

**Our Vision:**

Is a society where children enjoy play as an integral part of their holistic development.

Our Mission:

To promote the right to a play as an essential part of the child's holistic development through advocacy, capacity building and mobilization of resources in collaboration with various stakeholders.

A Chance To Play- Southern Africa Newsletter

Jan / Feb 2014 Issue



Girls playing mgusha (Indigenous game in Cotlands ,Hlabisa KZN)

Editor's Note

On behalf of ACTP-SA Coalition I would like to extend a warm welcome to everyone as this our first edition of 2014. At our first ACTP SAC Board Meeting in November 2013 members shared their dreams for ACTP-SAC :

- Government departments on board and a demand for ACTP
- Nationally recognised programmes that all organisations working with children can institutionalise.
- Build enough momentum so that ACTP-SAC will drive itself.
- See ACTP-SAC spreading across the world and involving more youth.
- Many play associations, forming all over the region and collaborating to promote play in practical ways in many different situations.
- To see ACTP-SAC as leader in Southern Africa for play business.
- Promoting play , sharing ideas and information about play to carefully selected extended groups of people who spread the word & implement.
- Play incorporated in the SADC protocol on the Rights of children.
- ACTP-SAC growing to be a fully fledged and functioning, organisation which takes lead in PLAY advocacy.
- Play should become an integral element of every schools dialy routine.

What has struck me about all the dreams is the common denominator of building and growing the coalition into being an effective vehicle for play across the SADC region, Africa and even globally. These dreams are in line with the ACTP-SAC vision which is achievable and realistic. On our own we can not be as effective as we would be if we work together as civil society, government and private sector towards reaching those goals and visions . We do appreciate your co-operation and support and yet we think there's still a room for improvement. So partners you are encouraged to share information,work together in promoting the right to play. We hope this will be a fruitful year in which we build and develop play, taking it to new level.

News from Brazil



Tuto Beat Wehrle the tdh coordinator of ACTP Brazil talking to a group of youth about ACTP

'A chance to play': an Afro-American collaboration to affirm the right to play

It is exactly a year since we launched the Brazilian version of the programme 'A chance to play'. One success in the first year was maintaining the link with ACTP Southern Africa; indeed we had two visits from them, one at the launch in January 2013 and another at a meeting with partner organisations in June 2013. In this way, we didn't have two separate programmes, but a joint Afro-American collaboration, looking to affirm the importance of play and its important role in the protection of our children.

The experiences we shared last year reaffirm this belief. Playing and sport are two very significant factors in the individual and collective development of children and young people. To play is to widen the imagination, spend time on creative adventures, and to give people the chance to construct a culture of peace. It not only recognises, but also consolidates the role infants and adolescents have in their own development. Besides setting up the fifteen planned projects, the programme had a truly special moment when we launched the Brazilian version of the A Chance To Play manual. Once again, the link with ACTP Southern Africa was very clear. With the guide we can reach many more people than through the projects and their local networks alone. The values and ideas in the guide will continue to spread through all of Brazil and other countries in Latin America. 2014 is the year of the World Cup in Brazil, and it will therefore bring many challenges, but also opportunities for us to fight strategically for 'A chance to play' to really come into action. One important moment will be the Street Football World Cup, held at the beginning of July. The conference, 'Football, development and human rights,' held last December as part of the ACTP programme and in partnership with the municipal government of Sao Paulo, announced the organising committee of this alternative Street Football World Cup. We will certainly continue working closely with ACTP Southern Africa so that we can count on their support at this critical time.



Promoting good sportsmanship and teamwork in 1 of the ACTP Brazil Projects

“The Right To Play “- World Play Day 2014

A Chance To Play –Southern Africa in collaboration with Cotlands are planning on World Play Day (WPD) 2014 theme of “The right to play” and ideas on what will be done to celebrate that day. More details about suggested games both indoor and outdoor will be shared with you soon. Please feel free to also send us the ideas your organisation has so that we can also share with other partner organisation and schools that will be celebrating this day.

Why the Right To Play?

Play is any behavior, activity, or process initiated, controlled and structured by children themselves. Play is non-compulsory, driven by intrinsic motivation and undertaken for its sake, rather than as a means to an end. It may take infinite forms but the key characteristics of play are fun, uncertainty, flexibility, and non-productivity. While committee reaffirms that it is a fundamental and vital dimension of the pleasure of childhood and is an essential component of children’s development.

