

Scan the QR code to get directions to get to the Ecopark
Community Adventure Playground



Or follow this map



The 1st Adventure Playground in Vietnam

A JOURNEY FROM JAPAN



ASIA
center

Grant: The Japan Foundation Asia Center
Grant Program for Promotion of Cultural Collaboration

ecopark

TOKYO
PLAY

THINK
PLAYGROUNDS

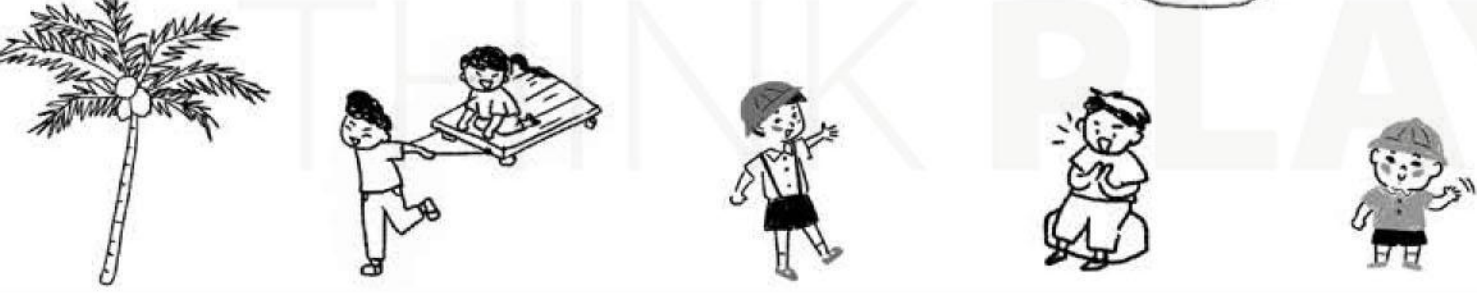
THE RESIDENT
COMMUNITY



"Playworkers
are children's friends in this adventure
playground"

"Three principles of an adventure
playground:
(i) is built by and for children,
(ii) opens for free; and
(iii) includes community participation"

"Happy memories will stay with children
forever"



This book belongs to
.....

I love playing this game

and this

and this

and this

and I enjoy playing with

and

and

and

THINK PLAY GROUNDS!

The 1st Adventure Playground in Vietnam

A JOURNEY FROM JAPAN



This book
needs some splashes of
colors. The more colors,
the better it looks!

THINK PLAYGROUNDS!



THE RESIDENT
COMMUNITY

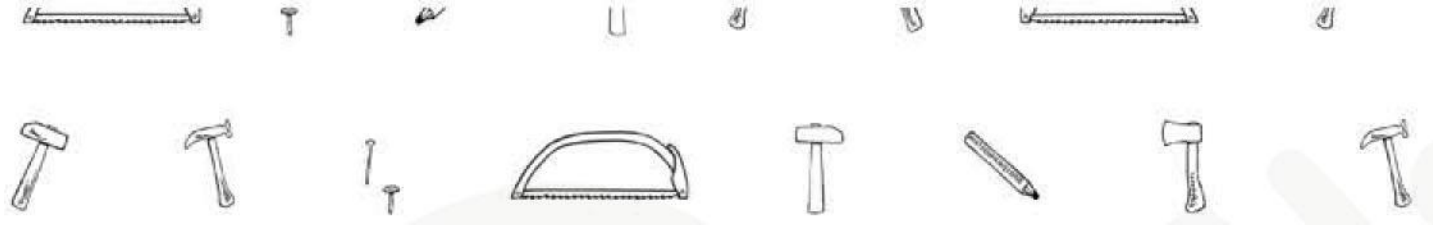


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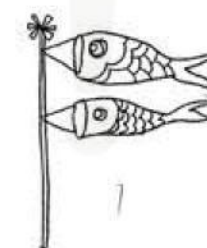
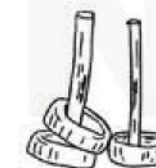


"The more adventurous play kids get, the more physically and mentally stable they become"

"A creative city cannot bear the void of play spaces"

"Play is the highest level of a child's personality development, for a child expresses his/her soul the most freely through play"

"Kids don't play to learn; they learn through play"



What is adventure?

