of children aged 5-8 were most likely to rate their concerns as low (44% rated concerns as ‘rarely’ or ‘never’), while those with an older child (aged 9 to 12) were more concerned (49% indicated they are ‘sometimes’ concerned) (Table 4). Parents/guardians with a female child were the most likely to rate their concerns as low (47%, occurring ‘rarely’ or ‘never’), while those with a male child were more likely to be ‘sometimes’ concerned (39%) (Table 5). Furthermore, respondents whose child did not have an older sibling were more likely to have concerns (45% rated ‘sometimes’). In comparison, almost half (48%) of respondents whose child had an older sibling indicated they rarely or never had concerns (Table 6).

Table 10. Cross-tabulation of frequency of indicated unstructured play safety concerns by age of child

Age of Child	Almost always/Often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	N=
5 to 8	15%	41%	44%	219
9 to 12	13%	49%	38%	166

Table 11. Cross-tabulation of frequency of indicated unstructured play safety concerns by sex of child

Sex of Child	Always/often	Sometimes	Rarely/Never	N=
Male	14%	49%	37%	206
Female	14%	39%	47%	174
Prefer not to say	20%	40%	40%	5

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

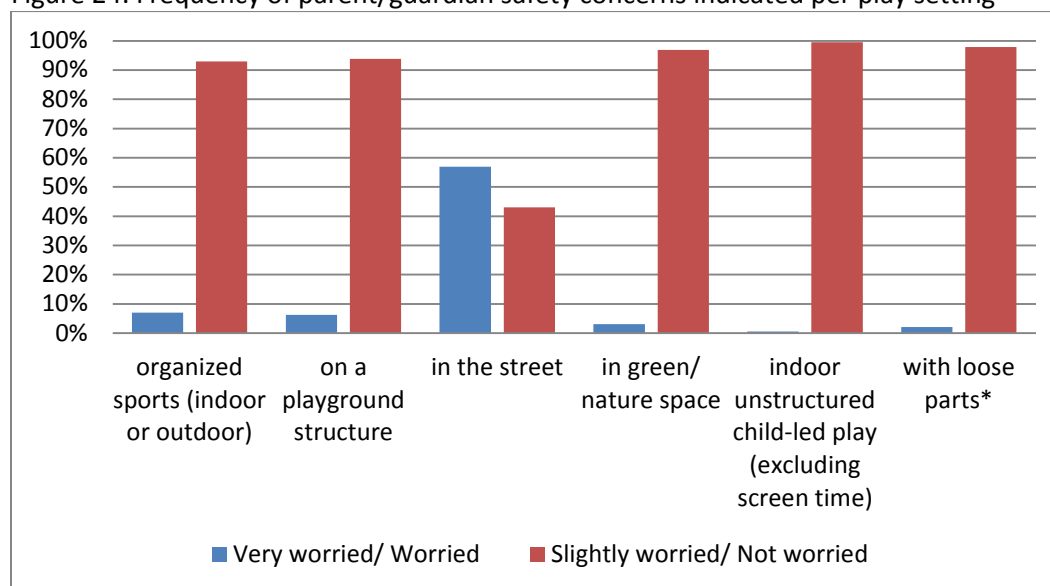
Table 12. Cross-tabulation of concerns about safety when this child engages in outdoor unstructured child-led play by having an older sibling

Older sibling	Almost always/Often	Sometimes	Rarely/never	N=
Yes	13%	40%	48%	80
No	14%	45%	41%	288

Play Locations: How concerned are you when this child plays...

Respondents (n=386) indicated they were the most worried when their child plays in the street (57%), while only 7% and 6% indicated they had concerns when their child plays in organized sport and on a play structure, respectively. Indoor unstructured play (99%), with loose parts (97%), and in green space/nature (97%) were the least worrisome play settings (Figure 24).

Figure 24. Frequency of parent/guardian safety concerns indicated per play setting



*loose parts: materials that can be moved, carried, combined, redesigned, lined up, and taken apart and put back together in multiple ways. They are materials with no specific set of directions that can be used alone or combined with other materials. i.e. tires, pool noodles, boxes, etc.

Figure 25. Ranking of play spaces by average Likert score



There were no notable differences between a parent/guardian of males or females concerning play setting, except for in the street. Parents/guardians with a male child were 'very worried' or 'worried' (63%) when their child played in the street, while 51% with a female child were 'slightly' or 'not worried' (Table 7).

Table 13. Cross-tabulation of frequency of parent/guardian safety concerns indicated per play setting by sex of child

Sex	Very worried/ Worried	Slightly worried/not worried	N=
Organized sport			
Male	7%	93%	204
Female	7%	93%	174
Prefer not to say	0%	100%	5
On a playground structure			
Male	5%	95%	206
Female	7%	93%	174
Prefer not to say	0%	100%	5
In the street			
Male	63%	37%	205
Female	49%	51%	171
Prefer not to say	80%	20%	5
In green/nature			
Male	2%	98%	206
Female	4%	96%	174
Prefer not to say	0%	100%	5
Indoor unstructured play			
Male	0%	100%	206
Female	1%	99%	174
Prefer not to say	0%	100%	5
With loose parts			
Male	2%	98%	207
Female	2%	98%	172
Prefer not to say	0%	100%	5

Respondents with younger children (aged of 5 to 8) were the least concerned (slightly worried or not worried) when their child played in organized sport (96%), compared to those with older children (89%) (Table 14). Alternatively, while the safety concerns were overall low for organized sport, parents/guardians with older children (aged 9-12) were more likely to be worried or very worried (11%). The reverse is true when considering street play; parents/guardians of younger children were more likely (64%) to have concerns than parents of older children, (48%). Furthermore, parents/guardians of children aged 9 to 12 were more likely to not be worried when their child engaged in street play (52%).

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Table 14. Cross-tabulation of frequency of parent/guardian safety concerns indicated per play setting by age of child

Age of child	Very worried/ Worried	Slightly worried/not worried	N=
Organized sport			
5 to 8	4%	96%	218
9 to 12	11%	89%	165
On a playground structure			
5 to 8	5%	95%	219
9 to 12	8%	92%	166
In the street			
5 to 8	64%	36%	215
9 to 12	48%	52%	166
In green/nature			
5 to 8	4%	96%	218
9 to 12	2%	98%	167
Indoor unstructured play			
5 to 8	0%	100%	218
9 to 12	1%	99%	167
With loose parts			
5 to 8	3%	97%	218
9 to 12	1%	99%	166

Parents/guardians who indicated that their child did not have an older sibling were more likely to be worried when their child played in the street (59%) while those with an older sibling were less likely to be worried (52%) (Table 15).

Table 15. Cross-tabulation of frequency of parent/guardian safety concerns indicated in the top three most concerning play setting by having older sibling

Older Sibling	Very worried/ Worried	Slightly worried/not worried	N=
Organized sport			
yes	10%	90%	80
no	6%	94%	286
On a playground structure			
yes	9%	91%	80
no	5%	95%	274
In the street			
yes	48%	52%	79
no	59%	41%	285

What concerns do you have? Please rate your concern for letting this child play for each of the following:

Overall, the **greatest concern** parents/guardians (n=386) had was nearby traffic (65%). Aside from nearby traffic, **most parents/guardians did not have concerns** (indicated by either slightly worried or not worried).

Following traffic, respondents were the most likely to indicate kidnapping (24%); bullying (19%); the likelihood of injury (14%); and community violence or crime (11%) as concerns that limit access to play. Respondents were the least worried about community violence or crime (89%). "Other" in text responses included:

- Not worried/ Not applicable
- Wild life/Environment factors (insects/animals/ sun exposure/ allergens)
- Opinion or judgment of other parents
- Child getting lost

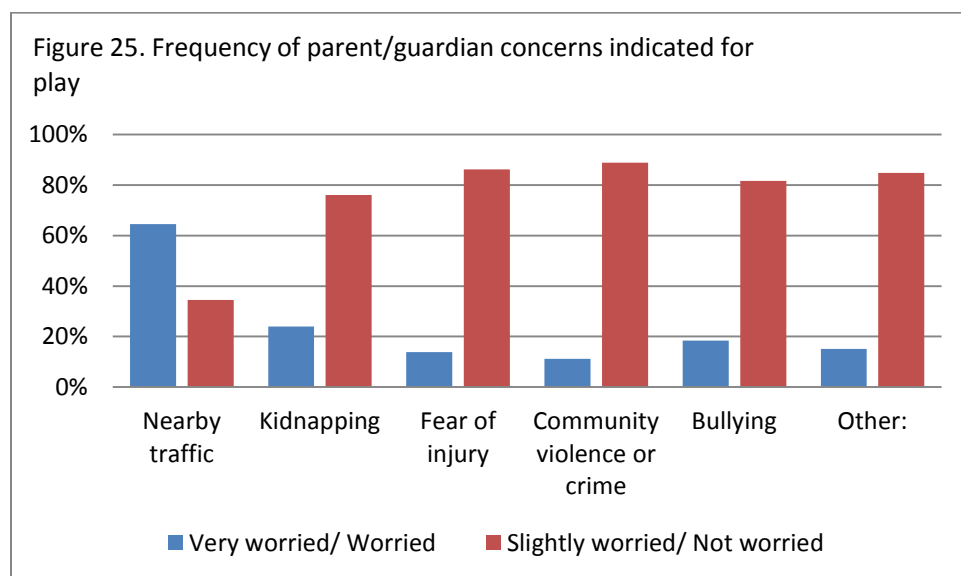


Figure 26. Ranking of type of parent/guardian concerns for play by average Likert score



Concerns for kidnapping (29%), bullying (29%), and community violence or crime (16%) was highest among parent/guardians residing in a rural location, while nearby traffic concerns were the highest (64%) for those in urban neighbourhoods and least for those residing in suburban neighbourhoods (40% slightly or not worried) (Table 10).

