



# Speaking of Play



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The Providence Athenaeum and Providence Children's Museum proudly partner to present a spring series of panel discussions about the critical importance of self-directed play for children's healthy growth and development.

Conversations will be held the first Tuesday of March, April and May from 7:00 - 8:30 PM at the Athenaeum (251 Benefit Street in Providence).

## Leave No Child Inside

**Tuesday, March 5 • 7:00 - 8:30 PM**

Today's children play outside less than any previous generation. Yet free outdoor play connects kids to the natural world and builds their imaginations, resiliency and confidence. Join a discussion about what's keeping them inside and what we can do to get them out!

### Panelists:

**Chris Hitchener,**

"Our Big Backyard" Program Manager,  
Roger Williams Park Zoo

**Paul Pieri,**

Middle School Farm Program Director,  
The Wheeler School

**Jeanine Silversmith,**

Founder and Director, RI Families in Nature

## What Happened to Recess?

**Tuesday, April 2 • 7:00 - 8:30 PM**

Recess is crucial for kids, resulting in better attention span, improved classroom behavior, and important opportunities for free play, creativity and interaction with other children – yet it is increasingly limited or withheld. Join the great recess debate!

### Panelists:

**Alicia Bell,**

Elementary art teacher and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
Elementary School parent

**Dr. Lauren Greve,**

Psychologist and Vartan Gregorian Elementary  
School parent

**Phyllis Penhallow,**

URI Lecturer and Chariho Elementary School parent

## Play & Risk: How Safe is *Too Safe*?

**Tuesday, May 7 • 7:00 - 8:30 PM**

Acceptable risk is beneficial to kids' physical and emotional development, so when did it become a 4-letter word? Taking risks helps children learn about their own capabilities and limits while increasing their comfort with making mistakes and taking on challenges. Discuss ways to foster healthy risk-taking in kids' play.

### Panelists:

**Dr. William Hollinshead,**

Pediatrician

**Wendy Nilsson,**

Director, Partnership for Providence Parks

**Sarah O'Brien,**

LICSW, Play Therapist

Conversations moderated by **Janice O'Donnell**, Executive Director, Providence Children's Museum

**RSVPs welcome to Lindsay Shaw, [ishaw@provath.org](mailto:ishaw@provath.org) or (401) 421-6970 ext. 17.**

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