Article 31 of the convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) recognizes the right of every child to rest, leisure, play, recreational activities and free and full participation in cultural and artistic life. However the IPA Committee on the Child is concerned by the poor recognition given by Governments to these rights. Rising urban populations, violence in all forms, and the commercialization of play provision opportunity to enjoy their article 31 rights. In general, where investment is made, it is in the provision of structured and organized activities, but equally important is the need to create time and space for children to engage in spontaneous play, recreation and creativity and to promote societal attitudes that support and encourage such activity.

For years many play experts and child- rights activist have hoped that the UNCRC would issue a statement on children’s right to play. There is deep concern that children’s play and games are endangered by unfavourable developments in children’s living conditions almost everywhere in the world , e.g housing , city planning , traffic , pressure for educational achievement, electronic media, commercialisation and tight daily and weekly time schedules of children . At the same time a growing body of research from many disciplines emphasizes that play activities – alone or in groups , indoor or outdoor , assisted or self organised – are of utmost important for children’s mental , neurological, social , moral and emotional development. The committee on the Rights of the Child has shared those concerns for a long time. The Committee monitors the implementation of the Convention on the Rights of a Child, which includes an article on children’s right to play . According to the Convention a child is defined as a human being under the age of 18 years. Therefore adolescents also enjoy the right to play, which is incorporated in Article 31 of the Convention.

Years ago the Commiittee included Article 31 in the long list of issues on which the Commiittee planned to elaborate through what is called a “General Comment” (Lawyers would call such a document a legal opinion) . Finally it happened! In its first session in the year 2013, the Commiittee adopted a well –prepared text , which details this right of children and puts it into a comprehensive context of the human rights of children.

The explanation of the Committee clarifies the nature and relevance of this right. It is important to keep in mind, that the right of the child to play is not just as a right that may be implemented by governments at their discretion. The right to play- recognised as a human right of children –is an *inalienable* human right , which means : No child may be denied the right to play in any situation and under any conditions of life . Deprivation of play is not an admissible disciplinary measure or means of punishment; play cannot be denied even to children in detention. Play cannot be postponed to “better days“ . On the contrary , catastrophes, in hardship or in other stressful situations ,children should be supported when they wish to play as it is a means , which human beings need to find their way into normal and coninued development- ***Right to play Consultaion Report***

Theresa Casey Statement

Theresa Casey , Presidency of IPA, warmly welcomed today's adoption of the general comment.

“play , recreation, rest, leisure and involvement in cultural and artistic life are all interrelated and critical to happy, healthy childhood. Problems arise when such activities are considered luxurious or frivolous. Nothing could be further from the truth.

They all are fundamental rights of children and IPA will do its best to continue supporting policy makers and practitioners who turn these rights into actions. We are delighted by the committee's decision to emphasize the importance of Article 31 in general comment, and are honoured to have assisted in the effort.

-The UNCRC General Comment on Article 31 can be found at ;

http://www2.ohchr.org/english/bodies/crc/docs/GC/CRC-C-GC-17_en.doc

Please note that we are including as an appendix to this newsletter 2 documents from International Play Association which you may want to copy and use in your work and/ or your plans for 2014.

A Chance To Play Southern Africa (ACTP-SA)

