

A stylized graphic of a hand with five fingers, rendered in light green, positioned in the upper right corner. The background features large, overlapping curved shapes in yellow, orange, and red.

# EVERYONE CAN PLAY

A GUIDELINE TO CREATE  
INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES

UPDATED 2023



### Acknowledgement of Country

The Department of Planning and Environment acknowledges that it stands on Aboriginal land. We acknowledge the Traditional Custodians of the land and show our respect for Elders past, present and emerging through thoughtful and collaborative approaches to our work, seeking to demonstrate our ongoing commitment to providing places in which Aboriginal people are included socially, culturally and economically.

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**Can I get there?  
Can I play?  
Can I stay?**

These three questions should be front and centre in the minds of everyone involved in creating and modernising playspaces across New South Wales.

Whether you are a local council, a playspace designer or a passionate community member, Everyone Can Play is your toolkit for checking that your playspaces are being designed and delivered according to best practice and can be used and enjoyed by everyone in the community.

At the heart of Everyone Can Play is a declaration that play really is for everyone, regardless of age, ability or cultural background. As you will read, even the smallest changes can do wonders for ensuring an inclusive playspace.

I would like to say thank you to everyone involved in putting this document together. Through sharing your stories, dedication and passion, you have been part of a landmark project that will leave a legacy of inclusive playspaces across NSW.

See you on the playground!

– Fiona Morrison  
Commissioner, Open Space and Parklands  
NSW Department of Planning and  
Environment

Everyone Can Play was developed through a highly collaborative process. Special thanks to the following groups for their expert advice and guidance in developing Everyone Can Play.

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- Joshua French, Western Sydney Parklands Trust
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- Dr Jane Bringolf, Centre for Universal Design
- Dr Philippa Carnemolla, University of Technology Sydney

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# A new commitment for inclusive playspaces in NSW

Our society is incredibly diverse, made up of people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

In our communities we have playspaces for adventure, discovery, relationship building and memory making. But there is more we can do to ensure the playspaces we create are designed to bring people together.

Play is for everyone.  
Our playspaces should be too.

Playspaces exist at the heart of our neighbourhoods and should cater for everyone – young and old, families and carers, and people of all abilities.

Playspaces should be welcoming and comfortable, easy to navigate and interesting. They should offer a range of physical challenges, a variety of landscape settings to explore, and provide opportunities to connect with others.

Let's ensure Everyone Can Play in NSW.

Whether you are a member of council, a community leader, a landscape architect or a passionate citizen, you can inspire change.

This document outlines the key principles of inclusive playspaces and provides the tools to convert your ideas into improvements.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard, but it is our commitment to the future of play in NSW. This is a set of best practice recommendations designed to encourage more people to create more inclusive playspaces.

## A new way of thinking

The creation of inclusive playspaces requires a new way of thinking about the way playspaces are planned, designed and managed. The three principles of Everyone Can Play will promote thinking towards creating more inclusive playspaces across NSW.

When it comes to determining if a playspace is truly inclusive, it is important to consider the wider context. Look outside, around and through the playspaces and ask: Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?



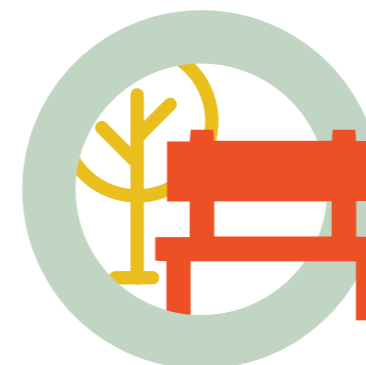
### Can I get there?

Consider location, layout, signage, wayfinding and accessibility to ensure everyone can find their way to, in and around the playspace.



### Can I play?

The play experience, including the equipment and surfacing, should enable everyone to experience a variety of challenging and engaging play opportunities in a way that suits them.



### Can I stay?

Consider safety, facilities, landscape and the wider environment to ensure everyone can stay at the playspace for as long as they would like.

# 1. BACKGROUND

## INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES ARE FOR EVERYONE

Understand what makes a playspace inclusive, why inclusive play matters and what Everyone Can Play hopes to achieve.



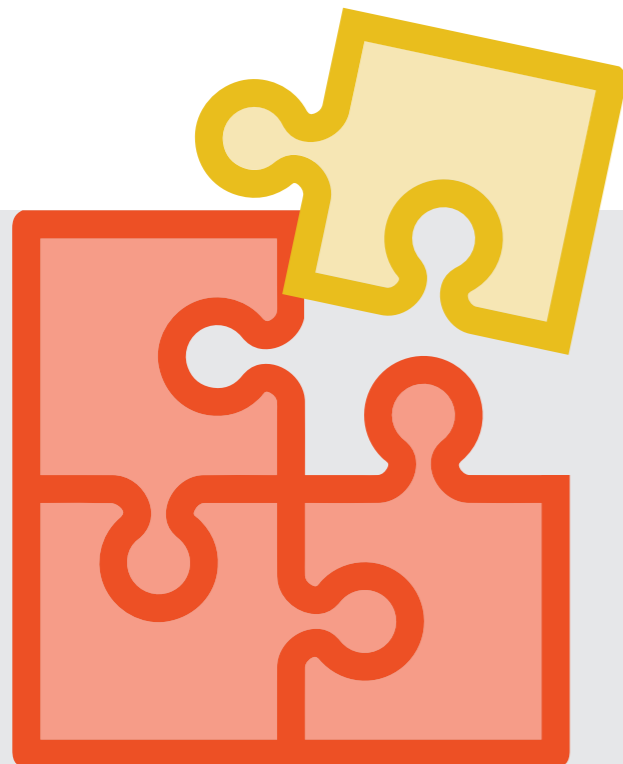
# What is an inclusive playspace?

An inclusive playspace invites people of all ages, abilities and cultures to come together to socialise and thrive.

Inclusive playspaces are easy to access, easy to move around in, provide a range of play types and challenges, and are equipped with appropriate facilities, in a comfortable environment. Inclusive playspaces allow everyone to stay as long as they choose.

A playspace is more than just equipment. It is the entire setting that is used and enjoyed as part of the play experience.

An inclusive playspace incorporates principles of inclusive design and accessibility. When these things are combined, they create spaces that people of all ages and abilities can enjoy.



## Accessibility vs. Inclusivity

Accessibility is commonly associated with mobility standards and safety compliance. Accessibility refers to the physical ability of people to access a place or thing. Accessible design predominantly addresses the movement needs of those with disabilities. When applied to playspaces, complying with accessibility standards across equipment, surfacing and support facilities, is key to creating an all abilities playspace.

Inclusive playspaces consider as many people's needs as possible. They provide a welcoming place where people feel comfortable yet challenged, while removing the obstacles and barriers that prevent people of all ages, cultural background and abilities (both physical and mental) from being invited to play.

Inclusive playspaces provide access to a variety of play experiences for people to enjoy together. The Everyone Can Play guideline encourages users to think beyond accessibility needs, so that everyone can realise the joys of play.

Accessibility is just one piece of the puzzle.

# Seeing new perspectives

A CONVERSATION WITH MEGAN AND EMILY

**When Megan, who is legally blind, had her daughter Emily, all she wanted to do was be able to take her to a playspace. Megan wanted a place for her and her daughter to belong. She wanted to be an equal in a space that fosters connection and community.**

**What does taking Emily to a playspace mean to you?**

"Going to a playspace is extremely meaningful for me, as it allows me to feel like I'm being a great parent. I'm not the parent with a disability who can't read her daughter print books. I'm the parent who can take her to the park and race her down the slippery dip. It's a place where I feel I can go and be myself, and my daughter can be herself. We can be comfortable, and people can be comfortable with us.

Playspaces are where our children get to learn boundaries. They are where we, as adults, get to teach our children about sharing, collaboration, cooperation and community. If a park does one thing, it breaks down barriers. It breaks down cultural barriers, diversity barriers, and disability barriers. Inclusion matters on all levels, and it's about everybody."

– Megan and Emily  
Mother and daughter



# The importance of inclusive play

Play is for everyone. It is essential to children's development, shaping the way they interact with the world around them. It enables them to learn new skills, make friends and build self-confidence. Play is also important to the health and wellbeing of people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds.

Play is important for all children. Through play, children develop the skills they need for life. It teaches children to socialise and interact with others. It allows them to develop creativity and imagination and helps with emotional and cognitive development. Play gives children opportunities to take risks and challenges. Besides the obvious benefits of movement, exercise and fitness, physical play provides the building blocks to children's complete development, from balance, vision and hearing, to tactile learning and sensory integration.

Play is not just focused on young children. Young people and the young at heart also benefit from playspaces. So inclusive design needs to consider more than the needs of young children. Everyone Can Play ensures people of all ages have places to be active and have fun.

Providing inclusive playspaces is crucial given 1.3 million people in NSW live with a disability, our ageing population is increasingly involved in the everyday care of grandchildren, and our multicultural society, has almost 100,000 overseas immigrants arrive in NSW annually.

Playspaces are key community assets, designed to bring everyone together in a fun, welcoming and comfortable environment.

Everyone Can Play will ensure NSW playspaces invite all people to participate in a variety of play experiences, in ways that challenge, excite and promote an active and healthy lifestyle.

Play is a vital socialisation opportunity for children and their parents or carers. Communities come together, connect and build relationships in playspaces. It is very important to consider this in planning and designing of playspaces.

Creating playspaces that allow people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds to play together is essential for community harmony. Building a society of tolerance and understanding is a value of inclusive playspaces in our community.



## Levelling the playing field

A CONVERSATION WITH LEILA AND MIA

**When Mia's mum, Leila, wants to take her daughters, Mia (four) and Andie (two) to a playspace, she has to do her research. She needs to check access to the playspace, what the play surfaces are (bark chips are the hardest for Mia to navigate with her prosthetic leg) and whether there is equipment both her girls can enjoy.**

**A trip to a playspace can cause anxiety for many parents and carers. Everyday things can present huge obstacles to people like Leila and Mia.**

"So many playspaces have no options that suit everyone, it's disappointing to me because Mia is more able than some. If I struggled, I can't imagine how it must feel for people who have children or family members with higher needs. It would make such a big difference if designers were to think about accessibility to the playspace and the choices of equipment for everyone in the community."

**What does the playspace mean to Mia?**

"It means Mia can be a kid! She gains more confidence, improves her motor skills and gets to make new friends! Every time we get to the playspace her face lights up and she has the biggest smile. With the right design, it's a place she can be on the same level as all of the other kids."

– Leila and Mia  
Mother and daughter

# About Everyone Can Play

## THE PRINCIPLES

The creation of inclusive playspaces requires a new way of thinking about the way playspaces are planned, designed and managed. The three principles of Everyone Can Play encourage thinking about creating more inclusive playspaces across NSW.

### Can I get there?

Consider location, layout, signage, wayfinding and accessibility to ensure everyone can find their way to, in and around the playspace.

### Can I play?

The play experience, including the equipment and surfacing, should allow everyone to experience a variety of challenging and engaging play opportunities in a way that suits them.

### Can I stay?

Consider safety, facilities, landscape and the wider environment to ensure everyone can stay at the playspace for as long as they would like.

## THE INCLUSIVE PLAY PROCESS

The six-step inclusive play process will help playspace designers, planners and managers integrate the principles of Everyone Can Play into the design and management of inclusive playspaces.

### Strategic Planning

Plan for inclusive play across your community.

### Scope

Review existing playspaces, determine improvements and create a scope for a new playspace.

### Design

Use inclusive design principles to inform playspace design.

### Deliver

Build inclusive play opportunities.

### Evaluate

Conduct continuous reviews and measurement of success.

### Champion

Become an inclusive playspace champion.

**Inclusion is a sliding scale. Not all playspaces can cater to everyone. Everyone Can Play is a guideline intended to help designers and those planning playspaces to do the best with what they have, within the budget and site constraints they are faced with.**

# Who is Everyone Can Play for?

## Children, adults and young people

Playspaces are utilised by a range of people, including children, adults, young people, families and carers. Everyone Can Play will ensure there are inclusive play opportunities available for a broader range of users.

