

# PROVIDER NEWS

November 2021



## PROVIDER RESOURCES

Contact our office for assistance with any of the following resources:

- Virtual Training Opportunities
- Professional Development Funds
- Credential Assistance
- Quality Improvement Funds
- ExceleRate Illinois Consulting
- Technical Assistance
- Referral Database

Office hours are 8:00am – 4:30pm  
815-484-9442

## LOOSE PARTS

There has been a lot of talk in recent years about “loose parts”. What are loose parts?

Miriam Beloglovsky just concluded a week long Loose Parts Summit, and many professionals answered the same question. In Lisa Daly and Miriam Beloglovsky’s book, *Loose Parts, Inspiring Play in Young Children*, they introduce the use of loose parts as, “alluring, beautiful found objects of materials that children can move, manipulate, control, and change while they play.” (Daly 2015) Many of the professionals answered this question with how open ended the items are for the children to explore.

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*“When children interact with loose parts, they enter a world of “what if” that promotes the type of thinking that leads to problem solving and theoretical reasoning. Loose parts enhance children’s ability to think imaginatively and see solutions, and they bring a sense of adventure and excitement to children’s play.” (Daly, 2015)*

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Lella Gandini and Cathy Topal’s book, *Beautiful Stuff from Nature*, states, “the natural world offers an infinite variety of open-ended materials that teachers and children can use to explore the intention of a standard, in a freer way.” (Topal, 2019)

The children are learning so much through their curiosity and exploration of items in the classroom. Suzzane Law, from *Pop-Up Adventure Play*, emphasizes the “looseness” of items used by children. The more child-directed, the looser the items because the children are choosing how it’s used.

**Are your toys loose parts?** Some toys would be considered loose parts, but the intent of loose parts is for the looseness”; the “open ended-ness”. There

should be less direction in the use of the items by an adult and more allowance for the children to do what they choose. For example, giving a child used toilet paper rolls: they may look through them, build with them, drive through them with toy cars; the possibilities are endless if we allow children to do what they want to and not what they should do.

**What about the risk?** It’s obvious your job is to keep the kiddos in your care safe so you would need to practice the same safety standards. You need to make sure the materials you use are clean or can be cleaned *Continue next page.*

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# YWCA IS ON A MISSION

*Continued from previous page.* again, and items used with infants and toddlers are not choking hazards. The idea is to allow them to explore and be there if a situation arises before intervening. By allowing a child to see the reactions/repercussion of their actions is a learning process. Many would not consider offering a child a glass cup, but once they have broken that cup they will see what happens: the cup breaks, it needs to be cleaned up, a towel, mop, or broom is used. They understand they are not able to use the cup again and are more careful when they are given another.



The theory of loose parts comes from Simon Nicholson, and one of the questions he poses is, “Out of all the possible materials that could be provided which ones were the most fun to play with and the most capable of stimulating the cognitive, social and physical learning processes?” So I leave you with that question to ponder and see how you can implement loose parts into your program. You may even find that while your kiddos are exploring they are also meeting many of those developmental milestones and standards.

Daly, L., & Beloglovsky, M. (2015). *Loose parts: Inspiring play in young children*. Redleaf Press.

Topal, C.W., & Gandini, L. (2019). *Beautiful stuff from nature: More learning with found materials*. Davis Publications, Inc.

**The Theory of Loose Parts** by Simon Nicholson

“In any environment both the degree of inventiveness and creativity, and the possibility of discovery, are directly proportional to the number and kind of variables in it.”



“The more stuff you have in the space, the more the children are able to engage. The more stuff there is, the more flexible their play becomes. The more stuff there is, the more exploration they have. The more exploration they have, the more they find the way things are working and what things can do, the more immersed they become. The more immersed they become the greater their self-esteem becomes. And all the while along here they’re playing, which means bang, bang, bang, the brain’s going mad, neural synapses, neural pathways forming synapses firing off all over the place. The world becomes better when you play.” *Meynell Walter, UK Playworker*

*We want to know what you think about the Provider Newsletter?*

*We value your feedback and want to extend a gift to the first 5 providers that respond with a topic for next month’s newsletter, an organizational tip, or a photo of a child’s STEM project.*

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**Institute a NO GLUE! Rule.**  
*Let your materials live another day!!!*  
 What may look like this masterpiece (right) may be even greater when the parts are used again by a different child.

