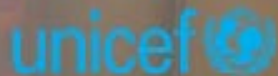


# Webinar | July 8

## The Role of Parenting Support Programs in Promoting and Sustaining Playful Parenting



INTERNATIONAL  
STEP by STEP  
ASSOCIATION



The LEGO Foundation





## Panelists and Moderator

### Panelists:

- **Diego Adame**, Initiatives Lead, Global Programmes, LEGO Foundation
- **Dr. Giorgio Tamburlini**, President, Centre for Child Health and Development (Centro per la Salute del Bambino), Italy
- **Anduena Alushaj**, Program Manager, Centre for Child Health and Development (Centro per la Salute del Bambino), Italy
- **Dr. Jelena Zajeganovic-Jakovljevic**, Early Childhood Development Specialist, UNICEF Serbia
- **Kristina Drini**, Junior Educational Specialist, CIP-Center for Interactive Pedagogy in Serbia.

### Moderator:

**Dr. Konstantina Rentzou** – Senior Program Manager, ISSA (the Netherlands)

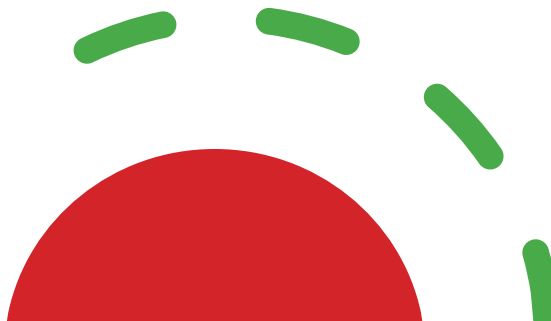
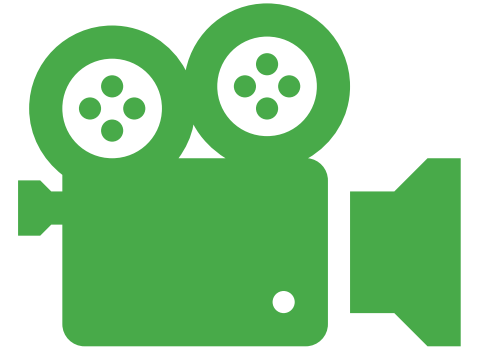


INTERNATIONAL  
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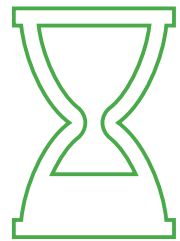


# Guiding Questions

- What is playful parenting and what are its benefits for children and adults?
- How Covid-19 have affected families and how playful parenting can mitigate the challenges the pandemic has created?
- How we can ensure playful, warm and responsive interactions between children and their parents?  
Examples from program implementation
- What are the key challenges in promoting playful parenting among professionals and parents?
- How key challenges can be overcome? Lessons learnt from pursuing behavior change among parents and professionals towards playful interactions



# Participate in the live Poll



**2 minutes**





## Setting the Stage:

The importance of  
playful parenting for children and  
parents



# Playful Parenting

- Relationship Building
- Quality over quantity
- Diverse types of play
- Playful state of mind



# How Covid-19 has changed/affected families and playful parenting?

Consequences on children and families

Crisis of child rights :

- Greater difficulties for families most in need, including technical divide
- Educational divide
- Enhancement of family problems and child maltreatment
- Long-term consequences not immediately perceivable

Fathers more engaged through technologies



Playful parenting

More time for many (not all) caregivers to spend time with their children  
→ Living spaces and time differently:  
opportunity for more responsive caregiving






- Parenting HUB and COVID 19 w/sites, social media and networks, #Kutakzaigru/PlayingCorner; #Learnigathome <https://www.unicef.org/serbia/en/coronavirus-covid-19>
- National TV Broadcast and UNICEF for Parents - daily morning shows (30 experts – 40 days and more)

## Lessons learnt - COVID:

1. Child development cannot be postponed
2. Parents in the spotlight
3. Exacerbation of vulnerabilities

Play for learning and development  
Play for increasing understanding  
Play for ensuring protection  
Play as stress relief  
Play for building resilience  
Play for ....  
Play for child's immunity  
Play as a state of parent's mental health