## Communities

Playspaces exist in diverse communities, with people of all ages, abilities and cultural backgrounds. Improving the network of inclusive playspaces will make our communities more resilient and connected.

## Playspace professionals

Councils, developers, designers, planners and manufacturers collaborate to build playspaces. Everyone Can Play provides the considerations and tools to guide the planning, design and delivery process. The majority of playspaces are inspected and maintained by councils. Everyone Can Play sets best practice recommendations for planning, evaluation and ongoing monitoring.

**We encourage every agency – private and public – to include the principles of this guideline in the design of their playspaces.**





# How to use Everyone Can Play

Everyone Can Play is a key resource for the planning, design and evaluation stages of new and existing playspaces in NSW. It aims to ensure everyone can play in NSW. It sets expectations and priorities for improved inclusive play opportunities in regional and metropolitan areas.

Everyone Can Play was developed through an understanding of current playspace design theory and an acknowledgment of the importance universal design plays in creating comfortable places for everyone to feel included.

This development included the establishment of the Everyone Can Play principles and the inclusive play process.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard and not intended to be prescriptive. Not all recommendations and considerations within Everyone Can Play will be relevant for all playspaces. Our communities are diverse and our playspaces should be too. Everyone Can Play provides guidance for the planning, design and delivery of inclusive playspaces.

**Importantly, Everyone Can Play is about doing the best you can with the resources you have.**

## Councils can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Inform design briefs.
- Address existing playspaces.
- Determine what improvements can be made to increase inclusivity.
- Influence budget setting for playspaces.
- Educate staff on the importance of inclusion in our open spaces.
- Form part of council's Play Delivery Program.

## Communities can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Inform and educate the community.
- Advocate for more inclusive playspaces.
- Understand what inclusive play is and its importance in the community.

## Playspace designers can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Act as a checklist and reminder of the principles and goals of inclusive design.
- Be an industry leader in the design of inclusive playspaces.
- Lead and influence clients to create more inclusive playspaces.

## Industry can use Everyone Can Play to:

- Educate and inform others on the value of inclusion.
- Act as a vision and commitment to all decision-making.

# How was Everyone Can Play developed?

Everyone Can Play's goals and principles were defined by a review of current theory and research into playspace design, accessibility standards and universal design. A common set of principles and criteria were developed, guiding improved inclusive play opportunities in both regional and metropolitan areas.

Everyone Can Play was developed during a highly consultative process, to ensure its principles and aims could easily be applied to industry and councils for maximum influence and benefit. The Open Space team undertook extensive stakeholder engagement in the preparation of the draft guideline. Advocacy and advisory groups provided guidance and critical review of the draft guideline.

The advocacy group, consisting of nine representatives from the play industry, worked closely to guide the foundation of the guideline. It established the foundation of design principles adapted to the creation of playspaces.

An advisory group of 55 council, community and industry representatives was established to test and challenge the evolving guidelines, ensuring the guideline evolved into a workable and usable document.

At key points in its development, Everyone Can Play underwent rigorous testing against example playspaces.

In 2022, the Everyone Can Play program and Guidelines underwent an extensive evaluation to understand areas where improvements could be made to promote inclusive play across NSW.

The results of this evaluation concluded:

- It is estimated that the program will have added over 400,000 square metres of inclusive playspace in New South Wales.
- Creating or upgrading inclusive playspaces improved community pride, particularly in regional areas.
- Collaboration between the Department and councils produced better outcomes for communities.

In response to the findings, the Guidelines have been updated to provide more technical support and inspiration when creating water and nature playspaces, and places that connect Country and community.

The update of Everyone Can Play guideline was informed by a series of workshops across NSW, with councils and industry representatives invited to participate and provide feedback.





# 2. THE INCLUSIVE PLAY PROCESS

THE PROCESS OF PLANNING, DESIGNING AND  
DELIVERING INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES

Learn more about strategic planning, preparation, delivery and evaluation, the Everyone  
Can Play design principles, and why standing up for inclusive play is important.



# The six-step inclusive play process

Our playspaces are diverse. The steps we take towards improving them will be diverse as well.

Everyone Can Play has been structured to provide concise principles that focus on creating playspaces that people of all backgrounds, abilities and ages can access and enjoy. To achieve these principles across NSW, all stages of the play process require thinking about inclusion needs.

The six-step play process is designed to assist playspace designers, planners and managers in making decisions and recommendations where inclusion is the foundation principle.

Everyone has a role in the play process – from designers understanding community needs, to communities acknowledging site limitations, to council crews maintaining the playspace.

This six-step process helps integrate the principles of Everyone Can Play into the day to day planning design and management of inclusive playspaces.

**The inclusive play process is flexible and can be adjusted for each project, as some stages may not be needed for all playspaces. This process should be used to establish different roles, and includes recommendations to help deliver inclusive playspaces in your community.**



## Fun for all ages

A CONVERSATION WITH COLIN AND ALFIE

**“I love taking my three grandchildren, Alfie, Ollie, and Charlie, to the park. We love going to playspaces that provide for everyone.”**

“I’ve just turned 71 so I want to relax, but two-year-old Alfie wants to run around, enjoy himself and make new friends. These playspaces have seats and shade, but what we enjoy most is when I can join in and play alongside him. We love to play on the big basket swing together and the higher we swing the bigger he smiles.

If I could influence the design of playspaces, I would ask the designers to imagine how the playspace will be used all year round. I would ask them to design the park to be exciting and enjoyable for the children, but also to make

it comfortable for the adults who accompany them. I would ask them to make sure it’s easy for us to get to with prams or walkers, that there’s shade, water and bathrooms close by and places for all of us, even the big children, to play.

I have really enjoyed the opportunities I’ve had to influence the design of a playspace in my community. The opportunity to share my experiences and preferences with the people who are creating places for me and my grandchildren has been exciting, especially when I get to see my requests come to life in the new space.”

– Colin and Alfie  
Granddad and grandson

# STRATEGIC PLANNING

**The successful delivery of inclusive playspaces requires enthusiasm and commitment, but it also requires careful thought about location, resources, policies and community needs and perceptions.**

Making appropriate plans to deliver inclusive playspaces will provide a strong base for engagement and successful delivery. Each organisation involved in the development of new or renewed playspaces should embed the principles of Everyone Can Play into strategic and project decision-making about play in their community.

## Strategic planning considerations

Creating a network of inclusive playspaces across NSW requires strategic leadership from all councils. Embedding Everyone Can Play into the strategic direction of the planning, design and management of open space will build a wider statewide network.

### Strategic planning steps

#### STEP 1

Determine where Everyone Can Play sits in relation to the organisation's strategic and statutory planning documents.

#### STEP 2

Undertake a review of key planning documents relevant to playspaces and align documents with the aims and principles of Everyone Can Play.

This may include a review of: current master plans, plans for management, development control plans, community strategic plans, open space strategies, public domain technical manuals and voluntary planning agreements between developers and councils.

If required, update planning documents to incorporate key inclusive playspace considerations or reference Everyone Can Play to inform future thinking. Consider whether an inclusive playspace implementation plan is required to ensure success.

#### STEP 3

Undertake an analysis of the distribution of playspaces and potential improvements required. This will help identify gaps that need to be addressed.

#### STEP 4

Identify the needs of the local community and align strategies and distribution of playspaces to meet these needs and address deficiencies.

#### STEP 5

Develop appropriate annual budgets for the planning, design, delivery and maintenance of inclusive playspaces.

There are costs required to create change, but simple solutions can have a big impact. Consider appropriate budgets for the planning, design, delivery and ongoing maintenance of new and renewed playspaces to ensure they provide long-term benefit to the community.

#### STEP 6

Embed the overall principles of Everyone Can Play into all statutory and strategic documents to maximise uptake of inclusion in the planning, design and management of playspaces across the local community.

#### STEP 7

Instill a culture of collaboration between planners, designers, builders and managers to achieve best practice inclusive decision-making.

## Project planning considerations

With Everyone Can Play embedded into the strategic framework for the planning of playspaces, the next step is to focus on the Everyone Can Play principles in the planning of individual projects.

**When planning a new playspace or an upgrade to an existing one, think of the three Everyone Can Play principles as the overall outcome. That is: I can get there. I can play. I can stay.**

To achieve these principles and create a more inclusive playspace, consult the following steps.



### Project planning steps

1. Consult with the local community and First Nations communities to understand their priorities, cultural considerations and expectations.
2. Understand who you are providing inclusive playspaces for and their unique requirements.
3. Understand the role and function of the playspace within the strategic playspace network. This will help clarify size, function and ancillary facilities needed.
4. Understand the budget for the project and use the outcomes of previous investigation to develop priorities for design.
5. Ensure appropriate resources are available to plan, design, evaluate, deliver and monitor inclusive playspaces.
6. Use the three Everyone Can Play principles (Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay?) to inform a brief or return brief and define the objectives and expectations for the playspace.
7. Collaborate with suitably qualified professionals to design and deliver improvements.

# SCOPE

Applying  
*Can I get there?*  
*Can I play?*  
*Can I stay?* principles  
to existing playspaces  
across NSW.

There are more than 6,000 existing playspaces across NSW. Retrospective application of the Everyone Can Play principles to these playspaces will significantly increase opportunities to improve inclusion.

All councils should consider what modifications or upgrades can be made to existing playspaces. Even the smallest changes to an existing playspace can have a big impact. Changes may take the form of additional shade or seating, a new access path or soft fall surface, or additional play equipment that will offer new play challenges.

The first step in understanding how to modify existing playspaces is to complete an assessment against the Everyone Can Play principles. The completed assessment will formulate a scope for upgrades and modifications.

Conducting a rigorous on-site evaluation of all playspaces in a community will establish the current provision of inclusive play opportunities.

## **The Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist**

Essential for determining improvements to existing playspaces, the Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist provides a set of specific criteria to guide you through an on-site assessment. The results from this comprehensive set of questions will determine the improvements needed to deliver inclusive playspaces in your local community.

From this process, key considerations for inclusive playspace delivery can be identified, and opportunities for improvement can be developed. Actions developed from the evaluation set the basis for an implementation strategy, which includes costing, budgeting and programming requirements.

The Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist is intended as a best practice measure for existing playspaces to assist in identifying ways to improve inclusive play across NSW.

The Everyone Can Play **Evaluation Checklist** can be found in Tools section.

## **Using the Playspace Evaluation Checklist:**



### **Can I get there?**

- ✓ The layout of the playspace can be easily understood
- ✓ Points of entry and exit are easy to locate



### **Can I play?**

- ✓ Equipment is well connected
- ✓ Equipment theming and colour palette respond to the local context



### **Can I stay?**

- ✓ Adequate amount of shade to cover play activities
- ✓ Range of seating options

# DESIGN

Playspaces can be designed and built to a range of different sizes, each with unique requirements. Whether regional or metropolitan, with a small or large budget, playspace designers should contemplate the site's characteristics, community considerations and design aspirations.

Everyone Can Play is not a new standard and is not intended to be prescriptive. Not every recommendation and consideration within this guideline will be relevant for all playspaces.

Our communities are diverse and our playspaces should be too. Everyone Can Play provides guidance for the planning, design and delivery of inclusive playspaces. Importantly, Everyone Can Play is about doing the best you can with the resources you have.

Public open space and playspaces are essential cultural landscapes, that provide Aboriginal people with opportunities for connection, cultural practice and learning. They are places for the 'Sharing of Country' between Aboriginal people, the Australian community and our visitors. Talking to local Aboriginal people and communities and walking on Country with local knowledge-holders is an important step in the design of inclusive playspaces.

Refer to the **Design Principles Checklist** in the Tools section to help you design your next playspace project.



## Design steps

1. Understand where the playspace sits within the local playspace network.
2. When designing a new playspace, determine a suitable location within the park using the design principles as a guide.
3. Talk to local Aboriginal people and communities and consider walking on Country with local knowledge-holders to inform the design of the playspace.
4. Consider the site's context and plan to celebrate the space's unique qualities.
5. Understand who you are designing for by consulting with the local community to recognise their priorities and expectations.
6. Use Everyone Can Play to inform your design brief.
7. Use the six design principles when shaping your concept and detailed design phases (or renewal works) to ensure you are enhancing inclusive play opportunities.
8. Critically review your playspace design against Everyone Can Play.

