# TABLE OF CONTENTS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Section</th>
<th>Page</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>WELCOME</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSION THEMES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2021 CONFERENCE DATES</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE ATTENDEE HUB</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KICKOFF KEYNOTE</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>HEALTH AND PLAY INSTITUTE</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>FEATURED SESSIONS</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>THE PLAY ROOM</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#BLACKGIRL MAGIC MONDAYS</td>
<td>13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>WORKSHOPS</td>
<td>14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSIONS BY THEME</td>
<td>15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SESSIONS BY SPEAKER’S NAME</td>
<td>25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>US PLAY COALITION STEERING COMMITTEE</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>GIVING THANKS</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>#WEPLAYCHAT ON TWITTER</td>
<td>36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SPONSORS AND PLAY COLLABORATORS</td>
<td>37</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Welcome from the US Play Coalition!

As your hosts for our 2021 VIRTUAL Conference on the Value of Play, we are excited to welcome you to the main event. Whether this is your first or twelfth conference, we are glad you have joined us on our journey to promote the value of play for people of all ages and abilities, anywhere and everywhere.

In early March 2020, we found ourselves among the first of our peer organizations faced with the unexpected need to pivot our annual in-person conference, scheduled just a few weeks later, to an online platform. There was an extraordinary response when we pivoted our 2020 Play Conference online! While it did not replace the unique experience of our in-person play conference, we clearly filled a broad need for affordable, accessible, safe professional development and networking.

With our second online Play Conference, there is a renewed intensity to connect play advocates, educate our national and global community, support play research and publications, and truly fulfill our mission to promote the VALUE of play throughout life. We continue to incorporate phenomenal speakers and resources with unique opportunities for learning through play!

This year, our theme is “PLAY IS SURVIVAL.” We are thrilled with the many sessions that will reframe the way we think about play through the sharing of knowledge and experience in the field. With more than 50 headliners, educational sessions, research symposium presentations, workshops and weekly networking socials, we are confident you will gain new knowledge and build meaningful connections with your peers. We also invite you to join our closed LinkedIn and Facebook groups for 2021 VIRTUAL Conference attendees to help you connect with PLAY colleagues, share resources and engage around the VALUE of play year-round!

We continue to advance play with our great sponsors and partners. Collaboration is the key to our success, and we are excited that play has creatively united so many of our individual efforts.

Thanks to our sponsors, partners, planning team, steering committee, volunteers and everyone who has played a role in making this event a reality.

Of course, our conference would not be possible without YOU. You are the heart and soul of the modern play movement. Thank YOU for being with us and for engaging with us virtually again this year, in the interest of public health, wellness, safety and education!

Stay HEALTHY and PLAYful!

Stephanie Garst
Executive Director

Fran Mainella
Chair Emeritus

Brett Wright
Chair
Accessible & Inclusive Play: Play should be accessible, available, and open to all. Advance the field for play for all abilities, all shapes, all sizes, all colors.

Designing for Play: Landscape architects, architects, designers, city planners, and civic groups are invaluable experts, practitioners and resources for PLAY. Many of these sessions will be part of a special LACES track.

Education & Play: Play is a vital part of the learning equation, both in and out of the classroom. The faces of those learning while at play are some of the most engaging! Consider play as a vehicle for learning through both traditional and nontraditional settings including schools, camps, afterschool programs, museums, zoos, aquariums, parks & recreation departments, faith-based spaces, and more.

Emerging Trends in Play: Play is changing! The Play movement is growing! Explore the latest in play- technology, social media, politics, policies, and more.

Health, Recreation & Play: Play is a building block for healthy living. Examine health and physical activity trends related to play, healthy benefits of play, and the intersection of health and recreation to insure a healthy face of play.

International/Global Play: Play looks very different around the world. Share play practices, history, and culture from countries across the globe.

Multi/Intergenerational & Adults at Play: Promoting play throughout life is our mission. Explore how adults (college-aged to retirees) play and how adults share and benefit from play with children.

Nature Based & Outdoor Play: The faces of play are often wet, muddy, and sun-glistened from hours spent outdoors. Focus on play in nearby and far away nature—backyards, parks, creeks, lakes, trails, wetlands, and beyond.

Nuts & Bolts: From play basics to play essentials. Share tips, trainings, techniques and tools for PLAY.

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Mark your calendars!

**2022 IN PERSON Conference on the Value of Play: The NATURE of PLAY**

April 2 - 6, 2022 | Clemson University
Clemson, South Carolina
In order to access the conference content, you will need to login to the Attendee Hub. THIS is the website where you will access the content. Enjoy dozens of headliners, workshops, educational and research presentations – all recorded live earlier this year and now available ON DEMAND through December 31, 2021.

When you open the Attendee Hub, you will have to give your first name, last name and email used to register. After this you will receive a verification code by text and email to complete the login.

The easiest way to view the sessions is by clicking on the "On Demand" tab under the "Schedule" heading. This will take you to a page with all the recordings in alphabetical order by the session title.

Here is a helpful link to the searchable Conference Sessions page for session descriptions - http://bit.ly/2021-playsessions

If you would like to be included in the attendee list in the Attendee Hub, you have to do these few steps. For privacy reasons, the default is that your profile does NOT show in the attendee list. SO! Click on the circle in the top right that probably has your initials in it. There you can set your visibility settings to Visible and add info to your bio. Be sure to include whatever contact info you want to share in your bio (email, websites, social media, etc).
KICKOFF KEYNOTE

POWER PLAYER PANEL
RECORDED LIVE - FRIDAY, APRIL 2ND

Thought leaders and game changers will come together for our kickoff keynote session – the “Power PLAYer Panel.” Tackling the theme of “PLAY IS SURVIVAL,” particularly as it relates to issues of access, equity and inclusion, this is a discussion NOT to be missed!

LAURA HUERTA MIGUS

Laura Huerta Migus is the Executive Director of the Association of Children's Museums (ACM) in Arlington, Virginia, the world’s largest professional society promoting and advocating on behalf of children’s museums and children’s museum professionals. Throughout her career, Laura has been devoted to the growth and education of children, particularly those from underserved and under-resourced communities. Under her leadership, ACM pursues innovative and effective partnerships to leverage the power of children’s museums worldwide.

LYSA RATLIFF

In early 2021, Lysa M. Ratliff became the newest CEO of KABOOM!, the national non-profit that works to end playspace inequity. For good. Throughout her career, Ratliff has served as a champion for kids and their resilience, leading efforts to connect partners and make change for communities and kids across the country, and around the world. She was the Vice President of Partnership Development at KABOOM!, has held senior leadership roles at Habitat for Humanity International, Save the Children, and spent more than a decade in international marketing communications at several large corporations.

DR. CHRISTINE SIMS

Dr. Sims completed her doctoral degree at the University of California at Berkeley, focusing on issues of heritage language maintenance and revitalization among American Indian tribes. She established the American Indian Language Policy Research and Teacher Training Center at UNM in 2008. The Center engages in public advocacy and training support to Indigenous language maintenance and revitalization initiatives and has sponsored several international language symposia. She is also active in the New Mexico Coalition for the Majority, an advocacy organization supporting cultural and linguistic diversity in education.
After more than a decade of planning and preparation, we are excited to launch the inaugural Health & PLAY Institute. The institute features presentations from leading healthcare professionals and researchers from the AMA, APA, AARP and more. Each panel examines the synergies between play and health through five distinct pillars.

See complete details online at [usplaycoalition.org/healthandplay2021](http://usplaycoalition.org/healthandplay2021).

**AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™**

The Health and PLAY Online Institute has been planned and implemented in accordance with the Essential Areas and policies of the Accreditation Council for Continuing Medical Education (ACCME) through the joint providership of MedChi, The Maryland State Medical Society and the US Play Coalition. MedChi is accredited by the ACCME to provide continuing medical education for physicians.

MedChi designates this web-based educational activity (and its recordings) for a maximum of 6 AMA PRA Category 1 Credits™. Physicians should claim only the credit commensurate with the extent of their participation in the activity.

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**The Science of Play: What We Know**

*Recorded Live - Monday, April 5*

- **Stuart Brown, MD**, Founder of the National Institute for Play
- **Jessica M. Black, PhD**, Educational Neuroscientist, Assoc Professor, Boston College
- **Jenny Radesky, MD**, Developmental Behavioral Pediatrician & rep for the Amer. Academy of Pediatrics
- **Anthony T. DeBenedet, MD**, author of *Playful Intelligence: The Power of Living Lightly in a Serious World*

Examining the history of play science and its relationship to human interaction, brain development and as a potential medical intervention.

