



**WAYFINDER**

# **The Power of Play** for Educators & School Culture

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# Belonging + Purpose





# No...you don't play too much!

- + **Equipping adults** with SEL competencies helps to **prevent burnout**
- + Incorporating **play** in school culture creates mental maps that lead us to **past experiences of joy**
- + Play is how we first learned to build and **foster meaningful relationships**
- + **Schedule** times to do things that bring you **joy**.

Release  
endorphins

Improve brain  
function

Stimulate  
creativity







# SPARKING JOY

How does our joy spark joy in others?

BELONGING 1: SELF // Lesson 2.1.3.

**WAYFINDER**

# QUICK REFLECTION

- + What happened in the video?
- + How did it start?
- + Where did you notice joy?
- + What did you notice about their body language?
- + How did you feel watching the video?
- + How is joy connected to belonging?



# What is Play?





# How do you like to play?



## Others-directed

playing with other people

## Lighthearted

Improvising and laid back

## Intellectual

wordplay and problem-solving

## Whimsical

odd or unusual things



# Music and Play, Play well Together

- + Create energy
- + Shift the atmosphere
- + Boost energy
- + Build Community

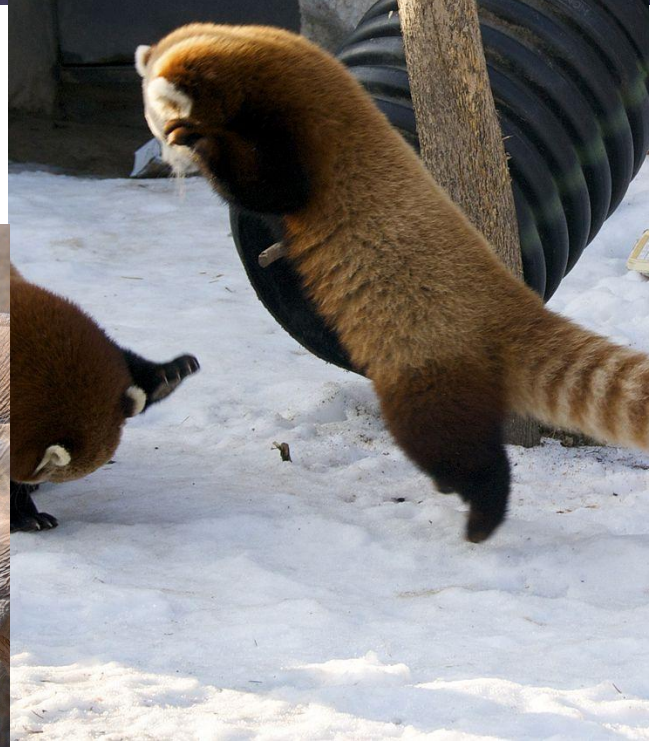


# All Mammals Play



**Retreat From  
Chaos**

**Memories you  
can borrow**



**Unabashed**



# Dog and Bear

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## Play is a Future-Readiness Tool

- + Play has a way of removing inhibitions
- + Play hypes you up (excitement and stress)
- + Peaks of stress in a safe environment helps prepare you for life

## Take Action

- + Let's Play



# I love making music!

Every culture has music. **We are wired to connect through song.**

The science of song:

- + We feel connected to people we sing with
- + Information in songs bypasses our brains normal filter and defense mechanisms
- + Listening to and making music releases positive neurotransmitters that help you feel good and calm the nervous system.



"Play is developmentally appropriate and necessary at every age!"

*Mark Williams*

*Curriculum + Training Designer*





# I love to play Checkers

So much that we love is **passed down among generations**

This game creates several things for me :

- + Nostalgia
- + Immediate Satisfaction (Especially when I yell "King Me")
- + In checkers your brain must consume the entire board and calculate all the moves you and your competitor could make
- + Joy

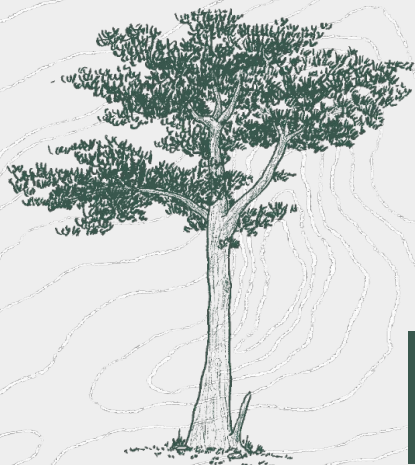


Settle in to play, laugh out loud, real, loud from your gut and allow the joy of the moment to hold your spirit.

*Quinae G. Jackson*

*Director of Training & Learning*

Play supports  
Skill-building to  
promote **belonging** +  
**purpose**



Building Empowered +  
Engaged Leaders

Building Confidence +  
Community

Creating Connections + Fostering  
Curiosity

Growing + Understanding Ourselves

Caring for Ourselves + Others

Exploring Feelings + Actions



# Analyzing Your Energy...

## Discomfort is Okay

- + Become more comfortable with new ways of thinking and doing
- + Have you ever been scared to do something but felt you had to do it anyway? What happened and what was that experience like?

## Practice makes Progress

- + Slowly do what works for you.
- + Is it more important to be comfortable or to be brave? Why?

## Embrace and experience positive emotions.

- + Remember that the wholeness of our experiences is appropriate.
- + What is one thing recently that has surprisingly brought you joy?



# You can incorporate play in your classroom

1

Don't put pressure to make every interaction an academic one

2

Create Play breaks to help students energize themselves

3

Co-create a collaborative class "joy list"  
"Joy Bookmarks"



# SEL Reimagined for Today's World

## CASEL Competencies Alignment



A photograph of two women sitting at a wooden table, looking at a laptop screen. The woman on the right is typing on the keyboard. The laptop screen displays a webpage with the heading "Workplace Step 10 - Step 12" and a progress bar. There are water bottles and a coffee cup on the table. The text "Thank You" is overlaid in large white letters across the center of the image.

# Thank You