Read the design principles on page 29.



## The game plan

A CONVERSATION WITH LUCILLA

**"Play has been part of my life since my landscape architecture degree. Play is such an important part of growing up and developing our skills, no matter what age or ability."**

"It's not just something that's important in my work, but in my personal life too. I have five children, two of them are on the spectrum. So it's really important I can take them places they feel part of and can socialise. It's something I take seriously in the playspaces I work on.

Everyone Can Play will help people like me plan more inclusive playspaces. We can use Everyone Can Play to design something that will actually bring everybody together, and will have ongoing impacts for everyone. It's an awesome guide for every council, but particularly us in the regional areas that don't always have a lot of support and information about inclusive play.

Everyone Can Play complements the various Australian standards that ensure our playspaces are safe. Through application of Everyone Can Play and the Australian Standards, we can ensure our playspaces are safe and inclusive."

– Lucilla  
Landscape Architect and Group Manager, Community Place  
Port Macquarie Hastings Council

## Universal design

**Universal design is the process of designing for everyone. It is the “design of products and environments to be usable by all people, to the greatest extent possible, without the need for adaptation and specialised design.”**  
- Ron Mace, 1997

Everyone Can Play and its framework is strongly influenced by universal design thinking. Everyone Can Play takes the emphasis for design of playspaces beyond accessibility and ability, to ensure equal emphasis is placed on maximising play opportunities and social integration for people of all ages and cultures.

The principles of inclusive playspaces provided in Everyone Can Play are an adaptation of the Seven Principles of Universal Design (developed by Ron Mace et al. 1997) and the Eight Goals of Universal Design (Steinfeld and Maisel, 2012). These principles and goals have been applied in a practical way to playspaces in NSW.

### Seven Principles of Universal Design

1. Equitable use
2. Flexibility in use
3. Simple and intuitive to use
4. Perceptible information
5. Tolerance for error
6. Low physical effort
7. Size and space for approach and use

## Playspace design theory

With ever-changing technology, an increasing awareness of the differing needs of our community, and a greater understanding of child psychology and physical development, a review of best practice theory and design recommendations was required to give Everyone Can Play a well-informed foundation.

Various local and international industry leading publications were reviewed to gain an understanding of current innovative design for all abilities. They were also reviewed for intergenerational play, sustainable playspace initiatives and the influences of cultural perceptions on play.

The consultation undertaken for Everyone Can Play was a critical source of knowledge, bringing together industry leaders from design, delivery, playspace management organisations and community advocates. People we consulted were those whose daily lives would be improved by the successful delivery of more inclusive playspaces.

The understanding and insight gained from this consultation was key to ensuring Everyone Can Play developed a holistic approach to inclusive play opportunities, both for participants and carers.

### Eight Goals of Universal Design

1. Body fit
2. Comfort
3. Awareness
4. Understanding
5. Wellness
6. Social integration
7. Personalisation
8. Cultural appropriateness

# The design principles

These six guiding design principles address the intent of inclusive playspace design in greater detail. Established through a review of current theory and research into playspace design, accessibility standards and universal design, the principles are an important reference for inclusive playspace design.

The design principles extend the focus beyond accessibility to include opportunities for play and social interaction for people of all ages, abilities and cultures.



## Find

Communicate the purpose and location of play elements and facilities.



## Fit

Provide a range of play opportunities for people of all abilities and sizes.



## Choose

Enable exciting individual experiences and social interaction.



## Join In

Create opportunities for everyone to connect.



## Thrive

Challenge and involve people of all capabilities.



## Belong

Create a place that's welcoming and comfortable.

Refer to the **Design Principles Checklist** in the Tools section to help you design your next playspace project.

# Find

Communicate the purpose and location of play elements and facilities.



# Fit

Provide a range of play opportunities for people of all abilities and sizes.



## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Signage
- Wayfinding
- Play experience
- Equipment
- Surfacing
- Landscape
- Safety
- Facilities

## Outcomes

Playspace users should be able to find their way to, in and around the playspace.

Making the playspace as clear, easy to get to, and logical in its location and layout will assist in removing any perceived barriers and encourage users to visit the playspace.

Linking the playspace to surrounding elements such as paths and cycle routes, will aid people in getting to the playspace. Additionally, providing a connection between the playspace and the surrounding landscape will broaden the play experience.

## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Signage
- Wayfinding
- Equipment
- Surfacing

## Outcomes

Inclusive play provides opportunities for people of different abilities and fitness levels to play together.

By playing, users can develop problem-solving skills, foster creativity and imagination, build relationships, and improve emotional and social skills.

Being able to participate in activities and play can increase one's self-esteem, lead to feelings of acceptance and being valued, and encourage people to feel positive about themselves.





# Choose

Enable exciting individual experiences and social interaction.



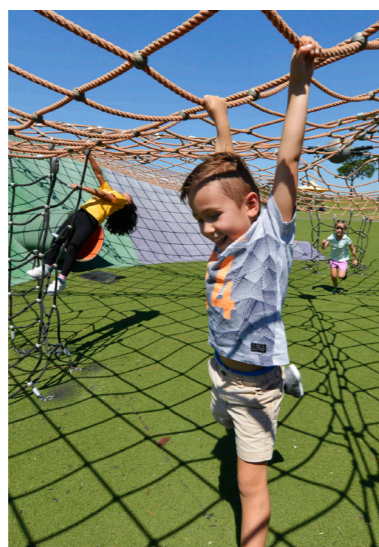
## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Signage
- Wayfinding
- Play experience
- Equipment
- Surfacing
- Landscape
- Safety
- Facilities

## Outcomes

Playspaces should provide a range of options for the user, so they can choose how they wish to play.

Confidence and comfort in decision-making are important skills to develop. If the playspace provides multiple play opportunities for both individual and group play, it enables people to decide how they want to play, and with whom.



# Join In

Create opportunities for everyone to connect.



## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Play experience
- Equipment
- Surfacing
- Landscape
- Safety
- Facilities

## Outcomes

Playspaces can provide a safe, secure environment for people to connect with others through play. This participation can lead to the development of cooperation, communication and social skills.

The playspace and play equipment should provide engaging experiences and enable all people to use and join in where possible – helping to improve social skills, as well as physical and mental health.



# Thrive

Challenge and involve people of all capabilities.



# Belong

Create a place that's welcoming and comfortable.



## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Play experience
- Equipment
- Surfacing
- Landscape
- Safety

## Outcomes

Playspaces are a great place for children to challenge themselves and develop cognitive, social, emotional and fine motor skills.

By including a range of stimulating and imaginative activities in the playspace, people of all capabilities are challenged – improving their wellbeing.



## Focus areas

- Location
- Layout
- Accessibility
- Signage
- Wayfinding
- Play experience
- Equipment
- Surfacing
- Landscape
- Safety
- Facilities

## Outcomes

Playspaces can be a safe space for the community to gather and play.

Creating an inviting space that encourages members of the community to come together can encourage people to make new connections and friends, develop social skills, and leave a positive impact on mental health and development.

This feeling of belonging can also lead to community-building, through a sense of ownership and local participation.



# Collaroy Beach Playspace, Collaroy

## Best practice case study

Regional playspaces offer an opportunity to combine a variety of play activities within a setting that is comfortable and enjoyable for a wide range of people.



Shade to the majority of the playspace activity zones and central seating areas

Carousel flush to allow ease of access

Set within existing landscape features to provide strong sense of place

Located adjacent to informal kick about space

Pause point on entry to allow paced movement into activity zones

Orientation path of consistent width and material linking entry points and play zones

Primary entry celebrated with signage and artwork

Play experiences suitable for all ages and abilities co-located with more challenging play experiences

Surfacing colour contrasted to show activity vs. circulation space

Inclusion of equipment that offers challenge as users develop in ability and strength

Accessible parking spaces adjacent

Formal enclosure through walls and fences to provide sense of safety and comfort adjacent to potential hazards (e.g. water bodies and roads)

All abilities equipment pieces co-located with standard pieces of same play type (e.g. liberty swing immediately adjacent to other swing types)

Multiple seating options (some with backs and arms) with sufficient circulation space

Passive lawn area away from activity zone for rest and quiet play

# Paperbark Park Playground, Parramatta

## Best practice case study

The challenge of building in a heritage listed park inspired innovative inclusive design, incorporating a no dig technique to maintain the important history of this popular place.

The shade is placed over the swings and positioned to maximise shade coverage for time when the playspace is used to most by the community. The shade structure is fully integrated into the swing frame

There is an area within the playspace for carers to interact and supervise

A raised central seating area is a great space to sit and gather, and also offers a vantage point for supervision

Equipment is challenging for multiple age groups and ability levels

Integrated into the wider landscape of the park to promote a variety of play experiences

A variety of swing seat types to offer a diversity of experience and allow for people of all abilities to participate

Integrate water into the playspace

Play experiences at different heights for graduated challenge



There is an adequate amount of shade to cover the majority of play activities

There are views or visual links to the local context outside the playspace, to contribute to a sense of play

The majority of equipment is designed so that adults can be fit in, on or under (e.g. swings, slides, climbing structures)

Equipment selected enables multiuse and intergenerational play experiences

Reflect the local environment when selecting materials and colours

Formal and informal seating is provided in appropriate locations (e.g. at regular intervals, near shade, adjacent to activity areas)

The playspace has been located close to nearby trees to make best use of the they provide. Close proximity to the existing trees and vegetation also offers a place for quiet nature play opportunities

The circulation path has a consistent width and surface finish

There is a flush edge from the path surface to the play surface for easy access by all users. (The entire surface does not need to be flush – just key transition points)

# Tench Reserve Playspace, Penrith

## Best practice case study

Create playspaces using materials and experiences that reflect and connect the site.

Local landscape provides sense of place

Water can easily be accessed by all playspace users and has fixtures that are easy to operate

The playspace is connected to a shared path or cycle route

Place equipment in natural shade, or install shade structures when not available



A variety of seating is provided, including seats with backs and armrest. The seating is also positioned to provide comfort for parents and carers near the swings

There is a flush edge from the path surface to the play surface for easy access by all users. (The entire surface does not need to be flush – just key transition points)

There is enough circulation space (beyond fall zone requirements) around the majority of equipment to provide safe movement

Contrasting surfacing colours to delineate between activity and circulation spaces

Equipment is challenging for multiple age groups and ability levels

Equipment such as trampolines at ground level to minimise the need for transfer onto play equipment

Informal seating located through the space

Plants of different heights, shapes and sizes so everyone can look, feel and smell

# DELIVER

We acknowledge everyone will have different methods of delivering inclusive playspaces to the community. By collaborating with a wide range of people, including traffic engineers, play equipment manufacturers, landscape architects, developers, community group representatives, open space planners and the community, you will ensure the most inclusive outcome for everyone.

## Delivery considerations

### The planning

Developing an inclusive playspace implementation plan may be beneficial to assist in the immediate and ongoing delivery of improvements to inclusive playspace provision.

### The technical elements

Review the playspace against the Evaluation Checklist prior to the finalisation of the playspace documentation to ensure all opportunities to maximise inclusion can be reached. Once complete, undertake any necessary improvements. Review local, statewide and Australian policies and standards to ensure your design is compliant.

### Consultation

Consult the local community, play equipment manufacturers, advocacy groups, designers, schools, and people who use the playspace to assist with the delivery.

### Partnerships

Partnering with others will help deliver better playspaces. Seek partnership opportunities with neighbouring councils, government agencies, local businesses, developers, advocacy groups, designers, and international service organisations, such as Lions Club and Rotary clubs.

# EVALUATE

## Beyond delivery

Ongoing maintenance will ensure playspaces look and function as intended. It is important to educate and upskill professionals on Everyone Can Play, to maintain and improve playspaces. Partner with neighbouring councils to share resources and knowledge, or establish community working groups to foster a sense of ownership and pride over playspaces.

It is essential that both new and improved playspaces are continually reviewed, monitored and adjusted appropriately. We recommend you review these spaces annually, in line with regular checks already being undertaken.

As the people who make up our communities change, so too will the requirements for playspaces. Similarly, as new equipment and technology is developed, there will be an opportunity to review and adapt our inclusive playspaces.