**How we can ensure playful,  
warm and responsive  
interactions between children  
and their parents?**

Examples from program  
implementation





# SCALING-UP PLAYFUL PARENTING: SERBIA

The **LEGO** Foundation 

unicef   
for every child



# CONTEXT IN SERBIA

➤ Inequalities – all aspects of nurturing care

Violent disciplining

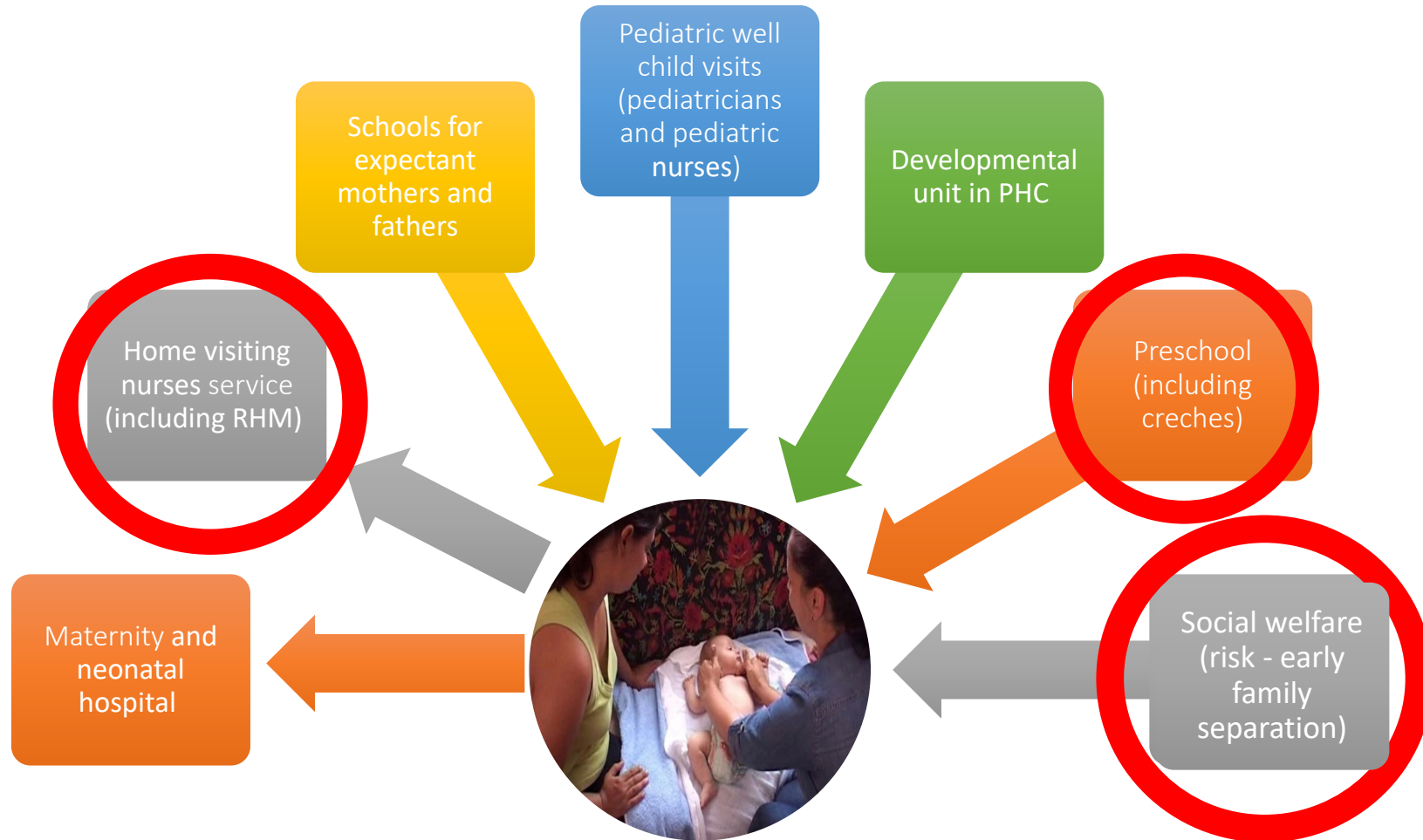
Gender unbalanced parenting

Screen – time ...

Playful interactions as solution



# FAMILY ROAD MAP: IN-DEPTH INTERVENTION AND ENABLING ENVIRONMENT



Achieving results with other sectors - co-operation and referral

# UNIVERSAL - PROGRESSIVE HOME VISITING

Population and main areas of intervention	No of universal home visits	Total No of home visits with progressive component
Pregnant women	1	2 or more
Women after delivery	5	7 or more
Newborns (first 15 days)	5	7 or more
Infants	2	4 or more
Children in 2 <sup>nd</sup> , 4 <sup>th</sup> year	1	As per need





*The changed  
role of HVN  
leads to a  
change in  
parental  
behavior*

### **Fathers involvement supported by HVN:**

- Planning a home visit with both parents present (flexible and feasible working hours of HVN) and making balanced contact with both parent from the beginning
- Starting with father's involvement during the pregnancy (first HVN visit)
- Introducing self-reflective practice in the supervision of HVN (contact with personal beliefs and barriers to engaging in supporting co-parenting alliance)

### **Introducing playful child-parent interaction by HVN:**

- Create a comfortable and playful setting for family counseling – (on the floor, outside on the playground)
- Support playful child participation in daily family routines – for example as an integral part of changing clothes, bathing, preparing meals, feeding, walking, cleaning the house.
- Support play with ordinary items available in the environment (papers, spoons, dishes, socks..). Let it be lead by a child.

