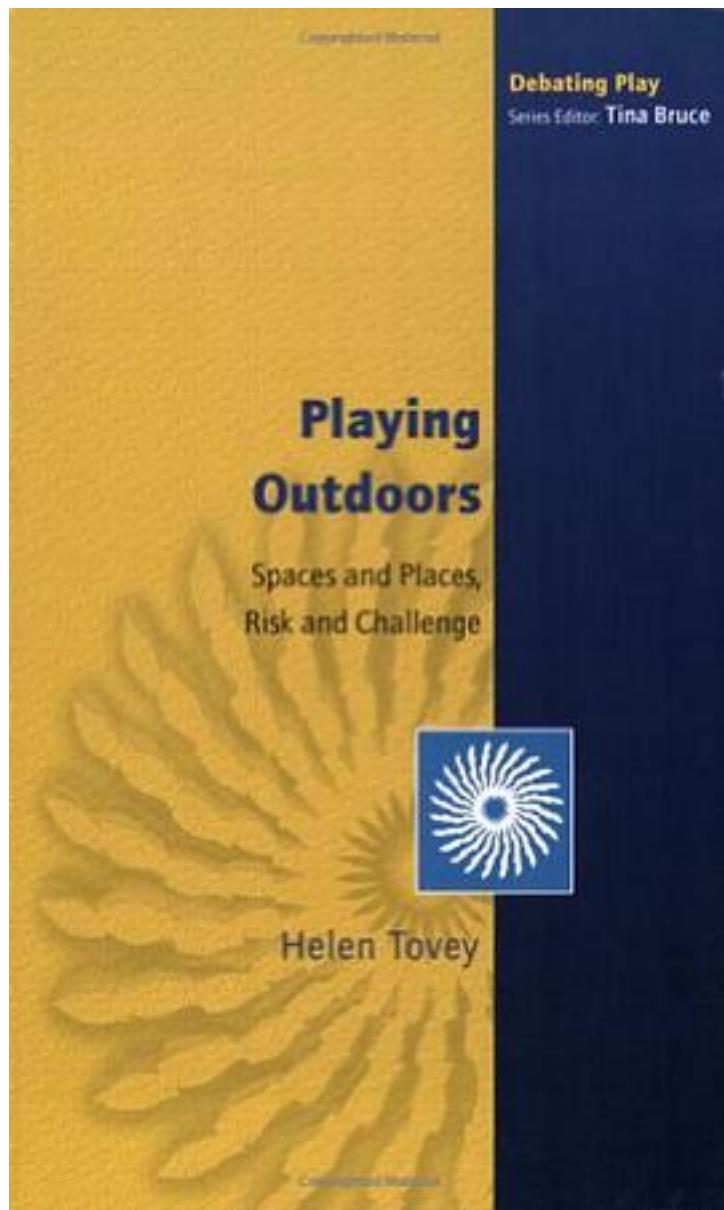


Playing Outdoors



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What do children learn through playing outdoors? What makes an effective and challenging play space? What is a safe environment and can children be too safe? How can adults best support challenging play outdoors? Young children seek adventure and challenge in their play outdoors. They look for places they can explore and spaces they can transform. However, provision for exciting and challenging play outdoors is often restricted because of an over-emphasis on safety, and also because the value of play outdoors is not well understood. This book offers a clear rationale for why outdoor play is essential in young children's lives and learning. It asks fundamental questions about what sort of environments we want for young children, as well as examining controversial issues of risk and safety. The author identifies key principles underpinning the design of challenging outdoor play environments and examines how children use and transform space to create their own imaginary worlds. The essential role of the adult in supporting and extending children's free play is examined and implications for practice identified. This book makes an important contribution to current debates on risk, safety and challenge in outdoor environments for young children. It brings together research from a range of different disciplines, as well as illustrative examples of children's play and talk outdoors. "Playing Outdoors" is inspiring reading for early childhood practitioners, students, play workers, parents, policy makers and all those seeking to develop challenging outdoor play areas.

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