

The American Toy Institute, Inc.

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“The Power of Play”

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A Public Service Campaign

March 10, 1999

Affiliated with Toy Manufacturers of America, Inc.

"The Power of Play" – an executive summary

Play is critical to a child's social, emotional, and intellectual development. Psychologists, researchers and educators are increasingly convinced of this fact. Play has been acknowledged as one of the most effective ways for children to learn. Make it a game and children participate eagerly. Lecture at them and they become distracted and lose interest.

Play is also credited with helping children develop self-esteem and a sense of fulfillment and well-being, as well as practicing leadership and negotiating skills. Play brings children of all cultures together with each other, with parents and with grandparents.

Play has proven to be a highly successful method for dealing with children who have emotional and physical disabilities – from play acting to simple games that encourage troubled children to interact with a therapist, parent or another child.

Yet, play is under intense pressure. It is being squeezed out of certain schools as frivolous and unnecessary. Recess at many schools is being systematically eliminated. This is no small matter: In the name of competition, some parents and teachers are demanding the kind of results from play that can be measured on tests, while its importance in encouraging imagination, teamwork, freedom and self-expression – values central to the American character – are being overlooked.

Also at odds with the knowledge that play is an essential developmental and learning tool is the reality of life in America. In an era of working parents with fewer leisure hours, latchkey kids and non-stop entertainment on television, less and less attention is paid to making time for playful interaction between parents and children and the positive results that time engenders.

What can be defined as a societal dilemma – the discovery that play is essential coming at a time when play is being systematically neglected – presents a unique opportunity, and the American Toy Institute (ATI) has taken the initiative to meet it. A not-for-profit corporation, ATI was set up for the express purpose of working to improve the quality of children's lives. The need to establish the value of play dovetails with ATI's basic mission, and in recognition of that, it has drawn up a three-to-five-year public service program aptly named *"The Power of Play."*

Under the umbrella theme of *"The Power of Play,"* ATI is designing a campaign around the benefits children and adults alike derive from play: mental and physical development, social and interpersonal skills, healing, fun, joy and discovery. The theme spans all ages and incorporates all aspects of play. It crosses ethnic, national and

generation lines. It has universal appeal and will attract any number of potential partners ranging from teachers, government and childrens' organizations to the corporate world at large.

The primary audience for "*The Power of Play*" program is parents/caregivers of children from birth to early teens – with the highest concentration on the early years through primary school. The program is NOT limited in any way by gender, demographics, ethnic background, religious orientation, or physical/emotional/mental abilities.

Parents/caregivers are key. They are closest to children and most concerned about their individual needs. Parents also can act to influence other target audiences – educators and policymakers.

Given the influence of policymakers, opinion leaders and educators on the future of play throughout our nation, initiatives to reach these key audiences will be vital to the success of "*The Power of Play*" campaign.

The national campaign includes a multitude of program extensions, intended to unite the population with common, easy and attainable goals for all!

- Take the time to play with your child and make it a positive, relaxed, enjoyable experience.
- Lend your support for school programs that include recess and a play component in the learning process.

Every extra minute a parent or caregiver takes to play with a child will benefit that child.

The ultimate success of "*The Power of Play*" program will depend on ensuring national impact, and the national publicity that would build up around it. The following program elements serve that purpose in five areas: the national dimension; a multimedia operation; an advertising campaign together with the Ad Council; core materials, and outreach to communities.

1) National Initiative

ATI will work to make "*The Power of Play*" program part of the national children's agenda, putting play on a par with the other vital needs of today's families and communities. This national "umbrella" will help provide cohesiveness to the entire campaign, reaching a wide variety of target audiences: parents and educators; corporate and community leaders; and a broad constituency of children. It will also create an opportunity for additional endorsements from important

national organizations and other entities capable of adopting practices that alter lifestyles in ways that benefit society through play.

ATI will also work to establish a National Play Day.

2) Multi-media program

The multi-media program would be conducted through the Institute For Play in San Francisco and consist of:

- Publication and national launch of a book for the general public: *The Power of Play*
- A two- to three-hour, prime-time TV series on PBS entitled *The Power of Play*, with segments devoted to:
 - Why Do We Play?
 - What Happens If We don't Play?
 - How Can We Re-learn to Play?
- Educational videos and print materials in support of the PBS show, including kits and teachers' and students' guides

3) Public Service Advertising Sponsored by the Ad Council

ATI will solicit the support of the Ad Council in producing a national public service print, television, radio and interactive advertising campaign. The campaign will promote '*The Power of Play*' as a tool for learning and creative development, for bringing people of different generations and cultures together, for socialization and problem-solving skills and for recreation.

