

Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play:
An Exploratory Study

by

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Abstract

This study explores, through observations and interviews, the rough and tumble play of young children in early childhood settings. The purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of how early childhood educators, parents, and young children interpret rough and tumble play. The study also identified the extent to which rough and tumble play is included or not included within early childhood settings.

Participants in this study included 11 educators, 16 parents, and 16 children from four settings. Observations of the play of children and the responses of the educators to rough and tumble play were made at two settings. During 30:25 hours of observation, 110 incidents of rough and tumble play were recorded.

Twenty-seven distinct rough and tumble play behaviours were exhibited during the observation period. Behaviours included components that had been identified as rough and tumble play in previous research and also additional behaviours that were not previously identified as elements of rough and tumble play.

Results of the interviews of adults indicate that there is perceived value in rough and tumble play; the play needs to be supervised; the play is more acceptable at home rather than at daycare; adults are unaware of formal policies or guidelines for the play; and adults reject the notion that the play may be linked to aggressive behaviour. Results of the interviews with children indicate that adults place restrictions on the play; it is important that no one is hurt; there are gender differences; and while all the children were observed engaged in the play, 60% of the children stated that they do not engage in rough and tumble play at daycare.

The results of this study will have implications for the understanding of child development. It may be that rough and tumble play evolves as children age; that children move into more, or less, complex play behaviours as they mature. This study might also have implications for early childhood education. The parents and educators conceded a lack of knowledge about rough and tumble play. This finding highlights the need for the development of teacher and parent education resources.

Supervisor: Dr. M. I. Mayfield, (Department of Curriculum and Instruction)

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Chapter 1 ~ Overview of the Study

The social domain of play has been a topic of consideration of philosophers throughout history; the writings of Rousseau (1963) and Pestalozzi (1973) are just two examples. The social nature of play has been widely considered by researchers in the 20th century such as Parten (1932), Bowlby (1969), Piaget (1951), and Vygotsky (1978). Clearly, the social elements of the play of young children have not only held the interest of philosophers and researchers down through the ages, but are of interest to a wide range of scholars including historians, psychologists, sociologists, educators, anthropologists and zoologists.

The history of scholarly interest in the play of preschool age children has addressed general and specific areas of interest such as gender differences (e.g., Evans, 1998), creativity (e.g., Singer & Singer, 1985), pretend play (e.g., Paley, 1988), and play group entry techniques (e.g., Trawick-Smith, 1988). While each of these topics contributes to our understanding of the social nature of play, there is much to describe to understand fully every aspect and element of play.

Within early childhood settings, children engage in a wide variety of play. Children pretend to be dads or moms in the house area, they create mountains in the sandbox, build towers with blocks, and colour and paint. Throughout their play, children are interacting not only with materials, they are also interacting with one another.

Rough and Tumble Play in Research

Stutton-Smith and Rosenberg (1982) examined the popularity of children's games over a 60 year period from 1898 to 1959. The results of their review indicate

that one game that was continuously popular throughout this period was the physical game of wrestling. The physical nature of play has been explored in research primarily in terms of aggression (Goldstein, 1995). The role of positive physical contact within play, that of rough and tumble play, is in need of further consideration.

Rough and tumble (R&T) play has been considered a “neglected aspect of play” (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998, p. 577). While R&T play has recently become a topic of growing interest to more researchers, more understanding is needed. Specifically, more understanding of the attitudes of early childhood educators, parents and children towards R&T play is in need of exploration. As detailed by Reed (2005), “research of day care and school personnel’s attitudes and values toward R&T play need to be assessed . . . R&T play among girls should be evaluated to determine what this type of play means to them” (p. 69).

The research on rough and tumble play which has been undertaken has primarily involved elementary school aged children with primarily boys as participants (e.g., Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Reed & Brown, 2000). There is a need to understand the rough and tumble play behaviours of young children, both boys and girls (Reed, 2005).

The studies on the rough and tumble play of school aged children have involved gathering the thoughts of boys engaging in R&T. There is a gap in the research literature on the perspectives of parents about rough and tumble play. Equally, as young children may be in care of educators, there is a need to understand how early childhood educators interpret and respond to rough and tumble play. The thoughts of each of these interest groups is in need of exploration in order to better

understand how these different interests groups interpret and support, or restrict, the rough and tumble play of children.

Interpretation of Rough and Tumble Play

The interpretation of rough and tumble play by the educators supervising children is in need of investigation in order to determine how educators are defining R&T play and including or excluding this form of play in their settings. Humphreys and Smith (1984) recognized differing perceptions among educators when seeking schools in which to conduct their study on rough and tumble play: “Some [educators] saw such activity as harmless fun, and were happy to let it carry on provided nobody was in danger of getting hurt, while at the other extreme, some saw all such behaviour as aggressively motivated and forbade it” (p. 253).

Humphreys and Smith were concerned with the manifestation of rough and tumble behaviours rather than educator thoughts. However, their experiences in securing sites for their study demonstrate that without an understanding of how educators interpret rough and tumble play it will be difficult to ascertain why individuals within early childhood settings hold particular, or differing, thoughts on the governance of play.

Conceptualizing Play

According to King (1992), children view play as self-chosen, preferred, and gratifying. Play is an activity that “is the essence of creativity in children throughout the world a self-satisfying activity through which children gain control and come to understand life. Play teaches children about themselves . . . about the world” (Gordon & Williams-Browne, 1996, p. 348).

There are multiple definitions of rough and tumble play. With no agreed upon definition of rough and tumble play, a working definition is utilized for the purposes of this study. Rough and tumble play has been hypothesized as an evolution of the exercise play, or physical activity play, of very young children. McCune (1998) explains,

The peak of exercise play at 4 or 5, the age by which children perfect such skills as running, skipping, and jumping, suggests that the playful occurrence of these activities is related to their recent or ongoing mastery. Subsequently these actions are incorporated into every day life – hurrying to keep up with mom, jumping over a puddle – and into organized physical sports. Rough-and-tumble play integrates exercise play with social pretend play. (p. 602)

This physical mastery of skills is incorporated into the social interactions of the young child during the development of rough and tumble play. According to Pellegrini and Smith (1998), rough and tumble play includes, “running, climbing, chasing, and play fighting” (p. 577). From this categorization of the play, the elements of rough and tumble play have been further defined by Reed and Brown (2000) to include fleeing, wrestling, falling, and open-handed slaps.

One common element of recent descriptions and definitions of rough and tumble play is the inclusion of a “play face” where participants are smiling and laughing (Reed & Brown, 2000). This play face is an important characteristic as it distinguishes rough and tumble play from aggression. According to Reed and Brown, aggressive behaviour involves anger and a determination to cause harm to another, unlike the playful nature of rough and tumble play. DiPietro’s research (1981) supports the importance of intent in rough and tumble play. She states, “Aggressive actions were distinguished from playful ones on the basis of their perceived intent to

inflict injury, as well as the recipient's perception of the intent. This judgment was based on the facial qualities of both children . . . and their verbalizations" (p. 55).

Using these descriptors as a working definition, rough and tumble play can be recognized within the play of young children within formalized early childhood settings. However, while the play may be recognized as rough and tumble, the settings in which the children are at play may be vastly different. Each setting is unique as educators develop a curriculum to guide the activities and program. The educators in each early childhood setting will implement a curriculum designed and supported by the educators within the setting, which results in no single, universal, curriculum design across early childhood settings.

Early Childhood Education and Curriculum

The National Association for the Education of Young Children and the National Association of Early Childhood Specialists in State Departments of Education (1991) define curriculum as

an organized framework that delineates the content that children are to learn, the processes through which children achieve curricular goals, what teachers do to help children achieve these goals, and the context in which teaching and learning occur. (p. 21)

Evans (1982) offers an expanded definition of curriculum as

an ideal representation of the essential philosophical, administrative, and pedagogical components of a grand education plan. It constitutes a coherent, internally consistent description of the theoretical premises, administrative policies and instructional procedures presumed valid for achieving preferential education outcomes. (p. 107)

Thus, individualism of early childhood curriculum among varied settings represents the ideals of each setting. Curriculum in early childhood programs

derives from many sources, including the content of the disciplines, the goals of families and the community, and the demands of society. The curriculum in preschool programs typically provides opportunities for children to acquire knowledge of content in ways that support and reflect children's development. (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 142)

Consequently, curriculum will vary from setting to setting due to the philosophical beliefs of the educators, needs of the parents, and in response to the community in which individual settings are located. The individual elements of curriculum were identified by Schubert (1986), based on the work of Joseph Schwab, as the children, educators, subject matter, and environment. Within these four basic elements of a curriculum, vast differences can be identified within early childhood settings. It may be that these curricular variations impact upon the degree that rough and tumble play is included, or not included, in early childhood settings.

Curricula and Play

For children in early childhood settings, "learning in all domains – physical, social-emotional and cognitive – is the by-product of play that results when children are challenged, trusted, encouraged, supported, responded to and respected" (Shipley, 1997, p.19). However, the play of young children is dependant upon the materials and activities provided by the educators guiding the play. According to Canella (1997), "although, children can be given choice within the privacy (and control) of their homes or within the pretend environment of the school, through the use of materials and experiences, adults actually control the choices that surround children and the capacity for follow-through when choices are made" (p. 121). Thus, the play experiences of young children in care are dependant, to some degree, upon the choices the educators make as they create early childhood curricula.

Uniqueness of Curricula

Differing experiences are readily identified within programs offering the Reggio Emilia or High/Scope curricula. The Reggio Emilia curriculum emerges through a process of negotiation between the children and the educators (Malaguzzi, 1998). Areas of study, or exploration, are typically initiated by the children and expanded by the educators. In contrast, the High Scope curriculum is much more educator directed. In this case, the educators plan activities and play opportunities for the children in order to support, and promote, cognitive development (Weikart, Rogers, Adcock & McClelland, 1971).

The ideals of both the Reggio Emilia and High Scope approaches reflect the thematic curriculum advocated by Dewey (1902). Within the approaches of Dewey, Reggio Emilia, and High Scope, the children work within themes or projects that are of interest to the children as they develop cognitive skills through educator supported active learning through activities and play experiences. Themes may stem from the interest of the children, the play of the children, or an idea from the educator and learning occurs through activities designed by the educator to expand the children's knowledge of a topic or theme.

Each of these three approaches to curriculum development, while unique, offer a commonality – that of structure within the early childhood setting. Structure is defined as, “regulatable variables including adult/child ratio, group size, and the education and training of adult caregivers” (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2000, p. 41). In British Columbia, the Ministry of Health (Province of British Columbia, 2000a) regulates a maximum group size of 25 children and the adult/child ratios of no more

than eight children for each educator. These structural components are predetermined and standard across all licensed child care settings. Therefore, the main area of variation across settings in British Columbia, according to the definition of structural quality by Roopnarine and Johnson (2000), is educator training.

Curriculum and Educator Training

Educator training includes developing an understanding of the role of play in early childhood settings. According to Gordon and Williams-Brown (1996), educators are facilitators of play and are responsible for creating the environment for play. As facilitators, educators must know, “when to join children at play and when to remain outside the activity. They must ask themselves whether their presence will support what is happening or whether it will *inhibit* the play” (Gordon & Williams-Browne, p. 356). In creating the environment for play, Gordon and Williams-Browne comment that educators provide children with, “choices for play” (p. 357). The choices for play can include puzzles, a dress-up area, cars and blocks, table toys, and opportunities for physical, or gross motor, play.

One of the determinants by which educators facilitate play and create an environment for play is the curriculum which guides their actions. For each curriculum design, educators are, “responsible for what is included, how it is presented to the children, selecting among program options, providing learning experiences, and evaluating the curriculum and program” (Mayfield, 2001, p. 122).

Provincial Regulations on Curriculum Development

The guidelines for training in British Columbia are determined by the Ministry of Education. The Ministry developed program standards for organizations

providing training to individuals seeking a license to practice as an Early Childhood Educator (Province of British Columbia, 1985).

The standards fall into eight sections: knowing the individual child; program planning, implementing, and evaluating; guiding and caring for children; health; interpersonal professional relationships; attitude and conduct in professional relationships; interacting with families; and centre operations (p. i). Within the section on centre operations, the only reference to a governing philosophy to guide the implementation of curriculum is, “interpret the operating philosophy of the program” (p.173). Thus, curriculum design is not a specifically prescribed element of an early childhood setting.

Curriculum Development

No clearly defined regulatory controls have been established to govern curricular elements or the extent to which children are given opportunities for play in individual early childhood programs. Early childhood settings within British Columbia are governed by the regulations established under the Ministry of Health (Province of British Columbia, 2000a). The Ministry of Health regulations on early childhood programs clearly define rules and regulations on health and safety concerns. However, curricular elements are left largely to the discretion of the staff of the individual facilities. This absence of regulatory guidelines about curriculum limits the utility of regulations in determining the level of curriculum structure employed in an individual setting.

An important element for consideration in the development of curriculum in British Columbia early childhood settings is the lack of formal guidance offered by

the licensing body. Thus, the curriculum of the early childhood environment can vary from facility to facility. There is no single level of curriculum structure or degree to which play will be included that is universally implemented in all facilities. The variety of structural levels warrants an examination of how the varied thoughts of educators impact upon the play behaviours of the children enrolled in programs (e.g., Hedin, Ekholm, & Andersson, 1997).

The word curriculum in early childhood programs, “evokes many images in the minds of teachers, administrators, and parents. For most early educators prepared in European and American traditions, though, *curriculum* has a single powerful association – the image of the ‘whole child’” (Williams, 1999, p. 1). It is not unusual for a setting to incorporate this holistic, whole child, play based approach to curriculum implementation. As detailed by Gullo (1992), “in an integrated approach, it is important to approach teaching with the mind-set that one does not isolate the curriculum areas . . . Children learn best if they have an opportunity to *know* something in a variety of ways” (pp. 32-33).

The impact of the structure of individual early childhood curriculum, developed and implemented by individual early childhood educators, is in need of attention in relation to specific elements of child development, such as rough and tumble play. It is, therefore, reasonable to expect that the structure of the curriculum implemented within a setting might also impact the manifestation of certain behaviours, specifically rough and tumble play. For example, a very relaxed structure with a focus on the interests of the children, may result in very different play behaviours among the children than a setting with a focus on direct instruction.

The educators working within varied settings can implement a wide range of curriculum designs, some of which can be described as *developmental-interactionist*, *direct-instructional* (Goffin & Wilson, 2001), or *traditional nursery school* (Mayfield, 2001).

Traditional Nursery School

Within the curriculum of a *traditional nursery school*, the emphasis is on social behaviour and development within a program that is supportive of the autonomy of the children in making choices. Children and adults interact within an environment focussed on “the development of the whole child” (Mayfield, 2001, p. 368), expansion of the interests of the children and a curriculum designed to provide learning experiences through free play (Evans, 1975; Goffin & Wilson, 2001). The daily program within a traditional nursery school is flexible as educators seek to follow the interests of the children when planning activities. According to Gordon and Browne (1989),

Developmentally, a traditional nursery school focuses on social competence and emotional well-being. The curriculum encourages self-expression through language, creativity, intellectual skill, and physical activity. The basic underlying belief is the importance of interpersonal connections children make with themselves, each other, and adults. . . programs attend to the physical and health needs (toileting, snacks, fresh air). There is a balance of activities (indoors and out, free choice, and teacher-directed times). Closer inspection of the environment reveals a wide variety of activities (large- and small-muscle games, intellectual choices, creative arts, social play opportunities). (pp. 33-34)

The traditional nursery school is, compared to the developmental-interactionist and direct-instructional approaches, more child centred as educators seek to follow the children’s leads in planning for the program. This child centred

approach results in a program that promotes numerous play opportunities rather than structured learning opportunities.

Developmental-Interactionist

The *developmental-interactionist* setting supports children in their development within an environment that champions learning through themes as educators provide the opportunities for children to make choices and expand upon their knowledge. An example is the Bank Street approach, which, according to Evans (1975), includes a flexible schedule and a focus on child directed activities as children learn about themselves and their world. This type of early childhood setting,

Reflects Bank Street's historic concern with the whole child and the complexity such a comprehensive approach entails. Concern with the whole child entails appreciation of the child as both an intellectual and emotional being. Respect for the complexity of development implies sensitivity to the complex, external interactions between the child and her environment and the complicated, internal interactions between cognition and affect. (Goffin & Wilson, p. 80)

Based upon this foundational philosophy, the proponents of the developmental-interactionist setting recognize that,

From birth, children are seen as curious beings who are actively engaged in interaction with their social and physical environment and who, through exploration and experimentation, work eagerly to make sense of the world in which they live. Each child has a history of experiences in a world shaped and influenced by the social forces of family, community, and culture. In their encounters with the social and physical environment, children respond with a wholeness of self. (Roopnarine & Johnson, 2000, p. 267)

As with the traditional nursery school, the developmental-interactionist approach supports children's interests by providing play opportunities focused on the interests of the children. However, unlike the traditional nursery school, the developmental-interactionist setting will also provide more structured, educator

planned learning opportunities. The structured learning times are not, however, the dominant feature of the curriculum, as would be seen in the direct-instructional setting.

Direct-Instruction

Finally, the *direct-instruction* setting, according to Goffin and Willson (2001), represents a focus on language acquisition and cognitive skill development that is, “based on learning principles derived from behavioral psychology” (p. 100). The instructional setting is “academically oriented” (Gordon & Browne, 1989, p. 48) and might include elements such as a fixed schedule that has relatively little room for variance in the daily routines; the inclusion of formal, pre-set learning experiences and less emphasis on child directed activities. “The direct-instruction model is built on two premises: (a) that the rate and quality of children’s learning in the classroom is a function of environmental events and (b) that educators can increase the amount of children’s learning in the classroom by carefully engineering the details of students’ interactions with that environment” (Goffin & Wilson, 2001, p. 111).

Unlike the traditional nursery school or the developmental-interactionist settings, direct-instructional early childhood settings provide more educator directed learning experiences than child directed, play based, experiences in the daily schedule. Thus, the direct-instructional, developmental-interactionist, and traditional nursery schools support child directed, or free, play and structured learning times to different degrees. Since each curricular design includes play to a different degree, it would be reasonable to expect that the degree to which rough and tumble play is included or not included in each curricular design would vary.

This element of curriculum structure in relation to the display of R&T play by children has not been fully researched and is in need of further exploration. It may be that program structure influences the display of rough and tumble play. Equally, it may be that the structural designs of differing settings influence the thoughts on rough and tumble play by the children, educators, and parents.

Statement of the Problem

Curricula

The curricula seen in full-day licensed early childhood settings in British Columbia reflect varied levels of structure. While early childhood educators implement a variety of curriculum designs, researchers have not considered the impact of curricula of differing structural levels on rough and tumble play within British Columbia. Byers detailed (1998), “there is good reason to collect descriptive information of the age scheduling of physical activity play in children. It is important to know whether our social institutions may be influencing the expression of natural behavior during a sensitive period” (p. 600). Equally, there is a need to understand how the curriculum influences R&T and how R&T influences the curriculum. There is a need to understand how our social institutions, such as the early childhood setting, influence the natural expression of young children’s physical play.

Because the educators working with those children who are enrolled in programs establish the curriculum, we need to consider rough and tumble play and its place in curriculum implementation. The perspectives of the educators need to be understood. DiPietro (1981) noted, “Children . . . seem to have no trouble discriminating mock fighting from more threatening exchanges. A problem arises

when adult observers misinterpret children's interactions by attending to the behavior alone and not the context in which it is performed" (p. 57).

Thoughts of Children and Their Parents

In addition to understanding the thoughts of educators on rough and tumble play, there is also a need to understand the thoughts of the children and parents served by early childhood settings. As stated by Cannella (1998), "education as hearing and responding to the voices of younger human beings in their everyday lives" (pp. 173-174) should be a focus of early childhood education. The dynamics of the setting from the position of the parents and children need to be considered in order to gather a more holistic outlook. This is particularly important for the children enrolled in early childhood programs. As stated by Winzer (2003), "adults are outsiders to the world of children and it may be that adult viewpoints are out of alignment with children's perceptions" (p. 18).

Rationale

Rough and tumble play is becoming an element of play of interest to educators of young children. While the National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) had discouraged rough and tumble play in the 1986 handbook on developmentally appropriate practice (Bredekamp, 1986), the revised edition of the handbook now recognizes rough and tumble play as an acceptable play behaviour (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997).

Value of Play

Dewey (1902), Piaget (1951), and Vygotsky (1962) each recognized the value of play in learning. As educators seek to develop curriculum that best meets the needs

of children, it may be prudent to look to the interests of the children for guidance.

One of the contributions educators might make in supporting the play of young children is to accept and support the freedom of children to choose their play.

Rousseau wrote 240 years ago,

freedom, not power, is the greatest good. That man is truly free who desires what he is able to perform, and does what he desires. This is my fundamental maxim. Apply it to childhood, and all the rules of education spring from it. (Rousseau, trans. 1963, p. 48)

As educators seek to develop curriculum that reflects the interests of the children, they need to develop a level of acceptance and understanding of all elements of play. One of the elements in need of consideration within the social domain of play is rough and tumble play. It may be that rough and tumble play within early childhood settings has not been fully understood because rough and tumble play has been viewed as a predominantly male form of play (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). Early childhood educators are predominantly women, which may lead to a lack of awareness of male patterns of play. With increased understanding of various patterns of play, educators may be better able to distinguish among play behaviours. Increased understanding of varied patterns of play is based, to a certain degree, upon the thoughts of individual educators.

Feminization of Early Childhood Curriculum

In a field dominated by females, the feminization of early childhood curriculum may be of concern, or cause for celebration. The female dominance of a field can lead to supportive environments for traditionally female forms of social interaction. Equally, the female influence can lead to the suppression of male forms of social interaction such as rough and tumble play (Reed & Brown, 2000). In a study

by Cooney and Bittner (2001), male early childhood educators discussed the gender bias they encountered while in training. This study reported that

Some of the men acknowledged that their college classrooms often felt biased against the male student in choice of texts, in dominant perspectives expressed in discussions, in chosen content. One male even pointed out that it's not just the teacher editions of school books that are biased but that the teaching objectives are also biased, in their wording when referring to the teacher. (p. 80)

Rough and tumble play tends to be a male dominated activity. Reed and Brown (2000) recognized that research on rough and tumble play has been dominated by a focus on the play of boys. This form of play tends to be misunderstood by females (p. 114). As a result, males engaging in rough and tumble play in early childhood settings stand a greater risk of being reprimanded for engaging in the activity. This is not a malicious act on the part of the female educators; rather, according to Reed and Brown, it is an action based on misunderstanding.

Directions for Research

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) suggest directions for future research on rough and tumble play including, "a need for more descriptive data on the forms of physical activity play and their age trends through childhood and adolescence" (p. 589), and a need for more information on gender differences. Further, there is a need for

more information of duration, frequency, and intensity of physical exercise of both the playful and nonplayful variety from infancy through adulthood, and the correspondence between these data and measures of immediate and sustained fitness. (p. 589)

Further research is required to determine the implications of rough and tumble play for young children in early childhood settings. Pellegrini and Smith identified the need for naturalistic data to establish the frequency of play occurrence and to

determine the distinctions between play fighting and play chasing. Further, the social function of rough and tumble play is identified as requiring attention because, “we need to know more about the ways in which R&T play is used by boys to establish and maintain social leadership and dominance in their peer groups.” (p. 590).

With these suggestions for future research in mind, Pellegrini and Smith concluded that, “physical activity play deserves greater attention from psychologists and educators.” (p. 592). While this is a somewhat general statement, the authors did articulate the need for rough and tumble play to be investigated in a more intensive manner. In addition, Pellegrini and Smith identified the importance of the thoughts of the educators and children involved in the play. However, the investigation of the thoughts of these groups represents a gap in the research literature. It is this gap within the research that will be addressed by this study.

Reed and Brown (2000) support Pellegrini and Smith in identifying a need for further research on rough and tumble play. Reed and Brown recognized that rough and tumble play needs to be accepted as a legitimate form of play among children. As these authors state, “rough and tumble play, as well as other aspects of childhood, need [*sic*] to be examined in the context of childhood, not adulthood” (p. 115). This study examines rough and tumble play within the context of the early childhood setting. The preschool children engaged in play contribute their voices. In this way, the role of rough and tumble play is considered not only from the viewpoint of the educators but also from the children themselves.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this exploratory study was to determine the underlying thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. The specific purpose of this study was to gain an understanding of the relationship between the curriculum structure experienced and how early childhood educators, parents, and young children interpret rough and tumble play. The study also identified the extent to which rough and tumble play was included or not included within early childhood settings.

The specific questions for this study were:

1. How do educators, young children, and parents respond to and define rough and tumble play?
2. Are there structural dimensions, as determined by the early childhood educators, in individual settings that are recognized and may account for differences seen in the manifestation of rough and tumble play?
3. To whom do educators, young children, and parents think rough and tumble play would be of interest? If to one gender, why not the other? If to one age group, why not others?
4. What are the thoughts of the educators and parents about their experiences engaging in rough and tumble play? What do they think about their own childhood experiences?

5. What outcomes would educators, young children, and parents anticipate from the inclusion of rough and tumble play in early childhood curriculum?
6. Where do educators, young children, and parents think rough and tumble play occurs (e.g., inside/outside, school/home)? Where do educators, young children, and parents think rough and tumble play should occur?

With increased understanding of the relationship between curriculum structure and R&T play, educators may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the R&T play of young children. The results of the study add a previously unexplored element to the expanding body of scholarly knowledge about rough and tumble play.

The results of the study may serve educators and families by providing educators and parents with additional insight into the role and importance of rough and tumble play. Further, the study may provide additional insight into the thoughts of children, parents, and educators on rough and tumble play and the role of the play in early childhood settings.

Summary

As detailed in this chapter, this study was an exploratory study of early childhood educator and young children's attitudes toward rough and tumble play within varied curriculum structure. The study investigated the thoughts of educators and children as they interpret rough and tumble play within their setting. Chapter 2 presents a review of the literature. In Chapter 3 the research methodology employed

for this research study is outlined. The results of the study are reported within Chapter 4 and discussed in Chapter 5.

Chapter 2 ~ Literature Review

Play is a multi-dimensional activity expressed through a variety of forms and actions. Within early childhood environments, play surfaces in a variety of forms intentionally or unintentionally supported by the curriculum developed by educators. For the purposes of this study, the research and literature on rough and tumble play will be explored. The role of curriculum will also be reviewed.

Play

Work or play are all one to him, his games are his work; he knows no difference. He brings to everything the cheerfulness of interest, the charm of freedom, and he shows [*sic*] the bent of his own mind and the extent of his knowledge. Is there anything better worth seeing, anything more touching or more delightful, than a pretty child, with merry, cheerful glance, easy contented manner, open smiling countenance, playing at the most important things, or working at the lightest amusements? (Rousseau, trans. 1963, p. 126)

For Rousseau, the image of children often envelops play. Particularly for young children, prior to entry into elementary school, play serves not only as an enjoyable experience, but also as a vehicle for learning. Play, according to Mayfield (2001) is

voluntary, chosen by the child; meaningful to children; active, with children being actively engaged; intrinsically motivating; pleasurable and enjoyable for the child; non-literal (i.e., involves make-believe/pretense); child-directed; natural; flexible; spontaneous; free of rules unless these are agreed upon by the participants, and fun. (p. 257)

The play of children can occur in almost any setting. The playground, backyard, preschool or the backseat of a car all serve as backdrops to play.

Play and Learning

Within these vastly differing environments, a wide range of learning occurs. Children develop their physical abilities, social skills, language, and are beginning to

understand their emotions and the emotional expressions of others through play. When children run in a chasing game, they are not only exercising their bodies, they are learning. They learn how their bodies move, how their playmates will respond when a change to the game is made, how to negotiate these changes to games, what to do when one of the children falls, and how to express their thoughts to the others involved in the game.

Sutton-Smith (1997), recognized that play is often viewed as developmental activity for children. The play of children serves as the initial avenue for the development, practice, and mastery of many skills. The physical skills are developed, practiced and mastered through rough and tumble play. As children run, climb, and test their strength with one another they are practicing and mastering physical skills.

Social Development and Play

As children move into the preschool years, social interaction and learning through play takes on an increasingly encompassing role. Children are entering into preschool classes, daycare programs, and a multitude of community adventures such as sports, art, or music. With each venture, most children gain additional independence from the family. Young children are developing an increased awareness of peers and are able to enter into a series of social play experiences, with those children of similar age. Interactions with peers may take place in formal settings such as the preschool or daycare or the interactions may occur within informal settings such as the local neighborhood or at a playground.

Early peer interactions serve not only as sources of enjoyment and learning, but may also be necessary for learning. Children learn about their world and the

social expectations of others through play with peers. Peers play an important role as children interact within fairly egalitarian relationships unlike their relationships with adults. The peer relationships offer opportunities to explore a variety of social behaviours such as disagreement, cooperation, competition, and aggression that might not be experienced in the same way as in relationships with adults (Hartup & Moore, 1990).

Cognitive Development and Play

Piaget (1951) identified the importance of play in the cognitive development of children. While Piaget recognized that the limits in the cognitive abilities of young children limits the extent of play, the play also serves as a medium for practicing those skills that have been learned. This process of cognitive development, for Piaget, is defined in specific stages of development. The first is the sensory motor stage for children up to about age two; the second is the preoperational stage for about ages two to seven; followed by the third stage of concrete operations from about age seven to eleven.

The five year old children participating in this study would, according to Piaget, be in the preoperational stages of cognitive development. Piaget (1951) identified the preoperational stage as the stage of symbolism and representation that begins at approximately age one or two and lasts until age seven. During this stage of play children are practicing skills that will become elements of their concrete operational play that leads to the development of games with rules.

Fischer (1980) expanded upon Piaget's theory by stressing the importance of experience in cognitive development. For Fischer, gaining a cognitive understanding

of the social system within the home is supported as children gain an understanding of the social system within a peer's home. This type of learning is sustained when children engage in play that is a reflection of home environments (e.g., playing house, or assigning family roles in pretending to be a family of puppies). Thus, play can serve to provide many practical experiences which enhance learning including developing an understanding of social rules and expectations.

Vygotsky (1962) placed even greater importance on the role of the environment in cognitive development than did Piaget. Where Piaget considered cognitive development to take the form of a maturational process, Vygotsky placed the emphasis for cognitive development on the environment and the social interactions of the individual. From this perspective, and also Piaget's, the children at play are learning through their play as they act on their environments. For example, the children learn about mathematics when they determine who has the most blocks, they learn about reading when they look at books or tell a story, they gain understanding of their environment when caring for a doll as they imitate their parents, and they expand their language when they talk with each other and construct meaningful sentences in order to convey their ideas.

The cognitive abilities of children serve as a foundation to the social elements of play. Children interact with objects and individuals within their environment when they engage in play. The manipulation of objects and understanding of others enhances their cognitive skills. As recognized by Dewey (1915),

The more they play the more elaborate becomes their paraphernalia, the whole game being a fairly accurate picture of the daily life of their parents in its setting, clothed in the language and bearing of the children. Through their games they learn about the work and play of the grown-up world. Besides

noticing the elements that make up this world, they find out a good deal about the actions and processes that are necessary to keep it going. (p. 108)

Play Typology

In observing children at play, one can recognize learning on a variety of levels. One of the classic researchers into the play of children, Mildred Parten (1932), developed six categories for classifying the social play of children, “that have been used by researchers, theorists, and educators ever since” (Mayfield, 2001, p. 268). The first, unoccupied play, happens when a child is not engaged in play and appears to lack any type of goal. They may wander, or look around a room or engage in random movements that are disassociated from one another. The second type, onlooker play, occurs when the child is actively watching the play of others. This may be observed in the child who watches others perform a task before making an attempt to perform the same task. The third type of play is solitary play where the child plays alone.

Parten’s fourth classification is termed parallel play. In parallel play, children manipulate similar toys but do not interact during their play. An example of parallel play would include two children in the sandbox using similar toys to complete their own projects. In the fifth classification, associative play, children interact with one another though there is little organization of the play by the participants. Finally, in the sixth classification of cooperative play, children interact with one another and will plan their activity and work as a group. Children who take turns in playing a game such as Monopoly would be engaging in cooperative play as they not only take turns, but also seek to meet a group goal of playing the game together.

One of the interesting elements of the categories developed by Parten is the fluidity of the application of the categories. A child may engage in each category during a single play session. This leads to the understanding that Parten's categories are not a hierarchy but rather are composed of continuously incorporated elements as the basic levels of play, such as solitary, are not rejected with the adoption of advanced levels such as cooperative play.

Parten's play categories revolve around the social component of play. The interaction between playmates, friends, or peers is a foundational element of the play experience. The notion of socialization is one that not only is encompassed within the play setting, but also is learned during the experience of playing. However, while Parten's typology represents the social elements of play, it neglects the cognitive dimensions. Bergin (1988) examined the Parten and Piagetian perspectives in developing the sensorimotor/practice, pretense/symbolic, social, constructive, and games typology.

Parten's typology was examined and elaborated upon by Smilansky (1968) who detailed that, "children's play had the following cognitive dimensions: functional (exploratory manipulation), constructive (building), dramatic (make-believe), and games-with-rules (external rule-governed behavior)" (Pellegrini & Perlmutter, 1987). In an examination of the Smilansky-Parten matrix of play behaviour, Pellegrini and Perlmutter noted that, "additional social categories included unoccupied behavior, where children were unengaged, alone; on-looker behaviors, looking at other's activity from a distance and rough-and-tumble (R&T), nonaggressive wrestling, pushing, jumping." (p. 91). Petrakos and Howe (1996), in their study of the influence

of physical design on children's play, support this positioning when they classified rough and tumble play as "nonplay" along with unoccupied, onlooker, transition, conversation, and aggressive play.

The peers with whom children interact are often termed 'friends'. Rubin, Coplan, Nelson, Cheah and Lagace-Seguin (1999) state, "Generally speaking, perhaps the most important function of friendship is to offer children an extra-familial base of security from which they may explore the effects of their behaviors on themselves, their peers, and their environments." (p. 459). Certainly, friendships play an important role in the social learning of children (the relationship of friendship and R&T will be discussed later in this Chapter). Children seek out peers and establish specific partnerships, or friendships, during the preschool years. Particularly in the play domain, friends serve to expand social understanding by bringing varied social perspectives to the play situation.

However, as demonstrated by early childhood organizations such as the National Association for the Education of Young Children, rough and tumble play has been misunderstood. In the first NAEYC handbook on developmentally appropriate practice (Bredekamp, 1986), rough and tumble play is discouraged. In the revised edition of the handbook, it is detailed that "peers become important agents of socialization and provide important learning opportunities as well as the rough-and-tumble, playful, and inventive forms of interaction that young children enjoy at these ages" (Bredekamp & Copple, 1997, p. 115). Clearly, the NAEYC now recognize that rough and tumble play for preschool aged children is acceptable. What is not clear is whether rough and tumble play is "desirable" and to be encouraged and supported.

Is Rough and Tumble Play Really Play?

Rough and tumble behaviours are considered to be play behaviour (e.g., Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Reed & Brown, 2000) and yet are also, at times, referred to as non-play behaviour. As stated by McCune (1998), “Play has been difficult to define because it occurs as an aspect of many activities rather than being limited to a specific kind of activity; thus it rarely occurs in isolation” (p. 601).

Rough and tumble play has not yet been accepted universally as a form of play, although the majority of research appears to support its inclusion as a form of play (McBride-Chang & Jacklin, 1993; Pellegrini, 1989). Further, the identification of rough and tumble play as behaviour manifested cross-culturally (e.g., Whiting & Edwards, 1973) supports the inclusion of rough and tumble as a form of play.

Rough and Tumble Play

In 1998 Pellegrini and Smith published a comprehensive literature review of rough and tumble play (R&T). This review is of importance because it is one of a very few scholarly literature reviews of rough and tumble play. Within the review, Pellegrini and Smith identified age and gender trends, the functions of physical play, and proposed suggestions for further research. The review illustrated that, “forms of physical activity play are quite common in childhood” (p. 579).

Partial Understanding of Rough and Tumble Play

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) highlight the need for research on physical activity play. Specifically, “there is a need for more descriptive data on the forms of physical activity play and their age trends through childhood and adolescence” and,

“we need more data on gender differences in exercise play” (p.589). The review also highlighted a definition of rough and tumble play as,

Physical activity play, specifically, may involve symbolic activity or games with rules; the activity may be social or solitary, but the distinguishing behavioral features are a playful context, combined with what Simons-Morton et. al. (1990) describe as moderate to vigorous physical activity, such that metabolic activity is well above resting metabolic rate. Paradigm examples of physical activity play include running, climbing, chasing, and play fighting, the latter being a component of rough-and-tumble play (R&T). (pp. 577-578)

The definition of R&T by Pellegrini and Smith is supported by the work of Reed and Brown (2000) who defined rough and tumble play as running, fleeing, wrestling, open-handed slaps, falling, play fighting, and chasing. Reed and Brown also describe the ‘play face’ of children engaged in rough and tumble play. The play face was defined as smiling expressions coupled with open-handed touches rather than the angry facial expressions coupled with closed fists during physical contact in aggression.

The qualitative study by Reed and Brown included observing the rough and tumble play of seven boys aged six to nine years with a focus on expressions of care displayed within the play. The researcher also interviewed the boys about their rough and tumble play. The boys commented, “on where and when it was appropriate to express care and intimacy for one another, which often is contrary to traditional ideas about play and recess” (p. 104). Reed and Brown also identify, “the need for teachers and administrators to reconsider the importance of R&T as one way boys express care, fondness, and friendships toward each other” (p. 104). This need for teachers and administrators to recognize the importance of rough and tumble play is supported

by Pellegrini and Perlmutter (1998) who recommended that R&T play be provided for in elementary schools.

Time Distribution and Rough and Tumble Play

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) discuss the emergence of rough and tumble play as represented by an inverted-U shape since involvement in the activity “begins in early infancy, peaks during childhood, then declines during adolescence, and all but disappears by adulthood” (p. 578). Three to five percent of the play of preschool children can be considered to be rough and tumble play (Pellegrini, 1984). Pellegrini and Smith (1998) reported that “Rough-and-tumble increases during the late preschool and early primary school years, accounting for about 5% of observed recess behavior, peaks in later primary years at around 10%, and then declines during early adolescence, accounting for less than 5% of play” (p. 580). Clearly, rough and tumble play is present for portions of playtime (e.g., Humphreys & Smith, 1984; Pellegrini, 1984; Pellegrini & Smith, 1998).

The inverted U-shaped distribution of time accorded to rough and tumble play may reflect a sensitive period in development (Byers, 1998). As detailed by Byers, “the highly age-specific inverted U-shaped distribution of play suggests a sensitive period in development, during which the performance of motor acts alters brain development. [It may be] that the function of play is to modify development of a portion of the brain that is involved in the fine control of motor output” (p. 600). Given this influence of motor activity on brain development, it might be recognized that physical play is necessary for both males and females.

Functions of Rough and Tumble Play

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) explore the functions of physical play within their review of rough and tumble play. Here, two opposing perspectives are presented.

First, that “children engage in play to learn and practice those skills necessary to be functioning adult members of society” (p. 581). Second, that “play may be viewed not as an incomplete or imperfect version of adult behavior, but as having immediate benefits during childhood” (p. 581). Regardless, Pellegrini and Smith state,

if children are deprived of opportunities for physical activity play, they will, when given the opportunity to play, engage in more intense and sustained bouts of physical activity play than they would have done if not so deprived. This generalization, in turn, suggests that physical activity play is serving some developmental function(s) such that a lack of it leads to compensation. (p. 582)

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) identify the need for exercise as another possible function of rough and tumble play as, “during the preschool/primary school years children engage in substantial amounts of exercise play” (p.579). Limited amounts of research, “supports the hypothesis that children who habitually engage in vigorous games and sports show immediate benefits in terms of being fitter than children who do not” (p. 583). Pellegrini and Smith recognize that, “more research is needed to document the intensity and duration of exercise play.” (p. 583).

The development of endurance and strength through physical play is a speculative function of rough and tumble play for two reasons. First, the play can lead to heightened arousal and second, “exercise play might, by breaking up cognitive tasks, provide spaced or distributed practice rather than massed practice.” (p. 584). This distributed practice might, according to Pellegrini and Smith, help children to attend to cognitive tasks. If children are given opportunities to exercise during a mid-

point in a period of completing cognitive tasks, the contention is that their ability to attend to these cognitive tasks is improved.

Gender Differences in Rough and Tumble Play

Pellegrini and Smith (1998) indicated in their article that “males tend to engage in exercise play at higher rates than females . . . [and that] males exceed females in frequency of R&T in virtually all cultures that have been examined” (p. 580). According to Monghan-Nourot (1997), “boys are thought to be more likely to engage in rough-and-tumble play and weapon and war play, and to construct narratives that are more disorderly and with more exciting and incongruous elements than do girls” (p. 138). Smith and Lewis (1985) researched the role of rough and tumble play, fighting, and chasing in early childhood settings and found that, “of the 145 R&T episodes, 84 involved only boys, 22 only girls, and 39 involved both sexes” (p. 178).

