



Northern California
Annual Report
2022-23

OUR MISSION

is to improve the health and well-being of children by increasing opportunities for physical activity and safe, meaningful play.

OUR VISION

is that one day every child in America will have access to safe, fun, healthy play every day.

A child with dark, curly hair, seen from the back, wearing a tan jacket with a fuzzy collar. They are holding a large, green, textured ball with the Playworks logo and the word "PLAYWORKS" printed on it. The background is a bright blue sky with red and white striped awnings.

PLAYWORKS

A MESSAGE FROM OUR EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

This annual report marks the completion of my first year with Playworks Northern California. Throughout the year, I had the privilege of visiting Playworks playgrounds in San Francisco, the East Bay and Silicon Valley. As I reflect on my many site visits, I'd like to share with you the three observations that struck me the most.

1. The trust that students have in Playworks is immeasurable

I was astonished to experience how my affiliation with Playworks instantly elicited trust and camaraderie among kids I've never met before. During site visits, as soon as they caught a glimpse of my branded t-shirt, kids greeted me enthusiastically and often curiously inquired about what game I was there to teach or play. This level of trust and connection is a testament to the exceptional work of our school-based staff, who wholeheartedly dedicate themselves to being consistent caring adults in their school communities.

2. Junior Coaches are a talent pipeline of future Playworkers

Junior Coaches are our 4th and 5th grade students who participate in weekly leadership workshops and help lead recess games for their K--3 peers. During site visits, I was impressed by how confidently Junior Coaches could explain their roles, game rules and conflict resolution strategies. I joked that these exceptional students may render their Playworks Coaches obsolete one day...only to find out that many of our current full time staff members are in fact former Junior Coaches! I feel so fortunate to have former participants of our program on our team.

3. Playworks is deeply embedded in school communities

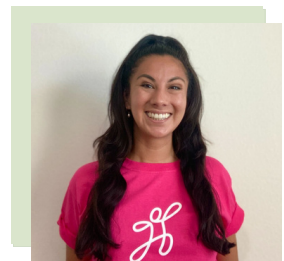
At so many schools that I visited I was greeted in the hallways with bulletin boards spotlighting Playworks Coaches, highlighting our values of safe and healthy play and showcasing the recent work of Junior Coaches. When I chatted with school staff, principals and teachers, I learned about the many ways that Playworks' presence has had a positive influence on school climate. It's clear to me that Playworks' impact reaches much further than just the playground.

In the pages that follow, I'm excited to share with you some highlights of our impact, our team and our partners during the 2022-23 program year. I hope that you find them as inspiring as I do.

In Community,



Laura Medina Quintanar
Playworks Northern California, Executive Director



YEAR IN REVIEW: MOVING BEYOND THE PANDEMIC

During the 22-23 program year, we emerged from the COVID-19 pandemic with a renewed focus. No longer needing to constantly adapt our programming to ever changing social distancing guidelines, we directed our energy towards delivering high quality programming and expanding our reach to address the lasting impacts that the pandemic had on children's development.

Our commitment to program quality was evident through our Pre-Service weeklong training program attended by all 24 of our direct service staff. During the in-person sessions we provided workshops on game facilitation, curriculum writing, conflict resolution, and the power of play. Throughout the year, we offered continuous professional development for coaches through weekly virtual training sessions and leveraged the expertise of program specialists to provide peer-to-peer support and modeling to our newer coaches.

This investment in our staff paid off with excellent program delivery in key components like Class Game Time and Junior Coaches, ensuring safe and healthy recesses in our 35 direct service schools.

Following the pandemic, the demand for support in students' conflict resolution and social-emotional skills increased significantly, exceeding our direct service capacity. To meet this need, we expanded our Pro Trainer team to four members, allowing us to deliver over 100 training, consultation visits, and Recess Reboots services to schools, districts, and organizations across Northern California. Through these consultative touch points we connected with new partners to increase the number of adults who are equipped with tools and strategies to deliver safe and healthy play in their communities.

Our dedication to program quality and staff support during the 22-23 program year allowed us to emerge stronger from the pandemic, making a positive difference in schools and communities across Northern California.





17,301
Students Served

35
Schools Partners

70%
of schools average 75% or higher
total eligible students for
free/reduced lunch.

87%
are students of color

OUR IMPACT

Every year, Playworks surveys our partner schools to learn about the impact of our programs and find ways to improve. Here are a few highlights from educators surveyed this year:

94% of educators agree Playworks helps improve the school climate.

95% agree that during recess Playworks increases the number of students engaged in healthy play with peers.

96% of educators agree that Playworks helps students strengthen their overall well being, especially as they heal from the pandemic.

95% of educators agree that Playworks helps students develop the skills to succeed in their learning community.





COMMUNITY HIGHLIGHT: TIM SESO-HUNTER, PROGRAM DIRECTOR

In the heart of our community, there's a driving force of change, a person whose journey has woven play and purpose together. Meet Tim Seso-Hunter, Northern California Program Director, a dedicated playmaker who has been reshaping youth development through safe and healthy play. Sixteen years ago, Tim embarked on his Playworks journey at Willowglen Elementary as the first coach in a new district, marking a significant milestone for Playworks Northern California.

Today, Tim's strong commitment to fostering a positive change through play makes him our dynamic and fearless leader. As Program Director, he leads a team of 25 dedicated individuals, reaching over 41 schools across Northern California. His leadership serves as a compass, steering the team towards elevating communities through the transformative power of play.

