Webinar series: Young children amidst COVID-19
# 4: Distance learning approaches for young children

Tuesday, 12 May 2020
15:00 – 16:30 (SG time, GMT+8)
Short and Long Term Impact of COVID 19 on Young Children’s Early learning

Venita Kaul
The Presentation

- How are children impacted by Covid 19?
- Why are early years important?
- What do Early learning opportunities imply?
- How can distance modes/on line education help?
- What governments must do to prioritise ECD
2020—the Year of Covid 19!

“ It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity, it was the season of light, it was the season of darkness, it was the spring of hope, it was the winter of despair.”

— Charles Dickens, A Tale of Two Cities
Why Best Time and Worst Time?

**Best Time**

- Focused unshared attention due to less distractions: (Enjoy both parents company & care)

- Families come together (safety & security)

- Opportunities to do things together (Emotional connect & Better quality learning from elders)

- Flexibility of Time and less time pressure (More enjoyable)

**Worst Time**

- ‘Contained’ often in limited spaces—can be claustrophobic for all. (Lack of physical space to play.)

- Social interactions lessened & Overexposure to each other. (Lack of socialization with other children).

- Income loss due to lay offs & tension: (Basic needs an issue; to manage more with less).

- Monotony and overload of house/office work (no patience to talk/play with kids)

- Intolerance & Domestic Violence may increase-toxic stress for children
“Young Children”-Multiple Childhods

Age Categories

• Birth to 2 years
• 2 to 4 years
• 4 to 6 years

Social Categories

❖ Children with better educated parents and availability of toys/games/technology
❖ Children with less educated or illiterate parents with little availability of toys/games/technology. (At best a mobile)
Impact of Toxic Stress in early years

- Toxic Stress
  - School failure
  - Health Issues
    - Economic impact
    - Reduced productivity & prosperity
    - Body & Brain circuits affected, Insulin resistance; Cancers; intellectual impairment & loss of potential etc.
Why are early years significant?
Why ECD?: Empirical Evidence of Impact

Developmental Outcomes

Immediate/Mdm term impact
◆ Significant gains in children’s health, school readiness levels, cognitive skills; academic performance in school and school retention.

Long term impact:
◆ Higher incomes, more incidence of home ownership, lower propensity for welfare; lower rates of crime, delinquency, arrest.

Economic Returns

• Perry Preschool, Abecedarian project demonstrated $ 12.9 benefit for every dollar invested. (2004)
• Brazil showed 7-12 percent increase in future income through each year of preschool. (1998)
• India WB study (2015) for every Re. 1 invested in preschool returns up to Rs. 25 will be generated!

But Quality of experience and environment matters; not just provision.
What is Holistic Development and Learning for Young Children: (No formal academic skills)

- Responsive Care
- Good health
- Nutrition security
- Opportunities for Early learning
- Physical & Motor skills
- Language Skills & Emergent literacy
- Sensory/Cognitive Skills/concepts & Emergent maths
- Socioemotional & Executive functions/skills
- Safety & Security
- Creativity
- Sensory/Cognitive Skills/concepts & Emergent maths

- Interest/meaning directs child to experience
- Experience wires the brain
- Repetition of experience strengthens the wiring
- Interaction enhances the learning

Opportunities should be designed accordingly
Important to ensure:

Activities/Interactions with children are

- Age appropriate and as per attention span
- Interesting & have meaning for children
- Are mix of free and structured activities.
- Are of their interest and engaging
- Are contextually relevant
- Allow for thinking and problem solving & dev of executive functions
- Promote questions and curiosity development,
- Ensure acknowledgement, attention and appreciation of the child
What Parents need to give priority to during Covid-19?

Cannot avoid stress but need to ensure

(a) Parents own stress reduction & care and comfort level with child.

(b) Stimulating & caring adult child interaction and relationships: Children need interactive and reliable adults; they need to be kept updated on information, encouraged to speak out and share anxieties, need love and care not mere custodial protection.

