

The Power of Play

Children and young people's Call to Action



Why play matters

Play is not just a right but a necessity. We need play just as much as we need air to breathe, nutrition to grow and develop, and love to thrive and be happy. In our consultations with over **10,000** children and young people, **97% told us that play is important**. Play is important to our development and well-being because:

- It makes us happy: **71%**
- It helps us make friends: **57%**
- We like to move and exercise: **45%**
- We enjoy time with family, parents, and carers: **45%**
- We can choose what we want to do and create our ideas: **43%**
- It helps us learn new things: **42%**



The cost of play deprivation

Unfortunately, children and young people are not playing as much as they need to thrive. In fact, humans are the only species in the world to deprive children of play.

We, children and young people, and particularly those of us with special needs, face many barriers to play:

- **1 in 3 children and young people** do not have the time to play
- **1 in 5** lack safe spaces to play
- **1 in 5** have no one to play with

This impacts our health and well-being. When deprived of play, we experience feelings of **boredom, sadness, disappointment, and loneliness**. Some of us even feel anger.





Our recommendations

To change this, we have developed recommendations for the many adults who make decisions that impact our lives, including the UN, civil society organizations, businesses, school administrations, and our parents and caregivers. We ask adults and decision-makers to:

- **Invest in children's well-being by protecting our right to play.**
- **Provide children with more time and opportunities to play, including in school.**
- **Protect our right to play by creating safe and accessible places to play, including for those of us with special needs.**
- **Respect our rights to be heard in decisions impacting our right to play.**
- **Support us in developing social skills through play.**

We also ask you to remember that ALL children have the right to play, especially those of us with special needs and those living in poverty, countries with conflict, and communities impacted by climate change

[Read our Call to Action for a more playful future!](#)