Causal Factors

The difference in the frequency of rough and tumble play may be influenced by causal factors. Pellegrini and Smith (1998) state that, “boys and girls are socialized into different, and often segregated, worlds that tend to reinforce these gender differences . . . girls are more closely supervised by parents and teachers [which] may further inhibit their physically vigorous behavior” (p. 581). The nature of the gender differences highlighted in research is indicated as an area in need of further study.

The social nature of rough and tumble play is explored in relation not only to its social function, but also in relation to gender differences. Where females are identified as employing verbal skills as a “means to gain and keep resources”

(Pellegrini & Smith, p. 587), males will employ physical means in the “establishing and maintaining of dominance relationships.” (p. 587). This male dominance is reflected in rough and tumble play in two ways. First,

R&T may provide a way of assessing the strength of others so as to decide one’s strategy vis-à-vis dominance competition – a form of ‘ritualized aggression,’ as described in other mammalian species, which leads to real fighting in only certain circumstances The second way in which R & T may provide the context for establishing or maintaining dominance is more direct. Participants may use an R&T bout to get their partners in a position where they can actually display their superior strength or assert dominance, for example, by pinning or intimidating a playmate. (p. 587)

This element of dominance within rough and tumble interactions can lead to confusion between the behaviour being interpreted as aggression or as play. The line between aggression and play is, at times, ambiguous. It is necessary to recognize the definitive elements of the ‘play face’ (Reed & Brown, 2000) and the interpretations of the play by the participants (DiPietro, 1981).

Expression of Caring and Rough and Tumble Play

Reed and Brown (2000) discuss gender differences in the expression of caring behaviours amongst children. It was their perception that, “boys and girls have different perspectives on intimate relations and different interpretations with regard to connection and expression of care” (p. 105). Indeed, the authors note that research suggests there may be a relationship between rough and tumble play and caring friendships. It was the perception of the authors that rough and tumble play may be one of the few socially acceptable ways for males to, “express care and intimacy for another male [and it may be that] our culture’s homophobia [supports the need for boys to engage in rough and tumble play as a] camouflage for expressions of intimacy and care.” (p. 114).

Mothers and Fathers and Rough and Tumble Play

McBride-Chang and Jacklin (1993) conducted a study addressing the play between fathers and their children and mothers and their children. This study involved 128 children from the Stanford Longitudinal Study as subjects. These children were observed and /or rated at nursery school, in first grade, and by their parents at 9, 18, 26, 33, and 45 months of age. The authors demonstrated that the mother's arousal and encouragement of rough and tumble play was not associated with later displays of this type of play by the children. However, "children who are engaged in, or discouraged from, R&T by their fathers early in life may exhibit long-lasting tendencies either to participate in or to shy away from such play on the basis of early socialization influences from their fathers"(p. 101). The study showed that the rough and tumble play of the fathers with their children was associated with later (i.e., first grade) displays of rough and tumble play by these children.

McBride-Chang and Jacklin further noted that choice of sex-typed play was determined to be an indicator of rough and tumble play. The choice of 'girl' play (e.g., having a tea party) was negatively associated with rough and tumble play whereas the choice of 'boy' play (e.g., playing football) was positively associated with displays of rough and tumble play.

Based on the results of the study conducted by McBride-Chang and Jacklin, it would appear that there is, "an association between both father involvement in early development and 'boy' sex-typed play and later R&T" (p. 106). However, the authors indicate that it is, "unclear whether early father influences and sex-typed play cause

R&T, or, rather, whether precursors to R&T coincide at early ages with father behavior and sex-typed play” (p. 106).

Fagot (1978) studied the relationships of mothers and fathers with younger children (20 to 24 months). It was recognized that at this young age, there were no significant gender differences in the play behaviours of the parents with their son or daughter. However, by the time children were three years of age, parents direct rough and tumble play towards their sons rather than daughters (e.g., Lamb, 1981; Thompson, 1975). The influence of parental expectations for older preschoolers (i.e., five-year-olds) is in need of exploration. It may be that the trend recognized by Lamb continues, as older females are discouraged while older males are encouraged to engage in rough and tumble play.

Aggression and Rough and Tumble Play

Reed and Brown (2000) entered into a discussion of the connection between rough and tumble play and aggression. The authors highlighted the findings that women are more likely to view rough and tumble play as aggressive, and, therefore, to discourage children from engaging in this type of play. This is of particular importance for educators of young children who are predominately women (i.e., 96.1% of paid staff in licensed group care settings in British Columbia) (Province of British Columbia, 2001). The impact of their personal perspectives on rough and tumble play should not be overlooked. As detailed by King (1992),

The larger social context includes the teacher and other adults present in the classroom. Their influence on play in which they do not participate should not be overlooked. The rules governing classroom conduct as well as the implicit expectations concerning interpersonal etiquette provide a structure even when the teacher is not present personally. Although the influence may be subtle

and indirect, the larger social context of the classroom always influences the immediate social context of the play event. (p. 47)

Clearly, the perceptions of rough and tumble play held by the predominantly female educators within a setting would logically impact upon the displays of play behaviours by the children in care. Should rough and tumble play be misunderstood by the educators, it may be interpreted as aggression and thus forbidden. As detailed by Humphreys and Smith (1984), "Even though there is no evidence that rough-and-tumble play actually fosters aggressive behaviour, such play is discouraged by many teachers and nursery supervisors" (p. 262).

DiPietro (1981) recognized that, "the term *rough and tumble* (R&T) has been used to designate the set of play behaviors that are displayed during exuberant arousal and that mimic more intentionally aggressive actions." (p. 50). Reed and Brown (2000) support this descriptor of rough and tumble play. Based on the results of their study, these researchers recognized that while rough and tumble play is symbolic of aggression, it is not true aggression. As stated by Reed and Brown, "those who engage in wrestling as part of R&T do not intend to hurt their partners" (p. 105). Reed and Brown expand upon the intentions of rough and tumble players, when discussing the intentions of boys participating in a qualitative study, with the statement, "participants were declaring their friendship. They felt that R&T gave them an opportunity to show that they cared for each other." (p. 109).

Pellegrini (1991) reflected that, "Popular children play with each other, as do friends and children of similar dominance status, because such social configurations minimize the likelihood that their rough play will move into aggression." (p. 210). This suggests that children engage in rough and tumble play in social groupings

specifically chosen to limit opportunities for aggressive interactions. The children seem to make choices in their play partners that support friendly interactions rather than hostile ones. The children are also able to distinguish between aggressive and playful interactions as demonstrated by Smith and Lewis (1985). In this study, young children and their educators were able to discriminate which behaviours were aggressive and which were playful in intent.

Anti-Bullying Programs and Rough and Tumble Play

Recent social concern about the occurrence of bullying has sparked interest in what constitutes acceptable play behaviours among young children and how schools should be approaching violence among children. Beran and Tutty (2002) interviewed 450 students in grades one, two and three from seven elementary schools in Calgary, Alberta. The results of their study showed that 40% of children reported being bullied by being pushed, kicked, hit, or hearing unkind things being said about them by other children at least once per month. This study shows that some children in the primary grades are identifying themselves as victims of bullying. In response educators find themselves in the position of being responsible for ensuring a safe learning environment for young children. In seeking this safe environment, educators can find themselves in the position of needing to discourage physically rough play, both aggressive and playful.

Programs have been developed in an effort to aid educators in promoting social competence amongst young children. The Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Attorney General (1999) produced a bullying prevention program designed to, “assist schools in developing and implementing a detailed action plan

that strengthens the physical, social, and psychological safety of schools and reduces the incidence of bullying” (p. 2). Within this program, students, parents, and educators are to work together in developing a plan for preventing bullying. The act of bullying is identified as, “aggressive behaviour [that] includes physical or verbal behaviour, and is an intentional and purposeful act meant to inflict injury or discomfort on the other person” (p. 6).

The Ministry Education and the Ministry of Attorney General’s guide to preventing bullying (1999) notes that,

Bullying can start out in seemingly playful ways, consisting of pranks, jokes, and some ‘roughhousing’. The incidents soon become more hurtful, degenerating into name-calling, ridicule, personal attacks, and public embarrassment. Rough and tumble ‘play’ gives way to punching, kicking, restraining, and beatings. (p. 6)

This presentation of a connection between rough and tumble play and bullying can be misleading for educators who might interpret that the end result of all rough and tumble play is bullying. Failure to recognize the slight variations between displays of rough and tumble play, such as the play face, and displays of aggression, such as intent to cause harm, can easily occur within the context of the school environment.

The separation between rough and tumble play and bullying is not clearly recognized within anti-bullying programs. Rigby (1998, 2001) and Brookman (1999) have each developed anti-bullying programs designed to aid educators and students in developing school climates free from bullying. Slaby, Roedell, Arezzo, and Hendrix (1995) assembled tools, or techniques, to aid educators managing violence in preschool programs. However, none of these authors recognized potential roles for rough and tumble play within the school environment. Rather, as with the program

developed by the Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Attorney General, physically rough behaviours are interpreted as harmful and in need of elimination. There is a need to examine how bullying prevention programs and the discourse on the phenomena of bullying has impacted the perceptions of rough and tumble play held by educators and parents.

Friendship and Rough and Tumble Play

As noted earlier, Reed and Brown (2000) focused on the expression of caring behaviours during rough and tumble play. Specifically, their qualitative study examined the ways in which seven pre-adolescent boys, aged six to nine years, expressed care and intimacy during their participation in rough and tumble play. The research was “conducted in a youth center for school-age children within an Air Force military installation located in the southeastern United States” (p. 108). The children were videotaped over a ten day period as they played after school. The participating children also participated in two individual and one group interview where they viewed and commented on their rough and tumble play recorded during the videotaping of their play.

Ultimately, the authors concluded that rough and tumble play serves as a “staging area for caring friendships” (p. 113) and the development of social competence. For the participants, the play served as,

a place for negotiation, problem solving, fulfilling their need to belong to a group, having intimate contact with friends, experiencing friendly competition, and developing a sense of community somewhere between the warmth and closeness of family and the isolation and indifference of the adult masculine world. (p. 113)

The analysis of the data generated by Reed and Brown in their study clearly indicated that caring and intimate contacts were demonstrated during the rough and tumble play. There were 73 demonstrations of caring and intimate contact (e.g., helping, hugging, verbal expressions of concern) observed during 119 episodes of play. The participants explained that their involvement in rough and tumble play was a method by which they declared their friendship. The play, “gave them an opportunity to show that they cared for each other” (p. 109).

As highlighted by Reed and Brown, rough and tumble play provides not only the opportunity for the declaration of friendship and caring relations, but also involves intimate contact that is met with understanding by the players. Rough and tumble play resembles a ritualized type of play that requires specific knowledge and regular players who know and observe the rules of play. Reed and Brown state, “those who did not know the rules or were unfamiliar with the style of play had difficulty playing with those who did” (p. 111), and that, “new players were accepted, but only if they were willing to learn and follow the rules” (p.111).

Curriculum and Rough and Tumble Play

The early childhood setting is dependent upon the individual perspectives held by the educators within each setting:

Every early childhood educator and every early childhood program has theories and philosophies. These may or may not be clearly articulated. They may even be unconscious, but we all have certain beliefs about how young children develop and learn that influence how we interact with children and the types of programs we plan. (Mayfield, 2001, p. 7)

The educators determine what will be presented and supported within the setting.

They may follow a formula as with the Montessori method (e.g., Montessori, 1912),

the Reggio Emilia approach (e.g., Edwards, Gandini & Forman, 1998), or the High/Scope curriculum (e.g., Weikart, Rogers, Adcock, & McClelland, 1971). However, educators may choose an eclectic approach as they seek to combine elements from various curricular models (e.g., Evans, 1975).

Hedin, Ekholm, and Andersson (1997) conducted a study in Sweden “investigating the relationship between various day care center climates and the children’s behavior at the centre” (p. 181). It was discovered that there is a relationship between the climate of a setting and the behaviours manifested by the children. While the focus of the study was the impact of future-focused, present-focused, and combined rearing climates, the results indicate that there is a relationship between the climate of a setting and the behaviours manifested by the children in care. The study identified that,

Children’s behavior at centers with differing work climates also parallels adult behavior. When the adults were relaxed and cooperative with each other (relaxed work climate), the children were more cooperative with peers, discussed things more, and helped each other more. They also spent more time actively with adults. When adults were strained in their work relations, the children showed more noncooperative behavior, engaged in more conflict, and were more often left on their own. (p. 187)

The researchers conducted observations of the staff in their work settings and administered a questionnaire to the staff at twelve childcare settings. The settings selected provided equal representation of the varied rearing climates. The study recognized the importance of focussing, “on actual staff behavior and their interpersonal relations with children during their daily work” (p. 187).

Curriculum Structure Assessment

The process of assessing the curriculum implemented in a particular setting is a more difficult task than one would assume. The very process of applying an assessment tool to curriculum becomes a complex task. There are relatively few descriptors of assessment procedures for curriculum. Attempts have been made within the early childhood community to develop assessment scales specifically designed to rate the structure of a curriculum.

Harms, Clifford, and Cryer (1998) have developed one widely used tool for the assessment of early childhood settings. This assessment scale includes environmental factors for discerning the structure of a particular setting embedded within factors utilized in overall setting assessment. The environmental factors include the facility, health, safety, personnel, and the program offered at the setting. The guide provides a rating scale designed to determine the quality of the structure of individual settings.

Some elements of the scale can be adapted and incorporated into a scale of structural level. For example, the rigidity of the daily routines is detailed by Harms et al. as being of concern when the “schedule is *either* too rigid, leaving no time for individual interests, *or* too flexible (chaotic), lacking a dependable sequence of daily events” (p. 42). A rigid schedule is typically reflective of the direct-instruction setting, the flexible schedule reflective of the traditional nursery school setting, and a mid-range schedule would be reflective of the developmental-interactionist setting.

As with the structure of a setting, the Harms et al. assessment scale lacks a clear definition of formalized learning opportunities within early childhood settings.

For example, it is common practice for preschoolers to engage in a circle time of songs, stories, and explorations of weather, shapes, and colours. However, some settings will extend the practice to include several group learning times while other settings will not include circle times. Further, while some settings make circle participation mandatory as they incorporate direct instructional activities, others will allow children to choose not to participate.

This focus on the structure of an early childhood setting has been, historically, of interest to those developing specific approaches to the education of young children (e.g., Montessori, 1912). However, a universally applicable scale for the assessment of the structure of an early childhood setting has yet to be developed.

Summary

Rough and tumble play is a social activity engaged in by children in social situations such as early childhood settings. The young children who choose to engage in rough and tumble play are developing their social understanding of their world. However, the impact of the environment through curriculum structure and the perspectives of the educators must be explored in an effort to understand the role of rough and tumble play in formalized early childhood settings.

As detailed in this literature review, further understanding of the role of rough and tumble play warrants consideration. Investigation of the future directions for research identified in this chapter will contribute to the existing understanding of rough and tumble play. However, increased understanding of the rough and tumble play of young children and the thoughts of educators, parents, and children on R&T play is required.

It is this very need, to explore the thoughts of young children and educators about rough and tumble play, which is the focus of this study. The question of how the perspectives of the educators impact upon the play of young children merits consideration.

The next chapter will highlight the methodology to be employed within this study to gain further understanding of, and insight to, the attitudes of young children and early childhood educators on rough and tumble play.

Chapter 3 ~ Methodology

As discussed in Chapter 2, the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood curriculum is not clearly defined. Equally, the thoughts of educators, young children, and parents on the role of rough and tumble play are in need of further exploration. Therefore, the purpose of this study was to explore the thoughts of educators, parents, and young children on rough and tumble play. In addition, observations of early childhood settings were conducted to enhance understanding of the R&T play of young children and of how educators respond to the play. This chapter presents descriptions of the research design, description of participants, instrumentation, data collection techniques, and the procedure for data analysis.

Research Approach

The focus of this study is to explore the thoughts on rough and tumble play held by educators, parents, and preschool children across a variety of early childhood programs. The research design is exploratory in its approach. As stated in Anderson and Arsenault (1998), "The intent is to uncover the implicit meaning in a particular situation from one or more perspectives" (p. 90). In the process of uncovering the meaning of a situation, the researcher attempts to ask, and answer, the question of what the experience is like for those individuals who are immersed within, or observers of, the event.

The advantages of this approach include the process of gathering diverse and in depth viewpoints. While measurements of a phenomenon can add value to the understanding of any experience, the voices of those involved add depth to measurements and can provide an enriched discernment. Equally, the thoughts of the

individual provide a means for personal validation on the part of the participants because not only are their voices being heeded, they are also being recognized. For Patton (2002), “being heard” is “an end in itself quite separate from use of findings” (p. 98).

Within this approach social reality is illuminated and explained (Anderson & Arsenault, 1998). The focus of this research study is to gain an understanding of the expression of rough and tumble play in relation to curriculum design from the viewpoint of the participants.

Within this exploratory approach, samples are selected based on their involvement in the event to be explored. The means of selecting participants can be based on a specific criterion, opportunistic cases, or convenience. Typically the data are collected through the use of personal contacts between the researcher and the participants. Methods employed can include interviews and observations.

The participants within this study were asked their thoughts on rough and tumble play. The term “thoughts” is utilized in this study to mean the opinions, views, feelings, judgments, evaluations, observations, ideals, and beliefs of the participants. Throughout this study, the term thoughts means any statement made by the participants as “a product of thinking” (Soukhanov, 1984, p.1204) about the observations made by the researcher or the questions posed by the researcher.

Internal and External Validity

The internal validity of the research can be defined as, “the degree to which the experiment results in ‘truth’ in terms of the trustworthiness of the knowledge generated in the experimental situation itself” (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996, p. 52).

Internal validity can be established through awareness of the researcher's assumptions or biases. The researcher is an experienced early childhood educator with over twelve years working with young children in a variety of settings. The experience provided a foundation of understanding of both the play behaviours of young children in care and of the thoughts of educators and parents on the play of these children. The researcher's experiences lead to an initial conclusion that most educators tend to restrict physical play, that parents tend to want their children to be safe from harm or injury, and that children will engage in rough and tumble play while in care to the extent to which educators will accept the play. However, while the researcher held an initial understanding of the interpretation of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings, personal R&T play experiences as a child resulted in an appreciation of how the play can be an enjoyable, and memorable, part of childhood.

In an effort to address this initial expectation of how rough and tumble play might be interpreted in early childhood settings and by the children involved in the play, the researcher developed research questions and an observation protocol that refrained from leading to a presupposed result. The use of open ended questions with review of the comments by the participant aided in ensuring that recordings accurately reflected the thoughts of participants. Equally, validation of the exactness of recorded observations through review by a participating educator aided in ensuring the accuracy of the recordings.

The external validity of the research is limited to the sample population. As stated by Hittleman and Simon (2002), "when researchers lack assurance that results can be generalized to other persons and other educational settings, we say the

research lacks external validity” (p. 132). The research is specific to those participants included in the study. Generalization of findings to larger populations is not a valid use of the data. As a result, though others could replicate the research design, the likelihood of duplicating the same results is limited due to the personal and individual nature of the responses within this research design. However, the results of this study would likely be transferable to similar groupings of participants. The results on how rough and tumble play is interpreted by educators, parents, and children in early childhood settings would likely be similar for studies conducted in settings with comparable clients, environments, and educator training.

The use of an exploratory methodology is appropriate as a tool for capturing interpretations of the human experience. According to Merkens (2004), “exploratory studies are a special case, because what is characteristic of them is that the case is not yet known but is only constructed in the course of the investigation” (p. 169). The approach is personal and allows for individual thoughts to be recognized and shared. However, the results cannot be used to infer causation since, “purposeful manipulations of independent variables are [not] consistently followed by corresponding changes in dependent variables” (Mertler & Charles, 2005, p. 299).

Methodological Considerations of Rough and Tumble Research

Rough and tumble play is a relatively new area of exploration. The methodologies from previous studies were reviewed in an effort to ascertain the methodology best suited to the research questions employed as part of this study. The studies included here are those that are frequently referenced in the current literature on rough and tumble play.

Previous research on the rough and tumble play of children involved the utilization of interviews, observations, and videotaping of R&T play events. The methodological approach of the study conducted by Reed and Brown (2000) involved videotaping the rough and tumble play of seven boys aged 6 to 9 years. A total of 10 hours of rough and tumble play were videotaped over a three-week period. These videos served not only as a method for interpreting the play of the participants, but also as a catalyst for engaging the participants in discussions about their play. In addition to the use of videos, Reed and Brown interviewed each participant twice and the entire group once. The interviews involved the viewing of the videos by the participant and a discussion with the researcher about the personal interpretations of each participant. These interviews were audio and videotaped and later transcribed for further data analysis.

Smith and Lewis (1985) employed videotaping in their methodology as they observed the play of young children in nursery schools. In this study the children were videotaped and their behaviours were recorded during observations. The children and their educators were then asked to distinguish which videotaped episodes were playful and which were aggressive. The identification of episodes as playful or aggressive by the participants was compared to the classification of the episodes by the researchers. The study identified that, “some adults and preschool children, unfamiliar with the relevant scientific literature, can make the discrimination with reasonable accuracy and agreement” (p. 179).

McBride-Chang and Jacklin (1993) employed a classical longitudinal research design extending six years. The study, “compared two ways of measuring rough-and-

tumble play (R&T) and examined three precursors to this play” (p. 99). Specifically, the study employed observations and questionnaires to examine the potential influence of “parental arousal and encouragement of R&T, children’s sex-typed toy preferences, and children’s activity levels . . . as early predictors of children’s later R&T” (pp. 105-106). The parental arousal was defined as modeling and encouraging rough and tumble play, sex-typed toy preference was defined as the child’s interest and play with sex-typed ‘boy’ or ‘girl’ toys, and the activity level measured how active a child’s play was. Mothers and fathers provided measures, through estimates, on their rough and tumble play with their child. The parents completed a Likert scale questionnaire. In addition, at 18 months of age an observation 10 minutes in length was made of the children as they interacted with two peers in a trailer next to their nursery school.

Measures of activity level were obtained through observations both in a laboratory situation and in the child’s home. As a further measure, the activity levels of the children were assessed in nursery school and in first grade. In the school environments, the observers used a 7-point scale. The nursery school observations occurred during both indoor and outdoor play while the first grade observations occurred during recess. The level of parental arousal was gathered through observations. “An observer watched while the children played one-on-one with their fathers and then with their mothers for 15 minutes each” (p. 103). In this measurement situation, the observer used a 5-point scale to rate how aroused the children were by each parent. Included in this observation was a rating by the parents of ‘tomboy’ behaviours exhibited by daughters.

While video recordings have been utilized in other studies (e.g., Reed & Brown, 2000; Smith & Lewis, 1985), an observation sheet (see Appendix C) method of recording was chosen over the use of video taping in this study because it was less intrusive of the activities of the participants. Video taping also holds limitations in the use of play sequences by participating children when a non-participant enters into the play area. For example, as it was unlikely that all parents in individual settings would provide consent for their children to participate in the study, written recordings of displayed play behaviour were preferable because only those children participating with parental consent would have their actions recorded. Further, it was unlikely that the owners of individual settings and the educators working in these settings would provide consent to have their actions video taped.

Delimitations of the Study

This study is limited to the site and populations directly examined, specifically licensed childcare settings, the early childhood educators working within these settings, the parents of children enrolled in these settings, and the preschool children enrolled in the settings. The thoughts conveyed by the participants are limited to the participants themselves. The views expressed by each participant will be influenced by the individual's history and philosophy. Therefore, interpretation of the data collected within this study is limited to the context in which it was gathered. The data presented are reflective of individual viewpoints.

The context of this study involved childcare facilities in a mid-sized city on the Canadian West Coast. The study was limited to participants who were capable

and interested in completing the interview and observation process during the specific time period (see Appendix A).

Assumptions

The assumption that children learn and develop within an active environment is foundational in early childhood education. This provides the basis for much of the programming within childcare facilities as educators seek to provide an environment that not only supports development, but also promotes the development of children. The event of rough and tumble play is an active learning situation for young children. Within this framework, rough and tumble play can be viewed as a developmentally appropriate, or inappropriate, event.

For the purposes of this study, it is assumed that the participants provided honest answers to the questions presented. Because the ethical guidelines of research require anonymity, the participants were more likely to express their true thoughts. Further, because the researcher is also an early childhood educator, the participants might have been more comfortable engaging in discussions about their thoughts on rough and tumble play.

Participants

The participants in this study included 4 external experts, 4 managers, 11 educators, 16 parents, and 17 children. The managers, educators, parents, and children were from 4 settings. The allocation of the participants at each setting is displayed in Table 1. At two settings (2 and 4), only the managers and educators were interviewed. No observations or interviews of the parents or children were conducted at these two settings.

Participation Barriers

No parents or children participated in the study at Setting 2 or Setting 4. The researcher asked the managers of these two settings why they thought the families at their settings did not participate. One manager indicated that the information contained within the ethics forms might have been a limitation. This manager stated, "I think your information was wonderful but very dense. And two pages of it, tons to Table 1

Allocation of Participants in Each Setting

<u>Participants</u>	<u>Setting 1</u>	<u>Setting 2</u>	<u>Setting 3</u>	<u>Setting 4</u>
Managers	1	1	1	1
Educators	3	3	3	2
Parents	8	0	8	0
Children	9	0	8	0

read" (4:M)¹. This manager went on to comment on the limitation of response to written information within the setting when commenting, "why can't we get rid of head lice if we sent home a lovely package. A very short letter with the steps on it and a couple of different methods, and we still have it" (4:M).

For the second manager, the bustling nature of the lives of the families was recognized as a possible reason for the lack of response. This manager related, "I think that probably they got taken home and the papers got put into the pile on the

¹ The notation (4:M) refers to the manager at Setting 4. The coding system is described on page 115.

counter or something and forgotten about . . . I mean they have busy lives, they are working, they're doing exams, doing whatever" (2:M).

Settings

Upon the receipt of a Certificate of Approval from the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Committee (see Appendix F), the Child Care Information Service in a mid-sized city on the Canadian West Coast was contacted by telephone. A request was made for the director of the Child Care Information Service to provide a list of licensed full-day group child care settings from their computer database.

The inclusion of full-day programs rather than half-day programs enabled the data to be collected over the course of a longer time frame. By conducting observations of the settings both in the mornings and afternoons, the data could be analyzed to determine if rough and tumble play is an activity that occurs at particular times of the day. Half-day early childhood programs would not provide a venue for collecting this type of data.

The settings to be included in the study were limited to those with 5-year-old children enrolled. According to Pellegrini and Smith (1998),

Rough-and-tumble play appears to increase through the preschool and primary years and peak in the later primary years, around 8 to 10 years, just prior to early adolescence; this appears to be a distinctively later peak than that for exercise play, provisionally described as being at 4-5 years. (p. 579)

Therefore, it would be expected, based on this progression of development that five-year-old children would engage in rough and tumble play while younger children might not as yet have fully developed this form of play. In addition, children of similar ages are often grouped together while attending early childhood programs. By limiting the participating children to those of similar ages, the likelihood of children

being in separate groupings is reduced. Had the sample of children included three-year-olds as well as five-year-olds, it would be expected that the children would be in separate areas at some point. For example, during a circle time the younger children might have been in a different room or area than the older children. In such a situation, a single researcher would be unable to collect the data for both groups. This was a practical necessity in order for the researcher to be able to observe all the participating children in each setting at the same time.

External Experts

The researcher requested that four knowledgeable members of the early childhood community review the list of settings in order to describe the curricula offered as either direct-instruction settings, developmental-interactionist settings, or traditional nursery schools. The external participants were those who hold professional knowledge of a variety of early childhood settings. This knowledge includes an awareness of the programs, curricula (including staff member philosophy), and clientele (age groups of children enrolled in the programs). The external experts had previously worked in early childhood settings and had visited a variety of settings as part of their current employment. As it was unlikely that a single individual would hold explicit knowledge of all settings, the inclusion of four experts provided for a range of knowledge about as many settings as possible.

Descriptors of Setting Structure Chart

Based on the descriptors of differing curricula from early childhood textbooks (e.g., Evans, 1975; Goffin & Wilson, 2001), the descriptors were assembled by the researcher, as part of this study, into a table (see Appendix B). The curriculum of a

direct-instructional program was identified as including elements such as a rigid schedule, focus on the acquisition of cognitive tasks (e.g., printing one's name), and primarily educator directed activities. The developmental-interactionist setting represents a regular schedule that has room for variance, the inclusion of both free-play and more formal learning experiences and both child and educator directed activities. Finally, the traditional nursery school setting was identified as including a very flexible schedule, focus on free-play experiences, and primarily child directed activities.

Participant Recruitment

The members of the early childhood community approached to participate in this identification process included staff of a local resource and referral service and early childhood educators from local colleges. Prior to participating in this study, the external experts, as with all participants, were informed of the purpose of the study and were required to sign an informed consent form (see Appendix D).

The staff of the resource and referral service were chosen to participate in this process because they hold extensive knowledge about local daycare programs. As a referral agency, these staff were in regular contact with daycare settings and hold knowledge not only of curricular structure but also of the ages of children enrolled in individual settings.

This knowledge of local programs is also held by the teachers in the early childhood programs of local colleges. The teachers at the colleges not only hold expertise in curricular structure, they are also regular visitors in many local daycares as they supervise students completing the practical requirements of their programs.

The process for selection of the participants for the description process was initiated through a telephone contact by the researcher to the director of the resource and referral service and the team leaders of the local colleges. The researcher explained the details of the study to these supervisors and requested participation of members from their organization in the selection process. The researcher requested that the supervisors recommend members of their organizations for participation in the study. The recommended participants were then contacted by the researcher and invited to participate in the study.

The director of the resource and referral service identified two members of the staff who not only possessed extensive knowledge of the settings but also had several years of experience working with the early childhood community. The team leader from the first college volunteered to be part of the study.

The team leader from the second college did not specifically recommend individual instructors but rather recommended contacting each instructor. The team leader of this college commented that all the instructors held knowledge of local programs. However, the team leader did comment that the instructors were pressed for time and that this restriction of available time might hinder their ability to participate. From this college one member of the teaching team was able to participate.

Participants volunteered to become a part of the research study. Through telephone contacts, the researcher approached the facilities identified by members of the early childhood community who are knowledgeable of all the program options within the area. During the telephone contact the participants were informed that the

research was being conducted as a requirement of the researcher's doctoral program at the University of Victoria. The participants were informed that the Ethics Committee of the University has approved the study and that they were required to complete a letter of consent prior to their participating in the study (see Appendix D).

Connecting with Participants

Because the collection of data involved an interview process for the parents, the participants were asked to complete an interview contact form that requested convenient dates and times for the completion of the interview (see Appendix E). The purpose of this form was to facilitate the interview process by providing a means for the researcher to set a convenient interview session with each adult participant. The children were interviewed in their early childhood setting in order to limit disruption to their regular routines.

Procedure

Each of the four identified 'expert' participants was given the details of the study and the description process that they were to perform. These participants were advised that their names or professional affiliation would not be disclosed to any other participant in the study. The four individuals who were available and willing to participate completed the descriptors of setting structure task. Two of the interviews with the external experts were conducted at the participant's home and two were conducted at the participant's place of employment. Each interview was audiotaped with the participant's written permission for later transcription. The interviews were held in the afternoon in private rooms free from distractions. One of the interviews, occurring in a workplace setting, was interrupted briefly. In this case a co-worker

interrupted the interview to give a phone message to the participant. No other interruptions occurred.

Each of the participants was asked to categorize a list of childcare facilities according to the level of structure of each setting (see Appendix B). The participants categorized a list of 54 daycare settings with five year old children enrolled obtained from the Child Care Information Service. In addition, the participants were asked the criteria they used as they determined individual setting categorization.

Descriptors of Settings

Of the original list of 57 settings, three were removed from the list by the researcher. The first setting was removed from the list because the researcher was employed as the manager of the setting. The other two settings were removed because they were places of employment of individuals who had previously worked for the researcher. In both of these settings, the researcher was a previous supervisor of the educators. It was the opinion of the researcher that the pre-existing relationship might unduly influence these individuals should they participate in the study. Thus, a total of 54 settings were reviewed by each of the four external experts.

The descriptions of the settings resulted in some overlap. This would be expected, as curricular structure does not involve hard and fast categories (Goffin & Wilson, 2001). Rather, the level of structure can be considered as a continuum as the categories may be considered to blend together at points. For example, a setting not included in the study was described as direct-instructional by one expert and developmental-interactionist by a second expert. The first expert commented on the rigid nature of the daily schedule while the second expert focused comments on the

opportunities for the children in this setting to make choices. Each expert prioritized different elements of this setting in determining the classification of the setting. It was due to these variations in priority when classifying settings that the researcher, in this study, only included those settings which were unanimously identified within a single classification.

In an effort to ensure the most appropriate descriptors for individual settings, a further verification process occurred when the researcher contacted the settings for an initial consultation. At this time the researcher personally reviewed the settings and requested the thoughts of the manager within each participating setting to ensure that their setting has been accurately described by the four members of the early childhood community.

Each of the external experts participating in the description process was given a chart (see Appendix B) outlining general descriptors of the direct-instructional, developmental-interactionist, and traditional nursery school setting. The participants were given the list of settings identified by the resource and referral service. The participants utilized the chart to describe settings along a continuum as direct-instruction, developmental-interactionist, and the traditional nursery school. The continuum places the direct-instruction at one end with the traditional nursery school at the other end and the developmental-interactionist in the centre. The charts were to be completed independently by each participant.

The external experts' categorizations of the settings resulted in ten settings that were mutually identified as direct-instructional, developmental-interactionist, or traditional nursery school. Two of these were mutually identified as direct-

instructional, seven as developmental-interactionist, and two as traditional nursery school.

Upon the completion of the chart by the external experts, the researcher interviewed each of the four participants in order to determine why, or how, they described the structure of each setting. This interview was audio taped and the tape transcribed for review by the participant. The participants reviewed the transcriptions of the tapes in order to determine if their thoughts were accurately recorded. There was one change made to the transcript of one of the external experts. In this case the expert thought a comment she made about herself would be identifiable by members of the community. The inclusion of this statement might have compromised this expert's anonymity so the statement was removed from the transcript. The removed statement was not relevant for the classification of settings.

Selection of Settings

The researcher contacted each centre identified unanimously by the four experts (i.e., two traditional nursery schools, seven developmental-interactionist, and two direct-instructional settings). The contact, via the telephone, included a discussion of the title of the project, a general outline of the purpose of the study, a general outline of the duties of those who chose to participate, and communication of the researcher's name and telephone number.

While two direct-instructional settings were identified by the external experts, neither of these settings agreed to participate in the study. Equally, while two traditional nursery schools were identified by the external experts, neither of these two settings agreed to participate in the study. Of the seven developmental-

interactionist settings identified by the external experts, four participated in the study.

Traditional Nursery School Participation

Of the two traditional nursery schools contacted, both expressed initial interest in being part of the study. However, the board of directors of the first setting declined participation. The board stated that they had been involved with previous research studies with the University of Victoria and were not interested in further participation as it was a taxing endeavour for the setting. The second setting expressed initial interest; however, when the consent forms were distributed to the families, only a single consent form was returned. The researcher then inquired about the participation of the educators as an independent unit. The manager cited scheduling difficulties and declined to participate or allow the educators to participate. As a result, neither of the settings unanimously identified as a traditional nursery school was included in the study.

Direct-Instructional Participation

Both the settings identified as direct-instructional were Montessori programs. The researcher contacted both settings; however, neither setting expressed an interest in participating in the study. The first of these settings did not provide a reason for declining to participate while the second setting was concerned about the children being observed. Further, it was the position of the second setting that the educators would not be available to monitor the observations or to participate in the interview process. Therefore, neither setting unanimously identified as direct-instructional by the external experts participated in the study.

Developmental-Interactionist Participation

Each of the seven settings identified as developmental-interactionist was contacted to participate in the study. The first setting contacted declined to participate because the setting was to close in June 2003. The second setting contacted declined to participate due to an overabundance of community personnel in the setting. This setting had three students in addition to the regular staff members and the manager of the setting felt that the program could not sustain additional community involvement. The third setting contacted initially expressed interest in the study even though there was some reluctance on the part of the manager to participate in an interview. However, there was only one consent form completed by the families. This setting was eliminated due to a lack of response. Each of the four remaining settings participated in the study.

Limits on Group Size

While the number of participating children in any one setting was to be limited to eight, all the families in the setting were advised of the participation of their setting in the study. There were no families in either setting who expressed disapproval of the study being conducted in their particular setting. The inclusion of a grouping of eight children in each setting reflects the child to educator ratio permissible by the Province of British Columbia (2000a) guidelines. A single educator can engage in small group activities with no more than eight children. In addition, a single observer of the play of children would likely have had difficulty focusing on the actions of more than eight children. In two of the four participating settings, a sample of eight children aged five years participated in the study.

While eight children are generally considered manageable, the inclusion of at least eight children in each setting allowed for possible attrition of participants. Should one or two children leave the study, a grouping of six would still provide sufficient data to reflect accurately the rough and tumble play of a particular setting. However, through the duration of this study, no participants withdrew or were otherwise unavailable to complete their participation in the data collection process.

The parents of the participating children were also included in the study. The sample of parents was limited to those whose children were also participating in the study. This limitation was required because discussions of observed behaviours of the children were included in the research design. A sample of at least two educators working directly with the participating children was included in the research sample.

The educators who participated in the study were those that typically supervise the participating children. The inclusion of at least two educators from each setting aided in ensuring that the data collected were representative of the population and not a reflection of atypical perspectives. A total of 11 educators participated in the study (10 female, 1 male).

Setting 1

Setting 1 is a privately owned and operated licensed early childhood centre. The centre is situated in the lower level of a family home in a middle income residential neighbourhood. The setting is licensed to care for up to 16 children aged 30 months to school age. In addition, the setting housed a licensed toddler program for up to four children aged 18 months to three years. However, this toddler program was not included in this study.

This first setting employs four regular full-time early childhood educators. At the time of the data collection for this study, one of the educators was on an extended leave of absence and the position was filled temporarily by a substitute childcare worker. This temporary educator was not a regular employee of the setting. As a result, this temporary educator was not included in the sample. All three of the regular educators participated in the study, as did the owner of the setting who performs the role of the manager for the setting. In addition to the educators, 9 children participated in the observations and interviews and 8 parents were interviewed for this study.

Setting 2

Setting 2 is a licensed early childhood setting operated as a non-profit organization as part of a post secondary educational institution. The centre is situated in a purpose built facility located in proximity to the post-secondary educational institution. The setting is licensed for up to 24 children aged five years. The setting also houses a licensed program for 24 children aged four years, and a second for 24 children aged three years. In addition, this setting housed an infant program for up to twelve children aged six to 18 months, a toddler program for up to twelve children aged 18 months to 3 years, and an after school care program. The only program included in this study was the program for the five-year-old children.

This second setting employs four regular full-time early childhood educators. All four educators participated in the study. Three were interviewed in their roles as educators. The fourth was employed as head supervisor of the setting and was

interviewed in the role of manager. There were no participating families from this setting.

Setting 3

Setting 3 is a licensed early childhood setting operated as an independent non-profit organization. Some of the parents of the children enrolled at the setting serve on the Board of Directors of the setting. The setting is situated in a purpose built facility located in proximity to government offices. The setting is licensed for up to 24 children aged 30 months to school age. In addition, this setting housed an infant program for up to eight children aged six to 18 months and a toddler program for up to eight children aged 18 months to 3 years. Neither the infant or toddler programs were included in this study.

This third setting employs four regular full-time early childhood educators. Of the four educators, three educators participated in the study. Of these four educators, one was a male, the only male educator who participated in this study. The setting employs a full-time manager who also participated in the study. In addition, 8 children participated in the observations and interviews and 8 parents were interviewed for this study.

Setting 4

Setting 4 is a large licensed early childhood setting operated as an independent non-profit society. This setting is situated in a multi-purpose building located in proximity to residential housing. The setting is licensed for up to 24 children aged 5 years. The setting also houses licensed daycare and preschool programs for children aged 30 months to school age, an infant program for children aged 6 to 18 months, a

toddler program for children aged 18 months to 3 years, and an after school care program. The only program included in this study was the program for the 5 year old children.

This fourth setting employs three regular full-time early childhood educators. At the time of the data collection for this study, one of the educators was on an extended leave of absence due to an injury. As a result, only two educators participated. The setting employs a full-time manager who also participated in the study. No families volunteered to participate in this study at this setting.

Procedure

Observations

Pilot Study

Prior to the main study, the researcher conducted a pilot study at a developmental-interactionist setting during the first two weeks of May, 2003. The pilot study included observations of four participating children (two boys and two girls) and two participating educators (both female). Ten ninety-minute observations (900 minutes) were made at the pilot setting. While the original design of the study detailed that one-hour observations would be made, it was determined by the researcher that ninety-minute observations better served the purpose of the study (to observe the daily schedule of activities of the children twice). One-hour observations did not provide adequate time to observe transitions between scheduled activities. This lack of time for transitions was alleviated by the utilization of ninety-minute observations.