### **Caring for caregivers based on family-centered approach:**

- The starting point in counseling needs to be based on family needs and preoccupations
- Provide emotional support for parents /caregivers (using stress and emotions bucket as self cares tools)
- Support parents/caregivers to develop communication and conflict resolutions skills
- Support parents/caregivers to increase formal and nonformal networks of support

# PROGRAMME PLATFORMS AND STRATEGIES

## ECD workforce

- Capacity building: in-service and pre-service
- Communities of practice, participatory and mobilizing approaches
- On-line platforms for learning and exchange

## ECD services

- From health to education, social welfare and community services
- Local self-governments (key for sustainability)
- Peer to peer learning (from 6 to new 27+)

## Communication

- C4D for playful parenting practices
- Social mobilization and communication through various service and media platforms
- Campaigns
- Parental engagement and participation
- Academic and private sector engagement

## National and local buy-in, policies and partnerships

- Supporting Government to operationalise nurturing care
- Setting standards and evidence-based sustainable mechanisms
- Knowledge generation and strengthening data and monitoring systems

**Anduena Alushaj & Giorgio Tamburlini**  
**Centre for Child Health and Development, Italy**



**Centro per la  
Salute del  
Bambino**

# CSB programs

## Nati per Leggere

**Date of birth:** 1999

**Objective:** to promote shared reading in early childhood

**Target group:** families and children aged 0-6

**Professionals involved:** health, education, social and cultural sector

**N. of families reached per year:**

225,000 families with children in 2018



NUTRIRE LA MENTE  
fin da piccoli®



## Nati per la Musica

**Date of birth:** 2006

**Objective:** to promote musical experience, from prenatal period to 6 years

**Target group:** families and children aged 0-6

**Professionals involved:** health, education, social and cultural sector

**N. of families reached per year:**

30,000 families with children in 2018



## Un Villaggio per Crescere – A Village to grow together

**Date of birth:** 2018

**Objective:** to improve accessibility and quality of early education services in economically, socially and culturally disadvantaged communities in 10 cities

**Target group:** families and children aged 0-6 years

**Professionals involved:** health, education, social sector

**N. of families reached per year:** 1400



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Salute del  
Bambino

## Activities and guiding principles



- **Universal, area-based** approach
- Open access and proactive strategies for **outreach** and **retention**
- **Joint participation** of parents and children from birth to age 6
- Easily accessible spaces with timetables adapted to **parents' needs** and seasonality
- **Evidence-based activities** for child development and responsive caregiving
- **Facilitation of activities** by professional educators
- **Inter-sectoral collaboration** (health, education, social services, libraries) through co-planning, co-location and multi-professional training
- **Involvement of all community actors** (public services, commercial, non-profit, religious, etc.) for ownership, shared values and sustainability
- **Mixed-method** impact evaluation

# Digital challenges during Covid-19

Increased digital divide and greater consequences for vulnerable families and children (lack of devices and/or internet connection problems)



- Redefinition of activities: from offline to online
- Effort of professionals to keep in contact with all families
- Offer support but avoid to overwhelm parents
- Propose playful activities feasible in all houses



# Children's drawings and voices from one of our Villages

*Studying at home is not the same as studying at school. You miss your friends, the affection of your teachers that teach you new things every day. To study at school is more beautiful. I hope everything passes by soon and that we will come back to our normal lives, to our desks and blackboards with our teachers. I hope we will see again on September being more calm. (Melania, 8 years old)*



*I don't like doing school through videocalls. I miss very much the teachers and my classmates even if at the same time there is something positive: I stay with my family and I always keep in touch with my teachers, even though you can't study well under these conditions. I hope I can go back to school again. (Federica, 8 years old)*

*I like the distance school, but it is better to go to school together with classmates and teachers. (David, 8 years old)*

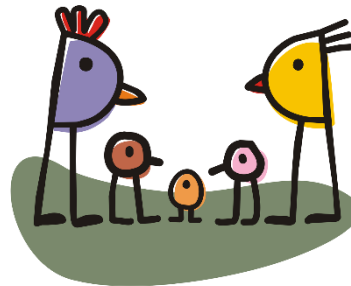


CIP – CENTER FOR INTERACTIVE PEDAGOGY



# “Program for children and families STRONG FROM THE START-DAM LEN PHAKA”

STRONG FROM THE START  
DAM LEN PHAKA



We focus on children and youths, their present and their future!

