

Trauma-Informed Best Practices for Skateboarding-Based Youth Programming

By Rhianon Bader
September 2, 2018

Abstract

There are now more than 100 skateboarding-based youth development projects around the world, with many working in conflict-affected and/or impoverished communities where children are vulnerable to complex trauma. As safe spaces for sport and play, these programs have potential for providing trauma-informed care to otherwise hard-to-reach children, yet trauma awareness and psychosocial competencies among such programs are thus far very limited. Similarly, there is a lack of empirical research on the positive benefits of skateboarding for youth development, or trauma-informed best practices for such projects. Consequently, this paper pursues a multi-disciplinary literature review to identify strategies from the fields of trauma and sport for development (S4D), as well as existing documentation of the positive benefits of skateboarding generally. This paper then proposes a practical set of recommendations for practitioners that already run or wish to run skateboarding-based programming for trauma-affected youth, so that they have a greater awareness of how trauma affects their participants and can structure their programming to most effectively support resilience and recovery for youth affected by trauma.

Introduction

This paper examines trauma-informed best practices that can be applied in skateboarding-based youth development programming. As a new field of practice, there is a knowledge gap in the therapeutic benefits of skateboarding, therefore I will review a range of related disciplines to compile recommendations for promoting psychosocial well-being, resilience and social supports through skateboarding-based programs.

In the past 10 years, more than 100 skateboarding-based youth development projects have been established around the world (Skateistan & Pushing Boarders, 2019)¹. These projects promote skateboarding as a positive physical activity for young people, particularly in communities where skateboarding equipment and infrastructure were previously non-existent. A growing number of these social skateboarding projects work in conflict-affected and/or impoverished communities where many children face complex trauma. Often, these projects provide rare safe spaces for play and sport in communities where children have few other positive outlets.

While some larger projects link skateboarding programming with educational, leadership and/or psychosocial outcomes (Thorpe, 2016), the majority of these projects focus only on access to and teaching skateboarding. Despite the vulnerabilities of targeted participants, there exists little awareness among most social skateboarding projects about why and how to incorporate trauma-informed best practices in their activities. At best, this gap in understanding may result in unfulfilled potential, and at worst it can compound children's experiences of trauma.²

My intention with this research is to provide a clear set of recommendations to organizations that

¹ In June 2018 the first *Survey of Social Skateboarding Projects Worldwide* was conducted by the non-governmental organization (NGO) Skateistan and the Pushing Boarders conference, in order to identify the aims, impact and activities of these projects. The online survey received 120 responses from 101 different projects working in more than 50 countries around the world.

² Children affected by trauma often exhibit severe behavioural problems that can be misinterpreted by those lacking trauma awareness, leading to punishment of those children which potentially compounds trauma-related issues.

already run or wish to run skateboarding-based programming for trauma-affected youth, so that they may have a greater awareness of how trauma affects their participants, and can structure their sport programming to most effectively support resilience and recovery for youth affected by trauma.

Problem Description and Analysis

This paper explores relevant best practices for working specifically with *children and youth*³ populations affected by trauma. It is aimed at practitioners of skateboarding-based youth programming who work within communities with a high percentage of trauma-affected youth, for example due to conflict, social marginalization, neglect, exploitation and/or high rates of violence. Since there is not yet a commonly-used term to describe these types of initiatives, I have chosen to use the term “skateboarding-based youth development” because it implies that skateboarding is being used as a tool for larger youth development goals, rather than solely for the sake of the activity itself. Furthermore, the term can apply both to registered NGOs and charities, as well as to informal, community-based projects.

This paper will seek out best practices for trauma-informed skateboarding programming applicable to a variety of geographic and socio-economic contexts. The aim is to present a minimum set of recommendations which could be applied within programs in Canada, Afghanistan, Palestine, the USA or anywhere else that skateboarding is used as a positive development tool for trauma-affected youth. Since any proposed solutions must be evaluated depending on the context (Scherer & Herman, 2008), I anticipate that the resulting recommendations will be added to and adapted to the specific needs and strengths of a given community.

Background on Trauma

The need for such trauma-informed youth programs would be greatest in contexts that lack human security, defined as “freedom from fear and freedom from want” (UNDP, 1994, p.24). Yet trauma can occur whenever a negative, external event overwhelms an individual’s coping capacities (Ammann & Matuska, 2014). Traumatic experiences are associated with intense fear, horror, helplessness, serious injury, or the threat of death (Ammann & Matuska, 2014). Examples of traumatic events include war, abuse (physical, sexual, psychological), discrimination, neglect, violent attack, disasters, or witnessing such events (Ammann & Matuska, 2014; Bulanda & Byro, 2016). When one individual experiences multiple traumatic incidents, often over a long time (e.g. child abuse, sexual violence, war), this is known as “complex trauma” (Brunzell et al, 2016, p.64). When such complex trauma is unresolved into adulthood, subsequent generations can suffer from a cycle of abuse or neglect, resulting in “intergenerational trauma”, which is an unfortunate legacy of Canada’s treatment of indigenous peoples (Barron & Abdallah, 2015, p.103).

Trauma-informed practices do not intend to deal directly with trauma, but instead create awareness of the impacts of trauma on individuals, as well as providing a safe, empowering environment.

³ The United Nations (UN, n.d.) defines children as those under the age of 18, and youth as those aged 15-24.

“Trauma-informed services are sensitive to trauma related issues, meaning that they can accommodate the vulnerabilities of trauma survivors, allowing services to be delivered in a way that will avoid re-traumatisation and facilitate programme participation.” (Ammann & Matuska, 2014, p.4)

This diverges from *trauma-specific* practices which directly seek to address trauma and its effects, such as through counselling and clinical interventions with trained mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) professionals (Ammann & Matuska, 2014).

Learnings for a New Field

The field of skateboarding-based youth development is very new, with the first organizations emerging only a decade ago. Most founders of these grassroots skateboarding projects tend to be action sports enthusiasts from diverse professional backgrounds rather than experienced humanitarian, aid or social workers (Thorpe, 2014; (Skateistan & Pushing Boarders, 2019)⁴. The relative novelty of this field means that the skateboarding for youth development initiatives that exist have widely varying levels of capacity and that there is not yet significant academic or external research on the impact of these programs. Currently much of the reported success of these projects on children’s lives is anecdotal or based on monitoring and evaluation (M&E) published in reports by the organizations themselves – with most skateboarding-based initiatives lacking the resources and capacity for formal M&E.

