

The Power of Play in building resilience among children and families

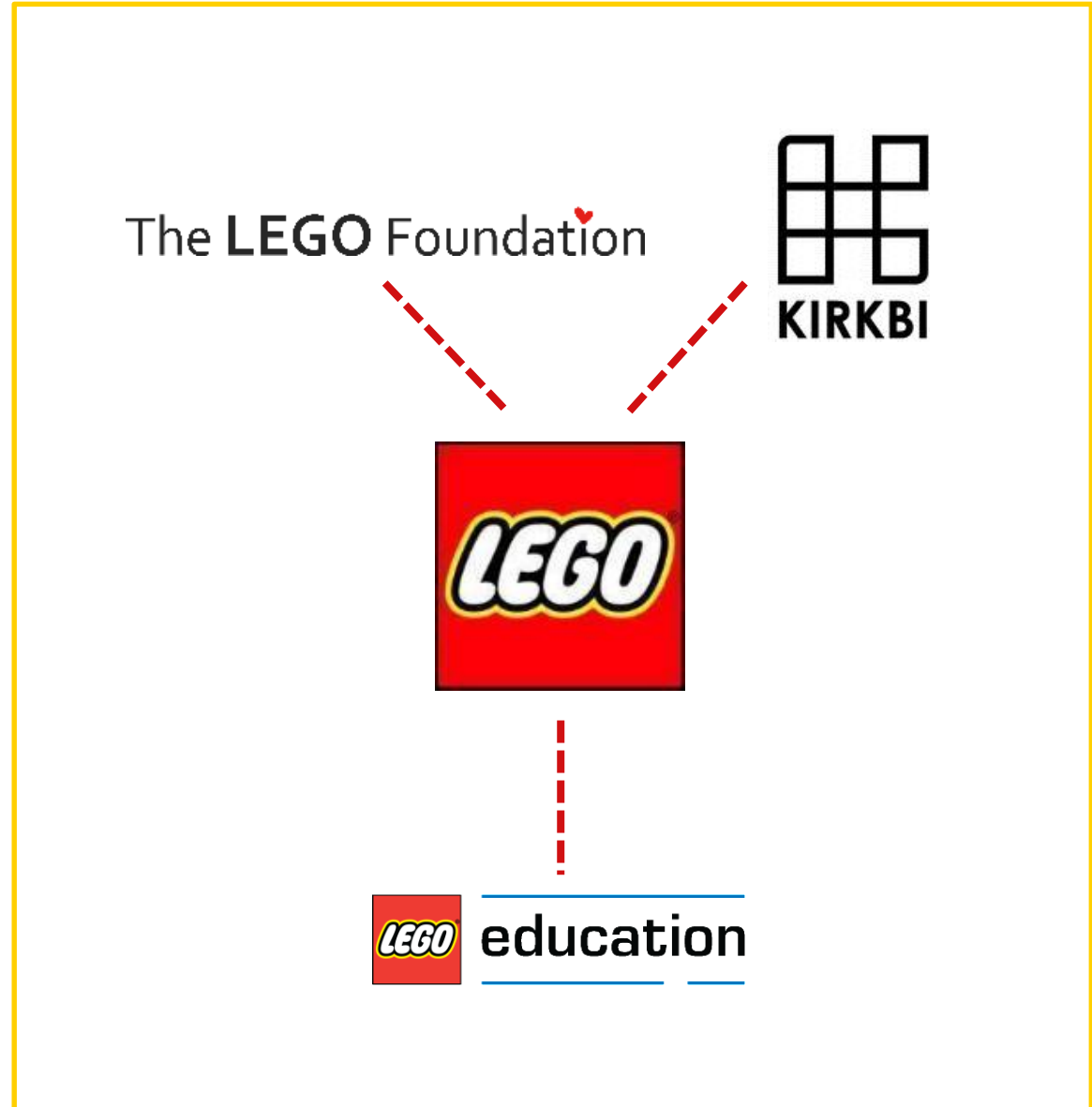
ARNEC Hanoi,
December 2019





**We share a mission
with the LEGO Group**

**inspire and
develop the
builders of
tomorrow**




Our aim:

re-define play

**re-imagine
learning**



play

/pleɪ/ 

verb

1. engage in activity for enjoyment and recreation rather than a serious or practical purpose.

