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Fathers' Roles, Attitudes, and Practices Regarding Tree Climbing

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ABSTRACT

Gull, Levenson Goldstein, and Rosengarten (2018) examined the benefits and risks associated with tree climbing on child development and resiliency in regards to parental perspectives; however, it lacked a clear male perspective. The recommendations from that study mentioned that 93% of the responses originally came from mothers; hence, the need to look specifically at fathers' views on tree climbing. A follow-up mixed method survey instrument was administered to fathers of children aged 3-13 that climb trees, examining background information, rules and restrictions on tree climbing, injuries, and fathers' attitudes on allowing children to climb trees. As with the initial study, the results suggest few injuries. However, fathers do have different concerns, perspectives, and rules associated with their children climbing trees. The data concluded fathers perceive tree climbing as providing children with the ability to have fun and improve dexterity, physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence. Fathers of tree climbers from this study recognize and accept the risk of tree climbing, knowing the risks and potential injuries are growing experiences for their children.

***Keywords**:* childhood tree climbing, outdoor risky play, resiliency, fathers' perspectives

Gull, Levenson Goldstein, and Rosengarten (2018) conducted a mixed method study with parents of children aged 3-13 that climb trees. The study examined the benefits and risks of tree climbing on child development and resiliency. The survey questioned parents' perspectives on the impact of tree climbing on their children, including potential injuries. The study reached 1602 parents; however, 93% of survey respondents were female. The results of the study concluded that children afforded the opportunity to climb trees grow socially, emotionally, physically, cognitively, and have increased resiliency. However, the study largely showed mothers' perspectives. Males' viewpoints could vary and provide additional insights into this important topic since fathers are often associated with rough and tumble play with their children (Fletcher, May, St. George, Morgan, & Lubans. 2011). Analyzing fathers' viewpoints on the benefits, behaviors, rules, restrictions, and injuries concluded tree climbing provides children with the ability to have fun and improve dexterity, physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence.

LITERATURE REVIEW

As in the original study, the authors focused on tree climbing as risk-taking play, investigating the benefits and risks. Additionally, the authors continued to examine policies that limit or even ban tree climbing activities. Research on child development and resiliency from a fathers' perspective was also examined in this comprehensive literature review.

Benefits of Play and Risk-Taking Play

Tree climbing and risky play are essential tools for children's growth and resiliency (Gorman, 2017). Play is an essential part of child development and children are most content when playing. Outdoor play promotes creativity, large motor development, environmental understanding, and skills for navigation (Brussoni, Olsen, Pike, & Sleet, 2012). Risk-taking play allows children to "know their own strengths, trust themselves, and take calculated risks" (Gorman, 2017, p. 1).

Risky play allows children to try out their physical limits, develop motor skills, and learn to circumvent and adapt activities (Brussoni et al., 2012). Sandseter (2007) wrote about a "balance between making sure our children are safe versus letting the children play in physically and emotionally stimulating and challenging environments" (p. 237). Brussoni et al. (2012) noted two important conclusions: (1) Children have a"natural propensity toward outdoor risky play" where children seem to understand and know their limits (p. 3139) and (2) "Keeping children safe involves letting them take and manage risks" (p. 3140).

"Children's need for play has been globally recognized as a basic childhood right" (Brussoni et al., 2012, p. 3142). In fact, Brussoni et al. stated:

> Through play, children learn societal roles, norms, and values and develop physical and cognitive competencies, creativity, self-worth and efficacy. Play has been described as the work of children which helps them develop intrinsic interests, learn how to make decisions, problem-solve, exert self-control, follow rules, regulate emotions, and develop and maintain peer relationships. (2012, p. 3136)

Tree Climbing Injuries, Policies, and Restrictions

Gull et al. (2018) explored injury statistics on tree climbing and found no significant organizations collecting information specifically on tree climbing accidents. Information that could be found was related to agricultural workers (including children) climbing trees, hunters with tree stands, and professional tree trimmers. They noted many states have an Environmental Literacy Plan or Children's Outdoor Bill of Rights which includes tree climbing as a way to connect to nature; however, tree climbing restrictions in public parks of major cities, such as San Francisco, New York, and Portland curtail this childhood activity. With few injury statistics and a push for tree climbing as a right in childhood, the authors shared other approaches to bans on tree climbing, such as safety rules, using a benefit risk analysis, designating certain trees for climbing, or limiting heights climbed.

Organizations, state and city parks, schools, and parents limit tree climbing for many reasons. Safety of trees and children, liability concerns, and protected areas, such as nature preserves, contribute to tree climbing restrictions. Rules and regulations limiting tree climbing are often initiated to provide protection from lawsuits against property owners and organizations. Current law practices in the United States hold property owners responsible for tree climbing accidents on their property due to negligence in many jurisdictions. How associated laws are interpreted and applied leaves many arborists and property owners with confusion and questions (Mortimer & Kane, 2004). Tree climbing policies and injury prevention may play a key role in keeping children safe; however, the same limitations may not allow for the development of resiliency through risky play.

Fathers' Practices Regarding Risky Play

Many fathers walk a fine line during play between safety and risk. Fathers' decision-making characteristics and risk-taking attitudes incorporate the importance of healthy risk taking for child development. Often, "fathers take the 'encouragement from the ground' approach to keeping kids safe ('Don't put your weight on that!'), but the better approach, as in all things, is to model good behavior" (Marx, 2017, p. 1).

