THE ART OF PARENTING

TRAINING GUIDE

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Foreword

This Parenting Guide represents a culmination of several years of tedious work by the National Parenting Taskforce, chaired by the National Committee for Families and Children (NCFC) and with support from UNICEF. It is a first-of-a-kind for Belize. This project was conceived from a National Parenting Conference hosted by the Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation through the Community and Parent Empowerment Program, with support from UNICEF in February 2013. The conference provided stakeholders with an opportunity to examine parenting programs in similar context to Belize. Particularly for Belize, parenting programs were found to be provided by varying entities, such as community-based organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions; however, there is a lack of coordination and harmonization as it relates to the concepts, skills, and dispositions incorporated within these parenting programs/sessions. The information revealed that effective parenting programs shape the quality of children's development and is instrumental in supporting children's outcomes and parents' well-being.

The Guide is well aligned to the Children's Agenda 2017-2030, particularly, the cross-cutting transformational goal one (1), which speaks of providing support to parents. The knowledge and skills that parents will garner, should enable them to become better parents and resultantly produce well-developed children, who are able to develop to their full potential and contribute positively to their community. Parents and potential parents will be guided through the three thematic areas, which include: Child Development, Positive Parenting – Guiding and Nurturing and, Coping and Surviving as Parents for a Lifetime- they will be kept fully engaged using interactive and fun activities that will enhance their learning.

It is my hope that this Guide will be utilized nationally and that its impact will be far-reaching! Ultimately its use should improve the lives of Belizean children and families and contribute to the vision of the Children's Agenda 2017 – 2030, which is to make Belize the best country in the world to grow up and raise a family, and where the rights of all children and adolescents are respected, protected and fulfilled; where their voices are heard and where they are supported to realize their maximum potential!

Thank you,

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Acknowledgements

Introduction

1.1 Background

Families are the basic unit of society and in most cases provide the best environment for meeting a child's developmental needs. The family not only provides care and protection but also serves as that environment in which children learn to socialize with others, learn about their culture and customs as well as develop their spirituality. Experiences in the family unit associated with positive parenting aids in the empowerment of children and focuses on the best interest of the child. However, one must be cognizant of the fact that in today's society, family influence is fragile and in many instances, outnumbered by many other social forces. It is critical more than ever that families, are aware of these social forces and use them to their advantage in order to be that fundamental environment for the growth and wellbeing of all its members and in particular children. The CRC in its preamble states that the "child should grow up in a family environment and in an atmosphere of happiness, love and understanding."

Parenting Programs therefore are developed from the philosophy that nurturing and positive parenting skills are critical for effective child rearing practices. The word nurturing comes from the Latin word nutritura which means to promote, nurse and nourish life. Parenting education differs from parent support in that it is more commonly a learning activity designed to promote positive parenting practices. Parenting education can be viewed as a subset of parent support in that it is often embedded and central to comprehensive, family focused parent support programs.

The Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation through the Community and Parent Empowerment Program, with support from UNICEF, hosted a National Parenting Conference in February 2013. The conference provided opportunity for stakeholders to examine Parenting Programs in context similar to Belize. The information revealed that effective parenting programs shape the quality of children's development and is instrumental in supporting children's outcomes and parents' well-being.
1. Research also strongly links both risk and protective factors for children and adolescents to the family environment.
2. Therefore, properly structured parenting programs are an integral aspect of effective primary and secondary prevention and intervention services.

Parenting education is an emergent professional area of expansion in Belize provided by varying entities, such as, community based organizations, governmental and non-governmental organizations, and educational institutions. National assessment of the social conditions among families in Belize illustrate that the erosion of paternal presence, poor financial stability and increase crime in urban areas are due to weak family structures coupled with parents who are unskilled to rear and support children. Many experts agree that effective parents/caregivers should possess certain knowledge, skills, attitudes and interpersonal abilities that promote parental effectiveness.
1. It has also been strongly agreed that parent-child interaction is enhanced when parents display qualities of sensitivity, responsiveness, reciprocity and support. These basic parenting practices are universally applicable and cut across ethnic and economic classes.
2. It must be recognized; however, that how parents of diverse backgrounds learn and practice parenting is highly individualized and associated with social, cultural and economic factors.

3. Consequently the curriculum, training guide, parents and facilitators workbook and resources are not prescriptive. These can be modified to cater to parents/caregivers to address varying needs.

The Parenting Guide has been developed with the support of the Parenting Task Force and the National Committee for Families and Children whose primary aim is to strengthen the overall process and delivery of parenting initiatives in Belize. This will ensure that (1) key messages and strategies delivered capture the entire lifecycle and development of children; (2) capacity building for parents is done in a standardized and harmonized manner, and in a way that it is relatable and adaptable to the uniqueness of the cultural and family situations in Belize.

The guide and its attending documents are guided by the core principles of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC).

This guide is for all parents, whether single mothers or fathers, teenagers, low income or identified through programs including referrals by the Courts or FamCare through the Ministry of Human Development.

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1.2 Convention on the Rights of the Child -CRC

Background

Belize was the 5th country to sign and ratify the CRC. The Convention recognizes all children under the age of 18 as active participants in their own development and deserving of universal rights to ensure they live full and healthy lives. Almost every country in the world has agreed to the Convention, making it the most universal human rights agreement of our time. The Convention consists of 54 articles, forty –two of which outline the rights that children should have; the remaining 12 refer to the responsibilities that governments have to ensure that rights are adhered to and implemented.

The philosophy at the heart of the CRC is that if children and young people are to become responsible citizens, they need the chance to participate in the world around them. If they are denied the right to take part in their community, they will struggle to learn how to become responsible members of that community as adults. This belief, that all children are equally entitled to have rights, is fundamental and by promoting children's rights to children, we can provide a platform for healthy personal development and respect for the civil and political forces that underpin stable societies.

The CRC introduces children and young people to basic human entitlements and to fundamental principles of justice. It encourages discussion of what rights mean for individuals and for societies, how rights can only have meaning if they are balanced by responsibilities and how young people can and do exercise their rights in everyday life.

The CRC is based on five basic principles:

Principle 1
A child is any person under the age of 18.

Principle 2
Non-discrimination: All children have rights and they must be respected without discrimination.

Principle 3
Best interests of the child: When decisions are made that affect the lives of children, it's very important to think about what is best for the child.

Principle 4
Right to survival, protection and development: Governments should protect children from harm, and help children live and grow to be the best they can be.

Principle 5
Participation: Children have the right to give their opinions in all matters that affect them and to have their voices heard. Their views should always be taken seriously and they should have more say as they grow older.

The rights enshrined in the CRC fall into four categories:
1. The right to survive
2. The right to be safe
3. The right to participate
4. The right to develop

The Convention has 54 articles in total. Articles 1 – 42 are about the rights that children are entitled to and 43–54 are about how adults and government work together to make sure that all children get all their rights.

The Articles of the Convention

Article 1: Everyone under the age of 18 has all the rights in the Convention.

Article 2: The Convention applies to everyone: whatever their race, religion or abilities, whatever they think or say, whatever type of family they come from.

Article 3: The best interests of the child must be a top priority in all things that affect children.

Article 4: Governments must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights.

Article 5: Governments must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents and care givers to direct and guide their children as they grow up, so that they can enjoy their rights properly.

Article 6: Every child has the right to life. Governments must do all they can to make sure that children survive and develop to their full potential.

Article 7: Every child has the right to a legal name and nationality, as well as the right to know and, as far as possible, to be cared for by their parents.

Article 8: Governments must respect every child's right to a name, a nationality and family ties.

Article 9: Children must not be separated from their parents unless it is in their best interests (for example, if a parent is hurting a child). Children whose parents have separated have the right to stay in contact with both parents, unless this might hurt the child.

Article 10: Governments must act quickly and sympathetically if a child or their parents want to live together in the same country. If a child's parents live apart in different countries, the child has the right to visit both of them.

Article 11: Governments must do everything they can to stop children being taken out of their own country illegally or being prevented from returning.

Article 12: Every child has the right to have a say in all matters affecting them, and to have their views taken seriously.

Article 13: Every child must be free to say what they think and to seek and receive all kinds of information, as long as it is within the law.

Article 14: Every child has the right to think and believe what they want and to practise their religion, as long as they are not stopping other people from enjoying their rights. Governments must respect the rights of parents to give their children information about this right.

Article 15: Every child has the right to meet with other children and to join groups and organizations, as long as this does not stop other people from enjoying their rights.

Article 16: Every child has the right to privacy. The law should protect the child's private, family and home life.

Article 17: Every child has the right to reliable information from the media. This should be information that children can understand. Governments must help protect children from materials that could harm them.

Article 18: Both parents share responsibility for bringing up their child and should always consider what is best for the child. Governments must support parents by giving them the help they need, especially if the child's parents work.

Article 19: Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Article 20: If a child cannot be looked after by their family, governments must make sure that they are looked after properly by people who respect the child's religion, culture and language.

Article 21: If a child is adopted, the first concern must be what is best for the child. All children must be protected and kept safe, whether they are adopted in the country where they were born or in another country.

Article 22: If a child is a refugee or is seeking refuge, governments must make sure that they have the same rights as any other child. Governments must help in trying to reunite child refugees with their parents.

Article 23: A child with a disability has the right to live a full and decent life with dignity and independence, and to play an active part in the community. Governments must do all they can to provide support to disabled children.

Article 24: Every child has the right to the best possible health. Governments must work to provide good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that children can stay healthy. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 25: If a child lives away from home (in care, hospital or in prison, for example), they have the right to a regular check of their treatment and the way they are cared for.

Article 26: Governments must provide extra money for the children of families in need.

Article 27: Every child has the right to a standard of living that is good enough to meet their physical, social and mental needs. Governments must help families who cannot afford to provide this.

Article 28: Every child has the right to an education. Primary education must be free. Secondary education must be available for every child. Discipline in schools must respect children's dignity. Richer countries must help poorer countries achieve this.

Article 29: Education must develop every child's personality, talents and abilities to the full. It must encourage the child's respect for human rights, as well as respect for their parents, their own and other cultures, and the environment.

Article 30: Every child has the right to learn and use the language, customs and religion of their family, regardless of whether these are shared by the majority of the people in the country where they live.

Article 31: Every child has the right to relax, play and take part in a wide range of cultural and artistic activities.

Article 32: Governments must protect children from work that is dangerous or might harm their health or education.

Article 33: Governments must protect children from the use of illegal drugs.

Article 34: Governments must protect children from sexual abuse and exploitation.

Article 35: Governments must ensure that children are not abducted or sold.

Article 36: Governments must protect children from all other forms of bad treatment.

Article 37: No child shall be tortured or suffer other cruel treatment or punishment. A child should be arrested or put in prison only as a last resort and then for the shortest possible time. Children must not be in a prison with adults. Children who are locked up must be able to keep in contact with their family.

Article 38: Governments must do everything they can to protect and care for children affected by war. Governments must not allow children under the age of 15 to take part in war or join the armed forces.

Article 39: Children neglected, abused, exploited, tortured or who are victims of war must receive special help to help them recover their health, dignity and self-respect.

Article 40: A child accused or guilty of breaking the law must be treated with dignity and respect. They have the right to help from a lawyer and a fair trial that takes account of their age or situation. The child's privacy must be respected at all times.

Article 41: If the laws of a particular country protect children better than the articles of the Convention, then those laws must stay in place.

Article 42: Governments should make the Convention known to children and adults.

Rights and Responsibilities

Children have the right
- To be loved and protected and to be treated with care and respect;
- To experience a sense of belonging and safety in their family, community, and nation;
- To express their opinions and ideas.

Children are responsible for
- Treating others as they would like to be treated;
- Respecting others' opinions and ideas;
- Keeping agreements about rules.

Children have the right to develop physically, mentally, socially, and spiritually in a healthy manner.

Children are responsible for caring for their bodies, minds, and spirits in a healthy manner.

Children have the right to equality, regardless of race, color, gender, religion, opinion, nationality, or ethnic heritage, and to learn about and express/celebrate their culture and/or ethnic heritage.

Children are responsible for treating others as they would like to be treated and for honoring agreements.

Children have the right to a name and to a nationality.

Children are responsible for respecting the rights of those who live in other countries and who are from different countries, and working toward the positive development of their nation.

Children have the right to life, to an adequate standard of living, to education about their health, and to health care.

Children are responsible for eating what is provided, taking care of the home, their clothing, and themselves.

Children have the right to special care and protection when needed.

Children are responsible for helping provide special care and consideration for others who need it and helping to advocate for others' needs in achieving self-reliance and a full and decent life.

Children have the right to care, protection, and guidance that is in their best interest and takes into consideration their evolving capacities, and to receive the love and care of adults.

Children are responsible for loving and nurturing others, understanding others as best able, and learning about and expressing feelings.

Children have the right to free and compulsory education, discipline consistent with their rights, dignity, and education that prepares them for an active adult life.

Children are responsible for applying their attention to learning being prepared to benefit self and society; cooperating with teachers, parents and others.

Children have the right to play and recreation, to cultural expression, to learn about and practice their religion.

Children are responsible for engaging in play and leisure time activities, being tolerant of culturally different recreational and religious activities, respecting others' rights.

Children have the right to protection from abuse, inappropriate work, sexual exploitation, torture, and war.

Children are responsible for treating others as they would like to be treated, not hurting others, and acting safely.

Children have the right to freedom of expression, and to have their opinion taken into account in matters affecting them.

Children are responsible for supporting other's freedoms and using their freedoms so they don't infringe on the freedoms or well-being of others.

STANDARDS
1. Parents will understand the rights and responsibilities of children in Belize.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
Parents will:
1. Distinguish between needs (rights) and wants
2. Explore and demonstrate an understanding of the Convention and how it applies to the well-being of their children.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Parents will be able to respect the rights of their children and advocate on their behalf.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Parents will respect their children as human beings with rights and responsibilities.
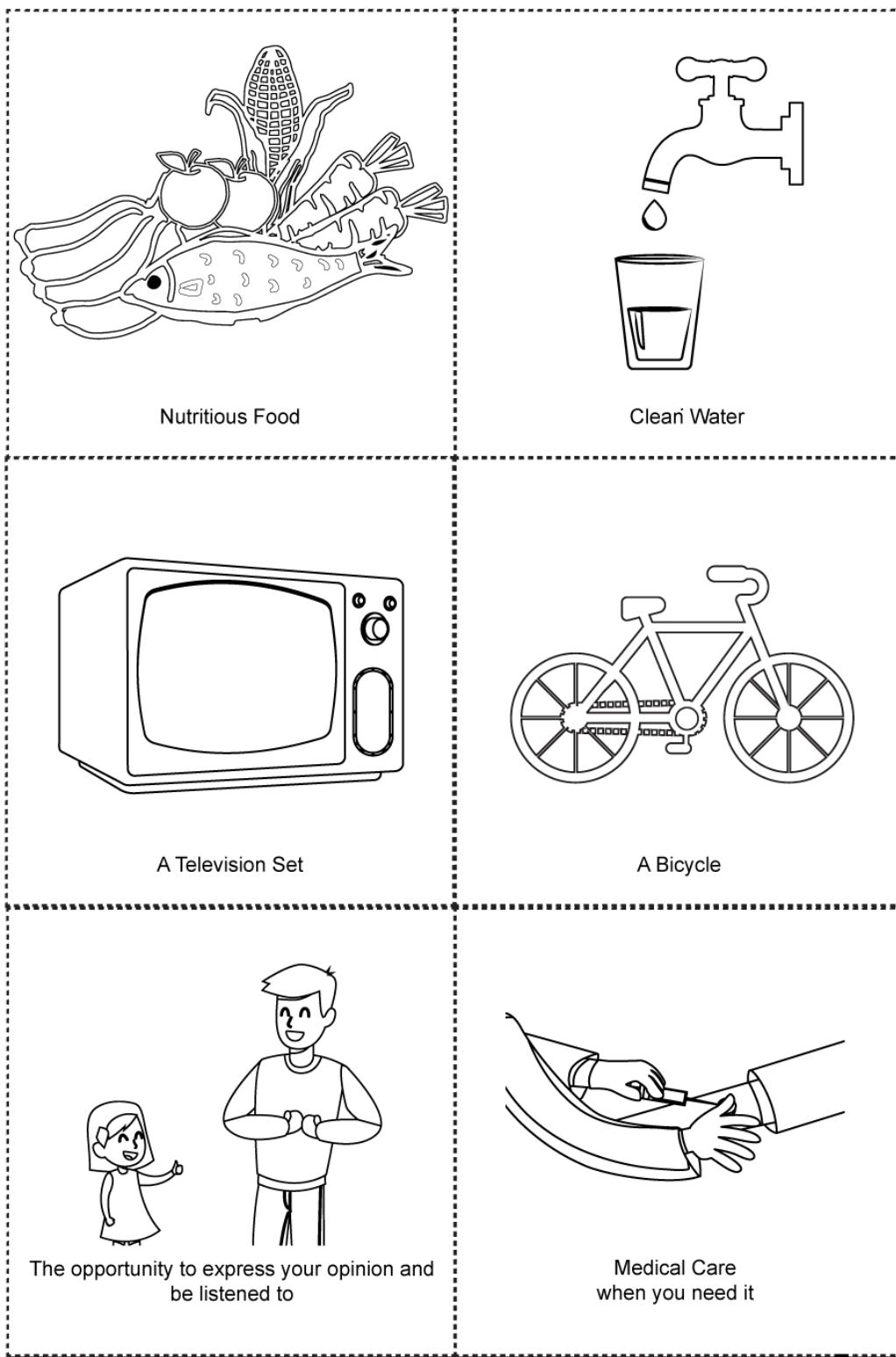

PHOTO CREDIT: UNICEF Belize

ACTIVITY 1

Needs and Wants

1. Organize participants into groups of 3-5. Hand out markers, sticky notes and paper to each group.

2. Have the outline of a child on a sheet of newsprint.

3. Instruct the groups to imagine that this paper person represents a child. Groups should give their child a name.

4. Groups brainstorm all of the things their child will need to have and be able to do now, in their childhood, to grow up happy and healthy. Explain that some of their ideas will be things that we can touch and have physically (like nutritious food). Other ideas will be things that we can do or have but that can't be seen or touched (like privacy). (You can prepare and cut out pictures as sample given below to assist). Each idea should be recorded on a different sticky note and placed inside the child's outline. After brainstorming, groups debate and then leave the 20 most important ideas inside the paper outline. They set the others aside in a pile. Then each group shares some of their ideas about their child and the things he or she needs to grow up happy and healthy.

5. Announce that circumstances in their child's life mean that they will not be able to have or be able to do all of the things the group feels are necessary. Each group must choose the 5 least important items (leaving 15 remaining) to remove from their paper outline. They set these aside in a separate pile.

6. Explain that their child will have and be able to do even fewer things in their childhood. The group must choose the 5 least important items inside the outline and remove them to a separate pile. They will have 10 items remaining.

7. Regroup and discuss: What are some of the things you have remaining inside your child's outline? Do we see similar ideas among the groups? What were some of the items you removed in the first elimination? What about in the second? Or in the third? Did it get harder to decide which items to remove the more you were asked to take away? Why? What can we say about the items remaining on your paper versus the ones you removed in the first elimination? Discuss the difference between 'needs' (the things that are absolutely necessary for all children to have or be able to do to live a happy and healthy life) and 'wants' (the things that are nice to have but are not necessary for a full life).

8. Introduce the Convention and explain that it is a list of children's rights (needs) that governments have agreed to uphold. All of the rights in the Convention are considered equally important and necessary for a full life.

9. Hand out a copy of the Convention to each group. Have participants draw a line down the middle of their child splitting them in two. They label one side 'rights' and the other side 'wants'. Then participants categorize their sticky notes under the two categories. They can use the Convention for help.

10. Post the paper children up around the room and have participants circulate to see the ideas.

WANTS AND NEEDS CARDS

Nutritious Food

Clean Water

A Television Set

A Bicycle

The opportunity to express your opinion and
be listened to

Medical Care
when you need it

ACTIVITY 2

Rights and Responsibilities

Each participant is given a 'right' card. Rights cards can be done using the Articles in the Background section and as the example below. In turn, the participant is given the opportunity to share their right and then, in groups, think of two or three responsibilities that correspond to that right. They can then be encouraged to list the responsibilities in order of priority. What is the ultimate responsibility attached to that particular right? Use the NCFC Rights, Responsibilities and Respect, CRC – a guide for children and adolescents to assist with this activity.

ACTIVITY 2. Clustering
CRC CLUSTERING CARDS

Article 16. Children have the right to protection from interference with privacy, family, home and correspondence, and from attacks on their character or reputation.

Article 17. Children shall have access to information from national and international sources. The media shall encourage materials which are beneficial, and discourage those which are harmful to children.
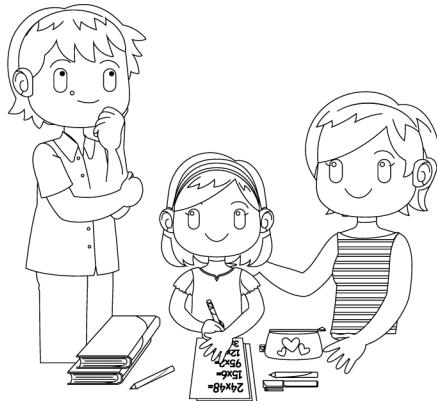
Article 18. Parents have joint responsibility for raising the child, and the State shall support them in this.

Article 19. Children shall be protected from abuse and neglect. States shall provide programmes for the prevention of abuse and treatment of those who have suffered from abuse.

ACTIVITY 3

Parents are responsible for the caring and rearing of their children (Primary duty bearers)

Divide participants into two groups and give them the following statements:

1. Parents and carers have the right and responsibility to direct and guide their children as they grow up so that they can enjoy their rights properly.

2. Government must respect the rights and responsibilities of parents to direct and guide their children but must do all they can to make sure every child can enjoy their rights.

Parents are to discuss the statements: what they understand, what that is saying to them as parents, share some examples of how they direct and guide and how government can support. Each group presents and plenary discussion is encouraged.

Facilitator emphasizes that it is the parents' responsibility to direct and guide their children as they grow and develop. Government is there to support but not to take over parents' rights and responsibilities.

ACTIVITY 4

Understanding Rights

1. Place an empty, clean garbage can upside down on a desk (decorate it if you wish)

2. Explain: As has been reported in the news, planet Earth is being visited by friendly aliens. These aliens are curious about human life. Zorp is here today because he wants to learn about human children and what they need to live full, healthy and happy lives.

3. Explain: Talking to aliens like Zorp is tricky because we don't speak the same language. So we are going to provide Zorp with pictures and items that describe our ideas. We're going to pack Zorp a suitcase with these items so he can take them home.

4. Draw a picture or use photos cut from a magazine, of things that illustrate the rights of children and things that are nice but living does not depend on them.

5. Explain: Since Zorp knows nothing about children, he needs us to organize our ideas into two categories: things you absolutely need to survive and live well (needs) and things that are nice to have but living well does not depend upon them (wants).

6. Pack them in the suitcase, (garbage can).

7. Review the items to make sure we are giving Zorp the right information.

8. Wish Zorp well in his journey.

Facilitator ends by reminding participants on the importance of understanding the rights and responsibilities of children to ensure their survival, protection and development and the fact that these should guide the ways in which we parent our children.

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References
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1.3 Investing in our Children

Background

The principle of investing in children rarely evokes controversy. However we look at it, to invest in a child is to invest in our common future: The world of tomorrow will inherit the children of today. Whether nations grow and prosper will depend heavily on the survival, health, education and protection of their citizens, particularly the youngest. There are several compelling reasons to invest in children: Investing in children is fundamental to ensuring the realization of their rights. The 1989 Convention on the Rights of the Child, sets out the legal obligations of national governments to realize children's economic, social, civil, political and cultural rights to the maximum extent of their available resources (Article 4).

Childhood is a unique window of opportunity. The science of child development tells us that even temporary deprivations experienced by young children can have irreversible effects on their future capabilities and, in turn, a nation's future prospects. Interventions and policy choices made today will determine whether millions of children and youth are able to reach their full potential, or are left to face a future of worsening inequity and marginalization. Many would agree that there could be no more compelling argument than that.

Repeated studies find that investments at relatively low financial costs during childhood can yield a lifetime of gains, not only for individuals, but also for societies and economies. The benefits far outweigh the costs.

Investing in children can help promote equitable, inclusive societies, allowing more people to effectively participate in their economic development. All children should have access to the essential health, educational, and nutritional requirements. Providing these will allow more equal access to better paying jobs later in life, as well as improved productivity.

Furthermore, because the poorest and most vulnerable groups in society might be unable to make the optimal investments on their own, there is a strong rationale for public investments in social sectors related to children – especially when aimed at those most in need. The benefits to investing in children are not limited to those receiving the investment. Healthier and more educated societies benefit everyone. And although there might be some time between when investments are made and the benefits to the society and economy are fully realized, the gains can be significant and long-lasting.

Over the years, as cost-effective interventions to address childhood deprivations have emerged, the case for investing in children has steadily strengthened. (UNICEF Social and Economic Policy Working Paper: Right in Principle and in Practice. A Review of the Social and Economic Returns to Investing in Children).

Parents' role in ensuring their children's holistic development is critical and therefore must invest in their development. Investment does not only require finances but a strong positive parent/child relationship.

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect parent and child relationships. For example, parenting methods that produce positive results can be influenced by:

1. The parent's personal characteristics, which potentially influence every other determinant as well as parenting. Parents' characteristics encompass a wide variety of attributes, including the parent's own experience of being parented, age, education level, cognitive ability, personality, and other traits. (Haresnape, S. & Brown, L. 2013)

2. Ethnic and cultural differences must also be taken into account in studying the effects of parenting styles on child social development. It is difficult to escape social pressures, usually those that reflect the dominant culture, that judge some parenting styles to be better,. (Grusec, 2006)

3. Understanding your child's temperament (individual differences in emotional and behavioural processes, which emerge early in development) is an essential part of creating a strong parent-child bond. (Lerner, C. & Dombro, A.L. 2000).

Parents must be aware that the first years of life is a unique period of human development. As parents, you should guide young children from complete infantile dependence into the beginning stages of autonomy, your styles of caregiving can have both immediate and lasting effects on children's social functioning in areas from moral development to academic achievement.

Safeguarding the best possible outcome for children requires parents to face the challenge of balancing the maturity and disciplinary demands they make to integrate their children into the family and social system with maintaining an atmosphere of warmth, responsiveness and support.

The following outline provides eight essential responsibilities that parents must adhere to in order to foster their child's physical and/or emotional well-being:

1. **Provide an environment that is SAFE.**
   - Keep your child free from physical, sexual, and emotional abuse.
   - Keep unsafe objects locked up or out of reach of your child.
   - Get to know your child's caregivers (get references or background checks).
   - Correct any potential dangers around the house.
   - Take Safety Precautions: Use helmets when riding bicycles, motorcycles and scooters, lock doors at night, always wear seatbelts, etc.

2. **Provide your child with BASIC NEEDS**
   - Water
   - Plenty of nutritious foods
   - Shelter
   - A warm bed with sheets, blankets, and a pillow

   - Medical care as needed/Medicine when ill
   - Clothing that is appropriate for the weather conditions
   - Space (a place where he or she can go to be alone)

3. **Provide your child with EMOTIONAL (SELF-ESTEEM) NEEDS.**
   - Accept your child's uniqueness and respect his or her individuality.
   - Encourage (don't push) your child to participate in a club, activity, or sport.
   - Notice and acknowledge your child's achievements and pro-social behaviour.
   - Encourage proper hygiene (to look good is to feel good!).
   - Set expectations for your child that are realistic and age-appropriate.
   - Use your child's misbehavior as a time to teach, not to criticize or ridicule.

4. **Teach your child MORALS and VALUES.**
   - Honesty
   - Respect
   - Responsibility
   - Compassion
   - Patience
   - Forgiveness
   - Generosity

5. **Develop MUTUAL RESPECT with your child.**
   - Use respectful language
   - Respect his or her feelings
   - Respect his or her opinions
   - Respect his or her privacy
   - Respect his or her individuality

6. **Provide DISCIPLINE which is effective and appropriate.**
   - Structured
   - Consistent
   - Predictable
   - Fair

7. **Involve yourself in your child's EDUCATION.**
   - Communicate regularly with your child's

teacher(s)
- Make sure that your child is completing his or her homework each night.
- Assist your child with his or her homework, but don't DO the homework.
- Talk to your child each day about school (what is being studied, any interesting events, etc.).
- Recognize and acknowledge your child's academic achievements.

8. **Get to KNOW YOUR CHILD.**
- Spend quality time together.
- Be approachable to your child.
- Ask questions.
- Communicate.Communicate.Communicate.

→ Articles 3, 5, 18, 27 and 32 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS
1. Identify parenting methods that yield positive results.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. Explore the terms "investment" and "payoff" in relation to self and to others
2. Identify parenting methods that will yield positive results
3. Examine the kind of investments they make in parenting their children
4. Identify the kind of investments, in self and in children, which are most likely to bring desired results.
5. Plan to implement at least one non-financial investment strategy.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Coping (self- management, self-awareness, and dealing with emotions.)
2. Exploring and evaluating personal and parenting experiences, attitudes, and feelings (parental self-reflection.)
3. Effective Communication using positive tone when speaking, listening, and observing.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Accept and appreciate parental responsibilities and methods that produce positive results.

Suggested Activities
Warm up: Memory Lane (10 minutes)

Facilitator: We will begin our session with a trip down "Memory Lane". Share the answer to the following question with a partner: Who invested the most in you as a child and adolescent? (Give the pairs 3 minutes to share together before allowing volunteers to share their answers with the larger group.) Facilitator can remark on the range (or not) of investments mentioned (e.g. material, emotional, outings, etc.).

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ACTIVITY 1

Defining Investments and Payoffs

1. Engage the group in brainstorming the definitions of investment and payoff, short-term and long- term. Make sure that all understand the terms, that investments are not always monetary, and that a payoff can be either positive or negative.

2. The cards prepared (above) are to be handed out, one to each participant. (If fewer than 20 persons, some can have more than one.) Explain that each card lists a personal investment—of money, time, self—that we commonly make in our lives. Ask each in turn to place their "investment" under the type of usual payoff.

3. The facilitators are to ensure that each investment is explored in its range of aspects, e.g. weekly hairdresser appointments can be seen as a relative "waste" by some (compared to other longer- term investments). It is also an investment in feeling good about one's appearance, and sometimes this is important for an overall sense of wellbeing. Similarly, social drinking, maybe seen as a big negative(as in loosing money) but there can be payoff in being with peers, filling time, feeling you are doing something that might help relieve stress etc.

4. Summarise the points that emerge from this activity/discussion: payoffs differ, some are big, others slow/small; some are immediate, and others take long to come to fruition; some are highly visible, others invisible. It is important to draw out and emphasize those investments that need not be monetary but give other personal rewards. In fact, for many, the most lasting investments are non- monetary.

ACTIVITY 2

Investments in our children

Facilitator
We now know what investments, short and long-term mean. And we understand what we mean by different types of payoffs. So now, we're going to look at what investments we make in our children.

A facilitator once heard a father speak with great frustration on hearing that his fifteen-year old daughter had become pregnant:
"Imagine, I pay school fees and lunch money all those years for her to go to school, and look what I get for it—I would have been better off investing in chickens!!"

How do older generations and present generations think about investing in children? Draw out participants' ideas of this. If necessary, give some examples:
"children are your old-age pension" men feeling entitled to first sexual initiation of daughters/step-daughters "after all I've done for you...." (my sacrifice should result in your good behaviour/good grades) I feel fulfilled when my child succeeds

In the same way we looked at our own personal investments, let's list all the kinds of investments we can make as fathers and as mothers in our children.

List suggestions on board/flip chart, supplementing as needed, e.g.:
- Shelter, clothes (new, keeping clean)
- Food (provision, cooking)
- Taking care of health—immunizations, visits to clinic, comfort when ill, etc.
- Reading to them when small, will encourage them to read books later
- Toys
- Singing
- Talking to them
- School fees, lunch money
- Teaching manners, responsibilities

- Time for outings, sports, etc.
- Allowance
- Setting rules, discipline
- Encouragement
- Helping with school work
- Extra lessons
- Extra-curricular activities: dance, music, sports, etc.
- Vacations, trips around country, beach, etc.

Small group work
In groups of 4-5, participants are to see if they can agree on five of the investments listed that can lead to the most positive outcomes in their children. This should encourage lively discussion.

Facilitators can make it clear that consensus is not the objective, and there are no right five— it is only important to bring out what we feel are the most important. Groups report what they came up with, including disagreements. Lists are compared.

Summarize key points that emerge, and discuss whether these are short or long term investments. Most will be seen as long-term, but some of those that may seem immediate (like satisfying baby's hunger, singing) can have long-term effects.

Look back at the list: Which of these investments are usually made by fathers? Which by mothers? (Can put M or F beside the items, or both M and F.) Why is this? Are there fathers who do things that mothers usually do? And vice-versa? Can a father do everything a mother can do? Can a mother do everything a father can do? Discuss and record key points.

Are there payoffs for parents (for fathers, for mothers) in making these investments? What are they? Make sure discussion includes not only material payoff down the road (taking care of parents), but also emotional/psychological benefits—pride, closer relationships, gratitude, etc.
Are there negative investments and negative payoffs? Discuss the idea that lack of investment (no visits, no interest), or negative investments

(e.g. harsh treatment) can have negative outcomes (child with poor self-esteem, angry child, etc.).

Do children OWE parents? Do parents OWE children? Why or why not? Discuss:
Concept of parental responsibilities for children as different from responsibilities children have; many parents believe children owe them obedience and respect without earning it.
What would parents like to see from their investments in their children?
How do parents "earn" better payoffs from their children?

The facilitator will close this session by sharing the following messages:
The choices made by parents are a crucial and primary influence on how children develop and what their future achievements will be. Parents choose the sort of nurturing, monitoring, disciplinary, and environment in which their children are raised. Taken together, these choices determine the level of parental investment in children.

Investment in myself can be an investment in my family.
- My children need investment from all the men and women who parent them.
- Some investments show results right away; others may take a long time.
- My positive and regular investments in my children also benefit me.

Closing
Ask each participant to recall one thing from the session that they think they will remember most during the coming week.

Give each person a clean sheet of paper and ask them to draw a symbol of something they plan to do during the coming week as a positive investment in their child. These don't have to be representational or take much time - only enough that the picture will remind them during the week of what they promised themselves to try.

Draw a clock face to remind you to spend ten minutes talking with your child each day, or a book if you plan to read to your child, etc.). They can post at home as a reminder. They can share if they wish, but do not have to.

Notes

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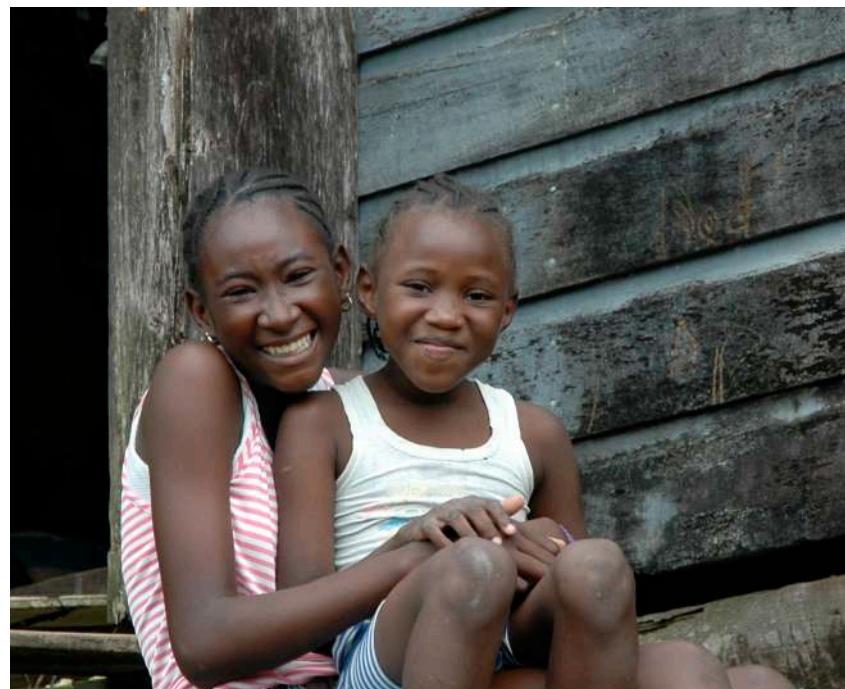
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THEME 1
CHILD DEVELOPMENT

Theme 1: Child Development

Introduction

Child development refers to the different changes that occur in children from birth to adolescence. The changes (growth and development) occur physically, emotionally and mentally, and vary in the different stages. In addition to learning about early childhood, pre-adolescence, and adolescence, parents will also gain knowledge about assisting children with disabilities and as well as coping with the different behavior styles.

The sections on Early Childhood, Pre-Adolescence, and Adolescence will aid parents in understanding their children during each of these stages. The topics discuss the developmental changes of each stage, as well as tips on healthy eating, proper nutrition, hygiene, and social issues that affect children as they get older. Parents will learn to better communicate with their children and to better educate them, especially by modeling proper behavior.

Coping with Differences and Behavior Styles is a topic that focuses on the four behavior styles that human beings associate themselves with. Although people can shift their behaviors in different settings, everyone has a predominant style that makes them who they are. Helping parents discover their personal behavior style as well as their children's style can be a significant factor in improving communication.

Understanding More about Disabilities is another topic found in this theme which gives parents tips and suggestions to better assist their children who may have any form of disability – whether it is physical, cognitive, or emotional.

The topics found in Theme 1 were created to assist parents through the journey with their children. This theme is important in understanding children as they develop and grow into adulthood. After learning about Child Development, parents will better appreciate their roles as caregivers and educators. They will also learn new forms of communication that can help them to strengthen their relationship with their children as they grow and develop.

2.1.1 Stages of Development

2.1.1.1 Early Childhood (0-8 years)

Background

Early Childhood is the most rapid period of development in human life. The years from conception through birth to eight years of age are critical to the complete and healthy cognitive, emotional, and physical growth of children.[1] Most critical are the first 1000 days of a child's life. Scientific research confirms that within these 1000 days, the brain develops most rapidly and vital changes occur in language and communication, social skills, emotional control, recognition and understanding of symbols in the environment and the development of attitudes and aptitudes to learning and living. At this age, the brain is extremely receptive to experiences in the environment whether positive or negative. Positive early childhood interventions can lay the foundations for lifelong learning, behavior, physical and mental health thereby increasing the possibility that children will survive, thrive and reach their full potential. On the other hand, young children who experience a lack of nurturing care such as inadequate nutrition, neglect, abuse, ongoing feelings of insecurity, negative stress, are at risk of having their positive development hindered. Parents, caregivers and community based services are vital to Early Childhood Development (ECD) and should include attention to health, nutrition, education and water and environmental sanitation in the homes and communities.

The biological and brain development of children during the first few years and especially in the first 1000 days of their lives depend entirely on the quality of stimulation and the experiences that are evoked by their environment – at all the three levels of family, community, as well as the society. Early childhood interventions of high quality have lasting effects on learning and motivation.
If a young child is to experience positive growth and development, and be able to maximize

his/her full potential as an adolescent and adult then he/she must be exposed to an "early growth promoting environment" which includes stimulating and developmentally appropriate experiences and positive social interactions with attentive caregivers.[3]

Infancy 0-2 years

The stage of infancy lasts from birth until approximately the age of 2. During infancy, a great deal of initial learning occurs. Very basic skills are mastered during this time period, such as crying, nursing, co-ordination and the ability to represent images and objects with words. An important influence in the child's life at this stage is the parents.

No infant "acts up" on purpose. Infants often communicate their needs through crying. If an infant is hungry, tired, in pain or discomfort or just plain bored, their only way of telling us is through crying.

Infants need to explore. The way infants explore is through their senses. They need to see, feel, taste, hear and smell the world around them, so you need to give them safe opportunities to discover their world. At the same time, infants can be over-stimulated by too much noise, colour or action. Sometimes some quiet time in the rocking chair with you provides a welcome relief. Infants love to make messes, throw food, bang cups and may even "explore" others through pinching, biting and pulling hair.

It is also typical for infants to experience separation or stranger anxiety, so especially in the first weeks of care an infant will likely need to spend a lot of time in close contact with you to settle in. It is very common to see a child at the ages of 7-9 months old become upset when they are separated from their primary caregiver. This phenomenon is known as attachment, and is important in determining how a child will behave in future relationships as they mature.

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AGE	LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION	SOCIAL / SELF-HELP
0 - 6 Months	• Crying to convey needs. Soon different types of crying develop to indicate different needs. (wet, tired, hungry) • Baby coos, gurgles and sighs. Contains some consonant and vowel sounds. • Baby turns head to the direction of sounds. • Baby begins to babble to people and reciprocates in sound play.	• Baby is dependent upon caregivers for all needs. • Baby needs and enjoys lots of physical contact and tactile stimulation. • Baby establishes eye-contact. • Baby demands social attention.
7 - 12 Months	• Babbling becomes more sophisticated— sounds more like speech sounds. • Baby develops inflection. • Responds appropriately to "no" and "bye-bye"; responds to name; follows some simple requests (e.g. clap your hands). • Repeats simple sounds and words such as "mama" or "dada".	• Explores environment enthusiastically (safety precautions are important). • Baby seems uncomfortable in soiled diapers. • Holds own bottle.
12 - 18 Months	• Uses 10 –15 single words appropriately. • Pronunciation of words is often unclear, but baby clearly demonstrates. understanding of the meaning (e.g. "tup" for cup). • Communicates by pointing and saying a word or two. • Responds to simple commands such as "give me the cup" or "open your mouth".	• Baby drinks from a sip/spout cup or regular cup with help. • Imitates housework (e.g. sweeping, wiping). • Feeds self with a spoon with little spilling. • Takes off shoes/socks without help. • Is interested in toys and games. • Can maintain interest in a single activity for 15 minutes.(e.g. marking with a pencil, looking at books). • Potty training begins.
18 - 24 Months	• Uses two-word sentences. • Attempts to sing songs with words. • Child repeats or "echoes" what he/she hears. • Receptive vocabulary grows quickly. Child can understand more than 1,000 words. • Understands concepts such as "soon" or "later".	• Can remove own coat if it is undone; puts on shoes with assistance. • Can feed self with a fork. • Interested in exploring new places. • Demonstrates jealousy. • Expresses affection; engages in parallel play. • Potty training continues.
2 - 3 Years	• Uses short sentences (e.g., "I don't want it"). • Asks questions (e.g. "Where my daddy go?"). • Identifies colours, uses plurals, relates personal experiences. • Follows compound commands (e.g. "Pick up the doll and bring it to me.") • Uses most vowel sounds and some consonant sounds correctly.	• "Terrible twos" - frustration and tantrums are frequent. • Sometimes resists change— likes routines/predictable experiences. • Washes and dries hands. • Understands and is cautious of common dangers (e.g. sharp knife, hot stove). • Feeds self using a spoon and fork properly. • Helps tidy up. • Potty trained — uses toilet. • Helps with bathing and dressing.

AGE	WHAT CHILDREN DO AT THIS AGE	WHAT THEY NEED ALONG WITH APPROPRIATE, SENSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE PARENTING
Birth to 3 Months	• Begin to smile, track people and objects with their eyes. • Prefer faces and bright colors. • Turns towards sound. • Discover feet and hands.	• Protection from physical danger. • Adequate nutrition, healthcare, (immunization, oral dehydration therapy and hygiene). • Appropriate language. • Motor and sensory stimulation.
4 - 6 Months	• Smile • Develop preference generally to parents and older siblings. • Repeat actions with interesting results. • Listen intently and responds when spoken to. • Laugh, gurgle and imitate sound. • Explore hand and feet, puts objects in the mouth. • Sit when propped, rolls over. • Grabs objects without using thumb.	• Protection from physical danger. • Adequate nutrition, healthcare, (immunization, oral dehydration therapy and hygiene). • Appropriate language stimulation. • Motor and sensory stimulation.
7 - 12 Months	• Remember simple events. • Identify themselves, body parts and familiar voices. • Understand their name and other common words, say first meaningful words. • Explore objects and find hidden objects, puts objects in containers. • Sit alone, Pull themselves up to stand and walk.	• Protection from physical danger. • Adequate nutrition, healthcare, (immunization, oral dehydration therapy and hygiene). • Appropriate language stimulation. • Motor and sensory stimulation.
1 - 2 Years	• Imitate adult actions. • Speak and understand words and ideas. • Experiment with objects. • Walks steadily, climb stairs and run. • Recognize ownership of objects. • Develop friendships. • Solve problems. • Show pride in accomplishments. • Begin pretend play.	In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require support in acquiring: • Motor, language and thinking skills. • Developing independence. • Learning self-control. • Opportunities for play with other children. • Health care must include deworming.

AGE	GROSS MOTOR	FINE MOTOR	COGNITIVE/ CONCEPTUAL
0 - 6 Months	• Baby begins to roll onto stomach and from stomach to back. • Rolls from back to side. • Baby sits up momentarily, leaning on hands. • Neck/head control develops.	• Baby follows objects with eyes to mid line. • Baby grasps toys actively. • Reaches for toy with both hands. • Bangs small objects in play.	• Baby responds to sounds. • Responds to voices. • Turns eyes and head to sound of voice. • Reaches for objects. • Motor and sensory stimulation.
7 - 12 Months	• Baby sits independently. • Makes stepping movements when supported. • Begins crawling. • Begins walking unsupported.	• Removes pegs from board, puzzle pieces from board. • Picks up small objects with a neat pincer grasp.	• Object permanence develops (i.e. searches for hidden objects). • Passes objects from one hand to the other. • Bangs objects together. • Throws objects. • Cause and effect reasoning develops.
12 - 18 Months	• Walks alone well. Can walk up stairs with help. • Throws a ball forward. • Walks backward.	• Marks on paper with pencil or crayon. • Stacks blocks. • Removes wrapper from a candy or other wrapped object.	• Stacks rings on a stand. • Looks at pictures in a book and turns pages (2-3 at a time). • Can point to at least one body part on self or other.
18 - 24 Months	• Kicks ball forward. • Walks upstairs alternating feet. • Begins climbing.	• Snips with scissors. • Makes circular scribble with pencil/crayon.	• Matches sounds to pictures of animals. • Recognizes self in a picture. • Begins grouping objects by colour, shape, etc. • Uses size words (e.g. "big", "little"), but doesn't understand the concept. • Points to and labels pictures of familiar objects.
2 - 3 Years	• Goes up and down a slide. • Climbs ladder, jungle gym. • Begins to pedal a tricycle. • Catches a large ball. • Balances briefly on one foot.	• Snips with scissors. • Copies a circle. • Stacks blocks. • Fits things together (e.g. nesting cups, simple puzzles.	• Knows at least 4-8 body parts. • Matches familiar objects. • Nests cups/stacks rings by size. • Answers "what", "who" and "where" questions by pointing and other actions. • Begins to understand number concepts (e.g. when asked, can count out three objects from a group). • Tells their age.

Young Child: 3-8 years

As toddlers, children have learned many new skills such as walking, climbing and running but have limited understanding of consequences. Provide enough safe opportunities for them to practice these skills. Children are active and need an environment and routines that support their active, busy nature. Take time to teach them self-control, the concept of time, how to share and take turns.

Children are also developing a sense of independence, wanting to do things themselves, even before they have all the necessary skills.

Once a child has acquired a new skill, they will want to repeat it.

As they progress in age, children become more curious asking questions about everything. They like to explore their world and surroundings and are usually very imaginative. In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to: develop numeracy and reading skills, engage in problem solving, practice teamwork, develop sense of personal competency, practice questioning and observing, acquire basic life skills, attend basic education. They may test their assertiveness and may come across as bossy.

AGE	LANGUAGE / COMMUNICATION	SOCIAL / SELF-HELP
3 - 4 Years	• Talks intelligently to self, sings nursery rhymes. • Can engage in conversation. • Asks many questions. • Uses longer, more varied sentences. • Understands children's stories. • Grasps concepts such as funny, bigger. • Can complete simple analogies (e.g. the sun is hot, ice is _____). • Makes articulation errors – substitutes sounds (e.g. 'baf' for bath; 'yoke' for like) • Sound repetitions or hesitations sometimes occur and are normal at this stage.	• Is more responsible to adult authority. • Learns social customs and manners (e.g. please, thank you). • Seeks approval. • Takes turns. • Begins to be responsible for dressing and can manage some fasteners.
4 - 5 Years	• Child has a vocabulary of 1500-2000 words and uses sentences averaging 5 words in length. • Begins to modify speech for listener (e.g. uses more complex sentences with adults, but uses baby talk for younger children or a doll). • Can define familiar words such as hat, stove. • Asks questions such as "Who did that?" • Uses conjunctions such as 'if', 'when', 'because'. • Recites poems and sings songs from memory • Still may have difficulty with some consonant sounds and consonant blends.	• Wants to help and be praised for it. • Seeks adult and peer approval. • Begins to share toys. • Expresses basic feelings about self and others. • Dresses self except for difficult fasteners. • Is learning table manners.
5 Years +	• Language continues to develop steadily, although less dramatically after age 5. • A typical 6 year old uses most complex forms of adult English. • Has an expressive vocabulary of 2,600 words and understands more than 20,000 words. • Most children acquire adult speech patterns by age 7.	• Respects authority. • Is quite independent in dressing, eating and bathing. • Begins to spread and cut soft foods with a knife. • Participates in group activities. • Loves games.

AGE	GROSS MOTOR	FINE MOTOR	COGNITIVE/ CONCEPTUAL
4 Years	• Balance on one foot for 4-8 seconds. • Jumps from step. • Cuts straight with scissors. • Copies a circle.	• Unbuttons large buttons. • Winds up toy by turning knob. • Cuts entire length of traced line within one-half inch of the line. • Pulls on shorts. • Draws a cross with intersecting lines. • Begins to show a hand preference. • Strings 4-5 beads. • Copies the word stop. • Draws a person with at least 8 body parts. • Copies a diamond.	• Asks questions – what, where who? • Speaks clearly and is understood by non-family members. • Gives reasonable answers to basic questions. • Says sounds of d, g, k, y. • Dresses and undresses with little help. • Gives first and last name. • Counts to 5. • Builds a flower with 10 blocks.
5 Years	• Skip using alternate feet. • Catches large balls. • Bathes self. • Walks backward toe to heel.	• Folds paper in half with edges within 1/8 of each other. • Cuts square within 1/8 inch of lines. • Copies familiar shapes (square, circle, triangle). • Puts objects behind, in front of, under, back, etc.	• Speaks clearly in sentences up to 5-6 words. • Counts up to 10 objects. • Dresses alone. • Plays with boys and girls. • Likes playing with adults or older children.
6 Years	• Climbs, skips, hops and gallops. • Can learn to ride bikes.	• Connects dots with straight lines. • Touches each finder to thumb rapidly. • Colors within lines without crossing. • Imitates building a pyramid with blocks. • Able to use a spoon.	• Uses all types of sentence structure, prints letters. • Describes objects seen in pictures. • Recognizes shapes and numbers. • Knows rights from left. • Makes decisions easily. • Likes to have a best friend. • Plays in small groups. • Developing a sense of right and wrong.
7 - 8 Years	• Dexterity increases (skills in performing tasks especially with hands) • Can skate, ride a bike. • Agility and coordination improves.	• Increasingly skilful with hands. • Likes to build things. • Fond of puzzles, board games and cards. • Can learn to write in cursive.	• Thinks in concrete. • Able to read and write. • Curious about the function and use of objects. • Age of relational thinking and concrete concepts. • May reject Santa Clause and Easter.

What Children do and need at this age

AGE	WHAT CHILDREN DO AT THIS AGE	WHAT THEY NEED ALONG WITH APPROPRIATE, SENSITIVE AND RESPONSIVE PARENTING
2 - 3.5 Years	• Enjoy learning new skills. • Learn language rapidly. • Gain increased control of hands and fingers. • Act more independently.	In addition to the requirements for healt-growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to: • Make choices. • Engage in dramatic play. • Have increasingly complex books to read to them. • Sing favorite songs. • Solve simple puzzles.
3.5 - 5 Years	• Develop longer attention span. • Talk a lot, ask many questions. • Test physical skills and courage with caution. • Reveal feeling in dramatic play. • Like to play with friends, do not like to lose, share or take turns sometimes.	In addition to the requirements for healthy growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to: • Develop fine motor skills, continue expanding language skills through talking, reading and singing. • Learn cooperation by helping and sharing. • Experiment with pre-writing and pre-reading skills.
5- 8 Years	• Gain curiosity about people and how the world works. • Show more interest in numbers, letters, reading, writing. • Play cooperatively and develop interest in final product. • Gain more confidence and use words to express feelings and cope.	In addition to the requirements for healthy-growth of the previous years, children at this age require the opportunity to: • Develop numeracy and reading skills. • Engage in problem solving. • Practice teamwork. • Develop sense of personal competency. • Practice questioning and observing. • Acquire basic life skills. • Attend basic education.

Social Development

Social development refers to the process of learning how to live with others. Children will learn a variety of social skills when exposed to different experiences both inside and outside the home. If afforded the opportunity, children will learn to share, to take turns, respect others, to socialize, table manners, and personal hygiene. The tables above include some social behaviours that children will display depending on their age and development process.

Spiritual Development

Parents can begin to instill values that will enhance their child's spiritual development. Building a strong moral foundation is important and should be introduced at a very young age. They can learn right from wrong as they develop and grow. If children are taught to respect others, value diversity and to love others, it can help to prevent among other things, bullying in later years and perhaps even learn how to confront bullies and abusers in positive ways.

As parents you need to:

- Plan activities with your child that will encourage spiritual development. Sing songs, read bible stories, fill their imaginations with images of God and they will begin to see Him as important and will begin to accept Him in their lives.
- Pray with your child at an early age; impart the importance of prayer and the need to interact with God- they learn to pray by example. Prayer is a spiritual discipline that a child will embrace if they experience and participate in often. Create a praise environment that is fun. Attend church services and activities as a family.
- Promote the love of God, of self and others
- Practice lead by example; treat them and others with respect and care including caring for animals, plants, the environment in general
- Present opportunities for the child to learn tasks at home and to participate in those household chores that will allow them a sense of satisfaction and to accept responsibility. They will learn to be responsible and productive individuals as they mature.
- Plant seeds of love, joy, peace kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self -control.

The key to great parenting is to stay focused on God and ask him to lead, guide, and direct you as you accept the awesome responsibility of being a parent to the most precious gift of all – **CHILDREN.**

Breast Feeding, Nutrition, and Health Care

Belize has met and is sustaining the target of 95% immunization rate for each of the 10 vaccine-preventable diseases. But when it comes to nutrition, not enough mothers are exclusively breast feeding for the first 6 months. Only 33% of babies are exclusively breast fed while 50% are predominantly breast fed. (MICS 2015). The percentage of children 0-8 years who are undernourished, as measured by the percentage of children who are underweight, stunted, and

wasted, is higher than the maximum acceptable percentage.