At present, there are no major skateboarding-based youth development organizations focusing explicitly on psychosocial benefits related to skateboarding⁵. In contrast, surf-based development programs have recently begun to explicitly promote “surf therapy” (Snelling, 2016, p.1) and conduct joint research on the psychosocial benefits related to surfing (Matos et al, 2017). A constraint to the research topic of this paper has thus been the lack of published research on the specific psychosocial benefits of skateboarding, with most academic articles focusing instead on the physical risks/dangers of the sport. This paper will provide a starting point for further research on the topic. Over time, more internal and external research on skateboarding-based programs will help to identify and confirm how skateboarding brings about positive changes for youth, which may in turn reveal new approaches to promoting psychosocial well-being. In the meantime, the gap in established knowledge on trauma-informed practices for skateboarding programs is also an opportunity, since the newness of skateboarding-based programs make them open to innovation and trying out different program designs that will ultimately enable the best experience for their participants.

Literature Review

Due to the lack of existing literature on trauma-informed best practices for skateboarding-based youth development programming, I will be doing a multi-disciplinary literature review to identify strategies that cross-over with the unique benefits of skateboarding. I will review the relevant literature across three main domains:

⁴ Just over 35% of respondents to the Social Skate Survey reported prior experience in education, humanitarian, non-profit or related sectors.

⁵ However, Hull Services in Canada is an established behavioural and mental health organization that has recently begun to research the potential of skateboarding for trauma care. More details on page 21.

- *Trauma-informed mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)* – with a focus on how trauma effects children and strategies for trauma recovery and resilience
- *Sport for development (S4D)* – including benefits that apply to unstructured and individual sports, specifically surfing
- *Benefits of skateboarding for youth development* – extracting the positive aspects of skateboarding identified in literature related to conflict transformation, sport policy, adolescent development and neurobiology.

I will then compile and link the relevant strategies identified in the literature review to the positive attributes of skateboarding as a tool for youth development, creating a table of recommendations for practitioners.

Section 1: Trauma-informed mental health and psychosocial support

When one thinks of trauma what comes to mind is often war or natural disasters, but traumatic experiences can occur in any context, and as many as 60% of individuals in the US, for example, have experienced some form of childhood abuse, neglect or trauma (Roulier & De Fazio, n.d.).

Incidents that can be particularly traumatizing for children include:

- Abandonment, betrayal of trust, or neglect by a caregiver
- Physical or sexual abuse
- The death or serious illness of a loved one
- Witnessing domestic violence
- Witnessing/experiencing community violence or war
- Living in chronically chaotic environments due to poverty
- Bullying (NCTSM, 2008; Williams, 2006)

Childhood trauma affects the functioning of multiple domains, including physiological, motor, emotional, social and cognitive (Gaskill & Perry, 2014). The following table lists some of the most common negative effects of trauma on children.

Table 1. *Negative effects of childhood trauma*

<i>Effects of Childhood Trauma</i>	<i>References</i>
Impaired learning – including concentration and memory	(NCTSM, 2008; Bergholz et al, 2016)
Reduced ability to organize and process information	(NCTSM, 2008)
Decreased ability to problem-solve or plan	(NCTSM, 2008)
Overwhelming feelings of anxiety, anger and/or frustration	(NCTSM, 2008)
Interrupted sleep and nightmares	(NCTSM, 2008)
Hyperarousal and jumpiness	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
Intrusive thoughts	(NCTSM, 2008)
Mental health issues arising from trauma	(Scholte & Ager, 2014)
Damaged sense of self	(Bergholz et al, 2016; Bulanda & Byro, 2016)

Sense of learned helplessness	(Bulanda & Byro, 2016)
Social withdrawal and isolation	(NCTSM, 2008; Green & Myrick, 2014)
Attachment issues and inability to maintain interpersonal relationships	(Green & Myrick, 2014; Brunzell et al, 2016)
Difficulty regulating emotions and impulses	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
Disengagement and low motivation for rewarding activities	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
Low self-awareness	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
Difficulty interacting with peers	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
Modeling the behavior of abusers	(Snelling, 2016)
Depression	(Brunzell et al, 2016)

The effects of trauma can negatively impact health and well-being long after it is experienced, profoundly affecting one's "sense of safety, self and self-efficacy" (Ammann & Matuska, 2014, p.15). In particular, the abilities to regulate emotions and relate to others can be disrupted. This is especially true when trauma takes place during childhood, since it can delay or disrupt the sequential development of the brain at a crucial stage (Brunzell et al, 2016; Hull Services & the Child Trauma Academy, 2018). When a child perceives an external threat, the body's stress response is triggered, with long-term damage to important neurological and psychological systems that impact both behavioral and emotional functioning (Brunzell et al, 2016; Williams, 2006).

This damage to brain development matters because many of the skills required for a healthy adulthood – as well as for cognitive-based psychology interventions like goal setting – require individuals to be "developmentally ready" in terms of more basic neurological competencies that are often compromised by traumatic experiences (Brunzell et al, 2016, p.64). When children who have experienced trauma act out, this is often because they lack the capacity for self-reflection, planning and intentional behavior that is associated with healthy brain development (pp.184-185). In the long run these developmental delays are detrimental to success at school, which in turn has a negative effect on income, health, social participation and involvement in justice systems (Brunzell et al, 2016).

Mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS) is defined as "any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder" (IASC, 2007). MHPSS interventions include both specialized medical care (ie. therapy) and non-specialized activities by community workers or volunteers (Ommeren et al, 2015). In contexts with high rates of trauma, such as conflict or disaster zones, MHPSS is increasingly recognized as a priority service to provide alongside other humanitarian or emergency relief. Non-specialist community members or NGOs staff (for example working in the health, gender-based violence, or protection sectors) are increasingly provided with trainings

on trauma and psychological first aid, so that they can facilitate the building of social supports or provide referrals to specialized services (Ommeren et al, 2015).

