



Our youth have spoken — and called for action!

As children and young people, we might be vulnerable, but we are also resilient and full of potential. We have a voice, and we would like adults and decision-makers to listen to us. **This is our Call to Action.**"



More than 10,000 children and young people across the world have spoken!

They have told adults and decision-makers exactly **why** and **how** they need more space, time, and opportunities to play.



The UN has declared a new **International Day of Play** on 11 June each year. Crucial to that milestone was the work of the Child and Youth Advisory Group, a diverse team of young people from around the world who came together to champion an international campaign on play.



Supported by leading organisations committed to children's wellbeing and rights, the group undertook a **global consultation with children and young people** via online surveys, playful workshops and focus group discussions.



The result is a fascinating report, **The Power of Play: Children and Young People's Call to Action**. It analyses the findings and offers recommendations to adults and decision-makers.

To make it easy for you, we have compiled an easy-to-read summary for your reference as well as some of our key resources to help. Enjoy!





Key findings



Only **27%** of children play outside their homes today, a stark contrast to the **71%** of our parents and grandparents.

The importance of play

Play is vital for children and young people – irrespective of age or background – with **97%** saying they consider play to be important.

Their main reasons?

- ✓ It makes us happy.
- ✓ It helps us make friends.
- ✓ We like to move and exercise.
- ✓ We enjoy time with family, parents, and carers.
- ✓ We can choose what we want to do and create our ideas.
- ✓ It helps us learn new things.

Favourite types of play

Children have varying needs and priorities regarding play, with their top 6 play preferences being:

- 1 Run, do physical games, or do sports.
- 2 Build or create things.
- 3 Make up my own games.
- 4 Collect things.
- 5 Pretend and make believe.
- 6 Climb things.



Barriers to play

Children and young people are not playing as much as they want to – or as much as they need to thrive. 65% of children and young people said they would like to play more.

The main reasons children and young people say they are not playing enough are:



1 in 3 children and young people do not have the **time to play**.



1 in 5 children lack **safe spaces to play**.



1 in 5 children have **no one to play with**.



Children also reported that some **parents and teachers** don't think play is important.

