

Mura Moegi Kazil Sagulau : all children play



A program for parents and community agencies to support
the social and emotional development of young children
through play and reflection

Facilitator Guidelines for Parent-Talk Program

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Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this document may contain images or names of people who have since passed away.

Who we are

The Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) is a trans-disciplinary research institute committed to providing leadership and driving change to improve the lives of Indigenous and non-Indigenous children through better health, education and wellbeing.

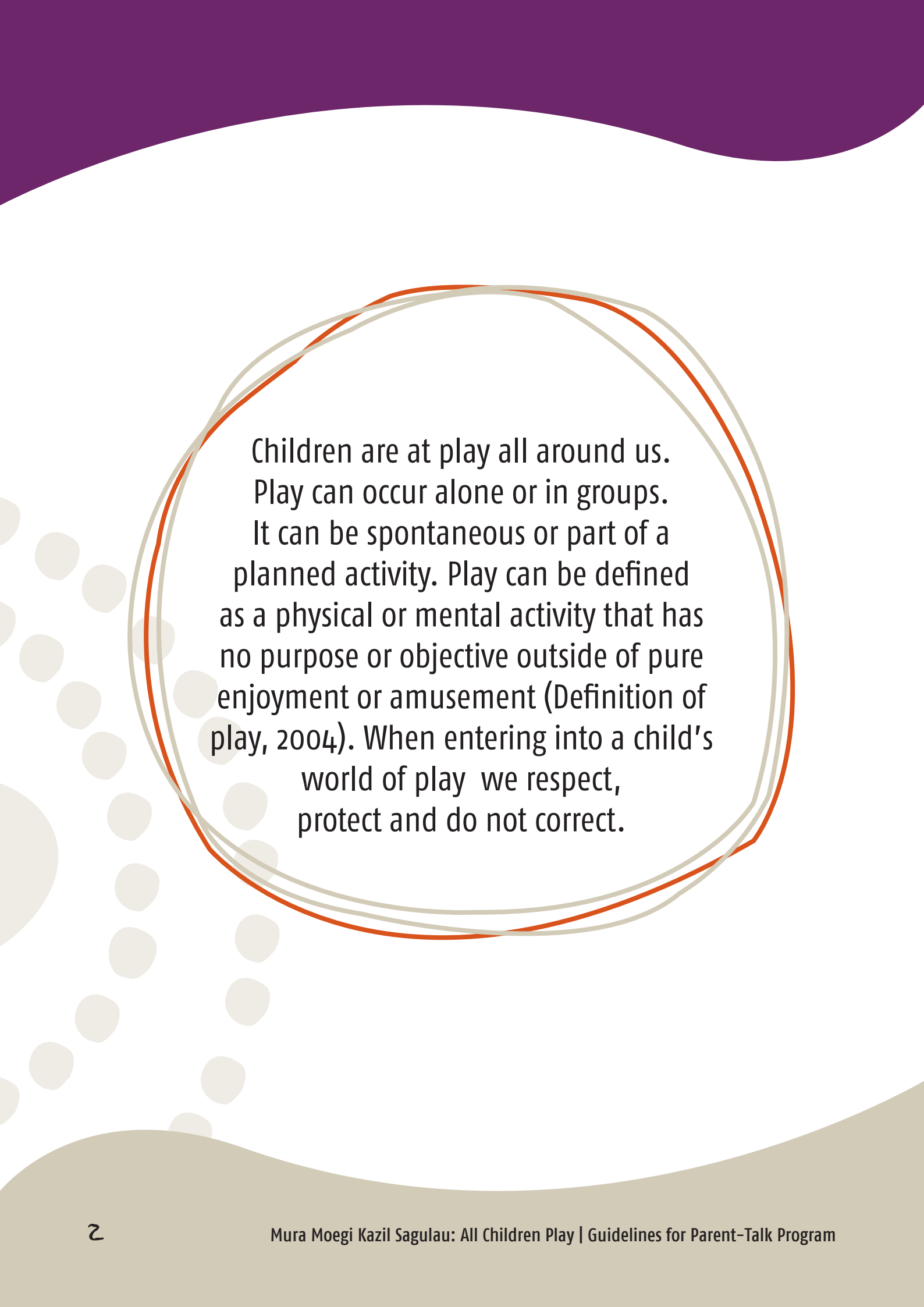
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Children are at play all around us.
Play can occur alone or in groups.
It can be spontaneous or part of a
planned activity. Play can be defined
as a physical or mental activity that has
no purpose or objective outside of pure
enjoyment or amusement (Definition of
play, 2004). When entering into a child's
world of play we respect,
protect and do not correct.

