

Civil Society and Multilateral Organizations and Academia Come together to Address Violence in Early Childhood

Geneva, 14 June 2018

Arigatou International, a Japanese-based NGO working for the well being of children worldwide, is convening a new Consortium with civil society and multilateral organizations and Academia to work together to challenge violence in early childhood and mobilize religious communities to support families in nurturing safe and protective environments for children.

Children thrive and grow in trusting relationships with people who love and care for them. Ideally, and for the most part, this happens within their homes. Sadly, it also cannot be denied that the home is the place where most abuses occur. According to the most recent UNICEF report, close to 300 million (3 in 4) children aged 2 to 4 worldwide experience violent discipline by their caregivers on a regular basis; and 250 million children (around 6 in 10) are punished by physical means.

The new Consortium aims to foster collaboration to share good practices and develop evidence-based and innovative approaches in religious communities and from the work of civil society organizations that contribute to end violence in early childhood, challenging social and cultural norms that justify it and supporting families to nurture values and spirituality in children.

“Religious communities are particularly well placed to support these efforts, supporting families in their child-rearing responsibilities, helping change mindsets and behaviors that support violence against children, said Mrs. Marta Santos Pais, Special Representative to the UN Secretary-General on Violence Against Children.

The launch of the Consortium will take place in Geneva with a one-day public seminar on 2 July at Club Suisse de la Presse, followed by a Reception, and working meetings at Château de Bossey on 3 – 4 July 2018. The seminar will look at the intersections between early childhood development, violence against children, positive parenting practices, the critical role of nurturing spirituality in children that can break the cycle of violence in the family, and the role that religious communities play.

The Consortium is formed by Catholic Relief Services, the Early Childhood and Peace Consortium, the Global Partnership to End Violence Against Children, the Guerrand-Hermes Foundation for Peace, the International Network of Engaged Buddhists, Islamic Relief Worldwide, the Office of the Special Representative to the Secretary-General on Violence Against Children, Pastoral da Crianca International, Sarvodaya Movement Sri Lanka, Shanti Ashram India, UNICEF, Faculty of Theology and the Sciences of Religion - University of Montreal, the World Bank, World Council of Churches, and World Vision International. Individual experts are also part of the Consortium: Ms. Caroline Arnold; Mt Rev. Bishop Duleep De Chickera; Dr. Ilham Nasser; Dr. Imam Rashied Omar and Prof. Anantanand Rambachan.

For more information on the Seminar, click [here](#). To register to participate send a message to geneva@arigatouinternational.org by 27 June.