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Play Culture Over Five Decades

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ABSTRACT

Over the past five decades, there have been significant cultural changes in ideologies, family structures, institutions, and technology. Technology, in particular, has seen enormous strides in the development of electronics and digital applications (i.e., social media, video games, TV, smartphones, texting, etc.). Another substantial change over the past five decades has been increasing mental and physical health issues within youth (i.e., stress/anxiety, obesity, depression, social isolation, etc.). Most studies at this point view these cultural, mental, and physical changes as mostly isolated and segregated issues with having little to no interconnected relationships. Through compiling twenty-one research articles and three books, this study aims to show that these cultural, mental, and physical changes are interconnected and that over the past five decades there has been a substantial societal change in how youth engage in play. Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to collect data from sixty-one parents within the state of Oregon to find if youth are indeed following this trend. The results of the study show that there has been a change in play culture. These changes of play culture include declining unstructured outdoor play time, increasing indoor play time, growing electronic use, and diminishing parental views of safety and trust outside of the home. Additionally, the data shows that stress/anxiety, loss of physical activity, and social isolation are strongly correlated to these changes in play culture. It is hoped that this research brings awareness to these cultural changes and aids in implementing policies to educate parents, institutions, and youth on the importance of spending less time on electronics and to bring back unstructured outdoor play.

INTRODUCTION

“For a new generation, nature is more abstraction than reality. Increasingly, nature is something to watch, to consume, to wear - to ignore.” (Louv, 2008). Today’s youth are spending increasingly more time indoors looking at screens (such as TV’s, computers, video games, tablets, and cell phones) and less time engaging with the natural world. According to a Kaiser Family Foundation Study (2010), within a five year time span youth have increased the amount of time they spend consuming media from six hours and twenty-one minutes to seven hours and thirty-eight minutes. Furthermore, the Center for Public Education (2011) estimates that youth spend on average about six and a half hours in school. Therefore, most children spend about fourteen hours out of the day either in school or on an electronic device. Consequently, this leaves little time for unstructured outdoor play. In fact, according to Louise (2014), youth on average spend about seven minutes in unstructured outdoor play each day. Additionally, the CDC (2005) estimates that only six percent of children ages nine to thirteen play outside in a given week.

This research paper aims to show that: there is a societal change of play culture among children due to the cultural shifts of ideologies, family structures, institutions, and technologies of the postmodern era; play culture is shifting from more unstructured outdoor play to more structured indoor play; and this change in play culture is correlated to the rise in psychopathology, social isolation, and childhood obesity. To show these changes, this research will firstly address the literature of the past and present play culture, what the literature says are some causes for the changes, and what the literature says are some implications of such changes. Secondly, this research will then address quantitative and qualitative findings collected from an online survey and from in-depth personal interviews.

THE LITERATURE

Play Culture of the Past

Historically, youth lived in a world free of electronic devices and constant parental or adult supervision. However, there is little research or quantified data to prove how in fact youth used to spend their free time. One can only assume that this lack of data is because play culture was not seen as an issue of importance in the past. Therefore, finding data and research on how youth spent their time beyond the 1960's is near to nonexistent. What can be found however, are stories and memoirs that depict how children used to engaged in play within the past. These stories and memoirs paint a picture of youth actively engaging in unstructured outdoor play, face-to-face social interactions, and having little adult supervision.

One such example can be read in a memoir by Hanson titled *What The Grown-Ups Were Doing: An Odyssey Through 1950s Suburbia* (2013). Hanson states "Most of the time, my friends and I made our own games up: making perfume from rose petals, brewing ginger beer, holding snail races, picking blackberries, making dens in the woods..... We played by the river bank, fishing for sticklebacks and newts, climbed trees and cycled everywhere." In another memoir, Forsyth (2015) describes a similar scene as she remembers her childhood back in the 1950s:

Children played outdoors all the time, town children in the street if they lived in tenement buildings. Pavements were marked with chalk for hopscotch, playgrounds were divided into boys' and girls' areas, the girls throwing balls against the wall (two at a time if you were good at it) or turning skipping ropes. In the boys' playground there always seemed to be more running about than anything else. Nobody sat in front of the television or updated their Facebook status in this digital-free childhood.

Both of these personal accounts show that youth were actively engaged in unstructured outdoor play and socializing with peers. Furthermore, there are many more stories that depict similar upbringings throughout history. It is important to state how youth used to engage in play as it

sets a foundation, a foundation to how youth had previously engaged in play and how they interacted with their peers. The next section of the literature will address how youth are currently spending their time today and how their time use and play is significantly different from what the memoirs depicted in the past.

Play Culture of the Present

Compared to any past generations, youth are radically changing how they use their free time. The concept of youth using their free time to play is trivial, as youth will always find ways to engage in play (regardless of the situation at hand). What will change is the culture of play within the social context and environment. In today's postmodern world filled with many different mentally and visually stimulating technologies, youth appear to be pulled away from the woods, creeks, streets, backyards, and friends (as what was depicted in the memoirs). Instead, youth are now drawn into their homes to their TV's, computers, tablets, video games, and smartphones like a moth to a flame that is electronic screens.

One extensive study on the issue by Clements (2004) wanted to compare play experiences of mothers to their children's play experiences. Clements surveyed eight hundred thirty mothers and found that seventy percent of the mothers reported playing outdoors every day in their youth. In contrast, the survey also found that the mothers reported only thirty-one percent of their children play outdoors every day. Therefore, this survey shows a thirty-nine percent decrease in daily outdoor play after just one generation. Additionally, fifty-six percent of the mothers reported that when they themselves had played outside as a child, they remained outdoors for three hours at a time or more. In contrast, only twenty-two percent of the mothers reported their children playing outside for three hours at a time or more (2004). Clements stated that "85 percent of the surveyed mothers identified their child's television viewing and computer

game playing as the number one reason for the lack of outdoor play” (2004). Clements study shows that in just one generation, there has been a significant change in play style. To have a thirty-nine percent decrease in daily outdoor play in just one generation depicts how drastic these changes in play culture really are. Moreover, Clements study also shows that when youth are outside, they are thirty-four percent less likely to remain outside for three or more hours as compared to their mothers.

Hofferth (2000), examined the different ways in how children use their time on a weekly basis by conducting a longitudinal study between 1981 and 1997. The data Hofferth used for this study came from twenty-four hour time diaries within two surveys of the American population. The two data sets used are the *1981 Time Use in Social and Economic Accounts - The Time Use Longitudinal Panel Study* and the *1975-1981 1997 Child Development Supplement to the Panel Study of Income Dynamics*. The data found a fascinating trend in children's use of time. There was an overall increased in time with activities such as school, studying, sleeping/napping, household work, shopping, computer activities, and personal care. In contrast, the data also showed a decrease in activities such as sports, hobbies, and outdoor activities. Outdoor activities, in particular, had been found to have a fifty percent decrease over the years (p. 14). Therefore, Hofferth's study hints at a movement towards an increase of indoor activities and a decrease in active and outdoor activities.

Edwards, Duerden, Lizzo, Campbell, and Kamper (2014), also looked at how much time youth are spending outside each day. This research was intended to test different methods of adequately tracking the time youth spend outdoors (as this has been a challenging aspect of measuring). The study randomly selected forty-nine youth and had them keep a journal of how much time was spent engaged in outdoor activities each day of the week. The results of this

study found that the participants spent a mean of 712.3 minutes outside each week. Therefore, each participant only spent on average about one-hundred minutes outside each day. One can therefore conclude that the rest of the day is spent indoors.

Howard P. Chudacoff (2007) argues that due to the move from rural to urban lifestyles, children's access to the natural world has been radically diminished. However, there is evidence showing that this cultural shift to the indoors is not only affecting those within the city limits, but those in rural areas as well. The Matz, Stieb, Davis, Egyed, Rose, Chou, and Brion study (2014) compared the effects of age, season, gender and urban-rural status on time-activity. The study surveyed five-thousand eleven people from both urban areas with a combined population of over eleven million and rural areas with a combined population of over one-hundred thousand. The results indicated that although season, age, gender, and rurality were significant predictors of time-activity patterns; the majority of the time was spent indoors at 88.9%. The study continues on to show that people reported only spending 5.8% of their time outdoors. Therefore, this study shows a trend that; not only are inner-city youth spending less time outdoors, but youth from both inner-city and rural areas are spending more time indoors.

The Push from Unstructured Outdoor Play

To understand why America's youth is spending less time outside, one must look at the factors that are pushing youth away from an unstructured outdoor play style. This section will explore how youth have a natural drive to seek out risk through unstructured play, but this natural drive is clashing with the modern parental ideologies of safety. Little, Wyver, and Gibson (2011) looked at the influence of play context and the adult attitudes towards children's physical risk-taking during outdoor play. Little, Wyver, and Gibson used semi-structured interviews and naturalistic observations to gather data for their study. Being that the two concepts "risky play"

and “risk-taking” were a crucial aspect of the study; Little, Wyver, and Gibson defined the two concepts as follows: risky play is “play that provides opportunities for challenge, testing limits, exploring boundaries and learning about injury-risk” while risk-taking was stated as a necessary part of children's play, that there is a growth in understanding one’s limits and the limits of nature and the environment through outdoor risk-taking.

