

# WHY IS GUIDED PLAY SO IMPORTANT?

**Free play and recess is not enough**, nor is it everything children need. There are many benefits to recess; children get great exercise and build strength and have fun! However, children aren't exposed to full range of manipulative, locomotor, and stability skills when on their own. We believe, along with current research and scientific studies, that *guided movement* at this young age is pivotal for determining the child's success and enjoyment of exercise in the future. Together we can help change our nation's obesity epidemic and empower children towards better health.

## FREE PLAY VS. GUIDED PLAY

- ◆ Free play is so important for children to explore, learn, have fun and be healthy.
- ◆ Yet, without guiding them and providing opportunities for them to learn the vast array of motor skills, children will miss out on valuable life tools.
- ◆ **Guided play Incorporates a large variety of:**
  - \* **Manipulative Skills:** throwing, catching, kicking, bouncing, rolling, striking
  - \* **Locomotor Skills:** hopping, skipping, galloping, leaping, sliding, crawling, chasing and fleeing
  - \* **Stability Skills:** balancing, twisting, stopping, rolling, swaying, dodging, stretching, bending
- ◆ **Learn, develop and explore:**
  - \* hi/ low levels
  - \* fast/slow speeds,
  - \* zigzags, curves, straight pathways
  - \* over/under, right/left, up/down, forward/backward, in/out, sideways, twisting, mirroring, spatial awareness
- ◆ **Guided imaginative play** – educational school readiness skills
- ◆ **Class discussions on many health topics** i.e., the importance of moving and being active, why our heart beats, healthy foods, breathing exercises

