

# CHILDPLAY

## RESOURCES

**The Big Ideas:**  
Persistence  
Finding Your "Thing"

**DON'T  
LET THE  
PIGEON  
DRIVE THE  
BUS!**



**THE MUSICAL!**

Art © Mo Willems

Based on the book by Mo Willems  
Published by Hyperion Books for Children  
Script by Mo Willems & Mr. Warburton  
Lyrics by Mo Willems  
Music by Deborah Wicks La Puma  
Dramaturgy by Megan Alrutz  
Directed by Dwayne Hartford



# Meet the Team

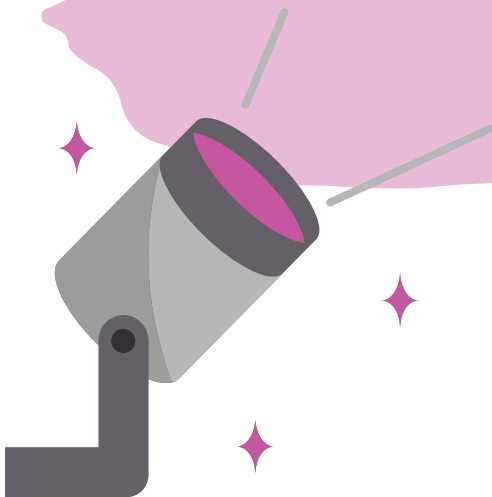
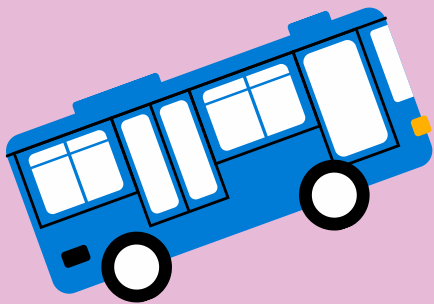


## Cast

Pigeon ..... Ryan Ardelt  
Little Old Lady ..... Jon Gentry  
Bus Sounds ..... Savannah Inez  
Bus Driver ..... Katie McFadzen  
Businessperson ..... Luz Navarro  
Teenager ..... Carlos Sanchez Beltran  
Female Swing ..... Rachel McCabe  
Male Swing ..... Ian Eller

## Creative Team

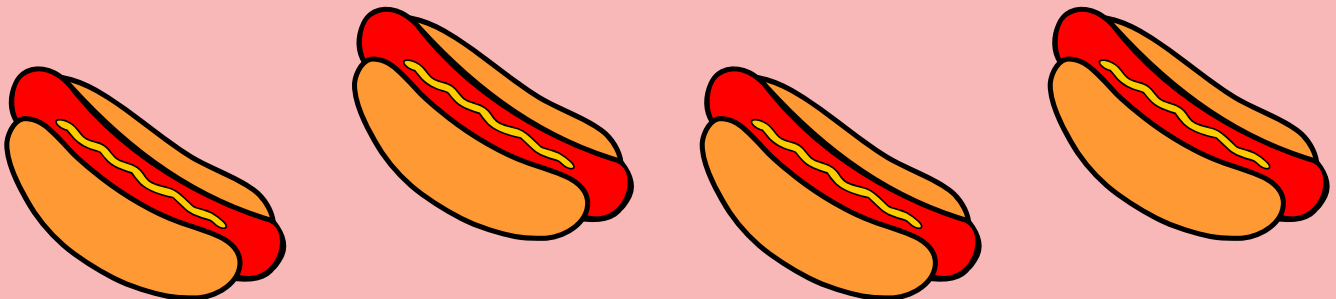
Director ..... Dwayne Hartford  
Assistant Director ..... Rachel McCabe  
Music Director ..... Bonnie Beus Romney  
Choreographer ..... Kat Bailes  
Stage Manager ..... Aurora Winger  
Scenic Designer ..... Jeff Thomson  
Costume Designer ..... Adriana Diaz  
Lighting Designer ..... Nick Hutchinson  
Sound Designer ..... Connor Adams  
Props Master ..... Natalie Ward  
Puppets ..... Matt McGee



# What the Play is About

Pigeon is having a rough day—no one lets him do anything fun! First the Hot Dog Vendor ignores him, and then Duckling eats a hot dog right in front of him! When a bus arrives, Pigeon sees the driver's excitement for driving, and suddenly, Pigeon decides that driving the bus is his new dream!

