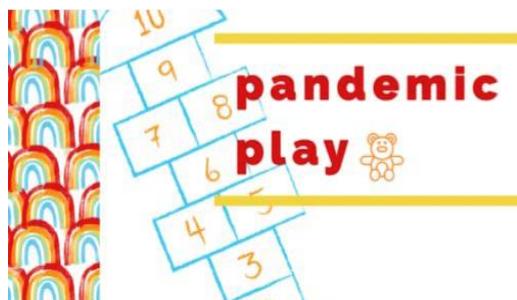


PANDEMIC PLAY PROJECT 2020



We are a group of independent researchers who specialise in the secret business of childhood; the culture kids share with each other – away from the adult gaze.

We are calling on kids & adults to help us document kids' play activity as they return to school after being isolated at home. We'd also love to know what parents and teachers have observed.

We know that all over Australia, kids are playing versions of virus 'tip', 'tiggy' or 'tag' and that there are many different ways of deciding who is 'it'. In some versions, a child who has been 'tagged' contracts the virus and can only be saved by a 'vaccination' from a free player. In other versions, anyone 'tagged' catches the virus but there is no cure, and so it spreads... the last player left in becomes 'it' next time.

We've also had reports of kids playing imaginary handball (or 4-square) as they are unable to play hand-to-hand contact games at school. In a number of places, the age-old favourite Hopscotch has seen a resurgence, perhaps because this is a 'safe' game to play at the moment.

Are there any coronavirus chants or jokes circulating in schools or social groups? Songs, taunts, slang references (of the 'naughty' or 'rude' variety that kids adore)?

Children are incredibly creative when it comes to play, and even though 'Rona' has ruined many plans this year, we predict there will be a wave of re-invented play created around the theme and realities of the COVID-19 pandemic, as kids return to school and resume socialising after lockdown.

We're also interested in hearing about the ways in which kids (and families) remained playful *during* lockdown. We would love pictures of the chalk art and teddy bears in windows that have characterised the suburban experience of the pandemic, but particularly want to document the many ways children found to play at home, and to stay connected with each other. Were there any games about coronavirus? This is what we hope to discover.

We need your help to capture this unique moment in history and in the lives of Australian children.

We are asking kids, parents & teachers to record their responses by sending us an email, uploading images of their written responses or drawings, photo images, voice recorded descriptions of their games and activities or videos. MP3, jpeg and MP4 files are preferred. **Emails must include your first name, your age (kids) and your postcode.**

We **DO NOT** want any images of children's faces, or pictures of people under the age of 18 that display school uniforms where an individual can be identified.

By submitting material to this project, people are agreeing to allow their images, videos, written accounts and audio files to be displayed publicly (website and social media) for the purposes of this project, to be openly accessible by researchers and cultural institutions.

SUBMIT VIA EMAIL: pandemicplay20@gmail.com **OR VIA OUR FACEBOOK PAGE**
WEBSITE: <https://pandemicplayproject.com>

For interviews please contact:

Judy McKinty: judy@pixeltech.com.au / 0438 389 297 (VIC)
Rob Willis (OAM): robwillis44@gmail.com / 0427 911 962 (NSW)
Ruth Hazleton: ahiddenculture@gmail.com / 0419 487 060 (VIC)

“Where there are children, there is play. It is a universal impulse, as old as humanity. Physical play, verbal play, friendship play, solitary play - it is the exercise of body and imagination, marked by humour, challenge, invention and exploration. As essential to childhood as food and drink.

– Dr June Factor (*Far Out, Brussel Sprout!, All Right, Vegemite!*)

Project Team

Judy McKinty: Judy is an independent children's play researcher, based in Melbourne, with a special interest in children's folklore and traditional games. Her work has mainly focussed on play in primary schools and the relationship between play and place. She has a Master of Cultural Heritage, is an Honorary Associate of Museums Victoria, Life Member of Play Australia and was a co-editor of the online journal *Play and Folklore*. Her favourite games are Marbles, Jacks and string games.

Ruth Hazleton: Ruth is an independent oral historian, researcher, folklorist and musician who has specialised in children's folklore studies. She has been associated at different times throughout her work with the National Library of Australia and Museums Victoria.

Rob Willis OAM and Ollie Willis: Rob and Ollie Willis have been collecting social history and folklore since the mid 1970s. Their audio, video and photographic collections are housed in the Oral History and Folklore Section of The National Library of Australia. Rob and Ollie have recorded in Multicultural and First Nation communities Australia-wide documenting and preserving stories, music, folklore and dance for future generations.

Children's Folklore, games and stories have been an important part of their collection. Ollie, a trained teacher with over 30 years' experience has a passion for education and learning.

Dr June Factor : June is an esteemed specialist in children's literature and folklore, with a special interest in literacy, and the history and importance of children's play. She is also a widely published researcher and academic whose expertise spans many subject areas. As a writer she has developed a special interest in the lives of children and became famous nationwide for her compilations of schoolyard humour, beginning with *Far Out, Brussel Sprout!* and followed by *All Right, Vegemite*. She is also the author of *Captain Cook Chased a Chook*, which won the prestigious American Opie award in 1989.

Dr Gwenda Davey AM: Gwenda is an eminent folklore researcher (for which she was awarded an Order of Australia), children's activist, and a former teacher, lecturer and counsellor in the field of children's development and psychology.

Emeritus Professor Graham Seal AM: Graham is Emeritus Professor of Folklore at Curtin University. His research activities and publications are extensive and involve working with industry, government, community and academic partners throughout Western Australia, Australia and internationally. He is the founder and convenor of the Australian Folklore Network and is an editorial board member of *Folklore (UK)*, *Heroism Studies* and *Folklife: Journal of Ethnological Studies*.