The Importance of Breast Feeding (National Breastfeeding Policy, Ministry of Health, 1996)

Breastfeeding a baby exclusively for the first 6 months, and then continued breastfeeding in addition to appropriate solid foods until 12 months and beyond, has health benefits for both the mother and child.

Benefits for the Baby

- Breast milk, when fed directly from the breast, is immediately available with no wait and is at body temperature.
- Breast-fed babies have a decreased risk for several infant conditions including sudden infant death syndrome (SIDS).
- The sucking technique required of the infant encourages the proper development of both the teeth and other speech organs. Sucking also has a beneficial role in the prevention of obstructive sleep apnea.

Breastfeeding is associated with lower risk of the following diseases:
- Allergies
- Eczema
- Asthma
- Gastroenteritis
- Autoimmune thyroid diseases
- Hodgkin's lymphoma
- Bacterial meningitis
- Necrotizing enterocolitis
- Breast cancer
- Multiple sclerosis
- Celiac disease
- Obesity
- Crohn's disease
- Otitis media (ear infection)
- Diabetes
- Respiratory Infection and wheezing
- Diarrhea
- Rheumatoid arthritis
- Urinary Tract Infection

Breast milk also has various anti-infective factors. These include the anti-malarial factor para amino benzoic acid (PABA), the anti-amoebic factor

BSSL, and lactoferrin (which is the second most abundant protein in human milk and binds to iron, inhibiting the growth of intestinal bacteria like E. Coli and Salmonella) and anti-bodies such as IgA, IgG, IgM which protects breastfeeding infants from microbial infection.

- Unlike human milk, the predominant protein in cow's milk is lactoglobulin. This is an important factor in allergy to cow's milk.
- Breast milk also contains, adequate amounts of various amino acids which are essential for neuronal development like cystine, methionine and taurine.
- Breastfeeding is nutritious, easy to digest and absorb.
- It is readily available at the right time and right temperature.
- Breastfed infants have faster linear growth and are less prone to being overweight.
- Human milk enhances the development of the brain. They perform better on test for intellectual development than formula fed infants.
- Breastfed preterm infant demonstrate marked intellectual development than those fed with artificial formula.
- Breastfed preterm infants have shorter hospital stays and lower rates of infections.
- Breastfeeding protects babies from diarrhea and acute respiratory infections.
- Breastfeeding stimulates the immune system.

Importance of breastfeeding for mother

- It releases hormones including oxytocin and prolactin that have been found to relax the mother and cause her to experience nurturing feelings toward her infant.
- Breastfeeding as soon as possible after giving birth increases levels of oxytocin which encourages the uterus to contract more quickly. This helps to decrease bleeding after the birth.
- Mothers can find breastfeeding helps them return to their previous weight as the fat accumulated during pregnancy is used in milk production.
- Frequent and exclusive breastfeeding delays the return of menstruation and fertility known as lactation amenorrhea method.

Breastfeeding mothers are at reduced risk of many diseases

1. Reduced risk of breast cancer
2. Reduced risk of ovarian cancer
3. Decreased insulin requirements in diabetic Mothers
4. Stabilization of maternal endometriosis
5. Reduced risk of post-partum hemorrhage
6. Reduced risk of endometrial cancer
7. Reduced risk of osteoporosis
8. Beneficial effects on insulin levels of mothers
9. Mothers who breastfeed experience improved bone re-mineralization after the birth, and a reduced risk for both ovarian and breast cancer both before and after menopause.

Breastfeeding enhances self-esteem, bonding and attachment process

1. Bonding and attachment occurs through skin to skin contact and facilitates initiation and maintenance of breastfeeding.
2. Mother and baby form loving relationship and babies cry less.
3. Exclusive breastfeeding can delay ovulation and facilitate child spacing.
4. Breastfeeding may reduce chronic diseases and obesity.
5. Breastfeeding allows the uterus to return to normal size in a shorter period.
6. Breastfed babies are healthy and require less medical visits
7. Families save money when mother breastfeeds
8. Money is saved because there is no need to purchase formula, bottles, fuel, and other supplies
9. Women who breastfeed are less likely to miss work because their babies have fewer episodes of illness.

Good attachment

Poor attachment

Signs of Sufficient Feeds

Is baby gaining weight? Steady weight gain is the most reliable sign of sufficient feeds. The usual weight loss of 10 percent of birth weight is recovered within two weeks of birth.

It is acceptable for some babies to gain 113-142 grams (4-5 ounces) per week.

The average breastfed baby doubles birth weight in 5-6 months. By one year, the typical breastfed baby will weigh about 2½ times birth weight. By two years, differences in weight gain and growth between breastfed and formula-fed babies are no longer evident.

Babies 0-36 months should have height for age measurements (at health facilities and / or community level) taken and recorded on a monthly basis.

Is baby breastfeeding regularly? Newborns breastfeed around eight to twelve times daily, or on demand.

Can I hear baby swallowing? Observe the strong motion of your baby's cheek and a pause to indicate swallowing.

Are my breasts softer and emptier after feeds?

Remind women when breastfeeding to empty one breast completely before offering the second breast. Start on alternate breast at the next feed.

Does my baby have six to eight wet diapers per day? If in doubt wet diapers should weigh two to four tablespoons of water (20-40 gr) heavier than a dry diaper.

Signs of Insufficient Feeds

Poor weight gain: less than 500g a month or less than birth weight at two weeks.

Passing small amount of concentrated urine: less than six times a day, yellow and strong smelling.

Other signs

- Baby not satisfied after breastfeeds
- Baby cries often
- Very frequent breastfeeds
- Very long breastfeeds
- Baby refuses to breastfeed
- Baby has hard, dry or green stools
- No milk comes when mother tries to express
- Breasts did not enlarge (during pregnancy) Milk did not "come in" (after delivery)

Breastfeeding guidelines and HIV infection

All pregnant women at the moment of delivery must have an HIV test done at 34 or more weeks gestation

If HIV status at 34 plus weeks pregnancy not available, have a rapid HIV test done upon admission

Treat women and infants as per protocol.

SITUATION	GUIDELINES
Mother's HIV Status is not known upon admission for delivery	Have a rapid HIV testing done upon admission. • If result is negative, communicate immediately and delay posttest counseling after delivery. • If result is positive, ensure mother receives posttest counseling prior to delivery of results.
Mother's HIV status is negative	Encourage exclusive breastfeeding – ONLY breast milk from birth to six months - After immediate newborn care, put baby to breast, even if placenta is not expelled.
Mother's HIV status is positive	Provide ARV to mother and baby as per protocol. Find out mothers decision on feeding pattern for her baby upon admission. Provide counseling if no decision has been made. Help mothers to make the best choice, based on her particular situation. Provide ARV treatment for her baby upon discharge Explain when and where to go for follow up (indicate appointments): a) Pediatrician (booked appointment prior to discharge) b) Medical Officer / Specialist in charge of HIV patients c) Public Health Clinic (3 days after hospital discharge) for postnatal care and child growth promotion including vaccines.
Mother is HIV positive and chooses to formula feed her baby	Discuss the AFASS conditions for safe formula feeding Exclusive Breastfeeding cessation should be when conditions for AFASS formula is met. Exclusive breastfeeding is from birth to six months. At six months of age breastfeeding should be nil. Encourage optimal complementary feeding practices. At six months formulas can be given in cup.
General recommendations	Assess AFASS conditions if formula feeding is chosen If formula feed is not AFASS, encourage exclusive breastfeeding until Formula feeding AFASS is achieved Explain the importance of exclusive breastfeeding to reduce the risk of transmission Support the mother in planning and carrying out a safe transition from exclusive to NON breastfeeding option Prevent and treat breast conditions of mothers. Treat thrush in infants. Ensure that mother knows where to seek skilled care if any problems arise.

Source: UNICEF/WHO (2006) (Condon, 2005).

Breastfeeding techniques:
Breastfeeding Positions

Cradle hold
- Position baby in mother's lap, with baby's head in crook of arm.
- The baby's chest should be against her chest so that the baby does not have to turn head towards breast.
- Be sure the arm of the chair is at the right height to support arm. Use pillows to support back arm and the baby's head if necessary.
- Elevating feet slightly would be helpful and promote comfort.
- Most common breastfeeding position.

Cross-cradle hold
- Cross cradle hold is similar to the cradle hold except baby is lying in the opposite direction with his head in mother's hand, rather than the crook of her arm. This position is useful when first learning to breast-feed because it allows for good control of the baby's head while helping the baby to latch-on.

Football hold
- Hold baby like a football along forearm, with baby's body on your arm and face toward your breast and position legs under mother's arm. Patient uses the other hand to support breast.
- This hold is useful if patient has engorged breasts or sore nipples. It is also a good position if patient has had a cesarean section and cannot place baby on stomach.
- It is a good position for nursing twins.
- Football hold helps to prevent plugged ducts because baby helps to empty the bottom ducts.

Lying down breastfeeding
- Patient lies on her side and place baby on side facing her with head at the breast.
- Support back with pillows and ensure that baby's nose is unobstructed. Remember babies are obligatory nose breathers. Place baby on back for sleeping and create safe sleeping environment.

Cradle Hold

Cross-Cradle Hold

Football Hold

Lying Down

http://parenting.firstcry.com/wp-content/uploads/2017/10/284239985-H.jpg

Mothers have a right to breastfeed their child and to ensure that their infant benefits from Maternal and Child care services and therefore should advocate with their employer to be given time off to do so. Reference can be made to the Ministry of Health's Breastfeeding Policy as well as the Convention on the Rights of the Child which states that: Every child has the right to the best possible health.

Some Places to acquire Brochures on Breastfeeding and other health care services in Belize are:

1. Belize Family Life Association
2. Belize Medical Associates
3. Penelope Casasola Breastfeeding Consultant & Labour Support
4. Collet Education and Resource Center
5. Ministry of Health
6. Public Clinics
7. Public Hospitals

Other relevant information on the importance of a Balanced Diet for Proper Development Goals for Optimal Nutrition and Healthy Eating Habits in Early Childhood:

1. Physical growth and development
2. Visual and cognitive development
3. Healthy immune system development
4. Healthy body functions and organ systems, e.g., digestive, cardiovascular, neurological
5. Age-appropriate weight gain
6. Achievement of expected physical and cognitive developmental milestones
7. Enjoyment of healthy foods as a part of daily life.

Some Nutrition Tips

As children grow older and begin to eat other foods:

1. Limit unhealthy choices for snacks and celebrations; provide healthy choices.
2. Limit or eliminate sugary drinks; provide water.
3. Prohibit the use of food as a reward.

4. Provide opportunities to get physical activity every day.
5. Limit recreational screen time.

In the first six months, babies receive all their nutritional requirements from a milk-based diet. However, from six months, children enter the stage of transitional feeding, and progress from a milk only diet towards a varied, balanced diet of complementary foods from the four food groups. The food groups that make up this balanced diet are proteins, carbohydrates, fruits and vegetables, and milk and dairy foods.

Proteins are essential for a number of important functions including growth, brain development and healthy bones. Of the 22 amino acids – or building blocks that make proteins, children need to get 10 'essential amino acids' from their food. (Full Protein foods: chicken, eggs, milk, yogurt and cheese; Partial Protein foods: legumes, lentils, tofu and soya products).

Source: https://plus.google.com/+youssefboualibodybuilding

Children need a source of **carbohydrate** in each meal. However, young children under 13 months may struggle to digest wholegrain varieties of carbohydrates, and too much fibre can compromise the absorption of important minerals such as calcium and iron.

https://www.ggznieuws.nl/home/verband-tussen-koolhydraten-en-depressie/

Aiming for five portions of **fruit and vegetables** is a good starting point for children. Easy tips for keeping on track could be as simple as keeping a bag of frozen vegetables in the freezer or chopping up a piece of fresh fruit for dessert.

Source:http://www.frigoscan.com/cold-storagefruits-and-vegetables/

Children gain a lot of nourishment from **dairy foods** such as milk, yogurt and cheese. These foods can provide the body with easily absorbed calcium as well as vitamins A and B12, protein and other vitamins and minerals.

Source: https://www.mindmeister.com

Hygiene for Personal and Family Health Care

Hand Washing
Good hand washing is the single most effective way of preventing germs from getting into our bodies and causing infection to us and our babies. Always wash hands:
- After touching any potentially contaminated surface (drains, cleaning cloths)
- After using the toilet, sneezing or blowing your nose
- After touching animals
- After contact with blood or body fluids
- Before and after handling food, changing diapers or handling potties

Diaper Changing
Babies are at higher risk of infection than older children, and diaper changing provides an ideal opportunity for germs to be transmitted- not only to the baby, but also to parents. Change diapers often, especially after soiling. It is important that you keep the baby's skin clean and dry. Rinse any soap away thoroughly because it may over-dry the skin and cause irritation.
Follow the guidelines below when changing diapers:
- Wash your hands thoroughly before and after each diaper change
- Use a waterproof changing mat that can be disinfected
- Use disposable towels
- Place soiled disposable diapers in a plastic bag, then in a bin lined with a plastic liner
- With re-usable diapers, discard solid matter in the toilet before disinfecting the diapers in a properly sealed bucket. After disinfection, the contents of the bucket should be flushed down a toilet, not poured down the sink.
- Disinfect re-usable diapers in hot water.

Eating and Feeding
Mothers' personal hygiene when breast-feeding is extremely important. Dry or inflamed skin in the nipple area can become infected and be harmful to mother and child. Regular gentle washing and general care of the area is imperative.

Sterilizing

All feeding utensils- bottles, teething aids, and other utensils- must be decontaminated between feeds by boiling or by using a suitable disinfectant product to protect babies from infection. These products are referred to as "sterilizing products", but actually work to disinfect the equipment.

Food and Kitchen Hygiene

Illness from contaminated food or water is one of the most widespread health problems in the world. For young children, it can be fatal. Always keep a clean and sterilized kitchen, and clean and cook food properly.

Personal Hygiene

Parents, caregivers and peers can influence the way in which children approach personal hygiene, which will stay with them for life. Educating children on good hygiene is the best way to avoid the spread of infection and disorders; teaching the principles of correct hygiene at an early age can help keep individuals healthy in later life. Principles of hygiene should be made part of everyday life and the best way for parents to teach their children about good hygiene is to lead by example.

1. Hand washing is one of the most important hygiene practices we can teach our children. The basics include washing several times daily, especially before meals and after using the bathroom, using soap and water. While they are washing their hands, sing a song with them to make it fun while teaching them how long they should wash for. (e.g. the happy birthday song).
2. When teaching them to blow their nose, turn blowing a runny nose into your best horn impression.
3. During shower time, use the shampoo suds to turn their hair into a Mohawk or other funny hair style.
4. Do a dance together while brushing teeth each morning and evening.
5. Children thrive on routines. Incorporate hair and teeth brushing into your morning and evening ritual. Make bath time a precursor to your bedtime story. As they start to perform these tasks daily, they will begin to accept

them as part of their daily life. They may even surprise you and remind you when you've forgotten an important part of the hygiene routine.

Parents should also be aware of the following:

Article 19: Governments must do all they can to ensure that children are protected from all forms of violence, abuse, neglect and bad treatment by their parents or anyone else who looks after them.

Child Abuse

Regardless of the age of the child, children can be neglected and physically, sexually and emotionally abused. Violence against children is a gross violation of children's rights. Every child has the right to a life free from violence. It can happen in homes, institutions, schools, or within communities. Child abuse is not only about bruises, but also about deep lasting scars left by emotional and sexual abuse. Physical abuse is the most obvious but ignoring the needs of a child, making them feel stupid or worthless and leaving them in situations which are unsupervised and dangerous are also ways in which a child is abused.

*   **Child neglect:** a common type of abuse; a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs - food, clothing, hygiene or left unsupervised.

*   **Physical abuse:** physical harm or injury caused by excessive physical punishment – hitting, punching, lashing, etc result in physical abuse. Parents should be encouraged to use positive discipline rather than punishment.

*   **Sexual abuse:** Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching behaviors. Non-touching behaviors can include looking at a child's naked body, exhibitionism, or exposing

the child to pornography. Children of all ages, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds may experience sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse affects both girls and boys. A child below the age of 16 cannot consent to any form of sexual activity, period. When a perpetrator engages with a child this way, they are committing a crime and should be reported. Sexual abuse can have lasting effects on the victim.

Children who have been sexually abused may display a range of emotional and behavioral reactions, many of which are characteristic of children who have experienced other types of trauma. Child sexual abuse isn't always easy to spot. The perpetrator could be someone they have known for a long time or trust.

Consider the following warning signs:

Physical signs
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bloody, torn, or stained underclothes
- Bleeding, bruises, or swelling in genital or anal area
- Pain, itching, or burning in genital or anal area
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections

Behavioral signs
- Acting out in an inappropriate sexual way with toys or objects
- Unaccountable fear of particular places or people
- Outburst of anger
- Changes in eating habits
- Shrinks away or seems threatened by physical contact
- Changes in hygiene, such as refusing to bathe or bathing excessively
- Returns to regressive behaviors, such as thumb sucking
- Nightmares or bed-wetting
- Anxiety
- Depression

Although many children who have experienced sexual abuse show behavioral and emotional changes, many others do not. It is therefore critical to focus not only on detection, but on prevention and communication—by teaching children about body safety and healthy body boundaries, and by encouraging open communication about sexual matters.

Bullying is no laughing matter
Unfortunately teasing is a part of growing up – almost every child experiences it. Teasing becomes bullying when it is repetitive or when there is a conscious intent to hurt another person/child.

Bullying manifests itself in different forms:
- **Verbal** - making threats or name-calling,
- **Psychological** – excluding them from activities, spreading rumours
- **Physical** – hitting, pushing, taking away your possessions

Children learn bullying behaviour from older children, from adults, from the television. Children who are bullied are often shy, weaker than their peers, have low self-esteem and poor social skills making them targets.

Bullies often have difficulty forming positive relationships as adults and are more apt to use alcohol, cigarettes and even to be abusive spouses. Parents can begin from very early to instil in children respect for others, acceptance of diversity and love which in the long run help with minimizing or accepting bullying.

Organizations which can provide support if your child is not developing according to what is expected or are in need of referral:

- Maternal and Child Health – Ministry of Health
- Community and Parent Empowerment Programme COMPAR – Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
- Human Services – Ministry of Human Development, Social Transformation and Poverty Alleviation
- NaRCIE – Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports
- The Inspiration Center
- Belize Council for the Visually Impaired (BCVI)

Age appropiate chores for children

AGES 2 - 3	AGES 4 -5	AGES 6 - 7
Put toys in the box	Feed pets	Gather trash
Place dirty clothes in basket	Wipe up spills	Fold towels
Throw away garbage	Put away toys	Put away clean dishes
Fold wash cloths	Straighten bedroom	Match clean socks
Get diapers and wipes	Water house plants	Weed garden
	Clear kitchen table	Rake leaves
		Disinfect door knobs
		Replace toilet paper roll

PHOTOS CREDIT: UNICEF Belize

KEY MESSAGES

A child is any human being below the age of 18 years unless national laws state otherwise (ref. United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child)

The first 1000 days in a child's life are critical as this is the time the brain develops most rapidly and vital changes occur in language and communication, social skills, emotional control, recognition and understanding of symbols in the environment and the development of attitudes and aptitudes to learning and living.

The first six years of life are extremely crucial for the growth and development in children. As a matter of fact, their mental growth is accelerated when they receive adequate attention, love and affection, mental stimulation, and encouragement.

Preschool child development occupies a pivotal position in the lives of the infants. It is during this phase that parental responsibilities towards the growing child become most important. It has been proved by research studies that children tend to develop a more extensive vocabulary if their parents involve them in frequent conversations and early childhood curriculum.

Early childhood is an exploratory age when children begin to discover their surroundings. It is an imitative age as well. Children start picking up the mannerisms, speech, and actions of elders around them. Parents therefore should be appropriate in their behavior in front of children.

Particularly critical areas in early childhood development: vision, logical thinking, language, music, and emotion. These are considered as "windows of opportunity", and should be considered as important aspects of their development.

In early childhood, behavior problems seem to be more troublesome and frequent as compared to problems related to the physical care of children. If their actions are unsupervised, they might grow up to be disobedient, obstinate, antagonistic, and stubborn. Parents should pay extra attention to the needs of their children.

The social behavior of individuals at a grown up stage is determined by the way they have been nurtured by parents during their early childhood years. Therefore, it is extremely crucial to ensure that children are not only provided with proper nutrition and early childhood learning, but also protected from abuse, harm, and discrimination.

The state of early childhood development, when measured with a comparable approach, results in the betterment of the child and subsequently, the entire community.

Our children are different from us in many ways; they see and feel their world differently.

What we say and think about our children affects them even from before birth. Children are emotionally vulnerable. We need to help our children develop to their fullest potential.

Our children have different capabilities. For children to achieve their greatest potential for physical, social, psychological, cognitive, cultural, and spiritual development, they must have caring and nurturing individuals and a sound education in the earliest years of their life and must be provided in safe, supportive and inclusive settings, especially in the family environment, in which children freely explore and openly express themselves (Early Childhood Development Policy for Belize).

Articles 5, 7, 19 and 24 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

1. Examine ways in which parents can effectively support the development of children in the early childhood stage, (ages 0-8).
2. Value the importance of breast feeding, nutrition and health care.
3. Understand the issues which can affect children at a very early age, for example abuse.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Recognize and identify the importance of a stimulating home environment and its effect on the development of young children
2. Discuss and sensitize on the different child rearing practices (breast feeding, proper nutrition, routines to include hygiene best

practices; grooming; communication to include use of voice, respect to include greetings)

3. Identify the importance of breast feeding to growth, development and attachment.
4. Examine the effects of fully balanced meals to children's development
5. Identify the stages of social development of children
6. Describe the importance of family health care; how to promote personal health care (e.g. immunization, washing hands, brushing teeth, taking regular baths, grooming, potty training, and keeping ones environment clean, protection against abuse).

Skills to be acquired by parents

1. Enhance your child's development
2. Identify your child's needs during early childhood
3. Develop new strategies for child rearing during early childhood

4. Recognize the importance of breast feeding, its benefits
5. Identify the benefits of personal health
6. Develop new skills for family and personal hygiene

Values to be acquired by parents

1. Appreciate your child's physical, cognitive, social and spiritual development.
2. Appreciation for nutritional needs including breast feeding, especially during a baby's first six months.

Suggested Activities
The background information will help the facilitator in the preparation of power points and activities in addition to those suggested below.
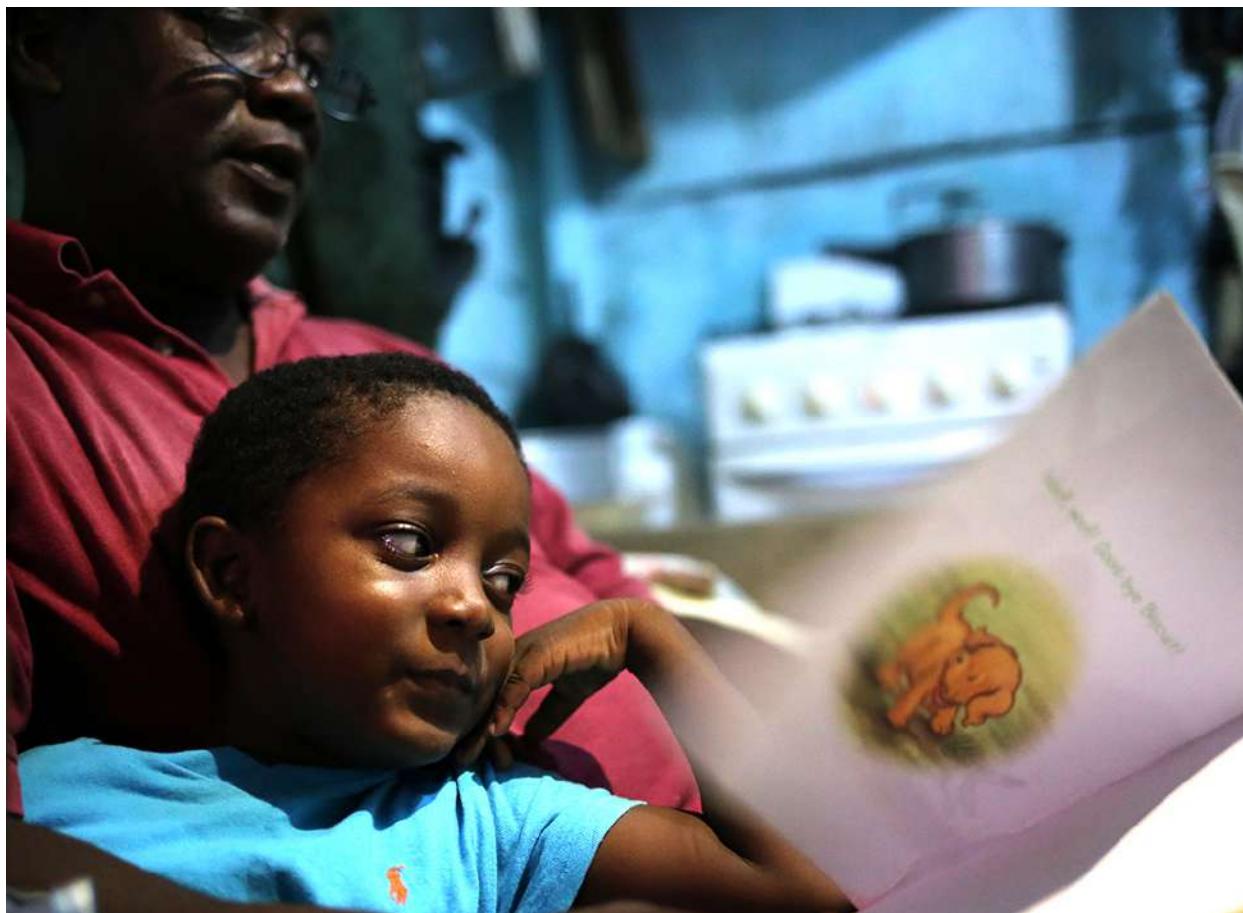
Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Tips for Helping with my Child's Learning

All the fun activities that you do with your child at home are important in supporting their learning and development, and have a really long lasting effect on your child's learning as they progress through school. Even when your child is very young and is not yet able to talk, talking to them helps them to learn and understand new words and ideas. If you make the time every day to do some of the following things with your child it will make a real difference to your child's confidence as a young learner.

- Sing and tell nursery rhymes
- Allow your child to cut out and stick pictures from magazines
- Cook/bake together
- On a trip to the store, talk about things that are familiar and resemble shapes, colors, numbers etc
- Plant seeds or plants in a garden
- Talk to your child at every opportunity
- Share a book and read to them

- Explore the park together
- Use songs during household routines.
- Teach children to put their toys away, take a nap, or transition to a new activity through repetition of songs or rhymes. A quick song can signal to a child that it's time to transition and do something different.
- Use movements to teach patterns. Babies and toddlers can learn to recognize patterns and begin learning introductory math skills through the use of songs or chants.
- Sing songs and do movements to the lyrics. Think about what songs or rhymes use counting, patterns, and accompanying movements. The children will learn to sing along and do the movements on their own. Songs like "One little two little three little babies- ending in ten little baby boys/girls, "Itsy bitsy spider", etc, Simon says….

Using games like chalupa or bingo help children recognize similar objects, patterns, words. Parents can make these games and have the children engaged in making them.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

ACTIVITY 1

The Seed Analogy

Ask the question: What is a child? Allow participants to engage in brainstorming and list their responses on flip chart/board. You may receive answers such as: a gift from God, a human being, innocent, lacking inhibition, free, troublesome, etc. The Facilitator then gives the seed analogy:

Pass jar with various seeds/beans in it to participants and ask them to take some (do not direct number they are to take).

Once everyone has taken some, ask and discuss the following:

1. How many seeds have they chosen? (Some may take one or two while others may take more than they can count.)
2. Are the seeds all the same? Color? Size? Type?
3. Why did they choose those particular seeds?
4. How does this relate to our children? Are they all the same?

Bring out the fact that children are not all the same, they look different and they will not be just like their mothers and fathers. Before we are born, our genetic make-up, can determine if we are prone to be fat or slim, tall or short.

What do seeds need to bear fruit?
e.g. Water, soil, care, nutrition, and the right conditions – some may need shade, some may need light, some may need to be in water, and some in sand.
What would children need to bear fruit/ reach their full potential? Discuss and list how the needs of a seed relate to the needs of a child, e.g.:

WATER – attention, encouraging words
SOIL – foundation, the family
CARE – nutrition - proper diet
RIGHT CONDITIONS – environment, neighborhood, atmosphere at home, attitudes
PROTECTION AND GUIDANCE
LIGHT – spiritual education

The Facilitator then expands the concept of children being like seeds. That just as within the seed there is the tree, so too within the child is the adult. Nurturing and the surrounding conditions can help to shape and guide the development or stunt and destroy it. Allow for further feedback and reflection, perhaps on aspects of themselves they wish had been further developed and nurtured when they were younger.

ACTIVITY 2

Parenting Skills

1. Begin by asking participants to tie a scarf or any piece of cloth on their partners' eyes to cover their sight.
2. Have them walk around the room with the partner and ask the guide to describe to the blindfolded one the things they are passing.
3. After about 5 minutes, the presenter calls everyone back and asks different people to share how they felt during the experience (the guides and the blindfolded ones).
4. Explain that this is a metaphor for parents who must guide their young children (between ages 0-8) and that describing things to them helps them learn language while they are learning to balance and walk.
5. Presenter passes around a blank sheet of paper and asks parents to individually come up with 3 parenting skills that they believe are the most important in bringing up healthy, happy and successful children.
6. After a few minutes, volunteers are asked to read their 3 parenting skills and explain why they believe those are the most important.
7. Presenter begins to explain the top 10 parenting skills and a discussion is held about them with the group.

ACTIVITY 3

Nursery rhymes

1. Organize participants into groups of 4 and have them develop a nursery rhyme which can teach their children about numbers, shapes, colors, letters
2. After 30 minutes, participants present the rhymes.
3. Facilitator presents ways in which you can help the child learn – Have participants give other ways or examples of how they can use the ones presented by the facilitator.
4. Engage parents in making a game such as bingo or snake and ladder or chalupa to teach their children patterns, matching etc.

ACTIVITY 4

Nutrition, Breastfeeding and Breastfeeding and HIV

1. Facilitator makes a power point presentation using the above information on nutrition, breastfeeding, HIV and breastfeeding
2. In groups discuss the advantages of breastfeeding and make presentations Engage participants on a discussion on breastfeeding and HIV
3. In 3 groups, participants develop 2 healthy meals and 1 snack for: a). Children 6 months – 2 years, b) 3 – 5 years and c). 6-8 years using local fruits, foods etc
4. Groups share their meals and these are collected and shared with all the participants.

Facilitator presents on the benefits of nutrition for the development of children 0-3, 3-5, 6-8 using and elaborating on the tips for optimal nutrition and healthy eating.

ACTIVITY 5

Proper Hygiene

1. Participants develop a list of activities which are necessary for proper hygiene for different age groups 0-2, 3-5, 6-8 and identify ways in which these can be taught and made a part of their daily routine including songs or nursery rhymes which they developed to assist with teaching children proper hygiene.
2. Facilitator adds any of the information if participants miss any of the suggested above.

Tips for Communicating with Young Children

Communicating positively with young children helps them develop confidence, feelings of self-worth, and good relationships with others.

- Get the child's attention before speaking. Look directly at the child and call her name. A touch on the shoulder or taking her hand will help get her attention. Give her time to look at you before you start speaking.

- Communicate on the same level. Adults need to stoop down to the child's level or sit beside her. Making eye contact with the child lets her know that she has your attention and is much less intimidating to the child. Focus on the child's feelings rather than your own.

- Modeling appropriate behavior is one of the best ways to get desired behavior from a child. Say "Good morning," "Hello," "Please," "Thank you" and "You're welcome" to the child. Nagging a child to use these terms is a bad example. They are more likely to use courtesies when parents model the behavior and if they are not constantly reminded.

- Positive communication with children uses more "Do's" than "Don'ts." In other words, tell the child what to do rather than what not to do. Children respond much quicker to positive demands than negative ones.

- Sometimes, adults spend so much time talking "to" the child that they neglect the listening

part of communication. Talking with children lets them know that, not only do we have something to tell them, but that we are also willing to listen to what they have to say. Do not lecture, criticize, or threaten.

- Unkind words help to tear a child down and make the child feel bad. Kind, supportive words and actions tell children that they are loved and lead to positive self-esteem. Affection is also part of effective communication; comforting a child and sharing smiles and hugs are powerful communication tools.

- Use a warm and affectionate tone of voice to help reassure and comfort children. A warm tone's message can be reinforced by using words of endearment or special nicknames.

ACTIVITY 6

Positive Communication

1. Develop different scenarios and participants in pairs are to role play parent/child interaction while other participants can critique and offer suggestions.

- Child is unwilling to pick up toys and put in its right place. How do you get him/her to do so?

- Every day after school child leaves school bag and shoes in the middle of the living room despite your request to place in homework area or bedroom. How do you address this reoccurrence?

- Child did well in school – how do you communicate and celebrate his/her achievement?

- Child is behaving strange – something is bothering him/her – how do you begin a conversation?

- Share the following poem taken from Pinterest. Parents may wish to take turns to recite the poem and make their own to teach manners.

Facilitators share the tips for communicating to support and enhance participants' presentations.

MANNERS

We say "thank you"
We say "please"

WE DON'T INTERRUPT OR TEASE

We don't argue
We don't fuss

We listen when others talk to us

We share our toys.

And take our turn.

GOOD MANNERS AREN'T TOO HARD TO LEARN.

It's really easy when you find that
Good manners means

Just being kind!!

The importance of play and early stimulation

Research indicates that children learn best in an environment which allows them to explore, discover, and play.

Play is an important part of a developmentally appropriate child care program. It is also closely tied to the development of cognitive, socio-emotional, and physical behaviors.

Play is filled with opportunities for children to learn and develop new skills; when children play they use all their senses- hearing, seeing, and tasting, touching, smelling and moving.

Play is a universal phenomenon and a right of childhood. It is spontaneous, rewarding and fun with several benefits:

- Education: helps children learn and build skills that lay the foundation for learning to read, write and do math.
- Social skills: provides opportunities to socialize with peers of the same age, and to learn to understand others, to communicate and to negotiate.
- Cognition: encourages children to learn, imagine, categorize and problem solve.
- Therapeutic benefits: Gives children the opportunity to express troubling aspects of their daily life, including stresses, trauma, family conflicts and other dilemmas
- Play is important because it enhances language development, social competence, creativity, and thinking skills. Play is the chief vehicle for the development of imagination and intelligence, language, social skills, and perceptual-motor abilities in infants and young children.

For example see box below to look at how much children learn as they play together with blocks:

LEARNING THROUGH PLAY

Talking and Thinking
They may learn to:
• Connect words to actions
• Participate in conversations
• Understand position words – next, on, below
• Understand concepts – soft, hard, big, small
• Use their imagination
• Make a plan
•Complete a task

Moving and Doing
They may learn to
• Develop awareness of where they are going
• Develop balance as they carry the blocks
• Use hand and wrist muscles to do delicate tasks – stacking.

Feelings and learning about self
They my learn to
• Express their feelings
• Feel, "I can do it"

Getting along with others
They may learn to:
• Play with other children
• Cooperate with others
• Follow a simple rule – no throwing blocks
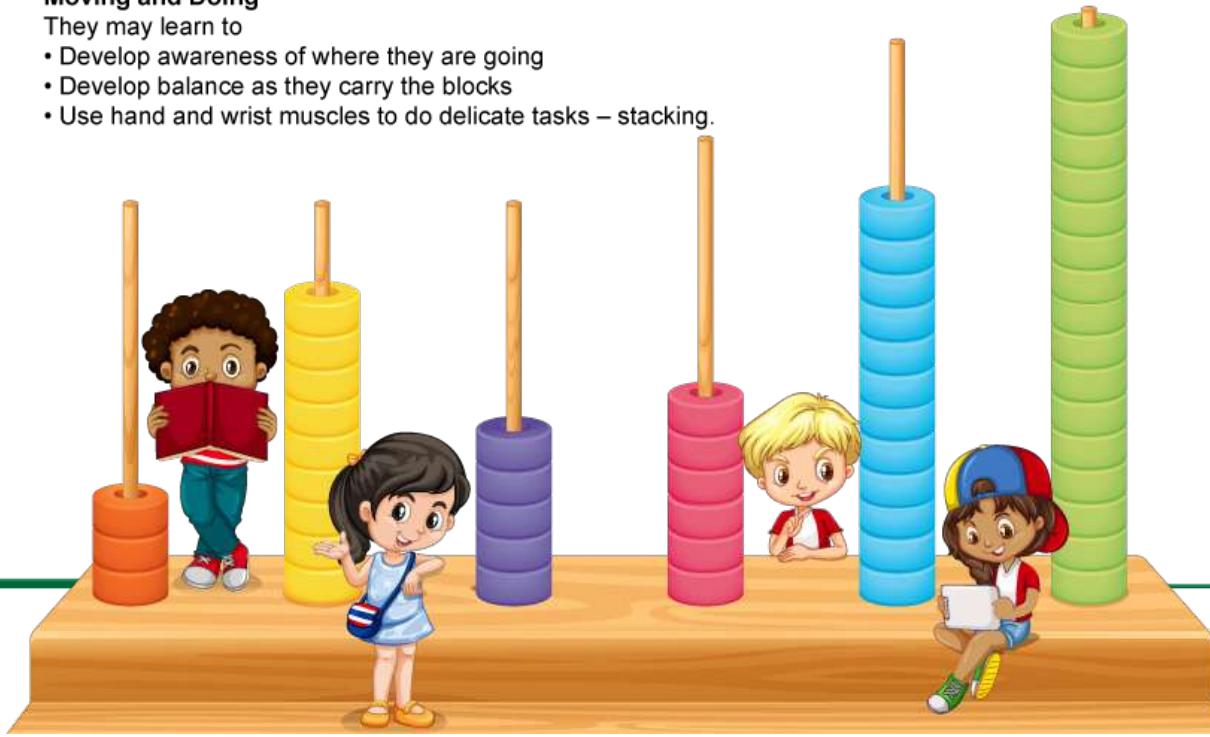
ACTIVITY 7

Learning through Play

Have parents identify toys which are beneficial for children 0-3 to play with that will enhance their physical, social and cognitive skills. Share lists. Some examples: soft blocks, cloth books, alphabet blocks, texture puzzles, peeka boo, stacking using cups, any childhood game they teach young children.

- Using sets of dominoes, possibly 5 groups of participants, have them identify ways in which, through play, these can be used to teach children 4-6 years. Groups are to present types of games, eg, matching, and what skills the child will learn eg numbers, texture, color.

- Engage parents in developing play spaces using materials from around the house or recycle bottles etc. Groups will be assigned different corners of the room and each group will visit the other's spaces.

- Develop a list of outdoor games they played which can help children 6-8 with development their cognitive and social skills. Engage parents in playing these games.

- Have a general discussion on the way play helphem develop cognitive and social skills and share the content on learning through play in the Box above (pg 46).

Notes

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2.1.1.2 Pre-adolescence -Middle childhood – Ages 9-11

Background

Pre- adolescence or middle childhood is a time when children develop foundational skills for building healthy social relationships and learn roles that will prepare them for adolescence and adulthood. They gradually develop into more independent human beings who are capable of exploring the world around them. Their behavior, attitude and the way they see the world is influenced by what they see and hear at home, school and community.

Towards the end of this period, they are challenged by dramatic physical and emotional changes.

Middle childhood brings many changes in a child's life. Having independence from family becomes more important now. Events such as starting school bring children this age into regular contact with the larger world. Friendships become more and more important. Physical, social, and mental skills develop quickly at this time. This is a critical time for children to develop confidence in all areas of life, through experiences with friends, schoolwork, and sports.

Main Developmental Characteristics

DOMAIN	DEVELOPMENT CHARACTERISTICS
Cognitive	• Better distinguishing between fantasy and reality. • Understanding inner motivation of characters. • Understanding causality (one thing leads to another). • Using more sophisticated language. • Developing problem solving and critical thinking skills. • Developing understanding of television and other media (sound and music cues). • Frequent interest in learning life skills (cooking, fixing things) from adults.
Behavioral / Physical	• Becoming more independent in taking care of daily needs such as personal hygiene, feeding, taking care of possessions. • Learning to follow rules of play and interactions. • More interested in taking part in drama and sports. • More concerned about body image and appearance. • Taking more responsibility for their own actions.
Social / Emotional	• Friends gradually taking a more central role in their lives. • Continuing to need supportive adults and positive role models. • Clearly preferring same sex friends. • Learning about right and wrong and making moral choices. • Developing exclusionary and stereotyping behaviours. • to be disorganized and forgetful. • Frequent quarrels with respect to chores, school work and untidiness (bedroom).
Communication needs	• To nurture positive feelings about themselves, others and the world. • To explore and test their own ideas, skills and talents. • To be guided in using their potential in positive ways. • To have their feelings and worries understood and respected. • Parental listening skills become increasingly important .

1. Child Development, Middle Years – Communicating with Children – UNICEF and Oregon State University Extension Services - extension.oregonstate.edu>ecno1527

Parent tasks to support their child

1. Encourage child to express feelings and ideas. Listen non-judgmentally; good communication from an early age is important preparation for more difficult teenage years.
2. Don't be afraid to be wrong and admit it, this is important modelling and builds respect.
3. Make learning new skills (like reading, writing, home chores) pleasurable. Positive feedback and rewards for effort and achievement help children see work in a positive light.
4. Don't separate your love for the child based on approval or disapproval of the child's behaviour. Parental love provides basis for security, trust and self-worth, and encourages effort.
5. Encourage your child to join constructive groups of age-mates and to bring friends home.
6. Understand your child's growing need for independence away from parents and for privacy.

Positive Parenting Tips and Communication

1. Show affection for your child.
2. Help your child develop a sense of responsibility—ask him/her to help with household tasks, such as setting the table.
3. Talk with your child about school, friends, and things he/she look forward to in the future.
4. Talk with your child about respecting others. Encourage him/her to help people in need.
5. Help your child to set his/her own achievable goals—her or she will learn to take pride and rely less on approval or reward from others.
6. Help your child learn patience by letting others go first or by finishing a task before going out to play.
7. Make clear rules and stick to these, such as time to watch to TV and bedtime; how long he or she can watch TV.
8. Do fun things together as a family, such as playing games, reading, and going to events in your community.
9. Get involved with your child's school. Meet the teachers and staff to find out how your child is doing and to understand his or her learning tasks.
10. Read to your child every day. As your child learn to read, take turns reading to each other.
11. Use positive discipline to guide and protect your child. Follow up on any discussion about what not to do with a discussion on what to do instead.

Praise your child for good behavior. It's best to focus praise more on what he or she does.

The Importance of Proper Nutrition

By providing healthy food for your children, you can help stabilize their moods and energy levels, sharpen their minds, and give them the best opportunity to grow into healthy, confident adults.

Tips:

1. Encourage healthy eating habits – such as limiting portion size, modelling proper eating habits, providing healthy snacks, and eat home cooked meals.
2. Ensure that your child eats breakfast. Children who enjoy breakfast every day have better memories, more stable moods and energy, and score higher on tests.
3. Limit sugar in your child's diet. Avoid sugary drinks and make juices at home with more fruit and less sugar. Give them more fruits as snacks instead of sweets and store-bought snacks, for example: mango or nuts instead of chips or cookies.
4. Encourage exercise.

Tips for Personal Hygiene and Grooming in Middle Childhood

Teach children to care about the way they look and smell. Ensure that they follow these tips. This helps to increase their self-esteem.

- Shower daily. When sweat glands under the arms and around the genitals begin to work and pour out sweat, this can cause body odour.
- Change clothes and underclothes daily. Clothes are next to our skin and collect dead skin cells, sweat, and other stains.
- Keep shoes clean by brushing, polishing or washing. This will help shoes to look better, last longer and be less likely to smell. Feet have sweet glands that create a bad odor so it is important to air out shoes.
- Begin to teach children to use deodorant or anti-per spirant under armpits.
- Have them wash hair regularly with shampoo. The hair follicles produce oil which keeps the hair smooth. There are sweat glands and dead skin cells in the scalp as well. These all make hair greasy and look dirty when not washed regularly.
- Teach children to brush their teeth twice a day - after breakfast and before going to bed.

Spiritual Development

It is important that as children grow older, parents continue to promote their spiritual development.

- Attend church activities as a family.
- Pray together – before meals, early morning, bed time.
- Promote the growth and maintenance of relationships – particularly within the family –that inspire trust, security, and empathy.

AGES 8 - 9	AGES 10 - 11
Dust furniture	Clean bathrooms
Put groceries away	Vacuum or sweep
Walk dogs	Clean counter tops
Sweep verandah	Mow lawn
Wipe off table	Sweep out driveway
Put out garbage	Prepare a simple meal

Child Abuse

Child abuse is manifested in different ways: physical, neglect, emotional and sexual.

Regardless of the age, children can be neglected and physically, sexually and emotionally abused. Violence against children is a gross violation of children's rights. Every child has the right to a life free from violence. It can happen in homes, institutions, schools, or within communities.

Child abuse is not only about bruises, but also about deep lasting scars left by emotional and sexual abuse. Physical abuse is the most obvious but ignoring the needs of a child and leaving them in situations which are unsupervised and dangerous are also ways in which a child is abused. Being a victim of any form of abuse impacts the lives of children and they often display certain behaviors as teenagers and adults which could be linked back to the abuse they were subjected to. Abuse of children is often perpetrated by people they know rather than by strangers.

Child neglect: a common type of abuse; a pattern of failing to provide for a child's basic needs - food, clothing, hygiene or left unsupervised.

Physical abuse: physical harm or injury caused by excessive physical punishment – hitting, punching, lashing, etc. Parents should be encouraged to use positive discipline rather than punishment.

Sexual Abuse: Child sexual abuse is any interaction between a child and an adult (or another child) in which the child is used for the sexual stimulation of the perpetrator or an observer. Sexual abuse can include both touching and non-touching behaviors.

Non-touching behaviors can include voyeurism (trying to look at a child's naked body), exhibitionism, or exposing the child to pornography. Children of all ages, ethnicities, and economic backgrounds may experience sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse affects both girls and boys. A child below the age of 16 cannot consent to any form of sexual activity, period. When a perpetrator engages with a child this way, they are committing a crime and should be reported. Sexual abuse can have lasting effects on the victim.

Sexual or any other type of abuse is never the child's fault!

What are the warning signs?

Children who have been sexually abused may display a range of emotional and behavioral reactions, many of which are characteristic of children who have experienced other types of trauma. Child sexual abuse isn't always easy to spot. The perpetrator could be someone they have known for a long time or trust.

Consider the following warning signs:

1. **Physical signs:**
- Difficulty walking or sitting
- Bloody, torn, or stained underclothes
- Bleeding, bruises, or swelling in genital or anal area
- Pain, itching, or burning in genital or anal area
- Frequent urinary or yeast infections
2. **Behavioral signs**
- Acting out in an inappropriate sexual way with toys or objects
- Becoming withdrawn or very clingy
- Becoming unusually secretive
- Unaccountable fear of particular places or people
- Outburst of anger
- Changes in eating habits
- Talk of a new, older friend and unexplained money or gifts
- Self-harm (cutting, burning or other harmful activities)

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

- Shrinks away or seems threatened by physical contact
- Has trouble in school, such as absences or drops in grades
- Changes in hygiene, such as refusing to bathe or bathing excessively
- Returns to regressive behaviors, such as thumb sucking
- Runs away from home or school
- Nightmares or bed-wetting
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Inappropriate sexual knowledge or behaviors

There are many reasons children do not disclose being sexually abused, including:

- Threats of bodily harm (to the child and/or the child's family)
- Fear of being removed from the home

- Fear of not being believed
- Shame or guilt
- Children often believe that the sexual abuse was their own fault and may not disclose for fear of getting in trouble themselves. IT IS NEVER A CHILD'S FAULT
- Very young children may not have the language skills to communicate about the abuse or may not understand that the actions of the perpetrator, PARTICULARLY if the sexual abuse is made into a game

It is critical to focus not only on detection, but on prevention and communication—by teaching children about body safety and healthy body boundaries, and by encouraging open communication about sexual matters.

TIPS TO HELP PROTECT CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL ABUSE

1. Teach children accurate names of private body parts (vagina and penis).
2. Avoid focusing exclusively on "stranger danger." Keep in mind that most children are abused by someone they know and trust.
3. Teach children about body safety and the difference between or "good" and "bad" touches.
4. Let children know that they have the right to make decisions about their bodies. Empower them to say no when they do not want to be touched, even in non-sexual ways (e.g., politely refusing hugs) and to say no to touching others.
5. Make sure children know that adults and older children never need help with their private body parts (e.g., bathing or going to the bathroom).
6. Teach children to take care of their own private parts (i.e., bathing, wiping after bathroom use) so they don't have to rely on adults or older children for help.
7. Educate children about the difference between good secrets (like surprise parties—which are okay because they are not kept secret for long) and bad secrets (those that the child is supposed to keep secret forever, which are not okay).
8. Trust your instincts! If you feel uneasy about leaving a child with someone, don't do it. If you're concerned about possible sexual abuse, ask questions.

LISTEN TO YOUR CHILD IF HE OR SHE IS EXPRESSING DISCOMFORT WITH SOMEONE. EXPLORE THE DISCOMFORT

SOME CHILD SEXUAL ABUSE MYTHS AND FACTS

MYTH: Child sexual abuse is a rare experience.

FACT: Child sexual abuse is not rare. However, because child sexual abuse is by its very nature secretive, many of these cases are never reported.

MYTH: A child is most likely to be sexually abused by a stranger.

FACT: Children are most often sexually abused by someone they know and trust.

MYTH: Preschoolers do not need to know about child sexual abuse and would be frightened if educated about it.
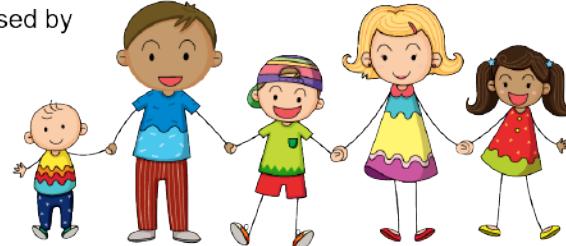
FACT: Numerous educational programs are available to teach young children about body safety skills and the difference between "good" and "bad touches.

MYTH: Children who are sexually abused will never recover.

FACT: Many children are quite resilient, and with a combination of effective counseling and support from their parents or caregivers, children can and do recover from such experiences.

Both Tips and Myths adapted from "The National Child Traumatic Stress Network" - http://www.nctsn.org

Bullying

Bullying is the act of intentionally harming someone physically, verbally, or psychologically. Bullying is often repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power.

Acts of bullying include hitting, pushing, or other unwelcome touching; teasing and name-calling; repeated exclusion of an individual from games and activities; sending threatening or mean-spirited messages (such as texts, chats, voicemails, or e-mails); or spreading of hurtful rumors.

Children are insulted, picked upon and demoralized by being called a colorful plethora of derogatory names sometimes based on their gender, ethnicity, being differently abled, etc.

Bullying can also occur in the home, school or in the community.

Some warning signs of Bullying – give as a handout to parents.

Children who are bullied may

- have torn, damaged, or missing pieces of clothing, books, or other belongings.
- have unexplained cuts, bruises, and scratches from fighting.
- have few, if any, friends with whom he or she spends time or isolates him/her self.
- seem afraid of going to school, walking to and from school, riding the school bus, or taking part in organized activities (such as clubs or sports) with peers.
- take a long "illogical" route when walking to or from school.
- lose interest in doing school work, or suddenly begin to do poorly in school.
- appear sad, moody, teary, or depressed when he or she comes home.
- complain frequently of headaches,

stomachaches, or other physical problems.
- have frequent bad dreams, or trouble sleeping.
- experience a loss of appetite.
- appear anxious and suffer from low self-esteem.
- difficulty in trusting others.
- lack of assertiveness.
- aggressive and difficulty controlling anger.

Children who bully others may

- have a positive attitude toward violence and the use of violent means.
- have a strong need to dominate and subdue others and get their own way.
- are impulsive, aggressive, or easily angered.
- lack empathy toward students who are bullied.
- have defiance and aggression toward adults, including teachers and parents.
- are involved in other anti-social or rule-breaking activities such as vandalism, delinquency, and substance abuse.
- have greater physical strength than that of others in general and the students they bully in particular (especially in boys).
- are looking for attention or think that it is a way to be popular.
- are trying to make themselves feel important.

Dealing with Bullies – Encourage your child to be aware
It may not be easy but they can do the following:

- Don't give the bully a chance- take a different route
- Ignore the bully – getting a reaction makes them feel that they have the power they are seeking
- Stand up for yourself – pretend to feel brave and confident – tell the bully to stop it in a loud voice and run
- Don't bully back – stay with others, stay safe
- Don't show your feelings – plan ahead – try distracting yourself
- Tell an adult – it is very important

Helping children who are bullied

THE BEST OFFENSE IS GOOD DEFENSE!

Teach your children the following:

Skill 1: Stay connected – make and maintain connections with faithful friends and supportive adults

Skill 2: Create Awareness –telling on a bully is not a mark of cowardice, but rather a bold powerful move; encourage your child to speak out

Skill 3: Re-define gossiping – telling on a bully is not gossiping but will help to re-balance the power dynamic; teach your child that being labelled as "tell a tale" is exactly what the bully wants to intimidate further

Skill 4: Act quickly – the bully tests the waters; if a victim does not tell or stand up, the aggression will get worse – Teach your child to take action sooner than later

Cyber bullying

Bullying that takes place using the internet, technology, mobile phones or electronic means.

Examples are mean text messages or emails, rumors sent by email or posted on social networking sites, and embarrassing pictures, videos, websites, or fake profiles.

While it is not the best idea to have children at this age have access to social media, teach children the importance of blocking anything or anyone that they find suspicious, and to keep their online information as private as they can.

Teach children the importance of not sharing their passwords with anyone.

SUPERVISE CHILDREN'S SOCIAL MEDIA ACCESS

1. Pre- adolescence or middle childhood is a time when children develop foundational skills for building healthy social relationships and learn roles that will prepare them for adolescence and adulthood

2. Children develop key thinking or conceptual skills and are more self-aware.

3. This is an important time for children to gain a sense of responsibility along with their growing independence.

4. Spiritual Development continues to be necessary for children.

5. Healthy food will help stabilize their moods and energy levels, sharpen their minds, and give them the best opportunity to grow into healthy, confident adults.

6. Teaching children to care about the way they look and smell gives them higher self-esteem.

7. Regardless of the age of the child, children can be abused. Violence against children is a gross violation of children's rights. Every child has the right to a life free from violence.

Abuse is never a child's fault. Always believe your child!

Bullying is no laughing matter.

Articles 3, 12, 13, 17, 27, 28, 32, 33, 34, 36 and 37 of the Convention on the Rights of the Child relate to this section of the guide.

Standards
1. Recognize parenting behaviors to support children in the pre-adolescence stage

Performance Indicators
1. Discuss the specific developmental task that a child needs to accomplish during these years.
2. Sensitize parents on signs of sexual abuse, bullying, peer pressure, sex, puberty etc.
3. Sensitize parents on the importance of proper nutrition, hygiene practices and grooming.