The advertising will focus on children as part of the Ad Council's "Commitment 2000" initiative, aimed at making a lasting impact on society by helping children achieve their potential.

Through the agencies that volunteer their services, the Ad Council will provide creative development of advertising materials at no cost, as well as free media valued at \$10 million annually. Out-of-pocket production and fulfillment costs will be the responsibility of ATI.

4) Core Materials

ATI will oversee development of a graphic identity for "*The Power of Play*" program. Written support materials will be created to satisfy the needs of audiences that the program targets on a regional and national basis.

A generic "*Power of Play*" kit, with a variety of ideas and activities to implement locally, will be the cornerstone, with separate sections and add-ons, such as the corporate initiative, handicapped children's initiative, and others. A variety of other materials, such as teachers'/leaders' guides, instruction manuals for partners and endorsers and a package for TMA members, will be distributed as supplements to the generic kit.

5) Outreach Activities

The program elements in this section are intended to be carried out by the coalitions and partnerships established by ATI, which will provide instruction kits on how to implement the activities and how to attract local publicity. The outreach activities support the national program and the cumulative effect of the publicity they engender will feed into the national publicity program ATI develops.

6) "*The Power of Play*" Program Launch

The tone of the entire campaign will of course be set by coverage of the launch of "*The Power of Play*" program, scheduled for April '99. The launch will provide parents/caregivers, educators, decision-makers and policymakers with viable information about our nation's "state of play," based on extensive research compiled on behalf of ATI.

"*The Power of Play*" is a multi-million dollar, three to five year program with an ambitious goal: the establishment of the value of play in American society. ATI is committed to staying the course.

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"The Power of Play"
A Public Service Campaign by the American Toy Institute, Inc.

Supporting Statistics

Developmentally appropriate play promotes optimal educational development in infants, toddlers and preschoolers.

Children who absorb fundamental concepts and capacities through developmentally appropriate play are considerably better off in the long run than those whose learning experiences have been limited to rigorous instruction in specific academic areas.

Play contributes to:

- Maximizing a child's potential by stimulating imagination and creativity;
- Contributing to healthy adjustment in the areas of interpersonal relationships and self-esteem;
- Building strong educational foundations by developing a broad knowledge base and universal skills;
- Making the entire learning process self-sustaining by promoting a natural love of learning.

Developmentally appropriate play respects the notion that young children need to approach new concepts and capacities at their own pace and in their own way.

Source: The Power of Play --A Discussion about Early Childhood Education, by Dr. Michael Meyerhoff, executive director of The Epicenter Inc. "The Education for Parenthood Information Center," and former researcher with the Harvard Preschool Project

The importance of school recess

The Atlanta, Ga., public schools and many others around the country have eliminated recess in elementary schools. This trend, which has accelerated in recent years, is based on the belief that free time detracts from instructional time. However research has shown that:

- Free time and unstructured play are vital for intellectual and emotional growth, as well as nurturing negotiating and cooperating skills
- The longer children sit in classrooms, the less attentive they become
- Social interaction with peers facilitates children's cognition and minimizes antisocial behavior

- Young children put into enjoyable environments -- like playgrounds -- with their peers typically exhibit high levels of competence
- Playful contexts typically provide an important motivational component in children's learning

Sources: New York Times, 4/7/98; Research conducted by Dr. Anthony Pellegrini, State University of New York, published in School Recess and Playground Behavior, Educational And Developmental Roles.

Television vs. Play

American parents and children are spending more time watching television and less time interacting in a way that would be emotionally, developmentally and educationally beneficial to children.

Americans spend 40% of their free time watching television

Children spend an average of 17 hours a week watching TV

TV has replaced other more constructive forms of free time activity such as playing, socializing and visiting, community activities, and membership in clubs and organizations

Source: Parks and Recreation poll, June, 1997

Use of leisure time

Parents and children have less leisure time than ever before and what time they do have is seldom spent playing together.

