

9:45am
Global Consultations On Children's Right To Play: An IPA Project

Looking back – and looking forward ...

In 2010 IPA completed a series of consultations on children's play rights in eight regions of the world. Over 350 adults concerned with children's play and 400 children participated in the Global Consultations on Children's Right to Play. Between them they identified 115 infringements of the right to play across four continents.

Play is vitally important in the everyday lives of children in times of peace and security but in stressful situations – encountered by so many of the world's children – it is an important coping mechanism; an element of survival.

In spite of the fact that play is at the core of every aspect of child development – and has a significant effect on their well-being – the Consultations showed a disturbingly low understanding of play by parents, professionals, officials and policy makers. This of course is at the root of the widespread violation of the right to play.

Presented by a member of the Steering Group and representatives of the Consultation Facilitators team, this presentation will consider findings of the project and discuss practical steps that can be taken regionally to move toward more playful communities.

They will place the findings of the Report in the context of advocacy for children's rights and IPA's call for a UN General Comment on article 31.

This session will provide delegates the opportunity:

- to learn about the key messages on barriers to children's play arising from eight countries, on four continents;
- to gain a deeper understanding of article 31 and its place in the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child;
- to gain a deeper understanding of advocacy for the child's right to play and the importance of mass involvement in the public education process.



Biographies

Valerie Fronczek

Vancouver, Canada

Cynthia Morrison

Johannesburg, South Africa

Hitoshi Shimamura

Tokyo, Japan

Pamela Kola

Kenya



(front row, kneeling, left to right) David Yearley, Hitoshi Shimamura, Ivaylo Sirkarov, Pamela Kola, Rami Allow. (back row, standing, left to right) Cynthia Morrison, Valerie Fronczek, Harry Shier, Maria Assi, Kanaporn Sornsomrit, Yolanda Corona, Theresa Casey, Aruna Thakkar, Selim Iltus

Valerie Fronczek

Valerie is currently IPA's Communications Officer and Editor of its magazine *PlayRights*. She was the co-ordinator of IPA's Global Consultations Project.

For twenty-three years Valerie was Executive Director of an NGO child advocacy organisation based in Vancouver, Canada, which produced ground-breaking material, and leadership, in relation to compliance with the *United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child* (UNCRC) and assessment tools for *Child Friendly Communities*. Since retirement, in addition to consulting work in these areas, Valerie has focused on the topic of children's play and the promotion of article 31 of the UNCRC.

Cynthia Morrison

Cynthia is a speech and hearing therapist, whose focus changed from remediation to early intervention, leading to the establishment of a toy library in 1987. The positive results led to the founding of Active Learning Libraries – SA, a national association. The number of toy libraries serving needy children has grown from 21 to over 200. Cynthia is serving her third term as President of the International Toy Library Association.

Hitoshi Shimamura

Hitoshi has been an adventure playworker in Tokyo since 1996. Now he is also a playwork trainer and supervisor of adventure playgrounds. In 2010, he set up Tokyo Play the regional play organisation for a series of play campaign and policy recommendations. He is currently interviewing 300 children to evaluate the children's policy in Tokyo. Hitoshi is a board member of the Japan Adventure Playground Association.

Pamela Kola

Pamela Kola is a Kenyan – a teacher by profession having taught in all sectors: university, secondary, primary and kindergarten. She holds a PhD in child psychology and is currently the Executive Director of Centre for Research, Communication and Gender in Early Childhood Education (CRECHE) – a non governmental organisation whose objective is to promote a child rights approach to development and education. Pamela was one of the first Kenyan authors of children's books.