Skills to be acquired by parents
Recognize your child's cognitive and physical growth changes
Identify your child's needs during middle childhood
Develop new parenting skills for the middle childhood years

Value to be acquired by parents
Understand your child's needs at this age and participate child's school and community environments

Suggested Activities
The background will help with the preparation of power points and activities in addition to those suggested below.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

ACTIVITY 1

Childhood Memories

1. Presenter begins training by asking parents to remember the time when they were between 6-12 years of age. Parents are asked, "What is one of your best memories of that time?"

2. Presenter asks for volunteers to share their memory with the group.

3. Presenter then asks if anyone grew up playing, "Red light, Green light, 1, 2, 3"

4. Parents are asked to stand and form a line towards the front of the room. One parent will stand at the opposite of the room and, with his or her back turned away from the others, will call out "Red light, green light, 1, 2, 3 as slow or as fast as desired. During this time, the others must run to the caller as fast as they can but must freeze when the chant is done. If the caller turns and sees anyone moving, they must return to the back of the room and start again. The first person to touch the caller wins the game.

5. When the game is finished, everyone is asked to go back to their seats and the presenter asks if children are still playing this game today? What games are today's children playing? What can us as parents do to help our children play outdoors with their friends and neighbours?

6. Explain that group games are very important to children at this age, especially because they are developing their social skills and learning more about communication at this time.

7. Presenter shares that apart from social skills, children also develop cognitively and physically.

8. Presenter explains these changes.

9. Presenter explains that this is an important time for children to gain a sense of responsibility along with their growing independence, and shares some tips for parenting at this stage.

ACTIVITY 2

Critical Issues in middle childhood

1. Trainer explains that as children become more independent and are away from home more, they are also more at risk for harm.

2. Presenter sticks four posters in different spaces across the room. Parents are divided into 4 groups and given a marker each. (Each group should have a different color to show variety at the end). This activity is called Graffiti Wall.

3. Each poster has a topic written in the middle of the poster. (Topics: Sexual abuse, bullying, nutrition, and personal hygiene). Parents will have 45 seconds to think about how they feel and know about the topic and write a few words describing their thoughts. After 45 seconds, the presenter calls "times up" and the groups switch to the next poster.

4. After all groups have visited the 4 posters, they are examined to see what the most common answers were and a discussion is held.

5. Parents are asked to go back to the first poster they had and reflect on the topic together. Sexual abuse group will discuss the issue and some signs they believe would be seen in children who suffer this; bullying group would also discuss the issue some signs they believe would be seen in children who bully or suffer from bullying; nutrition group discusses some tips for following proper nutrition; and personal hygiene group discusses important tips to teach children about this.

6. Groups make presentations

ACTIVITY 3

Child Abuse

1. Get newspaper or news items which report on different types of child abuse in Belize and share with parents.

2. In groups, discuss the different types of abuse and have groups explain and present different ways in which one can determine if a child is being abused. Have them share any examples that they know of in their neighbourhood or community

3. Using the book, "My Body is Precious" engage parents in further discussion of sexual abuse. Divide parents into groups and assign a section of the book and have parents discuss and them make a presentation on their section.

4. After all groups present, trainer presents any further information on sexual abuse,

5. In groups, participants will develop different methods and focus on brief content to teach their children about the subject discussed – posters, song, drama etc

ACTIVITY 4

Bullying

1. Pass out a strip of paper to the parents and explain to them that each strip of paper has three letters written on the side. R, J, E

2. Ask parents to choose one of the letters and come up with one word that starts with that letter that describes how they would want to be treated by others.

3. After a minute, each parent shares his or her word and sticks them on a wall that is easily visible to them.

4. Presenter explains that many children are not treated in positive ways, and presents on Bullying.

5. Participants are invited to develop a public awareness message to discourage bullying in the home, school and community.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Tool Kit Resources

My Body is Precious

Notes

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2.1.1.3 Adolescence – Ages 10- 19 (WHO)

Background

Adolescence marks the beginning of the development of more complex thinking processes, including abstract thinking, the ability to reason, and to consider many points of view. It is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood which requires special attention and protection. This is a time when the brain undergoes substantial development which affects emotional skills, physical and mental abilities. It is during this period that gender norms are either solidified, rejected or transformed. Adolescents take on additional responsibilities, experiment and push for independence. Values and skills which have great impact on their well-being are developed at this time.

Investing in adolescents can accelerate the fight against poverty, socio-economic disparities and gender discrimination. Caring adults with adequate policies and services which focus on their needs and capacities have the potential to help break the cycle of poverty, discrimination and violence.

Some issues adolescence may struggle with include:

- Depression
- Anxiety
- Bullying
- Sexual Activity
- Drug and alcohol use
- Peer Pressure
- Social Media
- Violence

Early adolescence (10–14 years)

Early adolescence might be broadly considered to stretch between the ages of 10 and 14.

Physical changes generally commence, usually beginning with a growth spurt, followed by the development of the sex organs and secondary sexual characteristics.

These external changes are often very obvious and can be a source of anxiety as well as excitement or pride for the individual whose body is undergoing the transformation.

The internal changes in the individual, although less evident, are equally profound. In these early adolescent years the brain undergoes a spectacular burst of electrical and physiological development impacting on emotional, physical and mental ability.

The frontal lobe, the part of the brain that governs reasoning and decision-making, starts to develop during early adolescence but this development starts later and takes longer in boys, than in girls. This phenomenon contributes to the widespread perception that girls mature much earlier than boys.

It is during early adolescence that girls and boys become more keenly aware of their gender than they were as younger children, and they may make adjustments to their behaviour or appearance in order to fit in with perceived norms.

They may fall victim to, or participate in, bullying, and they may also feel confused about their own personal and sexual identity.

Given the social taboos often surrounding puberty, it is particularly important to give early adolescents all the information they need to protect themselves against HIV, other sexually transmitted infections, early pregnancy, sexual violence and exploitation. For too many children, such knowledge becomes available too late, if at all, when the course of their lives has already been affected and their development and well-being undermined.

Late adolescence (15–19 years)

Late adolescence encompasses the latter part of the teenage years, broadly between the ages

of 15 and 19. The major physical changes have usually occurred by now, although the body is still developing.

The brain continues to develop and reorganize itself, and the capacity for analytical and reflective thought is greatly enhanced.

Peer-group opinions still tend to be important at the outset, but their hold diminishes as adolescents gain more clarity and confidence in their own identity and opinions.

Risk-taking – a common feature of early to middle adolescence, as individuals experiment with 'adult behaviour' – declines during late adolescence, as the ability to evaluate risk and make conscious decisions develops.

The flip side of the explosive brain development that occurs during adolescence is that it can be seriously and permanently impaired by the excessive use of drugs and alcohol.

Girls in late adolescence tend to be at greater risk than boys of negative health outcomes, including depression, and these risks are often magnified by gender-based discrimination and abuse.

Girls are particularly prone to eating disorders such as anorexia and bulimia; this vulnerability derives in part from profound anxieties over body image that are fuelled by cultural and media stereotypes of feminine beauty.

These risks notwithstanding, late adolescence is a time of opportunity, idealism and promise. It is in these years that adolescents make their way into the world of work or further education, settle on their own identity and world view and start to engage actively in shaping the world around them.

Table shows some changes and characteristics in boys and girls during adolescence (Below)

Photos Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

CHANGES AND CHARACTERISTICS IN BOYS AND GIRLS DURING ADOLESCENCE

BOYS	GIRLS
Most boys first experience puberty between the ages of 10 and 16.	Most girls first experience puberty between the ages of 9 and 13. Girls usually begin puberty before boys.
Body Size: • Arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than rest of body. • May feel clumsier from these changes.	Body Size: • Arms, legs, hands, and feet may grow faster than rest of body. • May feel clumsier from these changes. Breasts: • Breasts grow in size and shape. • May be necessary to begin wearing a bra. • Breast growth is often the first area of growth during puberty.
Body Shape: • Grow taller and shoulders grow broader. • Muscles get bigger. • Gain more weight.	Body Shape: • Hips get wider. • Waist gets smaller. • Body will build up fat in the stomach, buttocks, and legs. • Body develops a more curved shape.
Hair: • Hair grows under the arms, legs, and in the pubic area (between legs). • Chest hair may appear in some during puberty (or years later). • Some may need to begin shaving.	Hair: • Hair grows under the arms, legs, and in the pubic area (between legs). • Hair growth begins shortly after breast development.
Skin: • Skin becomes oilier. • Body will sweat more. • Acne or pimples may develop.	Skin: • Skin becomes oilier. • Body will sweat more. • Acne or pimples may develop.
Voice: • Voice gets deeper. • Voice may start cracking for a period of time.	Voice: • No change in voice for girls
Penis: • Penis and testicles get larger. • May experience more erections (hardening of the penis). • Body will begin to produce sperm during puberty.	Menstruation or period: • Begins for most girls between the ages of 9 or earlier and 16. • A period is a discharge of fluid from the body. • Occurs monthly. • Most periods last from 3 to 7 days. • May feel discomfort before, during, or after a period.

A number of research studies indicate practices that must be undertaken to help adolescents.

These include:

Talk to Your Child about Puberty. (Children Health, 2016). Talking about the issues of puberty remains an important job for parents because not all of a child's information comes from reliable sources. Don't wait for your child to initiate a discussion. By the time children are 8 years old, parents should have the talk with them about what physical and emotional changes are associated with puberty. It's important to answer these questions about puberty honestly and openly.

Grooming and Good Hygiene Practices. (Raising Children Network, 2016). When your teenage child was younger, you taught him the basics of good hygiene – washing his hands, covering his mouth when he coughed and having regular baths or showers. Adolescence is a time to build on these basics. It's a time when your child's changing body means that her personal hygiene will need to change too. And just like when she was younger, you might need to help her at the start.

Parents are the Most Important Sexuality Educators for their Children. (Palo Alto Medical Foundation, 2015). Information your teen receives from outside sources are usually blatantly wrong or misinformed. That's why it's important that you start the conversation with your teen early. Continue this conversation throughout your teen's life by letting them know you are open and non-judgmental regarding the issue of sex and sexuality. There is no evidence that saying too much too soon should be a concern.

Goal Setting and Discipline - Developing new parenting skills to discipline adolescents. (Pickhardt, C., 2011). When conscientiously applied, a number of disciplinary practices can be effectively used with adolescents. The key is to be consistent. Some practices include: stating rules of what to expect from them at home, at school,

with homework, with friends, etc.; speak up when rules are broken or when they do something that is not right; show concern before immediately giving them a consequence for their misbehaviour, talk about what happened before a punishment is given.

Depression

Adolescence is always an unsettling time, with many physical, emotional, psychological and social changes that accompany this stage of life. Different social and development challenges that teens face may cause lead them to depression, a real medical condition. Some of these challenges include:

- Peer pressure
- Changing hormone levels
- Developing bodies

Depression is associated with high levels of stress, anxiety and even suicide and can affect an adolescent's personal, family, social and school life. If not treated properly, it can affect a person's life since they cannot "snap out of it" or "cheer up" from.

Some things to look for in your child that can help you determine if your child is in depression:

- Decreased interest in activities which were pleasurable before
- Appearing sad, irritable or tearful
- Changes in appetite or weight
- Decrease in energy
- Difficulty concentrating
- Feeling of guilt, worthlessness or helplessness
- Major changes in sleeping habits
- Regular complaints of boredom
- Talk of suicide
- Withdrawal from friends or after school activities
- Worsening school performance

Anxiety

Anxiety is a normal part of the adolescent years as these are some of the most stressful times in a person's life. Some anxiety is normal and can help them deal with situations for example sitting an exam. Anxiety is often a harmless phase that lasts for a while and dissipates on its own.

However there are a variety of disorders that can impact the lives of adolescents. This can lead to be fear, shyness, and nervousness and can cause them to avoid certain activities and places.

Anxiety disorder is one of the most common types of mental health concerns experienced by all ages. Extreme amounts of continuous fear, nervousness, trepidation or worry become disabling yet treatable mental health conditions.

Five types of anxiety disorders include:

1. **Generalized anxiety disorder:** extreme worry about a variety of events, past, present or future – occurs more days than not for periods six months or longer

   Worries about past conversations or behaviours, upcoming events, family problems, competence in sports or school, world events

   Has difficulty controlling extreme amounts of worry and the anxiety interferes with their daily life

2. **Panic disorder:** recurrent panic attacks and persistent anxiety that can lead to physical or psychological harm

   Feelings of intense fear, and unease including physical symptoms and fearful thoughts

   Avoids going out and engaging in activities out of fear that an attack may occur

3. **Separation Anxiety**: unwillingness to separate from major attachment figures such as care-givers or home – mostly in children but can be experienced by adolescents

4. **Social Phobia:** intense fear of embarrassment or humiliation in social situations; can lead to shyness or fear and will avoid attending parties, speaking with persons with authority of speaking in public

5. **Specific Phobia:** intense, irrational fears of specific things and situations – exposure to the feared object or situation will lead to extreme distress.

Bullying

Bullying includes behaviors that focus on making someone else feel inadequate, or focus on belittling someone else.

Bullying includes harassment, physical harm, repeatedly demeaning speech and efforts to ostracize another person.

Bullying is active, and is done with the intention of bringing another person down.

There are different kinds of bullying:

1. **Physical Bullying** This is the most obvious form of bullying. In this type of bullying, the instigator attempts to physically dominate another teen. This usually includes kicking, punching and other physically harmful activities, designed to instill fear in the one bullied, and possible coerce him or her to do something.

2. **Verbal Bullying** When someone verbally bullies another, he or she uses demeaning language to tear down another's self-image. Bullies who use verbal techniques excessively tease others, say belittling things and use a great deal of sarcasm with the intent to hurt the other person's feelings or humiliate the other teen in front of others.

3. **Emotional Bullying** This is even more subtle than verbal bullying. Teenage bullying that includes emotional methods aims at getting someone else to feel isolated, alone and may even prompt depression. This type of bullying is designed to get others to ostracize the person being bullied.

4. **Cyber Bullying** Electronic bullying is becoming a very real problem for teens. This type of bullying uses instant messaging, cell phone text messages and online social networks to humiliate and embarrass others. This can be especially devastating to the people being bullied, since they cannot even find a safe place in the virtual world.

Is teenage bullying common?

Teenage bullying is more common among younger teens than it is among older teens. However, it may be that young teens are more prone to physical bullying, which is easier to identify, and that older teens are more sophisticated in methods of bullying that are not always exactly identified as such.

Physical bullying is more common among boys, and teenage girls often favor verbal and emotional bullying. Indeed, while boys report that they are more likely to be involved in physical altercations, girls report that they are often the targets of nasty rumors – especially involving sexual gossip. Additionally, girls are more likely to use exclusion as a teenage bullying technique than boys are.

There are a number of effects that come with teenage bullying.

Physical problems and injuries that can result from physical bullying.

1. Emotional: can lead to depression (and even suicide), drug use and stunted social development. These are problems that can affect a person well into adulthood.
2. Retaliation: Bullied teens may have violent fantasies of attacking their tormentors. There are instances in which these teens become violent, turning on their classmates in order to get revenge. This can be a cause of heartbreak and difficulty.

Drugs and Alcohol

Teens may use a substance for many reasons. They may do it because:

- They want to fit in with friends or certain groups.
- They like the way it makes them feel.
- They believe it makes them more grown up.
- Teens tend to try new things and take risks, so they may take drugs or drink alcohol because it seems exciting.

Also, teens who feel that they are not connected to or valued by their parents are at greater risk. Teens with poor self-esteem or emotional or mental health problems, such as depression, also are at increased risk.

Substance abuse can lead to problems such as
- Poor schoolwork,
- Loss of friends,
- Problems at home
- Teen death or injury related to car crashes, suicides, violence, and drowning.
- Increase the risk of pregnancy and sexually transmitted infections (STIs), including HIV

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Peer Pressure

As children get older, they will start to care more about what their friends think and how others perceive them. They may feel pressured in good ways. For example, he or she may try out for a new sport or start learning how to play an instrument.

Your child might also feel pressured in bad ways, such as skipping class or cheating on a test. These types of activities can have negative impacts on your child's education and academic success.

Your child may feel pressured into partaking in illicit activities, such as rug use or drinking.
The pre-teen and teenage years can be a challenging time for parents as they might feel like they are out of touch with their child. Here are some healthy ways to talk to your child about peer pressure and some strategies for your child to overcome it:

How to talk to your child?

1. **Stay calm.**
   It is important to listen to what your child is telling you and not overreact. Teens just want to be heard and respected, and they may tell you something you weren't prepared to hear or might not like. It is important to acknowledge your children's feelings, listen to them, and encourage them to come up with their own solutions.
2. **Talk about what being a friend means.**
   Ask questions about what makes a good friend and if your child feels as if he or she can trust a new person he or she has just met and wants to be around. Ask your teen why this person holds so much power over other people. Encourage your teens to be themselves and find peers who accept them for who they are.
3. **Get to know your child's friends.**
   Invite your child's friends over. Talk to them about their interests. Showing your child that you are interested and invested in his or her life and friendships may encourage your child to have more honest communication with you.

4. **Model saying "no."**
   Show your child that it is okay to say no to something you don't want to do. Practice saying no with your child, and equip your child with the skills he or she will need to follow through when the time comes. Remember to praise and encourage your child when he or she makes healthy choices.

Strategies for your child

1. **Pay attention to your emotions and gut feelings.**
   If you feel like something is not right – chances are it isn't. Pay attention to your feelings. The more in-tune you are with your emotions, the better you will be at identifying them, staying calm in stressful situations, and remaining in control.

2. **Find a friend who also says no.**
   It can be hard to be the only person saying no. Find a friend who is also willing to say no to skipping class or smoking a cigarette, and spend time with this person doing something you both enjoy. There is strength in numbers, and you may find that more people may be joining you than going out for a smoke!

3. **Talk to someone you trust.**
   If you continue to feel pressured, talk to a teacher, counselor, parent, or friend about the situation. You will find it is helpful to talk through your emotions with someone you trust and on whom you rely. These people can help you practice saying no, learn to say no in a different way, or help you come up with alternative solutions to saying no.

Talking to your Teen about Puberty

Puberty is the time in life when a boy or girl becomes sexually mature. It is a process that usually happens between ages 10 and 14 for girls and ages 12 and 16 for boys. It causes physical changes, and affects boys and girls differently.

In Girls:
- The first sign of puberty is usually breast development.
- Then hair grows in the pubic area and armpits.
- Menstruation (or a period) usually happens last.

In Boys:
- Puberty usually begins with the testicles and penis getting bigger.
- Then hair grows in the pubic area and armpits.
- Muscles grow, the voice deepens, and facial hair develops as puberty continues.

Both boys and girls may get acne. They also usually have a growth spurt (a rapid increase in height) that lasts for about 2 or 3 years. This brings them closer to their adult height, which they reach after puberty.

Talking to Teen girls about the Menstrual Cycle

A girl can start her period anytime between the ages of 8 and 15. Most of the time, the first period starts about 2 years after breasts first start to develop. If a girl has not had her first period by age 15, or if it has been more than 2 to 3 years since breast growth started, she should see a doctor.

Having regular menstrual cycles is a sign that important parts of your body are working normally. The menstrual cycle provides important body chemicals, called hormones, to keep you healthy. It also prepares your body for pregnancy each month. A cycle is counted from the first day of 1 period to the first day of the next period. The average menstrual cycle is 28 days long. Cycles can range anywhere from 21 to 35 days in adults and from 21 to 45 days in young teens.

Good Hygiene Practices and Grooming

Keeping clean is an important part of staying healthy. For example, the simple act of washing hands before eating and after using the toilet is a proven and effective tool for fighting off germs and avoiding sickness.

Being clean and well-presented is also an important part of confidence for teenagers.

Helping your child with the basics of personal hygiene:

You've got an important role to play in making sure your child knows about how his/her body and hygiene needs are going to change, and in getting him/her ready to manage the changes.

1. **Body odour:** When children reach puberty, a sweat gland in their armpit and genital area develops. Skin bacteria feed on the sweat this gland produces, which is why teenagers – and adults sometimes smell 'sweaty'. Bacteria feed on sweat in other parts of the body too, which can lead to body odour.

   Changing underwear and other clothes worn next to the skin is especially important. These clothes collect all sorts of stuff that bacteria love to eat, including dead skin cells, sweat and body fluids. That's why they get smelly.

   The onset of puberty is also a good time for your child to start using antiperspirant deodorant. You can encourage your children to do this by letting them choose their own.

2. **Smelly feet:** Smelly feet and shoes can also be a problem for your child, whether he is sporty or not. He can avoid this by giving his feet extra attention in the shower, and making sure they're completely dry before putting his/her shoes on. It's a good idea to encourage them to alternate shoes and to wear cotton socks.

3. **Dental hygiene:** Good dental and mouth hygiene is as important now as it was when your child was little, and you'll need to keep making regular dental appointments. Brushing at least twice a day, flossing and going to the dentist regularly are vital if your child wants

to avoid bad breath, gum problems and tooth decay.

4. **Girls:** Although all teenagers have the same basic hygiene issues, girls will need help to manage their periods. For example, you might need to talk with your daughter about how often to change her pad or tampon, and how to dispose of it hygienically.

5. **Boys:** Boys will need advice about shaving (how to do it and when to start), looking after their genitals, and about bodily fluids. For example, you might talk to your son about wet dreams and how to clean up hygienically afterwards.

How Best to Communicate Safe Sex Practices

Talking with your teen about sex shouldn't be a one-time conversation. Like almost everything important in your teen's life, it is something that will need to be done over and over again. Conversations about these topics should start early and continue—and change—as your teen gets older. Teens go through a lot of changes during adolescence. Helping them figure out all of their relationships, including their sexual relationships, is important, and can really pay off. Studies have shown that parent- child communication about sex, birth control, and pregnancy is positively associated with delayed initiation of sex, decreased frequency of sex, and an increase condom and contraception use.

What Teens Want to Hear from Parents

1. Tell me why teen pregnancy isn't a good idea and help me think about positive opportunities for my future.

   Don't assume teens only see the bad things about teen pregnancy. Be sure to ask what they think about early pregnancy and parenthood and how it would change their goals for the future. Ask teens about their ideas for the future and provide them with specific ways they can make their dreams a reality. Don't

be afraid to talk to them about how getting pregnant or causing a pregnancy will get in the way of their goals and don't assume they've thought about this themselves.

2. Just telling me not to have sex or to "be safe" isn't enough. Tell me why you feel the way you do. It is very important to share with your teenager that legally, only a person 16 years and older can consent to having sex. Anyone who has sex with a girl or boy below the age of 16 commits an offence which is punishable

   Make sure teens understand why you're asking them to do certain things. They want to know what your values and attitudes are about these topics. Remember to talk to them about relationships and some of the emotional aspects of sex, not just the health and safety messages.

Some things you might say:

- It's okay to think about sex and to feel sexual desire. Everybody does. But there is a time for everything and your priority at this time should not be sex but rather focusing on your education. It's not okay to get pregnant/ get somebody pregnant as a teenager and pregnancy is not the only consequence of having sex, you are also at risk of getting a sexually transmitted infection. If you do get pregnant/get somebody pregnant, it will be harder for you to graduate from high school and go on to college. It also will be harder for you to reach your goals for the future.
- You shouldn't feel pressure to have sex without using contraception in order to have or keep a relationship with someone. If sex without using contraception is the price of your relationship, you deserve to find someone else.
- I'd really like you to wait to have sex until you're in a serious, committed, adult relationship.

3. Don't assume that just because I ask you a question about sex or contraception it means I'm having sex.

Teens may ask about sex or contraception because they are curious or heard something that they want explained. If you freak out the first time they ask you a question about sex or contraception, they'll probably be shy about asking you again. Also remember that giving young people information about these topics doesn't encourage them to have sex, but it can go a long way toward making sure they have accurate information. It can help begin a series of conversations with them about these topics. When they do ask questions about these topics, make sure you recognize the question, understand the question, and understand what it is they're trying to learn. If you don't know the answer to a question your teen asks, don't be afraid to admit it and suggest looking up the answer together.

Talking to Teens about the Risk of Teenage Pregnancy and STIs

1. Be clear and specific about family values and rules about when it's okay to start dating and your expectations around dating and sexual behavior. If you have strong beliefs and values around sex and marriage, communicate those plainly. For example, if you believe people should not have sex until they are married, say that. If you think teens in high school are too young to be involved in a serious relationship, say that, and why. Or, if you think the time to have a baby is after college, say that.
2. Believe in your power to affect change. It might seem like your son or daughter is ignoring you, as if your adolescents don't want to hear what you say, or that they don't care what you think. Despite how they act, some of what you say will sink in. In survey after survey, children report that they want to talk to their parents about their sex-related questions, that it would be easier to delay sexual activity and avoid teen pregnancy if they were able to have more open, honest conversations about these topics with their parents, and that parents influence their decisions about sex more than friends do.
3. Be there: monitor and supervise. Establish rules, curfews, and expectations for behavior through family conversations. Get to know your children's friends and their families. Also, be sure to monitor what your children are reading, watching and listening to, and encourage your children to think about consequences from behaviors they may be exposed to in the media.
4. Discourage early dating. Dating during adolescence is common and can be part of healthy development. However, serious and exclusive dating relationships can lead adolescents to have sex earlier than they would have otherwise. Adolescents who have sex at an early age are more likely to engage in risky sexual behaviors and in other unsafe activities, such as substance abuse.
5. Talk about their future. Young people who believe they have bright futures, options, and opportunities are much less likely to engage in risky sexual behavior. Encourage your children's aspirations to high levels of achievement and to participate in school and community activities (such as clubs, sports or music, etc.). Support their activities and dreams to the extent you can.

Awareness of Sexually Transmitted Infections (STIs)**

1. Sexually transmitted infections, (formerly known as sexually transmitted diseases) or STIs, are infections that can be transferred from one person to another through sexual contact. Sexual contact includes more than just sexual intercourse (vaginal and anal). Sexual contact includes kissing, oral-genital contact, and the use of sexual "toys," such as vibrators.
2. Women often have more serious health problems from STIs than men due to the nature of our sexual organs :
   • Chlamydia and gonorrhea, left untreated, raise the risk of chronic pelvic pain and life-threatening ectopic pregnancy. Chlamydia and gonorrhea also can cause infertility.
   • Untreated syphilis in pregnant women can result in infant death.
   • Women have a higher risk than men of

getting an STI during unprotected vaginal sex. Unprotected anal sex puts women at even more risk for getting an STI than unprotected vaginal sex.

3. Many STIs have only mild symptoms or no signs or symptoms at all. When women have symptoms, they may be mistaken for something else, such as a urinary tract infection or yeast infection. Get tested to be treated for the correct infection.

4. The best way to prevent an STI is to not have vaginal, oral, or anal sex. If you do have sex, lower your risk of getting an STI with the following steps:
   - Get vaccinated. There are vaccines to protect against HPV and hepatitis B.
   - Use condoms. Condoms are the best way to prevent STIs when you have sex. Because a man does not need to ejaculate (come) to give or get some STIs, make sure to put the condom on before the penis touches the vagina, mouth, or anus. Other methods of birth control, like birth control pills, injections, implants, or diaphragms, will not protect you from STIs.
   - Get tested. Be sure you and your partner are tested for STIs. Talk to each other about the test results before you have sex.
   - Be monogamous. Having sex with just one partner can lower your risk for STIs. After being tested for STIs, be faithful to each other. That means that you have sex only with each other and no one else.
   - Limit your number of sex partners. Your risk of getting STIs goes up with the number of partners you have.
   - Do not douche. Douching removes some of the normal bacteria in the vagina that protects you from infection. This may increase your risk of getting STIs.
   - Do not abuse alcohol or drugs. Drinking too much alcohol or using drugs increases risky behavior and may put you at risk of sexual assault and possible exposure to STIs.

The steps work best when used together. No single step can protect you from every single type of STI.

How to Communicate to Teens about STIs

Educating a child about sex is an important part of his or her healthy development. Their early understanding of sex, love, intimacy and their own sexuality can help mold their values, behaviour, and even their self-image, for a lifetime. You, as a loving parent (or caregiver), are uniquely qualified to be your child's first and best teacher.

Educating your child about sex involves much more than explaining how the physical side of sex works. You'll want your child to understand that emotions, intimacy, moral values, personal responsibility, sexual orientation, gender differences and self-image all play a role in establishing our sexual selves.

Same steps as talking to Teens about Teenage Pregnancy

Decision making and Consequences

Adolescence, as every teenager, parent, and youth professional knows, is a time of risks. With greater freedom and independence, young people face new choices involving addictive substances, and sexuality to name two—frequently in combination. Poor choices about these risks can have terrible consequences for individuals, families, and society as a whole.

We've all heard the cliché that young people think they are immortal and invulnerable to harm and underlies many efforts to educate young people about their risks. The problem is, it's not true.

The science of adolescent risk taking leads to two broad conclusions for designing interventions.

First, bombarding youth with the facts won't help them make better decisions, and may actually encourage a less mature, riskier form of reasoning. Interventions should instead encourage less deliberative, more categorical thinking about risk.

Second, because adolescents' brains are not yet mature, exposure to major risks should be limited as much as possible. The safety of young people is a community concern, not solely a matter of individual choice. However, interventions that help young people learn to make better choices can be an effective component of a larger commitment to youth development and healthy communities.

The following strategies can be used by parents, youth professionals, and communities to keep young people safe and help them make better choices (Reyna & Farley, 2006):

- Don't assume that adolescents think they are immortal—they don't! Research clearly shows that young people are well aware that they live in a world full of perils.
- Help adolescents see benefits differently, not just risks. Risks will have less appeal if young people perceive greater benefit from alternative, safer courses of action. For younger adolescents, highlight short-term benefits and risks, as these are the most salient.
- Use positive images or models of healthy behaviors and negative images of unhealthy ones. Positive, emotionally evocative images—such as those in the media, films, or fiction—can assist gist-based thinking and serve as reminders of the benefits of safer behavior.
- Use analogies to steer adolescents away from deliberative calculation toward more categorical thinking about risk. To help young people see that no possible payoff of risky behavior is worth risking death, ask questions like "Would you play Russian Roulette for one million dollars?"
- Develop emotional and personal cues. The most salient cues to making mature decisions are simple, visceral, and personal. A sexual health intervention could personalize risk by having young people write answers to questions like "What would happen if you were diagnosed with HIV? Who would you tell? How would it change your life?"
- Give adolescents practice at recognizing environmental signs of danger. Teach children about "red and yellow alerts" that indicate the possibility of various risks—for example, being at home after school with a boyfriend or girlfriend (and no parents or other adults) as a signal of the possibility of unwanted or unsafe sex. Have them practice finding such alerts in various scenarios so that they can avoid such risks and, if the risks cannot be avoided, thinking through actions they could use to extricate themselves.
- Teach self-efficacy; provide opportunities to practice concrete skills. Giving young people real-world tasks and concrete strategies helps them become responsible and capable. For example, young teens who are not ready for sex can practice refusal skills; repeated practice leads to better self-confidence in using these skills when they are needed, often in situations involving high emotion that can disrupt thinking. A well-practiced skill can be used automatically, without requiring a lot of thinking.
- Limit adolescents' exposure to risky substances and situations. For example, limit the number of peers in automobiles; avoid exposing minors to addictive substances (rather than exposing young people to alcohol to teach them to drink responsibly, which has been shown to be ineffective and in fact is associated with higher rates of binge drinking and other bad outcomes;
- Monitor and supervise younger adolescents. Rather than rely on reasoned choices, remove younger teens' opportunity to engage in risk taking by occupying their time with positive activities.
- Train young people in strategies to help them avoid dangerous situations. Teach youth to avoid circumstances in which they will need to make an immediate, risky choice—for instance, encourage them to stay away from situations where alcohol and drugs may be present.

KEY MESSAGES

Adolescence is a transitional period between childhood and adulthood which requires special attention and protection.

This is a time when the brain undergoes substantial development which affects emotional skills, physical and mental abilities.

Investing in adolescents can accelerate the fight against poverty, socio-economic disparities and gender discrimination.

Caring adults with adequate policies and services which focus on their needs and capacities have the potential to help break the cycle of poverty, discrimination and violence.

Seek help if you notice any signs of depression or anxiety in your child.

Bullying includes behaviors that focus on making someone else feel inadequate, or focus on belittling someone else. Be attentive to your child's behavior – He/She might be the bully or he/she might be bullied.

Teens may use a substance for many reasons. Be aware of your child's needs.

Puberty is the time in life when a boy or girl becomes sexually mature. It is a process that usually happens between ages 10 and 14 for girls and ages 12 and 16 for boys. It causes physical changes, and affects boys and girls differently.

Keeping clean is an important part of staying healthy.

Being a part of your teen's life will help build trust, and foster open communication about sex, pregnancy, STIs peer pressure, decision-making etc.

Articles 12, 13, 15, 16. 17, 27. 28, 29, 34, 36 and 37 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

1. Recognize the developmental changes in teens including factors in their social environment and identify ways to support them in this challenging phase.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Review the developmental milestones of adolescence
2. Focusing on the importance of proper nutrition and hygiene practices and grooming
3. Recall their own teen years-joys, challenges, needs
4. Identify strategies to deal with common issues.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Recognize your child's cognitive and physical changes.
2. Identify the importance of talking to your child about Sex and Sexual Transmitted Infections.
3. Understand the importance of decision making and its consequences.
4. Develop new parenting skills for the adolescent years.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

Understanding adolescence and actively participate in your teenager's life changes and education

The background will help with the preparation of power points and activities in addition to those suggested below.

Suggested Activities

Introduction

The following quotes can be displayed to show how ambivalent and sometimes confused parents (all over the world) are about the stage of our children's development called "adolescence":

- Italian proverb: Little children, headache; big children, heartache.
- Too many of today's children have straight teeth and crooked morals (unknown high school principal)
- Mother Nature is providential. She gives us twelve years to develop a love for our children be-fore turning them into teenagers.
- Teenagers complain there's nothing to do, then stay out all night doing it.
- Jewish proverb: Small children disturb your sleep; big children your life.
- The troubles of adolescence eventually all go away – it's just like a really long, bad cold. (Quotes from www.quotegarden.com/teenagers)

Invite parents to share any other quotes or phrases they have heard about the adolescence stage and engage on brief discussion of what these mean.

Experiences with teenagers

Ask for three volunteers. Two are to go outside and one blindfolds the other, waiting to be called back into the room.

Those remaining in the room are to rearrange chairs and other items in the room so there is some form of obstacle course. The blindfolded person is to be brought back in, and the third volunteer is to give that person directions for walking around the room without bumping into any object. (If space allows, the other participants could be the "objects" around which the blindfolded person is to negotiate to get from one side of the room to the other.) This should be fun—and make sure no one can get hurt! If time permits, this exercise could be repeated with a new set of volunteers.

When the course has been run once or twice, the group should resume sitting in a circle and the

Facilitator asks: What could this exercise have to do with parents and adolescents? Brainstorm and discuss from the angle of both parents and teenagers. Responses could include:

From "parents viewpoints":

The teens often leave us in the dark! They can make us feel helpless.

Sometimes all you see in your teen's path are obstacles (bad friends, drugs, sexual temptations, etc.)

You try your best to direct them but they don't always follow, or they get hurt/ lost anyway!

Going too fast can be dangerous—slow down!

From "teenagers viewpoints":

Parents are always warning you about the dangers ahead, or how to keep on track; but we need to see where we're going and choose our own path!

It takes lots of trust to follow directions to a place you can't see for yourself (e.g. college, joining a parent who lives abroad, etc.)
It feels uncomfortable to be told what to do without knowing why.
Even blindfolded I could find my way just fine!

ACTIVITY 2

Puberty

1. Parents are asked to remember the time when they began experiencing puberty. Had their parents spoken to them before that? Did they know what was happening to their bodies? Invite ladies, think about what it was like when they got your first period?

2. Presenter then gives everyone a piece of paper where parents jot down their thoughts to one of these questions. Presenter explains that they do not write their names. Parents are asked to form a circle and to crumple their papers into a ball. All balls are thrown up in the air where they will fall in the middle of the circle.

3. One at a time, parents will pick up a random paper and will go around the circle reading what their paper says.

4. Presenter then explains that puberty is difficult time for teenagers, but it is more difficult if parents do not talk to them (preferably beforehand) about what to expect and why these changes are occurring.

5. Trainer presents on puberty and the menstrual cycle taking the information from the background section.

6. Presenter then explains that good hygiene goes hand in hand with puberty and presents on this topic.

7. Parents are then asked to develop their own presentations on the topics and practice through role play show how they would talk to their children about these topics.

ACTIVITY 3

Critical Issues for teenagers

1. Trainer sticks 11 pieces of paper on the board or wall at the front of the room. The first paper has the word "Easy" written on it, the other 9 pieces of paper are numbered 1 to 9 and are placed beside each other. The last paper has the word "difficult" on it and is placed beside the last number. All the papers are side by side making a line. Parents will be randomly given a piece of paper with topics on them to talk to their children about. Parents are to go up to the 1-9 chart and stick where they feel that topic should go (how easy or difficult is it to talk to my teen about this topic?). Each parent will find the topic more difficult or easier so there is no right or wrong answer.

2. Topics to be given to parents on paper are: boyfriends/girlfriends of teen, abstinence, menstrual cycle, masturbation, sexual intercourse, right age to be in a serious relationship, teenage pregnancy, Sexually Transmitted Infections, friends of teen, parents' mental health, self-identity, anxiety, suicide, substance abuse, depression,

3. After parents have chosen where to stick their topic, presenter asks the group if they agree with where the topics where placed. A discussion is held on why these are easy or difficult and invite parents to share what they would like to learn more on.

4. Trainer presents on, mental health, peer pressure, drugs and alcohol use, safe sex practices and how parents can talk to their children about it.

5. After presentations, divide participants into groups and have them role play how they would teach their children about these issues especially those that they find most difficult to talk about. They can be creative and choose any means to present.

ACTIVITY 4

Teenage pregnancy and STIs

1. Trainer presents on how to talk to teens about teenage pregnancy and on awareness of STIs and in groups parents will develop brief adolescent friendly brochures which will help them to teach their children about the issues presented. Brochure could be edited and shared.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

ACTIVITY 5

Decision Making Wheel

Decision Making Wheel which they can share with the children to teach them about making decisions.

This decision-making model provides a process people can use in solving problems or making decisions. It is applicable to most situations in life, including sexual situations.

The Steps in the Process

1. **Define the problem** State exactly what the problem is or the situation about which a decision needs to be made.

2. **Consider all alternatives** List all the possible ways to resolve the problem, all the possible decisions that could be made. You may need to gather more facts or consult with others to be sure you haven't overlooked any options. Questions that can be asked – is it good, is it useful, is it necessary?

3. **Consider the consequences of each alternative.** List all the possible outcomes – positive and negative – for each alternative or each course of action that could be

taken. Make sure you have correct and full information by this point.

4. **Consider family and personal values**. Values include beliefs about how we should act or behave and the personal and family rules we live by and believe are important; for example, beliefs about honesty, loyalty or whether it's all right to smoke or drink. Most of our values come from the training we receive at home. Other values come from our friends and society.

5. **Consider whether each alternative is consistent with your personal and family values.**

6. **Consider the impact on other people.** Our decisions affect many people who are important to us: parents, siblings, friends, others. Think about the effect of each alternative on these people.

7. **Choose one alternative.** After carefully weighing each alternative, choose the one that seems most appropriate based on your knowledge, values, morals, and religious upbringing, present and future goals and the effect of the decision on the people who matter to you.

8. **Implement the decision.** Do what is necessary for the decision to be carried out as you want it to be. You may have to develop a step-by-step programme with a timetable to make sure things get done. (Adapted from Family Life Education Programme Development Project)

Engage parents in using the wheel – identify a problem and then go through the cycle and invite a few who are willing to share with large group. Encourage them to use this with their teenagers.

ACTIVITY FIVE: DECISION MAKING WHEEL
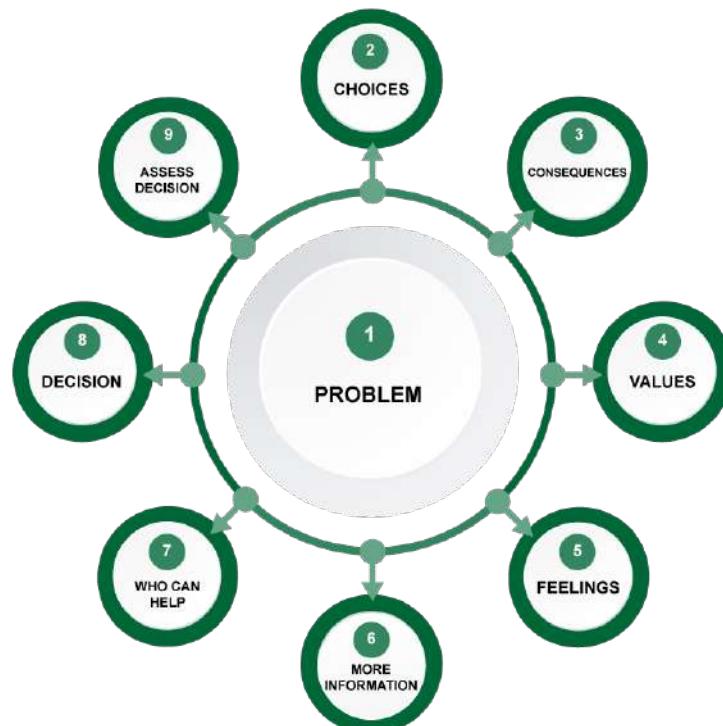
Sexuality and Adolescents with Disability Resource Booklet. Available at the National Resource Center for Inclusive Education (NARCIE)

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YouTube
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2.1.2 Coping with Differences and Behaviour Styles

Background

According to a study by psychology professor and researcher, Robert Epstein, published in 2010, some qualities of competent parents were found to be the following:

Loving and affectionate
Parents who are loving and affectionate while still providing parental guidance was most important in raising children.

When parents are loving, they choose to show respect, encourage, and nurture their children as opposed to judging and blaming them. Loving parents constantly affirm both verbally and through their behavior.

Skillful communicators
Parents who are skillful communicators show genuine interest in all areas of their child's life and make themselves available.

Parents who communicate well with their children are able to explain the reason behind rules, encourage children to express their feelings, listen to their children with understanding, show them that their feelings and opinions are appreciated and valued.

Ability to manage stress
Parents who manage their stress and temper lead to well-adjusted children because children mirror how their parents manage emotions during stressful situations.

Parents who come home and complain about their job, boss, use foul language, argue or take out their frustrations on children, set a poor example for healthy stress management.

Respectful of autonomy
Parents who value their children's emerging independence choose to nurture it rather than attempt to suppress it.

Instead of dictating rules, children are engaged in making them a joint project which in turn motivates them to abide or carry them out. Flexibility can show that as a parent you honor their needs, but still setting limits.

Positive role model
A positive role model for appropriate behavior is more effective than specific disciplinary measures or training in raising children.

Children learn through observation and often mimic the behavior if parents. Parents are encouraged to be those traits which they hope to develop in their children: kindness, compassion, honesty, respectfulness, tolerance, patience and unconditional love.

Importance of discipline in raising children

Parenting is not an easy job. It is often influenced by our own childhood experiences, concern for parent-child relationship and the willingness to look at some new or different ways of viewing children and discipline. However, if parents are open, these skills can be learned.

Jane Nelsen, author of positive Discipline books states: "Where did we ever get the crazy idea that in order to make children do better, we first have to make them feel worse?"

Discipline involves learning and discipline in children is about teaching and training not about punishment which can bring pain, blame, shame or humiliation. Children should be treated the way we treat all people – with dignity and respect, being kind yet firm. In this way, children will learn to be respectful of self, others and be accountable for their actions, while still feeling loved and respected.

Tips for Effective Discipline:

- Trust your child to do the right thing within the child's age and development stage

- What you ask for should be reasonable

- Speak to your child the way you would want to be spoken to if someone was reprimanding you! No name-calling, yelling or disrespect

- Be clear, firm and specific about what you expect, want or mean

- Model positive behaviour

- Allow for negotiation and flexibility – this can help in building the child's social skills

- Let your child experience the consequences for his/her behaviour, consequences should be delivered immediately or as quickly as possible and related to the broken rule

- Consequences should be fair and appropriate to the situation, the child's age and short enough in duration so you can move on to emphasize the positives

Children are expected to break rules once in a while because testing limits is how they learn about themselves and the world. However, sometimes, behavior problems can be signaling something more serious.

Warning signs of behavioral problems:

- Difficulty managing emotions and impulses – if your child cannot control his anger, frustration or disappointment in and age-appropriate manner, there could be an underlying emotional problem.

- Not responding to discipline – it is normal for children to test you but not normal if the child exhibits the same behaviour repeatedly if you are applying consistent discipline.

- Behaviour that interferes with school or peers – being sent out class, getting into fights during breaks, and difficulty staying on task.

- Self-injury or talk of suicide – head banging, burning or cutting, or talk od suicide.

Some normal behaviors:

Pre-schoolers– argue and exercise their right to say "no", occasional tantrum, minor aggression, crave attention

Time out and ignoring mild misbehavior are great discipline strategies

6-9 year olds- lack verbal impulse control, struggle to deal with failure, need help in dealing with uncomfortable emotions

Reward good behavior, implement logical consequences when rules are broken, provide plenty opportunity to practice good decision making and offer a lot of guidance

10-12 year olds – mildly oppositional and argumentative, disagreements with friends, ability to recognize long term consequences of behavior

Teach life skills, turn your child's mistakes into learning opportunities, reinforce good behavior, and institute a token reward system

13+ years – minor rebellion, moody, mild non-compliance, defiance is normal

Lose privileges for misbehavior, token reward system, problem solving as a way to deal with misbehavior, establish clear rules and follow through with consequences

A number of research studies indicate reasons why it is important to understand your child's behavior style as well as your own behavior style as a parent. Some examples are:

1. Greater Communication (Admin, 2012) – People with different behavior styles often have their own way of communicating. Therefore, understanding your child's behavior style will help you to communicate better with them.
2. Get Ahead (Cullen, 2010) – When you learn to identify your own style, you will be better able to recognize your unique style strengths. As you use these strengths, your sense of

accomplishment improves. So embrace your strengths and use them with your children as well as in other situations.

3. Empowers Relationships (Chaneski, 2006)) – Understanding your behavioral style as well as the behavioral style of your children empowers the relationship because you learn about your children's strengths, weaknesses, and how to treat them in a way that makes them feel comfortable.

4. Improves Effectiveness (Caron, 2013). – Objectives are achieved and the targeted problems are solved when behavioral styles are understood and respected in others.

We all display a mixture of different characteristics in different situations with different people. Our personalities (the way we are most often) interact with our environment so at any moment in time, we are a product of our personalities and our perceptions. Understanding our behaviour style as well as the behaviour style of our children can help us better communicate with them and appreciate their actions and behaviours.

There are 4 different behavioural styles. While we can each use all four of them, we will tend to use 1-2 most frequently.

The four styles are: DISC

- Dominance
- Influence
- Steadiness
- Conscientious (Compliance, Cautious)

This behavioral style model is frequently referred to as DISC, because of the first letter of each style. These behavior styles are described as:

1. **Dominance**

    People demonstrating the "D" style thrive on the challenge of accomplishing results and tend to be quick decision makers. They don't wait to be given authority; they take it. They like being in control. They are primarily interested in the bottom line and the big picture. They could care less about all those details. They

hate feeling micro-managed and work best when they are free from lots of supervision. They're not afraid to try something new if it will get results. They seek an environment that includes power, authority, prestige, challenge, opportunity, scope, freedom and variety. They are often found in leadership positions but this does not mean that they are "good" leaders as their weaknesses often include being poor listeners, impatient and insensitive to others.

2. **Influence**

    People demonstrating the "I" style are often thought of as "People-People". They prefer to be around others and tend to be very enthusiastic and entertaining. They enjoy contacting people, making a favorable impression, speaking articulately, creating a motivational environment and participating in groups. They seek an environment that includes social recognition, freedom of expression, group activities, freedom from control and detail, coaching and counseling skills, and positive interactions with others. They are more interested in people than in accomplishing tasks.

3. **Steadiness**

    Those demonstrating the "S" Style take a much more deliberate approach and don't like frequent change. They are patient and loyal. They have a real desire to be of service and help others. They are also very good at calming people when they get upset or during a conflict. They seek an environment that includes security, predictability, minimal work infringement on home life, sincere appreciation, identification with a group, and minimal conflict. They get along well with others because they are flexible in their attitude. If they receive appreciation, they maintain a high level of performance.

4. **Conscientious**
    The "C" style of behavior tends to focus on details. In fact, they pick up the tiniest, most minute items that others miss and keep the non-detailed people out of trouble. Unless

quality will be improved, this style doesn't like sudden or abrupt changes. They tend to be very systematic, critical thinkers. They seek an environment with a focus on quality, accuracy and access to the latest up-to-date information. They will study privately to learn about a subject before discussing in public because perfection is very important to them.

Coping with Other Behavior Styles

The main thing to remember when coping with others' behavioral styles (such as your children) is to respect their style. Approach them in the manner they would approach you. Here are some quick tips that can help you:

- Dominance style: Tell them the results you need, and let them figure out how to get it done. Don't try to force your will on them, or micro-manage them. Don't give long, detailed explanations. Focus on the bottom line in a quick, direct way. Focus on facts and ideas rather than people.

- Influence style: Approach them in a personable, relaxed, upbeat manner. Don't shower them with details or be too serious. Use humor. Let them know you like them and value them. Recognize their accomplishments.

- Steadiness style: Approach them in a warm, but deliberate manner. Explain step-by-step methods for best getting things done. Let them know they can count on you. Follow-up when you say you will. Refrain from changing things just for the sake of change. Be as dependable with them as they would be with you. Give them time to adjust to change.

- Conscientious style: Give them the rules and details they need and ask for. Don't be vague in response to their questions. Know what you're talking about and be able to back it up with facts. Avoid surprises and be patient.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

When you understand and appreciate your child's behavior style it will help you build better bridges with them. They will respect your approach (because, after all, you respect theirs). They will trust you more. They will think more highly of you.

However, despite the parents' and children's behavior style, parents need to exercise a level of firmness and authority over their children.

Key Messages

Parenting is not an easy job. It is often influenced by our own childhood experiences, concern for parent-child relationship and the willingness to look at some new or different ways of viewing children and discipline. However, if parents are open, these skills can be learned.

Some qualities of competent parents include being loving and affectionate, being able to communicate, manage stress, respect autonomy and be positive role models.

Discipline involves learning and discipline in children is about teaching and training not about punishment which can bring pain, blame, shame or humiliation.

Children should be treated the way we treat all people – with dignity and respect, being kind yet firm. In this way, children will learn to be respectful of self, others and be accountable for their actions, while still feeling loved and respected.

Children are expected to break rules once in a while because testing limits is how they learn about themselves and the world. However, sometimes, behavior problems can be signaling something more serious.

Certain behaviors are normal at each stage of a child's development.

There are 4 different behavioural styles. While we can each use all four of them, we will tend to use 1-2 most frequently. The four styles are: DISC

• Dominance
• Influence
• Steadiness
• Conscientious (Compliance, Cautious)

When you understand and appreciate your child's behavior style it will help you build better bridges with them.

Despite the parents' and children's behavior style, parents need to exercise a level of firmness and authority over their children.

Article 12 of the CRC relates to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

1. Identify differences in their own and their children's behavior styles

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Explain the qualities that characterizes a competent parent.

2. Explain the definition of discipline and what contributes to make parents effective disciplinarians – natural and logical consequences and assertive discipline.

3. List the structure and nature of the cornerstones of effective discipline.

4. List some of the behavioural problems that are considered a normal aspect of children's development. Distinguish between developmentally appropriate and developmentally inappropriate behaviour problems.

5. Explain the different parenting styles.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Enhanced ability to communicate.
2. Understand each other's similarities and differences.
3. Create a closer relationship with their children.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

Appreciate each other's differences in behavior to foster positive relationships

Suggested Activities

The background will help the facilitator to prepare power points and activities in addition to those below.

ACTIVITY 1

Competent parent

Divide parents into 4 groups and give each group one of the following statements to complete or discuss and present.

1. Competent parents are those who………….
2. Discipline helps us to be better persons while punishment brings pain and humiliation – Agree or disagree – why?
3. There are effective ways to discipline children: discuss and choose two ways and role play
4. There appropriate and inappropriate behaviors for children t different stages of their development. Discuss and present some examples of both types for pre-schoolers and teenagers.

ACTIVITY 2

Describing your children

1. People have different ways in which they behave and most often have a unique style. These are referred to as behaviour styles.

2. Invite parents to focus for a few minutes on one or two of their children and identify ways in which they behave most often of the time for example– demanding, ambitious, enthusiastic, warm, calm, stable, careful, diplomatic, neat etc – invite them to think of other words that describes them.

Have four charts with the following:
- Relates to control, power and assertiveness
- Relates to social situations and communication
- Relates to patience, persistence and thoughtfulness
- Relates to structure and organization

3. Have a general discussion on the statements and see if they can identify where the words they chose to describe their children fit.

ACTIVITY 3

We are Different

Discussion Training – Understanding the different Behavior Styles

1. The training begins by placing parents in a circle.
2. A basketball is given and parents must bounce the ball around while music is playing.
3. When the music stops, the last person who has the ball must choose a word that best describes them. Power point provides some suggestions. It will be the facilitator's responsibility to group in the relevant category
4. This is played for about 5 minutes or until almost everyone has gotten a turn. If a player gets chosen twice, he or she must choose another person to answer.
5. At the end of the activity, explain that the available words describe one of the 4 behaviour styles.
6. Words written on the PowerPoint: adventurous, decisive, daring, assertive, restless (dominance); optimistic, enthusiastic, impulsive, emotional, persuading (influence); predictable, patient, protective, modest, loyal (steady); logical, precise, sceptical, curious, perfectionist (conscientious)
7. Introduce the 4 behaviour styles to the groups.
8. Explain that it is important for parents to understand their behaviour styles as well as their children's behaviour styles so that they can build better relationships with them

ACTIVITY 4

Children's Behavioural styles

1. Parents are asked to study the same words shown at the beginning of activity one and choose the top three that describe their children.
2. Next, parents are asked to stand up and find a partner
3. Parents take turns sharing why they chose those words to describe their children.
4. Using the information learned in the video from activity two, parent's find out their child's behaviour style and discuss that with their partner as well.
5. Presenter asks parents to raise their hand if their behaviour style is different from their child's one.
6. Presenter explains some coping strategies, as shared above, that parents can use to communicate with their child, and explains what one can do to succeed when dealing with someone of a different behaviour style.