**Healthcare Professionals’ Wellbeing: Burnout, Compassion Fatigue & Play**

*Recorded Live - Monday, April 12*

- **Marie Brown, MD, MACP**, Director of Practice Redesign for the AMA
- **Brooke Buckley, MD, FACS**, Chief Medical Officer, Henry Ford Wyandotte Hospital
- **Caroline P. Cárdenas, MSN, MA, RN, CBCN**, doctoral candidate in psychology

Pulling back the curtain on the widely recognized and growing epidemic of healthcare professionals’ “burnout” and compassion fatigue with an eye toward using Play as a tool to combat “moral injury.”
**The Role of Play in Society**  
*Recorded Live - Monday, April 19*  
*Erwin Tan, MD, Director of Thought Leadership – Health at AARP*  
*Michael Suk, MD, JD, MPH, MBA, Chief Physician Officer, Geisinger System Services*  
*Sarah Griffin, PhD, Professor, Public Health Science, Clemson University*  
Exploring the role of play from a population viewpoint and the role of non-profit advocacy groups and state government.

**Using Play as Bridge Between Technologies**  
*Recorded Live - Monday, April 26*  
*Amy Babington, VP of Client Success & Strategy, Force Therapeutics*  
*Brittne Nelson-Kakulla, PhD, Senior Research Advisor for Consumer Insights, AARP*  
*Meaghan Praznik, Head of Communications & Partnerships, AllTrails*  
Looking at health technology platforms and discussing how aspects of “Play” can be a bridge to consumer engagement and/or better health outcomes.

**Play and the Ecosystem of Health**  
*Recorded Live - Monday, May 3*  
*Garth Graham, MD, MPH, Global Head of Healthcare & Public Health, Google/YouTube and Google Health*  
*Daniel Hatcher, Director of Community Partnerships, Alliance for a Healthier Generation*  
*Alex Maierspseger, Health Care Strategic Advisor, SAS’ Health and Life Sciences Industry Solutions*  
Considering the role of play in addressing the social determinants of health and the role of non-profit advocacy groups and health foundations.

**“Playing for Keeps” Post-Film Screening Discussion**  
*Recorded Live - Monday, May 10*  
*Stuart Brown, MD, Founder of the National Institute for Play*  
*Caroline P. Cárdenas, MSN, MA, RN, CBCN, doctoral candidate in psychology*  
*Peter Gray, PhD, Research Professor of Psychology, Boston College*  
The documentary “Playing for Keeps” will be available for screening from Friday, May 7 until Monday, May 10.  
Join the discussion as the hosts banter and debrief about the documentary – from health implications to access and equity challenges, PLAY is at the heart of many of today’s vital issues.
FEATURED SESSIONS

Play, Design and Mental Health
Recorded Live - Tuesday, April 13
Yesim Kunter, Play Futurist, Yesim Kunter Ltd.

In a world of Commercial Toys, how can we design resources that support the mental wellness / health of children? There is a growing need of resources that are playfully dedicated to the wellbeing of children. In this session I’ll be explaining the important design principals through some case studies.

Professors at Play: Bringing Fun and Joy into Higher Education
Recorded Live - Friday, April 23
Lisa Forbes, PhD, Assistant Clinical Professor, University of Colorado Denver
David Thomas, PhD, Executive Director for Online Programs, University of Colorado Denver

Play and learning are often at odds with each other in higher education. Through our work organizing the professorsatplay.org community, we will share a perspective on the obstacles and opportunities for play in higher ed, covering current research, techniques and results.

Play Opportunity and Play Quality as a Social Justice Issue
Recorded Live - Wednesday, May 12
Olga Jarrett, PhD, Professor Emerita, Georgia State University
Michael Patte, PhD, Professor, Bloomsburg University of Pennsylvania
John Sutterby, PhD, Associate Professor, University of Texas San Antonio

Authors of an upcoming book on play and social justice will discuss equity issues by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigrant status, illness, disability, and incarceration, issues that affect play opportunities and play quality. These issues include recess, playground quality and accessibility, classroom fun, hospital play, and recreation for incarcerated children.
Communicating Lessons Learned on Equity and Play: the Physical Activity Research Center
Recorded Live - Wednesday, May 19
Aaron Hipp, PhD, Associate Professor, Community Health & Sustainability, NC State University
Renée Umstattd Meyer, PhD, Associate Dean for Research and Professor, Public Health, Baylor University
Nisha Botchwey, PhD, Associate Professor, School of City and Regional Planning, Georgia Institute of Technology
Jim Sallis, PhD, Professor Emeritus, School of Public Health & Human Longevity Science, UC San Diego
Myron Floyd, PhD, Dean, College of Natural Resources, NC State University

The Physical Activity Research Center builds evidence for policy changes and practices that will help make physical activity part of everyday life for all children. PARC focuses on strategies targeted to the needs and preferences of children in lower-income communities of color. Here we present our collective strategies and communications from 2017-2021.

PLAY THERAPY MINISERIES
Eligible for SC Board Examiners for Licensure of Professional Counselors, Marriage and Family Therapists, and Psychoeducational Specialists; Permanent CE Sponsor Approval #22

Using Child Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) to Heal from Complex Trauma
Recorded Live - Thursday, May 20
Jennifer Geddes Hall, PhD, LPC, Clinical Assistant Professor, Counselor Education & Special Education, Clemson University

This workshop reviews rationale for using child-centered play therapy (CCPT) to heal trauma. Attendees will learn background on impacts of trauma on the brain/behavior, theory, and healing components of CCPT. Participants will discuss trauma impacts in their environments and how they may use components of CCPT to help children heal.

Play and Expressive Therapy Interventions for Enhancing Emotion Regulation
Recorded Live - Thursday, May 20
Christa Butler, LPC, Registered Play Therapist Supervisor, Owner and Founder, Creative Minds At Play LLC

The purpose of this training is to learn how to integrate play therapy interventions into the treatment of emotion dysregulation. We will define emotion regulation and the signs or symptoms that present as a result. Attendees will enhance understanding of the different states of arousal and the window of tolerance. This training will help therapists identify play-based interventions for enhancing emotion regulation.
Expanding the Conversation on Race and Play

Recorded Live - Monday, May 24
Harrison Pinckney, IV, PhD, Asst Professor of Parks, Recreation & Tourism Mgmt, Clemson University
Trea Andrea M. Russworm, PhD, Associate Professor of English at the University of Massachusetts, Amherst
Nathaniel Bryan, Asst Professor, Early Childhood Education, Miami University

Black people have long been depicted as less than human. Studies have shown that this perception has led to Black people being mistreated by police officers, teachers and even doctors. Unfortunately, Black children and youth are not exempt from this mistreatment. There are a number of historic and contemporary examples of play being interrupted for Black youth for this very reason. This will be an engaging discussion on how the portrayal of Black youth contributes to the way they are engaged in play spaces. Video games, free play, and movies will be among some of the contexts explored.

COVID-19 and Play: Trending Topics in Child Development Research

Recorded Live - Wednesday, May 26
Erin O’Connor, PhD, Director of New York University’s Early Childhood Education Program
Robin Neuhaus, Doctoral Student, New York University

How has the pandemic reshaped the way children play? What can caregivers do to leverage the power of play to help children thrive? Join Erin O’Connor and Robin Neuhaus as they discuss the research behind topics like independent play, self-regulation, and social emotional development.

Playful Activities to Support Whole Child Health

Recorded Live - Thursday, June 3
Daniel Hatcher, Director of Community Partnerships, Alliance for a Healthier Generation
Jane Park, Director, Too Small to Fail, The Clinton Foundation

Attendees will leave this interactive workshop with simple and inexpensive strategies to support children’s physical and social-emotional health. We will emphasize inclusive activities and partnerships to help caregivers engage children in fun, language-rich learning opportunities.
Playing Through Isolation
Recorded Live - Wednesday, June 9
Dené Mosier, Kansas Children’s Discovery Museum, Topeka, KS
Kathy Parham, The Children’s Playhouse, Boone, NC
Deb Gilpin, Madison Children’s Museum in Madison, WI
Laura Huerta Migus, Executive Director, Association of Children’s Museums

One year ago, most children and families were throw into sudden isolation – from the people and places they relied on for connection. The children’s museums were immediately impacted by COVID-related shut downs, but took adversity as an opportunity to ensure children and families most in need of the supports that play provides.

Outdoor Play Canada - Promoting, Protecting and Preserving Access to Play in Nature and the Outdoors
Recorded Live - Friday, June 18
Louise de Lannoy, PhD, Research Manager, Outdoor Play Canada, Children’s Hospital of Eastern Ontario Research Institute

Outdoor Play Canada (OPC), along with diverse partners, were responsible for the 2015 “Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play” that highlighted the unequivocal benefits of outdoor play for child growth and development. Now, OPC is putting together the Outdoor Play State of the Sector Report that will serve as a chronology of what has happened within the outdoor play sector since the publication of the Position Statement, an account of where we are now, and a map of where we need to go from here.

THE PLAY ROOM

“The Play Room” is an opportunity for registered 2021 VIRTUAL Play Conference Attendees to interact more directly with one another without a speaker, program or presentation.

