



Play Blast, Summer 2020

Message from the President

To say the last few months have been traumatic, heartbreaking, and tragic is an understatement. The Board and I hope you and yours are safe and healthy. As the country goes through these troubling times, keeping children and what is best for children in the forefront is essential. As the economy reopens and children, teachers, and families return to the new normal, keeping everyone safe is a priority, but providing children with quality early learning environments is also important. The balance between the quality of early learning programs and health and safety is a balance that seems impossible, but it is necessary to reduce levels of anxiety that children are experiencing. Children's lives, like yours, have been dramatically changed, and getting back to a level of normalcy is necessary. Here are some thoughts to keep in mind:

- *Use your playground and parking lot space (if this can be done safely) as classrooms. The virus is not as concentrated, and the risk is less when children are outdoors.*
- *Check temperatures of staff and children as they enter the facility.*
- *Provide a drop off system that limits folks entering the childcare program area.*
- *Provide families with opportunities to communicate with their child's teacher throughout the day, perhaps through parent communication apps such as TadPole, Kaymbu, or another of the same type.*
- *Ensure that the daily routine is consistent, yet flexible. Children need to know what comes next, but not forced to follow a rigid schedule.*
- *Maintain consistent groups and consistent staff with these groups*
- *Increase child-initiated play in your daily routine; now more than ever, children need child-initiated play where they have the freedom to choose and have control over with whom and where they play.*

- *Limit the use of hand sanitizer for children. Hand sanitizer has a high alcohol content and children are known to put their hands in their mouths.*
- *Wash hands with soap and water for at least 20 seconds and disinfect surfaces frequently.*
- *Though I understand the caution of maintaining social distance of 6 ft, with children, this might not be possible all the time, except at naptime.*
- *Teachers should wear masks.*
- *Now more than ever, children need comfort, physical contact, love, and nurturing.*
- *This is a time when we must do what is best for children in a time that is not optimal.*

Even during the pandemic, your IPA USA Board has been hard at work.

I wanted to let you know some exciting happenings that will be available by August.

We will have 8 Policy Briefs on a variety of topics – IPA USA's policy paper on Play, Executive Functioning, Recess, Risky Play, Infant and Toddler Play, Outdoor/Nature Play, Play and Children with Disabilities, Equity, and Play.

Our website will get a fresh new look.

We are beginning to record some Porch Play Chats that will discuss topics around play with members of IPA USA and board members. These recordings will take place on July 6, 7, & 8. If you would like to participate, email me at brainguru@aol.com. If you don't make the July date, we will have another recording set of times in August, send me your topic and contact info and I will start a new list.

Please like us on our Facebook Page. In Facebook – search for- International Play Association – USA, this is where the Porch Play Chats will be released.

We are also starting an Instagram account. Stay tuned for more info.

Three board members participated in the U.S. Play Coalition Virtual Conference. The conference is continuing, and you can find the following sessions by IPA USA board members.

- ✓ The Relationship Between Play and Relationships – Rusty Keeler and a panel
- ✓ Listening to Children: Exploring the Legacy of Vivian Paley – Vivien Geneser
- ✓ The American Association for Promoting the Child's Right to Play – IPA USA Information Session - Deb Lawrence
- ✓ Advocating for Risky Play – Deb Lawrence
- ✓ Lost Opportunities - How Teaching Interferes with Learning – Deb Lawrence

The IPA USA Board unanimously voted to support the Global Recess Alliance's recess statement. Take a few moments to read the statement and sign your name to support the position. Our own Olga Jarrett is part of this task force advocating for recess when schools reconvene.

The Global Recess Alliance, a newly formed group of scholars, health professionals, and education leaders, argues that attention to recess during school reopening is essential. Recess is the only unstructured time in the school day that provides space for children's physical, social and emotional development, which are essential for well-being and learning. When schools reopen, children will need space to heal from their collective trauma.

We have combined our expertise to provide answers and concrete strategies for a recess that not only works under the current circumstances but paves the way for a fundamental shift in the ways schools approach recess.