(c) Giving children priority at home: Children need space, routine to go back to their comfort level, opportunity to share and listen to others, and play as therapy for which free play opportunities with play materials, dolls for dramatic play, art, music, dance along with engaging adult can all be therapeutic. Also engage child in activities for overall development.

(d) Focus on not only cognitive but equally important socio-emotional needs of children: helping them understand and express their emotions; discuss right and wrong with them; develop social skills.
How is Distance learning helping young children?

Feedback

• On line learning through platforms such as Zoom are becoming common.
• 35-40 minutes interaction planned for children with a parent in attendance every 2-3 days/daily.
• Content of activities is stories, art/craft work; things to do
• Activities to be done with parents are sometimes interesting.
• Feedback is children enjoy seeing teacher and other children for a short time but children younger than 5 years have limited attention span.
• Screen time is getting lengthened.
• Many parents do not have equipment & facility of internet or raw material.
• Syllabus based approach guiding the content.
• Parent’s availability is an issue
• Not adequate focus on what parents can do with children at their own time.
Instead 'parental guidance' on doing what most parents should & can do well ....

- Engage them in home activities
- Stories /Songs
- Games
- Talk with children
- Let them Play! But Interact

- Ensure a Routine for children with adequate free time. Helps build resilience.
- Encourage/ Cater to their curiosity & discuss questions & fears esp about Covid 19.
- Talk a lot with them. Ensure Introducing them to new vocabulary in informal conversation & through stories/picture books.
- Strengthen their concepts of pre-number, number, colour etc through play activities and daily chores.
- Teach /discuss with them basic health habits esp hand hygiene, covering mouth, nutrition etc. and discuss health habits.
- Allow them a lot of physical movement as well as use of eye hand coordination eg. Threading beads, folding, clothes etc.
- Support imaginative play and creative ideas, drawing, clay work and do with them when possible etc. Play is therapy for kids.
- Encourage oral use of school language if home language is different.
- Not be over concerned about formal academic learning.
What Governments can do during & post Covid 19.

• **During Covid 19 & later**
  - Ensure all parents have access to stimulating materials and ideas for interacting with children through starting age-wise TV programmes dedicated to young children.
  - Have video/TV spots of short duration on parent child interactions and their importance for the child.
  - Ensure a Child help line for children in case of need and publicize it.

• **Long term**
  - Ensure good quality ECE provisions for children in public domain to reach out to all children irrespective of social status.
  - Ensure professionalization of ECE in accordance with Science of ECD through planned teacher education and professional development & career opportunities, mentoring, monitoring & regulation of services with adequate budgetary provisions.
  - Have a long term strategy for media based & home based regular support and guidance for parents rearing young children through professional cadre of social workers.
Thank You
Engaging Children in Play-Based Learning during COVID-19 Pandemic

Perspectives from Pakistan..

ARNEC Webinar 4

By:
Baela Raza Jamil
Idara-e-Taleem-o-Aagahi
7th April 2020
Local ECE Context during COVID-19-Lockdown

Children’s early learning at a standstill due to:

1. Closure of ECE programs 99.9% school based (public/private)
2. Crisis hardest for the poor households – (health/economic)
3. **Lockdown**: 8 weeks- Confusion, Anxiety & Frustration
4. 30-40% rural HHs do not have ICTs- Technology (Wifi, Smartphones ,TV) & 10% Urban (ASER 2019)
5. **Govt. Response**: TV-Tele School & Taleem Ghar (Gr. ECE -XII)
6. **Little Content for outreach on ECE for TV/Parents**.
7. **No Formal Digital/ICT Policy in Education & ECE in place**
8. **SOPs/Policies/Budgets are limited for ECE/ECD**; however, commitment is positive and fully reflected in Sector Plans
9. **Home Based ECE – as the new normal –what does it mean?**
ITA COVID 19 Response –ECE & Early Learning

ECE an innovative space for children/parents

Pre –Lockdown COVID-19-Preparedness
• Mapping locations/HHs/parents, volunteers with cell numbers
• Training-learning teams- Action strategy
• Digital/distance outreach by design/IT teams