According to a 2011 study in the *Journal of Developmental & Behavioral Pediatrics*, "fathers made decisions about the appropriateness of activities, striking a balance between protecting their child and exposing them to risk and

new experiences" (Brussoni & Olsen, 2011, p. 1). Fathers encourage children to "explore, take chances, overcome obstacles, be braver" (Paquette, 2004, p. 199). Tree climbing requires parents to step back and allow children to explore without hovering and monitoring their every move.

Many researchers report fathers are better at letting kids take physical risks than mothers. Fletcher et al. (2011), concluded that fathers reported that risk taking play was needed as a part of learning and that there is an increase in confidence and competence. "Father–child play that is physical, vigorous and highly stimulating and that simulates fighting (rough-and-tumble play [RTP]) has been suggested as a key aspect of male parenting that is important for child development" (Fletcher et al., 2011, p. 131). Cabrera, Fitzgerald, Bradley, and Roggman (2014) noted, "Fathers engage in more rough-and-tumble play than mothers" (p. 338). Lamb (2010) reinforced that statement, stating, "Fathers specialize in play, whereas mothers specialize in caretaking and nurturance" (p. 3). Lamb's study also concluded father-child interaction is often "boisterous, stimulating, emotionally arousing", along with "paternal playfulness and relative novelty" (2010, p. 3). Tamis-LeMonda (2004) found the interaction of fathers and children leads to encouraging risk-taking, developing confidence, and building courage.

Paquette (2004) revealed fathers tend to knock the children off balance during play, which contributes to cognitive development and allows children to deal with the unexpected. During play, fathers make more problem-solving demands and also use unfamiliar words to allow the child to reformulate thinking.

> Men seem to have the tendency to excite, surprise, and momentarily destabilize children; they also tend to encourage children to take risks, while at the same time ensuring the latter's safety and security, thus permitting children to learn to be braver in unfamiliar situations as well as to stand up for themselves. (Paquette, 2004, p. 193)

Fathers' attitudes and beliefs impact children's risky play, including tree climbing. Tree climbing and nature play are often considered part of childhood; however, increasing limitations on these activities and scarce research specifically on childhood tree climbing warrants further investigation. The literature review focused on benefits of risky play, fathers' roles in risky play with their children, and restrictions and limitations of tree climbing. Research questions for this study include:

1. How does recreational tree climbing in childhood impact resiliency and contribute to the benefits of nature play?
2. How do fathers influence tree climbing?

METHODOLOGY

Research Design

Fathers in the United States with children aged 3-13 whom they let climb trees were questioned, using a qualitative and quantitative 19-question survey about the benefits and risks of tree climbing and impact on child development and resiliency. The survey was anonymous and descriptive in nature. This mixed-method follow-up study was based on research by Gull, Levenson Goldstein, and Rosengarten (2018), examining parental perspectives of tree climbing in the United States. The questionnaire was disseminated to fathers to capture similar results to mirror the original study.

Selection of Participants

Participants for this study were solicited through a convenience sampling method in both Spring 2016 and Spring 2017 from personal and professional online groups that focus on fathers. The survey link was posted to online discussion forums, websites related to fathers, and social media outlets. The forums were open access, so permission for access was not required to share the survey link. Participants could also share the survey link with other potential respondents.

Instrumentation

The online survey consisted of 19 mixed method questions, using templates for a quality survey. Questions 1-4 limited the participants to the following criteria: father of child(ren) ages 3-13, lived in the United States and allowed their child(ren) to climb trees. Questions 5-8 collected demographic information regarding the father's education level, state residency, and age(s) of their children. Question 9 asked about the children's time outdoors. Question 10 investigated why fathers allow tree climbing and Question 11 questioned about the balance of risks and benefits of tree climbing. Question 12 queried the benefits of tree climbing. Questions 13, 14, and 15 allowed fathers to write in responses about their child's development through tree climbing, guidelines for climbing, and limitations on climbing trees. Question 16 asked about injuries related to tree climbing. Questions 17 and 18 addressed the potential impact of climbing trees on child resiliency. The last question allowed for any other comments related to tree climbing.

DATA, RESULTS, AND FINDINGS

Responses were compiled from an online survey. Online analytical tools were used to aggregate and dissect information. Open-ended responses were coded and analyzed to form the findings with reflections on fathers' perspectives on risky play concerning tree climbing.

Demographics

One hundred five fathers met the survey parameters of having children aged 3-13, allowing tree climbing, and living in the United States. Thirty-two states were represented with many responses from Midwest states. Forty-six percent of the fathers were 35 to 44 years of age and 32% were aged 25 to 34. Most fathers in the study were college educated with 27% having some college, 33% graduated from college, 14% finishing graduate school, and 8% doing post graduate studies. Sixty-one percent of fathers reported their children spent over 10 hours outside each week.

Finding 1: Benefits and Impact of Tree Climbing

Question 10 in the survey asked why fathers allow their children to climb trees. Responses included that it is a part of childhood (95%, 93 of the 98 responses), fun (93%, 91 of 98 responses), develops skills (78%, 76 of 98 responses), connects to nature (73%, 72 of 98 responses), and helps to negotiate risk (71%, 70 of 98 responses) (see Figure 1).

