

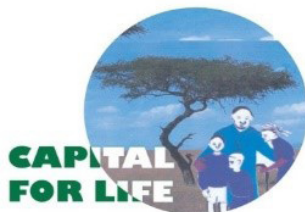
# Parenting for Respectability PfR

## MODULE ONE: BONDING AND ATTACHMENT



## Project Partners

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**HEALTH CHILD**

*Empowering Local Communities for Healthy Children*

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## List of Acronyms

CRVPF: Children's Rights and Violence Prevention-Fund

CHDC: Child Health and development Centre

CTPR: Centre for Transformative Parenting and Research

MRC : Medical Research Council

PFR : Parenting for Respectability programme

SVRI: Sexual Violence Research Initiative

UK: United Kingdom



## Acknowledgment

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Great thanks go to the project team at CTPR for the team work and dedication exhibited through the entire process.



## Introduction

Positive attachment between a child to a parent or caregiver is a powerful source of protection from violence, neglect and exploitation.

However in Uganda, existing evidence shows that there is poor child attachment and parental bonding due to harsh parenting practices such as harsh disciplining methods, failure to provide quality time, poor communication between parents and children among others.

Interventions that aim at modifying aspects of parenting such as reducing harsh and abusive parenting and improving parental knowledge on children's development, are listed among evidence based strategies for prevention of child abuse (WHO & UN 2014).

### **Parenting for Respectability (PfR)**

PARENTING FOR RESPECTABILITY is a home grown programme that aims at early prevention of child maltreatment and violence between partners. It draws from parents/caregivers inner motivation for parenting.

It modifies the main risk factors for violence against children and women including:

- i) *Poor parental bonding and child attachment*
- ii) *Harsh parenting and corporal punishment*
- iii) *Differential socialisation by gender*
- iv) *Parental conflict*



## Bonding and attachment



Children are born very dependent on their parents and need a loving and secure environment for their growth. Family is seen as a safe place where parents are expected to provide care, attention, and guidance for the children.

This module is one of the four major themes of the PfR programme that encourages parents and caregivers to deepen the meaning and understanding on bonding and attachment, and parental-child relationship. Sessions and activities in this module will support parents and caregivers to go through a process of becoming more sensitive and aware of the child's needs, provide loving care for positive child development outcomes.

### **Overall goal of the Module**

The overall goal of this module is strengthen family bonds and improve relationships.

### **Expected outcomes of this module**

It is expected that by the end of the module, there will be bonding and attachment between parents/caregivers and their children exhibited through:

- Parent-child interaction/ connection
- Parent-child communication
- Parental provision of children's needs

There are four main sessions under this module/ theme and each session lasts between 1 hour and 1 hour and 30 minutes.



# Session 1: Climate Setting



## 1.0: Introduction

<b>Participants</b>	Women and Men separately
<b>Objectives</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>1. Introductions, explore expectations, set ground rules and discuss role of the facilitator.</li><li>2. Appreciate the importance of family relationships.</li></ol>
<b>Duration</b>	1 hr. 30 Minutes

## Activity 1.1: Opening Remarks

**Time** | 30 minutes

**Objective** | To give an overview of the programme

**Materials** | Flip chart and Markers

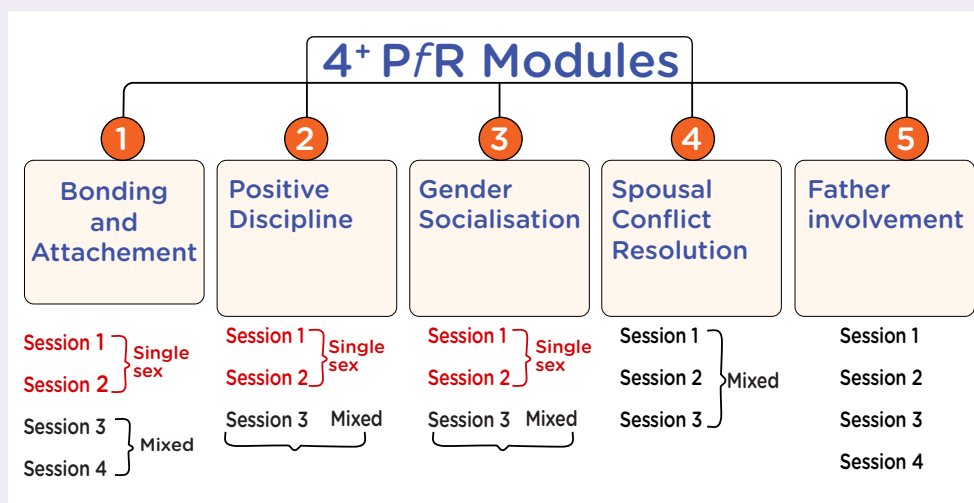
### STEPS

**1** | Begin the session by welcoming and greeting participants

**2** | Introduce yourself, other facilitators and staff you are working with.

**3** | Discuss the Parenting for Respectability programme and objective as below, and welcome participants to be part of it.