<https://globalrecessalliance.org/recess-statement/>

Lisa Latimer, the chair of the Play Advocacy Committee is still looking for playful members interested in advocating for play in their state.

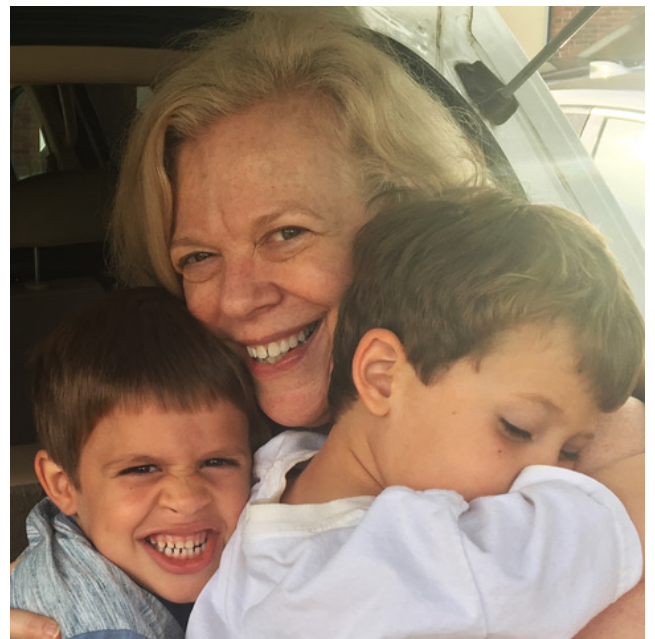
You can email Lisa at lisa.latimer@ileadaguadulce.org to learn more. As we move through the Summer months and live with uncertainty about the economy, COVID19, and the issues around social justice, take time to play and stay healthy.

Deb Lawrence, President, IPA USA

IPAUSA is Recipient of a \$500 Mini-Grant from Defending the Early Years (DEY)!

Message from Blakely Bundy, Co-Director of Defending the Early Years: "We are happy to report that your proposal to support the redesign of your new website has been reviewed and accepted. We will be featuring your grant idea in an upcoming newsletter, to help inspire others to follow your lead." **Congratulations, IPAUSA and Thank you DEY!**

Featured Play Advocate, Cynthia Gentry



Cynthia Gentry with two of her grandchildren

I (Olga Jarrett) met Cynthia during 2009-2010, a year in which I taught a doctoral seminar on play. She had designed a treehouse for a camp for children with disabilities and was featured in the *Atlanta Journal Constitution*. I invited her to speak to my class, and my students and I found her very inspiring. That spring, I asked her to participate in the triennial IPAUSA conference with TASP, at which time, she was conducting a world-wide play design competition. Since 2011, Cynthia's play

advocacy has included being Communications Officer of IPA World and Editor of Playrights. She is an amazing play advocate! I asked Cynthia to share a bit about herself and her play advocacy. Here is what she shared:

- I left the corporate world in 1995 to paint murals in a rundown inner city children's hospital in Atlanta. That led to painting murals for the medical lodge at Camp Twin Lakes.
- While running the arts festival in the Virginia-Highland neighborhood in Atlanta my next door neighbor's wife and two little boys were killed when a tree fell on their car in a storm. I led a campaign to put a new swing set in the muddy and old playground in the park where the festival was held. We ended up raising so much money that we built a brand new playground, refurbished the old playground, and fixed up the entire park in a community effort that spread across the whole city. My life was forever changed as I realized the importance of play and the power of community.
- I founded Play Atlanta and ran the Playful City USA campaign each year for the KaBoom competition. We even won first prize the first year in a video competition that included a guest appearance from the then-Mayor, Atlanta Hawk Dominique Wilkins, a CNN anchor and others.
- Another fun project was the Playable10 International Design Competition that I initiated and ran with the help of Georgia Tech's College of Architecture. Entries came from all over the world, and the winning playground was a giant structure in the shape of the letters ATL. It was built in Woodruff Park in the heart of downtown Atlanta and is considered an iconic spot in town appearing in countless advertisements and (more importantly) constantly overrun with children.
- In 2011 I joined the Executive Board of the International Play Association. I had no idea how much this would change my life. Over the past nine years we have worked on the importance of play for children in situations of crisis, a focus that became incredibly important to me after I spent time in Sarajevo painting murals in an elementary school right after the Bosnian War. My work with IPA has included countless projects both large and small from totally redesigning PlayRights Magazine, to creating a video in celebration of the ratification of