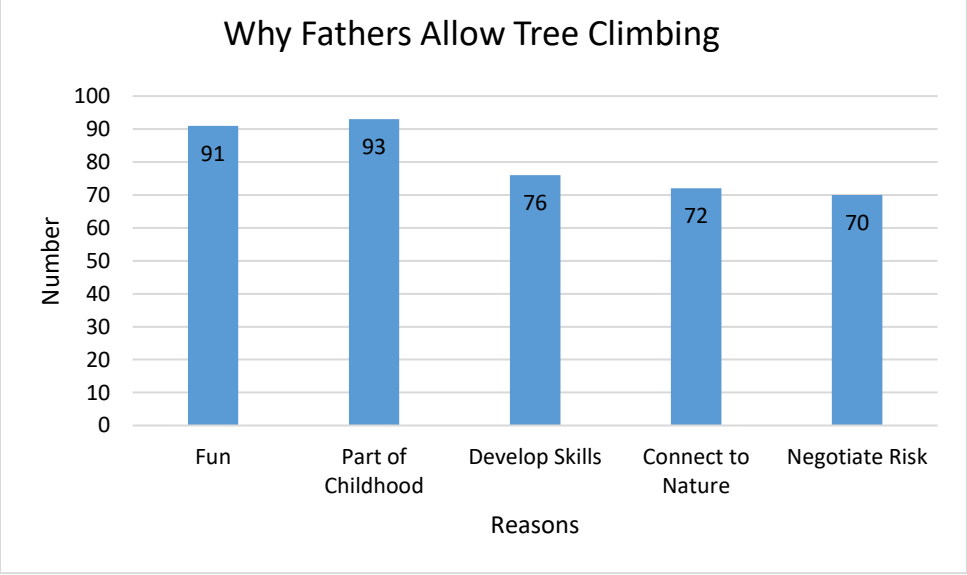

Figure 1. Why Fathers Allow Tree Climbing. This figure illustrates why fathers allow their children to climb trees.

In the Question 10 comment section, one father commented that his children were "unstoppable." Another father wrote that his children were "seeing a new perspective." A further comment included that climbing trees was "better than a fidget spinner or an iPad/game system." Additional responses indicated that tree climbing "builds strength and confidence" and "builds body strength and awareness."

In Question 11, 78% (76 of 98 responses) of fathers agreed or strongly agreed that the benefits of tree climbing outweigh the risks including potential injuries such as broken bones, concussions, or even fatality (see Figure 2).

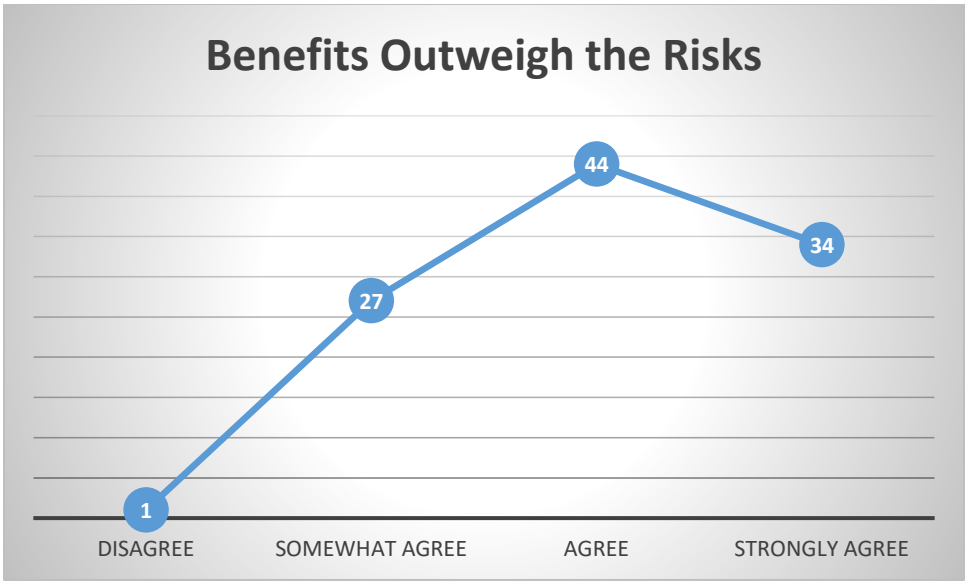

Figure 2. Benefits Outweigh the Risks. This figure indicates that the benefits of tree climbing outweigh the risks.

Question 12 looked at the impact of tree climbing on their children, listing ten potential benefits with response options ranging from no impact to high impact (see Figure 3). Over 60% (61 of 98 responses) of the fathers' responses rated tree climbing as highly impacting dexterity and physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence. Social interaction rated lowest with 33% (32 of 98 responses) rating it with no to low impact.

In Question 13, fathers were asked how tree climbing helps their children grow (see Figure 4). The word cluster shows the words used more frequently in larger, bolder words, with physically, strength, nature, teaches, learn, risk, think, and builds confidence higher on the list of words

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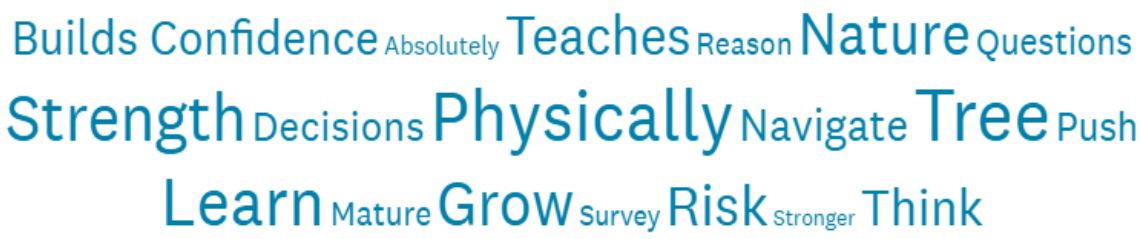

Figure 3. The Ways Tree Climbing Helps Children Grow. Parents commented by using the words in the word cloud.

