



# A Message For Parents



"Promoting The Child's  
Right To Play"



## Play Is The Way

Across the world, due to the spread of COVID-19, children and young people are affected by social and physical distancing, isolation quarantines and the closure of schools, services and opportunities for outdoor play and recreation.

These important protective and health and safety demands are affecting your child's opportunity to enjoy their human rights, in particular the right to Play ([UNCRC, Art 31](#)). We know this is a challenging time for parents and for children who we know still need to be active, to feel connected and **PLAY**.

## Our Message For Parents

Lots of people think that **PLAY** is what children do when they have nothing better to do. In fact, **PLAY** often is the better thing to do! **PLAY** is important at any time, but it's particularly important during this coronavirus pandemic.

## Why? Because **PLAY** Is Natural And Therapeutic, It Allows Children To:

- Safely work through how they **FEEL** about things, especially emotions such as anxiety; loss; fear; and loss of routine; and to develop their resilience;
- **FIND OUT** about things – to learn about how the world works and make some sense of what is happening at the minute. Of course the School stuff is important, but children learn and process things so much through **PLAY**;
- Develop **FRIENDSHIPS**, to practice the skills they need to build and maintain friendships; and most importantly;
- Have **FUN** – adults and children alike we all need a bit of **FUN** at the moment.

## So What Is Our Advice To Parents?

We think **PLAY** is good for the heart, so a little **CPR** is necessary to protect our child's well-being.

# C ...IS FOR COOL



Try to be cool about children playing:

- recognise how valuable it is.
- having **FUN** is worthwhile. There are lots of serious things happening at the moment.
- let the kids get on with it! Remember when you were a child – the best play of all was the play you organised yourself! **STEP BACK** and be cool about your child being the boss of their own play. Be around, in case they need a wee bit of help – but don't take over the play. Leaves don't have to be green! Egg boxes don't have to be for eggs!

# P ...IS FOR PERMISSION

It may sound a bit odd, (as often as parents we hear ourselves saying – 'Go and play'), but sometimes children don't feel they have **PERMISSION** to play. We are sometimes worried about the children disturbing someone, or getting in the way, or making a mess, or making too much noise. That can send a message that says – 'I'd rather you didn't play!'. This is often reinforced by society that says '**NO BALL GAMES! CHILDREN MUST BE ACCOMPANIED BY AN ADULT! STAY OFF THE GRASS!**'

So we need to make it clear to children that they have **PERMISSION** to play to:

- make a noise
- make a mess
- use that object (like a saucepan) as a play prop
- get dirty
- be really silly
- be bored – it's a great stimulus for creativity and play!



# R ...IS FOR RESOURCES

Parents can provide the **RESOURCES** for play. No we don't mean big, expensive play equipment! We all know the 'he/she had more fun with the box, than the toy' story! So we need to make sure that children have the resources for play:

- **TIME** in their day that isn't programmed or planned that they can do their own **PLAY** thing. Non-screen time!
- **SPACE** where they (and you) aren't worried about it getting messy or untidy or where noise wont disturb others unnecessarily
- **THINGS** lying around that kids can use as props for play. We often call these loose parts – like kitchen roll tubes, sticks, paint, chalk, boxes, old sheets, old clothes, a big tyre etc. Stuff that fuels children's imagination, develops and sustains **THEIR** play and doesn't rely on a screen!



The world is a very different and scary place right now. Giving children the chance to chat will help them to cope. As parents, we are in the business of making memories for our children. Let's help to make those memories positive playful ones!

So! Our big message to parents, in these strange times (but actually – at all times) - give your children some...

**C P R**

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