



# Symposium 2017: **Just for The FUN Of It!**

## PROGRAM - 11 MARCH 2017.

Gold Coast Recreation Centre, 1525 Gold Coast Highway, Palm Beach, Gold Coast.

Speaker bios:



Time	Speaker	Session and Synopsis
8am	Registration	And tea & coffee ☺
8.30am	<b>Donna Little</b>	<b>Mistress of Ceremonies' Welcome</b> As Mistress of Ceremonies, Donna will keep the Symposium program moving, and delegates too!
8.35am	<b>Craig Williams</b> , Cultural Consultant Yugambeh Yarga	<b>Welcome to Country</b> Craig is a descendant of Jackey-Jackey, King of Logan-Pimpama, and Jenny Graham, a prominent Aboriginal woman in the South-East region. Craig is a Queensland Government Indigenous Advisor for National Parks, Recreation, Sport and Racing, a member of the Gold Coast Commonwealth Games 2018 Indigenous advisory committee, the Queen's Baton Design Indigenous advisory committee, Dreamworld's Corroboree Indigenous advisory committee and was a 2016 AFL Multicultural Ambassador.
9.10am	<b>Donna Little</b>	<b>Playtime</b> - Time to have some fun and get moving
9.25am	<b>Hyahno Moser</b> , Nature Play QLD	<b>Nature Play – Where Children Find Fun &amp; Freedom</b> What is the role of freedom in childhood and FUN? Why is nature and outdoor play such an amazing conduit for freedom? How is freedom central to healthy childhood development? What is the future for freedom in childhood in a world of protection and control? What vision do we want to create for our children for a future that value freedom?
9.45am	Keynote Speaker, <b>Patrick Babant</b> , 13 yo.	<b>How to Encourage Kids To Connect With Nature.</b> Patrick is the City of Gold Coast Naturally GC Ambassador.
10.00am	Keynote Speaker, <b>Dr Michael Carr-Gregg</b> , Psychologist & Author	<b>Letting Kids be Kids</b> Today's parents often worry that their children will be at a disadvantage if they are not engaged in constant learning, but imaginative, unstructured outdoor and indoor play goes a long way to prepare children for academic and social success. Through expert analysis of the research and powerful examples, Michael will show how creative, spontaneous play fosters healthy mental and social development and sets the stage for academic learning in the first place. Michael thinks there is an urgent need to restore play's respected place in children's lives and encourages parents to trust their instincts to stay away from many of the dubious educational products on the market and let kids be kids



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11.00am	<b>Morning tea</b>	<i>Why aren't banana's ever lonely? – Because they hangout in bunches.</i>
11.20am	Keynote Speaker, <b>Hunter Barrett, 12 yo.</b>	Self-Professed Screen Addict <i>"I'm finally getting into the habit of having no screens, and having fun without them" - Hunter.</i>
11.35am	Keynote speaker, <b>Bruce McLachlan, Principal of Swanson Primary School, NZ</b>	<b>Taking The Adult Out Of Play</b> Adults are naturally well meaning when it comes to kids. By and large they like kids and they want them to learn stuff. They also don't want kids to hurt themselves, or more accurately – especially in the case of teachers – they don't want kids to get hurt 'on their watch'. Increasingly, this has meant supervising their every waking nanosecond, wrapping them up in cotton wool and not letting them play with anything sharper than a golf ball!
12.20am	<b>Collective Visioning for the Future of Nature Play, with Donna Little</b>	<b>Growing Kids in Nature Play</b> Nature Play can be a bridge between children, adults and nature; but it's also a portal to fun and freedom outdoors. The challenge is how to encourage, engage, inspire and empower more people, kids, families, councils, communities, schools, playgroups and society to value play in nature and reap the benefits. The focus of this session will be on collectively envisioning an ideal future for Nature Play. Between us we have a fountain of great ideas, experiences, knowledge and expertise. Let's share these and identify possible ways to strengthen the Nature Play community and plant the seeds for its future. If you feel so inspired, bring along a small prop that reminds you of why Nature Play is important or what you like about playing outdoors. It could be a pebble, twig, leaf, shell, hay, grass, fossil, flower, dirt etc. perhaps a photo. The only provisos - keep it small & gather from what is already fallen.
1.05pm	Lunch	<i>What did one plate say to the other plate? - Lunch is on me.</i>
1.50pm	<b>Nigel Coates, aka Sparky Do Dah</b>	<b>Playtime!</b> Experience the Art of Play with Sparky
2.05pm	Keynote speaker, <b>Dr Michael Nagel, Associate Professor, University of Sunshine Coast</b>	<b>Nurturing A Healthy Mind: Just For the FUN Of It!</b> Since the 1990's advances in technology and scientific research have provided new insights into the neurological development of children. As a result of this work all aspects of education, parenting and child care have been reinvigorated with new understandings of how the brain grows and develops, how this might impact on behaviour and learning and ultimately how early experiences may shape who we become as we grow into adulthood. Worryingly, neuroscientific research has also been used to perpetuate a number of neuromyths focusing on enrichment and building 'better brains'. This keynote address focuses on debunking a number of those myths by looking at contemporary research into how the brain matures and develops and the immense importance of play and fun in the development of a healthy mind.