21-43% of Americans say they don't have time for fun anymore

Many younger Americans say they have only 18 hours of free time a week, down 50% since the 1970s; only older people seem to have gained leisure time

American children in the '90s have less free time than at any time in U.S. history. Reasons include hectic parental schedules, parents' fear of unsupervised idle time resulting in overscheduled kids with little or no free time for playing

When asked to name their two or three favorite leisure-time activities, people ranked spending time with family/kids fourth – just ahead of fishing.

Even with increased free time, the pace does not slow down. People are undertaking more in their leisure time than in their work time, and so feel more “rushed.”

Sources: 1998 Harris Poll on leisure, as published in Florida Today, 7/18/98; Parks and Recreation poll, June, 1997; University of Michigan's Institute of Social Research

What parents think of play

92 percent of parents of children under the age of four say play is “very important” in early childhood development.

Two-thirds of parents believe they don't spend enough time playing with their young children, with affluent parents more likely to feel that way.

94 percent of parents say reading is the most important activity for early childhood development. They also cite drawing, playing with toys, playing make-believe, coloring, and listening to music as important.

However, 58 percent of the parents surveyed said they watch TV with their children at least once a day, making it the fifth most popular daily activity in which American parents engage with their children.

Source: Gymboree Play Programs survey, 1998.

“The Power of Play”

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A Public Service Campaign: Outreach Activities

March 10, 1999

VI. Outreach Activities

These programs are intended to be carried out by the coalitions and partnerships established by ATI, which will also provide the instruction kits on how to produce the programs and how to attract the attention of the local media. The outreach activities support the national program, and the cumulative effect of the publicity they engender will enhance it.

A) Partner Programs with national, regional and local impact

Through ATI's partnership network, corporations, associations and organizations throughout the country will adapt the Power of Play theme (and logo) into their own programming. Companies that elect to become partners in the program will have myriad opportunities to broaden its reach and, at the same time, generate positive publicity for themselves and showcase some of their products. Their participation could include one or more of the following activities:

- providing company experts for local community outreach (speaking engagements, play events)
- time in-store and other company promotions around regional activities
- providing toys/props for selected activities

B) Coalitions with educational groups

Play is one of the most powerful tools of learning for children and certainly the most enjoyable. At the same time, educators, too, are eager for creative ideas to help them engage children in the learning process.

ATI will build coalitions with educator groups such as PTAs, teachers' groups and colleges/universities. It will provide Power of Play kits containing learning-oriented play ideas that can be put into practice on a local level and that offer support openings for individual partners.

The goal is to:

- extend the reach of the Power of Play message in and out of the classroom
- introduce children and adults to new kinds of learning-oriented play
- equate safe play with learning
- enable partners to get involved in local community activities

The target audience here consists of primary and secondary school children, adults, teachers, and community/parents' group leaders.

Materials:

ATI will create an educational add-on to the generic Power of Play program kit to highlight ideas for incorporating a play element into the learning process, such as projects, classroom lessons, experiences and

events. These kits will be distributed to suitable audiences with the help of partner support, accompanied by a separate teachers'/leaders' guide that gives instructions on how to implement the ideas and expand lesson discussions on the value of these activities. Both the program kit and the guides will be developed by a team of educators and creative planners and made available on the website as well as in printed form.

There are myriad opportunities for partners to support this program, enhance its success, and broaden its reach, and at the same time, gain positive publicity for themselves and showcase some of their products.

Partner participation could include one or more of the following activities:

- select regions for specific partnerships;
- provide company experts for local community outreach (speaking engagements, play events);
- time in-store and other company promotions around regional activities;
- provide toys/props for certain activities.

Partners who support the educational aspect of play will benefit from the national publicity around the concept that play is a safe and powerful tool for learning. Partners will also reap the goodwill engendered by endorsements of the program by educational institutions and parent groups. Nationally, school boards may reconsider putting the value of play back in curricula.

C) Bringing people together through play

In today's society of working parents and latchkey kids, the television becomes babysitter, playmate and number one choice of entertainment. Children watch a screen rather than relate to each other or to parents and grandparents, as they would be doing if all were engaged in indoor games, handicrafts or outdoor activities.