Everyone Can Play is as an important tool for monitoring playspaces. The design principles and Evaluation Checklist are key resources to help review playspaces and ensure they continue to succeed.

These documents will help us understand if, and to what extent, inclusive playspaces are becoming the norm.



## Evaluating steps

1. Use the design section of Everyone Can Play to inform your thinking for new playspaces and existing playspace designs.
2. Understand the current provision, condition, access and distribution of playspaces and identify areas for improvement.
3. Undertake ongoing consultation with the community to understand their changing priorities, cultural considerations and expectations.
4. Update and review relevant planning documents including implementation plans, maintenance programs, playspace strategies and the Everyone Can Play planning section on a regular basis.
5. Keep up to date with current research and innovation of playspace equipment, surfacing materials and inclusive products.

# Reality check

A CONVERSATION  
WITH RACHAEL

**In her role in recreational project delivery and design, Rachael delivers playspaces for her region. She knows the importance of thoroughly assessing a space to create an inclusive strategy for each playspace. Rachael tested this guide's Evaluation Checklist (located in the Tools section) and shares her experience of how it helps in pre-design planning and evaluation.**

"The Checklist empowers my team to confidently assess existing and new playspaces against the criteria and ensure we are providing the best possible facilities for our community. It highlights areas where improvements can be made – especially small changes for big gains and ensure making playspaces inclusive becomes ingrained in the planning stages of all facilities in the Central Coast.

Using this Checklist ensures all aspects of inclusiveness are considered and addressed when designing, constructing and maintaining our playspaces.

Simply by going through the list, you understand that designing for inclusion is more than just accessibility, it's about making spaces that are better for the whole community, and that small changes can make a big difference to so many users.

Everyone Can Play (and the tools it includes) helps ensure we consistently evaluate and plan our spaces. It gives me a tool to promote and to educate staff, project managers and senior management on the importance of providing inclusive facilities."

– Rachael  
Project Manager, Recreational Project  
Delivery and Design  
Central Coast Council



# CHAMPION

## Education and advocacy

Inclusive playspaces are important in the lives of countless Australians. They are spaces for development – of physical and social skills, learning, enjoyment and growth. Many people experience their first memories at playspaces and continue to visit them throughout their lives.

To champion change, we need the support and dedication of all people involved. This goes beyond the communities, and extends to developers, councils, suppliers, maintenance staff and everyday people.

Championing inclusive playspaces can be as easy as leading by example. It can be creating best practice playspaces that incorporate the principles of inclusive playspace design, or communicating with and educating others on what you know or where they can find information. Councils can include a commitment to provide inclusive playspaces in Disability Inclusion Action Plans, or pass a motion mandating the use of Everyone Can Play for new and upgraded playspaces. Collaboration with other professionals is also critical in overcoming challenges and barriers to inclusion. You should consult with users to achieve playspaces that are embraced by the community and well used

**Championing change could simply be promoting great playspaces.**

This could include drawing attention to best practice examples and encouraging others to create more inclusive playspaces.



## BEST PRACTICE CASE STUDY

# A community-driven project

## LIVVI'S PLACE, WARRAGAMBA, NSW

Livvi's Place Warragamba is a true community-driven playspace project. The local community came together to design the space, host fundraisers and raise awareness of the need for inclusion.

The project was a partnership between the NSW Government, Touched by Olivia, Wollondilly Shire Council and community members. It was led by a local resident, with support from key stakeholder groups in the Aboriginal and disability communities.

The team understood they needed to go to the broader community to rally public support. Consultations were held at local festivals and Warragamba Public School, where students helped design key features of the playspace. A fundraising rodeo was also hosted, where the mayor auctioned off pieces of equipment for sponsorship.

Today, the playspace is loved by the locals, as it reflects what is special to them. Its unique elements include fence panels designed by a local Gundungurra Elder that illustrate local Aboriginal history, and an entrance wall decorated with over 200 tiles by Warragamba Public School students. Livvi's Place demonstrates the value of taking a project vision to the community and highlights the benefits community ownership brings.

Photo by Bec Ho



# Free to be free

## A CONVERSATION WITH BRIAN

**Brian's work in disability support services has strengthened his belief that inclusive playspaces are a vital element for working towards an inclusive society.**

**What challenges do you face when looking for a playspace for your clients?**

"It's really important I find somewhere that is inclusive for people of all physical abilities, as well as places that provide a safe environment for those with cognitive impairments, who may be at risk of becoming overwhelmed easily and behave unpredictably in public spaces.

Certain elements can make it easier to enjoy a playspace; tables that are wheelchair friendly; benches easily accessible for people with impaired mobility; play equipment suitable for people who require assistance – like large swings that are lower to the ground and allow the user to lay down in them; and spaces that are interesting and visually unique.

Inclusive playspaces allow people with varied levels of physical ability and cognition to interact with one another. They feel included. They feel as though spaces are made for them and their peers, and not just the portion of the population living without disability.

These spaces are so important because they allow everyone to interact in a fun and stimulating environment. They don't exclude one group through the process of including another. They allow a demographic of people who are marginalised within many aspects of society to feel accepted."

– Brian  
Disability support services





# 3. PRACTICE

TOOLS TO SUPPORT THE CREATION  
OF GREAT INCLUSIVE PLAYSPACES

By engaging with community and incorporating the unique characteristics of place and environment, we can create playspaces that foster connection, discovery and celebration.





# PLACE AND PLAY

**Understanding and incorporating the environment, context and community in playspace engagement, planning, design, and delivery will foster the creation of spaces unique to a place and community.**

By using local knowledge, materials, artists, plants, perspectives, climate, stories, and other elements to inform planning and design of inclusive playspaces, the spaces will reflect and celebrate our communities, culture, and environment.

Engaging meaningfully with communities and stakeholders is vital to understanding the aspirations and needs of the people who use these spaces. Ensuring a tailored community engagement program will champion local needs and allow designers to shape playspaces to meet community needs now and into the future.

Whether honouring established connections to a place or helping to create new connections, a place-based approach to designing inclusive playspaces is vital in creating places the community will love.

## Place in practice

Australia is home to the oldest living culture in the world. Understanding, embracing and celebrating our culture is a powerful way to foster a deep sense of belonging and community pride. From bushland to beaches and everything in between, we have a range of beautiful and diverse landscapes.

Expanding on the Everyone Can Play principles, incorporating a place focused approach encourages designers, planners and managers to think about the deeper experiences play can provide in a playspace. By planning and designing playspaces that are firmly rooted in place and informed by meaningful engagement, playspaces become powerful hubs for learning, discovery, community connection and celebration.

# Connecting with place

Places are unique because of their location, their history or how they make us feel. They provide us with a sense of identity through stories, images, experiences and memories. Connecting with place offers our communities social, cultural and environmental benefits.

## Start with Country

When beginning with Country, we recognise the importance of public open spaces as Country. Public open space and playspaces are essential cultural landscapes that provide Aboriginal people with opportunities for connection, cultural practice and learning. They are places for the 'Sharing of Country' and celebrating rich culture with everyone.

Talking to local Aboriginal people and communities, and walking on Country with local knowledge-holders will support greater understanding and respect of the innate identity and values of public open space. It's a way of celebrating its role in supporting wellbeing, belonging and broader socio-cultural benefit.

This understanding should be incorporated into the planning and design of playspaces to foster greater connections to place, caring and for Country and meeting the needs of the community.

## Form lasting relationships

Engaging local knowledge-holders and communities in the planning and design process brings people together around a shared goal. This bonds community members, allowing new relationships to endure once the playspace is constructed, and helping inform future local projects.

## Uplift the local economy

Localised engagement and collaboration with artists and makers creates a deeper sense of belonging and increases employment opportunities in the area.

## Promote sustainability

Local materials and resources are more environmentally sustainable as they are appropriate to the local climate and context and do not have to be imported across long distances. Sustainability also comes from working with our existing natural settings and amenities, like shade and cooling winds.

## Celebrate and appreciate place

Everyone can enjoy the experience of native organic textures, smells and sounds. By engaging with the natural elements around us, a deeper appreciation for where we live can be encouraged.

## Take ownership

Working with local communities to create playspaces nurtures a sense of stewardship and pride, reflects the identities and needs of our communities and fosters a sense of belonging.

# How to connect with place

Consider the deeper experiences that play can provide by asking:



## Can I connect?

Look for opportunities to connect with the local community, culture, history and natural environment.



## Can I discover?

Provide inclusive opportunities for exploration so everyone can discover history and place.



## Can I celebrate?

Find ways to highlight and enjoy the unique features of the local environment.

These questions can help you design playspaces that foster community connection and learning, and promote the unique characteristics of your local area.

When **planning, designing or upgrading** your next playspace ask yourself: Can I connect? Can I discover? Can I celebrate?



# Restoring community spirit

## LOT STAFFORD PLAYGROUND, TATHRA, NSW

After a bushfire devastated the small community of Tathra in 2018, there was an opportunity for the community to create a new public open space together. To support recovery and healing, Bega Valley Shire Council received Everyone Can Play funding to upgrade an ageing beachfront playground into an inclusive playspace.

The community was central to the playspace design. Stakeholder sessions were held with local Aboriginal representatives, Council's Access Inclusion Advisory Committee, and members of Tathra Public School, Tathra Playgroup and Tathra Lions Club. After consultation, the playspace plan was uploaded to Council's website for public comment.

The Everyone Can Play grant was critical to funding extensive refurbishment of the playspace. Lot Stafford Playground is reported as "packed every weekend" and a celebrated space for the community.

Council has since applied the Everyone Can Play principles to playspace upgrades in Bermagui and Eden. Inclusivity and accessible design are now part of Bega Valley Shire Council's strategic plan.

**"We learnt from the Tathra playspace to make sure that the design was thorough. We have a landscape architect review all our designs now."**

**It's about fine tuning the design so that we get the best outcome. It's about being inclusive, but also about having play experiences that are challenging for all ages and ability."**

– Leanne Barnes, General Manager  
Bega Valley Shire Council

### Can I get there?

A new concrete pathway connects the playspace to accessible car spaces and nearby fitness equipment. Blue soft fall flooring curves around the playspace — inspired by Bega River, an important cultural feature for the local Aboriginal community.



### Can I play?

Soft fall flooring links with a range of inclusive play equipment, including regular swings and a harness swing, a climbing arch, a wheelchair accessible carousel, and a trampoline. The town's children insisted the iconic giant green dragon from the old playground be kept, as it informed the unique identity of the place.



### Can I stay?

The playspace includes public toilets, shade sails, picnic tables with overhangs that accommodate wheelchair users, and benches with handles. The playspace is fully integrated with the adjoining skate park, offering places for more people to stay and enjoy the park.



# Can I connect?

## Connect with community and culture

Encouraging communities to play an active role in the planning, design and development process, creates a sense of ownership and connection.

Community engagement is an important part of connecting with place. Disability support groups, Aboriginal Land Councils, community members, council staff and children all have a special perspective to share.

Connect with the community early to help inform the playspace location and development of the brief. Bringing community members from diverse cultural backgrounds together in discussion is a key step in sharing our cultures and helping everyone connect over mutual values.



IAP2 is a good resource for training and tools, acknowledging that public participation promotes sustainable decisions by recognising and communicating the needs and interests of all participants, including decision makers. Public participation seeks out and facilitates the involvement of those potentially affected by or interested in a decision.

Community engagement can be as simple as conversations in the park, at the local schools, or you can develop a detailed multi level engagement strategy. The most important thing is to collaborate, communicate and connect with your community for the best outcomes.

# Connect with the site

The siting of a playspace within an open space is an important consideration when connecting with place, and to ensure the experience and comfort of users can be maximised.

To create a place-specific design and understand the intricacies of the place, spend time walking and gathering information on site. Consider a walk on Country with a recognised knowledge holder that will build a greater understanding of site significance, importance and value.

When connecting with a site, engage all senses — not only sight, but also touch, smell and sound. What textures do we feel? What plants do we smell? What wildlife do we hear? By using all senses, a richer understanding of place can be developed.

Site analysis reveals the conditions of the site, such as solar patterns, prevailing winds, soil types, water movements, cultural and natural landscape values, pedestrian desire lines, landscape features, areas for environmental protection and much more. Undertaking a site analysis will inform the design of the space and ensure the playspaces is located in the best place within the park.