In the past... adventure simply meant being outdoors because natural environments were wonderful playgrounds!



playing with peers in rice paddies



plenty of trees to climb on



bathing in rivers, streams and lakes whenever, however we wanted

collecting and grilling sweet potatoes were everyone's favorite things to do



Because adventure means discovering new things



Pour water into the hole and we can play with paper boat.



Sand & soil can be molded into anything. I can play with it all day long!



This wheelbarrow moves quickly, I can carry three friends!

These stairs seem a bit high but I can still make it to the top!



Beautiful voice!

Wow clay! Let's mold it into a pot and fire it!



Marshmallows will be burnt if toasted for too long!

But... adventure play sounds scary!!!!



Nothing to be scared of!



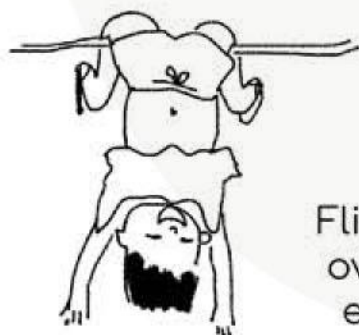
Falling is a lesson every child needs to learn in order to walk and run better.



The more you let your kid play adventurously, the quicker he/she will learn self-sufficiency, or in other words, the ability to **"manage risks"**.



Jumping through fire is a mentally stimulating challenge.



Flipping upside down over the beam helps enhance your kid's vestibular system!

Play activities children enjoy:

- Jumping down from a high place
- CartwheelSprinting → Hide-and-seek
- Using adults' tools

(Source: Kukuk Kultur's presentation on Adventurous Play)

And
kids need FREE play!



Free play helps children:

- » Socially: to empathize, collaborate and discipline themselves
- » Physically: to enhance their health and resistance, their self-defense skills, and their ability to protect themselves from pressure
- » Cognitively: to improve their reading, writing, science and math capabilities
- » Creatively: to stimulate their curiosity, imagination and flexibility, for each to develop his/her own unique self
- » Emotionally: to control anger and pressure, and to persevere

Did you know? These are problems that arise when children undergo too much pressure and have no time to play in Japan:

- » rising suicide rates
- » school bullying and violence
- » young people who avoid social interaction and don't leave their rooms

(Source: Tokyo Play's presentation on Adventure Playgrounds)



PLAYGROUNDS!

Hanoi is similar to other cities of Vietnam:
it lacks play spaces!

Hanoi's
green space per
habitant is only
1,72m²/capita

This lack of
play spaces is
coupled with the
fact that urban children
have to study a lot...



Urbanist
Nguyễn Thị Hiền

going to school



doing homework



having extra lessons
during weekends



spending the summer learning art

piano

dance

singing

swimming

math

mental calculation

handwriting

soft skills

English

learn...

learn more...

learn forever...

This is terrible! Kids need
to play freely in
adventure playgrounds.

Hitoshi Shimamura
Tokyo Play expert



Nguyễn Tiêu Quốc Đạt
Think Playgrounds expert

Urban children need adventure playgrounds!



Because here, children can play many things
that are not allowed at school or at home. Such
games were commonplace in their grandpar-
ents' time, don't you remember?



children can climb up
and down
many structures

try wood making



cook with
real pots and pans



build fires



play with mud



dig holes

HISTORY OF ADVENTURE PLAYGROUNDS



The first adventure playground opened in Denmark in 1943 and was called a 'junk playground.'

During the 1950s to 1980s, the adventure playground model was widely successful in the UK, Germany, Switzerland, etc.

... and was adopted in Japan in 1975.

Today, there are about **1000** adventure playgrounds in the world. Japan alone has 400 playgrounds.

Many adventure playground projects are being developed in Hong Kong, Korea... and now Vietnam!

