

# Play Works Youth Friendly Community Application

## What is Play Works?

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Play Works is a group of organizations concerned about the future of youth. With representation from sport, physical activity, civic engagement, arts and culture, rural youth and recreation, Play Works aims to bring back the **power of play** to Ontario's youth. It is dedicated to advancing play for 13- to 19-year-olds on local and provincial public and political agendas.

### Play Works' Partners

- 4-H Ontario
- Arts Network for Children and Youth
- Boys and Girls Clubs of Canada - Central Region
- Ophea
- Parks and Recreation Ontario
- YMCA Ontario

Visit the Play Works [website](#) for more information.

### Why does Play Works focus on play?

Play isn't all fun and games. It's not just in a park or a gym and it's not just for children. Play is diving off the high board, making pottery, throwing a snowball, dreaming on a lawn.

Play is crucial for social, physical, intellectual, emotional and civic development. It's all about shaping, learning and inspiring. A game of chess ignites reasoning. A run in the park builds endurance and strength. Volunteering at an art gallery develops social responsibility.

Play helps prepare youth for future endeavors. Youth councils develop an interest in local politics, promote youth advocacy and engage youth within their communities.

We believe the time is now to invest in the power of play.

### Why be concerned about play?

Opportunities for youth play are threatened in many communities:

- Places to play are becoming less accessible to adolescent youth.
- Cutbacks mean fewer activities for youth.
- Unsupervised activities for youth are seen as too risky.
- Volunteers and leaders are in danger of burning out.

What does all this mean? Less participation in play by Ontario's youth.

The lack of positive outlets can translate into more crime, drug use, complaints about loitering. What's more, lack of play has contributed to a 50 per cent increase in childhood obesity over the last 15 years.

***Ontario's youth need to come out and play!***