



**MINISTRY OF LABOUR AND SOCIAL  
PROTECTION**  
STATE DEPARTMENT FOR SOCIAL PROTECTION  
AND SENIOR CITIZEN AFFAIRS

## DIRECTORATE OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT



# NATIONAL POSITIVE PARENTING TRAINING MANUAL

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# PART A: Facilitator Guidance

## Introduction

Welcome to the National Positive Parenting Training Programme.

This Manual is for facilitators who will be delivering this training programme to fathers, mothers, and caregivers of children in Kenya.

This Manual contains all the information that a facilitator will need to effectively deliver the National Positive Parenting Training.

- **Part A** provides background information to assist facilitators in directly delivering the programme.
- **Part B** provides step-by-step guidance for each of the 15 sessions of the programme to enable facilitators deliver sessions as planned.
- **Part C** provides further information on parenting and child development that facilitators may find useful during content delivery .

The National Positive Parenting Training Manual is complemented by an Implementation Guide, which provides step-by-step instructions on how to set up and deliver the programme.

**Important! If you are using this manual to conduct the National Positive Parenting Training, you must have already successfully completed the National Positive Parenting Facilitator's Training. You will be working with a team of co-facilitators and supported by supervisors from a Government or Civil Society Organisation.**

## About Kenya's National Positive Parenting Programme

### National Positive Parenting Programme

The National Positive Parenting Training forms part of Kenya's National Positive Parenting Programme. The vision of the programme is "loving, safe and thriving families where children realise their full potential".<sup>1</sup>

The State Department for Social Protection and Senior Citizen Affairs through this programme, seeks to build and sustain a positive parenting culture and infrastructure that enables diverse families across Kenya to be loving, nurturing, respectful, supportive and violence-free, and to promote the equal wellbeing and development of all family members. Children who grow up in these environments will be able to contribute effectively to the overall development of the nation. As such, a positive approach to parenting is considered an investment in the future of Kenyan society.

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Kenya (2023). National Positive Parenting Programme Guidelines.

## About positive parenting

This programme is underpinned on the premise that parents and caregivers – both men and women - play a critical role in children's health and wellbeing. They are expected to provide love, guidance and support that children need to thrive in life.

**Parenting** is what the caregiver does to provide a stable environment in which the child grows. It means everything we do so that children in our care have good health and nutrition, are protected from harm, and can experience holistic growth from birth to adulthood.

**A parent or caregiver** is anyone who has the primary responsibility of raising a child. It can be the child's mother and father, or another adult who is looking after the child, such as a grandparent or uncle or aunt, a foster parent or guardian, or any other adult who can give the child the love and attention that the child needs.

A **family** is a societal group of people that is related by blood (kinship), adoption, foster care, guardianship or the ties of marriage (civil, customary or religious) of persons of the opposite sex. **Article 53 of the Constitution of Kenya, provides for parental care and protection.**

There are **diverse types of families in Kenya** and the National Positive Parenting Training applies to all types of families: “nuclear family (parents with biological or adoptive children only), single-parent families, skip-generation or grandparent headed households, polygamous households, supported child-headed households and extended family (family group consisting of not only the nuclear family but also includes aunts, uncles, cousins, grandparents and sometimes more distant relatives)”.

**Both men and women are equally important for the child's development. Children do best when they have the nurturing care of both male and female caregivers and adult role models.**

Positive parenting improves the health, well-being and development of children and young people, and when healthy family relationships are nurtured and supported, then the whole of society benefits.

### Important terms used in the Positive Parenting Training Manual

The following definitions are used a lot in positive parenting programmes, and it is useful to understand them so that you can explain them clearly to parents and caregivers.

**Child development** means changes in a child's physical growth and in a child's social, emotional, behaviour, thinking and communication skills. All of these areas of development are linked, and each depends on and influences the others.

**Non-violent discipline** involves protecting the child from all forms of violence (physical, sexual, psychological, neglect and exploitation) that results in actual or potential harm to their physical and emotional health, well-being or development. Violence can be perpetrated by parents/caregivers or other responsible adults, peers, or strangers, and it often occurs in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

**Nurturing care** means ensuring a child has good health, enough healthy food to grow well, security and safety, responsive caregiving (see the definition below), and opportunities for early learning.

**Positive parenting** describes behaviours and actions by the parent or caregiver that help develop a child to be physically, mentally, and emotionally healthy. Positive parenting is about putting the child's best interests first and includes listening to the child, giving them a voice and choice in decisions that affect them, providing consistent and nurturing care, setting age-appropriate boundaries and responsibilities and protecting children from harm, including not using violent discipline.

**Positive discipline** puts an emphasis on developing a healthy relationship with your child and setting expectations around behaviour, rather than punishment and what not to do.<sup>2</sup>

**Responsive caregiving** means understanding what your child is communicating to you through his or her words and/or behaviour and responding in a sensitive way. This helps your child feel safe and confident.

**Gender transformative parenting** refers to parenting that actively seeks to examine, question, and transform the gendered power imbalances within the home and the family.

**Violence** is defined by the World Health Organization in the 2005 *World report on violence and health* as "the intentional use of physical force or power, threatened or actual, against oneself, another person, or against a group or community, that either results in or has a high likelihood of resulting in injury, death, psychological harm, mal-development, or deprivation."

**Violent discipline** is defined by UNICEF and the World Health Organization as "any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression." Physical punishment is defined as "Shaking, hitting or slapping a child on the hand/arm/leg, hitting on the bottom or elsewhere on the body with a hard object, spanking or hitting on the bottom with a bare hand, hitting or slapping on the face, head or ears, and hitting or beating hard and repeatedly." Psychological aggression is defined as "Shouting, yelling or screaming at a child, as well as calling a child offensive names such as 'dumb' or 'lazy'."<sup>3</sup>

<sup>2</sup> UNICEF, 'How to discipline your child the smart and healthy way', <https://www.unicef.org/parenting/child-care/how-discipline-your-child-smart-and-healthy-way>, accessed 10 May 2022.

<sup>3</sup> Source: UNICEF Violent discipline, August 2021. <https://data.unicef.org/topic/child-protection/violence/violent-discipline/> The definition recognises that "While teaching children self-control and acceptable behaviour is an integral part of child rearing in all cultures, many caregivers rely on the use of violent methods, both physical and psychological, to punish unwanted behaviours and encourage desired ones. Regardless of the type, all forms are violations of children's rights.

Caregivers do not necessarily use violent discipline with the deliberate intention of causing harm or injury to the child. Rather, it sometimes stems from anger and frustration, lack of understanding of the harm it can cause or limited familiarity with non-violent methods. While children of all ages are at risk, experiencing violent discipline at a young age can be particularly harmful, given the increased potential for physical injuries as well as children's inability to understand the motivation behind the act or to adopt coping strategies to alleviate their distress."

## Why is a positive parenting programme useful?

Parenting programmes are designed to support parents and caregivers to continue doing the best they can by:

- helping parents and caregivers understand why positive and responsive parenting matters and the critical role they play in their child's growth, development, protection, and learning
- helping parents and caregivers feel confident about the love and care that they are already giving to their children, through giving parents and caregivers the chance to see that their actions are already good for their children;
- helping parents and caregivers learn skills and techniques from each other when they have questions or feel unsure if they are doing the best for their children;
- giving parents and caregivers the chance to practise techniques and skills that are based on all the latest evidence about how children develop.

Parenting programmes work best when **active learning** and **adult learning** approaches are used to **build on the strengths** of parents and caregivers. People learn best when they are actively involved in their learning. Experiential learning encourages adults to try things out.

Participatory learning encourages participants to

- think for themselves
- learn from their own experiences
- share their knowledge and ideas
- learn from one another
- work together to solve problems
- take responsibility for their own learning



### About the National Positive Parenting Training Manual

The National Positive Parenting Programme vision is loving, safe, thriving families where children realise their full potential.

The National Positive Parenting Training seeks to contribute to this through the following objectives:

- To support parents and caregivers to learn positive parenting techniques appropriate for all ages and capacities
- To create secure, loving family environments in which children develop to their full potential
- To support families to nurture respectful and equitable family relationships
- To support all family members to learn and apply practices which promote positive mental wellbeing.

## Guidance on facilitating the National Positive Parenting Training

## The National Positive Parenting Training Manual content

The table below gives a summary of each session, indicating how it is important to follow the sequence of sessions. The sessions in Part B include learning objectives and more key messages.

Session	Parenting techniques included	Key message
1. Introduction	Pre-programme questionnaire, to find out levels of knowledge	Happy and healthy families value and respect everyone, live together peacefully, and work well together effectively and use the available resources for the good of the family
2. Family Relationships	Family relations Responding to parents and caregivers' unique needs	Families that protect, love and care for everyone in the family are crucial to the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and society. Having good family relationships makes everyone in the family feel safe and secure.
3. Supporting Our Children's Development	Parenting through stages of development	One of the most important roles in positive parenting is to understand and respect your children's unique needs and characteristics as they grow and develop. Girls and boys learn and develop best when they are allowed to develop their full potential, with mothers and fathers contributing to caring for their family.
4. Building Strong and Secure Attachments	Providing nurturing love and care Parenting through stages of development	All children need loving and secure relationships. When parents and caregivers connect with their children, they are helping their children have the best possible start in life.
5. Caring for Ourselves and Caring for Others	Mental health and resilience Providing effective role models Responding to parents and caregivers' unique needs	Spending a few minutes every day looking after ourselves is good for us as well as good for the whole family and community.
6. Positive Communication	Using positive communication Supporting children to develop social and emotional learning Violence free households	Positive communication is the basic building block of any relationship, and of building healthy and happy family relationships.
7. Positive Play and Preparing to Learn	Parenting through stages of development Supporting children to develop social and emotional learning	Play is the best way to stimulate children's brains from birth onwards. It is an important tool for developing skills including imagination, communication,

		problem-solving, giving and receiving instructions.
<b>8. Values and Positive Discipline</b>	Family relations Positive non-violent discipline Providing effective role models	The values practised by the family are the foundation for children to learn, grow and act. Positive discipline helps to build a loving, trusting and mutually respectful relationship between you and your child(ren).
<b>9. Positive Male Involvement</b>	Family relations Modelling an equitable family Providing effective role models Violence free households	Fathers, male caregivers and other positive male role models play an important role in shaping the lives of children. Children who grow up in homes where men are loving, attentive and respectful to their children and wives/partners can help children become secure and face life with confidence.
<b>10. Creating Peaceful Homes Together</b>	Modelling an equitable family Violence free households	Families are happiest and strongest together when family life is peaceful and supportive.
<b>11. Keeping Children and Families Safe</b>	Violence free households	If children learn from a young age that they can talk to their parents and trusted adults around them about small things, then they are more likely to talk to their parents if more serious things happen.
<b>12. Positive and Protective Communities</b>	Family relations Providing nurturing love and care Mental health and resilience Violence free households Responding to parents and caregivers' unique needs	Positive cultural beliefs, values and practices are an important part of family and community life and can help create a sense of belonging and identity, as well as opportunities for celebration. It is important that families can choose to not participate in cultural practises and traditions that pose risks to the safety and health of children and other family members
<b>13. Family Health and Nutrition</b>	Providing nurturing love and care Responding to parents and caregivers' unique needs	Healthy eating and exercise/fitness is a critical component of healthy living and wellbeing for everyone. Nutritious food is important for the brain and body to grow Family meals can be a way of promoting healthy food habits and reducing unhealthy food habits

<b>14. Family Financial Planning</b>	Responding to parents and caregivers' unique needs	Managing money is about the choices we make as individuals and as a family. All adult caregivers should be involved in making important decisions about money, and this is one way you can practise sharing power and responsibilities within the family.
<b>15. Graduation</b>	All	We can all continue to support each other in positive parenting moving together.

### Facilitator roles and responsibilities

The following are the main roles and responsibilities of a National Positive Parenting Training facilitator:

- Be familiar with the session guide, including reading through each session carefully and understanding the information that needs to be delivered and how it is delivered.
- Be responsible for preparing for group session meetings, ensuring the venue, materials required during the sessions, refreshments (if provided), and any additional supplies for the groups are ready, and ensure completion of all financial reporting procedures for such materials.
- Maintain attendance register for group sessions.
- Facilitate National Positive Parenting Training sessions, using the session guide in Part B below.
- Work as a team with your co-facilitator (ideally you should prepare the sessions together) in presenting the session, making sure that when one of you is facilitating, the other person is observing the session, taking notes if needed, and supporting individuals where needed.
- Provide ongoing encouragement with group members over the duration of the fifteen-session programme.
- Conduct home visits for parents/caregivers who miss sessions (recommended).
- Identify and make any referrals that are needed, and comply with safeguarding protocols in case of need for referrals and support.
- Complete the monitoring tools.
- Attend all scheduled programme supervision sessions that are organised by your supervisor.

## Confidentiality, safeguarding and protection

Everything that is said in a session should be kept confidential by participants and the facilitator other than:

- Where the facilitator or a participant has any safeguarding/child protection concerns. This may be recent or in the past; be observed during a session or be verbally communicated, or where someone has reason to be concerned about the safety and well-being of a child or adult. In these instances, the contracting organisation's safeguarding/child protection policy must be adhered to. The facilitator may discuss this with his or her line manager.
- For the above reasons, it is vital that confidentiality and its limitations are communicated clearly to participants during the welcome session, as well as outlining the reporting protocol (in the contracting organisation's safeguarding policy)

## Managing emotions and supporting parents and caregivers to speak up safely

Some parents and caregivers who attend parenting programmes may be worried about their family life. They may be feeling helpless, stuck, and frustrated. These emotions may come out during sessions. Participants should know that the sessions are a safe space to talk about their fears or concerns. However, a participant should never express anger towards anyone else in the session, or criticise or be rude to other people in the session, including the facilitator.

It can be useful to discuss emotions and actual situations during the welcome session. Here are some useful tips for participants; it can be helpful to discuss these during session 1 activity 1 – group agreement together.

- Encourage participants to talk openly and honestly about their experiences parenting their children  
Encourage participants to share only what they feel comfortable with
- Ensure participants know that what is said during sessions must not be shared with anyone else outside of the sessions
- Let participants know they can share concerns and anything else they are not comfortable bringing up in the group, with the facilitator before and after sessions
- When talking about someone who is not in the programme, ask participants not to use those people's names
- If the facilitator or someone else is worried about someone's well-being, including their mental well-being, they may need to adhere to safeguarding protocol in order to prioritise the safety and well-being of the parent/caregiver and their child(ren).

## Reporting and referral<sup>4</sup>

If someone discloses a concern, the safeguarding protocol should be followed. While this is being done, the principles of survivor-centred approach, informed consent, confidentiality, and best interest of the child are followed. Facilitators of the curriculum should not act as

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<sup>4</sup> International Rescue Committee. (2018). *Girl Shine Caregiver Curriculum*.  
<https://gbvresponders.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/09/IRC-Girl-Shine-Part-3-Digital.pdf>

caseworkers, as they may not have case management expertise, and case work may conflict with their role as facilitator.

Facilitators should be knowledgeable about existing referral pathways and know how to handle disclosures of gender-based violence, by staying calm and reporting concerns to their supervisor. Facilitators should receive ongoing support from supervisors and also know how to deal with disclosures where caregivers or girls or boys of all ages may be at imminent risk of harm.

Maintaining strong confidentiality and boundaries around disclosures of violence from both men and women is essential to supporting survivors' safety. If a participant shares an experience of violence during a group discussion, thank them for sharing and immediately remind all other participants of the need to keep all information discussed in the group confidential. Offer the caregiver who made the disclosure the opportunity to talk one-on-one at the end of the session, and then follow safeguarding guidelines. Avoid extensively discussing an individual experience of violence with the whole group, as other participants might hold and share harmful attitudes towards the survivor (such as victim blaming). If appropriate, remind the group that a survivor is never to blame for the violence they face. Make sure to follow up with the survivor at the end of the session and have sufficient time to listen to them and provide them with information about services.

### Promoting positive beliefs and practices<sup>5</sup>

There are many beliefs and practices in families and communities that keep children happy and safe. The National Positive Parenting Training provides positive practices that support a child's healthy development. However, it recognises that there are harmful beliefs and practices that can put children at risk of harm or restrict their chances in life.

The National Positive Parenting Training Manual does not aim to change harmful beliefs and practices – it is not realistic to do this in such a short time, and behaviour change needs an all-community approach. However, it does provide an opportunity to promote principles and tools that support parents to prioritise the safety and well-being of their children, including understanding the importance of play and learning, being able to listen to and talk openly with your children about sensitive issues, practising gender equity within the family, and being able to think about what keeps children safe and protected in a way that enables them to grow up as strong, confident and resilient.

### Preparing for delivery of the programme

#### Before the day

- To deliver the session within the 2.5 hours allocated time, review the session carefully and be clear about what the objectives are (so you're clear about what you want to achieve in the session). Read the facilitator supporting notes, if you want to know more. Think about how you will explain the key messages in the session and how you will relate these to the overall aims. Always remember to reflect back on the goals that participants have set themselves.
- Practice translating key concepts and activities into the local language.

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<sup>5</sup> Source: Good Kombra na Gladly Family Facilitator Guide, Sierra Leone (draft)

- Ensure you have copies of all worksheets, handouts and other materials listed at the start of the session.
- Be familiar with the session instructions. Review the practical activities so that you can explain them clearly. You may want to adapt the examples to reflect the needs of the group.

**Tips for adaptation:** Proverbs are used to introduce the topic of the session, and scenarios and case studies are used in some sessions so that participants can reflect on a possible real case scenario. You may want to adapt the proverb to one that is specific to your local context or that reflects a religious teaching if all participants are of the same faith.

It is possible to adapt the scenario – maybe to reflect a child or family that is not already reflected in the case study, such as a focus on a child with a particular type of disability, for example, or to reflect the economic or social situation – if you are working with coastal communities, or in a refugee camp, for example.

When you adapt the scenarios, make sure that the objective of the activity remains clear as indicated by the key message at the end of the activity.

### Getting the venue ready

- Set up the room (or venue) in advance. Before the first session, make sure that chairs are arranged in a way that everyone can participate; a circle is usually best. Remember that the focus is on adults sharing skills and learning together, not having a ‘teacher’ lecture to ‘students’. Try to ensure that the environment is spacious with limited distraction, so that participants can move about freely during the session but also have privacy.
- Make sure that any refreshments that are being provided before the session are ready and nicely presented.
- If child care is provided, make sure that the space is clean and the people who will be providing child care arrive in plenty of time for children to be settled before the session. If possible, have a few toys or materials such as pens and paper so that if parents or caregivers bring their children, the children can remain entertained during the session and enable their caregivers to focus on the session.

### Session overview

Each session follows the same format and includes a summary at the start of the session that contains the information below.

- Session aim – the key information or skills covered in the session
- Time allocated overall and time for each activity
- Materials needed – any additional materials that the facilitator must prepare before the session, such as preparation of flip charts or additional resources required for the activity

- What the parent and caregiver will be expected to learn in this session – this explains the expected short-term outcomes for this session
- Session outline, including a list of each activity, suggested time for the activity and how the activity is delivered
- Key messages – these are summarised at the start of the session to orientate the facilitators. Key messages should **not** be read out at the start. The key messages are summarised at the end of the session for parents and caregivers.

This overview is followed by a step-by-step guide to the session, including tips and notes to the facilitator.

Facilitator supporting information is available for each session and is in Part C.

### Session approach and content

All sessions except the first and last sessions in the programme use the following approach:

#### 1. Welcome and home practice discussion:

- This is always the first activity of the session.
- The objective is to welcome people back to the programme and remember what was discussed last week and build on their understanding and accomplishments
- Encourage participants to recall the key messages from the previous session, using participants' own words.
- If the participants do not recall the main messages the facilitator reads them out.
- Parents and caregivers are assigned a task at the end of the session, to practise the new techniques. Allow time for people to share with the group how they got on. The facilitator should focus on:
  - Was it possible to practise the technique?
  - If it was not possible, why?
  - Was the technique useful? What happened when you used it?
- The facilitator's role is to help participants to work as a group to find solutions to any challenges that they found during the week. If the facilitator finds that people are not understanding the technique that is being demonstrated, it is better to spend more time on this and make sure that it is clear why the technique is being introduced (the theory behind the technique) and that parents feel confident about using the technique. It is not advisable to move onto the next theme of the programme until you are confident that people understand and are able to apply the techniques.

#### 2. Introduction to the topic

- Each session introduces the core concept to be covered in the session. This is done through introduction of a proverb for reflection about the key message and group discussion.
- Over the course of the 15 sessions, parents and caregivers will be shown their progress, using the image of a road along which everyone is travelling, building up parenting skills. The facilitator can show how these sessions bring us along a journey together.
- This session is an opportunity to introduce basic information about the topic.

### **3. Discussion**

- This activity allows parents and caregivers to share ideas and discuss together their ideas and views on the topic of the day.
- The facilitator's role is to stimulate sharing and reflection and only at the end to summarise and provide any information that is required, or to correct disinformation.

### **4. Skills practise**

- This activity allows parents and caregivers to practise parenting techniques that they have learned about.
- The facilitator's role is to encourage everyone to contribute and practice.
- The activity is usually in small groups.

### **5. Applying the skills**

- This activity allows parents and caregivers to explore any challenges or difficulties that they may face in their own families or spend more time practising a particular technique that is especially important for them.
- The activity is usually in small groups.
- The facilitator's role is to encourage sharing and promote confidence in the technique.

### **6. Self-care / wellbeing**

- Every session includes a 5- or 10-minute period where parents and caregivers focus on their own self-care. There are different activities in each session and cover topics such as relaxing, finding ways to control our emotions and feel calm, and finding ways to be good to ourselves.
- Each session includes a suggestion, but facilitators are encouraged to use their own ideas for self-care where possible.

### **7. Key messages and home practice**

- The facilitator reviews the key messages from the session. The facilitator should encourage group members to remember the key messages and state them in their own words.
- The facilitator's role is to make people understand the key messages. If there are major questions or concerns, now is the time to discuss them. It may also be time to see whether more time will be needed at the next session to reinforce the messages.
- In each session, a new home practice assignment is allocated. Participants are given a simple task that they are encouraged to practise at home. The task is to practise the new technique introduced in the session.
- It is only when people repeat what they have learned in the session in real-life situations that they can start to turn information into changed attitudes and practices. Parents and caregivers must apply the information in their own context and see what works.

#### After the session

- Collect everything that has been developed during the session, including flip chart notes and any information that has been added to the house.
- Make sure the room is clean, and refreshments cleared away.
- The facilitator should complete the **Facilitator observation tool** after the session. These notes are the facilitator's notes to assist in preparing and delivery of the programme. The notes help recall key points. They should never contain any confidential information about participants. See the sample below.
- All these notes should be prepared and later shared with the supervisor.

## Delivery style and time needed for each session

Each session has been planned to take 2.5 hours (some will take slightly less). In order to keep to time:

- Avoid spending a lot of time presenting information.
- Aim to spend the majority of the session in the discussion and skills practice activities.
- Keep introductions and explanations between activities brief, focusing on the key information.

In each session there is an option to make a brief introduction, then run 2-3 essential activities, and summarise the key messages – this should take about 75 minutes. The essential activities for each session are indicated by the star icon



## Facilitator tips

The programme is designed to encourage participants to share their experiences, build on their strengths, and understand the importance of core parenting techniques.

### General facilitation tips<sup>6</sup>

Parenting facilitators are central to the success of the programme. The programme design relies on the facilitator's skill in bringing people together to reflect and share ideas, explore new parenting techniques and apply them to their situations.

#### 1. Preparation

The facilitator should be well prepared before the sessions. This involves being ready for any disruption to the session or if there is a need to spend longer on a topic than in the programme. A good facilitator can be flexible if he or she knows what is coming up ahead, and can plan in advance if something needs to be adapted or changed.

#### 2. Timeliness

The facilitator should always be ready ahead of time and well prepared, to set a good role model. Parents and caregivers have given up valuable time to attend the sessions so it is important that they can finish on time, in order to get back to work or family responsibilities. If the facilitator starts and ends in good time, this makes it easier for others to also respect time in the sessions and may make people feel more motivated to attend.

Keep the session on track. Encourage discussion, but keep people focused on the activity objective. If the discussion goes off in a different direction, or around in circles, remind people of the objective of the session and gently bring people back to the activity.

#### 3. Inclusive

One of the primary roles of a facilitator is to help sessions flow. This can be done by making sure that everyone has the chance to speak. This is best done by spending time greeting everyone

<sup>6</sup> Source: Senefeld, S., Krisowaty, L., (2014). *Parenting Support in Africa: A Facilitator's Manual*. Catholic Relief Services, Baltimore, MD.

individually and by taking the time to get to know individuals. If you know that someone is facing a particular challenge, it makes it easier to be sensitive to them.

If someone is reluctant to talk, gently encourage them by asking them a question that will not put them in the spot in a group discussion. If someone talks too much,

If someone in the group talks too much, it can prevent others from speaking. If this happens, thank the participant for sharing and, gently, note that it is important for others to also have a chance to share. Show that you value what they have already shared by reflecting back what they have said to the group.

Be aware of individual needs. If one person appears to have a specific need for support or for information or is 'not fitting in' with the group because they have strong views, try to speak to them on their own at the end of a session. Ask them how the sessions are going and try to find out what may be any concerns that they have. Always make it clear that any discussions you have will be confidential.

Be open to the learning opportunities which you will encounter in the course of the programme. Let the participants know that you too are learning all the time.

#### *4. Strengths-based*

When parents and caregivers come to a parenting programme and have the time and space to reflect on being a parent, they often find it easier to focus on the challenges and difficulties than what is going well. It is important to focus on the positive. Positive parenting is about building on the strengths in children and it is important to do the same for ourselves. A facilitator can help by bringing out the positive aspects and helping people think about solutions to challenges.

The following are the main ways in which a strengths-based approach can be helpful:

- Evidence shows that children respond to praise and love. The programme content emphasises this, starting with Session 1: The Power of Parents, where participants get to see how important it is to children of all ages to receive care and love;
- Focus on people's unique strengths and experience, rather than the challenges that they face in parenting. People can be motivated to continue to do well when they feel confident and positive about what they are doing.
- Provide information as a supplement to what people already know. The programme offers information and resources to help parents understand why a particular approach is useful.
- Encouraging shared parenting, by recognising the broader family support that parents and caregivers receive and the support of the community. The idea of family and community further encourages working together for our children.

#### *5. Collaborative*

The facilitator is not the 'expert', but someone that can share the information that they have received about parenting, showing that they are adding additional information to what parents

and caregivers already know. Ideally, everyone will leave the parenting sessions feeling that they are also experts.

Be open about the challenges of parenting. The programme focuses on the positive aspects of being a parent, but it is important to recognise that parenting can be challenging and we all make mistakes. It is important not to be judgemental about the challenges people face – most caregivers face similar problems with their children at some stage. Allow space for people to acknowledge their problems and be non-judgemental.

### **Disability-inclusion**

The National Positive Parenting Training Manual seeks to ensure that the programme is accessible and welcoming to parents and caregivers with disabilities, and that parents and caregivers of children with disabilities can benefit from the programme content as much as others.

The parenting manual reflects images and situations of children, including children with disabilities. However, the training manual is not a specialised tool that meets the unique needs of children with disabilities, for example providing therapeutic parenting support. A facilitator should refer parents or caregivers who need additional disability assistance. If a parent is concerned about their child's development, encourage them to see a health worker or teacher who can give encouragement and support to identify if there is a disability.

Wherever possible, make sure that venues are disability friendly and accessible.

If the facilitator knows that there are people with disabilities who wish to attend the session, the most important step is to talk to the person facing the accessibility difficulties, ideally in advance. They're in the best position to advise on how the facilitator can include them.

Find out whether group members have any particular needs, preferably individually. It can help to know if one person is struggling to hear when people are all talking together, or another person needs a frequent break to move around.

Frequent breaks can be helpful - some people may need to really concentrate to follow discussions (e.g. if they can't hear everything that is being said) or may not be able to sit for long periods. Time to recover may be appreciated!

Some exercises may not be suitable for everyone – be sensitive to people whose hearing, sight and mobility might affect their ability to participate in activities. The facilitator should summarise regularly, providing another chance for the flow of the discussion to be understood. Make sure everyone can see each other clearly.

Plan the group's movements and physical activities (e.g. icebreakers, energisers, role plays, breaking into small groups) in an inclusive way, offering enough time and space to move and providing alternative suitable activities if necessary.

### **Facilitating male- or female-only groups, vs mixed groups of male and female**

The role of male and female parents and caregivers are both equally important in their children's lives. The programme actively encourages both men and women to attend.

As facilitators, we must encourage interactions that promote respect and equality, either in groups of only men or only women, or in mixed groups of male and female.

Decisions about whether a group should be just women or men, or mixed need to be taken locally. It may be useful to think about the following issues when facilitating a group:

In mixed groups of male and female:

- Allow flexibility for group members who may feel uncomfortable in the mixed group, for example by allowing people to sit where they choose and go into male-only or female-only groups for discussion.
- Make sure that both men and women have an equal opportunity to participate in the activities and to answer questions, by watching body language and seeing if women feel intimidated by the men, or if men feel that more 'experienced' women dismiss their experience
- Check with individuals before and/or after the session to make sure that people can express any concerns that they are feeling.
- Follow-up if any group members drop out to identify whether the mixed-group approach has prevented them from attending.
- Use existing parents who have completed the course as 'ambassadors' to show others that the sessions are not threatening if they are in a mixed group.

In male-only or female-only groups

- Spend time in activities and discussions asking people to consciously think about how it might be for a parent or caregiver of the opposite sex.
- Be prepared to challenge any gender assumptions that participants make about the opposite sex.
- Address the issue of facilitators carefully, possibly encouraging both male and female facilitators to work together where possible to demonstrate that parenting is both men's and women's work. Mixed facilitation teams can show that it is possible to work together, and they can model equality and respect.

# PART B: [National Parenting Training Session Content

# Session 1: Introduction to the Parenting Programme

*It takes a village to raise a child.*

<b>Session aim</b>	To support parents and caregivers to get to know each other and understand the Parenting Training Programme.
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Registration form</li> <li>● Pens and flip chart</li> <li>● One drawing of a goat, or a seed/plant (used in Activity 2)</li> <li>● One prepared sheet of flip chart with the 15 sessions listed</li> <li>● One prepared sheet of a flip chart with numbers one to 15 drawn along a road – you will be using the illustration to show the ‘journey’ we will go on during the training programme</li> <li>● Pre-training programme assessment tool (1 copy for each group member)</li> <li>● Other materials: notebooks and pens for participants (depending on the literacy levels of the group)</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn about what is in the training programme, introduce participants, agree on group norms, and establish a baseline through pre-training programme questionnaires</li> <li>▪ Understand basic safeguarding information and procedures</li> <li>▪ Create a vision for their family to support progress through the training programme</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
 <p>1. Welcome and Introductions</p> <p>Parents and caregivers meet, are welcome to the group and the training programme</p>	30 minutes	Group discussion
<p>2. About the National Positive Parenting Training</p> <p>Parents and caregivers are given information about the programme and how it will work over the 15 sessions</p>	30 minutes	Individual reflection and group discussion on what is a family
	15 minutes	Group discussion

3. Developing a Group Agreement and Learning About Confidentiality and Safeguarding  Parents and caregivers develop a group agreement (ground rules) for the training programme, and safeguarding processes are explained		
 4. Our Family Vision  Parents and caregivers use visualisation and guiding questions to create a vision for their family's future	30 minutes	Individual reflection and group discussion
 5. Pre-Training Assessment  Group members complete the pre-training assessment and registration forms	30 minutes	Self-reported assessments
6. Summary and Take-Home Activity  Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice	10 minutes	Group discussion

**Important note to the facilitator:** Remember that you are not expected to read out aloud what is written below from the page. Be familiar with what is written in the session guidance **before** delivering the session and deliver the content **in a language and style most suitable for the parents and caregivers.**

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Introductions (time: 30 minutes)

1.1 Greet each participant as they arrive and introduce yourself. Use the registration form to register them for the training programme.

*If parents or caregivers arrive with young children, explain what has been organised for them, such as a play area in the room, if this is available.*

1.2 Encourage participants to get refreshments (if available) and to chat with other participants who have arrived.

*Note that even if some participants may arrive late, it is important to start within 15 minutes of the planned start time to encourage people to be in time and respect those who have arrived in time.*

1.3 Ask participants to sit in a circle.

*Note: if any fathers/male caregivers attend, they may sit together and do activities together in separate groups from the mothers / female caregivers. Try to encourage people from the same household not to do activities together so that they can learn about other peoples' experiences.*

1.4 Before starting, ask a volunteer to pray (if appropriate in your setting.)

Welcome everyone and introduce yourself and your co-facilitator, saying where you work, a little bit about how you got involved in the training programme, and why you are excited to work with this group.

1.5 Ask each participant to introduce themselves as follows:

- Your full name and the name you prefer to be identified with during the training programme.
- How many children do you have/look after? and what are their ages ?
- Who else is in your family ?
- Why have you chosen to join this group? and what are you looking forward to ?

*Note: you may choose to guide by answering the questions yourself first.*

*Note: If children are attending the sessions, you can include them at this stage by asking the children who are old enough to say their name and age as you go around the circle, and for parents/caregivers to introduce children who are not old enough to introduce themselves. Encourage children to express themselves in whatever way is most comfortable for them, including non-verbally.*

1.6 Thank the participants. Ask them to share in pairs something they are proud of about their family and child(ren).

1.7 Once people are again seated in the circle, explain the main objectives of the session:

- Today is the first day of a series of sessions where we will meet as a group to learn and share our knowledge and skills in caring for ourselves and our children.
- You, the parents and caregivers, are the experts in the room. You all have a lot of experience and knowledge to share. Over the next fourteen sessions, we will get to know each other well.
- In this first meeting, we will get to know each other and learn a bit more about what we will be learning and doing together over the 15 sessions of the programme.
- We will also agree on how the training programme will be run and share some information about what we believe and know – we will do this again at the end of the training programme so we can all see how we have grown in this journey.
- We will end by sharing a vision for our families.

1.8 Make sure that everyone understands what will happen and answer any questions parents and caregivers might have.

1.9 **Explain:** we will shortly be learning more about the training programme and sharing our own experiences, but before we do that, we want to spend a short time agreeing on how we shall work together as a group.

## 2. About the National Positive Parenting Training (time: 30 minutes)

2.1 **Explain:** We will now talk about why we are all here.

2.2 Show a drawing of a goat that you have prepared before the session, or use the illustration.

2.3 **Ask:** What do young animals like this one need to grow tall and strong?

2.4 Once you have had several answers, explain that parenting is like rearing animals or other kinds of farming. Raising animals comes with many responsibilities – just like parenting.

*Note: you can use another locally appropriate example. This may be growing vegetables or other crops or looking after cattle.*

2.5 Ask participants to get into groups of three and discuss:

- What does a person need to know about rearing and taking care of a goat until she produces milk or has kids?
- Where do people get their knowledge and skills to raise animals?

2.6 After five minutes, ask each group to share their answers. Write them down on a flip chart and thank them for sharing.

2.7 **Now explain:**

- People need knowledge and skills to rear goats. Without knowledge and skills, the goat may not grow well or die.
- Farmers gain this knowledge and skills from different sources (such as different people) and in different ways.
- In the same way, we as parents and caregivers learn about caring for our children from sources and in different ways, and we also learn from our childhood experiences and as parents of our children.
- Raising a healthy and happy child requires knowledge, skills and patience from parents and caregivers. The more we share our experiences, and learn from others, the more skilled we become as parents.
- This parenting training programme will provide information, lessons, and tips on how to raise healthy, responsible, happy, and successful children. It aims to strengthen our caregiving skills and learn from each other new things that we may never have known before.
- The training programme also focuses on our own wellbeing and looks at how to strengthen relationships within our families.

2.8 Show the two flip charts prepared on the session titles and on the drawing of a road. Explain what is happening each week by pointing on each session number and title. Allow time for questions.

- Today, we will learn about what we will be doing in the training programme. We shall also fill a simple questionnaire to find out what we think and feel as parents and caregivers. We will do the same questionnaire again at the end, to determine how much you will have learned in the training programme.
- In Session 2, we will start by discussing families – their uniqueness and their importance for children’s development; We will look at how each family is different and the importance of caring for each other within the family and looking after yourselves.
- In Sessions 3 and 4, we will learn about how children develop, each in their own way, and understand their unique characteristics at every age and stage.
- In Session 5, we will learn the importance of looking after yourselves and each other, being positive parents and recognizing your own importance.
- In Session 6, we will discuss how positive communication strengthens our relationship with our children and reduces conflict in the family.
- In Session 7, we will look at helping children learn through play, how best to support children’s education, and prepare older children for the future.
- In Session 8, we will discuss family values and their importance in supporting a long term vision for our children.
- In Session 9, we will discuss the importance of male involvement and sharing parenting responsibilities in raising happy and emotionally balanced children.
- In Session 10, we will explore how to have a peaceful and harmonious family life.
- In Session 11, we will discuss how to keep children safe from harm at home and in the community.
- In Session 12, we will explore ways to support our children’s development for the future.
- In Session 13, we will focus on family health and nutrition.
- In Session 14, we will look at the importance of financial planning and techniques for making decisions about money.
- In the final session, we will celebrate all your achievements and discuss how to support each other moving forward!

- In summary, the training focuses on our wellbeing and looks at how to strengthen relationships for all the family.

2.9 Now explain that these sessions are deliberately in this order. Each session introduces a new piece of information on the skill and which builds on the previous one. The goal is that by the end of the training programme, we will learn new skills that we can use to handle different situations with our children.

2.10 Explain how the sessions will be organised, for example, weekly, and each session will take 2.5 hours. You, your co-facilitator and the team will be together until the end of the 15 sessions.

*Note: if anyone looks as if they may have challenges that require more discussion or time, suggest that you talk with that individual at the end of the session.*

2.11 Now explain your role as group facilitators:

- To organise, schedule and deliver parenting trainings, such as this one
- Be available to support, refer and connect parents and caregivers' families to services and support resources in the community, when this is useful
- Mobilise and organise parents and caregivers in peer support groups, when this is useful
- Keep a record of how the sessions are going and share with the organisation. The organisation needs to know who is attending and how the sessions are progressing on to make the parenting training programme successful. Explain that you will be keeping information about who is joining and how well the sessions are going, but you will also be respecting confidentiality and not sharing what is discussed in the sessions with others, other than safeguarding concerns.
- Working with other people in the community, such as community groups and local service providers, to improve access to services and support for families and caregivers.

### **3. Developing a Group Agreement and Learning about Confidentiality and Safeguarding (time: 15 minutes)**

3.1 Explain that over the subsequent 14 sessions, we will get to know each other well – our hopes, dreams, and challenges; for ourselves and our families. Parenting can be a lonely job sometimes. By sharing our experiences over the next few months, we can create a community of support to turn to, even after the training programme is completed.

3.2 Explain that, in order to get the most out of being here together, it is important to make sure that everyone feels comfortable and able to participate in the group. Ask people to consider:

- How can we create a space that feels safe for everyone?

- How can we create a space that challenges everyone to explore new ideas?
- How can we ensure that everyone is able to participate equally?
- Does anyone have any particular needs that the group should be aware of, or take into account? (For example, if someone has a hearing impairment, they may need others to ensure they face them as they speak so they can lip read, etc.)

3.3 Ask participants to suggest some shared agreements that will help make each session safe, enjoyable, and productive. Write down each suggestion on a flip chart paper. Try to encourage everyone to suggest something (verbally or nonverbally.)

*Note: you may choose to give an example from the list below to support participants to understand what we mean by setting a group agreement.*

- *Come to the session on time.*
- *Attend every session. If you have to miss a session, inform the facilitator in advance. A certificate will be given to those who attend all sessions.*
- *Listen to everyone's opinion respectfully, even if you disagree.*
- *Take turns to speak and avoid interruptions.*
- *Share your own experience or opinion.*
- *Keep mobile phones off or on silent. Go outside to take urgent calls.*
- *Respect each other's opinion and consider everyone's contribution carefully.*
- *What we share in the group, stays in the group (i.e., commit to confidentiality: **emphasise** that another person's experience cannot be discussed outside of the group)*
- *You have the right to choose not to speak; no one will be forced to participate in any activity or exercise.*
- *Commit to practising what is learnt in the sessions at home each week.*

3.4 Remind people of the agreement about confidentiality, if this has already been suggested. If not, explain to participants that everything said must be kept confidential (not shared with anyone outside the training programme) unless there is a concern about the safety of any child (a child safeguarding/protection concern), for example, if a child is being sexually abused, neglected or is at risk of early marriage.

3.5 **Explain:** if you are worried that an adult is experiencing abuse such as domestic violence, we may need to take action, to report the concern. The facilitator will follow up on the contracting organisation's safeguarding/protection policy.

*Note: if there is a play area in the space where children can play safely, at this point, children can go and play. Ensure the room has play items that are age and developmentally appropriate.*

3.7 Now ask the participants to identify two leaders – ideally one should be female and one should be male - for their group. Explain that it is important for each group to have leaders who will coordinate with the facilitators in ensuring that the training programme activities are well run. Group leaders will be responsible for:

- mobilising parents and caregivers to participate and attend parenting sessions

- supporting in organising sessions and other related activities
- supporting the facilitators in follow up and monitoring
- highlighting the needs and concerns of the parents and caregivers who are attending the training.

Allow the group to decide on the leaders in their preferred way. If it is not possible for participants to decide, suggest that they can choose a leader at the start of the next session.

#### 4. Our Family Vision<sup>7</sup> (time: 30 minutes)

4.1 Remind the group that this training programme was created in order to strengthen family relationships, improve the well-being of parents/caregivers and their children, and to promote children's positive development. During the training programme, we'll be working together to reach this goal, as well as other goals that families may have for themselves.

4.2 First ask everyone to take a moment, close their eyes if they are comfortable to do so, and think about their own family.

*Note: Explain clearly that 'family' may be different for all of us. Some of us care for our children with our spouse or on our own. In other instances children are taken care of by our extended families.*

Ask them to think about the following questions:

- How do you hope your family relationships might be changed by the end of this training programme?
- How do you care for each other and help each other?
- How do you communicate with everyone?
- What type of father, mother or caregiver do you want to be?

4.3 Say: This is a vision or dream for your family. Now ask everyone to again close their eyes or look away and imagine the future. Say:

- Imagine your child is all grown up. You are about to celebrate your child's eighteenth birthday. Think about what kind of person your child has become. What is your relationship like with your child?

4.4 Pause for a moment to let everyone think about this, then ask:

- What kind of person (qualities, characteristics) do you hope your child will be at that age?

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<sup>7</sup> This activity is adapted from the Family Vision session in the Promundo, World Vision Bangladesh (2018) Changemaker Families: A manual to promote gender equitable relations in Bangladesh. Promundo, Washington, D.C. USA. World Vision Bangladesh. Dhaka, Bangladesh. And from the Family Dreams and Positive Parenting Goals from Save the Children Kenya's Parenting Without Violence Revised Parenting Group Sessions for remote delivery, September 2020.

- What kind of relationship would you like to have with your child?
- What are the things you hope to have achieved as a family in that time?
- What does your future together look like?

4.5 Pause for a moment and allow people time to reflect.

*Note: If in your group everyone is confident in writing, you can ask them to note these things down in notebooks (that will have been handed at the beginning of the session).*

4.6 Ask participants to think of two or three short-term goals that they would like for their family by the end of this training programme, and then identify 2-3 long-term goals they want their family to achieve. If they wish, they can write these down or draw them.

4.7 After a few minutes, ask the participants to turn to their spouse/co-parent (if he or she is present at the meeting), or another person if their partner is not present, and share their vision for the family. Each person should take a few minutes to describe their own family vision. The person that they are talking to should sit quietly and listen. After a few minutes, ask pairs to swap roles.

4.8 After everyone has shared their vision with their partner, ask the group:

- When you shared your family vision, were your visions similar or different?
- Was anything surprising?

4.9 Next, ask if any person or couple would like to share their family vision with the group. Allow enough time for participants (who feel comfortable) to share their family vision.

4.10 After participants have shared, start a discussion based on the following guiding questions:

- *Are there similarities between different people's family visions? Are there differences?*
- *Do families talk about the vision they have and how they can work together to achieve it? Why or why not?*
- *Are there specific ways that this group can support you in achieving this vision?*

4.11 Close the activity by sharing the following key messages:

- Raising a healthy and happy child requires knowledge, skills, and patience from parents and caregivers. The more we share our experiences, and learn from others, the more skilled we can become as parents.
- In this group, we will work together to begin to realise how to achieve these visions.
- This week you could take this vision home and discuss it with your family – together you could think about anything else you want to add to the vision, and you can start to plan together for ways you can support each other to achieve it.

## **5. Pre-Training Programme Assessment (time: 30 minutes)**

5.1 Remind the group that your organisation will collect information to assist with planning, assessing progress and ensuring that the parenting training programme meets the hopes and needs of parents and caregivers.

5.2 Hand out the pre-training programme assessment tool. Explain that this form is a way of finding out what everyone currently knows and thinks about parenting. The form will be administered again at the end of the parenting training programme, to assess new knowledge, values and skills acquired during the training programme.

Allow people time to complete the form. In cases where participants cannot read or write, help record the responses precisely as the parent has suggested.

5.3 Thank participants for completing the exercise. Collect all the forms for returning to the office.

## 6. Summary and Take-home Activity (time: 10 minutes)

6.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end, and that we would like to reflect on what we have discussed today.

Explain that at the end of each session, you will be asking participants to make observations and practice skills they have developed in the session. The best way of learning is by doing. Explain that we will all share our home practice at the start of each session.

Ask everyone to think of their family vision and reflect how they will discuss it when they go home.

*Note: If you are working with parents who are comfortable with reading and writing, ask everyone to write down what they will do in their notebooks.*

*With these groups, you can encourage participants to document their thoughts about the session, including a reflection on the session's topic. The review could include the following:*

- *What did you think about today's topic before discussing it during this session?*
- *What did you like about today's session?*
- *What could have been done better?*
- *What action will you take, or what new perspective will you have after this day's session?*

6.2 Invite a few participants to briefly share what stood out most for them in the session and invite a few people to share their thoughts.

6.3 Summarise the key messages from this session:

- Raising a healthy and happy child requires knowledge, skills, and patience from parents and caregivers. The more we share our experiences, and learn from others, the more skilled we can become as parents.
- In this group, we will work together to achieve your family's vision.
- This week you could take this vision home and discuss it with your family, together you could think about anything else you want to add to the vision, and you can start to plan together for ways to support each other achieve it.

6.4 Agree with participants on the date for the next session and the time (and venue, if this is not already agreed).

6.5 Thank everyone for attending, acknowledging, and appreciating parents/caregivers for their participation and willingness to be part of the training programme.

6.6 Remind participants that we will discuss about family relationships in the next session.

Explain that you look forward to meeting them all in the next session.