General Comment #17 on article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child. The video was made to show at the UN in Geneva in a full day conference we presented to the members of the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. Serving on the Board has been an enormous amount of work (much more than the hour or two a month I was told it would take - ha! I fell for it!), but I have learned so much and met the most incredible people around the world.

For the past few years I have spent more and more time designing and building nature-based playgrounds. My love for play and understanding of its importance has only grown with the addition of five extraordinary grandchildren to my life. They have made advocating for play something I will do for the rest of my life.



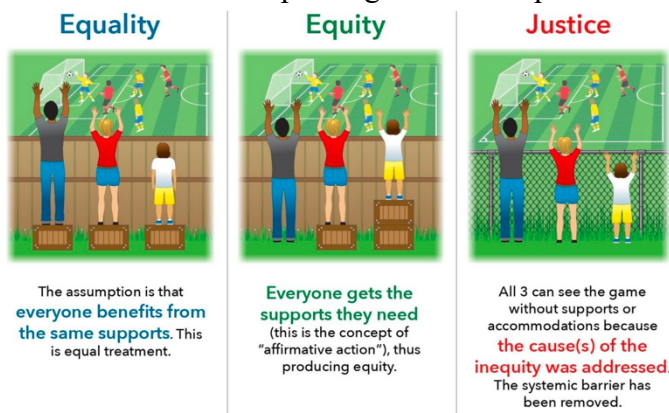
In the 2018 photo above, Cynthia Gentry (green scarf) is surrounded by members of the American delegation to the IPA World Conference in Calgary, Alberta, Canada.

Need for Equity in Play opportunities by Olga Jarrett



Sign made by Christopher Jarrett

Of course, all lives matter. But for far too long, Black lives have not mattered as much as White lives in the United States. There are too many examples of injustice, harassment, and murder, including children harassed by the police and even killed while playing (Pinckney, Outley, Brown, & Theriault, 2018). My own research shows that White children are more likely to have recess than Black children. And that the playgrounds of predominantly White schools are apt to have nicer, more challenging and fun equipment than playgrounds of predominantly Black schools. There are also disparities in childcare and school quality that manifest themselves in the quality of play opportunities, and there are some teachers who treat White children more positively than Black children. The heading for this column refers to the “Need for Equity...” Equity is not the same as equality. If children have similar needs, equality may be warranted. However, if some children start at a disadvantage because of discrimination, equity demands that they be given additional supports. This might mean extra funding for play equipment or assigning the most committed teachers to the highest poverty schools. But note, in the drawings below, that sometimes major changes are necessary to address the inequity. Examine your community for incidents of white privilege and racist policies.



<https://www.mobilizegreen.org/blog/2018/9/30/environmental-equity-vs-environmental-justice-whats-the-difference>

Pinckney, H. P. IV, Outley, C., Brown, A. & Theriault, D. (2018) Playing while Black, *Leisure Sciences*, 40(7), 675-685.

Books for young children on treating one another fairly

Recommended by Deb Lawrence, the following books by Free Spirit Press.

Available from Free Spirit Press or Amazon.com

Jamie and Bubbie by Afsaneh Moradian and Maria Bogade, \$12.99. Jamie teaches respectful use of personal pronouns in this lighthearted, multigenerational story.

Lulu and the Hunger Monster. By Erik Talkin and Sheryl Murray. \$14.99. Lulu's story personalizes the struggles of children experiencing food insecurity and hunger.