Table 16. Cross-tabulation of frequency of parent/guardian concerns indicated for play by location of residence

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Location of residence	Very worried/ Worried	Slightly worried/not worried	N=
Nearby Traffic			
Rural	64%	36%	90
Urban	69%	31%	146
Suburban	60%	40%	150
Kidnapping			
Rural	29%	71%	90
Urban	23%	77%	146
Suburban	22%	78%	150
Fear of injury			
Rural	16%	84%	90
Urban	14%	86%	145
Suburban	13%	87%	150
Community Violence or Crime			
Rural	16%	84%	90
Urban	10%	90%	146
Suburban	9%	91%	150
Bullying			
Rural	29%	71%	90
Urban	14%	86%	146
Suburban	17%	83%	150

Do any of the following influence these concerns?

The majority of parent/guardians (n=386) indicated they were not overly influenced by stories in traditional media (54%) or social media (63%), being judged by other parents (70%), or by insurance or legal claims (88%). However, when they were influenced, the causes most frequently indicated were stories in traditional media (43%), followed by those in social media (37%), and being judged by other parents (31%). "Other" text responses varied, but included:

- Not worried
- Negative stories shared from friends/family/colleagues
- Past negative experiences

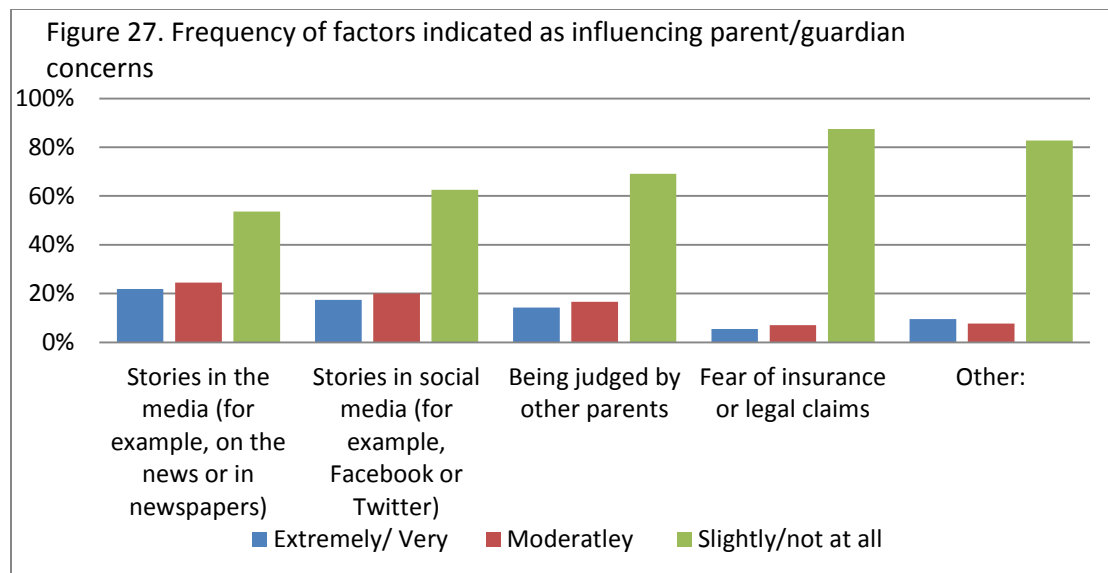
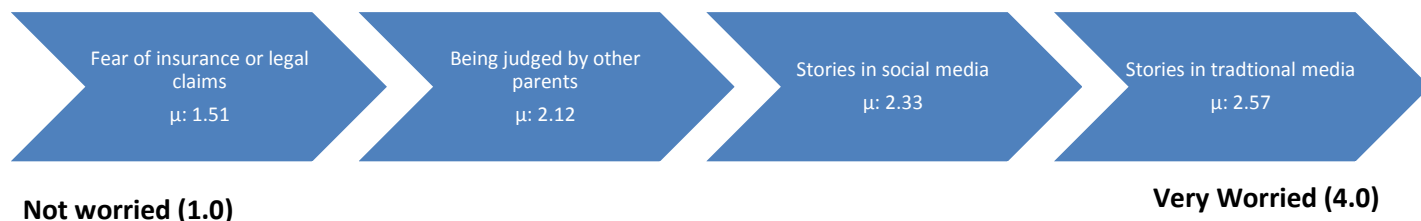


Figure 28. Ranking of influential factors on parent/guardian concerns for unstructured play by average Likert score

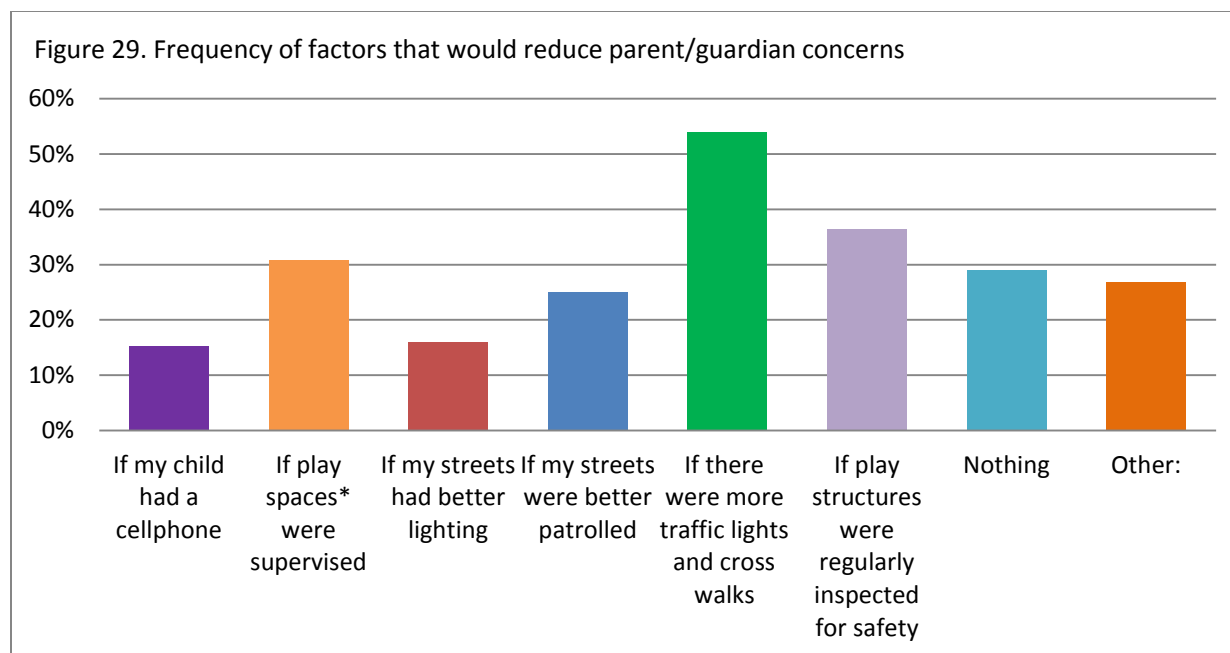


What would reduce these concerns? Please identify your top 3:

Respondents (n=375) were able to identify their top three choices (Figure 22) as: ‘if there were more traffic lights or cross walks’ (54%); ‘if play spaces were inspected regularly for safety’ (37%); and, if play spaces were supervised (31%). Other ideas included: if their streets were better patrolled (25%); if their streets had better lighting (16%); and if their child had a cellphone (15%). 29% indicated that nothing could reduce their concerns. 27% of respondents indicated “other” and provided a text response in which 42% were related to traffic calming measures: more sidewalks; reduced speed limits; and speed bumps. Other text responses included:

- More children in the play space (safety in numbers);
- A greater sense of community connectedness; and
- A greater sense of cultural/ societal acceptance around children playing independently.