This is a chance to get to know each other professionally and personally and to make connections just as we would have if we were at the in-person conference. Happening weekly from April 1-June 30 only.
#BLACKGIRLMAGIC MONDAYS

Exploring the shared living experiences of Black girls and women through play is vital. The hashtag #BlackGirlMagic is used to express not only excellence and brilliance of black women but has led young girls and women to inspire one another, activate contextual awareness and grow in power together. Join us as we explore the magic of Black Girls play by highlighting spaces where Black girls can experience freedom, autonomy, and joy and validate their experiences in today's society.

*Hosted by Corliss Outley, PhD.*

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**Empowerment, Play & Black Girlhood through History**

*Recorded Live - Monday, May 3rd, 12:00pm (noon) ET/9:00am PT*

*Corliss Outley, PhD, Professor, Parks, Recreation & Tourism Mgmt, Clemson University*

*Anitra Alexander, Graduate Student, Clemson University*

From backyards to schoolyards to community parks, play has been intertwined with racial and sexual violence against Black girl’s bodies throughout American history. This discussion will provide a glimpse into the lived experiences of Black girls and the significance of play as sources of hope, healing, agency, and justice across US history. This introduction discussion serves as the jump off point for a deeper understanding of the series.

**Black Girlhood, Self-Determination & Play in the Outdoors**

*Recorded Live - Monday, May 10th, 12:00pm (noon) ET/9:00am PT*

*Aby Sene-Harper, PhD, Assistant Professor, Parks, Recreation & Tourism Mgmt, Clemson University*

The outdoors has historically been viewed as beneficial to both our mental, physical, and spiritual development. At the same time, for many Black girls and women, the outdoors have also been spaces where sexualized and racialized violence was heaped upon their womanhood to enact and enforce a white supremacist social order. Yet, through it all Black girls and women have also reclaimed outdoor spaces to conjure up innovative Black diasporic cultural practices of resistance, survival and self-determination. This presentation will discuss how PLAY in the outdoors for Black girls can be rooted in this long legacy of cultural of resistance and self-determination.

**Raising Strong Daughters: The Impact of Daughter-Father Relationships in Play**

*Recorded Live - Monday, May 17th, 12:00pm (noon) ET/9:00am PT*

*Daphne Harris, PhD, Senior Lecturer, Educational Psychology, University of North Texas*

Given the vital role of Black fathers in the lives of Black girls, this talk will interrogate the daughter-father relationship in play and how it is used as a mechanism for bonding, socialization, and empowerment. Special attention will be given to Black fathers' conceptualization of play and shared activities and how they use this time to create space for Black girls to freely explore and make sense of the world around them.
Afro-centric Dance & Intergenerational Play
*Recorded Live - Monday, June 7th, 12:00pm (noon) ET/9:00am PT*
Sharon McKenzie, PhD, Assistant Professor, Recreation Therapy and Gerontology, Kean University

Historically in the African Diaspora, dance has played an intricate role in the cultural nuances and expressions of its people. From a cultural lens, general movements, ritualistic movements, and dance performances have been a catalyst for intergenerational exchange particularly between young girls and mature women. We will facilitate a discourse of the multiple realms and vital roles of dance in the lives of young girls and women.

Black Girlhood and Play: Where do we go from here?
*Recorded Live - Monday, June 14th, 12:00pm (noon) ET/9:00am PT*
Aishia Brown, PhD, Assistant Professor of Public Health & Information Sciences, University of Louisville

Play spaces and activities have been recognized for their significance in combating oppression by serving as spaces for resistance as well as healing for Black girls and women. These issues are not just historical but contemporary and relevant as illustrated in the hashtag #BlackGirlMagic. Representing the last discussion in the series, this workshop concludes with an overview of the role race, gender, and age play in the lived experiences of Black girls within play spaces. It will finalize by presenting strategies in order to better serve this population through the development of new policies and practices that are viewed as vital to the future of the field of play.

WORKSHOPS

PLAY Workshops are delivered LIVE to allow for interaction and engagement. Descriptions are included in the pages to follow.

**Parent LAB PLAY DAY Series** | Ariana Brazier & Julia Brazier
Recorded Live - **Wednesday, April 21st, 11:00am ET/8:00am PT**

**Let’s Play the Virtual Way - An Experience and Examination of Play Programming During the Pandemic** | Rebecca Dhondt & Tara Brent
Recorded Live - **Wednesday, May 5th, 1:00pm ET/10:00am PT**

**Prototyping: Play Applied** | Aaron Goldblatt, Megan Talarowski & Dana Schloss
Recorded Live - **Friday, May 14th, 11:00am ET/8:00am PT**

**Circus is an International Language** | Jessica Hentoff
Recorded Live - **Thursday, May 27th, 3:30pm ET/12:30pm PT**

**Capture the Flag: How Traditionally Marginalized Residents Reclaim Urban Space through Play**
Jenn Beideman, Kathryn A. Mariner, Evette Colon & Heather Feinman
Recorded Live - **Wednesday, June 2nd, 1:00pm ET/10:00am PT**

* denotes a featured session  * denotes an ON DEMAND research session
^ denotes a workshop  All other sessions are ON DEMAND educational sessions.
SESSIONS BY THEME

Note: All sessions have two themes. The sessions in this list are sorted by their primary theme.

Accessible & Inclusive Play

2020 ACTION GRANT WINNER: Parent LAB PLAY DAY Series | Ariana Brazier & Julia Brazier
This workshop provides an overview of ALT Parent Like A Boss, Inc. and a sampling of our Parent LAB PLAY DAY Series which includes physically interactive activities to illustrate how we promote active learning through our inclusive strengths-based approach. We will explain how the 2020 Action Grant augmented our series.

Access for All: Providing Equitable Hands-on Learning Experiences in a Digital World
Whitney Raser & Kimberly Tomlinson
Equitable access to early childhood education and learning through exploration and play are the driving forces behind program development at San Diego Children’s Discovery Museum. Learn how our team is delivering on these tenets through new digital programs and partnerships to serve young learners and bridge the digital divide during the pandemic.

All Ages, All Abilities, All the Time | Jill Moore White
Parks today face the challenge of providing environments where all visitors can feel safe, secure and fully engaged. Universal design increases usability, safety, health and social participation. In this presentation, participants will discover how applying the principles of universal design ultimately contribute to social equity and social sustainability in parks.

Inclusive Playground Design: A Case Study of Three New England Playgrounds
Ingrid Kanics, Andrea Fairman & Michael Rutar
This presentation will share the research results of interviews with parents of children of all abilities around the design of three New England Inclusive Playgrounds. We will share what design features they feel make a playground inclusive and how these playgrounds impact the life of their communities, families and children.

Parents’ Perceptions of Play throughout the Pandemic and in the Social Justice Movement
Tom Norquist
Join IPEMA’s Voice of Play team: past president and founder Tom Norquist and Voice of Play representative Ellen Dietrick as they explore the important role of play in shaping children’s emotional, mental and psychosocial development and discuss why – with the backdrop of 2020 as a guide – play is more important than ever.

Play Opportunity and Play Quality as a Social Justice Issue | Olga Jarrett, Michael Patte, John Sutterby & Vera Stenhouse
Authors of an upcoming book on play and social justice will discuss equity issues by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigrant status, illness, disability, and incarceration, issues that affect play opportunities and play quality. These issues include recess, playground quality and accessibility, classroom fun, hospital play, and recreation for incarcerated children.

Removing Invisible Barriers: A Design Call to Action from Families of Those with Differing Abilities | Jamie Swiener & Angela de Jong-Angelici
This is a call to action for designers, researchers, policy makers, equipment manufacturers, community leaders – to hear directly from a family with a special needs child and a landscape designer on how we should better approach designing for true inclusivity.
The Rubber Shark Principle: How Play Is Bridging Our Relationship With Disability Inclusion
Brandi Heather

The Rubber Shark Principle is this: when we create space for every person’s, way of doing, and way of knowing we are open to so many more opportunities and possibilities. Because sometimes even the simplest things have complex preconceived agendas. Let’s put out the rubber shark more often, so everyone can contribute, add a line, and choose to play. Find out how play can bridge our relationship with disability inclusion.

Designing for Play

2020 ACTION GRANT WINNER: Neighborhood Play: The Impact of the Pandemic in Central City New Orleans | Angela Kyle

When stay-at-home orders and event restrictions brought PlayBuild’s regularly scheduled programming to a halt last March, the organization quickly pivoted to launch a new program focused on playful neighborhood placemaking. PlayBuild’s Play Ambassadors played a key role in driving awareness, managing volunteers, and implementing this program thanks to the generous support of the Play Coalition through the 2020 Action Grant program.

Designing Everyday Spaces for Children | Shweta Nanekar

“How do we modify current approaches to the design of everyday spaces to make them more child-friendly?” Available literature on child-friendly environments is reviewed to identify empirical research and project examples that can help designers and planners to create spaces that cater to the “Whole Child”.

The Importance of Failure in Play | Melinda Pearson

Failure is an inevitable part of life. By creating play spaces that push boundaries in thinking and stretch the limitations of our bodies we create a safe play to explore our failures and learn great things about our growing selves and our budding potential in the process.

