

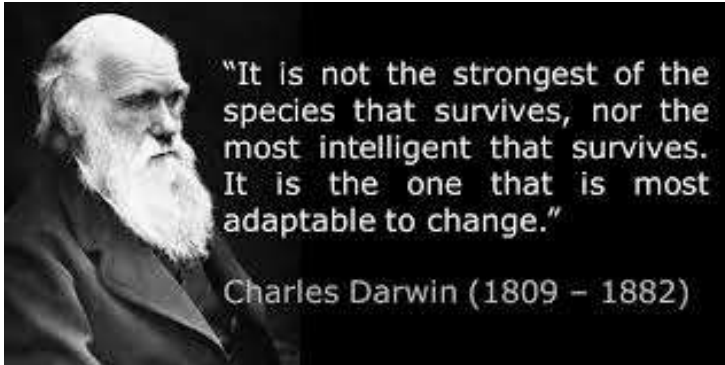
# Child's Play

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Psychology



# How to grow a successful human



Adaptability



Problem solver  
Creative thinker  
Innovator



Social Skills

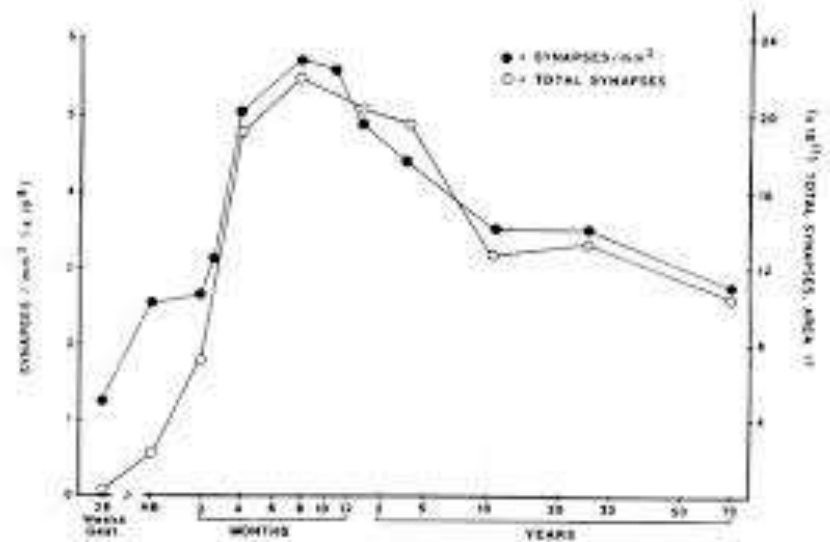
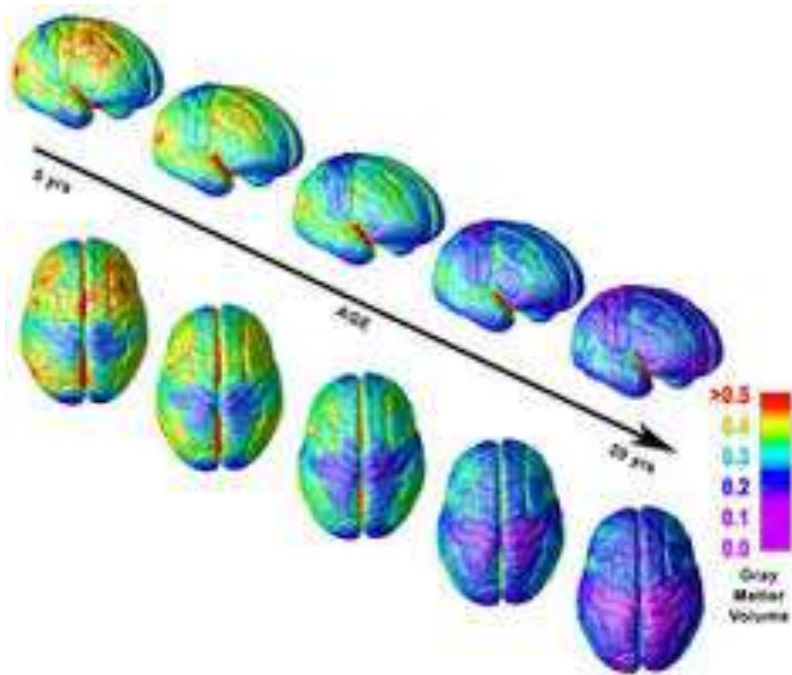


Resilience (high failure tolerance)