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey



*Play spaces: A setting where play occurs. This includes (and is not limited to) playgrounds, play structures, recreation centers, swimming pools, gyms, nature areas, and fields.

Respondents who reside in an urban area were most likely to indicate 'more traffic lights and crosswalks' in comparison to those in rural neighborhoods.

Table 17. Cross-tabulation of frequency of factors that could reduce parent/guardian concerns around unstructured play by location of residence

Location of residence	If my child had a cellphone	If play spaces were supervised	If my streets had better lighting	If my streets were better patrolled	If there were more traffic lights and crosswalks	If play structures were regularly inspected for safety	Nothing	Other	N=
Rural	8%	14%	9%	12%	20%	16%	14%	9%	200
Urban	5%	15%	6%	10%	26%	14%	11%	13%	348
Suburban	5%	11%	7%	11%	22%	17%	13%	12%	328

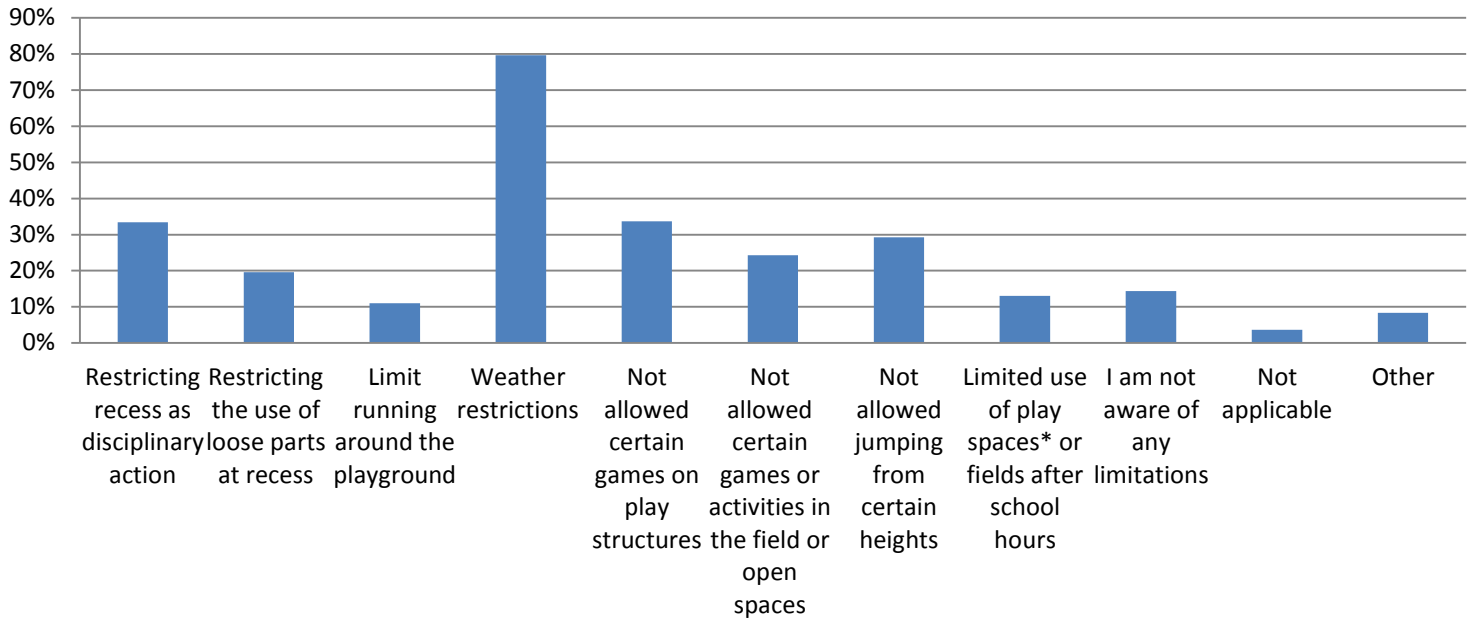
RESTRICTIVE PLAY RULES AT SCHOOL

Does this child's school have any of the following rules in place that you are aware of: (check all that apply)

The majority of respondents (n=383) were aware of at least one rule at their child's school that limited unstructured child-led play, while 14% were not aware of any rules. Of parents/guardians who were aware, the majority knew of weather restrictions (for example, not allowed outside if it is icy or too cold) (78%); prohibition of certain games on play structures (for example, grounders) (34%); restricting recess as disciplinary action (33%); prohibition on jumping from certain heights (29.24%); restricted use of loose parts at recess (balls, toboggans) (19.58%); limited the use of play spaces or fields after school hours (13.05%); and rules that limited running around the playground (10.97%). "Other" text responses included:

- Shortened recess or lunch period;
- Time restrictions to playground use before and after school; and,
- Sport equipment/loose parts use that is limited outside of gym class.

Figure 30. Frequency of parent/guardian awareness indicated regarding play-limiting rules in place at their child's school



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

- Parents who were aware of at least one rule were asked if they agreed with the rule(s) at their child's school, first considering the influence on child safety, and second the opportunities for unstructured child-led play:

Table 12. Parent/guardian agreement with known rules at school considering the influence on **child safety** and **opportunities** for unstructured child-led play.

Level Agreement	When considering <u>child safety</u> , do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school? (n=312)	When considering <u>opportunities for unstructured child-led play</u> , do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school? (n=309)
Strongly agree/ agree	weather restrictions (i.e. rules that limit play outside if it is too cold) (61%)	weather restrictions (i.e. rules that limit play outside if it is too cold) (53%)
	prohibit jumping from heights (45%)	prohibit jumping from heights (42%)
Strongly disagree/ disagree	the use of play spaces (playground or field) after school hours (90%)	the use of play spaces (playground or field) after school hours (91%)
	running on the playground (79%)	running on the playground (80%)
	the use of loose parts (such as balls) (79%)	the use of loose parts (such as balls) (78%)
	recess as a disciplinary action (70%)	recess as a disciplinary action (74%)
	certain games or activities in the field or in open spaces (66%)	certain games or activities in the field or in open spaces (70%)

See Appendix 3.4 for tables of each question.

When considering child **safety** (n=312) and **opportunities for unstructured child-led play** (n=309), most respondents disagreed or strongly disagreed with all rules, except for those relating to weather restrictions and jumping from heights. However, respondents were more likely to agree with weather related rules when considering the implications on child safety (61% strongly agree/agree) versus opportunities for unstructured play (53% strongly agree/agree).

The same pattern of disagreement was present for both questions (considering child safety or play opportunities). Parents/guardians most frequently disagreed with rules that limit or restrict:

- the use of play spaces (playground or field) after school hours;
- running on the playground;
- the use of loose parts (such as balls);
- recess as a disciplinary action; and,
- certain games or activities in the field or in open spaces.

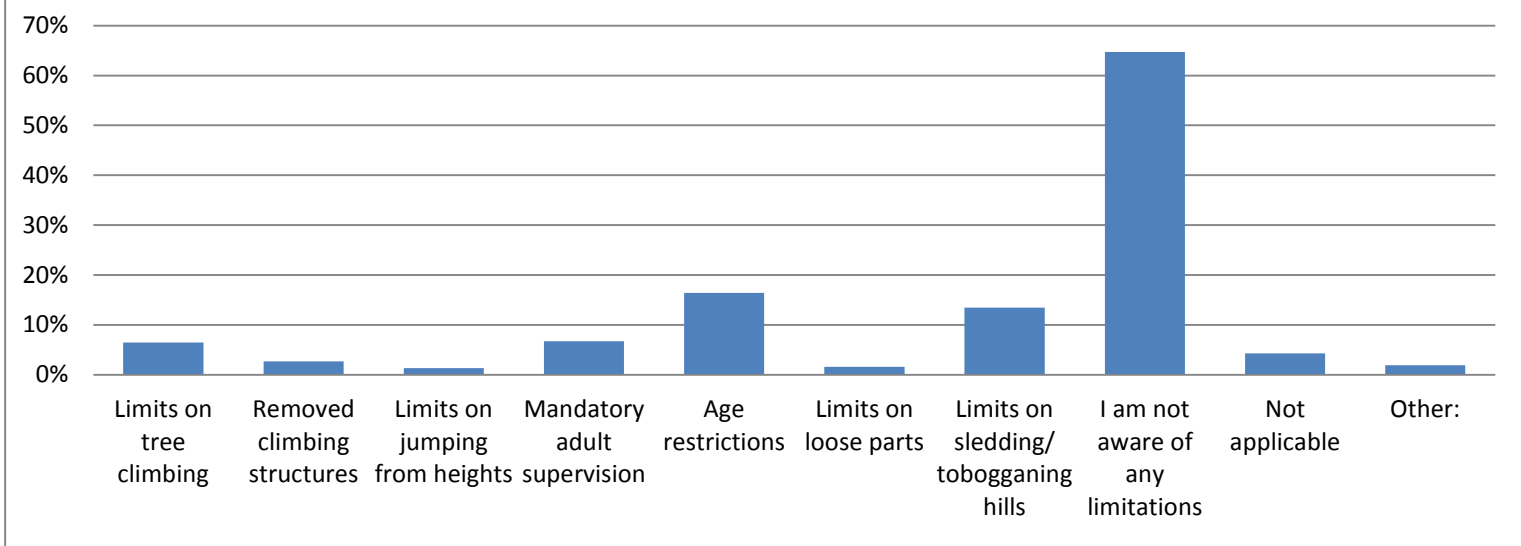
“Other” text responses of rules included:

