

Q2 | 19



THE
PLAY
A PLAYTIME
PUBLICATION **TIMES**

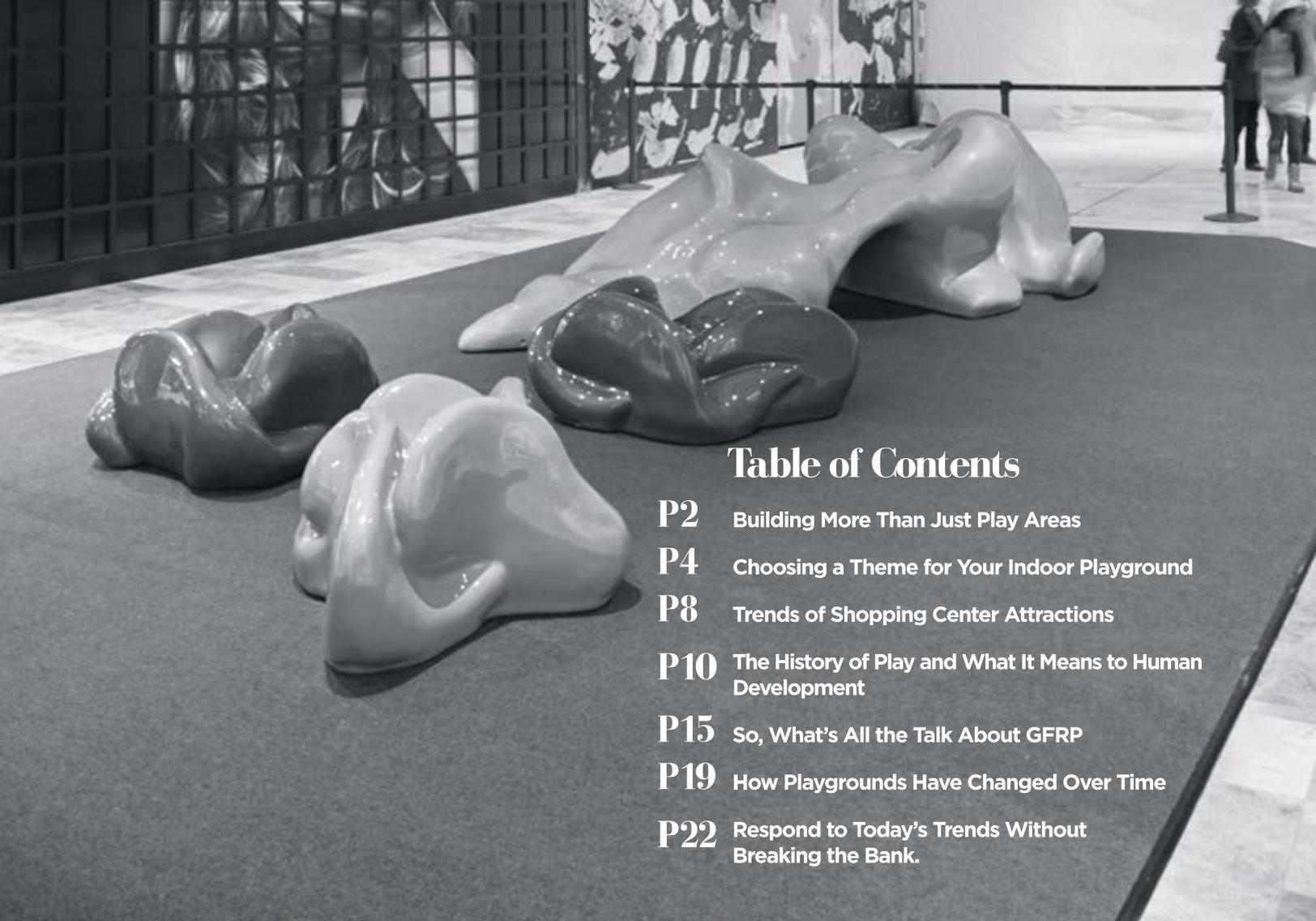


Table of Contents

- P2** Building More Than Just Play Areas
- P4** Choosing a Theme for Your Indoor Playground
- P8** Trends of Shopping Center Attractions
- P10** The History of Play and What It Means to Human Development
- P15** So, What's All the Talk About GFRP
- P19** How Playgrounds Have Changed Over Time
- P22** Respond to Today's Trends Without Breaking the Bank.

