

ADVISORY COUNCIL ON YOUTH (CCJ)

11 June 2025

English only

International Day of Play

On this second International Day of Play, let's celebrate not only the right to play, but the right to dream, to have a voice and to be listened to. The day was proclaimed by the United Nations General Assembly to acknowledge and advance the critical role that play holds in children's development and well-being. Play is essential for children's and youth's development and the Advisory Council on Youth urges all age-groups to not forget to play. The benefits of play are various - play is known to reduce stress, to help with learning and to empower leadership skills and support well-being. Through play, youth connects with others and builds resilience and relationships and learns to navigate social challenges.

In the spirit of the theme for this year's International Day of Play, "Choose Play – Everyday", we want to remind ourselves of the fact that play can be found in everyday tasks; singing in the shower, dancing in the rain and with friends, colleagues, and family. Play does not need expensive materials or formal settings, but can be exercised wherever and with whoever. Play is a part of lifelong learning and intergenerational dialogue as play provides a shared space where generations connect, listen and learn from each other. Across families, communities and different cultures and in traditional games or in digital platforms, intergenerational play introduces empathy and mutual respects, both which are important elements of a democratic society. What is more, it doesn't need to take much time, taking fifteen minutes out of the day to play has a big impact.

We encourage governments, institutions, and communities to safeguard the right to play, in line with the following

- Article 31 of the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child
- The Council of Europe Strategy for the Rights of the Child
- The Revised European Charter on the Participation of Young People in Local and Regional Life
- The Council of Europe's Recommendation CM/Rec(2012)2 on the participation of children and young people under the age of 18

They all uphold the importance of giving space for children and young people to be proactive and empowered participants in shaping their world.

Remember - there is power in play!

The statements of the Advisory Council are published for the purpose of informing the public about the activities of the statutory bodies of the Council of Europe youth sector. The statements reflect the opinions and positions of the Advisory Council and its members. The views expressed therein do not necessarily reflect the views of the Council of Europe.