Eager to drive the bus, Pigeon asks the Bus Driver and the passengers—an Old Lady, a Businessperson, and a Teenager—for permission. But no matter how much he begs, pleads, or throws a tantrum, the answer is always NO! The Teenager tries to cheer Pigeon up by sharing that he once wanted a puppy, but his mom said no. This gives Pigeon a new idea—if he can't drive the bus, he needs a puppy instead! But when that dream turns out to be a disaster, he's back to square one.

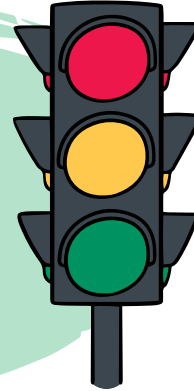


Just when it seems like things couldn't get worse, the bus won't start! The passengers panic, and even the Bus Driver isn't sure what to do. Pigeon sees an opportunity—maybe this is finally his chance! But when he realizes his legs are too short to reach the pedals, he feels defeated. The Bus Driver reminds him that there's more than one way to be part of something important, and she offers to teach him something new—how to fly!

With the whole group flapping and cheering him on, Pigeon finally takes flight! He soars ahead, warning everyone that the bus is on its way, and just in time—the Bus Driver fixes the problem! Pigeon may not have driven the bus, but he's discovered something even better—his passion. He can fly! And when he spots a new sign for an airplane, a new dream takes flight...will Pigeon get to fly a plane?

# Themes of the Show

- Persistence
- Finding Your “Thing”
- Managing Big Feelings



## Talk About It!

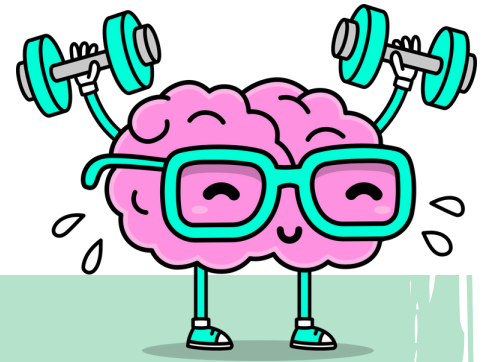
### Start a conversation before the show:

- ★ What do you think will be the same in the play as in the book? What do you think will be different?
- ★ What are some things you aren't allowed to do? Why?
- ★ How do you feel when someone tells you no?

### Start a conversation after the show:

- ★ Do you think the Pigeon should be allowed to drive the bus? Why or why not?
- ★ When have you had to tell someone no?
- ★ When the bus breaks down and the passengers are upset that they will be late, the Bus Driver helps them take deep breaths to calm down. When you have big feelings, what do you do to feel better?
- ★ Pigeon wants to drive the bus. What would you like to drive?

# Discover It!



## Bus Basics

- School buses are yellow because it helps us read their signage.
- Although the average bus carries between 30 and 100 passengers, some buses have a capacity of up to 300 people!
- There are 3 million city buses in operation worldwide! Most of these run on diesel, a form of fossil fuel, but 385,000 are electric.

## Pigeon Q&A

### Are pigeons smart?

- YES! They can recognize themselves in a mirror, which is something only a few animals can do. In a test, pigeons were even trained to tell the difference between paintings by Picasso and Monet!

### What do pigeons eat?

- Pigeons need a healthy mix of food to stay strong. They like seeds, grains, fruits, and veggies, and sometimes bugs or worms. They also need lots of clean water.
- If pigeons live with people, they can eat seeds, but they should also get fruits, veggies, and greens every day. Pigeons will eat “people food” like bread or rice, but bread isn’t very good for them.