Play, Design and Mental Health* | Yesim Kunter

In a world of Commercial Toys, how can we design resources that support the mental wellness / health of children? There is a growing need of resources that are playfully dedicated to the wellbeing of children. In this session I’ll be explaining the important design principals through some case studies.

Playground Design for School Communities - Moving Towards A Better Way | Trevor Zahara

The playground design process starts with knowing the need now while also looking into the future. Using data to design a play environment may seem straightforward, but where does this process start, and what does this fully encompass? Using a needs assessment, space audits, community demographics, and resource availability to drive the design process is vital in supporting a healthy school community.

Prototyping: Play Applied^ | Aaron Goldblatt, Megan Talarowski & Dana Schloss

Designers of all stripes occasionally use prototyping to test ideas and physical realities. This discussion advocates for moving the act from occasional to central to a practice and to understand it as an act of play. Designing through joyful exploration makes better spaces for everyone.

The Value of Adult Play is All in the Design | Daryl Campbell-Pierre, David Farbo & Debbie Rhea

Many adults do not regularly engage in play despite the known benefits that it provides. The environment may act as a barrier as playgrounds and parks are designed for children and do not offer many options for adults. This session will explore play activity preferences among adults that can be used in designing adult playgrounds.
The Benefits and Uses of Collaborative Competition in the Classroom | Andrew Davies
Collaborative competitions give teachers a way to benefit from the excitement of competitive games, and the collaboration of group projects, without the discouraging down-sides of either approach? Participants will see how these types of games can take various forms and learn tips on creating their own.

Beyond Candyland: Learning Through Making Board Games | Sharon Peck & Amy Shema
This session shares ways to make, skin, and modify board games for use in classrooms and youth programs. Building on the resurgence of board games this presentation shares the reasons why it should be viewed as a learning activity, and how to meaningfully engage children of all ages in making and playing.

Big Body Play Powers a Child’s Learning Trajectory | Preston Blackburn
Kids today are weaker and more sedentary than they have ever been, but study after study proves that movement, particularly in the form of big body play, support the social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive strengths and skills kids need to find success in the classroom and beyond.

Eduspeak and Play: Surviving the Wolf at the Door While Keeping Play Alive & Well in Your Classroom | Angela Novak & Sylvan Taylor
It’s not about educafying play. Play is essential as is- as PLAY. This presentation is about the disconnect between research and administrative expectations. In this session, we will reinforce the importance of play through educational strategies and activities that utilize both play principles and eduspeak that appeals to various stakeholders.

Equity and Play: Surviving and Thriving | Angela Novak
Equity drastically influences freedom in play. Ideally, children are free to play, but the reality is that one child’s play is another’s danger. This presentation delves into equity in play, grounded in Dr. Bettina Love’s abolitionist teaching, discussing how play helps us to not only survive, but thrive.

Let’s Start With Play. Why Play in the Emergency Department can be our Best Tool for Patient | Lauren Sufka
For many children, a visit to the emergency department can be extremely frightening and overwhelming. During this heightened time of stress, child life specialists assess pediatric patient’s natural coping techniques. Established in play, these techniques build trust and rapport to create a safe environment. Play is powerful bridging communication, and supporting learning.

More to Say After Outdoor Play: Bookmaking and Storytelling with Children | Anna Jennerjohn
Nothing inspires a story like playing outside! After this session, you will be able to 1) describe steps for children to make books about outdoor play; 2) recognize how outdoor play enhances early literacy; and 3) create a simple digital storybook about a time you were outside.

Performative Play for the Project Based Learning Classroom | Dalton Gray & Chaya Willick
If you’re teaching adults, teens or middle schoolers, you may have found it hard to incorporate play in your classroom. Join us for a deep dive into how to incorporate performative play in student centered learning. You’ll walk away with a fresh batch of tools for your curriculum design toolkit!

Play Like Our World Depends On It: Using Playfulness to Engage Others in the Climate Emergency | Casey Meehan
The climate emergency is a serious topic. Often framed through a lens of “doom and gloom,” what if climate educators and professionals took a more playful path to engage people in addressing the climate emergency? Leave this session with a rationale and framework for playfully engaging others on serious topics.
Play on the Go: Tips for Developing and Using Prop Boxes | Koti Hubbard, Julia Kate Bentley & Lisa Aker
This presentation explores sociodramatic play through prop boxes, a collection of materials/props around a topic or theme. We will discuss the benefits, uses in indoor and outdoor environments, integration of authentic literacy experiences, connections to academic standards, and fostering home-school connections. Examples of prop boxes will be provided.

Playful Activities to Support Whole Child Health* | Daniel Hatcher & Jane Park
Attendees will leave this interactive workshop with simple and inexpensive strategies to support children’s physical and social-emotional health. We will emphasize inclusive activities and partnerships to help caregivers engage children in fun, language-rich learning opportunities.

Playing in a Pandemic: Lessons from Virtual and Traditional Instruction in Early Elementary School | Jill Shelnut & Mary Whiteley
This presentation explores play during the pandemic from an educational standpoint. Presenters will share playful activities for both virtual and face-to-face instruction for young children in early elementary school based on the developmental domains of social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language/literacy.

A Prescription for Play in Education | Doug Smith
A Prescription for Play in Education will look at strategies for teachers and school administrators to implement play throughout the entire school day. Doug Smith, a national board certified physical education teacher, will site various publications as well as use his past experiences to present on how to justify and create more playful environments in schools.

Pretend Play as a Tool for Development during Virtual Learning of Young Children° | Tamanna Saxena
Play has an inherent importance in the life of children. It is a necessary aspect of their developmental span that can never be overlooked. During any adverse situation or a situation of uncertainty, Play comes to the rescue of a young child. Pretend play is a universal behavior that has been studied extensively over the years. The session would be utilizing the knowledge sharing pertaining to the mentioned topic. Along with the same the Session would touch base on some techniques and tools that can be utilized for children specifically in adverse times.

Professors at Play: Bringing Fun and Joy into Higher Education* | Lisa Forbes & David Thomas
Play and learning are often at odds with each other in higher education. Through our work organizing the professorsatplay.org community, we will share a perspective on the obstacles and opportunities for play in higher ed, covering current research, techniques and results.

The Push Play Project | Tia Reid
Push Play seeks to change the practitioners’ approach to instruction and learning by providing intrinsically motivated, intentional, and engaging paths toward effective literacy development and student-led achievement.

Recess and Play Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic | Heather Von Bank, Mackenzie Glaser, Jakob Erickson-Thoemke & Edinatu Thoronka
Children need opportunities for unstructured play through recess during their school day. In this research project, the investigators asked parents and teachers to respond to a survey about the amount of, types, and access to recess that children had before and during the COVID pandemic and subsequent quarantine.

Teaching Off Trail | Peter Dargatz
Now more than ever, play is an essential ingredient in a successful classroom. Teaching Off Trail will discuss a successful public school nature kindergarten that reaches and exceeds curricular standards through the utilization of a 4 P’s philosophy cemented in nature play, citizen science, service learning and community collaborations.

Children of all ages connect through humor, and the shared experience of creating wordplay contributes to verbal skills and collective wit. In this session, we will discuss how children gravitate towards witticisms and explore ways to heighten this natural tendency for the benefit of enhancing language development and social cognition.

Emerging Trends in Play

Afro-centric Dance & Intergenerational Play (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 4)*
Sharon McKenzie

Historically in the African Diaspora, dance has played an intricate role in the cultural nuances and expressions of its people. From a cultural lens, general movements, ritualistic movements, and dance performances have been a catalyst for intergenerational exchange particularly between young girls and mature women. We will facilitate a discourse of the multiple realms and vital roles of dance in the lives of young girls and women.

Black Girlhood and Play: Where do we go from here? (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 5)*
Aishia Brown

Play spaces and activities have been recognized for their significance in combating oppression by serving as spaces for resistance as well as healing for Black girls and women. These issues are not just historical but contemporary and relevant as illustrated in the hashtag #BlackGirlMagic. Representing the last discussion in the series, this workshop concludes with an overview of the role race, gender, and age play in the lived experiences of Black girls within play spaces. It will finalize by presenting strategies in order to better serve this population through the development of new policies and practices that are viewed as vital to the future of the field of play.

Black Girlhood, Self-Determination & Play in the Outdoors (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 2)*
Aby Sene-Harper

The outdoors has historically been viewed as beneficial to both our mental, physical, and spiritual development. At the same time, for many Black girls and women, the outdoors have also been spaces where sexualized and racialized violence was heaped upon their womanhood to enact and enforce a white supremacist social order. Yet, through it all Black girls and women have also reclaimed outdoor spaces to conjure up innovative Black diasporic cultural practices of resistance, survival and self-determination. This presentation will discuss how PLAY in the outdoors for Black girls can be rooted in this long legacy of cultural of resistance and self-determination.

Designing Hybrid Outdoor Play and Learning Spaces for All Ages | Suzanne Quinn

We are seeing a trend toward nature-based play & outdoor learning. We will review the current research on the benefits of nature for health, wellness, and cognition, and share ideas on how to design a built environment that works with nature to support active outdoor play & learning.