"the children were playing by a pool"

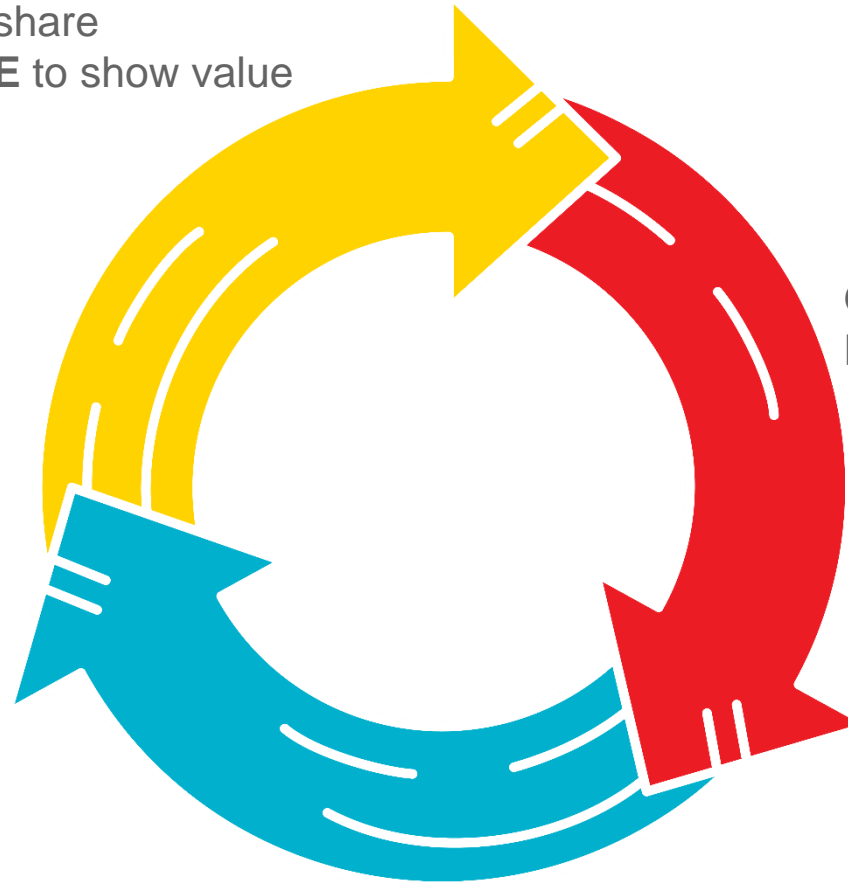
synonyms: amuse oneself, entertain oneself, enjoy oneself, have fun, have a good time, [relax](#), [rest](#), be at leisure, occupy oneself, divert oneself, play games, frolic, frisk, gambol, romp, cavort, caper; [More](#)

**Success is a future
where learning
through play
empowers children
to become
creative, engaged,
life-long learners**



How We Work

Build and share
EVIDENCE to show value



Open minds to develop
BUY-IN

Identify and support **PROGRAMMES**
that demonstrate results

Target Audiences

We focus on driving attitude and behaviour change among the following audiences:



Parents & Caregivers



Teachers & Practitioners



Systems
(e.g. schools / child care)