PLAYTIME REIMAGINED

PLAYTIME is the global leader of creating unique customer experiences for indoor, outdoor, and water markets. We are experts in using entertainment environments to enhance the customer journey, providing distinctive, memorable experiences families can share together.

We are a Creative & Design agency innovating the world of play one project at a time.

All of PLAYTIME's creations are designed, produced, and shipped out of our 100,000 sq. ft. facility in Englewood, Colorado.

Building More Than Just Play Areas

PLAYTIME has always strived to create memorable experiences that families can share together. With experience becoming the new marketing currency, people are demanding more from their experiences both online and off. To meet these demands, you have to get to know different customer segments – each and every one of them. Because with the right information, you can make more relevant decisions around the activities that will draw people into your locations time and again.

This issue of The Play Times focuses on what it takes to get started on an immersive play experience and all the benefits it brings to children, families and businesses. Whether you are in the beginning stage of picking your theme or in the final stage of installment, the articles in this issue will help you every step of the way.

There's a lot of talk in our industry about the importance of play and what it means to human development. This issue also focuses on the evolution of play and how we learn from our past experiences. We do not consider a project to be another business opportunity. We believe it is a chance to build a positive relationship that will last long after the scope of work is completed. We're excited about where the evolution of play is headed and grateful we get to be a part of it on a daily basis.