There is, however, major disagreement among MHPSS academics on whether Western medicalized psychosocial approaches – including diagnoses such as post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD) – should be widely spread in different cultural contexts or if this can in fact be harmful by creating problems or dependencies where they did not exist before (Summerfield & Veale, 2008). Trauma itself is a very complex topic with symptoms varying across cultures and no one-size-fits-all solution. For example, in more communal cultures a group-level intervention may be more effective and appropriate than individualized approaches that are unfamiliar and stigmatizing (Scholte & Ager, 2014). One way of mitigating the risks of inappropriate trauma interventions – particularly if working in an unfamiliar culture – is to perform an MHPSS assessment that surveys community members on beliefs, symptoms, coping methods, and priorities relating to mental health (IASC, 2012). Taking a strengths-based approach to MHPSS – rather than focusing solely on repairing “deficits” – is also beneficial in terms of promoting a “growth-mindset” that shows trauma-affected individuals their potential to learn and change (Brunzell, 2016, pp.64, 77). Below is a table with other best practices for trauma-informed interventions from the MHPSS field.

Table 2. *Best practices in trauma-informed MHPSS for children*

<i>Trauma-informed MHPSS best practices</i>	<i>References</i>
1. Create free, accessible child-friendly spaces with structured activities	(UNICEF, 2011)
2. Implement programming that accommodates all capabilities and unique needs	(UNICEF, 2011)
3. Work closely with community-based sectors to identify and refer at-risk children	(UNICEF, 2011)
4. Involve children/youth in decisions that affect them	(Victorian Department of Human Services, 2014)
5. Give children choices to make them feel safe and in control	(NCTSM, 2008; Brunzell et al, 2016)
6. Establish and maintain routines in a stable and consistent location	(NCTSM, 2008; Brunzell et al, 2016)
7. Provide a safe place for children to talk about trauma	(NCTSM, 2008)
8. Protect the traumatized child from the curiosity of peers	(NCTSM, 2008)
9. Give opportunities to identify & nurture multiple strengths and assets	(Brunzell et al, 2016)
10. Promote a growth-mindset	(Brunzell et al, 2016)
11. Encourage positive behaviours	(Brunzell et al, 2016)
12. Determine logical consequences instead of punishment	(Brunzell et al, 2016)
13. Demonstrate “unconditional positive regard” to build attachment and trust	(Brunzell et al, 2016)

Section 2: Strategies from the sport for development sector

Skateboarding as a tool for youth development is part of the larger S4D sector, in which sports (especially team sports like football and rugby) are increasingly incorporated into youth programming as a “hook” due to their ability to engage young people and provide them with further educational or advocacy programming. There are now hundreds of non-governmental organizations (NGOs) around the world using sport to achieve educational, health, and peace-building aims. S4D is a relatively new type of development work, with Burnett (2015) linking its emergence to the UN global agenda in 2003. Others trace S4D back to the Sport for Good concept embraced in the 20th century within many Western democracies, viewing sport as a means to address the social inclusion of marginalized and at-risk individuals (Toffoletti and Palmer, 2015).

Structured S4D programs claim to lead to a range of positive outcomes, such as enhancing health and self-esteem, providing leadership and empowerment opportunities, challenging gender norms, and building community (Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group [SDP IWG], 2008; Harkness and Honigsmeier, 2015). Some scholars are however skeptical about S4D’s impact, criticizing programs for lacking the rigorous evaluations to back up their “messianic claims” of the positive outcomes they achieve (Kidd, 2011;). Other critiques of S4D include the lack of participatory approaches and community buy-in (Ahmad and Thorpe, 2015), and the reluctance of some S4D agencies to share successful methods with others (Giulianotti, 2011).

There is however a growing body of research from both academics and practitioners on the ability for trauma-informed sport programming to provide psychosocial benefits for children and youth. I will first share some of the benefits of sport for well-being, and present a table of trauma-informed best practices for sport programs. I will then give a brief overview of the literature related to Action Sports for Development and Peace (ASDP)(Thorpe, 2014), which includes non-structured individual sports like skateboarding, and features some potential lessons from the growing field of *surf therapy*.

While sport can be a tool in formal play therapy requiring mental health professionals (Green & Myrick, 2014), sport and play can also be powerful MHPSS interventions on their own. Research has shown sport to be effective in restoring the well-being, psychological and physical health of trauma victims (Ammann & Matuska, 2014) – including in contexts with ongoing physical or psychological stress like war or displacement (Thorpe, 2014; Snelling, 2016)

Below is a list of other benefits of sport and play, particularly for children and youth:

- Facilitating holistic brain development across mental, physical, social and emotional dimensions (Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
- A break from sadness or frustrations (Brunzell et al, 2016)
- Increased children’s creativity (Brunzell et al, 2016)
- High self-esteem (Thorpe, 2014)
- Increased resilience (Thorpe, 2014; Snelling, 2016)
- Reduced depression/anxiety (Bergholz et al, 2016)
- Increased social/communication skills (Thorpe, 2014; Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
- Bridging social, racial, religious, and gender divides (Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
- Increased coping mechanisms and skills for future stress management (Ammann & Matuska, 2014)

- Developing habits of asking for help (Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
- Goal-setting and perseverance (Bergholz et al, 2016)
- Increased social supports (mentors, peer friendships) (Ammann & Matuska, 2014; Bergholz et al, 2016)
- A sense of positive group identity (Bergholz et al, 2016)
- Increased ability to regulate emotional responses (Bergholz et al, 2016)

However, despite the great potential for sport to improve the well-being of children affected by trauma “sport itself does not necessarily create change, but well trained coaches and well-designed programmes that connect sports with life skills, do” (Ammann & Matuska, 2014, p.14). Trauma-informed sport programming provides a safe environment where participants feel a sense of dignity, self-determination and control – and the physical space is only one dimension of making children feel safe (Ammann & Matuska, 2014; Snelling, 2016). The following table presents a list of best practices for sport-based youth development programming, informed by both academics and practitioners. Since sport educators cannot always know the backgrounds of the children they work with, it is best if all participants are treated as potential trauma survivors in terms of avoiding practices likely to be re-traumatizing and promoting practices linked to healing and growth (Ammann & Matuska, 2014).