- Shortened recess or lunch periods
- Time restrictions of access to playground before and after school
- Sport equipment/loose parts use that is limited outside of gym class

RESTRICTIVE PLAY RULES IN THE COMMUNITY

(a) At your community playgrounds, are you aware of any of the following rules: (check all that apply)

Figure 33. Frequency of parent/guardian awareness indicated regarding play-limiting rules in place at their community playground



The majority (65%) of respondents (n=371) were not aware of any rules in place at their community playgrounds. When they were aware of limitations, the rules were related to age restrictions (16%); limits on sledding/tobogganing hills (13%); tree climbing (7%); and mandatory adult supervision (7%).

“Other” text responses included:

- Closures in winter
- Time restrictions to use

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

- Parents who were aware of at least one rule were asked if they agreed with the rule(s) at their community playgrounds, first considering the influence on child safety, and second the opportunities for unstructured child-led play:

Table 18. Parent/guardian agreement with known rules at community playgrounds considering **child safety** and **opportunities** for unstructured child-led play.

Level Agreement	When considering <u>child safety</u> , do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school? (n=117)	When considering <u>opportunities</u> for unstructured child-led play, do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school? (n=117)
Strongly agree/ agree	Mandatory adult supervision (44%)	
Strongly disagree/ disagree	Limits on loose parts (83%)	Limits on loose parts (83%)
	Removed climbing structures (80%)	Removed climbing structures (80%)
	Limits on sledding/tobogganing hills (67%)	Limits on tree climbing (65%)
	Age restrictions (51%)	Limits on jumping form heights (60%)
	Limits on tree climbing (48%)	Limits on sledding/tobogganing hills (63%)
	Limits on jumping form heights (40%)	Age restrictions (55%)
		Mandatory adult supervision (40%)

See Appendix 3.4 for tables of each question

The majority of parents/guardians disagreed with **all but one rule**: 44% agreed with rules that required mandatory adult supervision (when considering the influence on child safety).

Overall, respondents were most likely to disagree with rules that limit loose parts play (83%), and removal of apparatus from playgrounds (80%). In addition, respondents disagreed with rules on tree climbing (65%) and jumping from heights (60%) when they considered the rule's implications **on opportunities for unstructured play**, compared to those for safety (48%, 40%, respectively). Around two-thirds disagreed with rules that limited sledding/tobogganing hills on both accounts.

APPENDIX

1. Methodology

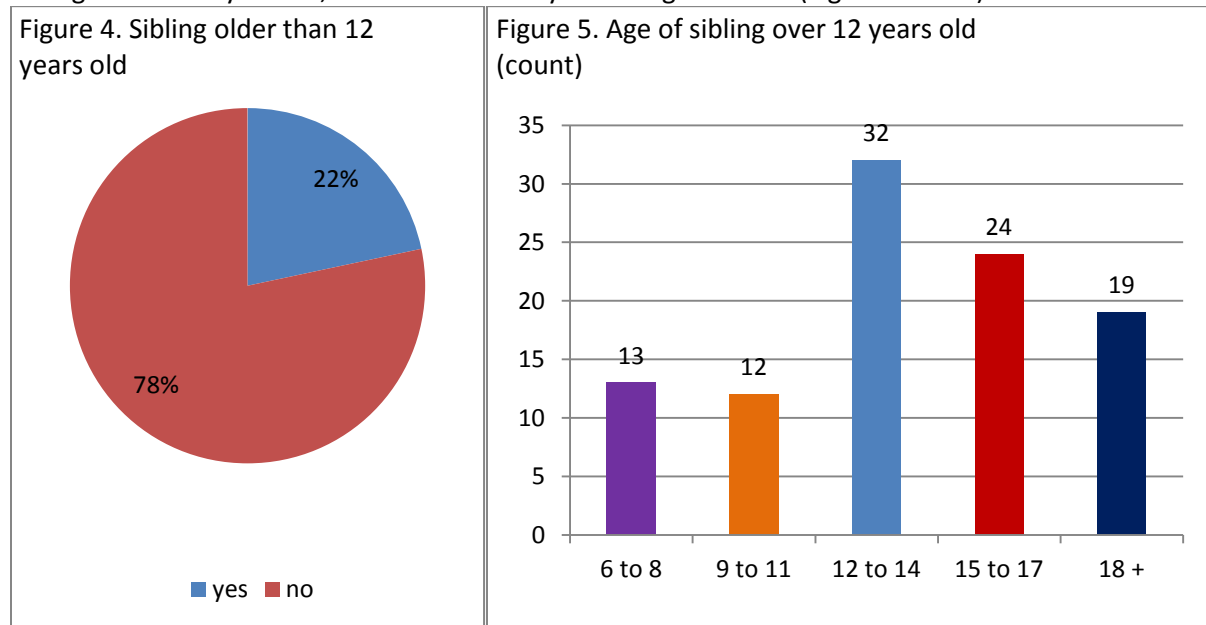
Prior to the development of a questionnaire, a review of both grey and research literatures on [parent perceptions](#) and play was completed. The survey was piloted internally by CPHA and by Ottawa Public Health in both French and English languages to ensure that questions were clear, possible responses were available, the literacy level was appropriate, and the survey layout was logical. The survey was designed using an online tool, Simple Surveys. There were a total of 33 questions over 21 pages and definitions of terms were provided throughout the survey where appropriate.

The question types used included: Multiple Choice (including check all that apply); Dropdown; Yes/No; Other Text Response; Rating (top three); Multiple Choice and Rating Matrices. For all demographic questions, respondents had the option to click ‘prefer not to say’ and could exit the survey at any time. The survey was offered in both English and French and it was estimated that completion time would take 15-20 minutes.

The URL link to complete the survey was distributed through a variety of social media and online resources, including (and not limited to) CPHA’s Facebook, Twitter, and Weekly Update member newsletter, and through requests from various child-focused organizations. To promote the survey, a targeted Facebook advertisement to parents with school-aged children was developed and hosted online from June 15, 2017 to August 1, 2017.

2. Participant characteristics

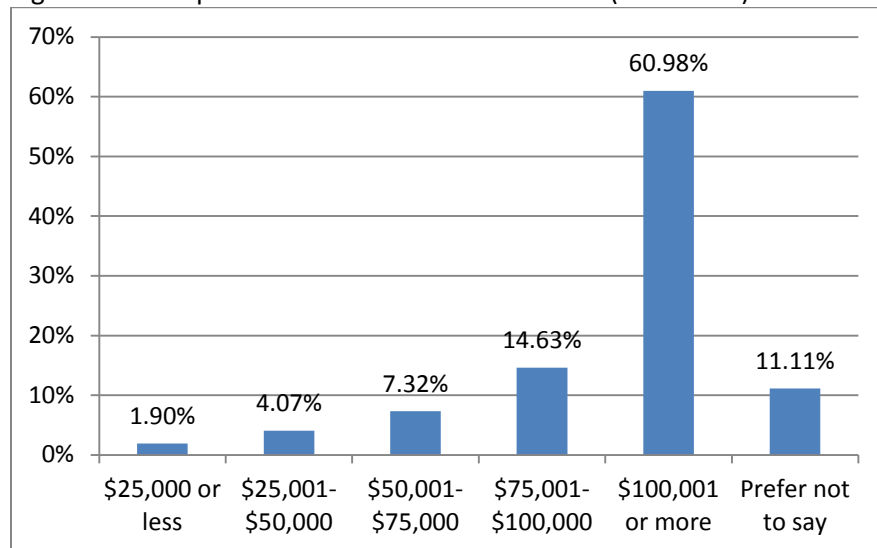
Over 78% of survey respondents indicated that their child did not have an older sibling. Of those who had an older sibling, most (39%) were between the ages of 12-14 years old, followed by 29% between the ages of 15-17 year old, and 23% were 18 years of age or older (Figure 4 and 5).



