

COUNSELING CORNER

Monthly school newsletter from Lutheran Counseling Services

Word of the Month: PLAY

Resource Highlight:



Purchasing a book through our link supports expansion of our school counseling program. Thank you!

Preschoolers will enjoy interacting with the book **Let's Play** by Herve Tullet, as they play along with a yellow dot! This is a companion book to others by this author, including **Mix It Up**, **Say Zoop**, and **Press Here**.

Stuart Brown, MD, shares **Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul**.

LIVE WEBINAR

Learn about Play and how to boost it in your family.
3/9/20 @ 3 p.m.

Sign up **HERE** to attend live or receive a link to the recording.

Get serious about play!

When we think of the word **play**, we may not recognize the incredible importance this has in development and shaping each of us on throughout adulthood. Play has been discussed throughout the ages, but only recently has become a focus of scientific study. In 2013, Dr. Peter Gray came up with these characteristics that make up play:

- (1) self-chosen and self-directed;
- (2) intrinsically motivated;
- (3) guided by mental rules;
- (4) imaginative;
- (5) conducted in an active, alert, but relatively non-stressed frame of mind.

Peter Gray (2013) Definitions of Play. Scholarpedia, 8(7):30578.

Play boosts creativity, improves learning, increases language development, improves positive social skills, fosters development of problem solving skills and improves reading and writing abilities. In a world that often focuses on accomplishments, play can get left behind. But it shouldn't be!

Someone who's taken a serious look at play is Stuart Brown, MD (with Christopher Vaughan) who wrote **Play: How It Shapes the Brain, Opens the Imagination, and Invigorates the Soul**. In





Car Conversations

Whether in the car, store line, or at the dinner table, here are some ideas to boost play in your family.

◆ Families with children up to age 6 can boost play time with the ideas in this article: [The Power of Play: How Fun and Games Help Children Thrive.](#)

◆ Implement Family Play Night where each family member gets to play in a way they would like, with who they would like for the time period set out. Prioritize Play.

◆ Make the serious more playful. Add a basketball hoop above the hamper, make cleaning up a Mary Poppins type song, or eat dinner as a picnic on a blanket instead of at the table. How can you add more play to daily tasks?

◆ Take the family to the park or playground. Each family member must engage in play activity in the area, separate from a device. From soccer, to swings, to singing, to sandcastles, everyone plays.



this book they talk about the many benefits of play and also share about 8 play personalities:

- The Joker- A person who loves to joke & make others laugh
- The Artist/Creator: Enjoys creating and making things
- The Explorer: A person who loves to explore something new or different, either physically or emotionally or mentally
- The Competitor: Loves a competitive game with rules, and likes to play to win
- The Director: Enjoys planning & executing events, loves organization
- The Collector: Enjoys gathering interesting collections of objects and experiences
- The Kinesthete: Someone who lives to move and push their body to see what it can do
- The Storyteller: Loves to use their imagination to tell stories in writing or in acting

As you read through the list, which 1 or 2 play personalities seems strongest for you? Which seem strongest for your family members? How often in a typical day do you engage in activities related to your strongest play personality? How often in a week, or a month?

Brown, S. L., & Vaughan, C. C. (2009). Play: how it shapes the brain, opens the imagination, and invigorates the soul. New York: Avery.



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