Table 3. *Best practices in trauma-informed sport for development*

<i>Trauma-informed S4D best practices</i>	<i>References</i>
1. Educators/coaches should be aware of the effects of trauma and common coping strategies of survivors	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
2. Provide safety and trustworthiness	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
3. Participants should have opportunities for choice (ie. which sport they play)	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
4. Give participants control: helping with warm-ups or setup, designing the program & setting the rules	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
5. Facilitate connection between participants	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
6. Provide structure and predictability (ie. repeating warm-up/games/drills)	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
7. Activities should be strengths-based and build new skills	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
8. Make the physical space safe (ie. safety equipment, first aid kit)	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
9. Ensure visitors/spectators don't make participants uncomfortable	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
10. Have no tolerance for physical or verbal attacks	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
11. Be friendly, caring and empathetic, but keep professional distance	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)

12. Do trauma-sensitive communications (calm tone, deep listening, explaining how/why, asking questions)	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
13. Focus on the sport not the trauma to give participants space, unless they wish to talk	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)
14. Provide long-term engagement not short-term programs	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
15. Avoid coach/mentor turnover so participants build attachment	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
16. Provide support for staff/volunteers to avoid burnout	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
17. Involve primary caregivers in the program (ie. as volunteers, spectators)	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
18. Measure progress and celebrate growth	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
19. Have regular check-ins or debrief	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
20. Teach mindful breathing and visualization	(Bergholz et al, 2016)
21. Know where to refer children in case of need or disclosure	(Ammann & Matuska, 2014)

Although all of the above-mentioned best practices would be relevant advice for any trauma-informed sport program, the majority were created with team sports in mind – and, indeed, “the lion’s share” of an estimated 700 S4D initiatives worldwide utilize traditional team sports rather than individual action sports like skateboarding, surfing, snowboarding or parkour (Thorpe, 2014, p.94). However, in tandem with the growth of S4D worldwide since the mid 1990s, these less-structured action sports have also been adopted by numerous NGOs and community movements as a tool for youth development (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2012). While rates of involvement in traditional team sports are declining or slowing in many countries, participation rates for action sports are increasing (Thorpe, 2014).

Out of all the ASDP organizations, those using surfing are the most advanced in their work with trauma-affected individuals. Practitioners and academics have begun to use the term “surf therapy” to designate the benefits of surfing in conjunction with psycho-educational activities for at-risk populations, to increase their well-being and reduce social exclusion (Matos et al, 2017). In 2017, the International Surf Therapy Organization (ISTO) was founded by eight organizations running trauma-informed surf programming (ISTO, 2018). One of the leading organizations in terms of program design and M&E is Waves for Change (W4C), which delivers a psychosocial curriculum alongside surfing programs to reduce antisocial behavior and help children cope with trauma in South Africa, Liberia and Somalia (Snelling, 2016).

Research on a surf therapy program for vulnerable youth in Portugal, designed using the W4C model, found a number of positive effects among participants, including: self-confidence, responsibility, problem-solving, time management, perseverance, social skills, interpersonal relationship-building, and emotional regulation (Matos et al, 2017). The study also found a statistically significant decrease in behavioral issues associated with psychosocial trauma, according to reports from those working with the youth (Matos et al, 2017). Surfing has also been shown successful in reducing symptoms of PTSD like depression and anxiety with combat veterans, and helping people to overcome addiction (Fleischmann et al, 2011; Matos et al, 2017).

The research so far on surf therapy programs has also informed a number of recommendations to achieve the biggest positive impact on trauma-affected children:

- Conduct psychosocial curriculum or teachable moments on the beach (rather than in a separate space), since surfing is the main reason participants are there and will incentivize attendance (Snelling, 2016)
- Use a democratic and inclusive leadership style (Snelling, 2016)
- Provide role models who participants can relate to (Snelling, 2016)
- Related to above, train former participants to be volunteers or coaches (Snelling, 2016)
- Ensure the activities are challenging enough to keep interest (Snelling, 2016)
- Allow participants to come at least twice a week or 3-6 hours per week (Snelling, 2016)
- Do not focus solely on surf skills – incorporate activities promoting social and emotional skills, cooperation, and safety/etiquette (Matos et al, 2017)
- Build group reflection into each session to promote the cognitive restructuring process and problem-solving (Matos et al, 2017)

Section 3: Benefits of skateboarding for youth development

While skateboarding as a topic of academic research is growing in popularity, much of the existing research focuses on skateboarding’s relationship to urban space (Borden, 2001); its cooptation by neoliberal agendas (Beal et al, 2017; Thorpe & Rinehardt, 2012; Howell, 2008); and, increasingly, the rise of “skateboard philanthropy” (O’Connor, 2015). There is limited literature on the psychosocial benefits of skateboarding – instead, a search of “skateboarding + trauma” on a research database brings up a wealth of studies on the risks of skateboarding injuries (Ma et al, 2018; Forsman & Eriksson, 2001; Lustenberger et al, 2010), including a minority who conclude that the sport is not especially hazardous, despite its predominantly negative reputation (Rethnam et al, 2008).

Skateboarding is a relatively new sport, first becoming prominent in the 1950s in California for surfers who needed something to do when the sea was flat (Bradley, 2010). Skateboarding soon caught on in many Western countries worldwide as an alternative to competitive team sports, going through peaks and dips in popularity until it became relatively mainstream at the turn of the 21st century. Long viewed as a non-conformist, counter-cultural activity – with many diehard participants rejecting it being called a “sport” at all – skateboarding is now set to debut as an Olympic sport in 2020 (Beal et al, 2017; BBC, 2016). Skateboarding is one of the fastest growing participant sports (Beal et al, 2017), and in the past decade has begun to reach every corner of the globe, in part due to the rise of skateboarding-based NGOs helping to build skateparks and import skateboarding equipment for the first time (Thorpe & Rinehart, 2012). Skateboarding requires no special equipment beyond the board itself and some concrete, making it relatively accessible almost anywhere, to anyone. Indeed, around the world, skateboarding’s ability to engage even the hardest-to-reach youth has become recognized as an asset for community development and well-being:

“Far from the narrow-minded view of skateboarding as purely countercultural and somehow separate to society, in the new skate city, skateboarding is being celebrated as something diverse, positive and very welcome.” (Borden, 2015, n.p.)