In Tim's eyes, the journey is far from over. His ambition is anchored in enabling Playworks to expand its footprint, touching lives in the same transformative way.

For those inspired to follow a similar path, Tim has a message: it's possible. The passion to make a change is the foundation, and organizations like Playworks Northern California are ready to nurture that spark. He also wishes for one thing - that more people could understand the culture shift, the paradigm change that Playworks ushers in during recess. It's more than just a break; it's a culture of play that enables kids to feel a real sense of belonging and have the opportunity to contribute on the playground, in the classroom, and into their communities.



Follow us on our social media to stay connected!



FUNDING HIGHLIGHT : SPARK PLAY

On June 4th, we hosted our first ever Spark Play event at SPARK Social SF, a popular food truck park in San Francisco. Spark Play was an energizing community event that provided our community members with an authentic opportunity to connect with our mission

Our vision for Spark Play was inspired by our commitment to community centric fundraising, a fundraising model grounded in equity and social justice.

Over 200 registered attendees joined us, including Playworks staff, students, families, board members, school partners, donors, and corporate partners. The event featured food, drinks, a 360 video photo booth, and engaging games led by our expert coaches.

A key principle of Community Centric Fundraising:

"all who engage in strengthening the community are equally valued, whether volunteer, staff, donor, or board member."



A top highlight of Spark Play was getting to celebrate our Junior Coach students. Because they are school based, our 4th and 5th grade student leaders don't usually have the opportunity to connect with other students in the Playworks network. At Spark Play, Junior Coaches got to not only meet each other but collaborate together to showcase for their friends and families all the great leadership work that they have been developing with Playworks.

We extend gratitude to sponsors Marsh McLennan Agency, Infinite Potential, and G2 Insurance Services for their support.

A very special thank you to our community members for joining and inviting friends to experience with us the transformative power of play.

PARTNERS IN PLAY: DEPARTMENT OF CHILDREN YOUTH AND THEIR FAMILIES

The Department of Children, Youth and Their Families (DCYF) has administered San Francisco's powerful investments in children, youth, transitional age youth, and their families since 1991. With a deep commitment to advancing equity and healing trauma, DCYF brings together government agencies, schools, and community-based organizations to strengthen our communities to lead full lives of opportunity and happiness.



Playworks Northern California is proud to have been partnering with DCYF since 2018. Each calendar year, DCYF funding has supported the delivery of direct services to 6-10 public schools in San Francisco. During the pandemic, Playworks partnered with DCYF to deliver safe and healthy play programming at 8 Learning Hubs, the pop up community pods that provided emergency child care and distance learning support.

During the 22-23 program year, DYFC funding supported Playworks Coach and Relay services at San Francisco Community Alternative, Leonard R Flynn , Bessie Carmichael, Visitacion Valley , E.R. Taylor and George R. Moscone Elementary Schools. We are proud to work with DCYF to make San Francisco a great place to grow up.

STRATEGIC PLANNING WITH THE BRIDGESPAN GROUP

Embracing change as both a challenge and an opportunity is the cornerstone of The Bridgespan Group's Creating An Adaptive Plan program. Committed to emerging out of the pandemic stronger than before, the Playworks Northern California leadership team enthusiastically participated in this program from September 2023 to January 2023 .

With input from direct service staff members, we created an actionable strategic plan to respond—and adapt—based on the changing world around us.

Playworks Northern California is clear in its goal to bring safe and healthy play to more kids across the region. To get there we are committed to updating our school prioritization and service matching strategies, in order to leverage our expertise in play to better meet the needs of our partners. We are excited to dive into the next steps of this strategic work during the 23-24 program year.



Thank You to Our Partners in Play!

Playworks Northern California extends immense gratitude to the generous support of all our individual donors and volunteers. Our impact is the result of our collective investment and commitment to Playworks' mission to bring safe and healthy play to every kid.

Our District Partners

Alameda Unified School District
Alisal Union Elementary School District
Auburn Union School District
Brentwood Union School District
Campbell Union School District
Cupertino Union School District
Davis Joint Unified School District
Dixon Unified School District
Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
Hayward Unified School District
Monterey Peninsula Unified School District
Moreland School District
Mountain View Whisman School District
Mt. Diablo Unified School District
Oakland Unified School District
Pacifica School District

Palo Alto Unified School District
Pleasanton Unified School District
Ravenswood City School District
Sacramento City Unified School District
San Francisco Unified District
San Mateo-Foster City School District
Soledad Unified School District
South San Francisco Unified
Spreckels Union Elementary School District
Sunnyvale Unified School District
The Fairfield-Suisun Unified School District
Ukiah Unified School District
Vacaville Unified School District
Washington Unified School District
West Contra Costa Unified School District

Our Foundation and Corporate Partners

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Dean & Margaret Leshner Foundation
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El Camino Healthcare District
Fenwick Foundation

Franklin and Catherine Johnson Foundation
Kaiser Permanente Northern California
Community Benefit
Kevin Carroll Catalyst
Peery Foundation
Quest Foundation
Saw Island Foundation
SFUFC Foundation
Sidney Frank Family Foundation
Warriors Community Foundation

If you're interested in collaborating or learning more about our partnerships, please reach out to bianelle.vazquez@playworks.org.

Northern California Regional Advisory Board Members

Nick Nieto, Board Chair
Annie Crangle
Anna Chan
Rebecca Goldberg

Pramod Gosavi
Trinity Martin
Craig Michaels



Follow us on our social media to stay connected!

