

Let Us Play!

These days kids are often criticized for being couch potatoes. Everything from television to video games is blamed for this, but a recent study by the Eureka Children’s Museum in England found that the real culprit in limiting children’s outdoor time is—parents!

Although over 80% of children surveyed by the museum say that they would rather be playing outside, about half of parents and caregivers won’t let their children leave the house or the yard. Merely a third will allow their children to go as far as the end of the street. Although these same parents grew up with significantly less supervision, concern for their children’s safety motivates them to keep a much closer eye on their children than their parents kept on them. Consequently, it is becoming increasingly rare to see kids outside playing in the neighborhoods after school and in the summer. Meanwhile, problems like obesity and behavioral issues are on the rise.

The study concludes: "Parents need to be provided with the tools and confidence to allow their children more freedom to play outside, or the next generation of children will become even more housebound than the current one. (They) . . . must be empowered to work with local councils on setting up street play initiatives aimed at closing off streets and instilling a sense of shared trust and collective care within a street community."

1. What is the central idea of the passage?

2. Write a brief summary of the passage.

