

Projects – Universally designed playgrounds

Participation in project „Game connects”

On 3rd december 2015. the Szerencsejáték Zrt. (SzZrt.), the Council of the Organisations of People with Disabilities (Fogyatékos Emberek Szervezeteinek Tanácsa, FESZT) and the Spanish National Association for the Blind (ONCE) has signed a cooperation agreement. It had an important element: the SzZrt. and the FESZT launched the lottery ticket called Nagykarácsony, and from the income of it they are going to support persons with disabilities.

Through this support unique, inclusive playgrounds are being built in Hungary, that are suitable for everyone. „Healthy” children and children with disabilities are playing together at these playgrounds, and thus they can become tolerant and open adults. In 2018 3 such universally designed playgrounds were opened: the first in the garden of Csillagház Elementary School in Budapest, the second in Kálvin János Park in Veszprém, and the third in the garden of Éltes Mátyás Nursery and Elementary School in Miskolc.

The Universal Design Information and Research Center (ETIKK) was invited by Szerencsejáték Zrt. to contribute to the project from 2017 to 2019 with its expertise.

What does a universally designed playground look like?

The universally designed playgrounds are inclusive and designed for all. They are projects, that are not only seeking for barrier-free solutions, but require proactive approach during the design process. In these playgrounds „healthy” and disabled children can play together, through which they might become tolerant and open adults.

There are inclusive equipment pieces on the playground, with which children can play together. They are not necessarily specially designed, but ensure an accessible playing experience. They have an appropriate shaping, pavement, accessing surface, and barrier-free transporting routes.



Fig 1. universally designed playground in Sopron, Erzsébet Garden. Barrier-free castle, sand box with tray, recessed mount trampoline, nest swing, talking flowers, motor developing castle with slide, recessed mount rotator embedded in pavement with rubber sheet

For more details about installing and constructing universally designed playgrounds see also:

<http://www.etikk.hu/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/kezikonyv-egyetemesen-tervezett-jatszoterek-letesitsehez-V2-2019-0131.pdf>

What makes an equipment piece universally designed?

The playground equipment piece below shows, how the shaping supports the cooperation of healthy and disabled children, while they are playing together. When installing this piece, it is important, that it can be approached equally by everybody. Primarily it is recommended to lay down a rubber sheet or cast rubber sheet as a pavement around the equipment piece (enough room for falling down and approaching is needed).

Example: barrier-free fishing house: it is barrier-free for every children, every corner of the house is easily accessible with wheelchair through a ramp. The elements of interactive water panels have contrasting colors, tactile surfaces and clear appearance, in favor of visually and mentally impaired children. There are acoustic elements integrated in the panels: xilofon, board game, rotatable maze, logic and several skill games, that are made both for healthy and disabled children.



Fig 2. waterside viewpoint, barrier-free castle, nest swing and rubber sheet pavement in the forefront (Miskolc, Éltés Mátyás Nursery and Elementary School). Designed, produced and distributed by Játéknapp Kft.