The study looked at youth, their parents, and the interactions and engagement of educators in outdoor play centers and at playgrounds. A total of twenty-eight children (nineteen boys and nine girls) ranging in ages from four to five years of age participated in the study. In addition to the observational research, a survey was used to gather parental opinions towards the risky play. The research found that children expressed a liking and favoring of unstructured outdoor activities that involved the higher potential of risks. Most parents and practitioners accepted some level of risk-taking by their children, but not at the same level as the children. Fathers were found to view risk-taking as twice as much more relaxed as compared to the mothers' views of risk-taking. In addition, it was found that due to childcare centers being modernized to be safer and have less liabilities, this forced the youth to engage in less risky play as there were less opportunities to do so. In contrast, children playing at playgrounds were much more likely to engage in risky activities as the playgrounds had more opportunities to do so and the play style being more unstructured.

Little, Wyver, and Gibson's study marks out essential aspects of how children are socialized to and approach outdoor play. Although the youth within the study ultimately sought out unstructured risky play, in the end, the youth's actions more or less followed what their parents and childcare practitioners supported. Therefore, parental and adult opinions have a substantial impact on the choices that children make. Moreover, if the parents have a biased view

on risk factors, then the children will likely acquire the same biased views. Additionally, if parents have particular ideologies of “safety” that are associated with specific activities or a particular play environment, then the children are also more likely to latch onto these ideologies as well.

The Pull to the “Safe” Indoors

As noted earlier in the memoirs, children used to play among their peers in neighborhood streets and parks, and Playday’s survey (2007) backed this. Playday surveyed over three-thousand children, parents, and adults and found that “71% of adults report to have played in the street or area near their home every day when they were a child.... Compares to only 21% of children today.” This taboo has come from the idea that playing in the streets and neighborhood is dangerous. This perceived danger can be backed by another survey conducted by Playday (2013):

Key barriers to children playing outside more, mentioned by both children and adults surveyed, include concerns for children’s safety; especially relating to danger from traffic, but also fears about potential harm from strangers. Reflecting this, children tell us that the changes they need to enable them to play more include: less danger from traffic and less parked cars; having more time to play; having more of their friends living near them; having more areas to play; parents and carers giving them more permission to do so, and having more adult supervision available.... In our consultations parents told us this is because there are not enough safe places to go - and there is plenty of anecdotal evidence that parents think their children are safer playing inside on a computer than outside.

Furthermore, Clements (2004) identified that eighty-two percent of the mothers identified crime and safety as a significant factor preventing them from allowing their children to play outdoors. Clements also found that the mothers understood the need for their children to experience free play in an outdoor environment, but their worry of danger was prioritized. However, by looking at reports from the Bureau of Justice Statistics (2010), one can see that there is an apparent

decline in crime rates across all categories. Therefore, this leads one to believe that it safer to play outside in most urban streets and surrounding neighborhood today than it was in the 1970s.

One argument made as to why parents may perceive more danger than what there is may be because of a concept known as “selective attention” bias or “accessibility bias.” This psychological concept stipulates that information that can be more easily retrieved from one’s memory will be more likely to dominate one’s judgments, opinions, and decisions. For example, Iyengar (1990), studied the influence of television news to the public opinion. Iyengar found that if people watched a news episode, they were far more likely to think that the issues covered were more relevant than in actuality (especially if it was a particularly memorable news story). Therefore, if parents watch or hear about some potential risk factor that may affect their children (whether it be a one-time incident or not), they will be far more likely to consider that risk factor as an actual threat. This theory of selective attention may explain why parents have increased perceptions of fear towards their children playing outdoors as compared to the past. Therefore, when confronted with a child who has been sitting in front of the TV for three plus hours, parents may think that is a safer alternative than to the dangers of outside.

Another critical trend to address in this research is the change in family structure from single parent to dual parent incomes and how it has affected the play style of youth. Pew Research Center (2015) shows that from 1960 to 2012 dual income families have increased from 25% to 60%, while father income families decreased from 70% to 31%. This family structure change coincides with a twenty-year increase of time spent in school and increased homework loads. The Juster, Ono, and Stafford (2004) study show that “American children age 6-17 spend about 6 to 7 hours a day at school during the weekday... Twenty years ago, in the early 1980s, less time was spent in school. The weekday average was about 5 to 6 hours.”

Additionally, Juster, Ono, and Stafford show that today's youth spend about three hours fifty-eight minutes a day on average doing homework, while in the 1980s youth spent about two hours thirty-eight minutes. Juster, Ono, and Stafford's findings also fit in line with Hofferth, Sandra L. and John F. Sandberg (2009) and their results with a change in time use. Hofferth, Sandra L. and John F. Sandberg show "a pattern of increased time in structured activities such as school, daycare, sports, and art activities, and reduced time in unstructured play, television viewing, visiting, and passive leisure." Therefore, the data shows that there has been an overall shift in the family structure, which has put youth in more structured settings for more extended periods, which in return takes away time for unstructured activities. These findings point to a significant cultural and societal shift in family structure, time use, and play culture.

The Implications

Thus far it has been shown that there has been a significant decrease in time spent outdoors, what is pushing youth away from the outdoors, and what is pulling youth indoors. The implications of the overall societal and cultural changes in play styles are expansive. However, four factors can cover most of the implications of this change in play culture. These four factors are outdoor and indoor activities, stress/anxiety, perceptions of safety, and meaningful relationships. The first implication that will be addressed is the increase of stress/anxiety. Gray (2011) studied how the decrease in unstructured play and play in the natural environment has created negative implications on the mental wellbeing of children and future adults. Gray established how the structure of children's play has changed over time and states that "Over the past half-century or so, in the United States and some other developed nations, opportunities for children to play, especially to play outdoors with other children, have continually declined... Children are designed, by natural selection, to play." Not only does Grey state that there has been

a loss in play among youth, Grey goes on to state that there has been an “increase in psychopathology and argues for a causal link between the two.” If children are designed to play, to learn about the world around them through unstructured play, then Gray argues there is a consequence of mental health when natural play is removed.

Therefore, if there is too much structure and not enough free play within youths daily lives, then they are much more likely to show stress and unhappiness. In fact, Grey looked at data from the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory (MMPI) as a means to test college students for their psychological health since 1938. Moreover, Grey reviewed a version for adolescents titled the Minnesota Multiphasic Personality Inventory for Adolescents (MMPI-A), of which has been in use since 1951. Grey found that the “analyses of MMPI and MMPI-A scores indicate that five to eight times as many young people today have scores above the cutoff for a likely diagnosis of a clinically significant anxiety or depressive disorder than was the case half a century ago.”

The second implication that will be addressed is less meaningful relationships. Robert Putnam, author of *Bowling Alone* (2007), writes on how there has been a loss of social capital over the years. Social capital is the theory that social connections have value. That if a community of individuals all have high social capital, then it is to say that this community is invested in the success of the community as a whole. Furthermore, social capital must be built through social engagement and mutual trust. Through large amounts of data collected over the last quarter century, Putnam claims that Americans sign fewer petitions, belong to fewer organizations, know neighbors less, meet with friends less frequently, and even socialize with families less often. Putnam argues that through changes in work, family structure, age, suburban life, television, computers, women’s roles, and other factors have contributed to the decline in

social activities over the years. Moreover, that people are doing more and more solitary activities, such as bowling alone. Putnam found that Americans are now fifty-eight percent less likely to attending club meetings, forty-three percent less likely to have family dinners, and are thirty-five percent less likely to have friends over. Therefore, if Americans are losing social capital, it goes needless to say that there is also a loss in meaningful relationships.

Twenge (2017) also delved into the concept of reduced social capital. Twenge argues that the cultural shift away from social interaction creates “isolation from the community, which then can cause negative psychological effects.” All of which plays a significant factor in how much time youth will spend outside or indoors. If youth are in an unhealthy state of mind due to a lack of socialization and meaning relationships, they will be less likely to want to play outside. On the other hand, it could be that the lack of play causes psychopathy which then leads to a decrease in socialization and meaningful relationships. Twenge also argues that when youth use social media, they get the feeling of being social. However, social media is not a good substitute to in-person socialization at all. The human mind responds very differently to the two types of socialization. Twenge found that those who took a self-evaluation survey for a week on personal emotion after using social media felt more anxious and depressed on average. In contrast, the group that took the same self-evaluation survey after a week of not being on social media scored much higher with patience and self-confidence.

The third implication addresses both indoor and of outdoor activities, this implication is the decrease in physical activity. As seen in the Hofferth study (2000), there is a large increase in indoor activities and a significant decrease in sports and outdoor activities. Both sports and outdoor activities imply being more physically active than most indoor activities. Therefore, one can conclude that the obesity epidemic could be in part caused by this shift in play culture. If

youth are spending about 14 hours between a screen or school each day, (assuming they get 8 hours of sleep) that means youth on average have only 2 hours of free time left over. Considering that youth will most likely need to do homework, eat food, and do daily chores; then this leaves little to no time for physical activity. It is estimated by Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (Fryar, 2014), that “within the United States, the percentage of children and adolescents affected by obesity has more than tripled since the 1970s.” This data is not alone; there are endless studies on the huge increase in childhood obesity. A study by Hales (2017) states that “1 in 5 school age children and young people (6 to 19 years) in the United States has obesity.”

The last implication is perceptions of fear. As seen in the Playday study (2013) and in the study by Clements (2004), fear of crime and risks take priority when parents choose whether or not play outside of the home. Therefore, one could conclude that with the increased perceptions of fear among parents, this could have a negative impact of the amount of time that youth spend outdoors. Additionally, as seen in the Little, Wyver, and Gibson study; despite childrens desire to engage in risky outdoor behavior, youth will ultimately follow the perceptions of what their parents view as safe or not. Therefore, if parents continually view the outdoors as increasingly more dangerous, then their children will likely choose activities that are indoors. This in turn will aid in the decrease in meaningful relationships as youth will be isolated from their peers. Moreover, this will also aid in the decrease in physical activity and increase to risk of obesity. All of these implications then feed into the overall psychopathology of the youth. For if a child does not feel safe outside of their home, they have little to no meaningful relationships, and are overweight, then this creates a very unhealthy mental state for a child. Therefore, one can

conclude that the relationship between these implications creates a very slippery slope for the overall wellbeing for children.