Empowerment, Play & Black Girlhood through History (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 1)*
Corliss Outley & Anita Alexander

From backyards to schoolyards to community parks, play has been intertwined with racial and sexual violence against Black girl’s bodies throughout American history. This discussion will provide a glimpse into the lived experiences of Black girls and the significance of play as sources of hope, healing, agency, and justice across US history. This introduction discussion serves as the jump off point for a deeper understanding of the series.
Expanding the Conversation on Race and Play* I Harrison Pinckney, IV, TreaAndrea M. Russworm & Nathaniel Bryan
Black people have long been depicted as less than human. Studies have shown that this perception has led to Black people being mistreated by police officers, teachers and even doctors. Unfortunately, Black children and youth are not exempt from this mistreatment. There are a number of historic and contemporary examples of play being interrupted for Black youth for this very reason. This will be an engaging discussion on how the portrayal of Black youth contributes to the way they are engaged in play spaces.

Future of Play: Technology Integration I David Flanigan
We all know that kids are spending countless hours in front of a screen, not only for gaming and social media, but due to COVID, many kids are attending school virtually. What will the future be like for kids if they are addicted to their screens and don’t want to go outside and play?

Hobby Horses—A Hobby, Sport or Pure Play? Feminine Debates on a Contemporary Plaything° I Katriina Heljakka
This presentation reviews current activities related to hobby horses. Media articles, YouTube videos and Instagram photographs were analyzed as part of a qualitative study to conceptualize hobby horses as a current and popular phenomenon among young females. The findings illustrate, how debates on a contemporary plaything negotiate between hobbying, sports and play.

Let's Play the Virtual Way - An Experience and Examination of Play Programming During the Pandemic^ I Rebecca Dhondt & Tara Brent
Smith Memorial Playground and Virginia 4-H are partnering to provide this interactive session, full of virtual play and discussion! In recent years, play advocates have actively warned adults of the dangers of excess screen time for children. Then the pandemic hit, forcing us all to communicate and program primarily through technology. Virtual lessons and programs can be more than just sitting in a chair listening to a speaker. Participants will engage in several activities and games that they can use in their virtual based programs to engage and connect with their audience, and resources to replicate the activities will be shared.

Play, Politics, & Policy: Building a State-Wide Movement for Recess I Heather Von Bank, Aaron Crowell & Susan Wangen
As the COVID-19 crisis brings unprecedented challenges to education, it highlights the need to address children’s need for play and access to recess. Our presentation will address laws and bills being passed across the US. We will discuss why bringing community and state-based organizations together is important to advocate for quality recess.

Playing Through Isolation* I Dené Mosier, Kathy Parham, Deb Gilpin & Laura Huerta Migus
One year ago, most children and families were throw into sudden isolation – from the people and places they relied on for connection. The children’s museums were immediately impacted by COVID-related shut downs, but took adversity as an opportunity to ensure children and families most in need of the supports that play provides.

Raising Strong Daughters: The Impact of Daughter-Father Relationships in Play (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 3)* I Daphne Harris
Given the vital role of Black fathers in the lives of Black girls, this talk will interrogate the daughter-father relationship in play and how it is used as a mechanism for bonding, socialization, and empowerment. Special attention will be given to Black fathers’ conceptualization of play and shared activities and how they use this time to create space for Black girls to freely explore and make sense of the world around them.
**Ready Player One: Harnessing the Power of Activity and Fun Using a Digital Medium**

*Erik Johnson*

This session will describe different emerging technologies available for use in therapeutic play and how the use of video games and technology can open an alternative world of play for people with disabilities. It will also explore how industry is looking at inclusive design as it approaches game development and overall engagement with digital entertainment.

**Shifting Play from Survival to Thrival**

*Debbie Rhea, David Farbo & Laura C. Maler*

Change doesn’t happen overnight. Sparks and bursts will happen with great ideas, but will burn out without a lot of energy, focus, and patience. Little successes of moving play forward happen every day, but this session will discuss how to create a sustainable and thriving (thrivival) movement that will shift our cultures for years to come.

**Health, Recreation & Play**

**2019 GRANT WINNER: Play Frisco 2.0**

*Shannon Coates*

Hear the story of a 2019 grant winning city at PLAY, where the question asked every day is, “Have You Played Today?” From city leaders to residents, PLAY is becoming essential! Discussion will focus on connecting with policy makers and sponsors to marketing and branding to community outreach and education as well as next steps for PLAY in Frisco.

**Capture the Flag: How Traditionally Marginalized Residents Reclaim Urban Space through Play**

*Jenn Beideman, Kathryn A. Mariner, Evette Colon & Heather Feinman*

This presentation will share how marginalized residents in Rochester, New York are working with multi-sector partners to promote a culture of play. Sidewalks, intersections, and vacant lots are becoming spaces of possibility, playful alternatives to “man-made” environments and a mechanism for residents to reclaim public spaces for their neighborhoods.

**COVID-19 and Play: Trending Topics in Child Development Research**

*Erin O’Connor & Robin Neuhaus*

How has the pandemic reshaped the way children play? What can caregivers do to leverage the power of play to help children thrive? Join Erin O’Connor and Robin Neuhaus as they discuss the research behind topics like independent play, self-regulation, and social emotional development.

**Communicating Lessons Learned on Equity and Play: the Physical Activity Research Center**

*Aaron Hipp, Renée Umstattd Meyer, Nisha Botchwey, Jim Sallis & Myron Floyd*

The Physical Activity Research Center builds evidence for policy changes and practices that will help make physical activity part of everyday life for all children. PARC focuses on strategies targeted to the needs and preferences of children in lower-income communities of color. Here we present our collective strategies and communications from 2017-2021.

**The Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Young Children’s Play**

*Alexia Metz, Madeline Hines & Gabrielle Latrielle*

We have been surveying and interviewing parents/caregivers of 1- to 8-year-olds in the USA about their children’s play during the pandemic. We have asked whether they have made adjustments in their homes or routines to support play. They have shared their observations of the ways their children have been playing.
The Effects of a Multi Recess Intervention on Body Composition in Elementary School Children° | David Farbo, Laura Maler & Debbie Rhea

This session will present the results of LiiNK, a school based 60 minute recess longitudinal intervention study, on body fat percentages in grades K-5 children. Bio-electrical impedance scales were used to measure body fat at two time points (fall and spring) for change over the school year. Overall, the intervention children showed healthier results.

Healthy Communities, Parks and Splashpads | Sarah Shepherd

As demographics, inclusiveness and health concerns evolve, aging facilities need to step up their game to keep communities engaged and active. Explore effective community infrastructure through the lens of aquatic play. Discover how Splashpads increase park usage, promote inclusion and build social capital that help communities grow and flourish.

Making Connections: People, Places, and Physical Activity | Ines Palacios

Discover planning and design considerations to increase community connectivity, offer more enjoyable ways to be physically active outdoors, and create multigenerational destinations that promote people’s health, happiness, and well-being. Effectively champion and advocate for solutions to provide more affordable, accessible ways to activate healthy lifestyles and increase economic vitality.

Play and Expressive Therapy Interventions for Enhancing Emotion Regulation° | Christa Butler

The purpose of this training is to learn how to integrate play therapy interventions into the treatment of emotion dysregulation. We will define emotion regulation and the signs or symptoms that present as a result. Attendees will enhance understanding of the different states of arousal and the window of tolerance. This training will help therapists identify play-based interventions for enhancing emotion regulation.

Reconsidering Solitary Play: Understanding Self, Place, and Nature | Michael Bell

Throughout life, solitary play experiences foster self-understanding, self-efficacy, curiosity, and imagination. This presentation will feature a contemporary perspective on solitary play, an understanding of the developmental and psychological benefits of playing alone and the benefits of solitary play experiences with nature in designed settings, as well as in the wild.

Reducing the Negative Impacts of Trauma Through Outdoor Play | Julie Stevens, Amy Wagenfeld & Chad Kennedy

All children deserve to grow, play and thrive—children who have experienced trauma and toxic stress require sensitively designed play environments to alleviate the effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Trauma-informed design is an emerging field focused on supporting the environmental and psychological needs of trauma victims and survivors.

Social Togetherness in a Time of Social Distancing | Brian VanDongen

Play brings people together, forms common bonds and encourages socializing. But what happens when a pandemic takes social togetherness away? In this session, you’ll learn how a municipal recreation agency recaptured that feeling of social togetherness and made their community thrive during this challenging time.

Soulful Play | Dominique Lewis

Soulful play provides social-emotional rest for those involved. Everyone needs these types of engagements as they rejuvenate and reboot our minds and bodies. Soulful Play promotes the importance of taking time to fully release oneself into the play, designating space and being courageous to see where the play may lead.