Nobody! By Erin Frankel and Paula Heaphy, \$9.99 Boys learn to deal with persistent bullying, overcome insecurities, and express feelings without hurting others.

Dare! By Erin Frankel and Paula Heaphy, \$9.99 When Jayla first witnesses her friend being bullied, she is too scared to stand up for her friend, but soon she finds the courage to do what's right

Weird! By Erin Frankel and Paula Heaphy, \$9.99 Colorful, polka-dotted Luisa changes everything about herself to avoid being bullied and learns a valuable lesson in the process.

Accept and value each person. Cheri J. Meiners and Meredith Johnson, \$11.99. Introduce kids to diversity, respecting differences, being inclusive, and appreciating people the way they are.

Parenting

Overcoming racial bias: Acknowledge it

Children are always watching and listening, but since protests for racial justice have spread across the globe, they're witnessing, absorbing and internalizing possibly more than anyone knows.

A recent statement from the American Academy of Pediatrics says pediatricians are “deeply concerned about the effects of racism on children. Even vicarious racism — secondhand racism witnessed through social media, conversations with friends or family, or media images — harms children's health.”

Here are a few suggestions to get the conversation started:

- Silence is its own message. Don't avoid conversations.
- Reflect on your own biases and uncomfortable

feelings.

- Color is real. Don't ignore or pretend it's not there.
- Start talking about racism early in your child's life.
- Read books together about racial equality and anti-racism.
- Listen to their questions and be honest with your answers.
- Realize this isn't one conversation, but rather a series of many.
- Be a good example.

"For children and adolescents, of all ages, the most powerful communication strategy is role modeling," says Dr. Paul Croarkin, a Mayo Clinic pediatric psychiatrist.

"Parents and caregivers often underestimate how important their own behaviors and communications with others are versus direct communication with a child."

From: MAYO CLINIC NEWS NETWORK (the Atlanta Journal Constitution, July 5, 2020)

IPAUSA t-shirts



In partnership with a small business, our Social Media, Outreach and Advocacy committee has created a T-shirt, Trees Over Screens. Follow these steps to order your T-shirt.

1. Visit www.treeandback.com.
2. In the top right, click "Schools".
3. Enter "IPA" into the search bar and the page will come up.
4. \$5 of your price helps fund IPAUSA advocacy efforts and is tax-deductible.

IPA/USA Vision, Mission, and Guiding Principles

Vision Statement:

A world where all children can play

Purpose/Mission Statement (from Bylaws):

The purpose of IPA/USA is to protect, preserve, and promote the child's right to play.

What is Play?

Play is the work of childhood. Play is biologically driven. There are many types of play. The highest, purest form of play is spontaneous, freely chosen, intrinsically motivated, pleasurable, purposeless, and free from conflicts. For younger children it also contains symbolism and/or elements of pretend.

Guiding Principles

- ☐ Play, along with the basic needs of nutrition, health, shelter, and education, is vital for development for all children, birth to 18 years.
- ☐ Play is integral and necessary for social, emotional, cognitive, language, and physical development.
- ☐ Play facilitates brain growth especially in the frontal cortex where essential cognitive functions reside; including attention, self-regulation, working memory, and cognitive flexibility, all of which are known as executive functioning.
- ☐ Some knowledge can *only* be learned through play and thus justifies the essential need of recess for younger children and breaks for older children.
- ☐ Play opportunities are needed both indoors and outdoors for all children, all ages.
- ☐ Play needs are different among the age groups: birth to age 2, PreK, early elementary, upper elementary, middle school, and high school.
- ☐ Schools, especially preK and elementary, need help understanding that young children learn best through play. Schools need help and support on how to provide meaningful and appropriate play/learning opportunities, including the project approach for older children.
- ☐ Families need help recognizing that play is learning; and that family-play also bonds the family and helps build happy childhoods.
- ☐ Community services and regulators, such as parks and recreation, city planning, and housing

developments, need help understanding why and how to include play in their plans.