The format for the pilot study was the same as that utilized for the main study. The researcher observed the participating children and educators, recording displays of rough and tumble play by the children and the responses to the play by the educators on the observation sheet (see Appendix C). Upon the completion of the observations, the educators were asked to review the notes taken by the researcher to determine the accuracy of the R&T play behaviours recorded and the accuracy of the responses to the play by the educators. The educators participating in the pilot study made no request for changes to the information recorded on the observation sheets. The educators commented that the recordings appeared to accurately reflect the R&T play of the children and the responses of the educators.

The observation portion of the pilot study proceeded as anticipated. As a result, no changes or alterations were made to the design of the observation instrumentation. However, the researcher anticipated extending the observation sessions to ninety-minutes due to the required adjustment during the pilot study.

Main Study

The researcher made 10 ninety-minute (900 minutes) observations of the daily activities of the participants in Settings 1 and 3 from May 22, 2003 through June 20, 2003 (see Table 4 on page 110). Ten observations of each setting at differing times of the day and on a variety of days allowed the researcher to view each setting under a variety of circumstance. Each participating setting was observed during the daily routines, structured activities, transitions, and free-play time. Free-play was of particular interest based on the work of Smith and Connolly (1980). They noted, in

their study of the rough and tumble play of preschool settings, that the frequency of rough and tumble play was greater during free-play sessions.

Criteria for Inclusion of Rough and Tumble Play

Through the process of completing a review of the literature on rough and tumble play, the researcher recognized that a limited number of play behaviours were identified as R&T by other researchers. Those commonly recognized R&T play behaviours were adopted by the researcher in this study to form the basis of the criteria for identification of play as rough and tumble. Children who displayed acts involving running, climbing, chasing, play fighting, fleeing, wrestling, falling, and open-handed slaps (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Reed & Brown, 2000) were considered to be engaging in rough and tumble play. These criteria were adopted because they represent those elements of rough and tumble play recognized and used by researchers engaged in the study of rough and tumble play. The criteria that was utilized in distinguishing these types of behaviours as play and not aggression involved the display of the cheerful play face (Reed & Brown).

Routine Observations

Most early childhood programs tend to follow somewhat predictable routines. The researcher had observed daily routines in several settings and recognized the typical daily routine was commonly applied across settings. The observations for this study encompassed the following typical daily routine:

1. Arrival and free-play of children during the early morning.
2. Snack and circle times during the morning.
3. Lunch and nap times during the mid-day.

4. Afternoon activity and play times.
5. Departure and free-play of children during the late afternoon.

The daily routines incorporated at the settings observed in this study followed this typical routine. In addition, for Setting 1, the process of walking the children to and from their kindergarten class at a local public school was observed. Each of these identified elements, or daily experiences, was observed twice at Setting 1 and at Setting 3 during this study.

The observations were designed to include routines, structured activities, transitions, and free-play experiences. Free play experiences are those in which children at play have the opportunity to make choices in determining their activity. Gordon and Browne (1989) state, “most schools for children under six have periods of time allotted for play called ‘choice time’ or ‘free play’” (p. 104). Play, according to Santrock (1992), “is a pleasurable activity that is engaged in for its own sake” (p. 268). This opportunity for children to make choices while at play is commonly incorporated into the required components of early childhood program schedules. The Ministry of Health (Province of British Columbia, 2000a) requires that licensed early childhood programs provide young children with regular daily routines, small and large group activities, and both indoor and outdoor play experiences. The movement from one activity to another is a transition.

Only one predominant activity (e.g., morning arrival and free play, lunch and nap, etc.) was observed within any participating setting on any single day. The completed observations of each setting provided a set of observations that reflect two complete days in each setting (see Table 4 on page 110).

Changes to Routines

The observations were conducted while the participating children were under the supervision of the educators also participating in the study. Each setting was observed for a total of at least two and one half-hours during each of the identified daily experiences. This length of time allowed for observation of the activities of the children including the transition to or from the activity on two separate occasions. The length of each observation varied slightly within participating settings due to the uniqueness of program designs and the length of time each setting allocates for each daily experience. For example, Setting 1 had an early snack which allowed for a longer morning free play time.

When the educators at a participating setting allocated a shorter period of time for one of the observation periods (e.g., a limit of 15 minutes for outdoor free play), the researcher made additional observations of this particular element of the daily schedule within the setting. Equally, when the educators at a setting had allocated a longer period of time for one of the activities (i.e., a two-hour outdoor free play time), the researcher only observed the setting for the first one and one half hours. However, the two settings observed within this study had relatively equal time periods for each program element observed. As a result, each setting was observed for equal lengths of time and neither required an additional observation of a program element or the conclusion of an observation prior to the completion of any program element.

Recording Child and Educator Behaviours

The observations focused on incidents of rough and tumble play as displayed by the participating children and the responses of the educators to the displayed

behaviours. The observation of rough and tumble play holds some inherent difficulties. Because uniform descriptors of this form of play have not been explicated, there is no uniform assessment tool. However, given the descriptors by Pellegrini and Smith (1998), and Reed and Brown (2000), a uniform method for the assessment of rough and tumble play can be developed. However, utilizing the descriptors provided through previous research provided only a starting point. Several of the descriptors are general in their form (i.e., wrestling and play fighting) and require observers to be aware of individual components which form larger play behaviour. For example, play fighting can include hitting, kicking, rolling on the ground, grabbing, and lifting a player. Each of these play behaviours represent rough and tumble play if displayed individually or if displayed in a sequence which can be referred to as play fighting.

Separate observations sheets were used for each incident of rough and tumble play observed. The observation sheet detailed the setting, date, time, and place (indoor or outdoor) of the observation. The behaviours of the children and educators participating were recorded, in separate parallel columns on the observation sheet. By recording the behaviours of the children and the educators in parallel columns, behaviours and responses were recorded together.

Recordings of the behaviour of the children included comments made by the children and behaviours that were directly observed by the researcher. This same format was utilized for the observations of the educators responding to the rough and tumble play of the children. Both the actions and comments of the educators that were directly observed by the researcher were recorded.

Completed Observations

Setting 1 and Setting 3 participated in the observation data collection. Setting 2 and Setting 4 were not observed due to limited interest in the study by the families in these settings. There was only one family in Setting 2 who returned completed informed consent forms. However, because the observation in this study involved the social play of the participating children, this portion of the study could not be completed as any social R&T play of the participating child with non-participating children could not be utilized in the data analysis.

A similar situation presented itself in Setting 4. At this setting, two families responded with completed informed consent forms. However, the manager at the setting indicated that these two children were not common play partners. The inclusion of two children who do not typically play with one another would have involved placing them in a play environment without their typical play partners. The exploration of the rough and tumble play behaviors of children who are not familiar with one another was not approved by the University of Victoria Ethics Review Committee, and therefore, not an avenue of data collection for this study.

Ten observations were conducted within each participating setting. The observations were conducted over a five week period in an effort to control for daily variables such as rainy weather, absence of participants, or the influence of specific curriculum elements such as the themes for study by the individual settings. Each setting was observed twice each week for five weeks (refer to Table 4 on page 110 for dates and times of observations). The sixth week was reserved for 'make up' observations in the event of unanticipated interruptions (e.g., rainy weather limiting

outdoor play observations, illness of participants, etc.). However, no unanticipated interruptions occurred during the data collection resulting in all observations being conducted within a five-week time frame. The data collected during each observation was recorded on an observation sheet (see Appendix C).

At the conclusion of each observation session, the researcher invited a participating educator from the setting to review the recorded notes. The educator who was present for the majority of the observation period was asked to review the notes. This method was chosen because it was not uncommon for educators to leave the play space as they attended to the needs of the children (i.e., taking a child to the washroom). The educator was asked their thoughts on the events recorded and asked for feedback on the accuracy of the written notes.

It was intended that this conversation between the educator and the researcher be audiotaped for later transcription. However, none of the participating educators would give permission for their comments to be audio recorded. Rather, the participating educators preferred to make verbal comments in response to their review of the recorded notes of each observation. The educators reviewed the researcher's recorded notes of the observations and made comments. At that time, the educator could either accept the transcription as presented by the researcher or request changes to the transcription. Through the course of the study, only one request for a change was made. In this instance, the researcher had inadvertently recorded the behaviour of a child not participating in the study. The educator alerted the researcher to the error and that observation sheet was destroyed.

The procedure of asking an educator from the setting to confirm that they witnessed the same activities that the researcher observed increased the validity that what was observed was what was recorded. Throughout the duration of this study, only one request for change was made by an educator when reviewing the observation notes. In this incident, at the time of the first observation at Setting 1, the researcher included a play element of a non-participating child in the setting. The educator reviewing the observation notes recognized the error and the play sequence was eliminated from the data.

Interviews

The interview questions for this study were developed by the researcher. The questions were designed to elicit an understanding of the thoughts of parents, educators, and children on rough and tumble play. Winzer (2003) developed a similar model of questions designed to elicit the thoughts of educators, parents, and children on a single topic. This questionnaire focused on learning in educational settings and included questions that are modified for each participating group (educators, parents, and children).

Pilot Study

In order to determine the clarity of the interview questions, a pilot study in a developmental-interactionist early childhood setting was conducted prior to the commencement of the research interviews. The participants who were interviewed as part of the pilot study included one manager, two educators, four children (two male, two female), and four parents (three female, one male). From this pilot study, changes

could be made to the wording, order, or extent of the questions based on the responses of the pilot study participants.

Main Study

The thoughts of the participants (educators, parents, and children) were elicited through the use of interviews. The interview was the method of choice in this study because the purpose of the study is to explore the thoughts of each participant on the specific research questions. A focus group or questionnaire would not have afforded the participants the same opportunity to express their individual thoughts. While focus groups would afford the participants the opportunity for discussion, the purpose of this study required the expression of individual thoughts on specific questions rather than discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play. The interviews at the two observed settings were done from June 10, 2003 through July 7, 2003. The interviews of the educators in the two unobserved settings were conducted from July 22, 2003 through July 31, 2003.

Example of Rough and Tumble Play

In order to ensure common understanding of the dimensions of rough and tumble play, participants were asked to provide an example of rough and tumble play. In the event that the participant was unable to depict an example, an example of the rough and tumble play behaviour of the participants within the setting, observed during the observation sessions, was to be described to the participants.

The example of rough and tumble play utilized by the researcher in the interviews did not include any names of the children displaying the behaviour. In addition, the participants at each of the four participating settings were only given an

example of rough and tumble play exhibited in that setting. Educators, parents, and the children were not provided with any examples of play behaviour from another setting. The example, based on observations within individual settings, was to be used with all participating educators, children, and parents in that setting who were unable to depict an example of rough and tumble play.

The example utilized within the interview process for participants unable to convey their own example of rough and tumble play was to remain structurally similar although the gender of the children involved in the play would be varied for each interview. For example, half the participants in a given setting in need of an example of rough and tumble play would be given an example of the play of males. The remaining half of the participants would be given the same example but the gender of the children would be changed to female.

Throughout the interviews with the parents and educators from Setting 1 and Setting 3, in which observations were conducted, all the participants were able to identify and describe an example of rough and tumble play. In each of the two settings, Setting 2 and Setting 4, in which only the educators were interviewed and no observations were conducted, a single participant from each setting required an example of rough and tumble play to be presented by the researcher. In each of these two incidents, the educators stated that they thought they knew what rough and tumble play was but were concerned that their understanding might be different from that of the researcher. Both of these participants were provided with a similar example of children running and chasing one another while making bodily contact such as pulling or grabbing each other. No identifying descriptors of children were

included in the example provided to the educators from settings in which observations were not conducted.

Should the observation sessions have resulted in no incidents of rough and tumble play being recorded, the interviews would have proceeded with the common questions listed. The question “Occasionally, you see a centre without rough and tumble play. Why do you think that is?” would be modified. This question would be revised to “Rough and tumble play was not observed within this setting. Why do you think that is?” However, in this study rough and tumble play was observed within both Setting 1 and Setting 3. As a result, revision of the question was not required.

Manager Interviews

The manager interviews served to provide information on the operations of individual centres. The managers were asked to complete the descriptors of setting structure chart (see Appendix B) and describe the daily routine. Further, the managers were asked about the guiding philosophy, the nature of the clientele, and to describe influences on the curriculum presented. The questions were developed by the researcher in order to gain an understanding of the setting.

The pilot interview of a manager did not result in any changes to the format of the descriptors chart or to the topics included for discussion in the interview. This manager did suggest a longer period of time be allotted for the interview because the process took 45 minutes rather than the 30 minutes indicated on the informed consent form (see Appendix D). The pilot interview also revealed that the categorization of the setting according to the descriptors chart took 10 minutes rather than the 45 minutes indicated on the informed consent form.

In response to the pilot interview of the manger, alterations were made to the study. The managers were informed verbally that the interview would likely take 45 minutes to complete and the categorization of the setting according to the descriptors chart would likely take approximately 15 minutes.

The managers in each setting described the structure of their setting in an interview with the researcher. In addition, the participating managers in each setting were asked to place their setting on the continuum on the descriptors chart (see Appendix B). In each setting the managers placed their setting in the same categorization as that of the external experts. The managers were asked to describe the structure of their setting, the daily program, the clientele, and any influences that impact upon the curriculum of the setting. For example, managers were asked to, “describe the daily program”, “describe the nature of your clientele”, and “does your curriculum change in response to factors such as changing clientele or the dynamics of the group?”

Educator Interviews

The interview questions for the educators were developed by the researcher utilizing the same procedure for the development of the questions for the parents. Each question is designed to elicit the thoughts of the educators on rough and tumble play.

Two early childhood educators participated in the pilot study. These educators both had six years experience working in a daycare facility. The educators both held their Early Childhood Educator certificate and were selected because the operators of the setting in which they were employed agreed to participate in the pilot study.

The pilot interviews resulted in one change to the educator questions. The second question was changed from, “Tell me about your program. Tell me about your curriculum” to “Tell me about the philosophy of your program. Tell me about a typical day.” In piloting the educator questions, the original framework of the question was confusing. The researcher then asked the participating pilot educators what would be a more appropriate question to determine the guiding framework of individual settings. The educators participating in the pilot interviews recommended this change in order to clarify the question. This proved to be a beneficial change as each of the participating educators in the study was readily able to interpret and answer the modified question.

In addition to the change to the educator interview question, there was one change to the background questions for both the educators and parents. The fourth question, “Did you rough and tumble as a child? Why or why not?” was amended to exclude the portion, “Why or why not?” The participating educators and parents in the pilot study found this element confusing and difficult to answer.

All the participating educators in this study were interviewed at the work site. Each setting made a room or office space available for the interviews and all the interviews were conducted during the educator’s hours of work. In each setting, the managers of the setting substituted for the individual educator with the children while the interviews were conducted.

Educator Interview Questions

The specific questions that guided the interviews of the educators were:

1. Can you give me an example of rough and tumble play in your program?

2. Tell me about the philosophy of your program. Tell me about a typical day.
3. Describe the role of play in your program.
4. What do the programming guidelines of your setting say, if anything, about the inclusion of rough and tumble play?
5. How would you describe rough and tumble play for a parent?
6. In your experience, do both the boys and girls engage in rough and tumble play? Do the boys rough and tumble play with other boys and girls rough and tumble play with other girls or do both boys and girls play together? Do they tend to play with same aged peers or with children of various ages?
7. Do you actively attempt to make provision for rough and tumble play in your program?
8. What do you think the children learn when engaging in rough and tumble play? What value do you think rough and tumble play holds?
9. Where does rough and tumble play usually occur? Does it occur inside/outside? Is the play different when inside/outside?
10. How does the staff feel about rough and tumble play? Have the staff ever discussed or made comments about rough and tumble play?
11. Have the children or their families ever commented to you or the staff about rough and tumble play? If yes ~ What sort of comments did they make? Are you aware of any comments that the children have made to their parents about rough and tumble play? If no ~ Why do you think the

children or families have not made comments about rough and tumble play?

12. Occasionally, you see a centre without rough and tumble play. Why do you think that is?
13. Is there a line between rough and tumble play and aggression? How would you describe the difference, how do you respond when play appears to be crossing the line?
14. Recently there has been a focus in the public schools on bullying. Has this influenced how you respond to rough and tumble play? If yes, tell me what you are doing differently now. If no, why do you think that is?
15. Is there anything else you would like to tell me about rough and tumble play?

The questions were designed to limit ambiguity through the use of easily understood terminology. The questions were open-ended to encourage descriptive responses. In addition to the questions themselves, a prompt script was used to elicit further discussion on the responses to the questions. The script comments included:

1. Tell me more about this.
2. What does this mean to you?
3. Describe to me what this would look like in your setting.
4. Could you clarify this for me?
5. Can you give me an example?

The interviews with the educators also included questions designed to determine the background of the educators. The purpose of these questions was to

address variables such as the education level, family make-up, and personal rough and tumble play experiences as children. The questions utilized in this portion of the interview, for the educators, included the following:

1. How many years have you worked with young children?
2. Describe the nature of your professional credentials.
3. Do you have any siblings? Ages/gender?
4. Did you rough and tumble as a child? If yes, with whom? What do you think about your experiences now and/or then?
5. Who were the adults who lived with you when you were a child?
6. Do you have children at home? Do your children engage in rough and tumble play? With whom do your children engage in rough and tumble play? How do you feel about your children engaging in rough and tumble play?

Recording of Educator Thoughts

All the interviews were audiotaped for later transcription. The transcriptions of each interview were forwarded to the participant to review. Although invited to provide any comments or suggestions for revisions should the participant feel their thoughts were not accurately represented, no revisions to the original interview transcriptions were requested or made. The interviews were completed during the last week in which the researcher was present in the settings for the two settings that included the participation of the families.

Educator Experience and Credentials

Each of the participating educators was asked how many years they have been working with young children. The range of educator experience was from two years to 24 years. In terms of total months working with young children, the range was from 24 months to 288 months. The mean was 11.86 years or 142.36 months.

The educators were asked to describe the nature of their professional credentials. Of the eleven participants, all but one held a Province of British Columbia Early Childhood Educator License to Practice. One educator stated that they held no credentials. The educator who reported no credentials was the lone male of the sample. Furthermore, four educators held their Infant/Toddler License and four educators held their Special Needs License. One of the educators held only their Infant/Toddler and another educator held only their Special Needs. Three educators held both the Infant/Toddler and Special Needs Licenses. Three educators reported that they were completing course work towards an undergraduate degree. The credentials held by the educators in each setting is detailed in Table 2.

Parent Interviews

As with the questions for the educators and children, in order to determine the clarity of the questions, a pilot study of a setting included the participation of four parents. The participating parents included three females and one male, one lone parent and three from dual parent households. The parents requested that the interview be conducted via telephone in the evening. Based on the needs of the parents participating in the pilot, the parents included in the main study were given the choice of conducting the interview in person or via the telephone.

Based on the comments of the parents participating in the pilot study, changes could be made to the wording, order, or scope of the questions. The only change requested by these parents was the elimination of the “why or why not” portion of question four of the background questions. Question four had been, “Did you rough and tumble as a child? Why or why not?” As a result of the comments of the pilot

Table 2

Professional Credentials of Participating Educators in Each Setting

<u>Credentials</u>	<u>Setting 1</u>	<u>Setting 2</u>	<u>Setting 3</u>	<u>Setting 4</u>
None	0	0	1	0
Early Childhood Educator License	3	3	2	2
Infant/Toddler Educator License	2	1	1	0
Special Needs Educator License	0	2	1	0
Undergraduate Degree In Progress	0	2	1	0

parents, the portion of this question, “Why or why not?” was eliminated from the questions asked of the parents in the study.

Recording of Parent Thoughts

The interviews of the parents were conducted in person or via the telephone. The schedules of parents of young children tend to be tight with limitations on available time therefore parents were given the option to do the interviews via

telephone. By conducting telephone interviews, the intrusion into the schedules of the parents can be limited as the interviews can be conducted while the parent is at work or during the evening and weekend hours. Within this study, only two of the 16 participating parents were interviewed in person, the other 14 participating parents were interviewed via the telephone. Of the 14 telephone interviews, 10 were conducted in the evening, 3 in the afternoon, and one in the early morning. The personal interviews were audio recorded for later transcription. The researcher made notes during the telephone interviews for later transcription.

The parents, as with the educators, were asked to describe an example of rough and tumble play during the interview. Should the parent not have an example of rough and tumble play, a behavioural example was provided. This example was the same one utilized at the start of the interviews of the educators. Half the participants needing an example were to be given an example of the play of males, the remaining half of the participants were to be given the same example but the gender of the children would be changed to female. However, in this study, all the participating parents were able to describe an example of rough and tumble play that agreed with the criteria for R&T play used in this study.

Parent Interview Questions

The specific questions that guided the interviews of the parents were:

1. How long has your child been going to this day care centre?
2. Why did you choose this setting for your child?
3. Can you give me an example of rough and tumble play by your child or another child you know?

4. Are you aware of any guidelines about the inclusion of rough and tumble play in your child's daycare? Are you aware of whether your child's teacher encourages or restricts this type of play? Why do you think the teacher made that determination?
5. Does your child ever talk about play at daycare? What did you learn about their play?
6. How would you describe rough and tumble play for another parent?
7. As the parent of a young girl/boy, what do you think of your child engaging in rough and tumble play? Would it be different if your child was a girl/boy (opposite gender to the parent's child)?
8. Where do you think rough and tumble play occurs? Inside/outside? Is the play different when inside/outside?
9. Is there a line between rough and tumble play and aggression? How would you describe the difference, how do you respond when play appears to be crossing the line?
10. Recently there has been a focus in the public schools on bullying. Has this influenced how you respond to rough and tumble play? If yes, tell me what you are doing differently now. If no, why do you think that is?
11. Anything else you would like to tell me about rough and tumble play?

The interviews of the parents, as with the interviews of the children and educators, were supported by scripted comments to elicit further discussion on the responses to the questions. The script comments included:

1. Tell me more about this.

2. What does this mean to you?
3. Describe to me what this would look like in your home.
4. Could you clarify this for me?

Questions similar in nature to the questions for the educators were utilized for the parents in an effort to gain understanding of the home and background of the participants. The questions for the parents were:

1. How many years have you had young children in your home?
2. Do you have any siblings? Ages/gender?
3. Who were the adults who lived with you when you were a child?
4. Did you rough and tumble as a child? With whom? What do you think about your experiences?
5. In your current home, do your children engage in rough and tumble play? If yes, could you describe the play? With whom to they engage in rough and tumble play? If no, why do you think that is? How do you feel about and respond to rough and tumble play?
6. In your opinion, what sort of value do you perceive from this sort of play?

Location of Parent Interviews

The interviews of the parents occurred either in person or via the telephone. As parents were dropping off and picking up their children, the researcher asked the parents, who had previously given consent, where and how they would like to be interviewed. The parents then suggested dates and times for the interview. In all but three cases, the parents requested a telephone interview and provided the researcher with a telephone number at which they could be reached and a suggestion of an

opportune time for the contact. In the three cases where a personal interview was conducted, the parents suggested that the interview occur at the centre at the time they were picking up their child.

Transcription of Parent Interviews

The personal interviews with the parents were audiotaped for transcription and review by the participants with their consent. The researcher made notes of the comments of the participants during the telephone interviews. These notes were then transcribed and reviewed by the participants. The researcher requested that the participants voice or note any misinterpretation of their thoughts at the time they reviewed the transcriptions of the interviews. There were no requests for any changes to the transcriptions.

Participating Parents

Thirteen mothers and three fathers (N=16) participated in the interviews. In all cases only one parent from each family completed the interview. This was the case even after the researcher requested that both parents, of dual parent families, participate. While the researcher did not request any reason for only one parent participating, several parents did identify that time constraints limited the ability for both parents to participate.

Child Interviews

As with the questions for the educators, in order to determine the clarity of the questions a pilot study of two boys and two girls of five years of age enrolled at an early childhood setting was conducted prior to the commencement of the research

interviews. From these pilot interviews changes could be made to the wording, order, or scope of the questions.

As a result of the pilot interviews with the children, one change was made to the proposed format or individual questions for the children. When the pilot children were given an example of the rough and tumble play of boys, the children tended to answer the questions as though they were being asked only about boys. Equally, when the children were given an example of the rough and tumble play of girls, the children tended to answer the questions as though they were being asked only about girls. The pilot children when given an example of the rough and tumble play of 'children' without a gender categorization tended to answer the questions as though they were being asked about both boys and girls. As a result, within the main study, the gender of the children involved in the example of rough and tumble play within the setting was not indicated by the researcher.

The interviews of the children followed the same format as that utilized for the educators and parents. However, the terminology was modified in an effort to achieve maximum understanding by the children. For example, while the parents were asked, "Are you aware of any guidelines about the inclusion of rough and tumble play in your child's daycare?" and, "Are you aware of whether your child's teacher encourages or restricts this type of play?" the children were asked, "Are there rules for play at school?" The children were not asked the family background or education questions.

Example of Rough and Tumble Play

Due to the limitations of the gender identification during the examples provided to the children participating in the pilot interviews, no gender identification was made in the example of rough and tumble play described to the children participating in the study. The example provided by the researcher at the start of each interview session with the children was, "I saw children chasing each other and sometimes catching each other and grabbing onto each other. Sometimes children pulled each other to the ground and rolled around a little bit. What do you call it when children play like that?"

The purpose of providing the children with an example was to develop a common understanding of the play to be explored within this study. Because children may call the play something different (e.g., wrestling, dog piling), the specific questions were modified to incorporate the children's terminology in place of "rough and tumble play". For example, for the second interview at Setting 3, the children stated that they called rough and tumble play "wrestling". The researcher then used the word "wrestling" in place of the term "rough and tumble play" during the course of this interview. This way the children were being asked questions about the play using their terminology for the play in an effort to achieve a common understanding of the topic of the interview.

Interview Process

The group interview process of the participating young children, which included the presence of a participating educator, was chosen as the method for collecting responses in an effort to offer the children comfort during the interview

process and in an effort to facilitate conversation among the children. Goodwin and Goodwin (1996) detailed that, “with young children, informal interviewing in pairs or group settings may be more fruitful than conducting individual interviews. Children may feel more relaxed in the company of peers, and the discussions that ensue are richer because of their interactions” (p. 136). This method is supported by Walsh, Tobin and Graue (1993) who suggested small groups in an effort to provide the children with a sense of comfort during the interview process.

As the researcher was not a regular person in their early childhood program, the children might have been nervous or shy with an unfamiliar person. By having the group of children together with one of their teachers for the interview, it was anticipated that the children would find greater comfort in the process than if they were interviewed individually. As stated by Garbareno and Stolt (1992), “when being interviewed, children may rely on avoidance or denial to protect themselves against the judgments of others. It may be helpful to a young child to have a significant adult present to provide reassurance” (p. 175). By dividing the participating children into two smaller groups of no more than four, the children would have more opportunity to engage in a discussion in response to individual questions or reply with simpler answers.

Recording Children's Comments

The interviews with the children were audio recorded for later transcription. In addition, an educator participating in the study joined the children and took notes on the interview session. This served to provide the children with a measure of comfort through the presence of their teacher. Moreover, as children's voices tend to sound

very similar on audio recordings, the educator's notes aided in ensuring that the children's comments were correctly attributed to each participant.

Grouping Children Together

The participating educators divided the children into the smaller groups for the interview. This smaller group arrangement, in addition to the presence of their teacher, was made in an effort to assist participating children in feeling comfortable in voicing their thoughts. The researcher discussed the group dynamics of the participating children with the participating educators. These discussions included requesting that the children be divided into groupings in which they would be most comfortable. For example, at Setting 3 an educator commented that it would be best to divide two of the participating boys into separate interview groups even though these children would choose to be in the same group. The educator commented that the boys tended to dominate group discussions when together. Thus, the educator thought the other children in a group with both these boys would find it difficult to speak. As a result, these two boys were placed in separate interview groups according to the suggestion of the educator. Therefore, each interview session included no more than four children.

At the start of each interview with a group of children, the researcher explained the purpose of the tape recorder to the children. The children were told that the recorder would tape their voices so that the researcher would not forget what was said. In addition, the researcher invited the children to speak into the recorder and the voices of the children were played back to the children. This process aided the children in understanding the purpose of the recorder.

Child Interview Questions

The specific questions that guided the interviews of the children were:

1. What do you call it when (behavioural example description)?
2. What do you think about “rough and tumble play”?
3. Are there rules for play at school?
4. Which of your friends like to “rough and tumble play”?
5. Do both boys and girls “rough and tumble play”? Who likes it more?
6. Do you ever “rough and tumble play” at school? If yes ~ tell me about it.
Who do you “rough and tumble play” with? If no ~ would you like to?
7. What happens if you “rough and tumble play” at school?
8. Where do you think “rough and tumble play” happens? Inside/outside?
9. What do your teachers think about “rough and tumble play” at school?
10. What does your mom or dad think about “rough and tumble play”? At home? At school?
11. Anything else you would like to tell me about “rough and tumble play”?

In addition to the questions themselves, as with the interviews of the educators, a prompt script was to be used to elicit further discussion on the responses to the questions. The script comments for the children included:

1. Tell me more about this.
2. What do you think about that?
3. What would this look like?

Setting 2 and Setting 4 did not include participating children. All the participating children from both Setting 1 and Setting 3 were provided with a similar

example of rough and tumble play. Similar examples were utilized in order to provide similar frameworks for the interviews. The behavioural example utilized was observed by the researcher in both settings. Therefore, the behavioural example was an example of the play of the children participating in the study.

Each interview of the participating children began with the following non-gender specific behavioural example,

When I was watching you play I noticed that some kids would be running and chasing. Sometimes they would grab onto each other, and they might fall to the ground and roll around and make big sounds and climb on each other.

The example was then followed by the question, “what do you call it when you do that? When you play like that?” The children would follow the lead of one another when responding to the question. In each grouping of children, one child would articulate a name for the play and the other children would accept and support the name given. This process of labeling of the play by the children was present in all groupings, in both settings.

The first group of children (B, D, F, J) interviewed at Setting 1 called the play, “dogpile” (1:C:B). The second group of children (I, A, H, G) interviewed at Setting 1 called the play, “rough play” (1:C:G). The first group of children (T,W,R,Q) from Setting 3 called the play, “play” (3:C:R). The second group of children (Y,V,S) from Setting 3 called the play, “wrestling” (3:C:Y).

Data Collection

The researcher conducted approximately 20-minute group interviews with the children. The children were interviewed in their early childhood settings with one of the participating educators present. The participating adults, both parents and

educators, were either interviewed at a location of their choice or via the telephone. The interviews of the children, parents, and educators were completed in June and early July of 2003.

The researcher made field notes during all interviews. These field notes included details such as the date, time, and location of the interview as well as any comments on any unusual occurrences (e.g., interruptions). The notes also included summaries of the comments of the participants. At the conclusion of the interview the researcher read the notes back to the participant.

Transcription of Interviews

The researcher then transcribed the notes and/or audiotapes and returned the transcriptions to the participants for their review. The researcher asked the participant if the transcriptions accurately reflect their thoughts and if they would like to make any additions or changes to the transcriptions. This allowed participants an opportunity to review their comments for accuracy.

Child Interview Process

The researcher encouraged the children to participate in the discussion. The researcher ensured that each child was given an opportunity to voice his or her thoughts by asking children who did not respond to comment on the question (e.g., "What do you think about that?").

As with the individual interviews with the adults, the researcher took notes through the interviews with the children. These field notes were read back to the children at the conclusion of the interview. The researcher asked the children if the notes accurately reflected their thoughts and if they would like to make any additions

or changes to the notes. At the conclusion of the interviews, the audio tape was transcribed. The researcher and participating educator reviewed the transcription to ensure that comments were accurately credited to individual children.

The interviews were audiotaped and later transcribed. The transcriptions were forwarded to the participating educator who witnessed the interviews. The researcher requested that the educators note any misinterpretation of the comments of the children. There were no requests for any changes to the transcriptions by any of the educators who participated in the interviews of the children.

The interviews were then further transcribed with only the comments of individual children represented on an individual transcription. This individualized transcription was then forwarded to the parents of the children. At that time the parents were requested to forward any comments or questions about their child's interview to the researcher. None of the parents of the participating children made comments or forwarded any questions.

The interviews of the children from Setting 1 occurred in the nap room at the conclusion of the children's afternoon nap. The children not participating in the interviews were at play in a separate room in the centre. The interviews of the children from Setting 3 occurred in the outdoor playground while the children not participating in the study were at play inside.

There was one interruption to the interviews with the children. During the first interview with the children in Setting 3, an educator (not the educator participating in the interview) brought jackets out to the children. The children put on their jackets and the interview continued. The interruption occurred early in the interview process

and did not require a reintroduction of the topic of rough and tumble play to the children.

Debriefing

At the conclusion of the each interview the participants were debriefed. They were thanked for their time and asked if they have any further comments or questions. The adult participants were informed that a two-page summary of the results of the study would be forwarded to them and their setting. The summary of results was forwarded to participants in October 2003 (The timeline for this study is presented in Appendix A).

Data Analysis

Interviews served as the methods for gathering the thoughts of the parents, educators, and children on rough and tumble play. The notes or audiotapes from each of the interviews were transcribed. Following the transcription of the interviews, the resulting data were reviewed for common themes in the responses from the participants. The themes emerging from the thoughts of the participants were then grouped together in an effort to organize the data. These common themes were then reported for each question asked of the participants. For example, both the educators and parents were asked to provide an example of rough and tumble play. The resulting data for the educators was then analyzed by reviewing the data for common themes. This procedure was also applied to the responses from the parents. Following the analysis for each group, the common themes were compared between the two groups of participants.

Participant Identification Coding System

According to Goodwin and Goodwin (1996), “The heart of data analysis in qualitative research is *coding*, a process that results in the data being organized into various categories” (p. 143). For this study, coding was utilized in an effort to clearly identify each individual participant. The coding system for identification of the participants involved assigning a number to each participating setting, a letter to each participant role, and individual participants. The settings were identified as Setting 1, Setting 2, Setting 3, and Setting 4. The participant roles were identified as ‘X’ for external experts, ‘E’ for educators, ‘M’ for managers, ‘P’ for parents, and ‘C’ for children. Individual participants were identified via two separate methods. The external experts and educators were identified numerically. The children and their parents were identified with individual capital letters, the same letter for each family. This coding system for the participating families supports clear identification of family units. The families from Setting 1 were identified as ‘A’, ‘B’, ‘D’, ‘F’, ‘G’, ‘H’, ‘I’, ‘J’, and ‘K’. The families from Setting 2 were identified as ‘Q’, ‘R’, ‘S’, ‘T’, ‘U’, ‘V’, ‘W’, and ‘Y’. In addition, the gender of the parents was identified through the use of “D” for fathers and “M” for mothers.

The utilization of codes for the participants aids in tracking the origin of thoughts of individual participants, individual settings, and groupings of participants (i.e., all educators or all parents). For example, the second educator from the participating educators in Setting 1 was coded as 1:E:2. Similarly, a participating child from Setting 1 was identified as 1:C:F, while this child’s parent was identified as 1:P:F.

Data Analysis

The interview transcripts were then analyzed. The analysis involved grouping the data from the transcripts into common themes, topics, and categories based upon the questions asked by the researcher. “The analysis proceeds by looking for patterns or relationships” (Goodwin & Goodwin, 1996, p. 144). The responses were analyzed for patterns and relationships each question and for each group of participants (educators, parents, and children) and compared across participant groups. This method of analysis was utilized by the study by Winzer (2003) where, “after all interviews were recorded, the most common responses were tabulated. Results were determined by calculating the most frequent responses” (p. 18).

The analysis of the observations involved the categorization of behaviours observed. Incidents of R&T displayed by the children and the responses by the educators were categorized and analyzed according to frequency counts. In this way, the number of occurrences within each of the participating settings could be compared.

The data from the interviews were analyzed, through the identification of common themes, within the following comparative groups:

1. The thoughts of each participating group were compared with the thoughts of the others (i.e., parents and children, parents and educators, educators and children) within each individual setting.
2. The thoughts of each participating group were compared with the thoughts of the others (i.e., parents and children, parents and educators, educators

and children) across settings (i.e., the thoughts of all parents compared with the thoughts of all children).

The data obtained from the interviews were then compared to the behaviours of the participants recorded during the observations. Similarities or discrepancies amongst the behaviours and verbalizations were determined for individual settings as well as across all participating settings.

Finally, the data obtained from the external experts, the researcher, and the educators were compared to determine the criteria each group utilized in describing the structure of individual settings as direct-instructional, developmental-
interactionist, or traditional. Analogously described settings then underwent a comparison of how they were similar to one another and how they were interpreted as different.

Summary

As detailed in Table 3, this study utilized interview and observational techniques to gather data on the thoughts of educators, parents, and children on rough and tumble play. The process of observing play within settings served as the method for gathering data on the rough and tumble play behaviours of young children and the responses to those behaviours by educators. The interviews served to gather the thoughts of participants on rough and tumble play. The qualitative analysis of the resulting data served to expand current understanding of rough and tumble play within early childhood settings.

The results of the analysis of the data of this study is presented in Chapter 4. The implications of the results from this study will be discussed in Chapter 5.

Table 3

Techniques to Gather Data

	<u>Setting 1</u>	<u>Setting 2</u>	<u>Setting 3</u>	<u>Setting 4</u>
<u>Observations</u>				
Number of Children	9	0	8	0
Number of Observations	10	0	10	0
Total Time of Observation	15 hrs	0	15:25 hrs	0
<u>Interviews</u>				
Managers	1	1	1	1
Educators	3	3	3	2
Parents	8	0	8	0
Children	8	0	7	0

Chapter 4 ~ Results and Discussion

This chapter presents the results of the data analysis. This analysis and the results may, first, aid in the understanding of the thoughts on rough and tumble play held by the educators, parents, and children currently enrolled in the licensed childcare programs in this study. Second, the observational data may aid in the understanding of the rough and tumble play behaviours of young children and how educators are responding to rough and tumble play. This chapter consists of the summary of the data collected through the observation of the children at play and interviews of parents, educators, and children (see Table in Chapter 3). Excerpts from transcripts are included to illustrate observed rough and tumble play and the thoughts of the participants.

This study included a sample of four external experts and four early childhood settings. Of the four early childhood settings, two of the settings (Settings 1 and 3) fully participated with interviews of the managers, educators, parents, and children as well as observations of the play of the participating children. The remaining two early childhood settings (Settings 2 and 4) participated with interviews of the managers and educators. No parents or children participated in the study from Settings 2 and 4.

External Experts

Interviews of External Experts

The external experts were asked how they evaluated settings when assessing the level of structure. Their evaluations were made first, on their own past observations and second, based on reports from staff employed at particular settings.

For example, one expert stated, “I think I would base it on what I’ve seen and whether I’ve really seen people allowing things to be child centered” (E:4).

The reports of educators employed in settings were, for one external expert, a somewhat formal procedure. As stated by this participant,

we ask them to evaluate their own schedule and a list of five activities; circle time, reading out loud, outdoor play, arts and crafts, and music. And we asked if they use some of those activities three or more times per week, in any of those areas, to check that off. (E:1)

This method of self reporting was viewed by the external experts as limited in gaining actual data on a setting: “I have one little bit of reservation because most people tend to answer yes to all of them, but then they probably do use most of them” (E:1).

Further, the experts stated that the educators working in settings will describe their programs as they would like to think they are rather than how the program is actually implemented. As stated by one expert, “I would think they think of themselves as developmental interactionist and yet they’re tending towards traditional nursery school to some extent, to a major extent” (E:3). A second expert stated, “they would probably like to be more child directed, they are less child directed than they think they are that to me is a whole other question, how people say they are and what you actually see happening” (E:4).

How Structural Level is Evaluated

The external experts were asked how they evaluate the structural level of individual settings. The participants readily identified Montessori programs as direct-instructional with statements such as, “most of your Montessori based programs are more one might think of them as being somewhat more direct instructional simply because of the type of programming that they have” (E:2), “just by definition

the Montessori programs, more instructional” (E:4), and “Montessori, it leans towards direct-instructional rather than developmental-interactionist” (E:1).

The traditional nursery school was not a commonly applied descriptor for settings. The external experts identified educator training as one reason for a lack of traditional nursery schools. As explained by one participant,

we have really good regulations and are really good in the demand we made for professional development for the people who work in childcare. And we do have ECE’s everywhere, so they’ve been trained . . . so it just doesn’t really happen unless you come across a childcare facility where people are burned out or don’t have enough help. (E:1)

One external expert detailed differences between what educators want to present and what is presented as a curricular framework when stating, “it seems like people often talk about this, the traditional. But I don’t know if they do it always, you know, pull it off” (E:4). However, a second expert identified the emergence of increased knowledge about child development as a factor in the movement of settings away from a traditional nursery school model. This expert commented on the influence of information when stating,

there has been a huge emergence of information over the last 10 years, 15 years. But I look back and think . . . I went into preschool work and there has been a big difference in terms of the amount of education we’ve been able to acquire about child development in the last 20 years, 25 years. I guess it had a big difference in terms of what you see as being really important. (E:2)

Of the 54 settings listed, only one setting was identified as uncategorizable within the settings structure chart. This setting was recognized by one expert as, “uncategorizable! We’ve finally hit the one that’s uncategorizable. . . . They have some of the traditional but we sometimes can get a little rigid around the schedule.

