Challenges for Children’s Play

The boy and the dolphin
Freedom to Play

for the Child’s Right to Play
The Right to Play

In the pictures in this Report, we show children of all abilities at play worldwide, in all sorts of situations - in cities, towns, streets, refugee camps, playgrounds etc - but we also show children under arms (and playing at it too), under bonded labour, in prostitution, and even being “judicially” executed for being gay. Their Right to Play?

... to Life?

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for the Child’s Right to Play
The Organisations

There are 2 organizational aspects of Fair Play for Children. There is the Association – this is the bit people and groups join. It is non-charitable, campaigning and its mission is to work in all appropriate ways to advance **The Child’s Right to Play**. Its Management Council is elected at the Association AGM.

The Charitable Trust’s membership is defined as that of the Association and the Trustee Directors are those people elected to the Association Management Council. The Trust’s role is charitable in pursuit of the Child’s Right to Play.

Activity and Programme

The transformation of Fair Play for Children’s core information work has continued through the website which now delivers our news, information and library functions in a way and to an audience that, for us, is unprecedented.

The online **Publications** - not just our own but links to relevant, good-quality material produced by colleague organisations - are partnered by the PDF Library of documents about a range of children-related issues from around the world. This is an area for a great deal of growth.

The online News Service, **PlayAction OnLine**, continues the excellent work of the former printed
quarterly journal. However, these days can see from 5 to 20 stories published under various sub-headings daily, and these are reaching a large audience. In early 2010, the total web counter reached 250,000, a huge increase in our coverage. Each month, also, we send out an e-letter to over 60,000 email addresses, again far more than in our history.

Indeed, Fair Play may be running a unique service internationally, sourced by contributions from the world’s media, from every continent and nation, dealing with the Right to Play, child care, early years, children’s rights, child labour, children and justice and much else.

What we can say is that reaction over the year has been hugely favourable. A word of thanks to our webmaster, Tudor Watson, whose careful eye has ensured that the site retains freshness and whose reaction to our needs has been always sharp and responsive.

The Child Protection in Playwork Programme, with its core CRB Umbrella Body service used by many Members in the voluntary sector, continues to provide a service which Members state quite clearly they want. The new Vetting and Barring Service run by the Independent Safeguarding Authority should have come into effect in July 2010, but its introduction has been suspended pending a Government Review. Fair Play has already criticised the previous Government for the manner of introducing late changes to the scheme, with resulting confusion, and a report has been drafted re the review. In the past year, we have seen a substantial increase in applications for CRB disclosures.
Policy activity

During the year under review, the General Election came into view and so provided opportunity for third sector organisations to put out their stalls to candidates, parties and public. We took advantage of that situation, publishing a Fair Play Manifesto online which set out a number of ambitious targets including a new Fair Play programme, “Play Wise” whose aim is to engage people and communities in their children’s play needs. A survey of election candidates based on the Manifesto attracted nearly 500 responses, with a very high rate of support for the majority of our ideas.

We continued our campaign to secure banning of the Mosquito anti-teen device including letters to the-then Home Secretary, Alan Johnson, but this remains a blot on the UK’s record with the young, despite also asking Trading Standards in the local authority area to ban it.

Membership

We abandoned the one-off membership payment system as a failure and members in any case opted in a survey of their general views for a return to annual subscription. This shows that new ideas can be trialled but that there is no shame in going back to old ideas either.

The survey, online, enabled us to ascertain members priorities quite precisely and is a device we can re-employ to enhance the Association’s democratic credentials. Child protection in play, and promoting the Right to Play topped the poll.
Income Generation

Generating income remains a huge priority of course and we have serious challenges ahead of us. The 5 year contract with Premier Publications ends later in 2010. This and its predecessors since 1998 have brought in over £160,000 plus in-kind value in terms of a printed product. However, a combination of our move to a paperless environment together with the challenges of selling the advertising has closed this avenue.