Section 1: Program Information

Introduction

The Mura Moegi Kazil Sagulau: All Children Play (MMKS) facilitator guidelines provide a manual for community organisations to facilitate the set up of MMKS and delivery of *parent talk* discussions about parenting and parent child relationships. This is designed to be run in the time set aside during the weekly play group sessions. The facilitator manual provides an outline of the aims of each session, key concepts and information, followed by a set of activities for playgroup facilitators to lead.

The guidelines cover six sessions, each with a set of themes and activities. Before starting sessions, playgroup facilitators provide information to parents about the aims of the session. These include:

- play, parenting and child development
- parents' observations during playgroup activity with their children
- identifying and discussing issues of interest to parents

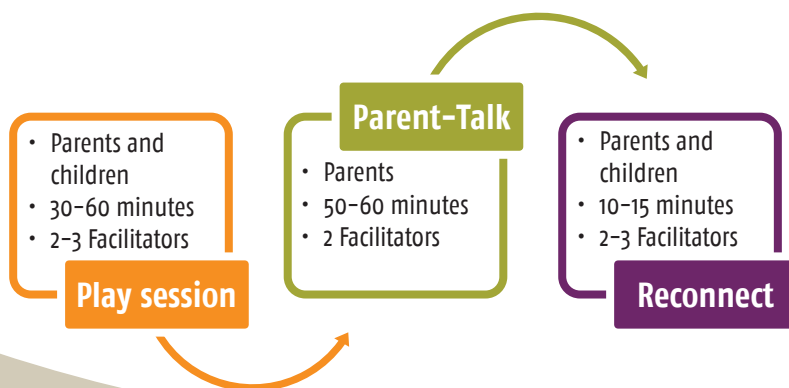
Activities described for the sessions are intended to provide a basic introduction to each week's topic or topics. The facilitator is then free to explore the parents' responses to topics and to expand on the conversation as they see fit. If there is not enough time to complete the activity, this should not be a concern. Facilitators may discuss with supervisors whether to simply leave an incomplete activity out, or to re-run a session the following week if there were disruptions that prevented a session from being completed. Some activities may be carried out in a different order to that set out in these guidelines.

The facilitators will ideally have completed five days of training with the Centre for Child Development and Education (CCDE) Menzies team or have been trained through co-facilitation with a trained leader.

MMKS is best delivered with a minimum of two facilitators and a third facilitator available for the supervision of children's play while the parents are in discussion.

Program Description

MMKS is a short-term intervention program for parents with young children, aged between birth and four years, who are finding parenting a challenge, or who want to develop their parenting skills and knowledge.



Program outline as follows:

PRE Group	Information session
Week 1	Parental Consent and Introduction: Key concepts and information
Week 2	Weekly session: Skills for Play
Week 3	Weekly session: Parenting Styles
Week 4	Weekly session: Managing Parents Emotions
Week 5	Weekly session: Me, My Child, Our Family
Week 6	Weekly session: Growing up for me and my Child
POST GROUP	Parental focus group and Facilitator focus group

Role of the Facilitator

- To create a culturally safe, open, respectful group environment.
- To present information in a clear, simple manner.
- To provide advice on how to access more technical information if required.
- To facilitate opportunities for discussion between all attending families.
- To be non-judgemental of families and facilitate in a non-paternalistic way.

Section 2: Week One to Six session details

Materials

Resources to photocopy from each of the sessions are included at the back of this manual. There are resources to hand out to parents and resources for the facilitators to use during the session.

Stationery and toys are required for every play session. It is a good idea to put a box together with the following materials that will then be available for each session when necessary:

- Toys
- Puzzles
- Games for fine motor play
- Games for gross motor play
- A selection of children's books
- Songs
- Textas, pencils, paints, crayons
- Coloured wool, icy pole sticks, straws
- Colour and plain paper (A3)
- Glue
- Scissors
- Sticky tape

Materials that are required each week for the parent talk session include:

- Butchers paper
- Marker pens
- Scrapbook for reflection
- Pens

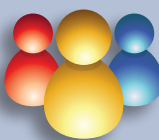
Icon Key



Aims & Rationale



Resources & Handout Material



Activity



Discussion



Notes



Skills for play



Ending the session



Take home message

WEEK 1 Overview

Theme

- Introduction
- Learning Through Play

Play session Content

- Introduction to play

Parent-Talk Content

- Introduction & Overview
- Dealing with interruptions
- Confidentiality

Reconnect Content

- Join in with child's play
- Morning tea or light snack
- Pack up

Parent Reflection or Observation task

- Watch my child/ren playing
- Write down what you observed

Additional Materials

- Consent forms
- Handout: The Importance of playing with Children
- Handout: What Children Learn From Play
- Scrapbooks
- Textas



Take home message:

We learn about our children through play.