And then they're developmental-interactionist if they're focusing on something where they're learning about other cultures" (E:3).

Influence of Staff on the Structure of a Setting

The impact of the staff working in the settings was cited by the external experts as an significant element in the structure of the setting, for example, "there could be some that are direct instructional that come out of older style of belief around the type of programming the children would need. Where there's a rigid schedule because maybe that is what the instructor grew up with" (E:2). A second expert stated,

you can have an excellent director or supervisor of the program who can clearly articulate the program but it is also trying to support the staff who might say they agree with the philosophy and yet in the next bit do things that are quite different from the philosophy. So it becomes quite an interesting balancing act how much weight to give with that philosophy in order to help that person function well enough and not end up in a situation where there's more conflict than is necessary, and how can you keep bringing them on board and help them realize what that philosophy really means? But there are many centres out there who can clearly articulate their philosophy, but they are not necessarily following it. (E:3)

The change in staff at a setting was recognized by the experts as an influence on how programs evolve. One expert, while describing a specific setting, noted,

there's a new director there . . . she would like to move towards developmental interactionist and I think her staff is trying for that but there seems to be an interesting combo of, certainly a lot of the traditional nursery school but I'm feeling that she would like to see more direct instructional happening. Now that could go either way because what she needs is enough educators in there that will remind her of what she learned. (E:3)

Another expert stated,

I've seen four different coordinators in child care services and each time the child care has changed considerably . . . someone else moves in with more energy and enthusiasm and in a matter of weeks things had managed to change and within a year a completely different daycare. (E:1)

The external experts were asked how, or if, the descriptors of the setting structure chart aided them in making their assessments of the structural level. The experts recognized that many settings are a blend of two categories. For example, when one participant was asked if there were settings that could be classified as a traditional nursery school, the reply was, “yes, yes, but as I say they all include some level of developmental-interactionist. There’s not really a good line between the two” (E:1). A second expert stated, “they have some that is direct-instructional but then I think they’ll be between developmental and traditional nursery school” (E:4).

Categorization of Settings

The external experts were then asked to place the individual settings, as direct-instructional, developmental-interactionist, or as a traditional nursery school utilizing the descriptors of setting structure chart. The experts recognized that childcare settings, regardless of the level of structure, hold common elements. As stated by one participant, “I don’t think I know of any centre that doesn’t have planned program activities, it’s the only way to run a day” (E:1). The experts also recognized that the chart is fluid with programming elements of many settings reflecting the direct instructional, developmental-interactionist, and traditional nursery school. As detailed by one expert, “I would say I see that. Whether people are really conscious of the fact that they’re moving back and forth I don’t know” (E:4).

Observations

Observation Schedule

Setting 1 was observed for a total of 15 hours while Setting 3 was observed for a total of 15 hours and 25 minutes. Both settings were observed ten times over a five-week time frame. The observation schedule is detailed in Table 4.

As reflected in Table 4, neither setting was observed more than once on any single day. Each setting was observed in segments that reflected the daily schedule. The segments included morning arrival and free play, snack and circle time, lunch and entry to nap, afternoon activities and free play, and afternoon departure and free play. Each of these segments was observed twice. The only daily schedule element not observed was the naptime because children are typically at rest and not engaging in any form of physical activity.

The observations proceeded as scheduled with no delays, cancellations, or alterations due to weather, interruptions, or absenteeism. Each incident of rough and tumble play observed was recorded on an observation sheet (see Appendix C).

Observed Rough and Tumble Play Behaviours

The individual R&T play behaviours observed, including the number of times each behaviour was observed are itemized in Table 5. A total of 116 demonstrations of rough and tumble play behaviours were recorded during the duration of this study. The researcher reviewed the recorded rough and tumble play behaviours and grouped the behaviours into three categories that had common actions. These behaviours were grouped into three categories: (a) physical contact between players, (b) play

Table 4

Observation Schedule

Daily Program Schedule	Setting 1	Setting 3
Morning Arrival and Free Play	Thursday May 22 7:30 – 9:15	Tuesday May 26 7:45 – 9:15
	Wednesday June 4 7:30 – 9:10	Monday June 9 7:45 – 9:30
Morning Snack and Circle Time	Friday June 6 9:30 – 11:30	Monday June 2 9:30 – 11:00
	Tuesday June 17 9:30 – 10:45	Friday June 20 9:30 – 11:00
Lunch and Nap	Wednesday May 28 11:00 – 12:30	Thursday June 5 10:45 – 12:15
	Thursday June 12 11:00 – 12:30	Tuesday June 17 10:45 – 12:30
Afternoon Activities / Free Play	Monday June 2 2:30 – 4:00	Wednesday June 4 2:00 – 3:45
	Friday June 20 2:30 – 4:00	Friday June 13 2:30 – 4:00
Afternoon Departure / Free Play	Monday May 26 4:00 – 5:15	Wednesday May 27 4:00 – 5:15
	Tuesday June 10 4:00 – 5:30	Thursday June 12 4:00 – 5:15

Table 5
Observed Rough and Tumble Play Behaviours

<u>Description of Behaviour</u>	<u>Frequency</u>
Grabbing body of other player	16
Use of voice ~ roaring	11
Chasing (e.g., in pursuit of other player)	11
Grabbing and moving body of other player	7
Falling	6
Banging body into body of other player	5
Hitting motions	5
Kicking motions	5
Rolling around on ground with other player	5
Running (e.g., without intent to chase or flee)	5
Large body motions (e.g., twirling body with arms outstretched)	4
Pushing other player	4
Open handed slaps	3
Jumping on object (e.g., couch)	3
Kicking object	3
Making crashing motions with held object	3
Throwing object	3
Banging body into fixed object (e.g., wall)	2
Hitting self	2
Holding hands	2
Making hitting motions while holding an object	2
Pulling other player	2
Rolling around on ground on own	2
Use of a loud voice	2
Crashing body into object	1
Fleeing (e.g., avoiding being caught by pursuing player)	1
Wrestling (e.g., lifting other's body, rolling on ground, etc.)	1

behaviours in which an object is an instrumental component, and (c) independent physical play behaviours.

Physical Contact Between Players

Each of the behaviours within the first category involved direct physical contact between players including grabbing the body of another player, grabbing and moving the body of another player, banging one's body into the body of another player, pushing another player, open handed slaps, holding hands, pulling another player, and wrestling. This category included the most commonly and least commonly observed behaviours during this study.

As indicated in Table 5, the most commonly observed rough and tumble play behaviour was when one player grabbed the body of another player. As observed in the play of a boy and a girl at Setting 3, 'U' grabbed 'W' around the waist from behind and proceeded to lift 'W' up off the ground before setting him back down. Both children involved in the play were displaying the play face as they laughed through the event (3:O:2-2). In another incident, U grabbed V around his neck then gave V a hug (3:O:9-1). The display of the grabbing behaviour was also observed at Setting 1 when 'F' grabbed 'B' with both arms around the chest and arms of 'B' which resulted in both children falling to the ground. Both children were smiling through the fall at which point 'F' let go of 'B' and the children sat on the floor and talked with one another (1:O:1-3). In both cases, an educator did not intervene in the play of the children.

Wrestling

Even though the child participants routinely described rough and tumble play as wrestling, there was only one incident of wrestling observed (see Table 5).

Wrestling is defined in this study as the display of several rough and tumble play behaviours with a peer (e.g., lifting the body of other, rolling around on the ground, grabbing other, pushing, running, falling, banging bodies) in a single incident of rough and tumble play. The incident observed occurred at the end of the day, from 4:48 to 5:00pm, in Setting 3. The running record of this rough and tumble play was recorded by the researcher as,

'R', 'V', and 'U' running, chasing each other. 'R' drops to his knees. 'V' jumps on the back of 'R'. Both 'V' and 'R' fall to the ground then jump up and make karate motions with their arms at each other. 'R' and 'V' grabbing each other, making kicking motions at each other saying, "Karate". 'V' picks up a helmet and puts it to his face. 'U' and 'R' hit 'V' on the head and the helmet with their fists. 'V' chases 'U' and 'R' with the bike helmet in hand. 'Y' joins the running. 'V' drops to the ground on his back with his legs in the air. 'V' hunches into a ball shape. 'R' and 'U' jump over 'V', hitting 'V' with their open hands as they go over. 'Y' moves to the climber (leaves). 'R', 'U' and 'V' take turns at leap frog with a hit. They jump up and start running and chasing each other. As they run they are grabbing each other and hitting each other lightly with open hands. 'V' grabs 'U'. They fall to the ground and start full wrestling as they grab each other's bodies, arms, and legs to throw each other to the ground. They are smiling and laughing. (3:0:7-5).

This incident of rough and tumble play resulted in the educator responding, "that's way too rough!" Both children then got up, grinned at one another, and ran to the climber together. This display of the wrestling sequence combined several rough and tumble play behaviours into a sequence (i.e., grabbing the body of other player, chasing, grabbing and moving body of other player, hitting motions, and running).

Nine of the children in this study engaged in rough and tumble play that would, at times, display behaviours that were included in wrestling. An example of

this behaviour was the wrestling move of physically grabbing and moving the body of the other player. The movement of one child's body by another was observed independent of wrestling on seven occasions. At Setting 1, B and F were standing together in the playground when F grabbed B around the waist and proceeded to lift B up off the ground. F then let B go (1:O:7-3). The children here displayed an individual element of rough and tumble play (i.e., grabbing and moving body of other player).

Physical Contact

The physical contact with another rough and tumble player included children banging their bodies into one another. In Setting 3 S, Q, and V were moving toy cars as they crawled on the floor. The three boys then moved to crash their cars into one another as they banged their bodies into one another (3:O:6-2). This example illustrates the physical contact of the children as they engaged in their play. In another example at Setting 3, the same children were dancing indoors in the music area. The children banged into each other as part of their 'dance' (3:O:6-3). The banging of bodies into one another was also observed at Setting 1. Here, A, B, and D were spinning toys on a table. They imitated the spinning of the toys, as they would then spin their bodies around in circles and crash into one another. The three children would laugh in their play as they crashed into one another (1:O:4-1).

The children would incorporate rolling movements into their rough and tumble play. Typically, rolling around on the ground was an element of conjoined play behaviours. The children did not roll around independently of other rough and tumble play behaviours. For example, at Setting 1, D (with a cape around the

shoulders) was jumping off a bench with arms outstretched as if to fly. Upon landing on the floor he would roll. K, a girl, joined D in the jumping and rolling play (1:O:6-1). Similarly, at Setting 3 three boys banged into one another and the walls as they danced. After banging into the wall or each other they would fall to the ground and roll on the floor before getting up and repeating the play sequence (3:O:6-3).

Children were also observed pushing one another with both hands and feet. For example, at Setting 3, two children were sitting against opposing walls waiting for their turn in the bathroom. Each child placed both their feet so they were touching the other child's feet and proceeded to push their feet against the other's feet (3:O:8-1). At Setting 1 a similar example of pushing with hands was observed. Here two children, with hands touching, were pushing against one another. As they pushed hands on hands against one another their bodies were leaning into the action. Both children broke away from the activity at the same time so neither child fell when the pushing stopped (1:O:5-2).

The children displayed pulling behaviours within their rough and tumble play. At Setting 3, Y (girl) and R (boy) were walking in the playground when Y pulled R to the ground (3:O:5-1). At Setting 1, two children combined holding hands with pulling behaviours. I and B were holding hands and walking together as they pulled one another. One child would pull the other towards themselves then the other child would repeat the play sequence by doing the pulling (1:O:8-1). Holding hands was also displayed independent of pulling behaviours as when V and W held hands while dancing (3:O:3-1).

The physical contact between children during rough and tumble play included the display of open handed slaps. At Setting 1, two girls and two boys (H, B, A, and K) were slapping each other's hands as they sat at a table. One child would slap his or her hand down on top of another child who would then pull his or her hand out from under the slap and proceed to slap the first child's hand. The children were engaged in a type of game as each child slapped their hands onto the hands of the other children who would then repeat the hand slapping behaviour (1:O:4-2). At Setting 3, three boys (R, V, and U) engaged in a game of leap frog with a hit (3:O:7-5). During this game one child curled himself into a ball shape while the other two children jumped over giving the first child an open handed slap as they went over. The children took turns in the role of leaper with a slap, and being the one leaped over.

Rough and Tumble Play Behaviours With an Object

The second category involves those play behaviours in which an object is an instrumental component including jumping on an object, kicking an object, making crashing motions with a held object, throwing objects, making hitting motions while holding an object, banging one's body into fixed objects, and crashing one's body into an object.

The most common rough and tumble play behaviour observed within this category was jumping on an object. At Setting 1, B (boy) would jump onto and off the couch in the book area of the playroom (1:O:3-2). During a visit to a local playground, two boys and a girl (T, W, and R) were jumping on a suspended bridge (3:O:10-2).

The next most common play behaviour involving an object was the kicking of the object. At Setting 3, several balls were available in the playground for the children to kick (3:O:2-4, 3:O:9-3). The children would also periodically kick random objects in the playground. A boy kicked a bucket laying in the playground as he ran past the bucket while engaged in a chasing sequence with a girl (3:O:7-1).

While the most common play behaviour with objects involved kicking, the children would also throw objects. At Setting 3 the children who were kicking the bucket also picked the bucket up and threw it towards one another (3:O:7-1). A few moments later two children were jumping off a wooden block. One of these children picked up the block and threw it after the other child. Both the children were smiling as they watched the block fall to the ground (3:O:7-2). At Setting 1, two children were throwing plastic plates filled with gravel from the playground into the air. The children were maneuvering their bodies so the gravel and plates would fall on each other (1:O:2-2).

At times the children would make crashing motions with a held object. This was observed at Setting 3 when two boys indoors at the car play area were crashing toy cars into the floor as they made verbalizations sounding like 'wahh' (3:O:6-1).

The use of objects in the rough and tumble play at times involved using the object to hit another player. An example occurred at Setting 1 when B and D were in the library area. Both children had books in their hands as they sat on a chair and small couch. They would take turns hitting one another with the books while laughing. They hit one another three times each, laughing throughout (1:O:8-4).

Stationary objects such as a fence became part of the rough and tumble play of the children. At Setting 3, Q was in the playground twirling his body with arms outstretched. He moved towards the fence surrounding the playground until finally banging into the fence. This behaviour of banging one's body into the fixed object was purposeful as it was repeated by the child (3:O:3-5). There was one incident of children making stronger physical contact with a fixed object. In this case, at Setting 3, Q and S were crashing their bodies into a wall. The children were not touching one another through their play though they were laughing as they engaged in the activity in unison (3:O:6-3).

Independent Physical Play Behaviours

The third category is independent physical play behaviours including making hitting motions, running, making large body motions, hitting self, rolling around on the ground, roaring, and using a loud voice.

One frequently observed independent physical play behaviour was roaring. The children engaged in rough and tumble play roared eleven times within the observation time frame. An example of the use of a roar within the play of the children was observed at Setting 1. F and B were sitting side by side at a table at the conclusion of the morning snack time. B physically held F's forearms down. B then roared at F and F roared back at B. Both children then laughed before leaving the table (1:O:1-2). These roars, as with each of the roars observed, sounded similar to a roar that might be made by a large animal such as a lion. However, the use of a roar in the rough and tumble play sequences was distinct from the use of a loud voice as

the roar appeared to be in imitation of an animal sound while the loud voice involved yelling as though to call another player.

The children participating in rough and tumble play used a loud voice on two occasions. On one occasion the children were riding small scooters indoors while bumping into one another and crashing into furniture and walls. As the children crashed their scooters they used loud voices when communicating with one another (1:O:1-1). The use of the loud voice appeared to be a byproduct of the play due to the noise caused when crashing the scooters.

While the use of a loud voice was utilized by the children within their rough and tumble play, they also utilized a loud body, or large body motions. The large body motion was recognized when children made large arm movements (arms outstretched) while also making large leg movements. For example, at Setting 3, Q, S, and V were in the music room with their arms and legs making grand motions as they 'danced' (3:O:6-3). At Setting 1, B jumped up into the air while twisting his body with arms and legs swinging wide and fast (1:O:7-3).

The display of hitting motions was classified as an independent behaviour. On one occasion at Setting 3 R and V were making karate motions without any physical contact with one another. They used both their feet and their hands as they kicked and made karate chops towards one another (3:O:7-4).

On occasion children were observed hitting themselves as part of their rough and tumble play. At Setting 1, F was blinking his eyes at A. A responded by laughing and hitting his head with his hands. Both children responded to A's actions by laughing (1:O:2-4). Similarly, at the same setting, the use of the hands to hit one's

head was displayed by H. A watched and copied the actions of H (1:O:4-2). (The hitting of self play behaviour was not observed at Setting 3.)

Falling was an element of rough and tumble play displayed by the children at both settings. At Setting 3, two children were observed running around the playground. They began and ended each running sequence at a grassy area where they would fall to the ground before again running and falling in the same space (3:O:5-3). Children were observed falling as part of play patterns that involved additional elements of rough and tumble play such as falling before rolling around on the floor (3:O:6-3). At Setting 1, two children were standing together in a hallway area. The first child grabbed the second around the chest and arms. Both children fell to the floor where they then sat and chatted together (1:O:1-3).

Closely connected with falling in the rough and tumble play of the children was rolling around on the ground on their own. At Setting 1, a child with a cape around the shoulders would roll around on the ground after jumping off a bench (1:O:6-1). During indoor play at Setting 3 two children in the music area would fall to the floor and roll around. The children repeated the play sequence three times before moving to a new activity (3:O:6-3).

One rough and tumble play behaviour that was observed at both Setting 1 and Setting 3 was running. Children would run to or from play areas within the settings as demonstrated at Setting 3. W, R, and T used running when transitioning between activities (3:O:3-6). This same type of transition running was observed at Setting 1 (1:O:2-1, 1:O:3-1). In another play session, R and V ran together across the playground with their arms outstretched as though imitating airplanes (3:O:7-5). This

use of running in a game was also observed at Setting 1 when three children were running races with one another (1:O:7-1).

As noted in Table 5, the children engaged in chasing behaviours. In each case observed, the children ran as they chased one another. At Setting 3, the children would chase one another while outdoors in the playground (3:O:5-2, 3:O:7-1, 3:O:7-5). The location of the chasing behaviour at Setting 1 was also in the outdoors (1:O:2-3, 1:O:4-3, 1:O:5-3).

Fleeing behaviours were observed once. At Setting 3, a child was following another child in the indoor playroom. V was darting and weaving amongst the toys and shelves as Q followed making grasping motions with his hands at V. After a moment of fleeing, V stopped moving and with a change of facial expression from playful to serious, said to Q, "Stop". Q continued to follow V when V said, "Stop, I don't like that" (3:O:3-2). At this point Q stopped following V.

The link between rough and tumble play and anger or aggression was an articulated concern for both the parents and educators. However, through the 30.25 hours of observation, the sequence noted above involved the only display of anger by one child towards another child observed during this study.

Climbing

One play behaviour that was not recorded as part of this study was climbing. Although the children in these settings had access to climbers in their outdoor play environment and climbing was observed to be a frequent activity, it did not involve rough and tumble play. There were no examples of rough and tumble play that involved climbing observed during this study.

Supervision of Rough and Tumble Play

The educators supervising the rough and tumble play of the participating children supervised the play differently at each setting. There were a total of 29 incidents of rough and tumble play recorded at Setting 1 with the participating educators intervening during 10 of these play events. In Setting 3 there were again 29 incidents of rough and tumble play with the educators intervening five times. The interventions by the educators included joining the play, reminding the children of rules for play, redirecting play, and clarifying what the children were doing in their play.

Joining the Play

When the educators joined the rough and tumble play of the children, they tended to join in the play initiated by the children. In one case the educator assumed the role of the players when joining a running game. The children seemed accepting of the educator's participation as indicated by the fact that the play continued in the same manner as prior to the educator's participation. An incident in which an educator became involved in the grabbing play of the participating children occurred at Setting 1. Three children were engaged in running games as they raced one another to the end of a short paved driveway. At the conclusion of each race the children, 'A', 'B', and 'H', would grab onto each other in celebration of the fast race. The educator supervising the play joined the races but did not physically touch the children while they celebrated through physical contact with one another. Throughout this incidence of rough and tumble play the children and the educator were smiling and cheering with each other (1:O:7-1).

Rule Reminders

Reminding children of the rules of the setting was a common intervention strategy utilized by the educators. The educators tended to call out rules to the rough and tumble players rather than approaching the children to speak with them. In Setting 1, an educator responded to the play of the children by stating, “Remember, if you are rough with the toddler toys, we’ll have to put them away” (1:O:1-1). This educator was in another room within the facility when speaking to the children.

Redirection

The redirection of the rough and tumble play of the children by the educators typically revolved around supporting the children to use materials in a different way. For example, in the library area at Setting 1 a child was repeatedly jumping from a couch onto a table. The educator made no verbal comment on the play but did give the child a book to look at. This redirection resulted in a change to the behaviour of the child who sat on the couch and looked at the book (1:O:3-2). However, the educator’s redirections also included verbal interactions. In the car area at Setting 3, three children were crashing cars as they made loud crashing sounds while also banging their bodies into one another. The play of these children moved outside of the car area to which the educator stated, “You guys need to go back to the car area.” In response to the educator, one child left the play while the remaining two children moved to the car area where their play resumed although they no longer crashed their cars or banged their bodies into one another (3:O:6-2).

Questioning

Questions were utilized by educators in the strategy of clarifying the rough and tumble play of the children. In both Setting 1 and Setting 3, the children were asked about their play by the educators. This resulted in the children making modifications to their play. In Setting 3, when a child was roaring and making karate kicking motions the educator asked, “Q what are you playing?” The child did not respond verbally to the educator but did end the play (3:O:2-1). The absence of verbal responses by the children was also observed in Setting 1. For example, when three children were tossing plates filled with gravel into the air as part of their play while outdoors the educator asked, “Is that what you should be doing with those?” These children did not respond verbally to the educator but ended their play and moved to a different area of the playground (1:O:2-2).

Time of Educator Involvement

The educators in Setting 1 were observed redirecting play during the mornings at 7:50, 8:40, 11:08, and at 11:50 on two occasions. During the afternoons the educators were observed intervening in the play at 12:00, 2:40, 4:00, 4:20, and 4:35. Within Setting 3 the morning interventions occurred at 8:45 and the afternoon intervention at 3:30, 4:00, 4:45 and 5:00. The educators at both observed settings intervened in the rough and tumble play of the children at different points in the day with the educators at Setting 1 intervening twice as often as the educators at Setting 3. However, the children at both settings were observed in similar amounts and types of rough and tumble play.

Gender and Rough and Tumble Play

Both boys and girls engaged in rough and tumble play although boys accounted for 79.5% of all observed incidents while girls accounted for 20.5% of observed incidents. The most that one boy engaged in some form of rough and tumble play was 21 times while the least that one boy participated was six times. The average number of rough and tumble play events by the boys in this study was 10. For the girls, the most rough and tumble play events was six while the least was two times. Girls participated in an average of four rough and tumble play events over the course of all observations.

There were differences in the type of rough and tumble play that boys and girls engaged in. One noted difference was in the display of wrestling. In this instance the players were both boys. The boys engaged in all forms of rough and tumble play (see Table 5 on page 111). The girls engaged in rough and tumble play events that were less intrusive of other players. For example, while girls would chase, fall, roll on the ground and hold hands, they were not observed grabbing and moving the body of another player or wrestling. In this study there appears to be some differences in the rough and tumble play of boys and girls. Not only do girls participate in R&T play to a lesser extent than boys, girls also engage in somewhat less physically intrusive forms of the play.

Indoor and Outdoor Rough and Tumble Play

The observations of play behaviour in Setting 1 resulted in a total of 67 incidents of rough and tumble play behaviour during 29 play sequences. In Setting 3 a total of 65 incidents of rough and tumble play behaviour during 29 play sequences

was observed. For Setting 1, 15 of the play sequences occurred indoors with the remaining 14 sequences occurring outside. In Setting 3, 9 of the play sequences occurred indoors and 20 sequences occurred outside. On average, in a one hour period, 3.63 incidents of rough and tumble play by participating children were observed.

The children at the two settings in this study were observed engaging in approximately the same number of incidents of rough and tumble play and in exactly the same number of play sequences. However, at Setting 3 more play sequences occurred outdoors while at Setting 1 approximately the same number of sequences occurred indoors and outdoors. It is difficult to determine the reason for this difference in location between the participants in each setting. It may be that the educators have inadvertently supported the location of rough and tumble play although the curriculum and daily schedule instituted at each setting is similar.

Rough and Tumble Play Sequences

The rough and tumble play sequences observed would often include more than one rough and tumble play behaviour. For example, a play sequence was recorded at Setting 3 as,

Q twirling body, arms outstretched banging into the fence. S runs up to Q. S is making roaring sounds. S stops two feet from Q then S runs back and forth in front of Q. S with arms outstretched making roaring sounds, Q joins roaring with arms outstretched. S moves on to ride a bike. (3:0:3-5)

One play sequence at Setting 1 was recorded as,

B and D twirling toys on the table. Crashing toys into each other and off the table. A joins them, voices get louder as they crash toys and cheer big crashes. Spinning the toys. A jumps away from the table as a toy falls. The educator said, "okay" and puts the basket for the toys onto the table. A, B, and D sit at the table. B puts the basket on the floor and all 3 return to spinning toys.

Voices get louder, bodies making bigger movements. B begins spinning toys on the floor. A and D join B on the floor spinning toys and jumping over and onto the toys. A, B and D continue spinning toys on the floor, jumping over spinning toys. A and D crash their bodies into each other. Laughter. B crashes into A. Laughter. All 3 spinning, jumping, crashing bodies. The educator said, "the toys are for building, not for spinning on the floor" and takes the toys away. A, B and D stop the play and move on to new activities. (1:O:4-1)

Interviews of Managers

The managers of each of the four participating settings were interviewed at their place of employment. Three of the managers were interviewed in their office while one was interviewed in the outdoor play area of the setting after the departure of the children from the setting. The managers were asked to, "describe your setting and the structure of the setting", and to, "describe any influences on the nature of the program presented."

Structural Level of Setting

When asked to identify the structural level of their setting, each of the four managers described their settings as developmental-interactionist. This agreed with the classifications of the external experts. The statements from the managers included, "definitely in the developmental-interactionist area" (1:M); "well clearly we're developmental-interactionist" (3:M); "I think it would be in the middle" (2:M); and "well I think we've seen a real switch from the direct instructional more towards the developmental kind of thing" (4:M).

The participating managers were asked what program elements supported the classification of the setting as developmental-interactionist. Each of the managers recognized that the program developed within their setting reflected the inclusion of elements from each level of structure: the direct instructional, developmental-

interactionist, and traditional nursery school. The comments from the managers included: “basically a lot of it is learning through play, we have some structure because children need to have some routines. The basic structure is there with flexibility” (1:M); and “we have direct instruction time for the kindergarten program part of it. So there are little groups where we come in and have a direct instruction time. We also have the opposite, the nursery school sort” (2:M).

Guiding Philosophy

The managers were asked to describe the philosophy that guides the development of the programming elements of their setting. Two of the four managers identified learning through play as a foundation for their philosophy. These two managers were associated with the two settings that fully participated in the study. These managers stated, “it’s a basic philosophy. Kids learn through play” (1:M) and, “our philosophy I think is the general learning through play. We expect children to learn through play opportunities and we set the situations up so they can experience different things” (3:M).

The element of learning through play was observed within both Setting 1 and Setting 3. The educators in these settings were observed expanding the play of children by adding materials, encouraging the children to discuss their play with one another, and encouraging the children to expand the play as when an educator spoke with two boys on how they could add another level to a structure of blocks.

However, when children engaged in rough and tumble play, the educators tended to guide the play through the use of behavioural limits. The educators would

remind the children of how materials were to be used and caution children to modify their play to less exuberant levels.

On two occasions the educators were observed interacting with the children as they enhanced their rough and tumble play. In the first case, at Setting 1, an educator joined the running game which the children had created. This educator added the dimension of different pairs of children running together as though in a race. In the second case, at Setting 3, a male educator initiated a game of kicking a soccer ball with two boys. This educator then moved on to physical play as he picked up the boys, carried the boys over his shoulder, and engaged in attempting to grab the boys as the boys ran up to and around the educator.

When describing the philosophy, one manager identified the influence of the inclusion of children with support needs in the setting. There was advocacy for maintaining respect for the individual while the needs of each child are met. This manager stated,

When the parents come in it's mutual respect for the adults and children. We have an inclusive centre so we have children here with supported needs every year. And that's something that we feel is important for the child coming in and also important for the children in the centre. We have some children come in who have been in other countries and have never seen anybody who's different from them. They just stand there in shock. Why can't she talk? Why can't she walk? So that's a really important part of our program. Just having a place where they can be in a loving nurturing environment where they're still learning as well. Giving them lots of chances for social activities and intellectual concepts. (2:M)

For another manager, the philosophy articulated reflected the influence of religious beliefs. The manager read the following statement of philosophy,

To manifest the love of Jesus Christ by providing for each child's spiritual development, providing children with a safe and respectful environment, providing the children with consistent quality care, providing developmentally

appropriate challenges, facilitating the development of the whole child, modeling age-appropriate expectations, and providing clear and consistent discipline and guidance methods. (4:M)

Once each of the managers articulated the philosophy of their individual settings including an assessment of the structural level, the researcher then asked the managers to describe the daily program. As a philosophy typically serves as a foundation for practice, it would be expected that the daily program at each setting would reflect the articulated philosophy. In the case of the four settings participating in this study, each described similar daily schedules. The day began with indoor free play before a snack and circle time. The children then moved outdoors for free play then lunch, a nap, further indoor play with an afternoon snack followed by outdoor play to finish the day. For each setting the free play was described as opportunities for the children to make choices about their play rather than being required to participate in a teacher directed activity.

Because there were no observations of the behaviours of the children and staff conducted in Setting 2 or Setting 4, the program elements described by the managers of these settings could not be verified by the researcher. The managers of these two settings were asked by the researcher why they thought the parents did not indicate that they would be willing to participate in the study.

Daily Program

For Setting 1 and Setting 3 the descriptions of the daily program reflected the philosophy articulated by the manager. These settings included a daily program that reflected the developmental-interactionist descriptors from the Descriptors of Setting Structure chart (see Appendix B). The manager from Setting 1 described supporting

the independence of the children in care while attending to the enjoyment of childhood. This manager stated, “my goal is for them to have fun doing things that are age appropriate and that they are developmentally ready for, to challenge them without frustration.” (1:M).

However, the managers demonstrated variability in focus across the settings. For example, while the manager of Setting 1 expressed the importance of independence and enjoyment, the manager of Setting 3 stressed the influence of individual staff members on the daily program. This manager described the influence of a senior educator when stating, “I think she’s created a really nice program in there. What she has done is try to maintain that whole idea of a nice flexible free play environment with little pockets of learning” (3:M).

In the case of Setting 4, the daily program described by the manager included a variety of opportunities for the children to make choices. The choices available for the children involved optional snacks and several periods of free play throughout the day. The manager also described elements of rigid planing in the movement of children through routines based upon a schedule. This schedule holds limited opportunities for flexibility due to the nature of coordinating the events of a large childcare setting. For example, the manager described the staffing needs at the end of the day when stating, “then outside time to finish up the day. Because our staff start leaving at 3:30 we have to be outside at 3:30 until five o’clock. In the summertime we’re out to 5:30” (4:M).

The variability of the structural level of a setting was demonstrated in Setting 2. The children at this setting are involved in a Kindergarten program through the

school year of September to June. At the time of the data collection, during the summer months, the daily program of the setting was modified to some degree. As stated by the manager of Setting 2,

in the summer it's a little bit different because we tend to go for walks and stuff instead. During the school year, our typical school year runs from September to June, we have more small group times. We have small group time where we bring the Kindergarten children in every day and do a math activity or writing activity. We don't do that in the summer, it's a little bit more free. We don't have to be so structured or things like that. (2:M)

The modification of the structural level of the program in Setting 2 was in response to the needs of the clients enrolled in the program. While the educators and foundational philosophies play a role in the development of the daily program, the clients in a setting will also influence the level of structure.

Staff and Clientele Influence on Program Delivery

The participating managers were asked if the program delivered, including the level of structure, is modified or changed in reflection of changing dynamics of staff or clientele. Each of the managers indicated that the program offered in their setting is fluid and not stagnant in nature. The managers indicated that the staff and the clientele influence the program.

One manager commented on the influence of the senior educator and the children enrolled in the program when stating, "I like the way it's set up here in having a senior educator. Those are the pivotal positions in the centre, they're the ones who make or break a room. Those are the ones you need to make sure you placed really well"(3:M). The comments from this manager on adapting the program to meet the needs of the clientele included,

just before I started the old senior staff person that we had in that room, they all ended up being boys. She had one or two girls, but mostly boys. She's actually a teacher by her first training. She lobbied to get that movable wall so they could have more small activities rather than always being in the big group. So there is the recognition of the changing needs of the program and a group of busy boys to stop some of the random running around type of play and to help them to focus on things at different times in the day. And another thing she did, with our sleepers and resters, rather than keeping the resters in, she would take them outside and that would be the run around time. So again it's a work in progress. (3:M)

Another manager recognized the need to gain some understanding of the children enrolled in the program prior to finalizing the program activities to be presented. This manager commented, "I'm not sure what it is going to be like this year. We usually spend half of September talking about themes and safety rules and finding out what the kids are like before I decide where I'm going to take them as a group" (1:M). Yet, for Setting 4 the interests and experience of the educators served as the foundation for program modification. This manager recognized that:

you really can't change a schedule until you know the schedule so well that you can muddle [*sic*] with it, that's my philosophy. Once you have, oh so this is what's going to happen in my little day down pat, then you can add a surprise. Because you're more comfortable with it. Then what we try to do is have the children have a sense of ownership that this is their place and their space and they know what's going to happen each day. But then we have lots of surprises that happen. . . . that's the individual teacher. They run it by me, I'm the one who types up their daily schedule so I know basically what's happening. (4:M)

Clientele

Each manager was asked to describe the nature of the clientele of their setting. The settings with the participation of the families in the study. Settings 1 and 3, had differing groupings of families utilizing the child care. The manager of Setting 1 described the clientele as an even balance of dual and single parent families. This manager went on to describe the parents as predominantly students and military

employees. For Setting 3, the clientele were described as principally government employees who are, “mostly dual parent. They are mostly two working parents. We have a couple of single parents, not a lot” (3:M).

Settings 2 and 4 had differing groupings of families utilizing the child care. The manager of Setting 2 described the variability of the clientele when stating, “it depends. We have had some years where it seems like everyone is a single parent. Then other years where everybody has two parents. It really varies” (2:M). The manager described the parents as predominantly students and approximately 25% employed. For Setting 4, the clientele was described as, “across the board. Every social economic group is represented. Every type of family structure. We go from protection daycare to double income civil servants or doctors” (4:M). This manager indicated that the families are, “maybe 60/40 on the single parents, single parent families and 40% double” (4:M).

The clientele of Settings 2 and 4 were not observed as they did not participate in this study. However, the clientele of Settings 1 and 3 were observed as part of this study. Setting 1 was composed of families from predominantly lower and middle income economic households. In this setting, 7 of 9 children (78%) were in lone parent households. Setting 3 was composed of families from predominantly middle and upper-middle income economic households according to the managers. In this setting, 2 of 8 children (25%) were in lone parent households.

The rough and tumble play of the children from lone versus dual parent households indicates different frequency of occurrence. For Setting 1, the average number of rough and tumble incidents observed by two boys from dual parent

households was 16.5 where the two boys from lone parent households averaged 9 incidents of R&T play. At Setting 3, four boys from dual parent households averaged 9.5 incidents of R&T where the two boys at this setting from lone parent households averaged 8 incidents.

The rough and tumble play of the children enrolled in Setting 1 and Setting 3 were similar in the frequency of the play. There were 67 incidents of rough and tumble play observed at Setting 1 and 65 incidents observed at Setting 3. There were differences observed in the number of rough and tumble play events the children engaged in. The four boys in Setting 1 averaged 12.75 rough and tumble play events while the six boys in Setting 3 averaged 8.9 R&T play events. The five girls in Setting 1 averaged 3.2 R&T play events while the two girls in Setting 3 averaged 5.5 play events.

It might be that socio-economic backgrounds influence the degree to which children are engaging in rough and tumble play. The results of the play of the children in this study indicate that two girls from higher income households engaged in R&T play more often than the five girls from lower income households. For the boys, the four from lower income households engaged in R&T play more than the six boys from higher income backgrounds.

Interviews of Educators

Of the 11 participating educators, one was male. This male educator from Setting 3 held somewhat different thoughts on rough and tumble play within the early childhood setting. For him, rough and tumble play is a natural and enjoyable part of childhood. He was observed engaging in rough and tumble play with the children

(3:O:2) and stated that he would like to encourage the play. However, this educator was the newest member of the team of educators and stated that he tended to go along with the parameters of the expectations at the setting and was trying to behave in a similar way to that of his female co-workers. He further stated that he had little interaction with parents as the parents tended to speak with the longer term female educators.

Example of Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked to provide the researcher with an example of rough and tumble play. Of the participating educators, eight were able to provide behavioral examples of the children in their care in rough and tumble play. The descriptors of rough and tumble play provided by the educators ranged from “when a few of the children will get together and they start running around playing tag and often the boys will tackle each other as opposed to touching each other” (1:E:1) and “they were chasing each other around the park and around the climber, one would stop and the other would jump on them, chasing each other and it ended up being really, like they were both laughing” (4:E:1) to “chasing games outside, when they grab onto each other, wrestling, play wrestling” (3:E:1).

One of the educators was cautious about responding to the question. This educator stated, “wrestling maybe, wrestling together I would say” (2:E:3). There were two educators who were unsure of how to respond to the question. These educators made statements such as, “it’s in the imaginary games that they play, I can’t think of a specific example” (4:E:2) and “I guess I would say that there is acceptable rough and tumble play and there’s rough and tumble play that I would say is

unacceptable depending upon what you mean” (2:E:1). Both these educators were asked by the researcher if they could describe what rough and tumble play looks like. This prompt resulted in these participating educators providing descriptors of rough and tumble play behaviour such as, “chase is a big, a very popular game outside, lots of running” (2:E:1) and “a lot of chasing, pushing all in their games” (4:E:2).

Philosophy of the Program

Each educator articulated their own philosophy rather than the overriding philosophy of the setting in which they were employed. Only one educator did not answer the question of, “tell me about the philosophy of your program”. This educator stated, “well I can’t really answer, ask the senior supervisor” (3:E:1).

Of the ten educators who responded when asked about the philosophy of their program, five of the educators identified, “learning through play” as a foundation for the design of the program (1:E:1, 1:E:2, 1:E:3, 3:E:2, 3:E:3). Three of the educators identified the need for their program to be, “child centered” (2:E:2, 2:E:3, 4:E:1). One educator stated that the emotional needs of the children were most important, that children, “feel comfortable and supported in this environment” (2:E:1). However, two participating educators were unsure what the philosophy of their program was (3:E:1, 4:E:2).

The desires or needs of the parents and children were detailed as philosophical influences in two cases. One educator (2:E:2) commented that, “parents are a partner in what you’re doing so you’re always trying to get feedback in whatever way possible from your parents, making sure that you’re providing a service that they’re wanting and that they’re comfortable with”. Another educator explained that the most

dominant influence within their philosophical perspective was the need to follow the children's interests. As stated by this educator, "just following the children's interests, setting up activities during free play that are geared towards their interests so they will participate" (2:E:3).

Another common theme verbalized by the educators was their support for the children in care learning life skills. As one educator detailed, "learning life skills, how to cope, how to manage with their peers, how to take care of themselves" (3:E:2). There was a recognition of "every day life experiences" (1:E:1).

The philosophy that the educators in this study described was different than the program observed to be offered within the settings. These educators were describing elements of the traditional nursery school with statements such as, 'learning through play' and 'child centered.' The descriptors typical of the developmental-interactionist approach such as involving a regular schedule or learning through themes were not utilized by the educators. The educators were speaking of a philosophy which varied from the ideals which form the foundation for programming in their setting.

A Typical Day

All the participating educators described a typical day in their setting. The descriptors of the typical day as detailed by the participants were supported by the observations of the researcher. The researcher observed program schedules in each setting that reflected the comments made by the participants.

Setting 1

Setting 1 began with free play inside and an art activity. An educator then walked the kindergarten aged children to the local public school while a second educator remained at the setting with the other children. When the first educator returned from the public school a second room opened up. In this second room the children were able to engage in free play activities. The educators provided snack for the children followed by a circle time. The circle time incorporated the singing of songs, reading of stories, and perhaps a game or two. Following circle time the children went outside for play. They then had lunch and brushed their teeth before gathering for a story time. After story time the children had a nap. Following nap the children participated in another free playtime inside and had an afternoon snack. Then the children then went outdoors for play until their parents picked them up.