Lock Down -Roll Out of ECE by ITA
• ITA’s early learning program spread across two provinces 10,000+ children
• Low-income & marginalized
• Exploring localized collaborative innovations
Importance of Play-based Learning in Pakistan - *a neglected area*

- Early Learning Partnership (ELP)-I survey (2018) in Pakistan by ITA reveals limited evidence of play-based learning at home prior to COVID-19
  - majority children (80%) do play with homemade or manufactured toys (but without supervision)
  - Limited parental engagement/understanding about early learning approaches

- Play based approaches cover key domains of child development:
  - Physical
  - Social Emotional –Psycho –Social well being
  - Cognitive and
  - Executive Function (flexible thinking, planning, self care, goal-setting, emotional regulation)
Early Childhood Learning Areas & Activities

6 Key Learning Areas of ECE Curriculum, 2017 with parental engagement

1. Personal and Social Development
2. Language and Literacy
3. Numeracy
4. Creative Arts/Cognitive Development
5. Health, Hygiene and Safety
6. World Around Us

Covering All 4 ECE Domains
COVID-19 & ECE : Pathways to Communities

Through volunteer efforts, field staff and teachers, ITA reached out communities to:

- Inform/orient parents/caregivers in safe clusters
- Organize awareness sessions parents on ECE routines-care
- Training local activists on core areas of ECE-domains
- **Child Protection and Safeguarding**
  * during emergency
- Connect parents/siblings to play based ECE learning
- Community Bonding for Education Solutions
- **Learning-Care Triad: Teacher/Volunteer-Child & Parent**

* Checklist for exposure to violence, neglect, unsafe household environment and exploitation
ITA’s Response: Early Learning in COVID-19

Phase 1: Roll Out-Mobilization, Training & Implementation

Step 1: Community Mobilization and Sensitization

• Content selection—core minimum essentials optimized
  • Care/heath/hygiene: learning through play; linkages with social safety-nets and LHWs (lady health workers)

• Awareness on Life skills, Hygiene, Social Distancing, ‘New Normal’ (by ITA Corona Saviors/activists initiative)

• Orientation of local Community Volunteers on ECE

• ICTs/Tech Ed mobilization of parents/local volunteers through whatsapp/sms – TV
Step 2: Activities Roll Out

- **Cluster based sessions**/conducting storytelling sessions in communities (with safety measures)

- **Play-based Activity tasks**
  - Use of low-cost No-cost local material (clay, leaves, bottle caps, sticks, ropes, cardboard, newspaper)
  - Audio Stories/Whatsapp activities in local context/language
  - Storytelling activities (what if questions, art/drawing)

- **Executive Function- Activities**
  - Setting a daily routine, Self portrait, mood charts, channeling expression via games, pictures, puzzles, artwork
Phase 2: Implementation and Monitoring

- Circulating E-Learning videos through Whatsapp/TV-Activity Cards/Sheets to Parents
- Teachers/Parents sharing ideas and activities
- Developing COVID-19 Portfolio of each Child (record children’s work at home)
COVID-19: Pilot(4)- *Sanjha Vehras* “Our Courtyards”
60-90 minutes shifts in villages: 8-10 children per shift

ITA-Community Collaboration for ECE with Social Distance

**ECE**

Upto 90 minutes
8-10 children

**WHAT**
Interactive Routines
Protection Learning
Play Expression

**WITH WHOM**
Children
Parents
Volunteers/Teachers
LHWs

Lady Health Workers

#COVID-19
#LearningCaringNeverStops
#SafeSpaces
Phase 3: Lively Sharing of Students Work in WhatsApp Groups

- Families/volunteers share assignments with teachers for feedback either via audio, video/images – *ITA making digital content - videos for TeleSchool*

- Field Staff interact in clusters with frequent hygiene activities for COVID-19 and play for engagement

- **Open Learning Together-** High Trust Level – Positive Spirit
ITA COVID 19 Journey for Learning!