The Ecopark community adventure playground model received guidance from Tokyo Play experts, and was designed, constructed and run by Think Playgrounds and Ecopark.

This is the first true adventure playground in Vietnam, with only 3 principles adopted from Tokyo adventure playgrounds:

- 1) is built by children and for children
- 2) opens for free
- 3) includes community participation



Shinagawa Park



Kodomonori Park



Kodomonori Park



Hanegi Park

Today, there are about 1,000 adventure playgrounds in the world. Japan alone has 400 playgrounds.

At Setagaya, the city government requires each district to have at least one adventure playground.

All those playgrounds are free and supported by parents living in near-by neighbourhoods and not-for-profit organizations.

Playworkers look after the playgrounds with parents and refurbish them over time.



Leaflets are handed out to provide parents information about the importance of play, the role of playworkers, and the playground's schedule and events.

WHO IS PLAYWORKER?



Playworkers are people who:



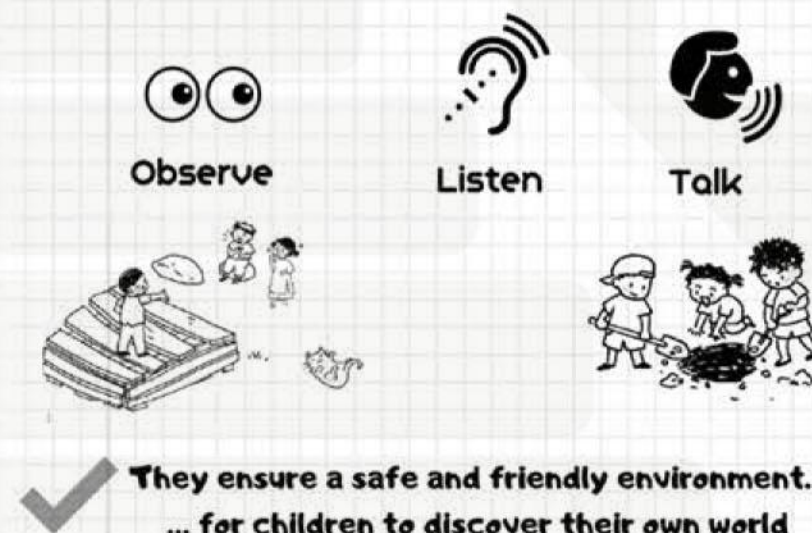
Play with children



Talk to children



Keep an eye on the playground



✓ They ensure a safe and friendly environment...
... for children to discover their own world

Usually, 2 to 3 playworkers are present in each adventure playground in order to ensure kids' safety. The job of playworker, in contrast to what people usually think, is very demanding since kids are restless. You are easily worn out after one hour of taking care of a child, right? Imagine how exhausting it can be looking after 20 to 30 kids simultaneously in an open playground regardless of the weather. Besides good health conditions, playworkers must be multi-skilled and highly responsible.

Until one day...

The journey of building the 1st community adventure playground in Ecopark



Site-survey

This place is vast and has plenty of trees.

Children still benefit from me although I am unable to reproduce.

My little Miu can dig the soft soil as much as she wants.



Meeting the community

Kids love our expert Shunichi Kambayashi

Oh yeahhh! A playground is coming very soon!

We love it! Fire and water in the playground are a must.



