THE UN-CONVENTION ON THE RIGHTS OF THE CHILD
AND THE EVOLUTION OF CHILDREN’S PLAY.

Pedagogy is always looking for criteria to judge pedagogical and educational initiatives and to evaluate some evolutions in society. I want to examine if the UN-convention offers us enough arguments to assess the evolution of children’s play.

Art. 31 of the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child mentions explicitly the Child’s Right to play, but also other articles are indirectly referring to the preconditions for the children’s play. On the other hand the UN-convention is a document realised within a very concrete context. The question I want to discuss is if the UN-convention has taken into account the evolution of children’s play? Does the interpretation of children’s play as handled by the convention, comply with the current evolution of children’s play?

To be able to answer that question, we first have to describe what the CRC says on children’s play and to develop an opinion on the situation of children’s play today. We will conclude with an attempt to assess the complex evolution of children’s play by the UN-convention.

1. The CRC

Searching in the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) for the word ‘play’, we will find it only once. This is remarkable because to play is the most typical behaviour of children and at the same time almost everyone agrees that children should have more opportunities to play. Nevertheless, starting from both this scarce attention for play and the basic philosophy of the CRC, it is possible to deduce a vision on children’s play.

1.1. How to understand art. 31 of the CRC?

1.1.1. Art. 31

If one reads art. 31 of the CRC without accounting for the context of the whole CRC, one must be disillusioned.

The article says:

Article 31

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.
In this article play seems to be reduced to recreational activities, to joyful activities offering children some rest after a period of hard working, i.e. in the classroom. It seems to be a compensatory approach of play: during work some stress, some tensions are build up, and from time to time children need the opportunity to release them in order to be able to function normally (this means: like adults), and to work during another period of time. Play is the valve that allows children to release superfluous energy. In fact this interpretation refers to an old approach of children’s play being a useless activity you have to allow in order to avoid bigger problems. It’s also related to prevention of criminality: while children are playing, they don’t do anything worse. Or: the devil finds work in idle hands. An other interpretation takes a compensatory approach: after having played, children are able to be concentrated on the work in the class.

But watching the whole article, we recognize that play is integrated in an article talking about participation in cultural life and in the arts. And that cannot be coincidental. The whole article makes us suppose that the term ‘recreation’ is not used in the original and out-of-date sense of the word: re-create, create once again, restore. Play should be interpreted within the context of the whole article. Play and recreation and cultural and artistic activities belong to the same category: to culture in the broad sense of the word. All these activities have in common that they refer to the universal human capacity to classify, codify and communicate their experiences symbolically. This approach opens a totally different dimension of children’s play and fits more to the conclusions of the CRC’s comprehensive approach.

1.1.2. The comprehensive approach of the CRC

For a correct interpretation of Art 31 of the CRC (and of every other article) we have to take into account the comprehensive approach of the convention. The convention should not be seen as an enumeration of articles, but as a coherent whole: all articles interact with all articles, they are interwoven, adding meaning to each other.

Talking about play, we have to take into consideration the broad context offered by several articles of the convention.

A first group of articles is directly related to play:

Art. 12: The Child has the right to express her/his own views freely in all matters affecting the child.

Art. 13: The Child has the right to freedom of expression

Art. 14: States parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion

Art. 15: States parties recognise the rights of the child to freedom of association and the freedom of peaceful assembly

Art. 31: States parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

All of these articles have a strong interrelation: they all are related to ‘participation’ of the child, to the very own way children participate in social life. All of these articles are stressing the idea that children are living in a social context, that they belong to society and that they can contribute to social life by expressing their feelings, their ideas and their opinion.

Another characteristic these articles have in common, is the word ‘freely, freedom’. While playing, children need a lot of freedom to organise their life, to dispose of their time, of the use of space, of the contact with other people: they need self-determination.
Within this context playing is more than doing some playful activities. The right to play is more than the right to have some time for doing childish activities. Within the context of the whole convention, the right to play is the right to belong to a society which respects the approach of children as a very typical contribution to social life and to children’s own development, even if this has characteristics (playfulness) that are unusual to adults.