- a) Parenting for Respectability develops fathers' and mothers' skills to bring up their children well so that they respect their parents and also earn respect from their parents.
- b) Parenting for Respectability helps to improve relationships in families in order to prevent violence in homes and communities.
- c) The long-term goals of this programme are:
  - ⊙ Improve infants' secure attachment to their parents and promote parental bonding and love.
  - ⊙ Improve upbringing of children through positive discipline for family respectability.
  - ⊙ Improve how boys and girls are socialized and reduce negative gender norms in families.
  - ⊙ Reduce conflict between parents.
- d) The programme has 10 sessions that are compulsory and one module (fathers involvement that is optional) simplified under different themes/modules as below:



e) Respond to any questions that arise

## Activity 1.2: Introduction of participants

**Time** | 20 minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) The purpose of the introduction is for participants to get to know each other and to begin building trust.
- ii) It is very important that every person participates actively in this initial session.

**Objective** | To get know each other.

**Materials** | Flip chart, Markers, and a ball made out of local/ available material

### STEPS

- 1 | Invite participants to stand or sit in a circle
- 2 | Request participants to introduce themselves; mentioning their name, number of children they are taking care of, and what they like about being a parent/ caregiver (*If it is not during Covid19 times, throw the ball and request the person holding the ball to introduce themselves as above*)
- 3 | Once every one has introduced themselves, **ask** participants to return to the general group

## Activity 1.3: Expectations and setting ground rules

**Time** | 20 minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) This activity is meant to help create an opportunity to clarify on the expectations of participants and address participants fears regarding the programme. It is therefore important that you create a fear free environment and get prior information on any referral pathways for the services or expectations that may be raised by participants but will not be met by the programme.
- ii) It would be good to re-echo some of the other existing community services as highlighted by the CDO during the community meeting

**Objective** | To discuss expectations, address fears, and establish ground rules for the programme

**Materials** | Flip chart and markers

**STEPS**

**1**

In Plenary, **ask** participants to brainstorm on the expectations and rules as you guide them to respond to the questions below:

- a) What would you like to learn about in relation to parenting? (These will be the expectations)
- b) What rules can we put in place to enable us participate and learn well in this programme?

**2**

Address participants expectations and clarify on those that will be achieved by the programme

**3**

Encourage participants to stick to the suggested rules which may include:

- a) Attending all sessions
- b) Encouraging others also to attend regularly
- c) Encouraging spouses to join the programme
- d) Do the home practice when given
- e) Seeing themselves as role models who should help others in regard to parenting
- f) Maintaining confidentiality
- g) Active participation by everyone for every session and keeping time.

**Close the activity by highlighting the following points:**

1. *In this programme, it is important that participants learn from each other, so we will most of the time work in groups*
2. *The facilitator will be guiding the group process of learning as he /she also learns from participants.*
3. *The facilitator will be like the midwife who helps the mother to deliver the baby in a healthy state for the good of both the baby and the mother.*

**Activity 1.4: 50 years and 3 months: Valuing relationships with one's children and spouse**

**Time | 30 minutes**

**What the facilitator needs to know**

- i) *This activity is supposed to trigger fathers and mothers desire to work towards strengthening bonds with their family members especially their spouses and children as well as creating the eagerness to attend all the sessions under the different themes especially the compulsory themes.*
- ii) *Use the notes on the relationship vacuum to explain the consequences of poor relationship with one's children and spouse.*



**Objective** | To emphasize the importance of family relationships, especially relationships with one's children and partner

**Materials** | Flipchart, markers and illustration

# STEPS

**1** | **Ask** participants in 2 minutes to think about what they would wish for if they had 50 or more years to live. *(This is a reflective exercise. Participants will identify items like; property, buildings/houses, land, more children, good education in good schools etc.)*