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

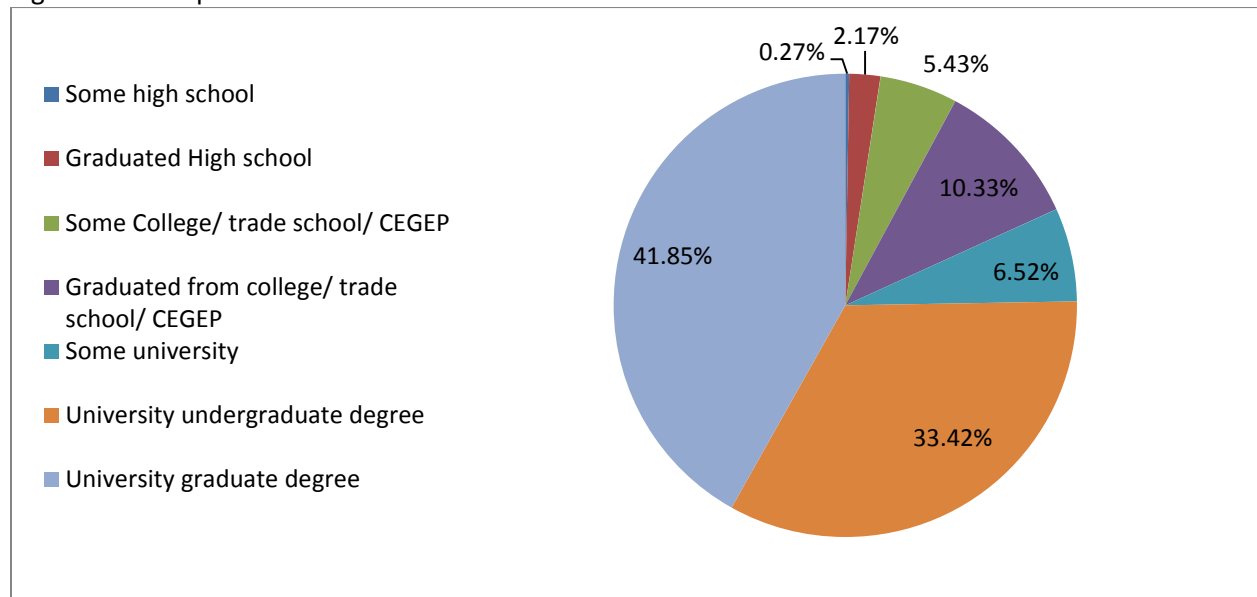
61% of survey respondents reported a combined household income of \$100,001 or more, while 14.63% reported a combined household income between \$75,001- \$100,000 (Figure 6).

Figure 6. Participant combined household income (before tax)



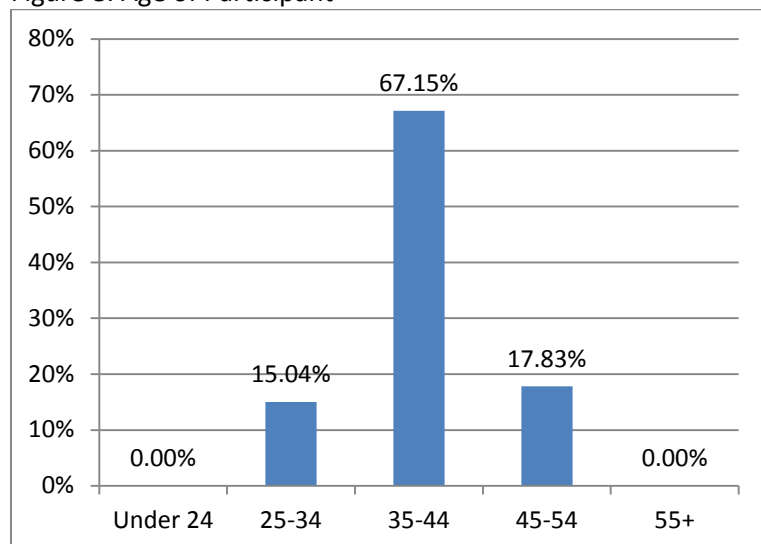
87% of respondents had completed post-secondary education. Most had completed a University graduate (41.85%) or under graduate degree (33.42%), while 10.33% had graduated from college/trade school/ CEGEP (Figure 7).

Figure 7. Participant educational attainment



67.15%, of parents/guardians were between the ages of 35-44, with the average age being 40 years old (Figure 8).

Figure 8. Age of Participant



3. Raw counts

1. Please rate your level of agreement with the following statement: unstructured child-led play is important for this child's development.

Respondents: 403

Choice	Percentage	Count
Strongly agree	89.83%	362
Agree	9.93%	40
Neither agree or disagree	0.00%	0
Disagree	0.00%	0
Strongly disagree	0.25%	1

Likert Scale Mean Score (1.0= strongly disagree – 5.0 Strongly Agree): $\mu = 4.89$

Respondents: 431

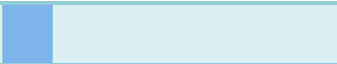

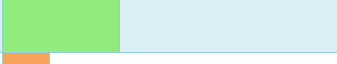

	Less than once per week/ Never	1-2 times per week	3-4 time per week	5-6 times per week	Every day	Total
Rating	1	2	3	4	5	
2. does this child	2.08% (8)	8.35%	16.94%	16.71%	55.92%	431

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

participate in unstructured child-led play?		(36)	(73)	(72)	(241)	
3. do you supervise this child's unstructured child-led play?	39.01% (165)	23.88% (101)	17.49% (74)	5.20% (22)	14.42% (61)	423

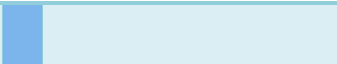

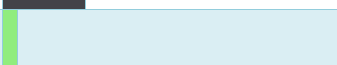
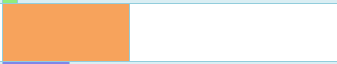
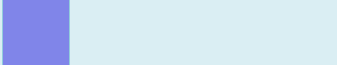

4. When this child participates in unstructured child-led play, on average how long does this child play?

Respondents: 431

Choice	Percentage	Count	
0-30 minutes	14.15%	61	
30-60 minutes	39.21%	169	
1 hour- 2 hours	33.18%	143	
More than 2 hours	13.46%	58	

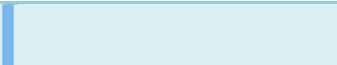
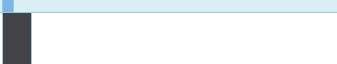
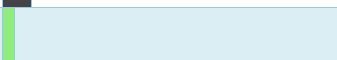
5. In my opinion, this child most prefers spending their time playing:

Respondents: 409

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Organized sports (indoor or outdoor)	11.49%	47	
On a playground structure	23.72%	97	
In the street	4.16%	17	
In green/ nature space	36.19%	148	
Indoor unstructured child-led play (excluding screen time)	19.07%	78	
Other:	5.38%	22	

6. In my opinion, the setting most important for play is:

Respondents: 408

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Organized sports (indoor or outdoor)	2.94%	12	
On a playground structure	8.33%	34	
In the street	3.43%	14	

In green/ nature space	74.02%	302	
Indoor unstructured child-led play (excluding screen time)	4.66%	19	
Other:	6.62%	27	

7. The farthest I would let my child play without adult supervision is:

Respondents: 386

Choice/measure of independent mobility	Percentage	Count	
My child is not allowed out alone	4.66%	18	
Within my yard and/or driveway	29.27%	113	
Within my street	27.46%	106	
Within 2–3 streets from home	17.36%	67	
Within a 15 minute walk from home	14.51%	56	
More than a 15 minute walk from home	6.74%	26	
Prefer not to answer	0.00%	0	

Table A. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by age of child.

Age of Child	My child is not allowed out alone	Within my yard and/or driveway	Within my street	Within 2–3 streets from home	Within a 15 minute walk from home	More than a 15 minute walk from home	N=
5 to 8	7%	45%	33%	10%	3%	1%	219
9 to 12	1%	8%	20%	27%	30%	14%	167

Table B. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by sex of child.

