



## BACKGROUND

### International Day of Play 2025 – Nova Scotia

#### What is the International Day of Play (IDoP)?

On **June 11, 2025**, Nova Scotia will once again join a growing global movement to celebrate the [International Day of Play \(IDoP\)](#) — a United Nations–designated day recognizing play as a fundamental right of all children. IDoP is more than a celebration — it is a call to action to protect, promote, and prioritize play in the lives of children and youth around the world.

Led provincially by [Recreation Nova Scotia](#) and supported by a dynamic coalition of partners, IDoP 2025 in Nova Scotia is a chance to highlight how play supports lifelong health, development, and equity. Community organizations, educators, governments, families, and children will come together to create, imagine, and move through inclusive, engaging events and experiences.

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#### Why Play Matters

Decades of research confirm what children instinctively know: play is powerful. It is how children explore their world, develop physical and emotional resilience, build friendships, and express themselves. According to the Canadian Public Health Association and the International Play Association (IPA), play supports:

- **Physical health** through movement and active exploration
- **Mental well-being** by reducing stress and building confidence
- **Cognitive development** through problem-solving, experimentation, and discovery
- **Social connection** by teaching cooperation, empathy, and shared joy

In a world that increasingly emphasizes structured activities, screen time, and academic performance, IDoP is a reminder that free, unstructured play is not optional — it's essential.

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#### Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play

In 2015, a coalition of Canadian organizations—including Outdoor Play Canada, the Lawson Foundation, ParticipACTION, and the Healthy Active Living and Obesity Research Group (HALO) at the Children's Hospital of Eastern Ontario—released the [Position Statement on Active Outdoor Play](#). This landmark document emphasized that "access to active play in nature and outdoors—with its risks—is essential for healthy child development." It advocated for increasing children's opportunities for self-directed outdoor play across various settings, including homes, schools, childcare centers, communities, and natural environments.

The Position Statement was informed by comprehensive research and consultations, highlighting the benefits of outdoor play for children's physical activity levels, social health, and overall well-being. It also addressed concerns about safety, suggesting that the benefits of outdoor play outweigh the potential risks when appropriate measures are in place.



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## Looking Back: Highlights from IDoP 2024 in Halifax

Nova Scotia was proud to take part in the first-ever **International Day of Play** in 2024, with Halifax serving as a vibrant host city. Highlights from the 2024 event included:

- **Old Time PlayDay on the Halifax Waterfront**, where children and families gathered for classic games like tug-of-war, sack races, hula hoop relays, and parachute fun.
- Community-led **film screenings** at the Halifax Central Library exploring the science and stories behind the importance of play.
- Robust **social media participation** with the hashtag **#IDoP2025** and **#IDoP2025NovaScotia** reaching thousands across the province and beyond.

The enthusiasm and energy of 2024 set the stage for a broader, more inclusive IDoP in 2025 — with communities across Nova Scotia planning their own events.

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## Tools for Communities: The IDoP Community Activation Kit

To support organizations and communities of all sizes, **Recreation Nova Scotia** has developed a **free, downloadable Community Activation Kit** — a step-by-step resource to help bring the spirit of IDoP to life locally. The Kit includes:

- A detailed **event planning guide** and timeline
- A **digital marketing toolkit** (social media templates, logos, posters)
- A **catalogue of play activity ideas** for various age groups and settings
- A **community engagement checklist** to build partnerships and promote your event

The Kit is designed to support schools, libraries, recreation groups, early childhood educators, public health staff, and municipalities in organizing their own IDoP celebrations.

**Access the Kit here:** <https://www.recreationns.ns.ca/international-day-of-play.html>

Let's work together to make Nova Scotia a place where every child has time, space, and freedom to play. Join us in celebrating the 2025 International Day of Play!

Choose play – everyday!

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## Who is involved?

The 2025 IDoP events and resources are made possible through a collaboration of many organizations, including Canada Plays Association, Recreation Nova Scotia, in addition to support from the Downtown Halifax Business Commission's Event Sponsorship Program. IDoP also recognizes the support of the Province of Nova Scotia through the Department of Communities, Culture and Heritage. We are pleased to work in partnership with the Province of Nova Scotia to develop and promote opportunities for play for all Nova Scotians. IDoP 2025 is also brought to you by Active Kids Adventures, the Association of Early Childhood Educators of Nova Scotia, Build Nova Scotia, Dalhousie University, Dartmouth Downtown Business Commission, Discover Halifax, Halifax Parks and Recreation, Halifax Regional Municipality, Healthy Tomorrow Foundation, Multicultural Playtime Society, PlayGroundology, and World Litter Run.

## **More Information**

For more information and to access the Community Activation Kit, visit [Recreation Nova Scotia's IDoP page](#). Use #IDoP2025, #IDoP2025NovaScotia, and #nsplays. Share your play-filled moments online!

For media inquiries and event partnerships:

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