RESEARCH QUESTION

Has there in fact been a change in play culture over the past five decades, and if so, what are the causes and implications of such changes? It is hypothesized that due to changes in ideologies, family structures, institutions, and technology over the past five decades; there has been a change in play culture to include more structured indoor play and less unstructured outdoor play; and that these changes in play culture have a causal relationship with the increase in stress/anxiety, obesity or lack of activity, and social isolation or lack of meaningful relationships.

METHODOLOGY

The literature shows that historically youth engaged in more unstructured outdoor play and have had more meaningful relationships. Moreover, many studies can be found on: the cultural shifts of ideologies, family structures, institutions, and technologies; and on the increasing mental and physical health issues such as stress/anxiety, obesity, depression, and social isolation. However, there is little research on the interconnected relationships between these factors. Therefore, this research paper aims to show that; that over the past five decades there has been a substantial societal change in how youth engage in play; that there may be severe implications from such changes in play culture; and that these cultural, mental, and physical changes are in fact interconnected. The data for this research will be collected through qualitative and quantitative methods with a sample population of Oregon residents to find if youth are following this trend, and if so, how this trend has changed over the past five decades.

Research Approach

The approach to this research will be conducted through a mixed methodology of both qualitative and quantitative research. The majority of the research will be conducted via a quantitative online survey as this will allow for an inexpensive way to distribute the survey to a large amount of parents throughout Oregon. Moreover, this method will be the most efficient use of time as there is only the need to design the survey, distribute, and then do an analysis with a spreadsheet and the program SPSS. Additionally, there will be some personal interviews to gather individual qualitative responses as a means to gain more insight into parental opinions with play styles and ideologies.

The online survey will be a short 21 question survey asking questions on how parents perceive time use, stress/anxiety, and socialization with their children. Moreover, the survey will ask questions on how parents view safety in different play environments. To measure time use among children, questions will be asked on how parents perceive the amount of time their children play in different activities within different environments (such as different indoor outdoor activities). To measure stress/anxiety, questions will be asked on how often parents perceive their children being stressed/anxious. To measure the level of socialization among youth, questions will be asked on how often parents perceive their children playing with friends and the level of meaningful relationships their children have. To measure parental perceptions of safety, parents will be asked to rate the levels of safety within different settings (such as different indoor and outdoor environments).

Sampling Method

Non-probability sampling will be used as this research will be looking to meet a specific quota for each of the different decades. Additionally, this research will likely employ snowball

sampling and convenience sampling due to little resources and limited time. The target population for this research will be adults (those over the age of 18) who have had children over the past five decades. For example, survey a group of parents who had children in the 1970s, another group of parents who had children in the 1980s, another group of parents who had children in the 1990s, and so on. In addition, the survey will ask for general demographics in order help categorize any patterns between the variables. Two such variables that will be categorized will be inner city residence and rural residence. These two variables will hopefully give a clearer picture to compare and contrast the social and cultural differences of time and play use.

Data Collection Method

The online survey will be created using Google Forms as this is a free and user-friendly survey creator. The survey will consist of closed-ended multiple choice questions covering the topics of unstructured outdoor play, unstructured indoor play, structured outdoor play, structured indoor play, technology use, stress, meaningful peer relationships, and parental perceptions of fear. The survey will then be administered through social media and by email. The data of the online survey will be put into a spreadsheet and into a program called SPSS for analysis. This will aid in organizing the data and help find patterns or differences between the generations of parents and demographics that may correlate to time use, activity level, and mental health. In addition to the online survey, there will be personal interviews with parents over the past five decades. This method will be done to gather a more detailed views of parental opinions. The questions used for the in-person interviews will be similar to the questions used in the online survey, but open-ended to leave room for more detailed explanations and for follow-up

questions. All answers will be documented within a journal, and the participants will be made aware of this at the beginning of the interviews.

RESULTS

General Sample Data

At the beginning of the survey, the respondents were given definitions of the differences between the playstyle definitions that were going to be used throughout the survey. Additionally, for those respondents whose children were still too young to engage in the different examples given actively or were grown up and far too old, they were asked to answer the questions as if their children were within grade school. The sample size for the online survey was sixty-one (N = 61), forty-seven of which were female and fourteen were male. The respondent's ages varied from eighteen to eighty-three, while their children's ages varied from one to sixty-two. Fifty-five of the respondents classified themselves as Caucasian/white, two classified themselves as Latino/Hispanic and Caucasian/white, one classified themselves as African American and Caucasian/white, one classified themselves as African American, classified themselves as American Indian, and one preferred not to say. Thirty-five respondents lived in inner-city residences during their child's upbringing, while twenty-six lived in outer-city rural residences during their child's upbringing. Twelve respondents reported having single-parent family structures during their child's upbringing, thirty-eight reported having nuclear family structures during their child's upbringing, and eleven reported having stepfamily structures during their child's upbringing. The average annual family income of the respondents was \$75,366.67, the minimum is \$14,000, and the maximum being \$200,000.

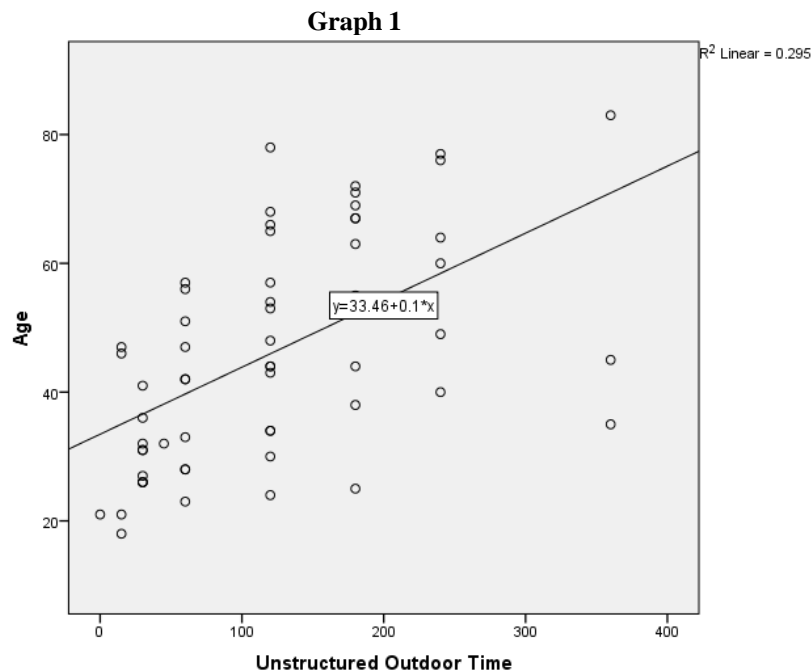
The Outdoor Activities

The first aspect of the data that will be analyzed will be the changes in activities and time use regarding unstructured outdoor play. Respondents were asked a series of different questions asking about their children's amount of time spent doing different activities. One question asked, "Approximately, how much unstructured time does/did your child spend playing outdoors each day?" The multiple choice options were as follows: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours. Of the sixty-one respondents, the average mean of daily unstructured outdoor time was one hundred-twenty-one minutes. However, when the respondents are divided by age into two groups, the averages change considerably. The average daily amount of unstructured outdoor time among children with parents under the age of fifty is about ninety-four minutes, whereas the average daily amount of unstructured outdoor time among children with parents over the age of fifty is about one-hundred-sixty-two minutes. When looking further into the relationship between a parents age and unstructured outdoor time, one can see a clear pattern. In the following table, it shows the mean of the respondent's age in relation to the number of minutes they said their children spent in unstructured outdoor activities. This table shows a pattern, as unstructured outdoor time increased, so did the average age of the parents.

Unstructured Outdoor Time	Mean Age	N
0 Minutes	21	1
15 Minutes	33	4
30 Minutes	30	9
45 Minutes	32	1
60 Minutes	40	10

120 Minutes	49	15
180 Minutes	56	11
240 Minutes	61	6
360 Minutes	54	3

This relationship can be exemplified even further when comparing the relationship of the respondent's age and time their children spent engaged in unstructured outdoor activities in a scatter dot graph. As seen in the scatter dot graph, as the age of the parent increases, so does the amount of time their children play in unstructured outdoor settings. In contrast, the younger the parent, the less time their children spend in unstructured outdoor settings. This relationship is, in fact, significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed). Moreover, the findings between child's age and unstructured outdoor time are more of the same and stand at a significant level of 0.01 (2-tailed).



When speaking with parents in personal interviews, every parent acknowledges the fact that their child engages in less outdoor play time, then they did as a child. Electronics tend to be the common culprit to this decrease. One seventy-five-year-old father with a twenty-eight-year-old son explained how when he was a child, "There was nothing to do inside the house when I was a child." "My family was very poor and had very few toys in the house, so me and my siblings would have to find things to do outside." The participant went on to say that he and his siblings would stay outside from morning until dusk. His parents would rarely check in on them and trusted that the children would be back for dinner.

