



## RESULTS CONFIRM RIGHT TO PLAY'S APPROACH STRENGTHENS CHILD-CENTRED TEACHING PRACTICES



Thailand is among the growing number of countries shifting to a holistic educational approach: strengthening values among children through a child-centred approach to learning.

Results from an internal evaluation carried out in Southern Thailand in late 2008, confirm that students enrolled in Right To Play classes demonstrated "good evidence of active participation" as indicated by a score of 3.11 out of 4.0 whereas those not enrolled scored 1.94 out of 4.0.



# Right To Play Monitoring and Evaluation Thailand South Evaluation

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INTERNATIONAL PROGRAMS

VOLUME 2

## *STRENGTHENING CHILD CENTERED LEARNING IN SCHOOLS*

### *Evaluation Highlights:*

Right To Play trained teachers demonstrated more child-centered learning practices than non-participating teachers, as indicated by greater evidence of:

- ✓ Active Learning
- ✓ Reflective Learning
- ✓ Relevant Learning
- ✓ Collaborative Learning
- ✓ Inclusive Learning

Children participating in Right To Play Activities demonstrated:

- ✓ More Confidence
- ✓ More Participation
- ✓ More Concentration
- ✓ More Collaboration

Education practitioners around the world are recognizing the need for a stronger focus on child-centered learning. **Child centered practices are based on the needs, abilities, interests, and learning styles of the child, and allow the child to be an active participant in their own learning.** Research has shown that child-centered learning can result in greater academic achievement and increased growth with respect to a child's life skills.

Right To Play fosters this child-centered approach to learning by using sport and play-based activities, coupled with a discussion strategy known as Reflect-Connect-Apply. This document identifies how Right To Play's approach has contributed to child-centered teaching practices in Southern Thailand and explores the successes and challenges of using this methodology in school-based settings.



## *RIGHT TO PLAY SUPPORTS SCHOOLS IN LINKING THEORY TO PRACTICE*

As we continue to work in collaboration with schools around the world, we want to enhance our evidence around 1) **how our approach supports the national and local educational goals;** 2) **how it contributes to child-centered teaching practices;** and 3) **how it influences children's learning.**

These three questions formed the basis of the internal evaluation carried out in Southern Thailand in late 2008. Thailand is among the growing number of countries that is shifting to a holistic educational approach: strengthening values among children through a child-centered approach to learning.

The evaluation methodology involved a comparison of Right To Play trained and non-Right to Play trained teachers, and used qualitative methods including class observations, interviews, performance based assessment activities, and focus groups with students, teachers, parents, and school directors.

The evaluation results confirm that Right To Play's approach effectively strengthens child-centered teaching practices. Results also indicated improved behavior among participating children: increased concentration and participation in school, increased collaboration among peers, and increased confidence.

The following pages provide an overview of the key results and learning that emerged from this evaluation.

### **Evaluation Overview**

**Timing:** Sept-Nov 2008

**Evaluation Type:** Internal, Final Program Evaluation

**Scope:** 2 Provinces in Southern Thailand (Satun, Songkhla)

**Sampling:** Stratified Random Sampling  
52 teachers, 400+children

**Data Source:** RTP teachers, non-RTP teachers, school directors, parents, children

**Data Collection Methods:** class observations, focus group discussions, performance based assessment, interviews

## Strengthening Child Centered Teaching Practices

The question of whether Right To Play's approach is beneficial for Thai teachers was met with a resounding 'yes.' One hundred per cent, or 50 out of 50, Right To Play-trained teachers and school directors reported positive outcomes among teachers who participated in Right To Play training, and 100 per cent of school directors requested that all teachers in their school be trained in the Right To Play approach. When asked how the Right To Play approach was beneficial, directors and teachers pointed to the alignment between Right To Play's approach and the Thai curriculum's focus on child-centered learning and values.