Week 1 Mura Moegi Kazil Sagulau: A Play Group for Parents



Aims & Rationale

This session outlines the aims of parenting discussions during playgroups and discusses arrangements for the sessions with parents.

Before commencing the first session, facilitators provide information to parents about the aims of the parenting discussion sessions. A key aim is to provide a safe forum for parents to discuss parenting issues with each other, to enable parents to talk about playgroup activity and what they learn from play with their children. During the first session, the main aim is to outline the program, go over the process with parents and identify any concerns they may have. Menzies facilitators are introduced to the group and their role is explained.

Parents are encouraged to use a play scrapbook to note things down for the parenting discussions, things observed during the play groups or things at home that they would like to remember or discuss. Parents can also stick handouts or other loose sheets in them.

Themes and Content:

- Provide an overview of the program
- Introduce parents to each other as parents and hear from each parent about their interests in learning more about parenting
- Talk about parents' views on play and the importance of play
- Discuss appropriate arrangements for the organisation of the parenting discussions within the group



Resources and Handout Material

Handout: Program Description
Handout: The Importance of playing with Children
Handout: What Children Learn From Play
Scrapbooks
Textas

Introduction

Commence the group discussion with brief introductions. Each participant is asked firstly to say something about themselves and where they are from. Play facilitators identify themselves and explain their role. Menzies facilitators identify themselves and say a little bit about their role in supporting the project and getting feedback from parents and facilitators about how it is going.

Facilitators then remind the group about the aims and process of the group:

To make a break midway through the playgroup to allow parents to sit together and talk about play, parenting and children's development.

During this time, children have some fruit or a drink and continue to play under supervision of an assistant or family volunteers.

Mention to parents that they remain responsible for their child, so that if they feel that the child needs them during this time, they should respond as they see fit.

Discuss how this might work and respond to any questions parents have.

Dealing with interruptions

Some family interruptions may be unavoidable, but suggest to the group that it would be a good thing for people to turn mobile phones off or on silent during discussions.

Other interruptions may come from the children during parents' discussions.

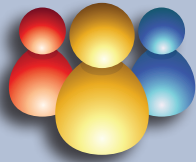
For example, parents may ask what happens if their child won't let them sit apart with the other parents and wants to come over to them, or cries.

Emphasise that such interruptions are normal. Parents know their children best and should deal with any of these interruptions as they feel they need to, for example if children react to separation, need attention or disrupt the arrangements. Parents need not be embarrassed.

Facilitators should encourage open discussion with parents about how they will manage these issues. Parents can try to think about solutions together. During sessions, allow each parent to deal with these issues as they wish. Acknowledge their efforts in a positive way and discuss different strategies with them.

Confidentiality

Facilitators should also discuss confidentiality. Parents should not feel pressured to talk about anything private or confidential concerning themselves or their families. However, they should feel free to discuss things as they wish. The general rule should be that what is said in the group stays in the group.



Activity: Introducing parent and child

Once the introductory discussion has ended, suggest that it would be good to find out a bit more about each other as parents. Play group facilitators can show the way by saying something about themselves first (especially if they have a child attending with them).

- Invite each parent to say something about their child and about other children not attending: they should be asked to say something positive, special or different about the child attending the play group.
- Invite each parent to share thoughts about being a parent, to name the best thing about being a parent and the most challenging thing about being a parent.

In discussion, encourage parents to think about something they would like to change, achieve, learn or become better at. This may include areas where they feel they need support. Then move on to the discussion about learning through play



Discussion: Learning through play

Suggest to parents that we can learn a lot about ourselves and our children through playing together. Explain to parents that this is one of the key aims of the group: to learn about ourselves and our children and to strengthen our relationships with them. Give parents the 'learning through play' handout.

Invite parents to talk about why play is important to children's development. Go through the handout: discuss different kinds of play and what children learn through play.



Notes



Resources and Handout Material

Handout: What children learn from play.



Discussion: Review the session

As the first discussion session draws to a close, go over the arrangements for separation into the parents' talk group and confirm how they can best achieve the aims of the group. If there are difficulties, discuss some options with parents. If the children did not settle or interrupted the session, discuss whether parents felt they had been able to deal with these issues and/or what they might do in the future.

This helps parents to see that the groups are to help them to talk together about the challenges of rearing children and about finding solutions to them. If there were no obvious difficulties, congratulate the group on the achievement.