But there are a lot more articles that can be related to play; let’s try to do the exercise:

**Art 3: In all actions concerning children …. the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration.**

This is a very important and strong article calling for action. But it has to be interpreted. We have to participate in the discussion on this interpretation by stressing the idea that because the best interest of the child definitely has to be related to play, playing should be taken into account in very much actions concerning children.

**Art 17: The States parties shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child ….**

Information about how to play is of great social and cultural benefit to the child; the mass media should disseminate such information. This idea can introduce a more interactive approach of media and that’s the way children like it.

**Art 24: States parties shall take appropriate measures to develop preventive health care.**

Talking about health care, we have to include mental health care, and on the other hand we have to emphasise the word ‘preventive’. We have to be aware that, as I learned from some eminent Greek colleagues, to play is a very powerful preventive activity to mental health.

**Art 27: States parties recognise the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.**

When children are playing, they are developing themselves in several respects. This is at least one good criterion to judge if the standard of living is adequate for children: does it permit children to play? It is remarkable that during the last few years, the actions of UNICEF in disaster areas have been paying more and more attention to children’s play.

**Art 29: States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.**

In stimulating the development of the child to its fullest potential, education should create more space and time for play directed by children themselves.

**Art. 19. 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, …**

With article 19 the attention for safety is worded. However, a different approach is stressed in this article. It makes the link to traffic safety, safety of toys and play equipment, social safety etc.

In trying to consider the convention as a whole and to situate children’s play into this context, playing should not be seen as an activity children are doing on a safe island far away from social life. To play is very strongly related to all the aspects of the development of the child, to the health of the child and to the social position of the child. To play is an existential characteristic of
children’s lives. To plea for play is to plea for the rights of the child, and to plea for the rights of the child is among others to plea for play.

**Provisional conclusions**

Without trying to write an all inclusive definition of play, the analysis we made offers a few characteristics:
- the word freely refers to the possibility of children organising their own lives
- this is because self determination contributes to the development of social life, to the health and to the overall development of the child
- to play refers to children’s contribution to cultural life, not just as a passive consumer but as an actor, to play refers to social actorship of children.
- but besides the participation-dimension, also the need of children for protection should be mentioned.

2. The situation of children’s play today

It’s easier to discuss the CRC as to discuss the evolution of children’s play, not at least because the CRC is a very concrete document and children’s play is an evading topic. The CRC hides a lot of discussions, opinions and visions but at the end it is a product and we discuss this document and not the preceding human activities. But while discussing children’s play, we focus on a very comprising group of vivid human activities and not on a concrete, well defined product. But the degree of complexity of a task cannot be a pretext to avoid it. We will use two methods to try to sketch the situation of children’s play. First of all we will listen to the public opinion, secondly we will gather some data from scientific research on the evolution of children’s play during the last decennia. We will conclude with some statements about the play situation today.

2.1. Public opinion

There are many social discussions on the evolution of children’s play. In a very short time everyone can –on the internet- find a lot of publications pleading for more unstructured, spontaneous play opportunities for children or more general for unscheduled time. The underlying idea is mostly that children don’t have enough such opportunities any more. At the origin of this decline the authors refer to the lack of space to play and the lack of time to play. And there is a great consensus on this point, not at least with children. Every survey questioning children themselves about play opportunities, has similar conclusions: there is a lack of public play spaces. Even many adults will support this approach (see further on in this text). This consensus is very important for policy making, but to be clear these insights are not based on systematic, comparable and incontestable data: these are opinions, they are based on subjective observations, pedagogical insights and on the vision on children’s process of growing up. Not everyone will accept the consequences of this viewpoint, but as a theory it’s not contested.

And besides these opinions, there are facts related to play that are widely accepted in our society and thus supported by many and many people. Children today have much more toys as a few decennia ago. Computer games offer new and different play opportunities. There is a whole industry involved in this field. They create a lot of very interesting play opportunities but they
create also a lot of junk. The commercialisation of toys (in broadest sense of the word) has positive
and negative influences. But who will be able to evaluate them?