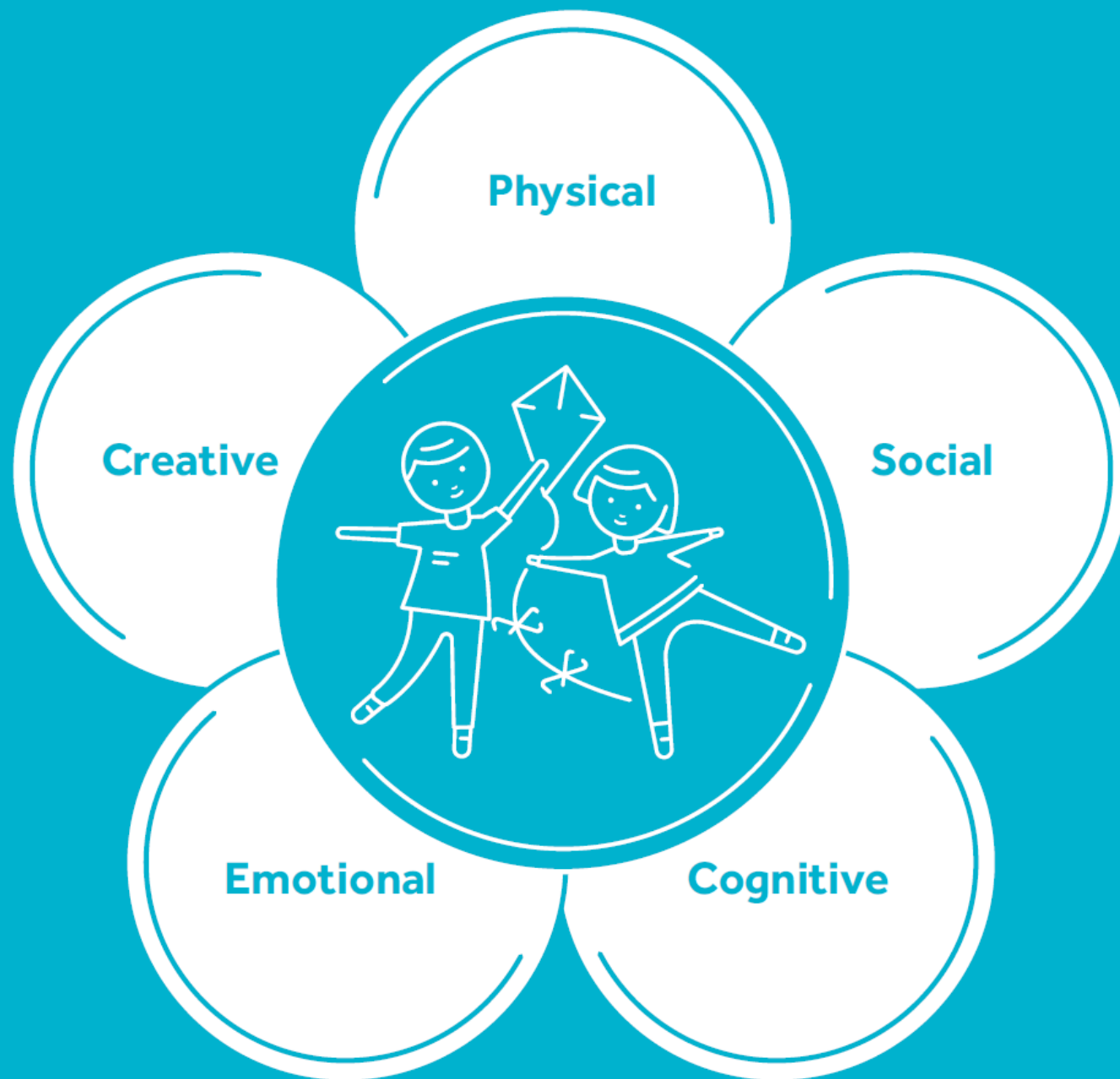


Governments

Five characteristics of playful experiences



Holistic development



¡Let's Play!



Patterns



Applause



Jump



Snap your fingers











Ready?