Additionally, being that the participant was so poor, he and his siblings would often go outside to hunt for duck and geese as a means for food. While speaking with a fifty-eight-year-old mother who has lived within a particular suburban neighborhood for over twenty years, she mentioned how she had noticed a change in her neighborhood over the years. The woman stated, "In the summer, the whole neighborhood was alive with children in the streets... You just don't see kids outside playing in the streets anymore."

In another question within the survey, it asks parents to rate how often their children did hypothetical activities within a six month period. The question was designed to look at engagement with the outdoors, indoors, technology, structured activities, unstructured activities, and with meaningful peer relationships. The hypothetical activities that related to unstructured outdoor play were climbing to the top of a tree, ride a bike in the street, walk home from school, play in a creek, stick fighting with a friend, go to the park with friends, play in the woods, play in the front yard, and go fishing. When comparing the respondent's age to the amount of time their children did unstructured outdoor type activities from this list, the results also showed a decrease in unstructured outdoor time. Every question relating to unstructured outdoor play activities is

positively correlated to the parent's age at the .05 or .01 level (2-tailed). This data, therefore, rejects the null hypotheses that youth are spending the same amount of time in unstructured outdoor play now as compared to the past.

The second aspect that the data shows is the changes between structured outdoor activities over time. The question that asks parents to rate how often their children did hypothetical activities within a six month period had three areas involving structured outdoor activities (i.e., attend an after-school program, play in organized sports, and attend a summer camp program.). Although the data shows that there is a decrease in participating in after-school programs among younger parents and current children, it is at a .06 level and not significant. Playing in organized sports did show a positive correlation with a significance at the .01 level and as well shows a decrease in participation over time. Summer camp participation shows very little change over the past five decades and is not significant at the .05 level. Therefore, the data accepts the null hypotheses and even shows a decrease in two of the three structured outdoor activities.

When speaking with parents under the age of thirty in the in-depth interviews, it was found that there was a discrepancy in their perceptions of how often their children played in outdoor activities and the actual reported time in outdoor play. Three of the four parents under the age of forty felt as though their children played outside an adequate amount each day. Moreover, two of the four reported that their children played outside about as much as they did as children (about three hours). One mother stated, "I make sure my son plays outside every day after school." However, the discrepancy comes from the fact that the numbers do not add up to a significant amount of time outdoors. As seen in table 1, parents under the age of thirty have children with a daily average of thirty minutes or less in unstructured outdoor play time.

The Indoor Activities

The data for indoor activities will examine the changes in time use with unstructured indoor activities; this will include electronic time use. The data in table 2 shows that the mean age in relation to unstructured indoor play at first increases as the minutes increase, but then at 120 minutes, the mean age begins to go back down as the time increases. Moreover, the table shows that the mean age for structured indoor activities stays below twenty-eight. What this table exemplifies is that younger children are far more likely to spend a significant amount of time indoors in structured and unstructured activities. In contrast, table 3 clearly shows that the mean age continues to increase as the amount of structured and unstructured outdoor time increases. Additionally, when comparing the relationship of the variables “child age” and “playing inside for three or more consecutive hours,” the data shows that new generations are more likely to engage in indoor play for extended periods of time. However, this data is not significant at the .05 or .01 level.

In graph 2, the data also shows that there is an increase in use with video games as the child’s age becomes younger, although the correlation is not significant at the .05 or .01 level. Graph 3 shows that time spent on miscellaneous electronic devices increases as age decreases, again not at the .05 or .01 significance level. However, graph 4 shows that there is a decrease in time spent watching TV for extended periods of time but not correlated at a .05 or .01 significance level. This decrease in watching TV comes at a surprise. In hindsight, it may have been beneficial to have survey questions on time use specifically with cell phones, tablets, or computers along with times use with media applications such as Hulu, Netflix, or YouTube as those may be seen as different from a traditional TV. Without this data, one can only speculate whether or not watching TV for extended periods of time is actually decreasing or not.

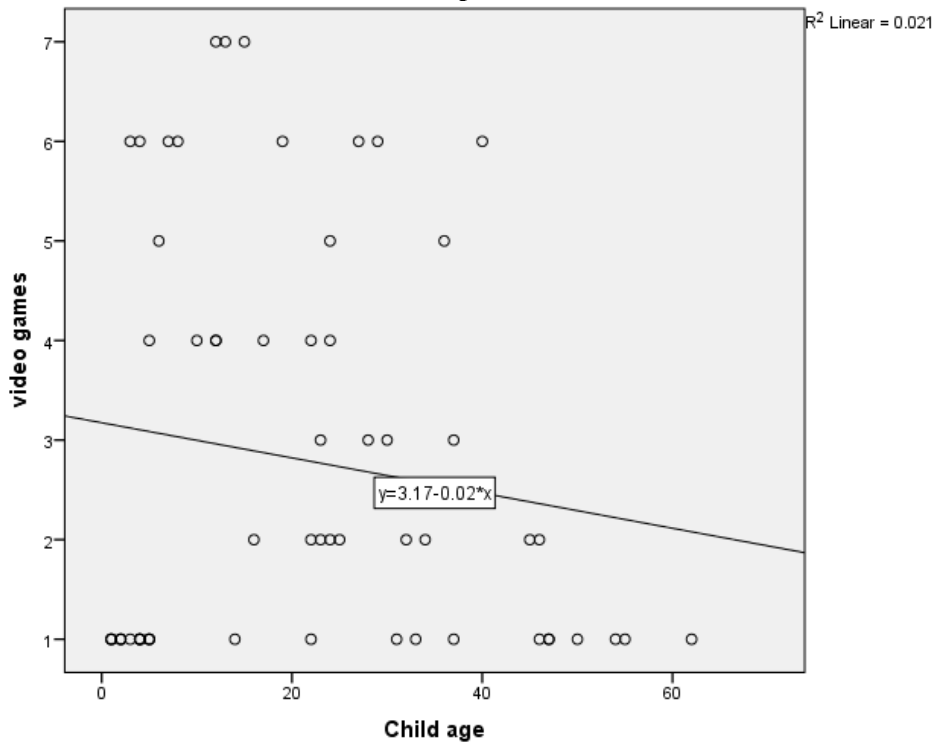
Table 2

Unstructured Indoor			Structured Indoors		
Time	Mean Child Age	N	Time	Mean Child Age	N
15 Minutes	1.00	1	0 Minutes	27.50	6
30 Minutes	21.00	3	15 Minutes	26.80	5
45 Minutes	12.00	1	30 Minutes	24.86	7
60 Minutes	23.60	5	45 Minutes	24.50	4
120 Minutes	26.35	23	60 Minutes	18.37	19
180 Minutes	22.15	13	120 Minutes	17.43	14
240 Minutes	16.25	8	180 Minutes	27.33	3
300 Minutes	14.00	3	240 Minutes	2.00	1
360 Minutes	3.67	3	360 Minutes	23.00	1
Total	21.18	60	Total	21.18	60

