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For a happy and healthy tomorrow children need to play today

Play Today is a new national campaign to get all children in Australia playing freely outside every day, for better health and wellbeing.

When we consider that 1 in 4 children are overweight or obese¹ and 1 in 7 children are experiencing a mental health condition², we have a long way to go to improve children's health in Australia.

Play Australia, the peak national body for play, has initiated Play Today to grow awareness about the value of children's outside play, being the ultimate early intervention to set children on a healthy path for life.

Barb Champion, Executive Director at Play Australia says, "we all have a responsibility to protect the rights of children to play and if you're a parent or caregiver, that means providing your children with freedom, time and space to get outside and play freely every day."

Play Today is supported by a number of generous launch partners including Imagination Play, Lark Industries, Forpark Australia and Playgroup Australia.

As a Play Today parent ambassador, Kieran Brophy celebrates the launch of Play Today.

"I have so many fond memories of playing outside in my neighbourhood as a child, only heading home when the street lights came on, and it's my wish that not only my children, but all children have that same freedom to get outside, explore and learn about the world around them through play" says Kieran, "play is one of the best ways to grow confident kids."

¹ Australian Institute of Health and Welfare (AIHW) 2019

² Beyond Blue, 2019

According to Play Researcher Dr. Jane Webb-Williams from the University of South Australia, many Australian parents and caregivers saw the negative effects of keeping their children indoors during COVID and are more aware of the benefits of outdoor play than ever before. However, there still exists many barriers to outdoor play including fear of injury – particularly from cars and stranger danger, lack of public transport to access outdoor play spaces and parent’s busy lives.

“We’ve got a big job ahead of us” says Dr. Williams, “to build confidence in Australian parents and caregivers so they give our children greater freedom to get outside and play.”

Play Today is Play Australia’s long-term national campaign to help remind parents and caregivers that the greatest learning experiences occur when children are given freedom to step outside their comfort zone and embrace new challenges through play.

“We need to embrace risk as an essential part of play” says Barb from Play Australia, “without risk our children would never learn how to ride bikes, climb trees, talk to one another and grow into resilient individuals, who have the ability and confidence to thrive through all life stages”.

Play Australia is proud to release a campaign website with information for families on the value of play for children’s holistic development as well as information for adults on how they can support children in their care to get the most out of their play today.

To find out more about Play Today and get involved visit www.playtoday.org.au



Available for interview:

- Barb Champion | Executive Director – Play Australia | M: 0419 363 666
- Dr. Jane Webb-Williams | Play Researcher – University of South Australia | M: 0499 045 954
- Kieran Brophy | Play Today Parent Ambassador | M: 0400 982 175

Play Today promotional videos for use:

- 1 min campaign promo: <https://youtu.be/Ex-qwg71k8A>
- 2 min children’s voices video: https://youtu.be/OrOL4HzZ_Og
- Note - other campaign videos are available at www.playtoday.org.au

Pictures for use with various children playing outside (Picture credit: Play Australia):

