



“Play is the highest expression of human development in childhood, for it alone is the free expression of what is in a child’s soul.”
- Friedrich Froebel

Play Training Half or full-day workshops

Research around children’s development tells us that play is essential to a child’s physical health and emotional well-being. Play stimulates all aspects of a child’s development, i. e. the physical, social, cognitive, emotional and spiritual aspects. Through play children, armed with curiosity and a spirit of inquiry, explore their environment and build knowledge about the world around them. In doing so they prepare the foundation on which they will build a life of resilience, creativity, self-confidence and life-long learning.



Play is also essential for the continued growth of adults. That’s why PLAYLearnThink workshops incorporate playful ways of engaging participants. Whether working as a group on a challenging task or experimenting with various materials, the focus is always the use of play to nurture imagination and foster creativity which leads to great feats of problem solving and a heightened self-esteem.

Pierre has facilitated workshops for various groups from different sectors across the country and internationally. The following provides a brief description of the Play Training workshops.

Learning Through Play full and half-day workshops.

The half-day workshop is 3 hours and divided as follows:

1. Overview of the importance of play in the healthy development of children.

This section is an engaging presentation on play and learning through play. It includes what we know from research and practice. It touches upon different topics such as the benefits of self-directed play, exploring risk, nature play, resilience and the adult’s role in supporting play. I also share videos and stories from personal experiences and touch upon what is happening in various parts of the world.

2. Loose parts play

Participants will play and create with a multitude of materials (loose parts) and tools. They will plunge into the joy of self-directed, spontaneous play and thus feel firsthand what children experience during free play.

3. Debrief

We start this section with a discussion of what participants discovered during free play. We then focus in on the play/learning environment. We end with Q/A session.

The full-day workshop is 6 hours and divided as follows:

The morning of the full-day workshop is similar to the half-day workshop. There are a few options for the afternoon portion:

1. Links to learning expectations from the Ontario Kindergarten program and to the How Does Learning Happen? document (or the curriculum documents/programs of the province/country in question). Participants will return to what they created in the morning to add to their creations in order to meet certain learning expectations from the program. We will discuss the role of the education professional in making the child's learning visible through observation, documentation and reflective practice.

2. Inquiry based learning or Children as Scientists.

This section draws links between children's play and science (or more precisely the scientific method). We look at how we build/acquire knowledge through play and inquiry. Demonstrations are presented which can be used to introduce concepts or set up a science centre in the learning setting.

3. Outdoor play

This section looks at outdoor play with a focus on natural elements and transforming space to place. We will take a look at what is being done in different parts of the world with a focus on the forest kindergarten. Benefit and risk analysis will be discussed. (Usually coupled with "5. playspace").

4. Physical Literacy

This section focuses on physical literacy development through child-directed play. Participants will have access to materials and tools to create various elements which provide different learning opportunities related to movement.

5. Indoor/outdoor playspace

Participants will have access to a variety of materials to create a model of an indoor/outdoor space that they would like to have at their site. We will then discuss the possibilities and the challenges.

Normally, a couple of the above options are combined for the afternoon portion. The full-day workshop ends with a debrief and Q/A session where participants are encouraged to share their challenges and successes.