Setting 2

The educators in Setting 2 followed a similar schedule. However, in this setting the children had a shorter indoor free play period followed by an outdoor play time before heading back inside for snack and another inside free play time. Following the second inside free play time the children participates in 45 minute group times where they worked on the academic components of kindergarten. After the group time, the children had lunch and a nap followed by another indoor free play time. The children then participated in another group time and finally returned to the outdoor playground to finish the day.

Setting 3

Setting 3 again followed a similar schedule. The day began with inside play before moving to snack during which the educators would read the children stories in a small circle time. The children then went outdoors to play in the centre's playground. After the outdoor play time, the children ate their lunch and had a nap. Following the nap time was a quiet indoor play time, another snack time and then the children went out to play for the balance of the day.

Setting 4

The educators in Setting 4 had a somewhat different program. At the time of this study, the program had entered into the summer format. The summer program included many more field trips than would be included through the rest of the year. Typically, the children arrived and engaged in indoor free play first thing in the morning. The children then had a snack and headed off on a field trip to a park or beach before returning to the setting for lunch. After lunch the children had more free play time both inside and outdoors. The educators monitored the play of the children and had they determined that the play was counter productive they would implement an organized activity or game. Other than the utilization of guided activities to modify the character of play, the children were able to play freely throughout most of the day.

Program Elements

All the participants stated that a typical day started with a period of indoor free play. The descriptors of the start of a day included, "come in and play first thing in the morning" (4:E:1), "come in, in the morning they have some quiet playtime at

the tables, table toys and stuff like that” (1:E:2), “we have free play until ten o’clock-ish” (3:E:1), and “free play in the morning” (2:E:3).

Following the indoor free play period, three of the settings move through a morning snack, circle time, and an outdoor free play time. For Setting 2 the indoor free play time ends at 8:30 at which time, “we take them outside right away . . . they’re outside until 10:00 or 10:30 in the morning and then they come in and have snack” (2:E:1). Setting 3 takes a slightly different approach. Here they “have morning snack and then come outside” (3:E:3). In the case of Setting 1, some of the children are walked to their morning kindergarten class at a local public school.

The educators from each setting outlined similar daily schedules when describing the school year from September through June. For Settings 2 and 4, summer schedules are adjusted to include more field trips and outdoor activities.

There was some variety among the educators in the amount of detail provided about the daily schedules, but most routines were described in a similar way by the participants. The descriptions of the daily routines for Settings 1 and 3 were accurate. These routines were observed during the observation portion of this study. While the daily routines of Settings 2 and 4 were consistently described by the educators from those settings, there were no observations made at these settings so the routines could not be verified by the researcher.

The daily routines described by the educators in Settings 1, 3, and 4 reflected a developmental-interactionist approach. These educators described programming which included a regular schedule that varies for special events, free-play and more

structured learning times, child and educators directed activities, and learning through themes.

The educators from Setting 2 described a program with elements of direct-instructional and traditional nursery schools. The children at Setting 2 encountered teacher directed structured learning in addition to opportunities to choose their activities within a flexible free-play environment. Setting 2 was viewed by the educators as developmental-interactionist due to the inclusion of elements of both the direct-instructional and the traditional nursery school. This classification of the structure highlights the fluidity of curricula categories and the artificial nature of the boundaries for each.

The Role of Play

Each of the educators was asked to describe the role of play in his/her program. All the educators identified play as an important element of their program. As stated by one educator, “play is extremely important, it’s a big part of the child’s day” (2:E:1). Other educators detailed that, “that’s their primary learning tool” (1:E:3) and “play is very important. That’s the most important aspect as I think the children learn through play” (3:E:2). This concept of children learning through play was identified by nine of the educators interviewed. These nine educators were from Settings 1, 2, or 3.

Learning Through Play

Neither of the educators from Setting 4 directly identified learning as a function of the role of play in their setting. This difference may have been reflective of the nature of the program in Setting 4. For this setting, a summer program was in

place with a primary focus on field trips and a 'summer camp' atmosphere. However, in this setting the educators did recognize play as an overriding element of their program. As stated by one educator, "it's part of the full day, through the whole program" (4:E:2). The second participating educator explained that, "the children are working through the day through play, a lot of it is play whether here at the daycare or on field trips, at the beach, anywhere, it's the whole day" (4:E:1).

Of the learning experiences identified by the nine participants who identified learning as a primary role for play, four stated that play is important in developing social skills as they interact with their peers. The thoughts expressed by one educator that, "the children learn so many things through it, they interact with each other and explore their environment" (3:E:1) were supported by another educator who stated, "it's very important that the children, the special-needs children in particular, learn play skills in order to interact with the other children" (2:E:2). Another educator stated, "they learn how to talk with their friends, to negotiate" (3:E:2).

Each of the educators emphasized that play is an important element of the program. The educators viewed play as a means for learning. These views on play were congruent with the educator statements on philosophy. The view that play is a means for learning was also evident during the observation portion of this study. At Settings 1 and 3, the educators were observed expanding the play of the children, helping children to problem solve social conflicts during play sessions, and assisting children in exploring their ideas utilizing materials available during free-play.

Programming Guidelines for the Inclusion of Rough and Tumble Play

The educators were asked what the programming guidelines of their setting say, if anything, about the inclusion of rough and tumble play. Each of the participants responded to the question. However, none of the educators provided clear details of what the guidelines of their specific setting were in relation to rough and tumble play. Rather, the educators indicated that they did not know what the guidelines were, that they were unsure of what the guidelines were, or described what they thought the guidelines of their setting might be.

Of the eleven participating educators, three stated that they did not know what the guidelines for their setting said about rough and tumble play. Of these three participants, two attached a caveat to their responses. These were, "I don't know. I can tell you what they should say. They should say rough and tumble play, as long as everyone is safe, is okay with us if no one gets hurt. That's how kids play because kids are kids" (3:E:3). The other responded with: "nothing, but we do believe in the importance of gross motor activities" (3:E:1).

Three of the participating educators thought that their setting did have a policy on rough and tumble play but were unsure of what the policy stated. As acknowledged by one of the educators, "to be quite honest I don't know what the guidelines say. I probably read them when I first started here but I've completely forgotten" (3:E:2) and, "actually I don't really know if there is anything" (2:E:2).

The remaining five educators described what they thought the position of their setting was on rough and tumble play. The educators recognized the need for safety in their descriptions of the guidelines on rough and tumble play. One educator stated, "I

think safety is a big issue. If it starts to get too rough it's time to put a stop to it. We don't want anybody to get hurt. A little bit of roughhousing is okay but when it starts to get to the point where they're getting carried away it's not safe anymore, we stop it" (1:E:2). Another educator stated, "what they say is that mainly the children are safe and that they're not abused in any way by the other children. I know that there's something to the effect that they feel safe and secure" (2:E:1).

One educator, who was unsure if her setting held any guidelines on rough and tumble play instead provided a description of a policy about weapons. She stated, "I know. There is a policy about weapons play. Children are not allowed to bring guns or toy guns or toy knives or swords. Again, I think that's pretty standard across almost every centre that I've ever been in. They're not allowed to make or play guns, that sort of thing. That may not really have so much to do with rough and tumble play I suppose as to violent play" (2:E:2).

Description of Rough and Tumble Play for a Parent

The educators were asked how they would describe rough and tumble play for a parent. All the participants responded to the question. Generally, the participants gave behavioural examples of the play in response to this question. Two educators, both from Setting 4, described the play as representative of the play behaviours of the children in their care. One stated, "it's normal, I think it's a normal activity" (4:E:1) while the other educator stated, "it's just another form of play they engage in, some more than others" (4:E:2).

Behavioural Labels

Eight of the eleven participants included behavioural labels of the play when describing rough and tumble play for a parent. Of the eight who utilized behavioural examples, five described used the word “wrestling” in their explanations. The statements from the educators included, “wrestling” (1:E:1), “chasing, wrestling, and rolling around, dog piling” (3:E:1), “basic roughhousing, a little bit of wrestling, rolling around on the ground with their friends” (1:E:2), and “wrestling maybe, wrestling together I would say” (2:E:3). Other descriptors of the play utilized by the educators included, “roughhousing” (3:E:2) and “pushing and shoving” (1:E:3).

Physical Action Description

The physical element of rough and tumble play was included in the comments of the educators. One educator described the play as, “anything that’s active with a little bit of physical contact” (3:E:3). While the educators included a variety of elements when indicating how they would describe rough and tumble play for a parent, they also included concerns for safety.

Safety Concerns

The concern for safety was reflected in the comments of two of the educators who identified the need to carefully monitor the play. One educator stated, “I think safety is a big issue, if it starts to get too rough it’s time to put a stop to it” (1:E:2) while another commented, “chasing, wrestling, and rolling around, dog piling. When no one ends up injured” (3:E:1). A third educator detailed, “I would say people are discouraged from it because they might get hurt” (2:E:3). According to one educator, “it’s really a matter of supervision and being aware of what’s going on” (2:E:2). This

need for supervision of rough and tumble play was recognized by a second educator who stated, “I think you do really have to watch them to make sure that, that they’re really having fun” (2:E:1).

Descriptions for Parents

The educators tended to describe rough and tumble play in a similar way to the parents. Both groups of adults routinely used wrestling to describe rough and tumble play. One group of children used the term wrestling when describing rough and tumble play. However, the descriptions of the educators and parents contrast with the actual observed behaviours of the children in this study. There was only one incident of wrestling observed in this study.

Gender Differences

The educators were asked if, in their experience, both the boys and girls engage in rough and tumble play. All the participants responded that both boys and girls participate in rough and tumble play. Seven of the educators detailed that while both boys and girls engage in rough and tumble play; boys tend to play in this way more than the girls do. The educators stated, “boys more than girls” (3:E:1), “more boys than girls that I’ve observed” (4:E:2), and “I have to say that both do but it tends to be more boys than girls” (2:E:1).

The researcher then asked the educators if the boys tend to rough and tumble play with other boys and girls rough and tumble play with other girls or if both boys and girls play together. All the educators indicated that both the boys and girls would participate in rough and tumble play together at times. However, the educators communicated differences among the boys and girls. One educator stated, “for the

most part, the boys stick together in rough and tumble play. Once in a while you see one of the girls included, but it's mainly the boys" (3:E:2). Another educator commented, "I find that usually the boys will start and the girls will follow. That's normally how it will start, but they get in there, the girls get in there. It may start off just one or the other but it always ends up together" (1:E:1). A third educator recognized that, "the boys tend to play amongst themselves because the girls are afraid of getting hurt so they don't play with the boys as much. The younger girls tend to rough and tumble play more but not with the boys. They might start out with the boys but stop playing with them when it gets too rough" (3:E:1).

The thoughts of the educators on the rough and tumble play of boys and girls accurately reflected the behaviours of the children in this study. During the course of the observations, both boys and girls engaged in rough and tumble play and boys accounted for 80% of the R&T play. Clearly, in this study boys participated in rough and tumble play to a greater extent than girls. This was commented on by the participating educators during the interview portion of this study.

Peer Play

Each of the educators was asked if the children tend to engage in rough and tumble play with same aged peers or with children of various ages. Two of the eleven educators interviewed stated that the children would play with both same aged peers and children of various ages. One educator stated, "for the most part when they're in smaller groups it's just their own age. But frequently they all come together and then you have everybody, all ages" while another detailed, "they mainly, they try and play with their age group. But some of them tend to play more with their developmental

peers. This one boy would like to play with the kids his age but they lose interest in him so he tends to play down a bit” (3:E:2).

Three of the participating educators noted that the children tend to play with other children of various ages. One educator stated, “the older rough and tumble ones do play with the younger rough and tumble ones. Yes they do” (4:E:1). A second educator detailed, “I would say various ages. In my experience I haven’t seen it be age related” (2:E:2).

The remaining six educators stated that the children tend to engage in rough and tumble play with same aged peers. This may be due to the age groupings of the children in the settings participating in the study. As explained by the educators, “the children are of similar age so I would say they just play with each other” (2:E:1), and, “most of the centres that I have been at they’ve been around the same age” (2:E:3). Additional comments included, “I would say they tend to stick more with their own age group” (1:E:1) and, “younger players tend to play with younger kids and the other way around with more advanced players play with older kids” (3:E:1).

The comments of the educators on the peer play of children reflected the observations of the children in this study. The participating children tended to R&T play with one another during the observations. However, the play of children with those of differing ages could not be substantiated through the analysis of the observations as the study was limited to children aged 5 years.

Provision for Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked if they actively attempt to make provision for rough and tumble play in their program. Of the eleven educators, four

stated that they do make provisions for the play. The comments of the educators ranged from, "I think so" (3:E:3) to "yes we do, we certainly do . . . we do make provision for that" (1:E:1). Another educator stated,

I think the fact that there's a lot of free play time outside is the centre's provision for physical activity. They use nice names like gross motor activity but it really is the provision for letting off steam and letting the children really get out there and do things uninterrupted. That's when you generally see the more rough and tumble play. And not that it's not supervised but the children have more freedom outside. There's more rules about running and jumping and all those things you can't do inside. Yes, I think that it's provided for in that way. (2:E:2)

Three of the participating educators stated that rough and tumble play was not actively provided for in their programs. Of the three educators who stated that R&T was not provided for, two were the only participants from Setting 4 and one was from Setting 3 where one co-worker detailed that they do provide for rough and tumble play. The comments from the educators who acknowledged that they do not provide for rough and tumble play included, "we don't encourage it, no" (4:E:1) and "we don't, I don't think, if they do start it's usually stopped" (4:E:2). The third educator stated, "no, it just happens. But when it gets too rough we try to settle it down" (3:E:1).

Two educators commented that they will adapt the program to include elements of rough and tumble play even though they did not state that they actively attempt to make provision for the play. One educator stated, "not to the extent where they are rough, pushing and shoving. When they are outside they've got room to run and play and roll around" (1:E:3). The second educator explained, "on a day when it's crazy we'll say let's get outside, let them run around a bit" (3:E:2).

Two of the educators commented that while they would like to provide for rough and tumble play in their program, circumstances have prevented them from doing so. The first of these two educators stated, “I used to and then I was rough and tumble playing with a child and I knocked their head on the wall and that was the end of that. She had a big bruise and welt on her face so that was basically it for me. I don’t do it anymore” (1:E:2). The second educator detailed, “I would but I’m also a new educator here so I’m not setting up my own program necessarily” (2:E:3).

These educators commented on the limitations they place on rough and tumble play. The limitations were observed in the settings as children were redirected to calmer activities when becoming active indoors. The educators would, at times, make comments to one another that the children need to go outside and run due to high energy levels while indoors.

Learning Through Rough and Tumble Play

Each participant was asked what he or she thought the children learn when engaging in rough and tumble play. One recurring theme was that the children are developing awareness of their physical abilities and the abilities of others. For example, one educator stated, “it’s such a good sensory development, and cognitive development because you really get an awareness of your body parts” (2:E:3). This body awareness was recognized by other participants who made statements such as, “they learn about their own abilities, their own bodies, space, the difference between running normally and running and flailing” (3:E:3) and, “their own physical strength and ability, I think they gain a greater awareness of themselves and other people” (2:E:1).

Physical Limits

The educators recognized rough and tumble play as a vehicle for children to learn about the limits of physical play with others. One educator stated, “it’s whole body play and it’s a way of being gentle with your body in a way so as not to hurt others. It’s active play without injury” (3:E:1) while another comment was, “they learn their own strength, they learn about someone else’s strength” (3:E:2). This element of learning the limits of physical play is reflected in an educator’s comments when stating, “I think they learn about other people’s body language, about physical proximity, about your own body space, they learn about other people” (2:E:2).

Judgment

Within the play the educators detailed that the children are learning judgment in determining the limits of the play. An educator stated, “they learn judgment, when to stop, when it’s getting too far. Yes, judgment I guess. To learn when it’s dangerous, when their play has gone over the top. When a simple game of pass the ball and run after it has turned into a fight. When to stop” (3:E:3). This element of discovering limits was reflected in the following responses: “boundaries and respect, they learn to recognize when they’ve gone too far” (3:E:2) and, “how rough to be because there’s a point when it’s not fun anymore and they’re starting to learn that. Some kids have hurt someone else and they’ll say I’m sorry, they’re starting to get it” (1:E:2). One educator identified the educators working with the children in their description of the learning of limits when they stated, “limits, how far can you push the teachers and get away with it, how far you can push your friends before they get mad at you and don’t want to play with you any more?” (1:E:3).

For one educator, personal rough and tumble play experiences guided her comments on what the children are learning. This educator stated, “I think I used to be in the rough and tumble stage and I remember it taught me some skills, some defense skills. How to stand up for myself. I remember being five and six and being rough and tumble. I think it helps the kids to stand up for themselves later on in life, not necessarily right now” (4:E:1).

The educators, as with the parents, commented on learning opportunities in rough and tumble play. The children are, according to the educators, learning social skills as they make judgments about the intentions of other players and learning what their physical abilities and limitations are.

Value of Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked what value they thought rough and tumble play holds. Several of the educators responded to the question with reference to the physical aspects of the play. As detailed by one educator, “I think it’s very valuable. It keeps kids active, priceless. You don’t want kids sitting down doing nothing all day, pudgy little kids. You’ve got to keep them active at that age, any age when you’re a kid. Being active involves rough and tumble play” (3:E:3). Another educator stated, “I say that it has a very high priority. Physical fitness too, it’s a big thing now. There’s many, many children now growing up who don’t have that opportunity for that kind of physical activity, it’s just unfortunate” (2:E:1).

Energy Release

The educators’ perception of the play was that it was valuable, “especially for energy release” (3:E:1). An educator stated, “I think there’s some boys that need to

get that out. And some girls as well, obviously the ones who like to do it. They obviously need that outlet, to roll around and jump around and get crazy”(1:E:3). This energy release through the play was identified as influential in the programming of the individual setting by one educator who stated, “it keeps them out so they nap, so they sit still during snack time. How do you expect them to sit still at a table all morning? It burns off their energy so they can focus on the quieter things” (3:E:2).

Social Competency

The educators recognized rough and tumble play as being of value in the development of social competency. One educator noted, “it teaches you control and compassion, how to play together. You’re always going to be in contact with people, always in one way or another so you might as well learn to deal with them” (3:E:3) while a second educator stated, “definitely there’s a social bonding thing with rough and tumble play” (2:E:2). This recognition of the social elements of rough and tumble play was reflected in the statements of an educator who commented, “it’s just a large body experience. Being in contact with another human being really cultivates a wonderful feeling. You create a relationship with that person. Developing emotionally, too. And spatial awareness, comfort with people in general” (2:E:3).

The elements of developing social skills were reflected in the comments of three of the educators who identified the limits or boundaries in social interactions as a valuable element of rough and tumble play. One educator stated, “I don’t know if it’s good to say that they get to know their limits. Like what is rough and tumble and what is over that line, boundaries of what they can do” (4:E:2). A second educator observed, “they’re learning that everyone has tolerance levels, patience levels,

everybody is different" (1:E:1) while the third educator commented, "all kids do it and they have to learn what is acceptable and what is not. So if they're doing something and it's not acceptable they're learning what's okay and what's not because somebody is going to come in and say that's not acceptable, you're going to hurt someone, that's not okay. They're learning, I guess, about what's okay and what's not okay, what's acceptable" (1:E:2).

The value that educators placed on rough and tumble play was primarily as a means for energy release as highlighted in the surplus energy theory of play (e.g., Pellegrini & Smith, 1998). This view of rough and tumble play as an outlet for energy release was also commented on by the parents. The adults conveyed the view that physical play serves a valuable role, and is necessary, for young children in order for children to be able to engage in quieter activities.

Where Rough and Tumble Play Usually Occurs

The participating educators were asked where they thought rough and tumble play usually occurs. All eleven educators responded to the question. Each of the educators indicated that the play occurs outside. Two of the educators responded, "outside" (4:E:2, 3:E:3) while the remaining educators commented that rough and tumble play occurs outdoors and indoors.

The researcher asked the two educators who responded to the question by stating that the play occurs outdoors if the play also occurs inside. The first educator commented that rough and tumble play indoors happens, "a little bit, but not as much. Rarely, it's rare" (4:E:2) while the second educator commented that the play occurs,

“where space is really open like in the library corner where we’ve got quite an open little carpet, or on the couches where it’s soft” (2:E:3).

Two of the educators commented that while rough and tumble play usually occurs outside, it will also occur inside in the spaces available for floor play (e.g., blocks, cars and trucks) and housekeeping (i.e., dress up and dramatic play). One educator stated, “outside or quite often it occurs on the floor toy area. And when we had our housekeeping, dress up area it quite often occurred in there too, or the dramatic play area” (3:E:2). The second educator stated, “in the mornings sometimes in the play room, and outside” (1:E:2). A third educator also detailed that rough and tumble play occurs inside, but also commented that the educators will stop the play when inside. This educator stated, “outside. We stop it when it happens inside. Sometimes it happens in the dancing area” (3:E:1).

This element of supervising and stopping rough and tumble play if it occurs inside was reflected in the comments of other educators. One stated, “definitely outside. We try not to let them do any of that kind of stuff inside” (1:E:3) while another educator stated, “outside generally because it is not suited to inside so it’s not something that’s really allowed” (2:E:2). One educator explained that the supervision of the play of the children leads to rough and tumble play occurring, “probably more in the back corners out in the play yard where the teachers aren’t watching” (2:E:3).

Indoor Versus Outdoor Play During Observations

The observations of the children show that rough and tumble play occurs both indoors and outdoors. The educators from Settings 2 and 4 made several comments about rough and tumble play being an outdoor activity. As these settings did not

participate in the observation portion of the study, the inclusion or exclusion of rough and tumble play indoors could not be verified. It might be that rough and tumble play at these two settings is limited to the outdoors.

For Settings 1 and 3, the educators' responses reflect the observations. While the educators might be encouraging rough and tumble play to be limited to the outdoors, they recognize that it does occur indoors. These comments by the educators are similar to the comments of the parents who confirmed that R&T occurs indoors and outdoors.

Rough and Tumble Play Differences When Occurring Inside Versus Outside

The educators were asked if the rough and tumble play of the children in their care was different when it occurred inside versus outside. The responses of the educators reflected three basic differences.

Energy Release Outdoors

The first difference identified was a release of physical energy when the children are outdoors. One educator stated, "they seem to get squirrely inside, like the walls are closing in so when they get outside it's a big release of energy" (3:E:1), while a second educator from the same setting observed, "it's bigger when it's outside, faster pace, more movement. Like these guys are walking towards each other here inside where outside they would be running towards each other so that outside they would have the running element, crashing" (3:E:2). The element of physical release was supported by an educator from another setting who stated, "it's more active and physical outside" (1:E:2).

Space Considerations

The second difference identified was a lack of physical space when the children are indoors. An educator stated, “there’s less space inside, it’s a restriction to them, it’s a restriction to other people around them who want to play quietly” (1:E:1) while a second commented, “there is more room to run around outside” (4:E:2). The comments of these educators were supported by another participant who stated, “there just isn’t the space and there’s a lot of safety issues. If they were running in here they would be tripping over chairs or running into each other. The level of excitement, they’re not looking as carefully where they are going. When they’re outside there’s more space, less things to fall over or bump into”(2:E:1).

Acceptable Play for Indoors and Outdoors

The third difference identified was the restrictions the educators place on play behaviours and what is deemed acceptable for indoor versus outdoor play. One educator commented, “I think as educators we try to set up the [indoor] environment to make it different. To make it more low-key, like we’re always saying use your inside voices. Like there’s tables set up and a lot of centres will, if they noticed there’s rough and tumble play, they’ll set up more barriers to sort of curb it. So it’s more physical rather than constant verbal. They force it to go outside” (2:E:3).

This element of the educators setting the environment for acceptable indoor play was reflected in the comment, “inside they’re having to be much calmer. Where outside they know they can, inside they know they have to use their inside voices and they stay on the ground. But outside we tell them you can scream outside if you want to, running around is for outside. We try to keep them equal but you can’t really have

them yelling and running around inside” (4:E:1). This perception of the play of children reflecting that which is acceptable is reflected in the comments of two additional educators. The first educator stated, “we don’t encourage running, we don’t allow running inside so that stops a lot of stuff that we can do outside. We try to encourage inside more sitting down play. Outside, free rein, let them go. As long as you’re safe, do what you want to do pretty much” (3:E:3). The second educator remarked, “they’re not allowed to run when they’re inside, they’re not allowed to be shoving and pushing. There’s not a lot of room for that sort of thing so the play outside is different. They definitely are more active when they’re outside” (1:E:3).

The comments of the educators were similar to the comments of the parents. The adults in this study articulated that space limits rough and tumble play indoors. The open space of the outdoors is, for educators and parents in this study, better suited to R&T.

The Other Staff and Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked how the staff with whom they work felt about rough and tumble play. Of the eleven educators, two commented that R&T is discouraged. These educators stated, “they discourage it pretty quickly” (2:E:3) and, “I think they probably all think it’s not highly valued. Maybe we’re not educated enough on it I would say because it’s stopped so quickly” (4:E:2).

Eight of the remaining nine participants made similar responses when commenting on how the other staff feel about rough and tumble play. The common element of these participants’ responses was that rough and tumble play is acceptable as long as children are not being hurt. Differences were noted among the educators in

how they phrased their responses. Five of the educators phrased their responses in a positive tone such as, “I like it. I think we all have the same thought on it. We all like it as long as it’s not too rough. As long as no one’s getting hurt. As long as everyone’s safe I think we all have the same thoughts” (3:E:3). Another educator responded, “we just basically know the key ones who would really rough and tumble and we make sure somebody’s in that vicinity with them. You can’t really stop them. I think we’re all kind of on that same, hopefully we’re all on the same page” (4:E:1). Additional comments included, “you know I think we pretty much agree and work as a team to foster good, positive rough and tumble play” (2:E:1) and, “if the children are being respectful and no one’s getting hurt then we are okay” (3:E:1).

Three of the educators commented that, while respecting the play, they viewed rough and tumble play as needing to be controlled. The comments from these participants included, “just that if it starts to get out of hand then it’s either slowed down to more acceptable level or they’re redirected to find something else” (1:E:2) and, “I think we just basically agree that it can only go so far. When somebody starts pushing and shoving where there’s danger of somebody getting hurt it’s got to stop” (1:E:3). This element of respecting the play while also expressing concern for the safety of the children involved echoed through the interviews.

One educator, however, recognized that the staff play a significant role in how rough and tumble play is managed in their setting. This educator stated, “I think we all know that it’s part of the child’s day, that it’s going to occur. I think it depends too on staff, how they are feeling that day. If they’re having a bad day, it’s harder to cope

with it. We have to cope with it but if you're having a stressful day, you can't tolerate it quite as well. But we all know it's important, we all know it occurs" (3:E:2).

The educators commented that they do not regularly speak with one another about rough and tumble play. Rather, the educators responded to physical play when it appeared that someone might get hurt. This is in agreement with the comments from the managers who stated that rough and tumble play is supported by the educators as long as no one gets hurt.

Staff Discussions and Comments on Rough and Tumble Play

The educators were asked if the staff at their setting ever discussed or made comments about rough and tumble play. The responses of the educators can be categorized into three groups: those who have not made comments or discussed the play, those who discuss the play on an incidental basis and those who have discussed rough and tumble play in a more formal atmosphere such as a staff meeting. Six of the educators stated that they had not entered into discussions with the staff from their setting. Comments from these educators included, "I don't remember ever having a talk about it" (1:E:2) and, "not since I've been here, not that I recall" (2:E:2).

Two of the educators stated that they have talked about rough and tumble play with their fellow staff on an incidental basis. These comments reflect the daily events of a setting such as, "so and so is very, really energetic today so you're kind of monitoring them more" (4:E:1). One educator detailed that they talk with the other staff about the rough and tumble play in specific situations. This educator remarked, "we'll watch what's happening with the kids and say that's borderline or do you want to step in or not. If someone comes out and sees a situation that's developed into

something that they go ‘oh, that’s rough’ then the person whose been watching the whole situation can say ‘well, actually, it’s just a game and this is how they’re playing and it’s okay and under control I’ve got my eye on it’” (3:E:3).

The remaining three educators described discussions that appeared more formalized. One educator spoke of lunchtime discussions when they stated, “sometimes if things are getting really rough . . . we’ll talk among ourselves at lunchtime and we’ll say this day is going to be something else. So we know it’s coming so we discuss it with each other, we are all more aware and actively watching” (1:E:1). This meeting of staff to discuss rough and tumble play was detailed by another educator who reflected, “sometimes at our room meetings we’ll say that they’re wild and crazy. It’s more on a daily basis. So if it happens, if it occurs, we try and accommodate for some of it. We don’t want the whole day rough and tumble though” (3:E:2).

The educators commented that they did not engage in planning conversations about rough and tumble play. Rather, the conversations the educators reported did have about physical play resulted from difficulties arising from the play. These educators responded to rough and tumble play rather than providing for the play.

Comments on Rough and Tumble Play from Children and Families

The educators were asked if they were aware of any comments that the children had made to their parents about rough and tumble play. Of the eleven participating educators, one recalled a comment reportedly made by a child to a parent. This educator stated, “often times we’ll get oh so and so hurt me in their game that they’re playing they’ve gotten hurt because of the game that they’re playing”

(4:E:2). A second educator recalled the comments of the children. In this case the children made the comments to the educator who was engaged in rough and tumble play with these children. This educator stated, “after playing a good afternoon of, most of the time with the soccer balls, that’s what I get out there, with the soccer balls. They have said that they really enjoy that” (3:E:3).

Eight of the educators stated that the families had not commented to them about rough and tumble play. The educators who responded that no comments had been made by the children or their families made statements such as, “I don’t recall anybody recently complaining about it or saying anything about it” (2:E:1) and “not that I can think of” (1:E:3).

The educators who indicated that the families had not commented on rough and tumble play were asked why they thought the parents had not made any comments on the play. Two of the educators indicated that rough and tumble play is an expected part of a child’s play. As one educator explained, “because they are children, they’re expected to do that occasionally” (1:E:2). One educator commented on the thoughts of the parents when stating, “I don’t think they really think about it. They haven’t divided play into categories, so I don’t think they think about it” (3:E:1). Two educators recognized the visibility of the play as a factor in parent comments, with one stating: “maybe if they saw it more they might comment about it. They don’t really see it a lot I guess” (2:E:3). The final three educators stated that they did not know why the families did not comment on rough and tumble play.

Three educators indicated that the families had made comments about the play. Each of these educators were asked what sort of comments the families had

made. One educator stated that the families had been seeking clarification on the supervision of the children by the staff. This educator stated, “sometimes it will start off if the parents watch them, if they stand and watch them. They might ask how come you’re not intervening?” (4:E:1). The remaining two educators indicated that parents talk to them about rough and tumble play when someone gets hurt. One of these educators stated, “they’ll talk about it if someone gets hurt, then we’ll hear about it. So if they’ve gotten a bruise or someone was pushing him, then that’s when you hear about it” (3:E:2). The second educator stated,

the only thing they usually say is if somebody did get hurt and we’re explaining to the parents what had gone on, that sort of thing. Then the parents will more or less just look at their child and remind them that there is a time and a place for rough play and daycare is not the time. It’s okay with daddy but not okay at daycare, that sort of thing I’ve heard go on. They’re not opposed to it because it is a part of them, it’s part of their growing up too, they will all do it. And we remind the parents, that’s another reason why we’re here. We need to communicate to the parents their developmental needs, and requirements, what’s going to change, what’s happening now. (1:E:1)

Discussions with parents on rough and tumble play, according to these educators, involved concerns over injury resulting from the play. This concern for the safety of the children engaging in rough and tumble play was a common concern within the interviews of the parents. While both the parents and educators articulated that rough and tumble play holds value and serves as a mechanism for learning, these elements did not appear to be points of discussion between parents and educators.

Centres Without Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked why they thought it was that on occasion you see a centre without rough and tumble play. Of the eleven participants,

one indicated that the absence of rough and tumble play might be a response on the part of the setting to problems with the supervision of the play. This educator stated,

you know what my guess would be is that they become, that there were some problems, that kids got too out of hand so they just said no more, nothing. That's really unfortunate. I think that sometimes happens when there's maybe not enough staff there, they're understaffed. Because we're really fortunate here at this centre, we have lots of staff. So we can be right there supervising. (2:E:1)

A second educator hypothesized that the limitation on rough and tumble play might be reflective of the children enrolled at the setting: "I guess it could be the personality of the children that go there too. I know that we do have some kids that don't rough and tumble play. Not that I've observed, there's some that don't like rough and tumble play. Gentle kind of kids" (4:E:2).

Two of the participating educators spoke of the staff of a setting as a primary influence on the inclusion or exclusion of rough and tumble play. As stated by one participant, "I would assume that that would be because the staff are not comfortable with it" (2:E:2). The second participant detailed,

because people are scared. People, because they don't have the proper definition of rough and tumble play, they think violence, out of control. They have a negative vibe with it. It depends on who the up and ups of the centre are and what their beliefs are. If you come into a centre as a new person you've got to follow what everyone else is doing. They could have had a bad incident or wrestling match where someone ended up with a broken leg. They could just be soft. Just be soft people. It's not a bad thing, just not believing in contact. I know people who just don't like contact sports. Soft is as nice a way as I can put it. (3:E:3)

The remaining seven educators spoke in a similar way about the beliefs, or philosophies, promoted within the setting as possible determiners of the inclusion or exclusion of rough and tumble play. One educator stated, "they're too rigid. Then all the kids go mental when they go home. When there's no chance for rough and tumble

play all day long then the kids are horrible when they are set free” (3:E:1) while a second articulated, “I would say they’re too structured. Obviously, you can’t stop. Well I guess you can but it would be hard to stop kids from starting to roughhouse occasionally. And if they do stop them then what’s happening? It’s a kid’s nature to start doing stuff like that, so I don’t know” (1:E:2). The philosophy that the parents of young children are seeking within a setting was recognized by one educator who stated, “because it’s probably full of little girls that wear dresses. I guess the expectations of the parents and the staff must be different. Parents that seek out that different philosophy. Not every kid could fit into that, they would have to be screened I would think” (3:E:2).

During the course of this study, each participating child engaged in rough and tumble play. Further, the adults interviewed in this study indicated that either they had engaged in rough and tumble play as children or were unable to recall if they had engaged in the play or not. As a result, it is difficult to determine with certainty why children in a setting might not engage in the play.

Distinguishing Between Rough and Tumble Play and Aggression

The participating educators were asked if there is a difference between rough and tumble play and aggression and then about how they distinguish between rough and tumble play and aggression. All the educators confirmed that there is a difference. However, one educator stated, “I think there is but sometimes I think maybe it’s a fine line. I’m not educated enough, I don’t feel, between the two to know which is okay and to let it go” (4:E:2).

When asked how they recognize the difference, or how they would describe the difference, there were three themes within the responses. The educators detailed that the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression is recognized through the intent of the play, the display of anger by one of the players, and the physical stance of the players. However, one educator articulated that there is an element of aggression in rough and tumble play when they stated, “there’s a certain amount of aggression in rough and tumble play by the nature of the play. The thing is teaching children or telling them so they learn what level of aggression to use when you’re playing and to keep it in control” (3:E:3).

Intent of Play

When speaking of the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression, one educator stated, “when they are aggressive they have the intent to injure someone. Rough and tumble play is having fun. If someone gets hurt in rough and tumble play it’s by accident” (3:E:1). A second educator detailed, “it’s when fun turns into tears I guess. When someone’s getting hurt or, and I think the language that goes along with it has a lot to do with it too. Like if we are going to chase and run and be racing cars, that’s fine. But when you say ‘I’m going to get you, I’m going to kill you’, that’s when it changes” (3:E:2). These educators identified the intent and behavioural responses of the players as indicators of the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression.

Display of Anger by One of the Players

The majority of educators identified anger as a component of aggression that is not recognized to be a part of rough and tumble play. One educator articulated, “I

think that if they're playing with rough and tumble play I don't think they realize if they're going to hurt somebody because in their mind it's their game and nobody's getting hurt but occasionally it happens. In aggression I think it's more of an, 'I'm mad and I know this is going to hurt you'"(1:E:2).

This recognition of anger was supported by an educator who stated, "rough and tumble is when they're running and laughing and having fun. Aggression is more when they're angry . . . you can tell that there's something up. There is kind of a lot of anger" (4:E:1). Another educator detailed, "you can actually see when the kid is losing it. They're getting angry and then they're just going for it. They're not into playing anymore. They've lost that laughing sense that they're enjoying themselves. They're actually just going for trying to hurt somebody. You can generally see when that switch is going on" (1:E:3).

Physical Stance

Finally, the educators identified the play face and physical stance as indicators of the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression. As detailed by one participant,

you can tell body language. If it's changing you will know it. Their facial expression will change, their stance will change. You know when it's getting aggressive. Closed fists, you know right away. Their bodies will tell you, their facial expressions will tell you. That's what you really have to watch for.
(1:E:1)

This was supported by a second educator who stated, "well rough and tumble, I look at their facial expressions to see if they're smiling and happy and have enjoyment in their face. With aggression there's probably more anger in the face"(2:E:3).

The educators in this study made similar comments as the parents when articulating that rough and tumble play and aggression are distinguishable in appearance and intent. The display of a cheerful play face was highlighted as a differentiating factor in defining rough and tumble play and aggression.

Behavioural Responses of the Educator to Aggression

The participating educators were asked how they respond when play appears to be becoming aggressive. One educator stated that they had not experienced an episode of aggression at their setting. This educator stated, "I don't think it's crossed the line here. I don't think I've ever seen anybody intentionally hurt some other person" (1:E:2). However, the educator did indicate that should aggression be displayed, they would talk about the issue with the child when they detailed, "if they did that is a safety issue and they would sit on a timeout and have a talk about what is okay and what is not okay. And if your body is angry or whatever then maybe you need to find a place to calm down or come and talk to someone" (1:E:2).

Discussions with Children

Five educators identified the use of discussions or talking with the children should aggression be displayed. One educator stated,

first of all I ask them what are you playing, what's happening, what's the game called. To make sure I'm seeing what I think I'm seeing. If it has gone over the line then we get them to stop. Find something else to do. If they don't stop, if they can't find anything else to do, then we'll get them to sit and think of something else to do. Then we'll ask them if they've thought of something else to do. And they'll usually say I'm going in the sand box. (3:E:2)

Another educator stated, "step in and I usually talk to the whole group. If they're playing a game that is eventually going to lead to danger then talk to the whole group" (3:E:3).

Physical Intervention

While several participating educators detailed the use of verbal guidance, five of the participants described the use of physical intervention strategies. These educators made comments such as, “I would stop it” (4:E:2); “I physically respond. I get down at their level and I use my body as a barrier. I’ll go right in the middle of them and then talk to them” (2:E:3); and “we usually separate them. If they’re still having a problem with it then they need to sit out and calm down” (1:E:3).

Two educators described multi-level physical responses. One said, “we get them to stop. We modify the play, remove them from the play, change the play, or just stop the play” (3:E:1). The second educator stated,

you know you have to go step in. When I see the change happen I usually go right over and get between. And I wait, I just kind of go approximately between them and they know I’m there. They’re aware that I am there and a lot of times that’s enough. They’ll deal with it themselves and I wait and see. By five they’ve been taught a lot of self-help and they’ve been taught how to deal with these things. So I wait and see if they will take the initiative to do it of if it’s going to escalate. If it’s going to escalate then I will step in. (1:E:1)

As with the comments on determining the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression, the parents and educators hold similar thoughts on the response to aggression. Both the educators and parents stop interactions between children that appear aggressive in nature.

The Influence of Bullying on Educator Responses to Rough and Tumble Play

Each of the participating educators was asked if the recent focus on bullying in the public schools had influenced how they respond to rough and tumble play. Of the eleven educators, six stated that they had been influenced to some degree and five stated that they had not altered their responses.