Email: coalition@a-chance-to-play.org

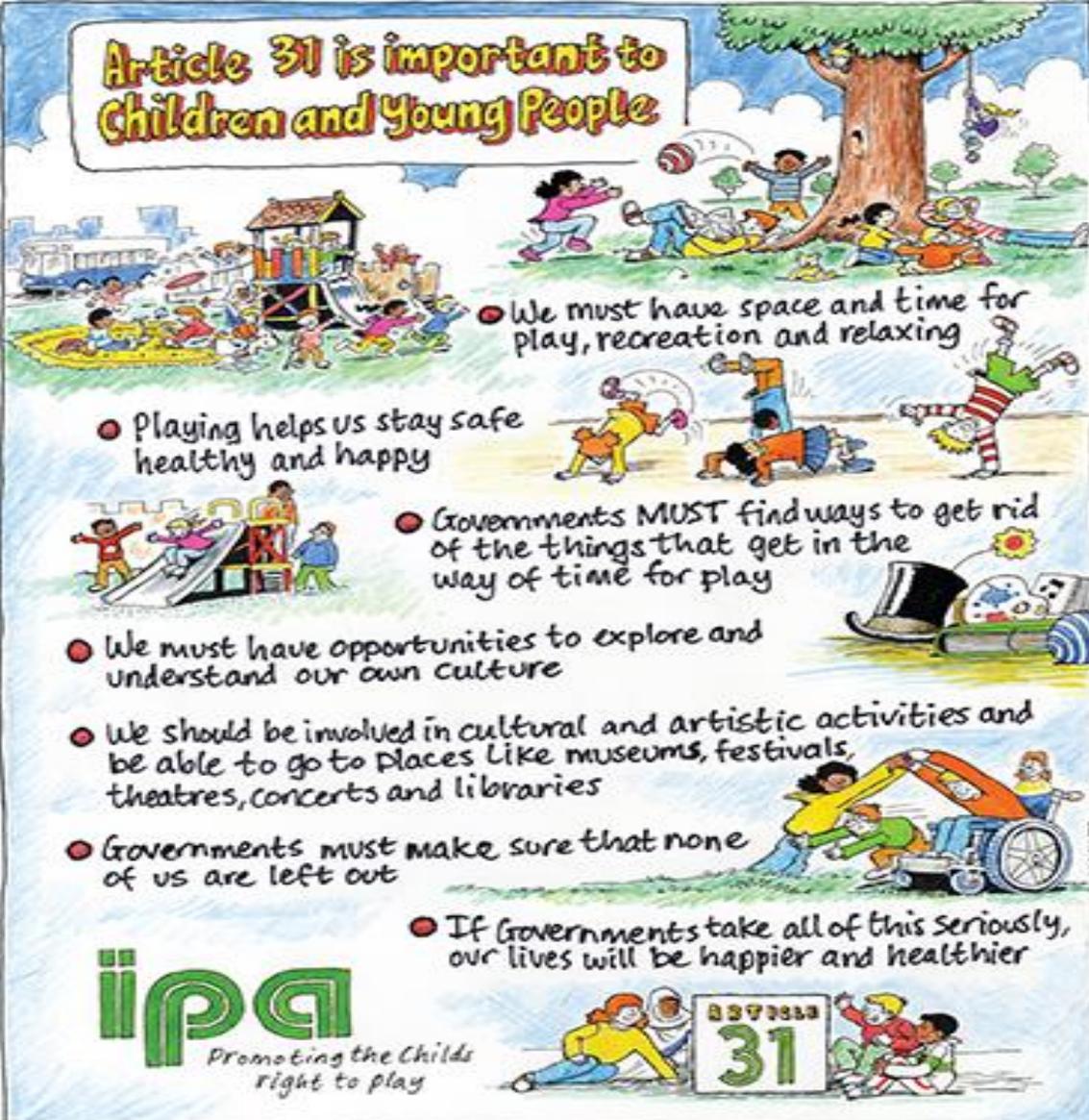
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Supported by:

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Help for Children in Distress

Article 31 is important to Children and Young People



- We must have space and time for play, recreation and relaxing
- Playing helps us stay safe healthy and happy
- Governments MUST find ways to get rid of the things that get in the way of time for play
- We must have opportunities to explore and understand our own culture
- We should be involved in cultural and artistic activities and be able to go to places like museums, festivals, theatres, concerts and libraries
- Governments must make sure that none of us are left out
- If Governments take all of this seriously, our lives will be happier and healthier

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Promoting the Child's right to play

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The Convention on the Rights of the Child

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is an international agreement. It explains the rights that we (all children up to 18 years old) should have. These rights help us to be healthy, happy and protected and take part in all sorts of activities and decisions that affect us.

Article 31

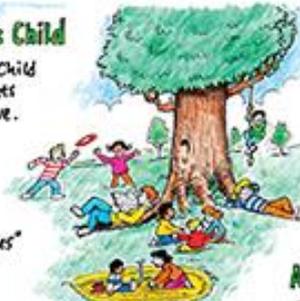
The Convention is divided into sections called "articles" that explain the rights that all children should have. Article 31 says that we have the right to rest, leisure, play and recreation and to take part in cultural and artistic activities.

The Committee on the Rights of the Child

The Committee on the Rights of the Child is a group of people from all over the world who are experts in children's rights.

UN General Comments

This committee is allowed to write "General Comments" to explain what the Convention means. General Comments give governments and other people good ideas and information that make it easier to protect and support our rights.



General comments on Article 31

A General Comment for Article 31 was written to help governments and other people to understand how important playing, recreation, culture and the arts are. It also helps governments make sure that all of us can enjoy these rights.

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