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Teachers' Perceptions about the Use of Play to Facilitate Development and Teach Prosocial Skills

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ABSTRACT
The purpose of this study was to investigate teachers' perceptions about the use of play to promote social, emotional, and cognitive skills to support planning for a school program aimed at increasing inclusive play for young children. This research was inspired by Vivian Gussin Paley's book, You Can't Say You Can't Play (1992). Participants included undergraduate students and graduate education students in the Teacher Education Program at a small liberal arts college, as well as practicing elementary school teachers. The results indicated that graduate students and practicing teachers had a more accurate understanding about the developmental benefits of incorporating play into the classroom and a greater willingness to embrace the " you can't say you can't play" rule to promote inclusive play and acceptance. Implications for designing a preventative program for inclusive play in young children are discussed.

KEYWORDS
Children, Play, Inclusion

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