



# INTERNATIONAL DAY OF PLAY 2026

## Concept Note: UNHQ High-level Event

### Background

The International Day of Play (IDOP) on June 11 is a global celebration dedicated to championing every child's right to play. For IDOP 2026, our advocacy will place prominence on safe and healthy play spaces for every child while also advancing the other two accelerators—universal access to evidence-based parenting support programs (playful parenting) and universal access to early childhood education (learning through play).

This focus recognizes that every child deserves access to secure, inclusive, and environmentally healthy spaces where play can flourish—whether in cities, towns, or humanitarian settings.

The three accelerators guiding our work on IDOP are:

- Universal access to evidence-based parenting support programmes (playful parenting)
- Universal access to early childhood education (learning through play)
- Safe and environmentally healthy play spaces for every child and early adolescent (safe places to play)

By spotlighting safe places to play, we will be reinforcing the interconnectedness of these accelerators and the holistic approach needed to ensure every child's right to play is realized.

To advance these outcomes for play, the core group of member States who tabled the IDOP resolution - Bulgaria, El Salvador, Jamaica, Kenya, Luxembourg, and Viet Nam will be co-organizing a high level event on IDOP together with UNICEF, UNESCO, and supported by the LEGO Foundation, the LEGO Group and a group of non-governmental and private sector partners.

### Theme:

Protect play, protect childhood.



### Objectives:

- Commitments: Secure statements of support from governments on expanding safe play spaces and on advancing universal parenting support and early childhood education access.
- Data-Informed Advocacy: Launch key findings from the global data report on play to guide national and municipal action.
- Movement Building: Strengthen engagement across the global play movement and IDOP partners.
- Child Leadership: Ensure children lead moments on stage and in the lawn activation, facilitating intergenerational dialogue.

*CTA: For International Day of Play 2026, we are calling on governments, businesses and other stakeholders to help ensure every child has access to safe and environmentally healthy spaces to play, while also strengthening the foundations of play by supporting playful parenting and expanding access to early childhood education grounded in learning through play. Together, these actions can turn the right to play into a reality for every child.*

### International Day of Play Event Overview

#### **High Level Event:**

- Date: June 11, 2025
- Time: 10:00 AM – 12:00 PM
- Location: United Nations Headquarters, New York
- Invited participants: children, UN member states, UN agencies, global leaders, educational experts, Civil Society Organizations, private sector partners etc.

The International Day of Play 2026 High-Level Meeting, held in UN Headquarters Conference Room 6 [TBC], will bring together Member States, children, UN leaders, partners, and civil society, to spotlight play as a fundamental right for every child. The meeting will showcase leadership, commitments, and evidence-driven action to protect and advance the right to play for every child.

#### **Play Experience:**

- Date: June 11, 2025
- Time: 12:30 PM to 5:00 PM
- Location: United Nations Headquarters Lawn, New York
- Invited participants: parents, children, educators, Member States representatives, global leaders, educational experts, Civil Society Organizations, private sector partners, members of the UN community.



To mark the day, Member States, UNICEF, UNESCO and partners, will transform the UN Headquarters Lawn into a joyful, child-centred public space—bringing together children and young people, UN leadership, Permanent Missions, and partners in an immersive play experience.

In 2026, IDOP aligns with a unique global moment: the World Cup 2026. This convergence presents a powerful opportunity to promote the right to play and spotlight why safe, play spaces must be protected everywhere.