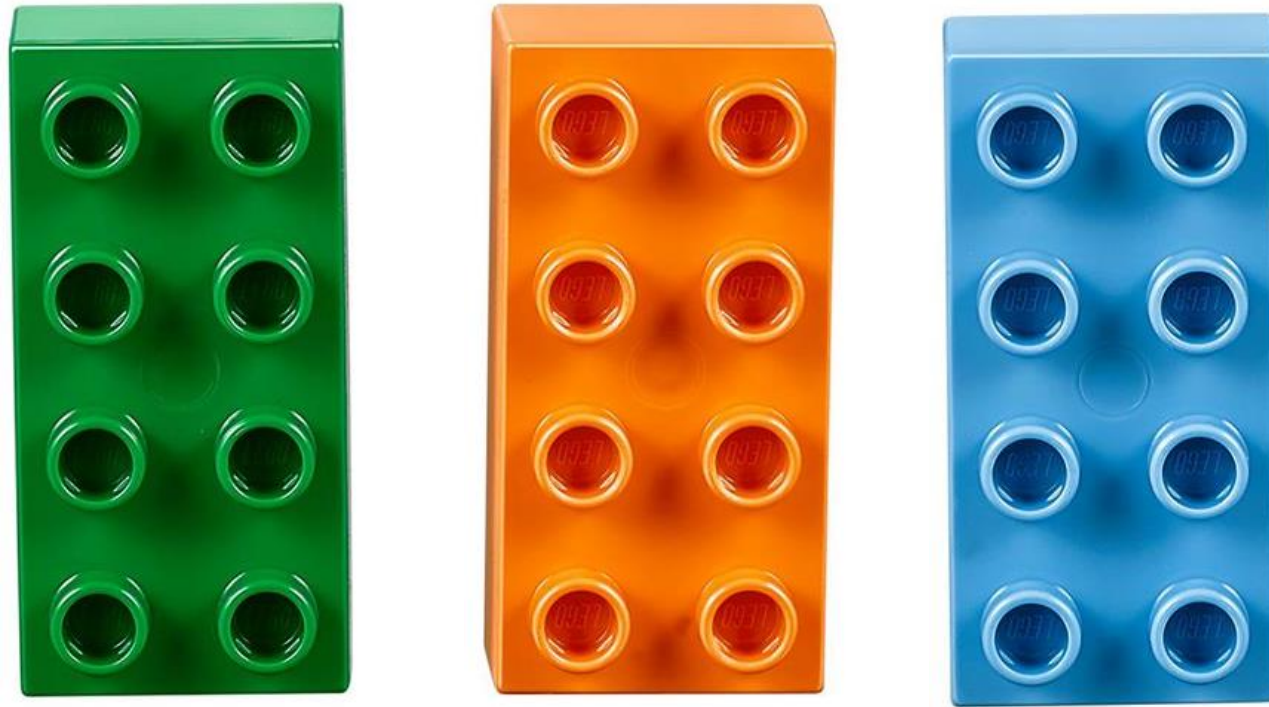


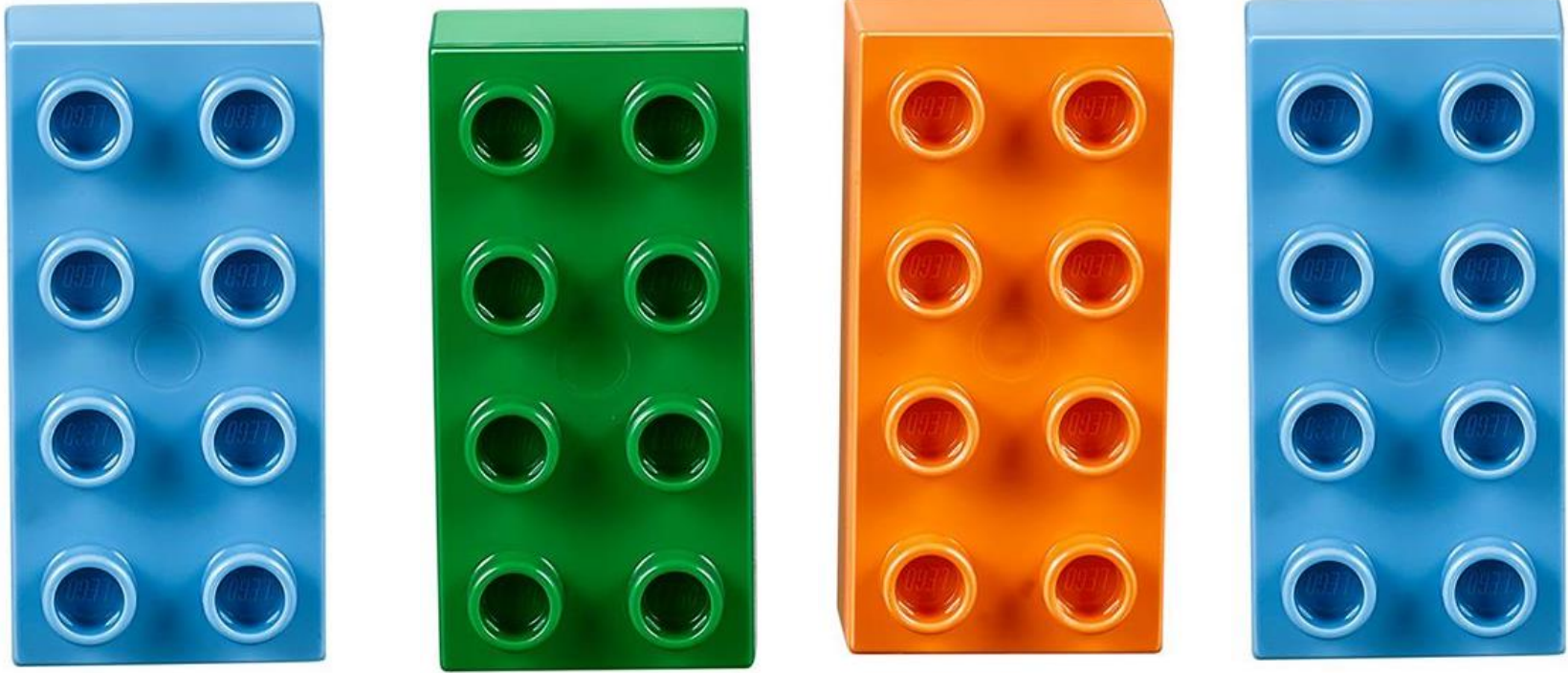


Too easy?

You have to memorize the sequence, repeat it when I say GO!







What happened during the activity?

Working Memory governs our ability to retain and