ATI will use the Power of Play program to help bring people together through play activities. This concept is a two-pronged initiative directed both at bringing diverse ethnic groups together and closing the generation gap. Its means of bridging ethnic divides are to:

- equate play with cultural understanding
- promote play as an activity for all ages and races

ATI will establish coalitions with communities to introduce the Power of Play as a means for bringing different cultures together. The audience would be Hispanic and African American children and families, school officials, community groups and community leaders.

By piggybacking on existing events, the program adds a play dimension to familiar celebrations and traditions to make them more fun and inclusive of others. In other areas, play events will be created and carried out by partners, with ATI support and coordination assistance:

- Establish partnerships to develop a grass roots campaign to plan events that celebrate play

- Promote and support play activities for inner city communities that build team spirit and reinforce the needs of individual communities with emphasis on night-time event ideas (without alcohol) to fill the void of safe and fun things for children and families to do near home.

The audience for efforts to encourage intergenerational play comprises both adults and children and of course the senior citizens themselves.

ATI would create an intergenerational play package that encourages organizations to plan their own play events.

Media

In seeking media coverage of these activities, ATI will target:

- Ethnic and intergenerational bonding through play generating natural topics for local newspaper, radio and TV event coverage and general editorial
- Op-ed pages for commentary on the role of play in problem solving, teamwork and achieving unity
- Current events that lend themselves to play solutions, play conjecture or play suggestions resulting in likely topics for children's programs

Toys, games and play equipment play a critical role in all we have suggested here, and offer partners a chance to demonstrate the safe and positive use of their products. The concept of bringing people together is an altruistic one and also provides a funnel for making charitable contributions to needy children.

Because of the all-inclusive nature of the concept – across generations and cultures – it boldly emphasizes the value of play in our society over and above its contribution to the healthy development of children. The grassroots aspect gives the concept the ability to build momentum nationwide and attract significant publicity in national and ethnic media.

D) Institutions that provide child therapy

Therapists were among the first to acknowledge the power of play as a tool for drawing children out, helping them communicate their feelings, and generally enhancing healing and therapy. The endorsements that the best known therapeutic institutions and organizations can confer on ATI will greatly enhance its ability to spread the Power of Play message by:

- demonstrating the value of play in achieving clinically measurable results in physical and social development
- enlisting support of professionals and parents who deal with children with special needs to carry out program messages by providing children with disabilities with activities that are both fun and instructive (partnership, cooperation, challenge)

The partnerships would spread the Power of Play message among parents and caretakers of children with special needs. One add-on to the generic Power of Play kit would be designed specifically for children with special needs, exploring all different kinds of solitary or group play.

The attention paid to this segment of the child population would enable ATI to leverage the good will element in its national umbrella media campaign, by including targeting newsletters (independent and organization-affiliated) with Power of Play activities, or interesting mainstream or niche market magazines in a partnership in support of the program as well as in contests and significant editorial coverage.

TMA members would have an opportunity to:

- provide props and materials for play activities and for prizes
- expand good-will efforts with disabled children
- sponsor contests/promotions
- demonstrate “toys in action” as a means of reinforcing learning through play
- expand the reach and scope of ATI’s annual *Guide to Toys for Children Who are Blind or Visually Impaired*

E) Taking the Power of Play message to parents

In the high-stress, busy world of today’s working parents, there is little time for leisure activities, and there’s always something that needs to be done, and doesn’t get done. It’s important, however, for parents to make time to play with their children – whether it’s one hour a day, part of a weekend or a block of vacation time. The “take time to play” message is fundamental to the entire Power of Play program.

These fun ideas are more than reminders of how great play is or how important it is to take time to play. These are the kinds of activities that create recognition, excitement, and a positive focus on toys to encourage active and passive participation for children and adults alike. Almost as much fun to watch as participate, they are designed to be stand-alone, mini events that are created in “template” form by ATI for other organizations and local groups to copy and implement. They are effective in supporting the national campaign with interesting associations with toys.

The target audience is families.

ATI will work both with partners and independently to promote the Take Time to Play message and to develop exciting play events that can travel nationwide.

ATI will develop templates for events that can be implemented around the country with the initiative and support of local groups. These ideas, which embody the aspect of family participation, can be utilized in all the Power of Play program initiatives – from local ethnic community events to large event sponsorships and national events such as National Play Day.

The Take Time to Play initiative should not only attract national media attention, but also interest the vertical media from sports to entertainment. Naturally a tie-in with a major industry association or corporate sponsor would enhance recognition of ATI’s umbrella campaign among our target audience.