Notes



Ending the session

Parents are reminded about next week's session, told that the theme for that session will be *Skills for play*, and that subsequent sessions will focus on a specific aspect of play. They are introduced to the idea of keeping a play diary for the duration of the program.

The scrapbook can be used to write down observations during play sessions and to record some things that happen during the week with their child at home – examples of play or ideas the parent may want to keep for further reference and perhaps share with the group.

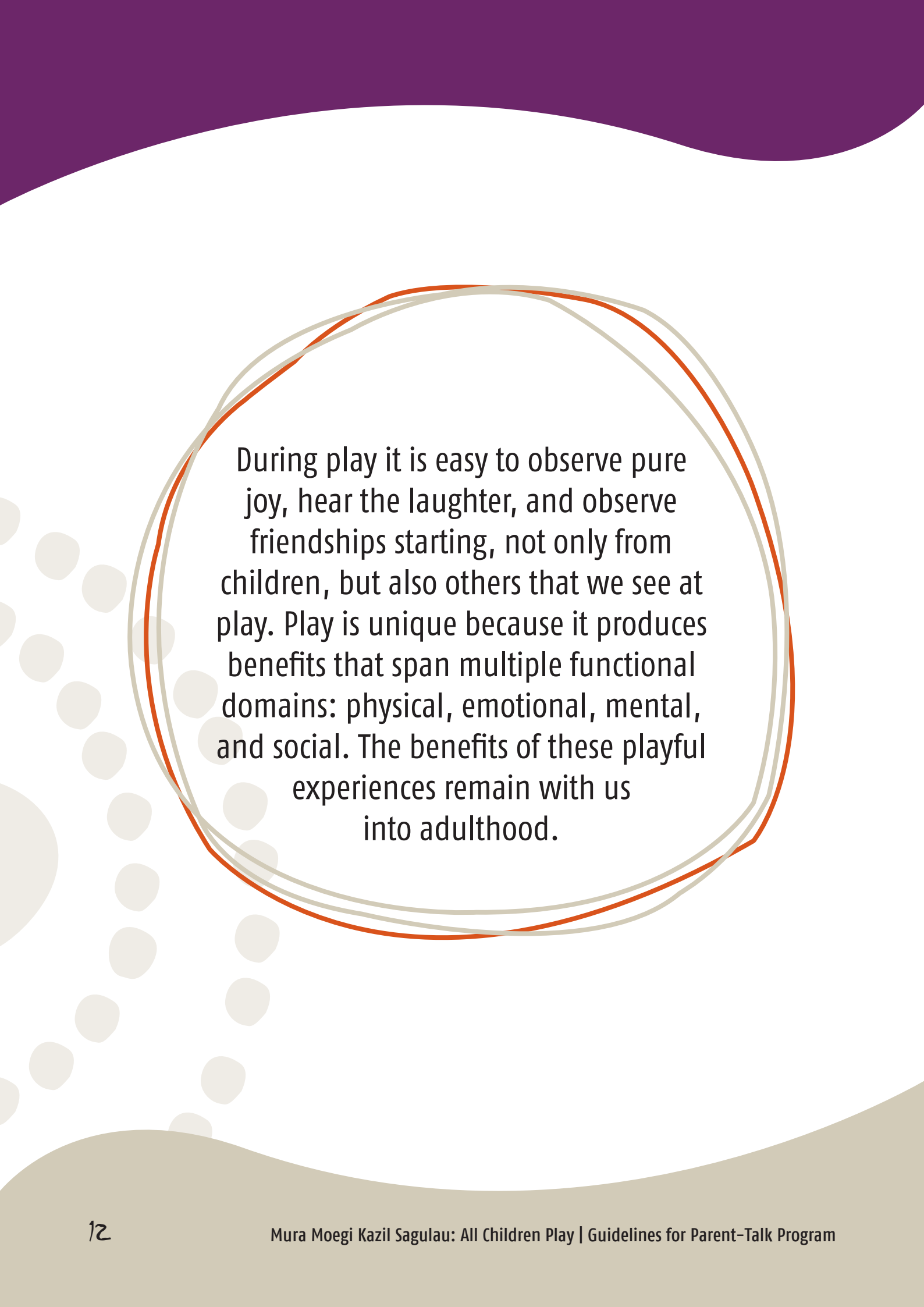
- The next session will focus on how we play and how we can get more out of play by developing *Skills for play*.

The group then reconnects with the children. Parents and children either continue to play together or depart.



Take home message:

We learn about our children through play



During play it is easy to observe pure joy, hear the laughter, and observe friendships starting, not only from children, but also others that we see at play. Play is unique because it produces benefits that span multiple functional domains: physical, emotional, mental, and social. The benefits of these playful experiences remain with us into adulthood.