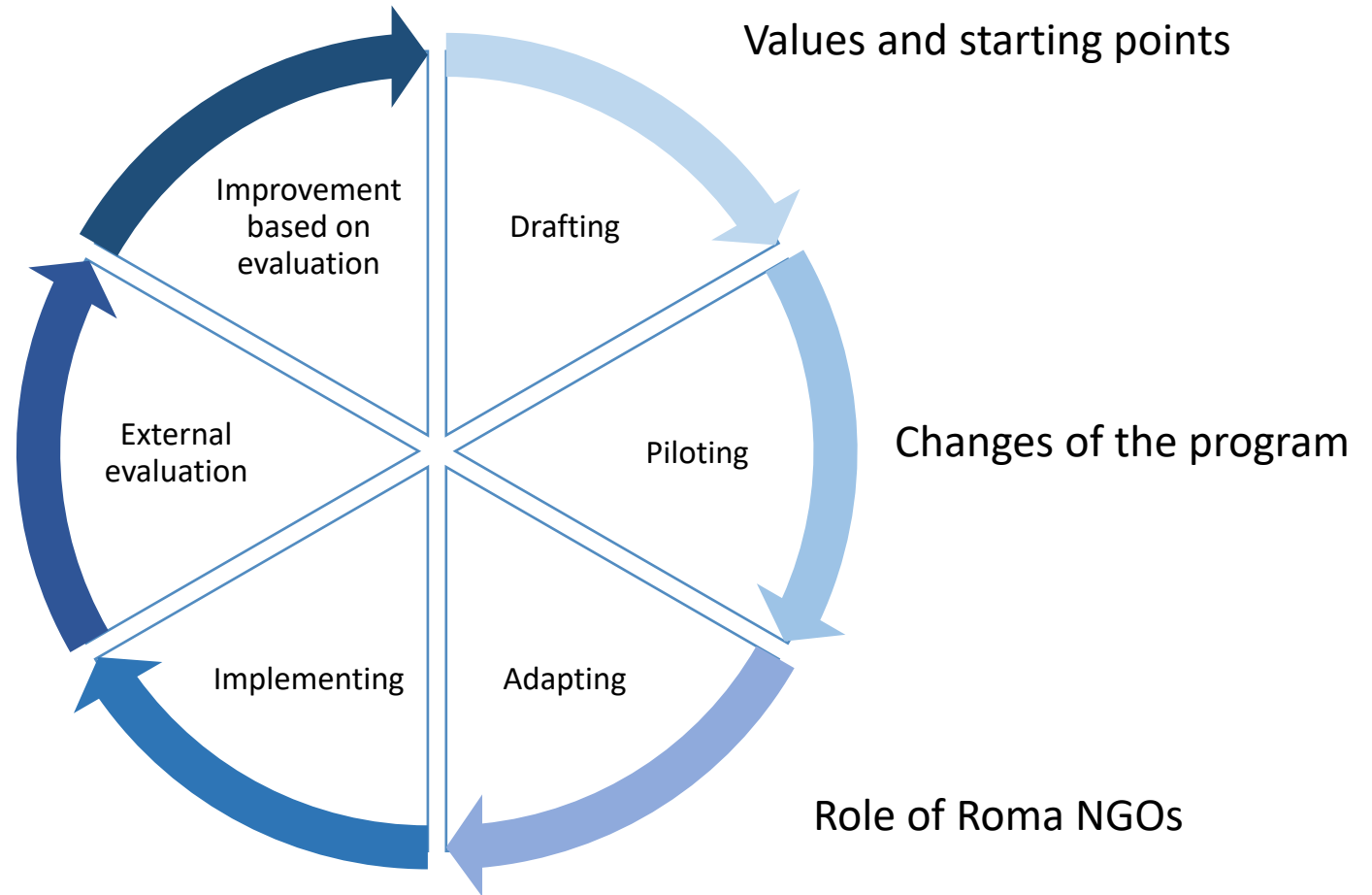


# Approach in developing program

Results of evaluation within project “Roma ECDE Initiative in Serbia“:

