

Welcome

Welcome to the March issue of the Children's Play Update, a monthly round up of news, information and events for the play sector in England. It is produced by the Children's Play Information Service in coordination with Play England.

To subscribe, or unsubscribe, to the update please email playupdate@ncb.org.uk

Play in the news

A snapshot of the month's news relating to children's play from play organisations and from *Children in the News*, a daily and weekly abstracting service published by NCB's Library and Information Service. *Children in the News* covers the key stories and events relating to children and young people, as reported in the national daily press.

<http://www.ncb.org.uk/library>

TellUs4 survey published

A survey of children in England, delivered by the National Foundation for Educational Research for the Department for Children, Schools and Families, gathered information about children's behaviour and sought their views on aspects of their lives, schools and local areas. The survey includes the results for NI199, the national indicator which measures children and young people's satisfaction with parks and play areas in their local area.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/rsgateway/DB/STR/d000908/index.shtml>

(Telegraph, 12 Feb 2010, p14)

Survey shows shortage of childcare for older children

The Daycare Trust's annual survey of childcare costs in Britain shows that nursery and childminder costs have continued to rise significantly in the past 12 months. Reversing the trend from the previous year, out-of-school club costs increased in England whilst decreasing in Scotland and Wales. Half of all local authorities reported insufficient childcare for older children and disabled children.

<http://www.daycaretrust.org.uk/>

(Observer, 7 Feb 2010, p12; Guardian, 10 Feb 2010, p6; Independent, 10 Feb 2010, pp1-2; Mail, 10 Feb 2010, p13; Times, 10 Feb 2010, p5)

Research shows family routines reduces risk of obesity in children

Four-year-olds who eat meals with their family, have plenty of sleep and have their TV viewing rationed have less risk of becoming overweight, say researchers at Ohio State University. Dr Sarah Anderson, who led the study, said such routines were

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"protective" even among groups that typically had a high risk of obesity. The study is published in the journal *Pediatrics*.

<http://pediatrics.aappublications.org/cgi/content/abstract/125/3/420>

(Mail, 9 Feb 2010, p27; Mirror, 9 Feb 2010, p31; Telegraph, 9 Feb 2010, p7)

How children spend their time

Research published in the *British Journal of Sociology* shows that a child aged between eight and 13 will on average spend 40 minutes a day on "achievement-related" activities, including homework, reading, artistic and creative activities, and 136 minutes watching TV. The remainder of their time, spent neither sleeping or at school, will be spent on household chores (47 minutes), leisure activities such as sport (174 minutes), meals, hygiene and dressing (112 minutes) and travelling (72 minutes).

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/working-mums-fail-to-help-with-homework-1899540.html>

(Independent, 15 Feb 2010, p12)

Children and rambling in the countryside – parents' fears

Small-scale research by Hertfordshire University has found that middle class mothers don't like the idea of taking their children rambling in the countryside because they're worried about them getting dirty, lost or hurt. Debbie Pearlman Hougie, senior lecturer in rural geography at the university, said "I think with this group of people, their fear of danger is exaggerated. They are very scared of children not only being run over, but being stolen even when they were with them. There also seems to be an obsession with cleanliness". Poul Christensen, of Natural England, said "Our research shows that contact with nature has halved in a generation, and that the overwhelming majority of children now want more opportunities to play outdoors".

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/earth/countryside/7279301/Countryside-ban-for-children-because-mums-cannot-read-maps-and-hate-mud.html>

(Sunday Telegraph, 21 Feb 2010, p5; Mail, 22 Feb 2010, p5)

Call for longer school day to help latchkey kids

Action for Children has published a report, *Deprivation and Risk*, which argues that the school day should be lengthened to help "latchkey kids" who are left alone after school while parents work. It claims that thousands of older children are left alone between 3pm and 7pm with nothing to do and are at risk of turning to delinquency. The Government's attempt to solve the problem with after-school clubs has failed because many older children simply refuse to attend the voluntary activities on offer.

<http://www.actionforchildren.org.uk/content.aspx?CategoryID=680>

<http://www.independent.co.uk/news/education/education-news/lengthen-school-day-to-help-latchkey-kids-charity-urges-1915003.html>

(Independent 3/3/10)

What's new at CPIS?

