



promoting the value of play

Media Release

Wednesday 25 March 2020
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

It's still OK to PLAY - OUTSIDE

The Prime Minister announced last night that indoor and outdoor play centres are to join the list of services through the country that are to be closed. Play Australia is announcing today that whilst playgrounds are to be closed, it's still ok to **PLAY OUTSIDE!** In fact, when we go outdoors, [we are more physically active, reduce our screen time, sleep better and our immune system becomes more robust and increase our defence against COVID-19.](#)

What is clear is that our communities need to be advised to take most seriously the practice of physical distancing, and to not take children to outdoor (or indoor) playgrounds at this time.

But this does not mean that children can't go outside to play!

Play Australia says that for children's health and wellbeing, it is well known and [researched](#), it is crucial for them to get outside for the physical and mental health benefits, building resilience and independence. In these stressful and anxiety heightened times, now more than ever, kids need to play outside to let off steam and to gain much needed sunshine for their immune system.

Kieran Brophy, Assistant Director at Play Australia, is the father of three children under four and will be supporting the Prime Minister's directive and ensuring that his family avoids communal play equipment at his local park. "As a parent of a 9 month old, 2 year old and 4 year old, I'm trying to act in the best interests of my children and keep them safe during these uncertain times. I also want to keep our broader family and community safe, including Grandad, Pa, our elderly neighbours and our more vulnerable

community members who are at greater risk” explains Kieran.

“Whilst the kids love their local playgrounds, we are now making time to play outside every day in the backyard, in our public open spaces and nature reserves – whilst supporting our new physical distancing protocols.” In addition, Kieran’s family is initiating a much stricter hygiene regime, by using hand sanitiser and hand washing more regularly after play and before food.

Kieran admits, “It gets tricky when the younger two continue to put fingers in their mouths every 5 minutes, but we’re doing our best! I believe it’s important for us all to remember kids are kids, they don’t always listen and can test the patience of the most experienced parent amongst us – let’s do our best, give them plenty of hugs and let them play every day, as it’s now more important than ever.”

“When I put my Play Australia hat back on, we MUST remember that our playgrounds will be there in future and we will be back, let’s hope this is the case for all of our community members as well,” adds Kieran.

The key to all precautions and closures taken now is to protect everyone in the community.

Information and advice is constantly changing and evolving as the worldwide pandemic plays out. Play Australia will provide further public statements and recommendations as information becomes available.

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