

# Standing Up for Children's Rights in a High-Pressure World

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## Free Play

Free play is freely chosen. It's child initiated and child directed.

Free play is not a free-for-all. Free play has rights and limits.

Renegade Golden Rule: It's OK if it's Not Hurting People or Property

## Essential Support

### Time for Play

Kids need plentiful unstructured time to play. Kids need blocks of time, preferably blocks of uninterrupted 2+ hour periods or more.

### Space for Play

Kids need space to move, where fast and loud action can be welcomed. Where can she be boisterous? Where can she discover the natural world? Where can she be messy? Kids need access to space where a variety of play is welcome throughout the day, not just during a designated "outdoor" time.

### Support for Play

Support comes in many ways. Resist encroachments on play time. Rethink space. Allow play ideas that might make you uncomfortable. Stand up for children's rights. Match programs with children's needs and adjust misplaced expectations.

### Author resources:

heathershumaker.com

Facebook: Heather Shumaker Writer

Twitter: @HeatherShumaker

Podcasts: Renegade Rules (early childhood)

BookSmitten (children's books)

## **Children's Rights**

- A child has a right to plentiful, unstructured Free Play.
- A right to choose her own playmates.
- A right to use props and choose his own play themes.
- A right to uninterrupted play during playtime.
- A right to feel safe.
- A right not to have objects taken from her (forced sharing).
- A right to move and use his body vigorously.
- A right to be outside.
- A right to experience and express the full range of her emotions.
- A right to ask questions and know things.
- A right to stand up for his own rights by setting limits on others' behavior.
- A right to be listened to, respected, and have her rights consistently supported by adults.
- A right to grow at his own unique pace, following the natural course of child development.

### **More Children's Rights from *It's OK to Go Up the Slide***

- A right to regular, daily school recess.
- A right to be free from homework in elementary school.
- A right to age-appropriate learning.
- A right to move her body vigorously.
- A right to adequate sleep.
  
- A right to learn healthy boundaries for technology.
- A right to interact with the real, non-screen world for the majority of her day.
- A right to times of quiet.
- A right to receive regular, full attention from people around her.
- A right to engage in the world in which he's growing up.