## Concurrent Nature Play in Practice Workshops – Choose your adventure!

2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Carly Garner,</b> Director of Natureweavers Earth School	<p><b>Free Play in the Forest</b></p> <p>This is a practical outdoor session exploring how to learn in, with and from nature alongside children, utilising the natural materials seasonally available. This session will introduce a simple and accessible, multi-sensory, zero cost and no-tools-required activity in nature, which will serve as a basis from which to explore the pedagogy of nature in more depth. We will explore the learning outcomes that arise from playing with the stuff of nature, how that learning can be identified and extended, and how to document that learning in ways that are meaningful and useful for children, families, regulators and ourselves.</p>
2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Madeline Avci,</b> Director of Barefoot Nature Play & Jump-Up Occupational Therapy	<p><b>Programming for Play</b></p> <p><i>“Play is an episode of activity that is child chosen and viewed as play by the child. Each play episode has some or all of the following descriptive characteristics – spontaneous, non-literal, pleasurable, flexible, means-oriented, intrinsically motivated, meaningful, active and rulegoverned” (Sturgess, 2007).</i></p> <p>We know the benefits of play in child development are undeniable. We know that being outdoors, particularly in natural environments, can add breadth and depth to a child’s play experience. Yet many of us are in the ‘business of play’ in an operating environment that often stifles spontaneity and flexibility and demonises the unpredictability of the natural world. This workshop will use the Sandcastle Model of Child-Initiated Play (Sturgess, 2007) to provide an evidence based structure that will empower you to make and justify decisions in your daily practice that uphold the fundamental aspects of play. We will play outside using natural and upcycled materials to consider the concept of programming for play.</p>
2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Sandi Phoenix,</b> Director of Phoenix Support for Educators Pty Ltd	<p><b>The Freedom Cup - Filling The Child’s Metaphorical Cup of Freedom</b></p> <p>Join Sandi as she presents a brief overview of her Cups philosophy for understanding children’s behaviour, before leading a discussion specifically around filling the freedom cup. We will rethink planning, routines and curriculum design to facilitate a sense of freedom by considering ways to provide uninterrupted, sustained periods of play. Let’s start planning for freedom... just for the fun of it.</p>
2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Nigel Coates,</b> Sparky Do Dah	<p><b>The Art of Playfulness</b></p> <p>If our goal is to create great humans, we need our children to develop a love of learning, passion, vocation and drive. These essential life skills are best experienced and developed through unstructured, joyful play. In this practical workshop, we will explore the Art of creating these environments in both centre, and nature-based environments, addressing the needs of all children, with practical take-home lessons, techniques and games to use in your setting. Nigel draws upon his variety of front-line service, to share practical insights into the role of the facilitator, striving to find balance between directing learning opportunities and letting children be fully responsible for their own play. We will clarify the successful frameworks that best allow children to feel free to experience playfulness. Focus on 3 to 10 year olds.</p>

2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Susie Berkhut</b> – Coordinator Payne Road Outside School Hour Care and Chairperson for Queensland Children’s Activity Network	<b>Unstructured Play in Outside School Hours Care</b> School day settings are often restrictive in allowing children time to make choices even in playtimes. How could children spend their time out of school but still in a school setting? How does the framework and law impact on what children are allowed to do during this time? Together with her dedicated team, supportive school staff and devoted families, Susie has established a shared commitment to the concept of complementing not duplicating a child’s school day. They believe children should have time in their day to allow for the open ending curiosities in life involving opportunities for unstructured play. She has always made sure the decisions made for the service’s ‘change of culture’ involved ALL stakeholders to ensure the changes became part of their everyday practice and ultimately everyday activities to enhance children’s development for independence and resilience.
2.50pm to 3.40pm	<b>Craig Williams</b> Cultural Consultant Yugambah Yarga	<b>Traditional Indigenous Games</b> Traditional Indigenous Games is a selection of games and activities from Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander societies all around Australia. It provides an opportunity to learn about, appreciate and experience aspects of Indigenous culture. Indigenous games and activities have a rich history as some were recorded by explorers, government officials, settlers, scientists and missionaries in the nineteenth century. They have also been passed down through generation by Indigenous Australians. Traditional Indigenous Games are: played in their traditional forms with modern equipment, modified for safety, ease of use or to cater for all ages and abilities, reconstructed from incomplete accounts.
3.40pm	Afternoon tea	<i>What happens when you make an egg laugh? – It cracks up.</i>
3.55pm	<b>Panel Discussion:</b> <b><i>Is genuine FUN in our children's lives?</i></b> <b><i>What is your role in making sure that fun is a natural part of childhood? How?</i></b> Dr Michael Nagel                                  Principal Bruce McLachlan Sarah Sutter    Susie Berkhut Sandi Phoenix    Madeline Avci Facilitated by Hyahno Moser	
4.45pm to 5.00pm	Symposium close and evaluation	

**Nature Play Village Bazaar:**



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