Different Behaviours for Educators Who Were Influenced

Of the six that stated they had been influenced, they were asked what they were doing differently. One educator responded, “you’re that much more watching and stopping” (4:E:2) while another stated, “we try to encourage the kids to think about other people’s feelings because that’s where bullying comes from, you don’t really think about the other person’s feelings, you’re there to tease or to be picked on. We try to make them think of the other person” (1:E:2). Another educator detailed,

I’m a little bit quicker to step in when I see what is potentially bullying. Where before I was like whatever, that’s kids being kids. Now I kind of step in, especially if it’s consistently one child doing something that’s basically bullying. No one’s getting hurt but you can see the aggression and maybe the menace behind it. You need to step in now and say that’s not okay cause it just gets worse. Yes, definitely, I do step in quicker now. (3:E:3)

The statements of two additional participants supported this element of discussion on the part of the educator. One detailed,

I’ve seen so much of it in the schools and I worry. It’s a hard thing to let your kid go to school and think that something like that’s going to happen. I think that when the bigger kids are getting aggressive or they gang up on one of them then you start to worry. You do talk to them about it. I actually talked to some of the older ones when they’ve started name-calling or things like that. I actually sat down and talked to them about what bullying is and about how when you get to the big school they’ll actually take you out of school for that. I explained that that is bullying and it hurts their feelings. Teach them how to respect each other, that just because somebody’s different than you, everyone needs to be treated fairly. It’s fine to play but it’s not okay if it’s hurting somebody. (1:E:3)

A second educator commented,

With bullying especially in the school system you have to teach the kids to be self-sufficient. You have to teach them to use their words and to stand up for themselves. Because with bullies, they will pick on the kid who is not prepared. If they have the language that they need to deal with that bullying, that bully will back off. But if they don’t and they just take it then a lot of times that will be a target for the next day. So that is what we teach, we do teach them the language that they need to ward off a bully. And they will tell

on a bully because that's something we've taught them to do. If you see a child being bullied and you're uncomfortable with that then you need to go tell someone. And these kids will do it, they'll even do it here. (1:E:1)

Reasons Educators Had Not Been Influenced

The five educators who stated that they had not been influenced by the focus on bullying in the public schools were questioned further about why they thought their responses had not changed. The comments made by these educators revolved around similar themes. They stated that they had not been influenced because they did not think that bullying occurred in the daycare setting. As explained by one educator, "bullying doesn't get a chance here. We encourage the children to be nice and respectful of each other. If it does appear we get right on top of it. We'd be having a meeting with parents pretty quick" (3:E:1). Another educator detailed, "I've not seen a bully at daycare. The bully would be more of the aggression and a lot of anger. But here at the daycare I have not seen that" (4:E:1).

The personal experience of one educator was reflected when commenting, "I'm not a parent so I haven't had a lot of experience with my child being bullied" (2:E:3). One educator identified a reluctance to label young children as the cause for not being influenced by the recent focus on bullying when stating,

I'm not comfortable with calling children this age bullies. I think that bullying is probably a learned behaviour, children learn a certain way of reacting to situations. I'm just not comfortable with calling children five and six years old bullies, or even describing the behaviour as bullying. I have heard parents do that and I think that's just the influence of seeing that in the media. I think that I would not describe it, because I think children at this age are still learning what is acceptable behaviour and how to interact with other people and what is socially acceptable in one situation might not be in another, all of those things are still something that they're learning. Talking about what is socially acceptable behaviour is okay but certainly not labeling it. (2:E:2)

The educators in this study who had been influenced by a concern for bullying commented on the need to help the children to be aware of the impact of behaviour on others. This concern was similar to the thoughts of the parents. Equally, the comments of the educators who were not concerned about bullying were similar to those of the parents. For these individuals, the idea that bullying and rough and tumble play are not the same thing was a view held in common. The educators in this study also commented that bullying was not a behaviour seen in these settings.

Additional Comments

At the end of each interview, the educators were asked if they had anything else to say to the researcher about rough and tumble play. Seven of the participants responded that they had no further comments to make. Four educators made statements that reflected support for R&T play. One educator stated, "I think it's really important. An element of that is that children learn to express their emotions" (2:E:1) while another detailed, "I like it. Don't be soft. Let your kids run around. Let them play physical contact, it's good" (3:E:3).

Supervision

Two educators commented on the need to supervise the play. One stated, "just that it's natural, it's a natural part of their development. You have to know how to guide it though. That's the big thing because you don't want to foster bullying and it can turn to that. So you have to be aware of what's happening" (1:E:1). The second educator stated,

it happens, it's fun to watch. It can be frustrating. Frustrating for the other kids if they're not into it, frustrating for the staff dealing with the rough and tumble play that keeps going beyond into aggression. That can be frustrating for

everybody. And trying to keep on top of things can be exhausting. If it can stay rough and tumble play, then let it happen. (3:E:2).

Lack of Knowledge

One educator (4:E:2), at the conclusion of the interview, commented that she hoped her comments were of value to the study because she felt that she knew little about rough and tumble play. This educator then commented that rough and tumble play was not included as part of her early childhood education training so, she stated, she was not educated enough on R&T play.

Siblings

The educators were asked if they have siblings and, if so, the ages of the siblings. All the educators reported that they have at least one sibling. Five educators reported that they have one sibling, four educators have two siblings, one educator has three siblings, and one educator reported that they have four siblings. The educators reported a total of three older sisters, eight younger sisters, four older brothers, and five younger brothers. In terms of the participating educator placement within the family, five reported that they are the oldest child, three reported that they are the middle child, and three reported that they are the youngest child.

Childhood Rough and Tumble Experience

The participating educators were asked if they engaged in rough and tumble play as a child. Three of the educators responded that they could not remember if they had engaged in rough and tumble play. The remaining eight educators stated that they had engaged in rough and tumble play.

Of the three educators who could not remember if they engaged in rough and tumble play, one indicated that their play was, “probably more fighting” (2:E:3) but

also stated that their “memory is really bad.” Two of the educators who did not remember their play as a child thought they probably did but did not remember. As one educator stated, “I’m sure I must have, I don’t really remember” (1:E:3).

Of the eight educators who responded that they had engaged in rough and tumble play as a child, four described themselves as tomboys. As one put it, “I was just like a little tomboy” (2:E:1). A second educator stated, “I tended to be more on the aggressive side however. I was very much a tomboy” (1:E:1). A third educator recognized that she may hold views on the girls in her care that are different from her descriptions of herself: “I was a horrible tomboy. I did actually. So my comments about girls basically, probably didn’t apply to me at all. That’s kind of interesting now that you bring it up” (2:E:2).

The educators who commented that they could not remember if they rough and tumble played as children had a variety of siblings. These sibling dynamics were a younger brother, an older sister and a younger sister, and an older brother and younger sister and brother. Those educators who referred to themselves as tomboys were also from varied sibling configuration. These educators had an older brother, an older brother and older sister, a younger sister, and a younger brother.

For the remaining four educators who indicated that they had engaged in rough and tumble play as a child, the sibling dynamics were, again, mixed. These educators stated that they had an older sister, two younger sisters, an older brother and younger brother and two younger sisters, and a younger brother and younger sister. The sibling dynamics of the families does not appear, for these educators, to be related to their participation in rough and tumble play when they were children.

When considering the play history of educators in each setting, there is no consistency. At Setting 1, one educator reported being a tomboy, one reported that she did rough and tumble, and the third could not remember if she engaged in R&T play. For Setting 2, two reported that they were tomboys and the third could not remember engaging in the play. The educators at Setting 3 reported that one was a tomboy and two were rough and tumble players. At Setting 4, one educator reported that she did engage in rough and tumble play while the second educator could not remember if she engaged in R&T play.

Childhood Rough and Tumble Partners

The participating educators who responded that they had engaged in rough and tumble play as children were asked with whom they played. The educators responded that they played with family members, with peers, or with both family members and peers.

Family Members

Three of the participants stated that they recalled rough and tumble play with family members. One educator recalled, “my cousins, I had all boy cousins. Also my brother” (2:E:2). A second educator detailed, “I have aunts and uncles who are not very much older than me. I have cousins that are not very much older than me. So when we all got together. And I think I rough and tumble played more with my father than with anyone else” (1:E:2).

Family and Friends

Descriptions of rough and tumble play with both family and friends were provided by three educators. One educator recalled playing with, “my brother, sister,

friends, boys and girls. We chase each other, role around, dog piling. Boys and girls together for some of the time and apart as well. We'd come together, play for a bit and then we go and do our own thing" (3:E:1). A second educator stated, "mainly with my brother. I have to say that was the negative part of it but certainly I was just like a little tomboy. I played with my brother's friends and we played cowboys and Indians and we'd tear around the neighbourhood" (2:E:1).

Peers

The descriptions of play with peers and not with family members were provided by two educators. One stated, "friends, not my sister. We played dolls together. We played all sorts of fun stuff but we never wrestled or rough and tumble together" (3:E:3). The second educator, who stated that she had one sister, recalled that she rough and tumble played with, "boys" (1:E:1).

The comments of the educators, that they engaged in rough and tumble play with family members and friends, is similar to the reports of the parents in this study. The parents also commented that they engaged in R&T play with family members and peers.

Thoughts on Childhood Rough and Tumble Play Experiences

The participating educators were asked what they thought about their rough and tumble play experiences then and/or now. Of the eleven educators, two did not respond to the question as they did not recall engaging in rough and tumble play as children. One educator also could not recall engaging in rough and tumble play as a child but this educator did respond to the question. This educator stated, "I don't know because I can't remember. It was probably fine" (4:E:2).

Five of the educators who recalled engaging in rough and tumble play as children indicated that the experience was positive. The educator responses included, “oh, I thought it was great” (3:E:2), “love them. Love them, all positive stuff” (3:E:3), and “I thought it was great then and I still do” (3:E:1). Two of the educators responded that they felt their rough and tumble experiences were typical childhood experiences. One stated, “It was just part of being a child” (2:E:2) while the second educator responded, “I thought they were normal. We were all rough, everybody was” (1:E:1).

Of the eleven participants, one commented that her rough and tumble play experiences were frustrating. This educator detailed

I think that sometimes it was frustrating. Sometimes you'd be doing something and then your instincts are just I want to rough and tumble. And then sometimes it's like no I want to do this with this other person. It has taught me a lot of skills now from rough and tumble then. It's taught me how to stand up for myself and to not let anybody push me over. (4:E:1)

The educators from Setting 3 who indicated that they had positive experiences also articulated that rough and tumble play was supported in their setting as long as the play is safe. For the male educator at this setting, his view that his experiences were positive is congruent with his work with the children in his care. This educator actively involved himself in, and initiated, the rough and tumble play of the children.

For the educators who indicated that their rough and tumble experiences were a typical part of childhood, their comments on the R&T play of the children in their settings included comments that the play needs to be monitored to ensure safety. These educators regarded rough and tumble play within the early childhood setting as a valuable element of play.

The educator who indicated that her rough and tumble play experiences were frustrating was from Setting 4 which was not observed. It is unknown if the feelings of frustration would have impacted upon the inclusion or exclusion of rough and tumble play in that setting.

Adults Living in the Childhood Home

The educators were asked who the adults were who lived in the home when the participants were children. Nine of the eleven participating educators indicated that they grew up with both their mother and father living with them in the home. The educators made statements such as, “my mom and my dad” (1:E:3), “mom and dad” (4:E:2), and “my parents, mom and dad” (3:E:3). One educator commented, “my parents and my grandparents lived next door. Both my parents worked but my grandparents were there all the time” (2:E:1).

Two of the participants indicated that their homes included stepfathers. The first educator stated, “I was raised by my mom because my father died when I was two. She remarried when I was ten” (3:E:2). The second educator recalled, “my mom and my step dad” (2:E:3).

Educators' Children

The participants were asked if they have children at home. Five indicated they did not while six stated they did. Two educators reported they have three children, two have two children, and two educators have one child. The groupings of children were: two girls and one boy (3:E:2), two boys and one girl (2:E:2), two boys (1:E:1), two girls (2:E:1), one boy (1:E:3), and one stepdaughter (1:E:2).

Rough and Tumble Play by Educator Children

The participants who indicated that they had children at home were asked if their children engage in rough and tumble play. Of the six educators, one responded that the child at home does not engage in rough and tumble play. The remaining five educators indicated that their children do engage in rough and tumble play. Responses by these educators included, “they were very rough and tumble, all of them” (3:E:2), and “they will run around and wrestle and just have fun and that’s great” (1:E:1).

Neither of the educators from Setting 4 had children. From Setting 2, one educator had children at home and one educator had older children who were no longer living in the home. The educator with children at home indicated that they engaged in rough and tumble play as a method of emotional connection. This same educator stated that she does, at times become frustrated when opportunities for rough and tumble play are discouraged by fellow staff members (2:E:2).

The three educators at Setting 1 indicated that they had children. The educators at this setting stated that they were comfortable with the rough and tumble play of the children in their care. While safety was a concern for each of these educators, they conveyed an acceptance of the play as a natural part of childhood. However, the educators at Setting 3 held similar views on rough and tumble play when only one of the three educators in this setting was a parent.

Rough and Tumble Partners of Educators’ Children

The five participating educators who indicated that their children engage in rough and tumble play were asked with whom their children play. One educator stated that the children rough and tumble play, “with each other” (2:E:2). Another

educator recognized the influence of a male adult in the rough and tumble play of her son when she stated,

There's the rough and tumble play with Grandpa that is totally different. It's that laughing and throwing him up in the air, all that kind of stuff. But because his father's not around, I know that he is different from some of the kids who do have fathers. They do have a different kind of rough and tumble with dads. They are always the ones who pick you up and throw you around and roll you around on the floor. I'm not like that so he doesn't grow up with that. I do notice a little bit of a difference when he plays. Some of the kids who I know have their fathers around, they are more physically that way, I guess boyish. (1:E:3)

Three of the educators responded that their children play with their siblings and with peers. These educators responded, "neighbours, there were lots of neighbours with kids their age" (3:E:2); "with friends and each other" (2:E:1); and "everybody, they all do. They're all really active, active children. Their friends have always been a part of our household. It's nothing to see six kids on the living room floor wrestling and playing, it's just part of life" (1:E:1).

Educator Thoughts on the Rough and Tumble Play of Their Children

The educators who indicated that they had children in their home who engage in rough and tumble play were asked how they feel about their children engaging in the play. The responses included (a) acceptance of the play, (b) concern about the play, and (c) viewing the play of these children in the same way as the play of the children enrolled in their child care setting.

The educators who indicated that they accepted the play included comments about the safety of the play. As detailed by one educator,

I didn't know better so I just figured it was okay as long as he wasn't hurting her. With the boys together I can't think of an incident where they ever hurt each other. They always, because they were close enough in age and ability probably, they always knew the limits of the other one. I think also that when

it's your own children you're more tolerant of it than in a care setting. You can't ignore like you can with your own children and let them work it out. (2:E:2).

A second educator stated, "it was fine. They were close in age. And my son wasn't a bully either. He was very sweet and kind but he was very physical but he knew where to draw the line" (3:E:2).

For one educator, there was more concern for the play due to the size of the child. This educator stated,

I worry sometimes because he is little. But you live and learn. You have to let go and sit back and let him learn his own lessons. If he is going to be rolling around and gets a foot in the face, he's going to have to learn the hard way but I don't want him to be fighting. There's that line again. (1:E:3)

An educator responded that the reaction at home to such play would be similar to that in the child care setting. This educator stated, "I think about the same as I do about these kids. As long as it was positive, as long as it was fun and they were both enjoying it, that was great" (2:E:1).

Final Thoughts of Educators on Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators were asked if they had anything else that they would like to tell the researcher. Ten of the participants had no additional comments to make. One educator made a comment about encouraging children to participate in rough and tumble play, stating:

I think that kids should be encouraged to do it to a point. As soon as safety becomes an issue then I think somebody should sit down and have a talk with them. I remember wrestling with my dad and sister, trying to beat him up. It was fine and it gave you a sense of power because you could knock dad over and tickle him. It made you feel like you were huge and could do things. I think that everybody should try to feel that a couple of times at least. (1:E:2).

The responses to the interview questions from educators from Settings 1 and 3 were similar to the responses from the educators from Settings 2 and 4. The educators from the two settings where observations were conducted and the educators from the two settings where no observations were conducted were not significantly different. The educators across each setting made similar comments in this study.

Interviews of Parents

Length of Time at the Setting

The participating parents were asked how long their child had been attending their daycare. The responses ranged from 2 months to 48 months. The mean was 19.125 months, the median and the mode were 12 months.

Reasons for Choosing the Setting

The parents were asked why they chose the setting for their child. Three main themes emerged from the interviews: (a) convenience of location, (b) the program offered by the setting, and (c) being referred to the setting.

Location

Location was the primary reason for the choice of a setting for 7 of the parents (44%). These parents were predominately from Setting 3 (6 of the 7 respondents). The comments made by the families included, "The old centre where we were closed so we had to find a new centre quickly. I liked it, and it's on the way to work for dad" (3:P:R-M), "It's close to work and I heard it was good" (3:P:Y-D), and "Well, I work right next to the centre so it's really convenient" (3:P:W-M).

Program and Facility Design

Five of the parents (31%) identified the program and physical design of the settings as the primary factor in choosing their childcare setting (all these parents were from Setting 1). One family commented on the availability of care for a younger sibling when stating, "I was in desperate need of care. I was starting school and I needed care for my child and a toddler space as well" (1:P:J-M). Another family needed a program that would support the child's additional needs. This parent detailed, "I liked that one of the staff has two children with ADHD and my child has ADHD. I liked that a staff has some experience with these children" (1:P:I-M). The other parents commented on the physical design of the setting with statements such as, "the outdoor play area, it's great. When I first saw it I just went wow, they really put a lot into the centre. It just showed me that they really care about the kids" (1:P:K-M).

Referral

Four parents (25%) described a referral or the popularity of the setting as the reason for choosing the setting. Their comments included, "popular demand, very popular spot" (1:P:H-M), and "I was referred to the centre by someone" (3:P:U-D).

Example of Rough and Tumble Play

The participating parents were asked to give an example of rough and tumble play by their child or another child they know. Eight of the participants (50%) used the term 'wrestling' when describing the play, four (25%) detailed physical play experiences, and three (19%) spoke about pushing and shoving. One participant asked for clarification as they were not sure how to describe R&T. The researcher then

provided a definition by stating that some people describe rough and tumble play as physical play when children are pushing, shoving, and chasing each other. This definition was accepted by the parent.

The comments from the parents who responded that rough and tumble play was wrestling included, “wrestling, the physical play” (3:P:T-M), “well an example by my son, he will wrestle with me though he calls it fighting. We will wrestle on a bed. It’s more aggressive physical contact with legs and arms going” (3:P:V-D), and “when they are wrestling” (1:P:B-M). For one parent there was an expression of the enjoyment and variety of the play when she stated,

My guy is a major rough and tumble player. But that’s hard to answer. I guess it’s wrestling. That’s his favorite thing to do in the whole world. But it varies depending on who he’s playing with. It can be a pillow fight, or he can be jumping on your head. He’s obsessed with muscle men, he loves to wrestle. (3:P:S-M)

The parents who commented that rough and tumble play involved physical experiences made comments such as, “when they are lying on the floor and doing face plants and head locks” (1:P:A-M), and “she plays rough with her brother. They like to jump off the bed onto pillows” (1:P:J-M). One parent described a play situation when articulating their definition of rough and tumble play:

Well outside there were four girls playing together. Two children about eight years old and two children about five years old. They were playing horses where the big girls were being the horses and the two smaller girls were riding on their backs. When they were playing horses one of the horses was a mean horse, growling a bit. But they were all having fun playing horses. (1:P:I-M)

The physical elements of pushing and shoving were utilized in the definitions of three participating parents; for example, “when they push and shove each other all

over the place. That pretty much covers it” (1:P:D-M) and “when children are pushing and shoving and smacking into other children” (1:P:G-M).

Inclusion of Rough and Tumble Play in Their Child's Daycare

The participating parents were asked, “Are you aware of any guidelines about the inclusion of rough and tumble play in your child’s daycare?” Nine of the parents (56%) responded that they were not aware of any guidelines, five parents (31%) responded that they were aware of the guidelines for rough and tumble play, and two parents (13%) thought they knew what some of the guidelines were.

The two parents who responded that they knew some of the guidelines for the inclusion of rough and tumble play made comments that reflected their uncertainty: “I guess they have the basic ones. They’re not supposed to do it or they get a timeout. They want them to have fun but not to be out of control” (1:P:A-M) and “I think it’s mostly a keep your hands to yourself environment, as far as being rough. Physical contact is not discouraged unless it is being invasive. I know that they discourage pushing” (1:P:I-M).

The comments of the parents who indicated that they were aware of the guidelines about the inclusion of rough and tumble play included details of what the children are not permitted to do. These comments included, “they don’t allow it, someone might get hurt” (1:P:K-M); “the uncalled for stuff is not allowed, the violent stuff. It’s the same at any daycare” (1:P:B-M); and “yes, though my son knows more. I know there is no hitting or doing anything that will cause harm” (3:P:R-M).

Educator Encouragement or Restriction of Rough and Tumble Play

The participating parents were asked if they were aware if their child's teacher encourages or restricts rough and tumble play. Nine of the parents (56%) responded that the educators in their child's daycare restrict rough and tumble play. Three parents (19%) indicated that the educators guide the play of the children including rough and tumble play in order to ensure that none of the children is hurt. The remaining four (25%) participating parents responded that they did not know if the play was encouraged or restricted.

Restriction of Rough and Tumble Play

The parents were then asked why they thought the teacher made the determination to encourage or restrict rough and tumble play. The responses from the parents reflected two distinct themes. First, parents stated that the supervision of rough and tumble play reflected skillful caregiving. Second, the majority (69%) of the parents indicated that the educators made their determination for safety reasons. However, one parent indicated a unique perspective when stating, "it stems up out of the belief that physical activity is a form of violence. They don't understand that it's part of him, he needs to rough and tumble play" (3:P:S-M).

The comments of the parents on the caregiving skills of educators included, "I think it's easier to have a no rough and tumble rule then to monitor it and watch where it goes. The children are too little to determine if the other child is okay with it so they have to be careful with it" (3:P:W-M). A second parent seemed to recognize the influence of the parents on the type of play that is permissible within the daycare environment by stating, "because they're good caregivers, they teach them what's

right. If the child goes home with it then the parents will be back to talk to their teachers about it” (1:P:A-M).

Safety

However, for the majority of the parents, safety was cited as the primary factor in determining whether to encourage or restrict rough and tumble play. Eight of the parents (50%) made succinct comments such as, “so they don’t get hurt” (1:P:K-M), “they want the children to be safe” (3:P:T-M), and “safety reasons. So everyone is safe” (1:P:I-M). Three parents expanded upon their comments with the statements, “respect for other kids, so no one gets hurt” (1:P:G-M), “for safety reasons, so it’s more fun for the children” (1:P:B-M), and “for safety reasons, the children can hurt each other and it promotes violence” (3:P:R-M).

Child’s Talk About Play at Daycare

The participating parents were asked, “Does your child ever talk about play at daycare?” Three parents responded that their child does not talk about their play at daycare. The remaining 13 parents responded that their child will talk about their play at daycare with two parents also commenting that their child will only talk about their play if the parent asks.

Of the three parents who responded that their child does not talk about their play, two commented that their child would talk about special events. One of these parents stated, “he’ll talk about activities and special events but not really about play” (3:P:V-D).

The 13 parents who responded that their child did talk about their play at daycare were asked, “What did you learn about their play?” Four parents responded

that they did not learn about their child's play. Some typical comments were, "not much" (1:P:A-M), and, "not a lot" (3:P:U-D). One parent stated that their child, "tells me about inappropriate play, when someone takes something or won't let him do something" (3:P:T-M). Two parents' comments related to play were, "he's a rough little boy with his friends. His friends are rough too. He looks to me for guidance on his play with his friends" (1:P:B-M), and "she likes to play rough, but she doesn't like to get hurt" (1:P:H-M).

Of the 13 parents who commented on what they learned about their child's play, six described their child's descriptions of the social dynamics of play with comments such as, "he enjoys playing with the kids. He has lots of friends and he talks about friendships" (3:P:Q-M); "about her relationships in play and the roles she takes. I learn about her personality when she's interacting with others" (3:P:W-M); and "she's very sociable, she gets along with others" (1:P:J-M).

Description of Rough and Tumble Play for Another Parent

Each of the participating parents were asked, "How would you describe rough and tumble play for another parent?" The most common response was to describe the play in terms of physical contact. The parents made comments such as, "when they run around and grab each other. Pushing and shoving, jumping on top of each other" (1:P:D-M), "when there are two or more kids together playing a game that involves physical contact, like wrestling" (3:P:V-D), and "physical contact play on the friendly side. It's joking, friendly wrestling, bear hugs, dog pile" (3:P:Y-D).

For three parents, the descriptions of rough and tumble play included the need to ensure that the play is safe with comments such as, "it looks like someone might

get hurt, and someone might, but oddly no one does. I'd say it's when you're bouncing around, shoulder checking, being physical" (3:P:S-M), and "anything that the kid doesn't get hurt. I mean a little bump and bruise isn't going to kill anybody. For the most part when she gets bumped or bruised she'll just keep playing. When there's no tears that's rough and tumble" (1:P:H-M). Another parent commented on the play in terms of not only safety, but also in terms of how the play is viewed when stating, "rough and tumble play has a negative connotation. It's boy play, wrestling, fun play but it needs to be in control. It's what boys do on occasion. It's absolutely fine with limitations so no one gets hurt" (3:P:R-M).

Gender and Rough and Tumble Play

The parents were asked, "As the parent of a young girl/boy, what do you think of your child engaging in rough and tumble play?" and then if it would be different if their child was the opposite gender. Of the seven parents of girls, two stated that they did not like their daughter to engage in rough and tumble play. When asked if they would respond differently if their child were a boy, both parents stated that they would hold the same view. These parents commented, "they shouldn't need it. Boys are already rough and don't need more encouragement to do more rough play" (1:P:K-M) and "no, there wouldn't be any difference. It's about respect" (1:P:G-M). Of the nine parents of boys, two preferred that their son not participate in R&T play and should their child be a female, they would not want their daughter to engage in it either. The four parents, who stated they would rather their child not engage in rough and tumble play, were female.

Three fathers (two with sons, one with a daughter) were interviewed as part of this study. Each of the fathers reported being comfortable with their child engaging in rough and tumble play with statements such as, "I'm fine with it. It seems to be a natural or intuitive kind of play. I think it's healthy for kids" (3:P:V-D) and "I'm fine with it provided there's limitations. Younger children can't keep up so you need a safe environment where everyone is willing to be part of the play" (3:P:U-D). When these fathers were asked if it would be different if their child was the opposite gender, their comments included, "I'm not sure. It depends upon the desires of the child. If she wanted to then I would be okay with it" (3:P:V-D) and "Not necessarily. The girls at school play just as hard as the boys" (3:P:U-D).

The twelve parents who responded that they were accepting of their child engaging in rough and tumble play indicated that the play is a typical part of childhood. These parents made comments such as, "it's fine as long as it doesn't go to the extent of anyone getting hurt" (1:P:D-M); "I have no problems with it. My wife and I are into sports so we understand contact sport situations" (3:P:Y-D); "I think it's great" (1:P:H-M); "I'm fine with it. It seems to be a natural or intuitive kind of play. I think it's healthy for kids" (3:P:V-D); and "I have no problems with it as long as the children are ready to play it and as long as she is not going to come to me if she does get hurt. She needs to be able to take her knocks. If she's dishing it out, she needs to learn how to take it too" (1:P:I-M).

When the twelve parents who were comfortable with their child engaging in rough and tumble play were asked if their thoughts would be different if their child were the opposite gender, seven responded that they would not change their view. Of

the five parents (all parents of boys) who did indicate that their views might change, two commented that they would need to consider the personality of the child in making their determination. The remaining three parents reflected on societal expectations of the play of boys and girls. One stated, “there might be more concern if she did it if it wasn’t considered or characterized as a girl activity. It might be viewed differently when a girl is doing it versus when a boy does it” (3:P:V-D), while a second parent detailed,

a girl. Well I would be okay with it if she initiated it. I wouldn’t chastise her for it. Yet I think differently now that I have a boy. I think before I probably would have thought differently about a girl’s rough and tumble play. I think I might have thought she might be gay. I guess it would depend on the degree to which she might thrive on it. (3:P:S-M)

Where Rough and Tumble Play Occurs

The participating parents were asked where they thought rough and tumble play occurs. Three parents responded that it occurs outside and twelve that rough and tumble play occurs everywhere, both inside and outside. One parent stated that rough and tumble play occurs, “at home mostly because it’s not allowed at daycare” (3:P:W-M).

Each of the parents were then asked if rough and tumble play is different when inside versus outside. Twelve parents indicated that the rough and tumble play of their children is different when outside versus inside. These parents commented on the limitations of indoor spaces versus more expansive outdoor spaces. Comments from these parents included, “they have more room outside, they can be rougher outside” (1:P:K-M), “they get more riled up outside. They have more freedom outside so they’re more lively and they feel free to do different things” (3:P:Q-M); and “the

space dictates it. There's not as much room inside as outside. I find myself telling him to cool it more inside" (3:P:S-M).

Two parents indicated that R&T play is the same both inside and outside. For two other parents, there were differences dictated by the play spaces available. As one parent detailed, "inside will be jumping on a couch or wrestling, perhaps building a fort. Outside they tend to play more with objects like balls and such" (3:P:U-D). The second parent stated, "it's different on a bed because it's soft and you can bounce, but outside it's not okay. The flooring is a big indicator of where it can happen safely" (3:P:Y-D).

Rough and Tumble Play and Aggression

The participating parents were asked if there is a difference between rough and tumble play and aggression and then asked how they would describe the difference and how they respond when play appears to become aggressive. Fourteen of the parents responded that there is a difference between rough and tumble play, one parent was not sure if there is a difference, and one parent stated that, "a lot of rough and tumble play comes out of aggression" (1:P:B-M). Parents who responded that there is a difference between rough and tumble play and aggression made comments such as, "children don't see the line, we have to teach them the lines as we go along. It's a learning process for the children" (3:P:W-M) and "there is a line between rough and tumble play and anger" (3:P:S-M).

Emotions of Players

When the parents were asked to describe the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression, the emotions of the players was cited as the defining

element for several of the parents. One parent stated, “it’s hard to describe the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression. I guess with aggression there isn’t the empathy if someone gets hurt” (3:P:S-M). Three of the parents identified the enjoyment of the play as a means of determining the type of activity. These parents made comments such as, “rough and tumble play is fun for everyone. When it becomes aggression, the play may continue but someone stops having fun” (3:P:W-M) and “aggression is different, it’s not having fun while playing. Rough and tumble play is fun” (1:P:B-M).

The emotional element cited by nine of the parents was anger. These parents detailed that the expression of anger from one or more of the players was an indicator that the play was aggressive. Their comments included, “well they’re angry, so they aren’t playing. It’s different when they’re angry because it’s like they want to hurt someone” (1:P:K-M); “rough and tumble play is more of a sport, more of a competition. Aggression is fighting and anger” (3:P:T-M); “aggression’s like going after somebody for a vengeful purpose” (1:P:D-M); and “aggression is out of anger and revenge. You see them being more physically harmful when they’re being aggressive” (1:P:J-M).

Tone of Play

Two parents cited changes to the tone of the play as indicators of the difference between rough and tumble play and aggression. These parents made comments such as, “the intent or motivation, the type of interaction” (1:P:I-M), and,

the whole tone changes. They get serious and they start reacting to protect themselves or looking to hurt someone else. It changes fast. It seems to be an unconscious transition where they move into a protection or protective mode. It can flip quickly from rough and tumble play into aggression.” (3:P:V-D)

However, for one parent, aggression was a direct result of rough and tumble play: “there’s not much difference, it looks the same. If you let them rough and tumble play, they will get aggressive” (1:P:G-M).

Stopping Aggressive Play

When the play of the children does appear to have become aggressive, the parents indicated that they stop the play by a variety of methods. For one parent, redirection is used: “I get down to their level and turn their energy to something new. I focus their attention on something else, totally different” (1:P:A-M). Three of the parents indicated that they put their child on a ‘time out’ if they become aggressive. The comments from these parents included, “I break it up. I stop them and send them to time out” (1:P:K-M) and “if he is being too rough in his rough and tumble play we’ll give him a couple of chances to settle down. With aggression we don’t give as many chances but will put him in a time out till he settles down” (3:P:Q-M). Yet another parent will remove their child from aggressive play: “I take him out of the situation, get him away from the other child” (1:P:B-M).

However, the most frequent response of the parents to aggressive play was to talk with their child about the play and what is appropriate and inappropriate play. Six of the participating parents, who indicated that they will step in and talk with their child about aggressive play, also indicated that they will try to help the child to move into a less aggressive type of play. The comments from these parents included, “I stop the play. I’ll ask the weaker child how they are, are they hurt. I’ll explain what was happening that was aggressive and help them fix it so they can go back to a different type of play” (3:P:W-M) and “I get involved and I explain what is not appropriate. I

make observations of the play and I'll say things like, 'I can see that you are becoming angry' and ask them to settle down or stop the activity" (3:P:T-M).

Rough and Tumble Play and Bullying

The participating parents were asked if the recent focus in the public schools on bullying had influenced how they respond to rough and tumble play. Two of the parents indicated that they had not thought about bullying. Four parents responded that they were influenced by the focus on bullying in the public schools while 10 parents attested that they had not been influenced.

The two parents who responded that they had not thought about bullying were asked why they thought that was. One parent stated, "I'm not sure. He hasn't been bullied yet. I try to keep him aware of the feelings of others so hopefully he won't be bullying others" (1:P:A-M). The second parent commented, "I don't worry about it. I'll address it if it happens. If it happens I'll stop it" (3:P:U-D).

Preparations for Possible Future Bullying

The four parents who responded that they were influenced by the recent focus on bullying in the public school were asked what they were doing differently now. Two of these parents stated that they were not doing anything differently, rather they expressed that they are more aware of the issue now. One of the parents responded, "I'm tough on her. I'm on top of her behaviour and then make sure she's not hurting other children. So I've been somewhat influenced. I don't want her at either end of the extreme. I try to help her to learn not to use her hands" (1:P:I-M). Another parent stated, "I'm trying to teach him that bullying is not nice and it hurts other people's

feelings. If he starts to go in that direction I'll try to steer him away from it" (1:P:B-M).

Bullying Viewed as Different From Rough and Tumble Play

The 10 parents who responded that they had not been influenced by the recent focus on bullying in the public schools were asked why they thought they had not changed their views on rough and tumble play. The most frequent response of the parents was that they had not been influenced because rough and tumble play and bullying are two different things. As detailed by these parents, "it's not the same thing. Bullying is about power and control where rough and tumble play is a mutual type of play" (3:P:S-M); "bullying is psychological, mean-spirited and an expression of anger. It's a threatening situation with the intent to put fear into others. Rough and tumble is physical but it's not threatening" (3:P:T-M); and

The bullying that has been focused on is quite different from rough and tumble play. It has nothing to do with playing. Bullying is looking to deliberately hurt someone either physically or emotionally. Rough and tumble play is learning to be physical and to interact with others without trying to hurt others. (3:P:V-D)

Final Thoughts on Rough and Tumble Play

The participating parents were asked if there was anything further they would like to tell the researcher about rough and tumble play. Seven of the parents responded to the question with a comment. One parent noted the need to supervise rough and tumble play to prevent bullying and teasing (1:P:J-M). Another parent reflected on the need to talk about rough and tumble play by stating, "I'd like to be able to talk more about rough and tumble play. It's hard to because rough and tumble play is repressed in daycare, it's hard to get help with rough and tumble play. I would

like a forum to talk about it and get help with it” (3:P:S-M). The remaining five parents commented positively on the experience of rough and tumble play. The comments from these parents included, “it’s natural for children to explore and rough and tumble play” (1:P:I-M); “it’s a good way to have fun for kids with lots of energy” (1:P:A-M); and “it’s good for kids, a necessary type of play” (3:P:W-M).

Years With Children in the Home

Each of the participating parents were asked how many years they have had children in their home. The range of parenting experience was from four years to 22 years. In terms of total months with children in the home, the range was from 48 months to 264 months. The mean was 7.53 years or 90.38 months.

Siblings

The parents were asked if they have siblings and, if so, the ages of the siblings. All the parents reported that they have at least one sibling. Six parents reported that they have one sibling, six parents have two siblings, two have three siblings, one has five siblings, and one parent reported that they have eleven older brothers. The parents reported a total of nine older sisters, eight younger sisters, fifteen older brothers, and nine younger brothers. In terms of the participating parent placement within the family, six reported that they are the oldest child, six reported that they are the middle child, and four reported that they are the youngest child.

Adults Living in the Childhood Home

The parents were asked who the adults were who lived in the home when the participants were children. Eleven of the sixteen participating parents indicated that they grew up with both their mother and father living with them in the home.

Two of the participating parents indicated that their homes included stepfathers. The first parent stated, “my mom and dad until I was 10, then my mom and step-dad” (1:P:J-M). The second parent recalled, “my mom and my step dad” (1:P:B-M). Three of the parents indicated that they lived with their mother with statements such as, “my mom” (3:P:Q-M, 3:P:U-D).

Childhood Rough and Tumble Experience

The participating parents were asked if they engaged in rough and tumble play as children. Of the sixteen participants, one responded, “I don’t remember that well, I’m not really sure” (1:P:I-M), two responded that they did not rough and tumble play as children, and the remaining thirteen indicated that they did rough and tumble as children. The comments from those who did rough and tumble play included, “oh yes” (1:P:J-M), “definitely” (3:P:U-D), and “every day” (1:P:H-M).

The two parents who stated that they did not rough and tumble play as children were asked why they thought that was. One stated, “I don’t know why” (3:P:R-M) while the second detailed, “we were dainty little girls. We just didn’t do it” (1:P:A-M).

The thirteen parents who stated that they did rough and tumble as children were asked with whom they played. One parent stated they R&T played with their dad, one indicated that they played with their dad and sister, three responded that they played with their friends, and the remaining eight reported that they played with their siblings. The comments from these parents included, “with my dad and my sister. We wrestled all the time” (3:P:W-M); “with friends at school, both boys and girls” (1:P:

G-M); and “just with my sister, I don’t remember rough and tumble playing with others” (3:P:Q-M).

Thoughts on Childhood Rough and Tumble Play

The 13 parents who responded that they did rough and tumble play were asked what they think about their experiences. One stated, “it’s okay until someone gets hurt” (1:P:G-M) while a second suggested, “I think it made me a stronger person” (1:P:B-M). Two of the parents commented on the play being an enjoyable part of their childhood. One stated, “I have very fond memories of it. I had a very happy, stable home life. I loved it.” (3:P:W-M) and the second parent said, “I enjoyed it a lot. It’s part of being a kid” (3:P:U-D). However, three other parents stated that the play was not a significant event in their lives when they made comments such as, “it was just part of being a kid, a stage all kids go through. It didn’t mean anything for when I grew up. I don’t think I’m any different because of rough and tumble play” (3:P:Q-M) and “didn’t think anything about it. It did get pretty rough. It seemed like a natural thing to do, it just happens” (3:P:V-D).

Freedom of Childhood and Concern for Safety of Own Children

The parents in this study commented on the enjoyment and freedom they experienced as rough and tumble players. Rough and tumble play was viewed by these parents as natural parts of their childhood. This view of rough and tumble play experiences as a child was also common amongst the educators in this study. Yet, while parents and educators speak of the enjoyment and freedom of childhood rough and tumble play experiences, they also refer to the need for the rough and tumble play of their children, and the children in their care, to be supervised and safe. While the

parents and educators speak of the enjoyment of the freedom they had, they also speak of the need to limit the rough and tumble play of children in order to ensure the safety of children.

The parents did, at times, make reference to their own rough and tumble play experiences in a different way than they referred to that of their children. For one mother, rough and tumble play was directly connected with aggressive behaviour when she stated, “there’s not much difference, it looks the same. If you let them rough and tumble play, they will get aggressive” (1:P:G-M).

Rough and Tumble Play at Home

The participating parents were asked if their children engage in rough and tumble play at home. Of the sixteen parents, three responded that their children did not rough and tumble at home. When these parents were asked why they thought their children did not participate in the play, they identified a lack of fellow players as the reason. The comments of these parents included, “she doesn’t have anyone to rough and tumble play with” (1:P:I-M) and “no, there’s too much of an age difference” (1:P:G-M).

Thirteen parents indicated that their children do engage in rough and tumble play. The responses by these parents included, “yes, always, every day unless they’re sick” (3:P:T-M) and “a portion of their play, about 10% is rough and tumble play. They play other ways too and they also play on their own, solitary play” (3:P:V-M).

The parents were asked to describe the rough and tumble play of their children when at home. Their descriptions referenced the physical structure of the home. The comments included, “they body slam themselves onto pillows onto the floor off the

bed” (1:P:J-M), “they wrestle on the couch or in the family room and they throw their toys around” (3:P:T-M), and “pillow fights, wrestling” (3:P:S-M). The descriptions also reflected general descriptions of rough and tumble play. These descriptions included, “wrestling” (1:P:K-M), “like I did before, wrestling, tickling, somersaults” (3:P:W-M), and “they wrestle and tickle and chase each other” (3:P:O-D).

The descriptions of the rough and tumble play of the children when in their homes reflect the comments the parents had on their own R&T play experiences as children. The play is described in terms of the actions of the children rather than the limitations which might be placed on the play. When the parents described rough and tumble play within the context of the daycare, parents related concerns about safety and how ‘appropriate’ the play is within a more formal setting. This indicates that parents hold differing views on rough and tumble play depending upon the location of the play.

The perceptions of home rough and tumble play by the parents, at times, differed from the perceptions of the children. One child commented that rough and tumble play at home is “bad” (3:C:W) while this child’s mother (3:P:W-M) described the R&T of the child in the home positively. A similar case occurred for a second child who stated that there is no R&T play at home because, “if you play rough at home it might break” (1:C:G) while this child’s mother stated that there is no R&T play due to a lack of play partners.

