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**Northern Ireland
Executive**

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DELIVERING SOCIAL CHANGE

Play Matters

Many of you will be aware that the Children and Young People's Strategy Team within the Department of Education is taking forward a Play and Leisure project entitled **Play Matters** which is funded through the Delivering Social Change - Early Intervention Transformation Programme (EITP).

Play Matters to everyone and as part of this project we will be launching a **Play Messaging Campaign** aimed at promoting the value and importance of play and leisure for children and young people amongst parents, professionals, communities and indeed, society as a whole.

All children and young people need to play. Play is an integral and fundamental aspect of childhood and is essential in contributing to the healthy development, and well-being of individuals and communities. Through play children explore, imagine and make sense of the world around them, from birth right through to teenage years.

As part of our play campaign we plan to promote key play messages through social media platforms and we are asking you to support us by taking the time to read and share our play messages through your own networks, forums and social media outlets. You can follow us on twitter at **@Education_NI**  **#playmatters**

Additionally, as we would like as many people as possible to be aware of our Play Matters campaign we ask you (where permission permits) to share this email and any future play messages amongst your staff, membership, contacts, networks and e-news bulletins.

If you would like more information or would like to hear more detail on the full Play and Leisure project (including Play Shaper and Play for Parents programmes) please contact Angela Stallard at angela.stallard@education-ni.gov.uk or Pamela Baxter at pamela.baxter@education-ni.gov.uk or call 028 91279203.