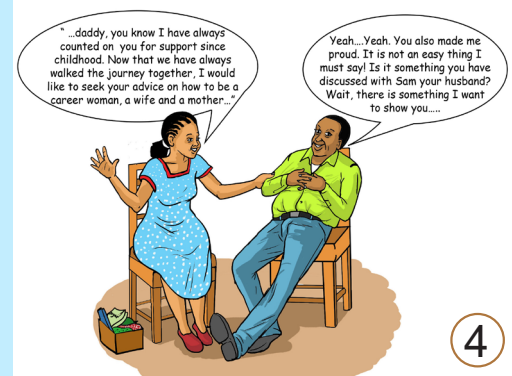
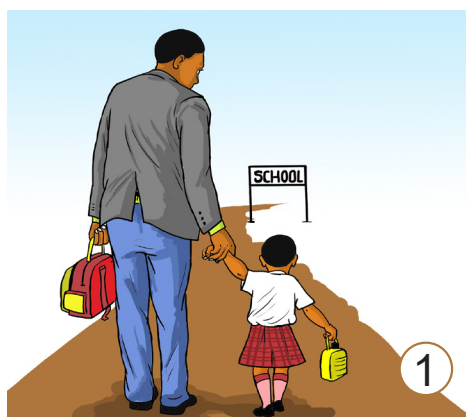
**2** | Get and record responses from 5-7 different people on a flip chart.

**3** | **Ask** participants in 1 minutes to think about what they would do if they had only 3 months to live. *(Participants will identify things like; talking to the children every day, praying to God, disclosing their properties to their children, being good to everyone, writing a will among others)*

**4** | Get and record responses from 5-7 people on a flip chart [Ensure to get views from even the quiet people]

**5** | **Ask** the participants to:

- Comment on the two sets of responses *look for any differences in the two sets)*
- Which of the two sets of achievements is more important?
- Distribute**/hang the illustration of the father taking a child to school in a place where all participants are able to see?



6

**Ask** the following questions:

- a) Does the father live with the child like he has 50 years, or 3 months?
- b) Are such relationships common in your community? why/ why not?
- c) What can you do to ensure that you live with your loved ones like you have only 3 months, yet plan like you have 50 years?

7

**Introduce** discussion on the relationship vacuum using the notes below?

- *Every human being needs positive relationships be it children, adults, men, women*
- *Life hates a relationship vacuum*
- When there is a relationship vacuum with one's family, they feel empty both inside and around them
- But because life hates a relationship vacuum, we are naturally drawn to fill that gap
- This often leads us to turn to other people or things such as drugs, alcohol consumption, or establish other relationships with other people in order to fill the existing gap
- Unfortunately, these 'other people' or things that we turn to are only substitutes. However, there is never a substitute that is as good as the original. (Emphasise that to avoid the vacuum, our children and spouses should know that we are there for them all the time)
- Therefore parents/spouses must endeavour to improve their family relationships in order to preserve their family and enjoy a better life and health.

**Close the activity by highlighting some of the following points:**

1. *Every human being has a need to relate with others i.e to belong somewhere, to be loved and cared for*
2. *For any human being, family relationships are important than material things*
3. *Family relationships provide a sense of belonging and identity*
4. *We need to live our lives like we have three months left so that we can create a loving environment in our families but also plan as if we have 50 years, so that our family members will not suffer the consequences of extreme poverty*

## Activity 1.5: Home Practice

**Time** | 5 minutes

**Materials** | Flip chart and markers

**STEPS**

1

Put up the flip chart that has the written homework and read aloud the home practice exercise to participants as follows:

- a) Discuss with your spouse/ partner/ other people in your family the importance of family relationships
- b) Practice interaction activities that improve relationships living like you have only three months with your children during the week

## Session 2: Attachment and bonding: Current beliefs and practices regarding child interaction



### 2.0: Introduction

#### Participants

Women and Men separately

#### Objectives

1. Discuss parents' goals for parenting and factors that hinder/ facilitate achievement of those goals
2. Discuss parents' beliefs and practices regarding parent-child interaction
3. Encourage emotion expressive dialogue between parents and children

#### Duration

1 hr. 20 minutes



## Activity 2.1: Review of home practice

**Time** | 10 minutes

**Materials** | Flipchart and Markers

**STEPS**

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session two.
- 2 | Review homework practice by asking individuals to share their experience [Encourage them to discuss *results, challenges and benefits of trying to improve their family relationships by living like they had only 3 months to live*]
- 3 | If participants had problems, **ask** others to suggest ways that they might be overcome