Partners can become involved in both the creation and sponsorship of these events. They can also use them to promote or showcase their products.

The positive and timely message of this initiative – along with the opportunities for broad national reach – will make it a catalyst for the entire umbrella campaign. It will attract positive reaction from press, parents, medical professionals, educators, as well as the sports and entertainment industries, literally putting the Power of Play program on the US map.

F.) Developing a Corporate Power of Play program

The corporate world may not think of itself as a playground, but forward-thinking companies already know that play, fun and recreation can stimulate imagination, creativity, and a sense of well-being and renewal that makes employees more productive than an “all-work-and-no-play” environment. ATI will take the “Power of Play” program right into the workplace.

In addition to offering unique opportunities to TMA members catering to the adult market, ATI will solicit endorsements from major corporations who undertake to become involved in specific Power of Play program elements that support the community at-large as well as the internal structure of the organization to:

- Show play as a means of achieving tangible business goals and solving common workplace challenges
- Elicit support and participation from well-known corporations nationwide

- Introduce the value of play in the workplace (boosting creativity, relaxation, teamwork, competition, relationship building, free flowing communication between management and staff, reducing stress)
- Reinforce recognition of the “agelessness” of play

Target Audience

The audience consists of corporate executives, managers, human resources directors, team leaders, large corporations and small companies, professional groups and industry organizations.

As an add-on to the generic Power of Play kit, ATI will provide corporations with ideas to make the work environment more productive and satisfying for employees through play.

A corporate initiative showing support for the importance of play reinforces a common goal of caring for children and could attract national media attention.

A media campaign that focuses on business publications will draw the attention of the corporate audience to the vital role that play has in all our lives, and in particular to the corporate office environment. Resulting publicity should be reprinted and used as third-party endorsements to attract corporate partners to the Power of Play program.

The Power of Play
A Public Service Campaign from the American Toy Institute

December, 1998

I. Background

“All work and no play makes Jack a dull boy” has been found to be literally true, and in many surprising ways. It seems that play, like affection, is something that children --- and adults --- must be exposed to regularly in order to mature normally.

At odds with that realization, that play is essential to life, is the reality of life in America today (and for the foreseeable future). In an era of working parents, latchkey kids and non-stop entertainment on television, less and less attention is paid to one of the most valuable tools for a child’s healthy development --- play. There is just too little time to cultivate the contribution play could make toward increased productivity through playful strategies, a playful imagination and play-stimulated creativity. Increased stress and lack of leisure time among parents compound this widespread phenomenon.

In the classroom, too, there is little recognition of the simple truth that incorporating play elements into the curriculum can provide an exciting, positive and highly effective tool for learning.

II. The Strategic Opportunity

The discovery of the value to society of play, on the one hand, and the systematic neglect of playtime and play emphasis on the other has presented the American Toy Institute (ATI) with a unique challenge. It has drawn up a public service program aimed at improving the quality of children's lives by emphasizing the power of play and helping them to harness it. The need to establish the value of play in American society dovetails with ATI's mission to improve children's lives through an environment that fosters personal, intellectual, and physical growth.

The target audience for word of the ATI program would be parents and caretakers, government policymakers, educators and the media.

The program would strengthen ATI's position as a leading foundation concerned with the quality of life of today's children.

III. The Theme: The Power of Play

Under the umbrella theme of the Power of Play, ATI intends to build a three to five year campaign around the benefits children and adults alike derive from playing with toys and games. These range from mental and physical development, social and interpersonal skills, healing, fun, joy and discovery.

The Power of Play theme spans all ages and incorporates all aspects of play. It crosses ethnic, international and generational lines. It is a theme that can not only be embraced by all foundation supporters – whether they market to children or adults -- but would also attract the support of any number of potential partners from the US Government, educators and children's organizations, to the corporate world at large and other industry associations.

The Power of Play theme reinforces the message that what the toy industry makes improves the quality of children's lives and is beneficial to society. ATI's strategy will be to publicize the Power of Play on a national level and at the same time, build up grassroots support.