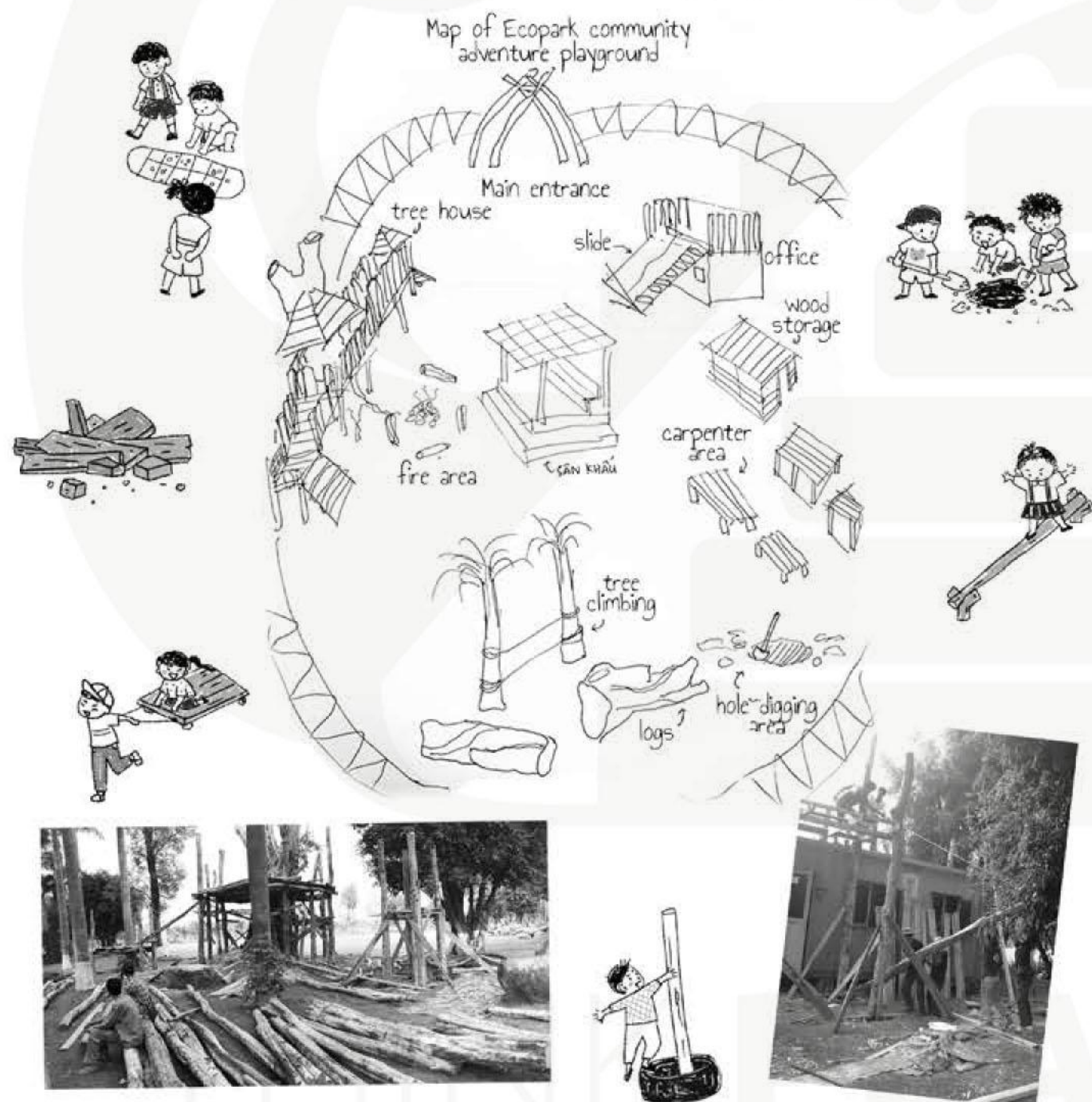
Turns out the community really likes the idea of an adventure playground