## Activity 2.2: 'Who is a child?'

**Time** | 20 minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) How a care giver perceives his/her child shapes the type of care the child is given
- ii) Perception of children and childhood has roots in our culture and tradition.
- iii) In our community, where family and clan are central, there seems to be a tendency to stress qualities in children such as obedience, respect, hardworking and loyalty towards the family and relatives. But for successful parenting these qualities should be two way: from both the parents and children.
- iv) Confident parenting and warm family relationships are important for children's achievement, well-being and behaviour.
- v) As a facilitator, be ready with examples which will facilitate a good lively discussion. Be alert and praise the parents/caregivers for their reports of the good behaviour with the children.

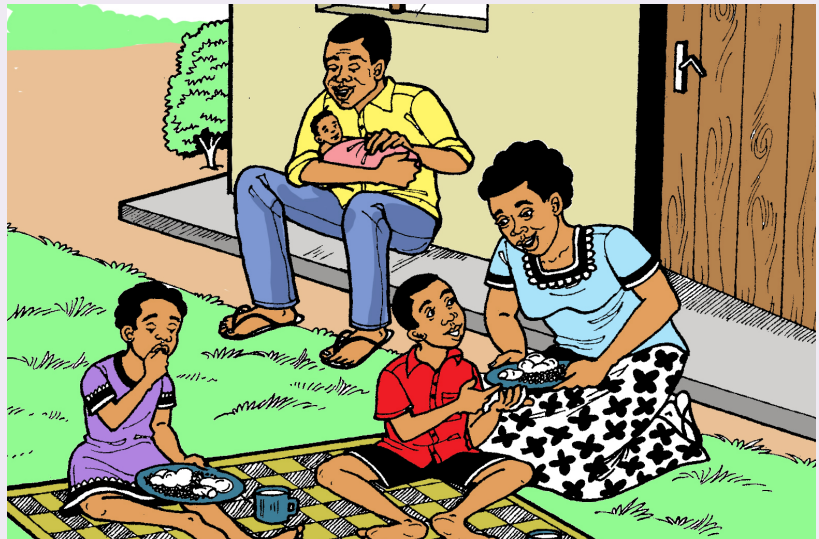
**Objective** |  
1) To explore parents' understanding of the needs of a child  
2) Re- enforce the importance of having a positive perception of a child

**Materials** | Flip chart, markers, masking tape and illustrations



## STEPS

- 1 **Distribute/** pin the illustration in different corners where everyone is able to see and allow them to study the illustration for two minutes



- 2 **Ask** the following questions to participants
- What do you see in the picture?
  - Do such things happen in their community? Why or why not?
- 3 Let participants divide up into 2 -3 groups and respond to the questions below (10 minutes). *(During their group discussion, let them identify 4 -5 important issues about children that they would like to share with the bigger group).*
- Who is a child?
  - What behaviours of children make parents/caregivers treat them negatively instead of what we see in the picture?
- 4 After the group discussion, let participants come together and share their views with the whole group. *(As they share, guide participants to assess the situation in their homes and community in regard to the number of children treated negatively due to behaviour deemed bad/negative. It is most likely that they will acknowledge that a lot of violence is happening to children in their community and appreciate the need for violence prevention programmes).*
- 5 Emphasise that despite the negative behaviours of some children, parents need to treat all the children with respect and instill good discipline in them instead of worsening the children's situation by treating them negatively.

**Close the activity by highlighting some of the following points:**

- It is a good thing to raise a child and a child is a **PERSON** like you and me
- Everyone may see a child differently depending on the circumstances surrounding their family or community.
- It is important for us to appreciate that everyone below 18 years in Uganda is still a child that needs our love and care.
- Facilitate participants to realise that treating children negatively due to their behaviours can only worsen the situation. **(You can invite them to share experiences)**. Encourage parents/caregivers to pay attention to the child's needs/values

## Activity 2.3: My Child in 20 years

**Time** | 45 minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) Encourage parents to start practicing early in a child's life the small things that help in supporting their children to become the kind of adults that they want to see in future.
- ii) The facilitator should provide examples which will facilitate a honest discussion and be alert to praise the caregivers for their good behaviour with the children.