Sustainability of Self | Delfina Newton

Play, recreation, and leisure are valuable tools to overall health and development and human survival. Today we are burning the candle at both ends yet expect to be functioning at optimal levels. We continually push through our stress signals daily to be successful that comes with dire negative health consequences.
Those Summer Days: Exploring Extreme Heat’s Impact on Children’s Outdoor Play and Physical Activity° | Kristina Anderson
The number of extreme heat days is anticipated to increase substantially, and children are especially vulnerable. This mixed method study sought to explore relationships between extreme heat and children’s (1) outdoor play and (2) physical activity. Results will hopefully guide all professionals involved in caregiving, research, programming, and built environments.

Toy Activism Through Teddybears: Promoting Playful Resilience and Ludounity in Pandemic Times° | Katriina Heljakka
This presentation outlines toy activism, playful resilience and ludounity as major themes in toy play during the pandemic 2020. Through a three-stage investigation including a theoretical conceptualization and two empirical studies with qualitative data, this presentation demonstrates, how communal toy play contributes to well-being in times of a health crises.

Using Child Centered Play Therapy (CCPT) to Heal from Complex Trauma* | Jennifer Geddes Hall
This workshop reviews rationale for using child-centered play therapy (CCPT) to heal trauma. Attendees will learn background on impacts of trauma on the brain/behavior, theory, and healing components of CCPT. Participants will discuss trauma impacts in their environments and how they may use components of CCPT to help children heal.

International/Global Play

Circus is an International Language° | Jessica Hentoff
Like play, circus is an international language. We’ll look at how Circus Harmony, a social circus school based in St. Louis, has partnered with other circus schools around their city and the world. Then we’ll look at how that can be applied to any classroom teacher or play practitioner’s work!

Crazy Games Workshop Explores Using Low Cost Materials Outside Normal Usage to Create Fun Learning | Winnie Wong & Samuel Roberson
Have you ever played with toilet pumps and carton sealing tape or considered how household goods can be used in games? What could you do when hosting a game day with nothing on hand? Crazy Games workshop explores fun possibilities of using game materials outside normal usage under COVID-19.

Play Behavior of Children from an Isolated Area in Brazil: Body and Space as Cultural Expression° | Heddy Garcia
The present research was elaborated to identify how children living in an isolated area in South America play. The researcher collected a set of games, toys, art expressions, and other activities from that community. The collected data elicits the body and the geographic space as significant elements of playing behavior.

Sacred Play: An Ancient Contribution to Contemporary Play Theory° | Susan Ross
This exploratory case study examined sacred play for the purpose of widening Western understandings of play. A review of literature yielded one publication that obliquely describes this complex play. Data derived from interviews and field observations. Results identified three categories of sacred play and ten subtypes and corresponding cosmology.
Multi/Intergenerational & Adults at Play

Intergenerational Play Within the Workplace: A Powerful Mechanism for Informal Learning
Abigail Stephan

Play is a powerful mechanism of informal learning, acting as a driver in intergenerational relationships between individuals and collaborative success among co-workers. This presentation focuses on discussing what is currently known about the presence of play in the multigenerational workforce and developing effective initiatives to promote intergenerational play in workplaces.

Legacy of Laughter; A Grandparent Playbook | Mary Kay Morrison

Explore the research-based benefits for using humor to maximize well-being. Provide the neuroscience behind playful intelligence. Explore the 5 stages of humor development. Discuss play techniques for each of the stages of humor development. Describe the unique opportunities that grandparents have to make a difference in their grandchild’s life.

Play as Culturally Sustainable Family Engagement | Ariana Brazier & Julia Brazier

We offer an overview of the sociohistorical basis for racialized play, communal and familial experiences; we will work to identify potential barriers to engagement. We will discuss and practice strategies for reducing barriers and initiating affirming, problem-solving interactions that center play as a joyful engagement tool.

Nature Based & Outdoor Play

Outdoor Play Canada - Promoting, Protecting and Preserving Access to Play in Nature and the Outdoors* | Louise de Lannoy

Outdoor Play Canada (OPC), along with diverse partners, were responsible for the 2015 “Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play” that highlighted the unequivocal benefits of outdoor play for child growth and development. Now, OPC is putting together the Outdoor Play State of the Sector Report that will serve as a chronology of what has happened within the outdoor play sector since the publication of the Position Statement, an account of where we are now, and a map of where we need to go from here.

Nuts & Bolts

2020 ACTION GRANT WINNER: No, They’re Not Too Old to Play. Bringing Loose Parts Play to South Florida Middle Schoolers | Simone Chin & Susan Caruso

Susan Caruso and Simone Chin from Sunflower Creative Arts, a 501c3 nonprofit that has provided play-based services for 0-12 years old since 1992 share their experience of launching Build and Play Middle School, an outreach program bringing loose parts play to under-served middle schoolers in South Florida.

Nonprofit, Let’s Play America, Hangs On During the Pandemic with Virtual Play Days & Handbooks | Pat Rumbaugh

Let’s Play America facilitated 130 play events prior to the pandemic. When the pandemic hit LPA, went virtual. Pat, The Play Lady, will share how All Virtual Play Days have been a whopping success. Readers of the digital Play Handbooks are calling them timely resources for now and the future.
SESSIONS BY SPEAKER’S NAME

Note: For sessions with more than one speaker, they are sorted by the last name of the first speaker.

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Capture the Flag: How Traditionally Marginalized Residents Reclaim Urban Space through Play^ | Jenn Beideman, Kathryn A. Mariner, Evette Colon & Heather Feinman
This presentation will share how marginalized residents in Rochester, New York are working with multi-sector partners to promote a culture of play. Sidewalks, intersections, and vacant lots are becoming spaces of possibility, playful alternatives to “man-made” environments and a mechanism for residents to reclaim public spaces for their neighborhoods.

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Big Body Play Powers a Child’s Learning Trajectory | Preston Blackburn
Kids today are weaker and more sedentary than they have ever been, but study after study proves that movement, particularly in the form of big body play, support the social, emotional, behavioral and cognitive strengths and skills kids need to find success in the classroom and beyond.

2020 ACTION GRANT WINNER: Parent LAB PLAY DAY Series^ | Ariana Brazier & Julia Brazier
This workshop provides an overview of ALT Parent Like A Boss, Inc. and a sampling of our Parent LAB PLAY DAY Series which includes physically interactive activities to illustrate how we promote active learning through our inclusive strengths-based approach. We will explain how the 2020 Action Grant augmented our series.

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The Value of Adult Play is All in the Design | Daryl Campbell-Pierre, David Farbo & Debbie Rhea

Many adults do not regularly engage in play despite the known benefits that it provides. The environment may act as a barrier as playgrounds and parks are designed for children and do not offer many options for adults. This session will explore play activity preferences among adults that can be used in designing adult playgrounds.

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The Benefits and Uses of Collaborative Competition in the Classroom | Andrew Davies

Collaborative competitions give teachers a way to benefit from the excitement of competitive games, and the collaboration of group projects, without the discouraging down-sides of either approach? Participants will see how these types of games can take various forms and learn tips on creating their own.

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Prototyping: Play Applied^ | Aaron Goldblatt, Megan Talarowski & Dana Schloss
Designers of all stripes occasionally use prototyping to test ideas and physical realities. This discussion advocates for moving the act from occasional to central to a practice and to understand it as an act of play. Designing through joyful exploration makes better spaces for everyone.

Performative Play for the Project Based Learning Classroom | Dalton Gray & Chaya Willick
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Attendees will leave this interactive workshop with simple and inexpensive strategies to support children's physical and social-emotional health. We will emphasize inclusive activities and partnerships to help caregivers engage children in fun, language-rich learning opportunities.
The Rubber Shark Principle: How Play Is Bridging Our Relationship With Disability Inclusion
Brandi Heather

The Rubber Shark Principle is this: when we create space for every person’s, way of doing, and way of knowing we are open to so many more opportunities and possibilities. Because sometimes even the simplest things have complex preconceived agendas. Let’s put out the rubber shark more often, so everyone can contribute, add a line, and choose to play. Find out how play can bridge our relationship with disability inclusion.

Hobby Horses—A Hobby, Sport or Pure Play? Feminine Debates on a Contemporary Plaything°
Katriina Heljakka

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Like play, circus is an international language. We’ll look at how Circus Harmony, a social circus school based in St. Louis, has partnered with other circus schools around their city and the world. Then we’ll look at how that can be applied to any classroom teacher or play practitioner’s work!

Communicating Lessons Learned on Equity and Play: the Physical Activity Research Center*
Aaron Hipp, Renée Umstattd Meyer, Nisha Botchwey, Jim Sallis & Myron Floyd

The Physical Activity Research Center builds evidence for policy changes and practices that will help make physical activity part of everyday life for all children. PARC focuses on strategies targeted to the needs and preferences of children in lower-income communities of color. Here we present our collective strategies and communications from 2017-2021.

Play on the Go: Tips for Developing and Using Prop Boxes | Koti Hubbard, Julia Kate Bentley & Lisa Aker

This presentation explores sociodramatic play through prop boxes, a collection of materials/props around a topic or theme. We will discuss the benefits, uses in indoor and outdoor environments, integration of authentic literacy experiences, connections to academic standards, and fostering home-school connections. Examples of prop boxes will be provided.