Yet, while skateboarding is often touted for its inclusiveness and progressiveness, skateparks are

still predominantly male spaces (Bradley, 2010) – a reality that many skateboarding-based youth development projects seek to change. Other criticisms of skateboarding as a tool for youth development include charges that unstructured, unsupervised spaces like skateparks promote antisocial behavior, substance abuse and negatively impact academic achievement. In fact, a study in Australia found a correlation between time spent at the skatepark and reduced academic achievement, but noted that this may be a reflection of the youth that skateboarding attracts (ie. those with difficult home lives or low educational aspirations) rather than the effect of skateboarding itself (Bradley, 2010). The study went on to suggest that the unstructured environment and freedom from adult authority was linked to the development of social skills and autonomy for young people (Bradley, 2010). The reality of whether skateboarding is a positive or negative influence is likely not black-and-white, with Friedel (2015), noting that “the skateboard is only an object that can be used and abused for several different outcomes” (p.49).

While there is one in-depth, mixed method research study of the potential benefits of skateboarding for youth in Australia (Bradley, 2010), there is a lack of academic literature specifically about the psychosocial benefits of skateboarding. That said, much of the skateboarding-related literature includes commonly mentioned perceptions of the positive benefits of skateboarding, which include:

- Physical benefits
 - o Skill-building (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Physical health (Beal et al, 2017)
 - o Releases adrenalin and serotonin (Flude & Delphin, 2015)
 - o Stamina (Flude & Delphin, 2015)
 - o Situational awareness (Friedel, 2015)
 - o Coordination (Flude & Delphin, 2015)
 - o Balance (Flude & Delphin, 2015)
 - o Connection between mind and body (Friedel, 2015)
- Psychosocial benefits
 - o Countering intergenerational trauma by reestablishing social systems, for example among First Nations youth (Hearne, 2014)
 - o Personal integration, social bonding, making friends (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Cooperation (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Social skills and etiquette (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Skateparks as a “hub for community life” (Bradley, 2010, p.290)
 - o Peer role models (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Achieving “flow” state (Friedel, 2015, p.85)
 - o Releasing energy/aggression (Friedel, 2015)
- Life skills benefits
 - o Self-expression (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Self-confidence and sense of self (Bradley, 2010; Friedel, 2015)
 - o Self-regulation / Self-direction (Hull Services and Child Trauma Academy, 2018; Bradley, 2010; Beal et al, 2017)
 - o Goal-setting (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Persistence by falling and getting back up (Friedel, 2015)
 - o Ownership, responsibility and civic participation (Bradley, 2010)
 - o Creativity (Beal et al, 2017)

- Tolerance for diversity (Friedel, 2015)
- Problem-solving (Bradley, 2010)

However, due to the relative novelty of skateboarding as a subject of academic study – with the first highly-cited articles not related to injury emerging in the mid-90s (Beal, 1995) – most of these positive benefits rely on anecdotal rather than empirical evidence to support the claims. In this respect, the skateboarding for youth development field is now at a similar stage to that of the wider S4D sector 10-15 years ago. There is indeed a risk of advocates for skateboard-based youth programs as being dismissed as “skateboarding evangelists” unless a more concentrated research effort can provide support for these claims.

Similar to the surf for development community, though, skateboarding-based social projects are now in a position to provide such evidence. In a recent survey of 101 socially-oriented skateboarding projects worldwide (Skateistan & Pushing Boarders, 2019), 17% said they had a “good” or “excellent” monitoring and evaluation system in place. Considering the vulnerable communities that many of these projects are working with, their data could help to build the knowledge surrounding trauma-informed best practices. For example, of the projects that took part in the survey, 37% targeted participants facing violence or abuse, 25% targeted the internally displaced and/or refugees, and 56% targeted participants facing social marginalization.

A particularly pertinent piece of research that specifically examines the potential psychosocial benefits of skateboarding is a film produced in Calgary, Canada, this year, entitled “Push to Heal” (Hull Services and the Child Trauma Academy, 2018). It applies the neurosequential model of therapeutics (Gaskill & Perry, 2014), which is a developmentally-informed, neurobiological approach to working with children affected by trauma, to Hull Services’ recently-established skateboarding-based therapy program for trauma-affected youth. The film demonstrates how skateboarding can help in developing all four parts of the brain: the brainstem, diencephalon, limbic system and cortex. Some of the positive psychosocial effects of skateboarding that Hull Services identify are:

- “A direct correlation between the kids experiencing progress in their various treatment goals and the amount of time they spent at the skatepark”
- The organically regulating effects of skateboarding, which is conducive to participants learning new skills
- The ability for skateparks to serve as a “specially designed environment” for serving as a “therapeutic milieu” to at-risk youth
- The social skills built through the “etiquette” of skatepark rules and norms, ie. taking turns to avoid crashing
- The development of empathy when reacting to someone landing a trick they have been trying over and over, or taking a brutal crash
- Becoming part of a supportive community

(Hull Services and the Child Trauma Academy, 2018)

While typical educational environments are often ill-suited for trauma-affected children with maladapted brain development, individualized, play-based interventions like skateboarding have the ability to help the brain to develop sequentially, building up emotional regulation and relational abilities that are pre-requisites for accessing the higher cognitive functions needed for overcoming the detrimental effects of trauma (Brunzell et al, 2016).

Discussion and Recommendations

While the common conception among academics has been the developmental superiority of “structured”, adult-supervised activities like basketball compared to “unstructured” leisure activities like skateboarding, this belief has recently been challenged (Bradley, 2010), suggesting that not all unstructured leisure activities have negative effects on youth development. Furthermore, I would argue that skateboarding offers a variety of *advantages* in terms of youth development versus team sports, especially for youth affected by trauma. Crucially, skateboarding is non-competitive, excluding the elite level (Thorpe, 2014), and is inherently self-regulating, with each participant learning at their own pace and adopting their own unique style. This means skateboarders gain a sense of achievement without feeling the often-immense pressures experienced in competitive sports. The stress of competition – with its winners and losers, strict ruleset, peer judgements, and yelling from coaches/spectators – can potentially exacerbate existing trauma (Roulier & De Fazio, n.d.; Bergholz et al, 2016) and reinforce existing divisions within a community (Ammann & Matuska, 2014). Individual sports like skateboarding and surfing naturally provide a “mastery climate” where the individual is their own point of reference for success, versus the “performance climate” generally found in team sports, in which fellow participants set the reference point one must measure up to (Snelling, 2016, p.16). Especially for vulnerable youth, a mastery climate instills in them more enjoyment for the activity, a higher appreciation of themselves and fellow participants, higher levels of motivation, and increased ability to learn from failure (Snelling, 2016).