Always consider the **core principles** of Everyone Can Play - Can I get there? Can I play? Can I stay? - when completing the site analysis



# Bringing people closer together

## BOWRAVILLE CHILDREN'S PLAYGROUND, BOWRAVILLE, NSW

Bowraville is located on the Nambucca River in the Mid North Coast of NSW. In 2016, Nambucca Valley Council adopted the Bowraville Connections Concept Plan. Using grant funds, Council commenced upgrades to amenities, shelters and pathways in a recreational precinct adjacent to the town centre. This included a skate park, BMX track, football fields and clubhouse, creek-side picnic area and basketball courts.

Further consultation was undertaken with input from the local Aboriginal Land Council, an Aboriginal language centre, schools, preschools, sporting clubs, mothers' groups, the Council Access Committee, the Chamber of Commerce, and residents. The result was a 'playspace for everyone' concept plan with inclusive play equipment and subtle indigenous design elements. The playspace was opened at a community event in 2020 by the Mayor, with a smoking ceremony performed by local Aboriginal Elders.

Children from all backgrounds enjoy the playspace — including the neighbouring preschool, which makes regular excursions.

It is also a meeting place for playgroups, and is well visited by local families in the afternoon and on weekends. Many people from out of town come to Bowraville for the variety of activities available in the precinct, and visiting sporting teams and their families tend to stay after the game to play and catch up with new and old friends.

Both the playspace and the precinct have delivered much needed community infrastructure. Consulting with local groups and applying inclusive principles helped shape a positive space for the community to be proud of.

**"It's been a really important project for us. Our town is going through a pretty significant healing process. This has been something really positive."**

– Gwydir Shire Council

### Can I get there?

The recreational precinct is connected to the town centre by concrete footpaths. Playspace areas are linked by internal footpaths, which use soft ochre colours, feature stones and locally significant native plants. Ample parking is available adjacent to the playspace, with level access.



### Can I play?

The playspace includes active play equipment for different ages and abilities (accessible swings, a wheelchair-accessible spinner and a climbing tower) and imaginative equipment (percussion instruments and quiet areas). Rubber soft fall is used around equipment.



### Can I stay?

Covered accessible seating is available in the playspace. The recreation precinct provides access to picnic areas and barbeques, toilets can be found at the nearby sporting fields, and there are shops and amenities in the local town centre.



# Connect with local suppliers

Working with local suppliers and makers is a cost-effective way to add unique and meaningful elements to our playspaces — whether it's a bespoke entrance gate made by local steel fabricators, a sculpture by a local artist, or a collection of plants grown by community nurseries.

Local landscape contractors can have an impact on the project through existing relationships with material suppliers or nurseries. By collaborating with local creators, we can enhance community connections and pride, and encourage people to play a key role in shaping their own spaces.

The engagement process doesn't need to be complex to gain useful insights. Councils can tailor engagement to suit their needs and time frames. Supply and construction tenders can be updated to include a requirement to work with local suppliers and makers.

**Remember: meaningful engagement takes time. The more we put into it, the more we get out of it.**

Refer to the **Tools section** for resources to assist this process.



# Working with the landscape

TOWN BEACH PLAYGROUND,  
PORT MACQUARIE, NSW

In 2021, a new playspace opened at Town Beach, Port Macquarie following extensive consultation with the community. Embracing the natural landform, the playspace was designed to fit between the beach and the Hastings River, sheltered against the adjacent reserve and incorporating the existing vegetation.

Council connected with the Birpai people who shared the stories of the Doongang (Hastings River), incorporating their totem of the stingray through the installation of a sculpture. The yellow and blue rubber soft fall is designed to resemble the river meeting the sea. The bells on the bridge provide an aural connection to the river boats passing the nearby waterfront.

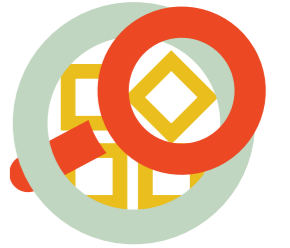
Analysis of the site found a need to create a stronger sense of place, which was achieved by connecting the playspace with an existing skate park, café and amenities and the coastal walk and town centre.

Locals can now enjoy an inclusive playspace inspired by traditional custodians, landscape and marine life.

Working with the unique landscape, and local flora and fauna, Town Beach Playground has become a popular place for the community to come together, connect and celebrate.



# Can I discover?



## Discover community perspectives

Inclusive playspaces are important gathering places where the community can encounter diverse people and perspectives. They are great places to share and celebrate diversity and foster community cohesion - places where people of all ages, abilities and backgrounds can come together.

When planning and designing an inclusive playspace, think creatively about the diverse perspectives of communities and groups and how to bring the unique characteristics of the community into the fabric of the playspace. Consider using local artists and makers to create play elements that reflect local stories or include the artwork of local children into the signage, paving and other play elements.

Opportunities to share and celebrate the diversity of perspectives of the community occurs throughout a collaborative design process from the planning of community engagement to the celebration of the completed project.

## Discover paths and adventures

Discovery is a vital part of inclusive playspace design. Creating places where users can be challenged and learn about surroundings offers great play value and promotes a sense of discovery.

Encourage a sense of discovery and adventure by using colours and finishes that reflect the space.

Colour selection plays a key role in wayfinding, with contrasting surface colour treatments used to distinguish activity and circulation zones. By using one colour underneath activity areas and another colour for paths users can discover and choose different experiences. Incorporate natural elements such as water, logs, planting, stepping stones and boulders to inspire adventures and a sense of discovery.



# Sharing a historical perspective

## ST PETERS FENCES PLAYGROUND, ST PETERS, NSW

St Peters Fences Playground is a playspace and permanent public artwork that records the character of local homes and streetscapes impacted in the creation of the WestConnex motorway.

Designed by Mike Hewson, the playspace was informed by a local historian and community members who shared their stories to inform the design. Locals also contributed to the build of the playspace through the donation of plants and structural items, including bricks and cast iron fences.

The playspace is predominantly constructed using these local salvaged materials. It includes innovative features, such as a rubber soft fall designed to look like concrete, swings that hang from the facade of a terrace house and climbing walls that reference residential fences, to create a unique playspace that visually communicates local history.

*Photo by Mike Hewson*



# Can I celebrate?

## Celebrate stories

Stories unite and inspire us, teach us lessons, spark imagination and honour our past. Connecting with place gives us the opportunity to share and celebrate local cultural stories.

Feature stories in artwork and design, through colour, patterns or motifs, or through play experiences.

Understanding cultural stories can also lead to the creation of flexible spaces for performances, gatherings and celebrations — such as a flat, accessible surface that doubles as a ball game area and a stage.

## Celebrate biodiversity

Incorporating the natural setting of a park into a playspace is a great way to celebrate landscape character and biodiversity. The use of native plant species and other natural materials such as rocks and timbers, can be reflective and provide for a deeper connection to place and offer opportunities to learn more about local flora and fauna of the area.

Nature playspaces are interesting and ever changing. Through the careful selection of materials, playspaces can be places where diverse communities can learn more about Australian plants and animals in a setting that is safe and comfortable and will promote care and value of ecosystem biodiversity.







# NATURE PLAY

Nature play is a great way to connect people with place, and can turn your playspace into a place of connection, discovery and celebration. Nature stimulates the imagination and encourages exploration, adventure and risk-taking — helping children learn new skills such as adaptability, coordination and resilience. Research shows being in nature can lower stress hormone levels, enhance immune system function, reduce anxiety, increase self-esteem and improve mood.

For many people, access to nature is determined by where they live, their cultural background, socioeconomic factors and ability. By incorporating nature into our playspaces, we can offer everyone in our community the opportunity to experience the joy and benefits that nature provides — regardless of age, ability, background or postcode.

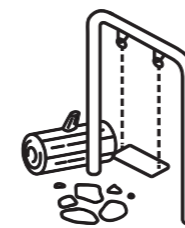
Nature playspaces are predominantly made of natural materials, such as plants, rocks, logs, sand, mulch and water. They are often combined with custom play equipment to

provide a variety of experiences for users. Nature play makes playspaces more interesting and distinctive by drawing on the unique characteristics of place.

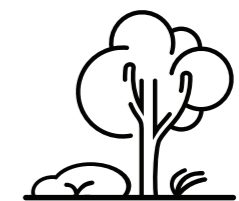
And nature is free! So incorporating nature into playspaces can help stretch budgets further. Materials last longer and are cheaper to maintain, and using local materials and makers reduces the environmental impact of importing offshore equipment.

When thinking about the possibilities for nature play, it helps to imagine a sliding scale. This scale includes a broad range of opportunities for design and educational intervention to allow everyone access to nature play.

Nature offers a broad range of design opportunities for everyone to access play and educational activities. It can link and enhance both formal playspace designs and unstructured natural spaces.



## The nature play sliding scale



Playspace with simple nature play elements

**Nature play opportunities**

Natural space with minimal formal play elements

# Designing inclusive nature playspaces

The flexibility and creativity of nature play encourages collaborative and social interaction between children and enables intergenerational engagement of parents and carers.

Nature playspaces can be inclusive, so it is important to think about the principles of Can I get There, Can I Play and Can I Stay when planning and designing.

Think about providing a range of play experiences so everyone can enjoy engaging with nature.

Consider using flat, level surfaces made from decomposed granite or stone pavers to provide access to natural spaces, and play elements such as 'garden rooms' or raised play tables where loose natural items such as pine cones, twigs and mud

can easily be explored and played with. By using appropriate plants at different heights, you can engage people of all abilities.

Ensure paths are free and clear of loose, natural items through raised and fixed edges and regular maintenance. Paths don't need to be perfectly clean, but they should be free of hazards. Leave things where they fall, as long as it is safe.

To bring more nature into playspaces, you can also help stage natural processes (such as germination or insect metamorphosis) in locations that are easily visible and accessed by everyone. Consider placement of bug hotels or plants that attract native wildlife, to deepen connections with nature.

When creating a nature playspace, it helps to follow a three-step process:

- 1. Understand the site**
- 2. Get creative in your design**
- 3. Deliver and maintain the playspaces**

Refer to the checklists in the Tools section to explore ideas for your nature based playspace.



## STEP ONE

# Understand your site

When planning nature playspaces, it's important to identify and understand your site and local environment.



- What do you want this playspace to be, and where will it be located?
- What is currently available in the local playspace network and what need are you trying to meet?
- Will it attract visitors from the surrounding areas, or is it a small upgrade to an existing local playspace?



- What Country is the site on?
- Who lives here and what does this place mean to them?
- What is the history of the site?
- Are there any stories that can be told through nature?  
Local Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal Land Councils and recognised knowledge-holders have deep cultural connections to nature. By engaging with Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal Elders and leaders, we can gain a better understanding of the Country we work on, and the significance of specific natural elements in the site environment.



- What are the features of the existing site?
- What existing natural features can be integrated in nature play design? (Trees, planting, rocks etc)



- What is the local environment context and how will it impact design?
- What is the local climate?
- What native vegetation can connect with place and minimise maintenance?
- What are the prevailing winds?
- What is the natural shade?
- Are there any native animals on site?



- Are there any topographical issues to consider (such as flooding)?
- Does the site offer opportunities such as potential viewpoints, natural changes in levels for play, or existing waterways?

## Suggestions

1. Consider play activities that align with micro-climatic conditions on the site.
2. A natural, shaded clearing can be an ideal location for hut building, a quiet space for socialising, or a retreat
3. Examine the topography and site features and identify places where play and park elements can be best placed. For example, install seats in locations that allow distant views or under the shade of existing trees, working carefully around existing trees to maximise shade and enjoyment of the trees or consider a dry creek bed along an existing natural drainage line.
4. Consider the use of key site attributes such as rocks, timbers and plant materials for landscaping, way-finding and play experiences. By incorporating materials that can be found on site or locally, the nature playspace will blend into the wider landscape setting and offer opportunities for a deeper immersion, education and experience of the local environment.
5. Investigate how the creation of an inclusive nature playspace may assist in the regeneration or restoration of a natural setting. As part of the site analysis, identify issues that could be addressed through landscape improvements, including areas of erosion, vegetation to be protected and trails to be formalised. The creation of the playspace can reduce ongoing maintenance costs and celebrating greater connections with nature.
6. Spend time understanding the natural characteristics and attributes of the site to inform the type of play activities that are possible. This can include consideration of diversity and density of existing vegetation, health and resilience of the ecosystem, topography, water movement and wildlife.

