

INTERPLAY Playground Study

Participant Information Sheet for Parents

Introduction

In this study, we would like to find out about how your child plays, how they think about the way they play, what they enjoy about playing on the playground and also what you think about the way they play.

Specifically, we want to look at a type of play that is called 'adventurous play'. This is play that is thrilling and exciting where your child might try out some challenging activities, and this means they experience some fear and uncertainty (e.g. climbing a tree). These behaviours are part of everyday life for children. Most children enjoy adventurous play as it is fun, exciting and helps them feel good about themselves. It also helps with concentration in school and making new friends.

Why are we doing this study?

In this new research, we hope to understand what adventurous play is from different perspectives, including the view of children and their parents and caregivers (you!). We will ask your child to wear a smartwatch which will measure their activity and heart rate during the play and capture the play using video. We would also like to explore whether children enjoy adventurous play, and how adults think about adventurous play.

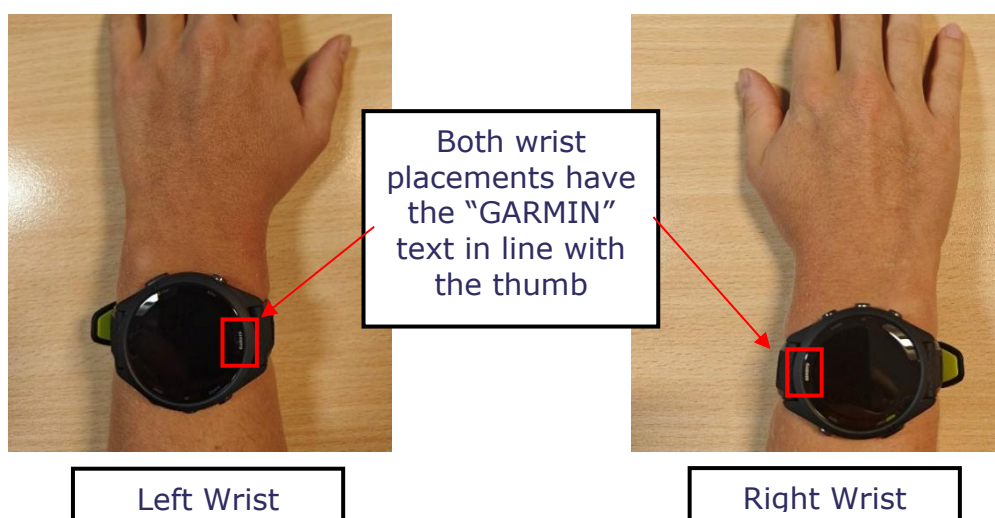
Why am I being asked to take part?

We are inviting you to take part because your child has experience in playing in the Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground managed by the Islington Play Association.

What would taking part involve?

Your child will be invited to attend a 90 min play session in the Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground (in Islington) on 28 June 2025 (Sat). The session will begin with a short introduction to our study, after which your child will be invited to sign the printed assent form if they are happy to participate in the study. Your child will then be asked to put on a smart watch (see figure on the next page) to measure their heart rate and movement on their non-dominant (non-writing) hand. Children will be asked to rest or sit for 30 mins. They will then be invited to play for 30 mins, during which the session will be filmed to understand how children play. Only a video will be taken, no sound will be obtained to ensure your child's privacy and confidentiality. After playing for 30 mins, your child will give back the watch, and will be invited to stay for a short chat with our researchers to answer a few questions about their play experience. The play session will be supervised by the manager of the Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground and members of our research team who have undergone Disclosure and Barring Service check.

You will also be invited to complete a short questionnaire aimed at understanding how you think about child play daily. You can complete the questionnaire on paper or online.



Garmin Placement on the Wrist

What are the possible benefits of taking part?

Taking part will help us (researchers) understand adventurous play in children, and this could help with the development of future interventions to promote adventurous play in children. Your child will participate in a play session with other children and will be invited to a pizza party where we share a summary of the results.

What are the possible disadvantages and risks of taking part?

Taking part in this study will involve setting aside some of your children's time to attend the session in the Crumbles Castle Adventure Playground (this will happen during normal opening hours of the playground), and your time to complete a questionnaire. You will be given the choice of doing this online or on paper.

Do I have to take part?

No, it is up to you to decide whether to take part. You are free to withdraw at any time, without giving a reason.

Will I receive any payment for taking part?

We will offer you a digital £50 supermarket voucher after the play session and the completion of the required questionnaire as a gesture of thanks and compensation for your time. Your child will also be invited to a pizza party in Crumbles Castle after the study is completed.

What if there is a problem?

If you have a concern about any aspect of this study, you should ask to speak to the research team who will do their best to answer your questions. If you remain unhappy and wish to complain formally, the University of Cambridge complaints process is available to you through the University of Cambridge Clinical School Secretary: telephone: 01223 333543 or email: SchoolSec@medschl.cam.ac.uk

What will happen to information about me and my child collected in the study?

Information we collect during the research will be kept strictly confidential and in accordance with current laws, including the General Data Protection Regulations (GDPR; <https://www.information-compliance.admin.cam.ac.uk/data-protection/research-participant-data>). Any information about you will have your name and contact details removed so that you cannot be recognised from it, and it will not be used or made available for any purpose other than for research. The smartwatch only records movement and heart rate and does not store any personal identifiable data. We will use the serial code number on the monitor to match with your child's "participant ID number", and the key to this code is known by the research team only. Your child's personal details are stored separately. Other security mechanisms are also used to protect privacy. No one will have access to the video recording, study data, and any information you and your child provide us except members of the research team at the University of Cambridge.

What will happen to the results of the study?

When the study is completed, the results will be published in an academic journal without a paywall so that anyone can see the results. We may use anonymised quotations from your child's responses about their play experience in reports and publications on the study. We may also present the results orally at scientific meetings and to interested stakeholders. If published or presented, your identity, affiliation and personal details will be kept confidential. No information that could identify you or your child, like your names, will be published in any report about this study.

Who is organising and funding the study?

This study is organised by the MRC Epidemiology Unit, part of the University of Cambridge, in collaboration with Islington Play Association. The study is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC). This study is one part of a wider research project at the University of Cambridge that is trying to understand and promote adventurous play in children.

Who has reviewed the study?

This trial has been reviewed by an independent group of people, called a Research Ethics Committee, to protect your safety, rights, wellbeing, and dignity. The study has been granted approval by the University of Cambridge Humanities and Social Sciences Research Ethics Committee. You can contact the Committee by quoting the ethics reference (25.392) by email: HSSREC@admin.cam.ac.uk

How to contact us

If you have any questions regarding the study or how you might be involved further, our team can be contacted via 07404 873405 (WhatsApp) or interplay@mrc-epid.cam.ac.uk.

Study Coordinator
Dr Karen Ma
Research Associate

Lead Researcher
Dr Andrea Smith
Senior Research Associate

Thank you for taking the time to consider taking part in this study.