

SPRING 2021

THANK YOU FOR HELPING CREATE
PLAY FOR ALL!



Tree House Complete! Now, What's Next?

By Margie Wilhelmi, Director of Marketing

This past year has been a challenging one for many of us. COVID-19 impacted the ability of families to gather, play side-by-side, and connect. We were disappointed to not be able to offer our summer play days and other planned events in 2020. We have seen firsthand the power of play and know that so many children missed out on this essential time to grow and explore. The pandemic also impacted our fundraising efforts for the Sensory Garden Playground. We are thankful that before the shutdown, the first phase of the tree house was fully funded and through our end-of-year appeal, we were able to begin installation on the fencing project.



So, you might be wondering, what's next? As a board, we have continued our mission and have been meeting and collaborating, and are ready to hit the ground running with plans to raise funds for the 5-to-12-year-old playground. Many families have shared input on the need for equipment and play structures for older children, and we could not agree more!



The playground area will include adaptive swings, slides, climbing structures, and other functional play features for those of all abilities. As we finalize our design and equipment plans, in the coming months, we will share more details on our website at playforalldupage.org and on Facebook at [/sensorygardenplayground](https://www.facebook.com/sensorygardenplayground). We hope that you will help us spread the word about our exciting plans.

More good news! We are planning to host our play days this summer, with the first one taking place on June 19. The play days will look a little different due to gathering restrictions, but we're hopeful that they will still provide us with an opportunity to speak with you, share some of our plans, and give families across DuPage County a way to connect with the power of play.

In the meantime, come out to the Sensory Garden Playground and explore our new tree house!

Mission

The Play For All Playground & Garden Foundation's mission is to create barrier-free and universally accessible outdoor play spaces and gardens in DuPage County. Through the cognitive, social, and physical values of play, the Foundation will promote a spirit of inclusion and enhance quality of life, as well as support involvement in recreation and wellness activities for all people and abilities.

Benefits of Inclusive Play

By Maddy Manden & Jenna Johnson
(Western DuPage Special Recreation Association)

We all would agree that play has an important role in raising well-rounded children. Active play helps kids with coordination, balance, motor skills, and spending their natural energy (which promotes better eating and sleeping habits). Inclusive play for individuals with and without a disability provides them with an environment to play together more independently. Through inclusive play, children will feel nurtured, encouraged, respected and active both physically and socially.



Inclusive play creates a sense of community among all children...

For individuals with a disability:

- Focus shifts from what individual can do instead of what they can't do
- Increases time spent socializing (leads to enhanced self-esteem)
- Gives them a chance to try new things and learn new skills
- Allows them to develop friendships and a stronger sense of belonging in their community
- Changes perspective from disability first to person first
- Provides opportunities to learn from role models

For individuals without a disability:

- Increases exposure to people who are different
- Provides opportunities to mentor (enhance self-esteem and self-worth)
- Removes fear and answers questions about disabilities in a natural and supportive setting
- Promotes learning related to respect, value and celebrating differences
- Encourages growth by seeing others overcome challenges and do the same



Fencing Project Fully Funded – You Did It!



Thank you for helping us complete the fencing project! The installation is underway with an anticipated completion by end of summer. This fencing will help safely keep children within the playground and gardens and has been a frequent request of families.

A special thanks to our partner and neighbor, Science of Spirituality for providing a \$2,000 matching donation.

\$50,000 Matching Donation Fundraising Challenge

This past year of quarantining, social distancing and virtual learning has made obvious the importance of our personal relationships. We have all had to adjust to a “new normal” and find new ways to safely interact with one another.

For many families, parks like the Sensory Garden Playground have played a vital role in helping to maintain both physical and emotional well-being during COVID-19. Parks and playgrounds have allowed friends and extended family members to find ways to come together in a safe, socially-distanced manner and stay physically active amid the pandemic. **But, COVID-19 not only brought with it significant increase to the playground’s visitors, it also had a significant impact on fundraising efforts, which has slowed the construction timeline for new projects.**

Since March 2020 several fundraising events hosted by community partners in support of the Sensory Garden Playground, like the Wheaton Rotary’s Fun Run in Color and Veggie Fest, have been cancelled. These cancelled events have resulted in more than \$60,000 in lost fundraising revenue earmarked to help maintain the existing playground and provide funding for new projects.