## Become a nature play champion!

**There are lots of ways to champion nature play.**

Start by hosting an opening event that celebrates nature play and educates others about the benefits. You can engage with nature play educators or interested community groups to explore ongoing educational opportunities hosted at your nature playspace — such as a weekly nature based playgroup.

## Creepy crawlies

Some people may not want to enter natural areas or engage in nature play due to personal concerns about Australian wildlife. While nature play occurs across a variety of settings, many parks and playspaces in residential areas aren't home to dangerous wildlife.

Encourage people to interact and visit through built features like pathways, signage, education programs and adjacent natural areas. In situations where there is wildlife on site, educate the community on what to do and which areas to avoid. Some animals will only be active during particular times of the day or year.

## Chatting with your maintenance team

Nature play maintenance is completely different to traditional playspace maintenance — in fact, it often requires less work!

It's okay to let some nature spaces overgrow. Twigs and rocks that aren't cleaned up can be an invitation to play. Have a chat with your maintenance team to explain the purpose of nature play and gain support in appropriately maintaining the space.

## STEP TWO

# Get creative in design

Time to get creative and think about the possibilities for different nature play elements in your playspace! In this step, focus on the experiences your playspace could offer, rather than just equipment.



- Are there opportunities for discovery and adventure?
- What wayfinding techniques will guide users to explore different areas and elements in the playspace?
- How can gentle cues encourage different activities? (For example, a collection of sticks next to a frame for hut building.)

Think about how paths and surfaces take users on a journey through different experiences and spaces



- What loose parts can be used to enable creative imaginative play?
- How can different sized materials cater to different users? (Small twigs and branches can easily be moved by younger children, while large sticks and logs challenge strength and allow for bigger creations.)



- What sensory and temporal experiences will deepen connections with nature?
- What smells, textures, sights and sounds can be incorporated from the local environment?
- How can changing seasons be showcased?



- Are there educational opportunities for learning about Country, the environment and ecological processes?
- What storytelling elements, such as stone trails and wood carvings, will lead users on an adventure of discovery?

## Suggestions

1. Once a site has been selected, it's time to design the space and scope of the playspace. If it's a small local playspace, it may only include simple additions — such as stones and logs for seating, balancing and climbing. Neighbourhood playspaces may include more additions, such as connections to adjacent bushland areas, with clearances for loose parts play. Large regional playspaces may have new planted areas and trails with outdoor classrooms, water, rock and timber elements in the form of a dry creek bed, or discovery stations to explore and play with different materials.
2. Incorporating boulders of different heights — in alignment along a path, or to define a play area — is a simple way to create opportunities to discover the textural qualities of stones, scramble, step and climb over rocks, or provide informal seating.
3. Logs or timber rounds can provide climbing challenges at different heights, help guide users through different spaces, or create boundaries for play areas. For example, timber rounds can be cut and used vertically as stepping stones or climbing poles, or laid on their sides and carved with motifs as part of a trail. When placed adjacent to an accessible path, logs can provide a tactile edge for users in wheelchairs or be used for climbing and sitting.
4. Planting can be used to create different scales of spaces, such as smaller 'garden rooms' for quiet, imaginative play, tunnels of small trees, and sensory trails using aromatic plants. Make sure paths allow everyone to access these spaces.
5. Loose parts play aids creativity and learning. For example, placing sticks next to a hut frame teaches children the fine motor skills needed to balance sticks, and helps them learn how to construct structures.
6. Wet and dry elements can be highlighted through a feature such as a creek bed for users to learn about changing weather and seasons. Flowering or fruiting plants are another great way to highlight changes in seasons.
7. Bug hotels in accessible spaces can teach users about natural ecological processes.
8. Thinking about how the space works holistically will create opportunities for users to discover diverse environments. The layout of the space should consider which uses work well together and which need to be separated.

## Other resources

Head to the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) website for a list of registered landscape architects and other resources.

[aila.org.au](http://aila.org.au)

Centennial Parklands has a list of nature play education activities and resources for programming inspiration.

[centennialparklands.com.au](http://centennialparklands.com.au)

Nature Play Australia is an alliance of not-for-profit associations established to increase the time Australian children spend in unstructured play outdoors and in nature. Visit the website for tools and resources to plan and activate nature playspaces.

[natureplay.org.au](http://natureplay.org.au)

## No-mow zones

If there are existing native trees and vegetation on site, consider defining adjacent spaces and areas below trees as 'no-mow' areas. Watch the natural process unfold as seedlings, grasses and plants develop.

This is a great low-cost option if you can't afford planting! Informal paths can be mown in, and seedlings can be thinned out later to define boundaries. As the space develops, more permanent paths and spaces can be created.

# Applying Australian Standards in nature playspaces

AS 4685.0:2017 defines nature play as: “The elements of a playground consisting of natural, non-manufactured items that are incorporated into the playground, including items such as logs, boulders, plant materials and surfaces, changes of level and other landscape elements.”

The Standard also encourages the incorporation of natural materials within playgrounds: “Playgrounds can comprise any combination of playground equipment and natural/landscape features, and should ideally include a variety of textures and materials, spatial characteristics and surfaces. They should offer opportunities for physical movement and challenge; for creative/sensory expression; for cognitive and imaginative play; and for social interaction, role-play and fantasy. The availability of some

loose materials for play is important. The landscape itself provides many valuable play opportunities and adds value to the equipment. Natural features of a site, such as trees, rocks, logs and sloping banks, can be incorporated into the design.”

As this statement applies to all playspace elements, we should design nature playspaces with consideration of the Standards.

Though the Standards acknowledge the benefits of natural materials and elements often outweigh the risks, a risk assessment may be required to determine likely risk and how to manage it. Agencies like KidSafe have prepared helpful guides on how to manage and identify these risks.

## Designing with risks

Everyone will have a different comfort level and understanding of risk based on their own experiences. Strong commitment to listening, learning and advocacy and education will likely be required to bring these projects to life.

### To manage risk you can:

- Provide well designed playspaces away from hazards such as cars and roads
- Design for different skill levels
- Undertake appropriate risk management plans and risk benefit assessments during the design process to reduce the likelihood and consequence of risks
- Continue risk management through delivery and maintenance to eliminate hazards
- Communicate safety information on site
- Most importantly, engage experienced professionals to design and construct facilities that will follow best practice.



# Fingal Foreshore Park, Tweed Heads

## Best practice case study

Natural elements such as timbers, rocks and plant materials give users the freedom to choose their own adventure.



The playspace is protected from adjacent potential risks (e.g. busy roads, open water bodies)

Colours reflect the surrounding environment

Various play experiences provided

Seating provided is adequate for the scale and use of the playspace

Trails are weaved between existing trees and bushland for exploration

Natural fall zone treatment of mulch or sand

Art work tells stories uncovered in the engagement process

There are unprogrammed spaces for imaginative play

Informal play opportunities encourage creative and imaginative play

Minimise transfer requirements for people using mobility devices

Equipment theming and the colour palette respond to the local context

Lawn area for rest and quiet play

There are clear lines of sight throughout the playspace for carers

Provide plants of different heights, shapes and sizes to enable everyone to look, feel and smell

The layout of the playspace can easily be understood by a first-time user

Logs and boulders are used for seating, balancing and climbing

There are views or visual links to the local context outside the playspace, to contribute to a sense of play

## STEP THREE

# Delivering and maintaining

Nature play is a broad concept. Decide what you want your nature playspace's scope to be based on your site, budget, resources and goals. It doesn't need to be costly or difficult. Remember nature is free!



- Drawing from the outcomes of steps one and two, what is the scope of your playspace?
- What nature play elements do you want to include?



- What resources do you need to deliver the playspace?  
You might have internal council resources or local community resources, such as men's sheds, community garden networks, or local creators and makers that you can include.



- Do you need an expert to assist?  
If you don't have internal or community resources, or your project scale needs an expert to assist, think about engaging a landscape architect. They can work with you and the community through a co-design process by conducting a site analysis, identifying opportunities, and creating a design that works for your needs and budget.

# Nature play maintenance

Despite the benefits of nature play, it's normal to have concerns about ongoing maintenance. With a little thought and smart selection materials, we can minimise these doubts.

## Choose elements that require minimal maintenance.

Rocks, pebbles and logs are all good examples. Well selected plants also require little to no maintenance once established. Look for timber that doesn't require staining and is resistant to splitting and insect damage.

## Use sand in small areas.

Sand can be used and managed effectively in small areas, such as raised troughs. This reduces sand displacement and enhances accessibility. Ask maintenance staff to add simple checks to existing routine inspections so there are no unwanted surprises.

## Recognise that nature is always changing.

Councils place a lot of pride on well maintained parks and gardens, and nature play and natural processes can sometimes look messy — but that's okay. Nature play activities are open ended and can change day by day, and with the seasons. By providing signage and boundaries through paths or edges, you can define the play area and help users understand the intent and benefits of nature play.

## Deliver a maintenance plan.

Prepare a maintenance plan in collaboration with the designers and maintenance team, so the space continues to provide the best possible play outcomes.

## Chat with your maintenance team.

Nature play maintenance is completely different to traditional playspace maintenance — in fact, it often requires less work!

It's okay to let some nature spaces overgrow. Twigs and rocks that aren't cleaned up can become play opportunities. Have a chat with your maintenance team to explain the purpose of nature play and gain support in appropriately maintaining the space.

For more inspiration through our case studies, visit:  
**[everyonecanplay.nsw.gov.au](http://everyonecanplay.nsw.gov.au)**



Photo by Guy Wilkinson

# WATER PLAY

## The benefits of water play

**Water play is a great way to turn your playspace into a place of connection, discovery and celebration.**

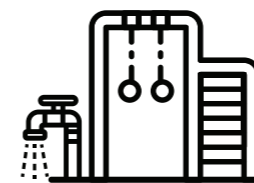
It's also a fun way to stay cool. Water play has many social and developmental benefits — helping to develop fine and gross motor skills across age ranges, coordination and problem solving skills, and providing opportunities to explore the senses.

As an open ended activity, it encourages imagination and creativity. And when water play becomes a group activity, it encourages children to engage in social and cooperative play. Gentle water play is restorative, relaxing and calming.

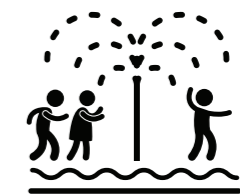
Access to water for play varies depending on where people live, their cultural background, socioeconomic factors and ability.

By incorporating water into our playspaces, everyone in our community can have the opportunity to experience the joy and benefits that water provides — regardless of age, ability, background or postcode.

Water play makes playspaces more interesting and distinctive by drawing on local stories and unique characteristics of place. When incorporated into existing site features and community stories, playspaces that reflect and celebrate our people, culture and environment can be created.



The water play sliding scale



Playspace with simple water play elements

**Water play opportunities**

Splash park with complex water play elements



# What is water play?

Water play is any activity that allows people to manipulate or appreciate water through actions like splashing, sprinkling, spraying, watering and more.

Elements can be as major as a splash park, or as minor as a tap or bubbler. Water play doesn't always mean you need to get wet!

When thinking about the possibilities for water play, it helps to imagine a sliding scale. This scale includes a broad range of opportunities for design and intervention to allow everyone access. Whatever your budget, context or vision, you can incorporate water play into your playspaces. Water play can be experienced in completely different environments — from small suburban playspaces to large national parks.

When considering water play elements in the early design phase, think about long-term maintenance and operation costs — especially for large water playspaces. This will influence the range of water play elements you include and where they will be located.

## Water play vs water recreation

In NSW we are lucky to have access to many natural bodies of water, such as creeks, rivers, wetlands, lakes and coastlines. These environments all offer wonderful opportunities for recreation and play, but come with greater risks and supervision requirements.

Water play in playspaces can provide a safer, more controlled environment to interact and play with water. Water play also enables people access to water in areas without natural bodies of water.