manipulate distinct pieces of information over short periods of time.

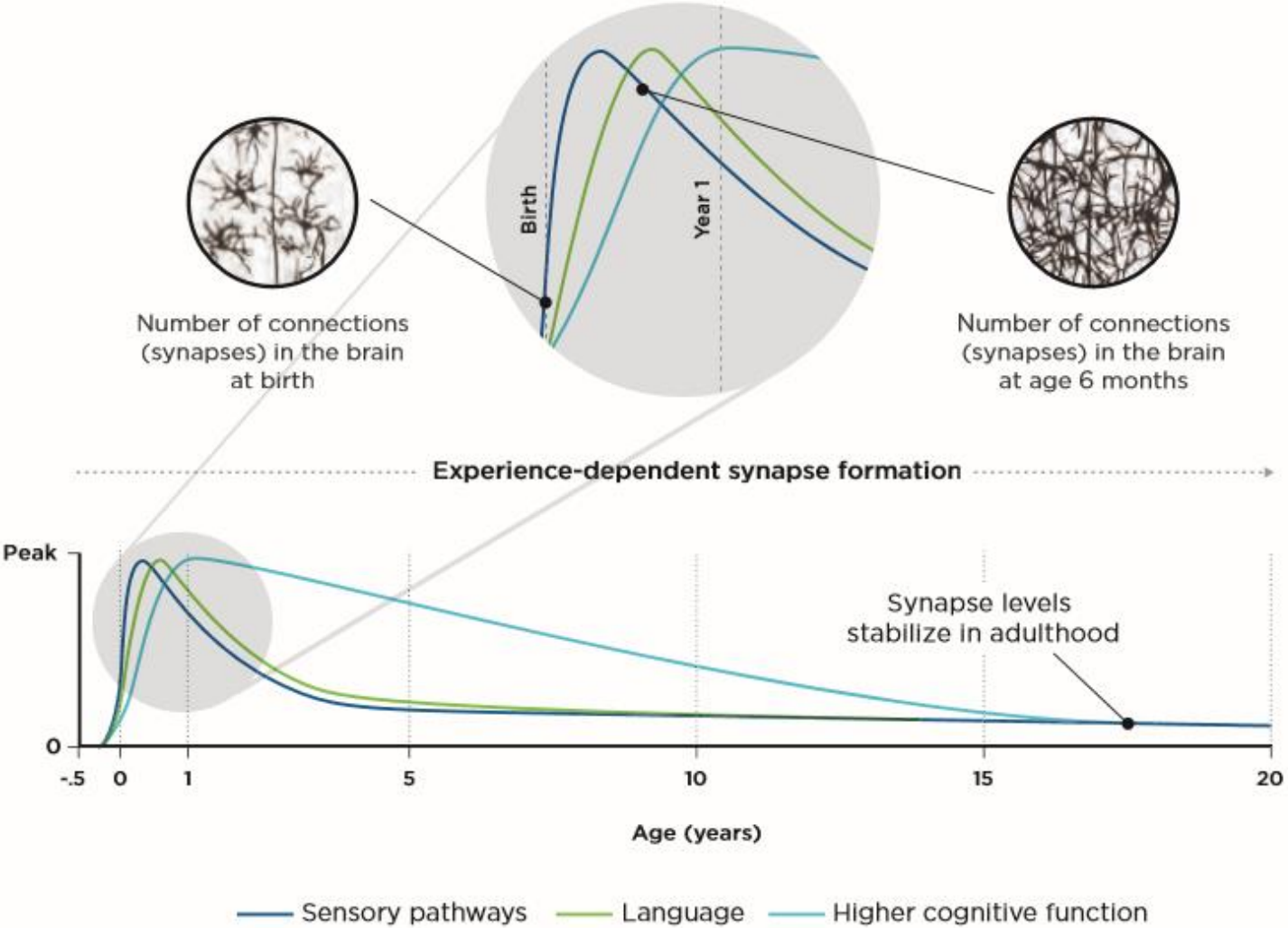
Mental Flexibility helps us to sustain or shift attention in response to different demands or to apply different rules in different settings