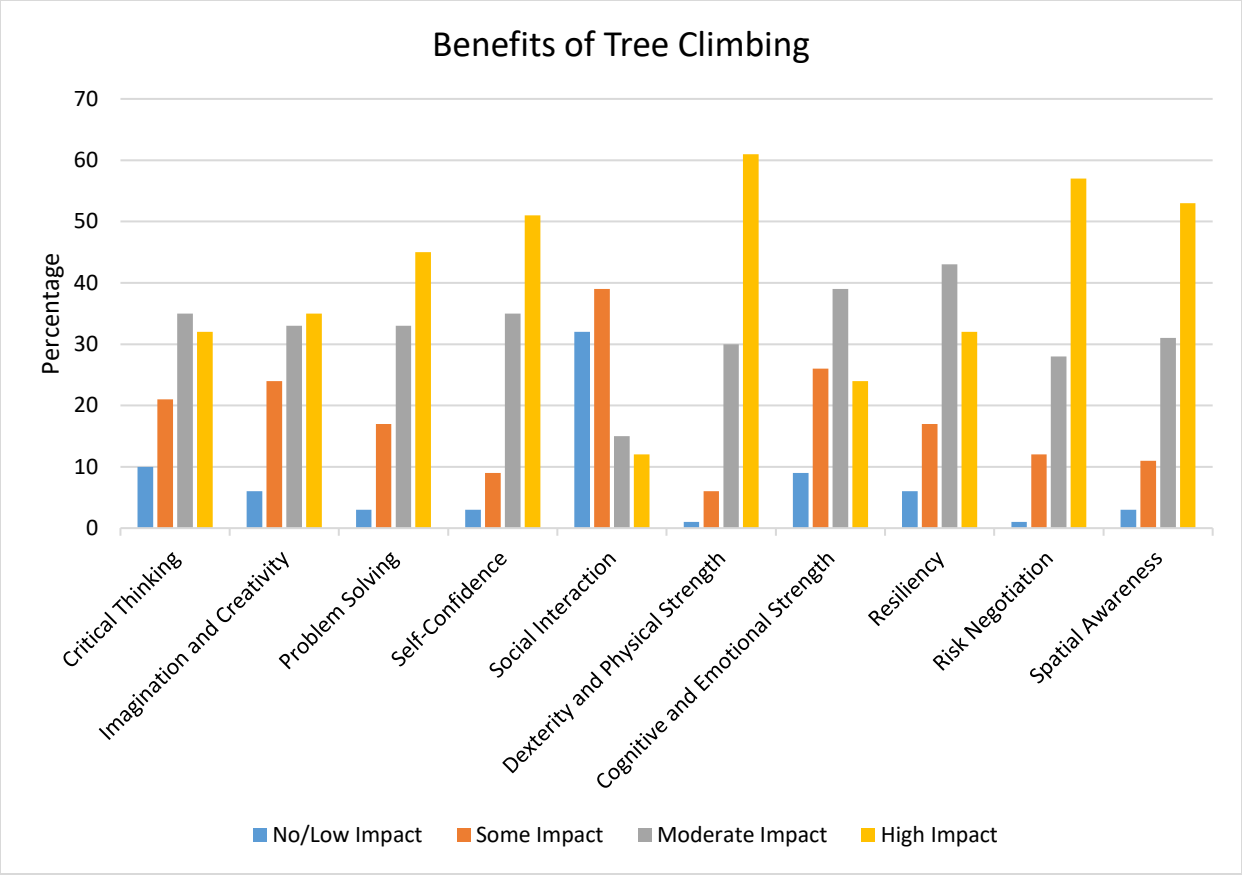

Figure 4. Benefits of Tree Climbing. This chart illustrates the perceived impact of tree climbing on ten attributes.

One father mentioned, "When you accomplish a goal that is hard you grow. Climbing a tree takes strength, planning, will and believe it or not thinking about one's safety." When looking at the aspect of challenge, one father said the children learn "I can do difficult things." Another father wrote that tree climbing "Allows them to push their boundaries." Other comments included the following:

> "Climbing helps my child grow in confidence, risk assessment, physical strength and agility, problem solving; he learns what he is capable of, and can set his own goals. In imaginative play, a tree can become nearly anything- and a good climbing tree can encourage social interaction."
>
> "Climbing trees is an adventure for my girl. We live on a farm with no playmates nearby for her so she has only herself to rely on for fun. Climbing trees is huge for her- she is physically strong and very healthy. Trees are her forts, her houses, her tents, her sanctuary, her boats/ships, and whatever other structures she can conjure up."
>
> "Honestly I get nervous letting my kids climb trees because I am concerned that they could fall and get hurt. However, I have a greater fear of my children not being able to accomplish difficult thing [sic]. I have a greater fear that my kids would eather [sic] interract [sic] with a virtual world than the physical world around them. I would prefer my kid get a few scrapes [sic] knees than playing video games all day."
>
> "I have a child with high functioning Autism/Asperger's. He is very cautious and doesn't climb trees very high. He has had very limited tree climbing but I think he has used that perspective in writing stories."