*"Student centered and Right To Play is the same method. It helps remind teachers to focus and care more for their students."* School Director, Songkhla

While a strong emphasis has been made on child-centered teaching practices in Thailand's education system, interviews with teachers revealed that Right To Play provided the first approach to effectively bridge theory to practice. Teachers and Directors perceived Right To Play's approach as a valuable tool for teaching the values component of the curriculum, as well as strengthening learning in the academic subjects. When asked about the ideal frequency of implementing Right To Play's approach, a Songkhla director claimed: *"Every lesson can adapt the Right To Play approach."*

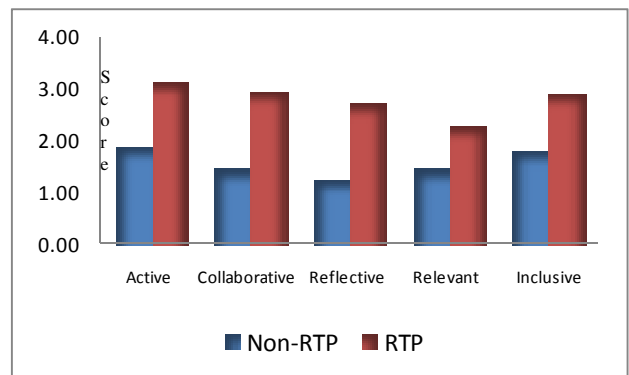
"It would be very beneficial if teachers could receive this type of training before they graduate university. Teachers would be able to understand better what the needs of the students are; they would be able to have more fun and interactive classes. And most of all, teachers would be more confident at the beginning of their careers."

School Director, Satun Thailand.

Through observations of Right To Play-trained teachers and non-participating teachers, Right To Play-trained teachers demonstrated greater evidence of child centered teaching practices than non-participating teachers.

Evaluators assessed five areas of child centered teaching practices: active learning, collaborative learning, reflective learning, relevant learning, and inclusive learning. **Right to Play trained teachers scored, on average, between**

**1.0 and 1.5 points higher (on a 4.0 scale), or 26 per cent higher, than those teachers who were not trained by Right To Play.** Outcomes extended beyond the areas of child centered teaching practices, and include direct benefits such as increased enthusiasm, confidence, and positive discipline practices among Right To Play-trained teachers.



## Improved Collaboration among Students

Children exposed to Right To Play teaching practices demonstrated signs of increased collaboration among peers. During their regular class instruction, children in Right To Play classes scored 3.3 (4.0 scale), demonstrating 'good evidence', and children in non-Right To Play classes scored 2.3, demonstrating 'some evidence' of collaborative behavior. An independent assessment activity carried out with both sets of students, using the same teaching approach, affirmed this differentiation, indicating a potentially deeper level of impact in the area of collaboration. Teachers described three primary indications of change: increased student communication, increased student support for one another, and increased teamwork. A Right To Play-trained teacher from Songkhla elaborated: **"children are [now] helping each other, caring for one another, reducing aggressive behaviour, and accepting friends."**

Children demonstrate collaboration during a performance based assessment activity



## More Participation and Concentration in School



Increased motivation and participation in school was the most commonly reported outcome among children after six months of participation in Right To Play activities. Students in Right To Play classes demonstrated ‘good evidence’ of active participation, while students in non-Right To Play classes demonstrated ‘some evidence’ of active participation, as indicated by average scores of 3.11 and 1.94 (out of 4.0), respectively. Multiple stages on the motivation continuum were highlighted. Some teachers noted that students expressed enthusiasm for the Right To Play activities, while some teachers noted an increased excitement in academic learning, and subsequently, in student attendance.

Students exhibited increased levels of concentration when the Right To Play approach was used. In an independent assessment activity carried out with Right To Play and non-Right To Play children, both groups of children exhibited similar levels of concentration. However, when observations were made with the same set of children during instruction periods with their respective teachers, students in the class of a Right To Play trained teacher scored 1.5 points higher on average (on a 4.0 scale), further validating the strength of the teaching approach.

“Instead of me waiting for them to enter the class, the students now come early to class and wait for me.”