Construction & Design



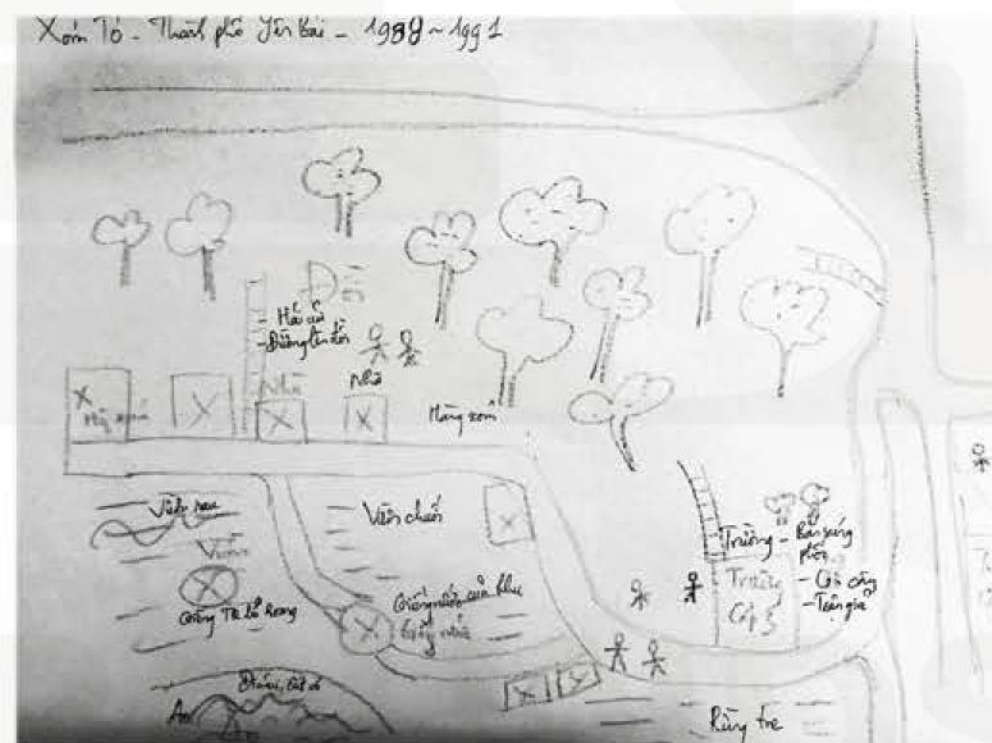
It took us 3 months to design and build the playground together.



'Becoming Playworkers' training workshops



We've played lots and had a chance to recall our childhood. Now we understand children better.



A trainee's map of his/her childhood play spaces.

There were many parents and volunteers coming to the playground to make signboards and leaflets



Children are always the most enthusiastic people.



Tam 'Linh', Ecopark residents, illustrated leaflets for the community adventure playground.

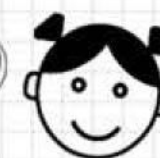
An accomplishment of the event "Together we build"

THE ROLE OF PLAY



Free play is very important for children. Why?

Because



Children can do what they like



They can be comfortable playing with friends



They don't have to compete



No one has to be successful or victorious



Happy memories of the playground will stay with children forever

Therefore they are very happy



Scientists have proven that the more free play kids get to experience, the more physically and mentally stable they become

Three Frees



Free to choose the way to play



Free entrance



Free to come and go as they want



This leaflet will help parents understand the meaning of play, for them to let children have more free play.



The 1st play day at the Ecopark Community Adventure Playground



Let's play!!!!



Xíu's story

Before the opening day, Xíu came and used a shovel to dig a big hole from noon until late afternoon. Then, she helped draw a sign for the digging area.



She liked her hole so much that she wrote this on the sign: "Do not enter". Her mother disagreed and suggested deleting it. She was very upset and went to pick up sawdust to fill the hole again. Mr. Hitoshi said, "It is very natural because she put so much effort into it".

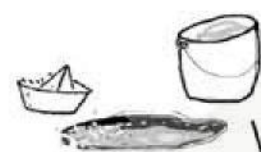


Xíu got mad and left for the fire area. After reading the instructions, she went to gather pieces of fuel wood. Ms. Trang helped her lay the fire and she seemed excited again.



When she returned to the digging area, someone was already asking for a water tap. The whole group sprayed water everywhere and even filled the hole. Together they played with their "chocolate". At the end of the day, they decided to put the "chocolate" in a cup, which they place inside a rice cooker and on a turtle cart; then, they drove around the playground and tried to sell the chocolate. Xíu had a lovely and emotional day in the adventure playground!





When will we come back to the adventure playground, Mom?