Finding 2: Rules and Restrictions

Fathers were asked about rules and restrictions they put on their children's tree climbing in Question 14 (see Figure 5). Fathers used an approach expecting common sense for children most predominately (28%, 21 of 76 responses). Twenty percent (15 of 76 responses) mentioned a height restriction. Eighteen percent (14 of 76 responses) advocated for looking for a safe tree to climb.

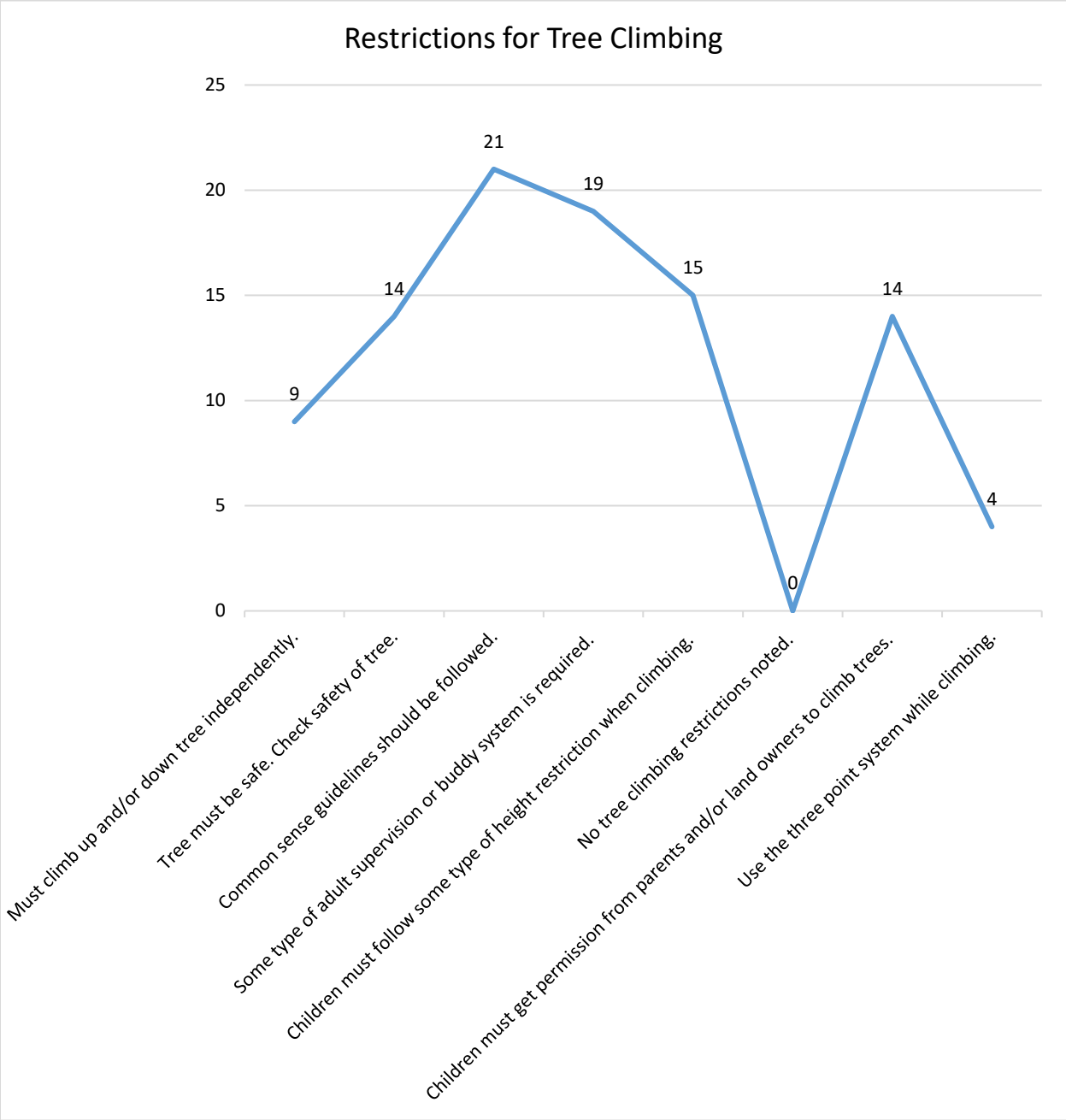

Figure 5. Restrictions for Tree Climbing. This figure describes parental tree climbing restrictions.

In Question 15, fathers encouraging common sense while tree climbing mentioned, "Be careful and pay attention" and "be mindful of your surroundings," noting fewer restrictions as children age and show competence in tree climbing. Fathers often encourage getting permission to climb to show respect for the property and tree, as well as to avoid negative comments such as when "neighbors get mad." Height restrictions range from "only go as high as you feel safe" to limiting the height in accordance to the age. Many fathers had variations of "If they got themselves up, they have to get themselves down." Other fathers looked at protecting the tree, enforcing children to not "break the tree," "don't damage the tree," and "be careful and respectful." Along with respect for the tree, the child needs to assess that the tree is safe by using the three point climbing system, testing the strength of the branch before putting weight on it, and avoiding landscaping trees. Perspectives varied, as one father stated, "Right now they can only climb when I'm there to supervise. As their skill increases I will allow them to climb on their own. I teach them to maintain 3 points of contact with the tree at all times." Another wrote, "We ask that our oldest not climb trees when in parks with other families. He is much better than most kids, and many parents are uncomfortable with their children following."

