

Top tips for celebrating Playday

Playday is the national day for play in the UK. It takes place on the first Wednesday in August.

Playday is an annual celebration of children's right to play. As well as being a day all about play, it is an ongoing campaign that highlights the importance of play in children's lives, every day of the year.

Every year, children and their families go out to play at events across Wales and the rest of the UK to celebrate Playday. Here are our top tips for a playful Playday.

- 1** You don't need a detailed plan of activities. If adults can take a step back and supervise from a distance, children will be more likely to play in their own way and gain the benefits of experimenting and experiencing things for themselves.
- 2** Provide plenty of loose parts play materials. Loose parts are natural and man-made materials that have no specific purpose. Ask parents and colleagues to help by collecting resources such as: fabric, guttering, cardboard boxes and tubes, tyres, sticks, tarpaulins, string and rope. Children get very creative when left to play with these resources. Find out more about providing loose parts to support children's play in our toolkit: www.play.wales/resources-for-playing-providing-loose-parts-to-support-childrens-play/
- 3** Make sure children are well equipped by informing parents of your plans. Encourage children to wear old clothes and be prepared for whatever the weather.
- 4** Make sure parents understand this might be a different sort of day than usual. This is a great opportunity to remind parents that playing is beneficial for children's physical and emotional wellbeing.
- 5** Children have a fascination with nature so think about resources that allow children to explore the four elements in their play:
 - **Earth** – mud pies, sand, clay or digging
 - **Air** – kites, bubbles or flags
 - **Fire** – candle decorating, toasting marshmallows or campfire cooking
 - **Water** – hosepipes, buckets, sponges or watering cans.
- 6** If you provide children with enough **time** they will play and get creative. Consider dedicating the whole day to play.
- 7** If you provide children with enough **space**, it will support a range of play experiences. If you have access to good outdoor space, this is the time to make use of it.

8 If you provide children with **permission** to play, they are more likely to play in their own way. You may need to agree some broad boundaries with supervising adults but otherwise allow children to decide what is appropriate by stepping back.

9 If you have a local play development team, get in touch with them as they may be able to advise you on ideas to make Playday a playful one.

10 Have **fun**. Dedicating the day to play should be fun for children and adults. Step back and observe the incredible experiences children have whilst playing – observe them learning, negotiating and enjoying themselves.

11 Finally, ask the children what they thought of the day. If it was successful, think about how you can integrate more time for play into every day at your setting.