Post at different points around the room the four cards with words often used to describe different behaviour styles or temperaments.
Read them out and make sure that all understand their definitions:

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wx0M81Hwm5I

ACTIVITY THREE: D-I-S-C

DIRECTOR	INFLUENCER	SUPPORTER	CONSCIENTIOUS
• Dominant • Active • Self - confident • Loud • Independent	• Impulsive • Talkative • People Oriented	• Modest • Cautious • Steady • Reliable • Calm • Quiet • Likeable	• Hardworking • Careful • Perfectionist • Serious • Logical • Thinker

Ask participants to stand under the card that best describes who they really believe they are and NOT just what people have said about them. When all have placed themselves, direct the attention of the small "groups" under each card to the flipchart/posted paper with the discussion questions listed below. The small groups are to sit together and discuss these questions for approximately ten minutes; they may record answers if they wish. Each group then presents their responses to the other groups, allowing for a few questions to gain clarity before moving to the next group.

Discussion questions (to post):

- What do you think are the strengths of this behaviour style?
- What are the difficulties/challenges others have with you due to your behaviour style?
- What are the difficulties/challenges you have with others because of this style?
- What do you need others to understand about you in relation to your particular behaviour style?

After groups have presented their responses, ask the following questions of the whole group:

- Did participants find similarities with other members of their group?
- Were the perceived strengths/challenges similar or different?
- Has this exercise helped them to gain a better understanding of how their child's needs and feelings might be different from their own?

ACTIVITY 5

Identifying our children's differences

1. Re-do activity three but this time focus again on their children.
2. Have a discussion on coping with the different behaviour styles of their children using information from the background.

Facilitator's Remarks:

Parent-child relationships differ from family to family. Since parents can't change or determine the child's temperamental style, parenting needs to be molded around the child's temperament. Parents who try to make the child fit their concept of the "perfect child" usually end up feeling very frustrated. A better approach is to observe and learn about the child's behavioural style and then change the way the parent reacts to the situation.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

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Notes
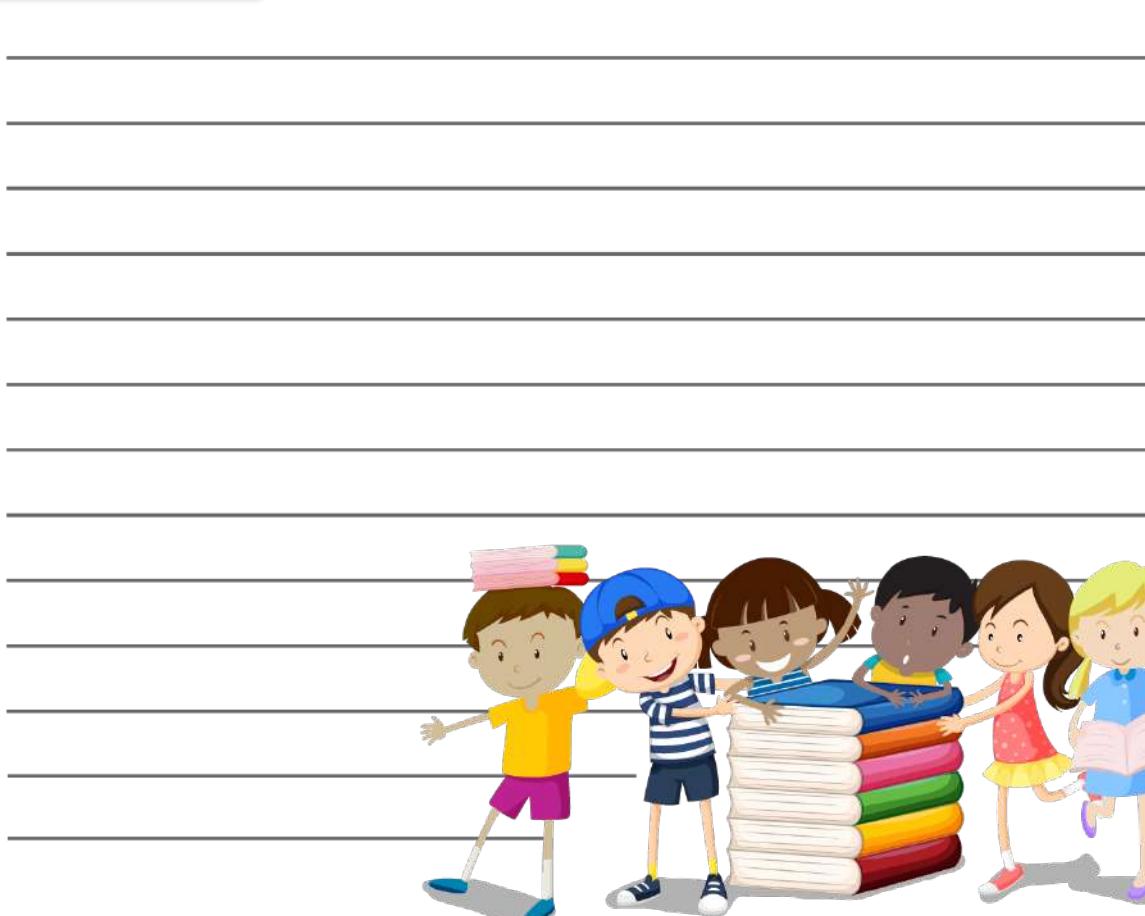
2.1.3 Understanding More about Children with Disabilities

Background

A number of research studies indicate practices that must be undertaken to help children with disabilities:

Public Awareness and Understanding about Children with Disabilities (UNICEF, 2015)
Programs have to undertake advocacy at all levels to highlight the urgent need to include children with disabilities in them. By utilizing diverse communication channels, including mass and community media, traditional media, such as puppetry, poetry, song and storytelling, and interpersonal communication, stigma and prejudice can be eliminated and positive attitudes towards children with disabilities and their families promoted.

Early Childhood Care Education (UNESCO, 2009)
The early years offer a special opportunity to foster developmental gains in children as 80% of the brain's capacity develops before the age of three. The gains are shown to be highest for those with maximum disadvantage. Comprehensive early childhood care education that provides care, stimulation, parental support and access to relevant services enhances the effects of interventions for children with disabilities.

Prevent Poor Nutrition and Neglect (Grantham-McGregor, 2007)
Poor nutrition leads to early childhood stunting, and coupled with low stimulation, it contributes to the poor cognitive and educational performance of over 200 million under-five children who are not fulfilling their developmental potential. Equally, early neglect has lasting disabling effects.

Problems during pregnancy (The Arc, 2011)
Use of alcohol or drugs by the pregnant mother can cause intellectual disability. In fact, alcohol is known to be the leading preventable cause of intellectual disability. Recent research has implicated smoking in increasing the risk of intellectual disability. Other risks include malnutrition, certain environmental toxins, and illnesses of the mother during pregnancy, such as toxoplasmosis, cytomegalovirus, rubella and syphilis.

The term "disability" means a physical, mental, or sensory impairment whether permanent or temporary, that limits the capacity to perform one or more essential activities of daily life, and which can be caused or aggravated by the economic and social environment.

It's only natural to want the best for your child with disabilities, but academic success, while important, isn't the end goal. What you really want for your child is a happy and fulfilling life. With encouragement and the right support, your child can build a strong sense of self-confidence and a solid foundation for lifelong success. When it comes to disabilities, look at the big picture. Your job as a parent is to give your child the social and emotional tools he or she needs to work through challenges and lead meaningful lives.

Your child is not defined by his or her disability.

A disability may present a challenge in certain areas which can be managed with support but there are many more aspects of your child's life that will help him/her succeed. Focus on your child's gifts and talents. Your child's life and schedule shouldn't revolve around the disability.

Your child's learning style

Everyone has their own unique learning style, whether they have a disability or not. You can help a child with a learning disability by identifying his or her primary learning style. Some people learn best by seeing, reading, listening, or by doing. Once you have figured out how he or she learns best, you can take steps to make sure that type of learning is reinforced, not just at home but at school.

Focus on life success

Success means different things to different people, but your hopes and dreams for your child should extend to more than just good grades at school. Success in life depends on things like a healthy sense of self, the willingness to ask for and accept help, the determination to keep trying in spite of challenges, the ability to form healthy relationships with others, and other qualities that aren't as easy to quantify as grades.

Handling stress

If children with disabilities learn how to regulate stress and calm themselves, they will be much better equipped to overcome challenges. Help your child to understand stress by asking them how they feel in stressful or difficult situations. Then, encourage your child to identify and participate in activities that help reduce stress like sports, games, music, arts, or journal writing.

Maintain a healthy lifestyle

Learning involves the body as well as the brain. Your child's eating, sleeping, and exercise habits affect their level of concentration, focus, and learning. Exercise makes a huge difference in mood, energy, and mental clarity. It is also a great antidote to stress and frustration. A healthy diet will help your child's growth, development, and mental focus. Sleep is also very important to learning. Children need more sleep than adults. On average, 8-10 hours is needed. You can help make sure your child gets enough sleep by setting a strict sleeping schedule.

Take care of yourself

Sometimes the hardest part of parenting is taking care of you. It's easy to get caught up in what your child needs, while forgetting your own needs. It's important to tend to your physical and emotional needs so that you're in a healthy space for your child.

Categories of Disabilities (Physical, Sensory, Cognitive and Social Emotional)

Physical

A physical disability is any condition that permanently prevents normal body movement and/or control. A person can be physically disabled due to congenital/hereditary (has the disability since birth or developed it later due to genetic problems) or problems or injury during birth. Secondly, it can be acquired through a road or other accident, infections such as polio, or diseases and disorders such as stroke or cancer. Some examples include cerebral palsy, spina bifida, poliomyelitis, paraplegia and tetraplegia.

Sensory

Sensory disabilities affect one or more senses; sight, hearing, smell, touch, taste or spatial awareness. They include autism, blindness, and hearing loss.

Cognitive or Learning

Neurologically based processing problems which can interfere with learning basic skills such as reading, writing and/or math. These can also interfere with higher levels skills such as organization, time planning, abstract reasoning, long or short term memory and attention. Learning disabilities can affect an individual's life beyond academics and can impact relationships with family, friends and in the work place. For example Dyslexia (affects reading and writing related language –based processing skills), Auditory Processing disorder (adversely affects how sound travels unimpeded through the ear is processed or interpreted by the brain), Dyscalculia (ability to understand numbers and learn math facts, telling time, trouble counting), Dysgraphia (affects person's handwriting ability and fine motor skills – illegible handwriting, inconsistent spacing, thinking and writing at the same time).
Children develop and learn at different rates and in different ways. However, some children will learn at a much slower rate than other children

of the same age. This may be due to an intellectual disability.

Intellectual disability can be linked with a number of genetic or inherited conditions such as Down syndrome and autism. It might be caused by a head injury or illness, or exposure to alcohol during pregnancy. For some no cause is found. People with intellectual disabilities will likely have trouble learning; they will learn but it will take them longer. There may be things they cannot learn.

Professionals usually talk about intellectual developmental delay, rather than intellectual disability, when a child is very young. Sometimes a child's learning will be slow for a while due to a serious illness, a change in family circumstances or a temporary hearing loss. But these children may later catch up on learning and then continue to develop as other children of the same age. However, if a significant learning delay continues as the child gets older and this delay affects a number of areas of the child's development, professionals will begin to speak of an intellectual disability. This means that they expect the child to continue to learn at a slower rate than other children of the same age into adulthood.

Social/Emotional

1. Affective Disorders: also known as mood disorders; involves persistent feelings of sadness or periods of feeling overly happy, or changes from extreme happiness to extreme sadness
2. Personality Disorders - deeply inadequate patterns of behavior and thought which cause sufficient severity to impair day-to-day activities.
3. Emotional Disorders - a condition exhibiting one or more of the following characteristics over a long period of time and to a marked degree that adversely affects a child's educational performance:
    *   An inability to learn that cannot be explained by intellectual, sensory, or health factors.
    *   An inability to build or maintain satisfactory interpersonal relationships with peers and Teachers.
    *   Inappropriate types of behavior or feelings under normal circumstances.
    *   A general pervasive mood of unhappiness or depression.
    *   A tendency to develop physical symptoms or fears associated with personal or school problems.

The Reaction Phase

Parents of children with disabilities have many reactions to their children's special needs and these may be positive or negative. Some parents go through several emotions roughly in sequence; others may experience only one of several reactions. The reactions may be minor and the approach may be practical while for others the disability may mean a change in the entire family structure and life. Parent's reaction to a child's disability depends on many factors: the intensity and complexity of a disability, how the information about the disability is shared with them, culture, and the financial resources needed.

The experience of discovering a disability may be similar to enduring a mourning process and might be equated to the loss of a loved one; for example: the mourning process can involve adjustment to the disability the person experiences and may be divided into a series of four stages or tasks - shock, denial, anger/depression, and adjustment/acceptance. The stages are expected, yet are not orderly or neat. People with new forms of disabilities go through these stages at their own pace and might skip whole stages entirely. A difficulty exists when the person has trouble with resolving one of the stages or becomes, 'stuck.' When this happens, further progress towards adjustment and acceptance is hindered.

However other feelings involve:

Confusion as a result of not fully understanding what is happening and what will happen. This can lead to the inability to make decisions and mental overload as information they receive may seem garbled and distorted and they may not abe able to make sense of all the information they are receiving.

Powerlessness to change what is happening.

Disappointment that a child is not perfect threatens a parent's ego and challenges their value system and can lead to a reluctance to accept a child as valuable.

Rejection towards the child, the medical personnel or to other family members.

Tips for Dealing with Children with disabilities

- Keep things in perspective. A disability isn't insurmountable. Remind yourself that everyone faces obstacles. It's up to you as a parent to teach your child how to deal with those obstacles without becoming discouraged or overwhelmed. Don't let the other things distract you from what's really important—giving your child plenty of emotional and moral support. Recognize that you are not alone. Keep daily routines as normal as possible.
- Become your own expert. Do your own research and keep up with new developments in disability programs, therapies, and educational techniques. You may be tempted to look to others—teachers, therapists, doctors—for solutions, especially at first. But you're the foremost expert on your child, so take charge when it comes to finding the tools he or she needs in order to learn.
- Be an advocate for your child. You may have to speak up time and time again to get special help for your child. Embrace your role as a proactive parent and work on your communication skills. It may be frustrating at times, but by remaining calm and reasonable,

yet firm, you can make a huge difference for your child. Remember this is your child.
- Remember that your influence outweighs all others. Your child will follow your lead. If you approach challenges with optimism, hard work, and a sense of humor, your child is likely to embrace your perspective—or at least see the challenges as a speed bump, rather than a roadblock. Focus your energy on learning what works for your child and implementing it the best you can.

Children with Disabilities and the Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities (CRPD) Article 7 in particular

The CRC includes a stand-alone provision on children with disabilities in its **Article 23** but the process to develop the CRPD had the following concerns pertaining to the rights of children with disabilities:

- The need for birth registration: often children with disabilities do not 'exist' officially because they are not registered at birth.
- Children with disabilities need additional protection from violence and threats to life, as they are more prone to experience violence.
- Children with disabilities are rarely informed about their rights and thus unable to participate fully and effectively in decisions concerning them.

To this end State Parties should take note of the following:

In all actions concerning children with disabilities, the best interests of the child shall be a primary consideration.

Ensure that children with disabilities have the right to express their views freely on all matters affecting them, their views being given due weight in accordance with their age and maturity, on an equal basis with other children, and to be provided with disability and age-appropriate assistance to realize that right.

Recognize that children with disabilities should have full enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedoms on an equal basis with other children, and recalling obligations to that end undertaken by States Parties to the Convention on the Rights of the Child";

Consult children with disabilities in the development and implementation of legislation and policies implementing the Convention.

Ensure respect for home and the family, Article 23, pertain to children with disabilities, most notably the right of children with disabilities to retain their fertility and the right to equal respect of family life. This provision includes the right to adopt children.

Another important aspect is that children are not to be separated from parents with disabilities against their will.

Early childhood is the period during which disabilities are usually identified and the impact on children's well-being and development recognized.

Young children should never be institutionalized solely on the grounds of disability. It is a priority to ensure that they have equal opportunities to participate fully in education and community life, including by the removal of barriers that impede the realization of their rights.

Young disabled children are entitled to appropriate specialist assistance, including support for their parents (or other caregivers).

Disabled children should at all times be treated with dignity and in ways that encourage their self-reliance.

It is essential that children with disabilities are heard in all procedures affecting them and that their views be respected in accordance with their evolving capacities. This should include their representation in various bodies such as parliament, committees and other forums where they voice views and participate in making the decisions that affect them as children in general

and as children with disabilities specifically.

Children should be equipped with whatever mode of communication to facilitate expressing their views.

Support the development of training for families and professionals on promoting and respecting the evolving capacities of children to take increasing responsibilities for decision-making in their own lives.

The physical inaccessibility to public transportation and other facilities including governmental buildings, shopping areas, recreational facilities among others, is a major factor in the marginalization and exclusion of children with disabilities as well as markedly compromising their access to services, including health and education.

All States parties are urged to set out appropriate policies and procedures that make public transportation safe, easily accessible and free of charge, whenever possible, taking into account the financial resources of the parents or others caring for the child, to children with disabilities

Key Messages

1. Your child is not defined by his or her disability.
2. Become your own expert.
3. Be an advocate for your child.
4. Children with disabilities have rights as stated in the Conventions on the Rights of the Child and the Rights for Persons with Disabilities

Article 23 Of the Convention on the Rights of the Child speaks to children with disabilities and **Article 7** Of the Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities speaks to the issue of children.

Standards

1. Recognize that children with disabilities are entitled to the full range of rights and services as is afford all children. .

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Examine the basic rights with persons with disabilities (PWD)
2. Identify and discuss appropriate articles of the UN CRC/CRPD especially those relating to children with disabilities
3. Discuss the most prevalent disabilities
4. Explain characteristics unique to the disabilities discussed
5. Assess the principles of the most enabling environment

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Enhancing your child's self esteem
2. Recognizing your child's potential
3. Creating a life plan for success

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Appreciate your child's strengths and talents

Suggested Activities:
The background will help the facilitator to prepare power points along with the activities.

ACTIVITY 1

Understanding Disabilities

1. The training begins by asking parents the question -what comes to mind when you hear the words, "a child with disabilities"?
2. Share thoughts in pairs and then in large group.
3. Make a list of positive and negative thoughts.
4. Distribute stories of persons who have special needs but have not allowed that to deter them from achieving – Rowan Garel (visually impaired), Dr Einstein Bodden (wheel chair bound), mother who accompanied her children through high school in Cayo (cerebral palsy)
5. In groups of four, share the stories and identify what could be key elements that enabled the success of these persons despite their different needs as well as what would have happened if those key positive elements were not present.
6. Present to large group.
7. Discuss some characteristics of the disabilities discussed
8. Culminate activity with power point presentation on the stages one can go through upon discovering your child has a special need and what you need to do as a parent to ensure that your child enjoys a meaningful life.

ACTIVITY 2

Children with Disabilities have rights

After the facilitator's presentation on the Articles:

1. Distribute Article 23 of the CRC and a simplified version of the Convention on the Rights for Persons with Disabilities
2. In groups parents will identify the key messages in each and develop creative ways in which they can bring public awareness on what these messages are.
3. Groups will present their activities to the larger group.

ACTIVITY 3

Simulating different forms of disabilities

1. A New View- smear a few old pairs of glasses with Vaseline or other substance to make them hard to see through – parents wear them while moving around the room.
2. After a few minutes of walking around remove and answer the following questions individually or in plenary:
   - What was different about the environment in which you moved around?
   - How did you figure where to walk?
   - What other senses did you rely on?
   - How did you feel?
3. Backwards – Dyslexia
   - Write one letter in each sentence backwards and distribute to parents.

   The dlack cat sat on the tin roof.
   The black cat sat on the hot tin roof.

   Mary is P years old.
   Mary is 9 years old.

   The dady is crying.
   The baby is crying.

   We hab eggs for dreakfast.
   We had eggs for breakfast.

   It is a clouby bay.
   It is a cloudy day.

   We choose SIM9LE words.
   We choose SIMPLE words.

   - Give them little time to review and ask different persons to read them out loud.
   - Keep interrupting them urging them to read it quickly – telling them this is easy

In groups discuss the experiences and lessons learned and what are some characteristics of the disabilities simulated.

ACTIVITY 4

Available Resources

Divide participants into three groups and assign a question to each: After 15 minutes groups will make presentation on the summary of their discussion. This will help participants to be aware of what exits in the community to support them.

- What are the known barriers (physical, psychological) in your community for children or adults who have disabilities?
- What could be done to remove or reduce some of these barriers?
- What organizations are available in your community, to provide services, or to advocate for improved access and services for persons with disabilities? Facilitator can add other questions.

Parents develop a brochure of community resources available.

ACTIVITY 5

Prevention is better than Cure

Facilitator ends this session with a power point presentation using the experiences from the activities to impress on parents the importance of prevention although not all disabilities can be prevented and the role of parents (tips for dealing with a child with disabilities):

- Use of folic acid before getting pregnant
- Proper nutrition during pregnancy
- Attending prenatal clinic
- Avoid alcohol and drugs
- Prevent infections

The need to ensure that the child disabilities whenever possible is integrated into the school system from an early age.

- Helps to create awareness and to reduce stigma and discrimination
- Helps the child to better adapt to the world outside of family

Notes

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THEME 2
POSITIVE PARENTING
GUIDING AND NURTURING

Positive Parenting - Guiding and Nurturing

Introduction

Positive Parenting is not restricted to a method, a set of rules, or a style; it is a belief, a way of living. Children should be treated with respect, free from fear of violence and shame, and guided with loving encouragement. This section of the guide is geared toward helping parents to improve their parenting techniques; communication skills and suggest alternatives to understand and approach family issues. These issues may include sensitive and delicate topics such as gender issues, sex and other unpleasant situations. It also addresses the level of involvement of parents to provide guidance and positively influence their children's lives.

The very first step to become a positive parent is to adjust one's thinking. This section of the guide will enable parents to be better caregivers by improving their knowledge, attitudes, behaviours and skills. To achieve this, parents must be willing to complete all activities and use the new information in their daily interaction with children. Parents will learn that communication is a crucial way to ensure an ongoing relationship with children. There are many benefits of regular conversations to share thoughts and ideas, this also gives opportunities for both parents and children to voice their opinions on various issues. It creates a stronger relationship, which is based on trust.

A child's early experience of being nurtured creates a bond with caring adults. Guiding and Nurturing occur when parents and children have a strong attachment and bond with one another. Children develop trust that their parents will provide the essential to thrive, including love, acceptance, positive guidance, and protection.

Another crucial role of a parent, is to provide "structure" for children. In this role, a parent gives direction, imposes rules, uses discipline, sets limit, and follows through with consequences. It is necessary to hold children accountable for their behavior, and to teach values. This theme encourages parents to provide the positive guidance that can help their children to change, grow, and become mature. Therefore, parents are responsible to love and teach their children to be polite, respectful and accountable. The activities aim to educate parents on the importance of nurturing and guiding children.

Ultimately, it is through loving and supportive early parent-child relationships that the foundations for future healthy relationships are formed. Being valued just for whom they are, helps to build children's self-esteem, hence the reason for these topics found in this theme. They will help parents better understand their role throughout the life of children. The value of both nurture and structure, is to prepare parents to assist their children through difficulties in life and enlighten them as to the critical need to provide consistent motivation and support for children to succeed. Parents will develop a clear understanding of balancing both guidance and support in child-rearing.

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect parent and child relationships. For example, guiding children's behaviour in positive ways can be influenced by:

1. Practicing consistent positive discipline is crucial because it promotes your child's self-control, teaches him/her to take responsibility for his/her actions, and helps him/her make thoughtful choices about how he/she treats himself/herself and others. (Nelson, J., Erwin, C. & Duffy, R. 2007).

2. Understanding your child's temperament (individual differences in emotional and behavioural processes, which emerge early in development) is an essential part of creating a strong parent-child bond. (Lerner, C. &Dombro, A.L. 2000).

3. Adults play a critical role in guiding children's behaviour. They support children to find positive ways to express their wants, needs, views and feelings. Children's wellbeing depends on adults understanding the child's behaviour and responding appropriately. (Nauert, 2015). Nauert commented on the importance of family when it comes to guiding behaviour positively by stating that, "Some factors that also can influence trajectories include the family's culture, their income and family resources, and the quality of the parent-child relationship, effective parenting involves guiding children in such a way as to ensure that they are developing along positive trajectories." (Nauert, 2015)

Parenting indeed is not a simple task, and it is easy to become confused and uncertain at times. The plain old-fashioned "parent sense" expressed here seems sensible and stable compared to the passing fads and theories.

The topics found in Theme 2 are created to assist parents through a lifetime journey with their child/ children. This theme is important in understanding children as they develop. It provides methods to foster positive growth. After learning about positive parenting, parents will use the strategies to strengthen the relationship with their child/children and to create productive citizens.

3.2.1   How we Learn to be Parents

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors that contribute to the holistic and healthy development of a child.
For example, the significance of the family in the development of a child can include:

1. The proper role of the parent is to provide encouragement, support and access to activities that enable the child to master key developmental tasks. As children develop from infants to teens to adults they go through a series of developmental stages that are important to all aspects of their personhood including physical, intellectual, emotional and social. (Siegler, R., DeLoache, J., & Eisenberg, N. 2011).

2. Family patterns have a lot to do with a child's moral development. Children learn about family bonding and mutual trust in families where there is a strong foundation of love. Family values also help developing children's mental and intellectual strength. (Dunn, 2009).

3. Responsive parenting is one of the aspects of parenting most frequently described when we try to understand the role the environment plays in children's development. It has the potential to promote normal developmental trajectories for high-risk children, such as those from low-income backgrounds and/or those with very premature births. (Hammond SI, Muller U, Carpendale JIM, Bibok MB, Liebermann-Finestone DP.2012).

The United Kingdom Government's Department for Education (2012) commented on the importance of parents; stating that *"parents are often said to be the first and best teacher for a child."*

The United Kingdom Government's Department for Education goes even further and defines the importance of family in child's life like this:
"The research shows that parental involvement in children's learning is a key factor. The role of parents during a child's earliest years is the single biggest influence on their development. Good quality home learning contributes more to children's intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income."

A number of research studies also indicate the importance of a father's presence in a child's well-being:

1. Fathers are central to the emotional well-being of their children. (Gross, 2014). **Fathers are capable caretakers and disciplinarians.** Studies show that if your child's father is affectionate, supportive, and involved, he can contribute greatly to your child's cognitive, language, and social development, as well as academic achievement, a strong inner core resource, sense of well-being, good self-esteem, and authenticity.

2. Interactions between Father and Child. (Scott & De La Hunt, 2011).There is no single "right" way for fathers to be involved. Instead, there are many types of father involvement in all aspects of raising a child. These include playing together, being nearby while a child explores, and taking a child for health check-ups. Research has found that the value of father involvement is determined by the quality of the interaction between fathers and their children – for example, a father's responsiveness to the needs of his child – rather than the amount of time fathers spend with their children.

3. Father and Son Relationship. (Finello, 2016). Boys who have involved fathers are less likely to get in trouble with the police as they get older. A good dad can be a positive role model for boys and help them to adopt a healthy gender identity as well as a better awareness of their feelings and emotions.

4. A Father's presence is important even before the child's birth. (Oliker, 2011). Even from birth, children who have an involved father are more likely to be emotionally secure, be confident to explore their surroundings, and, as they grow older, have better social connections.

The way fathers play with their children also has an important impact on a child's emotional and social development.

Importance of mothers in a child's life; A mother has a different relationship with her children than a father. (Kansas State University (http://www.k-state.edu)

1. Mothers are the child's first link of any emotional bonding and attachment.

2. Children recognize and experience connection with their mother through the feelings and the emotions they associate with her. In general the injured child is going to run to their mother rather than their father for comfort.

3. She is very important in teaching her son respect and about the importance of love and affection, and in serving as a model for when her daughter grows up and one day becomes a woman like her.

4. Mom is the primary source for comfort and care.

How fathers influence our relationships – Dr Gail Gross (Huffington Post, August 2014)

Your child's primary relationship with his/her father can affect all of your child's relationships from birth to death, including those with friends, lovers, and spouses. Those early patterns of interaction with fathers are the very patterns that will be projected forward into all relationships forever more: not only your child's intrinsic idea of who he/she is as he/she relates to others, but also, the range of what your child considers acceptable and loving.

Girls will look for men who hold the patterns of good old dad. Therefore, if father was kind, loving, and gentle, they will reach for those characteristics in men. Girls will look for, in others, what they have experienced and become familiar with in childhood. Because they've gotten

used to those familial and historic behavioral patterns, they think that they can handle them in relationships.

Boys on the other hand, will model themselves after their fathers. They will look for their father's approval in everything they do, and copy those behaviours that they recognize as both successful and familiar. Thus, if dad was abusive, controlling, and dominating, those will be the patterns that their sons will imitate and emulate. However, if father is loving, kind, supportive, and protective, boys will want to be that.

Unfortunately, there are a number of reasons a father might be separated from his child. If this should happen, positive male figures can serve as role models and mentors for the child. A competent, caring male figure can nurture and guide a young child effectively and contribute to all areas of the child's development.

Mothers can encourage absent dads to remain involved even if they are not able to be physically present. For example, a father could record himself reading books for his child. And, although a father involved early and often is considered best practice, it's never too late for fathers to re-connect and engage with their child.

Steps to Strengthen the Father-Son Relationship

1. Recognize that sons are influenced by their fathers. Whether we know it or not, our sons learn about being a man primarily by watching their fathers. A father's influence on his son's personal development is often unseen but nonetheless real. As a young man watches his father interact with his mother, he learns about respect (or disrespect), about how men and women interact and about how men should deal with conflict and differences. As he watches his dad interact with other men, he will learn how men talk, how they relate with one another and how they deal with masculine issues. Understanding that a father's influence on his son is unmatched will help

dad think more deeply about his relationship with his son and take that relationship more seriously.

2. Don't be afraid of a little boisterous play. It seems like with boys, this little bit of wild behaviour is a bonding experience. You have to keep them safe, but you can take some very small and calculated risks to give them a more physical experience. Later in life, this may translate into activities like rock climbing, skateboarding, football or basketball.

3. Get involved in father-son activities. Consider registering your son in activities – such as sports – that you can volunteer in. These structured experiences create opportunities to grow closer.

4. Take on a big project. There is something magical to a boy about being involved in something bigger than himself. These big, visible projects can really help a father and son bond. Some dads and sons landscape a back yard, build a dog house or head off on a big summer biking vacation. Other things can include an all-day fishing trip, planting trees, vegetables or a garden bed, or welding a Barbque grill. Whatever it is, a bigger than life project done together can create a bond that will last a long time and make memories you will talk about together for decades. It does not need to be expensive; the focus is on spending time together.

5. Listen to your sons. Men seem in general to struggle with effective communication. Starting from the earliest ages to listen to them without judgment and without trying to fix things too soon will go a long way to building a lasting relationship.

6. Don't be afraid of the big talk. Take the time to teach your sons about sex and relationships. Being open to having these conversations will help your sons develop better attitudes about sex and girls in general.

7. Make one on one time. Make sure that you program some one on one time with your sons.

The Importance of a Father-Daughter Relationship

1. Daughters whose fathers have been actively engaged throughout childhood in promoting their academic or athletic achievements and encouraging their self-reliance and assertiveness are more likely to graduate from college and to enter the higher paying, more demanding jobs traditionally held by males.

2. A girl who has a secure, supportive, communicative relationship with her father is less likely to get pregnant as a teenager and less likely to become sexually active in her early teens. This, in turn, leads to waiting longer to get married and to have children—largely because she is focused on achieving her educational goals first.

3. The well-fathered daughter is also the most likely to have relationships with men that are emotionally intimate and fulfilling. During the college years, these daughters are less likely to be "talked into" having sex.

4. As a consequence of having made wiser decisions in regard to sex and dating, these daughters generally have more satisfying, more long-lasting marriages.

5. Fathers have much more of an impact on their daughters' relationships with men than their mothers do.

6. Girls who have positive relationships with their fathers are less dissatisfied with their appearance and their body weight.

7. Girls who have better relationships with their fathers as children and teens deal with stress much better during adulthood.

Role of Parents

Parents must meet their children's basic needs for food, clothing, housing, medical care, and education. A parent must meet a child's basic needs and parent in a way that serves the child's best interests. They are the child's first role model. Children behave, react and imitate their parents. Parents play an important role in encouraging and motivating their children to learn. Good parental support helps children to be positive, healthy and good lifelong learners. Children acquire skills at the very early stage of their life if the parents are responsive and understanding.

Humans are social beings and we learn by modelling behaviour. In fact, all primates learn how to survive and function successfully in the world through social imitation. Those early patterns of interaction are all children know, and it is those patterns that effect how they feel about themselves, and how they develop. Your child is vulnerable to those early patterns and incorporates those behavioural qualities in his/her repertoire of social exchange.

Both the father and the mother are responsible to their children.

For example, girls who have good relationships with their fathers tend to do better in math, and boys who have actively involved fathers tend to have better grades and perform better on achievement tests. And well-bonded boys develop securely with a stable and sustained sense of self. Mothers, on the other hand, help both their children learn to be more forgiving, caring, and honest individuals. They help their sons learn to treat females with respect, and they help their daughters learn to be helpful to others.

Importance of parents

1. Provide unconditional love: Parents should provide a child with unconditional love.

2. Provide financial support through the childhood and adolescent years and possibly into adulthood for a child that is unable due to having special needs.

3. Provide moral support and guidance:

4. Parents' role during a child's earliest years is the single biggest influence on their development. Good quality home learning contributes more to children's intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income.

The major characteristics of being a positive parent are:

1. Guide by providing goals and limits that are appropriate to the age, ability and interest of the child.

2. Encourage through praise and celebration of accomplishments.

3. Affirm through a positive relationship that includes time to play and have fun as well as time to communicate and reflect.

4. Provide training rules to promote healthy development, learn self-discipline and develop a healthy respect for themselves and others.

5. Provide the most intimate context for the nurturing and protection of children as they develop their personalities and identities and also as they mature physically, cognitively, emotionally, and socially.

According to American Psychological Association (2014) most persons become parents without any training, "how-to" guides, or other specialty education. However, parents must remember that each child is unique and arrives into the world with his or her own strengths and weaknesses that parents have to interpret and work with.

Here is a list of factors that influence a person's parenting:

- Parenting skills from our parents
- Parenting skills from observing others
- Parenting skills from books, media, and experts
- Parenting skills from our children

NOTE: Parents, in this context, include biological, adoptive or step parents.

The ability to handle life's issues and demands is based upon psychological foundations of early family experiences. Within the society, parents identify certain values that are important for the development of their children (Goldsmith, 2000). According to The Family Paediatrics Report (2003), "Families are the most central and enduring influence in children's lives regardless of their education, composition, income, or values" The family is one of the main socializing institutions of the society. Within the family, the child appropriates the social norms and values and it becomes capable of having relations with the other members of the society.

The socialization process within the family has many components:

1. Normative-through which the main social norms and rules are transmitted to the child;

2. Cognitive-through which the child acquires habits and knowledge necessary to action as an adult;

3. Creative-through which the capacities of creative thought and of giving proper responses in new situations are formed;

4. Psychological-through which the affectivity necessary to the relation with the parents, with the future partner, with their own children and with other persons are formed.

Children's needs

Physical
Providing food, water, clothes, shelter, etc.

Emotional needs
Making them feel loved, heard, understood, accepted, valued, respected, etc.

Intellectual needs
Teaching them things they need to know and understand as they grow older.

Social needs
Making them feel they belong to a family, to help them make friends and to feel supported by other adults besides the immediate family, to give them time to play etc.

Protection needs
Making them feel safe at all times.

Spiritual needs
Making them feel connected to a higher power or greater belief system.

Steps to Strengthen the Parent -children Relationship

1. Recognize that children are influenced by their parents. As a young man and young women watch their father interact with their mother, they learn about respect (or disrespect), about how men and women interact and about how men and women should deal with conflict and differences.

2. Develop common interests. Parents may have different interests or hobbies. But take the time to find something that you both love to do or are passionate about and share this with each other. When parents and children maximize their time together doing something they both enjoy, the relationship will grow.

3. Get involved in parent/children activities. Consider registering in activities – such as sports – that you can volunteer in. These structured experiences create opportunities to grow closer.

4. Don't be afraid of the big talk. Take the time to teach your sons and daughters about sex and relationships. Being open to having these conversations will help them to develop better attitudes about sex and girls/boys in general.

5. Focus on the positives. Create positive ways to celebrate their accomplishments. Giving them constant reinforcement will help build relationships of trust and overcome this constant barrage of negativism that they confront daily.

6. Make one on one time. Make time for individual relationships with each child. So make sure that you program some one on one time with your sons/daughters.

7. Focus on the spiritual. Helping a child be grounded spiritually is an important role for parents. Whatever your faith tradition, go to worship together and help them understand the deeper meaning of life. If you don't have a faith tradition, help them reach for his inner self and try to have a perspective that will help them look at things deeper than on the surface.

KEY MESSAGES

1. The role of parents during a child's earliest years is the single biggest influence on their development. Good quality home learning contributes more to children's intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income.

2. Fathers are central to the emotional well-being of their children. When a father is affectionate, supportive, and involved, he can contribute greatly to your child's cognitive, language, and social development, as well as academic achievement, a strong inner core resource, sense of well-being, good self-

esteem, and authenticity.

3. Mothers are the child's first link of any emotional bonding and attachment.

4. Parents must meet their children's basic needs for food, clothing, housing, medical care, and education.

5. A parent must parent in a way that serves the child's best interests.

Articles 3, 5, 18 and 42 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide

STANDARDS
Identify the central importance of the family in the healthy socialization and development of a child.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. Share thinking about how parenting habits and skills are acquired
2. Examine why and how parenting habits and skills are changed
3. Reflect on habits and skills as parents – confident with, positive and needing improvement or change.
4. Select one or two skills to work at strengthening

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Understand the roles family members need to perform for a family to operate effectively.
2. Explore personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings about parental roles and responsibilities.
3. Evaluate parental/family strengths and weaknesses (parental self-reflection).

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
Commitment to parental roles and responsibilities that will aid in development of his/her child.

Suggested Activities
The background information will help the facilitator to prepare power points and activities in addition to those below.

ACTIVITY 1

Parenting Self - Test

Think about your overall performance as a parent and give yourself your own "report card". Beside the skill areas listed below, rank yourself between a high of 10 and a low of 1.

RATING	SPECIFIC SKILL AREAS
	Showing affection, love to my children
	Taking care of their hygiene (body, hair)
	Taking care of their nutrition
	Taking care of their health (immunisations, clinic visits, home remedies, etc.)
	Communicating with my children— talking and listening
	Helping my children with self-discipline
	Setting reasonable limits with explanations.
	Encouraging, supervising work
	Supporting my children at school (PTA, visiting teacher, etc.)
	Encouraging children's healthy friendships
	Setting moral, spiritual example
	Storytelling, reading stories
	Encouraging each child's uniqueness, creativity
	Modeling, teaching manners
	Discussing age-appropriate information about sex
	Assigning regular age-appropriate responsibilities
	Teaching respect for own country, culture
	Respecting people's differences, (e.g. age, gender, nationality, race, disability, etc.)
	Providing information about drugs, alcohol, STIs
	Other skill areas: MY OVERALL PARENTING SKILLS

After completion of the "report card" invite parents if they so wish to share a few of their high and low points. This assessment can be given again at the end.
Have them pick two of their lowest as those they will embark on strengthening using the information they gain from the sessions.

ACTIVITY 2

Mine Field

1. Begin by playing "Mine Field"

2. Using boxes, chairs, tables, etc., create an obstacle course of "mines" within your empty space. Divide the group into pairs, where one partner is blindfolded. The other must guide that person from one end of the course to another without setting off any mines (touching any of the objects). The person guiding their partner cannot enter the course and must only use verbal instructions to get their partner through. Depending on the number of people you have and how difficult you want this activity to be, you can vary the number of pairs trying to complete the course at the same time so that pairs have to work harder to listen to each other and communicate clearly.

3. Explain to parents that this activity teaches communication, team work, and trust. These are qualities that parents and their children should be building.

4. Start a discussion by asking the group what they think is the role of a parent.

ACTIVITY 3

My Parents

1. Ask participants to take a moment to think about an important lesson their father or their mother taught them when they were younger.

2. Ask participants to share their story with the group – a discussion is held.

3. Explain that fathers/mothers play an important role in their children's lives

4. Present on "Steps to strengthen parent/ children relationship"

ACTIVITY 4

In your steps- The power of Parental Influence

This session will highlight how we learn the skills involving being a positive parent. It will also reveal how parental ideas are formed, how parental skills are developed, and what areas of parenting need strengthening or changing. The participants will also learn how to share this information with others.

1. The facilitator will distribute colour coded paper and a pencil to each parent. The facilitator will inform the participants that they have 3 minutes to draw a picture of his/her 'ideal' parent.

2. The facilitator will get volunteers to explain his/her picture and provide positive feedback to the participants. The facilitator will then ask the participants to find other participants that have the same colour paper as theirs. (A sample is stick at a particular part of the room and the facilitator will inform the participants that this is their team for the training session.

The facilitator will then pose the following questions:

What is socialization?

Sample Answer: Socialization, the process whereby an individual learns to adjust to a group (or society) and behave in a manner approved by the group (or society). According to most social scientists, socialization essentially represents the whole process of learning throughout the life course and is a central influence on the behaviour, beliefs, and actions of adults as well as of children.

Where does socialization take place?

4. A group discussion on these questions; then facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share the group's response.

5. The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and then project this question on the whiteboard: What do think is your role as a parent in the socialization and in the development of your child? The facilitator will inform the participants that this is simply a question for them to ponder on.

6. The facilitator will then explain the role of parents in the development of a child.
    - Parents and family are the first social group that shapes individuals' selves and personality. Because there is a great diversity of family structure and size, the impact of family on self-formation is not universal.
    - From our families, we also inherit our position in the social structure. Families all belong to some social class, racial and ethnic group. This initial social positioning is central to our self-formation but also to our life-chances.

NOTE: According to sociologist Pierre Bourdieu (1990), from our families, we inherit our habitus, that is, the set of dispositions that mark us as part of our social class: manners, speech patterns, vocabulary and articulation styles, bodily behaviour and postures.

- From our family, children learn the social role expected of them by looking at role models within the family unit. E.g. their parent or sibling.

NOTE: Socialization within the family is crucial in the development of a child, and when done in a positive manner; it equips the child for his/her role in the society through the passing on of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values.

7. The facilitator will then allow volunteers to share their view on parents being socialization agents and if as parents they are making their child be socially ready to be a productive member of the society.

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

8. When viewing is completed, ask a few participants to share with entire group what they learned from this activity. End this activity by sharing the following important messages:
    - Parents are a commanding influence that shapes a child's life; for this influence is lifelong.
    - Family structures are diverse in shapes and sizes, so there is not an 'ideal' family; as long as the essential roles are performed.
    - The family unit has to be the ones to decide what works best for the family for we can change bad habits; we can learn new skills.

The facilitator will ask participants what they think about the roles and responsibilities of the family.
- Do they seem easy or hard to achieve? Why or why not?
- Do you believe that your parents' parenting techniques used on you influence the way you parent your child? Why or why not?

ACTIVITY 5

Parenting: not an easy task!

1. The facilitator will present the following scenario to parents to analyse in groups:
    Kim a manager in a financial company is currently on maternity leave following the birth of her second child. She has two daughters, Molly who has just turned 4 and Lilly who is 4 months old. They both attend a day care center. At the time of pick up at the day care center, Kim finds Lilly at an activity centre. She is not so interested in the activity, but is watching other children playing nearby. She coos and makes sounds. As soon as she does, Kim puts a pacifier in her mouth. At the same time Molly is playing with some of the other children. A little boy takes the toy she has been playing with and Molly tries to pull the toy out of his hand. When that does not work, she throws herself on the floor and starts to scream. Kim quickly offers her treats from her purse instead. Kim admits that Molly has frequent outbursts at home and she does not know how to deal with them.

The following questions will be discussed in groups:

What strengths can you identify?
What challenges if any can you identify?
How does Lilly's development compare to the development of a 4-month old?
What concerns can you identify in Kim's actions and words?
What recommendations can you offer?

Groups will make presentations on their discussion and recommendations.

2. The facilitator will then present information on:
   • The role of parents

3. The facilitator will then provide participants with key points on parents' roles to help provide for the child's needs. Here are some needs of a child:

   Physical

   Providing food, water, clothes, shelter, etc.;

   Emotional needs

   Making them feel loved, heard, understood, accepted, valued, respected, etc.

Intellectual needs

Teaching them things they need to know and understand as they grow older.

Social needs

Making them feel they belong to a family, to help them make friends and to feel supported by other adults besides the immediate family, to give them time to play etc.

Protection needs Making them feel safe at all times.

Spiritual needs

Making them feel connected to a higher power or greater belief system.

4. Each group will be given a scenario to role-play Each of these role-playing exercises should not last more than 3 minutes. After the role-play, invite the group to say how the parents helped in the development of the child. A general discussion on the importance of parents' roles within a family as it relates to the development of a child.

5. The facilitator will complete by placing parents in a circle and throw a soft ball around and have parents share one or two things they have learnt in this session.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

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3.2.2 Childrearing and Culture(s)

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect parent and child relationships. For example, childrearing practices have many influences which in turn influences a child's development. Childrearing practices are influenced by the following:

1. Culture helps to construct parents and parenting, and culture is maintained and transmitted by influencing parental cognitions that in turn are thought to shape parenting practices (Bornstein & Lansford, 2010; Harkness et al., 2007).

2. "Your family of origin exerts a large influence over the type of parent you will become. Many beliefs, values habits and thought patterns are ingrained through early family life." (Fedewa AL and Ahn S. 2011).

3. Family structure and economic resources have interrelated effects on parenting, as households with one parent, rather than two, have fewer economic and emotional resources. (Kamijo K, Takeda Y, Taka Y, Haripur M. 2015)

4. The ways in which mothers and fathers rear their children depends on a complex interplay of social factors. Social factors such as economics, social class, family composition, social interactions, race and cultural beliefs can have a particularly significant effect on how parents rear their children. These social factors can affect nearly every parenting decision a family makes, from how to discipline children to who cares for the children. (Grusec J. 2014).

5. Barrette J, Fleming AS (2011) commented on the importance of family when it comes to childrearing practices and the impact on children by stating that, "through family, child also learns about other people, cultivates interpersonal relationship, experience pleasure, give and receive affection. So, the family environment and child rearing practices related to consistency, warmth, interaction between family members and the child helps a child to become confident and eventually a productive member of society." (Barrett J, Fleming AS. 2011).

According to Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary, child rearing is defined as, 'the process of taking care of child/children.' This term has a clear connection to the practices and styles of rearing your child/children. Each parent rear their children differently from other parents but most important is that the methods used are appropriate, loving and safe.

Different cultures and countries approach rearing children from different philosophies and beliefs. Some may focus on teaching children to be more independent while others tend to focus more on expressing their love for their children. As a parent, you will realize your own beliefs are affected by how you were reared.

Aside from individual preferences, other parents from different cultures have also different way on practicing child rearing. Parenting is something that is not only rooted from a person's childhood experiences but also in the culture where a child grew up and lived in. Aside from personal experiences, culture is also found to have a particular effect on the parenting styles that people may use once they start their own family.

Child rearing practices play an important role in shaping one's behaviour and personality of the individual. The family serves as a unit of socialization for the child and through positive child rearing practices, the child gains self-knowledge.

Through family, child also learns about other people, cultivates interpersonal relationship, experience pleasure, give and receive affection. So the family environment and child rearing practices related to consistency, warmth, interaction between family members and the child helps a child to become confident and eventually a productive member of society.

Culture-specific influences on parenting begin long before children are born, and they shape fundamental decisions about which behaviours parents should promote in their children and how parents should interact with their children.

The issue of child rearing and culture has not been thoroughly documented in the Caribbean, and the same could be said for Belize

According to a summary report of the first Learning Community Researchers Meeting (2006) on CHILD REARING IN THE CARIBBEAN: Emergent Issues, we know very little about the various cultural constructs within the Caribbean and how sub-cultures shape child-rearing practices alongside other demographic/socio-economic factors.

Some general findings and not particular to any ethnic group, cited in the report include that:
Parents are uncertain about the benefits of play. Some practices in relation to play and Discipline are changing to more developmentally supportive behaviours.

There is little in the way of two-way verbal exchanges between parents and children.
There are low levels of parent-child stimulation.
Parenting styles are a mixture of authoritarian/ punitive control and affection.
Physical punishment is pervasive.
Children suffer dire consequences as a result of serial migration.

Looking at parental beliefs about childrearing and development across cultures, significant differences were found in desired outcomes for children, within and between cultures. For example, some parents are most concerned with raising obedient and respectful children, whereas others want children who are responsible, considerate of others and honest.

Studies have also found that parents give different meanings to children's play, relating it to health, cognition, enjoyment or sometimes negative or uncertain outcomes. Different religious, ethnic, class groups value different characteristics.

Professor Christine Barrow's research found that parenting constructs in Caribbean contexts are generally conservative or traditional:

They assume children's incapacity and to some extent incorporate Western notions of children being dependent and innocent.

Children were seen as moving to adulthood, becoming persons, rather than just being children, persons in their own right.

The concept of child rights is often opposed by parents who believe they "own" their children, who do not have (some) rights until they are much older.

Poverty, unsafe environments and single\ parenthood impact on what parents believe they can or cannot do. Impoverished parents often have little time for much more than ensuring survival of the family. In dire conditions of poverty and stress:

Children are sometimes under protected.
The space of childhood has literally and figuratively become smaller in poor conditions; Children are kept indoors or in the yard for protection; the immediate environment is seen as dangerous;

Participation by exploration, curiosity, must be restricted.

Traditional cultural constructs the social capital of the extended family and wider-community supports can still broaden children's worldview in some ways.

In discussion of sub-cultural differences, Professor Pat Anderson referred to her study in which fathers were asked what they considered the most important principle for raising children. She examined the placement of "manners" in the parents' ranking of principles within the three social class groups, and surmised that:

The lower-class group ranked manners highest because they are seen to be essential for moving

upwards in life, and in getting support from family and neighbours.

The working-class parents expressed that their children needed manners to get anywhere in life, but "rich people don't need manners".

The middle and upper classes do not rank manners as high, perhaps because they instil the trait automatically and/or they feel it will not be as essential against other traits that can assist their children to achieve.

This underscores the importance of learning just exactly what each favoured characteristic means to persons in different contexts; the same concept may mean very different things.

The Report recommends that the child development and early childhood education fields in the Caribbean would profit tremendously from investigations in the following areas:

- Parental ideas about development, culture and thinking,
- Customary practices, traditions, and rituals that touch the lives of children,
- How parents ensure the survival of young children,
- Developmental timetables and parental goals for development,
- Participation of children in the everyday life of communities,
- Pre- and post-colonial histories and their influence on the changing nature of childrearing.
- Similarities and differences in beliefs and practices in childrearing and their potential outcomes in the different ethnic groups that make up the cultural mosaic of the Caribbean.

The Belize Context

Belize is a multi-ethnic and multicultural society. Therefore, child rearing practices can vary as families will tend to follow the rules or tradition used in different generations and the one they grew up with.

Anecdotal evidence illustrates that aside from behaviours, parents from different cultures also use different ways of showing their affection and love towards their children. There are parents who choose to stop showing their affection once they reach the toddler age. On the other hand, there are also cultures that show signs of affection no matter what their age is.

Disciplinary actions can also be different by parents from different cultures. One of the last resorts that parents have for their children's misbehaviour is punishment through spanking or hitting. Different cultures have different beliefs when it comes to punishing their children.

According to statistics collected in 2015 under round 5 of the UNICEF Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey programme (MICS5), 65.1% of children aged 1-14 experienced violent "discipline" (physical punishment and/or psychological aggression) in the home in the month prior to the survey. More than half (54.8%) experienced physical punishment, while a much smaller percentage (25%) of parents or caregivers thought physical punishment was necessary in childrearing. 6.5% of children experienced severe physical punishment (being hit or slapped on the face, head or ears or being hit over and over with an implement), 51.6% experienced psychological aggression (being shouted at, yelled at, screamed at or insulted). (Statistical Institute of Belize (2015-2016), Belize Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey Final Report, UNICEF)

Understanding different cultures will make any parent understand the reaction of other parents with how they raise their children. Recently in Belize, in many cultures, children spend large amounts of time with caregivers other than parents, and all contribute to the caregiving

environment of the child.

Some Factors in Belize which can affect parent child relationship include:

1. Family Roots- Many beliefs, values habits and thought patterns are ingrained through early family life and varies within ethnicities.
2. Religious Beliefs-Religion, or lack of religion, can affect parent child relationship. Parents who place religion high on their priority list often incorporate these beliefs into their parenting.
3. Social Influences- Some cultures rearing techniques have become well established in a Belizean context. Examples are: attachment parenting, which seeks to create strong emotional bonds; slow parenting, which encourages parents to not over plan and organize their children's lives, and parenting for everyone, which believes in the dignity of the child and the child's sense of worthiness.

Non-Governmental Organizations that provide support for child rearing and culture are:

1. NCFC-National Committee For Families and Children
2. UNICEF -United Nations International Children's Fund
3. BFLA- Belize Family Life Association
4. Hand in Hand Ministries
5. NOPCAN – National Organization for the Prevention of Child Abuse and Neglect

KEY MESSAGES

1. Parents have different way of expressing their love for their children and have their own way of rearing their children.
2. Belize is a multi-ethic and multicultural society. Therefore child rearing practices can vary as families will tend to follow the rules or tradition used in different generations and the one they grew up with.
3. Child rearing practices play an important role in shaping one's behaviour and personality of the individual. The family serves as a unit of

socialization for the child and through positive child rearing practices, the child gains self-knowledge.
4. The way we discipline children has an impact on their upbringing. Substitute corporal punishment with positive discipline practices.

Articles 3, 12, 19, 31 and 37 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

Distinguish between varying traditional practices across more than one cultural group in Belize.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Discuss and compare traditional child rearing practices to current practices in Belize.
2. Value differences in child rearing.
3. Review what Caribbean research and our own experience suggest are our strengths and weaknesses in child rearing information and practices.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Evaluate parenting experiences and childrearing practices, (parental self-reflection)
2. Improve/adapt child rearing practices if necessary to assist in child's healthy development.
3. Use positive tone when speaking, listening, and observing

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

Commitment to positive childrearing practices that will aid in the development of his/her child.

Suggested Activities

The background information will help the facilitator to prepare power points and activities in addition to those below:

ACTIVITY 1

Childrearing and Child's development

Parents have different ways of expressing their love for their children and have their own way of rearing their children. The overall aim is to explain how childrearing practices affect child development, how to set limits for children, how to discipline children without beating them or shouting at them, how to make the experience of parenting less stressful. They will also learn how to share this information with others.

Based on different cultures, parents have different expectations when it comes to their children. The overall aim is for parents to figure out their childrearing style. As parents do, they will be aware that different childrearing styles have different effects and consequences on children. If parents are too strict, their children will not learn how to make decisions based on past actions. If parents are too uninvolved, their children may not have a good sense of their abilities and they may not be able to control their actions. This workshop is geared toward parents creating better suited childrearing styles that is appropriate to their children within environments that support, nurture and protect children, so they learn to be a valuable member of their community. After participating actively in this workshop parents will be able to use proper childrearing techniques that will help with the development of their children.