7-year-old Miu



10-year-old Tú Châu

I'll be back tomorrow and the day after tomorrow. I really like this playground

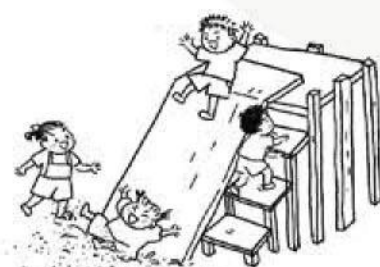


In the adventure playground, children can use real saucepans and pots to cook whatever they want. I was invited to eat crab soup from leaves and barks.

I like to climb up and down the slide. I can play all day! But children are still instructed by their parents a bit too much. Maybe parents should start letting them play more freely.



Vũ Xuân Hiếu
Bắc Ninh



Nhi Doãn
Volunteer



Hanoi is lacking playgrounds. The existing ones are pretty dull. In contrast, this adventure playground attracts children because it offers creative stimulation and various discovering opportunities. The design and construction process is also full of excitement.



Trần Huy Ánh
Architect



Lê Hà Quế
CEO of Eco PM

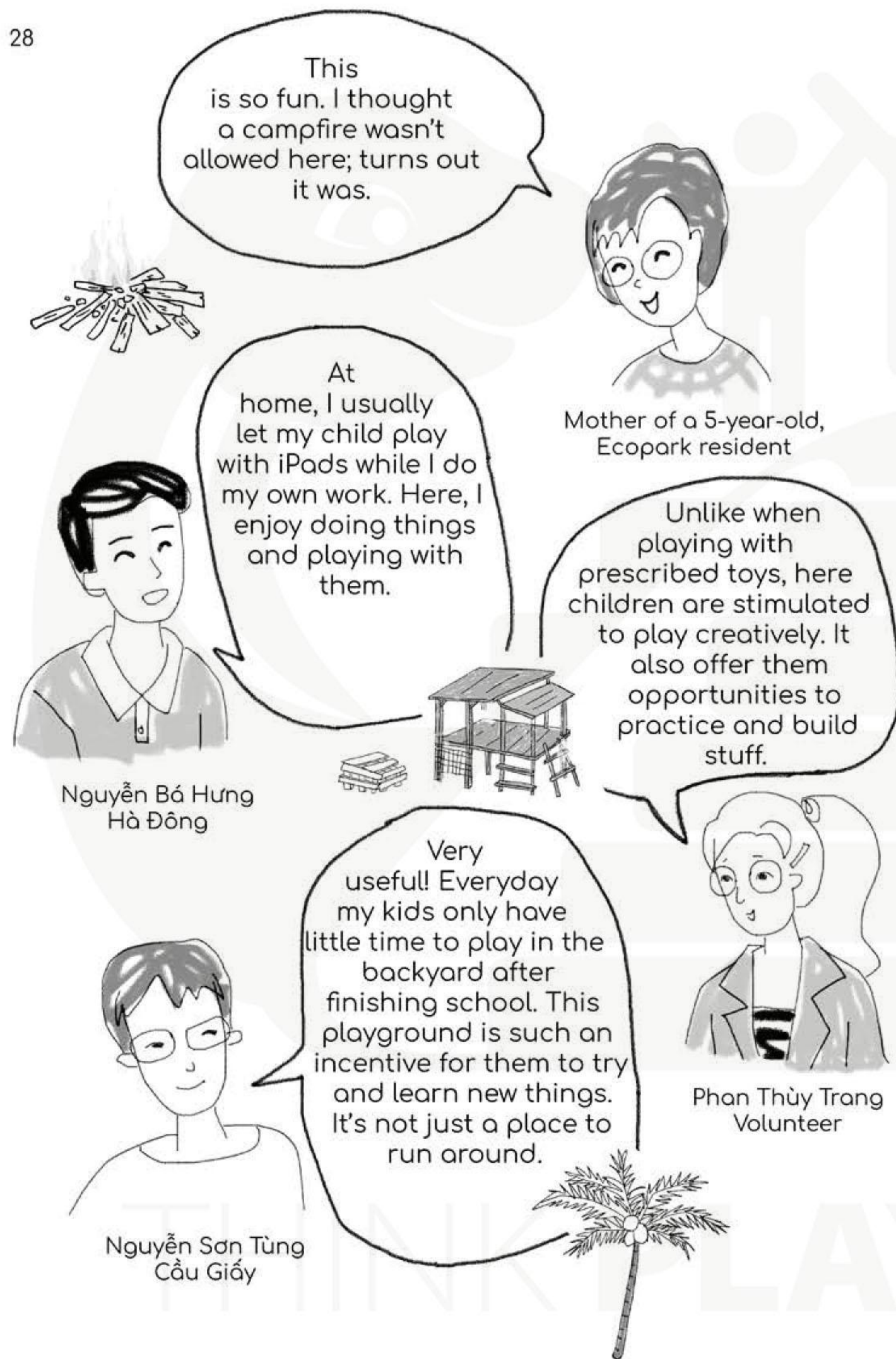
This adventure playground remarkably contributes to Ecopark residents' perfect living space. It helps children create their memorable childhood and nurture a harmonious connection with nature.