- *Statistically significant positive correlation has been confirmed between, on one side, the participation in the program and on the other, socio-emotional development and children’s readiness for school.*
- *Practicing activities that parents use to support the child’s development is in positive correlation with the child’s socio-emotional development.*

With around 700 families in Serbia



More on Program evaluation on the Results for Development web-site:

<https://r4d.org/resources/an-evaluation-of-a-parenting-program-for-roma-children-in-serbia/>

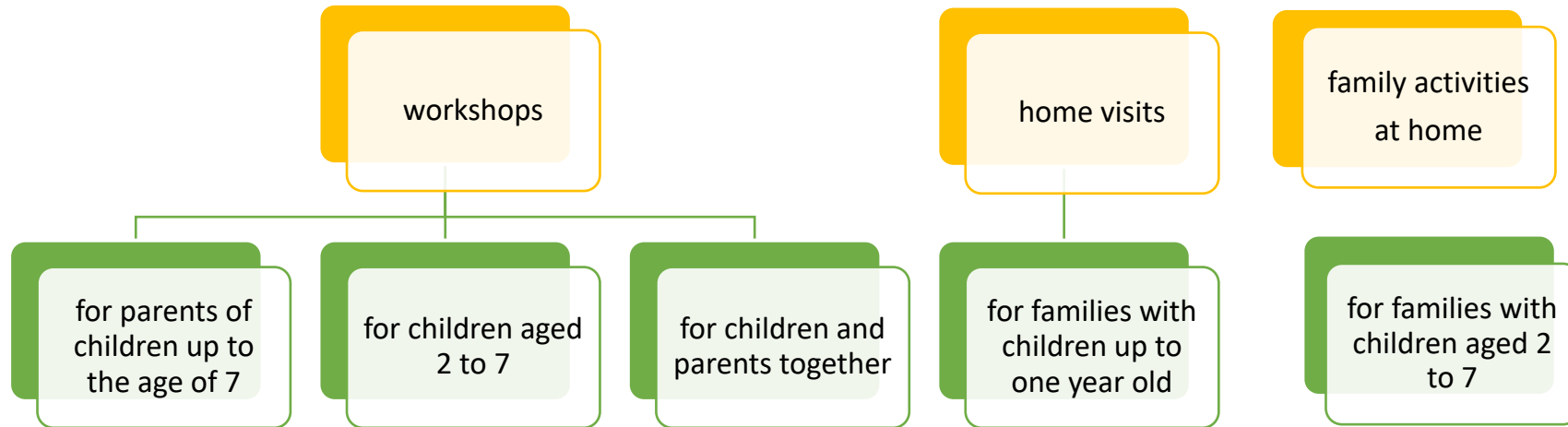


# About Program (1)

## Thematic structure:

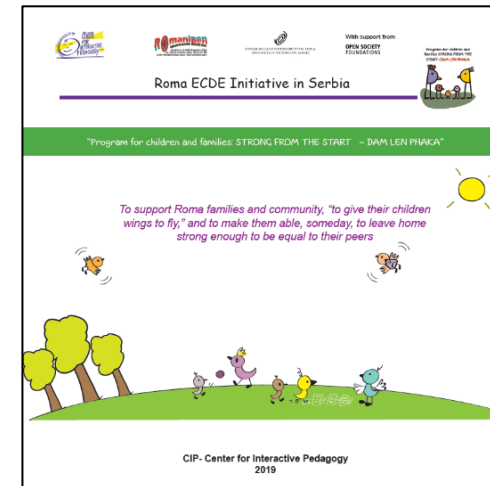
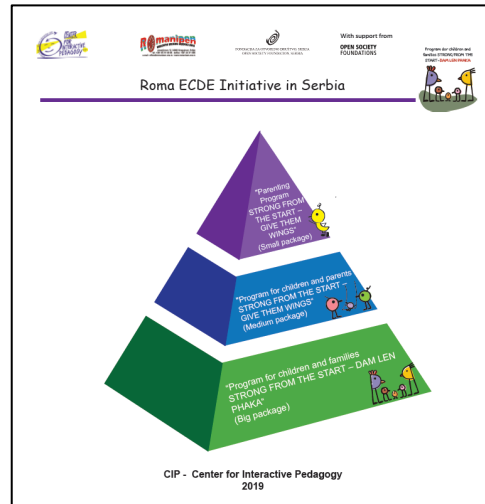
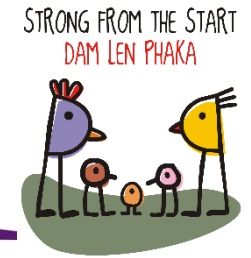
1. Protecting health and safety of both children and parents
2. Personal empowerment of children and parents
3. Children's potential development via play, learning and interaction with peers and adults
4. Upbringing with support and rules application instead of punishment

## Types of activities





# About Program (2)



More information about the program in publication available on:

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1qanyj0aOyFha86dgHTCwSVEyXoO0W94X/view?usp=sharing>

Program was created with the support of Early Childhood Program, Open Society Foundation - London.

