

Disclaimer: Activities with children must always be risk assessed, including for allergies or choking. Children must always have adequate supervision. Resources and materials must always be appropriate for children's age and stage of development.

Top tips: Risky Play

Risky play enables children to test their skills, build their confidence, self-esteem, perseverance and to learn about dangers in everyday situations and how they can be minimised.

Our top tips will help practitioners to support children's engagement in risky play experiences in a safe, secure environment.



- Ensure risky play is available for all children regardless of age, ability, gender or disability. This may mean you need to modify the environment, give some children longer to feel confident engaging in certain activities, encouraging the children to help one another and modifying the play to suit different abilities
- Provide opportunities for children to take risks, e.g. use tools/scissors, climb, jump and balance, run or cycle at fast speeds
- Provide training and support for staff and parents who may be risk adverse, highlighting the benefits to children of learning to manage risks
- Support children's risky play by observing, remaining close and providing ongoing reassurance
- Before you say 'no' or 'get down' take a minute to let the children decide whether they are capable of doing something, or whether they are safe. Trust their judgment unless the consequences are deemed too dangerous. Be careful not to put your own fears or concerns about risky play experiences onto children
- Use positive language throughout, especially if accidents occur. Use opportunities to discuss how they may do things differently another time so that they learn to assess risks for themselves
- Provide appropriate clothing to support a range of weather conditions and play experiences, e.g. playing out in the snow/ice they may need waterproofs and footwear or goggles and gloves for activities using real tools
- Provide time and space for risky play, give children time to persevere, to keep trying, to push their own boundaries and build their confidence as they achieve success.

NDNA products to support you with these tips

- Face to face course – [Outdoor and Risky Play](#)
- Online course – [Wales bilingual Risky Play](#)

And more resources at www.ndna.org.uk/hub/myndna