



UBP and ACM Learning Activity Center Sponsor Guide

Welcome to the Ultimate Block Party! We are excited to have you participate as an Activity Sponsor to showcase playful learning and help families understand how to put play into practice every day. We have developed the *UBP Activity Sponsor Guide* to make your Ultimate Block Party experience a success and to help you share your passion for kids and play.

These guidelines cover the common procedures and processes however we also recognize that each sponsor will have their unique approach to celebrating playful learning. What is important is to ensure that the activity is fun and engaging and also presents the science behind the activity.

The objectives of each play area is the same as two of the overarching objectives of the Ultimate Block Party:

- To be an advocate for play and its importance in healthy child development and education and
- To raise awareness of core scientific findings related to the positive impact play based activities have on healthy development and skill based outcomes.

Ten Things to Keep in Mind

Keep these basic guidelines in mind as you plan your company's activity:

1. Every activity is based in the arts and science of learning. Activities are to be rooted in science. Share the science with families in lay language and in any document produced for distribution. Importantly, the core messages should be about play and how its role in learning is supported by published science.
2. Activities can span a wide range of curricular areas, including those on language, literacy, math, science, technology—and includes activities that are both very low technology and high technology (see attached description of the ten core learning areas).
3. Nothing may be sold (including food provided by vendors) as UBP's are non-commercial events.
4. Have all signage approved by the UBP host. It must be small and unobtrusive for the same reason – keep the focus on play and playful learning and not on product. It is helpful to have signage that explains what children are learning in the play areas.
5. Activities should be engaging to children from 0-12 and to their parents as well. Focus on the younger age ranges is most appropriate for all UBP activities. Make sure the activities need little to no adult instruction (see sample activity below)
6. Your staff or volunteers must be trained and well informed so that they can help deliver key messages to parents about what the children are learning during the activity and the science behind that learning.
7. Low budget items are welcome. The UBP is designed to show parents that inexpensive materials, often put in the trash bin, can make wonderful learning opportunities for children. Cardboard boxes, tubes, ribbons, newspaper etc. fall into this category.
8. UBPs are designed for all families; not to serve any single religious, racial or commercial entities.
9. Ensure your activity is safe. Use age-appropriate materials and have enough staff for supervision and support.
10. Make it fun and playful! Think about how you want to engage the children. Enjoy the day and the families will too.

Activity Checklist

Activity Prep

- Contact the UBP key contact to discuss potential activity ideas should you need support (see sample activity below)
- Determine your mission for UBP participation:
 - What do you want families to learn about your company and how you support playful learning?
 - What type of activity will support your (and UBPs) mission?
 - Is there supporting research?*
- Create a detailed description of the activity by answering the following:
 - What will the children be doing?
 - How is it playful (hands-on and active)?
 - What will they learn?
 - What is the research behind the activity and the potential learning outcomes?*
 - What age range is this appropriate for?
- Create a budget for your activity:
 - Sponsor fee
 - Staffing
 - Travel
 - Materials
 - Signage
 - Shipping (if applicable)
 - Misc.
- Plan how you will set up and take down the activity
- Create a materials list for the activity (s)
- Review the materials list for safety
- Determine who in your organization will attend and support the activity
- Review the UBP checklist below and ensure you meet the deadlines for providing the core information to the UBP
- Create all parent communications
- Create any resource material for families to be shared on the UBP website (if applicable)
- Create a calendar with all planning and deadlines for the steps listed above

Provide to the UBP:

- Copy of your company's logo (jpeg – high resolution)
- Copy of company description (one-two lines)
- Detailed description of activity (s)
- Brief description of the learning outcomes*
- List of research supporting the learning within the activity*
- Images (or written copy) for any proposed signage in your area
- Materials list for the activity
- Planned number of staff or volunteers expected (with their names and titles)
- Copy of any communications to be provided to parents (pdf)
- Copy of any resource material for the UBP website (pdf)

*UBP personnel can help with ideas, research sources and learning outcomes if you need support.

Sample Activity

Let's Play Café

Description –

The children will play in a pretend café. The café will include making pies and other delights out of modeling clay, creating decorative chef hats, and designing placemats. The activity will include materials for pretend play to serve meals, take orders, pay for the meals and more.

Set up and Materials –

A café setting with tables and chairs including an entrance with a play cash register station. Tables for crafts; making placemats, playing with the modeling clay and decorating chef hats (clay, white paper chef hats, crayons, markers, blank placements). Other materials will include pretend dishes, food, flatware, crayons, pencils, writing pads and money.

Learning Areas (what children will learn) –

Mathematics, language development (vocabulary), eye-hand coordination, problem solving, creativity, collaboration, sorting and written expression.

Age Range –

3 to 8 years old

Science Behind the Learning –

Children develop many skills through make-believe play, especially in the areas of executive function and social emotional development:

- *The Need for Pretend Play in Child Development*, Scott Barry Kaufman, Ph.D., 2012, Psychology Today; www.psychologytoday.com/blog/beautiful-minds/201203/the-need-pretend-play-in-child-development
- *The Impact of Pretend Play on Children's Development: A Review of the Evidence* Angeline S. Lillard, Matthew D. Lerner, Emily J. Hopkins, Rebecca A. Dore, Eric D. Smith, and Carolyn M. Palmquist University of Virginia, 2013, Psychological Bulletin

We look forward to your participation! Please let us know how we can help in your planning and implementation of your company's Ultimate Block Party activity. Thank you for helping us create a truly playful community and spreading the word on the importance of play in fostering lifelong learning.

For more information contact ACM or UBP at www.ultimateblockparty.com