As always, we hope you find value in this content. Until next time,

Ryan Moats,
Director of Marketing



Order
Received



Set Up



Fiberglass



Coat



Paint

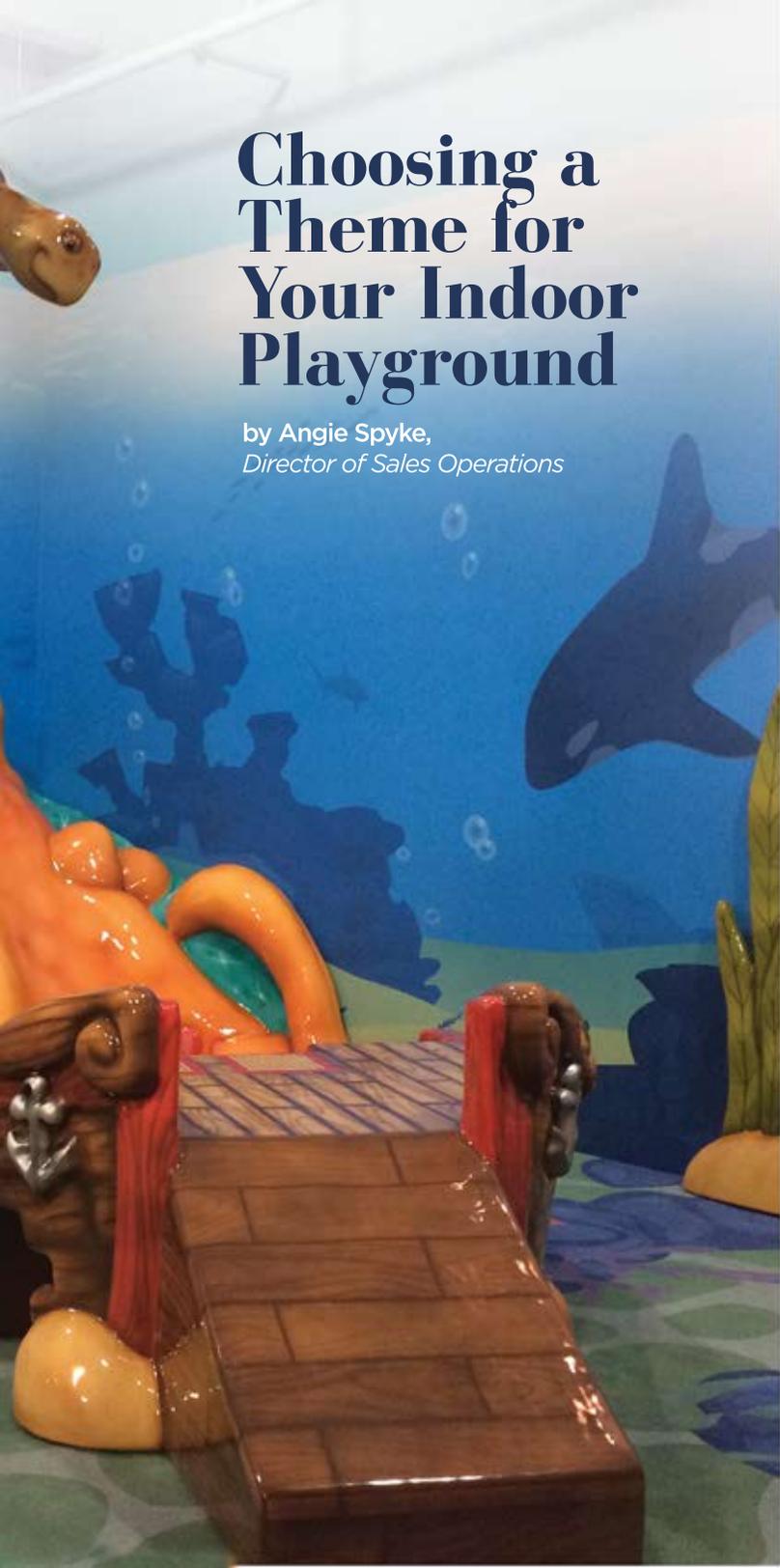


Finish &
Assemble



Pack &
Ship





Choosing a Theme for Your Indoor Playground

by Angie Spyke,
Director of Sales Operations

Kids dream big, and choosing the perfect theme for your indoor playground can be overwhelming. Themes allow kids to imagine themselves in a magical castle, on a far-off island, in an enchanted forest or just about anywhere else they can dream up. Playing pretend in a pirate ship or a Wild West Train Station can get kids fired up about using their imaginations. It keeps them coming back to play out the next scene of their big adventure.

A themed playground is also practical for you. You can choose a theme that aligns with your organization's logo or mission. You can also create a cool space that works together as a cohesive goal. Indoor playgrounds are great on their own, but you can get that "wow" factor when visitors can walk into your space and encounter a marine theme or an indoor beach!

HOW TO CHOOSE A PLAYGROUND THEME

Deciding on a theme for your playground begins by taking a look at the kids who will be playing at your playground and the type of organization you are. As you're deciding on a playground theme, consider:

- **Your Organization and Location.** Sometimes, the right themes stem from who you are and where your playground is located. If you're

near the beach and your organization's logo has a wave image, a seaside theme may be the organic choice. If you are located in Texas or the west, a Wild West theme might be a good fit.

- **Taking a Look at Some Existing Themed**

Playgrounds. PLAYTIME has created themed playgrounds for organizations across the country. Our custom design capabilities mean you're not limited to choosing something out of a catalog. If you can dream it, we can customize it.

- **The Children Who Will Visit.** Consider the age of your visitors. Younger children may respond better to neutrally themed playgrounds, such as forests or green spaces. Older kids may appreciate the excitement of a fire truck theme, Medieval theme, or other adrenaline-pumping adventure themes. Older children may also appreciate themes where more movement is possible. Something like a ship may be right for swash-buckling excitement!

- **Your Space.** This factor is commonly overlooked. It is important to understand the dimensions and restrictions of your space. For example, you may want your playground to be a giant ship. However, if your area is small with a low ceiling, another option may be a better choice. We understand that every space is different. That is why we have plenty of designs and layouts to accommodate any space size.

- **Your Budget.** PLAYTIME can work with different budgets, but keep in mind that if your budget is tighter, more straightforward play areas with fewer customizations can be the most wallet-friendly.

"Playing pretend in a pirate ship or a Wild West train station can get kids fired up about using their imaginations."

Choosing an indoor playground theme doesn't have to be complicated. PLAYTIME is always here to help, and our custom design specialists can work with you to get the exact design you want. Whether you're concerned about your budget or want to make a specific theme fit in your space, our reps can offer expert advice and can show you a range of play equipment to meet your needs. We can handle it all, from initial design consultation to planning and ordering, set-up and support. Bring your desire for a great playground, and PLAYTIME will handle the rest.

Visit: <https://playtime.com/environments/> to get the gears turning with one of our design experts.





Trends In Shopping Center Attractions

by Sunya McDaniel, *Retail Market Specialist*



Have you noticed that shopping malls have started to get a little more...exciting? If you have, it's not your imagination. And you're not the only one who's noticed. Shopping malls have recently been adding handfuls of new attractions that usually don't have a lot to do with shopping, stores or malls at all.

Why are shopping centers incorporating attractions and entertainment centers?

Incorporating attractions into a shopping center isn't an unheard of idea, but it's begun to gain a lot more momentum lately. This might seem like a random trend, but there's a good bit of logic explaining why this is happening.