### Objectives

- 1) Identify long-term goals parents have for their children's characters.
- 2) Identify and discuss factors that facilitate or hinder achievement of the parenting goals

### Materials

Flip chart, Markers, masking tape and illustration

### STEPS

1

**Provide** an overview of the objectives for the activity.

2

**Ask** participants to close their eyes and imagine the following:

*Your child is all grown up. You are about to celebrate your child's 20<sup>th</sup> birthday. Imagine what he or she will look like at that age. What kind of person do you hope your child will be? **What kind of relationship do you want with your child?***

3

In a plenary, **ask** participants share their thoughts. Some of the characteristics that may be mentioned by participants include:

- a) Kind and helpful
- b) Honest and trustworthy
- c) A good decision-maker
- d) Respectful
- e) Well behaved

4

**Ask** participants to share their current parenting practices (provide opportunity to 3-4 different people)

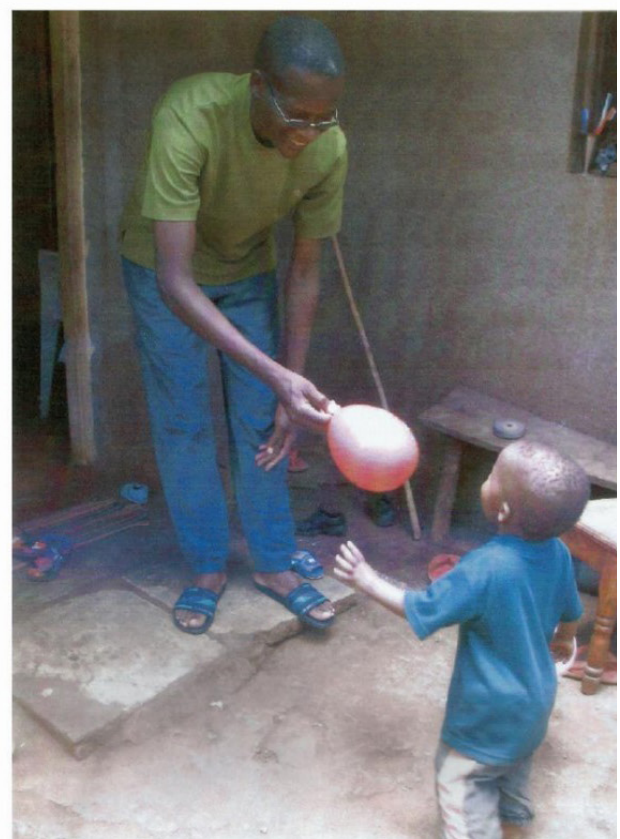
5

Explain that there are seven main different measures of parenting. These include;

- a) Provision of necessities.
- b) Parental connectedness to the child.
- c) Behaviour control.
- d) Respect for the child's autonomy.
- e) Modelling behaviour - collective parenting.
- f) Gender socialization



**6** | ***Pin/ distribute the following pictures of different types of parenting measures to participants. (Allow 10 minutes for this)***









- 7 | Let participants share their feelings about the pictures, when & how they are applied in their parenting roles (*As they share how they feel about the pictures, ask participants which practices they see in the pictures that are easy to apply and why and those that are difficult to apply and why*).
- 8 | Let participants divide the activities in the pictures between the different measures to parenting
- 9 | **Ask** participants to think of any other parenting activities that should be included in order to be good parents or achieve their goals as parents

**Close the activity by highlighting some of the following points:**

1. There are two main elements of parenting i.e. love and discipline which should be provided in equal measure
2. Children will change your life – they don't always fit properly into adults' timetable (Provide an example)
3. When parenting our children, it is important to think about the long-term goal (what you want to achieve) and then work towards it
4. In spite of the challenges, you can still raise successful children
5. Love, positive discipline, warm family relationships and confident parenting are important to children's achievement, wellbeing and character
6. It is important for children to have friends but it's very important for parents to know their children's friends and where possible invite them home and may be try to be their friend as well

## Activity 2.4 Home practice:

**Time | 5 Minutes**

**Materials |** Flip chart and markers

### STEPS

- 1 | Put up the flip chart that has the written homework and read aloud the home practice exercise to participants as follows:
  - a) Try and put four of the parenting measures in practice by doing some of the activities in the pictures that you have never done/ rarely do with your child (*Pay attention to the child's reaction and your feelings during the activity*)

## Session 3: Bonding and attachment: child development (0-17)



### 3.0: Introduction

#### Participants

Women and Men separately

#### Objectives

1. Explore basic development needs and behaviours of children 0-17
2. Show how parenting practices are important for children to reach their full potential.