Rough and Tumble Partners When at Home

The thirteen participating parents who indicated that their children engage in rough and tumble play were asked with whom their children play. Two parents stated

that the children rough and tumble play with a variety of individuals including both family and friends. Two parents detailed that their children rough and tumble play with friends.

For nine of the parents, the rough and tumble play was considered an activity for family members. Five commented that their children engage in the play with the parents, while four identified siblings as the play partner. These parents responded, “he’ll wrestle with his dad, and sometimes me, but mostly with his dad” (3:P:Q-M); “with me, but mostly he wrestles with his dad” (1:P:B-M); “just with each other. There are no neighbourhood kids for him to rough and tumble play with. There’s just girls in our neighbourhood, and they don’t rough and tumble play” (3:P:S-M); and “they rough and tumble play with each other. I’m not aware if they rough and tumble play in other places. They like to rough and tumble play with each other, it’s like some sort of comfort thing for them” (1:P:J-M).

The parents’ descriptions of the rough and tumble play partners of their children closely resemble their own experiences. Parents described their play partners as family members, friends, and siblings with siblings being the most common. These parents described the rough and tumble play partners of their children in similar ways although parents were more common as play partners than siblings. It may be that children are engaging in similar patterns of rough and tumble play in the home as their parents did but that different family compositions have resulted in modified experiences with play partners.

Thoughts on the Rough and Tumble Play of Children

The parents who indicated that the children in their home engaged in rough and tumble play were asked what they thought about their children participating in the play and how they respond to rough and tumble play. One parent stated that, “I don’t like it. It needs to be supervised. You can let it go a little bit but it needs to be stopped when it’s not play, when someone’s going to get hurt” (3:P:R-M).

Three of the parents commented on the need for the play to be safe; for example, “I’m okay with it as long as it’s safe. As long as nothing can get damaged and no one is getting hurt and they clean up after themselves” (3:P:T-M) and “it’s okay as long as it’s safe. I am conscious of safety” (3:P:S-M). For the remaining nine parents, there was an indication that they were comfortable with the play within limitations. The comments from these parents included, “I’m okay with it, but there is a time and a place for it” (3:P:Y-D); “it’s okay as long as it doesn’t get out of hand, as long as she doesn’t get angry” (1:P:K-M); and “I’m okay with it if it doesn’t get too carried away. If it does get carried away then I stop it” (1:P:B-M).

Thoughts of Parents on the Value of Rough and Tumble Play

The participating parents were asked what sort of value they thought rough and tumble play holds. For one parent, rough and tumble was not viewed as having value. This parent stated, “it’s not valuable. It’s too close to aggression and bullying” (1:P:G-M). However, the remaining 15 parents did identify value within rough and tumble play. One of the identified values involved the learning of boundaries. As detailed, “it’s valuable, it’s good for helping children learn to set limits and

boundaries” (1:P:I-M) and “it’s good for them to learn how far they can go with people, to learn boundaries” (3:P:Q-M).

Energy Release

The physical nature of the play was detailed as a valuable element with comments such as, “it’s an outlet for energy. It’s a huge value” (3:P:S-M) and “it helps them develop their physical skills and is good for keeping them in shape physically” (3:P:T-M). Another value identified was the enjoyment of the play as reflected by one parent, “it’s fun. I don’t know, it’s fun, it’s important to have fun when they’re little. If he is enjoying it, that’s cool” (1:P:D-M). Another parent recognized the building of relationships when stating, “my son and his dad have a different relationship because of rough and tumble play. My son sees his dad as his friend because they rough and tumble play” (3:P:S-M).

Confidence

For four of the parents, the value of rough and tumble play is reflected in a developing confidence within the players. The comments of these parents included, “I think it helps children to gain confidence in themselves. They learn what their strengths are and their physical limitations” (1:P:B-M); “it makes them more sure of themselves so others don’t take advantage of them” (1:P:K-M); and “it’s part of a lot of team sports and can help to make kids tougher. They feel more competent when they can play rough without being aggressive. It builds confidence” (3:P:Y-D).

Ideals

The variety of values associated with rough and tumble play were reflected in the comments of two of the parents. The first stated,

they learn about boundaries. They learn to empathize and to anticipate what other people are going to do. They have fun with it. It's a physical contact that's reassuring of their relationship with mom and dad. It's a chance for them to test their limits but it's not so passive and cozy. (3:P:W-M)

The second parent detailed,

Lots. First, it's a good opportunity to explore social interfacing. They learn what's appropriate and fun versus what is hurtful to others. Second, there's the physical learning. They learn to control their bodies. And third, it's a fun activity for him. He gets lots of attention from me and lots of physical contact. He needs that. We also do the nurturing touching as well with hugs and back rubs. But he needs the physical, playful touching that comes with rough and tumble play. (3:P:V-D)

The comments indicate that 15 of the 16 parents interviewed (94%) place value on rough and tumble play. These parents were able to articulate how rough and tumble play enhanced their child's play experiences and supported personal growth within social contexts. This value in rough and tumble play was congruent with the educators in this study. Both groups claim there is value in the participation in rough and tumble play by young children.

However, the parents in this study did not appear to have communicated their thoughts to the early childhood educators. Moreover, parents routinely viewed rough and tumble play as inappropriate for daycare due to the concern of injury and the appropriateness of the play in this environment. Educators conveyed similar concerns for rough and tumble play at daycare.

Interviews of Children

Definition of Rough and Tumble Play

Prior to the interview process, observations by the researcher of the participating children were conducted. From the observations a behavioural example of the play of the children was provided to the children. This example served to focus

the children on the topic of the interview. The example also served as a framework for eliciting the children's defining terms for the play.

Included in the children's definitions of rough and tumble play were comments about the play. The comments of the children were predominately negative with statements that included, "not allowed to play that" (1:C:B), "bad, I don't like that kind of play" (1:C:I), and "hurting people" (3:C:T). One child indicated their play partners when stating, "I wrestle with my mom and dad" (3:C:V). The definitions of rough and tumble play provided by the children included dog pile, rough play, wrestling, or simply play.

Thoughts on Rough and Tumble Play

The participating children were asked what they thought about rough and tumble play. The question was unique to each group due to the term selected by each group of children. The first group from Setting 1 was asked, "what do you think about dog piling?" The second group from Setting 1 was asked, "what do you think about playing rough?" The first group from Setting 3 was asked, "what do you think about that type of play?" The second group from Setting 3 was asked, "what do you think about wrestling?"

The children responded to this question in four ways. First, the children commented on specific games that they play. Responses included, "pushing them around" (1:C:J), "I know about a person playing rough and they absolutely play dead" (1:C:G), and "ah, I play rough with F and I play the pterodactyl game with J and those are dead pterodactyl's" (1:C:I). Second, the children commented on the safety of the play. The comments from the children on the safety of rough and tumble play

included, “you can make someone hurt, they could hurt themselves or they could fall down” (3:C:R) and “they could cut themselves” (3:C:T).

The third identified theme included the children’s articulated thoughts on what they should be doing in their play with comments such as, “I know what is a good play. A good play is when you talk to your friends nicely” (1:C:H). The fourth type of comment made by the children included a reflection on play with family members. One child stated, “I think that it’s fun with my dad” (3:C:S). However, there were some children who did not respond to the question and still others who made statements such as, “I don’t know” (3:C:W).

For the children who were interviewed as part of this study, the articulations included comments about the types of games they play, the safety of R&T, how they should be playing, and their play with members of their families. These comments were in agreement with the comments of the parents in this study who noted the need for the play to be safe, for their children to avoid physical contact in their play, and that R&T is not appropriate in early childhood centres.

Rules for Play at School

Each participating child was asked if there were rules for play at school. The children acknowledged that there were rules at school with comments such as, “oh, yeah” (3:C:R). The rules articulated by the children reflected limits on their play and were stated in terms of what they are not allowed to do rather than what they are allowed to do. The general rules shared by the children included, “don’t yell and scream inside. It might make our ears hurt” (3:C:W), and “can’t say bad words and secrets are not good” (1:C:F).

Limitations on Play

However, the majority of the comments made by the children reflected rules for, and limitations on, play. The rules for play included absolute bans on the play as detailed by (3:C:S) who stated, “there’s no wrestling at school, you’re only allowed to do it at home.” One child commented, “there’s rules about no wrestling. No wrestling at daycare” (3:C:R) while a second child simply stated, “no wrestling” (3:C:V). The limitations on physical play included, “no punching each other”(3:C:T); “no hitting and no punching and no kicking” (1:C:I); “no pulling hair either” (1:C:G); “I have a rule, don’t kick anyone in the tummy” (1:C:A); and “fighting, not allowed”(1:C:J).

These comments from the children on the rules for play at their daycare detail limitations. The comments from these children on play in their centres reveal limitations on physical and hurtful play. This is congruent with the children’s earlier comments that play should be safe and free of physical contact.

Rough and Tumble Players

The participating children were asked which of their friends like to rough and tumble play. The children responded with comments about rough and tumble play with their families and with their peers at daycare. For example, in one interview a child identified another participating child as a rough and tumble player, which resulted in a rebuttal from the second child. In this case, B stated, “D” to which D replied, “no I don’t” to which B responded with, “I mean F” whereupon D then stated, “I never play it” (1:C:B&D). Two children identified themselves as a rough and tumble players when stating, “I like to play rough” (1:C:H) and “I do” (1:C:I).

The participating children who identified peers as rough and tumble players made comments such as, “T is my friend but he only runs and I only run. I don’t do wrestling” (3:C:R); “yup, like Q always wants to wrestle. And that’s it” (3:C:S); and “well U does it a lot. He likes to fight me” (3:C:V). Those children who identified their family as rough and tumble players made statements such as, “my brother plays rough at my house” (1:C:A), and “me and my sister. We always sit on each other” (1:C:G).

The children identified both family and friends as rough and tumble players. The children also identified themselves as R&T players. However, when a participating child was identified by another participating child as a R&T player, the identified child denied the statement.

Male or Female Rough and Tumble Players

The participating children were asked if both boys and girls like to rough and tumble. One interview resulted in statements that reflected the participation of both boys and girls in the play. During this interview one child stated, “sometimes girls don’t, sometimes girls do” (3:C:Y) to which a second child responded, “even mans and womans like to wrestle” (3:C:V). The researcher then asked the children in this interview who likes to “wrestle” (i.e., R&T) more, boys or girls. In response to this question, the children responded that boys like to wrestle more (3:C:Y,V,S).

The reactions and responses to this question were very definite on the part of the children in the other three interviews. For example, when W (a female) states, “no, only boys like to” (3:C:W), the three boys participating in the interview all nodded in agreement and there was no further discussion among the children about

the possibility that girls may also engage in rough and tumble play. A second interview resulted in an equally clear response when a child stated “no” (1:C:A) to which the other children nodded agreement before this child continued with the comment, “girls don’t like to play rough” (1:C:A). The researcher moved on to ask both these groups who likes to rough and tumble play more, boys or girls. Both these groups of children held to their position by stating that boys like R&T better.

The third interview also reflected a predominance of males participating in R&T play when the children responded, “no” (1:C:D,B,J,H). The researcher then asked the children why both boys and girls don’t rough and tumble play to which the children responded, “boys do a dog pile because that’s what boys do” (1:C:J) and “because they like to jump on people” (1:C:B). The researcher then asked this group who likes to rough and tumble play more, boys or girls. To this question, the children responded, “boys” (1:C:J,D), “girls and boys” (1:C:F), and, “both” (1:C:B).

While all the children who participated in this study (6 female, 11 male) were observed engaging in rough and tumble play, the dominant view of these children was that R&T is a male form of play. For these children, R&T is a male form of play because boys like it better than girls.

Rough and Tumble Play at School

The participating children were asked if they ever engage in rough and tumble play at school. During one interview, all four children stated that they do not engage in rough and tumble play. A total of nine children (56%) stated that they do not participate in rough and tumble play. Six children (44%) stated that they do participate in the play. One of seven girls (14%) and five of eight boys (63%) stated

that they engage in rough and tumble play. Some typical responses were: “I never do it at school” (1:C:A); “sometimes I do, in the walks” (1:C:F); “I do” (3:C:V); and “sometimes we do running and chasing, me and T” (3:C:R). The responses from the children who stated that they do not participate in rough and tumble play included, “probably not” (1:C:B); “no” (1:C:J, H, I); “no, we never do” (3:C:T); and “I don’t” (3:C:Y, S).

The children who responded that they do engage in rough and tumble play were then asked to tell the researcher about that. This question did not result in responses from many of the children. The children who did respond provided descriptions of their play. One child stated, “well, sometimes I jump over guys and they miss me” (3:C:V), and a second child stated, “it’s mostly running” (3:C:R).

The children who stated that they do not engage in R&T play were then asked if they would like to rough and tumble play. Again there was a limited response from the children. One child responded with, “no, no, no, no” (1:C:A).

While the children in this study were all observed engaging in rough and tumble play, only 44% stated that they R&T. Interestingly, these children stated that R&T is a boy form of play and this was reflected in the admissions by the children that they rough and tumble: 63% of the boys stated that they R&T while only 14% of the girls stated that they rough and tumble play.

What Happens if the Children Rough and Tumble at School

The children were asked what happens if they rough and tumble play at school. The responses of the children fell into two main categories. First, the children stated that they would be reprimanded. Second, there were comments that some

children would get hurt from the play. In both cases the children were quite certain about their responses. The children from Setting 1 all commented on the behavioural consequences from the play. Equally, the children from Setting 3 focused on injury as a consequence of the play.

Timeouts

The comments of the children from one of the interviews in Setting 1 included one child's statement followed by clear agreement from the other participating children. Initially, the response to the question was, "if you do it then you're going to get in trouble and have a timeout" (1:C:B). Each of the other three children were asked their thoughts by the researcher who stated, "what about you, what happens if you dog pile at school?" The children responded with, "the same thing, yeah" (1:C:F), "same thing" (1:C:D), and "the same thing" (1:C:J).

The second interview at Setting 1 resulted in more varied opinions on what would occur should the children engage in the play. Comments by the children included, "you get sent on a timeout" (1:C:H) and "and on a chair" (1:C:A). One child provided a context to their answer when stating, "if I kick someone in the face, then I will go on a timeout" (1:C:P).

Someone Might Get Hurt

The children from Setting 3 who were interviewed focused on the possibility of getting hurt as noted in the comment of one child who stated, "we'll get hurt" (3:C:S). One child placed the concern of being hurt within the context of the play when recalling, "well sometimes, well one time when I was at daycare and I, and V was chasing me and I accidentally went on the rocks and fell on the cement and got

some little round spots and then it healed” (3:C:R). One child at Setting 3 commented on the acceptability of rough and tumble play when stating, “the teachers ask us to stop” (3:C:W).

The comments from the children in this study reflected two results from rough and tumble play: that they will be reprimanded and they may be hurt in the play. However, throughout the course of the observations in this study, no children were injured in their rough and tumble play. In addition, while the educators would, at times, redirect R&T, there were no reprimands as a result of rough and tumble play.

Where Rough and Tumble Play Occurs

The participating children were asked where rough and tumble play happens, inside or outside. Both interview groups of children from Setting 1 stated that rough and tumble play occurs inside and outside. The children from the first interview stated, “inside” (1:C:G), “outside, it’s not appropriate inside” (1:C:H), and “outside and sometimes people do it inside” (1:C:A). The comments from children during the second interview at Setting 1 included, “inside and outside, sometimes people do it” (1:C:B) and “no, not inside. You can’t play inside. You’re not allowed to play it” (1:C:D).

The children from Setting 3 responded that the play only occurs outside. The children from the first interview at this setting agreed with Y who stated, “I think outside” (3:C:Y). The children from the second interview at this setting engaged in some discussion when they commented, “outside, not inside because someone could get hurt and trip and fall down. It would be very hard for your bones so it would hurt a little” (3:C:R) and “yeah cause there’s a lot of chairs around” (3:C:W).

The children in this study recognized that rough and tumble play occurs outdoors. The children from Setting 1 stated that the play also occurs indoors. The observations indicate that rough and tumble play occurs both indoors and outdoors. The display of rough and tumble play in both locations was observed in both settings. It may be that the children from Setting 3 believe R&T should only occur outdoors even though they engage in the play indoors as well as outdoors.

What Children Think Teachers Think About Rough and Tumble Play

The children were asked what their teachers think about rough and tumble play. The children's responses to this question were limited with single word comments with some children not responding to the question. The 11 children who did respond to the question indicated that the teachers did not approve of R&T play.

The children from Setting 1 indicated that the question was a hard one when stating, "oh, that's hard, I can't even think" (1:C:I) and "such a hard question" (1:C:B). The responses of the children from Setting 1 also included, "I know it, I know it, it's not very good" (1:C:B). The children also commented on the consequences of engaging in rough and tumble play. The consequences were related through comments such as, "I don't like it when I play rough because I get sad on a time out" (1:C:G); "sometimes I have to go to the thinking chair" (1:C:A); and "you get sent on a time out. It's not an okay thing" (1:C:H).

The responses of the children from both interviews at Setting 3 were similar. Both groups of children used the same word. The children from the first interview stated, "bad" (3:C:Y, V, S, T, W). One child stated, "it would be bad" (3:C:R).

The children participating in this study indicated that their teachers do not approve of rough and tumble play. However, the educators stated that they support the play as long as the children are not being hurt within the play. During the observations, while the educators encouraged the play sparingly, they also did not stop the R&T play of the children. It may be that the educators were influenced by the researcher's presence to be more accepting of the R&T play. This may have led to the discrepancy between what the children are stating, what the educators stated, and what was observed.

What Children Think Parents Think About Rough and Tumble Play

The participating children were asked what their moms and dads think about rough and tumble play at home and at school. As with the question on the thoughts of the teachers, this question resulted in limited responses from the children. However, the children's responses were mixed across settings. Children from both settings indicated that the play was acceptable and children from both settings indicated that the play was unacceptable to their parents.

The comments from the children which indicated that there was acceptance of R&T play included, "my mom and dad don't mind about it" (3:C:V); "my mom and dad think about it, that it's a good thing" (1:C:J); and "my mom and dad think that it's okay but sometimes when I run I get hurt" (3:C:R). One child indicated that their parents may be divided on the approval of the play when stating, "my dad thinks its okay" (3:C:Y).

Some of the participating children indicated that their parents did not approve of the play. The comments of these children included, “bad, they think it’s bad” (3:C:W) and “no, if you play rough at home it might break” (1:C:G).

The children made comments about the members of their families who rough and tumble play. Their comments included, “I do it with my dad because I’m only allowed to do with my dad not kids” (1:C:B) and “my brother sometimes does it. My brother thinks of it good” (1:C:F). Another child identified their mom’s reluctance to engage in rough and tumble play when explaining, “they don’t mind it with my sister or my dad cause my mom always doesn’t want to wrestle” (3:C:S).

There was a comment on the response of parents to R&T play. One child stated, “sometimes when I hurt myself on something in my backyard when I’m running my dad will come and then they put a Band-Aid on it because they feel sad” (3:C:R).

The children in this study generally confirmed that their parents do engage in rough and tumble play with their children. These comments are in agreement with the comments of the parents who were generally supportive of the play at home as long as their children were not hurt or hurting others.

Final Thoughts on Rough and Tumble Play

The children were asked if they had anything else to say about rough and tumble play. Two children from Setting 3 responded to this question. One child commented on the size of the rough and tumble players when stating, “okay, if wrestling hurts you or if you’re a big kid it won’t hurt you. If you’re a little kid then it will hurt you. Because when babies wrestle they get hurt” (3:C:V). The second child

reflected on where rough and tumble play should occur. This child stated, “I don’t think it’s fun to wrestle at daycare, it’s not okay to wrestle at daycare. But I think it’s fun and it’s okay to wrestle at home” (3:C:Y).

Summary

The data gathered during the observation sessions in this study demonstrate that the young children in this study, both boys and girls, engage in rough and tumble play on a regular basis while at their early childhood setting. The data gathered during the interview portion of this study demonstrates that rough and tumble play is common play behaviour amongst young children. Children are engaged in the play at home and in their early childhood setting. Parents and educators expressed memories of rough and tumble play as children and commented that they engage in R&T play with their children at home. However, at the early childhood setting, the children commented that R&T play is not permitted, the parents commented that R&T play is not appropriate, and educators commented that they accept the play as long as children are not being hurt. The thoughts of the participants in this study reveal discrepancies, at times, with their behaviours.

Chapter 5 ~ Summary, Discussion, and Implications

This study has focused on the rough and tumble play of young children. The thoughts of children, parents, and centre managers were gathered in an effort to further understanding of the rough and tumble play of young children. In addition, the play of young children in childcare settings was observed in an effort to further knowledge of how the children play and how their teachers respond to the play.

The results of the study, detailed in Chapter 4, will be discussed in this chapter. This discussion seeks to answer the research question for this study which is: What thoughts on rough and tumble play are held by educators, parents, and preschool children within early childhood settings exemplifying a variety of curriculum structures and what are the implications of those thoughts for program structure? The specific questions for this study were:

1. How do educators, young children, and parents respond to, and define rough and tumble play?
2. Are there structural dimensions, as determined by the early childhood educators, in individual settings that are recognized and account for differences seen in the manifestation of rough and tumble play?
3. To whom do educators, young children, and parents think that rough and tumble play would be of interest? If to one gender, why not the other? If to one age group, why not others?
4. What are the thoughts of the educator's and parent's experiences engaging in rough and tumble play? What do they think about their childhood experiences?

5. What outcomes would educators, young children, and parents anticipate from the inclusion of rough and tumble play in early childhood curricula?
6. Where do educators, young children, and parents think rough and tumble play occurs? Inside/outside? School/home? Where do educators, young children, and parents think rough and tumble play should occur?

Summary and Conclusions

The participants from four settings included 4 managers, 11 early childhood educators, 16 parents, and 9 children. In addition, four early childhood community members participated as external experts. All the participating settings were developmental-interactionist in their structures.

The conclusions drawn from the data collected will be summarized in accordance with the research questions. The six research questions of this study will form the organizational structure for summarizing the results of the data collected during this study.

Responses to Rough and Tumble Play

The educators, children and parents participating in this study detailed similar thoughts on rough and tumble play in terms of how they respond to the play. Rough and tumble play was recognized by the participants as a common play form among young children. However, most participants indicated that the play is not appropriate in early childhood education facilities.

Young children commented that they were not allowed to participate in rough and tumble play at their schools yet each child was observed engaging in the play. While the children clearly articulate the behavioural expectations of their child care

setting, they demonstrate a discrepancy between the rules at the setting and their actual behaviour. This may indicate that while the children think they are not allowed to engage in rough and tumble play, they are actually permitted to R&T at their setting. It may be that children are permitted to rough and tumble play so long as the play is not causing harm. This distinction of allowing play that is not harmful is reflective of the comments of the educators who articulated that they allow rough and tumble play as long as children are not hurt. The young children in these settings may be interpreting a limitation on the intensity of the play as a lack of acceptance by their teachers of all elements of rough and tumble play. Further research is needed to determine if rough and tumble play of varying degrees of intensity hold varying levels of acceptance.

The educators of the children commented that they put restrictions on the play in an effort to ensure the safety of all children but did allow for the play in moderation. The parents indicated that the play was not appropriate play for daycare. The parents of the children generally held the view that rough and tumble play is not an appropriate activity for the centre based early childhood environment.

The observations of the settings indicated that moderate forms of rough and tumble play were permitted. Children were observed engaging in rough and tumble play behaviours that were limited in scope. The children would grab onto one another, push one another, and make both kicking and hitting motions. However, there was only one observation of wrestling, a more intensive form of rough and tumble play, and no observations of play fighting.

Nonetheless, the most prevalent statement among all the participants, children, parents, and educators, is the need to ensure that no one gets hurt. However, there were no injuries reported as a result of rough and tumble play through the duration of this study. It may be that the fear of injury creates a barrier for adults in fully accepting rough and tumble play which may lead to the belief, expressed by the participants, that R&T is not appropriate within early childhood settings. Only one parent commented on her lack of understanding about rough and tumble play.

None of the educators when asked about guidelines for rough and tumble play in their setting were aware of specific guidelines for the play. Rather, guidelines for safety were articulated by the educators. One educator in this study made specific comments about her lack of knowledge about the inclusion of rough and tumble play within early childhood settings.

Definition of Rough and Tumble Play

Current literature does not provide a specific agreed upon definition of the elements of rough and tumble play. Rough and tumble play has been hypothesized as an evolution of the exercise play, or physical activity play, of very young children. The common element of recent descriptions of rough and tumble play is the inclusion of a 'play face' where participants are smiling and laughing (Reed & Brown, 2000). The play face was identified in each episode of rough and tumble play observed in this study.

The elements of rough and tumble play can include, "running, climbing, chasing, and play fighting" (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998, p. 577), fleeing, wrestling, falling, holding hands, and open-handed slaps (Reed and Brown, 2000). In addition,

based on the results of this study, the definition of rough and tumble play can be expanded to include grabbing the body of other players, grabbing and moving the body of another player, pushing or pulling another player, banging their body into the body of another player or a fixed object, rolling on the ground with another player or on their own, use of a loud or roaring voice, making hitting motions, making hitting motions while holding an object, hitting oneself, making large body motions, jumping on an object, kicking an object, throwing an object, crashing their body into an object, and making crashing motions with a held object.

The participants commented that rough and tumble play includes the physical play of young children. Wrestling was a common descriptor of rough and tumble play utilized by the adults. The children described the play as wrestling, dog pile, rough play, and simply as play. However, the data from this study revealed that there were no displays of dog pile and only one display of wrestling during the observations. The descriptions of rough and tumble play utilized by the participants did not reflect the R&T play behaviours displayed by the children as observed in this study.

Structural Dimensions and the Manifestation of Rough and Tumble Play

The data collected within this study reflected a common structural dimension. Both settings participating in the observation portion of the study were developmental-interactionist in their organizational structure. The two settings in which the educators and manager were interviewed, but where no observations were conducted, were also developmental-interactionist. Therefore, the question of whether the structural level of individual settings accounts for differences seen in the manifestation of rough and tumble play cannot be answered with the data collected.

This question remains unanswered and in need of exploration within a future study. It might be that the particular curriculum structure guiding the actions of the educators would influence the degree to which rough and tumble play is accepted or rejected. The influence or lack of influence, of other curricular structures such as the direct-instructional or traditional nursery school on the play behaviours exhibited by the children in care is in need of exploration.

Gender and Rough and Tumble Play

The participating educators, parents and children commented that rough and tumble play is of interest to children. The participants reported that, while girls will engage in rough and tumble play, it is mostly the boys who rough and tumble play. This was congruent with the data collected during the observation portion of this study. For the participating children, boys accounted for 79.5% of all rough and tumble play sequences and girls for 20.5%. This supports previous research (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Monghan-Nourot, 1997; Smith & Lewis, 1985) which identified gender differences in the display of rough and tumble play. The current research supports the results from this study which indicates that rough and tumble play is a predominantly boy form of play, although girls also engage in R&T although to a lesser extent.

During the observation portion of this study all the participating children, boys and girls, engaged in rough and tumble play. The resulting data from the observations show that while girls participated in an average of four rough and tumble play events, boys participated in an average of 10 play events. However, boys engaged in a greater variety of rough and tumble behaviours.

DiPietro (1981) researched rough and tumble play with, "same-sex triads" (p. 50). This study showed that, "male sessions were more often characterized by a good deal of exuberant physical contact with one another and with the stimulus toys" (p. 56). For girls, "their play was likely to center around novel interactions with the toys. Contact with one another tended to be verbal and not physical" (p. 56).

Unlike previous research, this study included mixed gender groupings. The observational data in this study indicate that boys and girls engage in rough and tumble play with same gender peers and with peers of the opposite gender. These observation results indicated similar patterns of play as reported by DiPietro.

Based on the data collected as a part of this study, it appears that while both boys and girls engage in rough and tumble play, girls display fewer R&T play behaviours than boys. Boys engaged in every rough and tumble play behaviour recorded (see Table 5 on page 111) during the course of this study. However, in this study, girls engaged in only 14 of the 27 (52%) different rough and tumble behaviours. The rough and tumble play of girls included grabbing the body of another player, using their voices to roar, chasing, grabbing and moving the body of another player, falling, making kicking motions, rolling around on the ground with another player, running, making large body motions, open handed slaps, jumping on objects, kicking objects, hitting self, holding hands, and use of a loud voice. The notable absences from the repertoire of rough and tumble play behaviours for the girls included banging into another player, making hitting motions, throwing objects, pulling other players, crashing body into an object, and wrestling.

Age Group

According to the participating educators, children will engage in rough and tumble play predominantly with their peers. While the children in this study would, at times, engage in the play with younger or older children, this was not the most common occurrence. This position was supported by the documentation during the observation portion of the study. The similar aged children participating in the study tended to engage in rough and tumble play with one another rather than with younger children.

However, at the settings which were observed as part of this study, the children were divided into differing age groupings as part of the daily program. For example, at circle time, the older children would be grouped together and the younger children would be grouped. This division of children into similar aged groups might have impacted with whom the children chose to play. The data from this study do not provide an indication of whether children chose to play with similar aged children because of differing levels of maturity in their play or because the choice of play partners was, to some degree, determined by the grouping of children for program elements such as circle time.

Educator and Parent Experiences Engaging in Rough and Tumble Play

The parents and educators were asked if they had engaged in rough and tumble play as children. Of the 27 participants, 16 parents and 11 educators, 21 (78%) indicated that they had engaged in rough and tumble play as children. Two parents (7%) commented that they did not rough and tumble play when they were children.

One parent and three educators (15%) stated that they did not recall if they had engaged in rough and tumble play as children.

The majority of adults participating in this study engaged in rough and tumble play when they were children. These memories indicate that rough and tumble play is a consistent form of play in childhood for these adults. The adults in this study identified that they engaged in a similar form of physical play with their parents as they are engaging in with their children. For the majority of the adults, in this study, rough and tumble play was a natural form of play for themselves and a natural form of play for their children.

Educator and Parent Thoughts About Their Childhood Rough and Tumble Play

The parents and educators were asked their thoughts on their rough and tumble play as children. For those who could recall their childhood play experiences, typical responses reflected the routine nature of the play. Rough and tumble play was, for the participating adults, a normal part of their childhood experiences. These participants reflected on rough and tumble play as an enjoyable part of their childhood interactions with their families and friends.

While the adults identified rough and tumble play as an enjoyable and natural part of their childhood, they expressed reservations on the play of their children. Guidelines such as play partners and the intensity of rough and tumble play were related by the adults. The majority of adults in this study thought rough and tumble play players needed to be monitored to ensure that all players are comfortable with the play. Equally, several adults indicated that R&T play for their children is a family

form of play rather than a peer form of play. This represents a change in expectation for the play from when the adults were children.

As children the adults remarked that rough and tumble play partners included peers and family. The adults also commented that their rough and tumble play often occurred while in the community without adult supervision. In contrast, these adults stressed the need for R&T play to be supervised to ensure the enjoyment and safety of all players. The views on rough and tumble play seem to change dependant upon whether an individual is the child player or the adult supervisor.

Anticipated Outcomes from the Inclusion of Rough and Tumble Play in Early Childhood Curricula

This study found that the parents, as reported during the interview, lack information about the inclusion of rough and tumble play in their child's setting. Of the 16 parents participating in this study, 56% were not aware of any guidelines for the inclusion of rough and tumble play in their child's daycare, 31% commented that they were aware of guidelines, and 13% stated that they were aware of some guidelines. The guidelines highlighted by the parents included the need for all the children to be safe so no child is harmed by the play. It might be that the inclusion of rough and tumble play in the early childhood setting is in need of parameters of expectation. Should an acceptable format for the inclusion of rough and tumble play be made, parents might support the play in their child's daycare.

In contrast to the parents, the educators interviewed revealed that 46% thought they knew what the guidelines for the inclusion of rough and tumble play might be, 27% thought their setting did have guidelines but were unsure of what these were,

and the remaining 27% indicated that they were unaware of any guidelines. As with the parents, the educators thought the guidelines would include the need for all the children to be safe, for no child to be hurt while at the setting.

The results from this study indicate that early childhood educators have not specifically planned for the inclusion of rough and tumble play at their setting. This lack of preparation for rough and tumble play was recognized by Lofdahl (2005) who conducted a study on educator thoughts on chaotic play. Lofdahl reported, "teachers do not plan chaotic play, and it is hardly ever discussed" (p. 203). The educators in this study articulated guidelines for physical interactions between children (e.g., children are not to physically harm one another) but have not specifically planned for the physical contact viewed as part of rough and tumble play. This may account for the discrepancies noted during the course of the study. For example, the children engage in rough and tumble play yet they articulate that the play is not allowed in their settings. Equally, while the educators monitor and place limits on the play, they are unsure of guidelines for managing rough and tumble play. These results indicate a need for a guideline or set of guidelines on what forms of rough and tumble play are acceptable in the childcare settings. The development of guidelines would aid in alleviating the confusion, by educators and children, over the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings.

However, when the parents and educators were asked the value of rough and tumble play, similar responses were noted. The participants stated that rough and tumble play holds value in the physical nature of the play both in terms of a means to promote physical fitness and as a venue for energy release. There was also

recognition that rough and tumble play holds a social dynamic which aids in the development of social competency. Children, according to these participants, may learn about self-control, compassion, boundaries, and their own abilities in relation to other players.

When the educators were asked what they thought children learned in rough and tumble play, the play was viewed as a mechanism for learning to make judgments. The educators stated that children learn to adapt their rough and tumble play depending upon the abilities of other players. Further, the educators indicated that children are also learning limits to their play as they ensure that all players are comfortable with the experience. Children, according to the educators, are learning about themselves through rough and tumble play. The children are learning how to respond to others, how others respond to them, and what their bodies can, or cannot, achieve.

Where Rough and Tumble Play Occurs

Rough and tumble play was observed both indoors and outdoors at both Setting 1 and Setting 3. At Setting 1, 13 episodes (45%) of rough and tumble play were observed indoors while 16 episodes (55%) were observed outdoors. At Setting 3, nine episodes (31%) of rough and tumble play were observed indoors while 20 episodes (69%) were observed outdoors.

All 17 participating children observed engaged in rough and tumble play behaviours. When asked about rough and tumble play, only 40% of the children responded that they do engage in the play at daycare. The remaining 60% of the children indicated that they do not participate in the play at daycare. The children

from Setting 1 commented that rough and tumble play occurs both indoors and outdoors, which was reflected in the observations made of their play. The children from Setting 3 commented that rough and tumble play only occurs outdoors, which did not reflect the observations made of their play.

All the educators commented that rough and tumble play occurs both indoors and outdoors. A majority of participating parents (75%) indicated that rough and tumble play occurs both indoors and outdoors. The remaining 25% of parents commented that rough and tumble play is limited to the outdoors.

The participating parents and educators responded that the rough and tumble play of the children is different when inside versus outside. The play is limited indoors due to a lack of physical space compared to larger areas outdoors for large body movements. Rough and tumble play is limited indoors by differing expectations on the part of the adults. The adults commented that rough and tumble play is better outdoors where there were fewer materials, or objects, that could result in injury.

The comments of the educators and parents on the limitations on rough and tumble play indoors were congruent with the data collected during the observations. The rough and tumble play of children indoors was less boisterous than outdoor R&T. While the outdoor R&T play involved running, chasing, rolling, use of loud voices, and large body movements, the indoor R&T play involved smaller body movements such as grabbing, making hitting motions, or crashing objects.

Of all rough and tumble play sequences observed, 38% occurred indoors. The number of indoor rough and tumble play events varied between the two observed settings. At Setting 1, 13 rough and tumble play sequences occurred indoors while 16

occurred outdoors. At Setting 3, 9 rough and tumble play sequences occurred indoors with 20 occurring outdoors. These calculations indicate that the rough and tumble play of young children might vary depending on the setting in which the children are enrolled. In this study, while 29 rough and tumble play sequences were observed at each setting, 31% occurred indoors at Setting 3 while 45% of the R&T play sequences occurred indoors at Setting 1.

The location of rough and tumble play at Setting 1 and Setting 3 show the most difference between the two settings. Both settings had approximately the same number of rough and tumble play behaviours recorded with 67 at Setting 1 and 65 at Setting 3. Further, the observations resulted in equal numbers of rough and tumble play sequences with 29 sequences recorded at each setting. However, the variation noted between Setting 1 and Setting 3 is the percentage of indoor versus outdoor rough and tumble play. While the children at Setting 1 divided their rough and tumble play relatively evenly between indoors and outdoors, the children at Setting 3 engaged in the play primarily outdoors. This difference in the primary location of the rough and tumble play of the children may be due to the influence of the educators within the settings. It might be that the educators at Setting 3 discourage R&T indoors to a greater extent than the educators at Setting 1.

The educators and parents were asked about their children's rough and tumble play at home. The play of children in their homes was congruent with the dynamics of the play at daycare. A total of 81% of the parents, and 83% of educators, indicated that their children engage in rough and tumble play at home. The remaining 19% of parents, and 17% of educators, stated that their children do not engage in rough and

tumble play at home due to a lack of adult or peer play partners. This indicates that participation in rough and tumble play is dependant upon access to play partners.

Aggression and Rough and Tumble Play

One parent commented that rough and tumble play comes out of aggression. The remaining 15 parents viewed aggression as a separate issue from rough and tumble play. For these parents rough and tumble play and aggression are differentiated by the intent of the players. Aggression was viewed as an emotional response of anger where rough and tumble play was viewed as an enjoyable form of play. The parents, like the educators, stated that they stop any play that appears to be aggressive in nature.

The educators commented in a manner similar to the parents. The rough and tumble play was differentiated by the intent of the play where one player is displaying anger while the other player is upset. Educators expressed a common response of stopping any play that is not enjoyable for all participants or where a player is being hurt. The parents were congruent with this element of stopping any play with elements of aggression.

Both parents and educators commented on the lack of the display of the cheerful play face in guiding their determinations of whether the play is aggressive in nature. The adults in this study noted the emotional displays of the children, both physically and verbally, as indicators of aggressive behaviour. The child who is expressing anger verbally or using force in an effort to hurt was seen as being aggressive. Equally, the child who ceases to smile is viewed as no longer enjoying the activity and as a child who may become aggressive in response. The non-verbal and

verbal expressions of a child were considered by the adults as indicators of aggression.

Through the course of this study, the adults were not observed intervening in any interaction between two or more children due to aggressive behaviours. Therefore, the basis for such intervention can not be ascertained as being congruent with, or incongruent with, the comments of these adults.

Bullying

This research showed that bullying was viewed by parents and educators as a non-issue within the social domain of young children. The adults viewed bullying as something the children have yet to encounter as bullying was viewed as an issue for older children. The children who participated in this study will be moving into the public school system. According to Beran and Tutty (2002), 40% of all children will experience bullying during their first three years of public school. This indicates that while adults may be reluctant to include bullying in descriptors of young children, the children will soon be moving into a domain in which bullying is a recognized concern. This holds implications for prevention programs (e.g., Brookman, 1999; Ministry of Education and the Ministry of the Attorney General, 1999; Rigby, 1998, 2001) seeking to aid schools in developing climates free from bullying.

Rather than addressing an issue that is occurring, programs might have greater impact were they applied to younger children. It might be more influential to apply anti-bullying programs to children in the year prior to entry into the public school system. Slaby, Roedell, Arezzo, and Hendrix (1995) assembled tools for educators helping children with violent behaviours in preschool programs. The text includes

tools and techniques to address both the aggressor and victims of the aggression. However, while the text addresses methods for aid educators in managing aggression, the text does not focus on assisting children in managing future bullying experiences.

Of the participating adults in this study, 25% of the parents and 55% of the educators commented that they are preparing the children for the possibility of bullying by advising the children to seek help should bullying occur. These adults also commented that they are more apt to step in sooner should any form of social interaction appear to be threatening in nature for one of the players.

Observational Data

The observations of the childcare settings resulted in the recording of 116 incidents of rough and tumble play. The play behaviours of the participating children were recorded along with the responses of the educators. Twenty-seven distinct play behaviours were observed (see Table 5 on page 111). Previous research (Pellegrini & Smith, 1998; Reed & Brown, 2000) identified eight distinct play behaviours as components of rough and tumble play. The components identified by Pellegrini and Smith included running, climbing, chasing, and play fighting. The components of rough and tumble play identified by Reed and Brown included those detailed by Pellegrini and Smith as well as fleeing, wrestling, open-handed slaps, and falling. The data collected within this study included the display of each of these play behaviours except climbing.

Rough and Tumble Play Elements Not Observed

Throughout the study, no displays of play fighting were observed. Elements of fighting behaviours were observed including making kicking motions and hitting

motions. However, none of the participating children engaged in a play fight during the course of observations for this study. The elements for play fighting, such as kicking motions and hitting motions were observed. However, these R&T play behaviours were not observed together during play fighting in this study.

In addition to play fighting, climbing was not recorded as an element of rough and tumble play within this study. In this study, the climbing opportunities for the children were limited to the use of composite structures in the outdoor play space. The children participating in this study used these structures on a limited basis although the children had access to the structure for the duration of their outdoor play time (approximately 90 minutes in the morning and 90 minutes in the afternoon).