### Did you know?

- Pigeons are believed to be the first wild bird species to become domesticated by humans.
- Pigeons prefer to live close to humans. They live in cities and build their nests on ledges and rooftops.
- Pigeons are social, adaptable birds that often live in groups. They communicate through cooing, wing flapping, and head bobbing.





# Create It!

Activity courtesy of  
Pigeon Presents:  
[pigeonpresents.com/  
get-busy/](http://pigeonpresents.com/get-busy/)

## Draw Me! FOLLOW THESE STEPS:

**1.** Start with a big letter **O**.  
(It appears in words like "Mo"!)

**2.** Now draw a smaller letter **O**  
inside of it.  
(You've drawn a doughnut!)

**3.** Next, you have a choice between  
two letters—**M** or **W**— but draw  
the letter on its side.  
(You made a beak!)

**4.** We're going to place the eye next,  
which is the most important part  
of the drawing, because the eye  
shows how the character is feeling.  
Make sure to darken it in.  
(You always look at the darkest part  
of a drawing first!)

**5.** Draw two lines going straight  
down for the neck.

**6.** Next, draw two lines across  
the neck for the collar.

**7.** The body is a circ-angle—  
a triangle and a circle  
combined.  
(It kind of looks like an ice  
cream cone that's fallen over.)

**8.** The legs are two more lines  
straight down from the body.  
(Just like the neck!)

**9.** Almost done! Draw the  
letter **V** three times. The first  
two are upside down  
for the feet. The third is on  
its side in the body for  
the wing.

### FINISHED!

**Great job! That's an  
awesome Pigeon!**

Once you've gotten the basic  
drawing down, mix it up. Move  
The Pigeon's beak, wings, eye,  
or legs to create lots of  
funny poses!



# Imagine It!



## Take a Stand

The Pigeon has strong opinions, and now your students can too! This activity provides the opportunity to make decisions, consider different viewpoints, and try to persuade others in a fun and engaging way!

1

**Set Up:** Gather students in the center of the classroom.

2

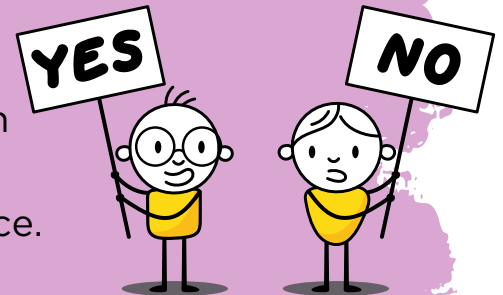
**Present Choices:** Offer two opposing options and assign each to a side of the room. For example: "If you'd prefer to drive a bus, move to the windows. If you'd rather fly a plane, move to the door."

3

**Make a Choice:** Ask students to move to the side that matches their preference. Remind them that they must choose one side; staying in the middle isn't an option.

4

**Share Reasons:** Invite some students from each side to explain why they chose their side, focusing on positive reasons for their preference.



5

**Reflect and Switch:** After hearing both perspectives, ask if anyone wants to change their choice based on what they've heard. Allow those students to switch sides.

6

**Repeat:** Continue with other pairs of choices, like...

- Play inside or play outside?
- Fly like a bird or swim like a fish?
- Winter or Summer?

# Share It!



## Create Your Own Bus Route!

A good bus route makes sure everyone gets where they need to go. Create your own classroom bus route and see where it takes you! Best of all, YOU get to decide who drives the bus.