IV. The Program

The Power of Play program is designed to change the perception of play from that of a frivolous activity to a valuable tool in today's society and to alter behavior patterns to emphasize the centrality that play should have in our lives. It will be established at the national level by ATI and implemented at the regional and local level through strategic coalitions and partnerships. Building on partnerships with corporations, national associations and various organizations and institutions, ATI will seek third-party endorsements that will give the program a presence and credibility.

As a national program with a multitude of extensions, the Power of Play is intended to unite the population with a common goal. Program elements are designed to work together to impact on all members of a community. Everyone benefits from play.

The key messages to communicate will be:

- Play is necessary and critical to human development;
- Play contributes to learning, well being, discovery, fun, happiness, and personal success;
- Play is a primary tool for socialization, for stimulating creativity and imagination, for sharing and experiencing other cultures, for gaining skills of strategy.

V. The National Program

The ultimate success of the Power of Play program will depend on ensuring national impact, and the national publicity that would build up around it.

The following program elements --- seeking national support, a multimedia operation, program materials, and a number of outreach activities --- come together to serve that purpose.

A) Multi-media Program

The national multi-media program would be conducted through the Institute for Play in San Francisco and consist of:

- Publication and national launch of a book for the general public: *The Power of Play*
- A series of three one-hour PBS prime-time TV shows, entitled the *Power of Play*, with episodes devoted to:
 - Why Do We Play?
 - What Happens If We don't Play?
 - How Can We Re-learn to Play?
- Educational videos and print materials in support of the PBS show, including kits along with teachers' and students' guides
- Virtual events organized around a website and online chat forum. The website will be linked to ATI's website and serve as a resource.

B) Public Service Advertising Sponsored by the Ad Council

ATI will seek the support of the Ad Council in producing a national public service print, television, radio and interactive advertising campaign. The media advertising will carry the Power of Play 800 number and list the Internet website address.

The campaign will promote the Power of Play as a tool for learning and creative development, for bringing people of different generations and cultures together, for socialization and problem-solving skills, for therapeutic and recreation purposes.

The advertising will focus on children as part of the Council's "Commitment 2000" initiative – an effort to make a long-lasting impact on society by helping children have a better chance to achieve their full potential.

Through the agencies who volunteer their services, the Ad Council will provide creative development of advertising materials at no cost, as well as \$10 million worth of free media a year. ATI will cover out-of-pocket production costs.

C) White House Initiative

ATI will work to make the Power of Play program part of the Administration's national children's agenda, equating play with the needs of today's families and communities. It will seek White House assistance in getting boards of education to incorporate more play elements into the educational process.

ATI's goal is to work with the Administration to encourage proclamation of a National Play Day. An optimal kick-off would for the summer of 1999 on the White House lawn.

ATI will establish partnerships with corporations and suitable associations and organizations throughout the country to get them to adapt the Power of Play theme (and logo) into their own programming, thereby carrying the messages of the program and extending its reach significantly.

D) Program Materials

At the very outset, ATI will oversee development of a graphic identity for the Power of Play program. It will include a logo, an exciting graphic design to provide recognition and consistency in all program materials, as well as letterhead.

Written support materials will be created to satisfy the needs of audiences that the program targets on a regional basis. A generic Power of Play kit, with a variety of ideas and activities to implement locally, will be the cornerstone, with separate sections and add-ons as needed. The kits will be distributed both proactively and upon request. They will also be available on the website. A variety of other materials, such as teachers'/leaders' guides and instruction manuals, for partners will be distributed as supplements to the basic kits.

The generic kit will contain ideas for incorporating a play element into different aspects of daily life: school, work, community/ethnic events, therapeutic environments, family life, etc. A guide designed specifically for the educator or group leader shows how to use play more effectively in the learning process. It will be a "how to" approach to presenting ideas and lessons in the framework of group and classroom discussion.

The package intended for partners will include a number of options for incorporating the Power of Play theme in company programs. It will show partnering companies how they can take advantage of the tremendous

visibility and publicity generated by the Power of Play and can adapt program elements and develop tie-ins to fit their specific needs.

An instruction manual in the kit will show partners how to leverage their endorsement among their membership, staff, and colleagues on the local level. The manual will give guidance on various types of activity:

- putting on events and where to get materials
- use of logos, White House and other protocol, instructions, etc.
- internal and external communications guidelines
- getting media coverage
- sample speeches, topics for discussion and a list of ATI and toy industry personnel available to address large and small groups
- list of all support materials available and how to order them

A toll-free 800 number will be set up and printed in the materials as a resource for partners. More information and answers to questions about implementing programs will be available via the 800 number. The number will also assist ATI in tracking the implementation of the program and the results.

