

Why Can't Children Sit Still?



The Importance of Movement and Play for Child Development

Why has society determined that it was 'normal' for children to sit still, when nature designed the human body to move, touch and connect? 21st century 'techno' and sedentary lifestyle is not healthy or natural, and is resulting in what can only be described as 'diagnosis mania' accompanied by pervasive drugging of children. With 15% of our elementary population receiving psychotropic (mind altering) medication, no one has mentioned to parents a preliminary three month 'unplug – don't drug' trial. Remember 25 years ago, before satellite TV, cell phones and videogames, when children use to engage in rough physical play, create imaginary games, and get lots of exercise and fresh air? Today's child is different, and so are today's homes and schools. Children use on average 6.5 hours per day of TV and videogames, with over 50% of children having TV's in their bedrooms. Parent misperceptions that the world and nature are not safe, keeps their kids indoors. School and community fears of litigation have dramatically changed how children access movement and play. Slides and swings are shorter, merry-go-rounds non-existent and jungle gyms unchallenging. Street hockey, tree houses and sidewalk chalk paintings have been outlawed. Videogames have become the *New Parent* and Wii the *New Sport*. Children are physically moving less, and as a result are not getting the necessary motor and sensory stimulation, resulting in developmental delays and attachment disorders that the health and education systems are only beginning to detect, much less understand.

Workshop Goal – *Why Can't Children Sit Still* raises awareness about the importance of movement and play in the every day lives of our children, and explores why adults are fearful of letting children move. This workshop details how a trial of 'unplug – don't drug' could eliminate the need to medicate many children.

Learning Outcomes

- Identify three critical factors for child development, and recognize the impact of perceptions of safety on access to playgrounds and nature.
- Analyze current research on technology's impact on child development, and differentiate popular mental childhood diagnoses from TV and videogame addictions.
- Recognize the evolutionary need for human movement, and describe five reasons why children need to move to learn, pay attention and develop properly.
- Using provided *Foundation Scale for Children*, rank individual performance levels, and using the *Nature and Child Development Directives*, list three creative intervention strategies to improve access to nature and enhance child development.
- Identify government, university, health and education system initiatives (one of each) to increase movement and play, and reverse the sedentary trend to not move.

Cris Rowan is a well-known speaker and author to teachers, parents and therapists providing over 200 keynotes and workshops throughout North America. Cris has BSc's in both in Occupational Therapy and in Biology, is a SIPT certified Pediatric Sensory Specialist, and has worked in the school system for the past decade. Cris authors the *Development Series Newsletter*, created the *Zone'in and Move'in Educational Programs* for schools and homes, and recently started *Rowan Training Systems* for registered Occupational Therapists.



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REGISTRATION FORM

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<u>Circle the workshops you wish to attend</u>	<u>Regular Price</u>	<u>Early Bird Price</u>
Morning session	\$150	\$125
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