



Children at Play

After school, how would you usually play? Perhaps you and your friends love the nearby playground, enjoy online games like Mobile Legends, or are good at board games.

Play is an important part of childhood. Through play, you make new friends, relax, stay healthy and pick up life skills. Here are some ways your school and the Government create safe places and chances for children like yourself to grow through play.



Play in your neighbourhood

Did you know that Singapore's town planners always try to include a playground in every housing estate? A lot of work goes on behind the scenes to give you fun and colourful places to play.

Before Singapore's first playground was built in 1928, children would run around and play in big open fields or climb into *longkangs* (drains).

Now, our playgrounds come in all shapes and sizes - you may have seen the famous Dragon Playground in Toa Payoh, or played on the watermelon slide in Tampines. You can play pretend with your friends, and be a group of fairies living in fruits or warriors riding on dragons. Choa Chu Kang also has an army-themed playground for you to defend Singapore from inside a large tank.

Our playgrounds today are also safer. Unlike the concrete playgrounds before the 1990s, playgrounds are now easier to repair when there are old or broken parts.



What is the UNCRC?

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) entered into force in 1990, and Singapore acceded to it in 1995.

It is an international agreement that protects children and their rights. It focuses on many different aspects of children's life, such as education, safety and play.



Play at school

Our schools make it a priority for the curriculum to include opportunities for students to play.

Target games, catching, captain's ball - do these sound familiar to you? These are some games commonly played during Physical Education (PE) lessons in school. PE focuses on cultivating good habits and practices that emphasise being physically active, eating right and caring for our mental well-being. With many opportunities to engage in a variety of physical activities, you develop better movement skills and learn about teamwork.

Exercise helps us stay healthy, and lowers the risk of having obesity and Type 2 diabetes. During exercise, your body releases chemicals called endorphins that make you feel happier throughout the day. Exercise also helps you sleep better at night.

Play online

With advances in technology, you may spend more time in the 'digital playground'. You may enjoy playing online games, reading e-books from the library or watching videos on your mobile phone and computer. While these allow you to learn and relax, it is important to be careful and responsible. If all of us are kind and do not make hurtful comments, the 'digital playground' will be a lot more pleasant for everyone.

Just as how you learn to take care of your body and belongings in the real world, you can also learn how to keep yourself and your information safe online. The Cyber Security Agency of Singapore's Go Safe Online webpage has videos about different types of cyber threats and good online habits. Your teacher may share these videos with you so that you know how to take care of yourself on the Internet.

Many television programmes also have ratings to show whether the content is suitable for children. On some video-streaming websites, unsuitable content can be restricted with a code so you do not accidentally view something that may be troubling to you.

Games of the future

From outdoor places to 'digital playgrounds', people continue to create new ways for children to play. It's exciting to imagine what games will be like in the future. Let's try to come up with a brand-new game to play with your friends!

The UNCRC has 54 different articles*, together guiding the protection and development of children. There are 196 countries that are a part of this treaty, making it the most widely agreed-upon human rights treaty in the world!

*An article is a paragraph or a section of a piece of writing. When we say the UNCRC agreement has 54 articles, it means the agreement has 54 sections and each section talks about a different part on how to protect a child's rights.

Article 31 of the UNCRC states that every child should be able to rest and play, and have opportunities to take part in cultural and artistic activities.

