



Media Release
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
Tuesday 18th March

Theatre experiences in the playground

Children and their families are invited to interactive theatre experiences in playgrounds to celebrate the art of imagination.

The Art of Play, a Women’s Circus and VicHealth initiative, has been activating public playgrounds in Melbourne’s west for children and their families during February and March.

The finale **PlayTime** events will take place at the public playgrounds, with improvised music and songs performed by adults and children alike. Imaginations will be inspired, hula-hoops will become magic tunnels and children will become animals.

PlayTime:

Sunday 23rd March 1.15 -2pm & 2.45 -3.30pm	Kevin Wheelahan Gardens - Devonshire Road Sunshine as part of MaDE in Brimbank
Thursday 27th March 10 -12pm	Kevin Wheelahan Gardens - Devonshire Road Sunshine (Next to Salvation Army)
Friday 28th March 9.30 -11.30am	Skinner Reserve - Churchill Avenue Braybrook (Beside Community Centre, currently in development)
Saturday 29th March 10 -11am, 11.30 -12.30pm & 1 -2pm	ArtPlay - Birrarung Marr Park Melbourne City
Media are invited to preview the PlayTime performance – Thursday 20th March 11.30am -12pm at Drill Hall – 395 Barkly Street, Footscray.	

Children and their families from schools and community groups within the western suburbs have been playing at Skinner Reserve and Kevin Wheelahan Gardens, with the *Art of Play* ‘playrangers’, throughout February and March. The playrangers take cues from kids to help them direct their own playground adventures.

Artistic Director at **The Art of Play**, Vanessa Chapple said: *“The theatre event, **PlayTime**, is an interactive experience which tells a story animated by the imaginative choreographies children have exhibited in the playgrounds during four months of The Art of Play project. The Art of Play team will perform a story for the children they have been playing with, and invite them to join the adventure.*

*“**PlayTime** has been developed through the observation and experience of children from schools, playgroups and kindergartens in the west which we have connected with in the parks during this first phase of The Art of Play”.*



Children and their families are invited to come and join the interactive theatre events at one or all of the dates. **The Art of Play** team of playrangers will take you on a journey through the playground.

The **Art of Play** project is funded by VicHealth's MOTION program, which aims to improve people's health by giving them opportunities to get creative, active and involved in their local community through arts activities. Maribyrnong City Council and Brimbank City Council are both project partners.

VicHealth CEO Jerril Rechter said the **The Art of Play** projects are built on the philosophy that sport isn't the only way to get physically active.

"This project is designed to inspire people who may not usually get involved in physical activity to get moving. The idea is to make everyone feel welcome to join in and have fun in the process," Ms Rechter said.

"Regular physical activity also improves mental health and increases resilience against stress, anxiety and depression, so I'd encourage Maribyrnong and Brimbank kids, big and small, to go along and get active."

The Women's Circus is an award winning arts organisation that works closely with communities to build sustainable cross- art form projects through cultural partnerships.

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Interviews are available with Artistic Director of The Art of Play, Vanessa Chapple on mobile 0458 617 789.