□ All types of play are important (e.g., physical play, such as, running, climbing, swinging, etc.; block and construction play; play within art and music; games with rules; rough and tumble; risky; nature; role-playing; etc.), but child-directed, spontaneous play is the most important during the early years of birth through age eight.

□ Children have the right to play as guaranteed by the 1989 United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.

Written by the following committee members: Marcy Guddemi (chair), Deb Lawrence, Rusty Keeler, LaDonna Atkins.

Approved by the Board by email on October 3, 2019.

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Members only page on the website

IPA USA members have had access to a Members Only section of our website, but note that the password changes each quarter. The current password is **PLAYSAFE**.

On the Members Only page you will find:

Bylaws

Articles of Incorporation

501c 3

Member Benefits

Member Recruitment Materials

Board Manual

Recent Quarterly Play Blast

Recent E-Journal

Board Minutes

Tools for Advocacy

Check back frequently as more and more resources will be added. To access the Members Only Page, click on this URL or paste it into your browser;

<http://ipausa.org/membersPage.html>

IPAUSA Publications

IPAUSA has several publications. You are currently reading the **Play Blast** (Olga Jarrett, editor) which you receive quarterly by email. As editor, I would appreciate hearing from you with items for the Play Blast or any additions or corrections at ojarrett@mindspring.com.

We also have an *ejournal*! The Spring 2020 issue of the *ejournal* is now available on the members only section of the website. The spotlight focus for the Spring issue was tinkering. You are invited to contribute to the IPA/USA E-Journal! We seek articles that highlight research, projects, and practice about topics pertaining to play and play behaviors in the home, in school, on the playgrounds, and in the community. Manuscripts may address advocacy, culture, games, and activities. Authors are encouraged to examine the ways that children play and how playful activities benefit development. You may submit articles on the spotlight topic as well as other aspects of play to all issues. **Note the themes and deadlines below for these upcoming issues:**

2020: Fall: Risky Play-due by 9/1/2020

2021: Spring: Positive Play with Technology-due by 2/1/2021

2021 Fall: Adaptive Play-due by 8/1/2021

Reminder: Manuscripts on other topics are also welcome and accepted at any time. Guidelines for manuscript submissions are below.

The IPA/USA E-Journal accepts manuscripts up to 2,500 words in length. All text should be featured in double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman Font, and APA format. Each submission should include a one-paragraph abstract of 150-175 words that describes the article as well as its significance to the study of play. All submissions will be evaluated by double-blind review. The names of the author and coauthors should appear only on the cover sheet. For each submission, include the contact information as well as a 40-word bio for every author. Authors should provide their phone, email, address of institutional affiliation, and research interests. The editors will communicate with authors about their status during the review process.

Our co-editors are Vivien Geneser, Shelley Harris and Reece Wilson. They monitor incoming manuscript submissions, manage the review process, and format the final draft prior to uploading it to the website. If you are interested in participating in the production of the eJournal, either as a reviewer or as an author, please contact them at vgeneser@gmail.com. Or submit your

paper to the link for journal manuscripts
ipausauser2019@gmail.com

Vivien Geneser is also the editor of the soon to be published book, *Scholarly Snapshots: Affirming the Importance of the Child's Right to Play* from which IPAUSA will earn profits. The book is now in the hands of the publisher, Rowman & Littlefield.

Olga S. Jarrett, olarrett@mindspring.com

Mini Grants!

IPAUSA has a mini-grant program. The purpose of these small grants (up to approximately \$250) is to provide funding for play projects such as the following:

- Promote play through advocacy effort.
- Create local play days at community-based locations
- Develop play-based advocacy tools to share with families
- Purchase playful materials to reintroduce learning centers into primary grade classrooms
- Purchase materials to inspire play

Check the website for application requirements:

www.ipausa.org/grants.html

So far, two grants have been funded:

- With a \$300 grant to the Ithaca Play Symposium at the Ithaca Children's Garden (Ithaca, NY), October 4-6, 2019, IPAUSA helped to sponsor the Symposium. The theme of the symposium was *Play for All: Equity, Access, and Inclusion*.
- A recent \$250 grant to Let's Play America, Pat Rumbaugh, Executive Director to help produce a Play Day Handbook. See the letter from Pat on the last page of the Play Blast for cost and availability of the handbook.

