



## Executive Director's Update October 2021

### Greetings to you all.

2021 continues to challenge us all over the country. Our members seem to be fully engaged in work and presumably life proceeds pretty much the same as pre COVID, but sadly this can't be said of our nations' children. Being locked down has had some terrible consequences for some children, and we can just hope that before long they will be back at school, and able to spend much greater time outside. There is increasing evidence that the mental health of significant groups of children, is in decline. This will be the most immediate challenge as soon as we move to greater socialization.

Fortunately Playgrounds have not been closed and Early Years Services and Schools will be open shortly.

Our next Online Learning Series, Series 4 is due to start on Thursday October 14. Invitations have been sent and registrations are coming in. Please share the Invitations to your work colleagues as they are all able to participate as a member.

We have celebrated the launch of 1000 Play Streets and are now looking to opportunities to grow and extend Play Streets nationwide. Thanks to Kieran, Gavin, and Erica for their outstanding work on this project.

### Play Australia Risk Assessors Network

Plans are underway for the Play Australia Risk Assessors Network, comprising risk assessors within our industry who are Play Australia members and who work independently of government and industry to begin shortly. Please see **Terms of Reference** [HERE](#).

Feedback and/or comment is requested. Please respond to me at [barb@playaustralia.org.au](mailto:barb@playaustralia.org.au)

### Development of the states

PRAV, the Playgrounds & Recreation Association of Victoria, changed its name to Play Australia in 2013 and in 2015 our first state branch outside Victoria began in South Australia. Since then most states have

developed branches and networks, including Victoria, and have connected with members across the country and undertaken a diversity of activities promoting play. It now seems timely to review the operation of the States and this **Discussion Paper For Members** (click [HERE](#)) has been prepared to promote discussion and debate as to how best to support the growth of the national organisation and what strategies and support are needed to enable the states to operate effectively. Please discuss with your colleagues and state committees, in particular, and provide your comments and input to me at [barb@playaustralia.org.au](mailto:barb@playaustralia.org.au)

## Online Training and Playground Finder

Work is continuing on the development of our Online Training Program to be launched early 2022 and the development and population of Playground Finder in Victoria and the ACT. These 2 initiatives will bring huge benefit to both our members outside Melbourne, and the community nationwide. Thanks to Peter Curry and Gavin Mahoney for the terrific work they are engaged in.

## Early Years Online Learning Series 2022

I am thrilled to announce that starting in 2022 we will be hosting an Online Learning Series for Early Years services. The program will be free to attend for anyone committed to the promotion of outdoor play for all children in services for children aged 0-6. The series will focus on significant issues facing services today. Watch this space for further details.

## Farewell to Renae Churches and Welcome to Joanne Thorne

After many years of supporting the development of our website and digital capacity, Renae has decided to move on to explore other opportunities, and we wish to place on record our enormous thanks to her for her terrific contribution to the organisation.

We are now delighted to introduce you to Joanne Thorne who is now our Web & CRM Administrator. We welcome Jo to Play Australia and look forward to the next stage of our development.

Until the next quarter

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Barb Champion". The signature is written in a cursive style and is positioned above a light blue horizontal line.