VI. Outreach Activities

These programs are intended to be carried out by the coalitions and partnerships established by ATI, which will also provide the instruction kits on how to produce the programs and how to attract the attention of the local media. The outreach activities support the national program, and the cumulative effect of the publicity they engender will enhance it.

A) Partner Programs with national, regional and local impact

Through ATI's partnership network, corporations, associations and organizations throughout the country will adapt the Power of Play theme (and logo) into their own programming. Companies that elect to become partners in the program will have myriad opportunities to broaden its reach and, at the same time, generate positive publicity for themselves and showcase some of their products. Their participation could include one or more of the following activities:

- providing company experts for local community outreach (speaking engagements, play events)
- time in-store and other company promotions around regional activities
- providing toys/props for selected activities

B) Coalitions with educational groups

Play is one of the most powerful tools of learning for children and certainly the most enjoyable. At the same time, educators, too, are eager for creative ideas to help them engage children in the learning process.

ATI will build coalitions with educator groups such as PTAs, teachers' groups and colleges/universities. It will provide Power of Play kits containing learning-oriented play ideas that can be put into practice on a local level and that offer support openings for individual partners.

The goal is to:

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- introduce children and adults to new kinds of learning-oriented play
- equate safe play with learning
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The target audience here consists of primary and secondary school children, adults, teachers, and community/parents' group leaders.

Materials:

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There are myriad opportunities for partners to support this program, enhance its success, and broaden its reach, and at the same time, gain positive publicity for themselves and showcase some of their products.

Partner participation could include one or more of the following activities:

- select regions for specific partnerships;
- provide company experts for local community outreach (speaking engagements, play events);
- time in-store and other company promotions around regional activities;
- provide toys/props for certain activities.

Partners who support the educational aspect of play will benefit from the national publicity around the concept that play is a safe and powerful tool for learning. Partners will also reap the goodwill engendered by endorsements of the program by educational institutions and parent groups.

Nationally, school boards may reconsider putting the value of play back in curricula.

C) Bringing people together through play

In today's society of working parents and latchkey kids, the television becomes babysitter, playmate and number one choice of entertainment. Children watch a screen rather than relate to each other or to parents and grandparents, as they would be doing if all were engaged in indoor games, handicrafts or outdoor activities.

ATI will use the Power of Play program to help bring people together through play activities. This concept is a two-pronged initiative directed both at bringing diverse ethnic groups together and closing the generation gap. Its means of bridging ethnic divides are to:

- equate play with cultural understanding
- promote play as an activity for all ages and races

ATI will establish coalitions with communities to introduce the Power of Play as a means for bringing different cultures together. The audience would be Hispanic and African American children and families, school officials, community groups and community leaders.

By piggybacking on existing events, the program adds a play dimension to familiar celebrations and traditions to make them more fun and inclusive of others. In other areas, play events will be created and carried out by partners, with ATI support and coordination assistance:

- Establish partnerships to develop a grass roots campaign to plan events that celebrate play
- Promote and support play activities for inner city communities that build team spirit and reinforce the needs of individual communities with emphasis on night-time event ideas (without alcohol) to fill the void of safe and fun things for children and families to do near home.

The audience for efforts to encourage intergenerational play comprises both adults and children and of course the senior citizens themselves.

ATI would create an intergenerational play package that encourages organizations to plan their own play events.

Media

In seeking media coverage of these activities, ATI will target:

- Ethnic and intergenerational bonding through play generating natural topics for local newspaper, radio and TV event coverage and general editorial
- Op-ed pages for commentary on the role of play in problem solving, teamwork and achieving unity
- Current events that lend themselves to play solutions, play conjecture or play suggestions resulting in likely topics for children's programs

Because of the all-inclusive nature of the concept – across generations and cultures – it boldly emphasizes the value of play in our society over and above its contribution to the healthy development of children. The grassroots aspect gives the concept the ability to build momentum nationwide and attract significant publicity in national and ethnic media.