Another theme in public discussions on children’s play is safety. A lot of efforts are invested to
develop norms and standards, almost overall in the world. They are based on the idea that play, this
wonderful activity for children, should be as safe as possible. And even while experts are arguing
that play without risks is impossible, the (emotional) weight of the risks is higher than the (rational)
arguments concerning the risks. The effect is a standardising of the play equipment and the
playground design and a reduction of the challenging characteristic of the playground.

2.2. Scientific research

A hallmark of scientific research is comparison. It’s impossible to describe something without
comparing it. So when describing an actual situation, you need to place it in an historical context.
To paint the play situation today, you have to compare with former play situations; in fact you have
to analyse the evolution of children’s play.

But as far as it concerns the evolution of children’s play, there is a lot of social discussion but there
is very few empirical research. And of course it’s not easy to investigate this topic. How can you
measure the evolution of children’s play? What shall be the operational definition of ‘play’? What
will be the indicators for an evolution? Are we talking about the amount of time children spend on
play? Or shall we focus on the quality of children’s play (and how shall we define it?)? Of shall
we try to combine both? Shall we discuss play behaviour or shall we also involve the
environmental factors determining children’s play?

However, as usual a fool can ask more questions as 1000 wise people can answer. Nevertheless
some wise people started to answer some of these questions. Let’s listen to what they
have to tell us about the evolution of children’s play, and let’s try to conclude with some general
statements.

2.2.1. Types of play

The systematic observation of different play types could offer us very interesting data, but they are
scarce. Van der Kooij (2007) concluded that between 1936 and 2001 repetition play (or sensor-
motor play) increased and imitation play diminished with percentages between 40 and 50%. He
bases this conclusion on the only 5 available research projects, but the evolution is incontestable.
However different play circumstances may make the same type of play quite different. As children
are living polychronical (they have the capacity to do different activities at the same time), a type
of play within a polychronical context can be quite different from the same type play in a
monochronical context.

The pedagogical reflections one can make on the conclusion of Van der Kooij, are related to the
pedagogical terms of reference he’s adhered to. It can be interpreted being a degeneration of
creative play behaviour in favour of an increase of sensor-motor play being a compensation for a
sedentary life organisation. Is this the necessary price children have to pay to ‘enjoy’ a ‘good’
education? Or is it really human degeneration because one of the most distinguishing
characteristics of human beings is their creativity? And has the lack of creative play behaviour
negative consequences for the creative behaviour as an adult? I suppose so, but I don’t know any
research projects that confirm it.

2.2.2. Effects of play

It would be wonderful if we had data about the effects of play for children’s development or for
social objectives. Meire (2007) in his overview of qualitative research on play, mentions
investigations that measure some bodily effects of play. He reported also on effects on social
behaviour (social skills, adjustment to school etc.), although he warns that it’s unclear if there is a causal relationship or not. Also interethnic relations and gender are important research subjects in this context. However and once again: it’s difficult to demonstrate concrete effects. Besides the critical remarks of Meire, there’s also the lack of data about effects of earlier decennia.

2.2.3. Time to play
There is a similar problem as far as the use of time by children is concerned. The time-budget research mostly is restricted to adults and youth starting from the age of 14-16 years old (this is the age young people are supposed to be able to report about their use of time). Nevertheless there are some interesting results.

Hofferth and Sandberg (2000) reported about the evolution of children’s time between 1981 and 1997. They made a distinction between the more structured activities as time spend in school, daycare, time for sleeping, eating, body care, sports etc to the unstructured time use as watching television, playing, visits, passive leisure. The time spend for the second group of activities diminished with 12%. There was a decline of playing (16%), television (23%), household conversations (34%) while time spend in hobbies (150%), sports (27%), arts activities (148%) increased. This evolution was the most explicit for children in the age of 3 to 5, but there is one exception: for 9-12 years old children the time for playing even increased with 20%. So there is no univocal relation between the increase of structured time with the decrease of playtime. However, in literature such a relationship is often taken for granted.