The Rise of E-Commerce

It is easy to blame any downward sales trends solely on people's tighter budgets, but in reality, it's a little bit more complicated than that. There are other contributing factors as well, and the biggest one is the rise of e-commerce. It's no secret that online shopping is a huge trend that's grown by leaps and bounds in the past several years. Online retail giants like Amazon are making it easier to have goods delivered right to your door quickly.

Even for traditional brick-and-mortar retailers, their online sales are becoming a huge priority as they strive

to insert themselves into the growing world of online shopping. But no matter how important these online divisions have become, they can't replace all the business these stores could do at their physical locations. People still want to have interactive and social experiences – something hard to replicate fully online.

Incorporating attractions into a shopping center isn't an unheard of idea, but it's begun to gain a lot more momentum lately.

Millennial Shopping Trends

The final element that was and still is truly hurting many brick-and-mortar stores, mainly chain departments are these trends. Millennials often have smaller comparative budgets than their parents and grandparents did at their ages. Their jobs are statistically lower paying, and much of what income they do have goes towards paying off student loans.

Because their budgets are stretched so thin, many millennials are selective about how they spend their



money. This makes them less apt to browse a shopping mall for fun and buy something they like on impulse. This presents a real problem for many stores. Millennials are currently the largest generation in the US, according to PEW research. While not all of them are at an age to be doing much shopping, this still represents a large market that isn't coming into the stores regularly.

The Enchanted Shopping Mall Experience

Due to these potential factors affecting shopping mall attendance, the concept of retailtainment was born.

Retailtainment is the idea that entertainment centers can be combined with the traditional shopping experience. Through this combination, retail centers can offer something that shoppers can't get if they did all their shopping online.

The idea behind this enhanced retailtainment experience is that shoppers will now have more reasons to visit a shopping mall than to shop online. They might go for the stores, or they might go for the entertainment, but in the end, people are more likely to visit the other while they're already there.

By incorporating these kinds of activities into more traditional shopping mall environments, they become more attractive to modern-day shoppers and families. The idea is that these spaces will be less dedicated shopping centers and more of an all-inclusive fun center. These fun centers allow you to enjoy a fun activity with your family, grab a bite to eat or enjoy some shopping. PLAYTIME has a considerable portfolio of retail environments and architectural accents that are beneficial to children and adults alike.

To learn more about PLAYTIME's commitment to generate a positive return on experience, visit:

<https://playtime.com/environments/retail/>



The History of Play and What It Means to Human Development

by Kalani Napoleon, *Manager of Project Operations*

Play is a naturally engaging activity. When we play, we are curious and experimental, often arriving at inspiring and amazing outcomes. It's not unique to humans, as animals participate in play as well. Play leads to learning and can be a vital part of development. When children play, their imagination opens up possibilities, and minds grow intellectually and emotionally. Psychically, play can improve dexterity and physical strength. Playtime is also essential for adults. It provides a break from stress and can help them evolve their thoughts and feelings.







Is There an Evolutionary Advantage to Play?

Research suggests that there is a correlation between play and brain development. Zoology professor John Byers from the University of Idaho has provided insight into this probability finding that play behavior of different species aligns with frontal cortex development. The frontal cortex is responsible for high-level cognition.

This connection was first found in studies by Marian Diamond in the 1960s. She and her colleagues conducted research using rats as the medium, finding that those that lived in “enriched” environments had larger brains and were smarter. But researchers noted that enrichment wasn’t merely about visual stimulation but rather active play between the rats or with toys.

So, with scientific support, it’s become well established that play does impact brain development, but how?

The brain at birth has billions of neurons with innumerable connections through which those neurons communicate. It’s a complicated process. Through interaction rules, some neurons are strengthened while others are eliminated so that the brain isn’t overloaded. Play, which happens most often in children with developing brains, seems to aid this process.

Why? Because play often includes repeated actions like throwing a ball, this repetition plays a part in strengthening those neurons, while possibly eliminating other connections. This idea was supported by a study in which juvenile rats were allowed to engage in play with peers. Compared to those rats that didn't have this opportunity, the playful rats had fewer neural connections in the medial front prefrontal cortex, leading to a less complex but more functional network of connections.

Alternatively, play also strengthens connections that may have otherwise been lost. Because play involves imagination, the behaviors of pretending can recruit networks of neurons that would usually not be active at the same time.