Updated list of current play research

CPIS aims to collect details of current research related to children's play and informal recreation, and has a database of ongoing and recently completed research. Each project listed gives contact details of the researchers and funding organisations, a detailed description of the research, and any publications resulting from the project. An updated list can be found on the CPIS website.

http://www.ncb.org.uk/cpis/resources/current_research_on_play.aspx

Play England Update

New research shows how staffed play provision improves outcomes for children

Play England has published findings from research by Demos that shows how staffed play services, often run by the voluntary sector, are an increasingly vital element in the multi-agency approach to improving outcomes for children, families and communities; and are also thought to be more cost-effective than established statutory services. The report *People Make Play*, calls for more staffed play provision – adventure playgrounds, after-school play programmes and play ranger schemes in parks – because they successfully engage children and young people most at risk of offending or anti-social behaviour.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/news>

Play England and LGA host four nations' debate on how to sustain momentum for change

On 3 March 2010, the four nations symposium *Playing the long game*, saw invited politicians, children's commissioners, academics and senior professionals from children's services and other sectors joined together with play advocates to review recent policy developments in play and to debate how to sustain the momentum for change. The event heard from each UK nation about play's role in addressing poverty; as part of schooling; its relationship to active travel and safer streets; as well as the importance of play 'for its own sake'. Play England organised the event with PlayBoard Northern Ireland, Play Scotland and Play Wales, in partnership with the Local Government Association (LGA) and SkillsActive. The symposium specifically focused on how to sustain and broaden the investment in play that has been made in recent years.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/news>

New film explains how to shape child-friendly communities

A new film and website about Play Shaper will help local authorities and their strategic partners understand their role in creating child-friendly communities through a range of measures including planning, design and policing. The website provides information and resources for those planning, designing, building and managing our towns and cities, and includes a short film exploring the importance of play in children's lives and how supporting it can help local authorities and their partners achieve targets in areas such as health, crime reduction and sustainability.

<http://www.playshaper.org.uk>

Get organised for Playday 2010!

The Playday 2010 *Get organised!* guide is now available. Published by Play England, this comprehensive guide is one of a number of new resources available for 2010 to support anyone who wants to celebrate Playday. The guide is packed with ideas and information to help you plan a Playday event and celebrate children's right to play in your community. This year Playday is on Wednesday 4 August, so now is a great time to start planning. As well as running an event, you can also support children's right to play by joining the Playday 2010: *Our place* campaign. *Our place* puts children at the heart of our communities and asks everyone, young and old, to help create better places for all of us to live and play.

<http://www.playday.org.uk>

New online resource gives direct support to local play campaigners

Play England has published a new online resource helping local communities to promote play where they live. The new website – and update of the previous Neighbourhood Play Toolkit – provides information, advice and resources for individuals, local community groups, third sector organisations and others who are developing play provision in their local neighbourhood. Playful Communities is delivered as part of the Community Play programme, under contract from the Department for Children, Schools and Families.

<http://www.playfulcommunities.org.uk>

Strengthening Play England's voice

Play England Council meeting - London, 29th April 2010

At this important meeting of Play England members, the council will be asked to adopt a new set of aims and objectives to provide the guiding framework for Play England's new strategic plan. Join us to hear about our plans for the future, including an update on our manifesto campaign aimed at influencing political parties in the run-up to the 2010 general election. For further information and to book your place, visit the website or email playenglandmembers@ncb.org.uk.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/members>

Upcoming Quality in Play opportunities

Quality in Play welcomes applications from play providers who want to be assessed for the first time under the updated Quality in Play programme; deadline for submissions is 15 March 2010. Mentors are also invited to attend a networking and support day on 16 March 2010 in central London; if you have not yet booked your place, please get in touch. If you are interested in attending a training session, ordering a manual or learning more about the Quality in Play programme, please contact us by email at qip@ncb.org.uk, or by phone on 020 7833 6838. Quality in Play is Play England's quality assurance scheme for out-of-school play and childcare provision.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/quality>

Play England joins lottery celebration event

Adrian Voce was one of many speakers at an event in February which showcased 31 children's play projects from across England, all funded through the Big Lottery Fund (BIG) Playful Ideas programme. The event celebrated the tremendous achievements in the development of creative play under BIG's voluntary sector programme, and gave delegates the chance to share ideas and experiences. Chaired by Peter Wanless, Chief Executive of BIG, speakers also included Dawn Primarolo MP and Tim Gill. The Playful Ideas programme awarded over £12 million to develop new and imaginative approaches to providing free and inclusive children's play in England. It was part of BIG's Children's Play initiative, which also funded the establishment of Play England.

