

The Australian Children's Week Oration

BY TIM GILL

Restoring Children's Freedoms

We know that children who get the chance to play out of doors grow up healthier and happier.

Yet in Australia and around the world, the horizons of childhood are shrinking. Children are spending more and more time indoors and in front of screens. And adults are becoming ever more anxious about children's safety and well-being. What is more, adult anxieties can end up harming children's learning and development, fuelling unnecessary fears and undermining trust and confidence in ourselves and our children.

How can parents, educators, campaigners and decision makers build the case for outdoor play, and for a balanced, thoughtful approach to risk?

Based on his influential books *No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society* and *Urban Playground: child-friendly planning and design can save cities*, Tim Gill will make the case for expanding children's horizons, starting in their own homes, schools, children's services settings and neighbourhoods.

Tim's presentation will be followed by a panel of Australian experts' reflections and discussion, with audience questions, on what action we need to take to create a case for play and where play fits in the National Wellbeing Agenda.

Thursday 26 October

10.00am – 12.15pm

Level 11, 60 Margaret Street
Sydney NSW

IN PERSON EVENT TICKETS:

\$75 per person

(Play Australia members \$50)

To book [click here](#).

Tim's presentation will be live streamed across Australia from approximately 10.15 am – 11.15am.

Please scan the QR code below for information on attending the venue including parking, directions and more.



About Tim Gill

Tim is a global leader of the movement for a balanced, thoughtful approach to risk in childhood: a position set out in his 2007 book [No Fear: Growing up in a risk averse society](#), published by the Calouste Gulbenkian Foundation. He is one of the architects of risk benefit assessment (RBA), having had a leading role in its development in the UK over two decades. In 2021 he became Chair of the UK [Play Safety Forum](#), a body whose work he has supported since the 1990s.

Tim is co-author of the government-funded publication [Managing Risk in Play Provision: Implementation Guide](#), and the publication [Risk Benefit Assessment for Outdoor Play: A Canadian Toolkit](#) [pdf link]. The approach set out in these publications is supported by the UK's overarching safety regulator, the Executive. Tim is a longstanding advocate for child-friendly urban planning and design. His book [Urban Playground: How child-friendly planning and design can save cities](#) was published by the Royal Institute of British Architects in 2021. It was RIBA's bestselling publication that year.

Tim is a Churchill Fellow, which allowed him to examine how the cities of Calgary, Ghent, Antwerp, Freiburg, Oslo, Rotterdam and Vancouver have taken children into account in their planning. Other cities including Recife, Tel Aviv and Tirana have also been included in Tim's research, thanks to financial support from the Bernard van Leer Foundation through its Urban 95 initiative.

Tim is co-author of the first London-wide planning guidance on children's play and recreation; the [revised edition](#) is helping to shape neighbourhoods for London's children.

As well as playgrounds, his interest in the built environment embraces streets, neighbourhood planning, transport and public space, and children's evolving relationship with nature. He explored this last topic in a 2011 report for former Mayor of London Boris Johnson's Sustainable Development Commission entitled [Sowing the Seeds: Reconnecting London's children with nature](#) [pdf link].



About Children's Week

Children's Week is celebrated annually across Australia in the 4th Week of October. Each year a theme is chosen based on inspiration from the International Convention on the Rights of the Child.

This year we are celebrating article 31 "The child's right to relax, play and take part in activities they enjoy".

Play Australia is a proud supporter Children's Week.

To learn more visit <https://childrens-week.org.au/>



About Play Australia

Founded in 1914 (yes, we are that old!), Play Australia is the national cross sectoral membership organisation promoting the importance of play.

Our mission is building healthier communities through play.

To learn more visit www.playaustralia.org.au



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