1. The facilitator will stick flashcards with the terms 'childrearing' and 'culture' on the whiteboard and ask participants to ponder on it. The facilitator will ask volunteers to provide their responses.

   The facilitator will then provide the participants with the dictionary meaning:

   According to Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary, child rearing is defined as, 'the process of taking care of and raising child/children.'
   According to Merriam-Webster Learner's Dictionary, culture is defined as 'the beliefs, customs, arts, etc., of a particular society, group, place, or time.'

2. The facilitator will give each participant an image that depict a culture in Belize; the participants will be required to find the persons that have the same image as theirs. (A sample is stuck at a particular part of the room and presenter will inform the participants that this is their team for the workshop session.)

3. Within the group a discussion will ensue, it will be concerning the image they have. The group will answer the following question:
   - How does this group raise their children? Give examples. Groups present and engage in a discussion of varied child rearing practices that are influenced by their culture.

ACTIVITY 2

Child rearing may differ based on our culture

The facilitator will distribute colour coded paper and a pencil to each parent, and then have each participant recall one time when her or his child did something the parent liked and one the parent did not like. Write two sentences describing what the child did. The facilitator will inform the participants that they have two minutes to write the sentences.

The facilitator will ask the participants to form a circle in the middle of the room and have their paper at hand. The facilitator will ask for volunteers to share. Select a couple of scenarios presented and invite to share different ways in which other parents would respond to the same scenario.

The facilitator will then ask the participants to find other participants that have the same colour paper as theirs. (A sample is stuck at a particular part of the room and the presenter will inform the parents that this is their team for the workshop

session.)

The facilitator will then pose the following questions:

- When you were a child, what was one thing you wanted to do, but your parents' culture did not allow you to?
- As a parent, what things don't you allow your child/ children to do because of your culture or beliefs?
- Do you believe that your parents' culture influenced the way they reared you and does it influence the way you raise yours?

A group discussion will be on these questions; then facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share the groups' responses.
The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and then project this question on the whiteboard: what other ways of rearing your children does your culture influence? Parents ponder on the question and share. Identify any similarities/differences between cultures if parents are of different cultures and beliefs.

The facilitator will then explain factors that contribute to childrearing styles and skills. Some factors include:

1. Our culture, beliefs and values.
2. Our experiences growing up in our families.
3. Our communities in which we live in.
4. Society's expectations and demands eg. both parents working and the absence of extended family will require that children be placed in a day care or after school program.

NOTE: However, you can also learn new childrearing ways by attending parenting sessions, reading literature on parenting, organizing parenting support groups.

The facilitator will show a video and explain that:[18]

1. There are national laws as well as community rules on how children should be reared.

2. Laws and community rules tell us what is right and what is wrong in rearing children.

[18] PlusTV Belize (2015) Childrearing dispute leads to stabbing https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BgYuVlKADUw Retrieved (May 30,2016)

For example: Community norms include respecting the elderly, helping family members with household activities, respecting the culture of the community; Laws speak to the issue of protecting children from abuse and neglect.
The facilitator will give participants 10 minutes to discuss the following questions in their groups.

- In your community, select one culture, discuss and share ways in which children are raised

Compare two cultures and examine the following situations.

- Household chores
- The age a daughter is allowed to marry
- Use of corporal punishment

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.
When time is up, ask a few participants to share with entire group.

End this activity by sharing the following important messages:
Family serves as a unit of socialization for the child and through positive child rearing practices the child gains self-knowledge.

Through family, child also learns about other people, cultivates interpersonal relationship, learns to give and receive affection.

Following our parents' or our communities' rules is generally good; but we have to make sure these rules don't harm our children.

It is important to always consider what is in the best interest of our children; that is, what actions will improve their wellbeing.

ACTIVITY 3

Child rearing practices

The facilitator will give each group a scenario to role-play. Each of these role-playing exercises should not last more than 3 minutes. After the role-play, invite the group to say what if possible what culture and was it rural or urban and what child rearing style was demonstrated. A general discussion on the importance of using positive child rearing styles that encourage positive behavior and self- esteem.

1. Father and 9 year old son leave for the farm at 5 in the morning while the mother and daughters go to fetch fire wood and water and begin preparing the midday meal
2. Mother and father leave for work and children stay behind getting ready to go to school
3. Girl has to do the dishes and boy has to take out the garbage before going to school
4. Boys attend school for six months and the other six months they have to help with crop harvesting.

The presenter will then present information on:
- The Convention on the Rights of the Child, mainly Article 19
- How culture and society influence childrearing

Notes
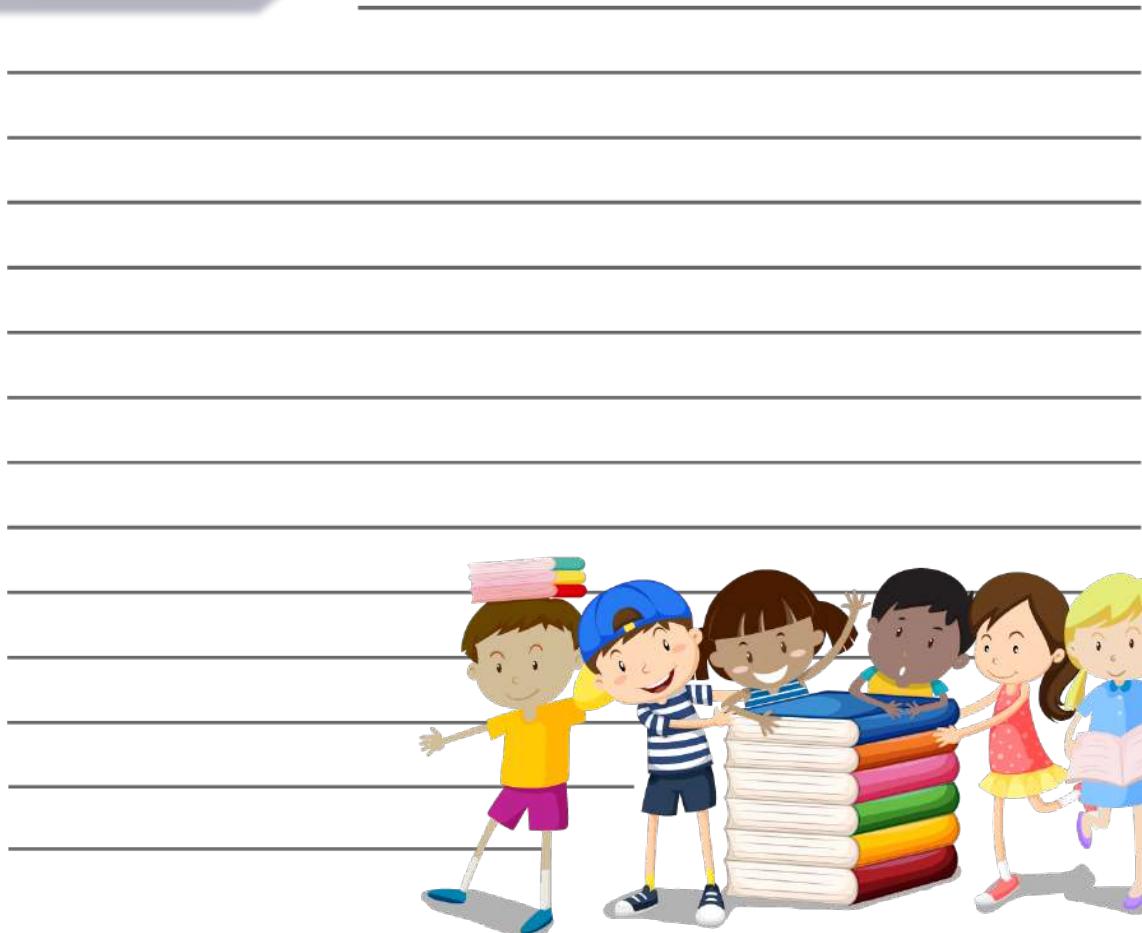
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3.2.3 Gender Issues and the Family

Background

In any parenting program, it is of utmost important that parents are made aware that boys and girls are not born with the behaviours that they display at different stages of their lives but that these behaviours are learnt from their interactions and experiences (gender) afforded to them by their parents, teachers and society at large. These behaviours are taught based on the expectations that society have of both men and women and because these are learnt, they change over time and can be different from society to society. They determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man. As a result, they have a powerful influence over how we live our lives.

Gender characteristics also shape (and are shaped by) relationships between women and men. For example, our society continues to assume that men are dominant and women are submissive, and this translates into our everyday behaviour.

Gender also affects relationships among women and among men. For example, women are often encouraged to see other women as competition for male attention. Men expect other men to act in ways that will show that they are "real men".

Gender influences are so powerful in our lives that it may seem that they are natural. We may think, "That's just how men (or women) are." But this is not the case. Our beliefs about gender are learned. They change over time. What it means to be a man or a woman in Belize today is different than it was a hundred years ago. It will certainly be different a hundred years from now. On the other hand, their physical, biological characteristics that makes them a boy or girl, their sex, is what they are born with and that cannot be changed. Hence the difference between Sex – biological characteristics and Gender – learned behaviours that affect the relationships between men and women. For example, more women than men, girls than boys are victims of abuse as reported by the Ministry of Health quarterly reports on Domestic Violence, women earn less than men due to the types of jobs they enter into,

but sometimes even if they require equal or more effort and skills, it is valued and remunerated less. (Equal pay for work of equal value – UN Women.org)

Families are the first teachers and therefore it is necessary that parents become aware that the way we raise boys and girls is what contributes to the inequalities and inequities that are visible in our society today. Parents are crucial in changing those expectations and behaviours from an early age so that girls may be afforded opportunities for equal participation and access to resources for maximizing their full potential as young and adult women. Additionally, boys need to be raised in ways which will help them to become equal partners in development, thus assuming a more active role in child rearing, engaging in household activities, expressing their emotions, just to name a few.

It is worth noting that when the word "gender" –our socialization process, was first used in this way, to signify social rather than grammatical difference, at the Institute for Development Studies at the University of Brighton, in the mid-1970s, the intention was not so much as to distinguish men from women, but to find an analytic tool to disaggregate the category "women". In other words, the intention was to refine analysis of the differing impacts of development on different groups of women, as well as differences between women and men.

The GID or Gender in Development perspective emerged in the late 1980's as an alternative to the prevailing Women in Development or WID approach. Unlike WID, which focused on women only, and called for their integration into development as producers and workers, GID focuses on the interdependence of men and women in society and on the unequal relations of power between them. The GID approach aims for a development process that transforms gender relations in order to enable women to participate on an equal basis with men in determining their common future. The GID approach emphasizes the importance of women's collective organization for self-empowerment.

At the United Nation Fourth World Conference

for Women held in Beijing 1995, countries made commitments to gender equality and women's empowerment. The Beijing Declaration adopted at the Conference builds on the perspectives and strategies outlined at the previous United Nations conferences on education – Jomtien, (1990), environment- Rio(1992), human rights- Vienna (1993), population – Cairo (1994), and social development – Copenhagen (1995), including the Convention on the Elimination of all Forms of Discrimination against Women (CEDAW, 1979).

It is based on the principles of human rights and social justice. It clearly recognizes that gender equality and women's empowerment are essential for addressing the central concerns of poverty and insecurity, and for achieving sustainable, people centered- development.

In response to its national and international commitments Belize has undertaken several initiatives to address gender equality and women's empowerment. It recognizes as Johnson 2002 indicates:

"In order for a country to develop its maximum potential each of its citizens must have an equal opportunity to participate fully in all actions that will impact positively on human development. This National Gender Policy sets out to identify the inequities experienced by both men and women and suggests action for the correction of gender disparities as well as giving direction for the coordination and implementation of the policy. It recognizes that the situation of women cannot be the sole focus as women do not live and function in isolation. In fact women as the primary care givers, in most households, set the relationships that future generations will accept as the norm. We have a long way to travel in order to reach an equitable society and there is much to be done so that today's adolescents may be the Belizean men and women of tomorrow who will bear their identity with pride and dignity. We need to have in place good services in the fields of education and health and there has to be satisfying and meaningful employment opportunities for the young people graduating from our high schools. Young people must be encouraged to participate in their communities so that they develop their enormous potential. Boys and girls, men and women must develop together with equal opportunities and we must remove any barriers that may be an obstacle. I hope this policy will be used by all involved in planning activities and that it makes a contribution towards attaining that equitable society."

The socialization process in which children learn these gender roles begins at birth. Gender socialization occurs through four major agents: family, education, peer groups, and mass media. Each agent reinforces gender roles by creating and maintaining normative expectations for gender-specific behaviour.

Children learn at a young age that there are distinct expectations for them based on their sex. Studies reveal that children are aware of gender roles by age two or three; at four or five, most children are firmly entrenched in culturally appropriate gender roles. Parents often supply male children with trucks, toy guns, and superhero paraphernalia, which are active toys that promote motor skills, aggression, and solitary play. Female children are often given dolls and dress-up apparel that foster nurturing, social proximity, and role play.

Parents can play a vital role in changing our society by doing away with the traditional expectations of boys and girls and meaningfully engaging them in equal opportunities that will bring about the necessary changes so that women and men will be equal partners in national development.

ACTIVITY 1

Sex vs Gender

The overall aim is to explore how the family influences children's understanding of their roles. Gender roles are defined by the socio-cultural norms of any society. In most of the societies, the family systems are based on the gender roles, and it is the pre-designed gender roles that help members of the family to run the family with assigned responsibilities. This activity is geared towards awareness and embracing the changes that family structures and the gender roles have been diverting from the traditional responsibilities.

1. Facilitator will hand out a skittle or M&M and after distributing ask them to eat it and then say to them that each one of them has eaten a pregnancy pill and are now expecting. Ask them to share if they would like to give birth to a boy or a girl and why? Take note of reasons – one section for girls and one section for boys on newsprint. Review the reasons and ask them to share why they think that way.

- Facilitator then asks how we distinguish a baby boy from a baby a girl without asking if the baby is a boy or girl. – Eg "we will dress the boy in blue the girl in pink" and immediately we begin to treat them differently – let participants share what are the things we do with and expect of boys and girls and list them on newsprint. Some examples: girls play with dolls and boys play with trucks, girls are allowed to cry but boys should not cry, boys play outside, girls stay inside.

- In groups of four have participants brainstorm the things listed on newsprint and help them determine if the expectations and the way we treat them helps them to behave like boys and girls or it is because they were born a girl or a boy.

2. Explain the terms Gender vs Sex:
- "Gender" is often confused with 'sex'.
- Gender is the termed used to define the social roles ascribed to males and females in a specific culture, location, society and time, is learned and can be changed. We teach boys and girls how society expects them to behave as girls and boys.
- Sex describes biological characteristics that determines if you are a boy or girl, are fixed and unchanging over time, do not vary between different cultures and are not influenced by social and economic factors.
- Distribute a hand out (prepare ahead of session) with a list of characteristics and participants are to determine if these are related to sex or gender.
- Women are not leaders (G)
- Women menstruate and can give birth; (S)
- Little girls are gentle (G)
- Men impregnate women; (S)
- Domestic workers are generally women; (G)
- Women have larger breasts and can breastfeed children. (S)
- Little boys are rough (G)
- Women take care of the house and raise the children; (G)
- Men are decision-makers; (G)
- Construction workers are generally men; (G)

ACTIVITY 2

Stereotypes

1. Participants will be given a riddle as follows to see if they understood the concept of gender and sex; this riddle has circulated so some parents may get it quickly.

   A father and son are in a horrible car crash that kills the father. The son is rushed to the hospital, just as he's about to go under the knife, the surgeon says, "I can't operate, that boy is my son! (Discuss possible answers)
   The answer is 'The doctor is the mother of the boy.'
   How could that be? Doctor was the mother of the boy.

Depending on how quick they get it - Facilitator can explain if they get it quick that in the past we were socialized in ways which led us to see only male doctors so we expect that all doctors are men or that it is difficult to see women as doctors so how could the boy be the son of the doctor because the doctor had died.

2. The facilitator will pair up participants (facilitator can try and place participants one male/one female) and ask them to brainstorm stereotypes that we have of boys and girls men and women and what consequences it has for boys/men and girls/women. For example: Girls don't climb trees, boys don't cry, girls do dishes, boys take out garbage etc, men are the income earners, women take care of the house and babies and how these come about. Some examples of consequences - domestic violence, less pay for women, men having multiple partners because he is to be MACHO, Pairs present a summary of their discussions. After sharing, have participants think of how to change the way we go about raising children to make it more inclusive for boys and girls. The facilitator will explain that as parents they can allow the boys and girls to engage in any activity if they give them both the same opportunities because a boy will not be less of a boy if he washes dishes and a girl less of a girl if she climbs trees. Rather we cheat them of becoming all that they can be by locking them into traditional expectations and careers choices. For example - we don't allow boys to play with dolls because they will become "sissies" but what we are doing is minimizing his role as a father when he becomes one – he will not take the desired role in raising his own child because he didn't learn to.

3. Ask participants to come up with examples if any, of changes we see in the expectations and behaviours of men and women and how they as parents can continue to contribute to these positive changes today. For example – men taking children to day care, more women running for political office may be some of their answers.

Being a girl, being a boy

1. The facilitator will divide participants into groups of four or five depending on the number of participants. The facilitator will provide groups with the required materials, and the groups will have 30 minutes to complete the task The first task assigned is to create a collage that describes the way 'it was for you Being a Girl' or 'Being a Boy'. Participants will then do a collage of what they would want to see what being a girl or being a boy would look like. The collages will be placed in the corner that the group was assigned to. The groups will visit each other's stations.

After viewing, the facilitator will pose these questions to start a general discussion.

Questions:
1. What gender distinctions did the collages illustrate?
2. How will you as a parent make it possible for your boy or girl?
3. What role can the family play in developing these opportunities for boys and girls?

Ask participants to state one thing they will remember from the session and ask participants commitment to personal goals that will help them in making the changes necessary in raising boys and girls. End this activity by sharing the following important messages which should be printed on newsprint or use power point: Other points may be developed from the back ground knowledge section if necessary

• Gender characteristics are socially created. They define the roles and opportunities that are available to women and men. They determine what is expected, allowed and valued in a woman or a man. As a result, they have a powerful influence over how we live our lives. Importantly, these characteristics can be changed and have changed over time but not fast enough.

- Gender is different from sex which determines our biological characteristics

- Parents can make a difference when they are aware that it is ok to raise girls and boy differently than what we have been socialized to think it should be.

- Because women and men have different experiences, we also face different problems. These problems affect both individuals and our ability to make economic and social progress as a nation. Most often, of course, gender inequality manifests itself through women's lower status in the home and wider society. This does not mean, however, that gender concerns are unimportant for men. The way in which we define what it means to "be a man" can also lead to specific vulnerabilities for men and boys.

- Parents are crucial in changing expectations and behaviours from an early age so that girls may be afforded opportunities for equal participation and access to resources for maximizing their full potential as young and adult women. On the other hand to raise boys in ways which will help them be equal partners in development, assuming a more active role in child rearing, household activities, express their emotions, respect for women among others.
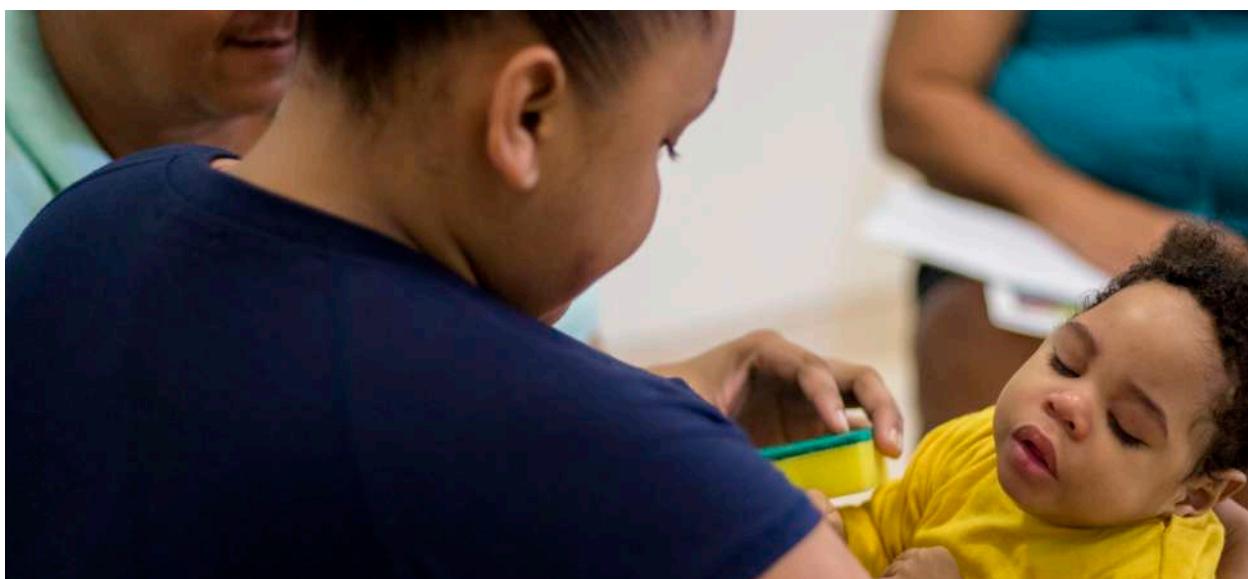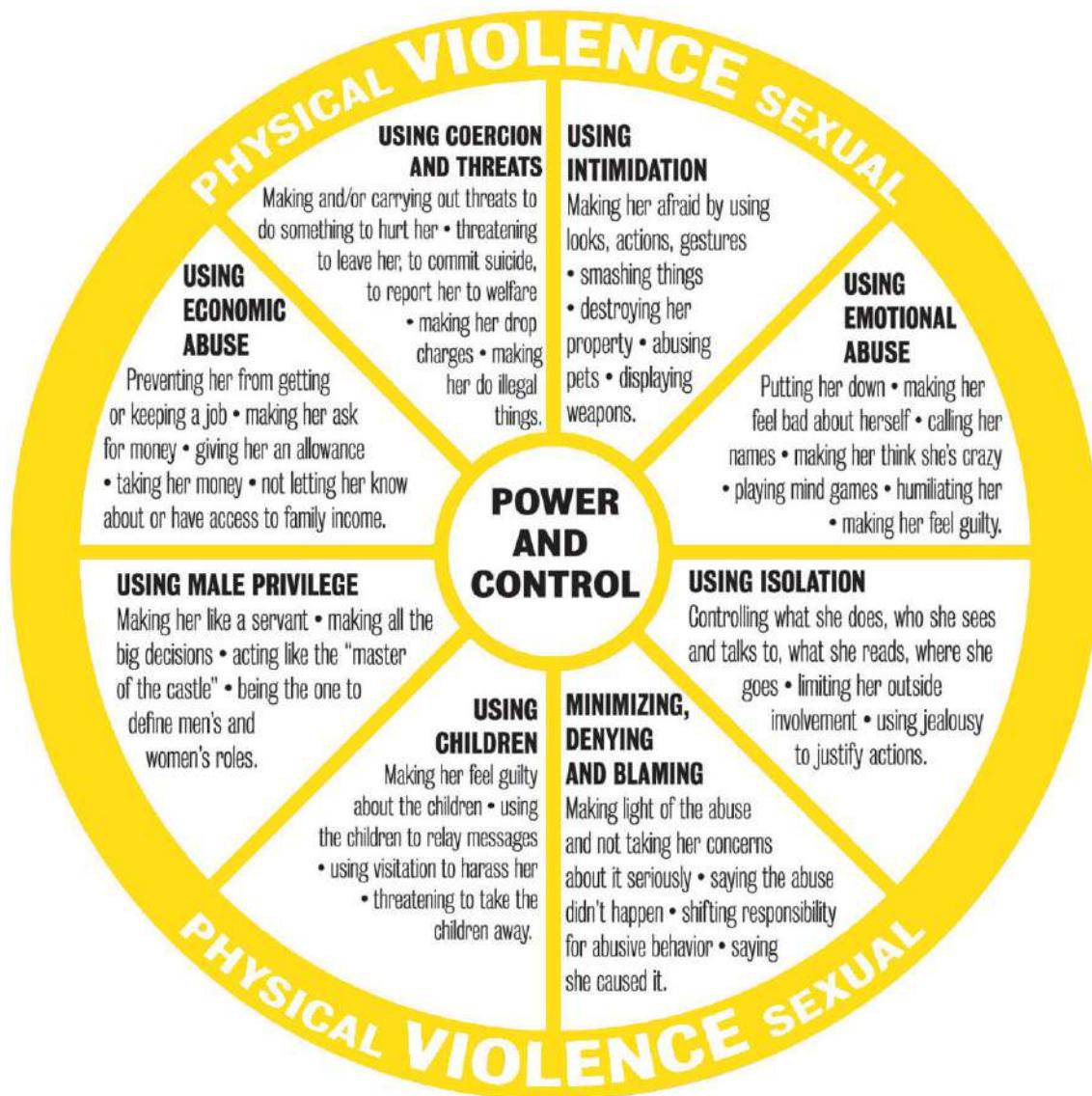
PHOTOS CREDIT: UNICEF Belize

Gender based violence (GBV) – violence that is directed against a woman because she is a woman or that affects women disproportionately. It is any act or conduct, based on gender, which causes death or physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, whether in the public or private sphere, including physical, sexual and psychological violence.

GBV occurs in the family and in the community.

Sexual violence – includes all forms of violence that have some aspect of sexual activity, stimulation or arousal that is not consented and/or or forceful. [4]

Domestic violence/Family violence – a pattern of abusive behaviour that one partner uses to maintain power and control of their partner. It includes physical, verbal, emotional, sexual and economic abuse. The power and control wheel shows how abusers maintain power and control over their partners.

POWER AND CONTROL wheel — surrounded by PHYSICAL VIOLENCE SEXUAL

USING COERCION AND THREATS Making and/or carrying out threats to do something to hurt her • threatening to leave her; to commit suicide, to report her to welfare • making her drop charges • making her do illegal things.

USING INTIMIDATION Making her afraid by using looks, actions, gestures • smashing things • destroying her property • abusing pets • displaying weapons.

USING EMOTIONAL ABUSE Putting her down • making her feel bad about herself • calling her names • making her think she's crazy • playing mind games • humiliating her • making her feel guilty.

USING ISOLATION Controlling what she does, who she sees and talks to, what she reads, where she goes • limiting her outside involvement • using jealousy to justify actions.

MINIMIZING, DENYING AND BLAMING Making light of the abuse and not taking her concerns about it seriously • saying the abuse didn't happen • shifting responsibility for abusive behavior • saying she caused it.

USING CHILDREN Making her feel guilty about the children • using the children to relay messages • using visitation to harass her • threatening to take the children away.

USING MALE PRIVILEGE Making her like a servant • making all the big decisions • acting like the "master of the castle" • being the one to define men's and women's roles.

USING ECONOMIC ABUSE Preventing her from getting or keeping a job • making her ask for money • giving her an allowance • taking her money • not letting her know about or have access to family income.

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5   Protocols for multisectoral response to sexual violence, 2011
         Women's Handbook on Domestic Violence, 2005

Why is it important to examine our socio-cultural beliefs and practices that define gender roles and expectations? Because the existing gender inequality leads to gender based violence. Gender Based violence occurs as a way to perpetuate gender norms and expectations that facilitate men's social, economic and political power, control of and access to resources.
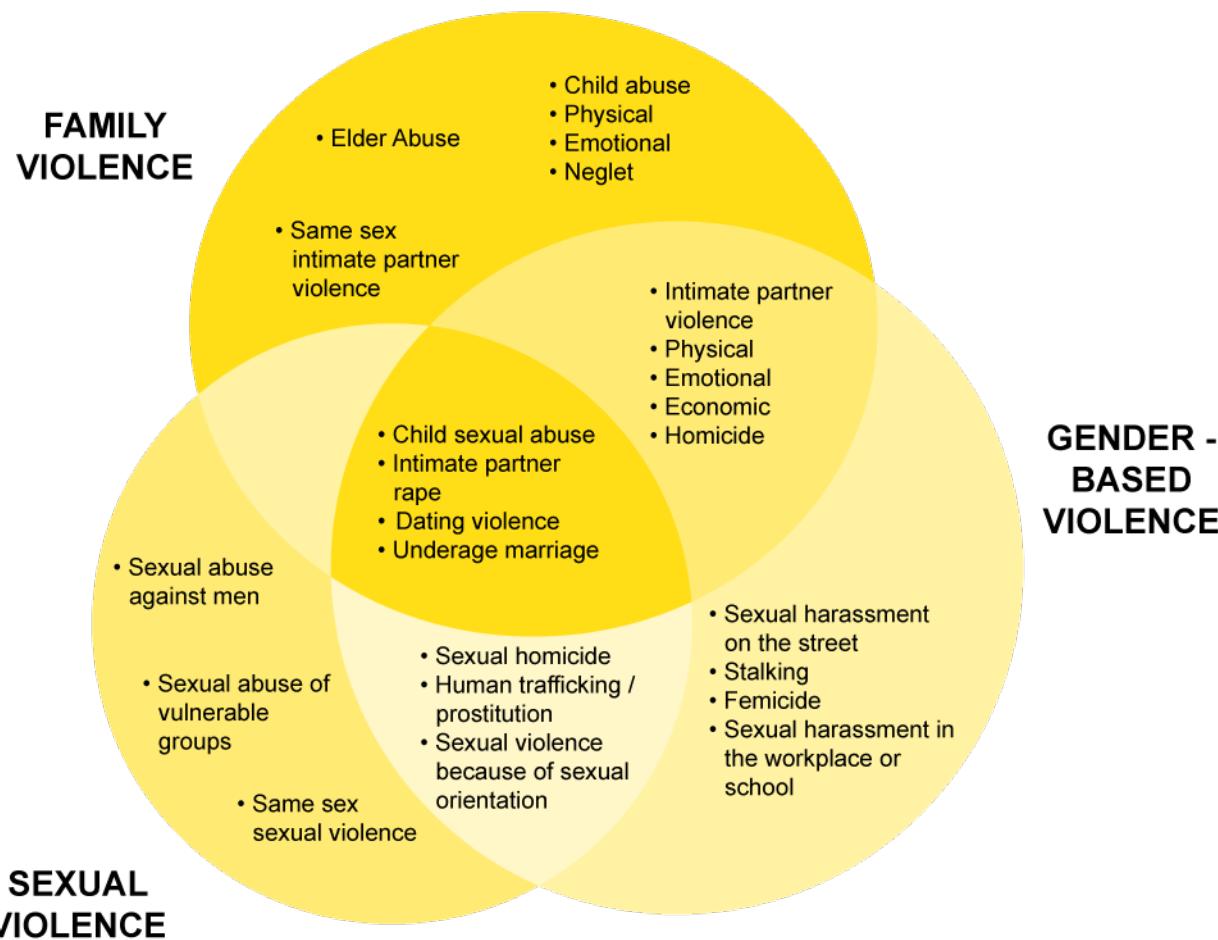
The relationship between Gender Based Violence, sexual violence and family violence

1. We do not all see gender issues in the same way; this is universal.

2. There are many contradictions in the ways we deal with gender issues. E.g. Parents encourage behaviour in children that we would not want in a matEveryone experiences violence in their lives and their communities. It is important to analyse the various ways we experience violence so that we can address them and not minimize our children's exposure to violence.

ACTIVITY 4

Gender based violence

After examining the power and control wheel, and the venn diagram showing the relationship between GBV, sexual violence and family violence the facilitator can hand out an individual sheet and allow participants ten minutes to reflect on and reply to the following five categories:

Individual activity

- Violence used against me.
- Violence that I used against others: Violence that I have witnessed.
- How I feel when I use violence.
- How I feel when violence is used against me.

Facilitator guides group discussion on the following topics

- What is the most common type of violence used against women?
- What is the most common type of violence used against men?
- How do you feel when you use violence against others?
- How do you feel when violence is used against you?
- How does the media (music, radio, movies) portray violence?
- What is the link between violence in your families and relationships and other violence that you see in your communities?

Other suggested activities

To demonstrate how culture informs gender roles is the proverbs challenge. A pair or team brainstorm and compile proverbs/sayings they heard that tell them about men and women. Or you can have proverbs/sayings prepared for them to analyse, great sources for these are Creole Council, Garifuna Council and Maya Council

Playing a popular video game – many of the currently popular video games are violent, sexist, and promote Violence Agaisnt Women and teenagers are playing these games. These games desensitize players from a very young age.

Play a popular soca/dancehall/reggae song, then without the music review the lyrics. This is important because music is another way our cultural practices are passed on, which includes our gendered behaviour. This is a good activity to do after lunch because the music gets people up and moving, while the discussion helps them realize what we are saying to ourselves, our partners and our children

Watch popular cartoons, and animated movies to see what our children are learning about their sex, gender, and ethnicity. For instance the Disney princesses that constantly need to be saved by the hero. And the newer cartoons and animated movies that showcase different ethnic groups challenging their cultural norms.

Types of Families

1. Facilitator will make a presentation on the different types of families using the information in the background section.
2. Put participants in groups and give them a set of pictures depicting the different types of families and have them label them.
3. Groups present on the types of families and give examples of which ones are most common in Belize.

Notes

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3.2.4 Communication Skills

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect parent and child relationships. For example, communication skills can be influenced by:
Use of descriptive language within the home environment (Paavola, Kunnari, Moilanen, &Lehtihalmes, 2005).

Restricting open communication opportunities which often affects children's willingness to communication openly with others (Fewell & Deutscher, 2002).

Children may also play a role in how interactions with their parents affect their own communication development. That is, how children respond to information shared by parents may strengthen or weaken communication (Morales et al., 2000).

Communication in families is characterized by mutual respect and the ability to freely exchange feelings and ideas. Parents who understand their teenager's need for a reasonable measure of independence and individuality encourage their child's growth and achievements. This positive interest strengthens the bonds of the parent-child relationship. When a child receives parental approval and believes that the parent genuinely values his/her accomplishments, it promotes a positive self-concept, fosters a critical thinker and creates a willingness to share other information about one's self. (Avdic, D., &Büyükdurmus, T. 2015)

Pugach and Johnson (2002) commented on the importance of communication by stating that, "Perhaps the most important skill of effective collaborators is the ability to communicate ideas effectively. Communication is the foundation of all interactions between humans. Without the ability to communicate, our lives would be barren."
Traditional forms of top down communication in many instance must be replaced with open communication skills. This type of individual-focused communication is about paying attention, affirming, bonding, influencing, and encouraging a

greater sense of responsibility (Conaty, 2002).

Parents must be aware that effective communication has to do with more than simply sharing information and exchanging ideas. Instead, it should involve:
1. Imparting of thoughts, opinions and information through speech, writing or signs;
2. Skills to share information and understand verbal and non-verbal meanings;
3. A medium for bonding and supporting children.

- Children learn how to communicate by watching their parents. If parents communicate openly and effectively, chances are that their children will, too. Good communication skills will benefit children for their entire lives.

- Children begin to form ideas and beliefs about themselves based on how their parents communicate with them. When parents communicate effectively with their children, they are showing them respect. Children then begin to feel that they are heard and understood by their parents, which is a boost to self-esteem.

- Communication between parents and children that is ineffective or negative can lead children to believe that they are unimportant, unheard, or misunderstood. Such children may also come to see their parents as unhelpful and untrustworthy.

- Parents who communicate effectively with their children are more likely to have children who are willing to do what they are told. Such children know what to expect from their parents, and once children know what is expected of them, they are more likely to live up to these expectations. They are also more likely to feel secure in their position in the family, and are thus more likely to be cooperative.

- Active Listening is key to effective communication and is an important skill you should have as a parent. It is a specific

form of communication that lets another person know that you are "with them," aware of what they are saying, accepting of their perspective, and appreciative of their situation.

- Really listening to your children is the best way to create a caring relationship in which they see you as being "in their corner" and as a base to which they can always return when they need support. Having this secure relationship is one of the strongest factors in helping your children to become resilient, responsible, and caring people who are open to your love and your guidance.

- By listening to them, you are communicating that they are worthy of your attention. By hearing their distress, you are demonstrating that their view of the world has merit. By allowing them time to decide their course of action, you are indicating your trust in their ability to solve problems.

Verbal and nonverbal communication

Nonverbal communication can happen on many different levels. The main areas are:

Body language which includes: posture or the way you stand, sit, hold your head, your shoulders, your arms, etc.

- Gestures - those little movements you make with your arms and hands or even with your head; pointing at things, scratching your head, clapping your hands and opening them again to invite your child to come to you, etc.

- Facial expressions - the inviting smile, a disapproving stern look, a tired blank stare, etc.

- Eye contact – you know how annoying it can be to talk to someone who looks at everything but at you. You're never sure whether he actually listens to you or not.

Speech elements:
- Loudness and pitch
- Intonation (lively or monotone)
- Tone of voice and inflection

Touch:
- The hug, tap on your shoulder, holding a hand. Is it done softly and gently? Or is it more forceful to hold you back?

Interpersonal space:
- How much space do you need to be around you to feel comfortable? Who can come closer? Signs for lacking space can include rocking, leg swinging, tapping and gaze aversion.

Objects:
- You communicate even through things like your clothing and hair style. What do they say about you?

Time:
- Do you spend a lot of time with your children (doing activities together or having fun conversations) or does the day seem too short to actually have time for them? This tells them a lot about your interest and affection.

Nonverbal Communication Tips

1. Match your feelings with your words - Nonverbal language is so complex, that concentrating on improving one or two cues only, often doesn't help. Most of it happens unconsciously as well. In this article you'll find examples and strategies on how to match your verbal and nonverbal communication.

2. Watch your child's reactions -They'll give you; what do they tell you about the way your children understood you?

3. Ask your children about the nonverbal signs you see -That gives them feedback and / or the chance to confirm your impression or put you on the right track. It can also help them clarify their emotions.

4. Become aware of your own nonverbal signs -That is maybe the hardest to do as you usually

don't see yourself to notice all the details of your verbal and nonverbal communication. Try to make it a habit for certain situations and find ways to get feedback.

5. Practice - a lot of practice and reflection makes all the difference.

Key Points on Verbal Communication

- Ask your children what they may want or need from you in a conversation, such as advice, simply listening, help in dealing with feelings or help solving a problem.
- Children learn by imitating. Most often, they will follow your lead in how they deal with anger, solve problems and work through difficult feelings.
- Talk to your children: don't lecture, criticize, threaten or say hurtful things.
- Children learn from their own choices. As long as the consequences are not dangerous, don't feel you have to step in.
- Realize your children may test you by telling you a small part of what is bothering them. Listen carefully to what they say, encourage them to talk and they may share the rest of the story.

Communication tips for parents

Be available for your child/children

- Notice times when your children are most likely to talk — for example, at bedtime, before dinner, in the car — and be available.
- Start the conversation; it lets your children know you care about what's happening in their lives.
- Find time each week for a one-on-one activity with each child, and avoid scheduling other activities during that time.
- Learn about your children's interests for example, favourite music and activities and show interest in them.
- Initiate conversations by sharing what you have

been thinking about rather than beginning a conversation with a question.

Let your child/children know you're listening

- When your children are talking about concerns, stop whatever you are doing and listen.
- Express interest in what they are saying without being intrusive.
- Listen to their point of view, even if it's difficult to hear.
- Let them complete their point before you respond.
- Repeat what you heard them say to ensure that you understand them correctly.

Listening Skills include

Listen:
- Pay attention to what your child is saying.
- Stop what you are doing to listen.
- If you are busy, tell your child: "I'm busy now, can we talk later?"
- Then, find the time to listen your child.

Keep eye contact:
- Eye contact improves communication.
- Reduce the physical distance between you and your child.
- Bend down or sit on the floor to be eye-to-eye with your child.

Let your child speak:
- Don't interrupt your child.
- Praise him/her when your child finishes.

Showing interest in what the child is saying
Show your child that his/her ideas are important to you.
- Say things like: "Really?', "Tell me more", "Say that again", "That's interesting"

Respond in a way your child/children will hear
- Soften strong reactions; children will tune you out if you appear angry or defensive.
- Express your opinion without putting down theirs; acknowledge that it's okay to disagree.

- Resist arguing about who is right. Instead say, "I know you disagree with me, but this is what I think."
- Focus on your child's feelings rather than your own during your conversation.

Are you really listening? Steps to Active Listening:
- Be open to your feelings and needs – don't' jump to a quick decision
- Get the facts – ask for more information
- Say it again – repeat what you understand your child to be asking or saying
- Share feelings – be honest
- Sum it up – say what you and your child have agreed to.

USE THESE BUILDING BLOCKS TO ENCOURAGE CONVERSATION

DO	SAY
Listen	I feel that right now you need me to just listen to you.
Praise	You worked so hard and I am proud of you.
Feel	I feel..., I am so angry with you ..., I love you.
Respect	It's your choice..., What can I do to help you?
Listen and Repeat	It feels like you were very unhappy about your class. Is that right?
Trust	I know you will be thoughtful and responsible.
Affirm	You are so smart. You made me happy when you...
Clarify	Could you tell me more about your argument with your friend?

KEY MESSAGES

How you talk to your child can make a big difference in how you understand each other! If it seems like he/she isn't hearing you, KEEP ON TRYING.

Parents must be aware that effective communication has to do with more than simply sharing information and exchanging ideas. Instead, it should involve:
1. Imparting of thoughts, opinions and information through speech, writing or signs;
2. Skills to share information and understand verbal and non-verbal meanings;
3. A medium for bonding and supporting children

Articles 5, 13 and 17 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

Promote Meaningful Parent and Child Communication.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Demonstrate skills to transmit and receive information
2. Respect ideas and opinions
3. Listen attentively while maintain composure
4. Use positive emotional tone

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Communicate using positive emotional tone
2. Able to listen attentively and maintaining eye contact

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Foster positive relationships and self-esteem.

ACTIVITY 1

Communication Skills

This session will focus on the importance of open communication between parent(s) and children. Parents should be able to communicate openly and effectively with their children. Open, effective communication benefits not only the children, but every member of the family. Relationships between parents and their children are greatly improved when there is effective communication taking place. In general, if communication between parents and their children is good, then their relationships are good as well.

1. The facilitator will distribute a jelly bean to each participant as they are entering the room. The jelly bean indicates to which station they belong. At the station, there are chairs arranged in a circle and a sheet of newsprint with the label 'Communication' and markers. The facilitator will inform the participants that they have 30 seconds to write the first thing that comes to mind when they see this word.
2. The facilitator will get volunteers to read the word and explain. The facilitator will provide positive feedback to the participants and inform the participants that this is their team for the training session.)
3. The facilitator will then pose the following questions:
   - Do you believe that communication is a skill?
   - What are two ways you communicate with your child/children?

4. A group discussion on these questions; then facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share the group's response.
5. The facilitator will provide feedback to each response. The facilitator will then highlight and explain the term communication and give examples.
6. Then the facilitator will pose this question: Do you think that parents should have open communication with their child/children? Discuss and share.
7. The facilitator will ask participants if they

have any questions and inform them that now they will demonstrate communication skills through a role-play.

Agitated Son

One Sunday afternoon, your son appears agitated (nervous, anxious) about something. You ask if everything is all right, but he doesn't say much. You ask if he wants to talk somewhere private, and then he says okay. You walk outside and he tells you about some trouble he is in, at school.
NOTE: You (the facilitator) will play the role of the parent. A participant can play the role of the child. Explain or read the scenario for participants first, then role play it.

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8. After the role-play, the facilitator will ask participants what things the mother did or did not do well.

9. After four minutes the facilitator will ask participants to form a circle.
   • Notice the son's appearance and express concern.
   • Sit at eye-level with the boy, showing full attention.
   • Let the child speak without interrupting him.
   • Look at the child while he is speaking.
   • Ask questions for clarification and understanding in a non-judgmental way.

10. The facilitator will ask participants what they think about these skills. Do they seem easy or hard to practice? Why or why not?

11. The facilitator will close this activity by sharing the following messages:

Importance of Communication skills

Good communication makes it possible to have a good relationship with your children. The most important part of good communication is good listening, which includes paying attention, expressing appreciation that the child has spoken and making sure you understand what the child has said.

ACTIVITY 2

Talking and Listening to my Child

This session will focus on effective communication skills between parent and child/children. Good communication is an important parenting skill. Parenting can be more enjoyable when positive parent – child relationship is established. When parenting good communication is the key to building self-esteem as well a mutual respect between child and parent.

The facilitator will distribute a piece of paper to each participant. Then, the facilitator will write the terms 'talking' and 'listening' on the whiteboard and ask participants to ponder on it.

The facilitator will ask participants to demonstrate their understanding of the words using any method they wish.

After four minutes the facilitator will say 'take off' and participants are to get up and form a circle. Then the facilitator will inform the participants to fold the paper and gently pass the paper to their right side.

The person will then describe or read the information from his/her perspective. Then the owner of the paper will comment on the person's description. The facilitator will allow six participants to share and explanation.

The facilitator will provide feedback and provide participants with definition of both terms.
Talk- to communicate or exchange ideas, information, etc., by speaking.
Listen- to pay attention to someone or something in order to hear what is being said, sung, played, etc.
The facilitator will give each participant an image that depict a form of listening or talking; the participants will be required to find the persons that have the same image as theirs. (A sample is stuck at a particular part of the room and facilitator will inform the participants that this is

their team for the workshop session.)

The facilitator will explain to participants that they will now learn how to talk to their children in a positive way. When there is good communication, misunderstandings can be avoided and when problems arise, they can more easily be solved.

The facilitator will explain and demonstrate each of the communication skills below using the pictures.

Make sure your child is listening
- Call your child's name.
- Make eye contact before you start speaking.
- Reduce the physical distance between you and your child.
- Get to the same level as your child.

Keep eye contact with your child
- Reduce the physical distance between you and your child.
- Make eye contact.
- Get onto the same level as your child.

Talk with your child, not at your child
- Talking with your child is a two-sided conversation.
- You and your child should both talk and both listen. You may take turns.
- By contrast, talking at your child is not a conversation. In those situations, only you speak, for example, "Go get the paper" or "You will have to clean your room."

Speak kindly
- Use words that communicate love and respect.
- Avoid using unkind words that ridicule, shame or label your child.
- If there is something you feel that you need to criticise, focus your criticism on the thing you are unhappy about – but do not criticise the person. For example, say, "You are a very clever person, but this thing you did was a mistake."

Keep your statements simple
- Ask your child to do only one thing at a time.
- Young children can't follow too many

instructions.

Match your tone of voice to your message
- Speak firmly when you are making a request.
- When you are not firm your child thinks your request is not important.
- Be specific and explain why you are making the request.
- Avoid being threatening. Do not shout.

Say do instead of don't
- Tell your child what to do, rather than what not to do.
- Example: "Close the door softly" instead of "Don't slam the door."

Communicate acceptance
- Avoid lecturing your child.
- Express thanks that your child is sharing with you.
- Use expressions such as "I understand", "I know how you feel."
- Children who feel accepted are more likely to communicate with their parents.
- The facilitator will ask participants if they have any questions and inform them that now they will demonstrate these skills through this role-play.

School Day

Daughter: (sounding sad) I don't want to go to school today. It's boring.

Mother: (said roughly) Of course you want to go to school today. You have Physical Education today and you always love that.

Daughter: No I don't. Besides we're playing basketball and I hate that.

Mother: Well, you better learn to like it, and to like school too. You don't have a choice, you know. You have to go to school. Everyone has to do things they don't want to do and you are no different.

Daughter: (Tiptoes away, dejected with shoulders and head hanging down, crying) I hate school and I hate gym.

This parent seemed annoyed, angry, and impatient, and didn't want to hear that the child hated school. The child felt that her mother wasn't listening to her and would eventually learn not to turn to this mother for support.

Participants will play the role of the parent and child. Explain or read the scenario to participants first and then role play it. Use positive talking skills and also listening skills.

1. After the role-play, the facilitator will ask the group what things the mother did or did not do well. After a brief discussion, participants will practice their listening and talking skills.
2. The facilitator will close this session by sharing the following messages about the importance of talking and listening skills.

Talking with your child means that both of you are talking turns listening and talking. Listening and speaking in a respectful way builds understanding and cooperation.

Good communication helps prevent some problems from occurring, and helps resolve other problems when they arise.

Photos Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Notes

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3.2.4.1 Managing Conflict and Anger through Communication

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect parent and child relationships. Some examples that affect conflict are:

1. Poor Communication Skills (Stuart, 2016) - It seems easier to speak out of turn in order to be heard or to defend ourselves. Yet, if each one would take time to listen, interpret, ask for explanation, and reflect many more families would be intact, rather than members being estranged from each other.
2. Finances (Banks, 2015) - One major source of family conflict is within the area of finances--specifically, the lack of enough money to pay bills, maintain the mortgage or rent, buy sufficient food and other necessities and have any remaining money for recreation. Job or career may contribute to conflict within a family.
3. Our safety, security, or stability is questioned (Doucey, 2011) - All human beings have basic needs. Part of these needs are physical, like the need for food, water or shelter, but essential needs go beyond these few elements because they cover the psychological sphere. Safety, security, and stability are all important needs, and when there is conflict, sometimes these needs are questioned and it can affect us greatly.
4. Differences in Perception (Salleh et al., 2012) - conflict happens whenever disagreements exist in a social situation over issues of substance, or whenever emotional antagonisms create frictions between individuals or groups. They agreed that conflict continues when either side do not believe in a certain agreement and intertwine of the other party is merely impossible.

According to Townsend, "While there are seemingly endless reasons for conflicts, they generally surround the underlying needs of all humans including physical, intellectual, emotional, social, and spiritual" (2010).

Parents must be aware that managing conflict through communication will not work if the communication is a negative one. For proper communication to take place, some practices to use between the speaker and the listener include (Markman, Stanley & Blumberg, 2010):

The speaker
1. The speaker should share his/her own thoughts, feelings and concerns—not what he/she thinks the listener's concerns are.
2. Use "I" statements when speaking to accurately express thoughts and feelings.
3. Keep statements short, to ensure the listener does not get overwhelmed with information.
4. Stop after each short statement so that the listener can paraphrase, or repeat back in his/her own words, what was said to ensure he/she understands. If the paraphrase is not quite right, gently rephrase the statement again to help the listener understand.

The listener
1. Paraphrase what the speaker is saying. If unclear, ask for clarification. Continue until the speaker indicates the message was received correctly.
2. Don't argue or give opinion about what the speaker says—wait to do this until you are the speaker, and then do so in a respectful manner.
3. While the speaker is talking, the listener should not talk or interrupt except to paraphrase after the speaker.

The speaker and listener should take turns in each role so that each has a chance to express his/her thoughts and feelings. Either can call for a time out at any time. The goal of this activity is not to solve a particular problem, but rather

to have a safe and meaningful discussion and to understand each other's point of view. While we may not always agree with the other's point of view, understanding and validating other's thoughts and feelings can improve relationships and help us build on common ground, which may lead to more effective negotiation and problem resolution.

Conflict Management Tips between parents

Keep it to yourselves
- Avoid arguing in front of your children.
- Save heated discussions for behind closed doors.
- Make a time to discuss problems when the children aren't with you – for example, after children's bedtime, or when they're at school or visiting grandparents.

Let children see you sorting things out constructively
- Take turns talking.
- Be polite.
- Try to understand your partner's feelings or perspective. You don't have to agree, but you can try to understand where your partner is coming from.
- Share your feelings with your partner.
- Try to hear the positive in your partner's message.
- Brainstorm possible solutions.

Keep a good relationship with your children
- Even when you're having problems with your partner, focus on a positive relationship with your children.
- Do things with your children that they enjoy.
- Tell them when they do things you like.
- Give them a hug – be affectionate.
- Talk with your children about things that interest them and what they're doing and feeling.
- Whenever you can, stop what you're doing so you can help, listen or talk to your children.

Let your children know they're not the problem
- Tell your children that the issues aren't about them and that the grown-ups are sorting it out.
- Let your children know that you're trying to find a solution to the problem.
- Continue to spend positive time with your children – remind them that you love them.
- Encourage your partner to keep a positive relationship with your children.

Don't feel you have to tell your children what the issue is. Some problems are for grown-up ears only.

Conflict between parents and children happens in every household. If you haven't argued about a toy, perhaps you have about a sleep over, more dessert, getting dressed, doing homework, getting more allowance, eating veggies, going to a party and so on…

The "because I said so" and "you get what you get and that's that…" and giving out consequences approach although popular, seldom leaves parents and children feeling like their reasons have actually been heard. It also doesn't help children learn conflict resolution skills, something that is a valuable life skill.

Do you dislike conflict but feel like whenever you set a limit conflict is inevitable?
While conflict can be annoying, difficult, disappointing, exasperating, it is also very disconnecting to argue and engage in power struggles. There are many ways to handle family conflict that are more positive and lead to actual resolutions.

Positive Solutions to deal with arguments, conflicts and back talks

1. Strive to stay positive: Avoid approaching conflict with a reactive attitude, and with the intent to have the final say. Instead, approach conflicts with the aim to understand, resolve and respond.

2. Listen with the intent to understand: For example when the child says that the toy is his favorite? That right there is a great place to stop the conflict, listen and understand.

"uhm…so this toy is your favorite? I hear you; it looks fun to play with." "Do you wish you could have something new every time we go shopping? Because sometimes I wish I could get myself something new all the time too!"

"I see it seems really important to you."

3. Focus on cooperation instead of control: It is really healthy and helpful in conflict resolution when BOTH sides are able to give input and actually discuss the situation.

"Alright, what do you propose we do about this?"

"Tell me what you are thinking and I'll tell you what I'm thinking, maybe we find a solution"

"I'd like to tell you my reasons and then listen to yours"

"We will all have a chance to talk, but let's take turns so we can really listen to each other."

4. Give choices: (This is particularly helpful with younger children)

"I hear that you really like the cake and want another piece AND you've had a lot already. What time do you want to have the cake tomorrow – morning snack or after lunch?"

"Which toy do you want to put away first the truck into the toy box or the puzzle into the drawer?"

"I know you want the blue pants but they are washing. So how about the jeans or the gray ones, you choose!"

5. Ask open questions: (This is great for older children)

"why do you think that is?"

"can you tell me more about your thoughts on that?

"what do you propose we do about it?"

"What about…..?"

6. Ask for reasons: Children can learn a lot about peaceful conflict resolution by learning how to argue their point of view respectfully. Practicing with mom and dad is the place to start!

"can you give me 3 solid reasons to support your idea?"

"can you please explain why this is important to you?"

"What is your goal in doing _____ "

"I'd like to hear more about your idea, what else can you tell me about this?"

"These are my 3 reason to say No, can you turn them around with some reasons of your own?"

7. Model Flexibility: Let's say your child does give you really good reasons? It's not going to make you look like a fool if you say YES. This isn't about giving in – it's demonstrating flexibility.

"I hear your reasons, I'm impressed that you have thought this through so I will go ahead and say YES this time."

"You know what, you have convinced me and I appreciate we all stayed cool about this – so YES!"

8. Strike a Deal: Offer a deal or let your children propose a different solution, often times it's something that is workable. In fact the more chances they have to practice this skill, the easier it becomes. It's not the same as giving in or letting them rule the house though. Striking a deal means the solution works for everyone.