# Weighing in on water play

## A CONVERSATION WITH ALAN

**“I think it’s a great interactive place, and it’s brilliant for families.”**

Tumalong Park Playground is a regional destination playspace with high visitation. There is varied water play features, from jets and fountains to pumps and troughs, allowing users to choose how they want to engage with water.

As the Manager of Building Services for the precinct, Alan knows the importance of maintaining water playspaces.

“Water features provide an interactive play experience for all ages. The beauty is a small child that can freely run around here in a very controlled environment in the middle of Sydney. There are many things to think about when you’re trying to maintain a water play area. Treated water can be high impact on surfaces so you need to consider the materials used. I’d use aluminium or stainless steel, it’s a higher cost but longer lasting. Minimising contamination is another thing to think about. If there’s stuff the kids can throw into the water, try and reduce it as best you can, because it will end up increasing your maintenance costs. If you’re going to put interactive equipment in, try and source locally if possible so that it is easier to get replacement parts.

Tumalong Park Playground can be high maintenance, but it makes it worthwhile when you see the kids having fun.”

– Alan  
Manager, Building and Place Services  
Placemaking NSW

## Different types of water

Water play can use a variety of water types including potable, reticulated or recycled water. Each type has different applications and maintenance requirements.

### Potable water

Is the supply of drinking water through the mains, like in a residential house. Water needs to be drained from a playspace, which can be achieved by draining into a garden bed, or a stormwater or sewer system. A plumber is required to provide the potable water connection and connect to the stormwater or sewer system. There are less maintenance requirements for potable water than other types.

### Reticulated water

Is a system of reused water which is collected, UV or chemically treated, and reused. Reticulated water is often used in splash parks. The system is topped up with a potable water supply when required. Stormwater diverters are needed to keep rainwater and foreign materials out of the balance tank when the system is not in use. A specialist is required to document, install and maintain a reticulated water system. Most ongoing maintenance is caused by blockages.

### Recycled water

Is a similar system to reticulated water, however it is not UV or chemically treated. The reuse of recycled water poses a higher risk from pathogens within the water, requiring routine maintenances.

## STEP ONE

# Identify and understand your site

## HOW TO CREATE WATER PLAYSPACES



- What do you want this playspace to be and where will it be located?
- What is currently available in the local playspace network and what need are you trying to meet?
- Will it attract visitors from the surrounding areas, or is it a small upgrade to an existing local playspace?



- What Country is the site on?
- What is the history of the site?  
Local Aboriginal communities, Aboriginal Land Councils and recognised knowledge-holders have deep cultural connections to nature. By engaging with Traditional Custodians, Aboriginal Elders and leaders, we can gain a better understanding of the Country we work on, and the significance of specific natural elements in the site environment.



- Drawing from the outcomes of steps one and two, what is the scope of your playspace?
- What water play elements do you want to include?



- What resources do you need to deliver the playspace?  
You might have internal council resources or local community resources, such as men's sheds, the local water catchment authority, or local creatives and makers that you can include.



- Do you need an expert to assist?  
If you don't have internal or community resources, or your project scale needs an expert to assist, think about engaging a landscape architect to help. They can work with you and the community through a co-design process by conducting a site analysis, identifying opportunities, and creating a design that works for your needs and budget.

## Suggestions

1. Consider water play at the beginning of the design process to better utilise characteristics and existing infrastructure. This will ensure more sustainable, manageable solutions.
2. It is important to think about the health and maintenance requirements associated with different types of water play.
3. Swales and small creeks that hold water for a short period after rain can be used for water play by incorporating ramped walkways and decks, or trails along the water course.
4. Indentations in rocks or other surfaces can capture and hold water for play.
5. A water source at the top of a natural slope can be used for water play as it moves its way downhill.
6. Low flow taps with push-buttons can be used to deliver water onto a hard area with dams and levers for control.
7. Water that runs into raised troughs allows easy access for everyone, along with other items such as buckets, water wheels and streams to explore
8. Provide water play experiences relative to your playspace scale. Small local playspaces may only need a simple addition such as a water lever. Large regional playspaces may benefit from a range of different water play types. This can include anything - from creative use of water bubblers or taps, dry creek beds, water capturing devices, rain wheels, pumps, water troughs, water channels or outdoor showers, to misting stations, streams, shallow ponds, jets, splash pads or bespoke water play equipment.
9. Head to the Australian Institute of Landscape Architects (AILA) website for a full list of registered landscape architects and other resources [www.aila.org.au](http://www.aila.org.au)

## No water access on site?

**If you don't have access to water on site, you can explore other options that capture and funnel rain.**

Rock or concrete carvings can create fun channels that capture water and show its journey after rain. By utilising, rocks, boulders and concrete, you can create a dry creek bed that imitates a creek and will periodically fill with water. Elements that measure or respond to rain, such as gauges and rain wheels, can be used to celebrate rainfall in dry areas.

## Other resources

Water quality requirements for public spaces: NSW Public Health Act 2010 and Public Health Regulation 2012

Fencing requirements for water depth over 300mm: Australian Standard 1926.1-2012: Swimming pool safety, Part 1: Safety barriers for swimming pools

Slip resistance classification for surfacing: Australian Standard AS45862013: Slip resistance classification of new pedestrian surface materials.

## STEP TWO

# Get creative

Time to get creative and think about the possibilities of different water experiences you want to provide in your playspace! In this stage, you want to focus on the experiences your playspace could offer, rather than just equipment.



- What sensory and temporal experiences will deepen connections with water?
- What smells, textures, temperatures, sights and sounds can the manipulation of water provide?
- What other materials or structures can enhance this experience?



- Are there educational opportunities for learning about water and the history of water on site?
- How can experimentation with water flows be included?
- How can water play build scientific enquiry and problem-solving skills, such as learning about volume and weight?



- How can water play encourage creative and imaginative play?
- What other items can be added to the water to stimulate curiosity and creativity? (Sand, pine cones, leaves etc.)



- How can equipment and features enable multiple users to play at once?
- How can the water play experience encourage cooperation?
- How can people choose to get wet or stay dry while playing together?

# Suggestions

1. Water reacts with different materials in different ways. Consider what other materials are on site or can be used to maximise play and sensory opportunities. Rocks, sand, mud, timber and stone all react with and reveal different qualities of water. For example, mixed sand and water allow experimentation with guiding and moving water, due to the way water affects the consistency and permeability of sand.
2. Pumps and wheels provide exploration opportunities for moving water.
3. Mixing loose play with water can encourage imaginative play, such as leaf races.
4. Jets that cause splashes and noise can enhance the sensory experience of water.
5. Flows of water can be diverted and affected by gates and blockages, allowing for experimentation.
6. Raised water troughs and stations allow multiple users to interact and play together. Provide clear paths with enough space for parents and carers to stand or sit alongside users to enable a choice of wet or dry play,

## Supporting infrastructure

**Infrastructure to support the Everyone Can Play 'Can I Stay?' principle is particularly important for water playspaces.**

Think about providing changing facilities, hardstand areas for drying off, dry seating outside splash zones and shade sails.

Consider including level access to water play activities, taps at different heights, raised troughs, accessible surfacing, easy pushbuttons or large levers to control or pump water so everyone can enjoy water play.

You can also think about providing a range of wet and dry water play experiences. Remember shade, dry supervision areas with supportive seating, and accessible facilities.

It's also important to consider sustainable water use beyond the play experience. Build in capability to time water use and make sure water can be turned off in cold weather, rain and drought.

*Photo by Simon Wood*



## STEP THREE

# Delivering and maintaining

Water play is a broad concept. Decide what you want your water playspace's scope to be based on your site, budget, resources and goals. It doesn't need to be costly or difficult. Water play can be as simple as thinking differently about the selection and detailing of drinking bubblers.



- Drawing from the outcomes of steps one and two, what is the scope of your playspace?
- What water play elements do you want to include?



- What resources do you need to deliver the playspace?  
You might have internal council resources or local community resources, such as men's sheds, community garden networks, or local creators and makers that you can include.



- Do you need an expert to assist?  
If you don't have internal or community resources, or your project scale needs an expert to assist, think about engaging a landscape architect. They can work with you and the community through a co-design process by conducting a site analysis, identifying opportunities, and creating a design that works for your needs and budget.

# Water play maintenance

Despite the benefits of water play, it's normal to have concerns about ongoing maintenance. With a little thought and smart selection materials, we can minimise these doubts.

### Work with natural drainage.

Observing and using natural drainage works across the site ensures loose materials, such as sand and mulch, aren't washed away or onto access paths.

### Keep water play simple.

Water play doesn't have to be expensive! Simple items, such as a drinking bubbler or a push-button tap, are great options. Drainage can also be used as part of water play.

### Incorporate potable water.

Using potable water efficiently through push-button operation reduces the need for water quality testing. To improve sustainability, consider the ability to turn off or reduce water during drought events or cooler months. To conserve water for large play elements, consider limiting hours of use.

### Think of the weather.

Water play elements that are dependent on rainfall are flushed out by weather events - reducing maintenance needs.

### Consider playspace placement.

Large scale splash parks do require routine water testing and maintenance, just like a swimming pool. Some councils choose to locate splash parks next to pool facilities to maximise existing resources, while providing a free, accessible option for everyone.

# Water testing and safety

The *NSW Public Health Act* defines splash parks with water features or fountains that are intended to be bathed in for recreational purposes as swimming pools. So these splash parks have the same testing and safety requirements as swimming pools. Water play that is not intended for bathing and uses potable water can reduce the need for testing. Contact your local public health unit for further advice.

# Water depth

Any water depth poses a drowning risk, with an increased risk for water depths up to 300 mm. Fencing is legally required if there is any water over 300 mm in depth. For all water playspaces (small, medium and large), water should be able to freely drain and not pool for long periods of time. For large water playspaces, more than one drainage point is required in case blockages occur.



# 4. TOOLS

THE TOOLS TO TRANSLATE  
IDEAS INTO ACTION

Do the best you can with the resources you have!  
The following tools will help ensure everyone can play.



# Playspace Evaluation Checklist

## A tool for reviewing existing playspaces and playspace designs.

Each playspace is unique and not all playspaces will meet every criteria of this Checklist.

Use the Everyone Can Play Evaluation Checklist to see where improvements can be made, in line with available budget, playspace size and location. Remember, it's about doing the best you can with the resources you have.

This Evaluation Checklist is designed to ensure more people can get to, play and stay at existing playspaces in our communities. It can also be used as a tool for reviewing inclusive playspace designs.

**Playspace name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Playspace address:** \_\_\_\_\_

## Can I get there?

### Location

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
Information about the playspace is available before I go.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Car parking is easily available/close to the playspace (e.g. street parking, a dedicated car park).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Accessible car parking bays are provided.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The playspace is connected to a shared path or cycle route.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a public transport link (bus stop, train station, light rail) close to the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The playspace's access point can be used easily and comfortably by most people without having to cross a main road or other barrier (e.g. unsignalised intersections, kerbs, streets without footpaths or pram ramps).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Layout

The layout of the playspace can easily be understood by a first-time user.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The playspace has signage or a map to aid navigation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Points of entry and exit are easy to locate from inside and outside the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are pause points at the entry and exit to view and assess play opportunities on arrival.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
There is an area within the playspace for carers to interact and supervise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are clear lines of sight throughout the playspace for carers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Play equipment for different age groups is grouped together without being separated from the main area of activity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Formal and informal seating is provided in appropriate locations (e.g. at regular intervals, near shade, adjacent to activity areas).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Signage

Signage is easy to read, using simple language, graphics and high colour contrast.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Signage is located at a height that is easy to read for all playspace users, including children and those in wheelchairs.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Pictographs and braille are provided on key instructional and safety signage.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Access

There is an orientation path or circulation path within the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a flush edge from the path surface to the play surface for easy access by all users. (The entire surface does not need to be flush – just key transition points.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Access gates can be operated by an adult using a wheelchair or mobility device.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Can I play?