Finding 3: Injuries from Tree Climbing

While injuries can happen as a result of tree climbing, no serious injuries were reported by fathers in this study (see Figure 6). In open responses, one father mentioned a sprained arm and a long, deep cut in his child. Eighty-three percent (65 of the 78 responses) of fathers who responded to this question mentioned their child(ren) had suffered a scraped knee, elbow or skin in Question 16. These common scrapes and bruises were mentioned in other responses on building resiliency and distinguishing minor issues from major injuries.

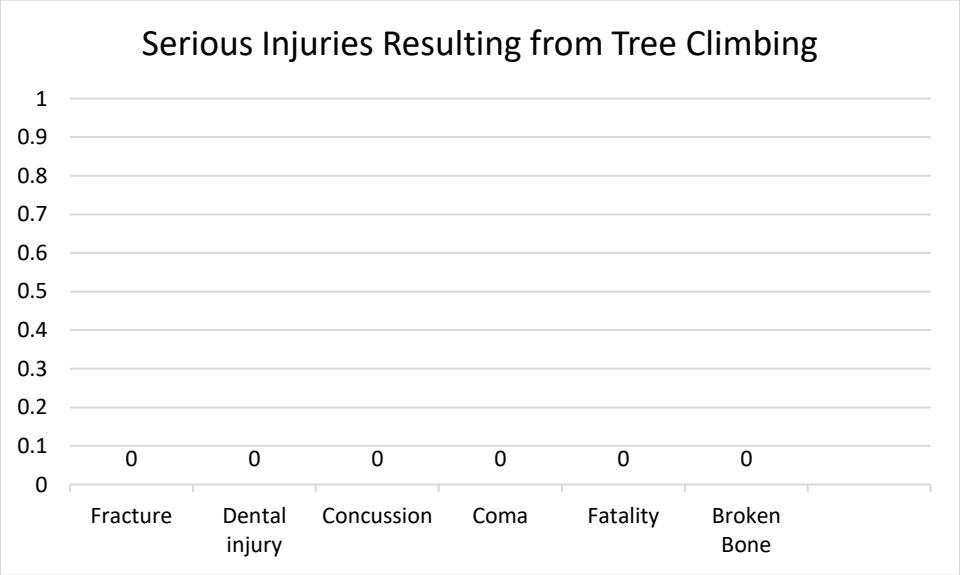

Figure 6. Injuries Resulting from Tree Climbing. This figure depicts serious injuries that result from tree climbing.

Finding 4: Tree Climbing and Resiliency

Tree climbing can impact children positively in many ways. Fathers were asked the effect tree climbing had on their children to adapt to uncertain situations, cope with challenges, and develop emotional tools to solve problems and make decisions. Question 17 in the survey looked at the ability to adapt in uncertain situations (see Figure 7). The data from the survey indicated that 80% of fathers (70 of the 88 responses) felt that tree climbing has some impact, moderate impact, or high impact on a child's ability to adapt. In Question 18, the data from the survey indicated that 86% of fathers (76 of the 88 responses) reported that tree climbing has some impact, moderate impact, or high impact on facing and conquering new challenges (see Figure 7).

Tree climbing provides children with opportunities to develop emotional tools to solve problems and to make decisions. Of the fathers responding to this question, 80% (70 of the 88 responses) indicated that tree climbing has some, moderate, or high impact on critical thinking, perseverance, persistence, confidence, and decision making (see Figure 7).