# Thank you for attention! 😊

contact: [cipcentar@cipcentar.org](mailto:cipcentar@cipcentar.org)

<http://www.cipcentar.org/en/>


*CIP – Center for Interactive Pedagogy since 1998. has been working towards improving the conditions for the exercise of rights by children in Serbia and their development and learning.*

*We translate contemporary theoretical knowledge and good practices into policies, quality inclusive education models, programs for children and families and trainings.*

*We focus on children and youths ... their present and their future!*



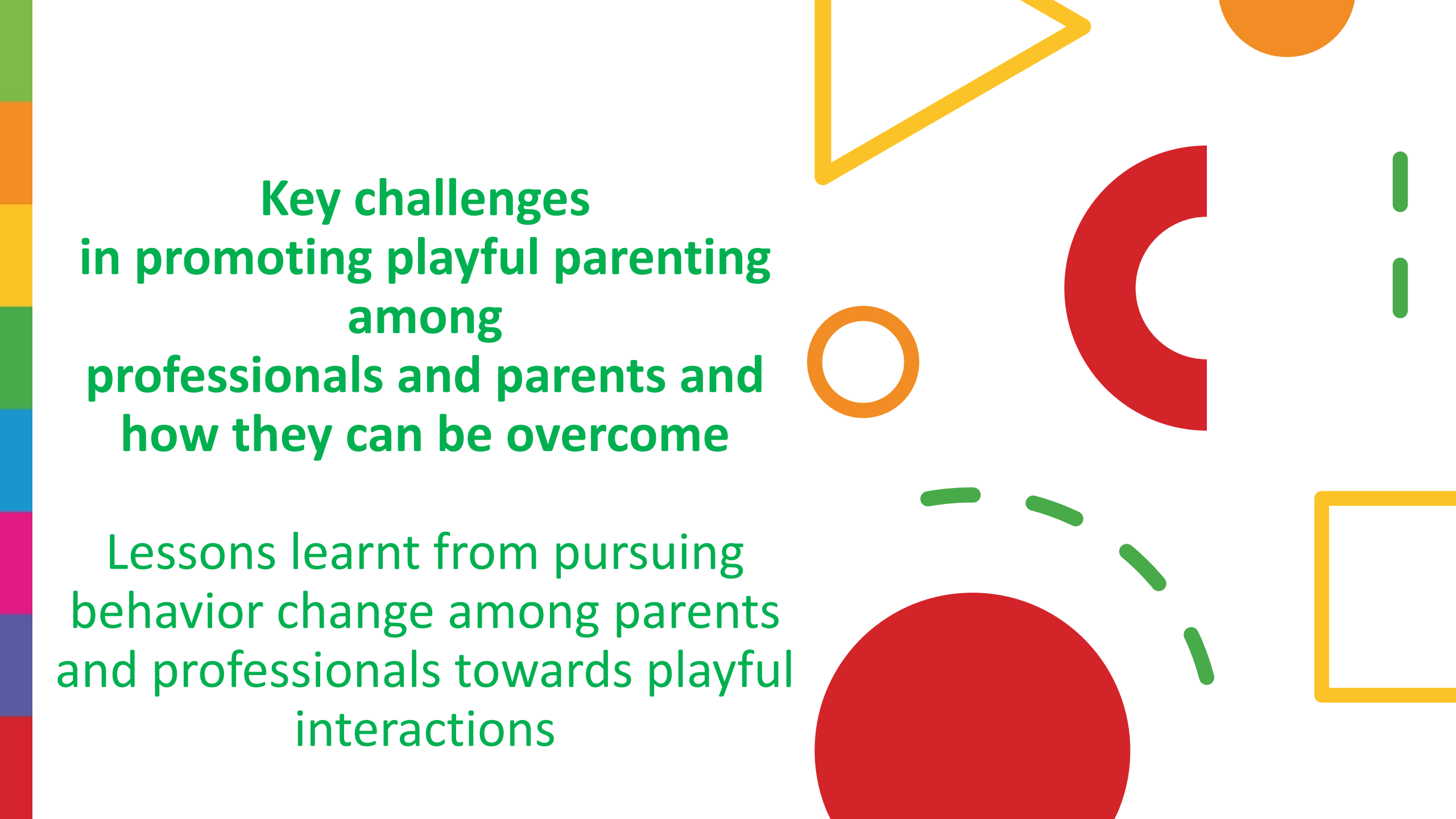




**How we can ensure playful,  
warm and responsive  
interactions between children  
and their parents?**

Examples from program  
implementation





**Key challenges  
in promoting playful parenting  
among  
professionals and parents and  
how they can be overcome**

Lessons learnt from pursuing  
behavior change among parents  
and professionals towards playful  
interactions

