

Build Back Happiness Through Play

Toybank's Play2Learn Program Update Report



Children excitedly engaged with the games at the Play2Learn centres at the start of the new academic year in June, after the long summer break

The new academic year brought about a sense of excitement and hope for what lies ahead- a post-pandemic time where children are able to regularly attend school, engage with learning in the classroom and continue to play with their friends. As schools and our Play2Learn centres slowly re-opened after the summer vacations, our team was ready to kick-start our in-person play sessions and interactions with the children and teachers. The teachers welcomed the children back to school with Play, creating a safe and happy learning environment in their classrooms for every student, with the support of our Programme Officers. We are humbled, yet take immense pride in our team who have ensured that the progress we have made for our children won't reverse.

We have been delivering our hybrid Play2Learn program to **60,000+ children** across **12 districts in Maharashtra** and **4 states and 1 Union Territory in India**. The program guides and supports **19,500 caregivers** through **645 support groups and 420+ Play2Learn centres** (as of 30th June 2022).

Here's a quick update of the work brought together over the last few months. We look forward to lanes between desks and benches, blackboards, walls, corridors, playgrounds and so much more transformed into child-friendly Play2Learn Centers for our children to freely be themselves.



1. 297 Play2Learn sessions were conducted by our Programme Officers and partner teachers

This quarter, while Programme Officers conducted Play2Learn Sessions once the schools reopened after the summer break, our partner teachers incorporated our Play2Learn activities into their daily lesson plan. They conducted games and solved Play2Learn sheets on the board in order to have engaging classes as they welcomed children back to school.



Children engage with board games which help them learn about shapes, colours and mathematical concepts during play sessions led by the Toybank team and teachers across the Play2Learn centres

2. Through WhatsApp Support Groups, we delivered 62 Play2Learn digital activities that were professionally designed to include age-appropriate content aligned with their academic curriculum, life skills and socio-emotional skills. The activities aided in the development of integral life skills like **critical thinking, socio-emotional well-being, and cognitive skills, while also aligning with their academic curriculum.**



Children build on their alphabet identification and language skills through the activity 'Find the Letter'. Teachers also used the sheets in their classes, further supporting the children to transition back to in-person learning from digital



“The games were instrumental in getting children back to school, especially after a long break due to covid and summer vacations. It has helped us in getting new admissions and in getting the children settled in school,” said S. Khune, Principal of ZPPS Yerandi, Latur District.

- Between April-June 2022, we conducted **Power of Play Workshops for 70 teachers from 28 centres** across Ahmednagar and Nanded districts, which supported them in aligning play-based learning with their academic curriculum and effectively using the Play2Learn digital activities and boardgames at the centers. These workshops are integral in enabling teachers to be play practitioners, taking the Power of Play to the community, and effectively ensuring the holistic development of the children.



Teachers collaborated, shared their challenges and worked together to complete puzzles and games. They also identified and discussed various skills each game would boost in children post the session.

“During the day-long training session with Toybank, I learnt how children’s physical, mental and social skills can be improved through play. We also learnt how to play the various games for the centres, as well as learnt about cognitive improvement and stress management through Play. I really enjoyed the Teacher Training sessions,” shared Sunita Solaskar, teacher from Utkarsha Bal Bhavan, Play2Learn Centre in Ahmednagar during the training held in May. [Here's the whole video](#) testimonial.

4. Replacement of 3410 Games across 93 Play2Learn Centres:



After permissions to conduct in-person meetings came through post the reopening of schools after the summer break, our POs were able to conduct stock checks at the Play2Learn Centres and initiate the process of restocking games and play material. The partner teachers see this positively, as now, children will have opportunities to learn and play from not just the digital Play2Learn sheets but also board games.



As schools and community centres reopened, the children excitedly engaged with the newly stocked games at the centres. Games like 'Junior Mechanix and Stacking Drums' enabled the children as they transitioned back to in-person learning from digital. (Z.P.P.S. Yeli, Osmanabad and Kushi Bal Bhavan Centre, Ahmednagar)

Story of Change: A child's intrinsic motivation to learn through Play



The 2nd wave of the pandemic and the resultant surge in the death toll had an especially massive impact on the lives of the children across Maharashtra. Six-year-old, Aamir (*named changed*) witnessed Covid's cruelty first-hand, with the untimely death of his father. The suddenness of the event left him traumatised. While Aamir remained well-behaved and obedient, he grew more reserved and timid. He attended school but spoke only when spoken to or when absolutely necessary. Even while giving him personal attention, I wasn't able to break through to him.

As time passed, little Aamir noticed his peers having a good time engaging with the Play2Learn Kit but didn't participate. One day, while the class was solving "Find The Letter", a playsheet where children are supposed to identify letters, Aamir raised his hand and said, "I will answer." I was taken aback at first but was also elated that he wanted to participate. I gave him the chance to answer and complimented him when he got it right. Soon, I saw him answering more and more as we continued identifying letters. He seemed to be having a good time.

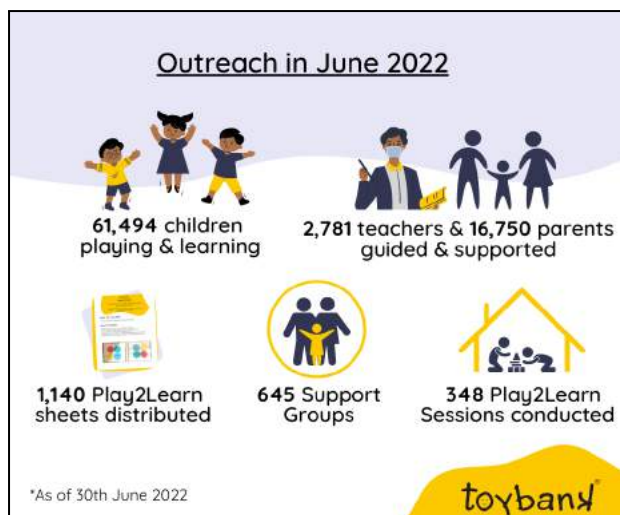
As a teacher, I am grateful that our Bal Bhavan is associated with Toybank's Play2Learn Programme as it helps children come forward, and actively participate in class, even if they are timid and shy otherwise. We've noticed how children enjoy learning through play and how easily they can comprehend subjects through play-based activities. Learning through play is the need of today's time for all children. We are really thankful to Toybank for providing us with this opportunity to teach in a playful and fun way

—Story shared by Sanima Shaikh, teacher from Kushi Bal Bhavan, Ahmednagar.



Aamir actively participated in class for the 1st time after his father's passing to give the correct answer as his class engaged with the Play2Learn activity 'Find the Letter'

Invest to Rebuild Childhoods through Play



Investing in Play to make mental well-being and learning accessible for at-risk children is the need of the hour. Your support will build back the well-being and happiness of **60,000+ children** who continue to Play and learn!

Thank you and Happy Toybanking!