Play involves novel activities. It's proven that when the brain registers something new, there is strong activity in the midbrain, which is associated with reward. So, the brain sees novelty as rewarding, which in turn stimulates the hippocampus, the brain's central area for learning and memory.

Play is a naturally engaging activity. When we play, we are curious and experimental, often arriving at inspiring and amazing outcomes.



Many Species Play to Learn and Develop

Many animals play, as well. Besides having fun, most animals use play to learn and develop. Play within animals is a natural instinct. It is not only fun, but it is also a way for them to learn to adapt. Play, as noted by experts in the field, could have been part of human evolution, allowing primates to develop better problem-solving skills leading to higher order cognition and emotional skills.

Playing Makes Us Human

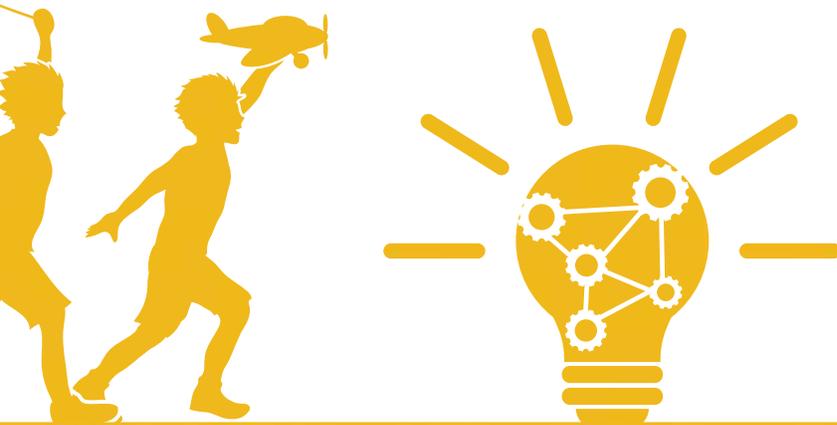
Historically, play has always been part of the childhood experience. It has changed over the centuries, as society has evolved. However, the modern world has made play sometimes harder to attain as the natural outdoors has become more

constrained. Physical play, which is what is so integral to brain development, has become something that children do less of, as play often centers around technology.

Fundamentally play is almost etched into our DNA. It's a basic motivation for children, and they should always have a right to it. Culture certainly has an impact on the specifics of play, but much of how children interact with one another is universal. Play has been and will continue to be part of human evolution, with more exciting changes ahead in the 21st century.

The importance of play is undeniable. To learn more about how PLAYTIME can help create immersive experiences for children to play on, visit:

<https://playtime.com/environments/>



So, What's All the Talk About GFRP

by Jeff Williamson, *Director of Business Operations*

PLAYTIME is a leader in the design and manufacture of vibrant, safe, and educational indoor, outdoor, and water play areas enjoyed by children around the world. Each PLAYTIME project is custom designed, hand-crafted, and assembled to create a unique play area that becomes a gathering spot for the community. Playspaces come in a variety of themes and configurations to fit a particular brand and complement a space's personality. Our innovative use of Glass Fiber Reinforced Polymer (GFRP) helps set us apart from the competition.

Important Stepping Stones for PLAYTIME

PLAYTIME was a pioneer in indoor play, installing its first play area in the Cherry Creek Mall in Denver in 1998. Over the next two decades, PLAYTIME created thousands of uniquely designed play areas that set the standard for unique family experiences. Not only were these play areas a place for children to use their imaginations, but they were also creating an influx of foot traffic to these installed locations. In 2003, PLAYTIME created its first outdoor play area in Peoria, Illinois. Since then we've built outdoor play areas for schools, city playgrounds, county parks, rec centers, and hundreds of other clients. PLAYTIME's distinctive

outdoor play elements are designed to stimulate activity, wonder, and curiosity. But just as importantly, they are also manufactured to be durable and practical.

GFRP Benefits

Because kids want to jump, climb, slide, and crawl, PLAYTIME's GFRP play areas are softer and safer than traditional outdoor playgrounds. GFRP elements are designed to work together with environmental features to become a focal point in a community. It also is extremely durable, UV-stable, and fade resistant. GFRP elements meet ASTM F1487 Standard Consumer Safety Performance Specification for Playground Equipment for Public Use. PLAYTIME can design projects of all themes and styles from realistic and natural to highly stylized and whimsical. The possibilities are truly limited only by the imagination.