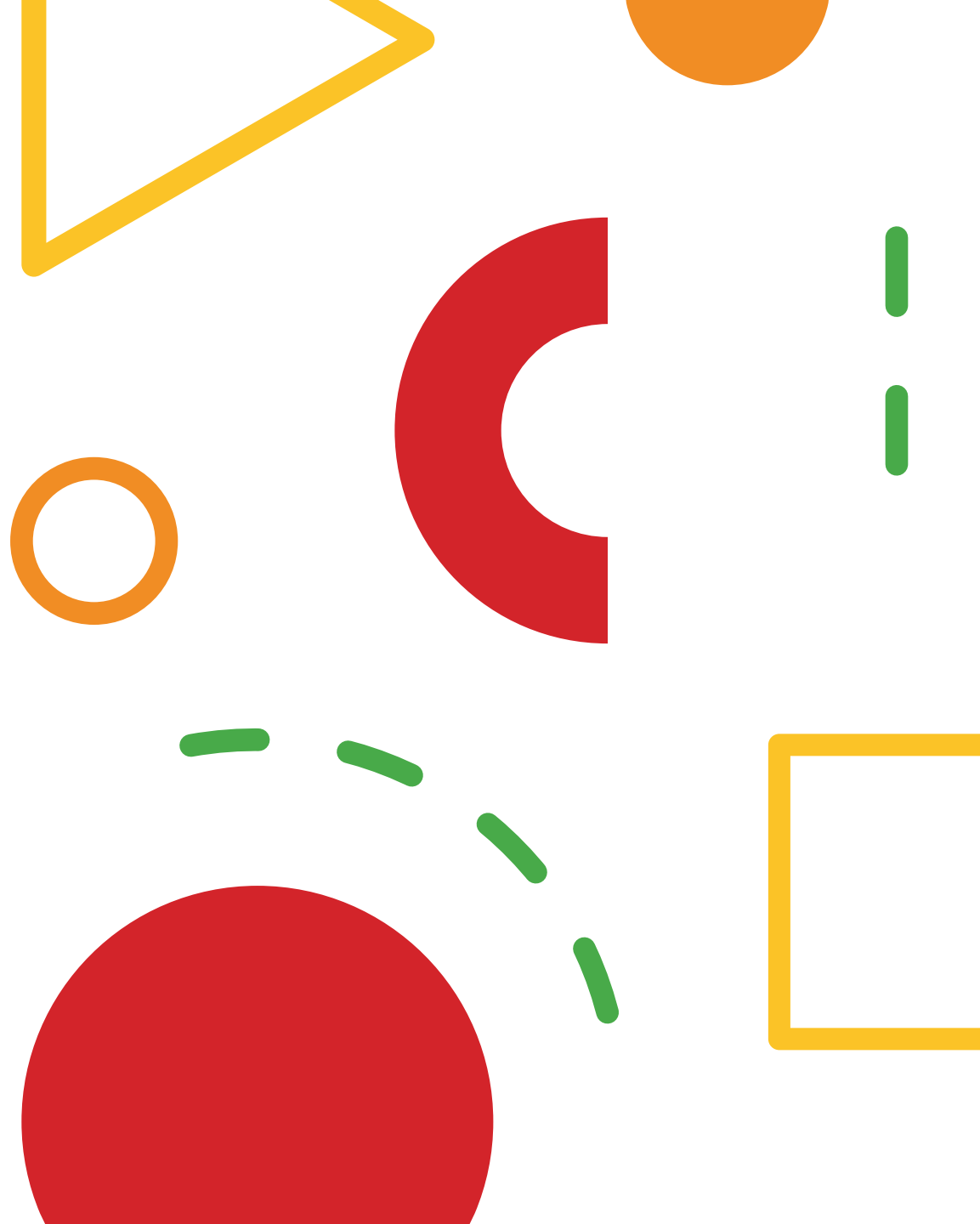



## Challenge 1:

**Ensuring parents realize the importance of playful parenting and are willing to change their behavior**

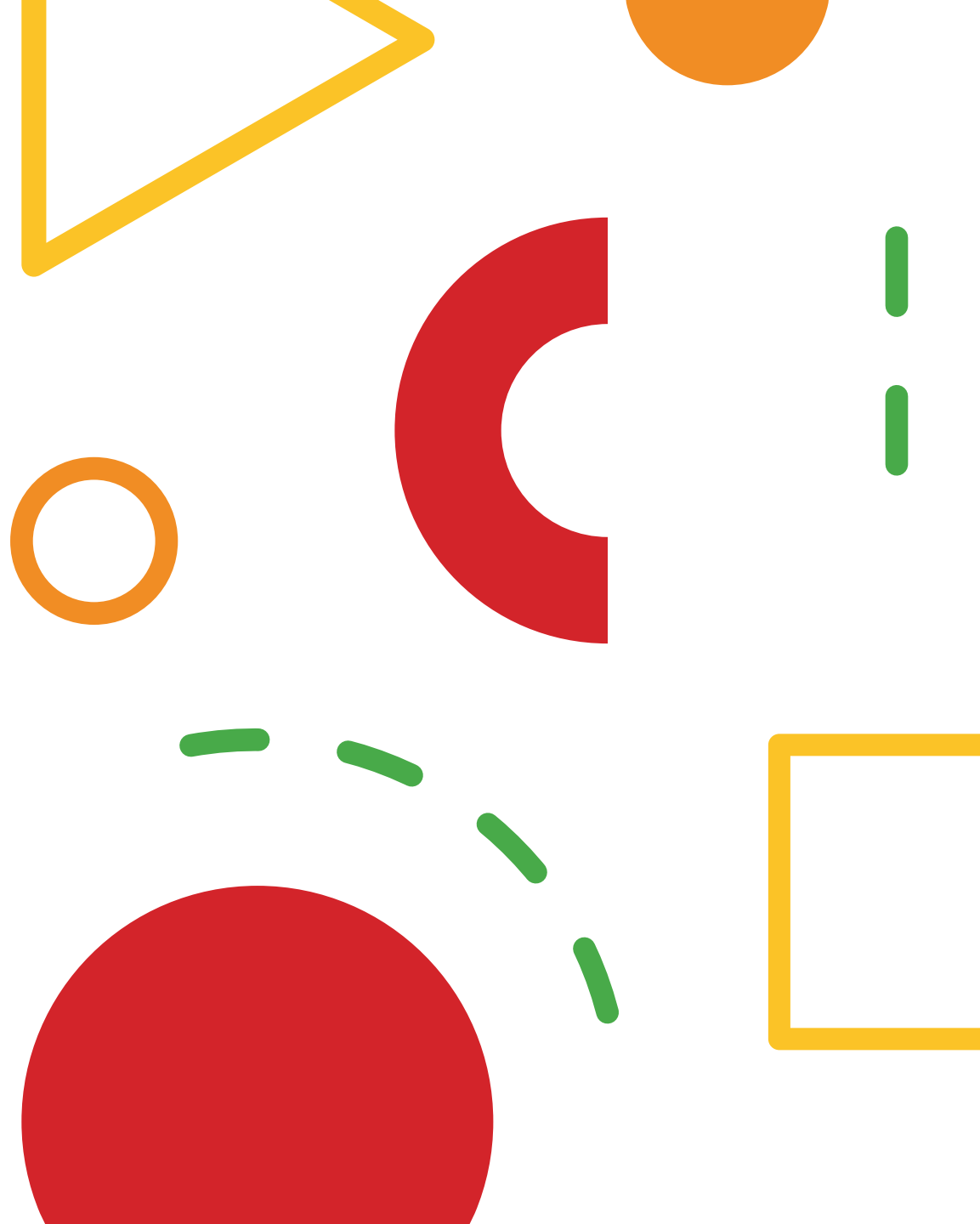
## Challenge 2:

**Implementing effective training strategies so that the workforce can deliver quality interventions**





**Challenge 3:**  
**Reaching the hard to reach  
populations with quality  
interventions**



## Challenge 4:

**Deliver playful parenting interventions at a distance**





**Questions  
and  
Answers**



“If they don't think we will play, they may not even ask. They just go about their business, and we go about ours, and we all miss chance after chance to reconnect.”

— Lawrence J. Cohen, *Playful Parenting*



Thank you for joining  
our webinar!

If you want to send any feedback related to  
the content of today's webinar, please  
contact:

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ISSA Senior Program Manager  
[krentzou@issa.nl](mailto:krentzou@issa.nl)



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