Ideas from the Genius of Play

The Genius of Play has been creating content and resources to help families during the pandemic. Check out their new virtual hub for parents and caregivers: www.thegeniusofplay.org/playtoday. The ideas include play activities and ways to relieve stress. They will be adding content and recommend, if you are on social media that you use #PlayToday and tag@GeniusofPlay.

Recommended video

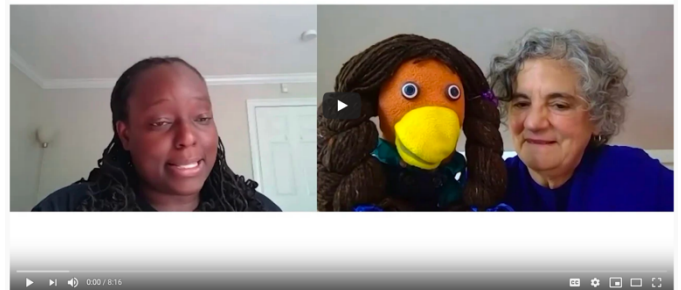
Here are two more videos from Defending the Early Years (DEY). In the first, Audrey Duck complains to Dr. Susan Linn about wearing a mask and not being able to visit with her friends her. in, "I'm tired of the virus!"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QNa4sbF4bM4&t=33s>



In the second video, Audrey Duck, Dr. Susan Linn and Dr. Denisha Jones discuss racism in "Why are people protesting?"

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=W-Q6zpdhZsQ&feature=emb_title



Thanks, Marcy Guddemi for sending me information on these wonderful conversations.

Recommended Conference

Marcy Guddemi also sent information on an amazing sounding upcoming conference: **The Play First Online Summit: ECE leaders from around the world, all in one place, sharing insights and ideas on the best way forward for children and the people who love them.**

**5-DAY ONLINE CONFERENCE
JULY 20-24, 2020**

Tom Hobson, Peter Gray, and Lisa Murphy are among the amazing speakers part of this FREE online summit! Go here to register!:

<https://go.fairydustteaching.com/the-play-first-summit/?ref=12>



IPA/USA E-Journal

Call for Manuscripts

You are invited to contribute to The American Association for Promoting the Child's Right to Play, IPA/USA E-Journal!

We seek articles that highlight research, projects, and practice about topics pertaining to play and play behaviors in the home, in school, on the playgrounds, and in the community.

Manuscripts may address advocacy, culture, games, and activities. Authors are encouraged to examine the ways that children play and how playful activities benefit development.

Themes and deadlines for upcoming issues:

- *Fall 2020: Risky Play-due by 9/1/2020 –*
- *2021: Spring: Positive Play with Technology-due by 2/1/2021*
- *Fall: Adaptive Play-due by 8/1/2021*

Manuscripts on other topics are also welcome and accepted at any time.

Guidelines for manuscript submissions:

The *IPA/USA E-Journal* accepts manuscripts up to 2,500 words in length. All text should be featured in double-spaced, 12-point, Times New Roman Font, and APA format. Each submission should include a one-paragraph abstract of 150-175 words that describes the article as well as its significance to the study of play. Submissions are evaluated through a double-blind review.

- *The names of the author and coauthors should appear only on the cover sheet.*
- *For each submission, include the contact information as well as a 40-word bio for every author/s.*
- *Authors should provide their phone, email, address of institutional affiliation, and research interests.*
- *The editors will communicate with authors about their status during the review process.*

Please submit your paper to the link for journal manuscripts here (use this email address in the HERE link ipausauser2019@gmail.com)

Sincerely,
Editors

Dr. Vivien Geneser
Texas A&M University-San Antonio.

