



# Newsbrief

Promoting the Child's Right to Play

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International Play Association  
England, Wales and Northern Ireland

## Farewell to David Yearley

David Yearley, IPA EWNl treasurer and membership secretary is resigning at the next AGM (AGM detailed later in this newsbrief) due to other work commitments.

If you are interested in taking on the role of either treasurer and/or membership secretary or would like to become a member of the IPA EWNl Committee, nomination forms are included in the AGM papers.

There is currently a shortage of IPA EWNl Committee members from Northern England. We would like to encourage IPA members in the North to step forward so that we can be more representative of the whole of the country. For more information please contact Paul Soames on 020 7608 8770 or email [paul.soames@cafamily.org.uk](mailto:paul.soames@cafamily.org.uk)

## IPA 2011 Conference Progress

Plans for the IPA 2011 Conference are well under way with the first of the two conference advisory groups meeting in March. The *Programme Advisory Group*, which includes representatives with a broad knowledge of play and playwork, will advise on the content of the conference programme, facilitate the exchange of ideas and the needs of the different professions that have an interest in the conference whilst the *Conference Organisation Group* which includes the WLGA (Welsh Local Government Association), Funky Dragon, Skills Active, the Office of the Children's Commissioner for Wales, Play England, Playboard Northern Ireland, London Play, Visit Wales, Play Scotland and Children in Wales will give general organisational support and advice to the conference co-ordinator.

The Conference will take place at City Hall on the edge of Cardiff City Centre between Monday 4th and Thursday 7th July 2011.

The title of the conference will be *Playing into the Future*.

For further information about IPA 2011 go to:  
[www.playwales.org.uk/page.asp?id=485](http://www.playwales.org.uk/page.asp?id=485)

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**Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child concerns a child's right to play and leisure:**

1. States Parties recognize the right of the child to rest and leisure, to engage in play and recreational activities appropriate to the age of the child and to participate freely in cultural life and the arts.

2. States Parties shall respect and promote the right of the child to participate fully in cultural and artistic life and shall encourage the provision of appropriate and equal opportunities for cultural, artistic, recreational and leisure activity.

## United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child concluding observations - What's been happening since?

In October the *Committee on the Rights of the Child* (the body of independent experts that monitors the implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child by its State parties) reported on the situation of children in the UK. This is a round-up of what's been happening since:

### Wales

On the 12 March the Welsh Assembly Government and the Wales UNCRC monitoring group hosted a Seminar '**UNCRC: Let's Get it Right! - Taking forward the United Convention on the Rights of the Child in Wales**'. With contributions from Funky Dragon (the children and young people's parliament), Barnardos Cymru, Children in Wales, Children's Commissioner for Wales and Play Wales, the aims of the conference were to:

- raise awareness of children and young people's rights and the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child's Concluding Observations 2008.
- review progress on realising children and young people's rights in Wales and work together to identify children and young people's rights based solutions.
- contribute to a national 5 year children and young people's rights action plan.

These were the key messages from the play workshop:

- When there is a duty on local authorities to provide for play, any play sufficiency audits undertaken by local authorities must provide the mechanism to measure play provision in terms of quality, not just quantity.
- Many of the barriers to children's play would be overcome if decision makers (i.e. planning, transport) considered the impact of decisions on children's play.
- Provision should be available when children need it (i.e. weekends and school holidays)

### England

**The All Party Parliamentary Group for Children** met on the 2nd February to look at the UNCRC from an international perspective, examining the impact it has made in other countries and what lessons there are for the UK to learn from implementation in other nations.

Chair, Baroness Delyth Morgan, Parliamentary Undersecretary of State for Children, Young People and Families made the following observations:

*'There has been significant progress in improving children's lives with the UN Committee recognising that children are an obvious priority to the UK Government. For example ... the play strategy involving the investment of over £235 million in increasing the number of safe and stimulating places for children to play.'*

The Department for Children, Family and Schools recently published **The Children's Plan - one year on** which highlighted play amongst its priorities for 2009:

*'Play is integral to a happy childhood. We also know that play has real benefits for children's development including raising physical activity levels, helping to build social and emotional resilience, strengthening friendships, and helping*

In March (2009), the **Children's Rights Alliance for England** published the results of a survey undertaken one year prior to the 2008 examination of the UK's implementation of the UNCRC by the UN Committee on the Rights of the Child. ***Beyond article 12: The local implementation of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child in England*** made the following observations:

*'Analysis of responses from local authorities suggests that knowledge about the UNCRC in local authorities, from strategic level to grass roots delivery, is far from consistent, and that children's rights do not routinely inform strategic planning or day-to-day work.'*

You can download the report at: [www.crae.org.uk](http://www.crae.org.uk) or phone 020 7278 8222

children learn to deal with risk. In the *Time to Talk* consultation, parents and children told us that they wanted more safe places to play outside. Therefore, in the *Children's Plan* and in subsequent announcements, we have committed to spend a total of £235 million between 2008-9 and 2010-11 to:

- *rebuild or renew up to 3,500 playgrounds and make these accessible to disabled children; and*
- *create 30 new adventure playgrounds for 8-13-year-olds in disadvantaged areas, supervised by trained staff."*

Download ***The Children's Plan - one year on*** at: [www.dcsf.gov.uk/oneyearon](http://www.dcsf.gov.uk/oneyearon) or phone 0870 000 2288 for a copy.

