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The American Association for the Child's Right to Play, the USA Affiliate (IPA USA) of the International Play Association (IPA WORLD), announces the release of IPA USA's 50th Anniversary White Paper. A collection of 57 papers written by 59 authors, spanning eight categories, providing research to support advocacy efforts, strategies, and ideas to increase play in young children's lives.

The child's right to play is at a critical juncture. The traditional concept of protecting childhood has been overshadowed by the urgency to bring children up to speed or prepare them for the next grade level. This current emphasis on readiness disregards the wealth of research and theories that have long championed play. Instead of nurturing development, contemporary trends overlook a century of groundbreaking research on developmental milestones and the skills acquired through play that lay the foundation for all future learning.

Over the last 40 years, children's play in neighborhoods and preschool, public, or private school settings has become increasingly limited and replaced with ancillary sports, dance, gymnastics, afterschool tutoring, and many other adult-led activities. The importance of play has moved from being a biological necessity for healthy development to being seen as a break from learning.

Childhood is no longer the sanctuary it once was, and child-led play is no longer recognized as the cornerstone of healthy growth. Instead, play is often viewed as a mere respite from learning rather than the biological necessity it truly is, on par with food, shelter, and safety.

IPA USA, in commemoration of its 50th Anniversary and with the backing of 59 esteemed authors, is unveiling this White Paper. It serves as a comprehensive repository of research on the benefits of play and equips you with tools for advocacy. This White Paper synthesizes the authors' research, offers specific strategies for promoting the child's right to play, and provides the evidence you need to bolster your efforts to safeguard childhood. With this powerful resource at your disposal, you can make a significant impact in advocating for the child's right to play.

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