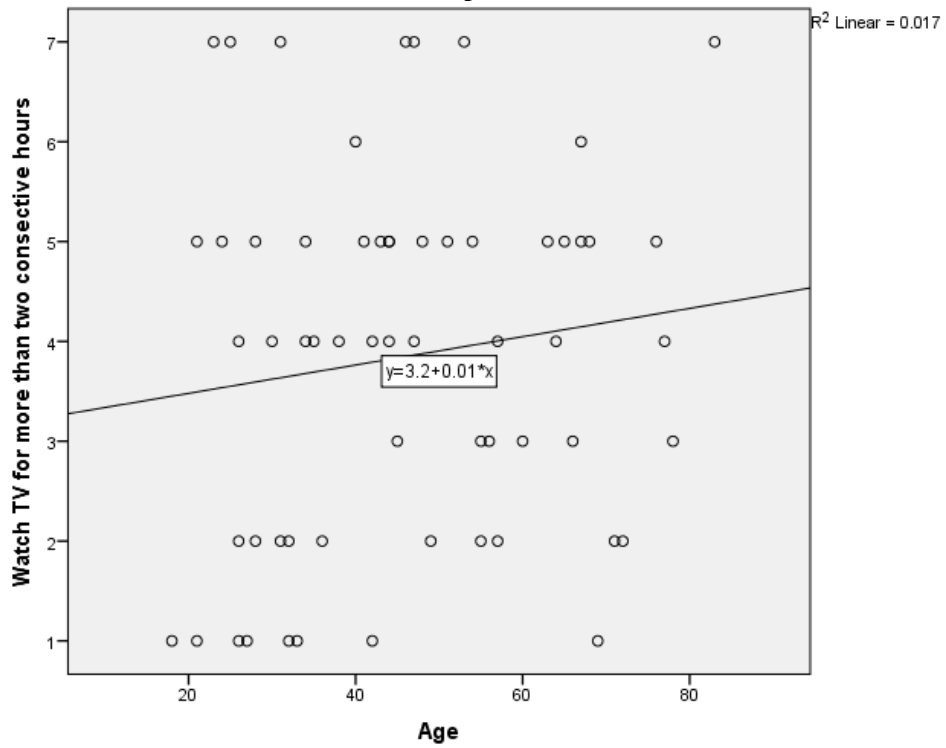
Table 3

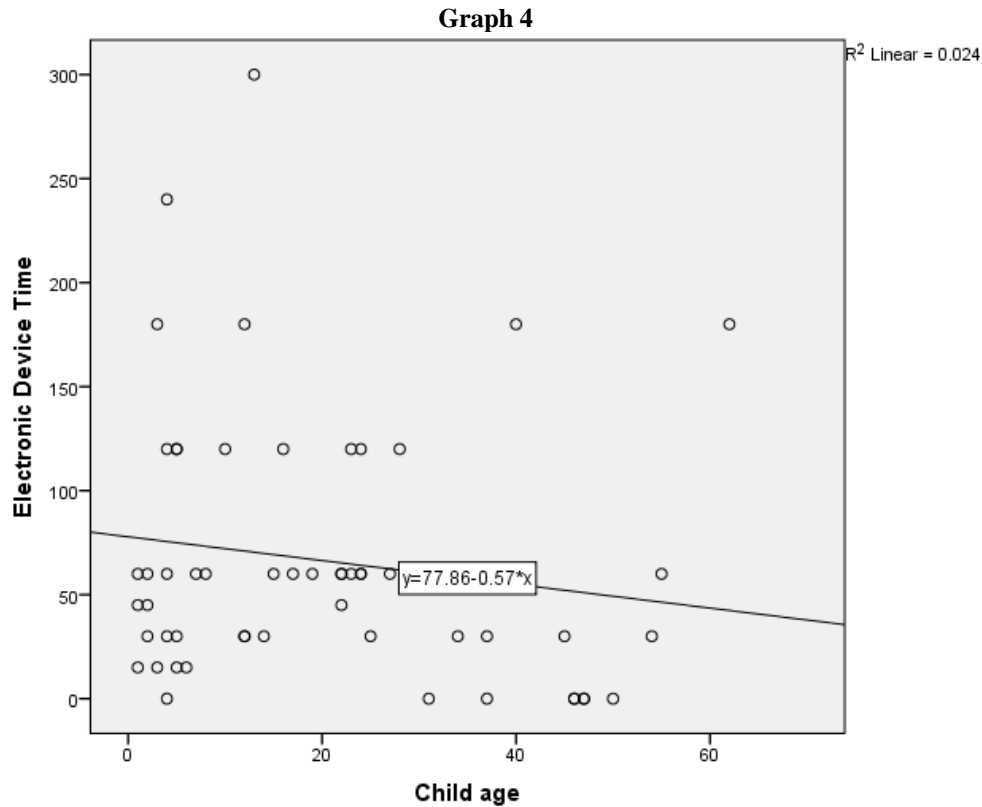
Unstructured Outdoor			Structured Outdoor		
Time	Mean Child Age	N	Time	Mean Child Age	N
0 Minutes	2.00	1	0 Minutes	13.83	18
15 Minutes	7.25	4	15 Minutes	16.60	5
30 Minutes	8.22	9	30 Minutes	20.20	10
45 Minutes	12.00	1	45 Minutes	20.50	6
60 Minutes	12.00	10	60 Minutes	27.81	16
120 Minutes	24.13	15	120 Minutes	34.33	3
180 Minutes	31.64	11	240 Minutes	47.00	1
240 Minutes	37.83	6	360 Minutes	19.00	1
360 Minutes	32.33	3	Total	21.18	60
Total	21.18	60			

Graph 2



Graph 3





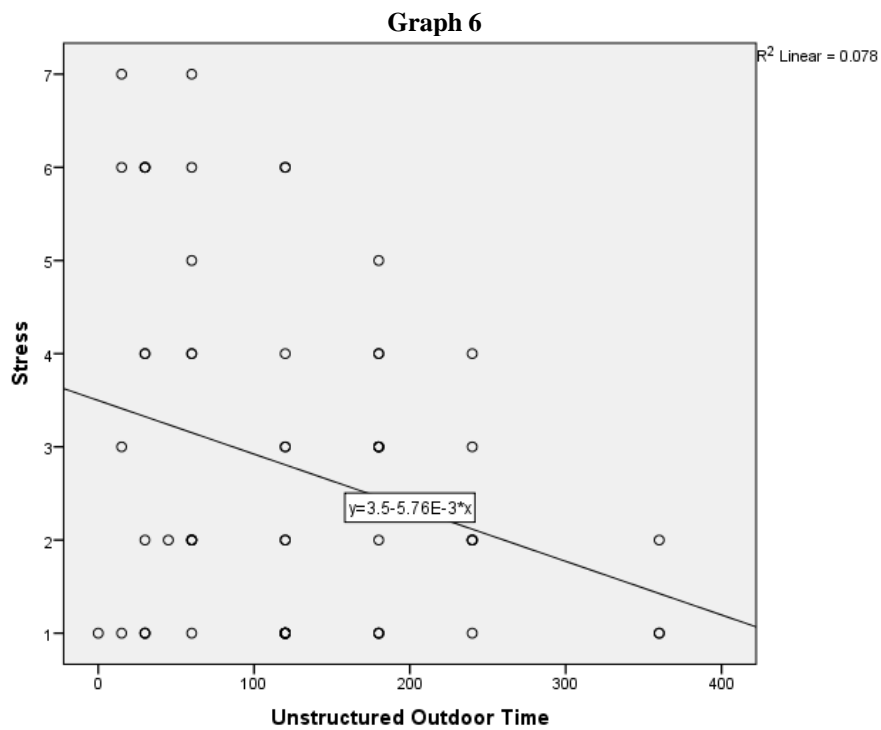
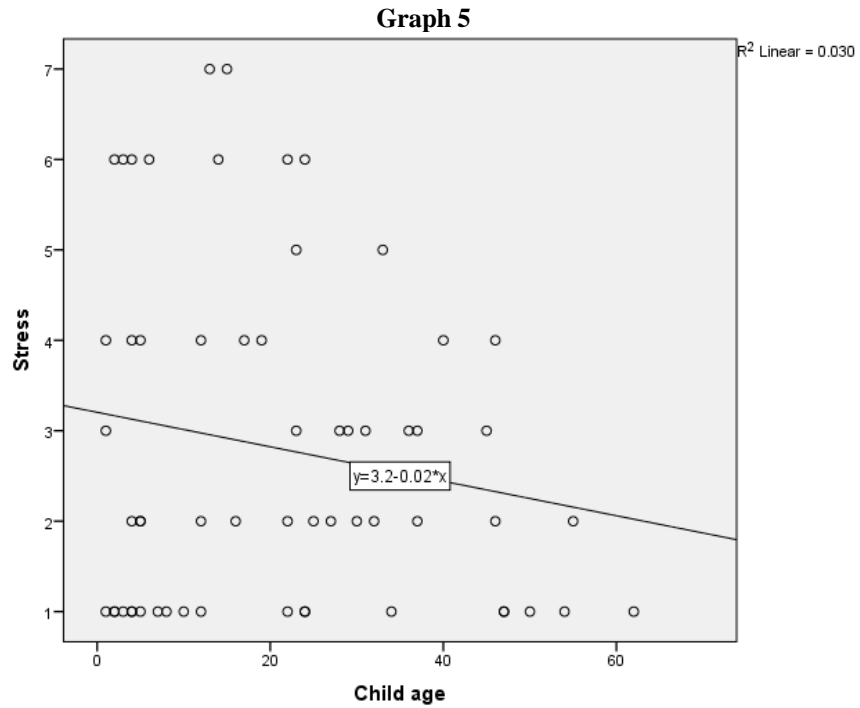
When conducting the in-depth personal interviews, most parents with children under the age of thirty acknowledged that fact that their children spent more time on electronics than they did when they themselves were children. Moreover, when asked when their children began playing with electronics such as computers and video games, most parents with children under the age of eighteen acknowledged the fact that their children grew up with playing with electronics (such as smartphones, video games, computers, and tablets). Most parents with children over the age of eighteen reported that their children did not always or immediately grow up with electronics. One thirty-two-year-old mother with a fourteen-year-old son claims that "My son is hooked on the game Fortnite. As soon as he gets home from school, that's all he wants to do."

Additionally, the same mother went on to explain how she had to adjust her parenting style as compared to how she was raised. The mother stated that "When I was a little girl, I

would've rather been with my friends or playing in the backyard. So, when my parents sent me to my room, I hated it. I didn't want to be there. But, I can't discipline my kid by sending him to his room, that's where he already chooses to be."

Stress/Anxiety

The next set of questions that will be analyzed is the relationship that stress has in regards to different age groups and environments. When comparing the variables of a child's age and levels of stress, there does seem to be a relationship. As seen in graph 5, as the age for the respondent's children goes down, the more likely the child is to be stressed. Although there is a negative slope between the two variables, it is only significant at the .09 level. When comparing stress levels to the amount of time spent in unstructured outdoor play, the negative slope is significant at the .05 level. This data in graph 6 shows that the more time a child spends outside engaged in unstructured play, the less likely they are to be stressed. On the other hand, when comparing stress to the variables of time spent on electronics, watching TV for three or more consecutive hours, video games, and playing inside for three or more consecutive hours, there is a positive slope. Additionally, the correlation between stress and these four variables is at the .05 level of significance. Therefore, one could conclude that the more time a child spends playing on electronics, video games, watching TV, and playing indoors the more likely the parent is to notice and report that their child is stressed or anxious.



When interviewing one particular father of six children, he explained that his oldest daughter (age 16) shows extreme levels of stress/anxiety over what he considers to be trivial things. One such example that the father gave is when his oldest daughter had to make phone

calls in order to raise money for her to attend a summer camp in England. The daughter went into high levels of stress/anxiety, just thinking about having to call someone on the phone. After further inquiry, the father realized that his daughter had never had to make phone calls before. Therefore the concept of having a conversation with a stranger triggered panic and stress within the young girl. A mother of two told another example of stress being triggered through conversations. The mother's oldest daughter (age of 15) explained how she would purposely pretend to be on her phone as a means to avoid having to converse with cashiers at the store. The daughter does this because she says that it is "awkward" and "stressful" talking with people she does not know in person.