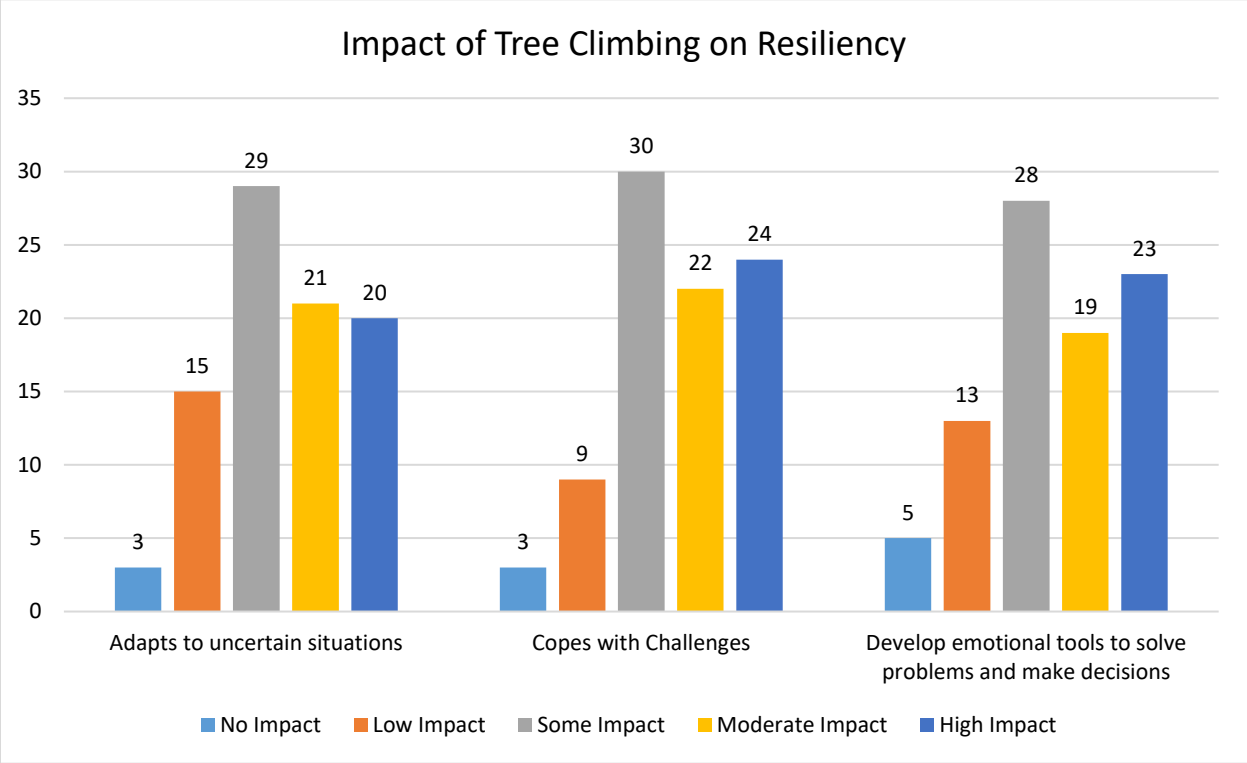

Figure 7. Impact of Tree Climbing on Resiliency. This figure demonstrates the effect of tree climbing on resiliency.

Open-ended responses in Question 18 by fathers suggested that tree climbing allows children to keep trying, figure things out, take measured risks, deal with frustrations, and build character traits such as courage, persevering, and confidence. Fathers reiterated their children learn about trying again, decision making, figuring things out, overcoming challenges, and learning from mistakes through climbing trees. Qualitative comments in regards to resiliency and tree climbing include:

> "After a fall, he was afraid to get back in a tree but over time, he's gone further than before."
>
> "My kids will get 'stuck' in a tree at times. They will start crying and not move. I'm able to climb up next to them and talk them through how to get down. This experience has thought [sic] them that when they are faced with a difficult challenge, if they stay calm they can figure it out or ask for help. This has transferred into all aspects of their lives."
>
> "If they 'get stuck' they have to stick it out and plan and execute how to get down. This transfers to other activities in that they are less frustrated when things don't go as planned."
>
> "When they are challenged by falling or getting stuck, they become more resilient and have more motivation and desire to try again and succeed."

> "Climbing trees has become part of emotional coping and how they re-calibrate emotions. Kids [sic] happiest in woods and climbing."
>
> "If you aren't successful, it toughens up your responses. It makes you realize you may have to try a few times before something works."
>
> "At times they've freaked out when they think they can't do something, or think they've gone too high. They'll ask for help, I'll provide support while they finish the action themselves. They're a lot calmer about it now."

Many fathers reported children persevering, writing, "Doesn't give up. Tries harder." Others mentioned a "respect for the challenge" of tree climbing and continue working to master climbing a tree. Children are able to "deal with problems" and "not back down from difficult" situations through tree climbing. Seven fathers reported no effect or not being sure of an effect of tree climbing on resiliency.

DISCUSSION AND FURTHER RECOMMENDATIONS

This study assessed the benefits and risks of tree climbing on child development and resiliency across the United States from fathers' perspectives, following Gull et al.'s (2018) recommendations to look at fathers' perspectives. Since 93% of their original respondents were female, specifically understanding fathers' attitudes toward the risks and benefits of tree climbing as a stand-alone study potentially provides more information and gender-based insights.

Based on the 105 fathers that completed the survey, the data concluded that tree climbing provides children with the ability to have fun while improving dexterity, physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence. Brussoni, Creighton, Olsen, and Oliffe (2013) noted, "Most men considered engaging children in risk as key to facilitating development and described strategies for protecting their children while engaging in risk" (p. 1). While fathers recognize the benefits of tree climbing, they also help their children negotiate the presented risk through encouraging common sense behaviors, putting height restrictions on the climbing, requiring supervision and/or permission, and checking for the safety of the tree. This reiterates Creighton, Brussoni, Oliffe, and Olsen's (2017) study on fathers' roles in risk suggesting that fathers "value risk taking over protection for self and child" (p. 8) while also looking at safety needs in protecting their children from injury mirroring the fathers' tendencies to enjoy risk in their own lives.

Fathers noted dexterity and physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence as benefits of tree climbing. This confirms Brussoni et al.'s (2013) finding that men put emphasis on encouraging their children in risk-taking activities as they test physical abilities, promote confidence, self-esteem, and build character. In analyzing responses to Question 13 from Gull et al.'s (2018) study, the responses from fathers offers interesting comparisons in regards to parents' perspectives on how tree climbing helps children grow. Gull et al.'s (2018) word cloud shows self-confidence, fun, problem solving, believe, and learn as dominant words from a predominantly female perspective. Figure 4 of this father-focused study shows words such as physically, strength, risk, grow, nature, and learn as dominant words in the corresponding figure, illustrating a stronger connection to physical growth and risk taking as ways tree climbing helps children grow.