6.7 You may close the session with a song, a prayer or any other appropriate way.

The ideal family is like a palm tree; it can bend in the wind but will not break

# Session 2: Family Relationships

<b>Session aim</b>	To explore the importance of family relationships and identify ways to promote healthy family relationships
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Group agreements from last session pasted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Road diagram with session outlines posted on wall</li> <li>▪ A ball (or paper crumpled into a ball) for Activity 1.4 (optional)</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflect on their own family's strengths and how each individual family member contributes to the strength of the whole family</li> <li>▪ Learn approaches for strengthening family relationships and connections</li> <li>▪ Practice skills for providing a strong, resilient, stable and a loving family environment</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
<b>1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session</b> Parents and caregivers meet each other, are welcome to the group and the programme, and agree on group norms and process	30 minutes	Group discussion
 <b>2. Introduction: What is a Family?</b> Parents and caregivers discuss different types of families and identify the core elements that make up strong and supportive families.	15 minutes	Individual reflection and group discussion
 <b>3. Discussion: How we were Parented</b> Parents and caregivers reflect on their own childhood experiences of being parented and identify the positive aspects that they also wish to practise as parents	30 minutes	Individual reflection and group discussion

<p><b>4. Skills Practice: Keeping Families Together*</b></p> <p>Participants identify strategies for strengthening family bonds and communication, and practice skills for conducting regular family meetings and how to effectively involve children in family matters</p>	30 minutes	Group discussion and role play
<p><b>5. Applying Key Skills: Showing Appreciation and Affection for Each Other</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers practise giving, receiving care and appreciation for each other and for their children</p>	20 minutes	Skills practise
<p><b>6. Wellbeing activity</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers take time to relax at the end of the session with a short breathing exercise</p>	10 minutes	Wellbeing activity
<p><b>7. Summary and Take-Home Activity</b></p> <p>Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice</p>	15 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session (time: 30 minutes)

1.1 Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the previous session).

1.2.If new participants were absent in the previous session, ask all to introduce themselves and request one or two volunteers to explain what was discussed.

*Note: if there are participants in the group who were not able to attend the previous session, or if people are reluctant to speak, you could start by asking an icebreaker question, for example, 'What are you proudest of achieving this week?'*

1.3 Explain that we will review last session's home practice. We will do this at the start of each session. Ask someone to remind the group what the home practice was. Confirm that the home practice was to discuss the family vision that they had with their family.

1.4 Ask if anyone would like to contribute how they shared the vision with their family. Use a ball to throw to participants, and when each participant catches the ball ask them to share one point if they are comfortable. Encourage the group to stick to one key point so that there is time for everyone to speak.

1.5 Once everyone has shared, explain that we will discuss the home practice at the start of each session. Remind everyone of the journey that we talked about in the last session, namely, parenting and family life. Show the flip chart with the 15 sessions going along the road. Explain that it is important to stop and reflect on the journey covered and aspire to practise what you have learned so far.

1.6 Now ask the group – 'what were some of the key things we agreed to in the last session for our group agreement?' Take a few responses and remind participants of the group

agreement (on the wall), check with the group if everyone is still happy with the group agreements, or if there is anything further to add, and then pin them up at the front of the room. Remind participants that these group agreements will always be displayed during sessions and that they can be referred back to at any point during the process. Remind everyone of the safeguarding commitments.

## 2. What is a Family? (time: 15 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: The ideal family is like a palm tree; it can bend in the wind but will not break

*You can use an alternative proverb from local cultures or relevant religious texts or sayings if preferred as long as they focus on the importance of family.*

2.2 Ask:

- How does this quote make you feel?
- What does this quote tell us about family relationships?

2.3 Ask participants to get into groups of two to three and discuss “What is a family?” and “Which are the different types of family that you know?”.

2.4 After 5 minutes, ask one person from each group to share one or two points that they discussed. Write participants’ answers on a flip chart.

*Encourage people not to repeat answers from other participants.*

*Remember that there are different types of families such as nuclear, single-parent families, families headed by grandparents, uncles, aunts or supported child-headed households, step/blended and polygamous families. What is important is the love and connection they share.*

2.5 Ask the group to think about the strong and supportive families that they know of in their community. Allow a couple of minutes for individual reflection and then ask volunteers to describe what makes the family strong and supportive. Write down their answers on flip charts.

2.6 Ask the group to brainstorm, “Why is having a family important? Why is it important for children to grow up and stay in families?” Write down the responses on a flip chart, recap and add important points that the group may not have mentioned.

2.7 Summarise the key points as follows:

- There are different types of families. All are equally valuable.
- What is important is that family members share love, connection, care, support and meet basic needs (food, shelter, clothing, health and education)
- Children who grow up in protective and caring families are more likely to become caring and responsible adults.

- Children learn how to relate with other people first from the family.
- A loving and caring family can help children learn to trust, care, respect and support one another.
- Our families are bigger than the individuals in the home. We all thrive better surrounded by extended family, friends and neighbours who support us and provide love.

2.8 End this information session by asking if anyone would like to add any other points. Emphasise that this training programme is about supporting our children’s wellbeing, as parents and caregivers. In the family, it is our role and responsibility to hold the family together. In this training programme, we will look at the different ways in which our family supports each other.

### 3. How we were parented (time: 30 minutes)<sup>8</sup>

3.1 Remind participants that this programme builds on everyone’s experiences as a parent and caregiver. In each session, the focus will be on sharing and discussing our own experiences. Today, we will start by reflecting on how we were parented.

3.2 Explain to participants that this activity can be sensitive for some people; participants should only share what they feel comfortable sharing.

3.3 Ask participants to get into groups of four.

3.4 Ask everyone to:

- *Think briefly about our childhood experiences with the people who brought us up (our mothers and fathers, grandparents or whoever was our main caregiver).*

*Note: it may be helpful for the facilitator to give personal experience or use the following: “I valued my parents encouraging me to stay in school; I valued my parents’ hard work ethic; I valued our time together on Sunday evenings. The three things I am doing differently are: trying to spend a bit more time with my children; not hitting them when they make a mistake; and listening to them more than I was listened to during my childhood.”*

3.5 Once people have had a few moments to think, ask participants to take turns to share in their group of four:

- *What you liked about how you were parented and are trying to provide for the children that you care for*
- *What you did not like, and you are doing differently*
- *What you did not like but are unsure how to do it differently.*

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<sup>8</sup> This activity is adapted from Rwanda Men’s Resource Center (RWAMREC) (no date). *Bandebereho Facilitators Manual: Engaging men as fathers in gender equality, maternal and child health, caregiving and violence prevention.* <https://men-care.org/resources/bandebereho-facilitators-manual-fathers/>

*Highlight that no one needs to share anything they are not comfortable with; if anyone needs support during or after the session, to inform the facilitator for further assistance/ referral.*

3.6 Get into one big group. Ask participants to *identify one thing that makes them proud about their parenting.*

3.7 Explain to participants:

- Most parents and caregivers love all their children, regardless of their unique circumstances, and want to do what's best for them.
- But parents' and caregivers' actions and behaviour are not always right. A parent or caregiver's negative words or actions can be very harmful to a child. They can continue to bring stress and pain even when they become adults.
- Getting support to work through difficult childhood memories is an important part of self-care. The support can be by a professional counsellor, health worker, family member or someone from your faith community. It can also be from a good friend who practises active listening to help overcome childhood trauma.
- It's important to look at what our parents did well and what didn't work so well for us when we were growing up
- Making positive changes in how we parent from how we were parented is a *huge* step.

3.8 Relate the discussion on how we were parented to the session before: What is a family? Ask people to get back into their groups of four and discuss:

- How can we use what we like or want to be as a parent to support the whole family?
- What can we do so that the parents or caregivers in the family support and care for each other in a complementary way? How about the children?
- What can we do so that boys and girls within the family can support and care for each other?

3.9. After 10 minutes, bring the participants together and ask each group to share their views.

3.10 Thank everyone for sharing their ideas and remind participants of the family vision discussed in the previous session at home. In today's session we shall discuss in detail further practical suggestions.

#### **4. Keeping Families Together: Practical ideas (time: 30 minutes)<sup>9</sup>**

4.1 Introduce this activity by reminding the group that:

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<sup>9</sup> To identify the original source of this activity – family meeting

- Having healthy and supportive relationships with family members is important for the development and wellbeing of parents, caregivers and children.
- From time to time we encounter challenges within the family, but strong and supportive families can resolve problems and conflicts together in a positive and healthy manner.
- In the next activity we will practise skills for building healthy, strong, and supportive family relationships such as holding family meetings and showing care and appreciation for each other.

*Facilitator Tip: To explore skills for building family connection, support the participants to pay attention to all family members including those with disabilities or health conditions. This will help them be seen, heard and valued for the contributions they make to the family.*

4.2. Ask participants to share in small groups, examples of when they spent time together as a family and what was enjoyable to them.

4.3 After 10 minutes, recall the small groups and bring the participants together. Ask them to share their ideas. Encourage the group members to give feedback to the questions below:

- Are there ideas that they think would be good for their own family?
- Do they have questions about how the activity is being carried out?

4.4 Activity: Explain that the participants will role play a family meeting activity.

4.5 **Explain:** Family meetings allow parents, caregivers, children and other members to discuss important issues, strengthen communication, reinforce shared values, have fun and build positive relationships. These meetings provide an opportunity to address family challenges and also check with each other after long periods of separation (For example during reintegration or break from school ).

4.6 Share some tips for holding family meetings.

**Step 1:** Family meetings always start best with positive feedback on family life. Ideally, each family member can say or express something positive about every other family member. For example, “Esther, thank you for preparing dinner yesterday. John, I appreciated how you looked after your younger brothers while I was at the market.”

**Step 2:** The family follows up on the solutions adopted during the last meeting. For example, “We agreed during our last meeting that everybody should be home by 6 o’clock. How did it work this week? Did everybody arrive home on time?”

**Step 3:** Everyone says what they want to discuss or communicate. Although it is unlikely that every conflict or issue will be solved, having a chance to talk about them gives everybody an opportunity and space to share their thoughts and be heard. Listening does not mean that we agree but is an opportunity to better understand

each other's perspectives. Items on the agenda are not necessarily issues, they can also be family projects.

**Step 4:** Enjoy family time. Have fun, plan family events and pray together. For example, "Who has an idea for something fun we can do? What about going out and having a picnic next Saturday?"

4.7 Ask participants to think about a good time to gather as a family and encourage sharing.

*Note: you can suggest the following if participants are struggling with suggestions:*

- *At a regular day and time in the week.*
- *When everyone is calm and peaceful.*
- *Right after having dinner together.*
- *Friday after mosque or Sunday after church.*
- *On a weekend when everyone is home.*

4.8 Explain to the participants that family meetings are more effective when:

- The meetings are regular and not only set up to manage a family crisis. It is as important to have a meeting to celebrate something positive as discussing a challenge.
- You keep an open discussion until family consensus is found, even if it takes more than one meeting to find a solution.
- All concerns and questions are welcomed.
- The meetings should not take too long, 30 minutes is a good average time. Children should get a chance to speak and express their thoughts and ideas.

4.9 Ask participants to divide into groups of four or five to carry out a role play of how family meetings should be conducted. Each group should choose different family roles and think about how they can communicate ideas effectively. Encourage participants to include a range of family members (children, youth, men, women, members with disabilities and older people) in the role play. Ask the group to think about what they can do to ensure everyone has an equal voice in the meeting.

4.10 In small groups, give the participants 10 minutes to practise how to conduct a family meeting.

4.11 Ask any group to volunteer to demonstrate their role play. After the role play, continue with the discussion based on the following questions : (Note: Begin with the demonstrating group)

- How did the family meeting go?
- What worked well? Which practices were demonstrated in this meeting?
- Were there any challenges with the meeting? What were they?
- Did everyone in the family have an opportunity to participate? Did each one voice their opinion, feel valued and heard? What decisions were jointly made?

4.12 Thank the participants for sharing, encourage them to hold family meetings regularly.

## 5. Showing Appreciation and Affection for Each Other (time: 20 minutes)

5.1 Introduce the activity by stating that:

- Simple acts of kindness and love can go a long way in strengthening relationships.
- It is important to show and tell each other how you feel.
- Each family has different ways of showing love and affection, which can vary depending on culture, religion, and background.

5.2 Explain that in each session, we will spend a short time practising a skill that we use daily. In the skills practice session, we are going to show appreciation.

5.3 Ask everyone to choose someone they would like to practise showing appreciation. Explain that as they work in pairs, they will take turns to role play as different family members.

5.4 Ask them to reflect about how to appreciate their children. Give them one of the following scenarios but explain that they can choose their own examples if they prefer. One person acts as the child, and the other practises showing appreciation as a parent.

- Your child is frustrated and throws a toy or bowl on the floor but then, without being asked, gets down and picks it up and puts it back carefully. What would you tell this child?
- Your child has done very well at school but has a difficult test or exam coming up. They are feeling stressed. How can you encourage and support them?
- Your older child is supporting the younger sibling with her homework. How do you react? What do you say and do?
- Your teenage boy in a wheelchair is polishing his shoes? What would you tell this teenager?

*Facilitator tip:*

*Adapt these scenarios to your local context or the situations faced by participants in the group. For example, you could include a faith or cultural practice that the child values.*

*Be mindful that there may be parents or caregivers with children with disabilities and it is important to provide as much encouragement and value achievements for all children.*

*Be mindful also that there may be parents or caregivers, such as those providing kinship care and foster parents, who have children who have experienced discrimination, trauma, or separation. It is crucial to show children appreciation and love in ways that are acceptable to children and are consistent.*

5.5 After three minutes, ask participants to swap roles and give one of the following scenarios to practise how to show appreciation to their spouse or to another caregiver who helps you with the children in your care:

- Your spouse/other caregiver has had a busy day doing tasks to take care of the household. How can you acknowledge their effort and what it means for the rest of the family?
- Your spouse/other caregiver is just back from the farm/work and looks tired and worn out after a long day. What can you do or say to appreciate the work they have done?
- You come home late from the farm/work, and your spouse / other caregiver is frustrated that you are not there to help prepare dinner. How will you react? How can you show your spouse / caregiver that you love and care for them?

*Facilitator tip: Adapt these scenarios to your local context or the situations faced by people in the group. If the parents or caregivers do not have a spouse, suggest examples of other adults from extended family or community or friends who care for their children.*

5.6 After three minutes, ask participants to swap roles again and give one of the following scenarios to practise how to show appreciation to their relatives.

- Your mother-in-law has just brought you fresh maize from her farm. She often takes care of her grandchildren when you are away from home. How do you show her your appreciation?
  - Your neighbour knows that you are struggling to balance taking care of your children and going to work. She often comes over to help the children after school when you are not yet home. How do you show her your appreciation?
  - Your brother, who lives 200 km away, comes each month to visit you and encourage you on how to parent your 2-year-old daughter who is visually and hearing impaired.

*Facilitator tip: Include community or extended family in settings where this is important as part of this exercise.*

5.7 Allow ten minutes for the whole activity and then bring the group back together and have a group discussion, using the following questions as a guide:

- How did it feel to show appreciation and to receive it?
- What was easy about finding ways to express your love and appreciation?
- What was more challenging?
- Do people in your family find it easy to show love and appreciation? What could be done to make it easier?
  - Do you feel like women, men, girls, and boys are equally appreciated in your family? If not, is there anything that can be done to make this more balanced?

5.8 Thank the group for sharing and encourage them to think about how to show appreciation to different family members in the way that best suits them. Highlight that it

can be hard, when family members are busy, so it is important to be deliberate in creating and scheduling time and moments to spend together.

If appropriate, you can share the following examples, and ask if the group have others to suggest based on their own family practices

**Family tree exercise:** Drawing or writing down a family tree which illustrates each generation, going back as far as you can all remember. A family tree does not have to be blood ties; you can draw a family tree of people who are important to you and your children. If there are family members who are new, or who have left or passed on, it is also an opportunity to reflect and celebrate new arrivals and recognise the contribution that family members have made who have left.

**Family meals:** Family meals offer opportunities and moments for families to interact and share. Families can prepare certain meals together and enjoy eating together while catching up with each other. It may be difficult to eat together every day, but agree on a day that the family all eat together and catch up.

**Playing games and sharing stories:** Opportunities to play games and share stories together and with children makes it possible to spend quality time together and is also often a useful opportunity to allow children to express their emotions freely.

**Establish family traditions:** Opportunities where members of the family celebrate key events and spend time together: This will promote a sense of belonging for each member and helps to form feelings of familiarity, understanding and trust. Events can be significant family moments – the day that a new foster child comes to stay, a special religious celebration that is of particular importance to your family, or simply a special day where you all watch your favourite football team winning a Cup Final.

## 6. Wellbeing activity (time: 10 minutes)<sup>10</sup>

6.1 We have all worked hard today. Now we are going to take some time to relax and keep calm. This is a useful exercise for us all to do, especially when we are feeling stressed.

6.2 Read out the following instructions using a calm, slow voice.

- Close your eyes.
- Breathe in slowly and deeply through your nose. Keep your shoulders relaxed. Your stomach / tummy (“abdomen”) should fill out and your chest stay still.
- Breathe out through your mouth.
- As you blow air out, purse your lips slightly, but keep your jaw relaxed. You may hear a soft “whooshing” sound as you breathe out.
- As you’re concentrating on your breathing you can also imagine yourself to be in a quiet, favourite place – maybe sitting under a beautiful tree, or sitting feeling the

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<sup>10</sup> To identify original source of breathing activity

sunshine on your face. Concentrate on what it feels like to feel peaceful and calm in this place.

6.3 Once people have followed the instructions, stay quiet and allow people to carry on breathing deeply on their own for some minutes.

6.4 After a few minutes, or earlier if people are ready to finish, ask people to return to their normal breathing and open their eyes.

6.5 Ask people how it felt.

6.6 Explain that this is a useful technique that anyone can use whenever they are feeling stressed. It can be done standing up, sitting down, or lying down. It is also a nice exercise to do together with your spouse and/or your children at the end of a busy day!

6.7 Remind participants of the list of sessions on our 'road' to positive parenting. We will be stopping on the road in the next session to spend more time thinking about our own wellbeing. We must be able to look after ourselves in order to care for the rest of the family and our children.

## **7. Summary and take-home activity (time: 15 minutes)**

7.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end and that now we would like to look back on what we have talked about today.

7.2 Ask participants what they think the most important messages are from what has been discussed.

7.3 As participants respond, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

- Families come in different types, sizes and dynamics. They are all equally valuable and what is important is the love and connection they share.
- What is most important for children's and caregiver's wellbeing is the quality of family relationships – and there are many skills we can practise to strengthen these relationships with our spouses, children and other family members.
- Every family faces problems, but strong and stable families can resolve problems and conflicts together in a positive and healthy manner.

7.4 Remind participants about the idea of home practice.

Ask people to remember that today is about building healthy and strong family relationships.

Propose the following home practice:

- Intentionally show appreciation for every member of your family at least once this week.
- Look for and show one act of appreciation that a family member or friend shows you between now and the next session, acknowledge and thank them.

- Discuss the ideas that we have discussed this week about building healthy families together – family trees, family meetings, other suggestions made by parents and caregivers in the group.
- Spend 5 minutes every day (or as many days as possible) practising deep breathing or another relaxation exercise.

*If you have a group that is comfortable writing, they can write it in their notebooks and complete the reflective practice.*

7.5 Thank everyone for attending. Remind people that we will look at Supporting Our Children's Development in the next session. End by giving positive praise about how people have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

7.6 Finally, invite any new participants who did not attend the introductory session last week to stay behind for a brief meeting, and if they have time complete the pre-training evaluation with them. If they do not have time arrange another convenient opportunity (for example half an hour before the start of the next meeting)

### **Key messages for Session 2**

- There are many different types of 'families' in Kenya. Every family is unique, and every type of family is equally special and important.
- Families that protect, love and care for everyone in the family are crucial to the health and well-being of individuals, communities, and society.
- Having good family relationships makes everyone in the family feel safe and secure. A caring and protective home environment makes it easier for families to solve problems and resolve conflicts as they arise.
- Children and adults with caring and protective family relationships are more likely to be emotionally stable, overcome stress and hardship. They also find it easier to learn and are healthier than those with constant family tension and conflict.
- Showing affection and appreciation to family members can make all the difference.
- Be kind to yourself as a parent/caregiver. Showing your family that you value taking care of yourself is extremely important in modelling a caring and supportive family.

# Session 3: The Role of a Parent or Caregiver in Child Development

Session aim	To explore the different developmental milestones, and the roles and responsibilities of parents and caregivers in fulfilling children's needs at every stage of a child's development, within a secure and loving family
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Road diagram with session outlines posted on wall</li> <li>▪ Flip chart with the drawing of a child in the centre and six circles around the child labelled: physical/practical, emotional, learning, social, protection, spiritual/moral, for Activity 4</li> <li>▪ Cardboard box (if available) for Activity 5</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appreciate the importance of parents and caregivers in promoting children's wellbeing and development</li> <li>▪ Learn about children's development at different ages, and how children's needs change and evolve at each stage of development and with each child's unique characteristics</li> <li>▪ Learn skills and strategies to support their children's unique developmental rights and needs.</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
<b>1. Welcome back and recap the previous session</b> Parents and caregivers remind themselves of the key messages of the previous session and share back the home practice	20 minutes	Group discussion
★★ <b>2. What My Child Needs to Grow: Introduction</b> Parents and caregivers are introduced to the key messages of holistic child development	10 minutes	Explanation and group brainstorm
★★ <b>3. What My Child Needs to Grow: Sharing Experiences</b>	40 minutes	Group discussion

Parents and caregivers reflect on their children’s needs and explore the ideas of children’s rights and responsibilities and how parents and caregivers can meet those rights		
<b>★★</b> <b>4.* Understand and Responding to Our Children’s Needs</b> Parents and caregivers reflect on how they might observe and be attentive to their own children’s needs and rights	20 minutes	Individual reflection and group discussion
<b>★★</b> <b>5.*Man Box, Woman Box, Human Box</b> Parents and caregivers explore the positive and negative aspects of being assumptions of how men and women should behave, and discuss the benefits of moving past these to live in the ‘human box’	40 minutes	Participatory exercise and group discussion
<b>6. Wellbeing activity – Shake It Out</b> Parents and caregivers practise self-care activities to reduce stress	5 minutes	Wellbeing activity
<b>7. Summary and Take-Home Activity</b> Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice	15 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session (time: 20 minutes)

1.1 Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the previous session).

*If there are any parents and caregivers who were not present at the last session, ask one or two volunteers to explain what was talked about in the last session.*

1.2 Remind everyone that we always begin with a discussion about last session’s home practice. We will do this at the start of each session. You can first ask a participant to remind the group what the home practice was.

*Reminder: Session 2 Home Practice:*

- *Intentionally show appreciation for every member of your family at least once this week.*
- *Look for and show one act of appreciation that a family member or friend shows you between now and the next session and acknowledge and thank them for it.*
- *Spend 5 minutes every day (or as many days as possible) practising deep breathing or another relaxation exercise.*

1.3 Ask 2-3 volunteers to share something about their home practice over the last week.

*Encourage participants to provide suggestions for each other, if someone has a challenge.*

1.4 Introduce today’s topic. We are now going to focus on the children in our family and our role as parents and caregivers.

## 2. What My Child Needs to Grow: Introduction (time: 10 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: “Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo (As you bring up a child, so s/he will be).”

*You can use an alternative proverb from local cultures if preferred as long as it focuses on the importance of providing children with positive role models and meeting their developmental needs.*

2.2 Ask:

- How does this quote make you feel?
- Is it always true?
- What does this quote tell us about how children develop and grow?

*Facilitator tip: If the group wants more detailed information about children’s development, you can use the information in the facilitator notes to explain in more detail. Feel free to adapt the language to make it simpler.*

2.3 Ask the group to brainstorm:

- What words describe how you want your children to be when they become adults?

If useful, you could suggest examples such as kind, courageous, healthy.

2.4 Thank everyone for their suggestions. Explain that for us to help our children grow up to have the suggested values or behaviours, it is our responsibility to help children learn about their own rights and responsibilities as they grow. To do so well, it is useful to understand how children grow and how we can support their growth in different ways according to their ages.

*An example of how you might explain this is – if one of the words suggested is ‘kind’, explain that a one-week-old baby will not be able to help their brother or sister. But by speaking warmly and showing a kind face, the baby will already be learning about gentle or ‘kind’ ways of speaking. When the child is a toddler, they will not automatically understand that hitting their caregiver when they are frustrated can hurt that person. This must be explained in simple ways, but we must also recognise that they are hitting because they are frustrated. They will learn more ways to show kindness as they grow, but this will only happen if they experience kindness themselves.*

## 3. What My Child Needs to Grow: Sharing Experiences (time: 40 minutes)

3.1 Ask the group to get into small groups – one group will discuss children aged 0-3 years, one will discuss children aged 4-10 years and one will discuss children aged 11 years and older. People can choose which group to go to.

Show the group the six categories below, that you drew or wrote on a flip chart before the session:

- Physical/practical needs (what a child needs for a healthy body and basic needs)

- Emotional needs (what a child needs to feel happy, loved and secure)
- Learning needs (what a child needs to have their brain stimulated inside and outside of school)
- Social needs (what a child needs from other people including family and friends)
- Protection needs (what a child needs to stay safe and secure)
- Spiritual or moral needs. (What a child needs to find meaning, purpose and value in life)

Ask the groups to think about what the needs of children in different age groups are. For example, a physical need might be to have nutritious food. A social need might be to be able to spend time playing with friends after school.

Ask each group to also think:

- Are there any needs that are especially important for some children, for example children with disabilities, children who are not living with their family?

3.2 Allow the groups to discuss for up to 20 minutes and then ask all three groups to share their feedback. Ask all participants if they have anything to add after each group presents back.

*Note: you can support the groups to consider the following needs, if they have not already been mentioned. The facilitator summarises age-specific milestones and parenting approaches.*

- Physical needs: providing food, water, clothes, shelter
- Emotional needs: making children feel loved, heard, understood, accepted, valued, and respected
- Learning needs: learning inside and outside of school (for example, discussions at home on topical issues, providing age-appropriate information, and listening to children's views)
- Social needs: making children understand that they belong to a family, helping them make friends and feel supported by other adults in addition to their immediate family, giving them time to socialise, have fun and spend time relaxing, supporting older teens as they start to explore relationships and imagine their future independent life
- Protection needs: keeping children safe and feeling safe at all times, including in the home, with friends and neighbours, and when they are online; protecting children from harmful practices

- Spiritual and moral needs: enabling children to feel connected to God, a belief system, and cultural values

### 3.3 After the group has discussed the feedback from all three groups, explain:

- This list of children's 'needs' comes from our own experience over generations of supporting children to develop.
- Children need food, shelter, schooling and clothes, but children also need someone they can trust, someone to protect them, someone to give them love and attention, someone to give them guidance on acceptable behaviour, someone who believes in them and builds their confidence, someone they can talk to and play with.
- All of these needs are equally important in order for children to grow and develop to their full potential.
- These needs are recognised in laws as 'rights'. Children are recognised as individuals with the same rights as any other human and the needs that the group have listed can all be described as rights.
- Children's rights reflected in the Constitution of Kenya 2010, the Children Act 2022 and many other laws in Kenya. For example, the need to be fed is reflected in the law as a child's right to adequate nutrition. The child's need to feel that they belong to a family is reflected in the law as the child's right to live in a family (as long as the child is safe and cared for) and to have a family name and birth certificate.
- Children also have responsibilities, such as supporting and caring for others; these responsibilities are also reflected in Kenya law. Children learn about their responsibilities when their parents or caregivers demonstrate the values and behaviours to practise.
- Kenya law, along with that of almost every other government, recognises that parents and caregivers have rights as parents and also have responsibilities to protect children, in line with global conventions that emphasise the need for respect for children with disabilities.

### 3.4 Remind the group of the following:

- All children have the same needs but how we help our children develop varies according to the child's individual age and developmental stage – this is sometimes called 'milestones'. A milestone is the time at which most children are expected to reach that particular point.

- Children develop at different paces. Some develop speech or walk earlier than others. If a parent or caregiver is concerned about their child's development, they should seek advice from medical professionals.

3.5 End the activity by thanking everyone for their creative suggestions.

#### 4. Understanding and Responding to Our Children's Needs: Reflection on our own parenting skills (time: 20 minutes)

4.1 Explain that we will now look at the practical ways that we can support our children's growth and make sure that all their needs and rights are met: physical, emotional, learning, social, protection and spiritual. When children's needs and rights are met, they will be better able to learn about and practise their responsibilities.

4.2 Ask participants to get into pairs. Share the following scenarios one at a time, with a minute's space in between each scenario for people to think about their situation, after which they can discuss all these scenarios with their partner:

- If you have a young child crying or whining all day. Nothing you do stops them from crying or whining, even though you know they are unlikely to be physically ill.  
If you have an older child, who has rudely answered back and refused to say what's wrong, How do you feel? What do you do?
- Your child has done something that you know can be risky but doesn't seem to understand the dangers. For example, they stay out later than you think is right if they are older, they keep climbing up on high surfaces when you are not looking if they are younger. How do you feel? What do you do?
- You want your child to do something and they refuse. For example, you want them to wear their best clothing to go to church/mosque/visit the family and they refuse, saying it is uncomfortable or it is too hot.

*Note: you can change these scenarios to locally relevant or group-specific content that encourages parents and caregivers to reflect on how they currently respond when their child's behaviour is difficult to handle.*

4.3 Ask the paired participants to share their thoughts for 5 minutes:

- *How did I deal with any feelings of frustration with my child's behaviour?*
- *Was I able to find out from my child what they were thinking or feeling when they were being difficult? If so, how?*

4.4 Back in the large group, ask a few volunteers to share their answers then summarise and explain:

- All the actions you discussed are about understanding what your child is feeling.

- There are many practical techniques for helping children to grow and develop. The most important skill as a ‘positive parent’ is to be able to understand what your child is trying to communicate, by listening, observing, paying attention and talking with the child.
- This programme supports parents and caregivers to develop skills that help build open communication with your children of all ages, so that families work together and can make decisions and choices that keep all children safe, meet their needs, let them know they are heard.
- As parents and caregivers, listening, observing and then modelling the good practices and behaviours that we want our children to grow into.

4.5 End the activity by linking the discussion now with the last session’s discussion on family appreciation. Highlight that this is all about being intentional about being open and sharing within the family.

## 5. Man Box, Woman Box, Human Box (time: 40 minutes)

5.1 Explain to the group that we will now reflect a bit more on our role as parents and family members, and some of the ways that women’s and men’s roles are often different. We have been discussing how to meet our children’s needs and modelling behaviour. Much of this is because of our assumptions about each other.

5.2 Show the group a cardboard box – ask a volunteer and request them if they would be able to sit in the box (if you can’t find a big enough box, create a small area in which people cannot move by, for example, placing chairs or tablecloths around a small place and asking the volunteer to sit within the small area). Ask the volunteer, “How does it feel to be sitting in this box? Are your movements limited in this box? How would it feel to stay in this box for the rest of the day?”

Now ask the rest of the group: “Are there any situations in our lives where we can also feel like we are limited by a box we have to stay in?” Allow time for people to answer.

5.3 Divide the participants into two groups: men in one group and women in the other group.

*Note: if the group is made up of men or women only, you will have to adapt the activity by asking one group to think about men and the other about women. As a facilitator, it will be important to encourage the group who is imagining that they are the opposite sex to reflect the views of that sex as accurately as possible.*

*This may be a challenging activity for people because it asks people to think about sharing responsibilities at home, which may be challenging. The key purpose of the activity is to get everyone to think about the benefits that may come from sharing and caring for others. This is to encourage both men and women to be able to benefit from the joys of parenting, as well as the responsibilities. There will be further discussions about the importance of involving men in Session 9 and sharing responsibilities in Session 10.*

Give each group a flip chart, a marker, and the following instructions. Give them 15 minutes to complete the following activity.

*Men's group:*

- *Draw a big square on your flip chart so that it almost fills the page.*
- *Think about the phrase 'act like a man' – what does society expect when they use this phrase? Write down all your ideas inside the square.*
- *Now think about characteristics described as "Not acting like a man" outside the square.*
- *Once you have listed your ideas, put a circle around anything that you have written that relates to men's roles as fathers.*

*Women's group:*

- *Draw a big square on your flip chart so that it almost fills the page.*
- *Think about the phrase 'act like a woman'. What does society expect when they use this phrase? Write down all your ideas inside the square.*
- *Now think about characteristics described as "Not acting like a woman" outside the square.*
- *Once you have listed your ideas, put a circle around anything that you have written that relates to women's roles as mothers.*

5.4 After 10 minutes in small groups, ask the women's group to present first and then the men's group to present.

5.5 In the whole group, facilitate a discussion using the following questions:

- Where do these messages come from? Who is the messenger? Do the messages differ if they come from a man or a woman (mother, father, teacher, brother or sister, friend)?
- How does it feel to be in your man's or woman's box?
- What are the advantages for men staying in the Man Box and women staying in the Woman Box?

*(For example, men who stay in the Man Box may be well-respected by other men. Women who stay in the Woman Box may find it easier socially if they get married)*

- What are the disadvantages to staying in the Man Box or Woman Box?

*(For example, men may feel constant pressure to provide or feel depressed that they cannot comply with all aspects of the Man Box. Women may be unable to get work outside the home even though they would like to.)*

- Are there advantages to stepping out of the box? What are they?

*(For example, more open communication between spouses and/or more peaceful households because each person is part of the decision-making process.)*

- How do these boxes affect your role as parents and caregivers? If you have a spouse or other caregiver helping with the children you care for, do these boxes affect your communication and relationship with them? How?
- What is the impact on children of being expected to be in a Boy Box or a Girl Box from a young age?

5.6 Draw another square on a new piece of flip chart paper and label it the “Human Box.”

Ask participants to mention the positive qualities of the Man Box. Write them inside the “Human Box.” Explain that many positive characteristics inside the Man Box are associated with having power. For example being a leader, having a career, making money, being involved in politics, being responsible for decision-making, and having control of finances. Ask the women in the group first “Should women also have access to some of these things?” Once they have answered, ask the men.

Ask participants to mention the positive qualities of the Woman Box and write them inside the “Human Box.” Explain that while there are also many positive characteristics inside the woman box, they are not often associated with power. Examples include: spending time with children; expressing emotions; being affectionate and loving; playing an active role in domestic chores.

5.7 Remind the participants of the items that were circled that the participants felt directly related to the roles that fathers and mothers had. Point out how many of these items are now in the “Human Box.”

Point out that children can also be limited by boy and girl boxes. Ask if the group can think of any examples. These might include girls being expected to participate in house chores. Boys’ education being prioritised over girls. Boys expected to be louder and girls quieter. Expectations around the way girls should dress/being modest. Activities that boys and girls participate in are limited by their gender. For example boys are expected to play with cars/like football and girls are expected to like dolls).

Ask the group: Are there ways we can change our parenting and caregiving to support our children to live in the ‘human box’ rather than the girl/boy box?

5.8 In summary, a family can work together to help each other in the different roles where applicable; for example, a mother nursing a baby can ask an older son or daughter to hold the baby.

5.9. End the activity by thanking everyone for agreeing to participate in a challenging discussion. This is essential for understanding how to support our children's growth and development so they have all the opportunities they can

## **6. Wellbeing activity – Shake It Out! (time: 5 minutes)**

6.1 Ask the participants in the room to think for a moment about how their bodies feel when stressed or under pressure. They do not have to share their answers.

Explain that sometimes, especially in times of stress, we can hold feelings and emotions in our bodies. This is not good for us, so finding techniques to ‘discharge’ these emotions is useful. We’re going to try one together today.

6.2 Tell the group that the exercise is very simple – we’re going to ‘shake it out’! Ask everyone who can to stand up. If the group includes people who are unable to stand due to frailty or a disability, it is ok to do this exercise in a chair or seated position too.

Call out the instructions below while shaking out yourself. Ask participants to copy you.

- Shake out your right leg, left leg, right arm and left arm .
- Have fun! Don’t worry about what others are doing.
- You can dance and move around the room

Do this for a minute or two and encourage everyone to join in in their own preferred way. You could put on some music if it is available. Encourage the group to laugh, smile and let go as they do this.

6.3 After two minutes are up, get everyone to stop, take a deep breath and let their breathing return to normal.

Once you have returned to normal, ask if anyone would like to share how it felt.

6.5 Once participants have shared their experiences, explain that this is a useful technique that anyone can use whenever they are feeling stressed or tired. You can do this exercise with your spouse and/or your children.

Remind participants that in each session we will be doing a self-care activity. Encourage them to share their own suggestions and take lead.

## 7. Summary and take-home activity (time: 15 minutes)

7.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end and we would like to reflect on what we have learned..

Ask participants what they think the most important messages are that have been discussed.

Thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

### Key messages for Session 3

- Children’s bodies and minds (brains), language, thoughts and emotions progress from before birth to the beginning of adulthood; this is known as child development.
- Every child develops differently. There are many things that can be done to support the development of children with disabilities so that they thrive

- Children need food, shelter, clothing, love, protection, healthcare, education, spiritual nourishment and mentorship. One of the most important roles in positive parenting is to understand and respect your children's unique needs and characteristics.
- As parents and caregivers, it is important to listen and observe, and then model the good practices and behaviours that we want our children to demonstrate
- Often our behaviours as parents and caregivers are influenced by what others expect of us as women/mothers, and as men/fathers. However, girls and boys learn and develop best when they are not limited by roles, and are allowed to develop their full potential.

#### 7.2 Introduce this session's home activity:

- *Find at least one moment this week to observe and listen to each of your children's feelings and reflect on what your child is trying to communicate.*
- *Encourage one or more of your family members, adult or child, to do something outside of the 'man box' or 'woman box' – or do something yourself outside of the box!*

Check that everyone has understood the home activities. If helpful, point again to the chart of the 'road' and remind people that we will be moving along the road by practising new things with our children and families.

7.3 Thank everyone for attending. Remind people that we will be looking at Strong and Secure Attachments in the next session. End by giving positive praise about how people have shared their ideas and the skills that everyone in the room already has.

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults

# Session 4: Strong and Secure Attachments

<b>Session aim</b>	To support parents and caregivers to provide consistent, responsive caregiving and develop key skills to promote and maintain strong and secure attachment with all their children
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Module outline with road diagram posted on wall</li> <li>▪ Four dolls for Activity 4, Skills practice 1</li> <li>▪ Developmental milestones chart (if available)</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will:</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Understand the importance of emotional warmth and structure for children’s development and learning.</li> <li>● Learn how children’s development can be affected by key events, and how to respond and support children at such times.</li> <li>● Understand the importance of attachment and practice techniques for building and strengthening secure attachments</li> <li>● Learn and practise activities to support children at all developmental stages.</li> </ul>

<b>Session outline</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>How</b>
1. Welcome back and recap the previous session: Parents and caregivers remind themselves of the key messages of the previous session and share the home practice.	20 minutes	Group discussion
 2. Building our Children’s brains and bodies with Love Introduction* Parents and caregivers discuss how to promote stimulation and attachment at each stage.	40 minutes	Explanation, brainstorming and group work
3. Importance of safe, loving and stable families: Parents and caregivers explore what they can do at home to build secure attachments and healthy relationships.	30 minutes	Participatory exercise and group discussion
 *4. Promoting secure parent-child attachment*:	30 minutes	Group discussion and skills practice

Parents and caregivers practise skills for promoting secure attachments with children at different developmental stages.		
5. Promoting secure attachment between caregivers: Parents and caregivers practise skills for promoting secure attachments amongst caregivers.	15 minutes	Skills practice
6. Well-being activity – The 4 7 8 Breathing Exercise: Parents and caregivers practise a self-care activity to reduce stress.	5 minutes	Well-being activity
7. Summary and Take-Home Activity: Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice.	10 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session (time: 20 minutes)

1.1 Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the previous session).

If there are any parents and caregivers who were not present at the last session, ask one or two volunteers to explain what was discussed.

1.2 Remind everyone that we always begin with a discussion about last session's home practice. We will do this at the start of each session. You can begin by asking someone to remind the group what the home practice was, then ask 2-3 volunteers to share something about their home practice over the last week. Finally, ask if anyone can remind the group of some of the key messages you discussed in the previous week.

1.3 Introduce today's topic. Say: *We are going to discuss in detail some of the topics that we covered in session 3. We will start with the first, most basic and important need that children have –love - and how we can build strong and secure attachments for our children through showing love, and by providing stimulation to help our children's bodies and minds thrive.*

### 2. Building Our children's brains and bodies with love: Introduction (time: 40 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: *"It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken adults."*

2.2 Ask:

- How does this quote make you feel?
- What does this quote tell us about our role as parents and caregivers in helping children develop and thrive?

2.3 Ask the participants to form two or three straight lines and to stand without moving, touching, or talking to each other for one minute.

After a minute, clap and ask everyone to speak and touch the people standing next to them, for example by greeting and shaking hands or bumping elbows.

2.3 Remind people that in the previous session, we talked about the importance of supporting our children's brain to grow. Explain that inside the brain, there are constant connections between different parts of the brain. When a child sees, hears, or feels

something then these connections become active. This is called **“stimulation”**. When children are born, their brains continue to develop for the next 16 to 20 years.

*Facilitator note: There is more information on brain development in the Facilitator notes.*

Explain that when everyone was connecting with the people they stood next to, in the row, they were the connections in the child’s brain. When everyone is standing in a row and not making connections with each other, this is what is happening when a child is not receiving any experiences – not seeing, hearing sounds directly or feeling new things – that is, when the child is not receiving any stimulation.

2.4 Ask for instances when a child is not receiving any stimulation. Examples might include, when a young child is on the mother’s back for a long time (e.g. while she is working in the fields) or sitting on a mat doing nothing. It could also be when an older child or a teenager is not given new things to learn or is ignored.

2.5 Explain that these connections in the brain get stronger the more the child receives constant and predictable positive stimulation. Each time a newborn is cuddled, the baby will feel safe, secure and loved and the brain will make positive connections about feelings of security and love.

- Imagine many villages neighbouring each other, but with a lot of bushes in between. When people walk between villages, they create paths in the bush. Over time, well-worn paths are formed in the areas that are frequently used, while the paths that are less frequently used gradually disappear.
- A child’s brain is like the bush and the paths created by villagers walking through the bush are connections made in the brain when a child is talking or playing, or when the child is receiving stimulation – talking, watching new things, feeling secure in the family.
- The more a child is stimulated and feels safe and loved, the more the connections in the brain will become strong and allow the child to develop fully.

2.6 Explain that stimulation is an important way for the brain to develop and for the child to feel secure. Ask each group to discuss the following question:

- What can I do with my child or children that will stimulate their mind and help them feel secure and loved?

Remind people of the discussions that were held in the previous session about children’s needs and that most of the brainstorming activities help a child feel stimulated and loved. Ask people to think about activities that are appropriate for the child’s age and those that help the child feel close.

Allow up to 10 minutes for discussion and then bring everyone back into the main group. Ask volunteers to share their feedback.

2.7 Summarise with the following key messages:

- The brain develops most rapidly in the first three years of life. Every time you have a loving, stimulating interaction with your children, you help them form new

connections in their brain. That is why it is so important to stimulate your young children through play, starting from birth.

### 3. Importance of safe, loving and stable families (time: 30 minutes)

3.1 Ask four volunteers to come to the front..

3.2 Choose one volunteer and give him/her a long piece of masking tape. Explain that this participant will be the 'child'. The other three volunteers will be caregivers. Give the following instructions:

- The 'child' should stand next to one of the three 'caregivers' and use the tape to attach his/her arm to the arm of the caregiver.
- The 'child' now learns that they can no longer stay with this 'caregiver' so they must remove the tape from both of their arms.
- Ask the 'child': ".Was it painful?"
- Once the 'child' has answered, they should find a new 'caregiver' and use the same piece of masking tape to attach themselves to the new caregiver.
- As the 'child' sticks the tape to the new caregiver's arm, ask: "Is the feeling the same as the last time you attached yourself to the first caregiver?"
- Once the 'child' has answered, tell him/her that they cannot stay with the second 'caregiver'. Ask the 'child' to remove the tape.
- Ask the child: "Did this hurt as much as the last time?"
- Once the child has answered, ask the 'child' to attach themselves to the final 'caregiver'. Ask the child and the caregiver (or anyone in the group) whether the tape is working as well.

3.3 The tape will have lost its stickiness.. Ensure that this has been mentioned by the group (or mention it yourself) and then ask participants to reflect on what they have observed using the following guiding questions:

- What does this activity show about how children 'attach' to caregivers?
- What does it mean that the tape gets less sticky?
- Would we be able to use this tape to attach to even more caregivers?

3.4 Ask participants to give suggestions on when children may not be able to 'attach' to their caregiver. Write their answers on the flipchart.

*Note to facilitator: Encourage people to think about the children not only in their own homes but those around them. These might be children that they know who have a different caregiver at home regularly because the parents are out to work and the child does not have anyone there, children who have moved home a lot due to death, conflict or family problems, or children in child care institutions (orphanages) where staff and volunteers change from day to day.*

3.5 Write 'secure attachment' on a flip chart and ask people to say what secure attachment with a child means for them, based on the exercise that they have just done. Write their responses down.

Summarise the feedback from participants and emphasise the following key messages:

- Secure attachment is a loving, emotional relationship that a child forms with at least one consistent and reliable caregiver.
- Being physically available as a parent or caregiver is a good start, but it is not enough without emotional connections and engagement.
- Building a secure base for attachment means that parents and caregivers must create a stable, loving, consistent and emotionally supportive environment in which children and others in the household feel safe.
- Both men and women can help children feel safe and secure, and stimulate their growth.
- Children who have moved regularly will need time and patience in order to develop trust and attachment in their family. As parents, caregivers and community members, we can help create a reliable, stable and safe environment. It is important to remember the difficulties the children we live with face in attaching to people, and how this makes it difficult for them to trust and open up to people.

*Remind participants of the difficulties parents and caregivers may face and that this parenting course is about valuing what we are already doing well, and practising how to do better, not regretting what we have done in the past or judging others.*

3.6 Divide the participants into three groups and ask them to brainstorm the activities they can do at home to build secure attachment and relationships with their babies and younger children.

*If necessary, go around the separate groups as they are discussing and suggest some of the following activities: holding and touching (e.g., stroking, smiling, massaging, tickling, bathing, gentle touching, close eye contact, singing, feeding, cuddling, snuggling, skin to skin touch), playing, singing, responding to the child's sounds and movements, and laughing together.*

3.8 After five minutes, ask them to brainstorm the activities they can do at home to build secure attachment and relationships with their older children and teenagers.

*If necessary, go around the separate groups as they are discussing and suggest some of the following activities: sitting down together after school for five minutes and having a cup of tea, sharing household tasks e.g., going to the market or the fields together, reading and singing, listening when a teenager wants to explain an online app or game they play with their friends.*

3.9 After another five minutes, ask the groups to brainstorm on the things that can get in the way of developing secure attachments with their children, and what they might do to address the situation.

3.10 Ask each group to share what they have discussed with the whole group.

3.11 Thank the participants for sharing and summarise the session with the following key points if they have not already been shared:

- Attachment is the relationship developed between a child and a parent or primary caregiver.
- Secure attachment is necessary for healthy brain development. This is the foundation for positive child development.
- When a caregiver shows love and care, and makes the child feel safe, the child can use this person as a secure base from which to explore, and when necessary, to return to for safety and comfort.
- It is important for parents and caregivers to be approachable and active listeners. When you show your child that you are really listening and want to hear what they say, and you also open up to your child, you are establishing a good foundation upon which your child will feel more comfortable, more connected and will find it easier to talk to you about difficult things.
- Finding ways to say “I love you” every day remains an important part of strengthening attachment.
- Secure attachment starts with taking care of yourself as a caregiver – having the energy and confidence to be the best caregiver you can be will affect the child’s own feelings of security.
- It is never too late to build attachment. Sometimes parents and caregivers and their children can go through various experiences that affect the secure attachment bond, and sometimes you may start to care for a child when they are older. It is still possible to (re) build and strengthen these relationships by actively promoting secure parent-child attachment.

