



# Everyday Learning Play Spaces

## PEOPLE'S EMERGENCY CENTER TEAM



**Sarah Vrabic, Everyday Learning Play Spaces Project Manager, People's Emergency Center (PEC)**

Sarah Vrabic is the Project Manager for Everyday Learning Play Spaces. As a former Early Childhood Education Specialist with The BELL Project, she is excited to build upon her existing relationships with Philadelphia's family housing provider agencies to transform their spaces into playful learning opportunities. She believes that every child deserves access to high quality, safe, and stimulating environments that encourage learning through play. Positive interaction between caregivers and young children is a protective factor that can promote resilience in families experiencing stress and adversity. Sarah is proud to lead the dedicated and passionate Everyday Learning Play Spaces team, in partnership with the wonderful staff and families at our participating housing programs, to spread the joy of playful learning to children and caregivers throughout Philadelphia's family housing provider agencies.

*What does play mean to you?* "To me, play means learning and growing in an imaginative, creative, and fun way with friends and caregivers who are doing the same. It is a collaborative and interactive process that can lead to meaningful learning across the lifespan. From young infants to our elders, everyone can play!"

## COLLABORATORS



**Sarah Lytle, Executive Director, Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network (PLLAN)**

Sarah has more than a decade of experience in connecting science to practice, working extensively with parents, early learning providers, and policymakers to promote evidence-based interactions with children. At PLLAN, Sarah infuses public spaces with playful learning opportunities, improving educational equity and preparing children for success in the 21st-century.



**Julia Miller, Program Manager, Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network**

Julia Miller is the Program Manager of the Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network. As a former play-based learning specialist, Julia is committed to helping support projects that lead to high-quality education without barriers to success through playful learning practices. Her philosophy of education has derived from the belief that all children deserve a stimulating social-emotional, sensory-oriented, and academic environment where every child can grow physically, mentally, emotionally, and socially in a playfully conducive setting.

*What does play mean to you?* “To me, play is the bridge that connects a world of joyful exploration between a caregiver and child. Play should be exciting, fun, creative, and imaginative! The best and most organic learning exists when children learn through play.”



**Ally S. Masters**

Ally S. Masters is a former preschool teacher and current PhD student at Temple University where she studies how young children learn through play. As a part of her research, Ally works closely with Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network and is excited to bring installations that support playful learning to shelters in Philadelphia.



**Ileen Schwartz-Henderson, Med,  
My Baby's First Teacher ®**

Ileen Schwartz-Henderson recently retired after 20 years as the National Director of the Bright Space Program for The Bright Horizons Foundation for Children. Bright Spaces are unique play and family spaces that create a safe place for children impacted by trauma to grow and heal. Over the course of her career, working with staff and volunteers, Ileen helped design over 300 family friendly, trauma informed spaces in many types of settings including emergency and transitional housing, domestic violence shelters, prison visiting rooms, Neonatal Intensive Care waiting rooms, food pantry's, reunification sites, child protection centers and other places where children are in crisis. Ileen has had a long career in Early Childhood as a teacher, administrator and trainer, program developer and manager of overall operations in a broad variety of settings. Ileen is the author of the parenting curriculum for at risk mothers of very young children, My Baby's First Teacher. ® Ileen has a strong belief in the value of building relationships and environments that support play in the early years to enhance resiliency, create a strong foundation for learning and improve caregiver/child relationships.