

Why do we have play, or recreation, leadership? Parents, sisters, brothers, and companions are still teaching children to play either by offering an example for them to imitate or by actually instructing them. But valuable as it is, this natural, informal, and often unconscious teaching is not sufficient. In supplementing the teaching of parents and companions, the play leader gives a deeper significance to the child's play life by bringing it to a wider experience and trained understanding. This would have been true even in a more leisurely age, as modern education with its great emphasis on the importance of child life has revealed. Today it is especially true, for the conditions which made playgrounds and recreation centers a necessity have also made the play leader indispensable.

Adults are taking a more active part in municipal recreation programs than ever before, and many of the new facilities are primarily for adult use. Large numbers of school buildings have been opened for community recreation use for the first time. The value of recreation in sustaining morale and in affording joyous, constructive, healthful use of leisure time has been more widely demonstrated and is more generally appreciated than ever before. Universities and colleges have become deeply interested in recreation and have considered the desirability of establishing courses to prepare individuals for recreation leadership. War has emphasized the need for carrying out recreation programs. Experience over nearly forty years has shown clearly that recreation is a fundamental human need equally in peacetime as in wartime.