#### **4. Promoting secure parent-child attachment (time: 30 minutes)**

4.1 Remind participants that physical and emotional presence and availability are important for young children. We are now going to practise some of the attachment activities you can use with babies, children and teenagers.

##### 4.2 Introduce Skills Practice 1: The importance of touch (time: 15 minutes)

Divide participants into four groups, and give each group a doll. Ask them to practise some of the activities suggested in the previous discussion, passing the doll around in the group. Explain that these activities can be done within the daily family routine. If necessary, remind participants of some of the activities:

- Comforting touch: massaging, tickling, bathing, gentle touching, close eye contact, singing, feeding, cuddling, snuggling, skin to skin touch. Identify the kind of comforting touch suitable to children who may have disabilities and chronic health conditions.
- Playing together: Be creative about games and activities that can be done together. Adapt these activities to suit children living with disabilities and chronic health conditions. Ask parents to give a few examples of games and activities that they can play together (hide and seek, card/board games, ball games, reading story books, or telling stories you know, to children etc.)
- Develop family time activities that include all the children.

- Soothing activities: soothing a child when crying, comforting and consoling children when they are in distress. Hugging, assisting the child when doing something difficult such as household tasks and homework.

*Facilitator note: Clarify that not every child feels comfortable with touch – children with autism and other neurological conditions (that is, brain development is atypical) are sometimes overly sensitive or under sensitive to ‘sensory information’ –the things that stimulate the brain, such as noise, crowds, light, clothing, temperature and so on. This means their senses take in either too much or too little information from the environment around them. If a child appears reluctant to touch, find out what the child finds comforting. Children who have experienced violence in the past may also feel uncomfortable with touch. Again, it is important to respect the child’s need for privacy and independence. These issues will be discussed further in Sessions 11 and 12.*

4.3 Now introduce Skills practice 2: Provide structure through stability and routines (time: 10 minutes)

Explain that structure is an important way of helping children feel secure and loved. When a child is very small, they need a lot of warmth. As children grow and learn the difference between day and night and become more aware of others around them, they start to have a routine. Teenagers need a lot of structure to guide them in decision-making and think about the consequences of their actions.

Ask the group to brainstorm on ways in which they can provide structure within the home. Use the examples below if they have not been suggested:

- Giving clear guidelines
- Creating a routine
- Being consistent
- Clearly explaining your reasons
- Supporting your child to learn
- Being a positive role model
- Encouraging your child’s own thoughts and ideas
- Problem solving together

The starting point for giving structure is keeping the family’s daily and weekly routines as familiar and stable as possible.

Ask participants to discuss with a partner what a good daily and weekly routine might be (for example, eating a healthy breakfast, specific times for chores and homework, good health and hygiene routines (cleaning teeth, taking a shower etc.), time together as a family, fun activities, regular bedtimes and wake up times, etc.).

4.4 Introduce Skills Practice 3: Attachment with adolescents (time: 10 minutes)

Explain to the group that as our children get older and become adolescents, they need more independence and autonomy, but also still need the reassurance of clear routines and boundaries, and reassurance that their parents/caregivers love and care for them (even if they are usually reluctant to show it!).

Ask everyone to divide into groups of 3 -4 and discuss:

- Tips for setting clear rules and boundaries with teenagers
- Tips for giving teenagers increasing freedom and responsibility
- Tips for connecting, and have fun with, your teenage children

Ask if any groups would like to share some of the key points.

## 5. Promoting secure attachment between caregivers (time: 15 minutes)

5.1 Introduce this new activity by reminding the group that every parent and caregiver in the room has strengths that have always supported them as parents and caregivers. They can build on these strengths to reinforce their relationships with their partners and other adults in the home, as well as with their children.

5.2 Tell participants that now they are going to practise some attachment-based activities that they can use at home with their partners or others in the home, as well as with their children.

5.3 Introduce Skills Practice 1: Learn each other's love language and take action (time: 10 minutes).

- Remind participants that people express love, affection and appreciation in different ways. Remind them of the home practice of giving and receiving appreciation. Say that we will call these "love languages". Different people like to be appreciated in different ways.
- Show the flip chart that lists the five "love languages" – see the list in the facilitator note below.
- Read out each of the titles one by one and ask people to get into pairs or small groups of three or four. Ask them to share examples of what they would do or say under each love language in the group.
- As they are discussing, move around the groups. Once they have discussed for five minutes, call on volunteers in the groups to share their examples – pick two examples per category to share in plenary.

*Facilitator note: The five types of love language are:*

- *Words of affirmation (congratulation and encouragement; praise and compliments; telling someone you love them and are proud of them)*
- *Physical touch (hugs, sitting close together and doing something together such as praying, watching TV, pats on the back)*
- *Acts of service (easing each other's responsibilities and burdens, such as sharing or doing each other's household chores, cleaning up after yourself so your partner is not left with more work, helping with something that the other person is finding difficult or hard work)*
- *Quality time (remember what was discussed in Session 3, doing enjoyable things together, spending family time together, giving undivided attention)*
- *Gifts (these do not have to be expensive – a flower picked from a tree or baking a meal that someone likes, giving not only on special days).*

*See the facilitator notes for examples under each of these five categories.*

5.4 Now introduce Skills practice 2: Using positive language (time: 5 minutes)

- Ask participants to practise in pairs to find ways of communicating in a manner that respects and makes the other person feel valued.
- You may want to start with a few examples to encourage ideas (but only if people are struggling for ideas). The first statement could be how we speak if we are hurried, tired or busy and the suggestion (in brackets) is how to say the same thing in a positive way:
  - Don't yell (Please use a quiet voice)
  - Don't talk to me like that (Please use kind words)
  - Don't interrupt me (Please wait until I finish talking)
  - Don't throw the ball inside (Please take the ball outside)
  - It's too expensive for us (It's not as affordable as we had hoped)
- Ask the group to practise for five minutes and then ask for one suggestion from each pair.
- Summarise the key message:
  - Telling adults and children what you want them to do rather than what you do not want them to do puts the focus on what you want to see happening. This increases your chances of a positive outcome.

## 6. Well-being Activity – The 4- 7- 8 Breathing Exercise (time: 5 minutes)

6.1 Ask participants to stand comfortably with their eyes closed and read out the following instructions:

- Breathe out through your mouth, making a whoosh sound, until your lungs are empty.
- Close your mouth and breathe in quietly through your nose while counting in your head up to 4.
- Hold your breath for a count of 7.
- Breathe out through your mouth, making a whoosh sound to a count of 8.
- Repeat this three times.

6.2 Suggest to participants they could try this at home once or twice a day, especially during times of stress. It is also a useful exercise to do with your children.

Explain that in the next session, we will be spending the whole session on self-care so ask people to really think about what type of activities work for them.

## 7. Summary and take-home activity (time: 10 minutes)

7.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end and that we would like to reflect on the discussions today..

Ask participant to give their thoughts on the most important messages that have come up during the discussions

As people call out, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

### Key messages for Session 4

Children of all ages and abilities need loving and secure relationships. Parents and caregivers help their children have the best possible start in life when they connect with them. Building this

connection and attachment starts from conception through providing loving and caring stimulation. This helps to build a child's body and brain and builds up attachment.

Attachment and bonding can be more challenging for families who have undergone separation, those affected by violence, and those who have gone through challenging life experiences. However, it is always possible to rebuild, or to build new connections.

Having regular routines that are right for your child and family is an important way of building security, which is an important part of attachment.

Understanding and offering affection using the ways that your children and partners appreciate is an important way of building up strong relationships.

#### 7.2 Remind people about the idea of home practice.

Ask people to remember that today is about building healthy and strong family relationships.

Propose the following home practice:

- Find time in the week to create a simple routine together with your children so that you all know what to expect during your day or week. You could do this in a family meeting. Try and allow each child in your household to have a turn choosing an activity: exercise; playing a game together; cooking together; singing and dancing together; reading a book together; doing household chores together; learning something new together.

7.3 Thank everyone for attending. Remind participants that we will be looking at *Caring For Yourself and Caring For Others* in the next session. Conclude by giving positive praise about how participants have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

# Session 5: Caring For Yourself and Caring For Others

To be able to love other people, you must be able to love yourself

<b>Session aim</b>	To understand how to physically, psychologically and spiritually care for ourselves, children and others, and apply practical strategies for doing this within our families.
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flip chart and pens</li> <li>▪ Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Module outline with road diagram posted on wall</li> <li>▪ Copies of role plays for Activity 5</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appreciate the importance of mental health, and understand that self-care is an important part of parenting</li> <li>▪ Reflect on how the gender roles in our families and communities can impact our mental health, well-being and opportunities for self-care</li> <li>▪ Practise skills for recognising and regulating emotions, and learning practical and affordable self-care techniques for themselves and for their families</li> </ul>

<b>Session outline</b>		
<b>Activity</b>	<b>Time</b>	<b>How?</b>
<b>1: Welcome and sharing</b> Everyone is welcome to the session, reflects on what they learnt the previous week and shares experiences from their home practice.	25 mins	Group discussion and sharing
<b>2: Introduction: The importance of caring for ourselves and caring for others</b> The topic of caring for ourselves and caring for others is introduced. Participants discuss the week's proverb, and share their own experiences.	10 mins	Group discussion and sharing

<p>★★★</p> <p><b>3: Discussion: How gender roles influence caring for ourselves and others*</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers discuss potential challenges for caring for ourselves and caring for others, identify ways these challenges are different for women and for men and practise skills for caring for ourselves and others in our families.</p>	30 mins	Breakout groups, listening and brainstorming
<p>★★★</p> <p><b>4. Skills Practice: Naming our emotions*</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers practise the skill of identifying different emotions.</p>	30 mins	Skills Practice
<p><b>5. Applying key skills: Family role plays</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers use role plays to identify opportunities to integrate practices to care for ourselves and others into family life.</p>	30 mins	Role play and discussion
<p>★★★</p> <p><b>6. Well-being exercise: The body scan</b></p> <p>Participants are taken through a well-being exercise that helps with rest and relaxation.</p>	10 mins	Well-being activity
<p><b>7. Recap and take home activity</b></p> <p>Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take home practice and write reflections in their journals.</p>	15 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection and journaling

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Sharing (25 mins)

1.1 Welcome everyone to the session and appreciate everyone's commitment in coming to the session today.

Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray, or share a short reflection/quote (if appropriate in your setting) before the meeting starts.

1.2 Remind everyone that in the previous session we discussed forming strong and secure attachments. Ask the group 'what are some of the key messages we discussed last week?' 'what was the most important learning for you in the last session?' and 'what were some of the skills we practised?'

Ask someone to call out what was the 'take home practice', and ask 2-3 volunteers to share something from how their home practice went this week.

### Session 4 Home Practice

*Find time in the week to create a simple routine together with your children so that you all know what to expect during your day or week.*

## 2. Introduction to the topic (10 mins)

2.1 Explain that this week we will be discussing the topic of ‘caring for ourselves and for others’. Read out the quote ‘to be able to love other people you must be able to love yourself’, and ask the group:

- How does this quote make you feel?
- Would anyone like to share some examples of caring for yourself and caring for others that is practised within your own family? And/or to share any challenges about why it is sometimes difficult to do this?

If the group has not already explained what ‘self-care’ means, explain that ‘self-care’ means looking after yourself through actions and choices that promote your health and wellbeing. This might include exercise, sleep, healthy eating and looking after your emotional health.

2.2 Show people the flip chart with the sessions along the road. Explain:

- We have journeyed some way along the road and talked about the importance of our roles and responsibilities as parents and what we can do to help children’s development for every age, including children with unique needs.
- It can be tiring walking along the road. So today we are going to take a pause, a breath and a rest! This journey towards our family vision is only possible if we look after ourselves and make sure that we do not get too tired and help all our family members to not get too tired.

## 3. Self-Care Group Discussion (30 mins)

3.1 Ask caregivers to divide into two groups – one for women and one for men. If the group is male-only or female-only, ask them to divide into two groups of youngest members, and older members.

In each group ask them to discuss the following questions:

- What does a typical day involve for you? What activities, tasks and responsibilities do you need to take care of? When do you have time for rest and relaxation?
- What makes it challenging for women/men to look after their mental health and practise caring for themselves?

- What are the opportunities for women/men to look after their mental health and practise caring for themselves?
- What small practices/routines can families practise to care for each other and ensure everyone in the family has time for rest and relaxation?

Give each group 15 minutes to discuss.

3.3 Ask the women's (or younger) group to go first, and for a spokeswoman from each group to present the key points of their discussion.

Before they present, remind the men (or older group) who are listening to practise their 'active listening skills' (i.e. focusing on what someone is saying and making an effort to understand what they are telling you, rather than trying to think of a response or thinking about your point of view)

3.4 After the women have presented back, ask the men's group 'what are the key points you heard from women in their presentation?'

3.5 Repeat with the men's group presenting.

3.6 After both groups have presented, ask the group to brainstorm what could be done in your own families to care for each other. Encourage the group to think of practical suggestions, and make a list of their suggestions on the flip chart – ensure that a range of suggestions have been covered (see a list of suggested activities to take care of yourselves and others in the facilitator notes/resources)

3.7 Summarise the activity and thank everyone for their ideas.

#### 4. Parenting Skills Practice – Naming our emotions (30 mins)<sup>11</sup>

4.1 Explain to the group: In this activity we are going to practise identifying and naming our emotions. This might be something that we are not used to doing, and it may feel a little uncomfortable at first. That is ok.

4.2 Ask the group to close their eyes and think about:

- *What emotion are you feeling right now? For example, do you feel happy, sad, relaxed, thoughtful, anxious, angry? etc.*
- *Can you identify why you are feeling like this? (What is the cause or the 'causes' of your feeling?)*
- *What does this emotion do to your body, mind and soul – can you physically feel it?*
- *When in your life have you felt this emotion before?*
- *How might this feeling affect your behaviour?*

4.3 Then ask the group to close their eyes again, and this time ask them to think about a time when they feel happy.

Ask the group:

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<sup>11</sup> This activity is adapted from Parenting for lifelong health  
[https://www.who.int/violence\\_injury\\_prevention/violence/child/PLH-manuals/en/](https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/child/PLH-manuals/en/)

- *Think of a day in your life when you felt really happy*
- *What kind of thoughts did you have when you felt happy? How did those thoughts affect your behaviour?*
- *What does your body feel like when you are happy? Where did you feel it in your body? What did it look like in your face?*
- *How do you know when your child is feeling this emotion?*

4.4 Repeat this exercise with different emotions (use a mixture of positive and negative emotions) - for example angry, sad, optimistic, anxious, afraid, love, etc.

4.5 Invite caregivers to get into pairs and to play the 'mirror game' – partners stand or sit facing each other. Choose who is Person 1 and who is Person 2, Person 1 says an emotion, Person 2 shows that emotion in her/his face and body, Person 1 mirrors that emotion back to the second parent. Try this exercise a few times, with pairs swapping roles each time.

4.6 Explain to participants that naming feelings tends to make the feelings more manageable and can give the person the chance to take a step back and make choices about what to do.

4.7 Encourage participants to practise doing this often, and to support their children to do this.

4.8 Summarise the activity:

- What we do and how we behave are often influenced by our emotions and how we are feeling at the time. Sometimes our first response cannot have the result we wished for, or hurts other people.
- If we practise recognising our emotions, then we can also practise ways to manage these emotions effectively (for example, if you recognise that you feel angry, you may choose to take a deep breath or go for a walk rather than shouting or hitting someone).
- In life we will experience a range of emotions, both positive and more challenging. It is important to practise useful responses (rather than destructive ones), and to gain some control over our reactions. This is not always easy, but when we put this into practice our relationships (and our lives) can improve.

## 5. Applying Key Skills – Family Role Plays (30 mins)

5.1 Divide participants into two groups to role-play the following scenarios.

*Facilitator note: if you have a larger group you may want to divide into four groups, and give the same role-play to two different groups. You may adapt the case studies below to reflect any issues that have been raised by the group.*

5.2 Provide group 1 with role play 1 and group 2 with role play 2. Give them 15 minutes to prepare a role play that shows:

- What is the family's situation?
- What kind of stresses is this family dealing with?

- What kind of impacts do these stresses have on the adults and the children in this family?
- What could this family put into practice to support their mental health, and to care for themselves and each other?

5.3 Once the groups have prepared the role play, bring everyone back together for a debrief and discussion. Use the following questions as a guide:

- *What did we learn from these role plays?*
- *Are these common scenarios in our own communities? Why/why not?*
- *Do some of the lessons from these role plays apply to our own families and situations?*
- *What simple steps can we take to manage stress and prioritise care in our own families?*
- *Are the challenges to include caring for ourselves and caring for others different for women, men, girls and boys? If so, how?*

**Role play 1:** Centrine is married to Juma. They got married when Centrine was only 15 after Juma impregnated her.. They have 3 children aged 3, 9 and 13 years. Juma is a motorcycle taxi rider – he doesn't make very much money and sometimes it is not enough to support the family. Centrine often does odd jobs so that she can ensure the children eat, have the basics and are able to go to school. She also takes care of the children and the daily household chores. Centrine often feels exhausted, and worries about the future.

She never has enough time to get everything done and looking after herself is never a priority. Juma is stressed and exhausted when he comes home from his work, he feels worried about the future too, but does not like talking about it, and instead often joins his friends drinking or smoking bhang or chewing khat, when he returns home he ignores Centrine and sometimes gets angry with the children.

**Role play 2:** Rose is a single parent with three children, two are her biological and one is the daughter of her sister who died a few years ago. The children's father left when they were very young, and never came back. Rose does not know his whereabouts and neither receives financial support from him.

Her three children are now older; the girls are 12 and 14, and the boy is 16. Rose loves her children very much and feels proud of her family. However, she also feels anxious about the financial burdens of raising them, paying for their education, and being exhausted by her parental responsibilities. The children love Rose very much, but she is always busy and stressed. She often does not have time to talk with them, and they do not feel like she listens to their opinions. This can sometimes lead to arguments at home.

## 6. Well-being exercise: Body Scan Meditation as suitable in your setting and audience (15 mins)

6.1 Explain that before we close the session, we will take part in a short well-being exercise for relaxation. This exercise can also be practised at home.

6.2 Ask everyone to sit comfortably and close their eyes. (If the group feels comfortable/the space is suitable this exercise can also be practised lying on the floor.)

6.3 Use the following instructions to take the group through the body scan meditation.

- Ask everyone to notice how their body feels, relaxed or tense? Are some parts of your body more tense than others?
- Explain to them that you will be practising body scan meditation. In this exercise, you will guide them to focus on different parts of their body from head to toe and encourage them to relax each part.
- Begin by instructing everyone to start with the crown of the head, focus on this, take a deep breath and relax this part of the body. Move down naming the rest of the parts of the head; the forehead, the cheeks, the nose and ears. Name each of these parts in turn, focus on them, take a deep breath, and relax.
- Next move onto the upper half of the body, the neck, the left shoulder, the right, the top part of your chest, take a deep breath and relax.
- Move down the arms and fingers; the right arm, the right wrist, the right hand, the palm of the hand, the little finger, ring finger, middle finger, index finger and thumb, take a deep breath and relax.
- Repeat for the left arm and fingers.
- Move onto the lower part of the body. The lower ribs, the tummy and abdomen, the hips and pelvic area. Take a deep breath and relax.
- Move down the legs; the right thigh, the right knee, the right calf, the right ankle, the right foot, the ball of the right foot, the sole of the right foot, the top of the foot, the little toe, the second toe, the middle toe, the fourth toe and the big toe. Take a deep breath and relax.
- Repeat for the left leg and foot.
- Finally, ask everyone to observe if their whole body is feeling more relaxed.
- Encourage them to continue noticing their breath and the overall sensations in their body.

- Let the group sit for a short time with this feeling, then ask everyone to slowly open their eyes, maybe have a stretch/roll their shoulders.

Ask if anyone would like to share how it felt to do this exercise

6.5 Thank everyone for joining in and remind the group that this is an exercise you can do yourself at home when you need to relax. You could also try it with your children or with other members of the household.

## 7. Take home activity and recap (20 mins)

7.1 Ask 'what was the most important thing that you took from the session today?' Take answers from a few different members of the group.

7.2 Summarise the session and recap the 'Key Messages':

### Key messages for Session 5

- Parents and caregivers have many roles and responsibilities; these bring joy but can be challenging and exhausting!
- Spending a few minutes every day looking after ourselves is good for us as well as good for the whole family and community.
- Parents and caregivers need time to relax, rest, recharge and unwind
- Self-care is important for both women and men. Women are often expected to care for others first and play many roles in the family. This means they often have little time to themselves and can't prioritise self-care. Men are often discouraged from acknowledging or expressing their own emotions. This can make asking for help or seeking support when it is needed more difficult.
- When we cannot look after ourselves well enough, it is harder to give the love and support that children need to grow up healthy.
- When children of all ages practise small acts of self-care and self-help, this can decrease stress, improve relationships, and promote wellness of the body, soul and mind.
- If we are overwhelmed for long periods of time, we can seek support from our spouse, another caregiver or other family and close community members such as a grandparent, friend or neighbour.

7.3 Remind everyone that it is important to practise what we have learnt at home. This week, try to think of one thing you can do to care for yourself at home, and one thing you can do to care for others, and practise these at home with your family this week.

7.4 Thank everyone for their active participation today and remind them that the next session is on Positive Communication. If suitable in your setting, finish with a prayer or a song.

Communication does not work when two people speak at the same time

# Session 6: Positive Communication

<b>Session aim</b>	To understand elements of good communication, and to learn practical skills that can be used to improve communication in families
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Flip chart and pens</li> <li>▪ Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Module outline with road diagram posted on wall</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Appreciate the importance of how positive communication can strengthen understanding of each other and family relationships</li> <li>▪ Practise effective verbal and non-verbal communication skills with children of all ages, and between parents and caregivers.</li> <li>▪ Practice strategies for use of positive communication in sensitive and challenging situations</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How
<p><b>4. Welcome and sharing</b></p> <p>Everyone is welcome to the session, reflects on what they learnt the previous week and shares experiences from their home practice.</p>	20 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
<p><b>2: Introduction to Positive Communication</b></p> <p>The topic of positive communication is introduced. Parents and caregivers discuss the week's proverb, and share their own experiences.</p>	10 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
<p><b>3. Discussion – Building blocks and Roadblocks</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers discuss positive and challenging conversations they've had in the past, and use these</p>	30 mins	Pair work, brainstorming and group discussion

examples to identify the building blocks and roadblocks for positive communication.		
 <b>4. Skills practice: Active Listening and 'I Feel' Statements</b> Parents and caregivers practise two skills to enable better communication – active listening and 'I feel' statements.	40 mins	Skills Practice
<b>5. Applying the Skill : Difficult Conversations</b> Parents and caregivers practise the skills and techniques in promoting positive communication and share feedback with each other.	25 mins	Break out groups and role play
 <b>6. Well-being activity: Expressing Appreciation</b> Parents and caregivers practise giving and receiving appreciation and positive feedback.	10 mins	Well-being exercise
<b>7. Recap and take-home activity</b> Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take-home practice and write reflections in their journals	15 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection

## Activities

### 1. Recap and Sharing (time: 20 mins)

1.1 Welcome everyone to the session and appreciate their commitment in coming.

1.2 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray (if appropriate in your setting), or share a short reflection or song. 1.3 Remind everyone that in the previous session we discussed caring for ourselves and caring for others, ask the group 'what are some of the key messages we discussed last week?'

Ask if anyone can share with the group what the home practice was.

*Reminder: Session 5 Home Practice:*

- *Think of one thing you can do to care for yourself at home, and one thing you can do to care for others*

Ask 2-3 volunteers to share how they practised self-care at home, and how it felt.

Encourage participants to provide suggestions for each other if someone has a challenge.

### 2. Positive Communication: Introduction (time: 10 mins)

2.1 Explain that this week we will be discussing the topic of 'positive communication'. Share the quote 'Communication does not work when two people speak at the same time', and ask the group 'what are your reflections on this saying?' and 'have you ever

experienced trying to communicate when two people were talking at the same time? What was the result?' Gather initial reflections from the group.

2.2 Ask the group 'Would anyone like to share some examples of good communication that is practised within your own family? And/or to share any challenges about why it is sometimes difficult to do this?'

2.3 Explain that positive communication means communicating between individuals in a way that expresses what you are feeling clearly, is respectful and is supportive of the other person. The communication can be spoken or can be in other ways – gestures and facial expressions.

### 3. Discussion: Building Blocks and Roadblocks (time: 20 mins)

3.1 Explain that we all have had experiences where we have felt heard and understood, and experiences where we have felt misunderstood and even ignored. In this exercise we'll explore some of these experiences and what they tell us about good communication.

3.2 Ask parents and caregivers to think about a time they had a good conversation with someone. It could be with a friend/partner/ child/ relative/neighbour. Ask them to think about what made it a good conversation, and then ask them to share with their neighbour:

- *Who did you have the conversation with?*
- *Why do you think it was a good conversation?*
- *What were the elements that made it a good conversation?*

Allow five minutes for people to discuss in pairs.

4.1 **3.3** Ask each pair to share something about what they discussed – these are 'building blocks for good conversation'.

3.4 Now ask everyone to find a different partner, and this time to discuss a conversation that didn't go well/where people in the conversation were misunderstood. Ask them to think about

- *Who did you have the conversation with?*
- *Why did you think the conversation wasn't successful?*
- *What were the elements of the conversation that contributed to it not being successful?*

3.5 Ask each pair to share something about what they discussed – these are 'roadblocks to good communication'.

3.6 Then ask the whole group how/whether some of these building blocks and roadblocks show up in communication with their own family?

3.7 Using the examples that people have just discussed, ask people about how communication differs with children of different ages.

*Facilitator note: Refer to the facilitator notes for more information about communication techniques with children of different ages, if these issues are not raised by participants.*

3.8 Ask the group, if someone in your family has a disability, what additional considerations might there be, for good communication? What strategies and practices can help aid good communication for those with hearing and visual impairments, and for those with cognitive disabilities?

3.9 Summarise the activity and thank everyone for participating.

#### **4. Skills Practice – Active Listening and ‘I feel’ statements (time: 40 mins)**

4.1 Explain to participants that we’re going to practise two skills that can help to improve our communication skills – active listening and using ‘I feel...’ to communicate about difficult topics.

##### **Skills Practice 1: Active listening**

4.2 Pair the participants. Ask one person in each pair to ask their partner to share the best moment, and the most disappointing moment of their day yesterday. Ask the other person to practise active listening skills, conveying their empathy and understanding through both verbal and nonverbal communication (e.g. smiling, nodding, making noises of agreement or small affirmative comments ‘I understand’, ‘I see’ etc.).

4.3 After 2-3 minutes, the listening partner should give feedback of what they have heard and understood – ask the listening partners to focus on summarising what their partner told them, and not their own opinions (for example ‘I understood that you felt happy and excited to be spending time with your children’ rather than ‘I think you were lucky to spend that time with your children’) – after the listening partner has given feedback, the partner who was sharing should clarify whether their partner understood what was being communicated, and clarify anything that hasn’t been well understood.

4.4 Summarise the active listening techniques that have been demonstrated.

*Facilitator note: You can use the following summary, if these points are not made:*

- *Focusing on what the person is saying with no distractions, for example by looking at the person’s face, nodding when they are speaking, avoiding looking away such as looking at your phone, watching the TV or listening to someone else.*
- *For a child, sitting at their level, on a chair or on the floor.*
- *Avoiding interruptions*
- *Checking that you understand what they are saying, for example by saying: “Can I check that I understood you. You are saying that you feel frustrated because.... Is that correct?”*
- *Giving the person space to speak – allow time for them to think about the words that they want to use.*

4.5 Now ask everyone to switch roles and repeat the exercise for 2-3 minutes and ask for feedback about whether active listening was practised.

4.6 Summarise the exercise to participants explaining that:

- Practising active listening can help family members feel heard and understood.
- Adults in the household can use this to check how each other is feeling – it can be simple, just for a few minutes at any time in the day.
- This is something you can practise with your children. For infants and toddlers, look at what they are expressing with their face and movements. For older children, try asking them simple questions at certain times (for example when they come home from school), and then really paying attention to the answers they give you. For adolescents, be sensitive not to pry too much and find times when you are together, for example if they are helping with house chores.

### Skills Practice 2: 'I feel...' statements

4.7 Remind the group that in the previous session (caring for ourselves and caring for others) we practised identifying our emotions. Explain that as well as being able to identify our emotions it is also important to be able to share them with those we care about. We all may have trouble sharing our feelings sometimes, even (or especially) with those we are closest to. A great way to work on communicating your feelings more often – and more effectively – is to practise saying “I feel .” Explain that this can be useful when we are experiencing strong emotions, or discussing a sensitive or difficult subject with a partner, friend, or family member.

4.8 Explain that you are going to describe a feeling in two ways and you would like participants to choose the one they think would be more useful when a partner has forgotten an important event or activity. Then say the following two sentences:

- *You don't respect my time, you are so forgetful and inconsiderate.*
- *I feel forgotten when you turn up late.*

4.9 Once you have read the two sentences, ask for suggestions about which is better and why?

4.10 Explain that this same approach applies to the way we talk with our children, share these two sentences:

- *You are naughty and disrespectful! You never help me in the house!*
- *I feel upset when you forget to do your chores, but when we all help out then I feel like the family members are working together and supporting each other.*

4.11 Once you have read the two sentences, ask for suggestions about which is better and why.

4.12 Once you have heard a few suggestions, summarise by saying that:

- When we focus on how we're feeling, rather than attacking or blaming the other person, it can make communication about sensitive topics much easier.

- Explaining how you feel shows your family members that you care about having a constructive conversation, and this makes it easier for them to understand things from your perspective.
- It is also important to ask how the other person feels about the situation.
- Communication does not have to be spoken. How we look and our body language is as important as the words that we use.
- Positive communication is important for everyone in the family. When children see their parents or caregivers listening well and communicating positively with them, this builds up a sense of security and attachment and children learn communication skills themselves.

## 5. Applying the Skill – Approaching Difficult Discussions (time: 25 mins)

5.1 Divide into small buzz groups (3-4 participants in each).

5.2 Ask the groups to practise how they would respond to the following situations by role playing the conversations, remind participants to draw on some of the skills learnt in the previous activities (active listening and I feel” statements), as well as the ideas in the ‘building blocks and roadblocks’ to good communication.

5.3 Tell participants that they have fifteen minutes to role play these scenarios in their group (5 minutes for each scenario, including time for feedback). Ask two people to have the conversation, whilst 1-2 people in the group take on the role of observer and give feedback after the conversation has taken place

**Scenario 1:** You asked your spouse to buy something at the market, and she/he forgot to buy it. You have had a long day and feel frustrated at their forgetfulness when she/he arrives home. How would you handle the situation?

**Scenario 2:** Your daughter normally receives good grades at school, but you recently received a report from school that said she was falling behind – her grades haven’t been as good and she is not concentrating in class. How might you approach a conversation with her about this topic?

**Scenario 3:** Your brother is close with your family and often spends time with you and your children. Recently though he has been coming over and telling off/disciplining the children in ways that you don’t like. How can you start a conversation with him on this?

**Scenario 4:** You have three children, aged 4, 10 and 17. The middle child has a hearing impairment. As you have children of different ages and abilities to consider, it is sometimes difficult to make sure that everyone feels included and listened to, so you have started the practice of regular family meetings to ensure everyone can have their say. What strategies will you use in these family meetings to make sure everyone, including your child with a hearing impairment, feels heard and included?

5.4 After fifteen minutes, bring everyone back for a plenary discussion, using the following questions as a guide:

- *What reflections do groups have on the conversations they just had? What went well? What was challenging?*
- *What advice/tips do you have for others on using good communication for difficult discussions?*
- *Are these approaches relevant in our own family lives? Why/why not?*
- *How might you integrate some of the skills for good communication learnt today into your family's daily lives/routines?*

After people have shared their thoughts, summarise the following key messages:

- Positive communication is the basic building block of any relationship, and of building healthy and happy family relationships.
- When a family knows how to communicate effectively and everyone feels heard, they are less angry, stressed, are more open to resolve problems and can develop more trust and caring between family members.
- Children of different ages and developmental stages have different communication needs, both spoken and non-verbal. Family members can develop additional skills like basic sign language, pointing and gesturing that enable them to understand and communicate with children and adults with disabilities effectively.

## 6. Well-being Activity (time: 15 mins)

6.1 Ask participants to find someone that they would like to work with – this is a relaxing activity about being kind to each other.

6.2 Once participants found a friend, tell the group that we will go around in a circle and each pair is going to tell the rest of the group one thing that they appreciate about their friend and what they bring to the group (for example 'she is always smiling!', 'he is very good at listening to what everyone says' or 'she makes us laugh all the time')

6.3 Once participants have shared something about their friend with the group, ask them to now think about themselves – what is one thing they appreciate about themselves? Ask participants to make a note of this (it could be a written note or a drawing) in their notebooks.

6.4 Ask the group 'how did it feel to hear this nice thing about yourself?' Collect a few responses.

6.5 Explain that when someone gives us a genuine compliment, or appreciates us, it makes us feel good and builds our trust and relationship with that person – this is an easy skill to practise in your own family.

## 7. Take home activity and recap (time: 15 mins)

7.1 Ask 'what was the most important thing that you took from the session today?' Take answers from a few different members of the group.

7.2 Summarise the session and recap the Key Messages

## Key messages for Session 6

- Positive communication helps to build healthy and happy family relationships.
  - When a family knows how to communicate effectively and everyone feels heard, they are less angry, stressed, are more open to resolve problems and can develop more trust and caring between family members.
  - Positive, open communication is especially important for children or caregivers who do not know each other very well – for example, in cases where children are coming back home after separation from their families or instances where children are joining a new family.
  - Children of different ages and developmental stages have different communication needs, both spoken and non-verbal. Family members can develop additional skills that enable them to understand and communicate with children and adults with disabilities effectively.
- 4.1 **7.3** Remind participants that it is important to practise what we have learnt at home – this week, think of one way you can practise positive communication with your partner/other adults in the household (if applicable, make sure to note that there are many types of families and that some people may be the only adult in the family), and one way you can practise positive communication with your children. Practise these skills at home with your family this week.

Thank everyone for their active participation. Remind them when the next session will take place. It will be about play. If suitable in your setting, finish with a prayer or a song.

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# Session 7: Positive Play and Preparing to Learn

Play gives children a chance to practise what they are learning

Session aim	To understand the importance of play in promoting child development, and supporting parents and caregivers to support their children's learning and social development at all ages, through fun activities for the whole family.
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>▪ Module outline with road diagram posted on wall</li> <li>▪ For Activity 4: Five bags or boxes containing at least five safe and clean materials for imaginative play with children aged 0-5 years, the following are examples:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ up to 10 cleaned and smooth bottle tops;</li> <li>○ a wooden spoon;</li> <li>○ one or two plastic or tin cups that could be used for stacking;</li> <li>○ plastic or wooden blocks for stacking;</li> <li>○ a soft ball or a fruit or vegetable that could roll around;</li> <li>○ a shiny object such as a key ring;</li> <li>○ a home-made scrapbook e.g. four pictures cut out from a magazine or old calendars and glued onto paper).</li> </ul> </li> <li>▪ For Activity 5: A collection of magazines or children's books that include simple pictures that can be used for storytelling.</li> </ul> <p><i>Note for the facilitator: This session includes activities that provide ideas for play with children of different ages. If parents and caregivers in your group all have children of a similar age, spend more time on the most relevant age-specific activities.</i></p>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand the importance of play for children's physical/practical, emotional, learning, social and spiritual/ moral development.</li> <li>▪ Understand the importance of supporting children as they prepare for and attend school at all ages</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Practice techniques for stimulating young children through locally available, no-cost toys and activities and for playing with older children.</li> <li>▪ Identify practical ways for families to come together and spend quality time through play.</li> </ul>
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Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
<b>1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session</b> Parents and caregivers remind themselves of the key messages of the previous session and share back the home practice.	15 minutes	Group discussion
<b>2. Introduction – The power of play</b> Parents and caregivers are introduced to the key messages about the importance of play for children’s development and for family well-being.	15 minutes	Explanation and brainstorming
★★ <b>3. Group discussion: The importance of play and keeping children safe through play</b> Parents and caregivers discuss how play is important for children of all ages, including children with disabilities, and including play within daily activities and routines.	30 minutes	Group discussion
★★ <b>4. Skills practice – Structured play, preparing to learn</b> Parents and caregivers practise skills for different types of play for children of different ages (Note: This activity can be adapted to focus exclusively on one age group, if only the age of children is represented in the group).	45 minutes	Skills practise
<b>5. Applying the skill – play with children of different ages</b> Parents and caregivers practise reading skills or talking with children about online safety. (Note: This activity can be adapted to focus exclusively on one age group, if only the age of children is represented in the group).	30 minutes	Skills practise
★★ Well-being activity	5 minutes	Well-being activity

<b>6. Well-being activity – Dance time</b> Parents and caregivers practice a self-care activity to reduce stress.		
<b>7. Summary and Take-Home Activity</b> Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice.	10 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session (time: 15 minutes)

4.1 **1.1** Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the group agreement).

If there are any parents and caregivers who were not present at the last session, ask one or two volunteers to explain what was talked about in the last session.

1.2 Remind participants that we always begin with a discussion about last session's home practice. We will do this at the start of each session. You can first ask someone to remind the group what the home practice was.

*Reminder: Session 6 Home Practice:*

- *Think of one way you can practise positive communication with your partner/other adults in the household*
- *Think of one way you can practise positive communication with your children.*

1.3 Ask 2-3 volunteers to share something about their home practice over the last week

Encourage participants to provide suggestions for each other if someone has a challenge.

1.7 Introduce today's topic. We are now going to talk about play. Play is important for children of all ages – from babies through to older teenagers. But obviously it is different for children of different ages.

*Note: If the parents and caregivers in the group that you are facilitating only have younger children, or older children, confirm with them whether they want to focus on that age only and spend longer on the age-specific activities in Activity 5.*

### 2. Introduction: The power of play (time: 15 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: "Play gives children a chance to practise what they are learning"

*Note: You can use an alternative proverb from local cultures if preferred as long as they focus on the importance of attachment and stimulation from the start.*

2.2 Ask:

- How does this quote make you feel?

- Is it always true?
- What does this quote tell us about the importance of creating play activities that can be done together with children?

2.3 Explain that we will be talking today about the power of play. We are going to start by remembering what it was like when we were young.

#### **Remembering when we were young<sup>12</sup>**

- Ask participants to turn to the person next to them and tell that person about a positive memory of playing from their own childhood.
  - What do you remember enjoying about playing when you were a child?
  - How did it make you feel?
  - Do you miss anything about that childhood play, or are you able to still capture those feelings sometimes?
- After not more than 3 minutes, ask a few volunteers to share their reflections with the whole group.

2.3. Now explain:

- We are going to talk about play in this session.
- Play is one of the most important ways in which children develop.
- Play is important for children of all ages although the way that children play is different – even adults do when we are able to.
- Play is good in itself – we feel good when we play
- Play is also an important part of developing and growing.

2.4. Ask the following question and note down the answers on a piece of flip chart:

- How does play help children develop and grow?

*Note: Remind participants that development and growth includes: physical/practical, emotional, cognitive, social and spiritual/moral. Encourage people to think about everything that you have already covered in the training programme.*

2.5. Thank participants for the suggestions that they have given and make the connection to the previous sessions.

Summarise the key messages below building on what has already been shared by participants:

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<sup>12</sup> The activities in this session have been adapted from [please advise who is the author of *Msingi Bora: Community Meetings to Promote Early Child Development (ECD)* and Ministry of Social Welfare. UNICEF Sierra Leone, *Good Kombra na Gladly Family*, draft version developed by Maestral International.

- Play helps us bond with children from a very early age
- Play is an important tool for developing skills including imagination, communication, problem-solving, giving and receiving instructions
- Children, including children with disabilities, benefit from play. Play is a way of showing love., Playing with children is spending quality time with them
- When children play as babies, their brains are stimulated which helps them learn new things
- As children grow up, they spend more time playing alone or with friends. However, daily one-to-one fun time with the parent or caregiver remains really important.
- Playing with others is a way of learning new social and communication skills, and learning to relax.
- For older children and teenagers, play and being playful with other friends, outside the home or online is just as important. Parents and caregivers can show interest in what their older children are doing.
- Play is good but one important role of adults is to protect children from harm while they play. This can be physical harm, such as playing with dangerous toys, or emotional harm, such as risks when playing games online.

2.6. Explain that for the rest of this session, we will divide up and have a chance to learn about practical ideas for playing with children of different ages. All of us with children under age 5 will explore practical ideas for safe and healthy play with our younger children. All of us with older children or teenagers, will be looking at how play is an important part of helping children learn and about children's online fun and safety.

### **3. Group discussion: The importance of play and keeping children safe (time: 30 minutes)**

3.1 Ask participants to stand in a circle – if people cannot stand, adapt the activity so that everyone is seated on the floor or chair. Take a ball or scrunched-up piece of paper and ask:

- “What do you think of when I say the word ‘play’?”

3.2 Throw the ball to someone and once they have called out a word, ask them to throw the ball to someone else.

Continue until you have a long list of words – if people are struggling, ask for the ball again and suggest a new idea that might stimulate ideas.

*Tip: Encourage participants not to think too much and ask them to say the first word that comes into their mind. Make it fun, for example by spinning around before you throw the ball or miming a basketball player.*

3.3 After participants have said at least two things, summarise some of the key ideas suggested. If not already covered, introduce them into the discussion:

- Play is fun
- Play can be done with or without toys or play materials
- Play can be done together with others and alone
- Play is important for all of us at all ages
- Play can be quiet (drawing, telling stories), active (sports, running around), be online (playing games with friends or on our own)
- Play helps us learn new things

3.4 Ask participants to look at the flip chart with the 'parenting road' and to think about what we talked about in previous sessions and how play can help with the positive parenting practices already covered.

Emphasise the following points if they have not already been mentioned:

- Play is a fun way to bring the whole family together and helps family relationships
- Fun activities can be a way of building family tradition – for example, some families might play together; traditional games and activities are a way of recognising our family values and traditions (Session 2)
- Play is the first way that children start to learn – play helps children develop in different ways (mentally, physically, intellectually, emotionally, and socially) and is a way of showing love and building attachment – Sessions 3 and 4
- Having fun is possibly the best way to look after ourselves (Session 5)
- Many play activities can build up positive communication – giving clear instructions, sharing ideas, etc. (Session 6)

3.5 Divide participants into small groups and ask them to now discuss the following questions:

- Why does play matter?
- Do you think that having fun with your child means you are spoiling them? Why/why not?
- Should play be alone or with the parent?
- How does play change as children grow older?
- Do boys and girls play differently to each other?

Allow 15 minutes for the discussion. Move around the groups and check that all the topics are being discussed.

3.6 Back in the large group, ask groups to give feedback. Next, ask participants to discuss the following points briefly with their friend (or the person sitting next to them). Ask one question, allow 2-3 minutes in small groups, and then ask for feedback. Then ask the next question:

- How can we find time each day to set aside time to play with our children of all ages?
- Are there any risks and dangers when children are playing, and how can we reduce them?
- What can we do as a family so that everyone has time to spend fun time together playing?

3.7 End this session by thanking participants for their contributions.

#### **4. Skills practice: Structured play, preparing to learn for children aged 0-5 years (time: 45 minutes)**

4.1 Explain: we are now going to play. In this session, we are going to explore the idea of 'free' or 'child-led' play, where children take the lead.

4.2 Divide participants into five groups, with parents and caregivers of children of a similar age in the same group (children aged 1 year and under, children aged 2 and 3, children aged 4 and 5). You can have more than one group that is focusing on the same age of children.

4.3 Hand out the five bags or boxes of play materials that you have prepared earlier. Explain that we will be looking at how to use easily available materials for age-appropriate play. Although each bag has the same materials, some might not be suitable for your age group and some can be used in different ways for children of different ages. Every child is unique – there are no rules about how these materials can be used at any particular age and that play is important for every child, including children with disabilities.

*Facilitator tip: If parents and caregivers have infants or young children with them in the session, encourage them to actually share one of the materials with their children and practice introducing a new material to children, checking that they are not providing unsafe materials for their children.*

4.4 Ask each group to spend 15 minutes looking at the toys:

- Which of these materials could be used to help my children play?
- Are there any materials here that are not safe for the children of your age group to use and why not?
- Are there any materials that can teach your children about safe and clean environments, for example that reuse plastics that would otherwise be thrown away?

*The facilitator notes at the end of this session list a number of play activities that can be done using the materials in the bag/box.*

4.5 Invite everyone back into the main group and ask each small group in turn to demonstrate one activity. Ask participants to give their feedback on what they liked and any suggestions for additional activities.

4.6 Explain that children also play on their own. We need to ensure that they are safe:

- How might we encourage children aged 0-5 to play alone but keep them safe?

4.7 Thank participants for their ideas and share the following tips:

- Children under 12 months do not always need 'materials'. Games might include: tickling, laughing, singing, clapping, pointing, and playing.
- Children under 12 months often learn with just one object – for example, they might pick up something and shake it (like a plastic cup filled with rice) or hit it against something else.
- Children under 12 months will enjoy grasping objects of different colours, textures, and shapes.
- Children over 12 months will also not always need materials. Games might include: hide and seek, musical games, play acting, gentle tickles or use of materials of different textures like feathers etc.
- Children from 2-3 years should start to be playing with more than one object. They might take 2 or 3 separate things and put the objects in or on each other, e.g. stones into a cup, stack one cup on top of another.
- As children grow, they play more complex games and will need more complex toys but these can be inexpensive, such as old boxes and sheets to make a house, dressing up in adult clothes, a simple ball and cup, etc.
- When children play they learn and their brains grow.
- It is not necessary to spend money on toys. Making up games using your imagination or materials you can find at home is even better than buying a toy. It encourages children to be creative, imaginative, and resourceful and is a great way to spend quality time together.

## **5. Applying the skill: Playing with older children (time: 30 minutes)**

5.1 Ask participants to choose one of two groups; participants with children not yet at school, and those who have teenagers.

5.2 Divide the facilitators into the two groups and each person introduces the separate activities.

### **Group 1: Infants and younger children – helping our children read**

- Introduce the activity by saying:
  - Reading and storytelling are important ways to help children build up their language skills and prepare them for school.
  - Research shows that when parents read and tell stories with their young child regularly, the child is more prepared to join and do well in school.
  - Some parents or caregivers may not feel comfortable reading books or may not be able to afford children's books. This is not a problem because the research also shows that it is just as good for the child's development when parents describe what is happening in the pictures, make up stories to tell the child, and ask the child questions about the story.
- Ask two volunteers – one will be a three-year-old child and the other will be the child's father. Hand the father a magazine or book with pictures and ask him to encourage the child to talk about the book.