1

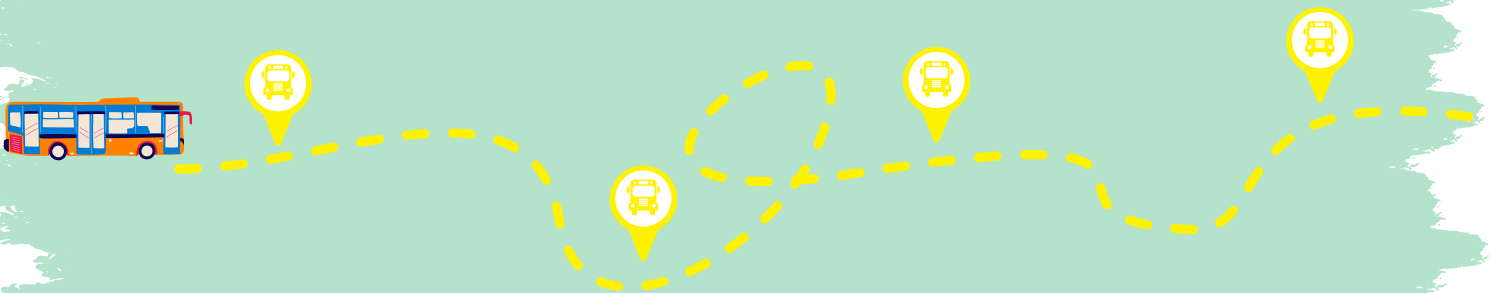
On a whiteboard or large sheet of paper, draw a picture of a road that will become your classroom's bus route.

2

Pass out a blank half sheet of paper to each student and have them draw a picture of where THEY would like the bus to stop. Is it a playground? A store? Their house? What does this place look like? Encourage them to use lots of color, just like the designers used in the play!

3

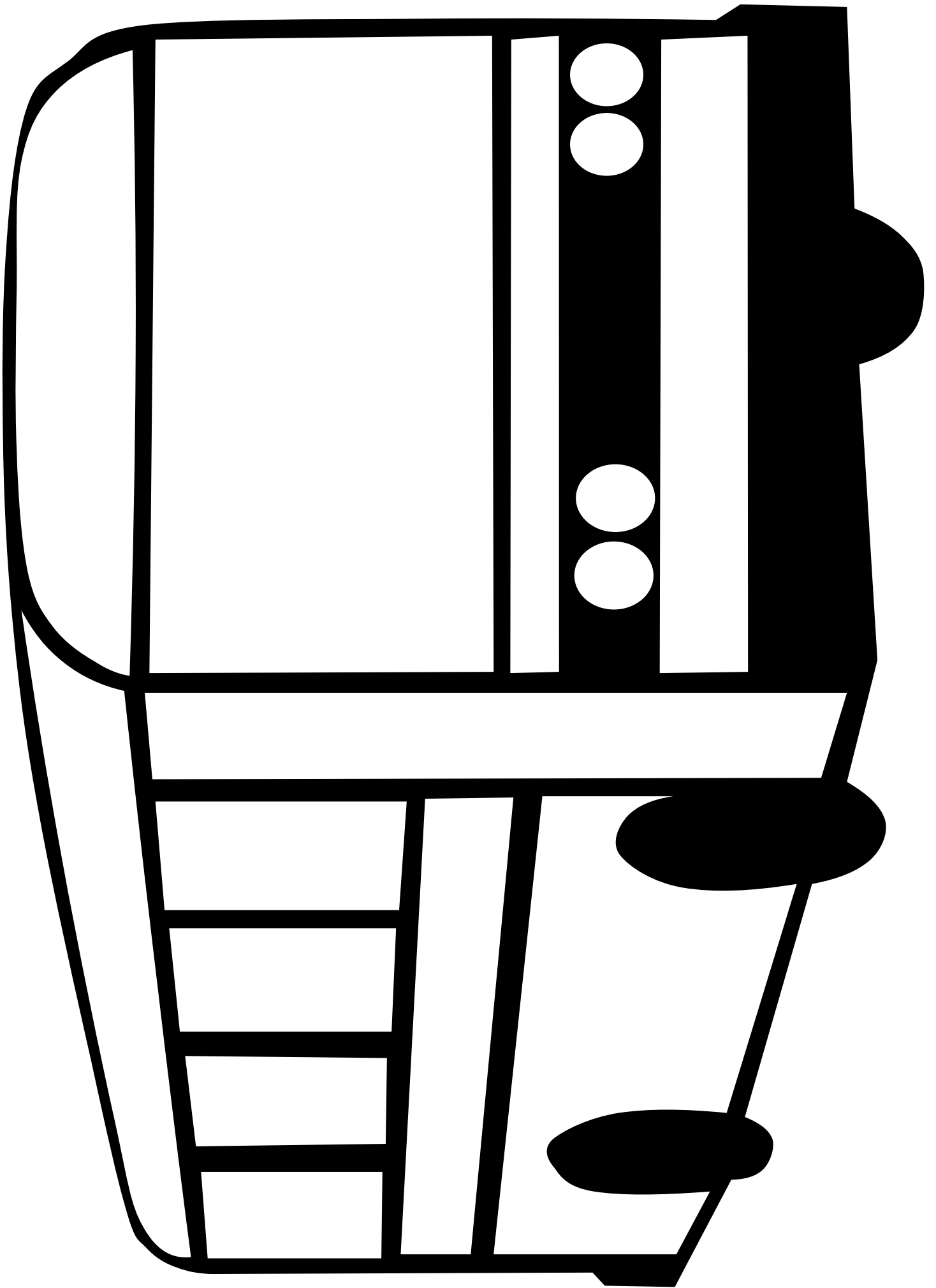
Tape each student's bus stop to the road to create one big classroom bus route. Have each student explain to the class where the bus will be stopping!