Dr. Shelley Harris
Texas A&M University-Central TX.

Dr. Reece Wilson
James Madison Universit

All members should have gotten the new digital issue of *PlayRights Magazine* in May. This is a wonderful issue. If it does not look familiar, it is probably hidden somewhere in your inbox. So, if you have not read it, here is another opportunity. You can click either on the link on this page or on the cover on the following page. Cynthia Gentry, the editor of this magazine is a member of IPAUSA, the Featured Play Advocate in this issue of the *Play Blast*, and Communications Officer of IPA World.

First Digital Issue of PlayRights Magazine released!

13 May 2020

Dear IPA Members,

Click to view and download your version of the new [PlayRights Magazine "Design Issue"](#). Read the Letters from the President and Editor to see why the decision has been made to continue in this sustainable format.

We hope you enjoy the new magazine!

Peace + Play,

Cynthia Gentry, IPA Communications Officer

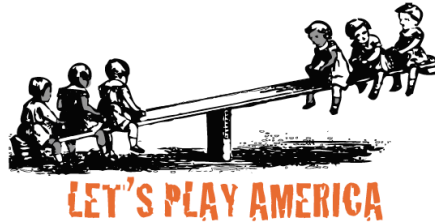
PRINTED COPIES: IPA no longer sends PlayRights Magazine to its members in a printed format. The expense of printing and shipping has grown substantially and prohibitively. Most importantly, offering the magazine in a digital format is a far more sustainable option and that will benefit both the planet and her children.

You will be able to order your own printed copy of the magazine if you chose to do so. To order a printed copy of the magazine from our digital publisher go to <https://help.issuu.com/hc/en-us/articles/204815408-Ordering-Printed-Copies-of-Publications> and follow the instructions. If you have difficulty, please let us know and we will do our best to assist.



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APRIL 2020

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promoting the child's right to play



IPA/USA Play Blast

June 22, 2020

To: IPA/USA for Summer IPA Play Blast

From: Pat Rumbaugh, Let's Play America's Executive Director

Do you miss playing with your co-workers, friends, neighbors, students and folks in your community? The non-profit Let's Play America has held over 25 Play Days over the past twelve years, and can help you plan your very own Play Day for your community. Let's Play America has distilled its wealth of experience into a digital **Play Day Handbook** that has step by step planning details for making your Play Day the best it can be.

If you are a play advocate looking to bring play to your community, you will want this electronic PDF **Play Day Handbook**. Do you have a Mayor, City Council representative, State Congressman or a Director of Recreation that would be thrilled to receive this Play Day Handbook?

Maybe you are a teacher of a preschool, elementary, middle, high school, a university administrator or faculty member. You know how much your students have missed being together. This **Play Day Handbook** is for you.

Let's not forget businesses whose employees have been working from home, or places of worship that have only seen their friends through Zoom. Planning a Play Day can be fun, and so rewarding. Senior communities, Let's Play America has organized six exciting Adult Play Days. Yes, we believe everyone deserves to play!

Play Days in person may still be a ways away, so why not consider planning a Virtual Play Day. LPA is playing with the idea of having a Virtual Play Day in September that would substitute for our Annual Play Day. Many of the planning ideas for a Play Day transfer into planning for a Virtual Play Day.

Whenever and however your community is ready to play together again, you can rely on Let's Play America's **Play Day Handbook** as a resource for organizing a positive, inclusive, and playful event for everyone.

Let's Play America's **Play Day Handbook** will be available upon request for \$20.20 on our website in July 2020: www.letsplayamerica.org.

For more information contact Pat Rumbaugh, The Play Lady info@letsplayamerica.org 240-752-9176

Let's Play America | P.O. Box 5242, Takoma Park, MD 20913 | 240.752.9176 | www.letsplayamerica.org

Let's Play America strives to encourage people of all ages to play and to help them create playful events in their OWN communities.

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