## Northern Ireland

At the meeting of the **All Party Parliamentary Group for Children** (outlined above) Patricia Lewsley, Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People said that *'following devolution in May there is no longer one minister for children in Northern Ireland. Responsibility for children's issues passed to the Office for the First Minister and Deputy First Minister (OFMDFM) and two ministers share joint responsibility for the Children and Young People Unit'*.

She also added:

- *The First Minister and Deputy First Minister both met with the UN Committee and outlined their commitment to the UNCRC. Progress has been made with every department in Northern Ireland incorporating a Children's Champion.*
- *In Northern Ireland there is a Ministerial subgroup focusing on children and young people that has six key priorities, including: post-conflict issues, police technologies (including tasers); equal treatment; youth justice; segregated education; and poverty. She argued that the concluding observations should be incorporated into these priorities.*
- *The Northern Irish government is currently consulting on draft proposals for the second action plan under its ten-year children's strategy. Patricia is asking for part 6 (which relates to rights) to include clear action on the concluding observations.*

The office of the Northern Ireland Commissioner for Children and Young People (NICCY) launched the findings of its 2007/08 Review of Children's Rights in Northern Ireland on 17 February 2009. The report of the work – entitled ***'Children's Rights: Rhetoric or Reality'*** made the following 'priority action areas' regarding play:

- *'The production of time-bound and adequately resourced action plans that outline how the implementation of the positive rhetoric contained within the Play Policy will be effectively translated into reality ...'*
- *'The realisation of the aims of the Play Policy will not be achieved without increased financial investment. It is imperative that adequate resourcing is sourced and ring-fenced for the lifespan of the action plans'.*
- *'Greater coordination and cooperation across all government departments directly responsible for the provision of play...'*

Download the report at: [www.niccy.org](http://www.niccy.org) or phone 028 9031 1616 for a copy.

## IPA EWNI AGM Reminder

The IPA EWNI AGM will be held on Thursday 7 May at 1pm first floor Holiday Inn, Castle Street, Cardiff, CF10 1XD. It will be hosted by Play Wales during their *Spirit of Adventure Play* conference.

**How would you like to receive this newsbrief?** we are trying to cut down on the number of paper copies we send out which is why you may have received this electronically. We appreciate that not everybody has access to email so we won't stop sending out paper copies to those who don't have access to email.

If you do not want to receive this newsletter via email please let the editor know:

**northoffice@playwales.org.uk**  
**or phone Annette (01745) 851816**

If you would like to join IPA EWNI, an organisation devoted to promoting and protecting the child's right to play please visit:

[www.ipa-ewni.org.uk/members.html](http://www.ipa-ewni.org.uk/members.html) and download an application pack.

IPA EWNI is a registered charity no. 1094980

## Play in the news

### What are we doing to our kids?

In March 2009 BBC Cymru Wales, to coincide with the 50th anniversary of the United Nations' declaration on the rights of the child, turned the spotlight on childhood with a special season of programmes and online content about growing up in Wales today.

By asking **What are we doing to our kids?** the aim was to spark a national discussion across a range of themes, including how children play today. As part of this work BBC Cymru and The Institute of Welsh Affairs (IWA) produced a report which was based on conversations with children and adults around Wales.



Parents and grandparents thought children today were less free to play without supervision and felt childhood had deteriorated as a result. In Cardiff, adults were concerned about the danger of traffic, but this was less of a worry elsewhere. All the groups were aware of "stranger danger", although the media's role in raising that awareness was recognised. Adults believed that the dangers children faced were not new, but the extent of the risks had grown.

Download the **What are we doing to our kids?** report at:  
[www.bbc.co.uk/wales/childhood](http://www.bbc.co.uk/wales/childhood)

### The Good Childhood® Inquiry

The Good Childhood Inquiry was commissioned by The Children's Society and launched in September 2006 as the UK's first independent national inquiry into childhood. Its aims were to renew society's understanding of modern childhood and to inform, improve and inspire all our relationships with children.

Evidence was contributed by over 30,000 people – including over 20,000 children - taking part in polls, research and focus groups. The result of this inquiry is the report **A Good Childhood: Searching for Values in a Competitive Age** published on 5 February 2009 and written by Richard Layard and Judy Dunn. The report includes recommendations from the panel to parents, teachers, the Government, the media and society in general.

To view the report go to:  
[www.childrensociety.org.uk](http://www.childrensociety.org.uk)

**If you are an IPA EWNI member and would like to contribute to future issues of this newsbrief please contact the editor:**

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