

Exercise in disguise



Indoor play is not only great fun for kids but play centres also provide huge health benefits for those little ones climbing, swinging, jumping, and pulling their way around the exciting play structure because they are in fact gaining “Exercise in Disguise”

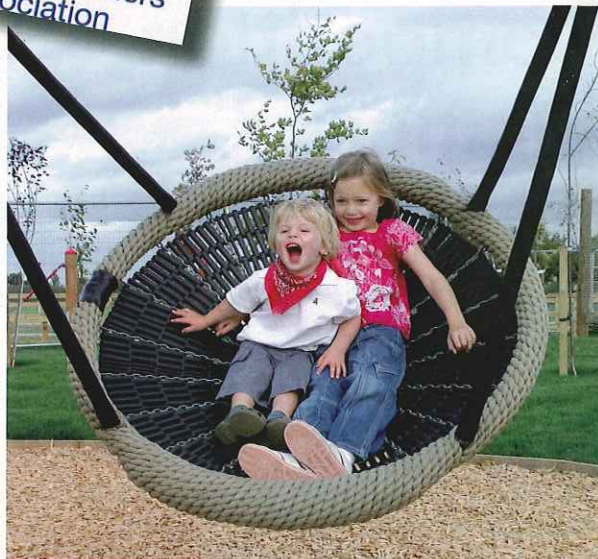
REPORTS from the UK Department of Health show that fewer than a third of young children are sufficiently active, one in six is obese, and all this is resulting in an alarming rise in ill health and increasing long term costs for the NHS. To add weight to the argument it is predicted that a million children in England will be obese within five years and 50% of the whole population will be obese by 2050.

The problem is two fold, firstly the popularity of screen based entertainment means that as a society our activity levels are not high enough and secondly poor diet is to blame as Jamie Oliver's recent crusades have highlighted. However, there is little point in healthy eating if this is not combined with increased physical activity levels. It is not a case of either or, parents must encourage and

support both of these goals in a way that is engaging for children. This is where indoor play centres come into their own ...

The benefits of indoor play are vast. When children go to play centres it is a really great form of exercise for them. Importantly the parents can relax (or play too!) knowing that their children are playing in a secure environment where safety is of primary importance. Janice Dunphy, owner of Creepy Crawlies, York commented “Kids develop socially, physically and emotionally through play and we have coined the term “exercise in disguise” to describe what our members offer as the children have such fun, they don't realise the great benefit it does for their long term health.”

Garry Long, the Managing Director of Xplore, Castleford agrees “In



today's digital age of video games and television, especially during the winter months, it's very easy to lose sight of the short and long term health benefits of physical activity for children. As adults, many of us started the New Year with resolutions of a healthier lifestyle, but do we make the same promises for our children? Promoting exercise and healthy living from an early age gives children a better chance of growing into fit and healthy adults”

This is obviously a key message at the moment and play operators hope that by encouraging children to be healthy and active as pre schoolers, we can help prevent obesity in later life.

The Play Providers Association (PPA) was formed to represent the operators of indoor play centres and to promote high standards of quality and service. By using a PPA member you can be reassured that appropriate insurance is in place, the equipment is well maintained and checked by an independent person as defined in the PPA code of practice and staff are CRB checked / first aid trained where appropriate. The PPA is the sign of a better play centre and you can find your nearest PPA member at www.playproviders.org.uk. We have members across the Yorkshire area providing you and your children with great facilities and excellent value.

Now go Play!!!

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