



# #ARNEClearning

ARNEC promotes sharing, collaboration and learning on innovations and noteworthy practices to support early childhood development in the Asia-Pacific region

2021 Series, No. 1

11 March 2021, 3:00-4:30 Singapore

## ARNEC fosters cross-country learning for responsive caregiving and playful parenting, strengthening ECD networks in the region

ARNEC has established Learning Groups to support responsive caregiving and playful parenting and promote multi-sectoral coordination through strengthened ECD networks in the Asia-Pacific region.

The learning community is composed of officials and officers of governments, practitioners, and partners in the region who meet under the auspices of ARNEC to implement a learning agenda and facilitate collaboration for ECD.



### ARNEC facilitates learning session with The LEGO Foundation on playful parenting

ARNEC invited Institutional Members, National Representatives, and members of the Learning Groups to participate in a learning session with The LEGO Foundation over Zoom on Thursday, 11 March 2021. Thirty-three invited guests participated in the session from 11 countries in the region, namely, Bangladesh, Bhutan, India, Indonesia, China, Laos PDR, Mongolia, Nepal, Pakistan, Philippines, Singapore, and Viet Nam.

Aaron Lee Morris, Early Childhood Programme Specialist at The LEGO Foundation led the session on why playful parenting matters.

Drawing from theory and practice, Aaron shared LEGO's work on supporting child protection, development, and caregiver well-being through playful parenting.

"There is no universal definition of what play is," stressed Aaron citing that play is a cultural experience and differs from one context to another. Aaron, however, explained characteristics of playful learning experiences: iterative, meaningful, actively engaging, socially interactive, and joyful.

He also emphasised that playful parenting supports holistic skills development among young

children, in addition to stimulating brain growth and improving the bond between the child and the caregiver.

Playful parenting also results in improved coping and resilience among young children and better mental health and well-being for caregivers, he added.

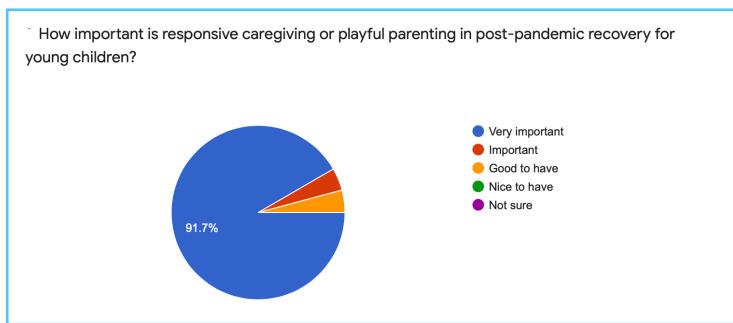
Aaron also presented LEGO's playful parenting projects in different regions, including the Prescription to Play (P2P) in Bhutan, as well as measures to track child-specific and caregiver outcomes.



## Up close and personal

**Aaron Lee Morris** is an Early Childhood Programme Specialist at The LEGO Foundation, overseeing a range of global partnerships focused on utilising play to support the learning and development of children birth-to-six at home, in early childhood centres, and within communities around the world. Prior to that, he was the Director of Family and Community Learning at PBS KIDS where he managed collaborative efforts that utilised PBS KIDS' media properties to create playful learning experiences for children, families, and educators across the US. An alumnus of the Harvard Graduate School of Education, Aaron holds an Ed.M. in Technology, Innovation, and Education.

## 9 of 10 participants: responsive caregiving, playful parenting essential in pandemic recovery



About 92 percent of participants who did the poll prior to the ARNEC

learning session said that playful parenting or responsive caregiving is

very important in pandemic recovery efforts.

playful parenting as a component.

In addition, 54 percent affirmed the presence of government policy on responsive caregiving or playful parenting, usually as part of the national ECD policy.

The poll findings also show that 37.5 percent implement programmes with all components of the Nurturing Care Framework (NCF) and 25 percent with two or more but not all components of the NCF.

About 62.5 percent have programmes with play or

**Moving forward**

### Insights from the learning session and call to action to promote playful parenting for young children in the Asia-Pacific region

- 1 Defining playful parenting recognises culturally diverse meanings and experiences of play interactions between young children and caregivers
- 2 Stimulating brain growth and building skills for holistic development of young children, as well as improving the well-being of caregivers are some of the scientific evidence on the effects of playful interactions between the child and caregiver
- 3 Promoting playful parenting is usually integrated into the national ECD policy and/or in discrete programmes for early childhood at the country level
- 4 Sharing insights and experiences on programme design and implementation incorporating playful parenting promotes cross-country learning and collaboration, which is aligned with ARNEC's objectives