Compared to most concrete sculptures, GFRP elements are lightweight and easy to install. That's because GFRP has a very high strength-to-weight ratio, similar in tensile strength to steel, yet only weighs 2 to 4 pounds per square foot. That lighter



PLAYTIME's distinctive outdoor play elements are designed to stimulate activity, wonder, and curiosity.



weight also translates to faster installation and lower shipping costs. GFRP is exceptionally durable and can withstand daily wear and tear, as well as harsh UV-radiation from the sun, salt water, acid rain, and most chemicals for years without fading or losing laminate properties. Its also fire resistant and can withstand the impact of a baseball bat. Best of all, it's safe and can be molded into virtually any shape or form, making it perfect for any outdoor play area.

How GFRP Has Made a Huge Impact on Outdoor Play Areas

The 10.5-foot tall GFRP tree stump element installed at Castle Rock Park showcases how PLAYTIME can make a big impact with a single feature. This structure provides free-form opportunities to climb and crawl for people of all ages. The semi-realistic style of this design blends in beautifully with the natural Colorado scenery and makes a significant impact with a small footprint.

Commercial park and playground equipment provider, Game Time and the city of Miami, FL worked with PLAYTIME to create an adventurous outdoor playground for the city. The PLAYTIME products are manufactured using GFRP rather than Glass Fiber Reinforced Concrete (GFRC), which had been a standard in the industry. The park has become a gathering spot for the community.

Sitka, Alaska is known for its nature and proximity to the ocean, so when they looked at installing a new playground, it made sense to choose a nautical theme. PLAYTIME designed several features including fish spring riders, a tugboat, and an octopus. We also created a fish weigh-in photo op element, celebrating the local fishing culture and encouraging guests to capture their time in this beautiful Alaskan town. PLAYTIME utilized GFRP when making these elements to ensure they would withstand the variant weather and wear and tear, so the locals and visitors of Sitka will be enjoying these features for years to come.

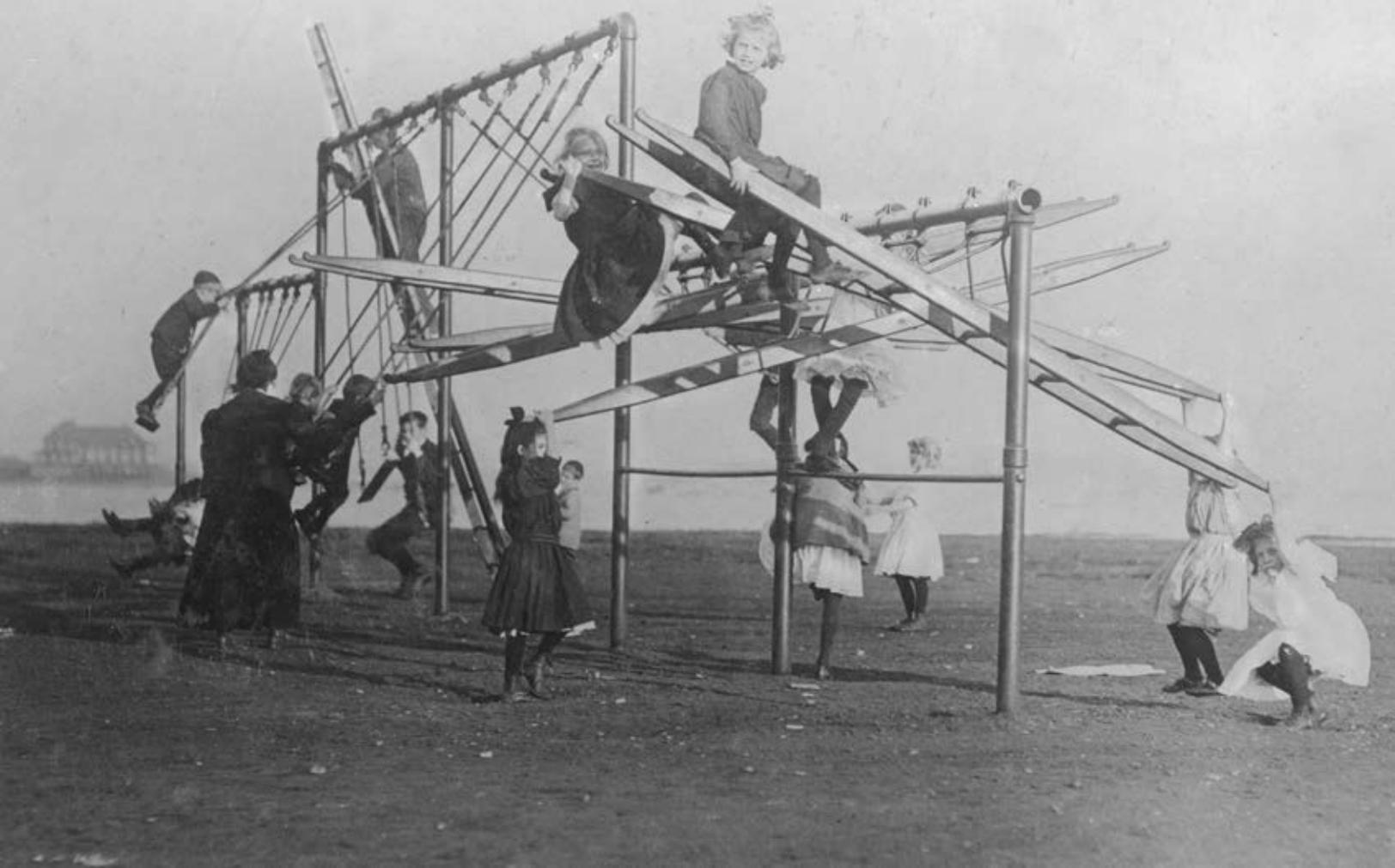
PLAYTIME sets the standard in custom designed and manufactured outdoor playspaces. Our use of GFRP is just one more way we're leading the way to better play. To find out more, visit