#### Duration

1 hr. 20 minutes

### Activity 3.1: Review of home practice

**Time | 10 Minutes**

**Materials |** Flip chart, markers and masking tape

**STEPS**

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session three
- 2 | Review homework practice by asking individuals to share their experience (*Encourage them to discuss results, challenges and benefits of trying to put the parenting measures into practice*)
- 3 | If participants had problems, **ask** others to suggest ways that they might be overcome

### Activity 3.2: Needs of children in different developmental stages

**Time | 45 minutes**

#### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) Children have a range of needs some of which are tangible and others non tangible. This activity is aimed at supporting parents to learn to full fill all children's needs and how the needs for the different ages differ. To facilitate all round development of children, all needs have to be met by the parents /primary care givers
- ii) Challenge participants to avail time for rest and play for children beside school work and house chores.

**Materials |** Flip chart, markers, masking tape and illustration

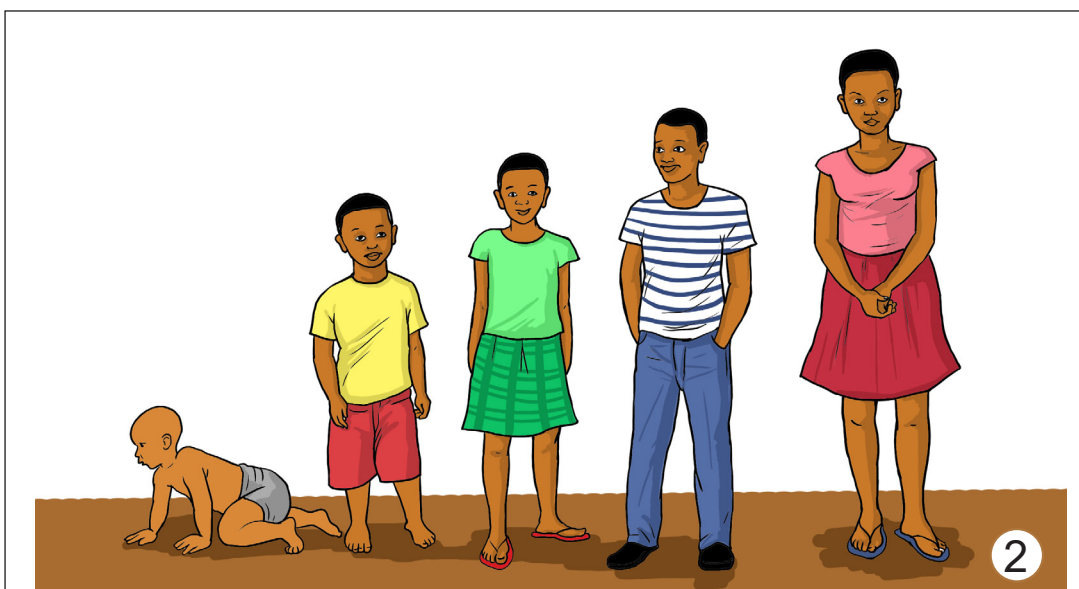
**Objectives |**

1. To explore the basic developmental needs and behaviours of children 0 – 17 years
2. To show how parenting practices are important for children to reach their full potential

**STEPS**

**1**

**Distribute**/pin the illustration where everyone is able to see and let them study the pictures for two minutes



**2**

**Ask** participants what their interpretation of the pictures is (Get 3-5 responses from different people)

**3**

Inform participants that there are four main developmental stages which include;

- 0 – 5 years (pre-school)
- 6 – 9 years (lower primary)
- 10 – 12 years (upper primary)
- 13 – 17(teenagers)