Meaningful Relationships

There are two variables from the survey that looks at social interactions; these are the frequency of playing with friends and the parental reported level of meaningful relationships a child has. Firstly, when looking at the relationship that playing with friends has between the variables of the parents age, child's age, structured outdoor play time, unstructured outdoor play time, frequency of climbing trees within a six month period, frequency of riding a bike within a six month period, frequency of walking home within a six month period, and the frequency of playing in the front yard within a six month period; all of which show a positive slope and are correlated at the .01 significance level. As seen in graph 7, the relationship between the frequency of playing with friends and these other variable has a very steep slope. Therefore, one can conclude that not only does the increase of structured and unstructured outdoor activities increase the amount of time a child plays with friends, but also that these interactions were more frequent among children of previous decades. To exemplify this relationship, in table 4 it can be

seen that the median age of respondents children increases as the frequency of playing with friends increases.

Graph 7

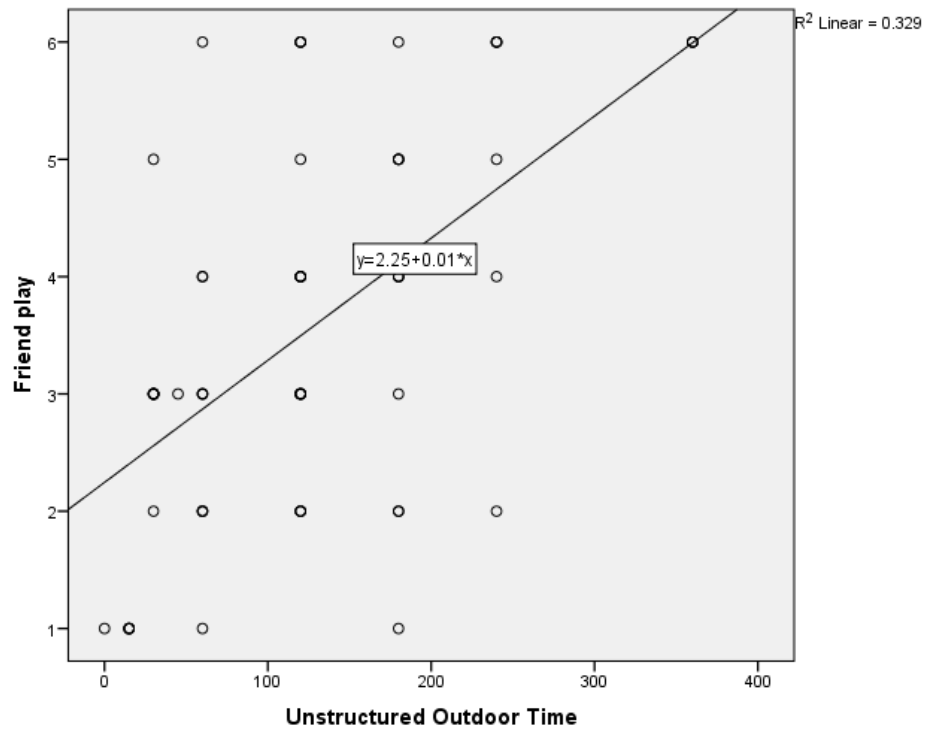


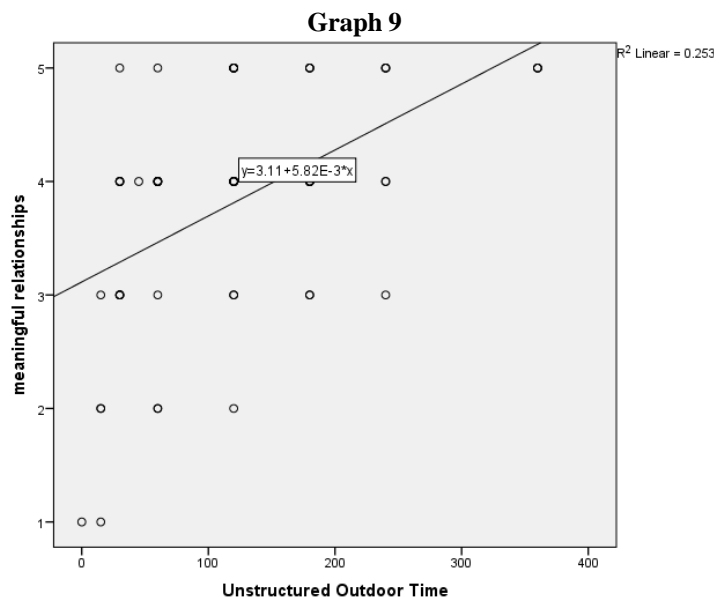
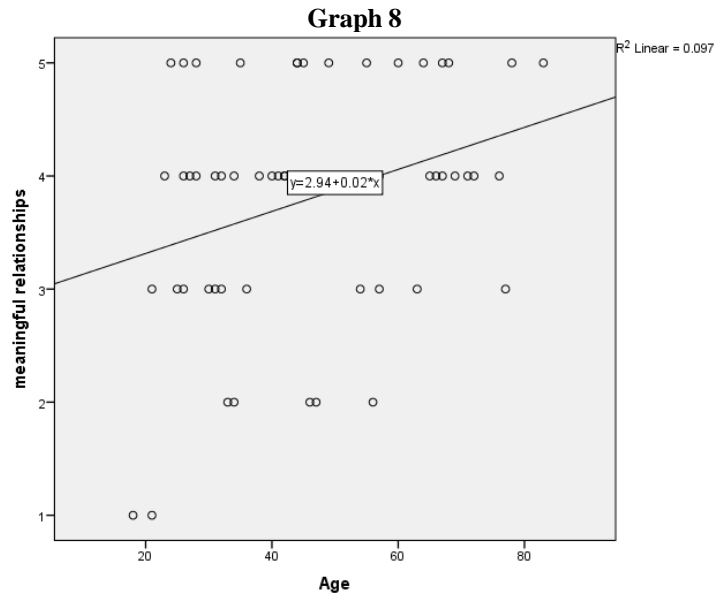
Table 4

Friend play	Median Child Age	N	Std. Deviation	Range
Less than once a month	4.00	7	13.009	36
Once or twice a month	12.00	9	10.464	27
Once or twice a week	12.00	17	16.095	46
Three or four times a week	23.00	10	10.309	33
Five or six times a week	35.00	6	16.964	48
Daily	32.00	11	18.835	58

The variable of meaningful relationships shows a similar pattern. When comparing the relationship between a child's level of meaningful relationships and the parents age (graph 8), child's age, unstructured outdoor play time (graph 9), structured outdoor play time, frequency of climbing trees within a six month period, frequency of riding a bike within a six month period, frequency of walking home within a six month period, frequency of playing in organized sports within a six month period, and the frequency of playing in the front yard within a six month period; all of which show a positive slope and are correlated at the .01 significance level (1-tailed). Moreover, there is a positive relationship between a child's meaningful relationships and structured indoor play at the .01 significance level (1-tailed). To exemplify this relationship, table 5 shows that the median age of the respondent's children increases as the parental reported level of meaningful relationships increase. There were also some negative relationships with a child's meaningful relationships. The variables unstructured indoor playtime and electronic time use showed a decrease in a child's meaningful relationships, although in the bivariate correlation significance was only at the .2 level or less. Therefore, this data rejects the null hypotheses that meaningful relationships and time spent with friends has decreased over the years.

Table 5

Meaningful relationships	Median Child Age	N	Std. Deviation
1	1.50	2	.707
2	12.00	5	4.980
3	16.00	11	16.781
4	22.00	27	15.976
5	30.00	15	17.748
Total	20.50	60	16.676



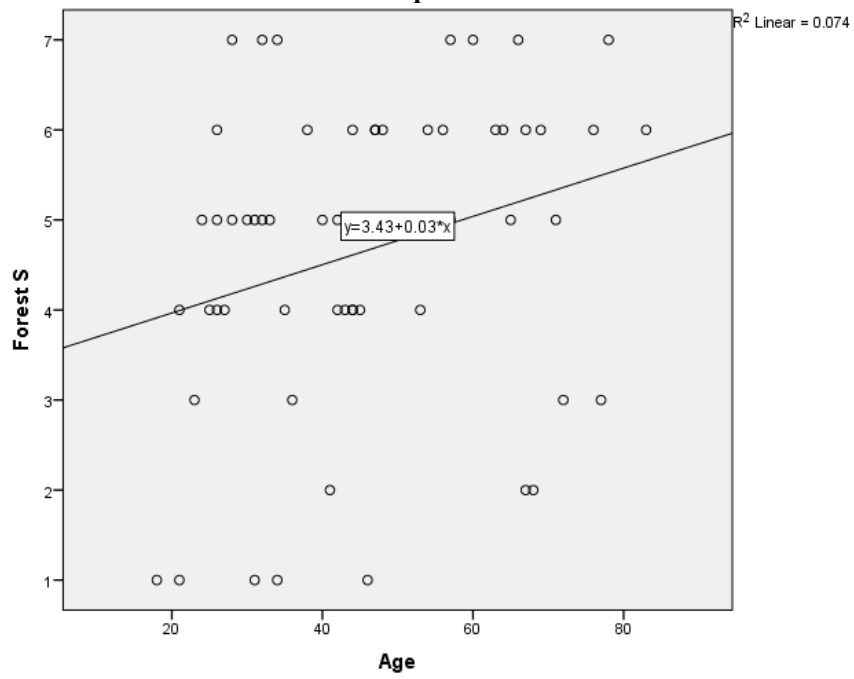
When speaking with parents during the in-depth personal interviews, most parents with children under the age of eighteen reported that they felt their children didn't play with their friends as often as when they themselves were children. One fifty-eight-year-old mother explained how her daughter used to be influenced by simply hearing children play. The mother stated, "When my daughter was a child, you could hear the sounds of children playing in their backyards after school each day. The sounds of the other children would make my daughter want

to go out and play with them." When speaking with a thirty-five-year-old father, he explained that "When I was a kid, I would walk over to my best friend's house every day to play... Now I have to plan play dates for my son to play with other kids."

