

Kidding Around

Ever wish you could take a break from adulting? **Kate Farr** pulls up a beanbag to find out how grown-ups are rediscovering the power of play.



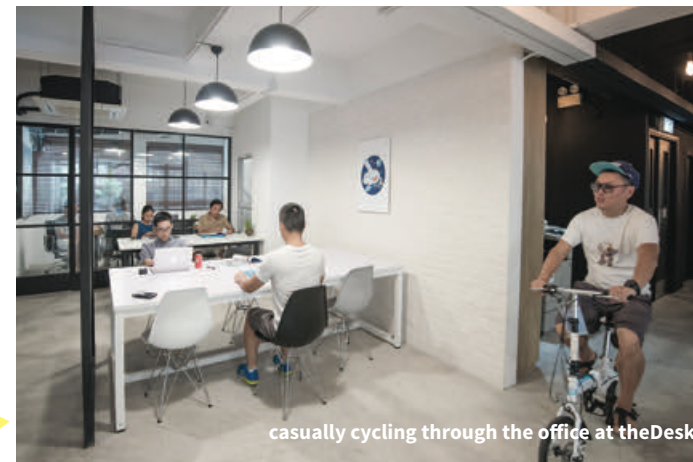
Put down the smartphone and pick up a pog: learning to be a kid again is the unlikely new fitness trend both here in Hong Kong and around the world. Studies show that cultivating a sense of playfulness can help to reduce stress, boost wellbeing, deepen interpersonal relationships and enhance creativity and problem-solving skills.

As if the ever-growing popularity of adult colouring books and play-focused workouts wasn't proof enough, last month saw the wildly successful TEDx Funtastic Salon event take place at the Convention Centre. This day-long event saw talks and demos from entrepreneurs in gaming and fun tech that allowed attendees to explore the many ways playful learning is influencing innovation.

"As adults, we often get so caught up in the 'should-dos' says Emma Brown of adult hula-hoop class **Turning Circles** (turningcircles-hk.com). "It's important to connect with the elements of creativity, passion, and excitement that ignite our desire - not because we have to, but because we want to." Brown's hula hoop



Turning Circles



casually cycling through the office at theDesk

sessions are getting increasingly popular with stressed out professional types looking to step off the treadmill. "The playful atmosphere keeps you smiling throughout your workout and brings an element of fun which, let's be honest, we can all use more of," she adds.

Another Hongkonger tapping into this trend for childlike pursuits is fine artist Eleanor McColl, whose "**Colour In Hong Kong**" books (eleanormccoll.com) are a hit with both adults and kids. Eleanor is enthusiastic about the benefits of adult colouring. "In a world ruled by technology, there's much to be said for the meditative benefits of colouring - staying focused on one thing for a while and just being present in that moment. Everyone can benefit from being still, switching off, and taking a break from work stress or hectic family life, whilst still actually doing something."

Looking for more ideas to unleash your inner child? Here are a few of our favourites.



1 Reach for the Lasers

You may have heard of **Bubble Football**, where players are clad in a full-body inflatable "zorb" suits before attempting a hilarious, bouncy soccer game. Take it to another level with a laser bubble football session, conducted in a dark, dry ice-filled room with glow-in-the-dark zorbs, music and a multi-coloured light show. Hilarious, completely baffling and a full-on, sweaty workout too - this is, quite literally, #squadgoals.

Various packages and rental options are available, visit bubblefootball.com.hk.

2 It's a Doodle

Drink and Doodle is a bi-monthly gathering of creatives (think designers, architects, photographers and artists) that's held in collaboration with street art organisation HK Walls and co-working space theDesk. It's pretty self-explanatory: rock up, grab a flavoured vodka pop and unleash your inner Jackson Pollock. There are prizes for the best doodles of the night, so sharpen those pencils.

The next event takes place on Friday December 9 from 6.30-10pm and costs \$150 for non-members. G/F, 511 Queen's Road West, Sai Ying Pun, 3706-8978, thedesk.com.hk.



