



## PLAYTIME TALKING POINTS

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Select one or two of the following points in your invitations and messages that you send to your networks to encourage attendance.

- Playtime Project (“Playtime”) cultivates resilience in children experiencing housing insecurity by providing and expanding access to transformative, trauma-informed play experiences.
- Playtime partners with transitional housing and emergency shelters across Washington, DC and Prince George’s County to create safe and fun play spaces where dedicated volunteers serve as playmates and mentors to children from 6 months to 12 years old.
- During the COVID-19 pandemic, Playtime has been distributing Playtime-to-Go kits to children living in our partner sites. The kits include reusable toys, books, art activities, and more. Parents received a "Parent Survival Guide" with online resources and activities that can be done in their rooms with few or no materials. Staff and volunteers created Virtual Playtime by posting videos of guided play and read-a-longs on Playtime's YouTube channel, and hosted live Zoom Playtime sessions to give volunteers, staff, and children the chance to connect and engage in activities together in real time.
- Founded in 2003 by a group of concerned citizens including its current Executive Director, Jamila Larson.
- In addition to play programming, throughout the year Playtime provides:
  - Holiday gifts and costumes for Halloween,
  - Back-to-school backpacks and supplies,
  - Emergency supplies, including gift cards for food support, diapers, and wipes, and
  - Referrals for online services for families, as needed, including mental health support.

### Importance of Play

- Play reduces stress and increases confidence and resiliency.
  - For example, through role-playing games, children explore adult ideas and themes, and they learn to conquer fears and navigate the stress of housing insecurity. Playing with blocks encourages problem-solving and creativity. Books, art, and physical activities, as well as field trips, expand their horizons.
- Though it's well-documented that housing insecurity causes physical, emotional, and developmental harm to children, resources are often limited or inaccessible. Recreation is severely restricted in most shelters, making play even more critical as a healing force for children living in transition. A disproportionate number of children in shelters suffer from emotional, behavioral, and learning problems.

For anyone interested in getting more information about Playtime, visit: [www.playtimeproject.org](http://www.playtimeproject.org).

*Playtime Helps Children Rise*

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