"I can't agree to the sleep over on Wednesday

night but if you can propose a different date we can discuss it."

"That way does not work BUT what other ways can you think of that could work?"

"If you stop by aunt Mary to wish her a Happy Birthday first, then I think it's fine for you to go over to Jamie's house for the rest of the time we are at the party – deal?"

9. Don't be afraid to rewind: If you've started down the conflict path, pause and rewind:

"Arguing is not getting us anywhere. Let's take a break, think and try again when we are ALL cooled off."

"Hey, we are arguing and it's getting us nowhere! Let's start over."

"Ooops, we are arguing instead of really talking about this. Let's try again."

10. Delay your discussion: Over time, when we use this strategy, children trust that we will return to the argument and actually resolve it and they learn that they gain more attention by arguing respectfully.

"I will discuss this when you are able to do so respectfully."

"I'd like to talk about this when I have time to listen to your reasons. Let's put this on hold until later when I can really listen to you."

"I'll be happy to discuss this when we can do it respectfully. I will be in the kitchen cooking, come find me when you are ready!"

"It seems you have a lot to say about this, but this is not the right time/right place, so let's meet tonight/at home/when we are cooled off to discuss it"

"I see how much you want this AND instead of deciding right now, let's talk about it when we get home."

11. Hold Family Meetings: Set a time aside each week where you can peacefully discuss issues that are in disagreement. This is also a time where everyone can practice making requests respectfully, like asking for a certain meal, asking mom for a ride to friends' house, money for a school fundraiser and so on…

12. Aim to set limits with respect, kindness and firmness in mind: There will be times when we will need to set a limit and say no and it can be done in a positive way.

"I hear your reasons, I understand it's important AND my answer is No."

"I know how much you like this AND today I am saying NO"

"Cake is delicious, you want more BUT tonight is not the time to have anymore."

"The toy looks great. We can put it on your wish list, today is NOT the day we will buy it"

"Sleep overs are great fun, we have agreed that on school nights we will NOT do them."

"It's my job to keep you safe AND my final answer is NO."

"I've made my decision, I understand it's not what you had hoped for AND it's final."

13. Support the disappointment: If you've set a limit and your child doesn't like it and responds with crying, whining and yelling – support them in the disappointment. Try to avoid belittling the situation with comments like "oh your idea was ridiculous, there is no way you will sleep over at Johnny's house on a school night!" and "stop crying already it's not a big deal" because to your child, it probably is. Instead try to understand that your child may need time to huff and puff and really hate your decision so let them own that feeling and process it. Be nearby to support them and trust that they will be able to handle and overcome their feelings.

14. Have a plan for argument related meltdowns: If your child is often upset and mad when they don't get their way and escalate into

tantrums, hitting, yelling and hurting, talk about self-regulation and cooling off strategies and dealing with anger at times when you are NOT arguing and conflicting that will be used if things do get heated.

15. Strengthen your connection: If you feel like most of your time spent with your child ends in conflict, you may find the biggest change comes from being deliberate about spending time together with the intent to connect and enjoy each other. You may also want to reflect and decide if there is anything YOU can do about your own attitude and how you are approaching communication with your child.

Think:
Are you commanding or demanding a lot from your child? Or are you inviting cooperation, involving your child and encouraging cooperation?

If managed well, conflicts can help your child grow capable of handling frustration, disappointment and problem solving. They can also serve a wonderful purpose to bring you closer together, to learn to trust and listen to each other.

1. Conflict between parents and children happens in every household. If you haven't argued about a toy, perhaps you have about a sleep over, more dessert, getting dressed, doing homework, getting more allowance, eating veggies, going to a party and so on…
2. Parents must be aware that managing conflict through communication will not work if the communication is a negative one.
3. If managed well, conflicts can help your child grow capable of handling frustration, disappointment and problem solving.
4. They can also serve a wonderful purpose to bring you closer together, to learn to trust and listen to each other.

Articles 5, 13 and 17 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS
Promote positive alternatives for resolving conflict.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Use positive communication skills to support children
2. Demonstrate effective listening skills
3. Demonstrate effective conflict management skills
4. Demonstrate effective decision making skills

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
Solve conflict positively and respectfully

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
Add value to their relationship by promoting positive conflict resolution

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Conflicts with Our Children

Have you ever had a conversation a bit like this?
"Can I have that toy?"
"Not today."
"But's it's my favorite kind."
"I said NO."
"Why???"
"Because I said SO!"
"Ugh, but… I waaaaaaaaaaaaaant it!"
"Please don't argue."
"But I REALLY want it."
"If you don't stop arguing, you are not getting any sweets tomorrow at all."
"Oh YEAH? What's the difference? I never get what I want."
"Okay. That's it…no sweets tomorrow. It's time to leave, let's go."
"UGH!!!! I hate you!"

Invite participants to share their thoughts on the conversation and how would they address it.

Ask participants to brainstorm issues over which

conflict arises and come up with seven common ones then write on board (or flipchart paper). Some suggestions are listed below:

- Money and belongings
- Friends and imitating them
- Chores – tidying room/house
- Food
- Siblings and their treatment
- Manners with adults
- School grades

Of the seven the group lists, choose 4 that create the biggest battles in family relationships. Then divide the group into 4 sub-groups and assign one of the four issues to each group. Instruct groups to discuss the following:

1. When conflicts arise over this issue, think about how such conflicts were handled in:
   a. your family of origin
   b. your present family
   c. other families known to you

2. Were these strategies successful or unsuccessful in resolving conflicts? Why do you think they were so? (list on flipchart paper)

After approximately 15 minutes, the 4 lists should be posted and reported briefly.

Reflect on list: You have described some conflicts that become destructive – verbal attacks or physical attacks that end up making everyone feel bad; you have also described some constructive conflicts, or ways of successfully solving conflicts.

Understanding how to manage conflict

1. The training begins with parents being asked to stand up and walk around the room where four pieces of shop paper have been placed on each wall of the room.

2. Each paper has a picture placed beside it – the pictures are different scenarios of parents and teens being involved in conflict

3. Parents are to stop at each picture, reflect on the situation, and write in one or two words what they think is the cause of the conflict on each shop paper.

4. Presenter then calls on different parents to read what is on each shop paper and discuss the answers

5. Next, parents are asked to form two parallel lines, then partner with the person on the line opposite of them

6. Parents are asked to take turns sharing with each other how they feel during conflict.

7. Everyone is then placed in a circle and share with the rest of the group some of the things they discussed with their partner

8. The presenter then begins to discuss with the group the different emotions felt during conflict and the importance of remaining calm, especially as parents since our children model our behaviour.

9. Next, parents are asked to close their eyes and imagine a soothing scene. While imagining their scenario, presenter guides them through calming breathing exercises that they can practice whenever they feel angry.

10. Other strategies for keeping calm are discussed, such as journal writing, listening to music, taking a walk, or more challenging exercise.

ACTIVITY 2

Managing Conflict

1. The presenter begins by defining conflict and explaining that, if solved successfully, conflict is a healthy part of any relationship which can bring two people closer together.
2. Divide participants into groups and have them role play positive and negative ways to resolve conflict with the following persons:
   a. Child and mom
   b. Child and dad

c. Child with other adults
d. Child and female friends
e. Child and male friends
f. Child with best friend

3. Participants will determine which was positive and which was negative and engage in a plenary discussion on positive ways to resolve conflict.

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3.2.5 Importance of Parental involvement in your child's education

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors that contribute to the holistic and healthy development of a child.

For example, the significance of education in the development of a child and parents' involvements could help a child by:

1. Parent involvement has been defined and measured in multiple ways, including activities that parents engage in at home and at school and positive attitudes parents have towards their child's education, school, and teacher (Epstein, 1996; Grolnick & Slowiaczek, 1994; Kohl, Lengua, & McMahon, 2000).

2. The proper role of the parent is to provide encouragement, support and access to activities that enable the child to master key developmental tasks. As children develop from infants to teens to adults they go through a series of developmental stages that are important to all aspects of their personhood including physical, intellectual, emotional and social. (Siegler, R., DeLoache, J., & Eisenberg, N. 2011).

3. Children with parents who are involved in their school tend to have fewer behavioural problems and better academic performance, and are more likely to have a higher level of academic success than children whose parents are not involved. (Noel, A., Stark, P., Redford, J., & Zukerberg, A. 2013).

4. The most consistent predictors of children's academic achievement and social adjustment are parent expectations of the child's academic attainment and satisfaction with their child's education at school. Parents of high-achieving students set higher standards for their children's educational activities than parents of low-achieving students. (Paavola, L., Kunnari, S., & Moilanen, I.2005).

The United Kingdom Government's Department for Education (2012) commented on the importance of parents; stating that "parents are often said to be the first and best teacher for a child."

The United Kingdom Government's Department for Education goes even further and defines the importance of family in child's life in the following way:

"The research shows that parental involvement in children's learning is a key factor. The role of parents during a child's earliest years is the single biggest influence on their development. Good quality home learning contributes more to children's intellectual and social development than parental occupation, education or income."

When parents are involved in their children's education, both children and parents are likely to benefit. Researchers findings indicate that parent participation in their children's schooling frequently:
• Enhances children's self-esteem
• Improves children's academic achievement
• Improves parent-child relationships
• Helps parents develop positive attitudes towards school
• Gains a better understanding of the schooling process.

Education also consists of a form of learning that is necessary for the development of one's personality and identity, as well as his physical and intellectual capabilities. Education permits, notably, the transmission of common principles to new generations, and the conservation and perpetuation of social values. It also contributes to the flourishing of individuality through the enhancement of social and professional integration.

Education has as its ultimate objective the improvement of a person's quality of life. It offers to underprivileged adults and children a chance to escape from poverty. It is thus an essential tool for the economic, social and cultural development of all populations around the world.

According to Henderson and Berla (1994), "the most accurate predictor of a student's achievement in school is not income or social status but the extent to which that student's family is able to:

1. Create a home environment that encourages learning.
2. Express high (but not unrealistic) expectations for their children's achievement and future careers.
3. Become involved in their children's education at school and in the community.

Researches show that parent involvement in activities that are effectively planned and well implemented result in substantial benefits to children, parents, educators, and the school.

Benefits of Parental Involvement in Education

Benefits for the Children

- Children tend to achieve more, regardless of ethnic or racial background, socioeconomic status, or parents' education level.
- Children generally achieve better grades, test scores, and attendance.
- Children consistently complete their homework.
- Children have better self-esteem, are more self-disciplined, and show higher aspirations and motivation toward school.

Benefits for the Parents

- Parents increase their interaction and discussion with their children and are more responsive and sensitive to their children's social, emotional, and intellectual developmental needs.
- Parents are more confident in their parenting and decision-making skills.
- As parents gain more knowledge of their child's development through parent/teacher interaction, there is more use of affection and positive reinforcement and less punishment on their children.
- When parents are aware of what their children are learning, they are more likely to help when they are requested by teachers to become more involved in their children's learning activities at home.
- Parents' perceptions of the school are improved and there are stronger ties and commitment to the school.
- Parents are more aware of, and become more active regarding, policies that affect their children's education when parents are requested by school to be part of the decision-making team.

Support your children's education

All children have a right to an education and therefore parents should ensure that they comply with the minimum standards as set by law which requires that all children remain in school until the age of 14.

The law also protects children by stating that any child whose education is affected because they have to work or to help support their family is considered child labour and is illegal. Children can help in the farm or in the family business or even work outside once it is not considered hazardous work (chemicals, late hours, sexual exploitation) and should not be to the detriment of their education.

Parents should also take an active role in their child's education by ensuring that:
- Children do their homework,
- Go to school on time,
- Visit the school to check on their progress,
- Attend Parent Teacher's Meetings (PTA)
- Participate in and support their child in extra-curricular activities such as talent shows, field trips, sports day etc.
- If possible help the school with their activities such as fund raisers, church services, etc.

Parents should advocate for their children to ensure that they are getting the best education possible but can only do so if they are actively involved in their children's educational process.

KEY MESSAGES

All children have a right to an education and therefore parents should ensure that they comply with the minimum standards as set by law which requires that all children remain in school until the age of 14.

When parents are involved in their children's education, both children and parents are likely to benefit.
Benefits include:
- Enhanced self-esteem of children
- Improved academic achievement of children
- Improved parent-child relationships
- Development of positive attitudes by parents towards school
- Parents gain a better understanding of the schooling process.

STANDARDS

Value the importance of educating one's child

Articles 23, 28, 29 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

Performance Indicators

1. Discuss ways in which they are and can be advocates for their children in relation to the school system.
2. Identify ways in which parents and parent groups can contribute to the improvement and strengthening of their community's school environment.
3. Identify how and why parents should actively participate in extra-curricular activities.
4. Clear understanding on the hindrances to education.

Skills to be acquired by parents

1. Explore personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings about education and its benefits.
2. Explore and evaluate the impact of education. (Parental self-reflection).
3. Develop goals and priorities related to education and future paths for his/her child.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS:

1. Commitment to be involved in child's educational journey.

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Importance of Education

1. The facilitator will distribute colored paper clips to each participant and ask them to stand in a circle. The facilitator will inform the participants that they have a minute to stick as much notes on other participants.
2. The facilitator will then ask participants to take a seat. The facilitator will have participants count the number of sticky notes on the back of the person who sits in front or next to them. The facilitator will inform the participants that the number of sticky notes indicate the number of words they will have to use to describe the term 'education'.
3. Participants will go one by one and facilitator will write down the words on the whiteboard. A discussion will ensue on the term 'education'.
4. The facilitator will then pose the following questions and organize participants into groups:
   - What is education? Does it have any value to you? Do you think that parents should be actively involved and engaged in their child/children education? How do children benefit from their parents' active involvement?
5. Groups discuss the above questions and share the group's response.
6. The facilitator will provide feedback.

In addition, the groups will create a list of ways they can help their child/children reach higher education. The participants will have 20 minutes to complete this task. The groups will stick their list on the wall for the rest of groups to view.

Note to facilitator

Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

Through children's educational journey, they need:
1. Adults who help them to stay safe and healthy.
2. Positive caring relationships that are on-going - the most important factor in supporting a child's learning.
3. All children need people who believe in them, care for them, and want to support them as learners.
4. Children do some of their most powerful learning from copying what people around them do, so it is important that they are with adults who are learners themselves.

ACTIVITY 2

Impact of Parents' involvement in Education

Present the participants with a scenario: impact of parent's lack of involvement in children's Education Nine-year-old Maria wakes up at four every morning. She does not go to school, but goes to sell tamales on Orange Street in Belize City. Her parents do not see the need for her to stay in school as they believe she can help the family by bringing in money to help with the family needs. In fact her parents were never interested in her schooling. They never went to a school meeting, paid her school fees or bought her school supplies. Maria who has seven younger brothers and sisters, barely completed Std. 4.

Participants will be given a copy of the scenario and in groups will discuss the following questions
1. What is taking place is the scenario?
2. Is it alright for Maria to be out of school?
3. What will happen to Maria in the future?

The facilitator will then present information on:

Child's Rights to Education

- The role of parents in a child's schooling
- Appreciate the uniqueness of each child, respect and respond to the child's feelings, needs and interests.
- Teach the child to control their behaviour and about what behaviour is accepted.
- Provide materials and share experiences to learn from, and find time to be involved with their children.

The facilitator will close this session by sharing the benefits of parents' involvement in their child's education.

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

Notes

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3.2.6 Sexual and Reproductive Health

Background

Sexuality evolves throughout our life cycle, it includes our physical makeup, our emotions, our spirituality, gender, attitudes, values, personality and all of the other aspects that make up our personhood. Most parents are uneasy talking with young people about issues relating to sexuality. They want to be involved in educating children about sex but they don't know how to go about it. Much of the worry comes from inadequate information. Many parents feel that they themselves do not understand sexuality well enough to be comfortable talking about it. Some parents think that if they ignore the topic, it will go away. Others use myths and scare tactics to discourage their children from early sexual experiences.

Parents often lack facts about:
- Anatomy
- Physiology,
- Menstruation,
- Puberty,
- Wet dreams,
- Masturbation,
- Conception,
- Contraception and other reproductive health issues.

Contributing to the anxiety are:
- Cultural taboos
- Traditional beliefs, values, attitudes,
- Fears and misinformation.
- That too much information leads to experimentation.

Studies indicate that misinformation or lack of information about sex simply increases sexual confusion and vulnerability. It stimulates curiosity and leads to more, not less, early experimentation – often resulting in an unwanted pregnancy, rape, sexually transmitted infections or AIDS.

Most parents need assurance. As a parent educator or facilitator, you can help them gain self-confidence by pointing out that:

- Nobody can be a perfect parent at all times.
- It's all right to be a little nervous or embarrassed.
- Just don't let it immobilize you.
- Sexuality continues throughout our lifetime.
- They need not feel pressured to tell everything at once.
- They have already begun their children's sex education without realizing it through their natural parental actions of loving, cuddling, hugging, teaching, etc.
- By encouraging their children to develop and use decision making skills in childhood, they have also begun preparing their children to make thoughtful decisions about sexual involvement.

Why Do Children Need to Know About Sexuality?

Children who understand their sexuality are:

... better able to take charge of their lives.
... better able to cope with their feelings.
... able to handle peer pressure.
... more secure.
... less likely to experiment with unsafe behaviours.
... more informed about the facts about AIDS, STIs, unwanted pregnancy.
... likely to make sound decisions about their sexuality and personal relationships.
... more likely to come to their parents for help.
... more confident.
... more likely to respect themselves and others.

Important Facts:

0-2 YEARS:
We give infants a sense of themselves from birth. We make them feel secure or insecure by:
- The way we hold and touch them,
- We feed, wash and diaper them.
- The tone of our voices.
- Letting them feel comfortable with their bodies and emotions.

Infants develop healthier feelings about their sexuality if parents do all these things in a pleasant, loving and caring way.

3-5 years:

By the time children are three, they are ready to know that boys and girls have different sex organs. They may have already wondered about it for a while.

- Talk about it the same way you talk about noses, fingers and toes.
- Introduce biologically/culturally appropriate names for sex organs, e.g., say "vagina" "penis" and "breasts" instead of nicknames. Otherwise, children may get the idea that something is wrong with these parts of the body.
- Toddlers are curious about the bodies of their parents and other children.
- Three-year-olds want to know, "Where do babies come from?"
- If your children ask this question, the first thing that you should do is to let them know that their question is a good one. For example, "That's a good question sweetheart, tell me where do you think babies come from?" After you hear their response, you can say something like "Babies grow in a special place inside the mother."

As children get older, you can slowly add other details as the child becomes able to understand them.

5-7 years:

It is common for children to become less attached to parents and caregivers at this time. They are beginning to realize their own femininity and masculinity.
They:

- sometimes say they hate children of the opposite gender.
- don't like to be teased.
- may be shy about asking questions but that doesn't mean they don't have questions.
- most children at this age have heard about such things as AIDS, sex or drugs and they wonder about these things even if they don't say anything.
- We need to keep talking with them.

8-12 (preteens):

This age group needs all the facts about menstruation, wet dreams and other signs of maturing.
Preteen(s):

- worry a lot about whether they are normal.
- boys worry about their penis size.
- girls worry about their breast size.
- need reassurance that no two people are the same and it is normal to be different.
- need to fit in with their peers.
- need to be encouraged to think for themselves and not get carried away by the crowd.
- are fascinated with the way their bodies change.
- are ready to know about sex and reproduction.
- want to know about sexual and social relationships.
- need to know about STIs, birth control, rape, drugs, alcohol and the consequences of teen pregnancy.
- need to know about their emotional changes as a result of hormonal fluctuations

They need to know how poor choices can affect their lives.

13-20 years:

All teens have to make sexual decisions.
They:

- should be told that there are good reasons to abstain from sex.
- must learn how to protect themselves against pregnancy and infection.
- must learn how to say "no" without feeling guilty or pressured.
- must know how to have healthy relationships.
- must know they are responsible for their choices.
- are easy targets for peer pressure and bad advice.

They should be told about the emotional, physical and financial consequences of pregnancy and disease.

Curiosity about sex is a natural step from learning about the body. Sex education helps children understand about the body and helps them feel positive about their own bodies. Younger children are interested in pregnancy and babies, rather than the mechanics of sex.

Discussing sex is also part of starting open communication with your child. Early, honest, and open communication between parents and children is very important, especially when your child becomes an adolescent. If open communication is normal, children are more likely to speak with parents about all the other trials of adolescence, such as depression, relationships, and the abuse of drugs and alcohol, as well as sexual issues.

Beginning a conversation about sex early and continuing that conversation as the child grows is the best sex education strategy. It lets parents avoid giving one big, and likely uncomfortable talk when the child reaches adolescence (and will have already gotten information and misinformation from their friends). These conversations are easiest when they come out of a life experience, like seeing a pregnant woman or a baby.

When parents talk with their children about sex, they can make sure that they are getting the right information. Parents should be a child's first source of information about sex. Understanding correct information can protect children from risky behaviour as they grow up.

Sex education also provides an opportunity to instil your family values in your children. For example, if you come from a family that believes intercourse should be saved for marriage, this can be part of the discussions about sexuality. If the subject has never come up before, there is significant risk that your child, now a teenager, will not be receptive to this message.

If parents do not teach their children about sex, they will learn about it from somewhere else.

A child's exposure to information about sex begins much earlier than many parents imagine. Not speaking with children about sex means parents will have little control over what and how they learn about sex.

Parents should not rely only on the school system to teach sex education. If your child is taught sex education at school, review it with your child. Ask them what they learned. What a child learns from friends and in the schoolyard will be incomplete and incorrect. It may also be demeaning or even dangerous.

Although the media is full of sex and sexuality, it is mostly depicted in the most sensational and superficial sense. Realistic portrayals of relationships and sexuality are rare. More often, issues around sex and sexuality appear either without any context or without any emotional or relationship component. Moreover, the risks of sexual activity are often hyped beyond the point teens will believe.

Studies show the more children are exposed to sexual images in the media, the more likely it is they will engage in sexual behaviours at a younger age. However, actual sex education does NOT lead to promiscuity. Children who receive sex education at home are actually less likely to engage in risky sexual activity. So turn off the television and get talking.

Having open communications with children about sex and other matters is healthy and safer in the long run. This does not necessarily mean it will be easy or without awkward moments. Teens are still very private people. However, speaking about sex early increases the chance that teens will approach parents when difficult or dangerous things come up.

A 2013 global study by internet security provider Bitdefender indicates that the average age a child is exposed to hard core pornography is six years old. Therefore it is never too early to have open, healthy and honest conversations with children about sex, sexuality and reproductive health in the real world.

Writer Sue Jaye Johnson suggests that if parents want their children to grow up to have healthy intimate relationships, then the discussions must go beyond biology, mechanics and safer sex practices. Addressing the topics of pleasure, desire, consent and boundaries help young people to begin to fully understand their sexual selves, to articulate their emotions and needs, and to find

common language that helps them to define how they love and respect their own bodies.

Talking about sex can be no different than talking about anything else if the conversations are open, honest and ongoing. In these discussions adults and young persons can clarify family sexual values, accountability, pleasure, and responsibility.

Diversity advocate, Cindy Gallop emphasizes the importance of families discussing and defining sexual values, in the same way the family discusses and encourages "good manners, a work ethic, a sense of responsibility, and accountability." She states that these discussions are helpful for young persons because sensitivity, kindness, generosity and empathy are as important in intimate relationships (and in participation in sexual activity), as in any other area of life.

In line with the HFLE curriculum, pre-teens and teenagers should be helped to:
- understand about healthy and unhealthy relationships
- understand how television, newspapers, music videos, movies and the Internet shape their understanding of adult relationships
- that every person has the right to control their own body and sexuality without being subject to discrimination, force, coercion or violence, and to refuse, or if they are above the age of consent, to agree to take part in sexual activity.
- explore assertiveness and refusal skills for saying "no" to sexual advances.
- explore the importance of openness, loyalty and long term commitment as factors that contribute to healthy adult relationships.
- identify effective ways of maintaining good sexual health, including having access to accurate information relating to sex and reproduction.
- discuss the implications for a teenager of conceiving a child.
- explore the benefits for all people, both male and female, of making informed decisions about whether and when to conceive children.

KEY MESSAGES

Family-based sex education can:
- Allow for the sharing of family values.
- Provide accurate information to children.
- Build effective decision-making skills.
- Counteract negative and exploitive sexual messages in the media.
-

Parents are the most important sexuality educators for their children.

No parent needs to be an expert on sexuality to have meaningful conversations with their children – parents can share their values about sexuality, relationships, and respect for others.

- Some parents believe that talking about sex will lead to teens having sex. In fact, research shows that teens who have talked with their parents about sex are more likely to post-pone sex and use birth control when they do begin.
- Teens that have high self-esteem are more likely to make responsible decisions about sex.
- Teens often believe that all of their friends are having sex. This belief puts pressure on teens (especially boys) to have sex.

Articles 14, 16, 17, 24 and 29 relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

Interpret how sexual and reproductive health of young people is a key component in nurturing the social, emotional and cognitive development of young people.

Recognize their roles in informing and guiding their children as it relates to sexual and reproductive health.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Knowledge of Sexual and Reproductive Rights
2. Interpret the responsibilities of sexual rights
3. Identify guidelines for talking with young persons about their sexuality and sexual health.
4. Explore values of rights, respect and responsibility

5. Clarify family values on sexuality, sexual health and reproductive health.
6. Guide and nurture children to make informed decisions and positive choices about their sexual and reproductive health

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Explore personal experiences, attitudes, and feelings about sex, sexual choices, sexual consent and abstinence.
2. Identify and describe the responsibilities and consequences associated with involvement in a sexual relationship.
3. Identify the risks, contraction, effects and prevention of HIV/AIDS and STIs.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

Awareness and commitment to promote safe, stable, nurturing relationships and environments that foster abstinence in the first instance and protection when it becomes necessary.

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Reflections on Family

Give each parent an index card. Ask them to close their eyes and reflect on the three questions that you will read:

> What does my family mean to me?
> What do I wish for my family?
> What do I want for my children?

After a few minutes, have parents number each card 1, 2, 3 and write down their answers. They should not put their names on the cards. After everyone has written his/her responses, collect the cards, shuffle them around and redistribute them to the group at random. Read the first, second, then the third question and have parents read their answers from the cards. Ask parents if the responses were similar. Were there any surprising responses? Start a discussion on the third question.

ACTIVITY 2

Pictionary Game (10) words

1. Parents will be divided into 2 groups. Each group will receive 5 words relating to sexual and reproductive health.
2. They will take turns in drawing the concept and the other group is to guess the word.
3. Group which guesses the most words wins.

Words to be used: sex, condom, penis, breast, pregnant, consent, healthy, man, woman, peer pressure

ACTIVITY 3

Remembering When

Have all participants introduce themselves to the group and tell how many children they have and their ages. Afterwards, ask participants to close their eyes and think back to when they were young. Ask them to remember how they first learned about where babies came from. Encourage each participant to share his or her experience.

Explain that most of us feel uncomfortable talking about sex to our children. Many of us were taught that sex is dirty. Most parents are afraid that they don't have any or all of the answers, or find it difficult to admit their children are sexual beings. Some even find it hard to admit that they are sexual. However, sex is a wonderful part of our lives.

In groups have parents discuss how and where do we hear about sex and sexuality. Groups present.

Facilitator ends by summarizing:
Messages about sex are all around us – on the radio, TV, videos, music, magazines, newspapers, etc. Sex is used to sell everything from soap to cars. Young people talk amongst themselves about sex with friends, in school and on the phone. Unfortunately children today hear a lot about sex but not enough to stay out of trouble.

Despite all the talk about sex, our children don't get much useful information. What they do get is misinformation and dangerous myths about sex that can put them at risk for an STI, unwanted pregnancy, rape and even AIDS. We all want our children to have healthy and rewarding lives. And we all know that teaching them about sex is very important.

Facilitator shares and guides discussion on:
Characteristics of Parents of Sexually Healthy Adolescents
(Excerpt From Facing Facts: Sexual Health for America's Adolescents, SIECUS, New York, NY, 1995.)

1. Demonstrate value, respect, acceptance, and trust in their adolescent children.
2. Model sexually healthy attitudes in their own relationships.
3. Maintain a non-punitive stance toward sexuality.
4. Are knowledgeable about sexuality.
5. Discuss sexuality with their children.
6. Provide information on sexuality to their children.
7. Seek appropriate guidance and information as needed.
8. Try to understand their son's or daughter's point of view.
9. Help their daughter or son gain an understanding of their values.
10. Set and maintain limits for dating and other activities outside of school.
11. Stay actively involved in their son's or daughter's life.
12. Ask questions about friends and romantic partners.
13. Provide a supportive and safe environment for their children.
14. Offer to assist adolescents in accessing health care services.
15. Help their daughter or son plan for their future.

Facilitator shares and guides discussion on these quick facts:
- Parents are the most important sexuality educators for their children.
- No parent needs to be an expert on sexuality to have meaningful conversations

with their children – parents can share their values about sexuality, relationships, and respect for others.
- Some parents believe that talking about sex will lead to teens having sex. In fact, research shows that teens who have talked with their parents about sex are more likely to post-pone sex and use birth control when they do begin.
- Teens that have high self-esteem are more likely to make responsible decisions about sex.
- Teens often believe that all of their friends are having sex. This belief puts pressure on teens (especially boys) to have sex.
- Teens often overestimate the percentage of their peers that are sexually experienced.

ACTIVITY 4

What is sex and sexuality?

The overall aim is for participants to begin to define sexual rights and reproductive rights and health, then they can begin to think of how they can help young people to understand the terms.

1. Trainer informs participants that this discussion will be on exploring the positive role that healthy sexuality can play in the lives of young people. Therefore the purpose is to identify ways to "help youth think more thoughtfully about sexuality, to learn what it means to respect their bodies, and to develop positive and realistic framework from which to make sexual decisions."
2. Trainer hands out blank index cards and asks participants to write down the first thing that comes to their mind when they hear the word "sexuality". Trainer should also write the word "sexuality" for participants who are visual learners.
3. Trainer collects cards, shuffles them and reads responses aloud.
4. If none of the definitions speak to self-knowledge, then trainer clarifies that the responses are all good responses, adding that sexuality also includes knowing yourself

as much as it is about engaging in anything physical.

5. Facilitator groups participants into groups of 3 – 4, and asks them to discuss

- What messages did you receive about sexuality as you were growing up (from parents, friends, school, media, religion, etc.)?
- What effect did these messages have on your life?
- What do you wish your parents would have done differently in terms of helping you understand sexuality? How do you think your children would answer this question right now?
- What messages/values (personal and spiritual) do you want to give your children about sexuality? (Name at least two)

6. Facilitator asks small groups to share their responses in large group. Each group is to add anything new or different from the previous group's presentation.

ACTIVITY 5

Values Clarification

Sex educator Al Vernacchio emphasizes the importance of distinguishing between a fact, an opinion and a value. The overall aim is to prompt the participants to think about not just what they do, but also why they do it. Allowing space and time for participants to identify their values around sexuality can help them to begin to understand their actions, and to open the door to conversations with the young people in their care.

1. Trainer explains to participants the difference between fact, opinion and values:

- Values are the deepest-set rules that guide one's decisions. Values reflect core beliefs. Every choice is based on one or more values; identifying our core values can help guide us in decision making.
- A fact is something indisputable. Facts are sometimes argued, but they can be proved true with verifiable evidence.

- An opinion is a view or judgment formed about something—a fact, an event, a belief, a comment, anything.
- Opinions don't always rest on a sound foundation. They can be informed or uninformed. They can be based on fact, supposition, emotion, or even pure speculation. They can be defendable or not.
- A value, as defined above, is a core belief that guides actions and decisions. It has more emotional resonance than an opinion, and is often felt with zealous conviction, but it's not a fact. A value answers the "why" question at the deepest level.

2. Trainer asks participants to complete the value statements worksheet:

Values Statements

1. A group of 13-year olds is not capable of having a mature conversation about sexuality.

   ( ) **Strongly Agree**
   ( ) **Agree**
   ( ) **Disagree**
   ( ) **Strongly Disagree**

2. Most families feel comfortable talking about sexuality.

   ( ) **Strongly Agree**
   ( ) **Agree**
   ( ) **Disagree**
   ( ) **Strongly Disagree**

3. I feel very comfortable talking with my children about sexuality.

   ( ) **Strongly Agree**
   ( ) **Agree**
   ( ) **Disagree**
   ( ) **Strongly Disagree**

4. A 15-year old is too young to have sex.
   ( ) **Strongly Agree**
   ( ) **Agree**
   ( ) **Disagree**
   ( ) **Strongly Disagree**

5. Girls rarely pressure boys for sex.

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

6. Boys are "hornier" than girls.

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

7. Masturbation is wrong for young people.

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

8. Homosexuality is normal and healthy.

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

9. Adoption is the best decision for a pregnant teen.

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

10. It is best to wait until marriage for sex

    ( ) Strongly Agree
    ( ) Agree
    ( ) Disagree
    ( ) Strongly Disagree

3. Facilitator asks participants to list 1 opinion, 1 fact and 1 value for each of the following: sexual intercourse, sexual rights, reproductive rights, masturbation, young people having sex, violence against women, sexual health, reproductive health, abortion, and safer sex practices.

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

Group work – break participants into groups and have them role play one of the statements showing how they would discuss the issue with their child

ACTIVITY 6

Myths and Facts

1. Develop and distribute a sheet with statements using some of the following and have parents determine if these are myths or facts.
2. Share and discuss their answers. Give parents a handout with the myths and facts. (below)

COMMON QUESTIONS	SRH MYTHS AND FACTS
You can get an STI from a toilet seat.	MYTH! You get STIs by having sex (vaginal, oral or anal) or by skin-to-skin touching--not from toilet seats.
You can get HIV or a STI from getting a tattoo or through body piercing.	FACT! There can be a risk for HIV or another blood-borne infection (like hepatitis B or C) if the instruments used for piercing or tattooing either are not sterilized or disinfected between clients.
You can't get an STI from oral sex.	MYTH! During oral sex, you can give your partner your STI and you can get theirs. Not all STIs are transmitted through oral sex, but some are. For example, if your partner has a cold sore (oral herpes) and performs oral sex on you, you could become infected with herpes in your genital area.
You can't get an STI if your partner is a virgin.	MYTH! Depending on how your partner defines being a virgin, it is possible for them to have contracted an STI. Your partner might not have had vaginal sex, but may have had oral sex with someone (and still consider themselves a virgin), putting themselves at risk for an STI. Also, there are other STIs (herpes and HPV) that are passed through skin-toskin contact, even if no penetration has taken place.
The best way to avoid getting pregnant is to use a condom.	MYTH! The best way to avoid getting pregnant is though abstinence. Abstinence (not having any kind of sex) is the only 100% effective form of birth control.
You can get pregnant while on your period.	FACT! It's very uncommon, but it is possible since having your period doesn't predict when you will release an egg which has to be present for sperm to begin the process of conception. Additionally, since sperm can live inside your uterus for up to 5 days, if you release an egg during these 5 days you run the risk of getting pregnant.
Peeing or douching after sex protects against pregnancy.	MYTH! When a male ejaculates, the sperm travels through the vagina into the cervix, and then into the uterus. Urine is released from the urethra, not from the vaginal opening, so it does not come in contact with sperm.
A female can't get pregnant the first time she has sex.	MYTH! It doesn't matter if it's your first time having sex--it is possible to get pregnant. Abstaining from sex altogether is the best ways to prevent pregnancy, but if you decide to have sex, condoms and other birth control methods can help prevent pregnancy
You can use a condom more than once, if you wash it properly.	MYTH! A condom should NEVER be used twice under any circumstances.

COMMON QUESTIONS	SRH MYTHS AND FACTS
Baby oil and Vaseline® are okay to use as lubricants with latex condoms.	MYTH! Oil-based lubricants (like baby oil, Vaseline®, handcreams, Crisco) can break down latex and allow STDs/STIs to pass through. Instead, water soluble lubricants like K-Y Jelly®, Glide®, Aqualube®, most contraceptive jellies, saliva, or even plain ol' water are good lubricants to use with condoms.
Most women can have an orgasm through vaginal sex only.	MYTH! Only about 30% of women reach orgasm through vaginal sex only. The other 70% need more manual or oral stimulation to achieve orgasms.
The average penis size is about 5 to 6 inches.	FACT! The average erect (hard) penis length is between 5 to 6 inches, and average flaccid (not erect, or soft) penis length ranges between 1 and 4 inches.
"Blue balls" is a real medical condition.	FACT! But . . . not a serious one. The correct medical term for "blue balls" is vasocongestion. This happens when blood builds up in the testicles and/or prostate when a male gets aroused ("turned on") but doesn't ejaculate. It is often accompanied by a cramp-like ache and pain or tenderness in the groin area. While this can be uncomfortable, it is not a serious condition and is not an excuse to pressure a partner into sex.
Only gay men like anal sex.	MYTH! Anal sex is a sexual act that many people enjoy, both gay and straight, men and women. This activity has nothing to do with sexual orientation.
Taking birth control pills over a long period of time can cause infertility.	MYTH! Continuous use of the birth control pill will not cause problems with future fertility.
Sperm can live in the vagina for up to five days.	FACT! Which is why you CAN get pregnant during your period! Jumping up and down, rinsing out your vagina, or urinating after sex won't get rid of the sperm .
Men must ejaculate to experience sexual pleasure.	MYTH! Some men have learned to separate orgasm from ejaculation.
When it comes to penis size, the bigger, the better.	MYTH! Sexual satisfaction is more influenced by psychological connection, intimacy, and relationship satisfaction–not just the size or shape of a person's genitals.
You don't need to use condoms if you're on the pill.	MYTH! The pill can help prevent pregnancy but it doesn't protect against STIs, so it's still important to wrap it up.

COMMON QUESTIONS	SRH MYTHS AND FACTS
Condoms are always too small or too big.	MYTH! Condoms aren't a case of one size fits all, there are plenty of different sizes on offer. If you're struggling to find your perfect fit, your local pharmacist or sexual health clinic can help out.
You can be allergic to condoms.	FACT! Some people are irritated by the latex which condoms are commonly made of, but luckily it is possible to get latex free condoms.
You don't need a condom for anal sex.	MYTH! In order to steer clear of STIs, you should wear a condom when performing whichever kind of sex takes your fancy - whether that's vaginal, anal or oral.
There are five to seven calories in a teaspoon of semen.	ACT! Semen also includes Fructose sugar, Water, Ascorbic acid (a.k.a., Vitamin C), Citric acid, Enzymes, Protein, and Zinc.
One orgasm a day may decrease a man's risk for prostate cancer.	FACT! It also provides a number of health benefits such as a boost in your immunity, better sleep, and can even protect against heart disease.
The average vagina is 3 to 4 inches long but can expand by 200% when sexually aroused.	FACT! Just as the vagina has the capacity to expand, allowing for the passage of a baby during childbirth, the vagina also has the ability to elongate during intercourse to accommodate a penis.
Shaving your pubic area increases your chances of spreading an STI.	FACT! Grooming may cause tears and cuts to the skin, increasing the risk of a picking up an infection down below.
Men Can't Have Multiple Orgasms.	MYTH! Men can, but it's usually learned skill involving Taoist or Tantric techniques which include breath control and making a distinction between ejaculation and orgasm.
Women Are Naturally More Bisexual.	MYTH! Sexual orientation is natural, and no more for one gender than others; it may be more socially acceptable and therefore easier for women to express more flexibility or fluidity with their sexualities but this does not equate to their identities nor does it exclude the men who experience attraction for their sex and other sexes.
Men want Casual Sex and Women Want Commitment	MYTH! As it turns out, most human beings enjoy sex and most people say their most enjoyable sex occurs in relationships.
Women Don't Watch Porn.	MYTH! When researchers study the physiological indicators of porn on the body, men and women respond equally to sexually explicit material. Their groins fill with blood, muscles tense up and for the women, a big myth debunk, and they get wet — so not a guy thing.
Men think about sex every seven seconds.	MYTH! There has been one study that found the average participant thought about sex 19 times a day

COMMON QUESTIONS	SRH MYTHS AND FACTS
You can get pregnant with another baby while you're pregnant .	FACT! If you ovulate more than one time a month — and women do — and a sperm happens to meet that egg and they, too, implant, guess what, you get a second fetus.
The hymen always "rips" or "breaks" during first-time sex (and it hurts!)	MYTH! The hymen often wears away during adolescence due to athletic activities, using tampons, masturbation, or even just walking — meaning that there's often very little left by the time a woman may have penetrative sex for the first time.
The clitoris is tiny.	MYTH! Most of the clitoris is located in the body, and it's actually the approximately the size of medium zucchini.
Shoe size and penis size are correlated.	MYTH! There has been no studies to prove this.

ACTIVITY 7

A note to my younger self
(Reflection and Small group discussion)

1. Facilitator guides participants on a trip back in time to remember themselves at various ages (5 – 7; 8 – 10; 11 – 13; 14 – 18; 18 +). As they remember their younger selves, encourage participants to remember what their passions, fears, challenges and questions about their bodies, about sexuality, and about love were at those stages.
2. Show video – A Note to My Younger Self (Sex Ed Project) BFLA can help with this video
3. After the video, facilitator tells participants they will write a letter to their younger self. Ask participants to reflect on the question: "What would you tell your younger self about sex if you could?" Reflection guide: choose a general age range for your reflection i.e. ages 5 – 7; 8 – 10; 11 – 13; 14 – 18; 18 +. Provide paper for participants to write to their younger self.
4. Form small discussion circles (about 6 – 8 persons)
5. In the discussion circle, ask participants to share any aspect of their reflection that they feel comfortable sharing with the group.

Notes

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3.2.7 Internet: Positive and Negative Effects

Background

A number of research studies indicate that there are many factors which affect a child's healthy development. For example, the overuse of the internet can hinder a child's development through these ways.

1. The risks that teens face online are similar to those faced offline. However, the risk profile for the use of various types of social media depends on the type of risk, a teen's use of the media, and the psychological makeup of the teen using them. It is important to note that teens most at risk often engage in risky behaviours offline and also have difficulties in other parts of their lives (Young, S. 2009).
2. Teens who are the heaviest media users report being less content and are more likely to report that they get into trouble a lot, are often sad or unhappy, and are often bored (Rideout, V.J., Foehr, U.G., & Roberts, D.F. 2010).
3. Cyber bullying has been shown to cause higher levels of depression and anxiety for victims than traditional bullying and has also been connected to cases of youth suicide with teens known to engage in reading hurtful comments days before their suicide attempts (Kowalski, 2010).

Carroll, J.A. & Kirkpatrick, R.L. (2011) commented on the proper usage of social media to lessen its negative effects by stating that *"Social media forms have altered how youth socialize and learn, and raise a new set of issues for educators, parents, researchers and policymakers to consider. Adults can help teens think about online presence in moral and ethical ways—-specifically to help teens in understanding the consequences for themselves and others of participation in the socially networked world. A multipronged approach that utilizes multiple social media platforms, as well as in-person contact, has the potential to reach teens with accurate health information, resources, and support."* (Carroll, J.A. & Kirkpatrick, R.L. 2011).

Social media has become a prominent part of life for many young people today. Most people engage with social media without stopping to think what the effects are on our lives, whether positive or negative. For parents, discussing media content with their teens can be an effective strategy to reduce the amount of personal information disclosed—more so than prohibiting access, as teens often perceive monitoring as a violation of their privacy. Admittedly, persons from various age groups use social media for different reasons and are potential victims to cyber offences.

What are the positive aspects of engaging in social media?

The positives of social media

Education
- Teachers are able to easily collaborate and communicate with students and one another.
- Students have easy, free access to resources online to help them learn.
- Grades can improve and absenteeism can be reduced.
- Students use social networking to discuss educational topics and use the sites to talk about school assignments.

Awareness/Being Informed
- Latest News
- Information spreads faster online than any other media. More than 50% learn about breaking news on social media.
- Social networking provides academic research to everyone with online access, allowing people access to previously unavailable resources.
- Social media sites inform and empower individuals to change themselves and their communities.

Social Benefits
- Social media allows people to communicate with friends and increases online communication which may strengthen relationships.
- People make new friends.

Using Multimedia

- It is believed that visual data has a greater impact on learning and memorizing than plain text. Therefore, images, graphics, animation, pictures, slides, documentaries, etc., have a greater appeal than a plain textbook. Using multimedia and Internet provides an opportunity for children to gain knowledge about a particular subject in depth.

Online Learning

- Another positive effect of Internet in education is the onset of distance education or online education (internet-based training (IBT) or web-based training (WBT). With this facility, you can take up short-term courses with the course material available online, attend virtual classes, learn, and appear for exams.

Easy Contact

- Students can contact other students or their teachers via the e-mail if they have queries about any information. Sharing of information, discussions on a particular subject, etc., can be easily carried out using the Internet.

School/College Projects

- Using the Internet can be very useful for completing projects in schools and colleges. As the Internet is an ocean of information, covering nearly all subjects known to human, one can find information, research work, etc., required for one's projects.

Encyclopaedia

- Sometimes, an encyclopaedia may not always be available to students and they may have difficulty in gaining access to the books in the library. In that case, the encyclopaedia of various subjects available on the Internet can be helpful.

News

- All the latest news is constantly updated on the Internet on news websites. Students learning politics, can have an access to all the current affairs through the Internet. Historical accounts like speeches, biographies, archive videos and photographs, etc., are also easily available on the Internet in detailed and accurate versions.

Affordable Knowledge

- Investing in research material may be tedious and unaffordable for some. But, now, thanks to the Internet, we have content websites, web encyclopaedias, and dictionaries whenever we want them. Today, abled as well as differently abled students can benefit from the sea of knowledge on the Internet.

Easy Education System

- Not only gaining knowledge, but, every part of the education system is simplified because of the Internet. You can now view your prospective educational institute, look up courses, enrol for online courses, take classes, research, see your results, and even look for job prospects on the Internet.

No Age Bracket for Education

- Online courses provide an opportunity for people of all age groups to study from home, while working, fulltime or part-time. Be it a student, a housewife, or a professional, they can just start up their computers, connect to the Internet, and take virtual classes. Therefore, people can now gain knowledge according to their need and time available. You are, now, never too old or too busy to learn something new.

NOTE: For Parents and Caregivers: Parents and caregivers need to educate themselves about social media and the ways their children may use it, as well as the common risks, to help them understand and navigate the technologies.

Family discussions are positive for teens and can result in less risky online behaviours—more of those teens who said their parents have talked to them "a lot" reported: (Cox, 2007)

- Greater concerns about online safety and sharing of personal information and photos,
- More limited sharing of information/pictures via the internet,

- Lower incidence of public online profiles, and
- Lower incidence of talking or meeting people they only know from online.
- Respect for privacy and empowerment (Cox, 2007)

Social Media and Family

A powerful tool, that contemporary society uses not only to entertain but also to communicate and educate, is an ever-present availability to media access. However, there is an ongoing debate over whether or not the power of this influence and its permeating availability yields positive or negative consequences in different aspects of our lives.

Social media can be used in a variety of different ways and for many purposes – entertainment, communication and, social interaction. A vast majority of individuals use media devices as a means of communicating or connecting with others. It can be used for, as an important resource for upholding family relationships and a platform for socialization with physically distant family members. Throughout the process of examining each medium and the role it plays within the context of family life, it has been observed that many technologies, specifically the computer and Internet, can create a paradox. The medium may, in fact, be a social device used to connect and communicate but is also linked with hindering social involvement with those in close physical proximity.

In this new era of technology, efforts must be made to spend time with children and set rules as to when and how long they can have access to gadgets, tablets, phones, and computers. Access to these, if not monitored, can limit the benefits that result from families sharing a meal together, along with important aspects of child development. Media devices present at meals or family functions distract family members from engaging in healthy conversations that ultimately form strong relationships.

It was discovered that communal television viewing as a family is regarded as fulfilling a social function, therefore having a positive impact on family development. The experience has potential for bringing the family together and positively influencing the time a family spends with each other, despite the poor quality of interactions between family members.

Negative Effects of Social Media on Children

- The vastness of social media ensures that there is no control on the scope of information. Such situations can lead children into obscene, harmful or graphic websites that may affect their thinking process.
- Spending too much time on social media can also affect your child negatively and often lead to addiction. Addiction can manifest itself as various symptoms and may even affect your child's physical health and ability to develop strong inter-personal relationships.

Cyber bullying

- Cyber bullying is another growing trend among social media websites, it can have dangerous and potentially fatal effects.
- Cyber bullying is when someone is tormented, threatened, harassed, humiliated, embarrassed or otherwise targeted by another person using the Internet, interactive and digital technologies or mobile phones. Belize has no specific legislation to deal with cyber bullying however discussions are being held to address this issue.
- Cyber bullying is similar to other types of bullying, except it takes place online and through text messages sent to cell phones. Cyber bullies can be classmates, online acquaintances, and even anonymous users, but most often they do know their victims. With the increase in accessibility to electronic devices in today's society, cyber bullying has become a major issue across the world. The use of Social Media and wireless devices, to harass, torment, threaten, humiliate and embarrass another person is occurring even in Belize. While persons of every age group may fall victim to cyber bullying, this phenomenon is particularly rampant in the lives of teens and young adults.

Examples of ways persons bully:
1. Sending someone mean or threatening emails, instant messages, or text messages
2. Excluding someone from an instant messenger buddy list or blocking their email for no reason
3. Tricking someone into revealing personal or embarrassing information and sending it to others
4. Breaking into someone's email or instant message account to send cruel or untrue messages while posing as that person
5. Creating websites to make fun of another person such as a classmate or teacher
6. Using websites to rate peers as prettiest, ugliest, etc.

NOTE: anyone has the right to block someone at any time whether they believe it is bullying or not.

The Effects of Cyber bullying

Victims of cyber bullying may experience many of the same effects as children who are bullied in person, such as a drop in grades, low self-esteem, change in interests, or depression.
However, cyber bullying can seem more extreme to its victims because of several factors:
- It occurs in the child's home. Being bullied at home can take away the place children feel safest.
- It can be harsher. Often children say things online that they wouldn't say in person, mainly because they can't see the other person's reaction.
- It can be far reaching. Children can send emails making fun of someone to their entire class or school with a few clicks, or post them on a website for the whole world to see.
- It can be anonymous. Cyber bullies often hide behind screen names and email addresses that don't identify who they are. Not knowing who is responsible for the bullying can add to a victim's insecurity.
- It may seem easy to get away from a cyber-bully by just getting offline, but for some children not going online takes away one of the major places they socialize

Some reasons people may engage on bullying online:

Anonymity
Cyber bullying allows bullies to avoid facing their victims, so it requires less courage and provides the illusion that bullies won't get caught.

Ignorance of the consequences The National Council on Crime Prevention in the US reports that in a survey of teenagers, 81% said they believe others cyber bully because they think it's funny. Because they don't see their victims' reactions in person, cyber bullies may not realize how much damage they are doing.

Social pressure Some cyber bullies may think their behaviour is normal and socially acceptable, especially when friends egg them on. Sites like Facebook or Twitter offer no routine monitoring and as a result, children from a young age must learn proper Internet behaviour. This is a call for parents and educators to teach these modern skills through awareness and advocacy. Parents and educators need to make children aware at a young age of the life-changing effects cyber-bullying can have on the victim. The next step for prevention is advocacy. For example, three high school students from Melville, New York organized a Bullying Awareness Walk, where several hundred people turned out to show their support.

Signs of cyber bullying may include your child:

- Being upset after using the Internet or receiving a text message
- Becomes secretive about his or her digital life
- Becomes withdrawn from family and friends
- Stops participating in group activities
- Starts avoiding school and group events
- Experiences a decline in grade point average
- Stops doing homework
- Has drastic changes in mood, sleep and appetite patterns
- Wants to stop using the phone or computer
- Becomes nervous when new messages come in
- Conducts self-destructive behaviour

Signs that your child might be the bully include:

- Encourages others to do the bullying
- Is very aggressive toward everyone
- Is being sent to the principal's office regularly
- Receives detention often
- Starts acquiring new belongings or unexplained money
- Does not take responsibility for anything, including his or her actions
- Is very competitive and worried about his or her popularity

How can I help a child who is being cyber bullied?

As a parent, we want to protect our children from the outside world. However, with current technology, sometimes the outside world comes to them. If you feel your child is being cyber bullied, the best thing you can do is to sit down and offer your support and guidance toward finding a solution. Assure your child it is not his or her fault.

Once you have identified the bully you can take action with your child to get the bullying to stop.

Here are some tips to help deal with the situation:

The school
Make the school aware of the situation by talking to your child's teacher, principal or guidance counsellor. Together with the school discuss how to prevent future acts and what will be done with the accused bully.

Documentation
Work with your child to document all incidents, including printing emails, taking screen shots of text messages and writing down all incidents in a notebook. This documentation will help when going to the school or authorities on the bullying.

Ignore
Block the bully from social media sites so he or she cannot see or comment on your child's page.

Also, block the bully's phone number on your child's phone and his or her email address in your child's email account.

Access
Until the situation is under control, limit your child's access to the Internet and phone. This will reduce the exposure the bully has to your child and will prevent your child from feeling depressed over something that occurred online.

A letter to the Editor taken from the Amandala (EXCERPT) - CYBERBULLYING – ITS IMPACT ON OUR FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS – Amandala Newspaper – August 23, 2013 - Beatrice Geban, M. Ed., Principal, St. Mary's Primary School

Kindly allow me a space in your leading newspaper to bring to the general public an awareness of cyberbullying, which has now become commonplace amongst our digital natives and a society that has become fixated on sexuality and acts of crime against minors..

Cyberbullying has become a ubiquitous phenomenon, impacting the well-being of individuals, educational institution, family and peer relationships of many young people. According to an online research the legal definition of cyberbullying refers to: actions that use information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm another or others; use of communication technologies for the intention of harming another person; use of internet service and mobile technologies, such as web pages and discussion groups as well as instant messaging or SMS text messaging, with the intention of harming another person.

Cyberbullying constitutes communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate. The actions are deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour intended to harm another or the recipient.

Recently in Belize, cyberbully has become the norm. Social media sites which can be of great benefit to everyone, particularly of economic interest through investments and networking, have been used in inappropriate ways for personal gratification of individuals seeking revenge on others because of limitations which they might possess.

There have been recent cases of young women/girls posted on facebook in very demeaning and disturbing ways by individuals who lack moral fibre.

In our society we have been hearing about bullying occurring in most/all schools for a quite a while now. Traditional bullying involves acts such as teasing, name-calling, kicking, fist fighting, exclusion due to economic status/ differences in ethnicity, taking away of someone's break money or snacks, the removal of someone's property without permission and the list goes on. In this century, traditional bullying has been upgraded to a new level.

All forms of abuse have a detrimental effect to a person's mental and physical health. Victims can experience significant social isolation and feel unsafe. It can lead to emotional and physical harm, loss of self-esteem, feelings of shame and anxiety, concentration and learning difficulties. Incidents of young people committing suicide have also been linked with cyberbullying.

