

# Live and learn

## The Challenge

Education is the most powerful engine for social mobility.

Yet many children don't have access to high-quality learning opportunities and lag behind in school readiness, academic performance, and social-emotional well-being. These disparities remain concentrated along racial, ethnic, and economic lines.

**We need to ensure that *all* children have access to opportunities that help them reach their full potential.**



**80%** of a child's time is spent outside of the classroom.

How can we meet children and families where they are and bring educational moments into homes and public spaces? How can we turn everyday play into joyful learning?

## Join the Movement

Where play is part of the plan.

We envision a new paradigm for affordable housing development that integrates playful learning guidelines into building design standards. Through **Live and Learn**, we will support children and families in developing the skills they need to shape the futures they want.

## Our Solution

With our **Live and Learn** initiative, we are building playful learning into the design and construction of affordable housing developments, beginning with two pilot sites in Philadelphia. Playful learning environments are public spaces designed to help children learn while playing, based on the science of how children learn best. Together with community residents, we will co-create environments that reflect the values and cultures of those communities. We will transform indoor and outdoor common areas at affordable housing developments into engaging playful learning spaces that spark crucial skill-building and social-emotional development.



São Paulo, Brazil. Photo: Purpose Brazil

## THE BEST PART?

The learning happens where children live.





Playful learning is a powerful and effective methodology for promoting early childhood learning and building community cohesion. Our pilot project for the Live and Learn initiative builds playful learning into the design and construction of two affordable housing developments in Philadelphia.

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## VISION

**Our vision is to expand education equity by integrating playful learning into all affordable housing.**



## OVERVIEW

### Project Facilitators

Watchdog Real Estate Project Management and Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network (PLLAN)

### Developers

Community Ventures and Penrose

### Designers

KSS and WRT

### Community Partners

Tree House Books, Lower North Philadelphia Community Development Corporation, Brewerytown Sharswood Community Civic Association, and Brewerytown Sharswood Neighborhood Coalition

### Supported By

William Penn Foundation

### Sites

- Susquehanna Square, North Central Philadelphia (Community Ventures)
- Sharswood Phase 3, Sharswood (Penrose)

### Timeframe

Fall 2023 through Summer 2025

### Goals

- **To create** relevant and engaging playful learning spaces in both existing and new affordable housing developments.
- **To expand** education equity for resident families and children, providing valuable skill-building opportunities and increasing school readiness.
- **To increase** social cohesion through meaningful community engagement.
- **To train** developers and designers to incorporate playful learning methodologies.
- **To build** a constituency who understands and values playful learning in everyday design, and who can advocate for the inclusion of playful learning in design guidelines and RFPs locally, regionally, and nationally.

**Where play is part of the plan.**

## RESOURCES

These resources are provided by Playful Learning Landscapes Action Network (PLLAN). Click on the buttons for more information.

## Background

[PLLAN WEBSITE](#)

[PLLAN PLAYBOOK](#)

## Videos

[ENRICHING THE COMMUNITY](#)

[APPLYING THE SCIENCE](#)

[ENRICHING THE DESIGN PROCESS](#)

## EXAMPLES

### PLLAN CASE STUDIES



Hidden Figures, Urban Thinkscape. Photo: Sahar Coston-Hardy



Cecil B. Moore Play and Learn. Photo: Halkin Mason



Mt. Airy CDC's "Literacy Nest." Photo: KSS Architects

