



WELCOME TO  
THE **VALUE** OF play



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Australian Toy Association

# About the Value of Play

The Australian Toy Association (ATA) has created the Value of Play (VOP) initiative to assist parents, grandparents, and caregivers in fostering play for their children.

Play offers numerous benefits, including physical, cognitive, emotional, social, language, behavioural, and cultural development. Play is essential during childhood. As parents and educators, it is our job to nurture and encourage play for all children.

Toys are an important part of play. They serve as tools to support children's imaginative play, role-playing and social skills development.

The ATA has partnered with Just Kidding magazine, a trusted publication for both children and educators throughout Australia. Just Kidding is a valued partner and advocate of the Value of Play, aligning with the ATA's values by offering content-rich magazines that support daily education for children and teachers.

# Everyone Should Know About Children's Rights!

Mark your calendars — Children's Week 2025 is running from 18 to 26 October, and this year's theme is a powerful one: Everyone should know about Children's Rights!

Why is this so important? Well, at the heart of this theme is a promise made by the world, written down in Article 42 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC). It's a promise that both children and adults will know about the rights every child is born with, rights that protect them, help them grow, and ensure they can reach their full potential.

Back on 20 November 1989, the UN General Assembly made history by adopting the UNCRC (Resolution 44/25). It's now the most widely accepted human rights treaty in history, with countries across the globe agreeing to put children first.

The Convention contains 54 articles covering everything from the right to be safe and protected from harm, to the right to play and rest, to having a family and a legal identity,

and to being treated equally no matter who you are or where you come from.

This year, Children's Week is a great chance to chat with your kids about what these rights mean in everyday life. You might be surprised at how much they already understand, and how much more confident and empowered they can feel once they know these rights are theirs.

So during Children's Week, why not:

- ★ Ask your child what they think their most important right is.
- ★ Share a story from your own childhood about a time you felt safe, heard, or included.
- ★ Explore the full list of children's rights together. You can even turn it into a fun quiz!

Because when everyone knows about children's rights, kids, parents, teachers, and communities, we can all work together to protect them.





# Grow, play, and dream

This year's Children's Week theme, "Everyone should know about Children's Rights!", is all about making sure young people understand the rights they're born with and how those rights help them grow, play, and dream.

One of the most important rights in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child is the right to an education. Learning opens doors to

opportunities, builds confidence, and helps children imagine a bright future for themselves.

To bring this idea to life, we've included a short story you can share with your child. It's called *The Magic Backpack*, and it follows Mia on a magical journey around the world to discover how children everywhere are learning, dreaming, and building their futures.



## The Magic Backpack

Mia's backpack wasn't like the others in her class. It looked ordinary, blue with a yellow zip, but inside, it was full of surprises.



"We're building robots! I want mine to help clean the oceans."

The globe spun once more—WHOOSH!—and Mia landed under a tree in India. Children sat cross-legged with notebooks in their laps. "Our school is here, outside," one boy said. "But we still learn every day."



One Monday morning, she reached in for her pencil case... and instead pulled out a tiny globe that began to spin. The room blurred, and WHOOSH! Mia found herself in a bright classroom in Kenya.



Children laughed as they sang the alphabet in Swahili. A girl named Amina handed Mia a book and whispered, "Learning here means I can become a doctor one day."

Before Mia could answer, the globe spun again—WHOOSH!—and she was in a snowy village in Canada. A boy showed her his school's science lab.



Mia's backpack finally took her home. She sat in her classroom, holding her globe. She realised something big:

In every place she'd visited, children were learning—and dreaming about their futures.

Her teacher noticed her smile. "What's on your mind, Mia?" Mia said, "I've learned that education isn't just about books, it's about giving every child the chance to imagine, grow, and become who they want to be."

The globe in her backpack glowed softly...

# what kids say

What's the true value of play?  
We went straight to the experts—kids themselves!

## "PLAY HELPS ME MAKE FRIENDS." MACKENZIE

When I play games at school or in the park, I meet new people and we start talking. Sometimes we even make up our own games together, like turning the slide into a 'lava volcano', making bases or just playing tiggy. That's actually how I found my best friend at school.



## "IT HELPS ME TRY NEW THINGS." TOM

When I play, I can pretend to be anything; a chef, a scientist, a soccer star, or even a pirate captain. I can make mistakes and nobody gets mad, so I get braver about trying again. Once, I pretended to run a café and ended up learning how to actually make real pancakes.



## "IT'S HOW I LEARN WITHOUT EVEN KNOWING IT." FINN AND STELLA

When I play with Connetix tiles or Lego, I'm actually learning how to build stuff and solve problems, like figuring out how to make a bridge or a tower that doesn't fall over. It's like school but without the homework or tests. I don't even realise I'm learning until I think about it later.



## "PLAY MAKES ME FEEL HAPPY AND CALM." CHLOE

If I'm grumpy or stressed after a big test, running around and playing tag makes me feel better. My brain feels lighter, like it's had a holiday. Even just drawing or playing cards helps me stop thinking about the stuff that was worrying me.



## "IT KEEPS ME HEALTHY AND STRONG." JAYDEN

Playing outside makes my legs and arms stronger, especially when I climb trees or ride my bike or scooter. It's way more fun than just sitting inside, and I can run faster when we play footy at lunchtime. Sometimes I don't even notice I'm exercising because I'm having too much fun.



“Play is the foundation of learning,  
creativity, self-expression,  
and constructive problem-solving.  
It's how children wrestle with life  
to make it meaningful.”

SUSAN LINN, CONTEMPORARY AMERICAN PSYCHIATRIST



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