

Broadcast- How rough play shapes stronger, smarter kids

ANCHOR LEAD-IN

First-time moms might be a little leery of dad wrestling with a little one, but [research shows](#) rough housing, or active play actually *helps* with physical development, social skills, and emotional regulation. There are also benefits for parents too.

VO or Radio Package

Dr. Kyle Boerke (BUR-key), a child psychologist and director of Outpatient Behavioral Health at OSF HealthCare says it might be surprising but aggressive physical play between parents and their kids results in ***less aggressive*** children. He says playing tag, wrestling, throwing a kid in the air, even tickling can build confidence, physical ability, and help kids set limits and know how to deal with emotions if they get frustrated.

Dr. Boerke says rough-and-tumble play can also be good for ***parents*** because it activates pleasure hormones.

“One of the most fascinating parts of research on this rough and tumble play is we actually get equal, if not higher, levels of this hormone oxytocin at the end of a rough-and-tumble play session than we do when we simply sit on the couch and cuddle with our kiddos. So, it actually strengthens the bond with my child.” (:20)

There is no age limit for active play. Dr. Boerke says the type just morphs a bit – as kids grow, it can involve more contact sports or physical challenges.