3 Got Game?

The first of its kind in Hong Kong, **Press Start** is a games hub for grownups with a firm focus on the social side of play. Hosting twice-monthly public board game socials with staff on hand to introduce and facilitate the sessions, the aim of the game here is to connect and learn through play. Press Start also host private events, and even organised the city's first mass "PokéWalk" - an event that proved so popular that it required police marshalling. Only in Hong Kong. **3/F, 18 Gilman's Bazaar, Central, 9283-2312, www.pressesstart.com.hk. Board game socials cost \$150, including all games, drinks and snacks.**



5 Find your Balance

Once the preserve of people with bulbous noses and massive footwear, unicycling has ditched the clown associations and is now a bona-fide fitness craze. Up the ante on this balance-centric sport even further by joining a unicycle hockey session, hosted weekly at the YMCA King's Park Centenary Centre in Jordan by the **Hong Kong Unicycle Sports Club**. This friendly sport is suitable for unicycle novices up to pro (the team tour internationally), delivering a surprisingly hard-core workout. Squirty flower optional. **For more information see unihk.org.**

4 Hands Down

Much like tic-tac-toe and skipping songs, the ability to execute a flawless handstand tends not to be a skill that we retain into adulthood. But **Aerial Arts Academy's** handstand class will have you flipping out (and working your core) in no time; you're taught progressive moves that will eventually lead you to be able to pop an unsupported handstand at will. Do it for the boost in stability and strength... or just for the ultimate party trick level up. **Class prices vary according to package credits. Multiple locations; for schedule information visit aerialartsacademy.com.**



6 Balls to the Wall

The fast and furious game of Dodgeball is an elementary school fave in the US, and believe it or not, there's quite the scene among grownups in Hong Kong, too. The **HK Dodgeball League** holds weeknight matches from Monday to Thursday, plus regular try-out sessions for newbies. Join an existing team or get a gang of friends together - the combination of pacey uber-competitiveness and hilarious team names (think "The Jammy Dodgers", "The Dodgefathers" and plenty more that are frankly unprintable here) make for a fast, fun and fit night out. **For more information visit facebook.com/groups/LeagueHKDodgeball.**



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7 On the Rebound

Remember when your mum used to tell you to stop bouncing on the bed? Put that advice right to the back of your mind and hit up one of two trampoline parks in Hong Kong: **RYZE** in North Point, or **Bounce Inc** in Kowloon Bay. The former has a ninja assault course, with foam pits to break your fall, while the latter has a bouncing wall where you can hone your parkour skills.

RYZE: 3/F, Kodak Plaza 1, 321 King's Rd., North Point, 2337 8191, www.ryzehongkong.com.

Bounce Inc: G/F, EMAX, 1 Trademart Drive, Kowloon Bay, 2556 9555, www.bounceinc.com.hk.



Bounce Inc



Hong Kong Rock Climbing Adventure

8 Zip it

Channel your inner Spidey with a whole-day zip-lining adventure courtesy of **Hong Kong Rock Climbing Adventure**. Boarding a ferry at Sai Wan Ho, you'll sail out to Tung Lung Island, just off the Clearwater Bay Peninsula, for a day of flying over granite cliffs, with only a steel cable between you and a sheer drop to the rocks below. Not enough rock-based daredevilry for one day? You can also try your hand at abseiling while you're there. Zip-lining tours cost \$480, or \$680 for zip-lining and abseiling.

For more information and to book a tour visit hkrca.com.

9 No Kidding

Wanna host a playful party? **Kidult's Amazing Party House** is for you. Pick from four themed rooms to host your gathering of between 6-70 people – a tented-ceiling travel room, a cosplay and video game space, a full kitchen for cooking parties, or an astroturf chill out room. Rental includes use of an instant camera, air hockey, cosplay costumes, board games and retro arcade machines for that authentic frat party vibe.

11/F, Sui On Industrial Building, 134 Wai Yip St., Kwun Tong, 6344-8644, www.kidultparty.com.hk.



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