It may be that the inclusion of a climbing structure within the daily environment of the participating children resulted in differing use of the apparatus by the participants. The educators may have introduced rules for play on the structure. It might also be that the children have mastered the climbing challenges of the structure and no longer spend significant periods of time on these structures. Children, in this study, would utilize the climber but did not engage in climbing as a part of their rough and tumble play.

Observed Rough and Tumble Play Elements

Excluding climbing and play fighting, each of the play behaviours described by Pellegrini and Smith and by Reed and Brown were observed during the course of this study. In addition, unlike previous research, twenty-one supplementary rough and tumble play behaviours were observed. These behaviours were: grabbing the body of another player, grabbing and moving the body of another player, pushing another

player, pulling another player, banging their body into the body of another player, banging their body into a fixed object, rolling on the ground with another player, rolling around on the ground on their own, holding hands, use of a loud voice, use of the voice as a roar, making hitting motions, making hitting motions while holding an object, hitting oneself, making large body motions, jumping on an object, kicking an object, throwing an object, crashing their body into an object, and making crashing motions with a held object.

Display of the Play Face

The display of the play face (Reed & Brown, 2000) was the most common element within the rough and tumble play observed within this study. The children in all incidents of rough and tumble play were displaying the play face of a cheerful expression. Some children would laugh and smile when engaging in the rough and tumble play events observed as part of this study.

The display of the cheerful play face was one of the distinguishing features described by some educators in this study in determining if play is aggressive in nature. The educators commented that they determine their response to the play based on the appearance of enjoyment by the players. The play face, for educators, might be the most important cue for determining playful rough and tumble from possibly aggressive interactions.

Early Childhood Education Training and Rough and Tumble Play

Early childhood educators participate in training programs as part of the process to become licensed to work with young children in licensed settings. Training

programs may utilize a variety of supportive materials, such as text books, for the purpose of conveying information about early childhood education and care.

A review of early childhood education text books was undertaken to determine the degree to which rough and tumble play is included. Eight textbooks were included in the review, including two utilized by the post-secondary institutions of which two of the external experts are faculty (i.e., Craig, Kermis, & Digdon, 1998; Eliason & Jenkins, 2003; Gordon & Williams-Browne, 1996; Hendrick, 2001; Kaiser & Rasminsky, 2003; Mayfield, 2001; Prochner & Howe, 2000; Reynolds, 2001). Five of the eight texts included rough and tumble play.

The text by Craig, Kermis, and Digdon includes a small section on rough and tumble play. The authors recognized that R&T play is, at times, misinterpreted when stating

parents and teachers frequently criticize and try to eliminate the kind of rough-and-tumble mock-fighting play of which young children are quite fond. This is usually an attempt to reduce the amount of aggression and real fighting among children. But rough-and-tumble play is play-fighting, not real fighting. (pp.341-342)

This focus on clarifying R&T play is also demonstrated in the text by Mayfield. Here rough and tumble play is included in a section titled, "Issues in Play" and is described as controversial due to concerns about the play becoming aggressive. The text also details that, "rough and tumble play is playful, non-aggressive, and normal" (p. 296).

In two of the reviewed texts, rough and tumble play was placed within sections on supervision. The Kaiser and Rasminsky text places rough and tumble play in a chapter on bullying. The half-page of information details the role of R&T play as, "a normal activity that at one time probably helped to develop fighting skills and now

perhaps plays a part in working out the dominance relationships in a group” (p. 244). The second text, by Reynolds, highlights the need to supervise R&T play while also stating that R&T play is often forbidden in child care centres. Reynolds suggests that the female dominated environments are not designed to allow for R&T play. This supports the position of Reed and Brown (2000) that rough and tumble play is typically limited in environments that are female dominant such as early childhood settings.

The Hendrick text includes a chapter on managing aggression. The statement, “It’s difficult sometimes to decide when it’s rough-and-tumble and when someone’s likely to get hurt” (p.307) is placed under a photo of two boys engaging in what may be interpreted as rough and tumble play or aggression; the facial expressions are not visible in the photo. The Gordon and Williams-Browne text includes a statement about roughhousing, “Roughhousing and aggression have distinctly different patterns of behavior and should be recognized as such” (p.448). However, the distinctions between the patterns of behaviour are not detailed within the text. Rather, a definition of roughhousing is included near the end of the text as, “rough and disorderly, but playful, behavior” (p. 545).

While some early childhood education textbooks include limited discussions of rough and tumble play, early childhood websites include less information. A review of websites for the National Association for the Education of Young Children, Canadian Association for Young Children, Canadian Child Care Federation, the Association for Childhood Education International, and the International Play Association including the Canadian Association for the Child’s Right to Play and the

American Association for the Child's Right to Play revealed little information on rough and tumble play. Three sites included some information on rough and tumble play; no position papers on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings were recovered.

One web site, for the Canadian Child Care Federation (2001), included an article which focuses on a discussion by educators on differences in the play of boys and girls. Within the article it was detailed that educators identified rough and tumble play as boy play and recommended that educators refrain from utilizing gender-biased resource books and follow the play of children when developing curriculum. However, while the article identified rough and tumble play as boy play, the results from this study indicate that while boys participate in the play to a greater extent than girls, both boys and girls partake in R&T play. The two other sites, for the Association for Childhood Education International and the National Association for the Education of Young Children, referred educators to research that was not accessible via the website.

This review of selected early childhood education texts and websites demonstrated a general lack of discussion of rough and tumble play. Where R&T play is discussed, it is typically presented as a behaviour needing supervision. It appears that rough and tumble play, in these texts, is as Pellegrini and Smith (1998) state, "a neglected aspect of play" (p. 577), and one that, "deserves greater attention from psychologists and educators" (p. 592).

Children's Picture Books and Rough and Tumble Play

As textbooks are utilized in the training of early childhood educators, so picture books are utilized by educators and parents in providing literacy experiences for young children. Shelves of books in libraries and bookstores include storylines on going to daycare, gardens at springtime, potty training, and so forth. However, as with educator textbooks, there is a similar lack of representation of rough and tumble play in children's picture books. While a large bookstore has a holding of hundreds of different children's books, the researcher, in reviewing holdings at one such bookstore, could identify only two that had elements of rough and tumble play within the storyline.

The first storybook by Munsch (2001) included a young girl who climbs a variety of items including a refrigerator, chest of drawers, and a tree. The young girl is shown falling from each to which the father or mother instructs her, "Be careful! Don't climb!" (p. 4). The second storybook by Reid (1997), includes boys and girls engaging in rough and tumble play as they run, chase, jump, and spin. The storyline includes phrases such as, "the night air invites us to enter the race – a galloping wide-open heart-thumping chase! Lopsided cartwheels collide in the air. We all fall down giddy with grass in our hair" (p. 26).

A review of the holdings, by the researcher and the children's librarian, at the local public library resulted in five storybooks that had elements of rough and tumble play within the storyline. The first by Ehrlich (2002) follows a toddler playing a chasing game with his mother who also tickled and squeezed the young boy. The second by Jonell (2000) illustrates a father and son rough and tumble playing as they

pretend to be bears. At one point in the story the boy asks his father to stop which the father does with, “we’ll stop. Let’s have a hug” (p. 21). After a hug, the young boy then initiates a continuation of the rough and tumble play at the conclusion of the story. Three additional storybooks, by McBratney (1996), Silverman (2000), and Wells (2001), show rough and tumble play behaviours in the storyline. McBratney illustrates a caterpillar pillow fight, Silverman shows two children leaping, somersaulting, and climbing, and Wells includes pushing, shoving, and cuddling between father and son.

This limited representation of rough and tumble play in printed materials for young children might inadvertently add to the mystique, or lack of understanding, surrounding the play. It might be that increased and accurate representation of rough and tumble play in print will aid in the play becoming more understood and accepted as a relatively common form of play for young children.

Parenting Resources and Rough and Tumble Play

Parent information is available through a variety of formats such as public libraries, local bookstores, and the internet. These three avenues which target parents seeking information were reviewed to determine the representation of rough and tumble play.

The researcher reviewed the holdings at the public library and two local bookstores. The focus for the review of holdings was parent education and general information. Eight titles were reviewed (two editions of one title) for their content on rough and tumble play. Of the nine books reviewed, four referred to rough and tumble play.

Blackthorn (2004) edited a guide to successful parenting, Coloroso (2001) wrote of the results of caring parenting, Samalin (2003) provided parents with information on loving children without spoiling children, and Siegel and Hartzell (2003) wrote of parenting to build a child's character. None of these books addressed rough and tumble play. Another popular book, *Dr. Spock's Baby and Child Care* (Needlman, 2004) failed to include rough and tumble play. However, while the most recent version (8th ed.) did not include rough and tumble play, the previous edition included comments on roughhousing in a section on aggression. In this seventh edition, Spock and Parker (1998) state, "there may be arguments and roughhousing, but real fights are relatively infrequent" (p. 498).

In addition to this seventh edition of Spock's title, three other books were found to include information on rough and tumble play for parents. Elium and Elium (2004) noted that rough and tumble play serves as a means for fathers and sons to connect. In contrast, Davis and Keyser (1997) stated that, "wrestling, tickling, and chasing can become scary for young children" (p. 192). In contrast, Pollack (1999), in a book focused on parenting boys, noted that,

research shows that such father play, or enthrallment, has many developmental benefits because it forces children – and this is especially significant for young boys – to learn to regulate and tolerate their feelings . . . to identify these feelings more clearly, and to adapt to a variety of complex social situations. (p. 114)

The review of parenting information on the internet revealed a wide range of materials available. Parents are invited to make purchases, subscribe to newsletters, and participate in polls. However, rough and tumble play was found on only one site. An article by Partridge (March, 2005) in *Today's Parent* magazine was found on-line.

This article discussed injuries amongst children and suggested that the dominance of injuries to boys could be attributed in part to their rough and tumble play. No other reviewed web sites (including Parenting, UNICEF, Save the Children, Early Childhood Care and Development and Dads Can) offered information related to rough and tumble play.

Future Research

Curricular Structure

While one goal for this study was to explore rough and tumble play within the context of varied early childhood education settings with varied structural levels, this element of the study was not completed. The impact of the curricula of differing structural levels on the play behaviours displayed by the children in care is in need of investigation in future research. Byers (1998) identified the need to understand how social institutions influence behaviour. Equally, there is a need to investigate how the display of R&T play influences the institution and what curricula is implemented in early childhood settings.

Hedin, Ekholm, and Andersson's (1997) study focused on work and childrearing climates and showed that there was a link between the climate of the centre and children's behaviour. The results of the study, "suggest that it is important to focus on actual staff behavior and their interpersonal relations with children during their daily work, rather than focusing only on cognitive, organizational, and management strategies" (p. 187). Similarly, the philosophical foundations of the curricular structure of a setting might impact on the children's rough and tumble play.

Time of Year

The observations for this study were conducted during May and June. The children who participated in the study had been enrolled at their settings for at least 2 months with a mean enrollment of 19.125 months. Thus, the children were experienced players with one another. Had the study been conducted during a different time of the year, such as September and October, the results might have been different as the children might have yet to establish their play patterns with each other.

The time of the year in which this study occurred might have had an influence on the resulting data due to the lack of weather constraints. The months in which the observations were conducted were predominantly sunny and warm. There were no climatic barriers to the outdoor play experiences of the children. Had the study been conducted during months with typically inclement weather, such as January and February, the resulting data might have been different due to limited amounts of play outdoors.

This study needs to be replicated during differing times of the year in order to gain understanding of the degree to which inclement weather impacts upon the rough and tumble play of young children. A longitudinal study would aid in the investigation of how differing weather impacts upon R&T play. Further, this study needs to be replicated with groupings of children who reflect different social dynamics, such as players who are new to one another, than the children who participated in this study.

Cultural Groups

The educators and families participating in this study were predominantly Caucasian with English as their primary language. This limit to the diversity of the population included in this study serves as a barrier to understanding rough and tumble play in early childhood settings. It may be that children, educators, and parents from other cultural groups hold different thoughts on rough and tumble play. Given that the managers in this study identified that they modify the program presented in their settings according to the clientele, it may be that differing cultural groups would influence the inclusion, or exclusion, of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings.

Likewise, the culture background of educators is in need of consideration. Because the educators in this study identified that there were limited guidelines for rough and tumble play, the impact of differing cultural backgrounds of educators may influence the degree to which rough and tumble play is included, or not included, in early childhood programs.

The investigation of rough and tumble play among a variety of cultural groups is in need of exploration. Children participate in a variety of early childhood programs in a variety of cultural environments. The investigation of R&T play in other countries, in other cultures would aid in determining the universality of the play. It may, or may not be, that rough and tumble play would be viewed in ways similar to those revealed in this study, by members of other cultural groups. Equally, it may, or may not be, that the rough and tumble play exhibited by children in other cultures would be similar to the play behaviours observed as part of this study.

Alternative Child Care Environments

The investigation of rough and tumble play within preschool settings is in need of exploration. It may be that children who participate in half-day programs display differing rough and tumble play behaviours than those included in this study. Equally, children who do not participate in early childhood programs need to be included in a future study. The display of rough and tumble play by children enrolled in full day, half day, or no form of care needs to be examined in order to ascertain the impact of the time spent in formal programs.

Home Environments

The participants in this study detailed differences in the acceptance of rough and tumble play within the home and early childhood environments. The participants within this study suggested that rough and tumble play is an activity for the home environment, not the school.

This study addressed the thoughts of the participants on the rough and tumble play of children at home in addition to the recollections of the adults on their own rough and tumble play experiences. The reminiscences of the adults were home and community rooted, not early childhood, or school based. When asked where they engaged in rough and tumble play when they were children, adults recalled R&T play either within the home with their family members or within the neighbourhood with peers. The adults did not recall engaging in rough and tumble play in an early childhood environment or at their elementary school.

The recollections of the adults may reflect the limitations of their memories. It may be that the adults were rough and tumble players in early childhood

environments but were unable to recollect these play experiences during the course of this study. However, ultimately, rough and tumble play is, for the participants within this study, more acceptable within the home than at daycare. Therefore, it would be valuable to research the rough and tumble play behaviours of children in their homes and neighbourhoods.

According to some parents and children, rough and tumble play is not appropriate for early childhood settings. These participants did comment that they do engage in rough and tumble play at home, that R&T play is more appropriate at home. Further, some parents also commented on the rough and tumble play their children engage in with children from outside the early childhood setting. The participating educators and parents also made regular reference to their childhood rough and tumble play experiences with family and neighbours.

These results highlight an important discrepancy in the thoughts of these participants on where rough and tumble play is acceptable. The participants in this study indicated that rough and tumble play is acceptable play behaviour at home but not acceptable for early childhood settings. This discrepancy is in need of further investigation in order to further understand how play behaviours of young children vary in how they are accepted according to the environment or setting of the behaviour.

The participants were clearly stating that they engage in rough and tumble play at home with family members and with neighbours outside of the early childhood setting. As the participants in this study were articulating where they engage in rough and tumble play, it is only prudent to follow their lead. A study of

the rough and tumble play of young children with family members and neighbourhood peers might bring light to further elements of the play that were not displayed during the course of this study.

Home Environments and Family Composition

The participants in this study identified that rough and tumble play often occurs at home between a parent and a child, or children. Equally, the participants conveyed that rough and tumble play is more typically a male form of play. There was a clear identification in this study that boys engage in R&T play more than girls. In addition, the participants typically described play with a male adult when speaking of the rough and tumble play between an adult and a child.

It would be beneficial to explore the rough and tumble play within homes with varied family structures. There may be significant differences in the rough and tumble play within a home with a father and a home without a father. There may also be differences between homes with female children or with male children. The differing play behaviours of children within the context of the gender pairings of parents and children is in need of further research in order to understand further the role of R&T play in family dynamics and the impact of family dynamics on rough and tumble play.

Rough and Tumble Stages

Given that the young children participating in this study displayed rough and tumble play behaviours not identified in previous studies involving school-aged children, it may be that rough and tumble play is an evolving form of play. It may be that children move into more, or less, complex rough and tumble play behaviours as

they mature. It might be that although the young children observed as part of this study exhibit some elements of more sophisticated rough and tumble play, sophistication of the play has yet to be developed.

According to Piaget (1951), young children learn the elements of play behaviours as they mature cognitively. Reed and Brown (2000) comment that rough and tumble play moves through phases of development in similar ways to other forms of play. Within Piaget's framework the children observed within this study could be exhibiting rough and tumble play in the symbolic play stage of development. The children would then move to the games with rules stage as their cognitive skills develop. For example, the children in this study displayed many of the R&T play behaviours, such as chasing, pushing, kicking, grabbing, and running, observed by Reed and Brown (2000) during the R&T games of older children.

It may be that the children observed by Reed and Brown (2000) engaging in a more sophisticated R&T game with rules were, at a younger age, displaying less sophisticated rough and tumble play behaviours similar to the younger children in this study. It might also be that the young children observed in less sophisticated rough and tumble play in early childhood settings will be displaying more sophisticated R&T play with rules when they are older. The study by Reed and Brown describes a sophisticated rough and tumble game called Smear which seven boys aged 6 through 9 had developed. These boys had created a rough and tumble game with defined rules to govern their play which is representative of Piaget's concrete operations stage of cognitive development.

It might be that the children in this study are exhibiting a preoperational level of play which, given a year or two, would develop into the concrete operational stage of rough and tumble play identified in the study by Reed and Brown (2000). A longitudinal study of rough and tumble players might answer the question of how rough and tumble play evolves, or changes, over time.

While Pellegrini (1991) conducted a longitudinal study, the focus was on the rough and tumble play of popular and rejected children. The observation of a cohort of typical boys and girls as they move through early childhood settings and elementary school environments would serve to provide an understanding of how rough and tumble play develops and changes with the growth and development of typical children.

Methodological Considerations

The exploratory methods used in this study proved effective due to the research questions utilized and the use of observations. However, there were limitations to the study due to the exploratory method. The results of this study were limited to the accuracy of the data collected through self-reports. Equally, the results may have been influenced by the researcher effect on participants. Further, the data are generalizable only to the participants of this study and not to other populations.

There were three distinct disadvantages with the use of the exploratory research methods utilized within this study. First, the social desirability effect may have impacted upon the remarks of the participants. As Cozby (1985) noted, "The social desirability response set leads the individual to answer in the most socially acceptable way – the way he [*sic*] thinks most people respond or the way that reflects

most favorably on him” (p. 124). The participating educators were aware of the focus of the study and would, at times, modify their behaviour. For example, in Setting 3 an educator would look over to the researcher when an episode of rough and tumble play was being displayed by the children. It appeared that the educator was displaying a heightened awareness of the behaviour focused on by the researcher for this study.

The consistent awareness of the researcher within the settings may have influenced the typical behaviours of the children and educators. The use of a two-way mirror or videotaping via a surveillance type of system may have resulted in differing, more naturalistic, behaviours being observed. Equally, the face-to-face interview was a personal experience for the participants and they may have responded in such a way as to gain favor or to provide information that is not entirely true in an effort to please the researcher.

Second, the personal bias of the researcher may have played an important role. The desire on the part of the researcher to achieve a predetermined result, such as witnessing rough and tumble play events, may have impacted on the responses and behaviours of the participants. The unconscious actions and expressions of the researcher may have provided clues to the participants of favorable responses. Again, the use of a less intrusive data gathering method such as a two-way mirror may have resulted in differing data.

Third, the personal nature of this form of study limits the generalizability of the results to other populations. The results from this type of research are reflective of the specific sample included in the study. However, the results might indicate trends outside the specific population included in this study. Further studies that replicate the

methods employed here are required to validate the emerging trends identified within this study. Replication of the study can be difficult because of the specifics of the locations, participants, and interviewer style. Nevertheless, further replication of this study under a variety of conditions is required prior to the results of this study being generalized to broader populations.

Encountered Complications

The process of completing the data collection for this study did result in some unexpected barriers or complications. Fewer participants were recruited to be part of this study than the original design had called for. This complication for this study is addressed in an effort to bring these limitations to light in an effort to encourage participation in future research.

Limited Participation

The limited participation of individuals from additional settings was a barrier to the completion of the intended study. This limitation is in need of further exploration. It is a fundamental requirement that researchers gain understanding of why educators are reluctant to participate in front line research. It may be that educators are inexperienced with participation in research and they might feel exposed or vulnerable with a researcher in their place of employment. It might also be that the educators are simply overworked and unable to accept a further requirement of time and energy. In either situation, increased support for educators and their vital role in research is required. Sharing the role of research in the development of a unique body of knowledge during educator training might assist educators in gaining a sense of comfort with the idea of being part of a study.

The inclusion of a unique body of knowledge is a tenet of professional status of early childhood education. As stated by Kelly (1990), “all professions have a body of knowledge which is essential to provide services to clients” (p. 170). Kelly adds, “professionalizing requires top quality literature be developed by those in the field” (p. 175). Therefore, it would be prudent for educators to embrace opportunities to support the augmentation of a professional body of knowledge developed within settings providing front line service delivery. The limited response of the settings contacted for participation in this study highlights the need for increased advocacy for support for the professionalization of the field of early childhood education.

Ethical Requirements

For Setting 4, the participation of families may have been limited by the informed consent procedures (see Appendix D). The content and structure of the informed consent forms required by the University of Victoria Human Research Ethics Committee may have served as a limitation to the participation of some families in this study.

As detailed in Chapter 4, the manager from Setting 4 indicated that the information contained in the ethics forms might have been a limitation in the recruitment of families for participation in the study. The manager asserted, “I think your information was wonderful but very dense. And two pages of it, tons to read”. The manager indicated that the families have displayed difficulties with written information when noting, “why can’t we get rid of head lice if we sent home a lovely package. A very short letter with the steps on it and a couple of different methods, and we still have it”.

The literacy levels of the families targeted for participation in this study may have served as another barrier to participation. The details required to be conveyed to participants through informed consent forms (see Appendix D) require a level of literacy that, according to one manager in this study, might have been beyond the capability of some parents. While there is an ethical need to disclose fully all elements of a research study, there is also a need for targeted participants to be able to comprehend the information. The ethical requirements for informed consent need to be adaptable and flexible to meet the literacy levels of targeted participants. It is possible that had the informed consent forms utilized in this study been adapted to reach a broader range of levels of literacy, there may have been an increased interest among targeted participants.

Curricular Guidelines

There is a need for development and discussion of curricular guidelines for rough and tumble play in settings. While rough and tumble play was an element of the play environment both in the settings and in the homes of the children in this study, no specific guidelines for the parents or educators in this study have been established. The establishment of guidelines for the early childhood community would aid in establishing understanding of R&T play. Guidelines for rough and tumble play can form a basis for discussion and understanding of the play by the educators and parents encountering R&T play.

The lack of discussion of rough and tumble play also exists in the regulations which govern the operations of a licensed child care facility in British Columbia. The Province of British Columbia Community Care Facility Act (2000b) includes

guidelines for elements such as the health of staff, requirements for play materials and equipment, and staff to child ratios. However, a schedule one page in length guides the standards of a program.

The program standards, as regulated by the Province of British Columbia (2000b), includes a section on physical development within Schedule D of the Act. Here the regulated guidelines for physical development includes, “provide indoor and outdoor activities that encourage the development of large and small muscle skills appropriate to each child’s level of development.” (p. 35). No other reference to physical play is provided. An organization in authority to regulate childcare programs should be addressing the activities of children while in care and providing guidance on the inclusion, or exclusion, of R&T play to educators.

The lack of attention rough and tumble play receives may be due to the relatively limited literature on the topic from researchers (Reed & Brown, 2000). In this case, this study serves to expand the current body of knowledge about rough and tumble play and assist in the process of according the play attention at the educational and regulatory levels.

Conclusion

This study explored the rough and tumble play of young children in early childhood settings. The study focused on gaining an understanding of how early childhood educators, parents, and young children interpret rough and tumble play. Equally, the extent to which rough and tumble play is included, or not included in early childhood settings was examined.

This study demonstrates that young children are engaging in rough and tumble play both at home and in their early childhood settings. Both boys and girls participating in this study engaged in a variety of rough and tumble play behaviours. Twenty-seven distinct rough and tumble play behaviours were exhibited during the observation period. Behaviours included components that had been identified as rough and tumble play in previous research and also additional behaviours that were not previously identified as elements of rough and tumble play. These elements might be preoperational forms of rough and tumble play.

The parents and educators in this study stated that the display of rough and tumble play behaviours is a typical part of childhood. These participants recalled positive experiences as rough and tumble players when they were children and positive experiences engaging in rough and tumble play with their own children. Results of the interviews of adults indicate that there is value in rough and tumble play; the play needs to be supervised; the play is more acceptable at home rather than at daycare; adults are unaware of formal policies or guidelines for the play; and they reject the notion that the play may be linked to aggressive behaviour.

Results of the interviews with children indicate that adults place restrictions on the play; it is important that no one is hurt; there are gender differences; and while all the children were observed engaged in the play, 60% of the children stated that they do not engage in rough and tumble play at daycare. The children articulated that engaging in rough and tumble play was not acceptable in their early childhood settings.

The results of this study have implications for the understanding of child development. It may be that rough and tumble play evolves as children age; that children move into more, or less, complex play behaviours as they mature. This study also highlights implications for early childhood education. The parents and educators in this study conceded a lack of knowledge about rough and tumble play. This finding emphasizes the need for the development of teacher and parent education resources on rough and tumble play.

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Appendix A

Time Line

Duration of Study: April 22, 2003 through August 21, 2003

Contact with, and interviews of, External Experts:

April 22, 2003 through May 15, 2003

Contact with Settings and Signing of Informed Consent Forms:

May 12, 2003 through May 23, 2003

Observation Schedule: May 26, 2003 through June 20, 2003

Schedule for Interviews of Managers, Educators, Children and Parents:

June 2, 2003 through July 31, 2003

Appendix B

Descriptors of Setting Structure

The descriptors detailed for the direct-instructional, developmental-interactionist, and the traditional nursery school are provided to serve as a means for the initiation of discussion on the structure of individual settings.

Direct-Instructional: rigid schedule, focus on language and the acquisition of cognitive tasks (e.g., printing one's name), educator directed activities rather than child initiated, product orientated, pre-set fixed programming

Developmental-Interactionist: regular schedule that has room for variance, the inclusion of both free-play and more formal learning experiences, and both child and educator directed activities, educators provide opportunities for children to make choices within the setting, use of learning through themes

Traditional Nursery School: flexible schedule, centered on free-play experiences, focus social relationships and child directed activities, educators follow the lead of the children when planning activities, flexibility in daily program, educators are supportive of the autonomy of children in making choices



Direct-
Instructional

Developmental-
Interactionist

Traditional
Nursery School

Appendix C

Observation Sheet

Setting: _____ Location: _____

Date: _____ Time: _____

Rough and Tumble Play Criteria: running, climbing, chasing, play fighting,
fleeing, wrestling, falling, open-handed slaps, display of the play face

Children ~ BehaviourEducator ~ Behaviour

Appendix D

Informed Consent Form for Early Childhood Educators

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play that is being conducted by Michelle Tannock. Michelle Tannock is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions at 592-4515 or at mtannock@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margie Mayfield. You may contact my supervisor at 721-7849 or at mayfield@uvic.ca.

The purpose of this research project is to determine the thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. Research of this type is important because with increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play, educators of young children may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the rough and tumble play of young children.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the early childhood community. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include observations and an interview.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you including; (1) having the activities of the participating children and educators during 10 one-hour observations of your program recorded via written notes; (2) participating in a review of the notes taken by the researcher during the 10 observation sessions to determine that they are accurate representations of the observations; (3) participating in an interview that should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. Personal interviews will be audio-recorded, with your permission, and written notes will be taken for telephone interviews for later transcription. The review of the notes taken by the researcher during the 10 observation sessions will occur at the immediate conclusion of each observation session. The interview will be held at a time of convenience to you, either during your work time or at a time outside of your work hours.

The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play. You might also find that your participation in this research will provide additional insight into the thoughts on rough and tumble play and, therefore, serve as a means for discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used in the analysis. Even if the managers and owners of your setting agree to the inclusion of the setting in the study, you still hold the right not to participate and may still withdraw at any time without consequences.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, your name will not appear on any part of the data, the research results, or in any written or oral discussions of the study. There is an anticipated risk to you by participating in this research. Your anonymity is not fully protected because your managers will know who participated and who did not. Risks to your employment or job security by participating in the study, particularly if negative things are discovered, will be limited by the use of anonymity. At no time will your name or any identifying descriptors of you appear in connection with the data. Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all data will be shredded and then burned.

Other planned uses of this data include completion of the research dissertation, articles for publication, and in workshop presentations. Data from this study will be disposed of upon completion of the oral defense and submission of the final version of the dissertation.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: (1) a two-page summary of the study will be forwarded to you in a sealed envelope via your participating setting in October 2003; (2) presentation of the results in a dissertation; (3) published articles.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your interview to be audio-taped by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
----------------------------	------------------	-------------

A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Informed Consent Form for Parents

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play that is being conducted by Michelle Tannock. Michelle Tannock is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions at 592-4515 or at mtannock@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margie Mayfield. You may contact my supervisor at 721-7849 or at mayfield@uvic.ca.

The purpose of this research project is to determine the thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. Research of this type is important because with increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play, educators of young children may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the rough and tumble play of young children.

You and your child are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the early childhood community. The design of this research study requires that both the parent and child participate. Parents will not be accepted as participants without the participation of their child and children will not be accepted as participants without the participation of their parent. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include an interview.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you including; (1) having the activities of the participating children and educators in your child's child care setting during 10 one-hour observations recorded via written notes; (2) participating in an interview that should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. Personal interviews will be audio-recorded, with your permission, and written notes will be taken for telephone interviews for later transcription. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play. You might also find that your participation in this research will provide additional insight into the thoughts on rough and tumble play and, therefore, serve as a means for discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play.

Should you decide not to participate, your child will engage in the typical activities of the setting while participating children are participating in the observation sessions and group interview sessions.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used in the analysis.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, your name will not appear on any part of the data, the research results, or in any written or oral discussions of the study. Your confidentiality and

the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all data will be shredded and then burned. Children's anonymity cannot be fully protected because educators and managers of your setting will know which children participated. In addition, children will be doing group interviews so other children will be aware of their participation or non-participation and who said what.

Other planned uses of this data include completion of the research dissertation, articles for publication, and in workshop presentations. Data from this study will be disposed of upon completion of the oral defense and submission of the final version of the dissertation.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: (1) a two-page summary of the study will be forwarded to you in a sealed envelope via your participating setting in October 2003; (2) presentation of the results in a dissertation; (3) published articles.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your interview to be audio-taped by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Informed Consent Form for Managers of Settings

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play that is being conducted by Michelle Tannock. Michelle Tannock is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions at 592-4515 or at mtannock@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margie Mayfield. You may contact my supervisor at 721-7849 or at mayfield@uvic.ca.

The purpose of this research project is to determine the thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. Research of this type is important because with increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play, educators of young children may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the rough and tumble play of young children.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the early childhood community. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include the completion of descriptors of setting structure chart and a discussion of how you determined how you would complete the chart.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you including discussing the structure of your setting with the researcher utilizing the Descriptors of Setting Structure chart (attached to this Informed Consent Form) that should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. This discussion with the researcher will be audio-recorded, with your permission, for later transcription. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play. You might also find that your participation in this research will provide additional insight into thoughts on rough and tumble play and, therefore, serve as a means for discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used in the analysis. The educators will be informed that even if the managers and owners of their setting agree to the inclusion of the setting in the study, they will still hold the right not to participate and may still withdraw at any time without consequences. The managers and owners should not pressure any individual educator or family to participate in this study.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, your name will not appear on any part of the data, the research results, or in any written or oral discussions of the study. Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all data will be shredded and then burned. Children's anonymity cannot be fully protected because educators and managers

within your setting will know which children participated. In addition, children will be doing group interviews so other children will be aware of their participation or non-participation and who said what. Further, educators' anonymity is not fully protected because managers will know who participated and who did not.

Other planned uses of this data include completion of the research dissertation, articles for publication, and in workshop presentations. Data from this study will be disposed of upon completion of the oral defense and submission of the final version of the dissertation.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: (1) a two-page summary of the study will be forwarded to you in a sealed envelope via your participating setting in October 2003; (2) presentation of the results in a dissertation; (3) published articles.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your interview to be audio-taped by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

[Appendix B was attached here]

Informed Assent Form for Children

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

My name is Michelle Tannock. I am a student at the University of Victoria and I'm interested in what kids at daycare think about rough and tumble play. I'm also interested in what your parents and teachers think about rough and tumble play. It is important to know what you think because I want to know more about what kids and their parents and teachers think about rough and tumble play at daycare.

If you agree, I would really like you to be part of my research on rough and tumble play. Research means that I have questions and I am finding ways to answer my questions. Once I find the answers to my questions I'll write up what I find out in a book, kind of like a story.

One of the ways for me to find the answers to my questions is to ask kids and their parents and teachers questions. I will ask the kids questions like:

1. What do think about "rough and tumble play"?
2. Are there rules for play at school?
3. Do both boys and girls "rough and tumble play"?
4. What happens if you "rough and tumble play" at school?

Another way for me to answer my questions is to watch you at play. If you want to be part of the research and give me permission, I'll watch you play 10 times for one hour each time and write down what I see. I will also ask you to be part of a group interview with one of your teachers and other kids. An interview is a group talk where I will ask questions. With your permission, your voice will be recorded during the interview and I will take written notes on what happens. There is nothing known that will hurt you by being part of this research.

If you decide not to be part of this research, you will be part of the usual activities of your daycare while the children who decide to be part of the research are being observed at play and being part of the interview.

It is up to you if you want to be part of this research or not. If you do decide to be part of the research, you may stop being part at any time without anyone getting upset with you and you don't have to tell anyone why you don't want to be part of the research anymore.

If you agree to be part of this research, your name will not be part of any of the written reports on this research or part of any talks about the research. Any information about you or the things you do or say will be kept safe by being kept in a locked file cabinet. At the end of the research, all information I have about you will be shredded and then burned. Some people will know about your part in this research because your teachers will know which children are taking part and the other children at your daycare will be know who takes part and who does not and who said what during the interview.

If you agree to be part of this research, your mom or dad will need to sign below to show that you know what you will be doing if you participate and that you have had any questions answered.

Name of Participant

Signature of Parent

Date

Your parent's signature below shows that you give permission for your voice to be recorded (audio-taped) during the interview.

Name of Participant

Signature of Parent

Date

A copy of this assent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

Informed Consent Form for the Owner/Board of Directors of Settings

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

Your setting is being invited to participate in a study entitled An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play that is being conducted by Michelle Tannock. Michelle Tannock is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions at 592-4515 or at mtannock@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margie Mayfield. You may contact my supervisor at 721-7849 or at mayfield@uvic.ca.

The purpose of this research project is to determine the thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. Research of this type is important because with increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play, educators of young children may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the rough and tumble play of young children.

Your setting is being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the early childhood community. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your setting's participation will include observations, an interview, and the completion of descriptors of setting structure chart.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to the participating members of your setting including: (1) having the activities of the participating children and educators during 10 one-hour observations of your program recorded via written notes; (2) participating educators will review the notes taken by the researcher during the 10 observation sessions to determine that they are accurate representations of the observations; (3) participating educators, parents, and children will partake in an interview that should take approximately 30 minutes of their time. Personal interviews will be audio-recorded, with your setting's permission, and written notes will be taken for telephone interviews for later transcription; (4) the manager of your setting will discuss the structure of your setting with the researcher utilizing the Descriptors of Setting Structure chart (attached to this Informed Consent Form) that should take approximately 30 minutes of their time. This discussion with the researcher will be audio-recorded for later transcription.

There are no known or anticipated risks to your setting by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play. You might also find that your participation in this research will provide additional insight into the thoughts on rough and tumble play and, therefore, serve as a means for discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used in the analysis. The educators will be informed that even if the managers and owners/board of directors of their setting agree to

the inclusion of the setting in the study, they will still hold the right not to participate and may still withdraw at any time without consequences. The managers and owners/board of directors should not pressure any individual educator or family to participate in this study.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, your name and the name of your setting will not appear on any part of the data, the research results, or in any written or oral discussions of the study. Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all data will be shredded and then burned. Children's anonymity cannot be fully protected because educators and managers will know which children participated. In addition, children will be doing group interviews so other children will be aware of their participation or non-participation and who said what. Further, educators' anonymity is not fully protected because managers will know who participated and who did not.

Other planned uses of this data include completion of the research dissertation, articles for publication, and in workshop presentations. Data from this study will be disposed of upon completion of the oral defense and submission of the final version of the dissertation.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: (1) a two-page summary of the study will be forwarded to you in a sealed envelope via your participating setting in October 2003; (2) presentation of the results in a dissertation; (3) published articles.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participating Setting</i>	<i>Signature of Authorized Representative</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your interview to be audio-taped by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participating Setting</i>	<i>Signature of Authorized Representative</i>	<i>Date</i>
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A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

[Appendix B was attached here]

Informed Consent Form for External Experts

An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play

You are being invited to participate in a study entitled An Exploratory Study of Young Children's Rough and Tumble Play that is being conducted by Michelle Tannock. Michelle Tannock is a graduate student in the department of Curriculum and Instruction at the University of Victoria and you may contact her if you have further questions at 592-4515 or at mtannock@uvic.ca.

As a graduate student, I am required to conduct research as part of the requirements for the Doctor of Philosophy degree. It is being conducted under the supervision of Dr. Margie Mayfield. You may contact my supervisor at 721-7849 or at mayfield@uvic.ca.

The purpose of this research project is to determine the thoughts of early childhood educators, parents, and young children on the role of rough and tumble play in early childhood settings in relation to the curriculum structure of individual settings. Research of this type is important because with increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play, educators of young children may gain an increased awareness of the influence of curriculum on the rough and tumble play of young children.

You are being asked to participate in this study because of your involvement in the early childhood community. If you agree to voluntarily participate in this research, your participation will include the completion of descriptors of setting structure chart and a discussion of how you determined how you would complete the chart.

Participation in this study may cause some inconvenience to you including discussing the structure of child care settings with the researcher utilizing the Descriptors of Setting Structure chart (attached to this Informed Consent Form) that should take approximately 30 minutes of your time. This discussion with the researcher will be audio-recorded, with your permission, for later transcription. There are no known or anticipated risks to you by participating in this research. The potential benefits of your participation in this research include an increased understanding of the relationship between both curriculum structure and family factors and rough and tumble play. You might also find that your participation in this research will provide additional insight into the thoughts on rough and tumble play and, therefore, serve as a means for discussion on the topic of rough and tumble play.

Your participation in this research must be completely voluntary. If you do decide to participate, you may withdraw at any time without any consequences or any explanation. If you do withdraw from the study your data will not be used in the analysis.

In terms of protecting your anonymity, your name will not appear on any part of the data, the research results, or in any written or oral discussions of the study. Your confidentiality and the confidentiality of the data will be protected by being stored in a locked file cabinet only accessible by the researcher. Upon completion of the study, all data will be shredded and then burned.

Other planned uses of this data include completion of the research dissertation, articles for publication, and in workshop presentations. Data from this study will be disposed of upon completion of the oral defense and submission of the final version of the dissertation.

It is anticipated that the results of this study will be shared with others in the following ways: (1) a two-page summary of the study will be forwarded to you in a sealed envelope via your participating organization in October 2003; (2) presentation of the results in a dissertation; (3) published articles.

In addition to being able to contact the researcher and the supervisor at the above phone numbers, you may verify the ethical approval of this study, or raise any concerns you might have, by contacting the Associate Vice-President, Research at the University of Victoria (250-472-4362).

Your signature below indicates that you understand the above conditions of participation in this study and that you have had the opportunity to have your questions answered by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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Your signature below indicates that you give permission for your interview to be audio-taped by the researcher.

<i>Name of Participant</i>	<i>Signature</i>	<i>Date</i>
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A copy of this consent will be left with you, and a copy will be taken by the researcher.

[Appendix B was attached here]

Appendix E

Interview Contact Form

Dear Participants,

As part of this study on rough and tumble play, your thoughts will be gathered in a short interview. Your participation is completely voluntary and you can withdraw from the study at any time, without explanation. You have the right to refuse to answer any questions you do not wish to answer.

The interview will take approximately 20 minutes of your time. The interview can be conducted in person or via the telephone. Personal interviews will be audio-recorded for later transcription. Written notes will be made by the researcher during telephone interviews. Any data collected in the interview portion of the study will remain confidential; notes resulting from the interview will be kept in a locked filing cabinet. Only the researcher will have access to the information. Your name will not be recorded on the data or used in any written or oral discussion of the study.

The interview can occur at a location of your choice or via the telephone. The researcher will contact you to make arrangements for the interview. Please fill in the following details in order to facilitate the interview. Thank-you.

Your first name: _____ Telephone number: _____

Good days and times to reach you:

1. Day _____ Time: _____

2. Day _____ Time: _____

3. Day _____ Time: _____

Please return this information sheet as soon as possible. Thank-you.