1. Mapping
   - Cell phones data collected, beneficiaries located, volunteers engaged

2. Strategy
   - Learning materials consolidated, platforms decided

3. Mobilization
   - Corona Saviours campaign launched, youth mobilized

4. Training
   - Teachers and learning activists trained

5. Dissemination
   - Learning materials shared with communities, social media & PTV TeleSchool

6. New Cadre
   - New cadre of learners and teachers

#CoronaSaviours
#LearningNeverStops
Outcomes and Impact

• 10000+ students covered through distance-learning and *Sanjha Vehra Safe Space initiative in communities*

• Positive response from parents *now practitioners of distance learning as a compelling life-skill*
  • Increasing parental engagement making TLMs & stories
  • *Parents and children play and share* collaborative work

• Need for scaling up and building a curriculum for home-based/ local safe space learning in the near future.

• ITA undertaking early years survey for post-COVID 19 situation assessing the impact and response
  
  *Two surveys already in pipeline (telephonic and F2F)*

• *Identify New Normal for ECE programs for* COVID-19

• Inform policy- new programs /school reopening and implementation options
Thank You
baela.jamil@itacec.org
## Annex: Developing Executive Function Skills at Home

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Executive Functioning (Skills)</th>
<th>Activities suggested</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Self-awareness</td>
<td>Self-portrait, Character Portrait with Self Comparison, Bingo Cards, Mood Chart, All About Me Drawings/Models</td>
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<tr>
<td>Emotional self-regulation</td>
<td>Mood Chart, Freeze Game, Poems with actions (The Itsy Bitsy Spider- Urdu version, head, shoulders, knees and toes) Exercise, Yoga Poses (Cat pose, cow, pose, Laughing baby pose, flower pose, lion pose etc)</td>
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<tr>
<td>Planning and Setting Goals</td>
<td>Daily Routine, Create Plans with Teachers/Community kids/neighbors remotely,</td>
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<td>Self-motivation.</td>
<td>Pictionary-</td>
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<td>Non-verbal working memory.</td>
<td>Pattern Matching, Counting and grouping, puzzles, sorting. Shape hunting, Post- Stories Activities</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Verbal Working memory.</td>
<td>Pictionary, Vocabulary Games, Storytelling and Post- Stories Activities</td>
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<tr>
<td>Problem solving</td>
<td>Counting, puzzles, sorting and grouping</td>
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<tr>
<td>Flexible thinking skills</td>
<td>Brain Teasers for literacy, numeracy and world around us.</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Unlocking the potential of our world’s vulnerable children

Young Children Amidst Covid-19 Series

Distance Learning Approaches For Young Children:

Case Studies from China & Vietnam

Alice Wong, Ph.D.
Chief Program Officer, Global
The OneSky Story

Unlocking the potential of our world’s vulnerable children
Training of China’s Child Welfare Institution caregivers

Family Skills training in China’s left-behind villages
Home-based Care Training in Vietnam’s Industrial Zones

Family Skills training in Mongolia’s Ger Districts
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Blended Learning

- Face-to-Face Training
- Digital Learning Platforms
- Regular Field Visits Guidance
- OneSky for all children
Unlocking the potential of our world’s vulnerable children
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Discussion Forums

Topics

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<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>No. of Comments</th>
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<td>Nhóm cù Thi – Bài 19: Văn hóa cơ thể đắn đo suốt đầu trong việc định</td>
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<td>Nhóm cù Thi – Bài 10: Gây(seq) trảng để nâng cao</td>
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<td>Nhóm cù Thi – Bài 09: Nghiên cứu về việc nâng cao</td>
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Views Comments Likes

Discussion Forums

線上學習回饋——第二小節 (2) 感受與兒童發展

線上學習回饋——第二小節 (1) 儿童是怎样的学习

線上學習回饋——第一小節 (回應式培育與情感依恋)

OneSky for all children
## Expert Q & A

### 问题列表

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>问题</th>
<th>专家</th>
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<th>浏览人次</th>
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<td>郭佳宁博士：失眠儿童，多动症儿童，注意力不集中儿童怎么处理？</td>
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<td>青春期的孩子经常喜欢拿别人的东西，怎么办？</td>
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<td>当幼儿出现不当行为时，老师该如何做？</td>
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<td>魏丽丽</td>
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Activity Cards

Children always love to play with cards. Here is an activity card to help the children learn and understand the concept of comparing numbers.