<https://playtime.com/play/gfrp/>



How Playgrounds Have Changed Over Time

by Rebecca Broadfoot, *Project Manager*



Playgrounds today are similar to the very first concepts developed in the 1850s with swings, slides and merry go round style rides. The designs were initially meant to create a way for children to play well together, learn to share and learn how to play safely using their imaginations. German, Frederick Froebel, the originator of the first playground, refers to this as “creative activity.”

A Century later, “junk playgrounds” came into existence, partnering car parts, old structures, and other construction items to create more imaginative playgrounds. In 1945 the junk playground was introduced in the UK and was given the name “adventure playgrounds,” and in 1950 here in the United States, the very first adventure playground was produced in Minneapolis. This adventure playground began a whole new idea in playgrounds and launched the concept of new novelty playgrounds in the 1950s through the 1970s.

Designers in the 1950s began to take on the challenge of making the traditional playground, one with typical sand piles, slides, swings and see-saws, and turning them into a novelty area with much more imaginative structures. Rockets and cars were popular pieces and concrete structures like mazes and tunnels. This changed many playgrounds as they tried to make them more exciting and a place a child would want to play and imagine. These designs continued into the

1970s, and we saw the rise of themes in playgrounds, pieces, and parts for specific ages of children.

The contemporary playground has had a vast evolution from the first concepts in Germany in 1837. We are approaching 200 years of design and play experiences. Children today are much more technologically advanced and have a broader imagination, given the digital age and how we see play today. The advance in technology has meant an increase in some of the playground features and structures.

Interactive digital play structures such as Quantum Space, a PLAYTIME interactive game, are advancing new ideas into what is expected by the new age of children. Themed playgrounds are a popular advancement now more than ever. We put together ideas of what the child experiences in the world of video games, fantasy and digital play and add this to the playground experience.

Today's playgrounds include advanced safety and imaginative structures developed with new technologies. Foams, plastics, and materials today are much safer and can offer unique areas of imagination. Engineers have spent much of their time designing playgrounds to be safer all while making them fun for kids to enjoy. These

playgrounds have become a safer place to play than outings on the streets, empty parking lots, and other unsafe locations such as construction sites and junkyards.

Children today are much more technologically advanced and have a broader imagination

PLAYTIME is continuously looking at ways to bring playgrounds into a contemporary and cutting-edge style using many of the new innovative technologies mentioned. Staying ahead of the innovation wave is top of mind as we continue to make the world of play the best it can be.



Respond to Today's Trends Without Breaking the Bank.

by Eric Sivertsen, *Creative Talent Manager*



Disneyland recently opened its new addition to the theme park, Star Wars: Galaxy's Edge. Theme parks are one of the most important cogs in the Disney machine. In a recent interview, Disney CEO, Bob Iger discussed the new Star Wars land explaining, "We're pushing the limits of imagination and innovation. We'll actually blur the lines for guests between fantasy and reality." This creative freedom allows Disneyland to do more than create a new world for Star Wars fans to enjoy. It also presents a stepping off point for all kinds of new Star Wars experiences, memories, and stories that families can share together.

