

LET GROW

Let Them PLAY Kit

Encourage kids to solve problems, make smart choices, and work well with others through unstructured play.

INCLUDES:

Parent Letter
100 Things List
Backyard Games

Kid Zone Poster
Let Them Play Pledge



Dear Parent,

Kids used to spend most of their summer playing outside with any other kids who were outside, too. Their days were loose, unscheduled, and largely unsupervised. Things have changed, though, and summers have become a time for adult-directed activities.

Yet free play—play where kids decide what to do—is crucial for children to develop the multitude of complex skills needed to be successful learners and, later, successful adults. Dr. Peter Gray, one of Let Grow’s founders says, **“No amount of things we give our kids or classes we enroll them in can compensate for what they lose if we don’t allow them plenty of opportunity for free play.”** You can look for his TEDx Talk on this subject, too.

When kids make their own fun, like playing tag, they can actually get more exercise than when they participate in organized sports. And when they play independently, from basketball to make-believe, they develop leadership and problem-solving skills.

How can we give our kids this free-play advantage? If you are lucky enough to live where lots of kids are already running around the neighborhood, just let your kids go out. Encourage your family, friends, and neighbors to create a Let Them Play Zone where kids really are playing on their own.

We’re including information, resources, and just fun stuff to enjoy in this Let Them Play Kit. Then if you’d like to take it a step further, we’d also invite you to look at starting a Let Grow Play Club with other families. It’s super simple, and we have a handy guide to get you started. For this, go to LetGrow.org/PlayClub.

Until then, enjoy the material in this kit. We hope it helps your kids grow in ways you never imagined.



I'm **BORED** Activity List

100 things to do when you can't think of anything to do.

Play Duck,
Duck, Goose.

Play a game you
remember from
gym class.

Look under rocks.
(Be sure to put
them back.)

Write kindness
notes.

Play tag.

Pretend to be
someone famous.

Collect things
to donate.

See how many different
flowers you can find.

Make your own
DIY video.

Draw something,
using an online
tutorial.

Paint rocks.

Find a DIY project
on YouTube.

Create something
out of cardboard.

Sew something.

Color.

Make slime.

Make paper
airplanes.

Make a cake and
decorate it.

Draw something you
see outside.

Do origami.

Pretend to be a dog or cat.	Find a new way to play with an old toy.	Play cards.	Make an indoor basketball game.
Tell ghost stories around a pretend campfire.	Find and play a Minute to Win It game.	Play hangman.	Pretend you are a _____.
Play hide-and-seek.	Invent your own game with dice.	Invent your own game with a deck of cards.	Play a board game.
Play 21 questions.	Play hopscotch.	Set up a lemonade stand.	Play in the sprinkler.
Have fun with water balloons.	Feed the birds.	Go on a bug hunt.	Climb a tree.
Fly a kite.	Take pictures.	Have a paper boat race.	Have a picnic.
Write someone a letter.	Write a poem.	Write about a wish you have.	Write predictions about your future.
Create a road or racetrack with tape.	Play school or _____.	Make a fort.	Play a game of I Spy.
Do a puzzle.	Have a "name that food" taste-testing contest.	Put on a puppet show.	Create something out of duct tape.
Have a car or bike wash.	Paint with a squirt gun.	Garden.	Play with bubbles.



Play catch.	Play Simon Says.	Call a friend and tell them a story.	Create a treasure hunt with clues.
Set up for an outdoor movie.	Watch the clouds and look for shapes.	Set up a tent.	Make mud pies.
Ride your bike.	Make an obstacle course.	Have a race.	Do some yoga.
Invent your own workout.	Jump rope, hula-hoop, or Frisbee.	Play balloon volleyball or real volleyball.	Kick a ball around.
Learn a new dance or have a dance party.	Go for a walk.	Play follow the leader.	Visit a new playground.
Look up and read about how to _____.	Write a scavenger hunt.	Find a place outside to read.	Write an alternate ending to the last book you read.
Invent your own backyard game.	Play charades.	Invent your own game.	Make play dough and create awesome things.
Have a talent show.	Teach a little kid something.	Play Four Square.	Play "Would you rather?"
Make up a new game using only a ball.	Create chalk art.	Build with blocks or LEGOs.	Throw a neighborhood parade.
Read a book you loved when you were little.	Write a news report.	Send a postcard.	Write a positive message to a worker.



Let Them
PLAY

ZONE

SUPERVISION NOT REQUIRED

LET GROW



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Let Them PLAY

KID PLEDGE

I will play respectfully. I will not deliberately hit or physically hurt another child.

I understand I need to get permission to leave the area.

I agree to listen to the adults. They'll only get involved when they need to, and then it's my job to listen.

PARENT PLEDGE

I understand that not all kids will be happy all the time at Play Club.

I understand that the adults will not intervene in the children's disagreements.

I understand that if my child deliberately hurts someone, they need to take a break.

I understand that this is a chance for my child to become more resilient, resourceful, and mature.

WE ALL AGREE TO encourage kids to solve problems, make smart choices, and work well with others through unstructured play.