Right To Play trained teacher, Satun, Thailand

## Greater Confidence among Children

Right To Play-trained teachers reported increased confidence in their students over the past six months, while two-thirds of non-participating teachers expressed no change or decreasing confidence among their students. One Right To Play-trained teacher from Satun noted, **“I see super clearly [that there is] more confidence in young children to talk and more confidence to volunteer [in class].”** Fifty per cent of the children in this teacher’s class reported high levels of confidence in class, while only 20 per cent of the children in the class reported high levels of confidence outside the class. This highlights the supportive and safe environment that teachers have effectively created, in which children can feel confident.

Teachers who reported increased confidence levels also noted a particular increase in confidence among shy or academically challenged children. The Director of a school in Songkhla described the impact the Right To Play approach has had on children with learning disabilities: *“These children can now express themselves much better and they have more confidence as a result.”*

## Recognizing the Challenges

Through Right To Play training and support, teachers are demonstrating greater evidence of child-centered teaching practices—more active, reflective, inclusive, collaborative, and relevant teaching practices. General classroom teachers, teaching both academic and non-academic subjects, demonstrated stronger evidence of child centered teaching practices than their counterparts teaching academic subjects. While Directors and teachers expressed the potential to use Right To Play methods to teach academic subjects, in practice, some teachers demonstrated and reported challenges in integrating the Right To Play approach into the education setting.

Evaluation findings revealed three primary challenges: 1) limited time in the school schedule to use the Right To Play approach, 2) mixed understanding on how to align Right To Play’s approach to meet the requirements of the curriculum, and 3) varied ability levels to modify or create new RCA questions to support academic learning.

The following section provides recommendations on how to further strengthen the integration of Right To Play’s approach into school settings.



Children engage in Right To Play activity during an English class

# Taking our Learning Forward

To promote more effective integration of Right To Play activities in formal education settings, the following strategies are recommended:

- ✓ Train teachers, directors, and partners on how to use Right To Play's approach to meet the needs of the curriculum (i.e. values and child-centered learning)
- ✓ Provide refresher training courses for teachers focused on the modification of the Reflect-Connect-Apply approach for academic subjects
- ✓ Develop teacher networks to share examples of Right To Play activities adapted for academic subjects
- ✓ Provide strategies on modifying Right To Play's five-step session to fit the timing and structure of academic instructional periods (i.e. begin each academic lesson with a short game or activity)
- ✓ Identify opportunities to integrate Right To Play activities in pre-existing school-based programs or initiatives (i.e. Scouts, Sports Clubs, weekly assembly focused on values)

Right To Play Thailand has already taken steps to bring this learning forward in its design of the new Southern Thailand program. However, the evaluation findings will provide a wider platform for learning and action in Right To Play's school-based projects around the world.

## Recent and Upcoming Evaluations

Through regular monitoring, evaluation, and communication of results, the Monitoring and Evaluation team at Right To Play helps to foster continuous learning, analysis, and dialogue about solutions to the complex challenges we face in reaching development goals.

### ***Recently Completed Evaluations:***

- ✓ Southern Thailand Evaluation, March 2009
- ✓ Indonesia Evaluation, March 2009
- ✓ Rwanda, Sierra Leone, Ghana Evaluation, Dec 2008
- ✓ SDP IWG Evaluation, Dec 2008
- ✓ oPt Evaluation, April 2008

### ***Upcoming Evaluations:***

- ✓ Lebanon Mid-term, 2009
- ✓ Jordan Mid-term, 2009
- ✓ NOARD: Tanzania and Mozambique Mid-term, 2009
- ✓ CIDA: Ghana, Benin, Mali, 2009

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## RESPONSE TO WENCHUAN EARTHQUAKE TO HELP CHILDREN TRAUMATIZED BY NATURAL DISASTER

The 2008 earthquake in Wenchuan claimed tens of thousands of lives and devastated the surrounding communities. Scores of children were affected by this disaster and have been traumatized, living in Internally Displaced Persons' camps, and in many cases, disabled.

Right To Play is helping these children begin to recover from the trauma associated with the earthquake, by participating in the Wenchuan Earthquake Taskforce (WET). Assessments made by NGOs and other organizations have shown that these children need immediate intervention and aid. But without official statistics to assess the children's situations, it has been impossible for governments to provide them with adequate care. This presents ongoing difficulties both for their daily lives and for their education.