Readings indicate that students who experience cyberbullying are more likely to:

- Use alcohol and drugs as a means to hide their emotional pain
- Skip school to avoid perpetrators
- Experience in-person bullying
- Experience drastic change in school performance resulting in poorer grades
- Have lower self-esteem and self- image
- Suffer from more health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, trouble sleeping/ insomnia
- Develop a fear of technology
- Exhibit depression and anxiety
- Change in dress style: A few start wearing dark shades to hide who they are or the situation they are in
- Have increased thoughts about suicide that may persist into adulthood. In one study, adults who recalled being bullied in youth were three times more likely to have suicidal thoughts or inclinations.

Arguably, another reason children bully is that they may fall into a trap by thinking that bullying is just "the cool thing to do," especially in front of their friends. Sometimes bullies are those children who are good students, athletes, or the children who seem to have everything going for them.

Some teenagers make very bad decisions as they progress through puberty that affect their reputation and the way people perceive them. Cyberbullying is just the tool used to distort and destroy them when those pictures/images that are explicit fall into the wrong hands.

Parents need to monitor everything that their child is doing on Facebook and open the door for active dialogue to occur. Only through communication will parents know what their child is experiencing or even doing. Simultaneously, parents should screen their children's friends in an effort to minimize peer pressure and negative influences that could be learnt through socialization.

Parents who recognized that their child is a bully need to be realistic and seek professional help. Bullies are human beings and they are also hurting inside. An intervention is needed to address the problems and curb behaviours that ultimately may destroy the person.

Here are a few things that you could do to open the door for communication and to safeguard your child's privacy.

How to protect your child:

- Talk with your child about netiquette, how to behave and communicate politely over the Internet and mobile devices. Importantly, teach children to never say something about someone online that they wouldn't say to that person face-to-face.
- Bullying others, online or in person, is never appropriate behavior. Make sure your child understands that comments and images posted on the Internet can be long-lasting and have a global audience.
- Teach your child to keep the passwords to their online accounts private. Create passwords that are a combination of letters and numbers and are difficult to guess. Passwords should not be shared with friends, not even a best friend.
- Talk to your child about how to handle strong emotions, such as anger. It is never appropriate to send a message or post a comment on the Internet when you are angry or emotional.
- If your child receives an angry or taunting

message, teach them to refrain from responding and to tell a responsible adult. Responding to these types of messages could encourage a bully to continue to pick on the victim.

- Know how much time your child is spending on the Internet and mobile device. Enjoy the Internet with your child. If you are unable to sit down together at the computer, at least know what activities they are doing online. Consider installing parental control software to monitor your child's activities and limit the web sites that are available.

- Encourage your local schools to educate the students on cyber ethics and the law.5

References:

http://www.boystown.com.au/downloads/rep/BT-Research-Report-Cyberbullying.pdf
http://news.discovery.com/human/psychology/bullying-phoebe-prince-teens.htm
http://www.mysecurecyberspace.com/articles/family-room/a-parents-role-in-putting-a-stop-to-cyberbullying.html

Photo Courtesy: UNICEF Belize

ACRONYMS	MEANING	ACRONYMS	MEANING	ACRONYMS	MEANING
AFAIK	As far as I know	HTH	Happy to help	ORLY	Oh, really? (sarcastic)
AMA	Ask me anything	IANAD	I am not a doctor	OTP	One true pairing
ASL	Age / sex / location	ICYMI	In case you missed it	POTD	Photo of the day
B/C, BC	Because	IDC	I don't care	PM	Private message
B4	Before	IDK	I don't know	PPL	People
BAE	Before anyone else	IKR	I know, right?	QOTD	Quote of the day
BFF	Best friends forever	ILY	I love you	ROFL	Rolling on the floor laughing
BRB	Be right back	IMHO	In my humble opinion	ROFLMAO	Rolling on the floor laughing Laughing my a(xx) off
BTAIM	Be that as it may	IMO	In my opinion	RT	Retweet
BTW	By the way	IRL	In real life	SFW	Safe for work
DAE	Does anyone else...?	JK	Just kidding	SM	Social media
DFTBA	Don't forget to be awesome	L8	Late	SoLoMo	Social, Local Mobile
DM	Direct message	LMAO	Laughing my a(xx) off	TBH	To be honest
ELI5	Explain to me like I'm 5	LMK	Let me know	TBT	Throwback Thursday
F2F	Face to face	LMS	Like my status	TGIF	Thank goodness it's Friday
FaTH	First and Truest Husband	LOL	Laughing out loud	Thx	Thanks
FBF	Flashback Friday	LOLz	Laughing out loud (sarcastic)	TIL	Today I learned
FF	Follow Friday	MCM	Man crush Monday	TIL	Today I learned
FOMO	Fear of missing out	MTFBY	May the force be with you	TL;DR	Too log; didn't read
FTFY	Fixed that for you	NM	Not much	TMI	Too much information
FTW	For the win	NSFL	Not safe for life	TTYL	Talk to you later
FUTAB	Feet up, take a break	NSFW	Not safe for work	TTYN	Talk to you never
FYI	For you information	NVM	Never mind	TTYS	Talk to you soon
G2G / GTG	Got to go	OAN	On another note	Txt	Text
GG	Good game	OH	Overheard	WBU	What about you?
Gr8	Great	OMG	Oh my God	WCW	Woman crush Wednesday
GTR	Got to run	OMW	On my way	WDYMBT	What do you mean by that?
HBD	Happy Birthday	OOTD	Outfit of the day	WOTD	Word of the day
HMU	Hit me up	OP	Other poster	YMMV	Your mileage may vary
HT	Hat tip			YOLO	You only live once
				YSK	You should know

EMOJI RECOGNITION CHART

BASED ON THE WORK OF PAUL EKMAN AS INTERPRETED BY SIRI

|					
HAPPY FACE WITH WIDE MOUTH AND SQUINTING EYES	RELIEVED FACE	FACE WITH HEART SHAPED EYES	SMIRKING FACE	GRIMMACING FACE	WINKING FACE WITH STUCK OUT TONGUE
FACE WITH STUCK PUT TONGUE AND EYES CLOSED	DISAPPOINTED FACE	KISSING FACE WITH CLOSED EYES	HAPPY AND CRYING FACE	SLEEPY FACE	FACE WITH COLD SWEAT
LOUDLY CRYING FACE	HAPPY FACE WITH OPEN MOUTH	HAPPY FACE WITH OPEN MOUTH AND SQUINTING EYES	WINKING FACE	EXPRESSION - LESS FACE	PERSON FROWNING
CONFOUNDED FACE	FACE THROWING A KISS	ANGRY FACE	POUTING FACE	CRYING FACE	TIRED FACE
DISAPPOINTED BUT RELIEVED FACE	FEARFUL FACE	EXASPERATED FACE	FACE SCREAMING IN FEAR	ASTONISHED FACE	FLUSHED FACE

10 APPS TEENS ARE USING THAT PARENTS NEED TO KNOW
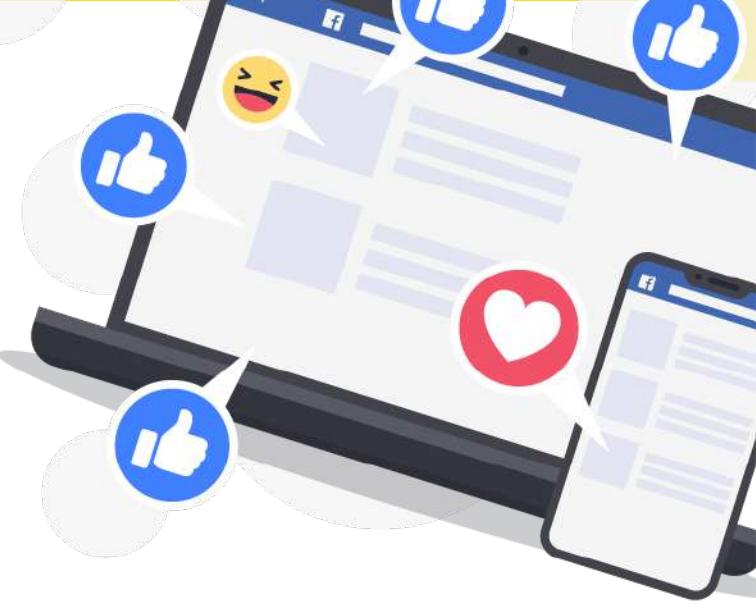
CALCULATOR%
This app looks like a calculator but functions like a secret photo vault

OMEGLE
A free online chat website that promotes chatting anonymously to strangers.

YELLOW
This app is designed to allow teens to flirt with each other in a Tinder-like atmosphere.

WHISPER
An anonymous app where the creators promote sharing secrets and meeting new people.

ASK.fm
An anonymous app where the creators promote sharing secrets and meeting new people.

HOT OR NOT
Strangers rate your profile. Goal is to lead to a hook up.

BURN BOOK
Post anonymous rumors about people through audio messages, texts, and photos.
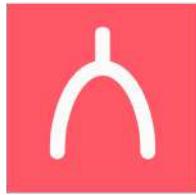
WISHBONE
An app that allows users to compare kids against each other and rate them on a scale.

KIK
Messaging app. Kik has built in apps and web content that would be filtered on home computer.

INSTAGRAM
Many kids are now creating fake accounts to hide content from parents. Kids also like to text using Instagram because messages are deleted once a user leaves the conversation.

For more information: appsolutelyapril.com

ACRONYMS	MEANING
1174'	Party meeting place
420	Marijuana
53X	Sex
8	Oral Sex
9	Parent watching
99	Parent gone
Broken	Hangover from alcohol
CD9	Code 9 / parents around
CID	Acid (Drug)
CU46	See you for sex
DOC	Drug of choice
GNOC	Get naked on camera
GYPO	Get your pants off
IPN	I'm posting naked

ACRONYMS	MEANING
IWSN	I want sex now
KOTL	Kiss on the lips
KPC	Keeping parents clueless
LH6	Let's have sex
(L) MIRL	Let's meet in real life
NIFOC	Naked in front of computer
PIR	Parent in room
POS	Parent over shoulder
PRON	Porn
SUGARPIC	Suggestive or erotic photo
TDTM	Talk dirty to me
THOT	That hoe over there
TWD	Texting while driving
WTTP	Want to trade pictures?

- The Internet and social media have both positive and negative sides to its use.
- Parents need to monitor their children's use of internet and social media.
- Parents and caregivers need to educate themselves about social media and the ways their teens may use it, as well as the common risks, to help them understand and navigate the technologies.
- The use of Social Media and wireless devices, to harass, torment, threaten, humiliate and embarrass another person is occurring even in Belize. While persons of every age group may fall victim to cyber bullying, this phenomenon is particularly rampant in the lives of teens and young adults.

Articles 13 and 17 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

1. Aware of the effects of internet on children
2. Sensitive to children's use of social media

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Identify the negative and positive effects of social media
2. Identify the effective use of social media for educational purposes

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Demonstrate knowledge of the effects of the overuse of social media on children/adolescents.
2. Using positive tone when speaking, listening, observing, and addressing concern of cyberbullying and overuse of social media.
3. Recognize and act on the risks associated with cyber bullying.
4. Value to be acquired by parents
5. Value the use of social media for educational purposes and act quickly on signs of cyber bullying.
6. Value the need to be precautious with use of social media.

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Social Media effects and considerations

The overall aim is to explain to parents the effects of overuse of social media. Using social media is among the most common activity of today's children and adolescents. Any website that allows social interaction is considered a social media site, including social networking sites such as Facebook, and Twitter; gaming sites and virtual worlds such as Club Penguin, Second Life, and the Sims; video sites such as YouTube; and blogs. For this reason, it is important that parents become aware of the nature of social media sites, given that not all of them are healthy environments for children and adolescents. This session will help parents understand these sites and to encourage healthy use and urge parents to monitor for potential problems with cyber bullying, sexting, and exposure to inappropriate content.

1. The facilitator will distribute colour coded paper and a pencil to each parent, and then project two images on the whiteboard (child on a computer watching you- tube video, family around the living room with all members glued to their phones). The presenter will inform the parents that they have two minutes to write the first thing that comes to their minds when they see these images.
2. The facilitator will get responses from volunteers and provide positive feedback to the participants. The presenter will then ask the parents to find other participants that have the same colour paper as theirs. (A sample is stick at a particular part of the room and the facilitator will inform the participants that this is their team for the training session.)
3. The facilitator will then pose the following questions:
   - When you were a child, how did you keep in contact with your friends?
   - As a parent, how does your child/children keep in contact with their friends?

• What is social media? Do you use any form of social media?

A group discussion on these questions; then facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share the group's response.

1. The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and then project this question on the whiteboard: How much time does your child/teen spend on any form of social media? The facilitator will inform the participants that this is simply a question for them to ponder on.
2. The facilitator will then list different forms of social media and ask participants if they themselves use them. Then the facilitator will ask the participants if their child/teen use them as well.
3. Facilitator will present an oral description of a young girl whose nude pictures were posted on Facebook and ask participants how can such incidents occur and what possible effects on the victim and how it could have been prevented.
4. The facilitator will define and differentiate between cyberbullying and bullying. The facilitator will then illicit other ways children/teen could degrade other children/teens online. The facilitator will provide participants with warning signs of cyber bullying.
5. Both facilitator and participants discuss the emotional trauma resulting from cyber bullying and overuse of internet.
6. The facilitator will then read this scenario that highlights the negative effects of overuse of social media and cyber bullying. A discussion will ensue after the scenario is read.

David a second form student at St Martin's High school, a sports enthusiast, a Jaguars fan, and a Boy Scout, hung himself in his family's back yard in January, 2016.

David had been the target of on-going bullying at his high school. He received a series of text messages from bullies, with comments that put him down and insulted him. According to his brother, the bullies went after him for no reason. "He did not do anything to them besides having an attractive girlfriend. They crushed his spirit and took away his motivation to do anything". Cliff also wrote the following strong words: "I saw the pain in David's eyes three nights ago as he was added to a group text only to be made fun of and kicked out two minutes later. I spoke to him right after to comfort him and he didn't even hear me. He stared off into the distance for what seemed like an hour. I could feel his pain. It was a tangible pain. He didn't even have the contact information of any of the eight members who started the group text. It is important to note David had been enduring this sort of abuse for a very long time.

Discussion Questions:
• What is taking place in this scenario?
• How could this incident have been avoided?
• Who is to blame for the outcome?
• Did he show any signs of emotional trauma?

7. The facilitator will ask the participants what else could social media be used for. The facilitator will illicit examples from participants.
8. The presenter will show another picture and explain that social media could be used in positive ways like:
• Latest News
• Easy Contact
• Affordable Knowledge
• Online Learning

9. The facilitator will give participants 10 minutes to discuss the following questions in their groups. Groups will provide possible ways for both questions; facilitator will provide groups with newsprints and markers.

- How important is it for parents to monitor what their children/teen is doing on social media?
- What are possible ways to educate you child/teen on the positive aspects of social media.

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

10. When time is up, ask a representative from each group to share with entire group. End this activity by sharing the following important message:

- Adults can help teens think about online presence in moral and ethical ways—-specifically to help teens in understanding the consequences for themselves and others of participation in the socially networked world. A multipronged approach that utilizes multiple social media platforms, as well as in-person contact, has the potential to reach teens with accurate health information, resources, and support.

ACTIVITY 2

The Power of Social Media

The overall aim is to enlighten parents of the lingering potential dangers of the misuse and overuse of social media. Furthermore, parents will learn that social media has a positive side as well. Through awareness parents will know the nature of social media sites, given that not all of them are healthy environments for children and adolescents. This session will encourage healthy use and urge parents to monitor for potential problems with cyber bullying, sexting, and exposure to inappropriate content.

The facilitator will stick the term 'social media' on the whiteboard and ask participants to ponder on it. The presenter will ask volunteers to provide their responses. The facilitator will then provide the participants with the dictionary meaning: websites and applications that enable users to create and share content or to participate in social networking.

The facilitator will give each participant an image that depict a form of social media; the participants will be required to find the persons that have the same image as theirs. (A sample is stick at a particular part of the room and presenter will inform the participants that this is their team for the workshop session.)

Within the group a discussion will ensue, it will be concerning the image they have. The group will answer the following question:

> What could that form of social
> media be used for?
> How?

The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and present the participants with a scenario which will link the use of social media to depression and even suicide.

Lisa Smith

Lisa Smith was a 13-year-old who grew up in Punta Gorda, Toledo District. Her only mistake was forwarding a nude photo of herself to a boy she liked. Another girl borrowed the boy's phone, found the image and forwarded it to other students. And so, the image found its way to a lot of other students in her school and in other schools. The result – taunting and bullying from her peers at school, with insults such as "whore" and "slut".

Lisa wrote in her journal. "Tons of people talk about me behind my back and I hate it because they call me a whore! And I can't be a whore I'm too inexperienced. So secretly TONS of people hate me … "School authorities found out about the nude photo around the end of the school year and suspended Lisa for the first week of second form, which started in August. When she returned to school, a counselor observed cuts on Lisa's legs and had her sign a "no-harm" contract, in which Lisa agreed to tell an adult if she felt inclined to hurt herself. On September 12, 2009, Lisa wrote in her journal: "I am done for sure now. I can feel it in my stomach. I'm going to try and strangle myself. I hope it works. The next day, Lisa hanged herself in her bedroom.

Participants will discuss the scenario using the questions below in groups and they will present.

- What was taking place in the scenario?
- How could Lisa avoid being exposed?
- Was the form of social media being used in a positive or negative way?
- What effects did the incident have on Lisa that led to her committing suicide?

The facilitator will then present information on:

- Cyber bullying Signs and its effects
- Encouraging open communication
- Positive Alternatives of using social media

The facilitator will then provide participants with key points on monitor child/teens activities on social media.

Regardless of how much your child resents it, you can only protect him or her by monitoring what they do online.

- Keep the computer in a busy area of your house so you can easily monitor its use, rather than allowing your child use a laptop or tablet in his or her bedroom, for example.
- Limit data access to your child's smart phone if he or she uses it to surf the web. Some wireless providers allow you to turn off text messaging services during certain hours.
- Set up filters on your child's computer. Tracking software can block inappropriate web content and help you check up on your child's online activities.
- Insist on knowing your child's passwords and learn the common acronyms children use online and in text messages.
- Know who your child communicates with online. Go over your child's address book and instant messenger "buddy list" with them. Ask who each person is and how your child knows them.
- Encourage your child to tell you or another trusted adult if they receive threatening messages or are otherwise targeted by cyber bullies, while reassuring them that doing so will not result in their loss of computer or cell phone privileges.

ACTIVITY 3

Bullying in Belizean schools

Distribute the letter to the Editor (Annex 2) to groups and have them engage in a discussion based on the content of the letter. Have parents discuss ways in which they can help with the growing problem of bullying. Present their suggested strategies.

The presenter will close this session by sharing the following message:

Awareness

Parents and caregivers need to educate themselves about social media and the ways their teens may use it, as well as the common risks, to help them understand and navigate the technologies.

ACTIVITY 4

Emoji, Acronyms and APPS

Divide participants into groups of 4-5.

Distribute emoji/acronyms using the examples in the background or the facilitator can develop their own with different emoji and acronyms and have participants identify them.

In their groups they will present and compare with the actual meanings or representations.

They can also spend time with the different Apps handouts to see if they are familiar with these. Groups present and participants can add more to the list provided.

Facilitator also shares on the different apps and have a general discussion on these and what they mean.

Notes

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3.2.8 Guiding Children Behaviour in Positive Ways

Background

Some characteristics of guiding children behaviour positively are:

1. Sets goals, rules and expectations;
2. Mentors—guiding, advising, training;
3. Creates supportive environments;
4. Encourages expected behaviour;
5. Uses verbal and non-verbal feedback;
6. Turns negatives into positives;
7. Being non-violent and respectful of the child as a learner;
8. Involves clear communication of parent's expectations, rules and limits;
9. Builds a mutually respectful relationship between parent and child;
10. Teaches children to learn life-long skills;
11. Increases children's competence and confidence to handle challenging situations;
12. Teaches children to become courteous, non-violent, empathic; self-respecting, and respectful of human rights and cultural differences.

The following information was taken from a survey which asked the question below:

"Based upon your personal experiences with your own children, what is the best advice you could give new parents about raising children?"

Although not new, these principles of child-rearing can offer a genuinely helpful guide to parents, teachers, day care workers, and others who care for children.

Love Abundantly

The most important task is to love and really care about children. This not only gives children a sense of security, belonging and support, but it also helps a child through difficulties in their childhood.

Discipline Constructively

Discipline means setting and adhering to standards of behaviour. Discipline is an essential preparation for adhering to the outside world; it makes a child better behaved and happier.

Apart from firmness and immediacy:
- Be consistent
- Be clear
- Administer discipline in private
- Be reasonable and understanding
- Be flexible
- Discourage continued dependency
- Be authoritative

Spend Time Together

- Playing
- Talking together
- Teaching
- Encouraging family activities

Tend to Personal and Marital Needs

Love, respect and faithfulness between spouses provide needed security to the family.

"A household in which love is openly expressed is a household in which children flourish. Verbalizing love to one's children is not enough.

Teach Right from Wrong

- Assign of chores and other responsibilities at home;
- Encourage spiritual development or religious affiliation;
- Insist that the children treat others with kindness, respect, and honesty;
- Place emphasis on table manners and other social graces in the home;
- Set of personal examples of moral courage and integrity.

Develop Mutual Respect

- Be polite to children (saying "Thank you" and "Excuse me");
- Apologize to a child when you are wrong;

- Show an active interest in the children's activities and TV shows;
- Be honest and sincere with children at all times;
- Do not favour one child;
- Follow through on promises made; and
- Show basic trust in a child's character and judgment.

Really Listen

Give undivided attention, putting aside one's own thoughts and beliefs, and trying to understand the child's point of view. Listening means understanding and communicating, not the physical act of hearing." It also means talking your child's language, encouraging the expression of feeling.

Offer Guidance

In offering guidance-be brief – state your thoughts in a few sentences rather than make a speech. Encourage them to come up with possible solutions.

"Don't force your opinions, likes, and dislikes. Offer them strictly as your opinion, not as law."

Children will usually respect your opinion if you're honest, and they will tend to follow your guidance.

Foster Independence

By fostering independence you will gain their affection and respect. Children should be given freedom to make decisions regarding minor matters first; then the areas of decision making should be expanded gradually.

Be Realistic

One should expect to make mistakes and to realize that outside influences – such as peer group pressure will increase as children mature.
Child-rearing is a series of "tough times and tender moments".

Child- rearing sorrows and heartaches but it also has its great joys and this is what makes it all worthwhile.

Children need adults to teach, guide, and support them as they grow and learn. Child care providers play an important role in guiding children's behavior in positive, supportive, and age-appropriate ways. The most appropriate ways to guide behavior are different at different ages, depending on their developmental abilities and needs. For example, two-year-olds have limited understanding and need a lot of redirection, but five-year-olds can learn to be good problem solvers. Effective guidance strategies also depend on the individual child's personality. Strategies that work well for one child may not be effective for another child of the same age.

Basic tips for child care providers to guide children's behavior. Remember that different strategies work best at different ages:

Keep rules simple and easy to understand. Discuss rules with children and write them down. Consider children's suggestions for rules. Repeat the rules often.

A few rules that work well with children include:
- Help each other.
- Take care of our toys.
- Say please and thank you.
- Be kind to each other.

Say what you mean. Use "do" instead of "don't" whenever possible. Choose your words carefully, especially when you are guiding children's behavior. Keep sentences short and simple. Focus on what to do rather than what not to do.
- Try saying, "Slow down and walk" instead of "stop running."
- Try saying, "Come hold my hand" instead of "don't touch anything."
- Try saying, "Keep your feet on the floor" instead of "don't climb on the table."
- Try saying, "Use a quiet voice inside" instead of "stop shouting."

Talk with children – not "at" them. Children often don't pay attention when you are talking (or shouting) "at" them. Guidance is much more effective when you talk to children at their eye

level. Look them in the eyes, touch them on the shoulder, and talk with them. Resist the urge to simply lecture. Instead, give children time to respond, and listen genuinely to their points of view.

Set a good example. Children watch you all the time. They see how you talk to other children and adults. They see how you cope with anger or frustration. They watch how you deal with sadness and joy. They listen to how you say "I'm sorry." The way you handle the ups and downs of life teaches children a lot about how to behave and get along with others.

Encourage children to set good examples for each other. Children also learn a great deal from each other. Encourage appropriate ways to share, play, and be kind to each other.

Give clear, simple choices. Toddlers can choose between a red cup and a green cup. Preschoolers can choose between playing "airport" and "zookeeper." Give children a choice only when there is a choice. For example, saying "It is nap time, do you want to lie down now?" is not really an option if your rule is that everyone will rest at nap time.

Show respect for children. Talk to children about misbehavior in private, rather than in front of others. Remind them of reasons for rules, and discuss what they can do differently.

Catch children being good. All children want attention. It is better to give them positive attention for good behavior than negative attention for misbehavior. Comment on something positive about each child, each day. Better yet, strive for several times a day. And share the good news. When children have done something positive, mention it to other children and to parents.

Encourage like a good coach instead of a cheerleader. A cheerleader just shouts general praise: "What a great job!" or "What a beautiful picture." A good coach tells you what you're doing right, uses praise as a teaching tool, and lets you know why he or she is proud of you. If a child sets

the table, you might say, "You did such a good job setting the table! You put the spoons and forks in the right place and remembered the napkins!" When you look at a child's painting, you might remark, "This painting just glows with color. You used blue, green, red, yellow, and orange. Tell me how you did this!" To learn more about the difference between praise and encouragement, see Encouragement Is More Effective Than Praise in Guiding Children's Behavior.

Use play activities to teach social skills. Become a character in children's pretend play and show children how to use good manners and be kind. Read children's books that show how children resolve problems. Play "what if" game and Encourage children to act out ways to work together.

Teach children how to resolve conflict and solve problems. Help them recognize and name feelings, identify problems clearly, come up with ideas for solving the problem, and try possible solutions. For more information on teaching problem solving, check out the article Ways Child Care Providers Can Teach Young Children to Resolve Conflicts.

Teach children how to apologize. Learning how to apologize is a skill. Young children have a hard time understanding another child's feelings, but by the time they are 4 years old they should begin to recognize that apologizing is a good way to make up for hurting someone else. Keep it simple (e.g., "Lucas, I'm sorry I hit you.") With time and practice, children will not have to be prompted, and their apology will be more genuine.
Teach preschoolers and school-age children the four basic steps of apologizing:
- Look at the other child
- Say the child's name
- Say "I'm sorry"
- Say why

Teach children how to correct their misbehavior. If a child throws food onto the floor give him a broom and show him how to clean it up. If a child draws on the wall, give her a wet cloth to clean the wall. Even if the child cannot successfully clean

up the entire mess alone, participating in clean-up teaches him that his actions have consequences. Over time, experiencing consequences helps children learn self-control.

KEY MESSAGES

Children need adults to teach, guide, and support them as they grow and learn.
Child care providers play an important role in guiding children's behavior in positive, supportive, and age-appropriate ways.
The most appropriate ways to guide behavior are different at different ages, depending on their developmental abilities and needs.

Articles 3, 5, 12, 14 17, and 18 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS
Recognize that parents can promote communities of learning in which families and young people can engage in positive relationships.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. Use positive communication skills to support positive parent/child development
2. Apply mentorship skills to assist the child in addressing a need or problem
3. Demonstrate effective communication skills
4. Demonstrate effective decision making skills

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Effective Communication using positive tone when speaking, listening, and observing
2. Effectively control emotions
3. Recapturing parenting experiences, think about them and evaluate them (parental self-reflection)
4. Value to be acquired by parents
5. Communicate with children in guiding their behaviour in a positive manner

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Guiding in positive ways

1. Divide parents into 6 groups and give each group two characteristics of guiding behavior in positive ways.

- Sets goals, rules and expectations;
- Mentors—guiding, advising, training;
- Creates supportive environments;
- Encourages expected behaviour;
- Uses verbal and non-verbal feedback;
- Turns negatives into positives;
- Being non-violent and respectful of the child as a learner;
- Involves clear communication of parent's expectations, rules and limits;
- Builds a mutually respectful relationship between parent and child;
- Teaches children to learn life-long skills;
- Increases children's competence and confidence to handle challenging situations;
- Teaches children to become courteous, non-violent, empathic; self-respecting, and respectful of human rights and cultural differences

2. Groups are to develop specific ways in which they can do this with infants, middle-aged and teens. For example setting goals, rules and expectations – goal is to get above average in at least 5 subjects and good in the other 3– therefore needs to study for at least 1 hour daily, do homework, go to bed early, limit use of electronic devices,

ACTIVITY 2

The Power of Guiding Behaviour

The overall aim is to provide parents with the necessary skills to guide and support their child/children to journey towards being responsible for his/her own behaviour. This workshop is geared towards creating developmentally appropriate environments that support, nurture and protect

children, so they learn to be a valuable member of their community. After participating actively in this workshop parents will be able to discover practical solutions to common children's behaviours.

The presenter will provide participants with the following scenario:

You are late preparing lunch for the family. Your seven-year-old son and six–year-old daughter come back from the first day of school. Both are excited and want to tell you about what they learned. None of them want to wait for the other to speak first, your son pushes your daughter down; but you didn't see it, you only hear your daughter starts crying. You can't stop cooking. Lunch will not be ready in time.

NOTE: Parents will role play in groups.

1. After the role play, the presenter should have a general class discussion. The presenter will pose the following questions:
    *   Did the mother make eye contact to her children?
    *   Did she show interest in what her children had to tell her?
    *   What things the mother did or did not do well?

2. The presenter will then present information on:
    *   The use of voice
    *   Provide precise and positive feedback
    *   Encouraging open communication
    *   Maintain eye contact
    *   Explain the child behaviour and provide alternatives

3. The presenter will then provide participants with key points on listening skills. These are some things the parent should do.

She should:
*   Be eye to eye with her child/children.
*   Let the child/children speak and tell his/her story.
*   Look at the child while h/she is speaking.
*   Praise the child/children when he/she finishes his/her story.
*   Show interest in her child/children's story by asking some questions about what he/she said.

4. Each group will be given a scenario to role-play. Each of these role-playing exercises should not last more than 3 minutes. After the role-play, invite the group to say what the parent did or did not do well. A general discussion on the importance of providing attention and maintaining eye contact with a child when he/she speaks.

5. The presenter will ask participants what they think about these listening skills.
    *   Do they seem easy or hard to practice? Why or why not?

6. The presenter will close this session by sharing the following messages:

    Good communication makes it possible to have a good relationship and guide children behaviour positively. The most important part of good communication is good listening, which includes paying attention, expressing appreciation that the child has spoken and making sure you understand what the child has said.

Notes

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THEME 3
STRATEGIES FOR
LIFETIME PARENTING

Strategies for Lifetime Parenting

Introduction

Parenting for a life time focuses on a parent's role in different stages of a child's life. This theme helps parents discover that they are teaching their children through their actions as well as the choices they make for themselves and their families. Parents model behavior to their children, and as children progress into adulthood, they use these model behaviors to help them cope with and manage their life.

Managing Family Life Routines and Finances helps parents to come up with healthy routines for their family to follow, and it gives tips on how parents can balance and manage their family's budget. Coping with Loss gives tips on how to explain death to children, and it shares different ways of helping children cope with loss and heal properly. Coping with Separation or Divorce explores how the parents can handle the separation for themselves and how they can support and assist their children through the difficult time. Parenting Chronically Ill Children assists parents by sharing with them how to manage and care for an ill child, as well as tips for helping parents reduce their stress. Stress Management will help parents to manage stress and help them to parent in positive ways rather than reacting to children's behaviours in negative ways due to stress.

The topics found in this theme will help parents better understand their role throughout their children's life. It enhances the awareness of parents as role models for their children, and it prepares parents to assist their children through difficulties in life. Parenting for a Life Time will bring a new awareness to parenting that can benefit not only the children's life, but the parents' life as well.

4.3.1 Managing Family Life - Finances and Routines

Background

Family is considered the most important unit in a child's life.

A successful family doesn't just happen. It results from a passionate commitment to shared values and from family members who invest their love, time and energy into helping each other discover and pursue their calling.

Family is the sacred ground for training and passing on beliefs, values and traditions.

Each family member has a role to play in a family.

As soon as children are able to help around the house, they need regular chores. It's more important that they learn to be productive and see themselves as active contributors to the welfare of the home.

Don't assume that certain household tasks are always the husband's or wife's responsibility. Let time availability guide you as you share the load.

Shared meals provide an avenue for communication.

Don't set an agenda for your child's life. Whether it's excelling at sports, earning high grades, or choosing a particular vocation, forcing a child to fit a mold of your making—one that doesn't consider how God designed the child—is a sure path to frustration for both of you.

Money has the power to destroy relationships, which are infinitely more valuable.

Experiencing financial difficulties is an opportunity to change spending routines that have gotten out of hand and focus on the truly important things of life: family, faith, and friends.

If wealth is your priority, then family life, personal health and a healthy union maybe negatively affected.

Spending time and/or money to create shared memories is a good investment.

The benefits of effective family management include:
- Bringing family members closer together
- Making it easier for grown-ups and children to talk
- Making everyone more organised and less stressed
- Making the most of precious time and finances
- Helping grown-ups deal with the way children behave
- Providing a way of passing on your family values
- Helping children develop important social skills for life
- Helping your family find more time to have fun together.

Some recommendations for basic family management:

Communication
It's important to talk through family issues with all family members, including children.

Affection, positive attention and family time
Everyone in the family needs to feel loved and valued. Make sure your children – and your partner – receive lots of encouragement, positive feedback and signs of affection. It's also important to make time every week to do things as a family – even a short walk or a visit to the park can help bring you together.

Routines
Consider your daily routines and figure out what system works best for all members of the family. Routines make children feel safe and secure, and can make the busy times of day less stressful for everyone.
- Sharing tasks: think about how you can divide up jobs so everyone is happy.
- Preferred reactions: talk about how you would like everyone to respond to difficult or challenging situations like tiredness, an upset child or financial pressures.
- Social life: think about ways everyone in the family can meet their needs for a social life.

4.3.1.1 Managing Finances

Having a plan for how to manage your money will help you and your family save money and avoid getting into debt. It can also help you get on with being a family, rather than spending too much time on financial stresses.

Benefits of budgeting

Budgeting will help you:
- Spend your money on the things you really need;
- Set aside money for unforeseen expenses;
- Stop accidental overspending;
- Save money for the things you dream about and;
- General savings.

MAKING A BUDGET: Versada Campbell and Andrea Okwesa, 1985 Food Budgeting for Caribbean Families

A budget is a financial plan and guide for organized spending and saving.

Taking time to prepare a budget allows the family to
- make choices which will benefit every member.
- help the family anticipate future financial commitments (whether in a week, a number of months or a year) ahead of time and plan to meet these commitments.
- contemplate different spending alternatives clearly, assess their relative value and make wise decisions.

Budgeting concerns every member of the family. Everyone should take part. Children should be exposed to the concept of budgeting so that they will be prepared to cope independently with situations, such as being away from home and living on an income of their own. Knowing how to budget and then establishing the right pattern of money management will enable them to make ends meet.

People tend to spend their money in ways which give them the greatest satisfaction. Some have smaller incomes than others and spend most of their income on food, the most important item of expenditure. If a certain level of food consumption is to be maintained, less money will be left for other needs, especially when prices are high.

Far too often consumers are tempted into spending more than is really necessary. Catchy advertising, attractive store displays and fancy packaging are some of the inducements which tempt us into parting with our hard-earned dollars and cents.

Before making a purchase, a shopper should ask:

Do I need it?
Can I do without it?
Can I afford it?

Budgeting does not mean that we will be 'pinching pennies' and neatly recording how we spent every one, but it does mean that we will:
- be able to manage the money we have better.
- face money matters frankly and write down problems
- consider wishes and needs of each member of the family.
- agree on realistic plans for spending and saving.
- adjust plans as circumstances change.

We all need to work out a budget so as to get the best out of incomes which are becoming more and more difficult to 'stretch'. It is only through careful budgeting and clever spending that we can hope to beat the ever-rising cost of living.

Develop a Plan for Spending and Saving

In making a budget, the following simple guidelines should be useful:

Get an idea of your pattern of expenditure by keeping a record of how much is spent for a given period on food, clothing, housing and other necessities.

Prepare another list showing the amounts planned for spending and saving.

Adjust the amounts where necessary. 'Cut' and 'carve' spending to fit income.

Check regularly to see that the amounts spent on particular items are within the sum allocated for these items.

There are several headings under which spending and saving may be divided. The major categories can be:
- food and drink

- housing (rent/mortgage)
- household supplies
- utilities (electricity, water, telephone, cooking gas)
- furniture and furnishings
- transportation (motor vehicle payments and upkeep, bus/car fares)
- clothing and accessories
- personal and health care
- pocket money
- loan payments
- recreation and savings

Make Your Plan Work

After you have planned how you will manage your money, put your plan to work. Form good buying habits. Here are some general hints to help you get the most for your money:

Learn all about a product before you shop for it. This is especially important when purchasing appliances and other standard household items.
Be alert to factors which cause prices to differ. Is it brand name or quality or how well the product is advertised? Compare prices. Are there any cheaper substitutes?
Develop good buying habits. Take advantage of specials, seasonal sales in food, clothing, linen, cleaning supplies etc.
Learn how to use credit. Know what it will cost you to use credit to help you get the things you need. Credit costs money. It may be better to wait a bit longer and get an item by saving for it than to get it immediately through credit.

Use your own and your family's skills — grow vegetables and fruits; make some of your clothes; carry out simple repairs to furniture, etc.
Make use of free or inexpensive educational and recreational services (enroll in sewing or craft classes or extra mural courses and patronize a public library).
Keep records; they will help you decide whether your dollars are giving you what you really want and need. Keep your records simple. Receipts are good records. They can be kept on a simple spindle made from a wire clothes hanger. A drawer, folder or box can serve a similar purpose.

Evaluate your Plan

At the end of the week, month or other budget period which you may have established, compare what you spent with what you planned to spend. If your spending was quite different form your plan, find out why. The answer to the 'why?' will help you to find ways to improve the next plan. If the plan fitted your needs but you had trouble sticking to it, you may need to exercise stricter self-discipline and better management, as well as enlist more co-operation within the family.

A budget is seldom perfect. Circumstances are always changing. So you will need to re-organize it accordingly and work and rework it until it suits you and your family.

The following is for information only as some parents may only be able to budget for a week

How to prepare a monthly family budget
1. Start with your income - Add up your expected monthly income, plus any side income.
2. List your expenses – utilities, rent, childcare, food, loan, car etc.
3. Subtract your expenses from your income.

ITEM	AMOUNT	COMMENTS
Rent	$250.00	
Utilities	$50.00	Phone and Electric
Transportation	$220.00	Car payment, insurance, gas
Food	$200.00	
Medical Expenses	$35.00	Insurance contribution
Clothing	$75.00	
Leisure Activities	$80.00	Movies, dining out, etc.
Miscellaneous	$50.00	
TOTAL	$960.00	
INCOME	$1225.00	
EXPENSES	$960.00	
SAVINGS		

4.3.1.2 Family Routines and Rituals (Traditions)

Routines and rituals (traditions) can give family members a sense of consistency and security and can help to make family members feel like they belong.
Routines
Routines are planned and recurring activities that help keep the home running smoothly. The following are opportunities for setting routines and gives you the chance to have a chat with your child as it helps to keep you organized:
- Getting dressed for school
- Bath time
- Setting the table
- Washing
- Bed time
- Goodbyes.

Family life might be more chaotic without some routine, but there's more to it than that. Routines also let your children know what's important to your family. Highly meaningful routines are sometimes called rituals. These can help strengthen your shared beliefs and values, and build a sense of belonging and cohesion in families.
Why routines are good for children?
Research shows that children learn in many ways about family relationships and how their family functions. Being involved in household routines is one way they can learn.

Routine has the following benefits for children:

- They can be a way of teaching younger children healthy habits, like brushing their teeth, getting some exercise, or washing their hands after using the toilet.
- An organised and predictable home environment helps children and young people feel safe and secure.
- Routines built around fun or spending time together strengthen relationships between parents and children. Reading a story together before bed or going for a special snack after school can become a special time for you and your children to share.
- Daily routines help set our body clocks. For example, bedtime routines help children's bodies 'know' when it's time to sleep. This can be particularly helpful when children reach adolescence and their body clocks start to change.
- If your child needs to take medicine regularly, having a routine for this will help make both of you less likely to forget.
- Having an important job to do in the family routine helps older children and teenagers develop a sense of responsibility.
- Routines help develop basic work skills and time management.
- Routines can help promote a feeling of safety in stressful situations or during difficult stages of development, such as puberty.
- When children reach adolescence, the familiarity of regular home routines can help them feel looked after. Predictable family routines can be a welcome relief from the changes they're experiencing.
- Routines for children with disabilities can be a big help. They can be even more important for children who find it hard to understand or cope with change.

Just about all families expect children to contribute in some way to family life. Some children have household chores or jobs they're responsible for every day or week. Other children help out when their parents ask them to. Either way, getting children involved benefits everyone.

KEY MESSAGES

- Family is considered the most important unit in a child's life.
- A successful family doesn't just happen. It results from a passionate commitment to shared values and from family members who invest their love, time and energy into helping each other discover and pursue their calling.
- Family is the sacred ground for training and passing on beliefs, values and traditions.
- Each family member has a role to play in a family.
- Spending time and/or money to create shared memories is a good investment.
- Having a plan for how to manage your money

will help you and your family save money and avoid getting into debt. It can also help you get on with being a family, rather than spending too much time on financial stresses.

- A budget is a financial plan and guide for organized spending and saving.

Taking time to prepare a budget allows the family to:
- make choices which will benefit every member.
- help the family anticipate future financial commitments (whether in a week, a number of months or a year) ahead of time and plan to meet these commitments.
- contemplate different spending alternatives clearly, assess their relative value and make wise decisions.

Get an idea of your pattern of expenditure by keeping a record of how much is spent for a given period on food, clothing, housing and other necessities.
A budget is seldom perfect. Circumstances are always changing. So you will need to re-organize it accordingly and work and rework it until it suits you and your family.
Routines and rituals (traditions) can give family members a sense of consistency and security and can help to make family members feel like they belong.
Routines are planned and recurring activities that help keep the home running smoothly.
Routine benefits children.

Articles 3, 5 and 30 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS
1. Interpret the importance of proper financial management and routines for the family well-being

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS
1. Identify the effects of finance on the family's well-being
2. Analyze their decision making priorities in spending and saving
3. Review the skills of creating and monitoring a budget
4. dentify the benefits of routine in a child's life

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS
1. Demonstrate competent reasoning, problem-solving and planning skills when dealing with managing finances.
2. Develop goals and priorities related to managing family finances and routines.
3. Value to be acquired by parents
4. Commitment to both self- improvement and family improvement when managing family life and finances.

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Managing Family Finances

The overall aim is to explain how and why it is important that parents manage family finances. Setting a realistic budget may help the family gain more control over their finances and show where you need to make changes to the family's lifestyle. If as a family, they can create a plan for managing their money, they may be able to save for family holidays and reduce their debts.
The facilitator will then pose the following questions and participants answer as a team. A member from the team will write down the list on a newsprint.
Imagine that you have a week's minimum wage ($200 BZ Dollars) how would you spend it?

Provide a reason to purchase each item. (Needs, wants, saving, spending etc.)
Who makes decisions in your family? Do your child/children have a say in decision making?

How these decisions are made when there are conflicting needs/ wants?

A group discussion on these questions; then facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share the group's response.
The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and then project this statement on the

whiteboard: Different families handle budgeting and money management in different ways. But the general goal of money management is a yearly, monthly or weekly picture of what you need to spend and what you have left over. The facilitator will inform the participants that this is simply a statement for them to ponder on.

The facilitator will then explain factors that contribute to managing a family finances. Some factors include:

1. Focusing on what's best for your family rather than trying to consider every financial option out there.
2. Balancing your family budget, try developing a basic plan for managing your money.
3. Deciding what your priorities are, and it will be easier to control spending in the different areas of your family life.
4. Taking steps to reduce debt will help you avoid stress. If you have a partner, reducing debt might also help you avoid arguments.

Key Point
Looking after your family's finances and managing money will help you avoid debt and stress – and enjoy your family life together.

The facilitator will ask groups to develop a plan for a week for a family of five people (ages: two-year-old, five-year-old, ten-year-old, and two adults) with a budget of $200.00. Facilitator will provide groups with newsprint and markers and groups have 15 minutes to complete the task.

The facilitator will give groups five minutes to report their work. After reporting the facilitator will start a discussion with the following questions. Discussion Questions:
What is budgeting?
How does budgeting help with managing family finances?
Where did you learn your budgeting skills?
Are you teaching your child/children about spending and saving money? Do they have their own money?
As a parent, at what age do you think a child should be given the responsibility of spending and saving?

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

After discussion, facilitator will ask each participant what he/she remembers most from this training and how would he/she will try to implement it in managing their family finances; so the entire family unit benefit.

End this activity by sharing the following important messages:
1. A person's attitude to managing his/her money is critical to financial success.
2. A budget enables a person to manage expenses each month.
3. It is crucial to distinguish between needs and wants.
4. Decision-making as a family can help all family member in setting priorities, and can help children learn to save and manage their own money.

Facilitator in furthering this discussion should underscore that personal and family values determine how decisions about money are made in the family.

Some questions may help to bring these out:

• Is everyone's money pooled for the family or does each earner spend his/her own money?
• Do adult needs come before or after children's needs in these decisions?
• Do the number of earners contributing to the family make a difference in how money decisions are made? If so, in what ways?
• What kinds of money decisions are the hardest?
• Do mothers spend money differently than fathers?
• How do money decisions affect family relationships?

Facilitator records key points from participant contributions on flip chart, and can add others then reviews key points made as summary before next activity.

ACTIVITY 2

Our Tools for Managing Money

Ask participants to divide up into 4 groups of 3-4 and give them each one of the following tasks to work on for 15 minutes and prepare to report:

1. Develop a menu for a week for six people from one-year old baby through adults. You have $200 to spend. Plan your shopping list and likely costs. List the "must have" foods to keep on hand for a family with young children.
2. Develop a back-to-school plan and list of necessary items to ensure your 5-, 9- and 14-year old children are all set to go in September.
3. Your fridge has just stopped working. You are two months behind in the rent. Your utility bills are due. What are your options?
4. A major celebration or event is coming (e.g. Christmas, Graduation). What MUST you plan to spend? (e.g. on clothes, on food, on gifts, on house repairs, graduation expenses etc.) How can you make your limited funds make the most of the holiday for the family?

Each group will be given a maximum of five minutes to report their work.
All report, and then Facilitator will help provoke discussion with questions like the following:
- Was this exercise easy or difficult? Why?
- Were there any tools, or skills persons used that we should note from these reports? (e.g.
- budgeting, planning ahead for major expenses, carrying calculator to supermarket or shop, savings plans, setting priorities, putting heads together for solutions, etc.)
- Where or from whom have you learned these skills?
- What are your children learning from you about spending and saving money? Do they have their own money? Is this important? Do they shop with your money? At what age should children be given responsibility for spending money?

As a suggestion: Keeping a Money Diary

In a small notebook, a "money diary", you should record:

1. All the money you earn/receive, dates of receipt, and where or whom it comes from.

2. Every item on which you spend money, where, and why you spent it.

The diary helps make visible exactly where their money comes from, how much there is, and where it goes. This sometimes helps to recognize unnecessary spending, or the reasons why we need to bring other family members into discussions of spending, or of the need to develop savings for other expenses.

ACTIVITY 3

The Power of Family Routines

The overall aim is to explain how and why it is important that family has routines. Routines and rituals can give family members a sense of consistency and security and can help to make family members feel like they belong. Routines are how families organise themselves to get things done, spend time together and have fun. The workshop is geared towards revealing to parents that every family has its own unique routines. Routines help family members know who should do what, when, in what order and how often.

1. The facilitator will stick the term 'routine' on the whiteboard and ask participants to ponder on it. The facilitator will ask volunteers to provide their responses. The facilitator will then provide the participants with the dictionary meaning.

2. Routines: are those planned and recurring activities that help keep the home running smoothly.

3. The facilitator will give each participant an image that depicts an example of a family routine; the participants will be required to find the persons that have the same image as theirs.

   Within the group a discussion will ensue, it will be concerning the image they have. The group will answer the following questions: What family routine is the image depicting? Does your family have routine as well? Provide an example.

4. In your opinion, what is the importance of family routines?

5. Within your groups, sketch a routine that majority of you share.

The facilitator will provide feedback to each response and present the participants with a scenario.
Computer Time
Fourteen-year-old Stephen and his younger brother Aaron started nagging their mother Andrea about using the computer as soon as they got home from school every day. They then spent most of their afternoons fighting over it.

Discussion Questions:
• What is taking place in the scenario?
• What could the mother do?
• Where can the use of routine come into play?

NOTE: You (the facilitator) will play the role of the parent. Participants can play the role of the children.

6. A general discussion follows after the role play.

The facilitator will present information on:
• Routines
• The Benefits of Routines
• How routines help with better family management

The facilitator will provide each group with a scenario to role-play. Each of these role-playing exercises should not last more than 3 minutes. After the role-play, invite the group to say what the parent did or did not do well. A general discussion on the importance of family routines.

The facilitator will ask participants what they think about family routines.

Do they seem easy or hard to practice?
Why or why not?

The facilitator will close this session by sharing the following messages:

There's no rule about how many or what kind of routines you should have. What works well for one family might be too restrictive for another.

Notes

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4.3.2 Coping with Separation

Separation in this context means living apart. Separation in children's lives may come as a result of several events: divorce, death or migration, for example for work or school. Coping with separation regardless of the circumstances can be one of the hardest experiences life brings us since it can be temporary or for a lifetime. The following sections provide information and strategies on how parents can help their children cope with separation.

4.3.2.1 Coping with death of a parent or a pet

Background

A number of research studies indicate that in order to cope with death in the family a number of strategies can help and include:

1. Respect Differences in Grieving Styles (The Dougy Center, 2016) - Children often grieve differently from their parents and siblings. Some children want to talk about the death, while others want to be left alone. Some like to stay busy and others withdraw from all activities and stay home.
2. Long-Term Grief (Cancer Net Editorial Board, 2015) - A child's grief may seem to come and go. And, a child may rarely verbally express his or her grief. This is normal. A child may also re-experience the intensity of the loss as he or she grows up. This may occur more often during certain milestones in life, such as starting school or going on a first date. Even into adulthood, important events such as graduating from college or getting married may trigger renewed grief.
3. Resilience to Heal (New York Life Foundation, n.d.) - Resilience is what's needed after a crisis, to help a child feel better over time. While we can't change what happened, we can help children to learn smart and strong ways to deal with grief and loss. Resilience through disclosure, support, and validation provides

an important model of how to heal after a tragedy.
4. Resilience and Growth (Bartel, 2013) - The normal human reaction to extreme adversity is crying, mourning, feeling down, etc., however, more commonly than not, the long-term outcome of people is resilience and growth. Growth after trauma is common, but it does not mean that the healing process is any easier. It is still grief, and it still requires an immense amount of suffering and strength to get through it, but it does present hope that there are positive outcomes to the most awful situations.

COMMON STAGES OF GRIEF IN CHILDREN
(Common for Adults, too)

Denial and Shock

In this stage the child or adolescent appears to have no or very little reaction to the death and continues life as if nothing has happened. Sometimes this is a necessary and appropriate defense mechanism for the child or adolescent to cope initially with the loss, particularly if it has been extremely tragic. But this phase should not last more than a few days to a week. The more protracted this stage is, the more diffi- cult it becomes to grieve later on. Parents should encourage children to express their feelings about the death and not assume this apparent lack of emotion to be an indicator of "strength".

Fear

After the death of a loved one, it is not uncommon for children to become fearful of many things — from simple fears such as not being able to do the things they used to be able to do, to more complex fears of abandonment, or fear of others persons close to them becoming ill or dying. Parents should recognize that this is just a phase but that much reassurance is necessary to allay the child's fears and anxiety. Ignoring these fears or dismissing them as unfounded or unimportant will not help the child eventually move past the fears.

Anger

Anger is a natural and normal stage of grieving. Often children act out and become very angry, slamming doors, throwing objects, swearing, or the anger may make them withdrawn and non-communicative. They may be angry with the person who has died or with the remaining parent or with God or generally just at everyone and everything. It is important for a parent to recognize that this is also just a phase and to help the child express his/her anger in appropriate ways that are not harmful.

Guilt

Often the child or adolescent ascribes some form of blame to him/herself for the death and feels some- how responsible. Perhaps the child even said or thought "I wish you were dead" in a moment of anger and now has to deal with his/her guilt. It is important that the remaining parent or caregiver gives am- ple reassurance that it is NOT the child's fault EVEN when it may seem obvious that it is not the child's fault.

Sadness

This is often the final stage of grieving when the child begins to integrate and accept the loss into his/ her life but becomes sad and finds him/herself missing the person. She may cry a lot and lose interest in the activities she once enjoyed. She may sleep more or less than usual or eat more or less than usual. It is important for a parent to recognize and allow the child to be sad and encourage him to ex- press his feelings about the deceased. It is also important not to confuse this phase of grieving with depression. Medication is not usually necessary during this period.

NOTE: Even years after a parent or close relative has died, a child may experience feelings of grief. This may be triggered by birthdays, anniversaries of the death or by separation of other close persons. Over time, however, the frequency and intensity of the feelings diminish. It is very important to reassure the child that the "pain won't last forever".

Helping your child cope with death

Here are some tips to help explain death to your child:

Use words such as "died" rather than confusing phrases such as "gone to sleep." You can say that death means the person's body has stopped working or that the person can no longer breathe, talk, move, eat, or any of the things he or she could do when alive.

Share your family's religious or spiritual beliefs about death.

- Encourage your child to ask questions, and try to answer them honestly and directly. If you don't know the answer to a question, help find the answer.
- Use books, drawing, or role-play games to help a younger child understand death.
- Here are suggestions that may help your child cope with death:
- Make sure your child understands that he or she is not to blame for the death and that the person who died is not coming back.
- Provide lots of affection and reassure your child often that he or she will continue to be loved and cared for.
- Encourage your child to talk about his or her emotions. And suggest other ways to express feelings, such as writing in a journal or drawing a picture.
- Without overwhelming your child, share your grief with him or her. Expressing your emotions can encourage your son or daughter to share his or her own emotions.
- Help your child understand that normal grief involves a range of emotions, including anger, guilt, and frustration. Explain that his or her emotions and reactions may be very different from those of adults.
- Reassure your child that it is normal for the pain of grief to come and go over time. And explain that they can't always predict when they will feel sad.
- If your child is older, encourage him or her to talk with an adult outside the family, such as a teacher or a clergy member. You can also consider an age-specific support group.
- Keep routines and caregivers as consistent as possible, and continue setting limits on

behaviour. Care, consistency, and continuity help children feel safe.

- Encourage spending time with friends and engaging in other age-appropriate activities.
- Reassure your child that it is never disloyal to the person who died to feel happy and to have fun.
- Speak with a grief counsellor, child psychologist, or other mental health professional if you are concerned about your child's behaviour.

Death of Pets

Let children know that it is right to feel pain and grief if their pets die. Don't try to avoid grief by not thinking about the pet; instead, reminisce about the good times. This will help your child understand what his or her pet's loss actually means to them.