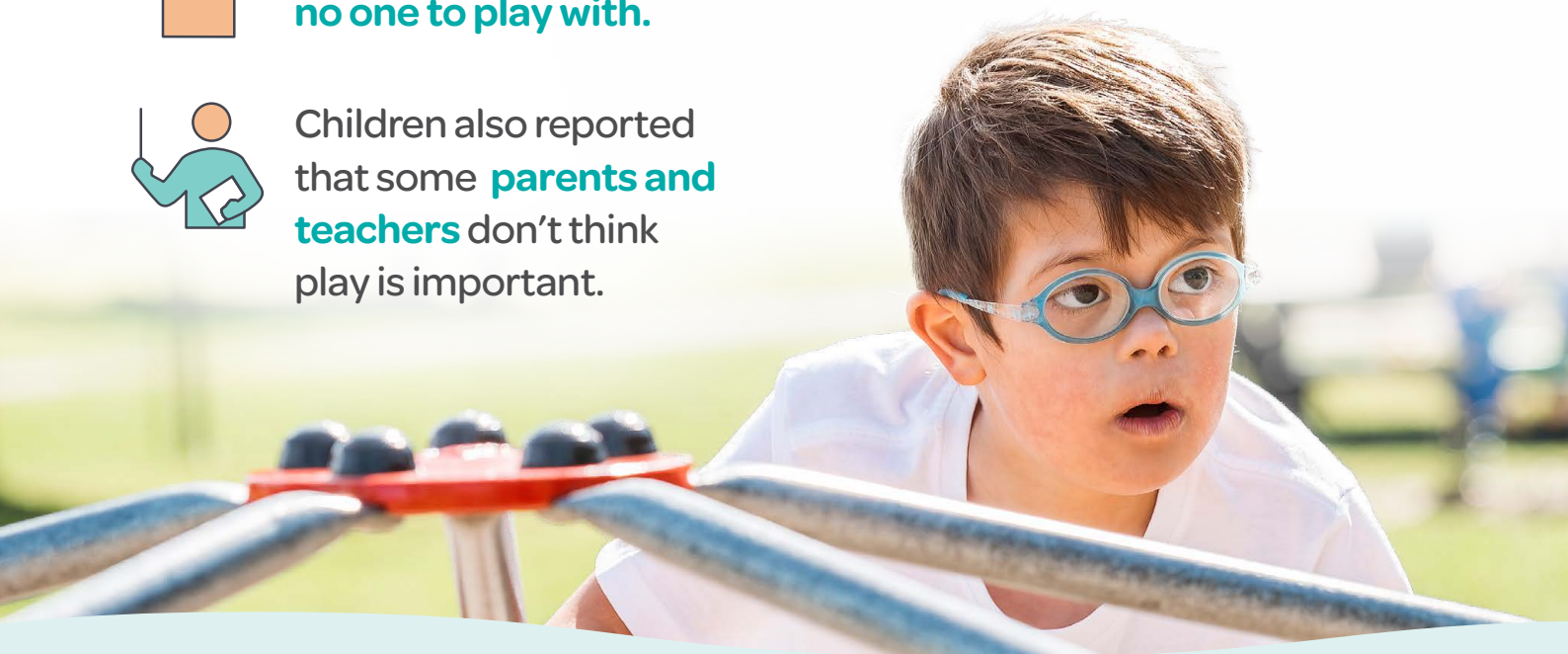
Accessibility



20% of children with disabilities said they **can't access** playgrounds and other play spaces.



35% of children with disabilities reported **not having anyone** to play with (compared to 20% of children and young people without disabilities).



Consequences of lost play

When deprived of play, we experience feelings of boredom, sadness, disappointment, and loneliness. Some of us even feel anger.”

Children also said they lose motivation for other activities, like studying, when unable to play – and actually fear missing out on physical activity, opportunities to develop friendships, and the chance to nurture cognitive abilities.

Key recommendations

The report includes wide-ranging recommendations. Here, we summarise key priorities relating to schools, councils and governments – as well as some resources we have developed that may help.

1 Build & create play-friendly spaces

School management and teachers:

- ✓ Design playful classrooms and school environments that prioritise interactive and hands-on learning.
- ✓ Let us play outdoors during breaks and incorporate nature-based activities into lessons.
- ✓ Equip classrooms and play areas with materials and tools that support different types of play.

Local and national governments:

- ✓ Build cities, communities, and playgrounds that are child-friendly, safe, and accessible to all children.
- ✓ Invest in making play spaces accessible to children with disabilities and special needs, including those of different ages and genders.

Resources

Plan outdoor classrooms



Download resource 

Explore nature play



Explore now 

Your guide to all-inclusive fun



All-Inclusive Fun

How It Plays Out

The essential handbook to inclusive play equipment

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Create more time and opportunities for play

School management and teachers:

- ✓ Ensure that students have time and opportunities to play between classes.
- ✓ Integrate play into curriculum and lesson plans across subjects.
- ✓ Train teachers on how children can learn through play.
- ✓ Reduce academic pressure and homework to allow us more time for play after school.
- ✓ Create a school culture that values and celebrates playfulness as an essential part of learning and development.

Local and national governments::

- ✓ Include play in the school curriculum.
- ✓ Incorporate play into laws, policies, and budgets.
- ✓ Consult children, including those with special needs, to identify barriers to play and define solutions.

See a great
inclusive
playground in
real life >

Resources

Outdoor Learning & Activity Guide for schools.



Download resource >



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Define what play should look like with children

School management and teachers:

- ✓ Involve students in identifying play opportunities and spaces to reflect different needs and interests.
- ✓ Ensure there are spaces dedicated to different types of play in school.

Local and national governments:

- ✓ Involve children and young people in decisions related to play. For example, establish diverse and representative children's advisory groups to advise and guide decisions regarding opportunities for play.
- ✓ Offer diverse, accessible, and affordable play and sports facilities to enhance our opportunities for play

Resources

People-Powered Play Spaces guide.



Download resource >

Contact us for fun
tools to engage
children in
consultation >



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Support children in building relationships through play

