

making a difference

Recommended By Debbie
Kitchin of Interworks, LLC



PLAYWORKS

I'm involved with Playworks because they bring out the best in every kid. Playworks builds a culture of play that allows kids to feel safe, learn to resolve conflicts and feel a real sense of belonging. I'd love to see Playworks at Durham by the time my youngest daughter starts there in a few years! - Heather Eldon, Eastmoreland parent and Playworks board member

DIFFERENT FROM OTHER APPROACHES TO YOUTH DEVELOPMENT, play is accessible to every kid regardless of economic status or physical ability, all kids speak the universal language of play. Inclusion, conflict-resolution, taking turns, decision-making, self-regulation, self-awareness, collaboration, empathy, are skills required for people to engage in civil society and are things one learns in play. Playworks is a National 501(c)3. Our local regional operation Playworks PACNW offices located in Portland and Seattle are serving local school partners through a variety of services including direct, consultative, and training/professional development and online services. In the Pacific Region (OR, WA, ID/AK) over 27,000 children have been served thus far through a combination of direct service (10 districts, 29 schools across two states) and professional development training and digital services (across all four states).

Playworks is an education-based non-profit that partners with elementary schools to leverage the power of play, leverage recess as a classroom to teach critical social and emotional skills and work with partners to create school environments where children thrive. Playworks' mission is to improve the health and well-being of children by increasing opportunities for physical activity and safe, meaningful play. Playworks is the leading organization leveraging play as a tool to promote healthy behaviors and increase social and emotional skills while simultaneously increasing educational attainment and racial equity.



Debbie Kitchin of Interworks, LLC (left), Asia Wisecarver of Playworks (middle) and Eleni Katsigoras (right)

Playworks PACNW values all partnerships, service partners, funders, individuals, community members, volunteers, champions, etc. They engage and work hard to create reciprocal partnerships where they move beyond transactions to relationships that engage all partners in mutually beneficial goals.

Schools, parents, community members can learn about their services and how to get involved by going to their website (local website www.playworks.org/pacific-northwest and national website: playworks.org) and submitting an inquiry or reaching out to their local region by contacting the Regional Director, Asia Wisecarver (information below). There are sortable games in their game guide online as well. Check out YouTube and search Playworks cheers for fun and/or explore additional free resources available at recesslab.org where folks can take their recess assessment tool and get valuable guidance based on their responses to help improve recess with suggestions emailed throughout the year around safety, engagement and empowerment.

COVID-19 Response. When all schools closed, they launched PlayAtHome in March 2020. Donating a free Live Recess three times a day, Monday-Friday to the community. Additionally, there is a printable game guide for those without online access found on the website and has been shared with school and community partners.

Playworks is launching Facebook Live Recess as part of our movement to ensure kids continue to #PlayAtHome. Broadcasting will be live on Facebook at 11am, 1pm, and 2 pm (Central Time). A Playworks Coach will go live every day to lead you through stretches, cheers, and most importantly, games. Tune in to @Playworks (tag facebook.com/makearecesscount) morning, afternoon, and evening to play along! For more information, visit: [#PlayAtHome #PlayworksAtHome @makearecesscount](http://playworks.org/playathome) <https://www.facebook.com/MakeRecessCount/>

“I’m a 5th-grade teacher at Durham. My son is a kindergartener at Lewis. He also has high-functioning autism. I wanted to let you know how much of an impact you have already had on him. This weekend he went to three separate playgrounds and asked kids to play. This is the first time he has ever initiated play with another child. My husband asked him where he learned to do that, and he said, ‘Ms. Ruby taught me.’ In one visit, you have changed his life and ours.”

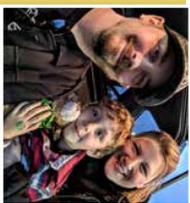
—Emily Galicia-Wolf, Parent and Educator

The local vision for Playworks’ PACNW future according to Director Asia Wisecarver is that: “We want to be the place where young professionals launch their amazing careers in teaching, nonprofit, and social work. We want to be the place that when given the choice to donate, fund, partner, volunteer folks choose us because they are certain they will have a high quality and high impact experience. Above all, we want to ensure that all kids in our communities experience safe and healthy play every day and that in doing so we have unleashed the power of play in others by creating a movement that has made it so.” Join us in building this movement. Don'te talk to your school's principal and/or PTA/PTOs, play at home with your kids, attend a local event, volunteer, consider joining their regional board and spread the word. Every child deserves

to feel safe and supported at school and together we can help more kids in our communities have this experience.

Covid-19 Impact Update: Covid 19 has had a significant impact on Playworks operations. If you are able please make donations to help ensure kids in our communities have access to safe and healthy play in the future. Donate at playworks.org/pacific-northwest

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Ruby was at Lewis Elementary school in 2019. She was the site coordinator (in Team Up consultation service) based there one week out of every month to help foster safety and inclusion on the playground. Emily shared her story after Ruby had been at her son's school for just one week. Ruby has been with Playworks Pacific NW since 2009.

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