



pandemic play project: documenting kids' culture during covid-19

Information for Teachers

This research project is being carried out with the support of academics and independent researchers from three states, to explore the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on the play lives of Australian children. Because of restrictions surrounding the pandemic, the project is being conducted online, and we are asking for your help.

Play is vitally important to children. Through their play, they make sense of the world and connect with each other. In times of crisis, play helps them to process what is happening in the wider world—and to express their ideas and feelings about it. Play is also how they form friendships, navigate social relationships and learn about their own culture through their games and play activities.

Everyone knows that games have rules, and children are used to making up their own rules for the games they play. With the onset of the pandemic, children have been forced to play under a new set of rules that are outside their control. But children are very clever at finding ways to play, and finding humour in adversity.

The Pandemic Play Project aims to find out how children have taken the coronavirus into their play repertoire - how they stayed playful at home during the lockdowns and if the pandemic has affected the way they play with their friends at school. We are including screen-based play in this project, because it has played such a significant role in many children's lives over the course of the pandemic.

Full details about the project, our research aims and play examples are on our website.

Website: <https://pandemicplayproject.com>

Facebook: [PandemicPlayProject](#)

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What we are looking for

We want to find out what children are playing at school at recess and lunch play. We are interested in the games, rhymes and other play activities that children make up themselves, or choose to do, rather than adult-led activities.

These are some examples of the information we need:

- What games are the children playing outside and how do they play them? (Brief description)
- Are they playing any games, saying any rhymes or making up songs that are about the coronavirus?
- Are they using any words or expressions directly related to the pandemic?
- Are they still playing the same types of games they played before the pandemic? If so, have they changed the way they play them, e.g. social distancing, not sharing equipment?
- Are they playing ball games, like Downball or Handball or Four Square?
- Are they playing contact games like chasing, catching and clapping games?
- Are they inventing versions of COVID tag? If so, how do they play it?
- Are they playing on the play equipment? Are there any special rules about this?
- * Are there any special safety rules about going outside to play?

Who we are

These are the members of our project team:

Coordinators:

Judy McKinty: Independent Children's Play Researcher and folklorist.

Ruth Hazleton: Independent Oral Historian, researcher & folklorist.

Project Team:

Rob Willis OAM and Ollie Willis, Oral and Social Historians, with a large collection of recorded material held in the National Library of Australia.

Dr. June Factor, esteemed specialist in children's literature and folklore, and author of the *Far Out, Brussel Sprout!* series.

Dr. Gwenda Davey AM, eminent folklore researcher, children's activist, former lecturer and counsellor in the fields of children's development and psychology.

Emeritus Professor Graham Seal AM, Emeritus Professor of Folklore at Curtin University, W.A.

How to submit your information

- **ONLINE [VIA GOOGLE FORMS](#)**
- Email completed observation forms or any other descriptions/multimedia to:
pandemicplay20@gmail.com

All information is confidential. The name of your school will not be disclosed, but we would like to know your postcode so we can record a suburb or town and email address. The only information we need about the children are the Year level/s and gender/s of the children involved in a particular game or activity. Thank you for your interest in this important research project.