*Note: Be ready to demonstrate 'active reading'. This involves asking questions for example pointing at the picture and asking the child what is in the picture. Once the child has said 'cat' or 'car', for example, ask what sound the cat or car makes. Then ask what is happening in the picture and what might happen next. Make the activity disability friendly.*

*This activity can be adapted to suit children or caregivers who have visual and hearing impairments. For visual impairments, train the child to learn how to read one word at a time until they master it. Write the word 'car' in big letters on a newsprint or a soft surface, fill in the letters with anything safe that has a rough texture. Let the child use their fingers if possible to feel the shape of the letter as the caregiver pronounces one letter at a time. The caregiver can read aloud a story about the cat and later ask the child some questions from the story. With hearing impairment, the caregiver should sit side-by-side and read the words loudly and slowly to allow the child to observe the movement of the lips. The caregiver can use gestures, sign language, and pictures while reading with the child. Caregivers should make these reading sessions as interactive as possible for the child to enjoy despite being abled differently. Once the volunteers have demonstrated, thank them for sharing. Ask everyone else in the group to say what they thought was done well. Then ask if there are things that could make the 'active reading' even better.*

*Some positive practices include: introducing new words or ideas, encouraging the child through praise, encouraging children to see how events in a story relate to real life.*

- Now ask everyone to get into pairs and see how they might practise active reading with their own children at home – leave the magazines in the middle of the group for them to choose.
- After 5 minutes, close the session and praise everyone for their practice.

## **Group 2: Teenagers and older children – keeping our children safe online**

- Ask everyone to discuss briefly in pairs the following question:
  - What is good about our children having access to the internet these days?

- What is not good about our children having access to the internet these days?

*Note: Remind people that even if they do not have much or any internet access in their own home, their children will probably have access at school, with friends, or maybe video dens.*

- Allow around five minutes and then ask participants to feedback the main points quickly.
- Explain that the internet can be a scary thing but it also offers our children amazing opportunities, as long as we learn how to keep them safe. Ask participants to brainstorm some of the things that they might do to keep children safe online and write suggestions on flip charts.
- Once you have a list of suggestions, read through the things that have been suggested and ask people if they are already doing this at home – it is likely that they will not be doing everything!
- Share the following tips about internet safety:

**1. Keep children safe with open communication:** Talk to children about who they communicate with and how. Make sure they understand the value of kind and supportive interactions and that mean, discriminatory or inappropriate contact is never acceptable. Parents and children can work together to establish rules on how, when, how long and where devices can be used.

**2. Use technology to protect them:** Keep devices safe by running the latest software and antivirus programs, and activating privacy settings. Remember to check the privacy settings to minimise data collection. Help your child learn to keep personal information private, especially from strangers.

**3. Spend time with children online:** Create opportunities for your child to have safe and positive online interactions with friends, family and the parent. Spend time with your child to identify age appropriate apps, games and other online entertainment.

**4. Encourage healthy online habits:** Promote and monitor good behaviour online and on video calls. Encourage your children to be kind and respectful to classmates, to be mindful of what clothes they wear and to avoid joining video calls from a bedroom.

**5. Let them have fun and express themselves:** There are fun online active exercise classes, age-appropriate games and more online. Be creative.

**6. Sharing of personal information:** Guide the children on the personal information they should avoid sharing online like telephone numbers, the direction/location of their home and other family sensitive information.

**7. Keep an online balance:** Ensure that your children balance time online and offline, so that they continue to have plenty of fresh air, physical activity, and social time with 'real' people. This is important for children's physical, emotional and social wellbeing.

*Tip: If you have internet access, the Kenya Communications Authority has short video clips about internet safety which you can share instead.*<sup>13</sup>

- Ask participants to think about how they would talk about internet safety with their children at home, and remember that a lot of these could be discussed together as a family.
- Ask participants to find someone to share with and spend 5 minutes each, practising how they will open a discussion about online safety while keeping it fun.
- After 10 minutes, ask everyone to come back and share.
- Thank the group for sharing and note down any tips.

5.3 Bring the two separate groups back and for the last five minutes of the activity, ask one or two volunteers to briefly share what they practised. Thank everyone for their contributions.

## **6. Wellbeing Activity – Dance Time (time: 5 minutes)**

6.1 Ask participants who are comfortable standing. Say we are going to end the day by playing and making music.

- Start by clapping hands or snapping fingers in whatever rhythm you want. Ask participants to copy you.
- As everyone is joining, say that you are going to point to someone. We must all carry on what we are doing and the next person should add a different sound or a movement once pointed.
- Continue around the group until you are all singing, shouting, clapping, jumping doing all the actions and sounds that everyone has added to the movement.

6.2 Ask participants to stop and ask if it was fun. Suggest that they can find times and places to just move around, sing or dance with their family. When we sing and move, we automatically feel better, however stressed we may be.

## **7. Summary and take-home activity (time: 10 minutes)**

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<sup>13</sup> ThinkUKnow (education website for the Centre for Exploitation and Online Protection, UK; a partner of Kenya's Cyber Crime Unit) produces activity packs for children of different ages to discuss online safety: <https://www.thinkuknow.co.uk/>

Check Communications Authority of Kenya on online safety and information for keeping children safe online and on mobile phones:

<https://ca.go.ke/downloads/publications/consumer-information-materials/>

7.1 Ask participants to reflect on today's session and the most important messages that have been discussed.

If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

### **Key messages for Session 7**

- Play helps us bond with children from a very early age.
- Play is the best way to stimulate children's brains from birth onwards. It is an important tool for developing skills including imagination, communication, problem-solving, giving and receiving instructions.
- All children, including those with disabilities, benefit from play.
- When we play with children, we are spending quality time with them.
- Playing with others is a way of learning new social skills and learning positive communication skills.
- For older children and teenagers, play and being playful as well as showing interest in their activities is just as important.
- Play is good but one important role of adults is to protect children from harm while they play. This can be physical harm, such as playing with dangerous toys, or emotional harm, such as risks when playing games online.

7.2 Point to the flip chart of the Sessions and the road that was developed in Session 1. Pointing to the road, shows that we are now halfway along our journey. Ask everyone to call out one thing that they feel that they have picked up during the journey and that they are now carrying (in their head, in their heart or in their hands) that can help them along the road to a happy, caring and loving family.

Thank participants for their suggestions. Say that as a group we have shared and learned some of the most important parenting techniques. We are going to carry on sharing and learning. If appropriate, clap or cheer together.

7.3 Remind people about the idea of home practice.

Ask participants to remember that today is about the importance of play.

Propose the following home practice:

- Set aside time once each day if possible, or at least three times in a week, to have some structured or unstructured age appropriate play and fun with your child. If you have family members who use the internet, think about how to discuss online safety and set your own safety controls on your devices.

7.4 Thank participants for attending. Remind them that we will be looking at Values and Positive Discipline in the next session. End by giving positive praise about what they have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

## Session 8: Values and Positive Discipline

Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo (As you bring up a child, so she/he will be)

Session aim	To support parents and caregivers to instil family and moral values and positive discipline in their children.
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Pens and flip chart</li> <li>● Group agreements flip chart posted on the wall</li> <li>● Session outline with road diagram posted on wall</li> <li>● Flip chart with examples of values already written on it for Activity 3 (see examples in Facilitator notes)</li> <li>● Paper and pens (if available) for Activity 5 – creating house rule posters</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<p>Understand values and their importance, and explore the moral values important to them and their family</p> <p>Reflect on how moral values can support a long-term vision for our children, and practise effective ways of promoting moral values in the home</p> <p>Practice skills for identifying and responding to challenging behaviour using positive discipline and non-violence.</p>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How
<p><b>1. Welcome back and recap the previous session</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers remind themselves of the key messages of the previous session and share on the home practice.</p>	20 minutes	Group discussion
<p><b>2. Introduction – Values and Positive Discipline</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers are introduced to the key messages on promoting discipline through having strong family values.</p>	10 minutes	Explanation and brainstorming
<p><b>3. Group Discussion – Identifying Our Family Values</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers identify the family values that are important to them and explore how to share these values with their children.</p>	30 minutes	Self-reflection, participatory exercise and group discussion

<p><b>4. Skills practise – Setting Boundaries and Addressing Challenging Behaviour</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers practise positive discipline techniques for use with children at different ages and developmental stages.</p>	45 minutes	Group work and role play, brainstorming and skills practise
<p><b>5. Applying the skill – Promoting Our Values Through House Rules</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers reflect on how to introduce the idea of group rules in their own homes.</p>	30 minutes	Small group discussion and skills practise
<p><b>6. Well-being activity – Rewarding Ourselves</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers practise self-care activities to reduce stress.</p>	5 minutes	Well-being activity
<p><b>7. Summary and Take-Home Activity</b></p> <p>Facilitators summarise key messages and parents and caregivers identify their home practice.</p>	10 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap the previous session (time: 20 minutes)

1.1 Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the group agreement).

1.2 Ask the participants to make a circle.

1.3 Explain to the participants that you will play a game. The person who catches the ball will tell the group one way in which they played with their children or with other family members, based on what they learned in Session 8: Positive Play. Once a participant shares , they then throw the ball to another participant.

Make sure that everyone has a turn to speak.

Encourage participants to provide suggestions for each other if someone has a challenge.

1.4 End by leading participants in a “special” clap and ask everyone to return to their sitting positions.

#### 1.5 Introduce Session 8.

In the last session we talked about supporting our children to learn and grow through play. In this session, we will talk about supporting our children to develop and grow by helping them

learn the values we want them to have as they grow and helping them build skills to manage their emotions and behaviour by promoting positive discipline.

## 2.0 Values and Positive Discipline: Introduction (time: 10 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: “Mtoto umleavyo ndivyo akuavyo” “(A child's future depends on their upbringing)”.

*You can use an alternative proverb from the local community if preferred, as long as it focuses on the importance of setting positive, non-violent values in the family and helping children learn discipline from how they see their parents as their role models..*

2.2 Ask a volunteer to explain what they understand by the proverb.

*Note to the facilitator: This proverb helps us to teach our children about right from wrong, so that when they are grown, they will still do right.*

2.3 Show the flip chart with the session outline. Show the journey through the sessions, looking at the importance of love and care, communication, and play. All of these help our children learn and grow, and help our family become strong together. We will first think about why discipline is important, and then look at how we can provide a safe and consistent environment where children can learn and understand the importance of positive values, reasonable limits, and rules for behaviour.

## 3.0 Identifying Our Family Values (time: 30 minutes)

3.1 Divide participants into groups of three.

3.2 Introduce the word ‘values’ (in local languages where possible) and ask participants to discuss:

- What does this word mean to me? Why are values important?

3.3 Show participants the list of values from facilitator notes below, already written up on a pre-prepared flip chart, alternatively ask people to brainstorm values important to them. Say:

- Remember the family vision that you thought of at the start of this course, in Session 2. Look at the list of values and think about which ones are necessary for me to achieve my family vision, and for my children to grow into the adults I want them to be.

*Remind the parents and caregivers of their family vision that they discussed in Session 2.*

- Select the values that are most important to you and your family.
- Discuss how/whether you practise these values in your home.

3.4 After five minutes of group discussion, ask each group to share their definition and examples of values in plenary.

3.5 Summarise the following key messages, if they have not already been stated by the group:

- Values stand for our most meaningful ideals.
- Values are passed from one generation to another.

- One responsibility of parents and caregivers is to pass moral values to their children.
- Values inspire us to keep going when the going gets tough.

3.5 Then ask everyone to find a partner and spend a few minutes talking about their family vision, any successes they have had so far, any challenges experienced, (remind the group that they only have to share what they feel comfortable with) and what they will do over the next few weeks to continue putting their family vision into action.

3.6 Suggest to the parents and caregivers that this week might be a good opportunity to discuss the vision with their family again – they could discuss anything new that has been added and reflect on their progress so far.

3.7 Summarise discussions and draw key conclusions guided by the notes below.

- Values are the beliefs and principles that inform the decisions we make and actions that we take through life
- Family is the natural and fundamental unit of society, and a primary socialisation institution and remains a powerful organ for the promotion of national values
- Family values can change over time as circumstances or experiences change. Parents and caregivers should mentor and nurture their children into effective, functional, and useful members of society who uphold national values.
- Finding a positive solution to any family disagreement or difficulty as an opportunity to model what you hope they will become as adults.

#### **4.1 Skills practice: Setting Boundaries and Addressing Challenging Behaviour (time: 45 minutes)**

4.1 Explain that one of the main ways to help children learn values is to “role model” positive values, by demonstrating in our own behaviour what is desired and what is unacceptable behaviour. We set boundaries in the house to encourage our children to follow acceptable behaviour. Ask participants to suggest:

- What is an example of when a child might do something that is not acceptable?
- How do you set a boundary so that the child understands that a behaviour is unacceptable?
- How do you communicate that with your child?

4.2 After the group have discussed, explain the following key message:

- Setting boundaries requires that we have a calm conversation with our children, where we explain what the boundary is in clear, easy-to-follow ways, and we explain a realistic consequence that is not harmful to the child if he or she crosses that boundary.
- Boundaries must be consistent and generally agreed upon by the whole family.
- Once children understand what the boundaries are *and why they have been set*, it becomes possible to work together with children to try and keep the boundaries.
- We all take time to learn. It is important to help children learn by gently reminding them, ideally before they cross the boundary, rather than waiting until they have done so.

- Children learn by experimenting. One of the ways that they experiment is by testing the boundaries. This is part of growing up; it is our job to help children understand and learn their roles in an age-appropriate way.

*Tip: Below are some examples you can use to explain setting age-appropriate boundaries. Remember that every family should set their own boundaries, as long as the child is safe.*

- *Hitting another person or an animal; children from an early age can learn that hitting hurts.*
- *Snatching a toy or food from someone else; toddlers can start to reflect on how they might feel if their toy or food was taken away from them.*
- *Helping with age-appropriate domestic chores for both boys and girls; children at an early age should learn that it takes work to feed people and keep the home clean, and that we all have a role to play.*
- *Staying safe; older children and adolescents will need to have boundaries about where to go and when to be home to keep themselves safe and avoid worrying other people.*

4.3 Explain that in this activity we are going to practise setting boundaries and finding ways to help children learn about those boundaries by using positive discipline.

4.4. Group participants into buzz groups and introduce the two words: 'Positive Discipline' and 'Punishment' (using local languages where possible). Ask them to discuss in their group what are the differences between the two words.

4.5 In plenary, ask participants to share their answers. Write the responses on a flip chart. Add the points below if they have not already been mentioned.

- Discipline means teaching a child to understand, respect, keep boundaries and obey rules.
- Discipline is not beating and scolding. Positive discipline means teaching a child with love and open communication.
- Positive discipline helps a child control their behaviours so that ultimately their actions are controlled and purposeful, not random and impulsive.
- Positive discipline is instilled with teaching, consistency, and firmness. It is important that the child understands what they are being guided to do, and why these rules have been set. Therefore, we have to guide children in a way they can understand (this will look different for children of different ages and children with disabilities).
- Physical force (corporal punishment) and emotional violence (humiliating punishment) are sometimes used by parents and caregivers to correct or modify a child's behaviour. Punishment includes; hitting with the hand, or an object, kicking or worse. Humiliating punishments include verbal abuse, ridiculing, isolating, threatening, scolding, or ignoring the child.
- Parents and caregivers might use corporal and humiliating punishment because they are angry or cannot control their emotions, believe it is the only way, or lack nonviolent alternatives. However, using these types of punishment can have long-term negative consequences. Using physical and emotional violence has been shown to not correct the behaviours and can cause harm. Children do not learn skills to modify their behaviour, they learn that violence is an acceptable way to get people to do what they want and can suffer longer-term physical or emotional harm.

4.6 Ask four volunteers to role-play the following discipline vs punishment examples – give two volunteers example A and two volunteers example B. Give them a couple of minutes to prepare and then ask them to show the example to the group.

**Example A:** a three-year-old throws her pencils or crayons on the floor.

**Punishment:** tell her she is a bad girl and slap her fingers.

**Discipline:** ask her to pick up the crayons or pencils. Explain that they could get broken or leave marks on the floor. Put them out of her reach for a short time until she has calmed down.

**Example B:** A fourteen-year-old is sulky and pinches his sister until she cries.

**Punishment:** Beat him and send him away from the room.

**Discipline:** Insist first that he apologises to his sister and remind him that it is wrong to make someone else cry. If he refuses, explain that if he continues to be mean to his sister, there will be a consequence; that he cannot watch the movie that evening that everyone else in the family has been looking forward to. Explain that he must first apologise to his sister, and afterwards he can explain what is making him sulky.

*Note: Feel free to adapt these examples, using the positive discipline techniques in the facilitator notes.*

4.7 Once the examples have been shared, summarise the key points below:

- Before deciding to discipline a child, do we think about why the child may be behaving in this way?
- Does the child always understand that what they have done is “wrong”? Do they know what the boundary is?
- Is there a reason why the child may be acting out? (For example, if she or he is hungry, sad, scared, something is happening at home or school?)
- Note that if a child may have a physical or developmental disability, there may be factors that could be causing the child’s challenging behaviour, such as feelings of frustration when unable to communicate their needs or when their needs have not been met. Caregivers can avoid such behaviours if they understand the causes. For example, a child may be requiring attention, feeling hungry, tired, afraid of something, or resisting the limits you have set.

4.8 Remind the group of the discussions in Session 2 Family Relationships and Session 3 Children’s Development. Explain that how we set boundaries to teach our values, and how we discipline children so that they learn about the boundaries, should be dependent on their age, developmental stage and circumstances.

4.9 Divide the group into four groups, each group will talk about boundaries and discipline for a different age of child:

- toddler (2-3 years)
- pre-school (4-6 years)
- middle childhood/early adolescence (7-12 years)
- adolescence/late childhood (13-17 years)

Highlight the following important points before allocating the group work:

- Babies have basic needs and that it is the parent's or caregiver's role to meet them. When a baby cries, they are not being 'naughty', they will be hungry, uncomfortable, or tired and need help. Responding to a baby's cry is not 'spoiling' him or her, it is helping build attachment.
- As babies start to move, they will explore. This is where they can start to be shown boundaries, such as learning not to bite or learning not to touch something dangerous. When they do things that are annoying such as tugging your hair, for example, it is important to set a boundary such as taking their hand away from the hair and sitting them on your knee out of reach of your hair. Consistently helping a baby to stop pulling hair, for example, is an early form of discipline but it is important to understand that this is not deliberately misbehaving, it is learning through exploring.

4.10 In the small groups, give them several scenarios drawing from the resource list below. Ask the groups to discuss:

- What might be the cause of a child's challenging behaviour at this stage?
- What can you do to show what the boundary is?
- What suggestions do you have for using positive parenting techniques once the child has crossed the line?

#### Group 1: Toddlers (2-3 years)

- Your child bites you
- Your child is throwing a temper tantrum
- Your child throws their dinner on the floor
- Your child refuses to go to sleep
- Your child breaks something precious in the home
- Your child picks up a bottle of pills that your father has left on the table

#### Group 2: Pre-school (4-6 years)

- Your child goes to play with the neighbour's child without asking you
- Your child takes a biscuit from a tin when no one is looking
- Your child refuses to go to sleep
- Your child breaks something precious in the home
- Your child picks up your husband's medicine

#### Group 3: Middle childhood/early adolescence (7-12 years)

- Your child comes home from school an hour later than usual
- Your child shouts at you that they hate you
- Your child is angry as they say you didn't listen to them; they are refusing to speak to you or look at you
- Your child tears up their school book and throws it on the floor
- Your child hits their younger brother or sister hard.

#### Group 4: Adolescence (13-17 years)

- Your teen comes home an hour later than the time you agreed
- The teacher tells you that your teen skipped school today
- Your teen shouts at you that they hate you then they walk out of the house
- Your teen stays up in their room playing games online with their friends when they are supposed to help prepare the evening meal
- Your teen arrives home and appears to have been drinking or taking drugs
- Your teen hits their younger brother or sister hard.

4.11 Once the groups have had time to discuss their scenarios, come back into the group and ask each group to share their positive parenting suggestions. Once each group has presented, ask the other groups for any additional suggestions that they have.

4.12 Add in any of the following techniques if they have not already been mentioned, drawing on the positive parenting techniques that are in the facilitator notes:

- Manage our own emotions – count to ten or find another way to be calm before beginning to discipline
- Explain the reason for the ‘rule’ using age-appropriate language
- Make sure that you are role modelling the behaviours
- Show real empathy *for by example, explaining that you understand why they are frustrated*
- Praise positive behaviours – ‘catch them when they’re good’. Children want the love and approval of their parents and others; they will repeat the behaviour that brings praise and attention.
- Ignore the behaviour if it is not too serious
- Redirect the child’s attention before the behaviour becomes challenging, *for example, by showing them a toy or book they like (for younger children), encouraging an older child or teenager to talk about something that they are interested in.*
- Use the technique of consequences for older children and adolescents, and make the consequences match the challenging behaviour – it must be immediate and related and given with a warning or a clearly understood rule. For example, it may be not watching a favourite TV programme that evening but then having a special moment later.
- If a parent responds angrily, it is likely their adolescent will respond with high emotions. Giving everyone time to calm down and reflect before coming together to discuss what happened calmly helps prevent aggressive communication.

4.13 Now ask the following questions:

- Who usually disciplines children?
- Do different people discipline differently e.g., men and women, older and younger caregivers?

After the group has given their views, stress that it’s important for everyone to build healthy relationships with their children, it’s a way through which we can positively influence our children. Reflect on the discussions that have already taken place about being in the human box (rather than the ‘man box’ and ‘woman box’) and ask people to think about how both parents/caregivers can use positive discipline techniques consistently within the family.

4.14 Summarise with the following key messages:

- Positive discipline helps to build a loving, trusting and mutually respectful relationship between you and your child(ren), as well as providing stability so they know what to expect from you.
- It is important to think about the reasons for a child's behaviour before deciding to discipline the child.
- Children, particularly young children, and often those with disabilities, see and interact with the world differently – they want to explore as much as possible and often 'naughty' behaviour is their way of showing frustration or overwhelming emotions that they don't know how to recognise or handle.
- Corporal and humiliating punishment is never ok and harms children.
- Corporal and humiliating punishment teaches children that violence is an appropriate way to solve problems and conflicts.
- Children who experience violence are more likely to use violence as adults, and/or to experience it in their future relationships
- Prioritise the safety of the child – if they are running across a road, grabbing them keeps them safe. You can then reflect afterwards; what could we do differently next time? For example, you can brainstorm ideas with the child and put them into practice together next time you're out together.

*Note: Children who have moved home regularly or experienced loss or stress are very likely to act out. If the group includes families going through reintegration or where a child has been removed from the home for safety concerns, it is especially important to be sensitive to their needs and also to be aware that they may have learned different value systems and boundaries.*

## **5.0 Applying the skill: promoting our values through house rules or boundaries (time: 30 minutes)**

5.1 Explain that we are now going to practise setting boundaries for our own children that promote our family values.

5.2 Ask participants to get into groups of four.

5.3 Ask each group to think of at least one house rule or boundary that we feel shows our family values and that everyone in the house should follow. They help everyone show respect and love for each other.

*Note: Families need rules that protect their safety, health, and rights of others. You may want to give some examples, such as 'we always listen to each other', 'don't interrupt', 'always speak using kind words and voices', 'do not open doors to strangers', ask before taking other people's property', 'stay away from the fire'.*

Ask each group to create a poster showcasing their five rules.

5.4 After not more than 20 minutes, ask participants to get into one big group and ask each group to present their rules to the other groups.

5.5 After participants have shared and had a chance to comment on the rules, facilitate a discussion with the following questions:

- *How can we involve our children in developing house rules?*

- *What happens when house rules are broken by a child?*
- *What happens when house rules are broken by a parent/caregiver?*

Explain: even young children can be involved in setting and upholding house rules. For example, children who are yet to talk can still have an emotions picture (faces with different emotions shown) so they can point to how they are feeling. Older children may find different rules more important and they may need to change. Some important rules include screen time and when to be back home. It is important that everyone understands the rules and the consequences of breaking them.

## 6.0 Wellbeing Activity – Rewarding ourselves (time: 5 minutes)

6.1 Say that we have spent time today thinking about discipline and rules. It is important to reward ourselves.

6.2 Ask everyone to close their eyes for a few moments and think of times that they have role modelled positive values at home with family, or with friends, at work or in this session.”

6.3 Now find someone that you are comfortable sharing with and share three things that you are really proud of.

6.4 Ask everyone to clap for themselves – stand up and clap while walking around the room.

## 7.0 Summary and take-home activity (time: 10 minutes)

7.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end and that we would like to reflect on what we have talked about today.

Ask participants what they think the most important messages are that have been discussed.

As participants mention them, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

### Key messages for Session 8

- Values are the beliefs and principles that guide our decisions and actions.
- The values practised by the family are the foundation for children to learn, grow and act.
- A good and sound value system is the foundation of discipline.
- Discipline is about helping children learn about responsible behaviour and self-control.
- All children need age- appropriate and developmentally appropriate discipline, including children with disabilities, health conditions and children who have experienced challenges (separation, abuse, trauma, stigma, discrimination etc.), in order to learn about safety and social relationships
- Corporal and humiliating punishment is never ok and harms children. It teaches children that violence is an appropriate way to solve problems and conflicts. Children who experience violence are more likely to use violence as adults, and/or to experience it in their future relationships
- Positive discipline helps to build a loving, trusting and mutually respectful relationship between you and your child(ren), as well as providing stability so they know what to expect from you

7.2 Propose the following home practice:

- Use one of the positive discipline techniques that we discussed today next time when one of your children is misbehaving.
1. Thank everyone for attending. Remind participants that we will be looking at positive male engagement in parenting. End by giving positive praise about how participants have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

# Session 9: Positive Male Involvement in Parenting<sup>14</sup>

It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men

<b>Session aim</b>	To explore how male involvement and sharing parenting responsibilities are an important part of raising happy, emotionally balanced children and to support parents to identify practical ways that fathers and male caregivers can influence the children under their care positively.
<b>Time</b>	2.5 hours
<b>Materials</b>	Flipchart, pens
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflect on their own experiences of being fathered when they were children – and how this influenced their lives and their own parenting</li> <li>▪ Share examples of positive and negative male involvement and identify ways to encourage more positive male involvement in their own families</li> <li>▪ Identify the work needed to meet the basic needs of everyone in the family and practical ways to share the load more equally amongst men and women</li> <li>▪ Provide practical skills for men to be more involved and connected with their children and families</li> </ul>

## Session 9 Outline

<sup>14</sup> Mbevi, S. (2019). *Intentional Dad: Skills for Effective Fathering*. Transform Nations.

Activity	Time	How
<p><b>1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session</b></p> <p>Everyone is welcomed to the session, reflects on what they learnt the previous week and shares experiences from their home practice</p>	15 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
<p><b>2. Introductions</b></p> <p>The topic of Male Involvement in Parenting is introduced. Participants discuss the week's proverb, and share their own experiences</p>	10 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
<p>★★★</p> <p><b>3. Group discussion and activity – The Power of Male Involvement</b></p> <p>Participants discuss positive and challenging relationships they had with their dads and how that has impacted on them</p>	30 mins	Group discussion, and presentation
<p><b>4. Skills Practice – positive male involvement</b></p> <p>Skills practise 1: A few people are invited to dramatise a family where the father/male caregiver demonstrates positive parenting</p> <p>★★★</p> <p><b>Skills Practice 2 – sharing the load</b></p> <p>Men and women explore the different tasks needed to provide for everyone's basic needs and identify practical ways to share the care more equally</p>	60 mins	Role plays, break out groups and discussion
<p>★★★</p> <p><b>5. Applying the Skill – activities to support positive male involvement</b></p> <p>Participants brainstorm ways to encourage more positive male involvement in their families and commit to one action to take during the week</p>	20 mins	Brainstorming and group discussion
<p><b>6. Well-being exercise</b></p> <p>Participants spend a few mindful minutes at the end of the session</p>	5 mins	Mindfulness
<p><b>7. Recap and take home activity</b></p> <p>Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take home practice and write reflections in their journals</p>	5 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection and journaling

## Activities

### 1. Welcome Back and Recap of the Previous Session (time: 15 minutes)

1.1. Welcome everyone to the session and appreciate everyone's commitment in coming.

1.2 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray (if appropriate in your setting), or share a short reflection or song before the meeting starts.

1.3 Remind everyone that in the previous session we discussed values and positive discipline. Ask the group 'what are some of the key messages we discussed last week?' and 'what were some of the key skills we practised?'

1.4 Ask 2-3 volunteers to share their home practice from last week: using a positive discipline technique at home when one of your children was misbehaving. How did it go? What went well/what could be different or improved on? Is this a useful skill or practise for your family to incorporate into their routines?

1.5 Explain that in this session we will be discussing the topic of 'Male Involvement in Positive Parenting'

### 2. Introduction: Supporting Male Involvement in Parenting (time: 10 minutes)

2.1 Share the quote "It is easier to build strong children than to repair broken men", and ask the group 'what are your reflections on this quote?' and 'How can it help us to understand today's topic 'Positive Male Involvement in Parenting?'

2.2 Ask the group if anyone would like to share some examples of men's involvement in building strong children from your own family? And/or to share any challenges about why it is sometimes difficult to do this?'

2.3 Explain that 'Today we are going to talk about the experience or lack of positive male involvement in the bringing up of children', ask the group 'Why is it important to have males actively involved in the raising of children?'

### 3. The Power of Male Involvement (time: 30 minutes)

3.1 Ask the group to remember the exercise we did at the start of this journey (in Session 2) where they identified their own experiences of parenting. Ask the group to think about what role fathers and other men played in their own upbringing and what impact this has had in their own lives. Ask them to start off by reflecting on this individually.

3.2 Then discuss the following questions:

- *How did/has your father impact(ed) you positively? What are your best memories of your time with dad?*
- *Do you have unpleasant or negative experiences and memories? What do you wish your father had done differently?*

3.3 Introduce the idea of 'positive male parenting' and 'negative male parenting', explaining that it is important for children to have positive male parenting role models in their lives. Give the following examples of positive and negative male parenting. Ask the group if they want to add any further examples from their own experiences.

Negative Male Parenting	Positive Male Parenting
<p><b>Absent Fathers</b> – when fathers/male caregivers leave, or were never involved from the start, children lack the modelling of positive masculinity and may struggle with identity issues and unanswered questions.</p>	<p><b>Present Fathers</b> – Children and mothers need active involvement of the father or primary male caregiver in the parental activities. This includes time with the family, involvement in education and school activities, sharing tasks in the home such as washing and cooking, resolution of conflicts, active listening, one-on-one time with the children and their mother and fun activities.</p> <p>Sometimes fathers/male caregivers may need to leave the home (for example if they are travelling for work or need to look after a sick parent) but they can still be present by having regular contact and staying updated and involved on what’s happening in their children’s lives, as well as making plans to ensure that children’s day to day needs are well taken care of (for example by making sure that money is provided to take care of their children’s needs)</p>
<p><b>Abusive Fathers</b> – When fathers verbally, emotionally and physically abuse their children and the mother, children grow up with fear, insecurities, the wrong idea of masculinity, and other psychological effects.</p>	<p><b>Loving And Caring Fathers</b> – Fathers and other male family members who can express love, care and appreciation to their children and partners provide healthy and positive models of masculinity to children</p>
<p><b>Passive Fathers</b> – When children grow up with passive/uninvolved or neglectful fathers, they pick the wrong picture of masculinity and struggle with inner questions and struggles as to why their dad does not want to be involved in their lives. They may exhibit withdrawal or aggressive tendencies. Passive male parents also leave all the daily tasks to the mother of the children (and/or other female family members), and that can be both exhausting and overwhelming for women.</p>	<p><b>Involved Fathers- These</b> are active, approachable and available. They listen to their children and actively seek their opinions on important decisions for the family. Together with women in the family they ensure that all parents/caregivers are carrying equal tasks and responsibilities – including care and domestic work, income generation work and other family and community responsibilities.</p>
<p><b>Trophy Fathers</b> – Some fathers tend to only show affection and approval to their children based on good performance. ‘If the children perform well (in school especially), they are spoken about proudly by their fathers. If they perform poorly, they suddenly only belong to their mother. This approach sends the wrong</p>	<p><b>Affirmative Fathers</b> cheer on and encourage their children to be their full and true selves. Fathers use their words positively to ensure affection, acceptance, and affirmation. They celebrate and guide their children and ensure that both girls and boys in the family are given equal chances for education, are</p>

message to the child (that you have to work for love and approval and constantly prove yourself) and this becomes a toxic environment for children.	encouraged to develop their talents, and feel positive about their aspirations for the future.
<b>Negative Male Role Model</b> – When fathers/male caregivers model negative behaviour to their children such as violence, drug addiction, alcoholism, intimidating behaviour, unacceptable language and other kinds of culturally and morally unacceptable behaviour, children can live in shame, resentment and withdrawal. It may also influence their ideas about the role of men, something they may try to repeat in their own adult lives.	<b>Positive Male Role Model</b> – when fathers/male caregivers model positive behaviours to their children such as kindness, patience, empathy, hard work and moderation they set an example for their children to aspire to, and create homes where children feel happy, balanced and able to reach their potential.

3.4 Explain that positive male involvement has many benefits for children; increasing confidence, reducing the risk of children participating in risky activities such as drug abuse and decreasing their risk of experiencing violence in future relationships. Positive male involvement also increases the likelihood of children doing well in school and continuing with education as well as experiencing better mental health.

3.5 In single-parent families headed by women and where there is minimal involvement of a father or male caregiver, it might be possible to identify other positive male role models in your children's lives. Ask the group to spend a couple of minutes brainstorming who these other male role models might be (for example, grandfathers, uncles, religious leaders, and teachers).

3.6 Share that those who have been impacted by negative male role models may also need some support with acknowledging and healing from these experiences. Explain that as parents and the children they care for, it is important to work on healing their childhood pains and experiences so that they are not passed on to their own children. Introduce the following three key steps and ask if anyone in the group would like to share or reflect on their own experiences of healing from negative masculinities.

**A – Acknowledge the hurt:** *Admit that the negative experience of masculinity, or the lack of a male role model has hurt you in one way or another. You may have experienced sadness, anger, fear, resentment, hate and negative attitudes towards other men, etc.*

**B – Boldly face the reality:** *Depending on one's experience or reality. Facing the reality may include forgiving, accepting the situation of not having a father/other male role models, reconciliation, talking through it with someone else (other family members, friends, a counsellor, a religious leader) among others.*

**C – Community:** *Healing happens in the community. As we share our experiences with others and walk together in community, we tend to 'fill in the gaps' of what we missed from our dads.*

3.7 Thank everyone for sharing.

#### 4. Skills Practice: Positive Male Involvement (time: 60 minutes)

4.1 Explain that we are now going to work together to identify practical ways for men to engage positively in parenting. If you are working with a male-only or female-only group, remind the group that these skills can be discussed with spouses/co-parents at home after the session, and/or, if you are working with single parents, they can identify ways to involve positive male role models in their children's lives.

##### Skills Practice 1: Positive Masculinities Role Play (30 minutes)

4.2 Divide participants into groups of four. Give each group one of the following scenarios and ask them to create a short role play showing how fathers and male caregivers might put positive masculinities into practice in this scenario. Give the groups ten minutes to prepare a short role play to share with the group.

**Scenario 1:** Your daughter has not done very well in her school exams this year. How will you react as her parents or caregivers?

**Scenario 2:** It has been a busy week for your family and there are many chores that need to be taken care of at home. How will you and your partner deal with this?

**Scenario 3:** Your wife has recently given birth to a baby boy. What will you do to support her in these first few weeks?

**Scenario 4:** Your older son has recently been withdrawn and seems sad or worried about something. What will you do to help him?

4.3 Give the groups ten minutes to prepare and then ask the groups to come back together to share their role plays.

4.4 After each group has shown their role plays, discuss the role plays with the group asking the following reflection questions:

- *What do you think are the benefits for families of positive male parenting?*
- *What are some of the cultural and social barriers that prevent male involvement in positive parenting? What can be done by families and communities to overcome these barriers?*
- *What type of skills does an involved father or male caregiver need to practise and develop?*

4.5 Now say that we are going to look at some of the practical ways that men can be involved in supporting the family. Explain to the group that there are many things required in a home and family to ensure everyone's needs are taken care of. This could include cooking, cleaning, bringing in enough income to cover everyone's basic needs, fetching water, paying bills, playing with children, growing vegetables, getting children to school, ensuring younger children have supervision.

##### Skills practise 2 – sharing the load (30 minutes)

4.6 Divide participants into two groups of men and women. Ask each group to make a list of all the things that need to happen to make sure everyone is taken care of in their family in a day. List everything that needs to happen and how many minutes/hours that particular task might take in a normal day. Include tasks normally performed by men and tasks normally performed by women.

4.7 After each group has their list, ask them to go through and tick the activities that are normally done by women, and put a cross by the activities normally completed by men, then add up the amount of time the tasks allocated to women have been estimated to take, and the amount of time the tasks allocated to men have been estimated to take, and add this to the bottom of the lists.

4.8 Ask the groups to come back together and share their lists with each other. Discuss with the group:

- *Do the two lists look different? Why/why not?*
- *Are there any tasks that the men have forgotten? (if yes, add them to the list)*
- *Are there any tasks that the women have forgotten (if yes, add them to the list)*
- *Did women and men make different estimates about how long different tasks would take? If yes, what are the major differences?*
- *Is the time spent on family tasks split equally between the men and the women? Why/why not?*
- *Is it important to balance the tasks that women and men take on at home? What can be the consequences when one partner has to do more than the other?*
- *What can be done to balance the number of hours that women and men spend on household tasks more complementarily?*

*Note: If working with a male-only or female-only group, do the same task in two groups and then come back in plenary to discuss.*

## **5. Applying the skill: Activities to Support Positive Male Involvement (time: 20 minutes)**

5.1 Explain to the group that today we have discussed many of the benefits of positive male engagement and that to put this into practice it is important to identify practical ways for men to play active roles in their families. Ask the group to brainstorm on a list of activities for fathers and male caregivers to connect with their children and families this week.

5.2 Collect answers from the group and if the group needs further help with ideas suggest the following activities:

- *Have a fun day out with your children – for example by taking them to play/watch a game or to a nearby park.*
- *Make toys/play materials with them*
- *Write a letter to your children about why they are so important to you. Take time to read the letter to them*
- *Read a story to your children every day before bed for a week*
- *If you have a young baby, take the time to sing a song with the baby every day*
- *If you have younger children, take turns with your spouse/other caregiver to put them to bed*

- *Think of a skill you would like your children to have (for example, planting and growing seeds) and make time in the week to start teaching this to them*
- *Take time to speak with your children about their day when they come home from school*
- *Show empathy when your child expresses challenges he/she may be going through and discuss ways of overcoming stress.*

*Facilitator note: For groups working with only women – identify the activities and add a step of discussing these activities with their spouses at home. For groups that include single mothers, discuss whether there is an activity they could do over the next week to involve other positive male role models in their children’s life , for example by making a visit to their uncle.*

## **6. Well-being Exercise (time: 5 minutes)**

6.1 Thank everyone for their participation. Talking about these personal topics can be difficult, especially if we have our own stories about the impact of negative or absent male role models in our own lives, so let’s all take a few minutes to look after ourselves before heading home

6.2 Tell everyone that we’re going to take a few minutes to practise some mindfulness – mindfulness is the practice of being in the present moment and noticing your thoughts, feelings and sensations. It can be really helpful to ground and calm us, especially in moments of stress. We will use the breathing practice that we did earlier as a way of being mindful.

Explain that if people feel comfortable it is normally easiest to do this with eyes closed.

- First ask people to take a couple of deep breaths
- Then ask the group to carry on being conscious of their breathing, each breath they take in and out and how that feels in their body
- Next, ask people to pay attention to how their body feels in the chair/on the floor. Do they feel their feet making contact with the ground? What other sensations can they notice? Maybe the air around them and how it feels on their skin.
- Finally ask them to notice the sounds around them. What is the closest sound they can hear? Depending on where you are it might be the birds, noise from the road/traffic, it could even be the breathing of the person sitting next to you. And then ask them to notice what is the very furthest away sound they can hear. Maybe someone speaking/shouting in the distance, birds or wind in the trees. Ask them to focus on these close by and far away sounds for a minute.

6.3 When you have spent a few minutes in quiet mindfulness ask everyone to open their eyes, and move on to the final reflections and take home practice.

## **7. Summary and Take Home Practice (time: 10 minutes)**

7.1 Explain that the session is nearly at an end and that now we would like to look back on what we have talked about today.

Ask people what they think the most important messages are that have been discussed.

As people call out, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

### Key messages

- Fatherhood, just like motherhood, is a *privilege* to be appreciated, a *responsibility* to be executed and a *challenge* to be faced.
- Fathers, male caregivers and other positive male role models play an important role in shaping the lives of children. Children who grow up in homes where men are loving, attentive and respectful to their children and wives/partners can help children become secure and face life with confidence.
- Children who grow up in homes with negative male role models, where men are violent, abusive, distant and uninvolved may face additional challenges later in life – such as being at higher risk of experiencing violence or perpetrating violence, poor mental health and low self-esteem
- There are many ways that fathers and male caregivers can share the daily parental roles and activities. Men who actively participate in sharing the care can develop deeper, more fulfilling relationships with their family.
- Men can practise kindness and gentleness with their wives/partners and children, teach skills such as ploughing with oxen, riding a bike, planting trees and reading with children, and share the care work, including cooking, washing and looking after children, with women in the family.

### 7.2 Suggest the home following practice:

- Fathers and male caregivers should all have identified one activity they will do to connect with their children this week and one way that they will support their spouse/co-parent with sharing the care in the home
- For women only groups they should discuss the list of activities and learnings from the session with their husband/co-parent
- For single mothers/female caregivers they should identify up to three positive male role models (relatives, friends, neighbours, teachers and community and religious leaders for example) that their children are connected to, and, where possible, arrange a visit or activity with one of these male role models. Similarly, for single fathers/male caregivers, they should also identify up to three positive female role models.

7.4 Thank everyone for attending. Show the ‘road’ on the flip chart and remind people that we will be looking at creating Peaceful Homes together in the next session. End by giving positive praise about how people have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

# Session 10: Creating Peaceful Homes Together

If you want to go quickly, go alone, if you want to go far, go together

<b>Session aim</b>	To reflect on how unequal relationships in the home can have negative consequences (including violence), identify ways families can work together to create peaceful homes, and identify sources of support for preventing and responding to violence in our homes and communities.
<b>Time</b>	2.5 hours
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Reflect on the impacts of unequal dynamics in the home, the link between unequal dynamics and violence in the family, and the positive benefits of working together to create peaceful homes</li> <li>▪ Learn about the different types of violence in the family</li> <li>▪ Practise skills for creating peaceful relationships and homes together</li> <li>▪ Reflect on their own circles of support and identify ways to support others who are experiencing violence</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How
<b>1. Welcome and sharing</b> Everyone is welcomed to the session, reflects on what they learnt the previous week and shares experiences from their home practice	15 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
<b>2. Introduction: Creating peaceful homes together</b> The topic is introduced. Participants discuss the week's proverb, and share their own experiences	10 mins	Group discussion and experience sharing
 <b>3. Group discussion and activity: A vision for peaceful homes and communities</b> Parents and caregivers develop a personal vision for peaceful homes and communities	30 mins	Group discussion and activity
<b>4. Skills practice: Reflecting on Peace in our homes</b> Participants use role-play to reflect on the different ways power imbalance might impact families, and then look at strategies for balancing power in family scenarios. They consider the different types of violence against women and how these are reflected in the scenarios.	45 mins	Skills Practice and reflection
	30 mins	Break out groups and role play

<p><b>5. Applying the skill: Circles of support</b></p> <p>Participants reflect on their own circles of support, and how to grow these connections. They are reminded that support networks are particularly important for those who are experiencing violence, and that this support can be both formal and informal.</p>		
<p><b>6. Well-being activity: Self-massage</b></p> <p>Participants learn a simple technique for self-massage</p>	10 mins	Well-being exercise
<p><b>7. Recap and take home activity</b></p> <p>Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take home practice and write reflections in their journals/ notebooks</p>	10 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection and journaling

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Sharing

- 1.1 Welcome participants to the session and appreciate them for coming.
- 1.2 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray (if appropriate in your setting), or share a short reflection or song before the meeting starts.
- 1.3 Remind participants that in the previous session we discussed positive male involvement, ask the group 'what are some of the key messages we discussed last week?' and 'what were some of the key skills we practised?' Remind everyone of the key messages from last week's session.
- 1.4 Ask participants to identify a partner in the group, and share with them something about your 'take home practice'; one activity that fathers and male caregivers would do with their children during the week. How did it go? What were the benefits of fathers or male caregivers spending this time with their children and what could be different or improved on? Is this a useful skill or practise for your family to incorporate into their routines? Give everyone 5 minutes to discuss.

### 2. Introduction: Creating Peaceful Homes Together (10 mins)

- 2.1 Explain that this week we will discuss the topic of 'creating peaceful homes together'.
- 2.2 Share the proverb 'If you want to go quickly, go alone, if you want to go far, go together', and ask the group 'what are your reflections on this proverb?' and 'How can it help us to understand today's topic about creating peaceful homes together?' Gather initial reflections from the group.
- 2.3 Ask the group 'what does this message mean from your own experiences? Would anyone like to share some examples of going far together with your own family? And/or to share any challenges about why it is sometimes difficult to do this?'

2.4 Today we are going to talk about who makes the decisions in relationships and families, how we behave toward each other in the home, and ways we can all create more peace in our families.

2.5 Ask the group 'how can we create a safe space to talk about these topics?' (*If not mentioned remind the group about the importance of confidentiality, respectful listening etc., as discussed in session 1*)

### 3. A Vision for Peaceful Homes (30 minutes)

3.1 Explain to the group that in today's session we're going to think about the conditions needed for peaceful and happy homes and communities. Tell the group that we're going to start off by imagining what it would feel like to live in peaceful and happy homes and communities.

3.2 Ask everyone to sit comfortably and close their eyes, ask them to imagine a peaceful and happy day in their community, you can use prompts such as:

- Which parts of the community would they visit?
- How would they reach those places? Who would they meet along the way? How would they greet those people?
- What can they hear on this day in their community? Can they hear the birds? Children playing? community members greeting each other? Laughter? Singing?
- What kind of activities would they be doing?
- Who would they meet and talk with during those activities? What would they talk about?
- On this peaceful and happy day how would everyone be treating each other? Is there Kindness? Laughter? Respect? Curiosity?
- On this peaceful and happy day, what are the things they value most about living in their community, and what do they value about others in their community?

3.3 Ask participants to open their eyes and turn to their neighbour and tell them something about how it felt to imagine this peaceful and happy day.

3.4 Now ask participants to close their eyes again. This time they will be imagining a day with their own family, where everyone in the family feels happy and peaceful, asking:

- What kind of activities will your family do together on this peaceful and happy day?
- What kinds of conversations would you have together? Would you laugh and joke with each other?

- How would you share food together? What would you eat? And how would you prepare the meal?
- How would everyone in the family treat each other on this peaceful and happy day? Would there be kindness? Respect? Consideration? Love?
- What do you value most about your family on this peaceful and happy day?

3.5 Ask participants to open their eyes and turn to a different neighbour, and tell them something about how it felt to imagine this peaceful and happy day with family.

3.6 Ask participants to sit back in plenary and discuss with the group:

- How did you feel participating in this exercise?
- What happens when there is an absence of peace in our communities and families?
- In our families and communities what are some of the barriers to peace? And what are some of the ways in our communities and families that we work to ensure peace and understanding?
- Is it common for people in this community to experience violence?
- Do you think there is a relationship between power and violence?
- Can power imbalances lead to violence? Why/why not?
- Is there a power imbalance in our own communities and our own families between men and women?
- Are there types of violence that are related to a person's gender?
- What is needed for peaceful communities and families?

