

DIVERGENT APPROACH

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Let us try to imagine some typical situations that we have seen many times in TV reports or at the park. The adult decides that the child can only climb the slide from the ladder, that he/she can only go on the swing by him/herself and rigorously sit on it or that a very young child climb up the slide without anything in his/her hands so he/she doesn't fall.

Children reason differently, in a divergent manner. They find many and alternative ways to become acquainted with the world. This is not to infuriate adults, but because their thinking is full of imagination and they have the impelling desire to discover the thousand ways in which they can become acquainted with an object.

This is why children climb the slide from the opposite side, or why they find it exciting and fun to search for balance on a slippery ground and be able to reach the top. They go in twos or even threes on the swing, to find the way to fit and push each other in harmony; even very young children tend to carry objects onto the slide because they want to complicate things and understand if they can actually climb it with an extra complication. Divergence is a laborious and strenuous process for the child, but his/her brain is enriched by an incredible quantity of new connections and stimuli.

I have seen (and you will find it in this documentation) that older children of the crèche use bicycles in a divergent manner, heaping them together and trying to step over them and climbing up on them. Some people might shudder at the sight because they think it's unsafe or even label it as anarchic, but divergence has a lot to do with assessing the risk and understanding what children are ready to do. This has a lot to do with creativity because it creates unprecedented and unexplored situations that allow children to progress at cognitive (flexibility, complex and creative thought) and at motor (new movements are developed and coordination is honed) level. Last but not least, the child feels a deep enthusiasm growing within, from having found a road that no one else before has mapped out.