Furthermore, skateboarding has also proven to be successful at engaging “hard-to-reach” demographics, particularly young males (Bradley, 2010, p.320) and youth with physical or developmental disabilities (Beal et al, 2017). And due to its individual nature, skateboarding can be done by children of varying ages and abilities in a shared space, allowing great opportunities for community building and interpersonal development. Action sports like skateboarding also give greater control and ownership – recognized as beneficial for trauma victims – to participants for managing their own safety and behavior, since the skatepark is self-regulated with “an implicit understanding of the cultural etiquette for sharing the space” (Thorpe, 2014, p.100). Lastly, skateboarding is also free of many aspects related to team sports that can trigger fear or anxiety in trauma victims, for example in other sports youth may feel vulnerable in a dressing room or group showering context, and since skateboarding is not a contact sport it thus does not require youth to engage in physical contact which may make them uncomfortable or scared.

Many of these advantages to skateboarding versus structured team sports can be found in other individual action sports like surfing, which is why it is worthwhile to share knowledge on trauma-informed practices between the disciplines. For example, surfing and skateboarding share the mastery of a challenging sport where one is competing against oneself rather than others, fostering longer-term engagement (Snelling, 2016), as well as the self-regulation of a shared space. But surfing also features some key differences which relate largely to it taking place in the sea. Being in the water is believed to provide a restorative environment, a connection to nature, and a sensory experience (p.2) that the largely urban skatepark environment cannot provide to the same degree. Yet, what skateboarding lacks in the quality of its environment for trauma recovery it gains in its vastly more accessible nature. Few places on earth are blessed with surfable waves all year-round, while skateboarding can happen anywhere with a paved surface.

Well-designed skateboarding programs have the potential to contribute to both repairing the regulatory and relational capacities of youth affected by trauma, as well as building their psychological resources. It is important to remember, however, that:

“If a sport-for-development programme is capable of engaging at-risk children and adolescents and providing them with a safe space, then a battle has been won – but by no means, the war. In order to produce psychological benefits over and above those produced by the delivery of a safe environment, sport engagement must be of a particular quality and quantity.”

(Snelling, 2015, p.14)

When developing the recommendations for trauma-informed skateboarding-based youth development in this section, I have taken into account a few considerations. Firstly, given the lack of capacity and psychosocial expertise of most existing skateboarding-based programs, it is important to ensure that all recommendations can be implemented safely by non-MHPSS specialists. Additionally, I want the recommendations to be feasible for organizations working with limited financial and human resources. The recommendations are, however, drafted with the assumption that skateboard-based youth development practitioners are already providing safe, respectful, and tolerant environments with caring adults involved as staff and/or volunteers. It should also be noted that any trauma-sensitive skateboarding program should be knowledgeable about the particular context and have an awareness of the local cultural beliefs and experiences related to trauma.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Based on the literature review and my own professional experience working in skateboarding-based youth development for several years, I have compiled 14 practical recommendations for incorporating trauma-informed best practices into skateboarding-based youth development programs (Table 4 on next page). These recommendations build on and can be applied in conjunction with the best practices for trauma-informed MHPSS (Table 2) and S4D (Table 3).

Table 4: *Recommendations for trauma-informed skateboarding programs for youth*

1. Be aware and prepared: Ensure skateboarding facilitators are trained in awareness of trauma reactions and how these might play out in the skatepark, and prepare teachers with tools and activities (ie. skate games) for managing trauma symptoms like low concentration, anger or underdeveloped social skills.
2. Minimize triggers: Know what parts of the skateboarding environment might lead to trauma triggers (ie. loud noises, yelling, physical contact), and minimize these during sessions, especially with new participants.
3. Individualize learning: Remember that people learn to skateboard at their own pace. Be supportive and encouraging, providing motivation to those that want to learn quickly, and being patient with those who are more careful and risk-averse.
4. Reflection: Check in with each participant regularly on what they want or like from the sessions. This can be achieved by incorporating group reflection before and/or after sessions, to practice sharing ideas, feelings, and opinions in a safe space.
5. Structure: Given the tendency for skateboarding to be a largely unstructured activity, consider making sessions more structured and repetitive when working with new participants or those known to be affected by complex trauma, in order to establish the program as a safe space where participants know what to expect. Ie. warm up, stretch, review rules, practice tricks, play a game, free skate, debrief.
6. Female-friendly: Since skateboarding is still male-dominated worldwide, a skatepark can be intimidating for girls. To reach more girls affected by trauma, especially GBV-related, provide female teachers/mentors that female participants can build trust with, and run regular female-only sessions.
7. Consent: To encourage boundary setting, incorporate consent into teaching skateboarding: ie. “Is it okay if I hold your hands to help you do this trick?” (This can be especially important with survivors of sexual violence)
8. Control: Encourage autonomy and control by students, for example giving opportunities to take responsibility like distributing/collecting skateboards or safety equipment, sweeping the skatepark, leading warm-ups, or helping new students.
9. Growth-mindset: While many psychosocial interventions focus on what to “fix”, use the skatepark to focus on strengths. Consider keeping a “trick list” for each participant to measure progress and celebrate growth – this can include silly challenges, and activities like teaching others or helping run a warm-up.
10. Peer role models: Provide opportunities for older students to become peer teachers (volunteer or paid, if of working age). Their shared experiences and success in overcoming traumatic experiences will allow younger children affected by trauma to relate, feel hopeful, and be more likely to build attachment. This is especially important in cross-cultural contexts.
11. Appropriate location: To maximize regular attendance (and psychosocial impact) choose a skatepark/location that is easily accessible, and if possible, allows for private skate sessions. This will reduce distractions, increase predictability, and prevent unwelcome spectators who can make participants feel self-conscious.
12. Media: Photos and videos are a big part of skate culture, but some children affected by trauma may not wish to be photographed/filmed for various reasons. Ensure consent is given by each participant and caregiver before they are documented in your programs (by internal or external media), and that photos portray the children in a positive light. Some participants may prefer to get behind the lens!
13. Mindfulness: Incorporate meditation and mindful breathing into skate programs, such as at the end of each session, to help children calm down and manage emotional responses.
14. Fun: In the pursuit of larger psychosocial goals, make sure that the skate programming never stops being fun, since fun is why children come and is linked to many aspects of well-being and childhood development.