Play Opportunity and Play Quality as a Social Justice Issue* | Olga Jarrett, Michael Patte, John Sutterby & Vera Stenhouse

Authors of an upcoming book on play and social justice will discuss equity issues by race, ethnicity, socioeconomic status, immigrant status, illness, disability, and incarceration, issues that affect play opportunities and play quality. These issues include recess, playground quality and accessibility, classroom fun, hospital play, and recreation for incarcerated children.

More to Say After Outdoor Play: Bookmaking and Storytelling with Children | Anna Jennerjohn

Nothing inspires a story like playing outside! After this session, you will be able to 1) describe steps for children to make books about outdoor play; 2) recognize how outdoor play enhances early literacy; and 3) create a simple digital storybook about a time you were outside.
SESSIONS BY SPEAKER’S NAME CONTINUED

Ready Player One: Harnessing the Power of Activity and Fun Using a Digital Medium
Erik Johnson
This session will describe different emerging technologies available for use in therapeutic play and how the use of video games and technology can open an alternative world of play for people with disabilities. It will also explore how industry is looking at inclusive design as it approaches game development and overall engagement with digital entertainment.

Inclusive Playground Design: A Case Study of Three New England Playgrounds
Ingrid Kanics, Andrea Fairman & Michael Rutar
This presentation will share the research results of interviews with parents of children of all abilities around the design of three New England Inclusive Playgrounds. We will share what design features they feel make a playground inclusive and how these playgrounds impact the life of their communities, families and children.

Play, Design and Mental Health | Yesim Kunter
In a world of Commercial Toys, how can we design resources that support the mental wellness / health of children? There is a growing need of resources that are playfully dedicated to the wellbeing of children. In this session I’ll be explaining the important design principals through some case studies.

2020 ACTION GRANT WINNER: Re-Inventing Neighborhood Play: The Impact of the Pandemic in Central City New Orleans | Angela Kyle
When stay-at-home orders and event restrictions brought PlayBuild’s regularly scheduled programming to a halt last March, the organization quickly pivoted to launch a new program focused on playful neighborhood placemaking. PlayBuild’s Play Ambassadors played a key role in driving awareness, managing volunteers, and implementing this program thanks to the generous support of the Play Coalition through the 2020 Action Grant program.

Soulful Play | Dominique Lewis
Soulful play provides social-emotional rest for those involved. Everyone needs these types of engagements as they rejuvenate and reboot our minds and bodies. Soulful Play promotes the importance of taking time to fully release oneself into the play, designating space and being courageous to see where the play may lead.

Afro-centric Dance & Intergenerational Play (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 4)
Sharon McKenzie
Historically in the African Diaspora, dance has played an intricate role in the cultural nuances and expressions of its people. From a cultural lens, general movements, ritualistic movements, and dance performances have been a catalyst for intergenerational exchange particularly between young girls and mature women. We will facilitate a discourse of the multiple realms and vital roles of dance in the lives of young girls and women.

Play Like Our World Depends On It: Using Playfulness to Engage Others in the Climate Emergency | Casey Meehan
The climate emergency is a serious topic. Often framed through a lens of “doom and gloom,” what if climate educators and professionals took a more playful path to engage people in addressing the climate emergency? Leave this session with a rationale and framework for playfully engaging others on serious topics.

The Effect of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Young Children’s Play | Alexia Metz, Madeline Hines & Gabrielle Latrielle
We have been surveying and interviewing parents/caregivers of 1- to 8-year-olds in the USA about their children's play during the pandemic. We have asked whether they have made adjustments in their homes or routines to support play. They have shared their observations of the ways their children have been playing.
LEGACY OF LAUGHTER; A GRANDPARENT PLAYBOOK | Mary Kay Morrison

Explore the research-based benefits for using humor to maximize well-being. Provide the neuroscience behind playful intelligence. Explore the 5 stages of humor development. Discuss play techniques for each of the stages of humor development. Describe the unique opportunities that grandparents have to make a difference in their grandchild’s life.

PLAYING THROUGH ISOLATION* | Dené Mosier, Kathy Parham, Deb Gilpin & Laura Huerta Migus

One year ago, most children and families were thrown into sudden isolation – from the people and places they relied on for connection. The children’s museums were immediately impacted by COVID-related shut downs, but took adversity as an opportunity to ensure children and families most in need of the supports that play provides.

DESIGNING EVERYDAY SPACES FOR CHILDREN | Shweta Nanekar

“How do we modify current approaches to the design of everyday spaces to make them more child-friendly?” Available literature on child-friendly environments is reviewed to identify empirical research and project examples that can help designers and planners to create spaces that cater to the “Whole Child”.

SUSTAINABILITY OF SELF | Delfina Newton

Play, recreation, and leisure are valuable tools to overall health and development and human survival. Today we are burning the candle at both ends yet expect to be functioning at optimal levels. We continually push through our stress signals daily to be successful that comes with dire negative health consequences.

PARENTS’ PERCEPTIONS OF PLAY THROUGHOUT THE PANDEMIC AND IN THE SOCIAL JUSTICE MOVEMENT | Tom Norquist

Join IPEMA’s Voice of Play team: past president and founder Tom Norquist and Voice of Play representative Ellen Dietrick as they explore the important role of play in shaping children’s emotional, mental and psychosocial development and discuss why – with the backdrop of 2020 as a guide – play is more important than ever.

EDUSPEAK AND PLAY: SURVIVING THE WOLF AT THE DOOR WHILE KEEPING PLAY ALIVE & WELL IN YOUR CLASSROOM | Angela Novak & Sylvan Taylor

It’s not about educafying play. Play is essential as is- as PLAY. This presentation is about the disconnect between research and administrative expectations. In this session, we will reinforce the importance of play through educational strategies and activities that utilize both play principles and eduspeak that appeals to various stakeholders.

EQUITY AND PLAY: SURVIVING AND THRIVING | Angela Novak

Equity drastically influences freedom in play. Ideally, children are free to play, but the reality is that one child’s play is another’s danger. This presentation delves into equity in play, grounded in Dr. Bettina Love’s abolitionist teaching, discussing how play helps us to not only survive, but thrive.

COVID-19 AND PLAY: TRENDING TOPICS IN CHILD DEVELOPMENT RESEARCH* | Erin O’Connor & Robin Neuhaus

How has the pandemic reshaped the way children play? What can caregivers do to leverage the power of play to help children thrive? Join Erin O’Connor and Robin Neuhaus as they discuss the research behind topics like independent play, self-regulation, and social emotional development.
Empowerment, Play & Black Girlhood through History (#BlackGirlMagic Mondays Part 1)*
Corliss Outley & Anitra Alexander

From backyards to schoolyards to community parks, play has been intertwined with racial and sexual violence against Black girl’s bodies throughout American history. This discussion will provide a glimpse into the lived experiences of Black girls and the significance of play as sources of hope, healing, agency, and justice across US history. This introduction serves as the jump off point for a deeper understanding of the series.

Making Connections: People, Places, and Physical Activity I Ines Palacios

Discover planning and design considerations to increase community connectivity, offer more enjoyable ways to be physically active outdoors, and create multigenerational destinations that promote people’s health, happiness, and well-being. Effectively champion and advocate for solutions to provide more affordable, accessible ways to activate healthy lifestyles and increase economic vitality.

The Importance of Failure in Play | Melinda Pearson

Failure is an inevitable part of life. By creating play spaces that push boundaries in thinking and stretch the limitations of our bodies we create a safe play to explore our failures and learn great things about our growing selves and our budding potential in the process.

Beyond Candyland: Learning Through Making Board Games | Sharon Peck & Amy Shema

This session shares ways to make, skin, and modify board games for use in classrooms and youth programs. Building on the resurgence of board games this presentation shares the reasons why it should be viewed as a learning activity, and how to meaningfully engage children of all ages in making and playing.

Expanding the Conversation on Race and Play* | Harrison Pinckney, IV, TreaAndrea M. Russworm & Nathaniel Bryan

Black people have long been depicted as less than human. Studies have shown that this perception has led to Black people being mistreated by police officers, teachers and even doctors. Unfortunately, Black children and youth are not exempt from this mistreatment. There are a number of historic and contemporary examples of play being interrupted for Black youth for this very reason. This will be an engaging discussion on how the portrayal of Black youth contributes to the way they are engaged in play spaces.

Designing Hybrid Outdoor Play and Learning Spaces for All Ages | Suzanne Quinn

We are seeing a trend toward nature-based play & outdoor learning. We will review the current research on the benefits of nature for health, wellness, and cognition, and share ideas on how to design a built environment that works with nature to support active outdoor play & learning.

Access for All: Providing Equitable Hands-on Learning Experiences in a Digital World
Whitney Raser & Kimberly Tomlinson

Equitable access to early childhood education and learning through exploration and play are the driving forces behind program development at San Diego Children’s Discovery Museum. Learn how our team is delivering on these tenets through new digital programs and partnerships to serve young learners and bridge the digital divide during the pandemic.