Self regulation Enables us to set priorities and resist impulsive actions or responses.

Self efficacy Belief in our capacity to execute a behavior that is needed to fulfil a task, the confidence in our ability to exert control over our own motivation, behavior and social environment



Early stimulation and play is critical



Source: World Development Report 2018, adapted with permission from Parker (2015) and Thompson and Nelson (2001).

Parents and caregivers play a critical role in their children's development – their playful and responsive parenting sets a critical trajectory for brain growth in young children, which lays a solid foundation for healthy development and lifelong learning.



Parent-child interactions - “Serve and Return”



Playful interactions as a privileged context



Secure attachment between caregivers and children

Associated with the way in which children learn to **regulate their high intensity emotions** during times of stress, anxiety and illness.

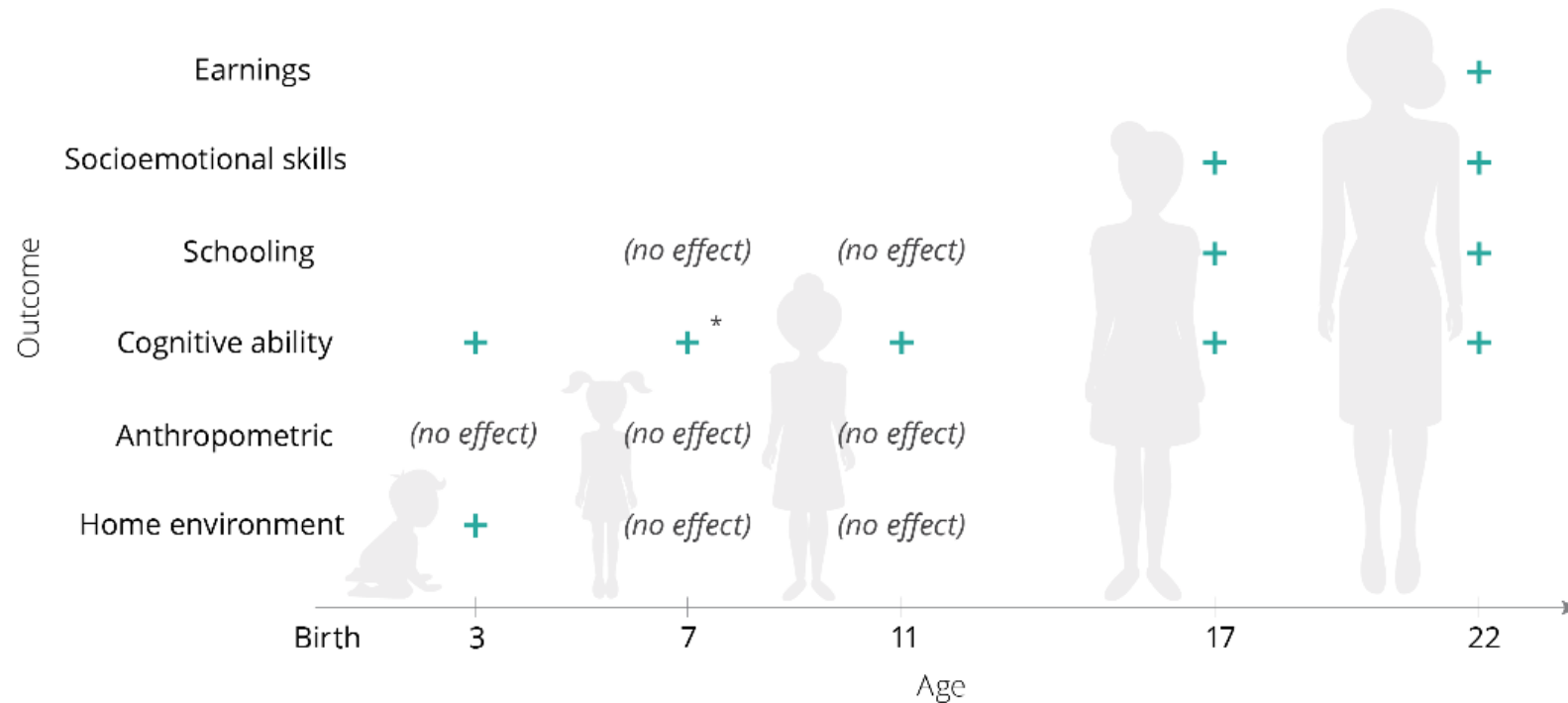
As well as to **later outcomes**, such as:

