



Thinking Critically About Environments for Young Children: Bridging Theory & Practice (Early Childhood Education Series)

Lisa P. Kuh

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Using a practice-based focus and a researcher lens, the contributors consider the ways in which environments for children enhance or diminish educational experiences, how social constructs about what is good for children influence environmental design, and what practitioners can do in their own work when creating learning environments for young children. There are copious examples from practice, lessons learned, and illustrations and photographs of key aspects of the environments they discuss. Organized into three parts, this essential text addresses:

- Aesthetics, politics, and space configurations in school environments for young children.
- Outdoor spaces, beginning with intentionally designed playscapes, children's gardens, and spontaneous improvisational play venues.
- The role of environments outside school, including informal learning environments that promote science knowledge, museum spaces, and virtual environments.

"Through rich examples and clear explanations of the historical, political, and aesthetic dimensions of design, [Kuh and her colleagues] help us think critically about environments and provide theoretical and practical tools to support our efforts."

—**Benjamin Mardell**, professor, Early Childhood Education, Lesley University.

"An enlightening book that gives educators new lenses for thinking about and creating the kinds of places that can optimize children's growth and learning, especially in this era of standardization. Educators need this book!"

—**Nancy Carlsson-Paige**, professor emerita, Lesley University

"For everyone who wants to take educational settings beyond minimal standards, this collection is a thoughtful and inspiring guide."

—**Louise Chawla**, professor, Environmental Design Program, University of Colorado, Boulder

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