### Play experience

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
The playspace provides opportunities for a variety of age groups (e.g. toddlers, children, teenagers, adults).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Varied play types are provided.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are a variety of multi-user equipment pieces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are opportunities for intergenerational play.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equipment is challenging for multiple age groups and ability levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Play opportunities can be accessed at a variety of heights.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Everyone can access the main play piece and have meaningful play experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are multiple opportunities for people with limited mobility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are unprogrammed spaces for imaginative play.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are quiet points within the playspace for rest and passive relaxation.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Wayfinding

There is a map at the playspace entry to assist with navigation and decision-making.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Maps follow the points listed for inclusive signage (i.e. easy to read, located at a height for all users to see).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is directional signage along activity trails.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a clear path network hierarchy (e.g. easy to distinguish between main orientation path, circulation paths and play paths).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is an appropriate colour contrast between the paths and the play surfaces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Access

The site's topography creates an obstacle or barrier to playspace access (e.g. steep slope with no footpath, stair-only access).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Any barriers can be overcome with the inclusion of a ramp.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The orientation path is clearly identifiable.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
There is an orientation path linking to, in and around the playspace that links to access points and key activity areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The orientation path has a consistent width and surface finish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The orientation path conforms to relevant Australian access standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The orientation path connects directly to all access points.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The majority of play elements are connected to a circulation path.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The circulation path has a consistent width and surface finish.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Equipment

Equipment is well connected.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The majority of equipment is designed so that adults can be fit in, on or under (e.g. swings, slides, climbing structures).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Elevated equipment pieces include a ramped access point for people of various ages with limited mobility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Dynamic play pieces are arranged in a sequence promoting skill development.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Equipment theming and the colour palette respond to the local context.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Surfacing

There is an accessible edge or point of access (flush or ramped) from the circulation path to the majority of play surfaces.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
All accessible equipment pieces have an accessible surface treatment to enable ease of use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The majority of play pieces have an accessible surface treatment or accessible path to the equipment's entry and exit points to enable ease of use. (Consider relevant fall zone surfacing requirements.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Path surfaces provide sensory play opportunities through materiality or texture features.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is enough circulation space (beyond fall zone requirements) around the majority of equipment to provide safe movement.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Can I stay?

### Safety

	NO CHANGE	POTENTIAL CHANGE	CHANGE REQUIRED
The playspace can be clearly observed from the street or neighbouring properties.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are clear sight lines to all play equipment pieces from the pathways and seating options to ensure comfortable supervision by carers.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The playspace is protected from adjacent potential risks (e.g. busy roads, open water bodies).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is a sufficient boundary enclosure to provide a secure environment (e.g. fence, natural features such as mounds, rocks, planting).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is adequate lighting provided from the street or within the playspace to support appropriate time of day use.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Supporting facilities (BBQ, toilet, car park) are adequately lit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Facilities

Seating provided is adequate for the scale and use of the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Seating provides various options to cater for a range of users (e.g. varied heights, back rests, arm rests).	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Various seating arrangements, such as individual and group seating, are provided.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is enough clearance space adjacent to the seat to park a pram, wheelchair or mobility device without blocking the circulation space or path.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are seating opportunities provided in a quiet location for retreat.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is access to drinking water.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Water can easily be accessed by all playspace users and has fixtures that are easy to operate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Rubbish bins are provided and suitably located.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Bins can be utilised by all playspace users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Toilet access is available within the playspace or nearby.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is an accessible toilet nearby that includes changing facilities for babies, children and adults.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are picnic tables provided within and adjacent to the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

NO CHANGE  
POTENTIAL CHANGE  
CHANGE REQUIRED

There are BBQ facilities provided.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Facilities are accessible to all users, are considerate of children's safety and are easy to operate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Landscape

There is an adequate amount of shade to cover the majority of play activities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There is an adequate amount of shade to cover seating areas and protect park users.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
The surrounding landscape provides a comfortable and enjoyable environment to be in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
There are views or visual links to the local context outside the playspace, to contribute to a sense of play.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>



# Design Principles Checklist

**A tool to assist in determining priorities when designing a playspace.**

The best practice recommendations are designed to inspire innovation, challenge existing processes and trigger designers to create inviting playspaces with inclusion top of mind.

Not all design recommendations will be relevant for all playspaces. Consider the unique context of the playspace to ensure the design is appropriate for the site's characteristics, size, budget and design aspirations.

## Find

### Location, layout and accessibility

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Research what Country the site is on, and find out about the history.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Look at the playspace network, and where this project will fit in.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connect to street footpaths and the park entry with safe road crossing points.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connect with transport networks and include appropriate arrival facilities: pedestrian and cycle routes, accessible parking, mini-van drop off zones, busy bays through close proximity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Orientate and position the playspace to utilise the site's unique features, including views, existing vegetation, topography and passive surveillance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a primary entry point that is linked by an orientation path to help people connect between all points of entry and exit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a formal entry zone that provides a sense of welcome to the playspace and a pause point to observe the layout, become familiar with the space and decide where to go first. A slow introduction to the playspace is important to some people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Signage and wayfinding

Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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## Play experience

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Equipment and surfacing

Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a variety of play surfacing to provide a contrast between activity, fall and circulation zones.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Landscape

Look at the local climate and how it can be incorporated into the design.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Develop a design that reflects the local environment and integrates the playspace into the surrounding landscape, utilising existing vegetation and key views.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Confirm topographical issues on the site such as flooding and consider how to design for least impact.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider shade patterns, use of natural shade when siting the playspace and prevailing winds.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Safety

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Ensure clear sight lines for passive surveillance from the street or surrounding property are not obstructed.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate lighting to the orientation paths and facilities in larger playspaces to enhance time of day use opportunities and provide a feeling of safety.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Facilities

Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Fit

### Location, layout and accessibility

Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include sufficient hard surface adjacent to all seats, allowing wheelchair and pram parking without obstructing the path.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

LOW PRIORITY  
MEDIUM PRIORITY  
HIGH PRIORITY  
N/A

Ensure there is an appropriately located flush edge to the play surface from the access path to help wheelchairs, prams and people with limited mobility travel between the areas with ease.

## Signage and wayfinding

Include universally designed and multi-sensory entry signage and emergency/maintenance contact details if appropriate.

Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)

## Equipment and surfacing

Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.

## Choose

### Location, layout and accessibility

If possible, locate the playspace adjacent to supporting facilities, such as toilets, informal recreation spaces/kick-about and food and beverage facilities.

Consider a formal entry zone that provides a sense of welcome to the playspace and a pause point to observe the layout, become familiar with the space and decide where to go first. A slow introduction to the playspace is important to include all people.

Include a vantage point/s with seating and shade from which the carers can see the whole playspace.

Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.

Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
<b>Signage and wayfinding</b>				
Develop a map of the playspace that outlines the location of key features to help people navigate the space. (Primarily for destination playspaces only.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think about the different paths and surfaces, take users through different spaces and experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Play experience</b>				
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explore opportunities for bike tracks and play paths. This could include directional or activity-themed markings, a variety of bumps, dips and level changes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Equipment and surfacing</b>				
If installing water play, ensure that there are ways people can join in without getting wet.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure surfacing to all abilities play pieces is accessible and compliant with the relevant Australian standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
<b>Landscape</b>				
Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Safety</b>				
Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Facilities</b>				
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
<b>Join In</b>				
<b>Location, layout and accessibility</b>				
Connect to street footpaths and the park entry with safe road crossing points.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connect with transport networks and include appropriate arrival facilities: pedestrian and cycle routes, accessible parking, mini-van drop off zones, bus bays through close proximity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an accessible path (without stair-only access) from/to the street, carpark and supporting facilities that are wide enough for a wheelchair and pram to pass each other with ease.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a primary entry point that is linked by an orientation path to help people connect between all points of entry and exit.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure there is an appropriately located flush edge to the play surface from the access path to help wheelchairs, prams and people with limited mobility travel between the areas with ease.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Play experience</b>	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider a range of dynamic play options to balance, climb, rock, slide, swing or spin.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Equipment and surfacing

Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure surfacing to all abilities play pieces is accessible and compliant with the relevant Australian standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Select equipment that enables multiuser play experiences.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

<b>Landscape</b>	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish a well-considered planting palette specific to the playspace's context (orientation, shade and wind provision) and environment. This will create a micro-climate for year-round enjoyment with seasonal variation and maximise comfort at all times of day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include shade structures, sails and significant tree canopies to provide shade to play zones and seating areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Safety

Ensure all playspace equipment, fall zones and surfacing complies with relevant Australian standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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## Facilities

Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include picnic facilities with a solid shade structure to provide year-round weather protection.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Connect with local community groups such as Men's Sheds, makers and creators to deliver the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Thrive

### Location, layout and accessibility

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Play experience

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide multiple play opportunities (both comfortable and challenging) to engage people of different ages and ability levels.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create informal and imaginative play opportunities to encourage creativity.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Consider including sensory focused and natural elements. These could include interactive technology, music, sand, water and planting to stimulate the senses.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Incorporate the changing seasons into the playspace through design. Consider how and when the playspace will be used at different times of the day seasonally.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Explore opportunities for bike tracks and play paths. This could include directional or activity-themed markings, a variety of bumps, dips and level changes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Suggest activity opportunities for nature based play - for example, leave sticks near a frame to encourage hut building.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Equipment and surfacing

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Include equipment pieces for all abilities and ages (flush carousel, hammock or basket swing, in-ground trampolines, ramp access to feature structure) that are fully integrated into the playspace and reachable for everyone.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure the majority of equipment pieces provide inclusive and engaging play experiences for all people.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Think about what items could add to the experience and encourage creativity and imagination.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create surfacing to sensory play and main equipment pieces that is comfortably trafficable by all, including those with limited mobility.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Landscape

Include a landscape area (e.g. turf kick-about) close by to provide opportunities for unstructured play and connections to the local environment.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
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### Safety

Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure all playspace equipment, fall zones and surfacing complies with relevant Australian standards.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

## Belong

### Location, layout and accessibility

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Orientate and position the playspace to utilise the site's unique features, including views, existing vegetation, topography and passive surveillance.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
If possible, locate the playspace adjacent to supporting facilities, such as toilets, informal recreation spaces/kick-about and food and beverage facilities.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include sufficient hard surface adjacent to all seats, allowing wheelchair and pram parking without obstructing the path.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include a vantage point/s with seating and shade from which the carers can see the whole playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a quiet area away from the activity zones with seating and a sense of enclosure to provide a place for quiet play and rest.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Arrange activity zones with subtle separation, without boundaries or significant distance between them.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Facilities

Create a gathering point with seating and shade to promote social interaction.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide variation of seating types (back and armrest, platform seating) at regular intervals on the orientation path to ensure everyone has appropriate rest options.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide bins, bubbler/water and bike racks near playspace entry points and picnic facilities. (Ensure these facilities are accessible to people of different sizes and mobility.)	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate, accessible picnic and BBQ facilities situated within the playspace or close by.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include picnic facilities with a solid shade structure to provide year-round weather protection.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include an accessible toilet/s and feature change facilities (babies, children, adults) near the playspace.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Signage and wayfinding

	LOW PRIORITY	MEDIUM PRIORITY	HIGH PRIORITY	N/A
Include universally designed and multi-sensory entry signage and emergency/maintenance contact details if appropriate.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Play experience

Find playful ways to incorporate the stories of Country, including environment and ecological processes.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a flexible, imaginative and unique playspace that is not solely reliant on equipment for play value.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Ensure fun and challenging individual and multi-user play options are included.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Position seating and shade directly adjacent to water play to ensure carers can closely supervise.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Landscape

Develop a design that reflects the local environment and integrates the playspace into the surrounding landscape, utilising existing vegetation and key views.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Establish a well-considered planting palette specific to the playspace's context (orientation, shade and wind provision) and environment. This will create a micro-climate for year-round enjoyment with seasonal variation and maximise comfort at all times of day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Include shade structures, sails and significant tree canopies to provide shade to play zones and seating areas.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

### Safety

Provide a formal or informal boundary enclosure (fence, gate, landform, planting) to provide a secure environment from potential risks. Risks could include busy roads and open water bodies.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Create a sense of distinction between quiet areas and activity spaces through landform, planting and surface materials.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate lighting provisions (streetscape or playspace specific) to ensure playspaces are safe at different times of the day.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Provide appropriate lighting to the orientation paths and facilities in larger playspaces to enhance time of day use opportunities and provide a feeling of safety.	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