In response, and in an effort to support children's psychological rehabilitation and holistic development, Right To Play works with approximately 80 Leaders in China to reach more than 6000 children affected by the earthquake, and focuses on building the capacity of primary and kindergarten teachers to effectively plan and lead sport and play-based activity sessions.

**"There is one little boy in my class who doesn't listen and other kids don't like to play with him. He always feels upset about that and sometimes cries with his parents because he doesn't have anyone to play with in class. After Right To Play's training, I realized he should be included in the games. Now I pay more attention to him and help him to find a partner in the games. Now he feels happier."**

**--Liu Na, senior class teacher from Kindergarten 1**



The teachers, who are trained to teach practical lessons about safety, awareness and knowledge for an emergency situation as an effort to promote children's capacity in coping with emergency situation, are also provided with play and learning materials to help them cope with the challenges and difficulties of educating in the Internally Displaced Persons camp schools.

Along with other partners in the WET initiative, Right To Play aims to turn the learning from these rehabilitation efforts into national policy so that the damage inflicted upon children from any future natural disasters may be minimized.



## SPORT AND PLAY ACTIVITIES CONTRIBUTE TO A REDUCTION IN TYPHOID

By Sandra Opio, Right To Play Project Coordinator, Kampala, Uganda



*To ensure the decline of water-borne disease continues, the school's administration bought and labeled a safe drinking water tank for the children.*

As a result of the health awareness created by the participation of children in Right To Play's sport and play activities at the St. Mary Learning Centre in Kampala, Uganda, the incidence of water-borne diseases among the school children has been in steady decline.

St. Mary Learning Centre, a primary school located in Western Kampala, provides subsidized education to area children, and currently reaches 280 (144 girls and 136 boys) on a daily basis, offering sport and play activities twice a week.

"Most of our children live mainly in slum areas where hygiene and sanitation are not properly observed," says Sunny, the School's Director and a Right To Play Coach. Early in the year, Sunny and other Coaches participated in a survey that helped to identify typhoid as one of the major preventable diseases affecting their community,

which is thought to be transmitted by drinking contaminated water at home.

### Right To Play's innovative games helped transform their community.

According to Sunny, the importance of clean water was not

understood and therefore not a priority for the children until they began participating in Right To Play's health-based games that addressed the consequence of poor hygiene. One of the games that the children played, "Partners in Hygiene", taught the children strategies to ensure good hygiene, including drinking safe, boiled water. Divided into groups, the children are blindfolded and given an object that can be used for hygiene, such as a toothbrush, soap or water. The children had to identify what their object was, and then find the other person in the larger group that had the same object.

Following the game the children engaged in an experiential learning exercise that had them discuss their object, reflect on what they had experienced during the activity; connect aspects of the game to what they already knew about hygiene; and, apply what they learned from participating in the game to their everyday life.

Overtime the children acquired knowledge of good hygiene practices, which they shared with their parents and siblings.

# RIGHT TOPLAY

RED BALL REPORT - SUMMER 2009



Top row: Ambassador Michelle Guerette, Right To Play staffer Rami El Sheikh, Ambassador John Zimmerman, staffer Ali Ahmed Subhet. Front row: Ambassadors Jason Rogers and Emily Cook, and Country Manager Lamis Shishani.

the cultural exchange program will see the Jordanian Coaches and volunteers who interacted with the US Athletes travel to New York to visit local training facilities and to see how Right To Play supporters are promoting Sport for Development in the United States.

The Athletes witnessed first-hand the tremendous impact of Right To Play programs on a day-to-day basis. They shared some intense emotional moments with the children and youth, who in turn had the time of their lives whether they were playing volleyball with Michelle Guerette, or break dancing with Jason Rogers, high-fiving John Zimmerman or being inspired by Emily Cook's story. The dramatic change in the children's behavior showed how important the Athletes' presence as role models can be.

"These girls, who had once been described as challenging, were instead working to help each other, laughing, cooperating and listening to instructions," Cook said. "In the class was a young girl with a disability who fully participated in both the games and the discussions and was clearly advancing in confidence, physical strength, and cooperation with her peers, and also having so much fun with a huge smile on her face."

