



# Free Play in a Digital World

A Public Call for Consultation

November 2020

## The Digital Futures Commission

The Digital Futures Commission is an exciting research collaboration of unique organisations that invites innovators, policy makers, regulators, academics and civil society, to unlock digital innovation in the best interests of children and young people. The work will be informed by the voices of children and underpinned by a research programme and outputs geared toward real world change for children. See [www.digitalfuturescommission.org.uk](http://www.digitalfuturescommission.org.uk)

### Commissioners:

**David Halpern**, Chief Executive, The Behavioural Insights Team

**Baroness Beeban Kidron OBE**, Founder and Chair, 5Rights Foundation

**Ansgar Koene**, Global AI Ethics and Regulatory Leader, EY

**Professor Sonia Livingstone OBE**, London School of Economics and Political Science

**Professor Helen Margetts OBE**, The Alan Turing Institute

**Professor Mark Mon-Williams**, University of Leeds

**Professor Dorothy Monekosso**, Leeds Beckett University

**Professor Brian O'Neill**, Technological University Dublin

**Michael Preston**, Executive Director, Joan Ganz Cooney Centre, Sesame Workshop

**Anna Rafferty**, Vice President, Digital Consumer Engagement, The Lego Group

**Dee Saigal**, Co-founder and CEO, Erase all Kittens

**Farida Shaheed, Shirkat Gah** – Women's Resource Centre

**Roger Taylor**, Chair, Centre for Data Ethics and Innovation

**Adrian Woolard**, Head of Research & Development, BBC

Full biographies and more details about the team can be [found here](#).

## Public call for participation

**What do you think about children's play in a digital world? What do you want to be different? What do you think good play looks like? What problems get in the way?**

The Digital Futures Commission (DFC) invites views from:

- Children and young people around the UK
- Parents/carers
- Professionals who work with children

## What is the aim of the consultation?

We want to re-imagine play in the digital world with you – to make it better for children of all ages and diverse contexts. More concretely, we will ask you why play is important for children, what opportunities children have for digital play, and how play could be made better in the digital world.

## What kind of consultation process is involved?

We will hold small discussion groups on Zoom. The discussions will have a serious purpose, but they will also be fun! You can join with a group of people you know, or join on your own and we'll put you in a group. We will ask you some questions, and do some interesting activities with you. We'll allow time to hear your suggestions for what should be improved.

## Who can participate?

- ***If you are under 18 years old, living in the UK***, you could join a group, or join with your friends to create a group. We'll need to send a consent form to you and to your parent or carer to give you permission to participate.
- ***If you are a UK-based parent/carer of a child aged 0-18***, you could join on your own or with a group of your friends. Just let us know and we'll send you more information and consent form(s).
- ***If you are a UK-based professional who works with children*** (e.g. educator, NGO, health professional, youth worker), you could join on your own or with your colleagues, and we'll create a group of people who do similar work. Do get in touch and we'll send you more information and consent forms.
- ***If you are a UK-based teacher or youth leader*** who can arrange for your class or youth group to participate, please create groups of between 4 and 8 young people, and we can send information and consent forms for them and their parents.

## When is the consultation open?

From 20<sup>th</sup> November 2020 to end February 2021.

## How long will it take?

The group discussion will take about 45 minutes. A member of the DFC team will be present to host the discussion. We will send you some information and a consent form in advance and then assign you to a group. No need to prepare!

## What will I get out of it?

The process will be interesting, fun and thought-provoking. Your views will be heard by organisations who have the power to create change.

## How do I arrange a date?

Please email Natasha at [info@digitalfuturescommission.org.uk](mailto:info@digitalfuturescommission.org.uk) and let her know which times and days are best for you.

- *You can choose any Monday, Tuesday or Wednesday in December, January or February at 10am, 2pm, 4pm or 7pm.*

## What will happen to the results?

We will report on what everyone says about play, especially digital play. We'll document the problems faced by children and young people in a digital world and recommend changes to encourage better opportunities for children's play in the future.

We will publicise the results online, on social media, and in ways that reach parents and carers, policy makers, educators, health professionals, youth workers, and organisations that design and develop digital products and services.

## Ethical Issues

You can join the online discussion with your camera on or not, and with your real name or not, as you choose. We will audio record the conversation but collect no images or video. Other than the information you may disclose to participants in your group conversation, your participation will be anonymous and confidential. The DFC team is DBS-checked. The consultation has been approved in terms of research ethics and data protection by the London School of Economics and Political Science and the 5Rights Foundation.