- Socio-emotional development,
- Cognitive development,
- Behavioural control (Ranson & Urichuk, 2008)



The Jamaican longitudinal study – (Walker et al., 2011)

demonstrates the effectiveness of home visiting programs, parent-child interactions and cognitive and social stimulation for infants and toddlers in closing the achievement gap and producing long-term economic gains.



* Perceptual motor skills, a measure of activities involving both movement and perception

Note: Plus signs represent statistically significant positive differences in outcomes between the treatment and comparison groups at the 95 percent confidence level or higher.

Parents and caregivers also benefit from engagement in play with their children

(Ray, 2008)





Toxic stress and adverse childhood experiences

Toxic stress can occur when a child experiences **strong, frequent, and/or prolonged adversity *without adequate adult support.***

This kind of prolonged activation of the stress response systems can:

- Disrupt the development of brain architecture and other organ systems
- Increase the risk for stress-related disease and cognitive impairment, well into the adult years

Coping & Resilience

- **Coping** refers to the cognitive behavioural strategies children employ to manage their emotions and behaviours and adapt to stressful and ever-changing environments (Capurso & Ragni, 2016; Li, Lopez & Lee, 2007)
- **Resilience** is the capacity to cope with life and adapt to change, based on the synergy between an individual and their environment (Fearn & Howard, 2012)



Play allows children to cope with everyday stressors



“Play likely serves multiple interrelating adaptive functions for children, not only in building social and cognitive skills but also in helping them regulate emotions and behaviour as well as fostering flexibility in problem solving”.

Capurso & Pazzagli, 2016

Play helps children cope with adversity and traumatic events

- **Play can reduce stress and anxiety levels associated with adversity, and help children develop socioemotional competencies and self-regulation skills as they interact with peers and adults.**

(Chazan & Cohen, 2010; Fearn & Howard, 2012; Fantuzzo et al., 1996; Harrison & Harrison, 2013; McDonald, Jr. & Howe, 1989).



Involving parents in play to counteract adversity

The benefits of play extend to caregivers facing adversity, including mothers dealing with depression and families living in refugee settlements.

(Ray, 2008; Jackson, 2006)



Sesame Workshop consortium



BRAC Humanitarian Play Labs



Boston College – Sugira Muryango



From scattered efforts across systems..

To stronger, integrated systems that support child development



Thank you!

www.LEGOfoundation.com