Conclusion

In this paper, I have drawn from the best practices in trauma-informed interventions for youth to develop a set of recommendations that can be applied specifically to skateboarding-based youth development programs. While the practice of trauma-informed skateboarding programs, and related research, has only recently become a focus area for some practitioners, there are many learnings from the MHPSS, education and S4D sectors that can give the skateboarding for development field a head start in this area. This paper is a starting point for further research on the topic, with opportunities for skateboarding-based youth development programs to collaborate on joint data collection and knowledge exchange.

In future, it would be valuable to: build the empirical research related to the positive outcomes of skateboarding; explore the gendered dimensions of trauma-informed best practices in skateboarding programs; and perform case studies of specific contexts, particularly those likely to have high rates of childhood trauma, such as conflict-affected environments. In closing, there remains much work to be done, and the first step is to build awareness of trauma's causes and effects among anyone seeking to use skateboarding as a tool for youth development.

Skateboarding is certainly not the solution to childhood trauma, but it can offer enough fun and freedom to give children affected by trauma hope, community, life skills, and resilience.

“When I skateboard, I’m feeling like I am a bird. I feel free like I am flying. It is like I am above the war and not part of it.” – Madina Saidi, Skateistan⁶ student in Afghanistan (Friedel, 2015, p.79)

⁶ Skateistan is the largest international NGO focusing on skateboarding-based youth development. Founded in Kabul in 2007, its mission is “empowering children and youth through skateboarding and education” (Skateistan, “Our Story”).

References

- Ammann, P. & Matuska, N. (2014). *Women on the move: Trauma-informed interventions based on sport and play – A toolkit for practitioners*. Swiss Academy for Development. Retrieved from: https://www.sportanddev.org/sites/default/files/downloads/sad_2014_women_on_the_move_part_i.pdf
- Barron, I. G., & Abdallah, G. (2015). Intergenerational trauma in the occupied Palestinian territories: Effect on children and promotion of healing. *Journal of Child & Adolescent Trauma*, 8(2), 103-110.
- BBC (2016, August 23). *Skateboarding leaps into the Tokyo 2020 Olympics*. Retrieved from <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-europe-37164307/skateboarding-leaps-into-the-tokyo-2020-olympics>
- Beal, B. (1995). Disqualifying the official: An exploration of social resistance through the subculture of skateboarding. *Sociology of sport journal*, 12(3), 252-267.
- Beal, B., Atencio, M., Wright, E. M., McClain, Z., (2017). Skateboarding , community and urban politics : shifting practices and challenges and challenges. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 9(1), 11–23. <http://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2016.1220406>
- Bergholz, L., Stafford, E., Andrea, W. D. (2016). Creating Trauma-informed Sports Programming for Traumatized Youth: Core Principles for an Adjunctive Therapeutic Approach Creating Trauma-informed Sports Programming for Traumatized Youth: Core Principles for an Adjunctive Therapeutic Approach. *Journal of Infant, Child, and Adolescent Psychotherapy*, 15(3), 244–253. <http://doi.org/10.1080/15289168.2016.1211836>
- Borden, I. (2001). *Skateboarding, space and the city: Architecture and the body* (pp. 1-318). Berg.
- Borden, I., (2015, April 20). *The new skate city: how skateboarders are joining the urban mainstream*. The Guardian. Available from: <http://www.theguardian.com/cities/2015/apr/20/skate-city-skateboarders-developers-bans-defensive-architecture>
- Bradley, G. L. (2010). Skate parks as a context for adolescent development. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, 25(2), 288-323.
- Brunzell, T., Stokes, H., & Waters, L. (2016). Trauma-informed positive education: Using positive psychology to strengthen vulnerable students. *Contemporary School Psychology*, 20(1), 63-83.
- Bulanda, J., & Byro, T. (2016). A Trauma-Informed Model for Empowerment Programs Targeting Vulnerable Youth. *Child and Adolescent Social Work Journal*, 33(4), 321–330. <http://doi.org/10.1007/s10560-015-0427-z>
- Burnett, C. (2015). Assessing the sociology of sport: On Sport for Development and Peace. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50, 4–5. doi:10.1177/1012690214539695
- Fleischmann, D., Michalewicz, B., Stedje-Larsen, E., Neff, J., Murphy, J., Browning, K., ... & Herriman, L. (2011). Surf medicine: Surfing as a means of therapy for combat-related polytrauma. *JPO: Journal of Prosthetics and Orthotics*, 23(1), 27-29.
- Flude, R., & Delphin, R. (2015). Skateboarding and Community Development : A Growing Relationship, 23(3), 31–36.
- Forsman, L., & Eriksson, A. (2001). Skateboarding injuries of today. *British Journal of Sports*