Sex of Child	My child is not allowed out alone	Within my yard and/or driveway	Within my street	Within 2–3 streets from home	Within a 15 minute walk from home	More than a 15 minute walk from home	N=
male	5%	32%	24%	19%	14%	5%	207
Female	4%	26%	32%	16%	14%	9%	174

Table C. Cross-tabulation of farthest distance from home a parent/guardian allows their child to play without supervision by prevalence of older sibling.

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Older sibling	My child is not allowed out alone	Within my yard and/or driveway	Within my street	Within 2–3 streets from home	Within a 15 minute walk from home	More than a 15 minute walk from home	N=
yes	2.50%	18.75%	25%	18.75%	25%	10%	80
no	5%	32.87%	27.34%	17.65%	11.42%	5.88%	289

8. Which of the following play spaces are within walking or biking distance from your home? (check all that apply)

Respondents: 375

Choice	Percentage	Count
Nature spaces (for example, a forest)	78.13%	293
Open school playground	72.00%	270
Community playground or park	85.33%	320
Open fields	81.60%	306
Indoor play spaces (for example, swimming pool, gym, recreation centre)	50.13%	188
None	0.27%	1

9. Please state your level of agreement with the following: My child enjoys playing at...

Respondents: 372

	Strongly agree (5.0)	Agree (4.0)	Neither agree or disagree (3.0)	Disagree (2.0)	Strongly disagree (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert Score
Nature spaces (for example, a forest)	64.25% (239)	28.76% (107)	4.84% (18)	1.61% (6)	0.54% (2)	372	μ: 4.55
Open school playground	58.60% (218)	34.41% (128)	5.11% (19)	1.61% (6)	0.27% (1)	372	μ: 4.49
Community playground or park	63.78% (236)	31.08% (115)	2.70% (10)	2.16% (8)	0.27% (1)	370	μ: 4.56
Open fields	39.67% (146)	40.76% (150)	14.40% (53)	4.62% (17)	0.54% (2)	368	μ: 4.14
Indoor play spaces (for example, swimming pool, gym,	55.83% (206)	39.02% (144)	3.25% (12)	1.63% (6)	0.27% (1)	369	μ: 4.49

recreation centre)							
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Likert scale score: 1.0 strongly disagree to 5.0 Strongly agree

10. When this child travels to these play spaces they: (Check all that apply)

Respondents: 371

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Walk/ bike/ skateboard/ scooter/ rollerblade alone	34.77%	129	
Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with an adult	78.71%	292	
Walk/ bike/ skateboards/ scooter/ rollerblade with older sibling	13.48%	50	
My child is driven to play spaces	53.10%	197	
Not applicable	0.27%	1	

11. Unstructured child-led play is important for this child's development.

Respondents: 371

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Strongly agree	91.91%	341	
Agree	7.82%	29	
Undecided	0.27%	1	
Disagree	0.00%	0	
Strongly disagree	0.00%	0	

Likert Scale Mean Score (1.0= strongly disagree – 5.0 Strongly Agree): $\mu = 4.92$

12. In my opinion, this child is at a higher risk of being injured playing:

Respondents: 407

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Organized sports (indoor or outdoor)	41.28%	168	
On a playground structure	13.51%	55	
In the street	38.33%	156	
In green/ nature space	0.74%	3	
Indoor unstructured child-led play (excluding screen time)	0.98%	4	

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Other:	5.16%	21	
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13. In my opinion, this child could be more severely injured from playing:

Respondents: 404

Choice	Percentage	Count	
Organized sports (indoor or outdoor)	33.17%	134	
On a playground structure	7.92%	32	
In the street	52.97%	214	
In green/ nature space	0.99%	4	
Indoor unstructured child-led play (excluding screen time)	0.74%	3	
Other:	4.21%	17	

14. Do you have any concerns about safety when this child engages in outdoor unstructured child-led play?

Respondents: 385

Choice	Likert Scoring	Percentage	Count	
Almost always	5	1.82%	7	
Often	4	12.47%	48	
Sometimes	3	44.16%	170	
Rarely	2	35.32%	136	
Never	1	6.23%	24	

Likert Scale Mean score (1.0= never to 5.0=almost always) = μ : 2.68

15. How concerned are you when this child plays :

Respondents: 386

	Very worried (4.0)	Worried (3.0)	Slightly worried (2.0)	Not worried (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert score
organized sports (indoor or outdoor)	0.52% (2)	6.53% (25)	44.39% (170)	48.56% (186)	383	μ : 1.59
on a playground structure	0.78% (3)	5.45% (21)	50.39% (194)	43.38% (167)	385	μ : 1.64
in the street	25.72% (98)	31.23% (119)	33.86% (129)	9.19% (35)	381	μ : 2.73

in green/ nature space	0.26% (1)	2.86% (11)	38.44% (148)	58.44% (225)	385	μ: 1.45
indoor unstructured child-led play (excluding screen time)	0.26% (1)	0.26% (1)	15.84% (61)	83.64% (322)	385	μ: 1.17
with loose parts*	1.56% (6)	0.52% (2)	21.35% (82)	76.56% (294)	384	μ: 1.27

Likert Scale score: 1.0 Not worried to 4.0 very worried

16. What concerns do you have? Please rate your concern for letting this child play for each of the following:

Respondents: 386

	Very worried (4.0)	Worried (3.0)	Slightly worried (2.0)	Not worried (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert score
Nearby traffic	33.16% (128)	31.35% (121)	29.27% (113)	6.22% (24)	386	μ: 2.91
Kidnapping	10.42% (40)	13.54% (52)	35.16% (135)	40.89% (157)	384	μ: 1.93
Fear of injury	3.12% (12)	10.65% (41)	61.82% (238)	24.42% (94)	385	μ: 1.92
Community violence or crime	4.92% (19)	6.22% (24)	29.02% (112)	59.84% (231)	386	μ: 1.56
Bullying	5.96% (23)	12.44% (48)	48.96% (189)	32.64% (126)	386	μ: 1.92
Other:	4.61% (7)	10.53% (16)	22.37% (34)	62.50% (95)	152	μ: 1.57

Likert Scale score: 1.0 Not worried to 4.0 very worried

17. Do any of the following influence these concerns?

Respondents: 386

	Extremely (5.0)	Very (4.0)	Moderately (3.0)	Slightly (2.0)	Not at all (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert score
Stories in the media (for example, on the news or in newspapers)	5.47% (21)	16.41% (63)	24.48% (94)	37.24% (143)	16.41% (63)	384	μ: 2.57
Stories in social media (for example, Facebook or Twitter)	4.94% (19)	12.47% (48)	20.00% (77)	36.10% (139)	26.49% (102)	385	μ: 2.33
Being judged by other parents	4.94% (19)	9.35% (36)	16.62% (64)	30.65% (118)	38.44% (148)	385	μ: 2.12
Fear of insurance or legal claims	2.08% (8)	3.38% (13)	7.01% (27)	18.18% (70)	69.35% (267)	385	μ: 1.51

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Other:	4.31% (5)	5.17% (6)	7.76% (9)	13.79% (16)	68.97% (80)	116	μ: 1.62
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Likert Scale score: 1.0 not at all to 5.0 extremely

18. What would reduce these concerns? Please identify your top 3:





Respondents: 375

Choice	Percentage of respondents (of 375)	Count
If my child had a cellphone	15.20%	57
If play spaces* were supervised	30.93%	116
If my streets had better lighting	16.00%	60
If my streets were better patrolled	25.07%	94
If there were more traffic lights and cross walks	54.00%	202
If play structures were regularly inspected for safety	36.53%	137
Nothing	29.07%	109
Other:	26.93%	101

19. Does this child's school have any of the following rules in place that you are aware of: (check all that apply)

Respondents: 383

Choice	Percentage	Count
Restricting recess as disciplinary action	33.42%	128
Restricting the use of loose parts at recess (balls, toboggans)	19.58%	75
Limit running around the playground	10.97%	42
Weather restrictions (for example, not allowed outside if it is icy or too cold)	79.63%	305
Not allowed certain games on play structures (for example, grounders)	33.68%	129
Not allowed certain games or activities in the field or open spaces (for example, red rover or tag)	24.28%	93
Not allowed jumping from certain heights	29.24%	112

Limited use of play spaces* or fields after school hours	13.05%	50	
Other:	8.36%	32	
I am not aware of any limitations	14.36%	55	
Not applicable	3.66%	14	

