

# Introduction



This Summer issue provides readers with a variety of information that includes the impact of retention laws on students and their families, the importance of supporting a child's imagination through play, and exploring the commonly used term "child centered". Additionally, this issue explores the impact AI technology has on STEAM education and how to support students' mental health with play, expressive arts, and parenting programs. The International Journal of the Whole Child continues to be committed to promoting holistic learning and the development of the whole child.

## Article #1:

Unintended Consequences: A Case Study of the Tennessee Third-Grade Retention Law's Effects on Children and Families

*Amber Spears, Darek Potter, Cassie Brown, Luke Anderson*

The researchers present findings following a qualitative case study illustrating the multifaceted consequences of Tennessee's Third Grade Retention Law, officially called the Tennessee Learning Loss Remediation and Student Acceleration Act. The authors outline the impact this law has had on both rural and suburban district communities following the COVID-19 pandemic. The authors highlight important policy recommendations for the retention policy and the need for better interventions to help students stay on track, limiting retention rates and improving the mental health and academic outcomes of individuals from both rural and suburban communities.

## Teacher Talk: Theory to Practice

Dreaming a Playground: Supporting Children's Imagination

*Kathleen Burriss and Sandra Stone*

The authors outline the positive developmental implications that outdoor play has on child learning and socioemotional development, highlighting prominent theorists and researchers in the field of child development. Despite the historical and theoretical importance that unstructured play has on individual success, there continues to be limited opportunities for children to engage in indoor or outdoor play in schools, with many schools encouraging rigid adherence to traditional indoor classroom activities. The definition and integral components of play are explicated to ensure educators and parents provide high-quality outdoor and indoor play environments.

## Tech Talk

Raising the Bar: Improving Mathematics Education to Equip Students for Success

*Nancy Caubin*

The author discusses the significance of mathematics regarding specific trends in the United States, such as scores from the most recent National Assessment of Educational Progress

(NAEP) and Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS). The author explicates the role that recent advancements in artificial intelligence have in the classroom, and the importance of utilizing research-based practices that are culturally responsive to aid in academic success for students.

### **Science, Technology, Engineering, Art, and Mathematics: STEAM**

From Chalkboards to Chatbots: Why Education Must Play a Role in AI's Creation

*Andrew Oxley*

The researcher discusses the ethical implications in the in the development of Artificial Intelligence (AI), which will ultimately lead to the evolution of Artificial General Intelligence (AGI). The author explores how AI is swiftly shaping the field of education, especially in the STEM field, which has positively transformed student learning experiences. Through collaboration, educators can better prepare to foster student development and support through newly created technological advancements.

### **Families and Children: Health and Wellness**

Parenting Programs for Current and Post-Incarcerated Fathers: A Literature

Review of Attachment-Based and Play Therapy

*Jasmine Reynolds, Tony Michael, Katherine M. Hermann-Turner*

The authors discuss research focused on parenting programs and interventions designed for incarcerated fathers utilizing attachment-base approaches and play therapy. The authors suggest that play therapy is an effective intervention to improve the attachment style of parenting for fathers currently incarcerated and for post-incarceration. Further implications include the potential for reducing recidivism and increasing parenting interventions during incarceration are discussed.

### **Play: Development, Learning, Therapy**

EMDR Drumming Protocol and Processes: Embedding Expressive Arts  
into EMDR for work with Adolescents

*Susan Elswick, T. Humphreys, G. Washington, C. Latta*

The authors examine the implications of a proposed Eye Movement Desensitization and Reprocessing (EMDR) Drumming Protocol for individuals who have experienced trauma. The importance of this practice utilized as an expressive art technique is discussed in detail with the integration of neuroscience.

### **Education by the Numbers**

Education Pays

*Donald Snead*

In this article, the author discusses the outcome and benefits of investing in a higher education degree. The data details a positive correlation between education attainment and earnings.

**Education: Words and Meanings**  
Exploring the Term: “Child-Centered”  
*Brian Stone, Sandra Stone*

The researchers discuss the significance of the child-centered approach to learning and the implications that this practice has on child development and education. Theorists such as Piaget and Vygotsky are cited as key contributors in the field of child development with an explication of both theories of cognitive development. Furthermore, the authors discuss how a child’s learning environment should align with a child-center approach and ways teachers can implement a more appropriate child-center approach in the classroom by choosing individualized curriculum to allow for continued growth and development.

**Pictures for Reflection**  
What Do You Hear? What Do You See?  
*Kathleen Burriss, Larry Burriss*

Picture 1: What do you hear?

A child named Roman is depicted in the photo showing anthropomorphism to his plants. This demonstrates a child’s empathy toward others and responsibility.

Picture 2: What do you see?

The author explains the significance of psychoeducation to children regarding UV rays and offers specific ways adults can model appropriate protection.

**Page Turners: Books for Children**  
*Maria Genest, Katrina Bartow Jacobs, Carla K. Meyer, Michelle J. Sobolak, Patricia Crawford,*

In this article, different children’s books are listed with descriptive summaries on each one. The books include: *Clever Crow*; *Girls on the Rise*; *The Light Within You*; *No More Señora Mimi*; *Rebellion 1776*, *Revolutionary Mary: The true story of one woman, the Declaration of Independence, and America’s fight for freedom*; *Rocket Ship, Solo Trip*; *Sunrise on the Reaping (A Hunger Games Novel)*; *There Was a Shadow*; *To See an Owl*

**Emerging Scholars**  
Supporting the Mental Health of School Children During the Summer Months  
*Brigny Obijo, Susana Garcia, Tiffany Wilson*

The authors discuss the challenges school children experience to maintain their mental health during the summer months due to loss of routine, decreased social interaction, increased access to electronics, and potential exposure to unsafe environments and food insecurities. The authors further explore strategies and interventions caregivers and stakeholders can implement to support a child’s mental health during the summer months.