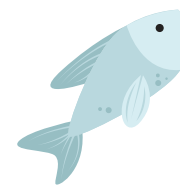
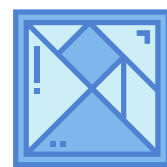


## Did you know that playful learning strategies stimulate children's social and cognitive areas?

In primary education in Costa Rica there are few programmes for the stimulation of students over the age of eight, and it is in rural areas where the least investment is made in educational projects, and the **canton of Matina in Limón** is no exception to this reality.

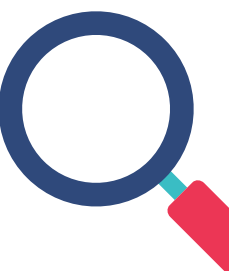
Results of epidemiological studies in the area indicate that frequent applications of pesticides in monoculture crops, such as bananas, **can affect children's cognitive and emotional development.**

For its part, the central nervous system has a capacity to adapt to environmental situations known as **brain plasticity**, which creates an opportunity to **stimulate the brain connections** involved in the teaching-learning process. For these reasons, this flexible play and educational strategy was created to stimulate the cognitive and social skills of school-age children, presented as a **Toolbox** with four games: **Memory, Tangram, Dominoes and Fishing.**



The results suggest that the strategy provided **support spaces** to contribute to the teacher's pedagogical work through Bandura's model based on social-cognitive theory and pedagogical principles. It supported her in **strengthening skills** such as observation, learning and the appropriation of innovative practices, and contributed to the reflection of educational work, the use of contextualised resources and the growth of teacher autonomy.

It was found that play in the classroom **stimulated** socialisation, communication, motivation, participation, allowed children to consolidate aspects related to autonomy, promoted enjoyment and creativity and opened the first steps towards becoming an inclusive classroom. The skills stimulated were approached through positive language.



The strategy provided beneficial experiences for the **teaching-learning process**, achieved self-regulation, motivated the children's attention and concentration, promoted the understanding of different scenarios and encouraged problem solving through the construction of games and the search for answers to everyday situations. It is noted that the strategy was particularly important in stimulating children socially and cognitively in a post-confinement period.

It was concluded that **play-pedagogical methodologies** as presented as a **Toolbox** are appropriate for the stimulation of different areas that constitute child development. It is **recommended** to **use and adapt** the strategy to other studies and contexts (rural or urban), where it is desired to enhance the integral capacities of children while having fun.