Dear Think Playgrounds, I'm very impressed with your work. I sincerely wish that this model will spread across Vietnam.

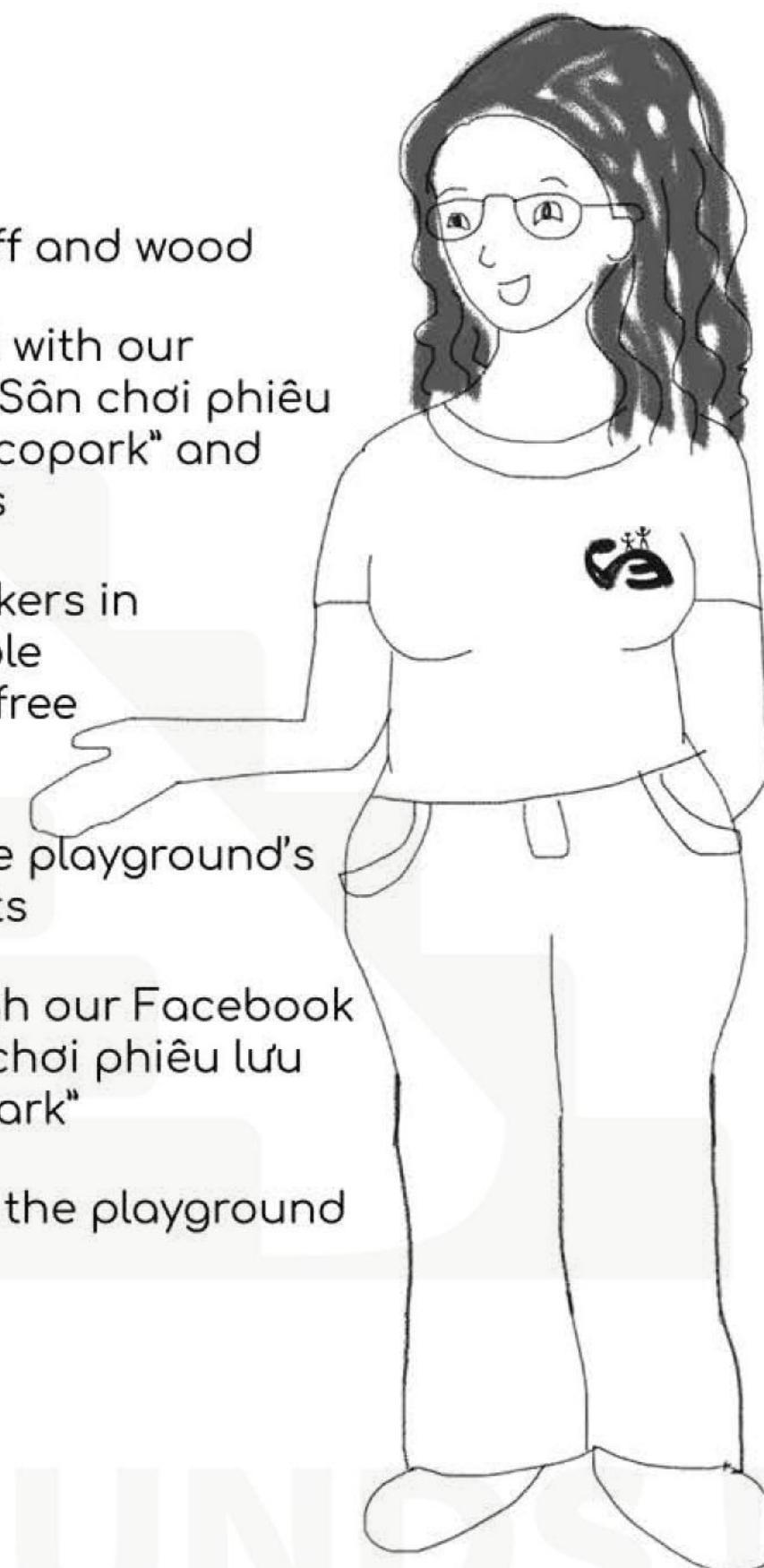


Shigeki Kamagami
Japanese expert



Let's maintain the adventure playground!

- ★ Donate used stuff and wood
- ★ Like and interact with our Facebook page "Sân chơi phiêu lưu cộng đồng Ecopark" and share news posts
- ★ Support playworkers in creating a suitable environment for free play
- ★ Join in adventure playground's community events
- ★ Volunteer through our Facebook group "TNV sân chơi phiêu lưu cộng đồng Ecopark"
- ★★★ Bring kids to the playground regularly



Ms. Nguyễn Huệ Phương
Project Manager at Think Playgrounds

About participating organizations



Grant: The Japan
Foundation Asia Center
Grant Program for
Promotion of Cultural
Collaboration

Japan Foundation Asia Center aims to connect people and expand networks in Asia through promoting bilateral exchanges and cooperation in various fields ranging from arts, film/moving images, music and dance, performing arts, sports, intellectual and people-to-people exchanges.



ecopark®

Since its establishment 16 years ago, Ecopark has become a model urban area that is functional and arguably the most livable in Vietnam, pioneering the development trend of Green Real Estate and earning international acclaim with multiple prestigious awards. With its mission to realize many Vietnamese generations' dream of having an ideal home in a humane and ecological urban setting, Ecopark builds not mere houses but perfect living spaces. It guarantees enriching natural experiences and a memorable childhood for residing children.



