

## Now is the time for parents to get creative with their kids: Sport Aurora

When Novak Djokovic and his brother Marko released a video last week of them playing tennis in their home with frying pans over a set of chairs, aligned through the foyer in their family home was a simple reminder of what it means to get creative.

Better yet, creativity is not a concept that simply compels professional athletes to shape-shift their home into a professional game, but it also means that everyone needs to occupy their time ? and thinking outside the box is a good start to making the best use of your time.

This is important for all age groups, but especially for children. In fact, it is imperative that children get outdoors and play; not just exercise, but play, according to Sport Aurora President Ron Weese.

?Play is a concept more related to freedom,? says Mr. Weese.  
?It's related to developing risk strategies, it has a large component of fun and as a result of that, people who play tend to play longer and tend to play harder.?

With recent changes in the COVID-19 pandemic, citizens have to abide by new physical distancing by-laws and are encouraged to stay home as much as possible, but that doesn't mean that children cannot play in their own backyard.

That's where families with multiple children benefit the most, but parents also need to be there to help their child/children mitigate the potential of boredom. It's also important to keep the child's mind active.

Playing is intellectual, Weese adds. If you give the child a chance to play, they will make choices. If adults instruct them to play a certain way then that creativity is lost.

When parents instructed their children to go play years ago, he says nobody told you what to play; just get out there and have fun and do what you want ? safely, of course.

Any form of running, jumping, hopping and skipping has a lot of benefits for the body.

According to Weese, children that reap the benefits from the locomotive activities increase their balance, reactions and strength.

Being outdoors and surrounding yourself in even the slightest of natures helps develop cognitive abilities.

For a group that advocates for children being outside, Sport Aurora says outdoor play also has internal benefits to the body and to the

immune system.

?So, people boost their immune system by getting a healthy dose of sunlight and it's proven, that's science,? Weese explained.

As COVID-19 protective measures stay in force for the time being, it is still important not to neglect any play, while respecting the laws. Play safe and play smart.

**By Robert Belardi**