Processing speed  
Personality

# We are a most remarkable species



# Brain strain!

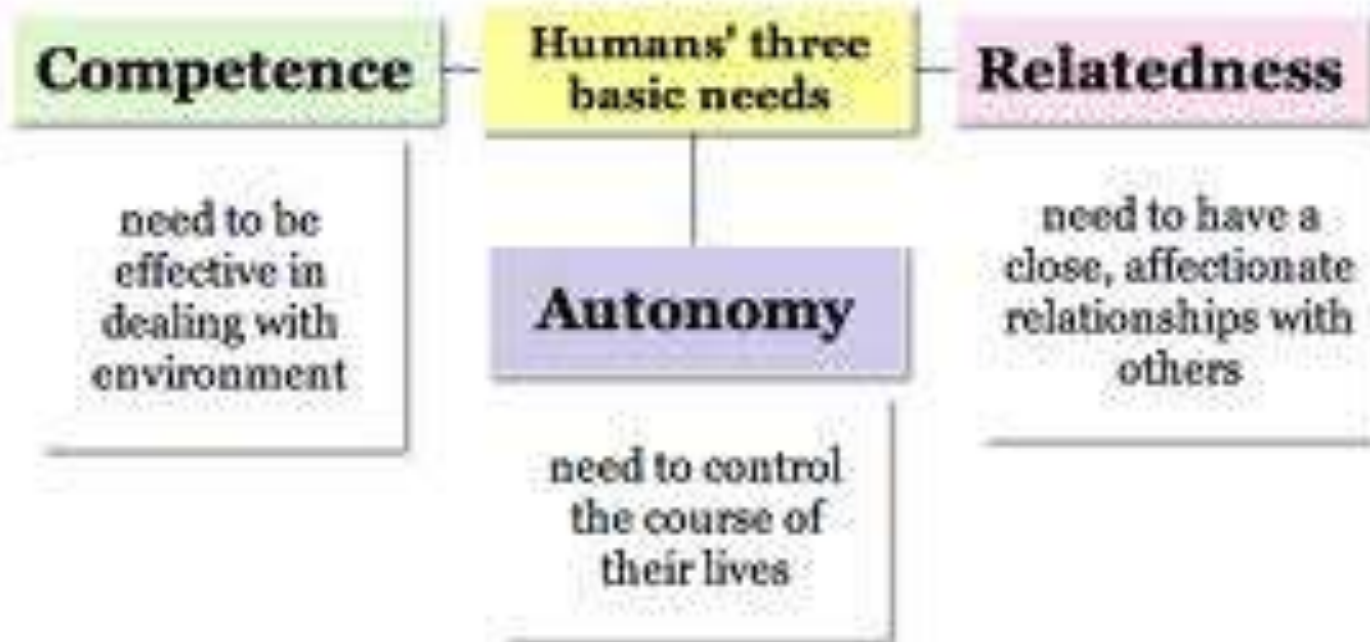


<http://www.boreme.com/posting.php?id=30670.VD1P6mddXh5#.VWZs1U0cSUk>

# What skills do you want your child to develop?



# Self-Determination Theory



- Autonomy (independence, self-directed activity, choice, freedom, risk-taking)
- Competence (moderate challenge, responsibility for success and failure = resilience, problem solving, creativity)
- Relatedness (social skills, co-operation, teamwork)

# What nature play builds





# Some science



- Is sitting the new smoking?
- Over 2 hours screen time each day = fat and unhappy children (Hands et al, 2011;Page et al, 2010; Prentice-Dunn, 2011)
- Physical activity results in smarter kids e.g., 6% improvement on test scores in children assigned to PA group compared to 1% decline in controls (Donnelly & Lambourne, 2011)

- Sydney Playground Project let kids loose in a OH&S nightmare of 44 gallon drums, ropes, tyres, milk crates etc in unstructured play:



- Reduction in fighting and bullying
- Creative children became the new alphas
- Exercise and PA increased

# What about the Parents?

- Auckland and Otago University research: primary schools across NZ banned playground “rules”
  - Fewer incidents of bullying needing teacher intervention (improved relatedness)
  - Kids learned to take risks and evaluate consequences (frontal lobe development, improved competence)
  - Drop in vandalism and serious injuries (self-discipline, self-control, taking responsibility, improved autonomy)
  - Ottawa study (31, 000 children) found no head/neck injuries from playground play over 2 year period. Broken limbs etc 1.5 injuries per 10, 000 hours of play



# What about the Lawyers?

- Remove them from any system that responds to playground/sporting injury – seriously.
- <http://www.acc.co.nz/>



- 8<sup>th</sup> June 2015
- International Journal of Environmental Research and Public Health Position Statement:
  - “in response to practitioner, academic, legal, insurance and public debate, dialogue and disagreement on the relative benefits and harms of active (including risky) outdoor play”
  - Their conclusion? “Access to active play in nature and outdoors, with its risks, is essential for healthy child development.
  - We recommend **increasing** children’s opportunities for **self-directed** play outdoors in all settings, at home, at school, in child care, the community and **nature.**”

# Approach vs Avoid

- The importance of failure in building lifelong approach motivation
- The case of the missed tackle:
  - Why did one boy go forward and one boy drop back?

- “He who never made a mistake, never made a discovery” *Samuel Smiles*
- “The successful man will profit from his mistakes, and try again in a different way” *Dale Carnegie*
- “If you are going through hell, keep going” *Winston Churchill*
- “Fall seven times, stand up eight” *Japanese proverb*

# Autonomy, competence, relatedness = confidence to approach life