Think Playgrounds is a social enterprise committed to developing and preserving public spaces through the design and construction of community playgrounds. Since 2014, TPG has helped build over 150 public playgrounds in various local communities all over Vietnam; won multiple urban initiative awards, including the first prize of the Green City Solutions contest (hosted by the Embassy of Denmark) with 6 community playground projects, and the third price of The Art of Recycle (hosted by UNESCO Vietnam) with the playground named "Tire's Journey" in Ha Lo, Dong Anh, Hanoi. TPG aims to provide safe and enjoyable play spaces for children.

Please visit the following website for more details:
www.sanchoi.org



Tokyo Play was established in 2010 and came into operation in 2016. A non-profit organization based in Japan, its mission is to promote children's right to unstructured play through conducting extensive research, organizing community events, and running playgrounds.



Japan Adventure Playground Association originated as Adventure Playground Information Centre in IPA (International Play Association) Japan in 2003 and registered as a non-profit organization. Under the mission of "Creating Playful Community", we support people and groups to build adventure playgrounds by providing training, lectures, information, research, consultation and networking.

Content: Kim Đức, Hitoshi Shimamura

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Some illustrations are extracted from "The brochure of the 5th Anniversary of the Dream Park of Kawasaki"

Leaflets are written and drawn by volunteers and playworkers

Photos: Think Playgrounds and Tokyo Play