#### **4. Skills Practice - Reflecting on Peace in our Homes (45 minutes)**

4.1 Explain to the groups that we are now going to think further about how peace, and the absence of peace, can be experienced in our homes and relationships, as well as the impact it can have on children in the home. Split participants into five groups, and give each group one of the five scenarios (scenario 1A, scenario 1B, scenario 1C, scenario 2A, or scenario 2B). Tell them they have 10 minutes to prepare a short role play showing this scenario.

##### **Scenario 1 A**

Mary lives with her husband John. John expects food on the table when he comes home from work, and for all the household tasks to be complete. Mary often feels intimidated by John and his unpredictable moods; she worries that whatever she does will never be enough to please him. When he is in a bad mood, he often shouts at her that she is useless, and that he should just find another wife. Sometimes John lashes out at Mary, and when the children notice that she has bruises she tries to cover them up. Mary and

John have four children who often witness John shouting at Mary and threatening her. Mary worries that they will grow up thinking this is how a relationship should be.

### **Scenario 1 B**

Mary lives with her husband John. John expects food on the table when he comes home from work, and for all the household tasks to be complete. John often feels intimidated by Mary and her unpredictable moods; he worries that whatever he requests from Mary will be turned down. When she is in a bad mood, she often shouts at him that he is useless, and that she should just find another husband. Mary and John have four children who often witness Mary shouting at John and threatening him. John worries that they will grow up thinking this is how a relationship should be.

### **Scenario 1 C**

John lives with his wife Mary, and their four children. Mary works hard at the local NGO, and is often tired when she comes home from work. Mary knows that John works hard too, he grows vegetables to feed the family and spends a lot of time with the children when they come home from school. At the end of the day when Mary comes home, John asks her how her day was and asks if he can help with preparing dinner together with the children. They all eat dinner together and talk about what happened during the day. Mary feels proud that her children are learning from her and John about respect, love and supporting each other.

### **Scenario 2 A**

Agnes lives with her husband Emmanuel. Emmanuel is a carpenter, money is tight, but when they are careful there is enough to provide for the family's basic needs. Both Agnes and Emmanuel work hard to care for the children, they know that this is really important. Emmanuel works in a small factory, he and the other carpenters are low-paid and sometimes the owner has not paid Emmanuel what he was expecting because he says the quality is too poor, even though Emmanuel knows that it is because the wood that they are given to work with is poor quality.

Emmanuel and his work colleagues work long hours and are frustrated. They are often hungry and can get into arguments with each other, turning to fighting. Emmanuel often comes home with cuts and bruises, they are constantly worried that he will be seriously injured by the machinery or when fighting breaks out. Emmanuel often stops for a drink on the way home, and last week he got into a fight with a group of men who were drinking in the same bar, and was severely cut by a broken bottle.

When he gets home after these fights, he is angry and shouts at Agnes and the children. Agnes is also frustrated and worried for Emmanuel's safety at work and in the bars and has tried to talk to Emmanuel about this to see how he can avoid being hurt, but Emmanuel feels that she does not understand the stress that he is under.

### **Scenario 2 B**

Agnes lives with her husband Emmanuel. Emmanuel is a carpenter and money is scarce, but if they are responsible there is enough to provide for the family's basic needs. Both

Agnes and Emmanuel work hard to care for the children, they know that this is really important. Emmanuel works in a small factory, he and the other carpenters are low-paid and sometimes the owner has not paid Emmanuel what he was expecting because he says the quality is too poor, even though he knows that it is because the wood that they are given to work with is poor quality. Emmanuel and his work colleagues work long hours and are frustrated. They are often hungry and can get into arguments with each other, turning to fighting.

Emmanuel talks to Agnes about his frustrations. Together they take time to discuss how Emmanuel can keep calm and out of trouble when there are fights at work. Emmanuel agrees to come home straight after work and when he talks to Agnes about his challenges they both feel calm. They have decided that it is good to relax sometimes but rather than going to a bar on the way home from work, where there is often fighting, they invite their good friends, John and Fatima, around and they relax at home with their children playing. Agnes and Emmanuel both feel proud that their children are able to go to school because they are working hard, that they are learning about how to make shared decisions and build trust as a family. They often discuss with their children what their hopes and plans for the future are once they have finished their schooling.

4.2 After ten minutes, ask the five groups to come back to plenary. Ask the group with scenario 1A to go first.

4.3 After the first group has showcased scenario 1 A ask the rest of the group:

- Is there peace in this home?
- Do Mary and John have a good relationship? Why/why not?
- Do you think there is violence in Mary and John's relationship? Why/why not?
- What impacts does Mary and John's relationship have on the children?
- Is Mary and John's situation common in our own community?

4.4 Ask the second group to show scenario 1B, after the role play ask the rest of the group:

- Is there peace in this home?
- What differences do you notice about Mary and John's relationship in this scenario?
- What differences did you notice about their relationships with their children?

4.5 Ask the third group to show scenario 1C, after the role play ask the rest of the group:

- Is there peace in this home?
- What differences do you notice about Mary and John's relationship in this scenario?
- What differences did you notice about their relationships with their children?

4.6 Ask the fourth group to show scenario 2A, after the role play ask the rest of the group: Is there peace in this home?

- What can you say about power in this home? Is there an equal balance of power between Agnes and Emmanuel? Why/why not?
- Do Agnes and Emmanuel have a good relationship? Why/why not?
- What impacts does Agnes and Emmanuel's relationship have on the children?
- Is Agnes and Emmanuel's situation common in our own community?

4.7 Ask the fifth group to show scenario 2B, after the role play ask the rest of the group:

- Is there peace in this home?
- What can you say about power balance in this home? Is there a power balance between Agnes and Emmanuel? Why/why not?
- What differences do you notice about Agnes and Emmanuel's relationship in this scenario?
- What differences did you notice about their relationships with their children?

4.8 Explain that we saw different types of violence in each of these scenarios, and that violence can be physical, sexual, emotional, or economic. Write these four categories on a flipchart, and explain a bit more about each one (see facilitator information below)

4.9 Ask the group, did we see examples of all of these types of violence in the scenarios with Agnes and Emmanuel and with John and Mary? If participants answer yes, ask them to explain how each type of violence was present in the scenarios. If participants answer no, then look again with them at the scenarios and discuss how each type of violence is represented.

4.10 Summarise the activity by telling the group that:

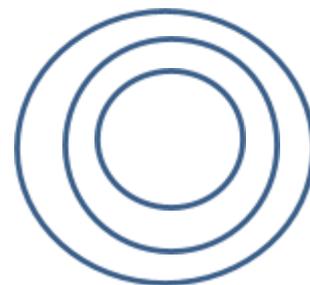
- Unequal relationships in our homes can have negative consequences for everyone.
- When there is sharing, collaboration, peace and respect, relationships and homes are happier and healthier.
- Children learn about collaboration, respect and care from their parents and caregivers. When they see respectful and loving relationships in their family, they are more likely to have happy relationships in their adult lives.

## 5. Applying the skills – my support network (30 minutes)

5.1 Explain that support networks can be an important source of resources, support, and solidarity. It is important for all of us to reflect on, create and build our own support networks. In this exercise we are going to start reflecting on the important relationships in

our lives, within our community structures and the support systems that we can turn to for advice.

5.2 Draw the circles of support diagram (on the right) on a flipchart. Tell the participants to consider the people they turn to for advice when facing problems (family members and friends) those individuals they rely on for advice, guidance, and help. Also, have them think about the community groups, organisations, or leaders available to provide support within the community (such as women's groups, health clinics, community and faith leaders).



5.3 Ask participants to think about who is in the ring closest to the centre, those whom they rely on for social support or advice. Think who is in the next circle, those who provide some support or advice but might not always be relied upon. In the outer ring think of those who are not an immediate part of their support network but that could be available for support/guidance in the future.

5.4 After 10 minutes, ask the participants to review their network in pairs, with the person sitting next to them. If there is an odd number of people, some groups can have three.

5.5 Allow the groups 10 minutes to discuss their social support networks. After 10 minutes, ask if any of the participants would like to share their social support network with the whole group, and open a discussion with the following questions:

- *Was it easy or difficult to identify the people who you can rely on for help and support?*
- *Are there people you would like to rely on for more help, support, and guidance?*
- *Are there people you would like to have in your inner support circle that aren't there now? What could be done to build or strengthen those relationships?*
- *What else can be done to strengthen your social support network?*
- *How can we support those who are experiencing violence in their families to access appropriate advice, guidance, and support? And how can we ensure that they have access to a strong social support network?*

5.6 Summarise the activity by reminding participants that:

- Our social support networks are an important source of support, advice, and guidance, especially in times of stress and crisis
- It's important for us to invest time in growing and nurturing the important relationships in our lives
- Support networks can also be an important tool in preventing and responding to violence. This support can be both informal (for example friends and neighbours supporting women by listening to them and providing help, or men speaking to other men about the benefits of non-violence) and formal (for example getting healthcare, reporting cases to the police, or going for counselling sessions).

- There will be local organisations that provide services for women like safe houses, counselling services and women's safe spaces or access to legal aid. Remind participants what some of these services are in their own communities and nearby (using your referral list)

## 6. Well-being exercise (as suitable to setting and audience) (10 minutes)

6.1 Thank everyone for their participation. Talking about conflict and violence can be difficult, so let us all take a few minutes to look after ourselves before heading home

6.2 Tell participants to take a deep breath into their belly and sigh it out ('aaaah!'), make sure you're sitting comfortably and relax

6.3 Tell participants that you are going to talk through how to give themselves a simple massage. Take one hand and hold your opposite thumb, make small circles up and down the thumb with the opposite thumb, move down the hand rubbing each finger in the same way with small circles, then do the opposite hand.

6.4 Then take your hand and rub with small circles on your opposite shoulder, then swap shoulders.

6.5 Finally take both hands and give yourself a quick head massage (put the tips of all fingers on the top of your head and rub in small circles).

6.6 When you have finished, stand up and stretch!

## 7. Take home activity and recap (15 mins)

7.1 Explain that the session is nearly at an end and that now we would like to look back on what we have talked about today.

Ask people what they think the most important messages are that have been discussed.

As people call out, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

- Families are happiest and strongest when life at home is peaceful and supportive.
- A home where violence is taking place is not a healthy environment for children to grow in. Children who witness violence or experience violence are more likely to experience and perpetrate violence and abuse when they become adults, whilst children who see respectful and loving relationships in their family are more likely to have happy relationships in their adult lives.
- Speaking out about violence can be difficult, and many people believe that violence in the home is a private matter for the family and others should not interfere. But it's important to break the silence, and speak out to prevent violence in our community and support those who are experiencing it.

- There are many things we can do in relationships, families, and communities to prevent violence in the home, including practising respectful communication, showing appreciation for each other, sharing decision making in our homes and families, and speaking out against violence in all its forms.
- Our social support networks are an important source of support, advice and guidance, especially in times of stress and crisis. Support networks can also be an important tool in preventing and responding to violence. These can include supporting women, listening to them and providing help, or men speaking to other men about the benefits of non-violence. There are local organisations that provide essential services for survivors of violence such as health services, counselling services, safe houses, women's safe spaces or access to legal aid.

7.2 Remind participants about the idea of home practice. Ask them to remember that today is about power balance in relationships.

Propose the following home practice:

- *Think of one way you can practise creating peaceful relationships in your home (for example by discussing important decisions like household finances with your spouse or other caregiver who is helping with the children you care for or spending time together as a family)*
- *Think of a way you can speak out about preventing violence in your community. For example by discussing the topic with a friend, or by supporting someone who is experiencing violence to get support*
- *Think of one way you can continue to grow your support network.* Thank participants for attending. Show the 'road' on the flip chart and remind people that we will be looking at Keeping Children and Families Safe in the next session. End by giving positive praise about how participants have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

# Session 11: Keeping Children and Families Safe

*Usipoziba ufa, utajenga ukuta* (Prevention is better than cure)

<b>Session aim</b>	To support parents and caregivers to understand child protection risks and practical steps to minimise them at home and in the community
<b>Time</b>	2 ½ hours

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Group agreement pasted on the wall</li> <li>• Session outline with road diagram posted on the wall</li> <li>• Leaflets and posters for Child Helpline or other local support organisations, if available</li> </ul>
<b>In this session, parents and caregivers will...</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Learn how to promote safe and nurturing relationships and environments for children and families</li> <li>• Explore the risks that children of all ages may face from people and the environment. Explore the potential risks that some children may face</li> <li>• Practice talking to children of all ages about safety, abuse, and neglect. This includes children with disability</li> <li>• Know what to do when they suspect that any child is at risk of or is experiencing harm.</li> </ul>
<b>Materials</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pens and flip chart</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How
<b>1. Welcome back and recap the previous session</b> Parents and caregivers review the previous session and give feedback on the home practice activities.	15 minutes	Group discussion
 <b>2. Introduction: Keeping Children and Families Safe</b> The topic of child abuse and neglect is introduced and parents and caregivers are reminded about group agreement and safeguarding.	5 minutes	Presentation by facilitator
 <b>3. Where Our Children Might Face Risks</b> Parents and caregivers map out where children of different ages may face risks. They explore age, gender, and other issues that may affect a child.	40 minutes	Group discussion and reflection, mapping activity
 <b>4. Skills Practice: Recognising and Talking About Risks with Children</b> Parents and caregivers explore how to identify possible risks of abuse and neglect for children of different ages and identify ways to address such situations.	40 minutes	Group discussion and role play

<b>5. Applying the Skills</b> Parents and caregivers talk about abuse, with their own children of different ages and developmental stages.	25 minutes	Skills practise
<b>6. Wellbeing activity</b> Parents and caregivers take time to relax at the end of the session with grounding and soothing activities	10 minutes	Wellbeing activity
<b>7. Summary and Take-Home Activity</b> Facilitators summarise key messages while parents and caregivers identify their home activity	15 minutes	Group discussion

## Activities

### 1. Welcome back and recap of the previous session (time: 15 minutes)

1.1 Welcome participants and sing or pray (as agreed in the previous sessions). Thank everyone for their commitment.

1.2 Explain that we are going to reflect back on what we did in the last session, before we start a new topic.

Remind participants that in the previous session we talked about creating peaceful homes together. Ask everyone to think for a minute about what they chose for their home activity.

#### *Session 10 home practice:*

- *Think of one way you can practise creating peaceful relationships in your home (for example by discussing important decisions like household finances with your spouse or any other caregiver who is supporting you with the children in your care, or about spending time together as a family)*
- *Think of a way you can speak out about preventing violence in your community for example by discussing the topic with a friend, or by supporting someone who is experiencing violence to get support*
- *Think of one way you can continue to grow your support network.*

1.3 Ask 2-3 Participants to volunteer examples of practical things they were able to do. Ask them to also think about the earlier home practice that they have been doing and all the skills and techniques they have developed.

1.4 Ask the group if anyone has any questions or concerns about what was covered in the previous session. If there are questions, clarify these or explain that this is going to be discussed later in the training and write the question in the “parking lot”.

1.5 End by leading participants in a “special” clap and ask everyone to return to their sitting positions.

### 2. : Keeping Children and Families Safe (time: 5 minutes)

2.1 Share the proverb of the week: “Usipoziba ufa, utajenga ukuta” (Prevention is better than cure)

2.2 Explain that we will be discussing the topic of ‘keeping children and families safe’. First, remind parents and caregivers of the positive parenting journey, the road that we are moving along, pointing to the flip chart with the sessions along the road. Explain that we are now going to talk about supporting our children when they face risks or harm.

Let them know that this is a sensitive topic. In this session we will look at skills to recognise and protect children from harm. We will continue talking about this topic in the next session, when we look at preventing harm in the community.

2.3 Acknowledge that this topic can cause a lot of emotions. Remind the group of the importance of looking after themselves, each other and creating a safe space for these conversations. Remind them of the group agreements that are posted on the wall and of the safeguarding commitments that were discussed in Session 1. Thank everyone for sharing as you introduce the next activity.

*Note: At this point you should reaffirm your organisation’s safeguarding commitments, explained in Session 1.*

### **. 3.0 Discussion: Where Our Children Might Face Risks (time: 40 minutes)**

3.1 Ask participants to get into groups of four. Give each group a flip chart and pens. Ask participants to draw a map of their home and local community (it doesn’t have to be accurate, but it must include locations that are important for the community and your child, such as the grandparents’ house, places of worship, friends’ houses, school, etc., and important roads or walking routes)

*Note: If participants are struggling with drawing maps, they can just describe the important locations in the community. There are some sample maps in the Facilitator notes; facilitators could give an example on a flip chart.*

3.2 Once participants have drawn their maps (in not more than 15 minutes), ask participants to mark on their maps:

- Where they think their children are safe
- Which places they think are important for boys’ and girls’ wellbeing, learning, and development. Are there differences in the safety of these places when it comes to boys and girls?
- Where they think their children are unsafe, specifically where they may be at risk of abuse and exploitation.
- Where girls and boys face different risks.

Encourage participants to think about the risks in the home and in the local community, as well as the places in the community that are important for children's well-being, learning and development. Remind people that the risks could be online, around them or within the environment.

3.3 Explain to participants that we will be looking at the maps later, but before doing that, ask the same small groups to discuss:

- *Who could harm my child(ren)?*
- *How could they harm my child(ren)?*
- *Do children of different ages face different risks?*
- *Do boys and girls face different risks?*
- *Do children with disabilities face specific risks?*

3.4 After 10 minutes, ask them to share their findings in plenary. Mention any of the following key messages that the groups have not already discussed:

- Children face practical risks in the home, including physical danger, and more specifically younger children.
- Children face abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect in Kenya and across the world.
- Even though there are laws in Kenya that seek to protect children from harm, many children continue to experience abuse and violence.
- Most abuse and violence take place in the family home by someone close to the child. This can include parents or caregivers, siblings, and other family members.
- People in positions of trust can also harm our children, such as health workers, those who work in our homes, teachers, religious or community leaders.
- Harm can include:
  - Physical (for example, hitting, burning, beating, pricking, tying a child with disability to items like furniture or starving a child, as means of punishment).
  - Emotional (calling a child names, making them feel unloved, locking up children without an opportunity for them to move or play, labelling children based on their developmental status, discrimination).
  - Sexual (exposing children to sexual images or suggestions, unwanted touching, or sexual acts with a child).
  - Exploitation (making a child or minor do hard labour or engage in sexual acts in exchange for something such as money, sanitary pads, food or clothes).
  - Neglect (for example, not feeding your child yet you have enough food in the home, leaving children in the care of others or sending children away to live in an institution or boarding school at an early age). Failure to take sick children or those with disabilities for health services; not spending time with them but relegating this responsibility to domestic workers.
  - Drug abuse (making alcohol available to your child or their friends, exposing your child to alcohol adverts, not supervising parties in your home to make sure there is no alcohol, socialising at someone else's home or going for sleepovers).
- Even if someone is committing abuse and violence in the name of 'discipline' or for spiritual benefit, this is abuse and violence (for example, harming a child through casting out bad spirits). This also contravenes the provisions of the Children Act, 2022.
- While there are benefits, the online world is now a major risk in causing harm to children.) Even where there are few mobile phones, children view different things on the internet via their friends' or older people's phones.
- Different factors such as age, gender or disability can impact the types of risks that children face so we must be always aware of our children's unique risks.
- It is important that girls are given freedom to explore and be independent as they get older. Discuss risks together with your daughters, and agree on what actions they can take to minimise risk when they are out in the community, rather than restricting their movements altogether. You should also discuss with boys the role they have in keeping girls safe in the community, and not perpetrating harassment or abuse on them.
- Parents and caregivers play an important role in providing safety for children.

3.5 Ask participants to look at their maps again and add anything that they have missed, and then stick them on the wall. Ask each group to walk around the room and look at the other groups' maps.

3.6 Come back to the main group and ask them how they are feeling about these risks. Once they have shared their thoughts, end the session with the following key messages:

- Children face risks in the world around them, including in the home and the online world.
- It is important that we recognise that abuse and violence are risks around us knowing about it and acknowledging these risks is an important starting point.
- It is important to discuss risk, and plan for safety with children at various ages. Start by teaching children how to stay safe in the home and then introduce the other risks to them.
- As children grow, it is important that they gain more freedom and independence as well as full understanding of the risks and boundaries already discussed.
- An important way to protect children is having open conversations with children from an early age. When we have open and positive communication, children are more likely to tell us if there is something that they are unhappy about.

#### **4.1 Skills Practice: Recognising and Talking About Risks with Your Child (time: 40 minutes)**

4.1 Introduce this skills practise activity by reminding participants about the positive parenting journey. Ask everyone to think for a moment about the positive parenting skills and techniques that they have shared and practised and how these might help us as parents and caregivers to help our children identify and respond to risks.

After several participants have made suggestions, summarise the following, if they have not already been mentioned:

- Provide nurturing care and support for children from birth onwards, especially for those born to older parents.
- Have opportunities to build open communication and trust in the family, for example, through family meetings.
- Recognise and understand children's development and *really listen* to what children are communicating verbally or nonverbally.
- Giving children praise and affirming positive values, so that they can grow confident and with high self-esteem (using techniques practised in Session 8).
- Practising positive and open communication as role models in the family.
- Addressing power in relationships and practising non-violent discipline, so that children see that treating people equally and fairly is right.

4.2 In this session we are going to build on the positive communication that we have already talked about:

- If children learn from a young age that they can let their parents know about minor things, then they are more likely to let their parents know if more serious things happen.
- This includes children with limited or challenged speech; we can encourage them to communicate through gestures, pointing or sign language.

4.3 We are now going to practise recognising and talking about abuse and violence first as a whole group and then in smaller groups by using role play. Read out the following scenario or adapt to one that is more suitable:

- Scenario 1: A 14-year-old girl used to be very outgoing and cheerful. She complains of a sore tummy in the mornings in the past few weeks when she is about to leave for school, but seems alright in the evenings. If you were her mother or father, how would you talk to her about how she is feeling?

4.4 Ask someone to volunteer to be the adult who is dealing with the scenario. In this first scenario, you can play the child.

After you have both roles played for about three minutes, stop and thank the volunteer.

4.5 First ask the volunteer who played the adult:

- *What were the signs that you observed in the child?*
- *What do you think the risks were?*
- *What positive communication techniques did you choose to use?*

4.6 Then ask the rest of the participants their views, using the following guiding questions:

- *Are there other risks that the child might be facing? How might you recognise the signs?*
- *Would you do anything different if the child was a boy?*
- *What actions might you take to enable you to talk about the risks with your child?*

4.7 Repeat the activity with another scenario, either from the examples below or developing your own. Choose a scenario that has a child of the opposite sex and a different age. After another volunteer has performed the role play, repeat the questions.

- Scenario 2: A 10-year-old grandson is living with his grandparents after the death of his mother two years ago, and the disappearance of his father. Although he is dealing with sadness from the loss of his mother, anger and confusion about his father's abandonment, he is happy with his grandparents who love him dearly. He has recently been reluctant to go to school, and in the past month has started wetting the bed. If you were the grandparent, what would you do?
- Scenario 3: A 3-year-old boy is often brought along to a neighbour's house with his older sister who looks after him, as his mother is out all day at work. The neighbour notices that he is very quiet and just sits on the ground not joining in, when his sister plays in the compound with the other children. If you were the neighbour, how would you talk to his sister or to your neighbour, his mother?
- Scenario 4: A 7-year-old girl used to be very outgoing and cheerful when she comes over to stay with her aunt and family. She has been staying there quite a lot because her parents are having difficulties. You feel that you want to protect her from the arguments at home. She has a learning disability. One of your children comes to you and says that she was talking about dirty things and showing her private parts. If you were the Aunt, what would you do?
- Scenario 5: A 9-year-old boy comes to your home after staying two years in a Child Care Institution. He was placed there when his parents were struggling for money, and then his father went to prison. You are a distant relative and have agreed to be a foster carer. He appears happy to be at your house but his behaviour can be erratic. He does not go to sleep and asks to stay up late and can get very angry at the

slightest criticism, often getting physically violent. If you were his foster father or mother, what would you do?

4.8 Once you have shared several scenarios, divide participants into four groups and allocate an age to each group: 0-2 years; 3-6 years; 7-12 years; 13-17 years and older. Ask each group to brainstorm on the following:

- What are the signs that a child of this age is at risk of abuse or violence?
- What might we do to encourage the child to communicate if they are at risk, both verbally and non-verbally?

4.9 Allow 15 minutes for discussion and then ask each group to briefly share what they have brainstormed. Share any additional key tips from the facilitator notes and end with the following key messages:

- There are many ways in which children can show when something is not right. As adults, we should always be alert to this.
- Signs might include a change in behaviour either being quieter or angrier, withdrawing from family or friends, or physical signs such as being afraid or starting to wet the bed which they do not usually do. Younger children may become clingier or cry a lot.
- Sometimes a child says that they fear someone or are afraid of being harmed.
- Children can also be affected by seeing other people being hurt, either in the house or bullying of a friend at school.
- It is essential to let the child speak (or communicate non-verbally), to listen to them, and to show them that you believe them.
- If you suspect a child is being harmed, it is important to report your concerns either to someone in the community who you trust and will be able to act or an authority in the area. Prioritise the child's best interests (see referral list), or report to Child Helpline 116.
- Remember that some children are likely to be at increased risk of violence because of the community's negative attitudes towards them such as children with disabilities and children who are living or working in the street. Note: it is everyone's responsibility to act and report if you suspect that a child is at risk.

### **5.1 Applying the Skills: Talking to our children about abuse (time: 25 minutes)**

5.1 Explain: We will now think about how to discuss this topic with our own children. Ask everyone to choose someone to partner with for practice. When everyone is in pairs (or threes), introduce some key tips:

- Timing and atmosphere are very important. Choose a calm and private time to talk with children and be prepared with accurate information.
- Here are some possible ways to start a conversation, you know your own child's age and level of emotional development and will adapt these examples.
- *"My role as a parent or caregiver is to protect and take care of you. So, if anyone does anything that makes you feel unsafe, scared or touches you, it is okay to tell me. Is there anything or anyone who makes you feel scared or unsafe? You can always tell me."*

- Be ready to respond if a child has a question or discloses something, respond calmly and avoid using words that may shame your child, such as “nasty” or “naughty.” If your child feels shame, they may feel like they should not talk to you if they have questions about sexuality or about their body.
- Talking to children about sexuality that is age-appropriate. Tell your children about their body parts, including their private parts, for example;
  - “That is your vagina/penis (use the words commonly used in your local language). It is a private part of your body.”
  - It is always okay to inform me or someone you trust if someone touches your private parts.
- Talk to your children about sexual touches and let them know that any form of sexual touch is unacceptable and they should firmly say no! Make it clear that no one should ask your adolescent child to keep a secret about something that they do not like and that it is not their fault if something has previously happened to them.
- Empower children to know:
  - It is wrong for anyone to do things that hurt, scare, or make children feel bad about themselves
  - Bad things include hitting you, making you feel bad or sad about yourselves like name-calling, or touching you or showing you things that make you feel bad.
  - Bad things can also happen online. If you have seen something on the internet or on your phone, or if you are being asked to do something that you do not want to do, talk to someone to make it stop because you do not have to feel scared.
  - When anyone like an adult or a child harms children it is called child abuse. It can happen in any place; at home, in school, on the playground, on the route to and from the school, in the market, at church or the mosque.
  - Remember that my body belongs to me, I can decide what happens to it, and if I say no to touch or anything else that makes me uncomfortable, this means no! It is always okay to say “no” if something is making you uncomfortable.
  - It is okay to talk about secrets that upset you so that you do not have to feel sad or scared any more. Being abused is never your fault, and it is always okay to report it. It does not make you a bad person and you don’t deserve to be treated in this way.
  - Children can contact Child Helpline 116

5.2 Now ask everyone to think about their own child or children and practice strategies for talking to their children about abuse in an age-appropriate way and in a setting which is suitable for that child. In this role play, one will be the child and the other one, the adult.

5.3 Ask each team to start with one person as the adult and the other as the child. After five minutes of practice, ask the person who was taking the role of the child to give feedback to the adult; how did the conversation make them feel? What did they do well? Is there anything they could do differently next time?

5.4 After the child has given the adult some feedback, they should swap roles and repeat the exercise.

5.5 Once everyone has had a chance to practise, return to the circle and ask volunteers to share what they felt about the activity.

5.6 End by summarising the key messages:

- Children need accurate, age-appropriate information about abuse
- Children need to be confident that adults they know will believe them and support them
- Children may be unable to communicate their feelings clearly, so you can help them by teaching them to identify and share when they feel sad, scared or angry
- If parents and caregivers can talk with their children about sexuality, relationships, and their bodies with openness and without shame or stigma, it will help them explain what is happening if something worries them and/or if abuse does take place.

## 6. Wellbeing activity: Grounding and soothing techniques (time: 10 minutes)

6.1 Thank everyone and say that today's topic has been heavy and can make people feel emotional. It is important that we take a moment to check in with ourselves and take care of ourselves by introducing two grounding and soothing techniques that anyone can use any time they feel emotional or overwhelmed.

6.2 Ask everyone to notice how they are connected to the ground. If the person is standing, it might be through their feet. If the person is sitting, it might be through their seat on the chair or ground. Ask participants to take a moment and focus on this connection and take some deep breaths at the same time.

After everyone has done this for a minute, ask if anyone would like to share what that felt like.

6.3 Tell participants that another grounding exercise is to give yourself a hug! Demonstrate and ask everyone to do the same:

- Put your hands on your opposite shoulders (so that you form a sort of 'X' with your arms)
- Rub your hands down your arms, repeat this motion a few times.

Demonstrate and encourage everyone to try this. This activity can be done sitting down.

6.4 Finally, ask participants to 'shake it off', they can do this standing or sitting' and should shake their arms/bodies/heads! Tell everyone that it's ok to look a bit silly.

6.5 Thank everyone and remind them to keep practising self-care, especially after intense sessions such as this one.

## 7. Summary and take-home activity (time: 15 minutes)

7.1 Explain that the session is coming to an end and we would like to reflect on what we have talked about today.

7.2 Ask participants what they think the most important messages are that have been discussed.

7.3 As participants mention, thank them for their answers. If any of the following key messages have not already been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising these messages:

- Children face abuse, violence, exploitation, and neglect in Kenya and across the world. Most abuse and violence takes place in the family home by someone close to the child. Harm can be physical, emotional or sexual and can include exploitation and neglect.
- The online world poses a major risk of harm to children (despite having a lot of benefits). Even where there are few mobile phones, children do access the internet via their friends' or other older people's phones. Online safety includes protecting children from exposure to sexual violence or exploitation and to risks of exposure to radicalisation.
- Different factors such as age, gender, disability, adopted children (including those living with their relatives) can impact the types of risks that children face.
- Parents and caregivers are important in providing safety for children. We will continue this topic in the next session, when we talk more about keeping children safe online and in the community.
- If children learn from a young age that they can talk to their parents and trusted adults around them about small things, then they are more likely to talk to their parents when serious things happen.
- Children need accurate, age-appropriate information about safety and family values. This includes providing information on children's development and healthy lifestyles, including risks from exposure to alcohol, drugs and other substances.
- Children need to be confident that the adults they are familiar with will believe them and support them.

7.4 Remind participants about the idea of home

practice. Propose the following home practice:

- Look around the house and see if there are things that can be done to make the house safer.
- Find a time or space to show your children that they can talk to you about sensitive topics, remembering that it is important to have the right time and space.

7.5 Thank all participants for attending. Remind people that we will be looking at Keeping Children Safe in Our Community in the next session. Also remind everyone that it is okay to seek support and if anyone has been affected by today's topic, they can come and talk to the facilitators or their friend. End the session by giving positive praise about how people have shared, and what skills exist in the room.

# Session 12: Positive and Protective Communities

There are two gifts we should give our children. One is roots, the other is wings.

Session Aim	To support parents and caregivers to understand the risks that some societal beliefs and practices have on children and take practical steps to promote positive beliefs and norms
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Copy of the session and group agreements from Session 1</li> <li>▪ (Optional: Materials and information about local initiatives that are promoting positive cultural practices and/or addressing harmful cultural practices)</li> <li>▪ Copies of role plays</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Understand cultural and traditional practices in their community and the important role that traditions and culture can play in their family life</li> <li>▪ Explore what constitutes a harmful practice, how harmful practices might impact on children’s safety and well-being, and how to navigate these as a family</li> <li>▪ Understand key risks that your children may face, in the community and online, and how these risks change depending on age, gender, disability and other factors</li> <li>▪ Practice problem solving with your children, and making decisions as a family about safety, including making a family plan for possible emergencies</li> <li>▪ Explore the importance of contributing to an environmentally conscious community and identify actions that they can take together as a family to care for the planet.</li> <li>▪ Acquire safety and survival skills for example psychosocial, first aid, lifesaving, road safety, fire drills, counter terrorism skills and self-defence.</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
<b>1. Welcome and sharing</b> Participants are welcomed to the session, reflect on what they learnt the previous week and share experiences from their home practice	15 mins	Group discussion and sharing
 <b>2. Introduction: Positive and protective communities</b> The topic on positive and harmful practices is introduced. Parents and caregivers discuss the week's proverb, and share their own experiences	10 mins	Group discussion and sharing
 <b>3. Discussion: Exploring Our Cultural Values and Practices</b> Parents and caregivers discuss positive and harmful cultural practices	35 mins	Break out groups, listening and brainstorming
<b>4. Skills Practice: Identifying and Challenging Harmful Practices</b> Parents and caregivers reflect on their children's attitudes towards positive and harmful practices and explore how to navigate these	35 mins	Small group discussion and role play
 <b>5. Applying key skills: Making Decisions Together – the STEP process</b> Participants use the step process to come up with solutions to family dilemmas	40 mins	Role play and discussion
<b>6. Well-being exercise: shake it out!</b> Participants are taken through a fun exercise to shake off the session	5 mins	Well-being activity
<b>7. Recap and take: home activity</b> Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take home practice and write reflections in their journals	10 mins	Group discussion and individual reflection

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Sharing (time: 15 mins)

1.1 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray (if appropriate in your setting), or share a short reflection or song before the meeting starts.

1.2 Admit that topics in the last two sessions have been difficult in Session 10 had a topic on creating peace in our home, and in the last session, Session 11, the topic addressed recognising child abuse. Acknowledge that these can be difficult topics to address but that everyone in the room brings in strengths and skills that can address these challenges. Ask participants to introduce themselves and say one strength or skill that they value from other parents and caregivers in the group. You can start with your own example: “Hello, my name is John and I have learned so much from the group about new ways to have fun with children”.

1.3 Remind participants that in the previous session the discussion was about recognising and talking with our children about the risks that they face. Ask the group “What are some of the key messages we discussed in the last session?” and “What were some of the key skills we practised?”

Ask what the practice was. If participants cannot remember, remind them:

*Session 11 home practice:*

- *Look around the house and see if there are things that can be done to make the house safer*
- *Find a time or space to show your children that they can talk to you about sensitive topics, remembering that it is important to do this at the right time and space.*

1.4 Ask 2-3 participants to share their experiences with the rest of the group.

1.5 Ask the group if anyone has any questions or concerns about what was covered in the previous session. If there are questions, clarify these or explain that this is going to be discussed later in the training and write up the question in the parking lot.

1.6 End the session by leading participants in a “special” clap and ask everyone to return to their sitting positions.

## **2. Introduction: Positive and protective communities (time: 10 mins)**

2.1 Explain that this week the topic of discussion will be ‘Positive and protective communities’. This continues the discussions from the last session about supporting children to grow safely. In this session the focus will be on supporting children to grow safely in communities. This will build on the topic and skills that were addressed in the last session, to think about risks in communities and help children navigate their way outside home and in the community. Discussions will involve looking at the issues that we face and also some of the potential risks when there are emergencies or crises. One thing to think about is how climate change will increasingly affect our own lives, and how we can talk with our children about being environmentally conscious and making plans for the future.

*The introduction and content of this session can be adapted to reflect local context. In communities that are already affected by crises, for example in refugee communities or where climate-related challenges occur regularly, it may be appropriate to focus more on the immediate challenges faced in the community. The key message is about working together to address emergencies, giving children and families the skills to stay safe, and supporting children to feel that they are supported by their family.*

2.2 Share the proverb **'There are two gifts we should give our children. One is "roots", and the other is 'wings''**. Ask:

- What do you think this proverb means?
- How can this proverb help us to understand today's topic about ensuring children live in positive and protective communities?

2.3 Once you have several reflections from the group, conduct a brief plenary reflection using the following guiding questions:

- What does this message mean from your own experiences?
- Would anyone like to share some examples of being able to give your children both roots so that they feel safe at home, and wings so that they are able to safely explore for themselves?
- Would anyone like to share any challenges about why it is sometimes difficult to do this?

### **3. Discussion: Exploring our Cultural Values and Practices (time: 45 mins)**

*Note: Talking about beliefs and practices is very sensitive. It is important to make sure that this session focuses on positive norms and practices in the communities in which you are working, as well as explore the practices that are harmful to children's wellbeing and safety.*

*If there are initiatives in the community that focus on issues such as child marriage, female genital mutilation (FGM) or other harmful practices, gather materials and information before the session. If harmful practices are particularly pervasive in the community, consider inviting a community champion who is influential and fighting against harmful practices.*

*If there is a lot of discussion and disagreement, it will be important to remind participants of the agreements about respecting each other's point of view. Keep the key messages clear (see facilitator notes) and maintain focus on positive practices.*

3.1 Ask participants to reflect on their own about the cultural values and practices that are important in their own families and daily life.

3.2 Then ask participants to get into groups of two or three people and share these practices. Allow not more than 3 minutes for quick sharing.

3.3. Place two pieces of flip chart paper in different places in the room with one piece marked 'Positive' and one marked 'Harmful'. As the small groups share each practice, ask the person to say if the practice is positive or if it is harmful.

As each practice is named, write down the practice on the paper and ask if everyone agrees. Remember to reflect on if each practice could be positive or harmful to different genders (men, women, boys, girls). If there is no agreement, note down the practice on both the positive and harmful sheets.

Leave the flip chart sheets on the wall as you will be looking at them again later.

3.4 Now ask the group if they know of any songs, proverbs or stories traditionally used in our community that imply certain beliefs about women, girls, boys and children with disability? (For example 'a talkative bird cannot build a nest' could imply that women should concentrate on tasks in the home and should not be speaking up). What messages do some of these songs, proverbs, sayings and stories give our children?

3.5 Summarise the following key message:

- Our cultural beliefs and values are an important part of family and community life. They can help us to celebrate and to mourn, to mark important transitions and to create a shared sense of identity and community.
- There are also cultural practices and beliefs that can be harmful to specific groups of people in our community. The harm might be physical, psychological or emotional, or it might mean that the person or family is rejected in the community.

*Note: See the facilitator notes about how culture is not a fixed or static thing. It can change all the time to incorporate new ways of thinking or new ways of doing things.*

3.6 Divide participants into groups of four people and ask the groups the following guiding questions to discuss:

- What aspects of culture and tradition do you enjoy in your family and in the community? Why are these important?
- Are there any aspects of culture and tradition that can be harmful to children or put them at risk? If so, give examples.
- Are there any cultural practices that impact or harm girls and boys differently? If so, give examples.
- As a family how can you make positive choices about which aspects of culture and tradition you participate in, and which you choose not to? How can you involve your children in those discussions?

3.7 Bring the groups back together and discuss each group's reflections. As each group shares, add to the existing lists of 'positive cultural practices' and 'harmful cultural practices' and start a new list of 'making positive choices'.

3.8 Summarise the key messages:

- There are many positive beliefs and practices in Kenya. Examples include traditional adult marriages, rites of passage for boys and traditional festivals.
- These positive beliefs and practices help to bring families and communities together
- There are some practices that are harmful to children. These include child marriage, FGM and child labour, practices that put children at risk, keep them away from education or harm their safety and wellbeing.

- All people have a role in shaping our culture and practices, and can make positive choices about practices that support our children to grow safely
- Strong families and communities can protect children; we should all be upholding our practices and beliefs that help children meet their needs and rights.

#### 4. Skills Practice: Identifying and Challenging Harmful Practices for Our Children<sup>15</sup> (time: 35 mins)

4.1 Divide participants into groups of four. Explain that discussions will now focus on how it may feel from children's perspectives to address some of the harmful practices that the groups have identified.

*Facilitator tip: If the group has not come to consensus about which practices are positive and which are negative, this exercise can provide an opportunity for further reflection. The examples below cover practices that are recognised as harmful in Kenyan law and policy; you can choose to add other harmful practices in your area.*

4.2 Provide each group a different scenario that reflects the harmful practices that they have listed:

- You are seventeen years old, married and pregnant. You are worried about giving birth because you had FGM as a child and you have heard that it can increase the risk of death or disability during delivery and that it can increase the risk of suffering from fistula condition which affects the dignity of women
- You and your family are struggling financially and you know there is work available in the local mine for children, you tell your parents that you are okay dropping out of school and working at the local mine to help out.
- You are a mother who has just given birth to a baby who has albinism. The family is saying that this is a curse and a punishment.
- You are thirteen years old and have learnt about climate change at school. Your family and neighbours have been asked to burn down a large amount of forest near you for farming which you and your friends think will harm the planet and make it harder to farm in future.
- You are sixteen years old. A fire breaks out in the school dormitory while you are sleeping. Your friends panic and some attempt to jump out of the window from the second floor to escape the fire.

Ask participants to discuss:

- What you think the child will be thinking and feeling is he or she scared, excited?

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<sup>15</sup> Adapted from Ministry of Social Welfare, Sierra Leone: *Good Kombra na Gladly Family (Good and Nurturing Caring / Parenting Makes a Happy Family)*

- Where does the child get information about the situation?
- Who can the child speak to about the practice?
- If there are supportive people in the family, who can the child speak to?

4.3 Allow up to 15 minutes for discussion in groups and then in plenary ask the first group to share their reflections. After they have shared, ask for any questions or observations from other participants. Repeat this with all four groups.

4.4 Once the group has discussed each scenario, summarise the key messages:

- Going against cultural practices can seem and be an enormous challenge. For example, to challenge child marriage may go against our parents' beliefs about what they have done.
- However, children may have different perspectives about what is fair and right. [yes, but needs to be qualified on the principle of human dignity as opposed to a general statement]
- Remember that although girls and boys might face different challenges when faced with cultural practices, it is important for both to access information and support to enable them successfully navigate these challenges.
- It is also important to support our boys and men to speak out and back up girls and women on their dignity and worth.
- You can get advice and support from the following organisations locally (add in the names of local organisations).

## 5. Applying the Skills: Making Decisions Together - the Step process <sup>16</sup> (time: 40 mins)

5.1 Explain to participants:

- This problem-solving process is called STEP.
  - S – State the problem; what is the problem?
  - T – Think of possible solutions
  - E – Evaluate possible solutions
  - P – Pick the best solution
- It can be used by older children and teens to problem-solve, and by families to work through problems together.

5.2 Choose a scenario that will be familiar to the group and talk through what these steps are together, the example here is from role play 1, but you can choose a different role play:

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<sup>16</sup> Adapted from IRC Girl Shine

**Role play 1:** Alice is 15 years old. She enjoys going to school, reading and hanging out with her friends in her free time. As Alice is getting older, you start to worry that she is spending too much time with her friends, especially with boys. One of your family members suggests that maybe the best thing would be for Alice to get married so that you do not have to worry about her anymore.

**State the problem:** what is the problem? *The problem may be that you are concerned that Alice may end up in trouble or pregnant. You may be worried about her not performing well at school; you may be feeling pressure from other family members. You will need to ask Alice whether she feels that there may be a problem, she will need to know your worries and that there is pressure for her to marry.*

**Think of possible solutions:** *you will have to ask Alice what the possible solutions might be, these could include her not going out at all, having more limited time out, meeting somewhere where there are adults around who can see that nothing inappropriate is happening, choosing to leave school and marry.*

**Evaluate possible solutions -** *you and Alice will need to decide what the solutions might be, thinking of both the immediate and long term problems. You may have to help Alice to reflect on the long term consequences if she has not thought of them.*

**Pick the best solution.**

5.3 Ask participants to discuss other scenarios in small groups. Give each group one of the following scenarios and ask participants to role-play the scenarios using the STEP process.

**Role Play 2:** *Your younger daughter, Natalie, is now attending school. She loves going to school every day but it is a long walk, and you do not have time to go with her as you need to start working. You have heard from neighbours and other families that some girls have been assaulted while walking to school and you are now worried about Natalie doing that walk every day.*

**Role Play 3:** *Your four children were doing well in school but when COVID-19 hit, your market stall business folded. You have no savings to start the business again and cannot pay for the children to go back to school. Your oldest girl, Juliette, is 15 years and your extended family has already been saying that it is time for her to get married. Although you know that she enjoys school, you also cannot see a way to pay for everyone. You have heard that many girls are getting pregnant now that schools are closed, so you think that maybe marrying Juliette off to a cousin who has a successful business will help you save school fees and keep her out of trouble.*

**Role play 4:** *Your son, Obama, has always wanted to herd cattle like his father and grandfather before him. For the fourth year in a row, drought has killed off many of the herd. The cattle herd of the whole clan has to roam further, sometimes into a neighbouring country. You have heard that the climate crisis means that there will be more droughts. You want your child to continue the family tradition but you are scared that he will be exposed to harm if he becomes involved in crossing the border. You are scared of the climate crisis and do not know what to do.*

**Role play 5:** *Your 10-year-old son has a learning disability. He likes playing with your neighbour's children; they also like to visit him at your home and play football. Often your son gets frustrated when he is not kicking the ball. When he gets frustrated, he gets angry and can hit and bite the*

other children. You have noticed that one of the children has started saying that your son is cursed by the devil. You do not want to stop him from playing with the children but you are concerned about your child's safety as well as the safety of the other children.

**Role play 6:** You run a small street-side food stall in your village selling drinks and snacks. You are learning about protecting the environment and your children are telling you about plastic waste. You notice that people buying food and drinks from your stall drop plastic waste everywhere, and you are using non-disposable trays and cutlery for your food. You want to raise your children to be protective of the environment but also worry about the cost of changing the way you package your food. You ask your teenage children to help you and your spouse think about how to be environmental role models in your village.

**Role play 7:** You are a mother attending to a 3-month-old baby and need to buy some milk at the shop across the road. You sent your 10-year old son to the shop

5.4 Ask each group to give a quick description of their scenario and the solutions they came up with using the STEP process. Ask if there are any volunteers who would like to show their role-play to the other participants.

Discuss together:

- Do we often face these sorts of dilemmas as families?
- Do you find the STEP process helpful in providing solutions? Why/why not?
- How can you involve children to participate in decisions that affect them?
  - When and how can you take the time to listen to them? How far should and can you consider their opinion?
  - How can you make a decision together?
  - How can you talk to other people when the problems are just too big to tackle as one family?

5.5 Introduce the idea of 'emergency planning', using the Facilitator notes. Brainstorm with the family ways that you can introduce the idea to children, remind participants of the positive parenting techniques that you have used in this training programme:

- *Compose a song about being ready for an emergency and sing it together with children. Include details such as parents' or caregivers' name(s), address or landmark and phone number.*

5.6 Once participants have concluded, end the session with the following key messages:

- Sharing a problem and thinking about the solutions can make a difficult problem become easier.
- Be non-judgemental and help the child think through the possible options and realise that they can try something and change it if the solution does not work.
- Open communication is important for solving problems.

- Some challenges cannot be solved within the family alone, humanitarian crises and climate crisis cannot be prevented by one family, but we can work together to be prepared to stay safe and to role model environmentally sustainable practices for our children
- Remember to praise the child for being responsible about making important decisions. This will prepare your child for the future!