About the situation of preschoolers in Canada, we found:
‘Parents are overwhelmingly in favour of both types of activities: 97% agree or strongly agree that unstructured activities like play are important and 91% agree or strongly agree that structured activities like attending organized lessons are important. Parents also appear to treat play as more important than attending organized lessons: while 56% of parents strongly agree that play is important, only 29% strongly agree that attending organized classes is important. As well, only 3.9% of parents indicate a more positive inclination toward organized lessons than toward play’.\[^{xi}\]

However, the factual situation is quite different:
‘More parents are enrolling very young children in lessons and other structured activities. For example, between 1999 and 2003, the percentage of Canadian 4- and 5-year-olds who took organized lessons (e.g., gymnastics, martial arts, etc.) increased from 23% to 30% and the percentage participating in coached sports increased from 36% to 41%.’(Hewes, 2007)\[^{xii}\]

It’s quite clear that children’s lives are more and more structured, and maybe a relative part (expressed in percentages) of the unstructured time may be dedicated to the play time, the absolute numbers of playtime become smaller and smaller.

2.2.4. Other children to play with
Another demographic characteristic is the reduction of the number of children in the families. The fertility rate (the average number of children per woman) in Europe is low: at 1,5 children, while the replacement rate of 2,3 is required to stabilise the population size.\[^{xiii}\]

It means that in an average family about 2 children are growing up. These children have only one other child to play with at home. And as at the same time the cocoonisation isolates the families in their own homes, this deficit cannot be corrected by the children of the neighbours. And as friends to play with, are very important for children, the lack of those, reduces the play facilities.

2.2.5. Public space and tolerance to play in the neighbourhood
That our European society offers less public space for children’s play, is quite evident. Even if we have no quantified data, there is no doubt about the increase of cars and the space they are occupying since the fifties.
But even if we don’t have such data, we do find data about how often children are allowed to play in public space. A Dutch research project showed that the reason for the decrease of traffic accidents involving children was not due to a better safety, but to the fact that less children were allowed to be on public space. Also the famous study of Hillman a.o. (110) about children’s mobility in England and Germany concluded that ‘the increase in the personal freedom and choice arising from car ownership has been gained at the cost of a loss of freedom for children.’ A Belgian research project learned us that almost half of the children seldom or never play in their neighbourhood, and an English survey of The Children’s Society concluded that 79% of the parents apply the rule that the fence of the garden is the limit of the play space while in 1997 the limit was situated at 280 m from home and in 1970 at 840 m.

So beside the problem of availability of public space for children, even or maybe more important is the tolerance of parents to admit the children to play in public spaces; and the tolerance is reduced for safety reasons.

2.3. General statement on the evolution of children’s play

Starting from the idea that children’s play fifty years ago was not a point of interest of adults, the attitude to children’s play now is quite ambiguous. On the one side there is a lot of interest and sympathy and thus tolerance to children’s play, on the other hand in practice one of the most important characteristics of play (self determination) is under high pressure.
- Children’s play is a theme of social discussion: people have interest for it.
  There is a strong plea for unstructured play, there is a lot of money spend for toys and computer games.
  Interests of a different kind are shown in the spending of a lot of money for toys (in the broadest sense of the word) and playgrounds, and in the appreciation for little children at play.
- But the social interest has been recuperated in two ways: by pedagogisation and by commercialisation. Commercialisation refers to the toy industry, computer games, indoor playgrounds etc. Pedagogisation means that children’s interest for play, is used for other – not inherent to play- objectives as: prepare preschoolers for education, help children to learn to read and to count, learn children a lot of social skills etc. In practice, the effects of the overall sympathy for children’s play are reduced both by the concern for children’s safety and by the concern for their academic futures.

3. How the situation of children’s play can be assessed by the CRC?

3.1. Assess the situation of children’s play by the CRC

While characterising the vision of the CRC on children’s play by keywords as: freely, self determination, social participation and protection, the situation of children’s play today can be synthesised by ambiguity, pedagogisation, commercialisation and safety concerns.

The non-comprehensive approach of children’s play by art. 31 of the CRC (see 1.1.1.) might in a big degree match the daily practice of children’s play. Playing, being a cultural activity, is a separate domain of life. It needs specific time-spans and often also specific spaces. It belongs to the leisure time which is less important than the working time, it is subordinate to working time.