We are experimenting with new approaches to raising money via the web-site but so far this has not started to generate the replacement income which will be needed. Much has to be done.

Administration

As we write we are moving back to the home of National Secretary, Jan Cosgrove, as our base. Matthew Cosgrove our Administrator is using his flat also and computer links between the two enable our machine to operate efficiently.

The Child Protection Worker, Liz Allen, is taking early retirement at the end of June 2010 partly as a result of the loss of income and she will be missed greatly by members and management alike for her commitment and her knowledge of play and child protection issues. Jan continues to put in many hours unpaid. Stephen Emck, also on the Management Council, undertakes support work as a volunteer, mainly on the trusts mailing effort, which sees around 100 appeals per month go out.
**Stefan Pikta** is a much-valued volunteer in the office, willing to do “what’s there”.

**Ethel Swann, East Midlands Network Co-ordinator**, also on the Management Council, works on a voluntary basis in Notts etc, where her huge experience is frequently sought by many play organizations and local authorities. We want to encourage more Members like her to offer their experience as Volunteer Network Co-ordinators. This is a main strength of Fair Play, that we can enable Members to share skills etc.

## Governance

We have seen the Management Council recover as an effective body, with grateful thanks to Fred Brown, Jan Cosgrove, Stephen Emck, Ethel Swann and Rob Wheway for their work and concern in a challenging year. The membership survey indicated support for e.g. postal ballots for election, and more use of the possibilities of the web site in an era where attendance at conferences is a luxury many small groups cannot afford often.

## Summary

This has been a full and important year for Fair Play for children. Our work becomes all the more urgent, our independence vital as we enter an era of cuts, seen all too quickly in play funding.

Fair Play wishes to thank all firms contributing to this Report’s publication through charity adverts, and all our Members and Supporters everywhere.

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**for the Child’s Right to Play**
THE FAIRPLAY FOR CHILDREN CHARITABLE TRUST LIMITED
(A COMPANY LIMITED BY GUARANTEE)
LEGAL AND ADMINISTRATIVE INFORMATION

CHARITY NUMBER
292134
COMPANY REGISTRATION NUMBER
1918707
START OF FINANCIAL YEAR
1st April 2008
END OF FINANCIAL YEAR
31st March 2009
DIRECTORS AT 31ST MARCH 2009
Fred Brown
Jan Cosgrove
Stephen Emck
Rob Wheway

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DATE OF INCORPORATION
15th July 1985
GOVERNING DOCUMENT
Memorandum and Articles
Incorporated 3rd June 1985

BANKERS
Lloyds TSB Bank Plc
High Street
Bognor Regis West Sussex

ACCOUNTANTS
Independent Examiners Ltd
Sovereign Centre
Poplars, Yapton Lane
Walberton West Sussex
BN18 0AS
OBJECTS
The provision, improvement and development of facilities for recreation and other leisure time occupations for children resident in the United Kingdom, being facilities of which such children have need by reason of their youth or social and economic circumstances and which will improve the conditions of life for such children by promoting their physical, mental and spiritual well-being, or which may advance their education.

ACCOUNTS
The Accounts of Fair Play for Children for year ending 31st March 2009 can be viewed and downloaded at the web site: http://www.fairplayforchildren.org/pdf/1275835291.pdf

NEW PUBLICATIONS IN THE YEAR
The Half-Acre Standard
Fair Play for Children gives its response to the Play England consultation "Embedding the Play Strategy" and says that the consultation "falls down where it fails to give any targets which are measurable and would undoubtedly improve children’s freedom to play."

Trevor Huddleston - Founder of Fair Play for Children
The charismatic founder of Fair Play for Children, mentor of Nelson Mandela and Desmond Tutu, tireless campaigner against apartheid.

What is the best Children’s Play Delivery System?
The 2010 General Election Manifesto of Fair Play for Children introducing its Play Wise proposal for play development.

All available online in PDF format.

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Annual Report 2009-10

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