## 6. Unwinding activity (5 minutes)

The facilitator uses the best way to end the session. It may include an energizer activity, prayer, experience sharing (what is my take home, lesson learnt), or singing a chorus.

### Take home activity and recap (10 mins)

7.1 Ask 'What was the most important thing that you took from the session today?' Take answers from a few different members of the group.

7.2 Summarise the session and recap the 'Key Messages'

- Positive cultural beliefs, values, and practices are an important part of family and community life. They help create a sense of belonging and identity, and opportunities for celebration
- Some cultural practices and beliefs can be harmful to specific groups of people like pregnant women, children with disabilities, girls and boys. It is important that families sensitise on positive cultural practices and traditions that promote the safety and health of children and other family members
  - Child labor, female genital mutilation (FGM), and child marriage can have an immediate harmful impact on children as well as putting their future opportunities and healthy development at risk in the long term.
  - FGM causes immediate health risks, as well as long-term impact on women and girls' mental and physical health.
- Gender stereotypes are harmful to both girls and boys and can limit their opportunities in life.
- Going against cultural practices can feel like an enormous challenge. However, change is possible, and because of the different choices parents are making, things are changing.
- Children, families, and communities are facing new challenges from climate change. Parents and caregivers can support their children to be aware of the impact of climate change and make their contribution to promoting environmental sustainability.
- There is additional advice and support available in your local community and nationally. Remember the circles of support in session 10! (add in the names of relevant local organisations)

7.3 Remind everyone that it is important to practise what we have learnt at home this week, identify at least one safety dilemma that you can use the 'STEP' process to talk about. If participants feel comfortable with writing they can write these in their notebooks, or if they would prefer not to write, they can discuss what they will do with the person next to them.

7.4 Thank participants for their active participation today and remind them of when the next session will take place. Inform them the next session will be on Positive Family Health. If suitable in your setting, finish with a prayer or a song.

# Session 13: Positive Family Health and Nutrition

“When diet is wrong, medicine is often of no use; when diet is correct, medicine is of no need.”

Session Aim	To support parents and caregivers acquire knowledge and skills for healthy living across all life stages
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens and flip chart</li> <li>▪ The flip chart with road diagram</li> <li>▪ Breast models (if available, for example in partnership with local health centre)</li> <li>▪ Enough boiled eggs one per participant (for Activity 4)</li> <li>▪ Enough locally available tasty food (e.g. fruit, maize) for Activity 6</li> <li>▪ Access to enough clean water and soap for everyone to wash their hands</li> <li>▪ If available, copies of nutrition information leaflets on nutrition advice for the family members</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gain information and share experiences on nutritious food and healthy habits, including the benefits of breastfeeding, complementary feeding and healthy nutrition of the mother</li> <li>▪ Practice ways to engage in active feeding of their children of all ages</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Learn about the importance of continuing to support good nutrition and food habits as children become adolescents</li> <li>▪ Practice techniques for promoting healthy family food habits</li> <li>▪ Learn where to go for additional support to ensure their family's</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
<b>1. Welcome and Sharing</b> Everyone is welcomed to the session, reflects on what they learnt the previous week, and shares experiences from their home practice	15 mins	Group discussion and sharing
 <b>2. Introduction: Promoting healthy habits in the home</b> The topic of healthy food habits is introduced and parents and caregivers identify parenting skills and techniques from previous sessions that they can use to improve a healthy home and environment.	10 mins	Presentation and brainstorming
 <b>3. Discussion: What do we know about feeding children?</b> The topic of healthy and affordable nutrition is introduced. Parents and caregivers share their knowledge about nutrition and are provided with accurate basic nutrition information for adults and for children of all ages.	30 mins	Question and answer session
<b>4. Skills Practice: Promoting healthy eating habits in the home</b> Parents and caregivers discuss ways of talking and active listening when feeding young children	30 mins	Break out groups, practical activity
 <b>Skills Practice: Building health habits in the home</b> Parents and caregivers plan healthy meal times using the information provided in the session and their local knowledge and identify actions to make their home a healthy home.	40 mins	Small group activity

<p><b>5. Applying Key Skills: Talking about healthy behaviours</b></p> <p>Parents and caregivers role play scenarios to practice approaching sensitive topics about healthy behaviours in their families and to understand what support is available and how to access it</p>	40 mins	Role play and discussion
<p><b>6. Well-being Exercise: Mindful eating</b></p> <p>Participants are taken through a fun exercise to better understand the session</p>	5 mins	Well-being activity
<p><b>7. Recap and tak: home activity</b></p> <p>Participants recap the key learnings and key messages from today's session, identify a take-home practice and write reflections in their journals</p>	10 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection

*Facilitator tip: This session provides basic guidance on nutrition and preventing simple diseases with a focus on the early years and on preventing unhealthy habits for adolescents, parents, and caregivers.*

*It is advisable to liaise with local health service providers who can provide information and literature. Remember that it will not be possible to provide detailed information about all aspects of family health in this parenting programme. It will be helpful to know where to refer participants for further support and information.*

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and sharing (time: 15 mins)

1.1 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray if appropriate in your setting), or share a short reflection or song before the meeting starts.

1.2 Remind everyone that in the previous session, we talked about Positive and Protective Communities. Ask the group “What are some of the key issues we discussed in the last session?” and “What were some of the key skills we practised?”

1.4 Ask everyone to identify a partner in the group, it can be their friend and with that partner to share something about the ‘home practice’.

Ask what the practice was. If people cannot remember, remind them:

*Session 12 home practice:*

- *Identify at least one safety dilemma that you can use the ‘STEP’ process to talk about.*

Give everyone five minutes to discuss with their partner on “How did it go?, What went well? What could be different or improved on? Is this a useful skill or practise for your family to incorporate into your routines?”

1.5 After 5 minutes are over, ask each pair to share one or two observations with the group about their take-home practice.

1.6 Ask the group if anyone has any questions or concerns about what was covered in the previous session. If there are questions, clarify them or explain that this is going to be discussed later in the training and note the questions somewhere.

1.7 End by leading participants in a “special” clap and ask everyone to return to their sitting positions.

## 2. Introduction: Promoting healthy habits in the home (time: 10 mins)

2.1 Share the quote ‘When diet is wrong, medicine is often of no use; when the diet is correct, medicine is of no need’. Ask the group ‘what does this message mean from their own experiences? Then have a discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Would anyone like to share some examples of looking after our children's health through good nutrition?
- Does anyone have examples of other ways that we keep ourselves, our spouses, other adults, and our children healthy (in addition to good nutrition)?
- And/or would anyone like to share any challenges about why it can be difficult to do this?

Note down the answers on a flipchart as you will refer to them in Activity 5.

2.2 Explain that in this session, the topic of discussion will be ‘Positive Family Health and Nutrition’. The focus will be on supporting children to grow in a healthy manner through eating well and on finding ways to promote positive health for the whole family. Refer to the flipchart with the road diagram and explain:

- In this session, we will be focusing on some of the more practical parts of parenting, promoting good health and preventing avoidable illnesses.
- We will use all of the parenting skills that we have focused on before to make a difference in our family's health. For example, sharing the workload of keeping the house clean, preparing and serving food, communicating positively so that everyone feels supported to live a healthy lifestyle, and setting up family routines that promote healthy living.

## 3. Discussion: What Do We Know About Feeding Children<sup>17</sup> (time: 30 mins)

3.1 Introduce this activity by saying we are going to start by building on what we already know. Acknowledge that the parents and caregivers in the room have a lot of knowledge

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<sup>17</sup> Activity is adapted from *Msingi Bora: Responsive parenting manual*. Nutrition advice is drawn from: Ministry of Health, 2020. *Mother & Child Health Handbook / Afya Ya Mama Na Mtoto, Revised edition 2020*.

about helping children grow strong and healthy and there is a need to build on this knowledge.

3.2 Say that we will start by thinking about the nutrition of young children and their mothers and then adolescents. Ask any volunteers to repeat the key messages about children's early development and the developmental milestones from Session 3.

3.3 Ask the following questions. After each question, ask for several responses until people agree with a correct answer or until there are various conflicting answers. Once you have heard the answers, give the correct answer.

- What does good nutrition for your children mean?

*Answer:*

*Good nutrition means giving the right balance of foods so that babies and children can grow and develop. Good nutrition can help the body grow physically so that bones and muscles are strong, it can help the brain to develop, can provide energy, and help protect from diseases. What we feed our children matters. It can make the difference between a sickly child and a healthy, energetic child who not only survives but thrives!*

- What is the best food for babies from birth to 6 months of age?

*Answer:*

*Breast Milk is the perfect food for children aged 0-6 months because*

- i) It has all the nutrients (the substances in food that are needed for healthy growth, development, and functioning) that your baby needs for the first 6 months of life*
- ii) It has enough water to satisfy your baby's thirst even in hot weather*
- iii) It has substances that protect your baby from common diseases such as diarrhoea and chest infections*
- iv) It is clean, safe, easy to digest, and readily available.*

- What can mothers, fathers, and other family members do to help make breastfeeding successful?

*Answer:*

*Families can support by:*

- i) Allowing time and space for mothers to breastfeed while at home, such as providing a comfortable sitting area, helping look after older children, allowing time for the baby to breastfeed for long enough*
- ii) Providing emotional and physical support for mothers to exclusively breastfeed, such as helping with household chores, assisting the mother in feeding the baby with expressed breast milk if necessary*
- iii) Supporting mothers to eat healthy diets (we're going to talk about that just now!)*

- When should a mother begin breastfeeding?

**Answer:**

*Mothers need to be supported to begin breastfeeding immediately after the baby is born. Beginning breastfeeding immediately after delivery strengthens the bond between mother and baby (remember attachment and stimulation!), helps the baby learn how to suckle properly, increases breast milk production, provides your baby with the first milk (colostrum) which acts like your baby's first immunisation and protects him or her from illnesses and infection.*

- When should a mother breastfeed the baby?

**Answer:**

*The best is to breastfeed on demand. This means breastfeeding whenever the baby or mother wants, as often and for long as the baby wants. Breastfeeding a baby on demand both day and night, which can be 8-12 times per day, helps the mother build up her milk supply.*

*It can be hard to always feed on demand. If a mother cannot feed her baby on demand because the mother and baby are temporarily separated, the mother can express breast milk and keep it for the baby. Expressed milk must be put into a very clean container (which has been in boiling water for a very long time and then sealed and kept cool).*

- Which is the best way to hold a baby while feeding?

**Answer:**

*Note, if the facilitator has access to illustrations or the MOH counselling cards, they can show these images). If not, they can demonstrate using a toy or a piece of cloth wrapped up to be a baby).*

*Hold the baby's head and body in a straight line; the baby should be facing the mother's breast with the nose opposite the nipple; the baby should be held close (infant's tummy to mother's tummy); and the mother supports the baby's whole body and not just neck and shoulders.*

*Once the baby is suckling, encourage the baby to attach well with the baby's mouth wide open, lower lip turned outwards and baby's chin touching the breast. If the baby is not attached well, this can lead to painful or damaged nipples, engorgement (when the breast is full of milk and gets very sore), and the baby does not feed enough. This means the baby is unsatisfied and cries a lot, feeding can be frequent and for a long time and the baby fails to gain weight.*

- What do children need at six months of age?

**Answer:**

*At 6 months of age, children need NUTRITIOUS semi-solid and solid foods to eat. This is called complementary feeding.*

*If you give complementary foods too early (before 6 months), the child is at risk of not getting enough nutrition (because it will be taking less breast milk).*

*If complementary foods are introduced too late, the child will not thrive because the child needs more nutrition than it can receive from breastmilk because it is growing fast.*

*The additional nutritious foods need to be introduced slowly so that the baby's digestive system gets used to new foods. Breastfeeding should continue for 2 years or beyond.*

*Complementary foods should be a mix of 7 food groups:*

1. *Grains, grain products, and other starchy foods such as barley, wheat, corn flour made into porridge or bread or tubers, plantains, or green bananas.*
2. *Eggs*
3. *Flesh foods such as fish or chicken or liver.*
4. *Pulses or Legumes, such as dried beans, peas lentils, etc. nuts and seeds such as groundnuts, simsim*
5. *Vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables such as dark green leafy vegetables, Orange or yellow-fleshed fruits, and vegetables such as carrots, pumpkin, papaya, mango, and orange-fleshed sweet potatoes. Each community has local ones that are nutritious and grown cheaply locally.*
6. *Other fruits and vegetables such as oranges, ripe bananas, pears, apples, and guavas*
7. *Dairy and dairy products such as milk and yoghurt*

- Can you describe your child's diet? And how often? Daily? Weekly? Monthly?
- Can you name some of the local vegetables commonly grown in your location? How often do you include them in the family meals?
- Why is it important to give your child eggs, fish, dairy products, liver, or chicken several times a week?

**Answer:** *Remember: Babies don't have teeth so parents should grind/chop/mash some of these foods so that babies don't choke at an early age from 6 months. As your baby grows, the texture changes until they are able to eat family foods.*

*How much food does a child need to grow strong, healthy, and smart?*

**Answer:**

*6 months*

- *At this age, your child should be able to sit without support. You should plan to feed them two things:*
- *breast milk: Your baby will still be getting most of his or her nutrition from breastfeeding. Plan to breastfeed your baby frequently day and night about 8-12 times.*

*First foods: As your baby starts to eat, begin with cereals like porridge, mashed potatoes, or mashed banana, etc. Do not feed your baby animal milk until they are 1 year old. Start with thick porridge or well-mashed or pureed foods. Give 2 to 3 tablespoons of porridge or pureed food in each meal.*

*At 7–8 months, most children will be crawling. Increase the amount of food gradually. Do not feed your baby animal milk until they are 1 year old. Continue to breastfeed frequently day and night, and give mashed or pureed family food 3 times a day.*

*At 9–11 months, many children will start to practise standing. A lot of new foods can be introduced. Continue to breastfeed your baby frequently day and night and feed the baby 3 meals a day of finely chopped food (with pieces no bigger than the nail on your little finger) and 1 snack, such as ripe banana, mango, boiled potato, arrowroot, or avocado) either between morning and afternoon or afternoon and evening meals. Do not feed the baby animal milk until they are 1 year old.*

*Unhealthy snacks such as sweet cookies, chips, candy, and artificial/chemical juices have too much sugar or salt and can be harmful to the child's teeth and appetite.*

*After one year, many children will be walking without support and can be getting used to eating from the family pot. Just be sure that the food is cut into small pieces they can chew and is not too spicy. You can begin to introduce animal milk at this age. A child of 1 and 2 years can have 3 meals a day, plus two snacks in between meals. They can continue to breastfeed when they want, day and night.*

- Is it important that teenage children still eat foods like eggs, fish, dairy, liver, or chicken?

**Answer:**

*Yes! Teenagers' bodies and brains are growing incredibly fast. In fact, the teenage brain is growing faster than at any other time than the first three years of life. Teenagers are growing physically and also going through puberty and need good nutrition to grow strong. Adolescent girls, in particular, need additional iron (for example, from green leafy vegetables and liver) because of menstruation. Pregnant teenage girls need even more nutrition than pregnant women because their bodies are still growing (although it is better for girls to wait until older to get pregnant; but if they do become pregnant, they will need special nutritional care).*

- Why is it important for pregnant women to eat well?
- What should pregnant women eat?

**Answer:**

*It is essential for pregnant women to eat well. A pregnant woman should have an additional small meal every day and two snacks, on top of regular well-balanced meals.*

*Lack of healthy eating in pregnancy can cause the woman to lose her baby before giving birth; or the baby can be born very small or born with defects.*

*In addition to eating well, a pregnant woman should use iodized salt and take iron and folic acid tablets and other medicines given by the nurse or doctor. Taking these steps will ensure that the baby's body and brain develop well. A breastfeeding woman should also have an additional 2 small meals and two snacks in addition to the 3 main meals.*

*It is important for a pregnant or breastfeeding woman to drink plenty of water and take sufficient rest. A pregnant woman should avoid alcohol as this can harm the growing foetus.*

*Adolescents and young women who are pregnant or breastfeeding need extra care, more food, and more rest than older women.*

3.4 Thank everyone for the answers. Hand out any key nutrition messages that you have available from local health centres or nutrition support projects.

#### **4. Skills Practice: Promoting healthy eating habits in the home<sup>18</sup> (time: 30 mins)**

*Note: If parents or caregivers have children under age 3 years in the group, you could carry out this activity 'in real time'. If you do have children under the age of three years, you can give the parent(s) or caregiver(s) of each young child a boiled egg for feeding to the child while engaging in a conversation with the child. If no children are present, people can still practise giving food to each other!*

4.1 Introduce this activity by explaining that giving young children nutritious food does not only give children physical strength but is also a way of showing love and stimulating the child.

4.2 Ask people for suggestions on how feeding children can provide children with these other essential growing needs (answers include, for example, talking to the child, helping the child explore by touching food, showing love by giving the child quality one-on-one time while feeding). Note answers on the flipchart.

3.3 Explain the following key points:

- As we just discussed, eggs are especially good for growing brains and bodies. They are also easy to cook and children can eat them by themselves whole or broken in pieces after about one year.
- Let us practise feeding our children eggs in this activity and share ideas for how to make eating healthy and fun.
- I am going to give you some eggs but before I do that, what do we all need to do?

Once someone mentions hand washing, thank everyone, and ask them to first wash their hands (and those of their children).

*Note: If you have access to clean washing water next to the training venue, move to the water and ensure that everyone has soap. If there is no simple access to water, you will have to provide water and soap.*

4.4 Hand everyone soap. Remind people of the following key messages:

- Handwashing is very important for health. Especially before eating or touching food or after touching faeces or toilet use.

<sup>18</sup> First part of the activity is adapted from *Msingi Bora: Responsive parenting manual*.

- Handwashing is also essential for public health measures, including COVID.
- It can be useful to turn handwashing into a game.

4.5 Direct people to start washing their hands and introduce a handwashing song that can be sung to children.

*Note: If there is already a handwashing song that the group knows, use this. If not, you can introduce the following song, composing a tune.*

*Wash, wash, wash your hands. Wash them nice and clean.  
Scrub the bottoms, scrub the tops, and fingers in between.*

4.6 Once participants have washed and dried their hands, ask them to group into pairs. Hand everyone either a boiled egg or a piece of food and ask them to share ideas in their pairs about how to make eating fun for an infant.

4.7 Ensure that participants have had a chance to speak and then ask the pairs to share their views with all the participants. Note down suggestions on a flip chart.

4.8 Facilitate a plenary discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Has anyone practised ‘family meal time’, as we discussed in Module X? If so, have you noticed any changes in your eating habits?
- Are there other suggestions on how to make shared mealtimes helpful and more nutritious in an affordable way?

4.9 Summarise the key messages from the above discussion and add in the following key messages:

- Mealtimes can be fun and more social if we eat at the same time with our children. Children learn good eating habits, learn new words and develop social skills for healthy interpersonal relationships.
- Children who have not mastered verbal communication can still communicate through sounds and gestures. You can encourage them with words such as, “Now I’m going to give you some egg/banana/mango. Yummy...that tastes good.”

## 5. Applying Key Skills: Making Our Home a Happy Place to Be (time: 40 mins)

5.1 Explain that we are going to practise some of the things you have learned. We shall also discuss what we can do to make our home a happy, caring, and safe place to be.

### Exercise 1: Planning Meal Times

Divide the participants in four groups.

- Ask the first group to design a meal plan for a pregnant woman.
- Ask the second group to design a meal plan for a 6 months old baby..

- Ask the third group to design a meal plan for a 15 months old baby

5.2 Invite each group to share their meal plans. Check for the following:

- Do the meals include all three food groups?
- Is the amount and texture right?
- Are the foods easily available in the community; or affordable?
- Are the meals tasty?
- Are the meals easy to prepare so that meal preparation can be shared with others in the family for example, children and men?

5.3 Now ask participants to think about the other aspects of being healthy. Remind them of the ideas they suggested in Activity 2 and were written on the flipchart. Now we are going to look at how we use our existing parenting skills to build a healthy and happy home.

### **Exercise 2: Promoting Healthy Habits in our Families**

Ask participants to get back into their small groups and give each group a scenario that relates to the challenges that were suggested in Activity 2. If they have not come up with their own scenarios, you can use or adapt the scenarios below.

**Scenario 1:** A family you know is really having financial constraints. The father lost his job during COVID and the family has only a few chicken left. They need to decide whether to slaughter and eat it today or sell it, go hungry but get some money.

*Refer to the discussion you had in our previous sessions on support and finding local resources. What advice can you give the family?*

**Scenario 2:** A grandmother and grandfather are looking after their grandchildren while the parents are away. The tradition is that the grandfather should not help with the domestic chores, but the grandmother would like him to get more involved in helping with feeding the children so that she can have time to go and sell some fruits and vegetables outside the house to generate income

*Think about what you discussed about the involvement of fathers and male caregivers. What advice can you give the family?*

**Scenario 3: Members of a** large extended family live and eat together. Recently they have found out that the 15-year-old girl (one of seven children and four adults living in the home) is not eating food, and is silent and withdrawn.

*Think about what you discussed about promoting attachment and talking about difficult subjects with teenagers. What advice can you give the family?*

**Scenario 4:** One of the adults in the house, unfortunately, drinks very heavily. Their spouse is worried about the effect on the person's health, his family finances, as well as being a poor role model to children.

*Think about what you discussed about harmonious families and positive communication. What advice can you give to the family?*

5.3 Allow 10 minutes for each group to discuss and then share their views with all participants in the plenary. Conduct a discussion and encourage the participants to refer to the previous lessons key messages on positive parenting.

5.4 End the activity by thanking participants for their contribution. Note that eating healthy is not always easy during difficult times. We can draw on our parenting skills and address some of the relationship challenges regarding food issues. Share ideas on any local resources for nutrition and health. Inform participants that the topic of financial planning will be discussed in the next session.

## 6. Well-being Exercise: Mindful Eating (5 minutes)

6.1 Thank everyone for their participation on the topic of food. Inform them they will now engage in some practical activities that would help them appreciate the importance of eating healthy food.

6.2 Give participants a piece of healthy food that you have brought in, for example, a banana or other affordable locally available fruit. Ask them to hold but not to eat the piece of fruit that you have given them.

6.3 Ask participants to listen to the following questions as they take slow bites of the fruit:

- **See:** What do you notice? What colour is it? What shape is it? What stands out?
- **Feel:** When you hold it in your hand, what does it feel like? Is it soft or hard? Squishy or rough?
- **Hear:** Does it make any sounds? What about if you squeeze it between your fingers?
- **Smell.** How would you describe the smell?
- Now close your eyes.
- **Taste:** Put the food in your mouth. Before you chew, what is the first thing you taste? Is it sweet or salty? Sour or savoury? As you start to chew, chew slowly, and before you swallow, think about the change in taste, feel and sound. Does it change the longer you chew?

6.3 Allow people to eat in silence for a few minutes and then ask them to talk about what it felt like to really concentrate on the food that they were eating. This is called 'mindfulness' and can be a way of just focusing and appreciating the present. This is also something that we can do with our children.

## 7. Take Home Activity And Recap (10 mins)

7.1 Ask the participants 'What was the most important thing that you took from the session today?' Take answers from a few different members of the group. Thank them for their answers.

7.2 If any of the following key messages have not been mentioned, you can conclude by summarising the messages as follows?:

### Key messages for Session 13

- Healthy eating is a critical component of healthy living and well-being for everyone
- Nutritious food is important for the growth of the brain and the body.
- Everyone needs to eat healthy; it is possible to have a balanced meal from low-cost locally available food stuff such as; grains, starch, legumes, nuts, seeds, vegetables, meat eggs, or dairy
- From birth to six months, an infant should only be breastfed. Breast milk has all the nutrients that the baby requires including brain-building foods; from six months, children can eat family food.
- A breastfeeding mother needs to take care of herself by ensuring she drinks a lot of water and eating healthy and nutritious foods (3 main meals, 1 extra small meal, and 2 snacks in between)
- Appetite increases as children grow. They should be given enough and a balanced diet. This is necessary for their growth and development.
- Water is the healthiest drink for all of us
  - Preparation of family meals and eating together can be a way of promoting healthy food habits. Food is one of the basic human rights. The community should be collectively involved to ensure no one lacks food. Similarly, those lacking food should seek help from the community.

7.3 Propose the following home practice:

- Using one of the ideas from this session, develop a simple plan that will help you to prepare nutritious and tasty food as well as make mealtime fun, for instance, ask your teenage child to plan a meal and help them prepare it. Remember to thank them

*If you have a group that is comfortable writing, they can write it in their notebooks and complete the reflective practice.*

7.5 Thank participants for attending. Remind people that we will be looking at family financial planning in the next session. End by giving positive praise for sharing their experiences, expertise, and knowledge.

# Session 14: Family Financial Planning

“Many people do not plan to fail, they fail because they fail to plan”

Session Aim	Parents and caregivers familiarise with basic concepts of financial planning (including budgeting, saving and planning for their family and children’s wellbeing)
Time	2 ½ hours
Materials	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Pens, marker pen, and flip chart</li> <li>▪ Water bottle</li> <li>▪ Cups or bags containing 5 beans and 10 maize kernels (one per participant)</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify money-related issues such as debts, negative environment for children and stress due to financial constraints and how they impact family life</li> <li>▪ Learn how to prioritise expenses and financial stewardship (making better choices based on available resources)</li> <li>▪ Plan in order to save money for future expenses</li> <li>▪ Discuss other ways of preparing for the future, including writing a will</li> <li>▪ Learn entrepreneurial skills</li> </ul>

*Note: The structure for this session is different from the previous structures; it does not have an introduction session. The second activity immediately begins with discussion.*

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How
<b>1: Welcome and sharing</b> Everyone is welcomed to the session. They are given an opportunity to, reflects on what they learnt the previous week and shares experiences from their home practice	15 mins	Group discussion and sharing
 <b>2: Activity: Financial planning - Needs and Wants</b>	15 mins	Group activity and individual reflection

Participants to reflect on the items that they commonly spend money on and decide if they are 'needs' or 'wants'		
<b>3: Discussion: Identifying the Consequences of Not Managing Money</b> Parents and caregivers explore the negative consequences of not planning on both the adults and children.	15 mins	Case study and group discussion
 <b>4: Skills Practice: Making a Visual Budget</b> Parents and caregivers develop their own visual budget for monthly expenditure.	60 mins	Small group activity
<b>5: Explanation: Account Tracking and Planning</b> Facilitator explains the concept of tracking and planning using visual examples	5 mins	Presentation
<b>6: Discussion: Making and Taking Different Decisions About Money</b> Parents and caregivers reflect on the challenges encountered when talking about money and identify strategies for addressing these challenges at home, including writing a will. Discuss about income generating activities or initiatives at family level	20 mins	Case study discussion and group discussion
<b>7 – Well-being exercise</b> Participants are taken through a fun exercise 'shake off' session	5 mins	Well-being activity
<b>8 – Recap and take home activity</b> Participants recap on the key learnings from today's session, identify a take-home practice and write reflections in their journals	15 mins	Group discussion, individual reflection and journaling

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Sharing (time: 15 mins)

1.1 Before starting the session, ask a volunteer to pray if appropriate in your setting, share a short reflection or song before the meeting starts.

1.2 Remind participants that in the previous session we discussed recognising and talking with our children about the risks that they face. Ask the group "What are some of the key

messages we discussed in the last session?” and “What were some of the key skills we practised?”

1.3 Ask 2 or 3 volunteers to share an experience about the ‘home practice’:

*Session 12 home practice: identify at least one safety dilemma that you can use the ‘STEP’ process to talk about.*

1.4 Ask participants if anyone of them has any questions or concerns about what was covered in the previous session. If there are questions, clarify them or let them know the response will be given later.

1.5 Introduce today’s topic on Family Financial Planning. Ask if anyone can remember the ‘STEP’ process that they practised in the previous session.

Once someone has recalled (State the problem; Think of possible solutions; Evaluate possible solutions); Pick the best solution), explain that the same process will be used in today’s discussion on Financial Planning.

1.8 Share the learning outcomes explained in the introduction and the following key messages, Ensure that everyone has understood. Managing money is a choice we make.

- Choosing is not easy when there are many things to spend on!
- If we do not manage money well and therefore fail to pay for important expenses, we will end up borrowing money that can be costly and have negative financial implications on future savings.
- There are practical ways in which we can be in control and manage our finances well.

## 2. Activity: Financial Planning - Needs and Wants<sup>19</sup> (time: 15 mins)

2.1 Remind parents and caregivers about their discussion of the family vision in Session 1 and the dreams that they have as a family.

2.2 Ask everyone to look back at the road that we have journeyed along together. Ask everyone to think about the discussions we had in Session 3, what does a child need to grow and develop well? What are child rights? Would you recall the things that our children need? (for example, children need love, safety, and food to grow). Remind participants that most of these needs and obligations require money. Explain that we are now going to think about what we as parents and caregivers must do to ensure that we can meet our children’s essential needs as well as move towards the vision.

2.3 Say we will now play a game about “needs” and “wants” that will help us think carefully about how we spend our money. Ask participants the following questions:

- Can anyone describe what “needs” and “wants” are?
- How are they different from each other?

Write the answers on a flipchart.

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<sup>19</sup> This activity is from *Sinovuyo* Parenting for Lifelong Health, World Health Organization

2.3 Ask participants to stand in a circle and stand by the flipchart with needs and wants written on it.

*Note: The following needs and wants can be adapted to most local contexts.*

- Soft drinks
- Sanitary pads
- Right to express your own opinion
- Radio
- Wheelchair or other assistive devices
- Medicine
- Alcohol
- Mobile phone
- Clean air
- Money to spend
- School uniform
- Television
- Fashionable clothes
- Soccer ball
- Bicycle
- Church, mosque or other religious site
- Evening meal
- Going out for a social event with friends
- School
- Clean water
- Love in the family
- Shelter
- Respect from your spouse, children and family

2.4 Read out the first item on the list and ask a volunteer to explain to everyone whether this item is a “need” or a “want”, and why.

Let people know that there is no right or wrong answer.

2.5 Ask other people if they agree with the person’s choice.

2.6 After the participants have discussed, acknowledge the majority views, if there is disagreement. Make a mark on that word to show if it is a need or a want, you can draw a circle around “need” or a square around “want”, or you could use two different colour marker pens.

2.7 Read the next word and ask another person for your view. Repeat this until you have covered a number of words on the list, at least ten items. Do not take more than 10 minutes in total.

2.8. Summarise the session by sharing the following key messages:

- Money is not easy to manage but we can learn
- We are going to learn together tips and tools that can help us manage money to achieve our goals

### **3. Discussion: Identifying the Financial Consequences of Not Managing Money, Analysing and Prioritising Family Expenditure (time: 15 minutes)**

## 3.1 Read the following story aloud.

*Otieno and Raheli are dairy farmers in a village. They have three children. They grow rice and Raheli also weaves baskets. Otieno gets occasional opportunities to work at a nearby construction site.*

*A few days ago, Raheli went to the market. She bought a few baskets, vegetables, and fish. She also bought snacks for the children, a new T-shirt, and rattan to make her baskets.*

*On that same day, Otieno worked and earned a bit more than usual. On his way back, he bought snacks for the children and one toy. He also had a drink with his friends.*

*The next morning, Otieno did not find work.*

*By the end of the week, they both did not have money to pay for school uniforms for the new year. Otieno is upset that Raheli does not have money left. They argue. Raheli doesn't dare tell Otieno she also owes the vegetable vendor some money.*

*What happened to the money they earned?*

3.2 Facilitate a group discussion around the issues in the story guided by the following questions:

- What have Otieno and Raheli spent money on?
- Which of these purchases are essential and which ones are not?
- What problems might arise in the family?
- Which of the challenges highlighted in the story do the participants reckon with regarding entrepreneurship or family business?

*Note to the facilitator: Suggested answers based on issues in the story:*

- *Some expenses may not be so useful*
- *They do not discuss and reach mutual agreement before spending*
- *They mix business and personal expenses*
- *They are distressed and get into an argument*
- *They do not share all the information hence not transparent with each other about their expenditure*

3.3 Say:

*Raheli and Otieno now have debts. Next week there is a fire in the shed where she stores the baskets she has made. Otieno's work at the construction company comes to an end. Raheli and Otieno need to feed their children so they have to borrow money to buy food.*

Ask: What has been the impact of today's debt on what they need to spend money on in the following week.?

3.4 Summarise the story by sharing the following key messages:

- Managing money is very important, even when our income is very little.

- If we do not plan our money, it is easy to run out of it. We may end up borrowing.
  - Debts are a heavy burden, we will have to pay back, meaning that we are already spending our future income, even before we have earned it.
  - Borrowing can be stressful and stress can cause tension within a household. This can escalate to violence. There are always better solutions than violence. Open communication, making decisions jointly, and treating each other with respect, and kindness are better ways of seeking solutions when challenges such as financial problems arise.
  - Financial planning and spending should be a shared and a collaborative responsibility in the family.
  - Family income-generating activities are a possible way of investing their money, but they need to think of personal challenges and the roles of the family members in the business.

#### 4. Skills Practice: Analysing and Prioritising Family Expenditure; Making a Visual Budget<sup>20</sup> (time: 60 minutes)

4.1 Explain that we are now all going to practise making a budget. Ask: What is a budget?

Once you have received some answers, you can help describe a budget like this:

- A budget describes how we decide what we spend our money on
- A budget helps us to find out how much money we can spend on the things that we need to buy and on what we would like for the future.

4.2 Ask a participant to choose one of the 'needs' that were talked about in the earlier activity and to say how much it costs. Once the participant has stated the cost, congratulate them for making their first budget.

4.3 Explain that everyone will now practise making a budget with "pretend" money. Ask everyone to get into pairs and explain that each of us will be doing our own budget but working on it in pairs.

4.4 Give participants a big piece of paper, markers, and crayons. If there are any pairs or groups from the same household, they should use just one piece of paper.

4.5 Now explain that participants are going to draw up their budget. Ask them to start by drawing a circle for all the things their family spends money on each month. As participants are doing this, check that they are thinking of the following five things:

- What are all the needs for your family and your household?
- How much do these needs cost?
- What are the wants for your family?

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<sup>20</sup> This activity is from the *Parenting for Lifelong Health* parenting package initially developed by Clowns Without Borders South Africa.

- How much do these wants cost?
- How much can you save after meeting the above costs?

4.6 Now ask any volunteers to tell others what their family budget includes, reminding people that this is voluntary. Thank the person for volunteering. Ask if anyone else wants to add anything to their own budget and allow time for people to add any additions to their budget.

4.7 Now introduce the second part of this activity. Say:

- Imagine that today is the day that you get money for the next month, this might be a payday or a disability allowance or some other form of income.
- I am now going to give you some pretend money (hand out the cup of beans and maize kernels).
- Pretend that these beans and kernels are your income for the next month.
- The beans are worth more money than the kernels; each bean is worth 1000 shillings. That means, with the beans you can buy more expensive things for example, you can use them to pay for school fees.
- Maize kernels are worth less money. Each kernel is worth 250 shillings. That means that you use the maize kernels to buy cheaper things for example maize meal, soap, or airtime.

Hand out the maize kernels and bean bags to each person. Every bag contains 5 beans and 10 maize kernels. Remember every bean is worth KSh.1, 000 and every kernel is worth Ksh. 250.

4.8. Explain that everyone is now going to make a budget plan with their beans and maize kernel money. Ask everyone to pretend that the kernels and beans in their bag are all the money available for the next month.

Ask everyone to think about how many things they want to buy and how many beans and maize kernels they have.

4.9 Allow time for each parent and caregiver household to decide where to put their maize kernels and beans on the circles that they have drawn on their visual budgets. They will buy an expensive thing by putting down a bean on the circle; they buy a less expensive thing by putting down a maize kernel on the circle.

Remind people as they are doing this to think about the following when making these choices:

- Which things are most important to you as a family?
- Which things do not mean much to you?

*Note: Take the time while they are doing this to check for understanding and remind everyone that this is a game and they should play around with the beans and maize kernels to find the best budget. Walk around and support participants who have difficulties with this exercise and praise the decisions that are being made in each of the groups.*

4.10 After participants have taken the time to have a good discussion, facilitate a plenary discussion using the following guiding questions:

- Why do you think we asked you to make a visual budget?
- Did you learn anything about how to handle money?
- Can a family income-generating activity be a way for the family to manage their finances?

*Note: You may want to find out if the activity helped participants to think about how to spend their money without being stressed, or if the activity helped anyone to think of things that they spend money on that they might want to change.*

4.11 Now remind everyone of the story of Raheli and Otieno.

*There is a fire in the shed where Raheli stores the baskets she has made. Otieno's work at the construction company comes to an end. Raheli and Otieno need to feed their children. To make matters worse, the shed fire also destroyed the paraffin stove that Raheli and Otieno use for cooking and they have to buy a new stove.*

Explain that things like this can happen to all of us and they usually come very unexpectedly. Ask for suggestions for other things that could cause money stress. (Possible suggestions could include: funeral; severe illness of a friend or family member; theft).

4.12 Ask participants to imagine “We have all just experienced the same thing as Raheli and Otieno, our tools for making income are being destroyed.” Ask them to draw a new circle on their paper and take one bean and two maize kernels from somewhere else in your budget and put it in this new circle to save for an emergency.

Say that “Now that you have less money, take another five minutes to move around your maize and beans and change your visual budget”.

4.13 After 5 minutes, conduct a discussion using the following guiding questions:

- If there is an emergency, where can we take the money from to cover the costs?
- How could savings help Raheli and Otieno?

4.14 Thank participants for their hard work

## **5. Explanation: Account tracking and planning (time: 5 minutes)**

5.1 Show participants a bottle of water and explain:

- Managing money is like managing water. If I go for a long journey across the desert, it may take 5 days. I only have this bottle of water.
- I have to drink only a little water every day.
- I may be very thirsty but I have to limit how much I can drink every day

5.2 Take a marker pen and draw 5 marks down the side of the bottle. Explain that:

- I need to follow my water budget and only drink to the mark.
- Sometimes the journey may take longer than 5 days, so it's important to plan for emergencies too!

5.3 Explain that in the same way, we need to plan for our money:

- There is a need to plan how much you are going to spend by using envelopes or any other relevant way to split your income between various expenses: Food, business, school, emergencies, etc.

5.4 Now wrap up the bottle with paper and say:

- It is now harder to follow if I don't know how much water I have.
- Writing down how much you spend is like drinking water out of a transparent bottle; you will know how much you drink and you know if you are following your plan.

5.5 Wrap up the activity by sharing the following key message:

- Planning and following your plan is very important. Split your income into envelopes and keep track of what you spend.
- "Mali bila daftari huisha bila habari!"

## 6. Discussion: Making and taking different decisions about family finances and resources (time: 20 minutes)

6.1 Introduce the activity by acknowledging that even though we have talked about the importance of identifying and prioritising expenses, there are instances where limited resources at the family level may force families to make decisions that are not in their best interests.

- For example, families may decide to remove one or more children from school or place them into charitable children's institutions, because they cannot provide education and other basic needs. Other families can decide to engage children in child labour or child marriage.
- There is often an argument within the family about which expenses to pay for or stress if one person is spending money on their wants and not the family's needs.
- These situations can lead not only to conflict, but the lives of children may be affected as learnt in the previous sessions.
- Talking about money at family level can assist in promoting family financial planning.
- Investment in a family income generating activity can be an option for some.

6.2 Ask participants whether they have talked about family finances and resources with their spouses or children in the last week or month?

6.3 Facilitate a group discussion: “What challenges do you face when you talk about family finances and resources within your family?” (spouse or other caregiver who is supporting you with the children you care for or other family members).

6.4 Write their responses on the flip chart.

6.5 Ask participants if they have thought about and discussed writing a will. Once you have heard some answers, share the following key messages about writing a will. If there are further questions beyond the below key messages, consider inviting a lawyer who can answer questions at the graduation ceremony.

- It is helpful for the family for each person to make a will. It is like budget planning for the future.
- A will can be a simple document in which you explain who you want to inherit your assets (land and property). It can explain who you wish to care for, any dependents that you are currently caring for.
- It is important to talk about your wishes with your family, ensuring that decisions about extended family are understood. This includes adopted children, children in kafaalah, or kinship care, step-children, and any other dependents.
- It is not essential to have a will signed by a lawyer, but it can be useful. If this is not possible, consider having it witnessed by at least two people who are not beneficiaries and are trusted people in the community, such as faith or traditional leaders.
- More information can be found in the Law of Succession Act (2012).

6.6 Now divide participants into small groups and ask them to spend the rest of the activity time (around 15 minutes) discussing parenting techniques they could use to talk about money challenges.

6.7 End the session by asking for suggestions.

## **7. Well-being exercise: Body Percussion (5 minutes)**

7.1 Say that we have all used our minds a lot in this session. Now we are going to stop thinking and just make some music, using only our bodies.

7.2 Ask participants to stand or sit in a circle; explain that we will start to make music. They will produce a different sound in turns.

- Start by making a sound using a part of your body in rhythm.
- Once you have started, turn to the person on your left and ask them to join in, making a different sound and only using parts of their body.
- After a few seconds, point to the third person who joins in with a different sound.
- Continue until everyone in the group is making ‘body percussion’ music together

*Here are some examples to start with: clapping hands together, snapping fingers, tapping fingers on a part of the body, slapping knees, stomping feet, rubbing hands together, popping air filled cheeks.*

7.3 Stop when participants are tired or when you run out of time and thank everyone!

## **8. Take home activity and recap (time: 5 mins)**

8.1 Ask 'What was the most important thing that you took from the session today?' Take answers from a few different members of the group

8.2 Summarise the session and recap the 'Key Messages':

### **Key messages for Session 14**

- Family financial planning means spending resources (money, time, people, and property) wisely.
- Managing money is about the choices we make as individuals and as a family.
- It is hard to choose how to spend, when there are many things to spend on
- Having goals can help us to save money.
- Budgeting can reduce stress, by thinking about coming expenses, keeping aside what is needed to pay for them, and making a savings plan for the future.
- If we do not manage money and run out of money to pay for important expenses, we will end up borrowing money. This is costly and eats up our future income.
- Managing money is like swimming towards the riverbank and not managing money is like drifting without knowing where we go.
- Discussing money matters regularly and working as a team at the family level and involving the children meaningfully helps anticipate useful expenses and helps resolve risks.
- All adult caregivers should be involved in making important decisions about money, and this is one way you can practise sharing power and responsibilities within the family. This includes discussing and planning a will for the future.

8.3 Remind participants that it is important to practise what we have learnt at home this week, go home and discuss with your partner or family including children about budgeting.

8.5 Thank everyone for their active participation today. Explain that the next session is the final, explain the logistics.

*Facilitator note: plans for the graduation ceremony will be made by your organisation and you should explain these plans clearly here.*

Explain that we would like to show participants, our family and neighbours what we have been doing. Explain that you will be asking everyone who is willing to share with the group the following questions:

- What has been the most important thing that you have learned as a parent or caregiver on this course?
- What change are you seeing for yourself and for your family?

Ask participants to think about these questions and discuss with their family.

Explain that the next meeting is an opportunity to share what they have learned with family and others in the community. Ask '4' participants discuss, with a neighbour or as a whole group, how they would like to use what they have learned for others in the community.

If the group can decide on these practical activities in the session, ask them to think about how they can make this commitment in the graduation ceremony, for example, who will announce the decisions. If the group wants more time to decide, set this as homework and agree that this will be decided at the start of the next session.

8.6 Thank participants for attending and end with a prayer or song as suitable to the setting and audience.

# Session 15: Positive Parenting Graduation Ceremony

*Note: This is the last formal session of the group and is a graduation celebration for all participants who have attended the parenting sessions. In this session important guests are invited. These are frequently family members, community facilitators, local government representatives but can also be friends to the graduates who are proud of their accomplishments.*

*This is an important opportunity to mobilise interested parents and caregivers for future parenting groups; ensure that you know of any plans that your organisation, or other local organisations, have for delivering parenting groups. Make sure that you have the necessary information and forms, if appropriate.*

*Certificates are only to be awarded to parents and caregivers who have attended at least 11 sessions.*

Session aim	To celebrate the completion of the course for parents and caregivers; to recognise and appreciate positive changes, strengths; and celebrate new possibilities. To share their successes with family members and other invited guests.
Time	2 ½ hours
Items	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Road map from Session 1</li> <li>▪ Post -training evaluation (1 copy for each parent and caregiver)</li> <li>▪ Individual family vision records (if written and shared with facilitators)</li> <li>▪ Food and drinks as agreed by participants and the implementing organisation</li> <li>▪ Certificates of graduation</li> </ul>
In this session, parents and caregivers will...	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Assess their strengths, knowledge and skills on parenting and caregiving</li> <li>▪ Celebrate, share, and articulate how they have benefited from the training they received throughout the course.</li> </ul>

Session outline		
Activity	Time	How?
1: Welcome and recap	15 mins	Group discussion

Everyone is welcomed to the session, reflects on the overall process of the course and shares experiences from their home practice		
2: Post-training evaluation Parents and caregivers complete a post -training evaluation	30 minutes	Individual tests
3: Family and Friends Arrive and are Welcomed	5 minutes	Greeting of guests
3: Reflections about Family Vision and Goals Parents and caregivers reflect on the benefits of the positive parenting sessions, and their achievements based on the family goals they developed at the beginning of the course	60 mins	Individual speeches
4: Distribution of participation certificates Parents and caregivers receive their certificates	15 mins	Presentation by a representative of local authorities
5. Celebration and best wishes	40 mins	Group lunch, songs, and photography

## Activities

### 1. Welcome and Sharing (time: 15 mins)

1.1 Welcome participants back to the session. Appreciate everyone's commitment in returning for this final session.

1.2 Ask participants to reintroduce themselves for a final time by saying their name and a positive parenting skill they have. For example, you could start by saying 'I am Mary and I play football with my sons every weekend', 'I am John and I spend time with my daughter helping her with her homework'.

1.3 Explain that now we are going to reflect back on what we did last week, before we start the session for today.

1.4 Remind participants that in the last session we talked about family financial planning and the homework was to discuss with your spouse (or other caregiver who is supporting caregiving with you), and family including children about budgeting.

1.5 Ask the participants to share in plenary what they were able to practise from the previous session for 3 minutes. Ask people to discuss:

- Was it easy or difficult to talk about making a budget? Did anything make it easier?
- Did you come up with any ideas together that you would like to share with the rest of us?

1.6 After several participants have shared, thank everyone, and encourage them to continue practising these techniques.

1.7 Confirm the one or two practical actions that the group would like to take forward in their community, and agree how the group would like to declare the actions in the graduation ceremony.

1.8 Ask the group if anyone has any questions or concerns about what was covered in the previous session. If there are questions, clarify.

1.9 Tell the participants that today is a special day – the graduation ceremony – and that you are proud of them for their commitment, hard work and participation in the parenting training.

1.10 Introduce today's agenda by explaining the objectives of the session as follows:

- Assess our strengths, knowledge and skills on parenting and caregiving.
- Celebrate and share what we have given and what we have learned in this session with each other, our family and friends, and all invited guests.

## **2. Post Training Evaluation (time: 30 Minutes)**

2.1 Remind the parents and caregivers of the questions that were asked way back at the start of the course. Remind everyone that the reason those questions were asked is because we would like to assess how successful the parenting programme is by comparing people's answers at the beginning and end of the session.

2.2 Hand out the post-training evaluation tool and remind participants that there is no 'right or wrong' and that their answers will not be shared with anyone else. Ask everyone to fill in the tool individually.