## Expand it!

Print out the bus on the next page (in whatever size you'd like) and put your class's faces in the windows. The driver can be a teacher, a student, or even the Pigeon himself!





# Read About It!



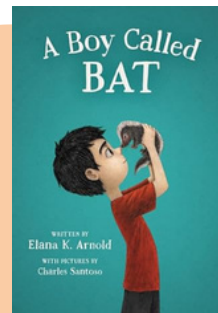
Keep the conversation going! Check out this list of books connected to the ideas and themes in 'Don't Let the Pigeon Drive the Bus! The Musical!'



**The Pigeon Finds a Hot Dog!**  
By Mo Willems  
Grades Pre-K-1



**Last Stop on Market Street**  
By Matt de la Peña  
Grades K-3



**A Boy Called Bat**  
By Elana K. Arnold  
Grades 1-5



**No!**  
By Marta Altés  
Grades Pre-K-2



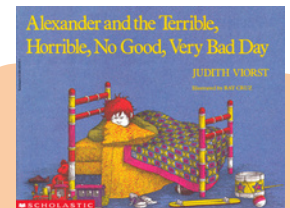
**Too Much! Not Enough!**  
By Gina Perry  
Grades Pre-K-2



**Real Pigeons Fight Crime**  
By Andrew McDonald  
Grades 3-7



**Lizard from the Park**  
By Mark Pett  
Grades Pre-K-3



**Alexander and the Terrible, Horrible, No Good, Very Bad Day**  
By Judith Viorst  
Grades 1-2



**Shh! We Have a Plan**  
By Chris Haughton  
Grades Pre-K-2



**How I Feel When I Hear No!**  
By Ronit Farzam  
Grades K-3



# Extend It!

The play is just the beginning - there's always more to learn. Scan the QR code to dig deeper into what interests you!

- ★ Explore the Mo Willems universe!
- ★ Learn about jazz music, which inspired the show's score!
- ★ Make a paper plate hot dog!



## Extend the Experience!

Bring a professional Teaching Artist to your classroom to lead an arts-based, standards-driven lesson connected to the play.

Email us at:  
[CPEducation@childsplayaz.org](mailto:CPEducation@childsplayaz.org)

## #SHAREWITHUS

Follow us on social media and share your comments & photos!

#ChildsplayAZ  
#CPPigeon

We also love getting mail!

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## About Childsplay

Childsplay is a nonprofit professional theatre company of adult actors who perform for young audiences and families.

Our Mission is to create theatre so strikingly original in form, content or both that it instills in young people an enduring awe, love and respect for the medium, thus preserving imagination and wonder, those hallmarks of childhood that are the keys to the future.

For more information:  
[www.childsplayaz.org](http://www.childsplayaz.org)