<http://www.biglotteryfund.org.uk>

Playable communities: Priorities for a new decade

23 March 2010 - central London

Please note that this event is now fully booked. After four years of unprecedented national investment in children's play, this major conference will consider its impact, explore how to sustain the momentum for change, and ask 'what next for play provision, playwork and playable public space?'

<http://www.playengland.org.uk/events>

Embedding the Play Strategy

The Department for Children, Schools and Families has published new guidance that aims to help local authority senior executives, strategic planners and their partners to improve local play offers by embedding everyday opportunities for healthy, active play within top-level strategies for children, communities and spatial planning. It aims to assist Directors of Children's Services and their partners in Children's Trusts to deliver play services locally through multi-agency cooperation. This guidance is based on the publication of the same name, which Play England wrote and submitted to government following an open consultation.

<http://publications.teachernet.gov.uk/default.aspx?PageFunction=productdetails&PageMode=publications&ProductId=DCSF-01194-2009>

Policy

Children's rights

Children's views on rights and responsibilities

This report by the Children's Rights Director for England asked children and young people for their views on their rights and responsibilities. They also had to vote for the rights they saw as most important, including the right to be able to play and do enjoyable activities.

<http://www.ofsted.gov.uk/Ofsted-home/Publications-and-research/Browse-all-by/Care/Children-s-rights/Children-on-rights-and-responsibilities>

Health and wellbeing

Understanding children's well-being: a national survey of young people's well-being

This report by the Children's Society presents the findings of a survey of over 7,000 young people aged 10 to 15 years in England on what determines their life satisfaction in a wide range of aspects of their lives. Key findings include:

- Family conflict has far more influence on children's wellbeing than family structure.
- Children are least happy with their appearance and confidence.
- A significant proportion of young people are unhappy with the way they are treated by adults; both in their local community, in the media and by government.
- As young people get older, they tend to become less happy with their lives.
- Girls are significantly less happy than boys with aspects of their lives such as appearance, confidence and school work

http://www.childrenssociety.org.uk/all_about_us/what_we_do/Well-being/market_place/19924.html

Statistics on obesity, physical activity and diet: England, 2010

The Information Centre for Health and Social Care has published statistics on overweight and obesity prevalence among adults and children; physical activity levels among adults and children; trends in purchases and consumption of food and drink and energy intake; and health outcomes of being overweight or obese.

<http://www.ic.nhs.uk/statistics-and-data-collections/health-and-lifestyles/obesity/statistics-on-obesity-physical-activity-and-diet-england-2010>

Playwork

A picture worth millions: State of the Young People's Workforce Report

The annual young people's workforce report is a three year project, sponsored by the Children's Workforce Development Council (CWDC) and the Children's Workforce Network, to establish the most up to date picture of the young people's workforce in England and to improve the data for effective workforce planning to achieve the Aiming High for Young People Strategy 2008-10 period. This first report provides an initial data baseline and documents the data that is available and data gaps

<http://www.cwdcouncil.org.uk/young-peoples-workforce/state-of-the-young-peoples-workforce-report>

Safety

Staying Safe Survey 2009: young people and parents' attitudes around accidents, bullying and safety

This research was commissioned by the Department for Children, Schools and Families (DCSF) to measure and track parents' and children's awareness, attitudes and reported behaviour across the various safety issues covered within the Staying Safe Action Plan and the Byron Review; inform further campaign development and priorities; and provide quantitative data for the DCSF to adequately measure progress of the collective communications efforts.