*Note: In cases where participants cannot read or write help by reading the questions and writing down the answers; this must be done word for word,*

2.3 Thank participants for completing the exercise. Collect all post training data evaluation forms, keep them safe and return them to the office the same or next day.

## **3. Arrival of Family and Friends (time: 5 mins)**

3.1 At this point, invited guests should be welcomed . Parents and caregivers can welcome people with a song or in a way that is suitable with their setting.

## **4. Reflection About Family Vision and Goals (time: 60 mins)**

4.1 Thank all participants and guests for attending the celebration together with the parents and caregivers who have worked so hard over the last 13 weeks.

4.2 Introduce yourself, the co-facilitator, and any invited chief guests.

4.3 Give a brief overview of Kenya's Positive Parenting Programme and objectives, referring to the flipchart that was developed for Module 1.

- The parents and caregivers in this room have been attending Kenya's Positive Parenting Training . The aim of this programme is to provide information, lessons, and tips on how to raise healthy, responsible, happy, and successful children. It aims to strengthen the caregiving skills of everyone in the course, and learn from each other new things that we may never have known before.

Talk through the main steps in the flipchart, or ask some of your group participants to explain each session.

4.4 Invite all graduates to stand up for recognition. Appreciate them for their commitment, hard work and finalising at least 80% of the sessions.

*A celebratory song may be sung at this stage.*

4.5 Ask the graduating parents and caregivers to make their short speeches 2-3 minutes using the following guiding questions:

- What has been the most important thing that you have learned as a parent or caregiver in this course?
- What change are you seeing for yourself and for your family?

4.6 Thank all participants for sharing their experiences and achievements.

4.7 Invite all invited guests to give a hearty clap to all graduates. If possible, sing a celebration song.

## **5. Distribution of Certificates (time: 15 mins)**

5.1 Invite the chief guest to give a speech.

5.2 After the speech, support the chief guest to distribute the certificates to each individual graduate.

Photographs can be taken for individuals or with their family members and invited guests.

5.3 Take a group photo after all graduates have received their certificates.

5.4 Announce the next round of the parenting group session, where appropriate. You can make this announcement here or later. If possible, this announcement can be made or endorsed by community leaders. If necessary, ensure that you have enrolment forms for the next round of parenting.

5.5 Give a vote of thanks and officially close Kenya's Positive Parenting Training Programme and hand over the symbolic facilitation of the group to the participants. If they have agreed to continue meeting as a group, invite them to explain to guests what they plan to do next.

## **6. Graduation Celebration and Best wishes (time: 40 mins)**

Prepare food as agreed in the previous session. The group lunches are usually prepared and provided by the participating parents and caregivers. The organisation can supplement the group's budget to ensure that there is enough food/refreshments for everyone.

# PART C: FACILITATOR SESSION NOTES

**PART C: Facilitator Notes**

These notes are not intended for reading out to the parents and caregivers.

**Session 3: The Role of a Parent or Caregiver in Child Development****Children's developmental milestones**

The notes below summarise the main developmental milestones. It is not necessary for you to share all of this information with participants, but it is a useful reference source for you as facilitators.

**It is important to remember that every child develops differently, and the milestones are just indications.** Some children develop faster and others slower. If a parent or caregiver is concerned about their child's development, they should get the support of a health worker.

The notes below summarise the main developmental milestones.

Age	Developmental Milestones	Parenting role
Birth to 18 Months	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shows interest in objects and human faces</li> <li>▪ Recognizes familiar faces</li> <li>▪ Responds to signs of love and affection</li> <li>▪ Has learned how to use some basic things like spoons</li> <li>▪ Can point to named body parts</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Tries to look at you or others</li> <li>▪ Starts to smile</li> <li>▪ Responds to facial expressions</li> <li>▪ Enjoys playing</li> <li>▪ Responds differently to different voice tones</li> <li>▪ Knows when a stranger is present</li> <li>▪ May be clingy or prefer familiar people</li> <li>▪ May engage in simple games</li> <li>▪ May have tantrums</li> <li>▪ May cry around strangers</li> </ul>	<p>During this stage of growth and development, babies grow and change rapidly. Parents and caregivers need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Speak and read to their babies a lot during this phase, because hearing your voice will help your baby to develop communication skills</li> <li>▪ Respond right away when your baby cries. Picking up and comforting a crying baby builds strong bonds between the two of you.</li> <li>▪ Give lots of attention. Play with your baby.</li> <li>▪ Take care of yourself physically, mentally and emotionally.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Begins to coo and make vowel sounds</li> <li>▪ Becomes calm when spoken to</li> <li>▪ Cries differently for different needs</li> <li>▪ Begins to babble or imitate sounds and gestures</li> <li>▪ May communicate with gestures</li> <li>▪ Knows what “no” means</li> <li>▪ Knows how to say several words</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Turns toward sounds</li> <li>▪ Follows objects with eyes</li> <li>▪ Grasps objects</li> <li>▪ Gradually lifts head for longer periods</li> <li>▪ Sees things and reaches for them</li> <li>▪ Begins to able to roll over</li> <li>▪ Starts sitting up without support</li> <li>▪ Pulls up into standing position</li> <li>▪ Crawls</li> <li>▪ Walks holding onto surfaces</li> <li>▪ May climb a step or two</li> <li>▪ May drink from a cup</li> </ul>	
18 Months – 2 years (Toddler stage)	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May identify familiar things in picture books</li> <li>▪ Knows what common objects do</li> <li>▪ Scribbles</li> <li>▪ Builds towers from blocks</li> </ul>	<p>During this toddler stage, children need lots of sleep, good nutrition, and close, affectionate relationships with parents and caregivers. Parents and caregivers need to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Create predictable routines to keep your child feeling secure and grounded.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May follow simple two-part instructions</li> <li>▪ Groups like shapes and colours together</li> <li>▪ Plays games</li> <li>▪ Social and emotional</li> <li>▪ May help with tasks like putting away their toys</li> <li>▪ Is proud of what they have accomplished</li> <li>▪ Recognizes self in a mirror and may make faces</li> <li>▪ Explores their surroundings therefore parents or caregivers ought to stay close by</li> <li>▪ Enjoys play dates</li> <li>▪ Plays beside other children</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Knows several words</li> <li>▪ Follows simple directions</li> <li>▪ Enjoys hearing short stories or songs</li> <li>▪ May ask simple questions</li> <li>▪ Can name many things</li> <li>▪ Uses simple two-word phrases like “more milk”</li> <li>▪ Says the names of familiar people</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can help in getting dressed</li> <li>▪ Begins to run</li> <li>▪ Drinks well from a cup</li> <li>▪ Eats on their own with a spoon</li> <li>▪ Can walk while pulling a toy</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Toddler-proof your home and home compound so that your child can explore safely.</li> <li>▪ Use positive discipline to guide and teach your child. Avoid corporal punishment or hitting because this can cause long-term physical and emotional harm.</li> <li>▪ Sing, talk, and read to your toddler to boost their vocabularies.</li> <li>▪ Watch your child for hints about the warmth and reliability of all caregivers.</li> <li>▪ Take good care of yourself physically and emotionally, because your child needs you to be healthy.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dances</li> <li>▪ Gets seated in a chair by themselves</li> <li>▪ Runs</li> <li>▪ Jumps up and down</li> <li>▪ Stands on tip-toes</li> <li>▪ Can draw lines and round shapes</li> <li>▪ Throws balls</li> <li>▪ May climb stairs using rails to hold on</li> </ul>	
3-5 years old (Pre-school years)	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can put together a 3–4 part puzzle</li> <li>▪ Can use toys that have moving parts like toy cars</li> <li>▪ Can turn door knobs</li> <li>▪ May be able to count</li> <li>▪ Can draw stick figures</li> <li>▪ May be able to predict what will happen in a story</li> <li>▪ May play simple board games</li> <li>▪ Can name a few colours, numbers, and capital letters</li> <li>▪ Can copy letters, numbers, and simple shapes</li> <li>▪ Understands the order of simple processes</li> <li>▪ Can say name and address of where they live</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Shows empathy for hurt or crying children</li> <li>▪ Offers affection</li> <li>▪ Understands “mine” and “yours”</li> </ul>	<p>During these pre-school years, children grow more independent and capable. Their natural curiosity is likely to be stimulated because of their expanding surroundings: new friends, new experiences, new environments like daycare or kindergarten. Parents and caregivers need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Keep reading to your child daily.</li> <li>▪ Show them how to do simple chores at home.</li> <li>▪ Be clear and consistent with your expectations, explaining what behaviour is right and wrong.</li> <li>▪ Speak to your child in age-appropriate language.</li> <li>▪ Help your child solve problems when emotions are running high. Talk about feelings. You can help your child work out why they are feeling something, and help them put words to these feelings. This will help your child form friendships and show empathy.</li> <li>▪ Supervise your child in outdoor play spaces, especially around water and play equipment.</li> </ul>

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May get upset if routines are changed</li> <li>▪ Can get dressed on their own</li> <li>▪ Knows how to take turns</li> <li>▪ May play games that have roles like “parent” and “baby”</li> <li>▪ Talks about their likes and dislikes</li> <li>▪ Is aware of their gender</li> <li>▪ Enjoy playing with friends</li> <li>▪ Sings, dances, and may play acting games</li> <li>▪ Switches between being compliant and being defiant</li> <li>▪ Can tell the difference between made-up and real</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Talks using 2-3 sentences at a time</li> <li>▪ Knows words to name many things used daily</li> <li>▪ Can be understood by family</li> <li>▪ Can talk about what happens in day-care or at school</li> <li>▪ Can say their first and last name</li> <li>▪ May tell stories that stay on track</li> <li>▪ Recites nursery rhymes or sings songs</li> <li>▪ Can answer simple questions about stories</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can walk up and down steps with one foot on each stair confidently</li> <li>▪ Runs and jumps with ease</li> <li>▪ Catches a ball</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Guide your child on how to relate with family members and strangers.</li> <li>▪ Play with your child daily, at least for 10 minutes. Playing together gives you the chance to enter your child’s world and find out about their thoughts and feelings.</li> <li>▪ Talk with your child about treating boys and girls equally, and respecting women and men.</li> </ul>
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	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can slide down on a slide</li> <li>▪ May be able to somersault</li> <li>▪ Hops or stands on one foot for about 10 seconds</li> <li>▪ Can swing on swing set</li> <li>▪ Goes to the bathroom or the toilet on their own.</li> </ul>	
Early primary years 6-8 years old	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can complete instructions with 3 or more steps</li> <li>▪ Can count backward</li> <li>▪ Knows left and right</li> <li>▪ Tells time</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Cooperates and plays with others</li> <li>▪ May play with children of different genders</li> <li>▪ Mimics adult behaviours</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can read books at grade level</li> <li>▪ Understands speech and speaks well</li> <li>▪ Can take brief notes</li> <li>▪ Follows written instructions</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can jump rope or ride a bike</li> <li>▪ Can draw or paint</li> <li>▪ Can brush teeth, comb hair, and complete basic grooming tasks</li> <li>▪ Can practise physical skills</li> </ul>	<p>During the school going stage, children gain independence and competence quickly. Friends become more important and influential. A child's self-confidence will be affected by the challenges presented within the school environment that is academic and social.</p> <p>Parents and caregivers in early primary years and onwards need to set limits and encourage healthy habits. They need to: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Limit screen time and monitor online activities carefully.</li> <li>▪ Build and maintain positive family traditions</li> <li>▪ Talk to children about consent and setting boundaries with their bodies.</li> <li>▪ Provide opportunities for regular exercise and individual or family team sports.</li> <li>▪ Create quiet, positive spaces for reading and studying at home.</li> <li>▪ Try to eat dinner as family as much as possible</li> </ul>
Later primary years 9-10 years old	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can use common devices, including phones, tablets, and game stations</li> </ul>	<p>As the children mature, the parenting challenge is to find a balance between keeping them safe, enforcing rules, maintaining family connections,</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Writes stories and letters</li> <li>▪ Maintains longer attention span</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develop a sense of jealousy</li> <li>▪ May be shy about their bodies</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Draws logical inferences based on reading</li> <li>▪ Can write about a stated main idea</li> <li>▪ Can plan and give a speech</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ May experience signs of early puberty like breast development and facial hair growth</li> <li>▪ Develops increased skill levels in sports and physical activities</li> </ul>	<p>allowing them to make some decisions, and encouraging them to accept increasing responsibility. Parents and caregivers from middle childhood through to adolescence and onwards need to set limits and encourage healthy habits. They need to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continue the positive parenting practice of 6-8 years</li> <li>▪ Teach life skills that will help the child to navigate their teenage years and beyond</li> <li>▪ Be a role model by incorporating physical activity into family time</li> <li>▪ Help child to be more responsible in managing their time and activities</li> <li>▪ Encourage child to have a healthy relationship with food</li> </ul>
<p><b>Early adolescence</b> (11-14 years old)</p>	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Develops views and opinions that may differ from parents' ideas</li> <li>▪ Grows aware that parents aren't always correct</li> <li>▪ Can understand figurative language</li> <li>▪ Their ability to think logically improves</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Identify with friends. May have a best friend</li> <li>▪ Can see from another person's perspective</li> <li>▪ Experiences more peer pressure</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Uses speech that isn't literal</li> <li>▪ Can use tone of voice to communicate intentions; sarcasm</li> </ul>	<p>Adolescents continue to develop greater independence and rely on their peers as they continue to grow. They also start to understand consequences of actions although they do not always act on this. Parents and caregivers should: -</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Be honest and direct with your teen children when talking about sensitive subjects such as drugs, drinking, smoking, and sexuality.</li> <li>▪ Meet and get to know your teen child's friends.</li> <li>▪ Show an interest in your teen children school life</li> <li>▪ Help your teen child make healthy choices while encouraging him/her to make his own decisions.</li> <li>▪ Respect your teen child's opinions and take into account her thoughts and feelings. It is important that she knows you are listening to her.</li> </ul>

	<p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Many girls will have started the menstruation periods</li> <li>▪ Puberty characteristics like armpit hair and voice changes develop</li> <li>▪ Height or weight changes rapidly</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ When there is a conflict, be clear about goals and expectations (like getting good grades, keeping things clean, and showing respect), but allow your teen input on how to reach those goals (like when and how to study or clean).</li> <li>▪ Talk with your teen child about their concerns and pay attention to any changes in behaviour.</li> </ul>
<p><b>Older adolescence (15-19 years)</b></p>	<p><b>Cognitive</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Internalize work and study habits</li> <li>▪ Can explain their positions and choices</li> <li>▪ Often have different opinions from parents</li> </ul> <p><b>Social and emotional</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Becomes more independent from parents</li> <li>▪ Displays moodiness</li> <li>▪ Has increased need for some privacy</li> <li>▪ Increased interest in dating and sexuality</li> <li>▪ Spends more time with friends than family</li> <li>▪ Develops an ability to empathise with others</li> </ul> <p><b>Language</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Can speak, read, listen, and write fluently and easily</li> <li>▪ Can have complex conversations</li> <li>▪ Can speak differently in different group settings</li> <li>▪ Can write persuasively</li> <li>▪ Can understand proverbs, figurative language, and analogies</li> </ul> <p><b>Movement/Physical</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Continues to mature physically</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ask them if they have moments of extreme sadness and how often. Seek professional help if necessary</li> <li>▪ Show interest in your teen child's school and co-curricular interests and activities and encourage them to become involved in activities such as sports and art.</li> <li>▪ Encourage your teen child to volunteer and become involved in civic activities in the community.</li> <li>▪ Compliment your teen child and celebrate their efforts and accomplishments.</li> <li>▪ Show affection for your teen child. Spend time together doing things you enjoy.</li> <li>▪ Respect your teen child's opinion. Listen to them without playing down their concerns.</li> <li>▪ Talk with your teen child and help them plan ahead for difficult or uncomfortable situations. Discuss what he/she can do if in a group and someone is using drugs or under pressure to have sex, or is offered a ride by someone who has been drinking.</li> <li>▪ Respect your teen child's need for privacy.</li> <li>▪ Encourage your teen to get enough sleep and exercise</li> </ul>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Provide guidance about behaviours that put teens at risk and about responsible sexual behaviours and other behaviours that they may start to learn about. The parent/caregiver needs to treat the child's opinions and ideas with respect and allow the child to learn from mistakes and correct self-destructive behaviours.</li> <li>▪ Talk about issues of concern to their particular age group (violence, romantic relationships, bullying, discrimination, friendships)</li> <li>▪ Encourage older adolescents to participate in family and in community or other public spaces and to eat healthy, balanced meals.</li> </ul>
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## Session 4: Strong and Secure Attachments

### About brain development

Brain development is one of the most amazing processes of growth and change in the human body.

The brain is part of the nervous system. The brain connects to nerves that carry communication signals or impulses around the body. Nerves carry messages from the outside world through our skin (touch), eyes (sight), tongue (taste), nose (smell), and ears (hearing). Nerves carry messages from the brain to control the body's muscles, so the body can move.

At birth: Before and at birth, the brain starts with simple connections that help a baby see, smell, feel touch and react to movement. Each time the brain receives an outside stimulus, a 'neural connection' is formed in the brain and a pathway is created in the brain. In the first few years of life, more than 1 million new neural connections form every second. The more that a baby receives the same message from outside, the stronger the connection becomes.

The brains are built through a process called serve and return. When an infant or young child gurgles, gestures, or cries, and an adult responds appropriately with eye contact, words, or a hug, neural connections are built and strengthened in the child's brain that support the development of communication and social skills. The more that a caregiver is sensitive and responsive to a young child's signals and needs, the stronger the connections become in the brain.

The brain continues to grow through childhood. A child's brain continues to strengthen physical coordination and then start to make sense of emotions next, as children start to communicate with the people and environment around them. The next major shift, for most children at around 3 or 4 years, is to start to have empathy, such as learning about sharing, making friends, and helping others. These continue through childhood.

Adolescence is a time of significant growth and development inside the teenage brain. The connections in the brain that haven't been used start to wither away ('pruning') and the final part of the brain to develop is the decision-making part of the brain, responsible for planning, thinking about the consequences of actions, solving problems and controlling impulses. Changes in this part continue into early adulthood.

Because this final part of the brain (the prefrontal cortex) is still developing, teenagers may rely more on the part of the brain that has developed in childhood that is associated with emotions, impulses, aggression and instinctive behaviour.

For more information on how the brain develops, see "Experiences Build Brain Architecture":<sup>21</sup>

For more information on serve and return, see:<sup>22</sup>

### About attachment

Attachment is the relationship developed between a child and a parent or primary caregiver. Secure attachment is necessary for healthy brain development, and is the foundation for positive child development. Safe, secure and nurturing families provide children with opportunities to build trusting, consistent and secure relationships with adults. The quality of these relationships influences how the brain develops from birth onwards, and influences the emotional, cognitive, physical and social development of children. To become securely attached, children need a dependable adult who responds to their needs and who is a solid base of security, learning, and comfort. Children who have secure attachments tend to be more socially competent, more trusting of others, and have better relations with parents and caregivers, siblings, and friends. They tend to find it easier to study in school and create more fulfilling relationships as adults.

Understanding a child's growth and development is an important part of parenting. Although every child grows and develops at an individual pace, most children develop skills and abilities at around similar ages. The six stages of development are: Prenatal/before birth, Infant (0-1 years), toddler (2-3 years), pre-school (4-6 years), middle childhood/early adolescence (7-12 years) and middle and late adolescence/teens (13-17 years). In each stage there are expected 'milestones' (important changes and developments that usually occur at specific ages). When parents and caregivers know what is realistic at each stage, they can help their children develop new skills and reach their full potential.

Secure attachment develops gradually and goes through a variety of phases. Attachment is essential during the first two to three years of life, and it is also really important for older children who have moved home or missed out on early care and love. Being physically available as a parent or caregiver is a good start, but it is not enough without emotional connections and engagement.

Building a secure base for attachment means that as parents and caregivers you need to have the ability to create a stable, loving, and emotionally supportive environment in which the children and others skillfully feel safe. As parents and caregivers, you can help your child to make a secure attachment by being present, dependable and responsive. That means you

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<sup>21</sup> <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=VNNsN9Ijkws&feature=youtu.be>

<sup>22</sup> [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m\\_5u8-QSh6A&feature=youtu.be](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=m_5u8-QSh6A&feature=youtu.be)

have to tune in and respond to your children's signals and needs, be available to provide comfort and relief and safe opportunities for exploration and learning. Secure attachment doesn't happen overnight. It is an ongoing partnership between you and your child and beneficial to both caregivers and children. **Module 4 builds on the initial introduction on understanding your child highlighted in Module 3.**

Parents and caregivers may experience difficulties that can interfere with the formation of secure attachments. Parents and caregivers who are stressed, depressed and experiencing traumatic events may find it difficult to interact and tune in and respond to their children's needs. Secure attachments start with taking care of yourself as a caregiver. That is why the next Module focuses on this in more detail.

### Building attachment (Activity 3)

When a caregiver is nurturing and caring, the brain develops well and this provides a foundation for positive child development.

#### ***Building attachment with babies and young children***

The first three years build a foundation for future learning, health and life success. Developing early attachment is essential for this lifelong development. When there is a secure attachment, children learn how to trust others, how to respond emotionally, and how others will respond to them. Children whose first attachments are insecure or negative may have difficulty forming healthy relationships

It is also important for adolescents to maintain a strong attachment with their parents or caregivers, regardless of past experience. Adolescent-parent attachment has profound effects on cognitive, social and emotional functioning. Adolescents with secure attachment are less likely to engage in high risk behaviours and have mental health problems and are more likely to have social skills and coping strategies.

#### **What parents and caregivers can do**

It is really simple to build attachment with our children in the day-to-day activities and actions that we do.

When your newborn gets what they need from you, like a smile, a touch or a cuddle, your newborn feels the world is a safe place to play, learn and explore.

Young children use body language (smile, make eye contact, laugh, make little noises) to show you when they want to connect with you. When parents and caregivers notice and respond to their child's cues and body language in warm and loving ways, the child feels secure. This also helps the child learn about communication, social behaviour and emotions, and encourages your baby to keep communicating. It all helps to build your relationship with your baby. To build secure attachment parents and caregivers should:

- Regularly touch and cuddle your newborn: From birth, your newborn can feel even the gentlest touch. Try stroking your newborn gently when you change a nappy or at bath time.
- Respond to crying: You might not always be able to tell why your newborn is crying. But by responding, you let your newborn know that you're always there.

- Hold your baby: Try rocking or holding your newborn against you, skin on skin. Or carry your baby in a carrier, leso or sling
- Make your children feel physically safe: Examples for babies include wrapping, which recreates the secure feeling of being in the womb, and giving a hug and reassuring murmurs when a child is scared, for example of a loud noise or bad dream.
- Talk with your children in soothing, reassuring tones: This helps your newborn learn to recognize the sound of your voice. It will also help your newborn learn language later.
- Sing songs to your children: Your newborn will probably like the up and down sounds of songs and music, as well as rhythm. Soothing music might help both of you feel calmer too. Your newborn won't mind if you've forgotten the words or the tune.
- Look into your newborn's eyes while you talk, sing, and make facial expressions: This helps your newborn learn the connection between words and feelings.

There are several attachment-based activities that can strengthen caregiver-child relationships beyond childhood. Some of these include:

- Making the world more predictable to children by setting limits, structure and consistent boundaries for behaviour at home this way children and teenagers can know what is acceptable and not acceptable, just like we learnt in the values and discipline module
- Expressing love to your children. Learn the love languages of your child. This was discussed in details in the communication module and will be discussed in following activities below
- Creating time to listen, play and laugh together.
- Creating or increasing time for family connections and activities so that you can spend more time together. Families connect together when they talk and do things together

There are situations or experiences which can cause parents and caregivers and their children not to have secure attachments and healthy relationships. Some of these include stressful events such as loss of a parent/primary caregiver, child abuse and neglect, family separation, institutionalization of children and severe illness among others. Dealing with stressful situations or experiences will be further addressed in the Module 5 on mental health and some aspects are going to be addressed in Module 10 on Preventing and Responding to violence, abuse and neglect, and through home visits.

### ***Building attachments with teenagers***

Let teenagers know that you love them. Re- assure them that they are loved, appreciated and that they have the support of their parents or caregivers no matter what. A caregiver can tell their teenagers but more important is know their love languages and act accordingly. Spend time with your teenager and show them that you care. Do not assume that your teen knows how much you love him or her.

Set reasonable expectations and limits for behaviour. Establish and communicate expectations, acceptable and unacceptable behaviour at home, in school and elsewhere as discussed in the values and discipline module. Although teenagers might act unhappy about the expectations their parents or caregivers place on them, they will usually understand and

need to know that their parents or caregivers care enough about them to expect certain things such as good performance, acceptable behaviour, and complying to the house rules. Remember discipline is about teaching, not punishing or controlling your teenager. Agree and communicate about consequences if they break the rules. As parents or caregivers make sure you are consistent and follow through with the stipulated consequences.

Examples for setting rules include:

- If you can, involve all family members in the discussions about rules. Try to keep the rules positive. For example, instead of saying ‘do not be disrespectful,’ you could say, ‘We speak to each other with respect’.
- If they break rules, follow up calmly, firmly and consistently. You can do this by using a brief and fair consequence that you and your child have agreed on in advance. It helps if you link the consequence to the broken rule. For example, ‘Because you did not come home at the agreed time, you will need to stay home this weekend’. This also helps you communicate your expectations about future behaviour.
- Encourage self-reflection. If you need to use a consequence, explain why you are doing it. This gives your child the chance to reflect on what she could change to stop the problem coming up again. For example, you could say something like, Mary, I get worried when you stay out late without telling me what you’re doing. Next time, you need to be home by 7 pm. What could you do differently next time, so you don’t get a consequence?
- You need to give enough guidance to ensure they are making healthy choices and while at the same time giving them enough freedom to make mistakes. Under your supervision, mistakes and failure can teach some of life's greatest lessons. When establishing rules for your teen, establish stricter rules in the areas where your teenager still needs the most guidance. When teens struggle to follow the rules, it is a sign that they are not ready for that much responsibility yet and may need more guidance.
- Talk about rules that promote safety. Teenagers need to be informed about the realities of drug and alcohol use and early sexual activity. Talk often about how to make good choices and set clear consequences about what will happen if your teen is caught experimenting with drugs and alcohol or is engaging in sex. Also, discuss how they can get out of a bad situation like being sexually abused.

Here are some examples of how adolescent growth affects their behaviour. More understanding can make it easier to accept teen behaviour.

- Physical changes (body image, physical appearance, body weight). It is important to help prepare the adolescent for the myriad changes that take place during this time of life. Even in schools where human sexuality education is taught, many girls and boys still feel unprepared for the changes of puberty, suggesting that we need to understand and talk to teenagers about these important topics and support them in this phase.
- Teenagers may also try on different looks and identities, and they become aware of how they differ from their peers, which can result in episodes of distress and conflict with parents or caregivers.

- Changes in reasoning, thinking and understanding. Parents and caregivers should know that it is normal for teenagers to be Self-centred and argumentative.
- Jump to conclusions even with their newfound capacities for logical thinking. Instead of correcting their reasoning, give teenagers the space and simply listen. You build trust by being a good listener.

Although most adolescents still need guidance from their caregivers to develop their potential for rational decision making, they increasingly prefer to seek the opinion of their friends when making important decisions about such things as attending college, engaging in a relationship or handling money.

### The language of love (Activity 5)

Love language	Suggested actions
Words of Affirmation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Congratulate and encourage</li> <li>• Give praise and compliments ('you are so kind or 'you are so thoughtful')</li> <li>• Tell them that you love them</li> <li>• Tell them that you are proud of them</li> <li>• Write letters or affirming messages</li> </ul>
Physical touch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hug, hold hands, a pat on the back, touches, sitting close</li> <li>• Pleasant facial expressions</li> <li>• Positive body language</li> <li>• Listen to music, watch a movie, or talk together while sitting close to each other</li> </ul>
Acts of service	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ease each other's responsibilities and burdens</li> <li>• Share or perform each other's household chores</li> <li>• keep yourself and your surrounding tidy</li> <li>• Give your partner some additional rest by taking up some of their responsibilities</li> <li>• Run errands for each other</li> <li>• Do things for each other without being asked</li> <li>• Help with a project/activity</li> </ul>
Quality time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Doing things, you enjoy together</li> <li>• Setting aside time in the week to eat together or to check in with each other</li> <li>• Family meetings, having meals together</li> <li>• Provide undivided attention and avoid distractions when spending time together, including switching off your phone</li> </ul>
Gifts	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Give gifts that reflect thoughtfulness and efforts not only on valentine's day, birthdays, or other special days</li> </ul>

## Session 5: Caring for Yourself and Caring for Others

### Self-care

**Self-care** refers to the right to look after oneself physically, emotionally, socially, mentally and spiritually . It should provide time to relax, rest and recharge.

**Collective care** refers to the fact that we are all connected, we need to support and care for each other too, and feel a meaningful sense of community. This idea also shares many similarities with the African concept of 'Ubuntu'.

Parenting children with disabilities or other health conditions is challenging and calls for a self-care routine to avoid burnout. Such parents and caregivers could engage other family members, friends, neighbours or other trusted people in the community to provide additional help and support while they take rest.

There are a number of steps and practices that can support and nurture good mental health, and that ensure we are caring for ourselves and for others:

**Connect with family, friends and neighbours to get social and emotional support:** Strong social connections can help you feel confident and valued, and support you during difficult times. Find a regular time to sit and chat and have tea with your friends, take a walk with your neighbour, visit or call your family members.

**Remain active and physically healthy:** Regular exercises also enable us to build a stronger immune system, fight disease, and have been proven to reduce anxiety. Exercise could be a daily walk around your community, a short run, playing active games such as football with your children, starting the day with stretches and any exercise that causes you to get out of breath ( For example. jumping, skipping, running on the spot). Some gentle massage could be of great help especially to parents or caregivers with physical disabilities.

**Eat nutritious and well-balanced meals:** Most nutritious foods are not too expensive and can be prepared at home. Include a range of vegetables and pulses in your meals at home every day, eat fruit regularly and stay well hydrated with water. Try to minimise the amount of oil and salt used in your foods (experiment with herbs and spices to make things taste good instead). It is possible that there are times when families are economically strained and therefore cannot afford all meals within a day or week. These families need to be connected to service providers who can assist or link the families for economic support opportunities.

**Minimise alcohol consumption:** When alcohol is consumed very regularly, or in large quantities, it can have a negative impact on our mood, our health and our overall well-being. In some cases it can also lead us to take impulsive actions that are 'out of character' such as shouting at or being aggressive with people we care about, starting fights with others, or being careless with our safety or our money. Think about how often you consume alcohol, what the impacts of your alcohol consumption are for yourself and others, and what steps you can take to cut down the amount you drink. For some people it can be very hard to cut down or to stop - in these cases it is important to seek help and support from others, and sometimes from health professionals or counsellors. Families with these impacts should be connected to service providers who can provide additional support.

**Take a good rest and get enough sleep:** Try to find a small amount of time every day to take a rest. This could be taking a few minutes to sit in the shade of the tree, finding some time to sit and listen to the radio, music or read the newspaper. It is also important to get enough sleep. Good sleep helps us to keep mentally healthy and also supports our immune system. When people get busy or stressed, sleep and rest can be the first things that go, but it's important to make them a priority (and to ensure that everyone in the household is able to get enough sleep). Everyone needs a slightly different amount of sleep but adults often need to get 7-8 hours a night. Young children and babies need more sleep than this, and teenagers/adolescents often need more sleep too.

**Share the household chore:** There are many responsibilities in a household; preparing food, washing dishes, washing clothes, looking after babies and young children and keeping things clean. If all of these are left to one person it often means they end up with little time to rest. Ensure that everybody in the family gets a break by dividing up tasks and chores between all adults and older children/adolescents in the household. Remember that tasks do not need to be divided by gender, and that everyone can play an equal and important part in keeping everything running in the household.

**Show each other that you care:** Try to practise caring for each other in your family. For example, make your spouse or caregiver a cup of tea or fetch them a cool drink after they have had a hard day, offer to do one of their household tasks so they can take some rest, take time to ask children about their day at school and respond to any issues arising. Praise your children for the good things they did.

**Spend time together as a family:** Take time to spend together as a family. Have your evening meal together and discuss your day, play games together, or go to community or religious events as a family. Make sure that when you are planning your family time you take everyone's needs and interests into account. For example, playing games together might be fun for some, but others may prefer to talk together. Try to make time for both. Look for a task to do together like completing a puzzle or preparing a simple meal.

Practise **talking about and expressing your feelings:** When something is worrying you, try to share it with your spouse, friends, or other family members. Encourage older children to identify what they're feeling and talk about it, with younger children, encourage them to name the feeling and find a way to express it. This can be particularly important for children who are coming into a new home or family and may be experiencing stress and confusion.

**Work in partnership with children:** Parents can communicate with their children and provide information about what is happening in the home and the family. Children often cope well when they can understand what is happening. This way children will also not blame themselves for what their parents are going through.

Finally **identify support** in the community, and options for professional help if the situation is overwhelming or not getting better.

### Background information about alcohol and substance use<sup>23</sup>

Alcohol and drug abuse are a major threat to life and national development in Kenya. Surveys undertaken by the National Authority for the Campaign against Alcohol and Drug Abuse (NACADA) have found that the most commonly abused drugs and substances in Kenya are

- Alcohol
- Tobacco
- cannabis (bhang)

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<sup>23</sup> This information has been drawn from the Government of Kenya's National Guidelines on Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, 2021.  
<https://www.issup.net/files/2021-07/National%20Guidelines%20on%20Drug%20Use%20Prevention%202021.pdf>

- glue
- miraa (Khat), and
- psychotropic substances.

In 2017, a rapid situation assessment found that more than one in ten (12.2%) persons aged between 15 and 65 are active users of alcohol, with 10.4% of them suffering from alcohol use disorders. A 2019 National Survey on the Status of Drugs and Substance Abuse among primary school pupils in Kenya, undertaken by NACADA, showed the average age of onset of at least one drug or substance of abuse was 11 years; and lowest age of onset of at least one drug of abuse was 4 years. A 2016 National Survey on Alcohol and Drug Abuse among Secondary School Students in Kenya found that alcohol had the highest prevalence at 3.8%, prescription drugs recording 3.6%, miraa 2.6%, tobacco 2.5%, cannabis 1.8% and heroin and cocaine having the lowest prevalence at 0.2%.

Parenting programmes, such as the National Positive Parenting Training Manual, can support the most important prevention step, which is to not use harmful substances in the first place. The evidence shows that alcohol and substance use prevention can be supported by **teaching parents and caregivers better family communication skills, age-appropriate discipline styles, firm and consistent rule enforcement, and other family management approaches**. For parents and caregivers who are concerned about prevention, practising positive parenting techniques is a good alcohol and substance use prevention itself!

*“A warm child-rearing style, where parents set rules for acceptable behaviours, closely monitor free time and friendship patterns, help to acquire personal and social skills, and are role models, is one of the most powerful protective factors against substance use and other risky behaviours.”* (Government of Kenya, National Guidelines on Alcohol and Drug Use Prevention, 2021)

If a parent or caregiver is concerned about their own substance use or dependence, or that of another family member or child, the priority is to **refer** for support to more specialised services.

## Session 6: Positive Communication

Communicating with children of different ages <sup>24</sup>

# Infants and toddlers

Developmental age and stage: Babies and young children need to know they are loved and safe. They should feel good about themselves and others and understand that having different emotions and fears is normal. They should feel good about new learning and experiences, and start to learn what to do when things go wrong so that they can “bounce back” and to ask for help

Communication style:

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<sup>24</sup> Source: Department of Children Services and UNICEF. Child Protection 5-day Training for Child Protection Volunteers

- Loving tones and simple language
- Ask questions to encourage curiosity
- Learning through play, such as 'pretend'
- Lots of repetition, rhythm and song
- Model positive role models of other children and adults

It is important that boys and girls learn from an early age that respectful and non-violent communication is very important.

## Primary school-age children

Developmental age and stage: It is important that children of this age have positive feelings about themselves, others and the world as they start to leave the family and home and spend time with others. They need to explore and test their own ideas, skills and talents, their feelings and worries need to be understood and respected,

Communication style:

- Use pictures and sounds to stimulate thinking in a fun way (brain teasers, riddles.)
- Model positive role models of other children and adults
- Introduce sensitive topics that show other children dealing with difficult issues like death, anger, abuse, disability, etc., in creative and healthy ways
- Show children making a difference in their own and other's lives
- Present stories about friendship, loyalty and "doing the right thing"

## Young adolescents (10-14 years)

Developmental age and stage: Depending on the individual developmental stage, children need to be guided about behaviours that put them at risk such as responsible sexual behaviours. Their opinions and ideas should be recognized, respected and they should be allowed to learn from mistakes

Communication style:

- Show different points of view and opinions
- Show characters with high self-esteem, especially for girls and children with disabilities

- Talk about issues of concern to their particular age group (violence, romantic relationships, bullying, discrimination, friendships)
- Do not “talk down”
- Challenging stories with creative ideas, difficulties and solutions
- Humour and creativity

## Older adolescents (15 years upwards)

Developmental age and stage: Older adolescents will have increasing independence, and are starting to be able to consider longer-term consequences. They need strong, positive role models with high moral standards, and they need to have opinions and ideas recognized and respected. Older adolescents can be encouraged to participate in family and in community or other public spaces.

Communication style:

- Show characters with high self-esteem, especially for girls and children with disabilities
- Talk about issues of concern to their particular age group (substance abuse, abstinence, friendships, life choices)
- Challenging stories with creative ideas, difficulties and solutions
- Humour and creativity

### Barriers/roadblocks to good communication

- Not listening carefully to what the other person shares
- Differing communication styles
- Presence of conflict
- Lack of trust
- Distractions (such as looking at your phone whilst talking to them)
- Vague statements or lack of clarity about what is being said
- Lack of attention and interest to the conversation
- Defensive body language (crossing your arms, frowning, turning away from the person as they speak, etc.)
- Verbal and non-verbal cues that the listener is bored or irritated (sighing, rolling of eyes etc.)

- Not accounting for/not understanding disabilities that may impact communication such as hearing problems or speech difficulties (for example speaking quickly or covering your mouth as you speak with someone with a hearing difficulty, or being impatient with someone who has a stutter – such as by asking them to hurry up)
- Name calling and put downs, such as saying “you are the slowest child”.

### Building Blocks

- Active listening, including to non-verbal cues
- Using positive body language (turning towards someone, nodding, smiling) to indicate attention
- Acknowledging the other person’s point of view
- Asking questions to gain more understanding
- Including positive feedback and appreciation of the other person
- Understanding the communication styles of different family members
- Using age-appropriate language and cultural expressions
- Resolving existing conflicts and trust issues
- Creating dedicated time to communicate to avoid distractions
- Understanding needs of adults or children with hearing and speech difficulties and modifying communication to support this
- Using accessible, simple language and avoiding jargon.

### Communication with children with disabilities

Spending time with your child and communicating through normal everyday activities can provide excellent opportunities for developing language and communication skills. Below are some additional considerations for children with visual and hearing impairments, and cognitive disabilities.

Type of Disability	Ideas for enhancing communication
Visual impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Always use the child’s name when speaking to them. This reassures the child that you are speaking to them.</li> <li>▪ If the child is partially blind, help them use the little vision they have by using large written letters for them to read.</li> <li>▪ Use touch for children who are blind to draw their attention.</li> <li>▪ Speak clearly; some children with visual impairment may not see body language or facial expressions to help them understand a situation or follow instructions.</li> <li>▪ Teach braille where possible</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Let your child initiate a conversation; the child could reach out to an object. Praise the child, this will encourage exploration</li> </ul>
Hearing impairment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use gestures, facial expressions, body language and signs to support good communication</li> <li>It is important that all the other members of such a child's family learn how to communicate through gestures, home signs, lip reading and use them together at home</li> <li>Rapid growth and development of children happens within the first three years of life therefore, it is important for parents to help children who are deaf or cannot hear well learn a language as early as possible.</li> <li>Create time to play with your child or play when doing the household chores</li> <li>Use of hearing aids; ensure the child is able to use them well.</li> </ul>
Cognitive	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Use visual images like illustrations, pictures and photos to support your interaction with the child</li> <li>Use videos; they have the advantage of sound and images</li> <li>Read to the children</li> <li>Talk to them often in a friendly way</li> <li>Provide explanations constantly</li> </ul>

## Session 7: Positive Play and Preparing to Learn

### Activity 3: Play ideas using local materials<sup>25</sup>

#### 1. Bottle tops

Put two or three plastic coloured bottle tops in front of the child (making sure that they are clean, will not cut the child, and being careful that the child does not put the top in his or her mouth which could be a choking hazard).

**For younger children less than 12 months**, allow your child to explore the bottle tops. Give him two or three. See what he or she does with them. Can she hold them? Does he bang them together? Drop them to the ground?

**For older children**, see if the child can stack them on top of each other to build a tower. Or make a long train.

Are there other things in the house a child could try making a noise with? Pots and spoons? Are there other things in the house a child could try stacking with? Plastic or aluminium cups? Wooden

<sup>25</sup> These ideas come from two useful resources:

- *Msingi Bora*. You may wish to review the full curriculum for further useful ideas on supporting parents and caregivers of children aged 0-3 years.
- UNICEF: Early Childhood Development Kit. A Treasure Box of Activities.  
<https://www.unicef.org/supply/media/631/file/%20ECD-early-child-development-kit-activity-guide-english.pdf>

blocks? With practice and opportunity, and as the child gets older, he/she will be able to build a higher tower.

## **2. Recycled cardboard or paper (for example, used shopping bags) and scissors**

**For younger children less than 12 months**, you could make some simple shapes of different colours and hang them with string above the child's cot (making sure that they cannot reach them) so they blow in the breeze, blow up a paper bag to make a sound and pop the bag if it is not too loud.

**For toddlers up to 3 years**, cut out animal shapes from recycled cardboard and decorate with pictures from old magazines/newspapers and pens/markers. Play with the animal shapes (e.g. make different animal noises).

**For children aged 4 to 5 years**, make a crown, dress up and pretend to be superheroes, give scissors (that are not sharp and under supervision) and glue (flour and water paste) to make pictures and glue them in a book.

## **3. Cloth or paper book, made with a few pieces of paper or cloth.**

Stick in or sew on some simple pictures for example animals, people, household objects.

**For younger children less than 12 months**, listen to the sounds infants make and talk back to them, point at the pictures and say the name and the sound.

**For toddlers up to 3 years**, talk about the pictures they see in the book, help them turn the pages. As you look at the pictures, talk about what you see. "What do you think comes next? Can you turn the page and see?" Change pictures often.

## **4. Sock puppet, using an old sock.**

Sew on some eyes and a mouth, or get creative and add ears and a tail.

**For younger children less than 12 months**, talk and sing. Talk about the animal, his name, and the sound he makes. Try making up songs.

**For children 1 to 5 years**, ask questions in the puppet's voice. Have fun and be silly with the puppet. Let children play with the puppets among themselves and make up their own stories and songs.

## **5. Modelling clay**

**For children 1 to 5 years**, make simple modelling clay, by mixing together 2 cups of baking soda, 1 cup of flour, 1.5 cups of cold water, and food colouring if you would like. Heat the mixture and keep stirring until it bubbles, then take it out of the pan and cool in a bowl covered with a cloth. Finally knead the dough until it is soft but not sticky, and start modelling.

Leave children to make up their own images, or combine the dough with natural objects to create animals and a landscape.

Staying safe online<sup>26</sup>

# Children and Digital Technology: The pros and the cons

Of course, toddlers and children are drawn to a shiny, colourful screen that responds to their touch by lighting up, moving and making noise. And no doubt an electronic tablet or smartphone can magically captivate and occupy the child at the doctor's office and on long car rides.

Though experts haven't fully figured out the downside or benefits of electronic gadgets for kids (you may not remember how you ever lived without it, but the gadgets were only introduced in 2010), there is no evidence that using gadgets will harm young children's physical or cognitive development, as long as you practise **moderation**.

## The benefits of digital technology for children

Not only are electronic gadgets engaging toys that are small enough to fit into your bag and take on the go, but some studies indicate that they can have educational benefits for young children. Research sponsored by the Joan Ganz Cooney Centre at Sesame Workshop found that certain apps may improve children's vocabulary and skills. There is also evidence that children with cognitive delays, e-tablet or smartphone apps may help boost language use and social interaction.

Too much screen time is always a concern for parents since it has been linked to reduce attention and bad conduct in children. However, a 2013 study published in the Archives of Disease in Childhood found that digital games (which are interactive and can foster creativity) seem to affect children differently than TV (which is not typically interactive). The researchers discovered that while excessive TV watching slightly increased a child's risk of bad conduct, age-appropriate digital games did not.

Also, it is important to note that digital tools and connectivity can be game changers for the most disadvantaged children, especially children on the move, children with disabilities and children who experience exclusion and marginalisation because of their ethnicity or sexual identity.<sup>27</sup>

Most of the world's children with disabilities are isolated and struggle with stigma, discrimination and a social environment that does not accommodate their needs or support realisation of their rights.<sup>28</sup> Digital communication offers them a way to express themselves, make their own choices and participate in decisions affecting them. It also has the potential to facilitate communication with friends and reduce feelings of isolation. For children with disabilities, their devices offer a means to

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<sup>26</sup> This information is from the following resource: *Semarak Kasih Malaysia Positive Parenting Programme Add-On Module: Digital Parenting: Keeping our children safe and supported in an online digital world*. This is an Indonesian version of Parenting for Lifelong Health.

<sup>27</sup> UNICEF (2017). *The State of the World's Children. Children in a Digital World*

<sup>28</sup> *Ibid.*

meet others with similar disabilities, and form friendships and relationships, as well as share skills such as guitar playing.<sup>29</sup>

Digital technologies can also provide access to education, skills training and employment. Mobile applications can help children and young people with disabilities be more independent. They can be used for instant communication and activities that address unique sensory, physical and cognitive needs.

Examples of digital applications that are specifically designed to help children with disabilities communicate include iSign and Yuudee. iSign facilitates communication between students with hearing impairment, teachers and peers who do not know sign language. Yuudee is an application that facilitates communication for children with autism, who can press an icon to speak an idea or an answer or express a need. This app can also help teachers and parents teach children with autism communication and cognitive skills. Other digital platforms help children with special needs take tests on the same subject matter as their peers. The DAISY consortium of talking book libraries, which has a global reach, makes text accessible to children who, because of visual impairment or for some other reason, cannot read print.

### **The disadvantages of gadget use for children and guidelines**

Even though there are benefits of using electronic gadgets for children, parents may want to limit their children's use. They may also want to use gadgets as an opportunity to engage with their children as an excellent way to model and teach them positive ways of using the gadgets.

Also, keep in mind that other toys, games, physical activity, creative free play and face to face social interaction is very important for children. After all, a screen offers a limited sensory environment and no physical exertion.

Children cannot feel an app the way they can feel their stuffed animal or dress-up clothes. They cannot smell an app the way they can smell the cookies they bake together with their parents. They cannot hold and manipulate an app the way they can hold and stack blocks. They can't run with an app the way they can romp in the fresh air, and they cannot connect with an app the way they can when they hug their parents. All of these real-world activities offer rich opportunities for toddlers to use their body and experience their environment and human relationships.

All children face the possibility of encountering harm as a result of internet technologies.<sup>30</sup> But for most children, the possibility remains just that.

Understanding why risk translates into actual harm for certain children, and not for others, is crucial. It opens our eyes to the underlying vulnerabilities in the child's life that can place him or her at greater risk in the digital age. By understanding and addressing these vulnerabilities, we can protect children both online and offline, and enable them to enjoy the opportunities that come from being connected in the digital age.