20. When considering child safety, do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school?

Respondents: 312

	Strongly agree (5.0)	Agree (4.0)	Neither agree or disagree (3.0)	Disagree (2.0)	Strongly disagree (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert Score
Restricting recess as disciplinary action	4.80% (6)	16.80% (21)	8.00% (10)	20.00% (25)	50.40% (63)	125	μ: 2.06
Restricting the use of loose parts at recess (balls, toboggans)	2.67% (2)	2.67% (2)	16.00% (12)	41.33% (31)	37.33% (28)	75	μ: 1.92
Limit running around the playground	0.00% (0)	7.14% (3)	14.29% (6)	38.10% (16)	40.48% (17)	42	μ: 1.88
Weather restrictions (for example, not allowed outside if it is icy or too cold)	14.83% (43)	45.86% (133)	8.97% (26)	20.00% (58)	10.34% (30)	290	μ: 3.35
Not allowed certain games on play structures (for example, grounders)	4.65% (6)	22.48% (29)	23.26% (30)	29.46% (38)	20.16% (26)	129	μ: 2.62
Not allowed certain games or activities in the field or open spaces (for example, red rover or tag)	2.17% (2)	14.13% (13)	17.39% (16)	42.39% (39)	23.91% (22)	92	μ: 2.28
Not allowed jumping from certain heights	10.91% (12)	33.64% (37)	21.82% (24)	20.00% (22)	13.64% (15)	110	μ: 3.08
Limited use of play space or field	2.04% (1)	4.08% (2)	4.08% (2)	34.69% (17)	55.10% (27)	49	μ: 1.63

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

after school hours							
Other rule	5.56% (1)	16.67% (3)	22.22% (4)	27.78% (5)	27.78% (5)	18	μ: 2.44

Likert scale score: 1.0 Strongly disagree to 5.0 Strongly agree

21. When considering opportunities for unstructured child-led play, do you agree or disagree with these rules at your child's school?

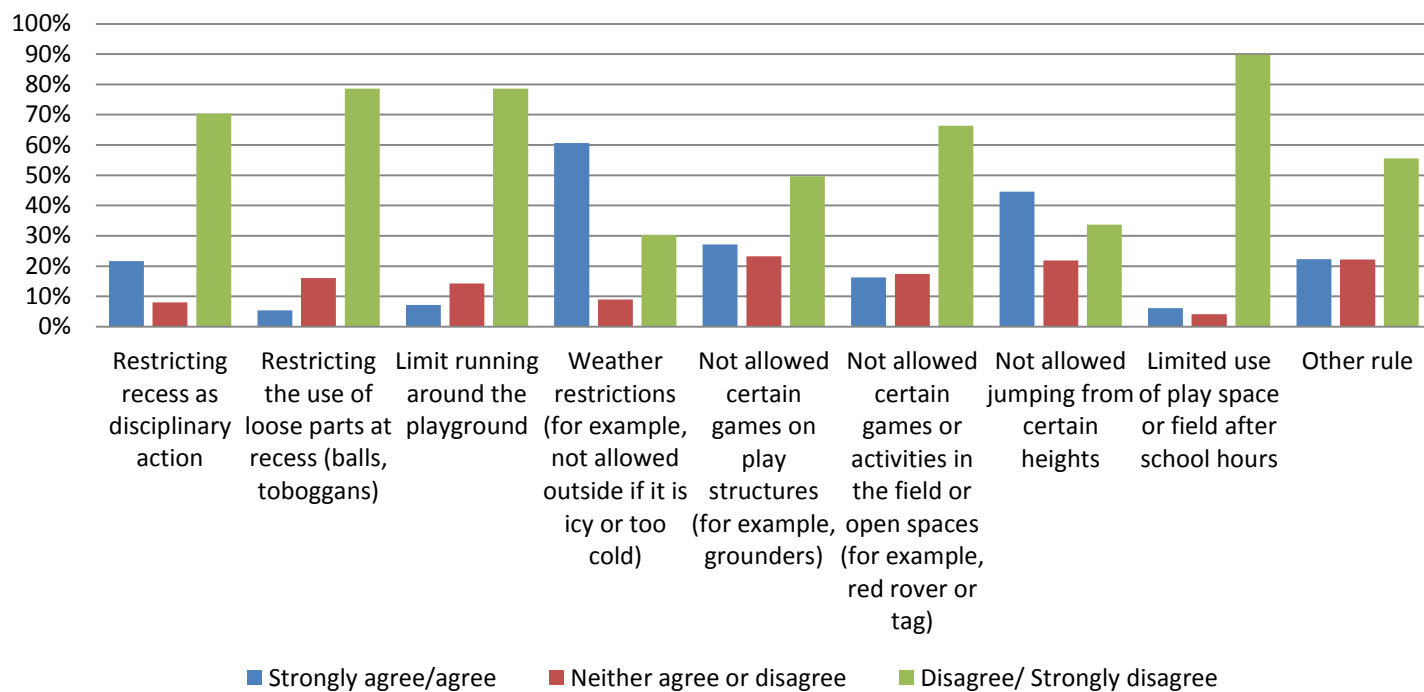
Respondents: 309

	Strongly agree (5.0)	Agree (4.0)	Neither agree or disagree (3.0)	Disagree (2.0)	Strongly disagree (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert Score
Restricting recess as disciplinary action	4.88% (6)	16.26% (20)	4.88% (6)	21.95% (27)	52.03% (64)	123	μ: 2.00
Restricting the use of loose parts at recess (balls, toboggans)	2.74% (2)	8.22% (6)	10.96% (8)	31.51% (23)	46.58% (34)	73	μ: 1.89
Limit running around the playground	0.00% (0)	2.50% (1)	17.50% (7)	32.50% (13)	47.50% (19)	40	μ: 1.75
Weather restrictions (for example, not allowed outside if it is icy or too cold)	14.69% (42)	38.46% (110)	13.64% (39)	20.63% (59)	12.59% (36)	286	μ: 3.22
Not allowed certain games on play structures (for example, grounders)	3.17% (4)	20.63% (26)	19.05% (24)	35.71% (45)	21.43% (27)	126	μ: 2.48
Not allowed certain games or activities in the field or open spaces (for example, red rover or	0.00% (0)	13.19% (12)	16.48% (15)	41.76% (38)	28.57% (26)	91	μ: 2.14

tag)							
Not allowed jumping from certain heights	11.93% (13)	30.28% (33)	20.18% (22)	22.94% (25)	14.68% (16)	109	μ: 3.02
Limited use of play space or field after school hours	2.22% (1)	2.22% (1)	4.44% (2)	31.11% (14)	60.00% (27)	45	μ: 1.56
Other rule	4.35% (1)	21.74% (5)	30.43% (7)	21.74% (5)	21.74% (5)	23	μ: 2.65

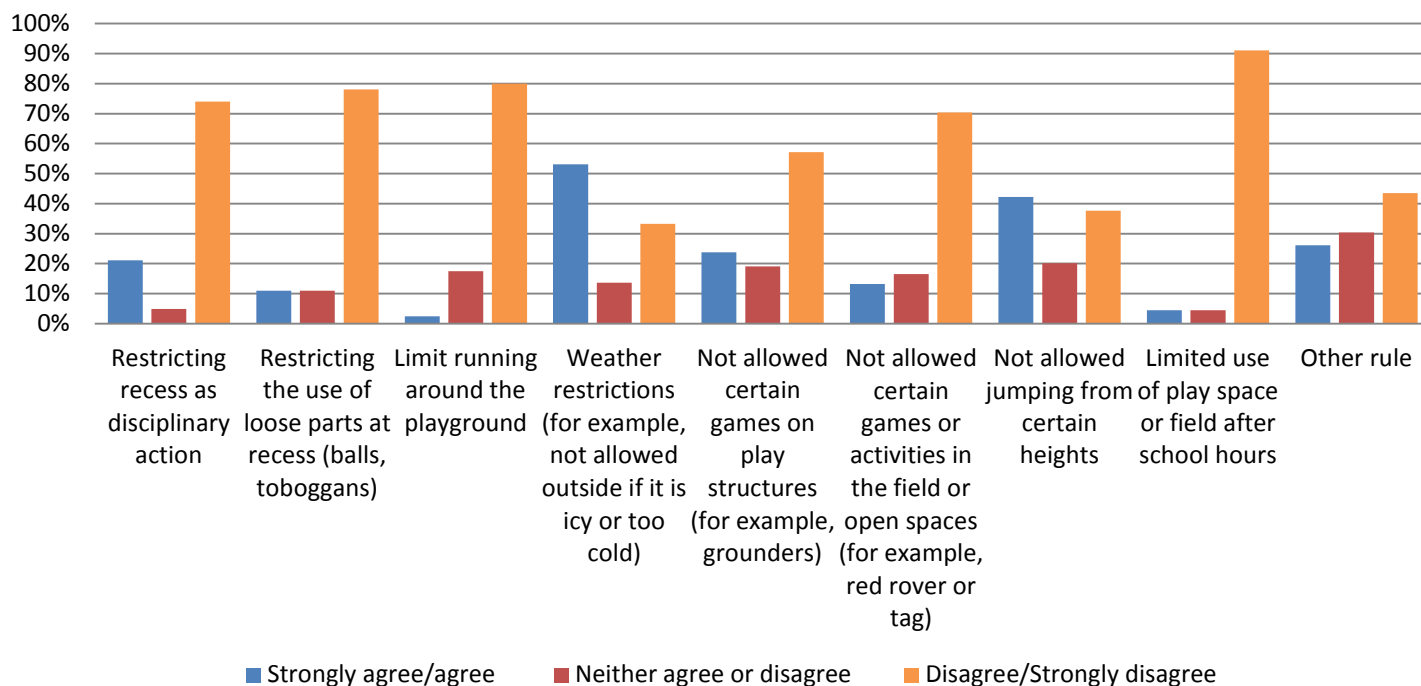
Likert scale score: 1.0 Strongly disagree to 5.0 Strongly agree

