

The Design and Experience of Play Spaces in Pediatric Healthcare Environments

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Background

- Play spaces in pediatric hospitals enhance quality of care for children and their families by providing opportunities for fun, socialization, and reducing anxiety and distress^{1,2}
- Engaging in play can mitigate a child's negative feelings during hospitalization and may aid recovery³
- The design of play spaces should take into account how they are experienced and how they can be used to enhance care⁴

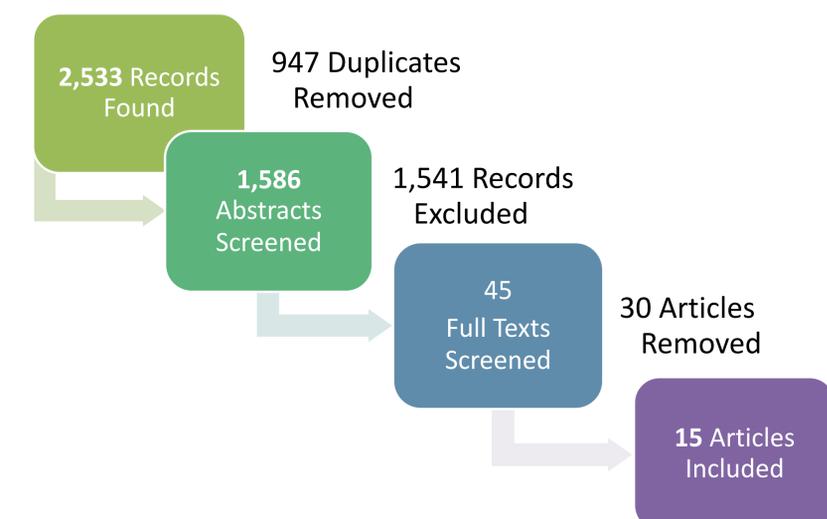
Objective

To reveal what the literature says about designing play spaces in pediatric healthcare environments to enhance quality of care



Methods

- Used a scoping review⁵ methodology
- Searched six databases using terms related to 'play space', 'pediatric', and 'healthcare'



There are numerous design elements that need to be considered when designing play spaces in pediatric health care settings



Results

1. Pediatric play space designs should be accessible, inclusive, and encourage interaction with others and the environment 
2. Ample seating, quality pathways, good lighting, and biophilic components are important design features of pediatric play spaces 
3. Little research (1/15 articles) has considered the design and experience of playgrounds in health care settings 
4. Little research (3/15) on play spaces in health care settings has emerged from the Global South 

Next Steps

Further research is needed to understand (1) how children and their families experience pediatric play spaces and, in particular, playgrounds, (2) how practitioners are using them, and (3) what best practices are for designing pediatric play spaces.

Relevance to Holland Bloorview

This research may help Holland Bloorview to optimize current and future play spaces. In turn, it may help to enhance the quality of care delivered to children and families. This work also aligns with HB's efforts to (1) Lead and Model Social Change, and (2) to Discover for Action.

Acknowledgements

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