<http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/research/programmeofresearch/projectinformation.cfm?projectId=15967&type=5&resultspage=11>

Transport

Number of children walking to school has fallen

Social Trends 40, Chapter 12, reveals that the number of British primary school pupils walking to school has fallen to less than half. The Office for National Statistics reports that in 2008 48 per cent of under-10s walked to school, a drop from the 62 per cent who walked to school in the 1989 to 1991 period. The corresponding data for the number of children driven to school jumped from 27 to 43 per cent over the same time period.

http://www.statistics.gov.uk/downloads/theme_social/Social-Trends40/ST40_Ch12.pdf

Conferences and events

Below is a selection of forthcoming conferences. Please have a look at the CPIS website for the full listing, *Play Conferences & Events*, which is published at the beginning of each month: <http://www.ncb.org.uk/cpis>

If you would like to receive an email alert about this listing please email cpis@ncb.org.uk

19 March 2010, Nottingham

Creating Child friendly Communities: A regional conference

Delegates from all over the East Midlands will gain a better understanding of children and young people's play and informal recreation and how they can work together to support more child friendly communities. Keynote speeches from Adrian Voce, Director of Play England and Wendy Russell, Senior Lecturer in Playwork, Gloucester University.

<http://www.nottinghamcity.gov.uk/play>

23 March 2010, London

Playable Communities: Priorities for a new decade – Fully booked

Play England is holding a major national conference that will consider the impact of the past four years national investment in play, explore how to sustain the momentum for change, and ask 'what next for play provision, playwork and playable public space?' The conference will celebrate the achievements to date and share learning for the future, including the impact that investing in play can have on a range of outcomes for children and families.

<http://www.playengland.org.uk>

20 April 2010, Bristol

Parks for Youth: A conference focusing on successfully engaging young people in parks and green spaces

Organised by GreenSpace, the conference will feature presentations, workshops and site visits. Topics will include how to successfully consult with young people, methods of establishing strong and effective partnerships with other organisations that provide youth services, and how to enable young people to feel proud and take ownership of their local environment.

<http://www.green-space.org.uk/events/GS/parksforyouth.php>

5-6 May 2010, Cardiff

Spirit of Adventure Play

The 10th annual conference organised by Play Wales will feature workshops and speakers, including George Broeseliske, Stuart Lester, Perry Else, and Jess Milne.

<http://www.playwales.org.uk>

13-24 May 2010, Marrakech, Morocco

20th International Play Therapy World Congress

The theme of the conference is 'Making a difference – innovations in the use of creative arts and play therapies'. Speakers from all over the world and a number of workshops.

<http://www.playtherapy.org.uk/WorldCongress/WorldCongress2010home.htm>

22-23 June 2010, Stoneleigh Park

PlayFair 2010: Putting play first

Annual outdoor trade exhibition aimed at the children's play and surfacing industry. Features exhibition of playground equipment and services, with seminars and briefings.

<http://www.playfairuk.com>

29 June – 1 July 2010, Winchester, Hampshire and South East of England

The World Outside the Classroom: An international event exploring school grounds

Organised by Learning Through Landscapes, this three-day conference includes a tour of exemplar school grounds and presentations. You can attend one, two or all three days. The conference is based in Winchester from where transport to all schools will be provided.

http://www.ltl.org.uk/the_world_outside_the_classroom_conference.htm

Play resources

Below is a selection of new books, reports and journal articles relating to children's play and added to the CPIS library in the past month. Please have a look at the CPIS website for the full listing, *Play Abstracts*, which is published at the beginning of each month: <http://www.ncb.org.uk/cpis>

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4CHILDREN (2010)

Wish you were here: practical guide to setting up holiday childcare

London: 4Children.

Gives advice and information for schools on developing high quality, inclusive childcare and activities for school age children during school holidays – a key element of the core offer of extended services. The guide covers all aspects of the process - from consultation, registration and budget planning to success factors and sample timelines. Includes a range of case studies and frequently asked questions.

http://www.4children.org.uk/uploads/information/WYWH_WallPlannerFinal.pdf

FRONCZEK, V. (2009)

Article 31: A 'forgotten article of the UNCRC'

Article in *Early Childhood Matters*, no.113 (Nov). pp24-28.