1. Choose a number card from the deck.
2. Show the children the number and ask them to find a matching number card.
3. Discuss the concept of greater than, less than, and equal to.

Let’s make the learning fun and interactive.

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Changes Amidst Covid-19
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Connecting Digitally with Children & Families
Modelling Care & Teaching
Leading Games & Activities

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Promoting Play at Home
Supporting Caregiver Communities Digitally

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Discussing “Responsive Care”

Trainers produce reviewing videos

Posted it on discussion form

Trainer commented on trainees’ reply
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Discussing “Secure Attachment”

Trainers produce reviewing videos
Posted it on discussion form
Trainer commented on trainees’ reply
Covid-19 Sharing
Covid-19 Sharing

Trần Thị Mỹ Lệ đã đăng một cập nhật trong nhóm Nhóm Lớp Địa Tốt Nghệp
3 tháng trước
Vệ sinh phòng dịch corona

Hà Thị Diễm Phương đã đăng một cập nhật trong nhóm Nhóm Lớp Địa Tốt Nghệp
3 tháng trước
NL Mặc Trái Nhỏ đã phun thuốc và đôn vệ sinh để phòng chống dịch Corona.
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Covid-19 Sharing

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Caregiver Community Live Talks

Unlocking the potential of our world’s vulnerable children
Reflections & Next Steps
Unlocking the potential of our world’s vulnerable children

By Alice Wong, PhD, Chief Program Officer
Engagement of Parents/Caregivers in Early Stimulation and Learning at Home: UNICEF and Gov’t of the Philippines Experience

ARNEC Webinar Series 4. Distance learning approaches for young children
12 May 2020
Status of Young Children and Families due to COVID 19

- Metro Manila and some parts of the country, especially Luzon is still on lockdown since mid-March
- Preschool classes prematurely ended in mid-March 2020 (about 800K 3-4 year old children affected in Luzon alone)
  - More time with family, but most parents may not be ready/confident to engage young children in early learning activities at home
  - Uncertainties within families – no income, job insecurity, unmet expectations from the social amelioration programme of the government, risk of separation of parents/primary caregivers from their children
Actions During COVID 19:  
10-Day Learning at Home Challenge during Lockdown

Objectives:

1. Increase awareness of parents/caregivers
   ✓ crucial role of parents in early stimulation, learning activities at home
   ✓ benefits to children’s holistic development;

2. Continue early learning for young children at home; and

3. Strengthen relationship between parents/caregivers and young children through enriched interaction.

Platform Used: social media (Facebook, Twitter)
• The introduction card explains the crucial role of parents and importance of play in the development and learning of young children

• Parents/caregivers are encouraged to take picture or video for each challenge and post them on FB (to encourage others to join and track engagement in the challenges)
Challenging parents and/or caregivers to play, sing and dance with their young children and explaining how this activity will help address stress/boredom while on quarantine.
Let’s wash our hands!

Let’s prepare our food!

Let’s talk about your experience at home!
What artwork did you make with your child?

What is your favorite color?
Day 7 – What is your favorite game?

Day 8 – What household chores were you able to do with your children?
Day 9 – What are your favorite shapes?