Some find it helpful to express their feelings and memories in poems, stories, or letters. Other strategies include rearranging your child's schedule to fill in the times they would have spent with their pet.

Resilience and Grief

Resilience is the capacity of humans to withstand traumatic and stressful experiences. It provides us the ability to draw strength from ourselves and others to overcome adversity. Contrary to popular belief, resilience is a common trait amongst individuals and most people not only stabilize after trauma, but experience growth.

Building resilience can help our children manage stress and feelings of anxiety and uncertainty. However, being resilient does not mean that children won't experience difficulty or distress. Emotional pain and sadness are common when we have suffered major trauma or personal loss, or even when we hear of someone else's loss or trauma.

We all can develop resilience, and we can help our children develop it as well. It involves behaviours, thoughts and actions that can be learned over time. Following are tips to building resilience.

Make connections

1. Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or feeling another's pain. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends. Build a strong family network to support your child through his or her inevitable disappointments and hurts. At school, watch to make sure that one child is not being isolated. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience. Some find comfort in connecting with a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately and you may wish to introduce your child to your own traditions of worship.

2. Help your child by having him or her help others

3. Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child in age-appropriate volunteer work, or ask for assistance yourself with some task that he or she can master. At school, encourage children to help others.

4. Maintain a daily routine

5. Sticking to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child to develop his or her own routines.

6. Take a break

7. Teach your child how to focus on something besides what's worrying him and make sure your child takes a break from those things if they trouble him.

8. Teach your child self-care

9. Make yourself a good example, and teach your child the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise, rest and have fun.

10. Move toward your goals

11. Teach your child to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus your child on what he or she has

accomplished rather than on what hasn't been accomplished, and can help build the resilience to move forward in the face of challenges. At school, break down large assignments into small, achievable goals for younger children, and for older children, acknowledge accomplishments on the way to larger goals.

12. Nurture a positive self-view. Help your child learn to trust himself to solve problems and make appropriate decisions. Teach your child to see the humour in life, and the ability to laugh at one's self.

13. Keep things in perspective and maintain a hopeful outlook

14. Even when your child is facing very painful events, help him look at the situation in a broader context and keep a long-term perspective. Although your child may be too young to consider a long-term look on his own, help him or her see that there is a future beyond the current situation and that the future can be good. An optimistic and positive outlook enables your child to see the good things in life and keep going even in the hardest times.

15. Accept that change is part of living

Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help your child see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable.

Children want to feel:
• Safe and secure. Children want to be able to count on parents and step-parents. Children of divorce have already felt the upset of having people they trust let them down, and may not be eager to give second chances to a new parent.
• Loved. All children like to see and feel your affection although it should be a gradual process in the case of step parents.
• Seen and valued. Children often feel unimportant or invisible when it comes to decision making.

Recognize their role in the family when you make decisions.
• Heard and emotionally connected. Creating an honest and open environment free of judgment will help children feel heard and emotionally connected to parents. Show them that you can view the situation from their perspective.
• Appreciated and encouraged. Children of all ages respond to praise and encouragement and like to feel appreciated for their contributions.
• It is important to remember that no one strategy will be effective in every situation, or with every child. At different levels of development, strategies must vary. However, the more options for guidance and discipline that parents have to choose from, the more successful they will be in meeting the challenge of living and working with children. (Nelson, J., Erwin, C. & Duffy, R. 2007).

4.3.2.2 Separation or Divorce

Separation of children from parents may be as a result of divorce, migration or simply two parents not living together any more. When this happens children may feel as if their world is turned upside down. The level of emotions experienced by the child may be influences by the way the parents separate, their age, how much they understand and the support they get from the adults around them.

Parental separation is associated with increased risk for numerous psychological, academic and social problems throughout the life-course. It is only within the context of the adult-child relationship that children accomplish the various developmental tasks related to psychological maturation. Separation from a parent will have a major impact on the child's psychological development and possibly on his/her cognitive and physical development as well.

Babies and toddlers are totally dependent on their caregivers and these are the people who form the sense of security and containment for them. They feel loved and cared for through the stability of a routine that involves sleeping, feeding, bathing, playing, resting and when this is disrupted they can

feel confused and scared. Children of this young age are highly attuned to their parents' reactions and feelings and so it is important to be calm and clear about the arrangements you make for them. Babies and toddlers in particular need one stable base with their own bed as they easily become unsettled when there is change. They need lots of regular time with both parents in order to continue to develop their attachment to each, as long as this is conflict free. Some pre-schoolers can manage overnights at the other parent's house, but some find it too distressing and become anxious.

Young children are learning about the world all the time, and can be quite shaken by the impact of separation on their family. They don't fully understand what separation means and can become quite distressed when they have to leave a parent, as they aren't sure what is happening and can feel unsafe and confused. They don't understand time as adults do, and can be unsure how long a separation from a parent is for. They need a lot of reassurance and patience when they become upset. It is helpful for both parents to remember not to take a child's sadness at missing the other parent personally. Children need to be supported wherever possible to continue to have stable relationships with both parents and close connections with all the family members they had before the separation. Sadness is an understandable reaction to all the losses they experience. They will have questions such as: Will my family ever be the same again? Why did my family break up? How come I don't have a family anymore?

In addition to the increased emotional turmoil, sensitivity and confusion that young children have, children of primary age will understand more of the reasons for their parents' separation and they can do a lot of thinking about why the separation occurred. When they see their parents upset, they try to work out whose fault it was. They are more likely to get involved in their parents fighting and need to be protected from this. They also may start to choose sides and favour one parent over another, especially if they think a parent needs support or needs their loyalty. They sometimes try to solve their parent's disputes for them, offering to not see a parent, or saying they are happy with an arrangement, when they really are not. Children

need permission to have a relationship with both parents, even if their parents are fighting.

Adolescents are the most likely to align with a parent and can become a main support for a parent. They worry about their younger brothers and sisters and can get very involved in parenting them in order to assist their parents. Sometimes they can be too involved in adult issues, such as the property settlement, finances and the content of their parent's disputes, especially when it comes to new partners. Adolescents are just learning about relationships and so the separation of their parent's couple relationship has quite an impact on how they understand intimacy, conflict, fairness, managing difficulties and permanency in relationships. They need to hold onto some hope for their own future relationships and know that relationships take effort. Even though their parents' relationship didn't last, other relationships can.

Anger: Usually towards one parent, often the parent who left: They can be wondering. Why can't they work it out? Why did Mum get a new boyfriend? Why can't my Dad leave us alone? Why don't they just stop fighting and grow up?

Shame and Guilt: Guilt about feeling upset at a parent, or blaming themselves: Was it my fault they broke up? Should I hate my Mum for making my Dad leave? Is it bad to feel good that they separated, just because the fights have stopped now?

What happens to children at different ages when parents separate?

Birth – 2 years
Children in this age group are highly dependent on their parents. If one parent has taken on primary responsibility for care of a child it is almost certain that a strong physical and emotional dependence will develop between them. Lengthy separation from this parent can be a source of intense emotional distress. A child at this age has a very different concept of time than does an adult. For very young children a few hours will often seem to be a very long time and this needs to be considered when making parenting arrangements.
In this age group, children are likely to be uneasy

in the absence of the parent, with whom they need frequent, short periods of contact to continue their relationship.

A high level of conflict between the parents can make visits extremely stressful for a child of this age. For this very young group, it can be helpful if parents stick to a routine and, where possible, provide reminders of the other parent such as photos. It may also be useful if some special toy or blanket travels with them between households.

2.5 – 5 years

Children in this age group begin to be a little more independent of their parents. Separation can be a major crisis for these children and they can react with shock or depression. For instance, children in this group may show their distress by a change in sleeping habits, toilet habits or a deterioration in language skills.

In this age group also, children differ from adults in how they perceive time. They have less time distortion than do infants, but still experience a short period as being a much longer time than it is for an adult.

Pre-school children understand the world through very different thought processes than older children. They often fantasize about what they don't understand and are likely to make up things from bits of their own experiences. They are also often confused by the concept of time and days. A calendar showing when they will be with either parent may be helpful. They are sensitive to criticism about either parent and may perceive this as criticism of themselves.

5 – 8 years

Children in this age group are beginning to be able to talk about their feelings. They often have an intense wish to restore their parents' relationship and say and do things they hope will bring this about. They often want to stay at home to be near the parent with whom they spend most of their time.

Similarly, they may feel reluctant to leave the other parent at the end of a visit and may exhibit behavioural problems which are noticed by friends, teachers and parents. Children in this age group can have difficulty expressing their worries and tend to demonstrate them through their

behaviour which can be difficult to understand.

It may be helpful if both of you, or adult friends or relations, invite children of this age to express their emotions about the separation, particularly of their desire to get their parents back together. You should discourage children from taking responsibility for making arrangements about contact.

8 – 12 years

Children in this age group are able to speak about their feelings. They experience a conflict of loyalty between each parent and, if the conflict between parents is high, they may try to cope by rejecting one parent or trying to keep both happy by saying negative things about one to the other. They are also beginning to experience the world outside their family. They have sporting and other interests and social commitments. When you make parenting arrangements you should take account of your children's interests and activities. This allows them the opportunity to join in the social and sporting activities which are an important part of their development. Where possible, it would be beneficial for children to continue their activities regardless of who is caring for them.

12 – 16 years

In some respects adolescents are increasingly independent of their parents, even when parents are not separated. They need to be given time and space to work out their own reactions to their parents' separation. If pressured by either parent, adolescents are likely to react with anger and rejection.

They particularly need flexibility in arrangements to allow them to participate in normal adolescent social activities and school events.

Key Messages

1. Resilience is the capacity of humans to withstand traumatic and stressful experiences. It provides us the ability to draw strength from ourselves and others to overcome adversity. Contrary to popular belief, resilience is a common trait amongst individuals and most people not only stabilize after trauma, but experience growth.

2. We all can develop resilience, and we can help our children develop it as well. It involves behaviours, thoughts and actions that can be learned over time. Following are tips to building resilience.
3. Emotional pain and sadness are common when we have suffered major trauma or personal loss, or even when we hear of someone else's loss or trauma.
4. Even years after a parent or close relative has died, a child may experience feelings of grief. This may be triggered by birthdays, anniversaries of the death or by separation of other close persons. Over time, however, the frequency and intensity of the feelings diminish. It is very important to reassure the child that the "pain won't last forever".
5. Stages of grief include denial and shock, fear, anger, guilt and sadness.
6. Let children know that it is right to feel pain and grief if their pets die.
7. Separation of children from parents may be as a result of divorce, migration or simply two parents not living together any more.
8. The level of emotions experienced by the child may be influences by the way the parents separate, their age, how much they understand and the support they get from the adults around them.
9. Children react differently to the separation of parents depending on their age.

Standards

1. Examine experiences and feelings about separation of parents and death and the process of grieving.

Performance Indicators

1. Share experiences and examine own feeling about separation and death
2. Discuss children's feeling and reaction to separation or divorce of parents and loss of pets.
3. Explore ways in which adults can help children deal with grieving
4. Discuss the concept of resilience vs. grieving

Skills to be acquired by parents

1. Identify the benefits of understanding grief.
2. Recognize the importance of resilience and grief.
3. Develop new skills for resilience.

Value to be acquired by parents

Appreciation for family and support during difficult times.

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Talking About Emotions

1. Have parents form a circle and give one of them a ball of yarn. Ask parent what is one thing that makes them happy. After they answer, they hold on to the loose strand of the yarn and then throw the ball of yarn to someone else. They can ask that person, "What makes you happy, sad, angry, jealous, scared….?" Or any other emotion they can think of. Parents continue passing the ball of yarn and holding the loose strand forming a web.
2. After everyone has had a turn, trainer explains that a web has been formed and it can represent a connection or closeness that was formed. This web gives us support as we talk about our feelings.
3. Presenter explains that having good support groups and talking about our feelings are important tools for dealing with death and grief. It is especially important for children who are dealing with grief.
4. Trainer presents on how to talk about death to children and tips for helping them cope.
5. Trainer presents on death of pets.

ACTIVITY 2

Evaluating Resiliency

Exercise (this is the activity from https://positivepsychologyprogram.com/resilience-activities-worksheets/)

This is an exercise for rating you. While this may not build your resilience directly, it can help you to learn about your current resiliency skills and abilities. In order to increase your resilience, it's important to know what aspects of resilience you most need to work on.

In the first part of this exercise, you will rate yourself on a scale from 1 to 10 in terms of several elements of resiliency, including:

___ Support from other people in your life.

___ Ability to accept yourself for who you really are.

___ Your confidence in your ability to cope with adversity.

___ How good you are at communicating and interacting with others in times of stress.

___ How good you are at facing challenging problems in life and solving them systematically.

___ Ability to cope with your emotions in the face of adversity.

Once you completed the exercise, add up your total score and review your ratings on each element.

If you rated any elements above zero, think about what made you give it a rating above zero and what you could do to get the score closer to 10.

Doing this exercise will help you to recognize where you are in terms of resilience and identify where you can improve from your current state of resilience.

ACTIVITY 3

Coping with separation or divorce

The overall aim is to explain how separation or divorce affects a child's emotional, social and cognitive development. The changes and feelings that come with separation or divorce can complicate normal child ups and downs. If you and your partner are separating, you can help your child by being open about what's happening and letting your child know that you both love him/her, no matter what. The most important issue to deal with when separating or divorcing is your relationship with your child/children. Although your relationship with your partner is changing, your role as a parent is for life.

Your child/children, whatever their age, need you both to put them first.

1. The facilitator will distribute two pieces of the same coloured paper to each participant. (The colours are: red, blue, yellow, and green and a sample of each color is placed at the corners of the room.) The facilitator will project an image on the whiteboard and inform the participants that they have two minutes to write the first two words that come to mind when they see the image.

2. The facilitator will get responses from volunteers and provide positive feedback to them. The presenter will then ask the participants to find other participants that have the same colour paper as theirs and move quickly and quietly to their groups.

3. The facilitator will then elaborate on the image and explain to the participants that separation or divorce affects a child drastically. Separation or divorce affects how you relate to your children and your child's development.
   • Psychologically- withdrawal from peers, depression etc.
   • Academically – lower grades, drop of school etc.
   • Socially – antisocial, fight etc.

4. The facilitator poses this question:
   What are some problems/challenges that both parents and children face when separation or divorce occurs?
5. Within groups, participants will draw a picture depicting a challenge that parent or child faces during a divorce or separation. The facilitator will provide markers and newsprints. Participants have 15 minutes to complete the task.
6. The facilitator will ask a representative from each group to share and the facilitator will provide positive feedback.
7. The facilitator will distribute the following scenario and a discussion will ensue.

Time to move on

Rhonda and Mark had been married for 12 years. Luke, their first born was now 10 and their daughter, Abigail was 7. Married life had not been easy. Mark had a drinking problem and often became abusive even in front of the children. Rhonda realized that the children themselves were becoming abusive to each other and even to the pets.
One evening as they were having supper, Mark came home and instead of sitting at table with them, he began verbally abusing Rhonda, accusing her of being a neglectful wife and mother among many other hurtful things. Rhonda saw the fear and anxiety in the children. It then it dawned on her that her children were being impacted by Mark's abusive behavior in a negative way. She remembered being at a session once where someone shared that when children live in abusive homes the effects on them are long lasting and even if they are not directly abused, witnessing violence can be emotionally damaging. They may learn to be abusive or tolerate abuse as adults.
Rhonda decided that it was time to leave! But how would the children react? They loved their dad as much as they loved her.

Discussion Questions

1. What is taking place in this scenario?
2. How is it affecting the children?
3. Should the mother inform the children about her decision? Why or why not?

The facilitator will then provide each group with a scenario and they will role play and summarize what is taking place and what kind effect it has on the child/children. The groups will have 20 minutes to complete the task. After each role play general discussion will ensue.

1. Mom has to go for a year to study abroad. Children will stay with grandparents.
2. Dad is a Customs Officer and he has been transferred to Punta Gorda but the family cannot join him because Mom's job is in Corozal and there is no available space for her at the Bank she works with in PG at this time.
3. Mom and Dad's relationship has not been going well. Both are unhappy and the children can feel the strain on the relationship. Mom decides it is time to end this as it is not getting any better.

Note to facilitator: Don't show agreement or disagreement with participants' opinions.

After role plays, thank the groups for their work. Then ask the group to identify the best way to approach dealing with separation or divorce, based on what they have learned.

Children with anxious or stressed parents may be more prone to separation anxiety. In order to help your children, overcome separation anxiety disorder, you may need to take measures to become calmer and more centred yourself.

The following strategies can help to keep your stress and anxiety levels in check:

• Talk about your feelings
• Exercise regularly
• Eat right
• Practice relaxation
• Get enough sleep
• Keep your sense of humour

Expressing what you're going through can be very cathartic, even if there's nothing you can do to

alter the stressful situation.

Physical activity plays a key role in reducing and preventing the effects of stress.

A well-nourished body is better prepared to cope with stress; so be mindful of what you eat.

You can control your stress levels with relaxation techniques like yoga, deep breathing, or meditation. Feeling tired will only increase your stress, causing you to think irrationally or foggily.

The act of laughing helps your body fight stress in a number of ways.

End this activity by sharing the following important messages:

Help Children express feelings - For children, divorce or separation can feel like loss: the loss of a parent, the loss of the life they know. You can help your children grieve and adjust to new circumstances by supporting their feelings.

- Listen- Encourage your child to share their feelings and really listen to them. They may be feeling sadness, loss or frustration about things you may not have expected.
- Help them find words for their feelings- its normal for children to have difficulty expressing their feelings. You can help them by noticing their moods and encouraging them to talk.
- Let them be honest- Children might be reluctant to share their true feelings for fear of hurting you. Let them know that whatever they say is okay. If they aren't able to share their honest feelings, they will have a harder time working through them.
- Acknowledge their feelings- You may not be able to fix their problems or change their sadness to happiness, but it is important for you to acknowledge their feelings rather than dismissing them. You can also inspire trust by showing that you understand.

ACTIVITY 4

Daddy's job calls

The overall aim is to show parents the effects of separation on both parents and children. Also finding ways to accept and cope with separation. It's natural for your children to feel anxious when you say goodbye. Although it can be difficult, separation anxiety is a normal stage of development. With understanding and these coping strategies, separation anxiety can be relieved—and should fade as your child gets older. For children, separation can be stressful, sad, and confusing. Helping your children cope with separation means providing stability in your home and attending to your children's needs with a reassuring, positive attitude.

Provide participants with the following scenario:

Daddy's job calls

Lissie and Pearl live with their mom and dad in Dangriga. Their mom works as a receptionist at the Belize Cancer Center and their dad is a police officer who has been stationed in Dangriga since both girls can recall. However, their dad has been promoted to Inspector of Police and he is being transferred to the Orange Walk district. Mom and the girls cannot join him in the immediate future since it would mean a bit more expenses due to other financial commitments they have at this time.

Mom and Dad sit with the girls to explain but they don't see why this has to happen. Finally the day comes when Dad has to say goodbye. Dad tells the girls he will visit as often as possible but that he will be in touch with them regularly. The girls understand but their sadness is obvious. Mom does her utmost best to keep them busy but the girls talk about their dad any chance they have and often end up crying because they miss him. The teacher at school tells mom that Lissie is not playing with her friends as before, and she often day dreams in class. Pearl on the other hand has been back chatting the teacher and sometimes bullies the smaller children in the class.

In groups participants will:
- Discuss the scenario
- Identify the effects of this type of separation on the girls
- Identify ways in which Mom and Dad can help the girls to cope with the separation.

Groups will present their main points and facilitator will add any relevant information.

Notes

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4.3.3 Parenting Chronically Ill Children

Background

Non communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are not passed from person to person. They are of long duration and generally slow progression. The four main types of non-communicable diseases are cardiovascular diseases (like heart attacks and stroke), cancers, chronic respiratory diseases (such as chronic obstructed pulmonary disease and asthma) and diabetes. (WHO).

Some examples are:
• Asthma
• Diabetes
• Sickle cell anaemia
• Cystic fibrosis
• Cancer
• Epilepsy

A number of research studies indicate practices that must be undertaken when coping with chronically ill children:

1. Take Comfort in Treatment. (Office on Women's Health, 2011) - If your child has HIV/AIDS, you can take comfort in knowing that there is hope for your child's future. Eighty percent of infected children have a slow rate of disease progression (that means it takes a long time before the disease gets worse). With treatment, children with HIV survive for longer now. There are many adults alive today who were infected with HIV from their mothers at birth and have grown into adulthood. They have a good quality of life because of new HIV drugs, better care, and fewer opportunistic infections.

2. Maintain Structure. (Bourdeau, 2013) - When a child is sick, parents often have a tendency to become overprotective. Try not to shelter your child or limit his activities unnecessarily. On the other hand, some parents of sick children become overly permissive — allowing the child to stay up late, for example, or to have extra snacks. But children crave structure, and may become scared or confused if you start breaking your own rules. As much as possible, try to maintain the same family routine you had before your child became ill.

3. Help Your Child Cope. (Hirsch, 2015) - Your child will have many feelings about the changes affecting his or her body, and should be encouraged and given opportunities to express those feelings and any concerns and fears. Ask what your child is experiencing and listen to the answers before bringing up your own feelings or explanations. This kind of communication doesn't always have to be verbal. Music, drawing, or writing can often help children express their emotions and escape through a fantasy world of their own design.

4. Care and Support. (Belize Policy on HIV/AIDS in the World of Work, n.d.)-Belize endorses a responsibility for including adequate measures for the care and support of individuals who are HIV+ or affected by full-blown AIDS. The responsibility should be shared by the tripartite partners and other key stakeholders including family members of those infected or affected.

The diagnosis of chronic disease in childhood can cause mental illness, stress, sentiments of anger, sorrow, and possible difficulties in their interpersonal relationships. Particularly distressing, however, is the diagnosis of disease for a child who was previously healthy. Chronic illness is a very difficult challenge for a child, who may often be afraid of both the illness and the laborious processes of treatment.

Basic Needs of a Chronically Ill Child

1. Keep up to date with your child's medicine – teach them about their medicines and create a schedule that helps you and them remember when to take it.

2. Stay involved and give information - discuss with your child (at their age level) what their

illness is all about, and what will happen to them in the hospital if they would ever need to be admitted. When you don't do this, children may imagine the worst.

3. Give them choices - some tasks for children with chronic illness must be done no matter what. Others are more flexible. Children with chronic illness, more than other children, need chances to make choices or to have control over any part of their lives they can control.

4. Support friendships and activities with peers - keeping children involved with their peers and making extra efforts to maintain those connections can go a long way in helping a child cope with an illness. Helping your child to find new ways to make and maintain new relationships is critical during this time.

5. Listen - Be available so your child can talk about the problems they are facing. Ask them how it's going, and listen to the answer. Listen to their troubles and help them find solutions to their problems. Pay attention to body language as well.

6. Have fun together as a family - You can expect the whole family to be under increased stress. Maintaining your commitment to your family and getting support from each other may be harder during times of stress, but it is also very important. Spend time together that is not focused on the illness.

7. Teach coping skills - Parents need to help children learn new ways to cope with the special challenges of an illness. Discussing with a child how their illness is affecting him or her and finding ways to help solve problems or cope with the feelings is very helpful.

8. Coordinate with their school - When your chronically ill child goes to school, good communication between your family and school is very important. Find out what you need to do to prepare and talk to the teacher about the child's needs such as medication, bathroom breaks and practicing good personal hygiene

9. Be aware of the risks of your child's illness - It's important to be very familiar with your child's illness. The more knowledge you have, the more likely you will be able to obtain the best care for your child. Don't be afraid to ask your public health nurses or the child's health care provider for information as well. Keep a written list of questions that come up, so you can ask at each medical visit.

10. Educate classmates, peers, and give them age appropriate information.

Relating to a Chronically Ill Child

When a child is sick, parents often have a tendency to become overprotective. Try not to shelter your child or limit his activities unnecessarily. On the other hand, some parents of sick children become overly permissive — allowing the child to stay up late, for example, or to have extra snacks. But children crave structure, and may become scared or confused if you start breaking your own rules. As much as possible, try to maintain the same family routine you had before your child became ill.

Many parents struggle with how to speak to a child about his or her illness. Be sure you're sharing age-appropriate information. Don't give too much information, but also don't try to hide the facts. If a child overhears a doctor or doesn't understand what's happening, he or she may begin to imagine the worst.

Talk to your child about what he or she is feeling. Parents may be surprised by which aspects of an illness are most difficult for a child. For instance, children with cancer may find not being able to do things they used to do more stressful than uncertainty about their survival.

Sick children can also feel isolated at school. Help them practice a short script so they can explain their condition to friends or classmates who ask questions or stare.

If you have other children, it's important to make some one-on-one time with them, too, so they know they're still important. Make them part of the team; help them figure out how they can be

involved in caring for their brother or sister.

Taking Care of Yourself and Your Relationships

Caregivers/parents need to take good care of themselves too—otherwise, they won't be able to give good care. Talk with other parents who have children with special health care needs, carve out time to do something you enjoy, get support, find someone to listen to you vent, take breaks, spend time with your partner, and learn to deal positively with your stress.

Also keep your family routine as normal as possible. Your relationship with your partner will be stressed and undergo changes, but it can emerge stronger than before you faced the challenges of your child's illness together. Seek help if you need it. Creating support groups and being an active member in this group is also very helpful.

KEY MESSAGES

- Non communicable diseases (NCDs), also known as chronic diseases, are not passed from person to person.
- The diagnosis of chronic disease in childhood can cause mental illness, stress, sentiments of anger, sorrow, and possible difficulties in their interpersonal relationships.
- Chronic illness is a very difficult challenge for a child, who may often be afraid of both the illness and the laborious processes of treatment.
- When a child is sick, parents often have a tendency to become overprotective. Try not to shelter your child or limit his activities unnecessarily.
- Other parents of sick children become overly permissive — allowing the child to stay up late, for example, or to have extra snacks.
- As much as possible, try to maintain the same family routine you had before your child became ill.
- Caregivers/parents need to take good care of themselves too—otherwise, they won't be able to give good care.

Articles 2, 3, 6, 24 of the CRC relate to this section of the guide.

STANDARDS

Knowledge of guidelines on how to support chronically ill children.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Discuss how to cope with seriously ill children.
2. Share basic information and common myths related to chronic illness.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Identify the importance of supporting chronically ill children
2. Recognize their basic psychological needs
3. Develop new care giving skills for your child and for yourself.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Participation in your child's life changes and struggles due to illness

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

Chronic Illness and your child

1. Begin by playing "Belly Balloon Break (Burst)"
2. Parents try to burst a blown up balloon between their bellies. Have at least three blown up balloons per each pair. Have everyone stand or sit in a circle, with all of the blown up balloons in the middle. They are to begin when you say, "Go!" then run to the middle for a balloon. They can only grab one balloon at a time. The pair who burst the most balloons wins. You can set a timer for a specific amount of time – such as 5 minutes.
3. Explain to parents that the activity called for team effort. Team effort is important in families, and parents must work together with their children as much as possible, especially if the child has a chronic illness.
4. Pair all participants, and ask each pair to share one or two things they have learned from any personal experiences as children themselves or now as adults, with being seriously ill, or caring for a child who is seriously ill. After just five minutes, ask participants to give one word — that can be a feeling, a task, anything —

that they associate with this memory exercise. Note that this exercise is simply to get persons thinking about the topic, not to engage in any lengthy stories at this point.

5. Trainer presents on the definition of chronic illness and the basic needs of a chronically ill child.
6. Trainer then leads a discussion by asking parents about other needs that these children might have.

ACTIVITY 2

Preparing Children for Hospitalization

The Facilitator can ask if anyone has had the experience of having to hospitalize a child, or to be hospitalized as a child. If any answer yes, they can be designated good resource persons for their groups.

Divide participants into 3 groups. Assign each group one of the following topics to brainstorm their ideas for 10 – 15 minutes.

Group 1:
What questions should parents ask? What information should they seek before hospitalization of a child?
Group 2:
What reactions can children have to hospitalization, and why?
Group 3:
What are some of the things parents can do to make the hospitalization experience better for the child?

Have groups share their findings and list the key responses. The Facilitator can add to the lists if necessary to ensure that the following points are noted:

Group 1:
What are the rules for visiting?
Why does the child need to be hospitalized?
What procedures might be done?
Can they stay overnight with their child?
What services are available e.g. counseling,

chaplaincy, social worker, classroom activities? What does the hospital require you to take? What items can the child take for comfort, activity, etc.?

Group 2:

Children should be told why they are going to the hospital and what to expect. The discussions should be honest and direct.

Children should be allowed to pack a few special clothes or toys to take with them.

Stay with the child as much as possible or rotate visits with other family members. Tell the child in advance when you have to leave and when you are coming back.

Listen to the child's fears, anger or frustration.

Give hugs and encouragement frequently.

Encourage the child to relate to other patients and staff and participate in activities on the ward.

Group 3:

Reactions may include crying, screaming, fighting, clinging to parent, refusing to take medication or excessive sleeping, reduced activity, diminished appetite and decreased communication. These reactions are not only responses to painful procedures but also to the stress of being in an unfamiliar environment, fear of the unknown, or of being alone, etc.

Note in summary: When children are ill the whole family is affected, including siblings. Siblings should be involved and kept informed about the treatment plan for the patient, and parents should set aside time to interact and do regular activities with the well sibling.

ACTIVITY 3

Basic Psychological Needs of the Sick Child

The sick child like any other child has emotional and psychological needs that must be nurtured. But the sick child may also be over-pampered and over-protected and this may result in immature behaviour.

Use a flip chart to list responses, brainstorm with

participants the ways parents can help their sick child, in hospital or at home, to continue living his or her life as normally as possible, eg.

• Parents should encourage children who are sick to engage in intellectual and physical exercises as much as possible.
• Children should be allowed to move about, play games and do "class work".
• Parents should liaise with the child's school and obtain assignments if age appropriate.

Participants can list the different ways in which play is children's work. This exercise can under- score the importance of recognizing the psychological and social/emotional needs of the child as well as basic physical needs, whether ill or in good health. The Handout, "Pointers on Play" can be shared, or used by the Facilitator to assist in guiding/ summarizing the discussion.

What about discipline? Ask whether the sick child should be disciplined, and if this would differ from when the child is well? To conclude, share the following excerpt by Pauline Bain, Caribbean counselor and educator, and ask for responses to it:

Part of disciplining a child is teaching him or her self-control. As parents we need to model self-control in our lives. This includes demonstrating self-control when we are disciplining our children. When we are in charge of sick children we definitely need to control ourselves so that we do not upset them unnecessarily. Part of teaching self-control to a child is establishing clear boundaries or limits. Some children may be disruptive when they are feeling ill and need particularly to be disciplined in love. The sick child can induce sympathy and here we sometimes give in and allow the child to do what he/she wants. If the parent decides to give in on an issue, it needs to be made clear that what you are doing is an exception and not the norm.

POINTERS ON PLAY

• Soft music can have a calming effect. Sing along tapes are suitable for language development, enjoyment and participation. Listening to and

playing music has been found to be an effective antidepressant and is an excellent way to lessen anxiety, ease loneliness and soothe irritability.

- Dance and any form of movement is enjoyable and allows for the development of motor skills and can help children learn to concentrate better. Through play children's bodies get exercise which they need for normal physical development. These skills are developed through running, jumping, climbing, swinging, pushing, throwing and catching.
- Puzzles, toys, colouring, stringing beads all help children in developing fine motor skills as they use their hands and fingers during play. It also helps in eye-hand coordination.
- As children play they think, observe, experiment, explore and solve problems, thus improving their mental capacity. Children develop social skills through play. eg., they learn to wait their turn and cooperate. They can begin to develop empathy and communication.
- Play facilitates healing as children release tensions, pent-up emotions and frustrations and play expands children's creativity and imagination.
- Play also helps to develop children's self-esteem because they can focus on the things that they do well and enjoy success through repetition.
- For children, play is a natural mode of self-expression, just as talk is the natural form of communication for adults.

Notes

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4.3.4   Stress Management

Background

Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Stresses can be external (from the environment, psychological, or social situations) or internal (illness, or from a medical procedure). (Medicine Net, Inc.1996-2017)

Positive stress is known as EUSTRESS, a word coined to reflect the combination of euphoria and stress. It is the type of stress that you are likely to experience when there is a desire to do a task accompanied by a feeling of confidence. It is the stress of winning, of success and achieving.

Symptoms accompanying Eustress are:
* A wellspring of energy
* A sense of wellbeing and confidence (which improves the probability of success)

An intense desire to succeed

Negative stress is DISTRESS. It is the perception of impending failure. The stress of losing, failing, over- working and not coping. Distress affects people in a negative often harmful manner. We all experience distress from time to time. It is a normal, unavoidable part of living. However, long-term chronic stress is positively dangerous and can lead to heart disease, stroke or cancer.

Distress brings the accompanying symptoms:
* Depletion of energy
* Compulsive behaviour (which actually increases the probability of failure)
* A general sense of discouragement and eventually depression.

Signs That You May Be Experiencing Too Much Stress
There are many clues that your body gives that indicate you are under too much stress. Such clues may include:
* tight throat
* sweaty palms
* headache, fatigue

* nausea, diarrhea, indigestion
* uneasiness, frustrations
* depression, restlessness
* changes in sleeping or eating patterns

Some signs of stress in children:
* Biting fingernails/grinding teeth/staring
* Hyperactivity
* Clinging to parent/Withdrawal
* Tantrums, aggression, holding of breath
* Sleep disturbances or bed-wetting
* Changed appetite/eating problems

What are the sources of stress?

Stress is experienced from three general sources: the environment, your body and your thoughts. Although you have some control over your environment and your body, you have much more control over your thoughts or the way you appraise/think about a "stressor".

The environment constantly requires us to meet demands and challenges and can therefore be a potential source of stress. For example, we experience natural disasters, traffic, time pressures, work and interpersonal demands. In addition, we may have to adjust to changes in financial status, job changes and the loss of a loved one.

Your body is another potential source of stress since it requires you to adapt to the physiological changes it makes. Some examples include: changes that occur in adolescence, phase of life changes brought on by hormonal fluctuations and the aging process. In addition, the onset of illness, improper nutrition and lack of sleep and exercise can contribute to the stress response.

Our thoughts, is the one over which we have the most control. Your brain interprets messages from the environment all the time. Your interpretations of these events determine whether or not you will feel stressed.

Stressors that could be present in a child's life that might trigger these symptoms of stress include (but are not limited to):

- Parental expectations
- Family arguments
- Taking a test
- Death of a pet/family member/friend
- Bullying
- Separation/Divorce/Remarriage
- Violence at home or in the community
- Punishment, especially if physical, harsh
- Demanding schedule of activities
- Starting a new school

What are the effects of unmanaged stress?

Indeed, stress symptoms can affect the body, thoughts, feelings, and behaviour. If you are able to recognize common stress symptoms it will aid you on managing stress. Unmanaged stress can contribute to many health problems, such as high blood pressure, heart disease, obesity and diabetes.

Common effects of stress on your body

- Headache
- Muscle tension or pain
- Chest pain
- Fatigue
- Change in sex drive
- Stomach upset
- Sleep problems

Common effects of stress on your mood

- Anxiety
- Restlessness

Lack of motivation or focus

- Feeling overwhelmed
- Irritability or anger
- Sadness or depression

Common effects of stress on your behavior

- Overeating or under eating
- Angry outbursts
- Drug or alcohol abuse
- Tobacco use
- Social withdrawal
- Exercising less often

(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER, 1996-2017)

Techniques used to manage stress effectively

If you have stress symptoms, taking steps to manage your stress can have numerous health benefits.

Explore stress management strategies, such as:

- Regular physical activity
- Relaxation techniques, such as deep breathing, meditation, yoga, tai chi or getting a massage
- Keeping a sense of humor
- Socializing with family and friends
- Setting aside time for hobbies, such as reading a book or listening to music

(Mayo Foundation for Medical Education and Research (MFMER, 1996-2017)

Other examples of things you can do to manage stress:

- Eat a balanced diet daily. Eat more whole grains, nuts, fruits and vegetables. Substitute fruits for desserts. Choose foods that are low in fat, sugar, and salt. Avoid caffeine, nicotine, sugar, and cola
- Get sufficient sleep to wake up refreshed. Do not use medication or chemical substances (including alcohol) to help you sleep or to reduce your anxiety or to calm you down.
- Keep reinforcing positive self-statements in your mind. Focus on your good qualities and accomplishments. Recognize and accept your limits. Remember that everyone is unique and different.
- Plan ahead and avoid procrastination. Make a schedule and try to follow it. Set realistic goals. Set priorities.
- Take a warm bath or shower. Go for a walk. Relax and have fun.
- Hug someone, hold hands, or stroke a pet. Physical contact is a great way to relieve stress.

KEY MESSAGES

1. Stress is a physical, mental, or emotional factor that causes bodily or mental tension. Stresses can be external (from the environment, psychological, or social situations) or internal (illness, or from a medical procedure). (Medicine Net, Inc.1996-2017)
2. Stress can derive from both positive and negative situations in our lives.
3. Stress is experienced from three general sources: the environment, your body and your thoughts. Although you have some control over your environment and your body, you have much more control over your thoughts or the way you appraise/think about a "stressor".
4. There are many clues that your body gives that indicate you are under too much stress. Become familiar with the changes in your body and your mood.
5. Children can also experience stress. Be aware and look for the signs.

STANDARDS

1. Practice stress management techniques to minimize and help prevent the negative effects of stress in themselves and their children.

PERFORMANCE INDICATORS

1. Discuss what is meant by stress.
2. Identify the sources and signs of stress.

SKILLS TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Recognize that stress may be caused by internal or external factors.
2. Manage stressful situations to produce positive results.

VALUE TO BE ACQUIRED BY PARENTS

1. Being aware of stressors will help them manage better and minimize the negative effects it may have on relationships within the family

Suggested Activities

ACTIVITY 1

"I get stressed when. . . ."

Ask participants to sit or stand in a circle. Using a small soft object have the object thrown quickly from one participant to another until each participant has had at least one opportunity to complete the phrase "I get stressed when. . . .".
The participant who catches the object is required to quickly complete the phrase and quickly toss the object to someone else of their choice.

ACTIVITY 2

Thinking about Stress

Participants will be asked to think of and list on a flip chart/board all the words and images that come to mind when they think about STRESS. Participants will then be asked to list words and images they regard as opposite to stress. Discuss whether the stress and non-stress words are negative or positive.

Discussion
Guide the group in brainstorming a working definition for stress.
It isn't easy to find a generally acceptable definition of 'stress'. Doctors, engineers, psychologists, management consultants, linguists and lay persons all use the word in their own distinctive ways with their own definitions. A useful definition (for our purposes) is that stress is a demand made upon the adaptive capacities of the mind and body. If these capacities can handle the demand and enjoy the stimulation involved, then stress is welcome and helpful. If they can't and find the demand debilitating, then stress is unwelcome and unhelpful.

This definition is useful in two ways:
1. stress can be both good and bad;
2. it isn't so much events that determine whether we're stressed or not, it is our reactions to them.

Generate answers to the following questions through group discussion:
1. Are all stressful situations negative?
2. Do all people respond to stress in the same ways?
3. Can something be a positive stress for me and a negative one for you?

ACTIVITY 3

Identifying and understanding stress

Case Studies: Participants will be divided into four or five groups. Each group will be given a case study (see below). Two groups will be asked to 'role play' their case studies for the entire group; the other groups will be asked to discuss their case studies. Each group has fifteen minutes to discuss how they will convey their case: how do most people react in such circumstances? How would they react under the circumstances? What outcomes might they expect from these reactions?

Case Studies/Role Plays:

1. The children are screaming and laughing while running through the house, while Grandpa is trying to read, and Mom is watching her favorite soap opera on TV.
2. Your three children come to you for the third time saying they are hungry and want something to eat. There is very little food in the house, their father isn't home yet with his pay, and you are very worried that the pay already won't stretch over the needs and bills waiting.
3. You haven't been sleeping well; there are several family problems on your mind. At bedtime your partner is in a romantic mood.
4. Your children ask for your help with homework. You have dinner to prepare, clothes to iron, and you are not feeling well.
5. There has been an upsurge of crime in your neighbourhood. A friend down the road was shot and nearly killed in a shoot-out between police and gunmen. Your children are expressing fears and don't want to go to school.

In the plenary, the Facilitator should encourage participants to list the warnings signs of stress. Refer to readings if necessary to cover common warning signs in adults and children. What coping mechanisms do they use, or know of that others use? What lessons have they learned from the times when their stress was not handled well?

Take Home Activity: Identify 3-5 stressors and what can be done about it.

One of the first self-care habits you MUST do for dealing with stress is to get in the habit of identifying the stressors. When you are feeling "stressed", write it down using the following chart. Here are some questions that you can reflect on as you write:

Briefly describe the situation. How did it make you feel? Where is the tension felt in your body? How did you handle the event? Do you feel you handled the event well? Overall, do you feel that you dealt with the stressor effectively?

DEALING WITH WORRIES
I am worried about _____
_____
_____

What can I do about it _____
_____
_____

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Annex 1

Annex 1:
Overview of Instructional Approaches to deliver the Parenting Curriculum

Lecture Discussion Model

The Lecture Discussion Model is design to motivate learners to identify relationships or linkages with new and previously learnt information. Through discussion the trainers allow participants to explore content and share beliefs (Holzer, C. 2014). The implementing process is comprised of five phases. The first phase is for the trainer to prepare an advance organizer, to review and introduce the topic. This may include a short discussion about the importance of the topic to be discussed. Phase two involves the trainer presenting the core element of the parenting session. The trainer then moves into phase three which involves comprehension monitoring. It is in this phase that the trainer ask questions to assess when the parent/participant has understood the content or skill. The fourth phase is integration. In this phase the trainer presents additional information linked to real life experiences followed by open discussion. In the final phase or close, main points are summarized and additional examples are provided.

An active discussion is vital in Lecture Discussion Model it allows trainers to provide opportunity for parents to state their point of view. Additionally, motivation is a key process in this model as it encourages open communication in a caring and trusting environment. (Simonson & Schlosser C. 2002). Another strength of this model is that it provides communication and feedback between the trainer and participants. When there is open dialogue it increases communication, heightens interest, and increases understanding.

Worth noting is that discussions can be very time consuming and unfocused hence the need for clear discussion lines and questions to assess whether the parent or participant is actively engaged and interpreting the material or content of the parenting session.

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Inquiry Base Learning

The Inquiry Base Model is designed to develop problem-solving skills and self-directed learning. It is based on two conceptual and theoretical foundations. One is by John Dewey who believed that children are socially active learners who learn by exploring their environment (Dewy, 1902, 1919). Dewy believed that students should be involved in active inquiry, that knowledge acquired form books and lectures, becomes useful when it is applied to the solute of real-world problems. The second is sociocultural theory which is a cognitive view of learning that emphasizes student participation in communities of learning (Vygotsky, 1978, 1986). Vygotsky stressed the importance of social interaction in learning, we learn by exchanging and comparing our ideas with those of others and by that we become active participants in the learning process.

The Inquiry Approach is more focused on using and learning content as a means to develop information-processing and problem-solving skills. This model involves asking questions and making systematic attempts to answer them. Involving parents in this method allows them to think critically, have a clear understanding of the topic.

The process of the inquiry model involves asking questions and systematical answering them based on facts and observations.   Parents become engaged with a topic, and develop a question to explore, they then determine what information needs to be found, gather data, synthesize findings, communicate finding and then evaluate the success. Core to the process is an attitude of self-reflection and evaluation, which are seen as "both a product of the inquiry process and an enable for success at every stage" (Justice et al. 2002). This model is implemented in a number of steps or phases; at first phase a question is identified that promotes parents' interest and motivates curiosity and challenge. Once the question has been identifies a hypotheses is generated that attempt to answer the question, this activates background knowledge. In the third phase parents gather data or information that is related to the hypothesis. This develops in-depth thinking and promotes involvement.

The inquiry model is a very excellent model to be used to deliver the parenting curriculum. The greatest strength of this model is that it encourages parents to develop critical thinking skills. That is, parents are given a scenario and required to identify possible answers. Some trainers perceive that asking parents/participants in training to work through a scenario or develop personal scenarios for discussion may be time consuming (Luke, 2006). While this may be true, self-reflection and dialogue is critical if parents are to truly interpret factors affecting our society (Plowright and Watkins, 2004).

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Problem Solving Learning Model

The Problem Solving Approach is an instructional method of hands-on, active learning centred on the investigation and resolution of real-world problems. These problems can either be issue- based or technical. It requires the use of problems that have authentic   meaning to the parents, which then creates motivation to achieve a solution. This model aids in conveying various diverse approaches to identify feasible solutions. The responsibility of learning lies with the parents. This means that the trainers must move from the traditional instructional model to telling and giving information to one that promotes equal sharing of ideas. To note that in this model, the trainer may not be viewed as the "all knowing authority" but as a guide or facilitator.

The process of problem solving model can be placed in five simple steps:
1.   Defining the problem and its roots
2.   Identify various approaches for a solution
3.   Select and implement an approach
4.   Evaluate the result

In step one the parents identify the problem, this is done by interpreting the information provided in a scenario. To gather the information parents brainstorm in small groups or whole class settings. After the gathering of information parents analyze what was the cause of the problem. Next, parents are guided to select an acceptable solution.

There are many strengths to be derived from use of a Problem Solving Approach. Firstly, it promotes the development of critical thinking skills and active engagement (Killen, 2012). It promotes the idea that during training there is no need to "regurgitate" information. Instead, parents should be guided to examine a problem, discuss best possible solutions, and to reflect on why a solution may or may not be the most feasible. Finally, they reflect on strategies to overcome difficulties/challenges.

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Annex 2

Annex 2

A letter to the Editor taken from the Amandala

CYBERBULLYING – ITS IMPACT ON OUR FAMILIES AND SCHOOLS – Amandala Newspaper – August 23, 2013 - Beatrice Geban, M. Ed., Principal, St. Mary's Primary School

Dear Editor,

Kindly allow me a space in your leading newspaper to bring to the general public an awareness of cyberbullying, which has now become commonplace amongst our digital natives and a society that has become fixated on sexuality and acts of crime against minors. The intention of the article is to take an in-depth analysis of what is cyberbullying, adverse effects on the victim, the bully and his role in cyber-attacks, parental involvement in preventing cyber -attacks and how our youth can safeguard their privacy.

Cyberbullying has become a ubiquitous phenomenon, impacting the well-being of individuals, educational institution, family and peer relationships of many young people. According to an online research the legal definition of cyberbullying refers to: actions that use information and communication technologies to support deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour by an individual or group, that is intended to harm another or others; use of communication technologies for the intention of harming another person; use of internet service and mobile technologies, such as web pages and discussion groups as well as instant messaging or SMS text messaging, with the intention of harming another person.

Cyberbullying constitutes communications that seek to intimidate, control, manipulate, put down, falsely discredit, or humiliate. The actions are deliberate, repeated, and hostile behaviour intended to harm another or the recipient.

A cyberbully may be a person whom the target knows or an online stranger. A cyberbully may be anonymous and may solicit involvement of other people online who do not even know the target. This is known as a "digital pile-on."

Recently in Belize, cyberbully has become the norm. Social media sites which can be of great benefit to everyone, particularly of economic interest through investments and networking, have been used in inappropriate ways for personal gratification of individuals seeking revenge on others because of limitations which they might possess. There have been recent cases of young women/girls posted on facebook in very demeaning and disturbing ways by individuals who lack moral fibre. Questions that come to mind include, why would someone post naked pictures of another person on Facebook? How will the bully benefit by scandalizing someone else? Why do the bystanders commit the same crime as the bully by passing the pictures around via their phones and computers? How will these bystanders react if it was one of their family members being degraded in such a manner? What led the victim to take pictures of such nature? Why are our young females so naïve to flirtation and charm?

Malcolm X's famous quote indicates, "If you don't stand for something, you will fall for anything." Individuals who participate in gross misconduct such as child pornography by passing along and emailing others nude pictures of someone are considered just as guilty as paedophiles.
In our society we have been hearing about bullying occurring in most/all schools for a quite a while now. Traditional bullying involves acts such as teasing, name- calling, kicking, fist fighting, exclusion due to

economic status/ differences in ethnicity, taking away of someone's break money or snacks, the removal of someone's property without permission and the list goes on. In this century, traditional bullying has been upgraded to a new level. Technological devices have become the weapons of destruction. Bullies are said to be mean individuals who at times have been abused themselves. They commit violent crimes against people who appear to be vulnerable and who might not have the support system in place they readily need to protect themselves.

In addition, it is observed that some bullies are encouraged by their parents and so they are never reprimanded nor given the proper guidance they need to become a more responsible person. Readings suggests that young males tend to be the primary perpetrators and victims of traditional bullying behaviour; however, there seems to be some contradiction where cyberbullying is concerned. Recent research has shown that cyberbullying appears to follow a gender pattern opposite to what occurs offline. Girls tend to report slightly higher involvement than boys in this form of bullying, both as bullies and victims.

All forms of abuse have a detrimental effect to a person's mental and physical health. Victims can experience significant social isolation and feel unsafe. It can lead to emotional and physical harm, loss of self-esteem, feelings of shame and anxiety, concentration and learning difficulties. Incidents of young people committing suicide have also been linked with cyberbullying.

Readings indicates that students who experience cyberbullying are more likely to:

- Use alcohol and drugs as a means to hide their emotional pain
- Skip school so as avoid perpetrators
- Experience in-person bullying
- Experience drastic change in school performance resulting in poorer grades
- Have lower self-esteem and self- image
- Suffer from more health problems such as headaches, upset stomach, trouble sleeping/insomnia
- Develop a fear of technology
- Exhibit depression and anxiety
- Change in dress style: A few start wearing dark shades to hide who they are or the situation they are in
- Have increased thoughts about suicide that may persist into adulthood. In one study, adults who recalled being bullied in youth were three times more likely to have suicidal thoughts or inclinations.

Contrary to popular belief, bullies often have high self-esteem. Bullies can lose their moral compass when driven by their peers. Literary pieces on bullying emphasize that friends of bullies that encourage and support them in mischief making make them stronger. Friends become the catalyst for bullies to continue demoralizing others.

Catherine Bradshaw, a developmental psychologist who studies bullying at the Johns Hopkins University Bloomberg School of Public Health in Baltimore, suggested in her research that children bully because of creating exclusion and it's all about a struggle for achieving power. The power brings them popularity and high social status amongst their peers.

Bullying expert Dorothy Espelage, a psychologist at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, indicated in her research that bullies and their supporters go through a peer socialization process. Bullies tend to have more friends than their victims and that bullies are not socially rejected. They portray an image as though they are untouchable and they instill fear in those considered vulnerable.

According to Frank Peretti, there are two basic reasons why children bully. One reason a child bullies is because he (or she) has a deep troubling need of his own and is picked on or feels that he does not have a very successful life.

Arguably, another reason children bully is that they may fall into a trap by thinking that bullying is just "the cool thing to do," especially in front of their friends. Sometimes bullies are those children who are good students, athletes, or the children who seem to have everything going for them.

Presently, there are several families affected drastically by the acts of cyberbullying in Belize. Pictures and sexual images of individuals are circulated with the intention to defame and slander. Some individuals who are familiar with these families affected by cyberbullying speak out and offer support to the families to cope with the backlash and ripple effect, while others only protect their interest because it does not affect their teenaged son/daughter.

As the cyberbullying practice continues, there have been reports that even our educators have become intertwined with such malicious behaviour. Teachers post up messages attacking teachers, students attack teachers and visa-versa. The entire educational system becomes under scrutiny when teachers fail to act maturely and show professionalism. The cyber war has gone viral and will spiral if there are no policies in place to protect individuals who are maliciously attacked.

Cyberbullying will never stop unless legislation/s is implemented to protect victims and families both at the school and judicial level. Support groups and NGO's that protect young people need to become stronger advocates and bring about changes that will benefit all young people rather than sweeping certain problems under the rug. Some individuals adopt the view that since it does not affect their family they don't need to show any interest.

Some teenagers feel that they have to participate in the right to passage to belong to a particular clique. In other words, they will do whatever it takes to belong and feel as though they are part of the group. If parents don't fill the void then our young people will be recruited by individuals with greater influences.

Some teenagers make very bad decisions as they progress through puberty that affect their reputation and the way people perceive them. Cyberbullying is just the tool used to distort and destroy them when those pictures/images that are explicit fall into the wrong hands.

Some affluent children are of the opinion that they can infringe on the rights of everybody because they have a better economic status and their parents can pay an elite attorney to represent them no matter what the situation might be. Cyberbullying will be their tool of destruction since some believe when pictures/messages are sent their ip address can't be located.

Cyberbullying has found its place into the Belizean culture and that there is a cadre of personalities that is in delight with fetish images.

Media houses need to become pioneers and beacons for more positive changes in a society that has become polluted with filth that is aired and broadcast on a daily basis. In addition, media houses should

be the avenue by which positive programs promoting values, respect and all the other character traits are infused into the society.

Parents need to monitor everything that their child is doing on Facebook and open the door for active dialogue to occur. Only through communication will parents know what their child is experiencing or even doing. Simultaneously, parents should screen their children's friends in an effort to minimize peer pressure and negative influences that could be learnt through socialization.

All schools in liaison with their education board, the Police Department and legal representatives need to develop policies with more stringent repercussions for such heinous crimes. Many schools do not have cyberbullying policies in place and so the administrative team finds it difficult in dealing with such infractions. The entire school becomes under disrepute when one student is scandalized. Therefore, there is a great need for such processes to be included in disciplinary plans.

Parents who recognized that their child is a bully need to be realistic and seek professional help. Bullies are human beings and they are also hurting inside. An intervention is needed to address the problems and curb behaviours that ultimately may destroy the person.

As we embrace another academic school year I advise all parents to dedicate some time every day to assist their child with his/her work. Don't take things for granted. Our children need us regardless of their age. It might appear to us that they have all grown up because they are attending high school but this is a very crucial time in their lives. Peer pressure is so influential and damaging.

Here are a few things that you could do to open the door for communication and to safeguard your child's privacy.

How to protect your child:

- Talk with your child about netiquette, how to behave and communicate politely over the Internet and mobile devices. Importantly, teach children to never say something about someone online that they wouldn't say to that person face-to-face.

- Bullying others, online or in person, is never appropriate behavior. Make sure your child understands that comments and images posted on the Internet can be long-lasting and have a global audience.

- Teach your child to keep the passwords to their online accounts private. Create passwords that are a combination of letters and numbers and are difficult to guess. Passwords should not be shared with friends, not even a best friend.

- Talk to your child about how to handle strong emotions, such as anger. It is never appropriate to send a message or post a comment on the Internet when you are angry or emotional.

- If your child receives an angry or taunting message, teach them to refrain from responding and to tell a responsible adult. Responding to these types of messages could encourage a bully to continue to pick on the victim.

- Know how much time your child is spending on the Internet and mobile device. Enjoy the Internet with your child. If you are unable to sit down together at the computer, at least know what activities they are doing online. Consider installing parental control software to monitor your child's activities and limit the web sites that are available.

- Encourage your local schools to educate the students on cyber ethics and the law.

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