



Earth Day[®]
CANADA



LET'S GET OUTSIDE AND PLAY!

Promoting Outdoor Play and Learning in our local school communities

Earth Day Canada has partnered with the Toronto District School Board to introduce Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) strategies in 6 pilot schools. OPAL will develop a comprehensive play provision program within these school communities, helping them provide enriched outdoor play opportunities during recess, lunch hours and after-school.

EcoKids play!

The most recent ParticipACTION Report Card on Physical Activity for Children and Youth (2015) showed that less than 10% of school age children are achieving the minimum activity levels they need each day for healthy development. The report calls for more unstructured outdoor play in school grounds, where children naturally achieve 20% more heart-pumping activity.

In addition to the many developmental and health benefits of outdoor play, here at Earth Day Canada we believe that nature education begins when kids connect to their own natural desire to discover the world through play.

OPAL offers a comprehensive strategy to improving the quality of outdoor active play for children by training schools in play provision.



Michael Follett

OPAL Founder & Director



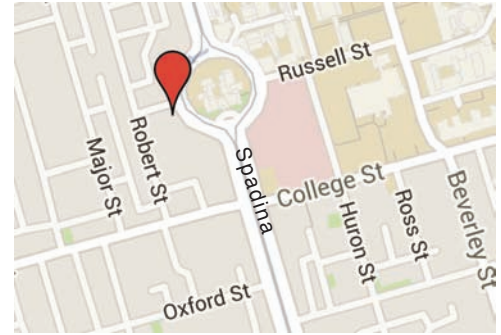
Michael Follett has been working to improve outdoor play in schools and early years settings for over 20 years as a playworker, teacher, special needs worker, school improvement advisor and social entrepreneur. To date, he has trained over 220 schools in the UK and the program is expanding internationally. OPAL has been commended by England's Parliamentary Education Committee and the All-Party Parliamentary Group on a Fit and Healthy Childhood. In 2014 Michael was recognized for his 'significant contribution to play and playwork' at the UK National Playwork Awards. OPAL is being studied as a best practice by the Centre for Research on Play in Education, Development and Learning (PEDaL) at Cambridge University.

Earth Day Canada is hosting two public events focused on encouraging outdoor active play and creating enriched play environments.

Outdoor Play and Learning (OPAL) Symposium

May 28 (9:30 am – 12:00 pm)

Meet Michael Follett, founder of OPAL and UK play expert, along with children's author Kenneth Oppel and play advocates from across Ontario to discuss how we can promote enriched, self-directed play in our local school communities.



Lord Lansdowne Public School
33 Robert Street, Toronto

Tickets available through Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/1TLnsfM>

Design for Play Workshop

May 30 (7:00 pm – 9:00 pm)

Join Michael Follett to explore park and landscape design from a playworker's perspective. Michael will draw upon his diverse experiences as a play consultant and share unique insights and best practices when designing for play.



Ryerson University
105 Bond Street, Toronto

Tickets available through Eventbrite: <http://bit.ly/24zNtnd>

**For more information, contact lindanacc@earthday.ca
Spots are limited - please RSVP your attendance in advance**



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