Day 10 – Who are your favorite persons?
10-Day Learning at Home Challenge: Enrichment Activities

✓ Re-launch the Challenge in June as part of the celebration of Parenting Month
✓ Printing and distribution of hand fans used by parents/caregivers esp. during summer -- recreating the images and messages in 10-Day Challenge (pictures of family playing and sample early stimulation/learning activities families can do at home)
✓ Use other platforms to disseminate and reinforce key messages for parents/caregivers (mobile networks, radio, TV, print)
1. UNICEF-supported initiatives
✓ mapping of children in all households with/without access to ECCD, including ECE services and reasons of no access

from paper-based tool to use of technology, i.e., **Project ChILD** (Children Information and Location Database) to **track** women, pregnant women and young children and **refer** them to basic social services
Actions before COVID 19 and towards early recovery and new normal brought about by COVID 19:
Home-Based Early Learning

1. UNICEF-supported initiatives
✓ based on results of mapping, planning and implementation of alternative modality for delivering ECE services for young children y/o, i.e., Parents Teaching Other Parents to Teach their Own Children Approach (PTOP) in Davao City

2) Formulation of Home-based ECCD standards by the ECCD Council
Objectives of PTOP (Davao City Initiative)

✓ Bring ECCD/ECE at home to increase access of 2-4 y/o children to pre-school education;

✓ Strengthen self-confidence of parents and empower them with knowledge and skills that will enhance their ability to foster total development of their young children; and

✓ Build and reinforce family responsibility.
Parents (mothers and fathers) conducting early stimulation/learning activities at home.
Results of PTOP

✓ Parents realized the value of early learning and their crucial role
✓ Increased self-confidence of parents with low level of education when they experienced being first teacher of their young children
✓ Changed mind-set from mere taking care of children to being the first teachers of their children
✓ Created a more positive and shared responsibility among mothers, fathers, grandparents, older siblings in caring and teaching young children

Source: Rapid Assessment Report by DSWD
Results of PTOP

✓ Children tend to be happy when their mothers and fathers are the ones teaching them; more bonding time; improved parent-child relationship
✓ Served children in indigenous communities that are difficult to reach with minimal cost (use of available materials at home)
✓ Children are prepared to enter kindergarten in formal school; no separation anxieties
✓ Lessened gossiping and vices in the community as more time is devoted by parents/caregivers to teaching their young children
✓ Decreased CICL incidence in the community which can be attributed to more protective environment and positive discipline practiced at home

Source: Rapid Assessment Report by DSWD
Next Steps:
Institutionalizing Home-Based ECE as part of the new normal

1) Provide support to parents/caregivers of young children, esp in low resource contexts, to do home-based learning

✓ Enhance and replicate PTOP model of Davao City and other existing home-based ECE initiatives
✓ Develop and provide practical tools needed in home-based learning
❖ simple activity guide, basic materials, tool to identify red flags for developmental delays and sample activities at home to help address red flags, etc
✓ Orient parents/caregivers
✓ Establish mechanism for regular monitoring and supervision of home-based learning activities

Important considerations:
➢ level of education, work/economic status of parents; culture
➢ need to balance work of parents and childcare;
➢ do not replicate school/learning center at home;
➢ while aiming for holistic development, give more focus in less developed skills (self-help, social-emotional, language)
➢ integrate early stimulation/learning activities in household chores;
➢ make learning fun, meaningful and relaxing
➢ provide opportunity for young children to interact with peers while observing social distancing and good hygiene
➢ capacity of local government units to support
Next Steps:
Institutionalizing Home-Based ECE as part of the new normal

2) Develop key messages (as reference by all stakeholders) and disseminate these using different platforms to empower parents and caregivers, promote early learning and development of young children and facilitate positive interactions between parents and children;

3) Aside from financial assistance to vulnerable families, include mental health support to parents and caregivers during this pandemic and beyond – to enable them to effectively support the development of their young children; and

4) Build the capacity of child development and health workers to support parents and caregivers.

5) Enhance the Home-Based ECCD standards developed by ECCD Council to consider the new normal brought about by COVID 19.
End of Presentation
Thank you!
Deadline has been extended to 15 May 2020!

A SURVEY ON

PERSPECTIVES ON THE IMPACT OF COVID 19 ON YOUNG CHILDREN AND EARLY CHILDHOOD DEVELOPMENT IN ASIA PACIFIC

Visit bit.ly/ARNECcovid19 or scan the QR code on the top right to participate in a 15 minute survey

*By 15th May 2020
Participate in the COVID-19 Early Childhood Education (ECE) Workforce Survey

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