The category ‘to play’ is very important, as everyone agrees on, but it’s subordinate to education, it’s subordinate to the parent’s work, it’s subordinate to safety concerns. To prove the importance of play, children’s play is often organised in specific provisions, or within the schedule of educational activities.
So the isolated article 31 match the isolated play practice. But, as we argued higher, this article belongs to a ‘convention that has to be concerned to be a whole, and to be applied as a whole. So we have to move to the comprehensive approach of the CRC.

Fundamentally the vision on play that is introduced by the CRC can be found in the approach of play today. The accent on freedom and self determination of the CRC can be recognized in the attention for non structured play, for non scheduled activities, for real play of which children can decide themselves when, where, with whom, how long, with what material it will be done. So as far as it concerns ‘freely’ and ‘self determination’, the theory, the philosophy has been entered in to the minds of people. But the domain of application of this vision is quite reduced to the organised play activities. So what the one hand is giving, is already taken by the other hand. The self determination is reduced by the setting that prescribes the ‘when’, and ‘where’ and ‘how long’ etc. There is still some freedom, but only within pedagogical determined provisions and processes. The pedagogisation results in limits in freedom and in self determination.

Also the social participation is limited by the pedagogisation and also by the safety concerns. It means that the safety concerns in the contemporary society are more important than the social actorship concerns: children are more protected than stimulated to be an actor. So the concept of ‘youthland’ as is has been launched by L. Dasberg is still applicable: children are more or less isolated from real live in order to be prepared safely and well protected for the later roll in real live. Indeed: in spite of the broad view on children’s play, also protection and safety are dominating the daily practice of children’s play. Safety in different form is a very important value in the Western society: food safety, road safety, social safety, play safety. Safety is more important than play.

3.2. Evaluation of the CRC as a tool for assessment of children’s play

With the vision on play as an integral and integrated activity, the CRC offers us the instruments to evaluate the situation of children’s play today. The conclusions of our exploration are challenging the Member States to take concrete measures to better the play situation. And with more research on children’s play, such conclusions can be refined and lead to well specified policies.

On the other hand, the CRC doesn’t offer any tool to identify the described recuperation processes. The comprehensive approach offers a broad vision on play, but it’s too implicit and too much from the viewpoint of adults (the CRC is written by adults, without any participation of children!!) to be used as a decisive evaluation-tool. Therefore more work should be invested in the interpretation of the CRC and while interpreting and concretising we will make progress on the implementation of the CRC. All the more, it’s the only way to make the CRC to a living document that is much more than a bible containing the final knowledge and wisdom concerning children.

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¹ definition picked up in /En.Wikipedia.org/


Dasberg L., (1978), Grootbrengen door kleinhalten als historisch verschijnsel. Meppel, Boom

Van Gils J. (2007), The child’s right to play: the right to be a child. Presented at the Interdisciplinary Course on Children’s Rights, Gent 2006. (to be published in 2007)
The UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child

and

the Evolution of Children’s Play.

Brno, September 9th, 2007
OBJECTIVE

- What says the UN-Convention on the Rights of the Child (=CRC) about children’s play?

- The situation of Children’s play today?

- How the situation of children’s play can be assessed by the CRC?
2. The Convention on the Rights of the Child (= CRC)
1.1. How to understand art. 31 of the CRC?

Article 31

2. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.
1.1. How to understand art. 31 of the CRC?

**Article 31**

- *States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities*

  =

  *compensatory approach of play*
1.1. How to understand art. 31 of the CRC?

**Article 31**

2. **States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities...**

2. **States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.**

**Play and recreation and cultural and artistic activities belong to the same category: to culture in the broad sense of the word**
1.2. The comprehensive approach of the CRC

Art. 12: The Child has the right to express her/his own views freely in all matters affecting the child.

Art. 13: The Child has the right to freedom of expression.

Art. 14: States parties shall respect the right of the child to freedom of thought, conscience and religion.

Art. 15: States parties recognise the rights of the child to freedom of association and the freedom of peaceful assembly.

Art. 31: States parties recognise the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

Participation, Freedom
1.2.. 
The comprehensive approach of the CRC

Art 3: In all actions concerning children .... the best interest of the child shall be a primary consideration. *the best interest of the child definitely has to be related to play*

Art 17: The States parties shall encourage the mass media to disseminate information and material of social and cultural benefit to the child .... *Information about how to play is of great social and cultural benefit to the child*

Art 24: States parties shall take appropriate measures to develop preventive health care. *to play is a very powerful preventive activity to mental health*
1.2..
The comprehensive approach of the CRC

Art 27: States parties recognise the right of every child to a standard of living adequate for the child’s physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development.

