

AnjiPlay

Invitation to Anji County, China

1 December 2016

To Whom it May Concern:

Over the last 16 years Angela Cheng has effected a profound shift in the educational ecology of her home county. As Director of Early Childhood Education for rural Anji, China, she has built a network of 130 public kindergartens that now serve 14,000 children ages 3-6.¹ During this 16 year period, she has also developed a complete pedagogy founded on principles of love, risk, joy, engagement and reflection, put into practice by returning the right of self-determined, true play to the child. Ms. Cheng's approach and her efforts, which resonate with, but are distinct from the best aspects of western practice and research, have lead to significant policy change at the local, provincial and national levels in China.

Today Anji Play is the subject of a global discussion about learning and knowledge in the 21st Century and how definitions of true play and true learning will impact future generations. The practices, materials, environments and technology that form the ground-breaking learning ecology of Anji Play have been the center of in-depth conversations hosted by WestEd, University of Wisconsin-Madison, RISD, MIT Media Lab, Mills College, Bank Street College of Education, Columbia University Teachers College, and Bing Nursery School, Stanford University among other institutions.

The Anji Play approach is also the basis for pilot programs in the United States. At One City Early Learning Centers in Madison, Wisconsin, materials, curricular elements and teacher practices are being introduced and adapted as the Center continues to grow. Our work with Madison Public Library and the Madison Public Parks Department around new approaches to learning, literacy and community engagement will continue throughout the winter and spring and grow over the summer.

Close conversation with our key partners in early childhood education and child and family services remains critical to our mission of bringing true play to children and communities across the globe. Through public talks, publications and social media we will continue to share our understanding of the nuance and depth of Anji Play to inspire these conversations. But we also know that the practices and approach of Anji Play cannot be understood or appreciated without seeing and experiencing them first hand in conversation with the teachers and communities of Anji who continue to play an instrumental role in their formation and development.

Anji County is located in the verdant tea and bamboo covered mountains that lie three hours northwest of Shanghai. Over the last year, Anji Play World has worked with Ms. Cheng to organize a limited number of trips to Anji, which allow our colleagues, partners and friends to connect with each other and with the local educational ecology of Anji County. We are pleased to invite you to join us in Anji from April 8 to April 16, 2017. Details can be found online or by contacting us directly.

We are committed to the partnerships we are developing with pre-K programs, community colleges, foundations, resource and referral agencies and other not-for-profit organizations working in the field of early education and child and family services in the United States. Moreover, Anji Play will soon become the focus of a wide range of research initiatives, focusing on cognitive and social development, literacy, risk, intergenerational trauma and assessment, among other areas of inquiry. It is our sincere hope that you will join us in Anji and join us in supporting the important work of Ms. Cheng and Anji County.



Yours truly,

Chelsea Bailey, Ph.D and Jesse Robert Coffino
AnjiPlay World

¹ This number represents 98.5% of children ages 3-6 living in Anji County, and includes children with special needs and the children of internal migrants who lack official status. Each of these children are full time students in Anji kindergartens.



AN INVITATION TO ANJI COUNTY

April 8-16, 2017, Anji County, China

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Educators who wish to understand the implications of Anji Play for global education must observe its practice first-hand in conversation with the teachers and communities of Anji who continue to play an instrumental role in the development of its ecology. We are pleased to invite you to join us in Anji for one week this April to visit the schools of Anji, observe the practice of Anji Play at its source, learn from local peers, meet colleagues from across the globe, and join a community of True Play practitioners.

Learn more: anjiplay.com/engage

Contact: info@anjiplay.com