The Push Play Project | Tia Reid

Push Play seeks to change the practitioners’ approach to instruction and learning by providing intrinsically motivated, intentional, and engaging paths toward effective literacy development and student-led achievement.

Shifting Play from Survival to Thrivival | Debbie Rhea, David Farbo & Laura C. Maler

Change doesn’t happen overnight. Sparks and bursts will happen with great ideas, but will burn out without a lot of energy, focus, and patience. Little successes of moving play forward happen every day, but this session will discuss how to create a sustainable and thriving (thrivival) movement that will shift our cultures for years to come.
Sacred Play: An Ancient Contribution to Contemporary Play Theory | Susan Ross
This exploratory case study examined sacred play for the purpose of widening Western understandings of play. A review of literature yielded one publication that obliquely describes this complex play. Data derived from interviews and field observations. Results identified three categories of sacred play and ten subtypes and corresponding cosmology.

Nonprofit, Let’s Play America, Hangs On During the Pandemic with Virtual Play Days & Handbooks | Pat Rumbaugh
Let’s Play America facilitated 130 play events prior to the pandemic. When the pandemic hit LPA, went virtual. Pat, The Play Lady, will share how All Virtual Play Days have been a whopping success. Readers of the digital Play Handbooks are calling them timely resources for now and the future.

Pretend Play as a Tool for Development during Virtual Learning of Young Children | Tamanna Saxena
Play has an inherent importance in the life of children. It is a necessary aspect of their developmental span that can never be overlooked. During any adverse situation or a situation of uncertainty, Play comes to the rescue of a young child. Pretend play is a universal behavior that has been studied extensively over the years. The session would be utilizing the knowledge sharing pertaining to the mentioned topic. Along with the same the Session would touch base on some techniques and tools that can be utilized for children specifically in adverse times.

The outdoors has historically been viewed as beneficial to both our mental, physical, and spiritual development. At the same time, for many Black girls and women, the outdoors have also been spaces where sexualized and racialized violence was heaped upon their womanhood to enact and enforce a white supremacist social order. Yet, through it all Black girls and women have also reclaimed outdoor spaces to conjure up innovative Black diasporic cultural practices of resistance, survival and self-determination. This presentation will discuss how PLAY in the outdoors for Black girls can be rooted in this long legacy of cultural of resistance and self-determination.

Playing in a Pandemic: Lessons from Virtual and Traditional Instruction in Early Elementary School | Jill Shelnut & Mary Whiteley
This presentation explores play during the pandemic from an educational standpoint. Presenters will share playful activities for both virtual and face-to-face instruction for young children in early elementary school based on the developmental domains of social-emotional, physical, cognitive, and language/literacy.

Healthy Communities, Parks and Splashpads | Sarah Shepherd
As demographics, inclusiveness and health concerns evolve, aging facilities need to step up their game to keep communities engaged and active. Explore effective community infrastructure through the lens of aquatic play. Discover how Splashpads increase park usage, promote inclusion and build social capital that help communities grow and flourish.

A Prescription for Play in Education | Doug Smith
A Prescription for Play in Education will look at strategies for teachers and school administrators to implement Play throughout the entire school day. Doug Smith, a national board certified physical education teacher, will site various publications as well as use his past experiences to present on how to justify and create more playful environments in schools.
Intergenerational Play Within the Workplace: A Powerful Mechanism for Informal Learning
Abigail Stephan

Play is a powerful mechanism of informal learning, acting as a driver in intergenerational relationships between individuals and collaborative success among co-workers. This presentation focuses on discussing what is currently known about the presence of play in the multigenerational workforce and developing effective initiatives to promote intergenerational play in workplaces.

Reducing the Negative Impacts of Trauma Through Outdoor Play | Julie Stevens, Amy Wagenfeld & Chad Kennedy

All children deserve to grow, play and thrive—children who have experienced trauma and toxic stress require sensitively designed play environments to alleviate the effects of adverse childhood experiences (ACEs). Trauma-informed design is an emerging field focused on supporting the environmental and psychological needs of trauma victims and survivors.

Let’s Start With Play. Why Play in the Emergency Department can be our Best Tool for Patient Lauren Sufka

For many children, a visit to the emergency department can be extremely frightening and overwhelming. During this heightened time of stress, child life specialists assess pediatric patient’s natural coping techniques. Established in play, these techniques build trust and rapport to create a safe environment. Play is powerful bridging communication, and supporting learning.

Social Togetherness in a Time of Social Distancing | Brian VanDongen

Play brings people together, forms common bonds and encourages socializing. But what happens when a pandemic takes social togetherness away? In this session, you’ll learn how a municipal recreation agency recaptured that feeling of social togetherness and made their community thrive during this challenging time.

Recess and Play Before and During the COVID-19 Pandemic | Heather Von Bank, Mackenzie Glaser, Jakob Erickson-Thoemke & Edinatu Thoronka

Children need opportunities for unstructured play through recess during their school day. In this research project, the investigators asked parents and teachers to respond to a survey about the amount of, types, and access to recess that children had before and during the COVID pandemic and subsequent quarantine.

Play, Politics, & Policy: Building a State-Wide Movement for Recess | Heather Von Bank, Aaron Crowell & Susan Wangen

As the COVID-19 crisis brings unprecedented challenges to education, it highlights the need to address children’s need for play and access to recess. Our presentation will address laws and bills being passed across the US. We will discuss why bringing community and state-based organizations together is important to advocate for quality recess.

All Ages, All Abilities, All the Time | Jill Moore White

Parks today face the challenge of providing environments where all visitors can feel safe, secure and fully engaged. Universal design increases usability, safety, health and social participation. In this presentation, participants will discover how applying the principles of universal design ultimately contribute to social equity and social sustainability in parks.

Crazy Games Workshop Explores Using Low Cost Materials Outside Normal Usage to Create Fun Learning | Winnie Wong & Samuel Roberson

Have you ever played with toilet pumps and carton sealing tape or considered how household goods can be used in games? What could you do when hosting a game day with nothing on hand? Crazy Games workshop explores fun possibilities of using game materials outside normal usage under COVID-19.
Playground Design for School Communities - Moving Towards A Better Way | Trevor Zahara

The playground design process starts with knowing the need now while also looking into the future. Using data to design a play environment may seem straightforward, but where does this process start, and what does this fully encompass? Using a needs assessment, space audits, community demographics, and resource availability to drive the design process is vital in supporting a healthy school community.

Removing Invisible Barriers: A Design Call to Action from Families of Those with Differing Abilities | Jamie Zwiener & Angela de Jong-Angelici

This is a call to action for designers, researchers, policy makers, equipment manufacturers, community leaders – to hear directly from a family with a special needs child and a landscape designer on how we should better approach designing for true inclusivity.
US PLAY COALITION STEERING COMMITTEE

Jodie Adams - Missouri State University Practitioner-in-Residence and NRPA Past President

Larry Allen - Professor Emeritus, Parks, Recreation and Tourism Management, Clemson University

Stephanie Garst - Executive Director, US Play Coalition

Stephen Hamelin - Vortex Aquatic Structures, President & CEO

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Meghan Talarowski - Studio Ludo, Founder and Director

Brett Wright - US Play Coalition Chair, Dean Emeritus, College of Behavioral, Social and Health Sciences, Clemson University

Heather Von Bank - Chair & Assoc Professor, Family Consumer Science, Minnesota State University - Mankato
GIVING THANKS

A very special thank you is in order for so many who helped us plan and implement our second online Play Conference and for all those that helped to manage all the other tasks, programs, events, and publications related to the work of the US Play Coalition this year:

Ryan Fahey, Shawna Cass, Michael Suk, Brooke Buckley, Michael Staton, Lori Kinley, Lindsey Watley, Fiona Kane, Haley Schueppert, Kate Hodges, Allison Killinger, Aamir Simms, Britney Schrecker, Jeff Hallo, Lori Dickes, Barry Garst, Jill Shelnut, Kevin Stinehart, Meghan Chandler, Dee Stegelin, Harrison Pinckney, Corliss Outley, Annette Parker, Kaitlin Mueller, Angee Pearson, CU PRTM & so many more!

Much gratitude to all our silent auction donors and patrons too!

#WEPLAYCHAT ON TWITTER

Once a month, social media savvy play advocates meet in cyberspace to “chat” about a current issue or trend in play. Launched in January 2016, #WePlayChat is the longest running monthly play-related Twitter chat in the world! Our #WePlayChat has drawn participation from sixteen countries, spanning 6 continents— and no one ever left the comforts of their home or office.

Join in the conversations around the value of play during our #WePlayChat. This FREE professional learning opportunity is a great way to connect with fellow play enthusiasts, teachers and experts from the across the globe! Check out some of our past topics at http://bit.ly/WePlayChat and find us on Twitter @USPlayCoalition.

Be sure to visit our website regularly for ongoing updates about the play movement and Coalition activities!
usplaycoalition.org

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