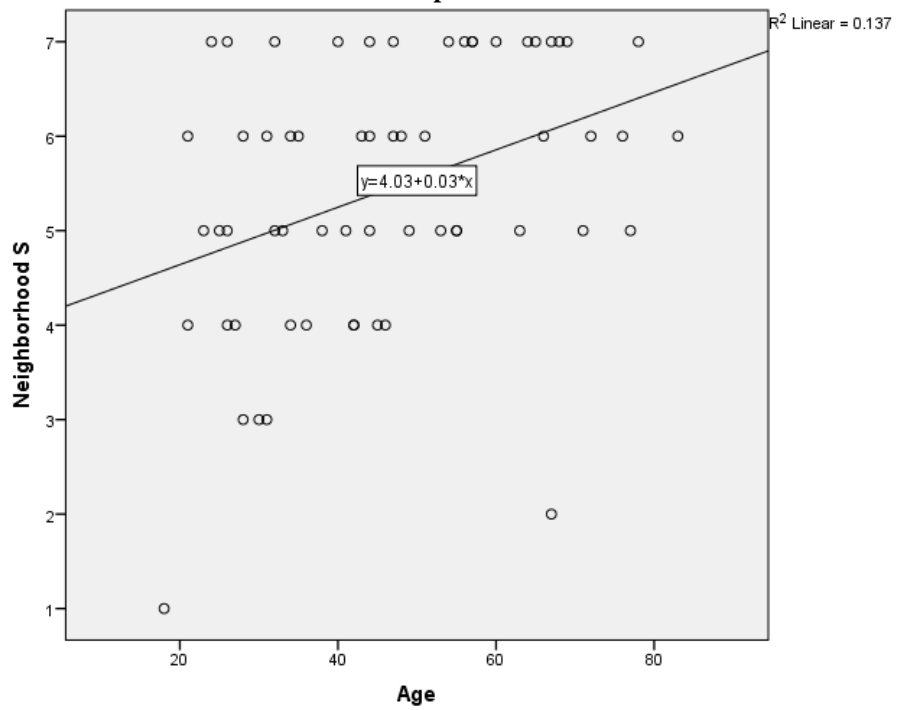
Perceptions of Safety

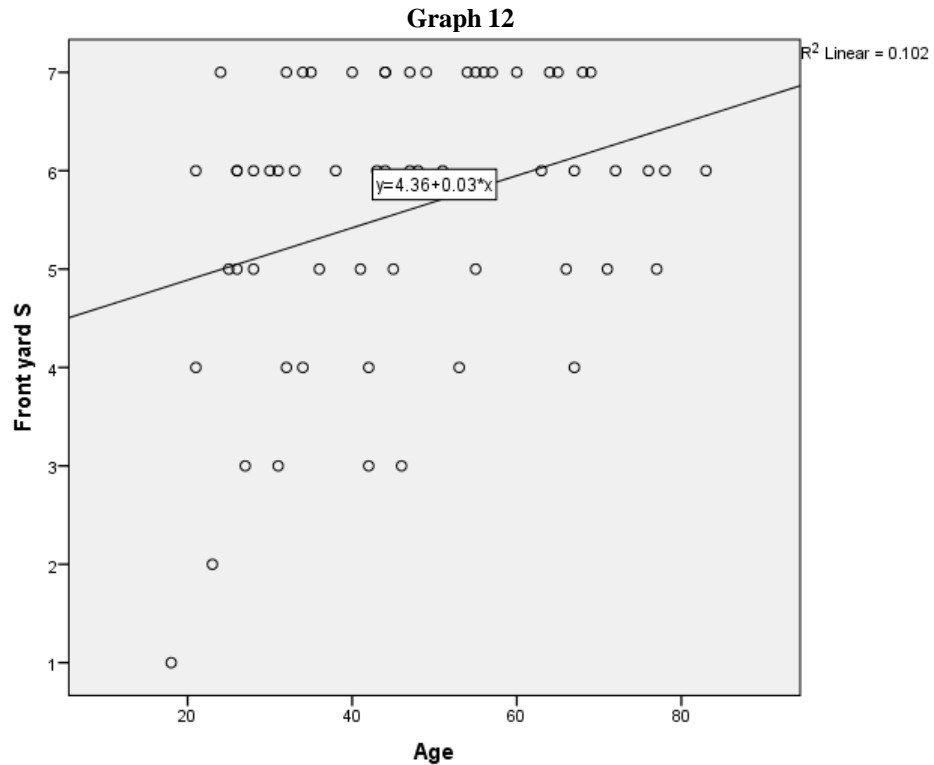
The next section of the survey analyzes the data of parental perceptions of safety within different environments. The environments were rated on a scale of extremely dangerous, moderately dangerous, fairly dangerous, neutral, fairly safe, moderately safe, and extremely safe. The environments that were rated are as follows: school, a forest, your neighborhood, a river, local park, your street, a creek, front yard, back yard, your house, and a tree fort. When looking at the relationship between safety and the different environments, there was a positive correlation between parental perceptions of safety and the environments of school, a forest (graph 10), your neighborhood (graph 11), a river, local park, your street, front yard (graph 12), and a tree fort at the .05 or higher significance level (1-tailed). As the respondent's age increased, so did the level of safety each of these environments. The only three variables that were not significant were a creek, back yard, and your house. However, these three variables still showed a positive slope. Therefore, one could conclude from the data that environments outside of the home and back yard are increasingly seen as unsafe. This conclusion rejects the null hypotheses that parental perceptions of fear have not changed over the decades.

Graph 10



Graph 11





When speaking with parents under the ages of forty years of age within the in-depth personal interviews, there appear to be hesitations with allowing their children to play outside of the home. Three of the four parents under the age of forty felt that crimes, kidnapping, and overall dangers had increased over the years. When asking why they believed this, they all reported that they see reports about it on the news almost daily. One thirty-one-year-old mother of two even stated: "I just don't feel safe letting my children play outside alone." Another mother said, "I don't know anyone in my apartment complex, so I don't feel comfortable letting my kids play without me there." In contrast, when speaking with parents over the age of fifty, most expressed that they felt as though it is much safer now as compared to when their children were still in grade school. Moreover, four of the five parents over the age of fifty stated that they commonly let their children play outside without immediate adult supervision. That they trusted

their children to make smart and safe decisions and that they felt that their neighbors and community would also keep an eye out for their children's safety.

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to show that there has been a shift from unstructured outdoor play to more indoor play. That this change in play culture is correlated to the rise in psychopathology, social isolation, and a loss in physical activity; and that the causation for such societal changes in play culture is due to cultural shifts of ideologies, family structures, institutions, and technologies of the postmodern era. It is essential to understand that these changes are a part of an overall societal change within the American culture. The results of this study are mostly consistent with the literature on the topic. However, some aspects leave room for speculation.

One unexpected result that was found was the discrepancy in parental reports of time use within the “outdoor activities” section. Within the in-depth interviews, parents who have had children within the last ten years reported that they felt as though their children play outside an adequate amount of time. However, the data from the online survey shows that this “adequate” amount of outdoor play time is far less than the parents themselves would have played. The data showed that outdoor play time has decreased by more than half the time. This loss in play time raises the question, how is it that parents feel as though the significant decrease in outdoor play time is okay? One explanation for this discrepancy could be that the parents do recognize that their children are not playing outdoors enough and that it is, in fact, a problem. However, parents do not want to admit this fact within the interview as a means to save face. For if a parent openly admits to the fact that their children do not play outside enough, they would also in part be admitting that they as a parent are failing to get their children outside enough.

Another explanation could be that parents are ranking their children's use of time based on how they view other children's use of time. For example, if a parent feels as though the amount of time their own child spends outdoors is greater than the majority of the other children within the community, then this could cause the parent to rank their own child as spending an adequate amount of time outdoors. Another reason for the discrepancy could be due to the loss of social capital within the community. As seen from the data, interviews, and literature; children are not creating as many meaningful relationships with peers within their community. Therefore, one could assume that this would mean that both children and parents will be socializing less with other children and parents within the community. Therefore, if parents are socializing with other parents and their children less, then they will have a harder time to accurately rank the amount of time their own child spends outdoors as compared to other children within the community.

Stress/anxiety is another noteworthy phenomenon that had some unexpected results. From most of the personal interviews, there appeared to be a common theme that stress within youth is triggered in social situations (particularly with strangers). Therefore, one may conclude that youth are not engaging in enough social situations and conversations with people they do not know. One explanation for this phenomena may be due to the increased perceptions of fear. The saying "stranger danger" arose in the early 1960s as a campaign to bring awareness to the dangers of unknown people being around children. Children all around the United States were being taught to be fearful of strangers. Moreover, "stranger danger" and "do not talk to strangers" is now a common rule many parents teach and instill in their children. This increase in fear of speaking with strangers may cause youth to avoid speaking with people they do not

know. Therefore, this avoidance could explain the increase in stress among youth when put into certain social situations where they are required to speak with strangers.