When looking at park policies, instead of instituting complete bans on tree climbing, recreational facilities could use information on fathers to help appeal to the safety side of fathers. Brussoni, Olsen, Creighton, and Oliffe (2013) found that men were more in control of the children's risk taking and recreation, while women are often responsible for the safety and injury prevention. Brussoni, Creighton, Olsen, and Oliffe (2013) suggest, "Injury prevention efforts might benefit from tapping into such contemporary father-child relationships, both in terms of acknowledging fathers as experts in their children's well-being (much as we currently do with mothers) and providing fathers with tools to select appropriate strategies for protection" (p. 9). Appealing to fathers with appropriate tools in the way of suggestions on looking at safety of the tree and tree climbing and trusting fathers are seriously considering risks and benefits of tree climbing could be more beneficial than tree climbing bans.

Risky play, specifically tree climbing, has an important role in the well-being and satisfaction of children. Even though the results of the study conclude the tree climbing can result in minor injuries, such as a scraped knee, it is a relatively safe activity for children. Fathers of tree climbers recognize and accept the risk of tree climbing, knowing the risks and potential injuries are growing experiences for their children. In fact, Creighton et al. (2017) report "some fathers were more comfortable with the possibility of injury, believing that getting hurt could be a way to learn and a means to toughen up" (p. 10). Therefore, in these studies, the benefits of tree climbing make the potential risks worthwhile from fathers' perspectives, mirroring the results of mothers' views from Gull et al. (2018) for this demographic.

While interesting to look at fathers' perspectives on the risks and benefits of tree climbing, the convenience sampling of the group following Gull et al.'s (2018) methodology, limited the diversity of perspectives shared. The fathers' parenting styles and backgrounds potentially influenced findings. Although the survey was distributed online with open access, fathers that use social media, are active on nature play sites, and/or friends and family of those active in outdoor and nature activities, were aware of and completed the survey, potentially limiting larger diversity of responses. As noted in the demographics, the fathers sampled have high college attendance rates and children who typically spend over 10 hours outside each week (61%). A strength of the study is additional data on fathers' perspectives on tree climbing, looking at the impact of tree climbing on resiliency, father-reported tree climbing injuries, and limitations on tree climbing. Perhaps this type of information can help normalize the perceived risk and fears of tree climbing, making it a more acceptable risk such as crossing streets or participating in organized sports. While there is potential for injury or accident in many childhood activities, society often chooses what is more acceptable in regards to risk and potential injury. With low injury rates reported in this study and no specific outside data gathering on tree climbing injuries, perhaps allowing the risk is needed, as fathers agreed in the study. As recreational areas and parks put restrictions on tree climbing, studies like this can help tree climbing be perceived as acceptable risks, such as crossing streets and organized sports, which often also happen in these same spaces.

Recommendations for Future Studies

There is still little information on recreational tree climbing of children in academic research. Gull, et al.'s (2018) suggestions of looking at regional differences or varied perspectives by ethnicity are still applicable. Focusing on more socially diverse groups that include differences in education, economics, physical abilities, political and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and other attributes could be valuable. Gender roles are also somewhat changing. Looking at changing viewpoints from more adventurous mothers and more domestic fathers could be effective. Investigating tree climbing safety recommendations aimed with fathers in mind could help target fathers who take an active recreation role with their children. Understanding better the interaction between the liability of property owners and litigation could be enhanced by looking at court case rulings and the needs of insurance companies. Additionally, using a similar study to "understand lawyer, judge, public space provider, environmental educator, and insurance perspectives on the topic might be fruitful" (Gull et al., 2018, p. 23).

The sampling and methodology of this study could have been carried out in a more concise and controlled method to have more reliable data that might represent fathers' perceptions more holistically. To have a more reliable study, defining the target participants, minimum sampling sizes, and sampling methodology could be improved. Qualitative research using focus groups, interviews, or observations could be used. Focus groups are valuable research tools that can capture information that will help to better tell the story on the research topic. Using a focus group could generate additional ideas, gather feedback, and encourage further discussion (Nagle and Williams, 2019). Quantitative retrospective research could be done looking more closely at potential data around injuries sustained from tree climbing.

Investigating parent fears and judgment of others for additional research is still warranted while also looking at actual serious injuries of tree climbing (Gull et al., 2018). In this particular fathers' study, no serious injuries were noted. Confirming the typical low risk of serious injury while also recognizing the real potential of injury is prudent. Investigating how parents and society teach children to climb trees and negotiate risk in general, such as crossing the street, as well as society's acceptance or rejection of perceived risk and liability could shed light on the limitations and restrictions of tree climbing. Additionally, better understanding the father's role in attitudes of fear, safety, risk,

pushing boundaries, and accepting challenges can add more diverse information to the bigger picture of the risks and opportunities of children climbing trees.

CONCLUSION

Fathers of children aged 3-13 that climb trees were questioned to understand how tree climbing may impact children's growth and resiliency. Four main findings were assessed: risks and benefits of tree climbing, limitations on tree climbing, related injuries, and the connection of resiliency to tree climbing. Analyzing fathers' viewpoints on the benefits, behaviors, rules, restrictions, and injuries concluded that fathers in this study perceived that tree climbing provides children with the ability to have fun and improve dexterity, physical strength, risk negotiation, spatial awareness, and self-confidence. Risky play, specifically tree climbing, has an important role in the well-being and satisfaction of children. The study concluded the benefits of tree climbing make the potential risks worthwhile from fathers' perspectives.

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