The impact of the athletes' visit not only resonates in the hearts and minds of all those who were involved, but it also gave a new perspective on the work that Right To Play does in Jordan, which is helping children to achieve their dreams and reaching the impossible through sports and the support of the local team. The second phase of

**"It is all the more important to engage children and young people to help the country grow economically, socially and culturally. Right To Play is quickly becoming a front-runner of this endeavor with its unique and innovative approach of using sport and play programs to teach the youth invaluable lessons that they will use to become community leaders as they mature into contributing members of society."**

**- Jason Rogers, Right To Play Athlete Ambassador**



Michelle Guerette, top left, and Emily Cook, centre, play a game with Jordanian students.

"Local Right To Play Coaches and the US Athlete Ambassadors shared our experiences in sport and life skills. Together we considered new ways to reinforce confidence, teamwork and positive communication skills through play," said Michelle Guerette, a silver medalist in Beijing. "I was inspired by the Coaches' commitment to advance their leadership and teaching skills to positively impact the children and strengthen their communities."

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### YOUNG GIRL DEVELOPS SELF-CONFIDENCE THROUGH PLAY

By: Abena Anim-Adjei



*Right To Play Coach Eugene Tetteh works with children, helping to develop their self-esteem and self-confidence.*

**Filled with self-esteem and self-confidence, Gloria has improved in her social relations with her friends and is aspiring for the leadership position of School Prefect of the Odumase-Samsam Primary school.**

Gloria Lamptey is a 10-year-old student from Odumase-Samsam, a community in the Greater Accra Region of Ghana. Timid and reserved by nature, Gloria once found it difficult to mingle with other children at school. But thanks to the efforts of her teacher and Right To Play Coach, Eugene Tetteh, Gloria's confidence has soared, allowing her to become an outgoing girl and a leader in her school.

Before her class was introduced to Right To Play's educational sport and play activities, Gloria was too shy to interact with other students, even during break time.

She would sit in her corner and watch other children play. In class, Gloria was unwilling to work in groups with others and was reluctant to contribute to discussions even though her academic performance was above average. This had been a matter of concern to her parents and her teacher until Right To Play introduced sport and play activities in Gloria's school in October 2007.

Led by their teacher, the children in Gloria's class engaged in various Right To Play games taken from the Red Ball Child Play module, which aims to help children develop life skills such as cooperation, sharing, compassion and teamwork. Initially hesitant to join in play sessions with other children, Gloria observed while they played games such as Follow the Leader, Orientation Square or Student Crossing, all of which focus on building self-esteem and self-confidence in children of Gloria's age. Meanwhile, Coach Eugene kept on encouraging Gloria to play with the other children until she finally agreed to join in the games.

**"Initially it was difficult for her to join in during play. I encouraged her to join but she would still refuse. After she had observed a couple of Right To Play yellow spirit ball games, I asked her if she wanted to play, and she hurriedly said yes!"**

**Right To Play Coach Eugene Tetteh**

Since then, Gloria has developed a dynamic team spirit. She willingly cooperates with other children during group activities in class and in recreational activities and has made friends with her classmates. Once a child who was so timid that she never interacted with her mates, Gloria now loves to play with other children and boldly volunteers to lead her team during play sessions.

"At first, I was afraid to make friends, thinking I would not be accepted because I am not as outgoing as the others," Gloria shares. "But since I joined the play sessions I always get the chance to talk and work as a team with all the other children I couldn't mingle with. So after play, it isn't difficult to talk to them any longer."

Filled with self-esteem and self-confidence, Gloria has improved in her social relations with her friends and is aspiring for the leadership position of School Prefect of the Odumase-Samsam Primary school. Along with other girls in her class, she actively takes part in regular Right To Play game sessions in her school. Looking back at her progress in the past two years of her life, Gloria realizes how far she has come.

"I am now popular in my class and I am aspiring for the next position of school prefect. The whole class looks up to me now and I am confident they will vote for me," she said.