**4**

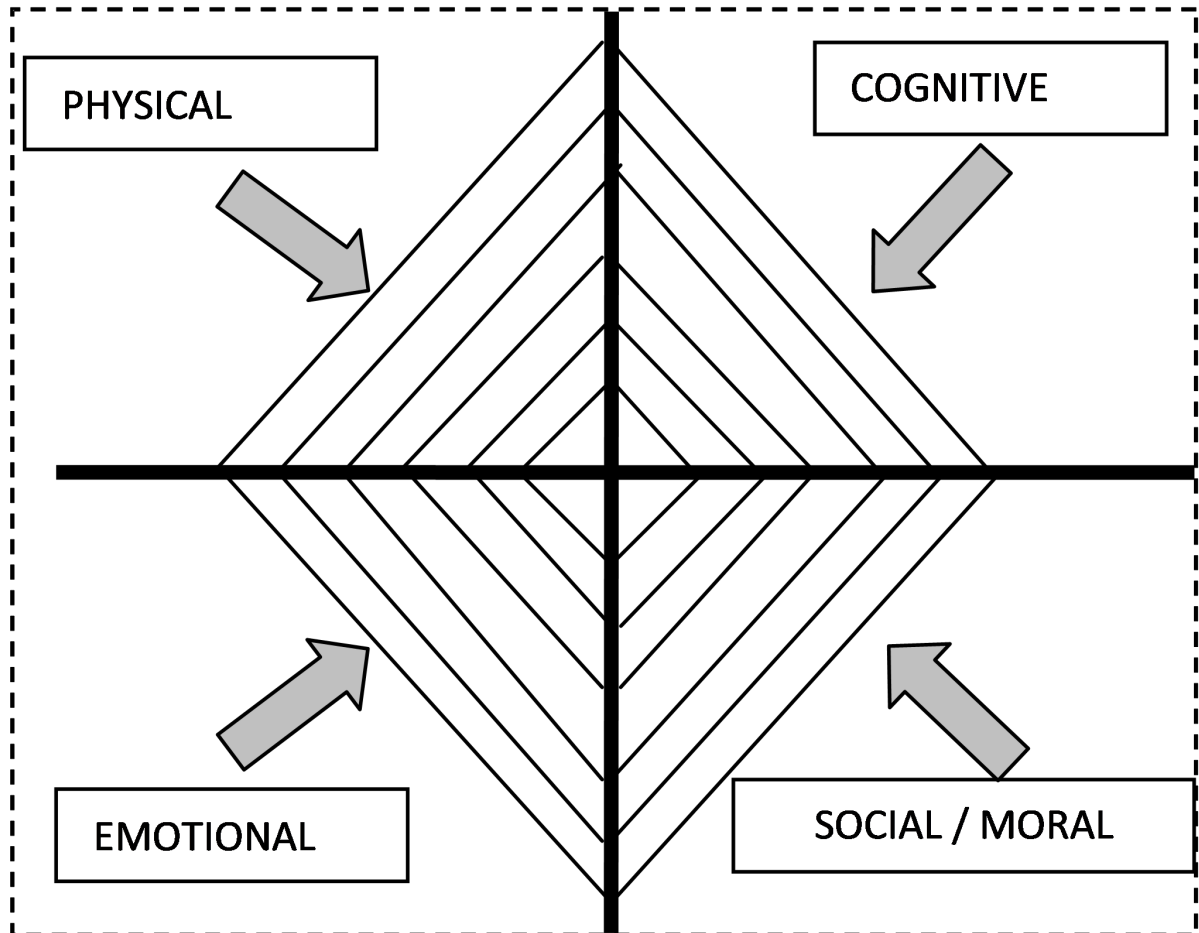
**Ask** participants to make 4 groups and assign each group an age group as above and answer the question below;

- a) What are parents required to do to ensure that children grow well physically (growth), emotionally (feelings), cognitively (thinking) and socially (social awareness)? (**provide 15 minutes**)



5 Let participants join the plenary and have each group present what was discussed in the smaller groups (*As they present, make keen observation if the cross-cutting needs like food, play, rest are mentioned. Fit the needs they mention in the diagram as mentioned in the notes below the diagram*)