This spring we are asking for your financial support to help continue construction of future phases. **Will you make a tax-deductible donation today to the Sensory Garden Playground project at playforall.kindful.com?** You can also mail your check made payable to the Play for all Foundation to:
Sensory Garden Playground, Attn. Development Office,
855 W Prairie Ave, Wheaton, IL 60187

Double Your Impact!



Your donation this spring is more important than ever. All donations received will be counted toward a matching gift of \$50,000 from a generous donor!

Your donation today not only helps maintain the current playground features, it also helps to kick start fundraising efforts for construction of a 5-12-year-old playground.

Thank you for your support and helping to make play for all possible.



Photo: Kmieck Imagery

Summer at the Playground

On the third Saturday of each month from June through September, staff will be available at the playground from 10A to 11A to share future plans for the Sensory Garden Playground and to provide craft & activity bags to the first 50 kids.

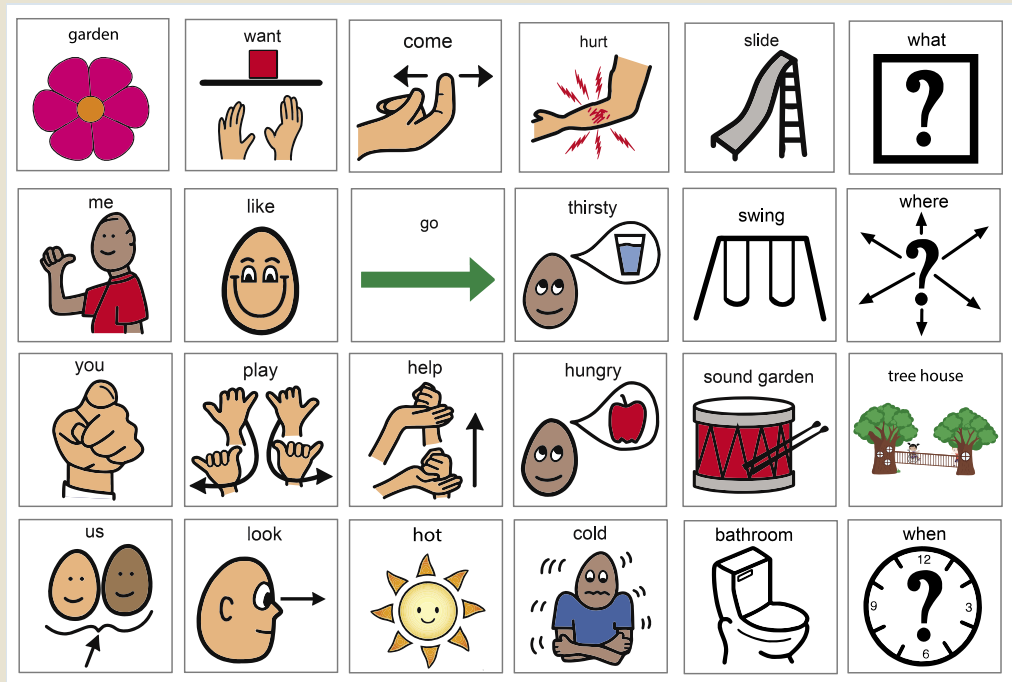
Prior to COVID-19, we hosted Play Days filled with interactive games and activities, but for the safety of our visiting families and staff, we will not be offering those games and activities this summer. We hope to bring back our traditional play days next summer.

Visual Boards to be Installed this Summer


The Sensory Garden Playground is for children of all ability levels. Some children have difficulty with communication and may use visual supports so we have added a visual board at the playground to assist children with communication as well as included a resource at playforalldupage.org.

Why a Communication Board is Useful

- Order of communication boards helps build sentence structure
- Consistency of order helps individuals have an idea of where the picture they need is
- Use of specific pictures helps individual transfer knowledge to a new setting
- Express their immediate needs and preferences, and they have a say in their own life
- Provides a way to learn and practice communication
- Keeps individual safe by giving them a means to tell others what is happening
- Allows individual to choose how and when to communicate
- Helps users build relationships



Without boundaries. Without limits. Play for all.

Park address: 2751 Navistar Dr. | Lisle, IL 60532
Mailing address: 855 W. Prairie Ave. | Wheaton, IL 60187
playforalldupage.org  [/sensorygardenplayground](https://www.facebook.com/sensorygardenplayground)