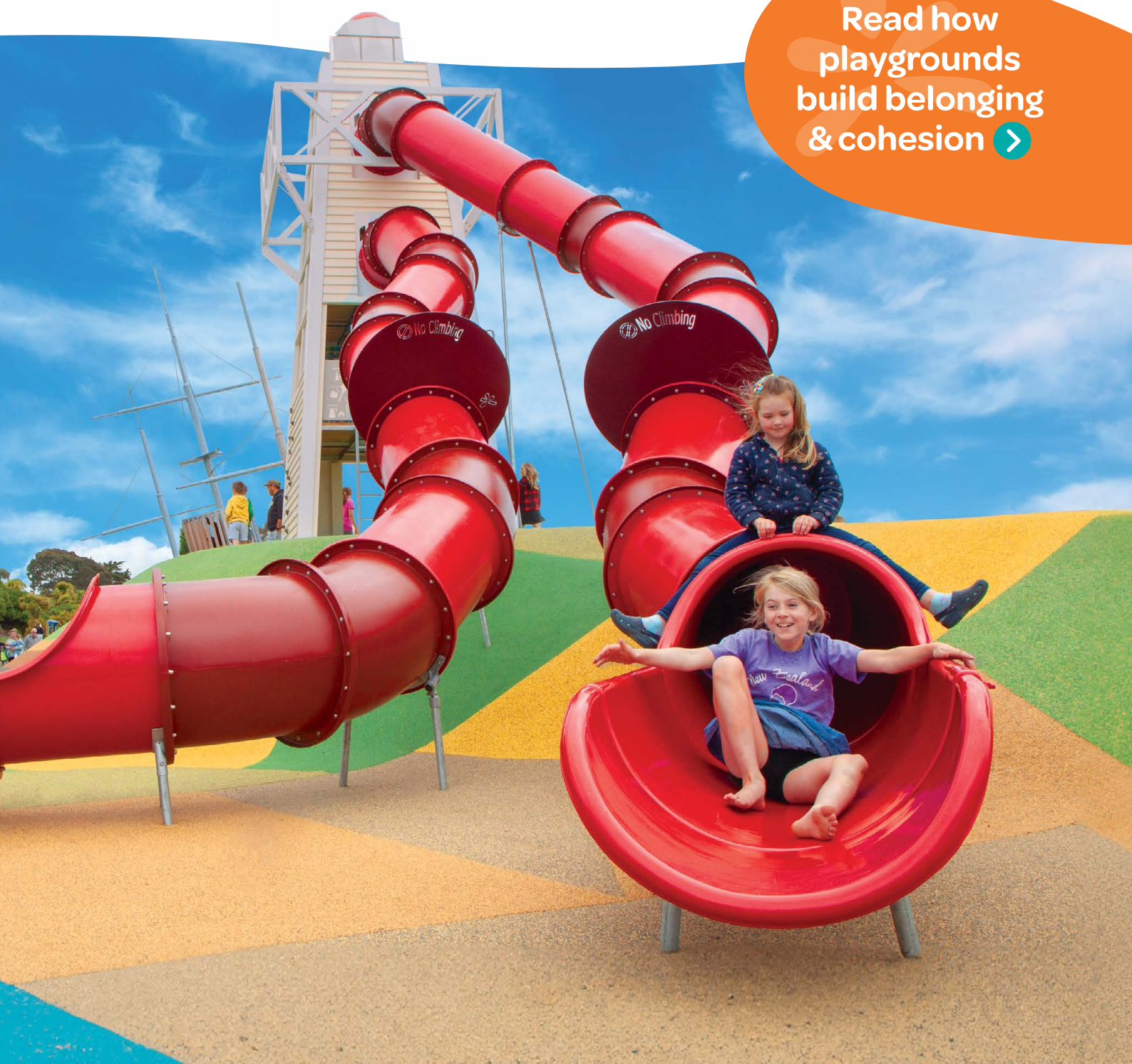
School management and teachers:

- ✓ Support us in making friends and socialising through play. Offer assistance to children who struggle with social interactions or forming friendships.
- ✓ Use play to teach us social skills such as sharing, taking turns, and resolving conflicts.
- ✓ Ensure that play activities are inclusive and accessible to all children, regardless of their abilities or backgrounds.

Local and national governments::

- ✓ Promote family-friendly policies that enable our parents to spend more time with us.
- ✓ Allocate funding to develop play spaces and parks that facilitate social interaction and relationship-building, especially for children with special needs.

Read how
playgrounds
build belonging
& cohesion >



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Promote wellbeing and happiness through play

School management and teachers:

- ✓ Encourage us to take breaks to play to enhance our learning and wellbeing.
- ✓ Recognise that play helps us make friends and is important to our learning.
- ✓ Collaborate with parents to reinforce the importance of play in our learning and wellbeing.

Local and national governments::

- ✓ Recognise the importance of play when you make decisions that affect us, especially opportunities to play.
- ✓ Raise awareness of the importance of play in child wellbeing, learning, and development.
- ✓ Organise community events and programs focused on play, such as play days, sports tournaments, arts and crafts workshops, and outdoor adventure activities.
- ✓ Celebrate the International Day of Play, every year.



Download
the full report
here >

or visit the International
Day of Play website

Download the Best
in class schools
playground guide >

with physical, brain & "whole
student" wellbeing benefits.





We are honoured to work with schools, councils and landscape architects every day to shape a healthier life and future for our children.

From individual playgrounds to district-wide play network planning, we put people at the heart of our work. Every collaboration starts with the community and stakeholders we are designing for – and ends with a play space or network tailored to suit their needs and add value to their lives.

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 playgroundcentre.com

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