

# Are we losing the art of play?

[New online resource provides ideas for learning through play](#)

PERTH, WA August 12, 2011 – PARENTS are continually given the guilt message to limit their child's TV viewing, but are coming up blank when it comes to alternatives, according to Perth early childhood educator and successful blogger Christie Burnett. This was part of the idea behind the launch of her new online resource Playopedia, which brings together play ideas in varying categories for babies through to early primary aged children.

Mrs Burnett said the problem was two-fold. "Thanks to over scheduling, television and high tech toys, children are at risk of forgetting how to play," she said. "Then there are parents not knowing how to manage when their children are bored, the default becomes putting on the television." She is regularly approached by parents needing help and ideas for playing with their children and, being a stay-at-home-mum herself, saw Playopedia as a way to help fellow mums. "We're told that children should have limited TV viewing hours. So if I don't want to put my child in front of the TV, what can I do? How do I make it fun so that they want to engage in something else?" she said.

Playopedia, which is housed on what has become one of Australia's largest parenting blogs Childhood 101, offers unique, quality play ideas that can easily be replicated at home. "I really try to focus on presenting play activities that demonstrate to parents the importance of children's play. The play ideas are sorted according to type of play and the collection is searchable, so it is a great resource for parents of young children. Parents can search to find play dough recipes or play activities to encourage outdoor playtime - whatever type of play their child enjoys."

Mrs Burnett said new play ideas were being added every two days, with the database already boasting 150-plus activities from around the world. "I am committed to keeping that growth going, because I'm so passionate about how children learn. I'm frustrated by the current state of our education system and the early years curriculum becoming less and less play-based, even in kindergarten. So I'll keep pushing the message that yes, children do learn through play."

The idea for Playopedia was sparked from a meme called We Play hosted on Childhood 101 for over 12 months, where parents and teachers from around the world who were blogging about play ideas could link up. When one of Christie's online friends contacted her after she lost a heap of bookmarked play ideas from the meme and dreaded the thought of going back through the thousands of links to find those ideas again, Playopedia became a reality.

Christie Burnett lives in Perth and is a mum to three-year-old Immy, successful blogger at Childhood 101 and an early childhood education teacher. She has taught kindergarten, pre primary and the first three grades of primary school. She spent six years in Sydney as the founding director of a high quality child care centre with a play-based program for 2-5 year olds. Christie also works as a presenter and consultant training early childhood educators. Her blog, one of the first by a teacher and parent educator in Australia, won a Nuffnang award for Best Parenting Blog against thousands of Asia Pacific wide blogs. Christie blogs at [childhood101.com](http://childhood101.com). You will find Playopedia at [childhood101/playopedia](http://childhood101/playopedia)

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