- Medicine*, 35(5), 325-8.
- Friedel, S. (2015). *The art of living sideways: Skateboarding, peace and elicitive conflict transformation*. Springer.
- Gaskill, R. L., & Perry, B. (2014). The neurobiological power of play. *Creative arts and play therapy for attachment problems*, 178-94.
- Green, E. J., & Myrick, A. C. (2014). Treating complex trauma in adolescents: A phase-based, integrative approach for play therapists. *International Journal of Play Therapy*, 23(3), 131.
- Giulianotti, R. (2004). Human Rights, Globalization and Sentimental Education: The Case of Sport. *Sport in Society*, 7:3, 355-361. doi: 10.1080/1743043042000291686
- Harkness, G., & Hongsermeier, N. (2015). Female sports as non-movement resistance in the Middle East and North Africa. *Sociology Compass*, 9(12), 1082-1093.
- Hull Services & the Child Trauma Academy (Producers), Matthew Allen & Joel Pippus (Directors). (2018). *Push to Heal* [short film]. Canada: Flying Fox Productions. Retrieved from <https://vimeo.com/281117753/3d052095ef>
- Hearne, J. (2014). "This Is Our Playground": Skateboarding, DIY Aesthetics, and Apache Sovereignty in Dustinn Craig's 4wheelwarpony. *Western American Literature* 49(1), 47-69. University of Nebraska Press. Retrieved from: <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/544359/pdf>
- Howell, O. (2008). Skatepark as neoliberal playground: Urban governance, recreation space, and the cultivation of personal responsibility. *Space and culture*, 11(4), 475-496.
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (2007). *IASC Guidelines on Mental Health and Psychosocial Support in Emergency Settings*. Geneva.
- Inter-Agency Standing Committee (IASC) (2012). *Reference Group Mental Health and Psychosocial Support Assessment Guide*.
- International Surf Therapy Organization (ISTO) (2018). *Surf therapy declaration*. Retrieved from http://media.withtank.com/cd4b89f465/wow0008_isto_declaration_2018_8_page_dr4_w eb.pdf
- Kidd, B. (2011). Cautions, questions and opportunities in sport for development and peace. *Third world quarterly*, 32(3), 603-609.
- Lustenberger, T., Talving, P., Barmparas, G., Schnüriger, B., Lam, L., Inaba, K., & Demetriades, D. (2010). Skateboard-related injuries: Not to be taken lightly. a national trauma databank analysis. *The Journal of Trauma*, 69(4), 924-7. doi:10.1097/TA.0b013e3181b9a05a
- Ma, N., Mills, S., McBride, C., Kimble, R., & Redmond, M. (2018). Neurological injuries from \ skateboards in paediatric and adolescent populations: Injury types and severity. *Anz Journal of Surgery*, 88(4), 337-340. doi:10.1111/ans.14288
- Matos, M. G., Santos, A., Fauvelet, C., Marta, F., & Evangelista, E. S. (2017). Surfing for Social Integration: Mental Health and Well-Being promotion through Surf Therapy among Institutionalized Young People. *Journal of Community Medicine and Public Health Care*, 4(1), 1-6.
- NCTSM (The National Child Traumatic Stress Network) (2008). *Child Trauma Toolkit for Educators*.
- O'Connor, P. (2015). Skateboard philanthropy: Inclusion and prefigurative politics. In *Skateboarding* (pp. 48-61). Routledge.

- Ommeren, M. V., Hanna, F., Weissbecker, I., & Ventevogel, P. (2015). Mental health and psychosocial support in humanitarian emergencies. *EMHJ-Eastern Mediterranean Health Journal*, 21(7), 498-502.
- Rethnam, U., Yesupalan, R. S., & Sinha, A. (2008). Skateboards: Are they really perilous? A retrospective study from a district hospital. *BMC research notes*, 1(1), 59.
- Roulier, R., & De Fazio, D. (n.d.). *Do the good for all: Mainstreaming trauma-sensitive sport interventions*, 1–9.
- Scherer, L. L., & Herman, A. E. (2008). Chapter 3 - The effect of emotional intelligence and cognitive intelligence on the solutions generated to ill-structured problems. In W. J. Zerbe, C. E. Hartel, & Ashkanasy, N.M. (Eds), *Research on Emotion in Organizations, volume 4: Emotions, Ethics and Decision-making* (pp. 57-81). Bingley: UK: Emerald Group Publishing Limited. doi:10.1016/S1746-9791(08)04003-0.
- Scholte, W. F., & Ager, A. K. (2014). Social capital and mental health: connections and complexities in contexts of post conflict recovery. *Intervention*, 12(2), 210–218. <http://doi.org/10.1097/WTF.0000000000000038>
- Skateistan (n.d.). Our story. Retrieved from <https://www.skateistan.org/ourstory/>
- Skateistan & Pushing Boarders (forthcoming November, 2018). *Survey of Social Skateboarding Projects Worldwide*.
- SkateQilya (2018, June 14). In *Facebook* [organization page]. Retrieved from <https://www.facebook.com/skateqilya/posts/did-you-know-we-practice-meditation-daily-at-our-summer-camp-find-out-more-about/647582488913255/>
- Snelling, M. (2016). *Breaking cycles of violence, one wave at a time: a formative evaluation of the Waves for Change Surf Therapy programme* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Cape Town).
- Sport for Development and Peace International Working Group [SDP IWC] (2008). *Harnessing the power of sport for development and peace: Recommendations to governments*. Toronto, Ontario, Canada: Right to Play. <http://www.un.org/wcm/webdav/site/sport/shared/sport/pdfs/SDP%20IWG/Final%20SDP%20IWG%20Report.pdf>
- Summerfield, D., & Veale, D. (2008). Debate: Proposals for massive expansion of psychological therapies would be counterproductive across society. *The British Journal of Psychiatry*, 192(5), 326-330.
- Thorpe, H. (2014). Action sports for youth development : critical insights for the SDP community. *International Journal of Sport Policy and Politics*, 8(1), 91–116. <http://doi.org/10.1080/19406940.2014.925952>
- Thorpe, H., & Ahmad, N. (2015). Youth, action sports and political agency in the Middle East: Lessons from a grassroots parkour group in Gaza. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(6), 678–704.
- Thorpe, H., & Rinehart, R. (2012). Action Sport NGOs in a Neo-Liberal Context : The Cases of Skateistan and Surf Aid International. <http://doi.org/10.1177/0193723512455923>
- Toffoletti, K., & Palmer, C. (2015). New approaches for studies of Muslim women and sport. *International Review for the Sociology of Sport*, 50(4) 1-18. doi: 10.1177/1012690215589326
- United Nations (n.d.). *Definition of Youth Fact Sheet*. Retrieved from <http://www.un.org/esa/socdev/documents/youth/fact-sheets/youth-definition.pdf>
- UNDP (1994). *New dimensions of human security. Human Development Report Office (HDRO)*,

- United Nations Development Programme (UNDP).*
- UNICEF (2011). *Guidelines for child friendly spaces in emergencies*. Retrieved from https://www.unicef.org/protection/Child_Friendly_Spaces_Guidelines_for_Field_Testing.pdf
- Victoria Department of Human Services. (2014). *Psychosocial support: a framework for emergencies*. State Government Victoria, 1–14.
- Williams, W. I. (2006). Complex trauma: Approaches to theory and treatment. *Journal of loss and trauma, 11*(4), 321-335.