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<sup>29</sup> UNICEF EAPRO and the Centre for Justice and Crime Prevention. (2020) Our Lives Online: Use of social media by children and adolescents in East Asia - opportunities, risks and harms.

<sup>30</sup> UNICEF (2017). The State of the World's Children. Children in a Digital World

All children who go online face some level of risk. Equally, some are more likely to suffer harm than others. Not surprisingly, research increasingly indicates that children who are more vulnerable offline are more vulnerable online. Not only do children who report more offline risks report more online risks, they are also more likely to report harm resulting from those risks. This link between online and offline vulnerability can deepen the challenges facing some of the world's most vulnerable and marginalised children.

### **Who are the most vulnerable children?**

Although there is a regrettable lack of research on some of the most marginalized communities and groups, existing evidence indicates that the children who are most vulnerable to online harms include girls, children from poor households, children in communities with a limited understanding of different forms of sexual abuse and exploitation of children, children who are out of school, children with disabilities, children who suffer depression or mental health problems and children from marginalized groups. Unguided digital access and a lack of awareness also put children at risk.<sup>31</sup>

While parents do not need to feel guilty about letting their children use gadgets *in moderation*, it is important that parents make sure it is just one of many activities they get to learn from, explore and enjoy.

When it comes to children and gadgets, it is best for parents and caregivers to follow international guidelines from the World Health Organization regarding screen time.<sup>32</sup>

- Children 0 to 23 months old: No screen time advised
- Children 2 to 5 years old: 1 hour or less
- Children 6 to 17 years old: Limited use based on agreed guidelines

Additional recommendations include:

- Keep screens out of children's bedroom since they are stimulating and can interfere with sleep and imaginative play,
- Monitor children's viewing and apps to make sure content is appropriate;
- Parents should talk to their children about the programmes and apps they are using.
- Parents can find more information from digital media researchers and experts through Common Sense Media : <https://www.commonsensemedia.org>

**Note:** As a principle, it is important to remember that parents need to be aware and take note of any negative impact of gadgets and respond accordingly. You should also remember that these guidelines are recommendations but may be different for individual families since every family and child is unique.

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<sup>31</sup> *Ibid*

<sup>32</sup> WHO guidelines on physical activity, sedentary behaviour, and sleep for children under 5 years of age.

# Protecting school-age children online and in mobile phone communication<sup>33</sup>

Using gadgets and the internet is becoming a normal part of life for many children (and parents). School-age children like going online to watch videos, play games and connect with friends and family. They might also be using the internet for schoolwork and homework. They can do this using computers, mobile phones, tablets, TVs and other devices.

Because school-age children are starting to be independent online and might go online unsupervised, there are more internet safety risks for them than there are for younger children. There are particular risks if children use the internet to communicate with others. For example, on social media or within games.

When parents take some practical internet safety precautions, they can protect their children from risky or inappropriate content and activities. This also allows children to make the most of their online experience, with its potential for learning, exploring, being creative and connecting with others.

## Internet safety risks for school-age children

There are three main kinds of internet risks for children.

1. **Content risks:** For school-age children these risks include things that they might find upsetting, disgusting or otherwise uncomfortable, if they come across them accidentally. This might include pornography, images of cruelty to animals, and real or simulated violence.
2. **Contact risks:** These risks include children coming into contact with people they do not know or with adults posing as children online. For example, children might be persuaded to meet someone they do not know, share personal information with strangers, or provide contact details after clicking on pop-up messages.
3. **Conduct risks:** These risks include children acting in ways that might hurt others, or being the victim of this kind of behaviour. For example, a child might destroy a game her friend or sibling has created. Another conduct risk is accidentally making in-app purchases.

<sup>33</sup> Mainly retrieved from:

<https://raisingchildren.net.au/school-age/play-media-technology/digital-safety/internet-safety-6-8-years>

# Tips for protecting school-age children from risks online:

Parents and caregivers can use a range of different strategies to help their school-age children stay safe while they are using the internet.

- **Create a family media plan.** Parents should involve their children in creating a plan for social media and internet use. The older the child becomes, the more important it is to involve them in the process so that they are “socially” bound to the decisions made and have ownership as well. Plans could cover things like screen-free areas in the house, internet safety rules like keeping personal information private, and specific programmes and apps that are okay for children to watch and use.
- **Use child-friendly search engines** like Kiddle, or content providers like ABC Kids, CBeebies, YouTube Kids or KIDOZ.
- **Check that games, websites and TV programs are appropriate for children.** Parents can do this by looking at reviews on parental guidance by relevant regulatory bodies. Parents can also play the games or view the content personally first to generate the experience needed to make a decision.
- **Monitor online use.** Parents can use the internet with their children or make sure they are close by and aware of what their children are doing while online. This way parents can act quickly and reassure their children if they are concerned or upset by something they have seen online. Makers such as Android and iOS have included screen time tracking in their systems. It’s very useful and highly encouraged to be used. Google also has a family link app that’s very useful for families: <https://families.google.com/familylink/>
- **Check privacy settings and location services,** use parental controls, use safe search settings on browsers, apps, search engines and YouTube.
- **Find out how to make complaints** about offensive online content - Kenya Communications Authority, <https://www.ca.go.ke/>
- **Block in-app purchases and disable one-click payment options** on your devices.
- **Make sure older siblings follow internet safety rules,** like watching only age-appropriate programs when they go online with younger children.

Children’s greatest fear about revealing online safety issues is not being reprimanded by their parents, but rather losing access to the Internet or their device as a consequence. Building positive and trusting relationships between parents and their children also helps keep children safe online. Calm, open conversations about internet use can help children feel that parents trust them to be responsible online. When children feel trusted, they are more likely to talk with their parents about what they do online and tell them about online content and contacts that worry them.

Remember that building positive parent-child relationships is the most important part. Parents should also avoid using surveillance apps that let them secretly monitor their children's online activity. Using these apps sends the message that they do not trust their children. You should recommend to parents that they talk openly about their own internet use and encourage their children to do the same.

If parents prefer to monitor their children's internet use while they are online or by reviewing their browser history, you can recommend that they talk with their children about it first.

## Building digital resilience with school aged children

Parents can help their children learn how to use the internet safely, responsibly and enjoyably. If they teach their children how to manage internet safety risks and worrying experiences for themselves, they will build digital resilience. This is the ability to deal with and respond positively to any risks they encounter online.

Parents can do this by:

- going online with their children
- talking with their children about online content
- being good role models
- teaching their children to be careful with personal information
- teaching their children to avoid online purchases
- talking about appropriate online behaviour.

**Spending time online with their children** gives parents the opportunity to see the apps or games their children play, or the videos they watch. Just like One-on-One Time, spending time online with children also reinforces positive relationships between parents and children. They learn about what their children like and dislike and how to use that knowledge to build stronger relationships with them.

Parents can share their children's experience while also checking that the content is appropriate. One way to do this is by asking questions that show interest in what their child is doing. Remind them that the focus on being engaged and listening in Sessions 3 (Child Development) and 4 (Strong and Secure Attachment) apply. For example, parents could say, 'That looks like an interesting game. Can you teach me to play too?'

Parents can also model for their children good internet use. They can show their children sites that are fun, interesting or educational and show them how to bookmark them for later. They could help

their children find information they need for homework by using the right kind of words for their searches. Parents may also learn something along the way.

If parents come across pop-up advertisements while they are online together, it's a good opportunity to talk with their children about the consequences involved in clicking on them. Parents can explain that pop-up ads can lead to sites with unpleasant pictures or sites that want personal or financial information.

**Talking about online content:** You can recommend to parents to explain to their children that the internet has all sorts of content and that some of it isn't for children.

There are parental controls, safe browsing settings and internet filters set up on most devices to help protect children from inappropriate content. But these are not a guarantee, and children could still come across inappropriate content.

Parents should encourage their children to inform them if they see something that worries them. For example, they might say, 'Sometimes people put horrible things on the internet. Some of it is made up and some of it is real. If you see anything that upsets you or makes you feel uncomfortable, let me know'.

If parents name things to look out for, it can help children identify unsuitable material by herself. For example, 'If you see a site with scary or rude pictures, swearing or angry words, let me know. It's not a good site for you to look at'.

It is important that parents allow children to debrief and process emotions that might arise when experiencing upsetting material online. Parents should also remember to talk about how their children feel during these incidents (and their own emotions as well).

Parents could also explain that not all information on the internet is true or helpful – for example, some news is made up. Encouraging children to question things he finds on the internet helps him develop the ability to tell whether a website has good-quality information. This is part of digital and media literacy.

**Being a good role model:** Children learn from their parents. This means they can model safe and healthy internet use by using digital media in the way they want their children to use it now and in the future. For example, parents might keep internet-connected devices out of bedrooms, and use technology for positive purposes like sending supportive messages to friends.

**Taking care with privacy and personal information:** Parents should make sure their children only communicate online with people they know and how to avoid contact with people they do not know in person. This is particularly important if children are using in-game social networks.

Parents should encourage their children to:

- Tell them if someone they do not know contacts them online
- Keep their personal information private. Parents could say, 'Some people online are fakers and cheats. Keep your name, address, phone number or birthday private!' This includes personal information on gaming sites or competitions. Parents could ask their children to check with them before filling out any online competitions or memberships

- Establish a rule that children ask their parents before using a new app, so they can show their children how to check the privacy settings to keep their personal information safe.

**Avoiding online purchases:** Parents can help stop any accidental in-app purchases by switching off in-app purchases and one-click payments on their devices.

It's also a good idea for parents and their children to agree on clear rules about in-app purchases. They might say, 'Lots of people want our money, but it's important that we only spend our money on things we need. If you want to buy a new game or something in a game, please ask me first.'

**Talking about appropriate online behaviour:** When parents communicate with their children about appropriate and inappropriate online behaviour, they will learn how to stay safe. For example, parents could:

- Tell their children to only say or do things online that they would do or say face to face with someone
- Encourage their children to think about possible consequences before posting photos or comments
- Help their children to avoid online arguments. They could say, 'Friends can say things they don't mean. It's good to let people get over their moods and avoid them online for a little while'.

## Session 8: Values and Positive Discipline

### About discipline

- Discipline means teaching a child to understand, respect, keep boundaries and obey rules.
- Discipline is not beating and scolding. Positive discipline means teaching a child in a way that is provided with love, communication, and openness.
- Positive discipline helps a child control their behaviours so that ultimately their actions are controlled and purposeful, not random and impulsive.
- Positive discipline is instilled with teaching, consistency, and firmness. It is important that the child understands what they are being guided to do, and why these rules have been set. Therefore, we have to guide children in a way they can understand (this will look different for children of different ages and children with disabilities).

### About values

Values are the beliefs and principles that inform the decisions that we make and the actions that we take throughout our life. They shape how we live and how we treat other people.

Family values are the foundation for children to learn, grow and behave. Values are very important in parenting since they deeply influence our behaviours and attitudes, and affect our decisions and relationships. Parents should be aware of their own values so that they can express, communicate and develop them in their children, as well as supporting children to think about which values are important to them.

Values guide parents and caregivers in the parenting choices that they make, for example what examples they want to set and what behaviours they want to promote. It can be helpful to take a step back and reflect on our personal values and value systems, understanding where they have come from and why they are important to us. Values offer a powerful way to influence children positively and to shield them from the harmful influences they may encounter from the outside world.

Family values can change over time as circumstances change or experiences influence what is important for us. At times values can conflict with each other and a parent or caregiver must think about which value is more important in that situation. For example: a parent or caregiver may value honesty and respect, but will need to counsel the child on when to speak out and when to hold counsel if the child speaks openly and truthfully on sensitive matters with another adult.

### Communicating and instilling values in children.

**Modelling:** Parents and caregivers can model, practice or demonstrate the desired value through words and actions. Caregivers and parents must learn how to handle their own frustrations without becoming violent. This way, they are sending a powerful message that children too can handle frustrations without violence. Children learn more from their experiences and from what they see at household level as opposed to what you tell them. For example:

- a. If parents and caregivers value politeness and courtesy, they should show these in their interactions with other adults and children – for example using ‘please’ and ‘thank you’, ‘you are welcome’ etc.
- b. If parents and caregivers value neatness and cleanliness, they should not be untidy themselves
- c. If parents want to promote sobriety and non-smoking, they should not do this in front of their children, and should not send children to purchase drugs and harmful substances including alcohol or cigarettes for them
- d. If both parents, male and female, value loving relationships, it’s important that they express their affection and care towards each other and towards their children and not treat them harshly or with disrespect or indifference
- e. If both parents, male and female share the value of mutual respect and support, they should equitably share both the domestic and caregiving roles as well as the income generation work and support each other to sustain their family and not expect that only one person will should all the work (domestic, caregiving or income generation)

**Teaching:** Parents and caregivers can share life experiences or use stories to teach their children certain values, such as stories from religious sermons and African folklore. These will always need to be delivered in an age-appropriate way. Remember that all children with disabilities have the capacity to learn. Teaching children with disabilities requires patience, creativity, empathy and hard work.

**Clarification:** Parents and caregivers can encourage or help children to consciously think about the value that is underpinning a decision or action, by asking simple questions. For example, if you want to teach your children to help those in need, you can ask them:

- *“Why do you think it is important to help less fortunate people?”*

- *“What would happen if people did not extend a helping hand to those in need?”*
- *“What categories of people would you consider to be needy of assistance?”*
- *“What specifically can you do in your life to help these people?”*
- *“Are there times when you think it is right to focus on your own needs over those of someone else?” “What might be some of those situations?”<sup>34</sup>*

### Activity 2: List of Positive Values

Children absorb everything they see or hear; parents have the primary responsibility to offer moral education from their tender age;

- Integrity
- Honesty
- Hard work
- Respect
- Gratitude
- Kindness
- Being content
- Decision making
- Being charitable
- Responsibility
- Adjusting and Compromising
- Assertiveness
- Self - awareness
- Self - control

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<sup>34</sup> Example adopted from <https://centerforparentingeducation.org/>

### Activity 3 Positive Discipline Techniques

Every child is unique. Parents and caregivers should think about the situation, the child's circumstances, and experiment with various methods before finding the best fit for the individual child.

Children change over time, so what may have worked well one week may not be effective the next. It's important to be flexible.

**Praise your child for behaving well.** This way they are likely to want to keep behaving well. Praise is essential for developing positive self-esteem and is especially important for parenting children with disabilities. Praise is a major part of the positive reinforcement needed to teach children with mental disabilities (for example, cerebral palsy).

Descriptive praise is when you tell your child exactly what you like. It's best for encouraging good behaviour – for example, 'Thank you for staying calm when you didn't win the game, thank you for trying to eat so neatly, and not smearing your food all over the table'.

#### **Setting rules, boundaries and expectations of what is acceptable and unacceptable behaviour.**

Clearly define expectations of appropriate child behaviour and establish the relationship between the behaviour and its consequences. Try to keep rules simple and minimal for children with developmental disabilities as they may be overwhelmed with too many rules. For children with developmental disabilities, pick the most important rules first, and focus on mastering one or two rules at a time.

Teach children about the set rules and expectations and check whether they have understood what the consequences are if they are not followed. A rule is not a good one unless you can enforce it consistently. If rules change constantly, your child will be confused and not know when a behaviour is right and when it is wrong.

**Consistency in discipline.** This is critical to a child's sense of wellbeing. Sticking to rules and addressing inappropriate behaviour teach children important lessons about right and wrong, and respect for themselves and others. At the same time, they become more confident, self-aware, and responsible when they are held accountable for their actions.

**Ignoring** - if your child isn't doing something dangerous and gets plenty of attention for good behaviour, ignoring bad behaviour can be an effective way of stopping it.

**Be Firm** - Clearly and firmly state, or even demand, that the child do what needs to be done. Speak in a tone that lets your child know that you mean what you say and that you expect the child to do as he/she is told. Being firm doesn't mean yelling, nagging, threatening, or taking away privileges. Keep suggestions to a minimum, and always speak kindly, even when speaking firmly.

**Redirect** - If a child is starting to get distracted and might start misbehaving, it may be because a child is bored, tired or restless. If this is the case, direct their attention to something new. If they are bored while you are preparing the meal, encourage them to join in the food preparation safely, for example sing a song to them.

### Positive discipline strategies for adolescents

For teenagers it is important to know that they require much less parental/caregiver intervention as they begin to make decisions on their own. All teens need independence, autonomy, and the chance to be themselves. This new independence may be a big jolt for a parent/caregiver who until now has been treating them as a child. Although teenagers need independence, they still depend on parental/caregiver guidance, even if they may not wish to admit it often! Two things are key to effective discipline for teenagers: being clear about expectations and involving the teenager in decision making.

- Where possible, agree on the rules together. For example, when a teenager starts going out in the evenings, agree what is a reasonable and safe time to come home. Practice listening skills and find out what the teenager wants to do and communicate your expectations clearly.
- Explain the consequences of breaking the rules ahead of time.
- When problems arise, sit down with your child and resolve the problem together. When a teenager has input into solving the problem, they are more likely to follow through the solution. Also, together you will probably come up with better and more creative solutions.
- Remember to be flexible and accept that there may be times that we need to give the child more leeway.

### Session 9: Positive Male Involvement in Parenting

This programme believes that it is important that men are involved in parenting. Global evidence shows that when fathers are involved, there are many benefits for the mother, child and the father – some of the evidence is listed below.

Benefits for the child:

- Children's social and emotional wellbeing is improved.
- Children are less likely to be mistreated.
- Children's performance in school is better.
- Boys who have an involved father have fewer behavioural problems and girls with an involved father have fewer psychological problems.
- Girls are less likely to engage in risky sexual behaviour when they have a close and consistent relationship with their fathers.

Benefits for the father or male caregiver:

- Involved fathers or male caregivers can have more satisfying relationships with their partners, feel more connected to their families and report better sex lives with their partner (according to some programmes).

Benefits for the woman or female caregiver:

- Mothers or female caregivers who have an involved father or male caregiver are less stressed about parenting.

You can find more resources about men and parenting from National Fatherhood Institute: This is US-based but has useful programme resources, blogs and more that can be adapted for other settings: <https://www.fatherhood.org/>

## Session 10: Creating Peaceful Homes Together<sup>35</sup>

### Types of violence in general

(Violence against children is described in Session 11 Facilitator Notes below).

#### **Emotional and Psychological violence**

Undermining someone's self-worth and/or intimidating them with threats, constant criticism, intimidation, belittling, name calling etc.

#### **Physical violence**

Hurting someone through use of physical force such as hitting, pushing, kicking, burning, use of weapons

#### **Sexual violence**

Forcing someone to take part in a sex act they do not give their consent for (including in marriage)

#### **Economic violence**

Making (or attempting to make) someone financially dependent by maintaining control over financial resources, withholding their access to money and/or forbidding attendance at school or employment.

#### **What about violence against men?**

Violence can take place in all types of relationships, it is never acceptable, and it is an abuse of rights - no matter who it is perpetrated against, violence against men can also occur in our homes, and we should all speak out to prevent violence in all its forms. However, violence against women and girls is a distinct issue to other types of violence (including against men and boys) because:

- Women and girls experience higher rates of violence in the home than men and boys (for example the Kenya Health Survey showed that 41% of ever married women have experienced violence from a partner, compared to 11% of men)
  - Women and girls experience violence in the home more frequently (it is a pattern of behaviour that often repeats itself rather than a one-off event)
  - Women and girls experience more severe forms of violence in the home (if women and girls experience violence in the home they are more likely to sustain serious or life-threatening injury, or even die as a result)

<sup>35</sup> Sources of information: UNICEF (2006) *Behind Closed Doors: The Impact of Domestic Violence on Children*. <https://www.unicef.org/media/files/BehindClosedDoors.pdf> and RaisingChildren.net.au, Family violence: what is it?, <https://raisingchildren.net.au/grown-ups/family-life/domestic-family-violence/family-violence-what-is-it->

- The many different types of violence that women and girls experience in their homes, and the frequency and severity with which it happens, is a symptom of inequality in our societies.

## Session 11: Keeping Children and Families Safe

### About types of violence and abuse

Violence can take many forms including all types of physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, or other exploitation, which results in actual or potential harm to the child's health, survival, development.

Abuse is when the violence happens in the context of a relationship of responsibility, trust or power.

Abuse happens in homes, schools, online, in institutions of care and in communities everywhere, no matter the tribe, religion, or upbringing. Adults, young people, leaders or even other children can perpetrate violence and abuse.

**Physical violence:** Physical abuse is whenever someone hurts or harms a child/young person on purpose, this could include: hitting/slapping, kicking, shaking, throwing, burning, biting, scratching and breaking bones

**Sexual violence:** When a child or young person is tricked or forced into sexual activity. (This includes when a child is involved in any type of sexual activity with an adult, as the power adults have over children mean that it can never be a consenting activity) It could include sexually touching a child's body, forced penetration/sex acts, making a child undress or touch someone else sexually. It could also include abuse where there is no physical contact with the child such as showing them pornography/ explicit pictures, making them take part in sexual conversations or a person exposing themselves to a child.

**Emotional violence:** Emotional (and psychological) violence is the continual emotional mistreatment of a child, and could include trying to deliberately scare, isolate or ignore a child, calling them names, bullying behaviours or breaking down their self-worth by repeating negative messages.

**Neglect:** Neglect is an ongoing failure to meet a child's basic needs – for example by not providing enough nutritious food, not getting medical treatment when it is needed, not providing adequate clothes or shelter for them, or failing to ensure they go to school and receive a basic education. Neglect implies a deliberate choice on the part of parents or caregivers to withhold basic necessities from children and fail to care for them adequately despite having the necessary means, knowledge and access to services.

There are also cases where parents/caregivers are unable to provide for the basic needs of their children due to poverty, deprivation or other issues beyond their control, but this form of neglect is not intentional.

Violence and abuse also include:

**Bullying:** Deliberate hurtful behaviour, usually repeated over a period of time, where it is difficult for those bullied to defend themselves. It can take many forms, but the three main types are physical (e.g. hitting, kicking, theft), verbal (e.g. belittling remarks, threats, name calling) and emotional (e.g. isolating an individual from the activities and social acceptance of their peer group). Bullying mostly takes place in schools or online, where it is called cyberbullying.

**Child labour:** Work that is mentally, physically, socially or morally dangerous and harmful to children and interferes with their schooling. In its most extreme forms, child labour involves children being enslaved, separated from their families, exposed to serious hazards and illnesses and/or left to fend for themselves on the streets— often at a very early age. Not all work done by children is classified as child labour – for example children’s or adolescents’ participation in work (both in the home and outside of the home) that does not affect their health and personal development, or interfere with their schooling can be positive, such as helping around the home, assisting in a family business or working age-appropriate jobs to earn pocket money outside school hours and during school holidays.

**Harmful practices:** These include child marriage, female genital mutilation, abandonment of children with disabilities immediately after birth, child labour, corporal punishment, and child rape victims being asked to marry the perpetrator. (This is addressed further in Module 11).

### Signs and symptoms of abuse and violence in children<sup>36</sup>

Effects of child abuse and neglect may be mild or severe, disappear after a short period or last a lifetime. Abuse and neglect can affect the child physically, psychologically or behaviourally.

0 to 3 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Not eating well</li> <li>▪ Not sleeping well</li> <li>▪ Intense physical symptoms that are distressing</li> <li>▪ Clingy/separation anxiety</li> <li>▪ Feeling helpless/passive</li> <li>▪ Irritable/difficult to soothe</li> <li>▪ Listless e.g. unwilling to play or explore</li> <li>▪ Repetitive/post-traumatic play (re-enacting the traumatic experience)</li> <li>▪ Setback in development e.g. forgetting new skills, or not developing</li> <li>▪ Fearfulness</li> <li>▪ Language delay</li> </ul>
3-5 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Avoidant, anxious, clingy</li> <li>▪ General fearfulness</li> <li>▪ Helplessness, passive, low frustration</li> <li>▪ Restless, impulsive, hyperactive</li> <li>▪ Physical symptoms (headache, etc.)</li> <li>▪ Difficulty identifying what is bothering them</li> <li>▪ Inattention, difficulty problem solving</li> </ul>

<sup>36</sup> Source: Centre for the Study of Social Policy. (no date). Strengthening Families Curriculum: Trauma and Brain Development—A Protective Factors Approach. <https://cssp.org/resource/trauma-brain-development-protective-factors/>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daydreaming or dissociation</li> <li>▪ Irritability</li> <li>▪ Negative aggressive behaviour</li> </ul>
6-12 years	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Anxious or fearful</li> <li>▪ Worry about own/other's safety</li> <li>▪ Emotional swings, moody</li> <li>▪ Easily startled</li> <li>▪ Sad or angry</li> <li>▪ Difficulty sleeping, nightmares</li> <li>▪ Learning problems</li> <li>▪ Changes in school performance</li> <li>▪ Attention seeking, clingy</li> <li>▪ Revert to younger behaviour</li> <li>▪ Re-enact trauma in play</li> <li>▪ Say have no feelings about event</li> </ul>
13 years and older	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Feel depressed</li> <li>▪ Difficulty imagining future or planning</li> <li>▪ Eating disorders</li> <li>▪ Self-harm behaviour, e.g. cutting</li> <li>▪ Over or under-estimate danger</li> <li>▪ Inappropriate aggression</li> <li>▪ Learning or school problems</li> <li>▪ Reckless or self-destructive behaviour</li> <li>▪ Drug or alcohol abuse</li> <li>▪ Act out sexually</li> <li>▪ Sleep disturbances</li> <li>▪ Pull away from activities, relationships</li> <li>▪ Feel numb, shut down or separated from life</li> <li>▪ Discuss traumatic events in detail</li> </ul>

## Preventing child abuse

Safe, stable, and nurturing relationships between parents/caregivers and their children and between parents/caregivers and other adults are an important way to protect children from violence, abuse, and neglect. Parents and caregivers can help to prevent abuse and neglect of their children if they take care of themselves, know the risk factors, take action to minimise the risks their children are exposed to, and strengthen their children's own sense of self, their understanding of consent and bodily autonomy, and giving them the confidence (and 'power within') to speak up if they are being mistreated or when a situation doesn't feel right. If children are subject to violence, abuse or neglect (despite parents and caregivers prevention strategies) they can minimise the potential for long-term harm by understanding the warning signs, taking quick action to stop the abuse, and understanding what to do to ensure children get the appropriate support.

### Key safety tips for safety in the home

- Always supervise children aged 0 to 3. Children aged 4 and 5 also need supervising but can, for example, play on their own in another room
- Create safe spaces where your child can play. These are likely to be small spaces for 0 to 2 year olds, getting bigger as the child gets older and understands risk more
- Give simple explanations of risks repeated regularly
- If a child is in danger, you may find yourself shouting and the child crying. When you both have calmed down, say sorry for shouting and explain simply that you were worried about them. For children who are speaking, you can then work together to brainstorm ideas for them staying safe next time (for example, holding hands when crossing a road)
- Prevent accidents where possible by keeping poisons such as soda and medicine out of reach, sharp objects out of reach, hot drinks in the centre of the table, not putting/letting children climb on high objects such as cupboards, and blocking off access to rooms with risks (such as the kitchen and bathroom) unless supervised
- Children can still have accidents, so have the contact details of your local clinic and hospital in case you need them.
- Children with disabilities may be more prone to accidents if their environment is not arranged well. To support children using assistive devices like crutches to move with ease, the environment at home should be conducive. This allows easy movement of members of the family who are visually and physically impaired.

### Talking about safety with your children

- Children need to have information about important topics that can keep them safe.
- It is important to give your child age-appropriate information to prevent possible harm. If parents do not talk about these issues, then children could get the wrong information from somewhere else.
- It is important to ensure that children are accessing accurate information online and are protected from possible online harm.

- Older adolescents need and want their parents to talk to them about important topics like drugs, smoking, alcohol, and sexuality.
- If you are calm and matter of fact, then your children will feel more comfortable asking questions or talking about difficult topics. Avoid being judgemental or angry.
- Practise positive communication with children in everyday life and everyday situations. That makes it easier to talk about more sensitive topics because you already have a strong and close communication.
- Use concrete examples so that a child understands exactly what you are talking about. For example, if you are talking about a man or boy sexually harassing your teenage daughter, describe a situation that they can easily imagine. (For example, "What if you are at a friend's house and her older brother says something about your appearance or behaviour that makes you feel uncomfortable?" or "What if you find someone contacting you online and asking you to do something that you are not happy to do?")
- Help your child to say "no" confidently and show your child that people should respect their boundaries. Show your child that this should be respected, by respecting it yourself. If your child no longer wants you to come into their room without knocking, respect this request.

Talk to your child about sexual touching that makes them feel uncomfortable and that it is ok to say no. Make it clear that no one should ask your adolescent child to keep a secret about something that they do not like and that it is not their fault if something has happened to them.

### Talking to children about sexuality and sexual development in an age-appropriate way<sup>37</sup>

Sexual development is a central issue in the child development process. Parents and caregivers have an important role in helping their children navigate through this reality and come out as responsible sexual beings.

"What should I tell my son or daughter about sexuality and at what age?"

"Do I have to talk about these things with my son? It's uncomfortable."

Well, it is a choice we must make. Our children will learn about sex eventually. For example, pop culture often treats sex in a commercialised and trivialised way, and makes it a big deal for the wrong reasons. You can either choose to talk to them about sexuality or they will find out from others (friends, media, music). When it is from the parent it comes with values and advice.

Your young one deserves accurate information from a trusted, caring adult at the right time. Who else would do a better job than an involved parent? You play your role, and you can involve mentors and youth counsellors as well so that they do their part. Teaching children about healthy sexuality is a community affair.

The foundations of teaching children about sexuality and sexual development are an open, involved parent and a value system. All parents live in a world very different from their children, and they must seek to understand what is happening for our children at home, at school, and in other spaces, including who children interact with.

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<sup>37</sup> Mbevi, S. (2019). *Intentional Dad: Skills for Effective Fathering*. Transform Nations.

*Be Close, Open your Eyes.*

Sexual matters are considered personal and private. For your child to come to you for trusted advice on these issues, you need to deliberately create a relaxed, solid relationship of trust. Talk freely with your children.

It can be tempting to think that our children are not interested in sexuality which is not true. It is important to acknowledge that all children are sexual beings, and will be curious about matters to do with sex and sexuality, the sooner the better for you and for them.

## Discussion Questions:

Does your relationship with your children need some fine-tuning before you can discuss intimate issues on sexuality with them? And if you are already talking about this subject, how can you build greater trust and openness?

How did our parents talk to us about sexuality? What could they have done better?

## AGE – APPROPRIATE SEXUAL EDUCATION

The information below is general guidance. Some children are ready for information earlier and some develop at a slower pace or are less interested. Be guided by what your child is interested in.

## Early Years: Three to five Years

This is the time to lay a good foundation to discuss sexuality. Your children are curious about their own bodies and about the opposite sex as well. Some children may regularly touch their genitals - that is normal, they are learning about their body.

Teach them that their sexual organs are 'private', that they should not touch them or display them in public, and that other people – whether they are family or strangers - should not touch their private parts either.

Talk to them about gender differences (that boys and girls are different in the way they look [make it simple])

Teach your kids the value of family, the social unit within which love and nurture can be fully and joyfully experienced. You may begin to have conversations on the simplest basics of human reproduction: that a baby is formed in a woman's tummy, and eventually the child comes out after nine months.

Just be truthful about what you share. It is better to tell your child what they can take then say you will explain further as he grows up.

## Six to eight Years

At this age, you can provide additional information, focusing on the beauty of being human. Explain a bit more about male and female physical differences. Explain that he/she should not look or touch girls/boys in their private parts (in between their legs or their breasts). You can provide a bit more information about conception and birth to the degree that the child can understand.

Have a conversation with your child about the changes he or she will be expecting, and also what changes happen to children of the opposite sex.

Explain using accurate biological terms, about sexual intercourse and where it belongs – in a special, protective relationship later in life. Talk about how children can sometimes see images of sex and sexuality that are abusive, for example pornography, for example access through phones. Encourage them to talk to you if someone is sharing images or doing things to them that they do not like.

Mention the dangers of early sexual exposure, such as pregnancy before the girl or boy is ready to be a parent and the dangers of illnesses, in simple terms.

If you start discussing these issues and your child does not seem at all interested, do not push it. Wait for the right moment to raise the issues.

Nine to eleven years By this age, it is likely that your child has been exposed to different views on sexuality and romantic relationships, and is beginning to ask questions. This is the time for the parent to be the primary sexuality educator, alongside other educators in school, in the neighbourhood and in the media.

Give a comprehensive explanation of why sex should wait, and its proper value and place within a committed, loving, adult relationship. Remember your greatest role is not just to teach biology to your child but shape your child's value system so that they will be able to conduct themselves responsibly and respectfully.

Address the messages that they are receiving from the culture around him/her.

Talk about:

- Early sex, the temptations and the dangers around it
- Teen pregnancy, abortion and the impact
- Peer pressure and the urge to belong in a group
- Sexually Transmitted Infections
- Body hygiene, Urinary tract infections
- All forms of sexuality – opposite and same sex attractions, bisexual and trans-gender realities: they have probably heard about it in the media and from others and may need to hear your view
- Pornography – the dangers thereof
- Sexual abuse, sexual harassment and sexual violence – that it is never ok, how to protect oneself and who to talk to if you are worried
- Romance and sex in movies, social media clips and Internet sites
- Online sex predators and online safety

Train him or her to make the right choices, that choices have consequences, and that you are here to guide them.

Teach them about love and relationships, filtering content online and movie rating, and the importance of boundaries so as to develop and mature.

This is a good age to teach them that sex and sexuality is a big deal in the world: it's taken casually, idolised and can be exploited (commercialised).

Expect lots of questions, if you give them permission to talk freely. Just ensure that at the end of it your child understands that sex is a human gift (not dirty) to be enjoyed at the right time with the right person.

A child this age may need to start knowing the purpose of sex: pleasure within a committed relationship and enhance intimacy, and for many in the future to have children. Talk about the basics of sex, sexuality, conception, and birth.

Furthermore, let your child understand the changes that come during puberty:

- Intense sexual attractions, with a desire to have a friend of opposite sex
- Sex hormones released in us give us strong feelings and produce certain physiological changes
- The body grows faster than before, changing rapidly within 3-4 years
- More hair grows on the body, especially pubic hair around the genitals and armpits
- A boy's voice begins to change/break
- Body size changes, (for boys the chest expands and biceps build up, girls develop breasts and hips tend to grow larger)
- For boys, the penis and testicles grow larger, and sperm begins to be produced which can make a girl pregnant (hence wet dreams)
- Girls begin to have their menstrual periods, which means they can get pregnant

These changes during puberty prepare us to understand love, the wish for a friend of the opposite sex and prepare our bodies for future adult choices including relationships and children.

You may talk about your personal experience and the lessons you have learned.

**Discussion Question:** What information do you need to get on sexuality from the above so as to prepare yourself for your child's sexuality education? Schedule some time to research from the Internet or read a book.

Twelve to fourteen years

This is the gateway into womanhood and manhood.

Prepare your children for the changes and hormones that come with puberty. Help them appreciate such changes, the seen and the unseen. Building on what you taught them earlier, talk more about sexual changes, sexual activities and the process of childbirth. [A more illustrated picture of the reproductive system would help - thankfully these things are taught in school as well, but you can add the values and advice.]Mentors that the young man and woman can go to for more questions and advice could be introduced, including aunts and uncles.

Other things your child should know include:

- Common sexually transmitted infections, including HIV/AIDS (what they are, how they spread and their effects)
- The question of contraceptives may come up – what they are and what they are for, and who uses them. [they see them on TV, they may need info and your view of them]
- The myths about sex out there (e.g.: the earlier the better, the first time you can't be pregnant, among others)

This is the stage for the big discussion on love and relationships: explanations, guidelines, heartbreaks, and creating and guarding boundaries.

More talk on sexual harassment and abuse, transgenerational relationships (interest from older people), and the issues of sexual orientation [what they are and what you believe about them]. Give honest and value-guided answers to the questions they raise. Don't be harsh, be gracious and loving enough for your child to know that if they slipped, they can come back to you for help!

Ask them questions and allow them to ask questions, because this can be a confusing season of life. You may watch some of the PG movies and discuss the place of sex.

Fifteen to nineteen years

With teenagers, the peer pressure is higher to experiment on their sexuality – the opportunities in parties, trips and hangouts. Keep the conversations that you have already had earlier alive. Encourage them to come to you with questions or concerns.

In addition, quite a few teenagers end up as fathers or mothers. Let your child know the possibilities of that and what the consequences or demands will be. A considerable percentage of teens are also reported to have contracted sexually transmitted infections, struggled with pornography addictions and experienced date rape. Talk about these issues.

As romantic relationships intensify, talk about disclosure of any harm, curfew and enforceable boundaries.

Parental Tips for Sex Education

The Medical Institute for Sexual Health has published excellent books on this topic. In one of them, *Questions Kids Ask about Sex*, edited by J. Thomas Fitch and Melissa R. Cox they give the following tips to parents concerning sex education:

- **Start Early.** Build a rapport with your child early on so that when you have to talk about sexual development it would not be out of character. The earlier you establish a connection the better for you and for him as well.
- **Believe in your child and build his or her confidence.** Prepare them and release them to deal with the temptations and make choices based on the moral framework you have taught them. Trust them, celebrate their successes and become their cheerleaders.
- **Look for teaching opportunities and seize them.** Use opportunities that present themselves to talk about sex and sexuality. Examples include a comment from the media or an advert, a scene in a movie, or a question he or she may ask.

- **Relax and create an open environment for talking (and listening).** Be calm, confident and collected. Remember your child can read your body language. Talk, listen and be real.
- **Give accurate age-appropriate information.** Do not hold back information that he needs and do not give too much information than he can handle. Relate at the level of his or her maturity.
- **Don't be afraid to say, "I don't know."** When you need to go and check up on something, ask for time to consult.
- **Anticipate the next stage before it happens.** Be proactive rather than reactive. Warn the child in advance of what is coming and guide him/her through. In doing so you establish yourself as an informed trustworthy guide.
- **Be aware of your actions.** Know when to talk and when not to. Do not embarrass him before his friends or push her before she is ready.
- **Teach your child how to develop healthy relationships.** The young one needs to develop strong friendships with other boys/girls and general ones with the opposite gender, and with adults who can stand in as mentors and counsellors in his/her life. This both lessens the pressure for sex and provides a trusted community to walk with him or her.
- **Integrate your family's faith and values into the discussion.** Faith is a huge factor in sexual decisions. Freely teach your child what you believe in and inform his or her convictions.
- **Love your children unconditionally.** Let them know that you love them and always will no matter what happens. And that you will always be there for them.

#### Final Words

Teach your child to live by the honour principle:

**Respect self:** To understand that his/her body is a gift, it is of great value and it is worth of great respect. It matters what one watches, touches, and who one gets close or intimate with. Self-control and delayed gratification are good for maturity.

**Respect others:** A boy needs to know that a real man respects girls and women, treats and speaks to them with dignity, respects their bodies and does not see or treat them as sex objects, respects their choices or decisions (and so he does insist on doing anything she is not okay with) and respects the parents of the young woman he loves.

A girl needs to know that a respectable woman respects boys and men, defines and defends boundaries with them, and maintains respect with them in word, deed, and social media communication.

#### Discussion questions

What information from the above do you think is too much or unnecessary information?

What would you do if your daughter came home to report that she is pregnant?

- What would you do if your son came home to report that his girlfriend is pregnant?

In the event that the sexual relation was forced, undesired or violent, it is very important to support the child, adolescent or young person to obtain the proper specialised professional help in addressing any physical, emotional or psychological damage that may have occurred.

For many parents, discussing these sensitive issues can be very difficult, if not impossible. If this is the case, parents must not hesitate in seeking out the professional and trustworthy services that provide all the necessary information to ensure your child/adolescent or young person is informed and equipped to better protect themselves and others. Some of these services in Kenya include: the internet of Good Things, one2one and 1190.

When a child talks about possible risk of violence, abuse, exploitation or neglect:

- Stop what you are doing, focus on your child and listen
- Show your child that they are loved and that they have done nothing wrong. This message needs to continue, so they know they can continue to talk and that they will be protected
- Show that you believe them – children who trust someone enough to talk about an abusive situation rarely lie
- Be supportive – allow the child to speak and make sure that they feel supported
- Stay calm and steady, however angry you feel. If you are angry, the child may choose not to say more, for fear of the consequences or fear that they are being blamed.
- Take action to protect the child straight away (for example, do not make them walk in place where they are at risk of or have experienced violence)
- Talk to family who are trusted, police, helpline – someone you trust who can help choose what to do. Always keep your child involved in the conversation without forcing them to repeat the painful experience in front of people
- Focus on protecting the child from further harm by getting help from professionals and working with the child to make the home (or the internet) feel safe for them while they heal.

## Session 12: Positive and Protective Communities

Kenyan laws and policies about harmful practices

Kenya's laws protect children from harmful practices:

- The Constitution of Kenya 2010 (Article 53) states that children should be protected from abuse, neglect, **harmful cultural practices**, all forms of violence, inhumane treatment and punishment, and **hazardous or exploitative labour**.
- The Children Act (2001) articulates the child's right to protection from abuse, **harmful cultural practices** and sexual exploitation, among others.
- Kenya's Third Medium-Term Plan (2018 –2022), Social Pillar 5.5 articulates challenges such as drug abuse, teenage pregnancy, gender-based violence and female genital mutilation.

The National Prevention and Response Plan for Violence Against Children 2019-2023 seeks to address harmful practices including female genital mutilation (FGM), child marriage and hazardous child labour. One result that it seeks to achieve is that people have *“improved awareness and understanding of the negative impacts of harmful traditional practices (including female genital mutilation and child marriage) and alternative positive norms and practices.”*

The role of parenting education programmes in addressing harmful practices

Parenting programmes cannot change deeply held norms and practices alone but they can be a space for parents and caregivers to understand the consequences of harmful practices and apply these to their children's development and growth. Parenting programmes can also support people to question their assumptions about gender norms, because many harmful practices are influenced by harmful gender norms.

As a facilitator, your role is to support parents and caregivers to reflect on their child's wellbeing, encourage them to apply positive parenting practices that include positive communication and active listening to children, and think about their child's wellbeing and growth and development.

Facilitators should also support parents and caregivers who need referral to health, child protection or other services.

### Environmental Conservation

Environmental conservation means protecting the **environment** and **natural resources**. Destruction of the environment comes from many sources, but the main reason is global warming which is leading to more extreme weather. All these issues pose a severe threat to generations to come.

Destruction of the environment is leading to the following circumstances:

- Reduced clean air and water, which affects everyone's health. Lack of water increases family expense and time fetching water.
- Future extinction of animal species.
- Depletion of natural resources such as fruits, rivers, tree species for our future generations.

Everyone has a role in addressing the destruction of the environment. National governments have a big role in passing policies and adhering to global commitments to reduce harmful polluting industries and practices. But we can all play a small role. Below are some ideas of involving children in conserving the environment:

Here are some ways of conserving the environment:

- Encouraging afforestation, for example by running or participating in tree planting drives in your local community.
- Increasing the use of renewable energy resources such as solar power, and reducing our use of non-renewable energy resources, such as use of motor vehicles (when not strictly necessary)
- Safe discarding of disposable masks and avoid littering the environment with face masks, and doing other activities such as children collecting and recycling litter.
- Learning about sustainable environmental practices and encouraging family and friends to adopt these practices.

#### Disaster preparedness: Making a family plan including communication plan

- Example: Teach a young child his/her name, parents names by creating a song

### Session 13: Positive Family Health and Nutrition

The facilitator can access the following information that gives the basics of nutrition. Ideally use these counselling cards that are available from the Ministry of Health.

Add in links to MOH publication:

- Maternal Infant and Young Child Nutrition: national counselling cards
- Good nutrition for pregnant and breastfeeding mothers in the context of COVID-19
- Feeding of children 6-23 months in the context of COVID-19

### Session 14: Family Financial Planning

#### Writing a will

For anyone to write a will in Kenya, they need: the testator's name and their wishes, the gifts, an executor, execution, and attestation.<sup>38</sup>

**The Testator's Name:** The testator is the one making the will. As the testator, you need to make a declaration that that is your last will. This is because the latest will usually invalidate the previous declaration. However, an oral will does not invalidate a written will.

**The Gifts:** Any property that is subject to a will is called a gift. When writing a will, you should name the gift and the person who is to receive the gift. In this part of the will, you should include conditions that need to be met by the one receiving the gift. You cannot assign gifts that you do not own.

**An Executor:** An executor is the one named by a will. The executor is the person in charge of distributing the deceased's assets. When a testator fails to name an executor, anyone who wishes to administer the deceased's estates should make an application in court for them to be considered administrators.

<sup>38</sup> <https://kenyavote.com/how-to-write-a-will-in-kenya-and-sample/>

**Execution:** A will should be signed by the testator or any other person under the direction and in the presence of the testator. For the will to be valid, the signature of the testator or the person signing on his behalf must appear intentional.

**Attestation:** A will needs to be signed by competent witnesses. Two or more persons must bear witness to the signing of the will by the testator or the one assigned to sign on their behalf. The witnesses must also, in the presence of the testator, sign the will.

### Family business/entrepreneurship<sup>39</sup>

In Kenya, family businesses contribute to about 75 per cent of the country's Gross Domestic Product. Globally, family businesses account for more than two-thirds of all companies and provide between 50 percent and 80 percent of all employment.

Family-owned firms can be top-performing companies in their respective industries. However, they are at the risk of family feuds that can overspill and adversely affect business operations. Strong networks of family relationships, shared values and clear business objectives enable the family to forge a strong brand identity and united vision for their family business. Unfortunately, this same closeness of family relationships can also lead to disaster, due to conflicts between family members, and the difficulty in separating interpersonal relationships with business relationships. Family-owned businesses face some unique challenges, many of which stem from the nature of their business structures. If you are a family business owner, it is important to understand the common hurdles that can arise so that you can identify them and proactively develop ways to overcome them. They include:

**Rivalry among family members.** In many families, differences may arise when siblings feel that factors like age or education entitle them to more advantages than the others. This family rivalry can pull families and their businesses apart, often resulting in court battles and eventually causing irreparable damage to the reputation of the company and the eventual collapse of the family business.

**Lack of proper financial governance structures.** Many family businesses are SMEs and MSMEs and lack proper governance structures. Family businesses need to agree on formalising compensation, expenses and budgets among other financial aspects. It is prudent to separate family business funds from family expenses.

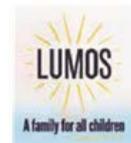
**Failure to invest in training, education and upskilling of the next generation.** Many family businesses rarely upskill the family members taking up various roles in the business. It is common to find that the family business owners do not appreciate or rather value capacity building. To increase your odds for survival, ensure that you invest in upskilling and capacity building for the next generation of family business owners.

**Drawing clear lines between business and family.** Family is about unconditional love and family relationships while business is about making a profit. As your family business grows, you will find out that these two do not always align.

**Lack of case studies to pass down.** Many family business founders have died without telling their stories. It is no wonder that there are children who take over the businesses after the passing on of the founder and do not understand the pain and sweat that goes into setting up and growing family

<sup>39</sup> Source: <https://sbs.strathmore.edu/family-businesses-hurdles-seven-key-challenges-to-watch-out-for/>

businesses. Training institutions and institutions of higher learning must begin working on case studies of successful businessmen and women to document their winning formulae that can provide valuable insights to new generations.



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