D) Institutions that provide child therapy

Therapists were among the first to acknowledge the power of play as a tool for drawing children out, helping them communicate their feelings, and generally enhancing healing and therapy. The endorsements that the best known therapeutic institutions and organizations can confer on ATI will greatly enhance its ability to spread the Power of Play message by:

- demonstrating the value of play in achieving clinically measurable results in physical and social development
- enlisting support of professionals and parents who deal with children with special needs to carry out program messages by providing children with disabilities with activities that are both fun and instructive (partnership, cooperation, challenge)

The partnerships would spread the Power of Play message among parents and caretakers of children with special needs. One add-on to the generic Power of Play kit would be designed specifically for children with special needs, exploring all different kinds of solitary or group play.

The attention paid to this segment of the child population would enable ATI to leverage the good will element in its national umbrella media

campaign, by including targeting newsletters (independent and organization-affiliated) with Power of Play activities, or interesting mainstream or niche market magazines in a partnership in support of the program as well as in contests and significant editorial coverage.

E) Taking the Power of Play message to parents

In the high-stress, busy world of today's working parents, there is little time for leisure activities, and there's always something that needs to be done, and doesn't get done. It's important, however, for parents to make time to play with their children – whether it's one hour a day, part of a weekend or a block of vacation time. The “take time to play” message is fundamental to the entire Power of Play program.

These fun ideas are more than reminders of how great play is or how important it is to take time to play. These are the kinds of activities that create recognition, excitement, and a positive focus on toys to encourage active and passive participation for children and adults alike. Almost as much fun to watch as participate, they are designed to be stand-alone, mini events that are created in “template” form by ATI for other organizations and local groups to copy and implement. They are effective in supporting the national campaign with interesting associations with toys.

The target audience is families.

ATI will work both with partners and independently to promote the Take Time to Play message and to develop exciting play events that can travel nationwide.

ATI will develop templates for events that can be implemented around the country with the initiative and support of local groups. These ideas, which embody the aspect of family participation, can be utilized in all the Power of Play program initiatives – from local ethnic community events to large event sponsorships and national events such as National Play Day.

The Take Time to Play initiative should not only attract national media attention, but also interest the vertical media from sports to entertainment. Naturally a tie-in with a major industry association or corporate sponsor would enhance recognition of ATI's umbrella campaign among our target audience.

Partners can become involved in both the creation and sponsorship of these events. They can also use them to promote or showcase their products.

The positive and timely message of this initiative – along with the opportunities for broad national reach – will make it a catalyst for the entire umbrella campaign. It will attract positive reaction from press, parents, medical professionals, educators, as well as the sports and entertainment industries, literally putting the Power of Play program on the US map.

VII. Evaluation/Measurement

The Power of Play is a multi-million dollar three-to-five year program with an ambitious goal: the establishment of the value of play in American society.

To ensure that we are on track at all times, meeting the goals and objectives of the program, we will establish benchmarks and evaluation systems. We will build into each component of the program the ability to see if the ideas being carried out help in reaching our objectives and target audiences, if they are cost effective in advancing towards the goals we have set ourselves.

By having a measurement system in place, we will be able to assess the effectiveness of expenditures, the timing of projects and the value of the partnerships established. This will enable us to make changes as we go along, realign our thinking, spend more effectively, and most importantly, be able to demonstrate the value of what we are doing to members of the Foundation Board and others.

We should be able to evaluate ourselves in terms of media coverage, in actual new programs put in place by local communities and on the national level and in general consumer and opinion leader attitudes. We are out to create a shift in attitude, and we must at all times realistically measure our success. Each program will have its own system of evaluation built in.

VIII. Timeline

Phase I – September '98 through February '99

Laying the foundation, initiating partnerships, preparing core materials, launching program to media, establishing benchmark evaluation system

Goal: Three national programs in place
(including written materials, graphic identity,
Power of Play launch)

Phase II – March '99 through December '99

Cultivating first partnerships and programs, developing media lists, preparing specific add-on materials

Goal: Three national programs in place, plus regional educational program (Play Day, Multi-Media)

Phase III – January through December 2000

Continuation of national programs, addition of partners

On-going Partnering Activities

Working the publicity angle:

- tally events and program successes
- package results together for media
- select/film case studies for media

PR support -- Media announcements/interviews/bookings wherever possible

- announce partners
- event photos: corporate play date, national events, local events
- contest winners
- promotions
- results/ case studies

Promote website

Coalition building/ addition of new partners