Today's consumers expect immersive, quality experiences when they attend a theme park or attraction. Many of them are looking for the "Disney experience" even when they attend aquariums, museums, and zoos. The smartest players in the industry today can respond to today's trends without breaking the bank. To be successful in the future entertainment and attraction operators will need to develop immersive strategies to adapt to the shift in consumer preferences, while still staying within their budgets.

Today's guests want a fully immersive experience, which stems from the complete integration of the facility, creative, and the IP - and they are smart

enough to recognize the difference. Using a strong brand to create a sense of place can provide the unique sensation of being transported to a magical destination. For most theme park developers, the ability to achieve this level of immersive environment requires the acquisition of a high-level IP. For other attraction venues such as aquariums, museums, and zoos this level of spend is not possible.

environment where possible. In addition, reducing the size of some thematic elements can create the same visualization perception while significantly lowering costs for an overall project. Even without a large budget, it is possible to create an entirely immersive experience and tell a story in a meaningful way.



In the cases where budget is a restriction to acquiring a well-known IP immersive environment, the attraction venue can establish its own look and feel at a much lower cost. This strategic path can prove to be successful when the theme is unique to the area and culture where its located. For example, a zoo can focus its efforts around a particular animal that is popular or unique to its location.

Another strategy is to focus the immersive environment of certain points of the experience by utilizing the surrounding landscape to complement that

Today's consumers expect immersive, quality experiences when they attend a theme park or attraction.

While Disney continues to raise the bar of creating the immersive experience, it is possible to all types of entertainment and attraction venues to follow this trend and create memories and stories that families



can share. Even with a limited budget, developers can create a central theme around a park or attraction. While it's important to stay on the pulse on emerging trends, it is just as important to recognize that there are creative ways to keep up with today's consumer demands without making the capital investment in the latest and greatest.

To find out how PLAYTIME can help set you apart from your competitors by creating immersive themed environments, visit:

<https://playtime.com/experiences/>



The Contributors

for this Edition





Angie Spyke

*Director of Sales Operations
at PLAYTIME*

As a mother, Angie knows first hand the importance of play as an essential part of healthy childhood growth and development. As the Director of Sales Operations, Angie takes on various responsibilities including leading teams accountable for proposals and new project initiatives. She also redesigned the Sales Operations model to better support the overall PLAYTIME business.



Sunya McDaniel

*Retail Market Specialist at
PLAYTIME*

Sunya is responsible for overseeing project implementation and providing day-to-day communication with some of PLAYTIME's largest retail customers. Sunya holds an excellent track record of strong working relationships with developers, property managers, and shopping center staff, resulting in successful play experiences in retail locations all across the country.



Kalani Napoleon

*Manager of Project
Operations at PLAYTIME*

Kalani specializes in turning dreams into reality. As the Manager of Project Operations, Kalani ensures PLAYTIME projects are installed on scope, on time, and on budget. Kalani fosters an environment of teamwork and makes sure designs are clearly defined while overseeing performance and maintaining timelines. His strong communication and client service skills enhance PLAYTIME's process-driven management philosophy.



Jeff Williamson

*Director of Business
Development at PLAYTIME*

Jeff is responsible for strategic development and growth in PLAYTIME's Amusement, Fitness, and Restaurant segments. Jeff's go-to market strategies and initiatives have been instrumental in PLAYTIME's growth and performance over the past seven years. He has a proven track record of helping businesses improve their overall customer experience through the implementation of custom play areas.



Rebecca Broadfoot

*Project Manager at
PLAYTIME*

Rebecca's role is to manage the production and installation of immersive play areas for PLAYTIME accounts. Her attention to detail and industry knowledge ensure every play area is installed on-scope, on-time, and on-budget. From start to finish, Rebecca oversees the project and assures that every detail from quality to installation reflects the theme and customer's goal for their play area.



Eric Sivertsen

*Creative Talent Manager at
PLAYTIME*

Eric is a pragmatic designer bringing distinctive creativity to PLAYTIME's designs. He also manages the creative team to ensure designs are completed on time and within the specifications required to exceed client expectations. Through Eric's leadership, PLAYTIME is creating thoughtful entertainment experiences for families and propelling brands with soul and substance through innovative play.



playtime.com | 303.662.0302

follow us