When children are playing, they are developing themselves in several respects.

Art 29: States Parties agree that the education of the child shall be directed to the development of the child’s personality, talents and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential.

Education should create more space and time for play directed by children themselves.
1.2..

The comprehensive approach of the CRC

Art. 19. 1. States Parties shall take all appropriate legislative, administrative, social and educational measures to protect the child from all forms of physical or mental violence, ...

traffic safety, safety of toys and play equipment, social safety etc.
Conclusions

- The word **freely** refers to the possibility of children organising their own lives.

- This is because **self determination** contributes to the development of social life, to the health and to the overall development of the child.

- To play refers to children’s contribution to cultural life, not just as a passive consumer but as an actor, to play refers to social **actorship** of children.

- But besides the participation-dimension, also the need of children for **protection** should be mentioned.
2. The situation of children’s play today.
2.1. Public opinion

Plea for more unstructured, spontaneous play opportunities for children or more general for unscheduled time:

- Lack of space
- Lack of time

Commercialisation of play

Safety norms and standards
2.2. Scientific research:
2.2.1. Types of play

Increase of repetition play
Decrease of imitation play

Polichronical use of time
Monochronical use of time
2.2. Scientific research:  
2.2.2. Effects of play

No comparable data available
2.2. Scientific research:

2.2.3. Time to play

1981 - 1997

Structured activities

- school,
- childcare,
- sleeping,
- body care,
- sports +27%,
- hobbies +150%,
- arts activities +148%…

Unstructured activities

- TV -23%,
- play -16%,
- household conversations -34%, …

(Hofferth and Sandberg 2000)
2.2. Scientific research:
2.2.3. Time to play

Only 3.9% of parents have a more positive attitude to lessons than to play.

BUT

For 4- and 5-years olds,
1999 - 2003
Increase of organised lessons: 23 to 30%
Increase of coached sports: 36 to 41%

(Hewes 2007)
2.2. Scientific research:

2.2.4. Other children to play with

- Reduction of the number of children
- Cocoonisation

Less play facilities
2.2. Scientific research:

2.2.5. Public space and tolerance

- ‘the increase in the personal freedom and choice arising from car ownership has been gained at the cost of a loss of freedom for children’ (Hilman, 1990)

- Almost half of the children seldom or never play in their neighbourhood (Van den Bergh, 1997)

- Limit of play space (Children’s Society)
  - 2006: fence of the garden
  - 1997: 280 m from home
  - 1970: 840 m from home
2.3. General statement on the evolution of children’s play

- Play = theme of social discussion
  - Strong plea for unstructured play
  - Lot of money for toys, computer games, playground-equipment

- Recuperation of social interest by:
  - Pedagogisation
  - Commercialisation
  - Safety concerns
3. How the situation of children’s play can be assessed by the CRC?
3.1. Assess the situation of children’s play by the CRC

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3.1. Assess the situation of children’s play by the CRC

**Non-comprehensive approach**

To play:

belonging to the category ‘culture’ is subordinated to education, to work, to safety concerns

BUT – to stress the importance- play is integrated in specific provisions/educational activities

Art.31 match the isolated play practice
3.1. Assess the situation of children’s play by the CRC

**Comprehensive approach**

- Level of ideas: the ‘free self-determination’ has been intered into the minds of people

- Domain of application of these ideas is reduced to organised play activities; so the when, the where, the how long, the with whom, … are prescribed.

  = *pedagogisation of children’s play*

  = *limited social participation*
3.1. Assess the situation of children’s play by the CRC

Comprehensive approach

- Also protection and safety are dominating the daily practice of children’s play
3.2. Evaluation of the CRC as a tool for assessment of children’s play

CRC offers us the instruments to evaluate the situation of children’s play today.

CRC doesn’t offer any tool to identify the described recuperation processes.

The CRC offers a score, an open score, leaving a lot of space for interpretation and discussion.