Figure 31. Parent/guardian agreement with known rules at their child's school (considering implications on safety)



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

Figure 32. Parent/guardian agreement with known rules at their child's school (considering opportunities for unstructured play)



22. At your community playgrounds, are you aware of any of the following rules: (check all that apply)

Respondents: 371

Choice	Percentage	Count
Limits on tree climbing	6.47%	24
Removed climbing structures	2.70%	10
Limits on jumping from heights	1.35%	5
Mandatory adult supervision	6.74%	25
Age restrictions	16.44%	61
Limits on loose parts	1.62%	6
Limits on sledding/ tobogganing hills	13.48%	50
I am not aware of any limitations	64.69%	240
Not applicable	4.31%	16
Other:	1.89%	7

23. When considering child safety, do you agree or disagree with these rules at your community playgrounds?

Respondents: 117

	Strongly agree (5.0)	Agree (4.0)	Neither agree or disagree (3.0)	Disagree (2.0)	Strongly disagree (1.0)	Total	Mean Likert score
Limits on tree climbing	17.39% (4)	26.09% (6)	8.70% (2)	26.09% (6)	21.74% (5)	23	μ: 2.91
Removed climbing structures	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	20.00% (2)	20.00% (2)	60.00% (6)	10	μ: 1.60
Limits on jumping from heights	0.00% (0)	40.00% (2)	20.00% (1)	20.00% (1)	20.00% (1)	5	μ: 2.80
Mandatory adult supervision	16.00% (4)	28.00% (7)	20.00% (5)	20.00% (5)	16.00% (4)	25	μ: 3.08
Age restrictions	3.51% (2)	24.56% (14)	21.05% (12)	36.84% (21)	14.04% (8)	57	μ: 2.67
Limits on loose parts	0.00% (0)	16.67% (1)	0.00% (0)	33.33% (2)	50.00% (3)	6	μ: 1.83
Limits on sledding/tobogganing hills	4.08% (2)	14.29% (7)	14.29% (7)	51.02% (25)	16.33% (8)	49	μ: 2.39
Other rule specified	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	40.00% (2)	20.00% (1)	40.00% (2)	5	μ: 2.00

Likert scale score: 1.0 Strongly disagree to 5.0 Strongly agree

24. When considering opportunities for child-led unstructured play, do you agree or disagree with these rules at your community playgrounds?

	Strongly agree (5.0)	Agree (4.0)	Neither agree or disagree (3.0)	Disagree (2.0)	Strongly disagree (1.0)	Total	Likert Mean Score
Limits on tree climbing	4.35% (1)	26.09% (6)	4.35% (1)	34.78% (8)	30.43% (7)	23	μ: 2.91
Removed climbing structures	0.00% (0)	10.00% (1)	10.00% (1)	20.00% (2)	60.00% (6)	10	μ: 1.60
Limits on jumping from heights	0.00% (0)	20.00% (1)	20.00% (1)	20.00% (1)	40.00% (2)	5	μ: 2.80
Mandatory adult	12.00% (3)	20.00% (5)	28.00% (7)	20.00% (5)	20.00% (5)	25	μ: 3.08

Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

supervision							
Age restrictions	3.57% (2)	12.50% (7)	28.57% (16)	35.71% (20)	19.64% (11)	56	μ: 2.67
Limits on loose parts	0.00% (0)	16.67% (1)	0.00% (0)	33.33% (2)	50.00% (3)	6	μ: 1.83
Limits on sledding/ tobogganing hills	4.08% (2)	12.24% (6)	20.41% (10)	42.86% (21)	20.41% (10)	49	μ: 2.39
Other rule	0.00% (0)	0.00% (0)	33.33% (2)	33.33% (2)	33.33% (2)	6	μ: 2.00

Likert scale score: 1.0 Strongly disagree to 5.0 Strongly agree

Figure 34. Frequency of parent/guardian agreement indicated regarding rules at community playground considering child safety

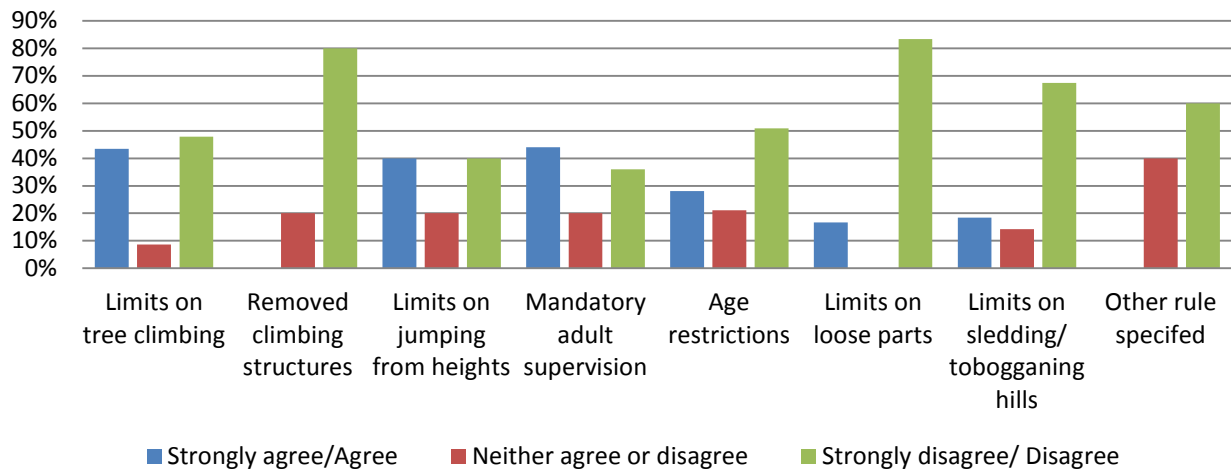
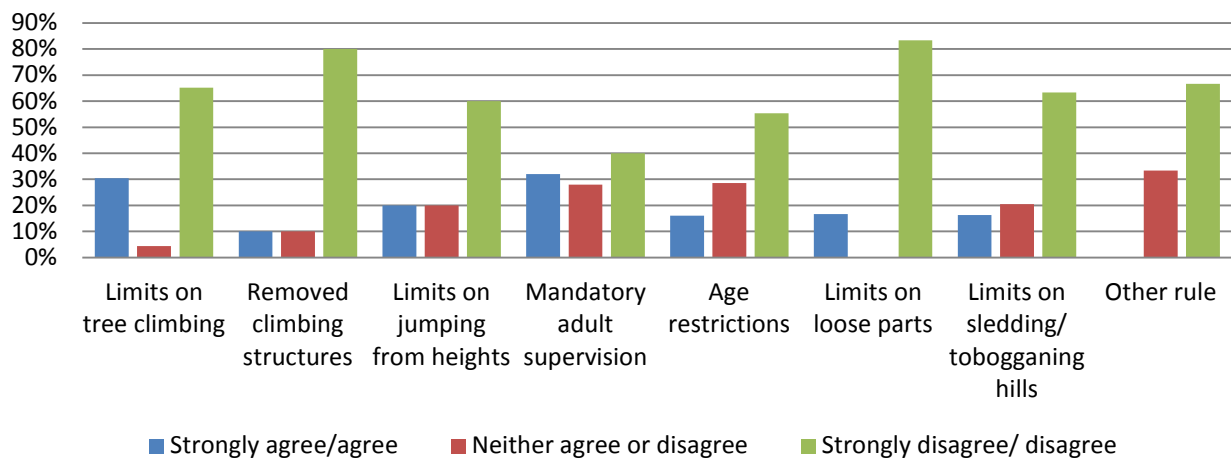


Figure 35. Frequency of parent/guardian agreement indicated regarding rules at community playground considering opportunities for unstructured play



Parent Perceptions on Play Survey

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