Outlines Article 31 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, which encompasses the child's right to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities and to participate in cultural and artistic life. Focuses on free play, a part of Article 31 which the author argues is least understood and appreciated. Considers the role of government in compliance with Article 31 and details some of the actions initiated by the International Play Association in order to focus attention on a child's right to play.

GUMMER, A. (2010)

What are the benefits of playing with military toys?

Article in *Ip-dip*, no.16 (Feb).(Insert).

Looks at the developmental skills encouraged through military role play, including team work, imagination, strategy and planning, identity, discipline and fitness.

HATTON, C. (2010)

Give them a break

Article in *Times Educational Supplement*, no.4874 (22 Jan) pp28-31.

Reports on two primary schools that have transformed their play areas and discusses the benefits for pupils' learning and development.

HUGHES, B. (2008)

Neophilic modification - an experiment in novelty

London: Islington Play Association.

Presents the findings from a three year study investigating the relationship between play environment modification and children's locomotor play levels. In addition to assessing play's contribution to children's physical health and the obesity agenda, the study provides qualitative and quantitative data on the different manifestations of novelty and their various impacts.

<http://www.islingtonplay.org.uk/files/documents/neophilic-modification.pdf>

IP-DIP (2010)

World play - Sweden

Article in *Ip-dip*, no.16 (Feb). pp4-6.

Reports on a visit looking at play provision, play space and playwork in Sweden.

KIDS (2010)

The health benefits of play and physical activity for disabled children and young people

London: Kids.

Commissioned by the National Institute for Clinical Excellence (NICE), this briefing examines the health benefits of play, the national policy context, and some of the barriers disabled and young children face in accessing play and leisure opportunities. Includes a number of recommendations.

http://www.kids.org.uk/files/104206/FileName/Health_PlayPhysicalActivitysmall2.pdf

KIDS (2009)

I have a right to play out too! Celebrating outdoor play for disabled children London: Kids.

This briefing provides practical examples and case studies of disabled children and young people accessing outdoor play drawn from seminars held by the Playwork Inclusion Project (PIP) and the National Inclusive Play Network.

<http://www.kids.org.uk/files/104088/FileName/IHAVEARIGHTTOPLAYOUTTOO%21161209-1.pdf>

LEICHTER-SAXBY, M. (2009)

Children's places of secrecy and play: a playworker's guide to dens and forts

London: Islington Play Association.

This guide originates from a research project on children's den-building culture at one adventure playground. Drawing on information from psychology, anthropology and other academic disciplines, it explores how children's play building can create a full and rich site culture. Includes suggestions on how to spark children's building of dens and forts in any play setting and a number of images.

<http://www.islingtonplay.org.uk/files/documents/den-booklet-web-version2.pdf>

ZIGLER, E.F., and BISHOP-JOSEPH, S.J. (2009)

Play under siege: a historical overview

Article in *Zero to Three*, vol.30, no.1 (Sep). pp4-11.

Argues that play has come under attack in the United States, both in early childhood and early education, following a move toward a policy of cognitive development and standardised testing. Provides a historical overview of the tensions between play and cognitive development. Concludes that quality preschool education should include both hands-on, play based learning, and developmentally appropriate instruction of academic skills.

About us

Children's Play Information Service (CPIS)

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The Children's Play Information Service (CPIS) is the national information service on children's play based at the NCB library. CPIS holds information on all aspects of children's play, including play theory, research and practical guidance.

Services include:

- enquiry service
- reference library
- free factsheets and student reading lists
- contact details of play consultants and play organisations
- details of play conferences and events

CPIS is funded by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport, and the Big Lottery Fund through Play England.

Play England

<http://www.playengland.org.uk> ▪ playengland@ncb.org.uk ▪ Tel. 020 7843 6300

Play England promotes excellent free play opportunities for all children and young people. Play England provides advice and support to promote good practice, and works to ensure that the importance of play is recognised by policy makers, planners and the public.

Services include:

- resources and information
- training, conferences and seminars
- networking and referrals
- advocacy and campaigning support

Play England is part of NCB, and is supported by the Big Lottery Fund.

Contact us

If you have any news about your organisation, including conferences, that you would like to be included in the next *Children's Play Update*, email us at playupdate@ncb.org.uk

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