Family structure was another factor that had unexpected results. Within the online survey, there were questions asking parents to report their family structure during the upbringing of their children. It was hypothesized that there would be a relationship of some kind between family structure and the use of playtime among the children. More specifically, that families with dual incomes would have more resources and time to allow their children to play outdoors. However, when analyzing the data, it was found that family structure showed little to no impact on children's use of time. Another factor that showed little to no effect on children's use of time was the families residence. Children whose upbringing was in rural residence had almost just as much of a decline in outdoor play time use as children whose upbringing was in inner city residence. Being that this was a relatively small sample size, it is hard to say if, in fact, family structure and residence are, not a factor in a child's amount of outdoor play time. Further research on this aspect would have to be conducted to understand these relationships fully.

It was initially hypothesized that there was not only a movement from outdoor play to indoor play but that there was also a movement from unstructured play to structured play. Although the literature points to the fact that this movement may be accurate, the data collected within the online survey did not show any significant changes toward more structured play. In fact, the data showed a decreased in both structured indoor and outdoor activities. One explanation could be that structured, and unstructured play was not clearly defined for parents to accurately separate and distinguish their child's use of time. Another explanation could be that the sample size was too small to analyze and graph these changes in play culture accurately.

Lastly, these results could also mean that all play, in general, is in decline. This explanation is a more pessimistic view, as it means that youth are showing an overall decrease in all play styles.

Another topic worth addressing are the modern ideologies that are being fostered within youth through different forms of socialization that may inhibit the valuing of outdoor activities and meaningful relationships. This concept of modern ideologies is abstract. I say that this concept is abstract because in all the literature and research found, there are few claims on such changes of ideologies. However, through what the literature and the data shows over the past five decades, I will argue that modern ideologies do encourage more indoor and solitary characteristics. Firstly, individualism, the moral value of being independent and self-reliant, may be fostering ideologies that increase social isolation. The book titled *The Myth of Individualism* by Peter Callero (2013) explores the different social forces that are causing American culture to be more individualistic. Callero discusses how “we are inspired by the “rags to riches” stories of the underdogs who start with nothing and succeed by “pulling themselves up from their bootstraps.” (p. 18). Callero goes on to explain how this ideology of individualism can be found throughout American literature, music, films, television, and even children’s stories. Therefore, it could be theorized that youth are being socialized to adhere to this ideology of individualism, to not need or depend on others and that they should be independent and self-reliant. All of these values and characteristics related to individualism do not fit in line with building social capital or meaningful relationships. Therefore, this increase of valuing individualism within American culture could explain the loss of social capital and meaningful relationships over time.

Secondly, institutions play an essential role in fostering values and ideologies within youth. One such institution is the public school system. The public school system may not only be fostering positive ideologies of individualism through solitary work and studies but also

positive ideologies towards indoor activities and electronic use (while inadvertently frosting negative ideologies towards the outdoors). The mandatory curriculum taught in public schools includes English, science, social studies, and mathematics. Moreover, many public schools are integrating tablets and computers into the classroom. By emphasizing English, science, social studies, mathematics, and electronic use; this could create latent negative opinions towards subjects that are not related. Therefore, being that outdoor activities are not a part of the mandatory curriculum, this could cause youth to view the outdoors as having less importance.

Additionally, societal opinions on occupational prestige may also play a large role in how youth are socialized to obtain their ideologies. For example, in a study by Smith on measuring occupational prestige (2014), Smith did an analysis on the 2012 General Social Survey and ranked occupations. The list is expansive, therefore only the top ten occupations will be listed to exemplify the point at hand. The list goes from highest to lowest prestige: physicians, lawyer, computer systems analyst or scientist, teacher, physicist or astronomer, chemist, architects, biological or life scientist, physical scientist, and chemical engineer. As one can see in this list, the public opinion on what occupations hold the highest prestige are in fact occupations that involve English, science, social studies, and mathematics. Therefore, it would make logical sense as to why public schools emphasize these subjects of study. Moreover, it is important to note that the top ten occupations are all mostly indoor career paths. Therefore, being that these occupations are held in such high prestige, it could mean that youth are being socialized to obtain views and ideologies that rank the indoors in general as being higher prestige. Which would also mean that there are latent lesser views and ideologies being socialized towards the outdoors.

CONCLUSION

The data from this research shows that there has, in fact, been a drastic societal change in play culture. That this change shows a movement from outdoor play to more indoor play over time and generations. Although indoor play and electronic use were not found to be significant at the .05 level or higher, there was ultimately a trend of younger generations increasingly engaging in these activities over time. The research also shows that increased amounts of time on electronics and decreased amounts of time in unstructured outdoor play is correlated to social isolation and stress/anxiety. Additionally, this research has shown that ideologies and perceptions of fear are being instilled within parents and youth through institutions and mass media, of which could be causing a loss in positive views towards outdoor environments and trust within the community. Lastly, it was found that further research must be done to truly understand the relationships of family structure, residence, parental perceptions, and postmodern ideologies.

With such abrupt changes in play culture, it is hard to say how these changes are going to affect the future. What is clear, is that there are significant negative mental, physical, and societal implications due to ideologies, perceptions of fear, social isolation, and less physical activity. Furthermore, if social isolation and lack of physical activity are the leading causes of many adverse mental and physical conditions, then one must look at how to bring back social and active lifestyles. If unstructured outdoor play is proven to be more social and more active, then one could conclude that unstructured outdoor play should be a crucial part of a child's daily life. Therefore, there is a need for action to socialize and educate youth back into adequate amounts of unstructured outdoor play time. This can be done by implementing institutional policies for more education and awareness on the importance of unstructured outdoor play within early

childcare centers, preschools, K-12 schools, and parents. Such policies and education could help socialize youth into finding value in spending time outdoors in unstructured play, take away parental perceptions of fear, help moderate the overuse of technology, build stronger human relationships, be more physically active, and become stronger and more well-rounded individuals.

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APPENDIX

Survey Questions:

- Please indicate your gender
 - Multiple choice options: Female, Male, Prefer not to say, other.
- Please indicate your ethnicity (check all that apply)
 - Multiple choice options: Caucasian/white, African American, South Asian, East Asian, Latino/Hispanic, American Indian, Pacific Islander, Middle Eastern, Caribbean, Prefer not to say, Other
- Please indicate your age
- Please indicate your first child's age
- Where would you consider your residence during your child's upbringing?
 - Multiple choice options: Inner city (urban) residence, Outer city (rural) residence, Other
- Please choose what family structure best fits your family
 - Multiple choice options: Single parent family, Nuclear family (two parents), Grandparent Family (grandparents raising grandchildren), Step Family (two families merge into one through marriage), Other
- Please indicate your annual income during your child's upbringing
- Approximately, how much Unstructured time does/did your child spend playing Outdoors each day?
 - Multiple choice options: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours
- Approximately, how much Unstructured time does/did your child spend playing Indoors each day?
 - Multiple choice options: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours
- Approximately, how much Structured time does/did your child spend playing Outdoors each day?
 - Multiple choice options: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours
- Approximately, how much Structured time does/did your child spend playing Indoors each day?
 - Multiple choice options: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours
- Approximately, how much time does/did your child spend engaged with electronics each day?
 - Multiple choice options: None, 15 minutes, 30 Minutes, 45 minutes, 1 hour, 2 hours, 3 hours, 4 hours, 5 hours, 6+ Hours
- Thinking back to your childhood, how would you compare the amount of your child's outdoor play time to your own?
 - Multiple choice options: Much less than mine, A little less than mine, About the same, A little more than mine, A lot more than mine
- Thinking back to your childhood, how would you compare your child's activity level to your own?

- Multiple choice options: I was far more active, I was a little more active, About the same, My child is more active, My child is far more active
- Which situation is/was your child more likely to be socially engaged with other children?
 - Multiple choice options: Unstructured outdoor play, Unstructured indoor play, Structured outdoor play, Structured indoor play
- Which situation is/was your child more likely to engage in solitary play?
 - Multiple choice options: Unstructured outdoor play, Unstructured indoor play, Structured outdoor play, Structured indoor play
- About how often does/would your child play with close friends outside of school?
 - Multiple choice options: Less than once a month, Once or twice a month, Once or twice a week, Three or four times a week, five or six times a week, Daily
- On a scale of 1 to 5 (1 being “Not at all” and 5 being “Very much so”) Do you feel like your child had/has close and meaningful relationships with their peers?
- Within a six month period, how often does/would your child do the following activities?
 - The activities: [Climb to the top of a tree], [Ride a bike in the street], [Walk home from school], [Watch TV for more than two consecutive hours], [Play in a creek], [Stick fighting with a friend], [Go to the park with friends], [Play video games for more than an hour], [Attend an after school program], [(Not including school) play more than three consecutive hours inside], [Play in the woods], [Play in organized sports], [Play in the front yard], [Go fishing], [Attend a summer camp program]
 - Multiple choice options: Not at all, Once or twice, Three or four times, Once or twice a month, Once or twice a week, Three to four times a week, All the time
- How would you rate your child's safety in the following environments?
 - The environments: [School], [A forest], [Your neighborhood], [A river], [Local park], [Your street], [A creek], [Front yard], [Back yard], [Your house], [A tree fort]
 - Multiple choice options: Extremely Dangerous, Moderately Dangerous, Fairly Dangerous, Neutral, Fairly Safe, Moderately Safe, Extremely Safe
- About how often would you say your child feels/felt stressed or anxious?
 - Multiple choice options: Not at all, Once a month or less, Twice a month, Once a week, Twice a week, Three times a week, Four times a week or more