6 The facilitator may then add using the diagram and the notes below:



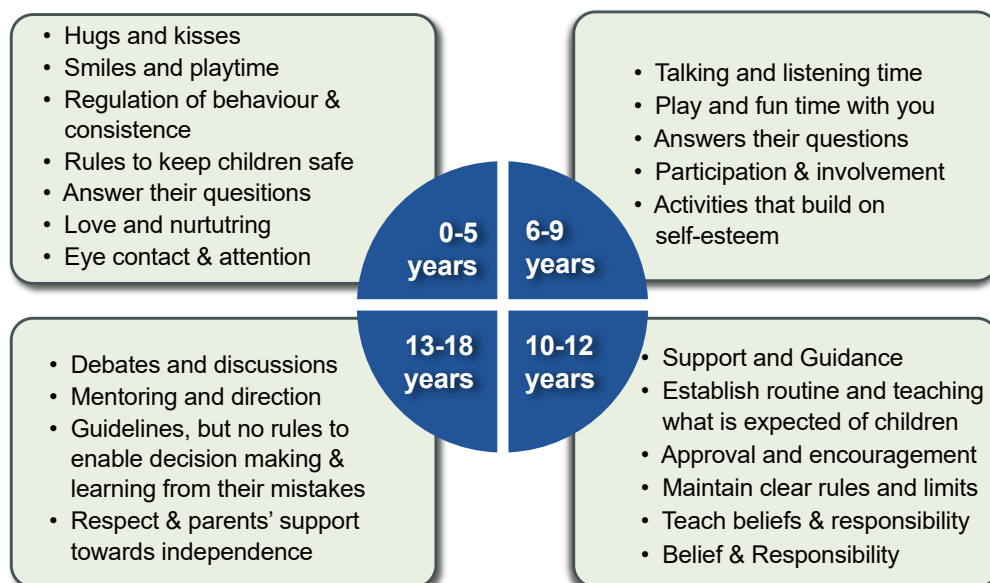
- Parents should ensure that they focus on all the four main areas proportionally in order to have a balanced development of the child. Use relevant examples from different contexts like rural, urban, rich and poor, to challenge participants to think of the consequences of neglecting some aspects of development (*For example some families in town raise brilliant children because they take them to good schools, ensure good feeding, avail time for school work and play, but ignore the social/moral domain thus children fail to relate well with other people. On the other hand some families in villages bring up children who are socially/morally competent, but they can not even spell their name or read a word*).
- Physical development**– proper nutrition, shelter, play, protection from violence etc.
- Cognitive development/ thinking** – simulation, colourful pictures, education, interactive play, good nutrition, time for rest etc.
- Feelings/emotional development** – supportive family, love, feeling secure,

protection from neglect and emotional abuse etc.

- e) **Moral / social (religious and cultural) development** – positive role models, positive and consistent discipline in a loving context (praising good behaviour, explaining why bad behaviour is wrong, giving positive remarks by name (Refer to the guide for more notes)).
- f) Children do not develop in isolation but need an environment that gives them the things they need and where their rights are respected thus, parents should endeavor to fulfill both tangible and non tangible needs of children at different stages of development (*encourage parents to have interactions with interactions beyond education with children because the other social issues are also important in supporting the children stay in school and lean to live a healthy life*).

**Close the activity by highlighting what children at different stages need from their parents**

What does your child want from you?



### Activity 3.3: Home practice

**Time | 5 Minutes**

**STEPS**

**1**

Put up the flip chart that has the written homework and read aloud the home practice exercise to participants as follows:

- a) During this week, try and identify one of the non-tangible needs of each child and fulfill it

# Session 4: Attachment and bonding: Influence of one's parents



## 4.0: Introduction

### Participants

Women and Men separately

### Objectives

1. To reflect upon the influence that fathers/ mothers or other important male/female figures have had on the participants while growing up
2. Discuss how participants can take the positive aspects of their father/mother or female/male caregiver's influence and address the negative impact to avoid repeating harmful patterns

### Duration

1 hr. 30 minutes

## Activity 4.1: Review of home Practice

**Time** | 10 Minutes

**Materials** | Flip chart, markers and masking tape

**STEPS**

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session four
- 2 | Review homework practice by asking individuals to share their experience *[Encourage them to discuss results, challenges of trying to fulfil non-tangible needs of children]*
- 3 | If participants had problems, ask others to suggest ways that they might be overcome

## Activity 4.2: My father/mother's Legacy

**Time** | 45 Minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

- i) Create an atmosphere where participants are validated for sharing personal emotional and intimate details.
- ii) Remind the team (participants and facilitators) the confidentiality commitment so that the participants do not share what was said during the session once they leave.
- iii) If a participant begins to break down and cry in front of the group, normalize the experience by giving them room to express that emotion. Consider saying, *"Thank you for being brave and trusting us with that story. I'm sure many of the people in this room have had similar experiences like yours."*

**Materials** | Flip chart, markers, masking tape and illustration

**Objectives**

1. To reflect upon the influence that fathers/ mothers or other important male/female figures have had on the participants while growing up
2. Discuss how participants can take the positive aspects of their father/mother or female/male care-giver's influence and address the negative impact to avoid repeating harmful patterns

**STEPS**

- 1 | **Provide** an overview of the activity objectives
- 2 | **Distribute or pin** the illustration where everyone is able to see and let them study it for two minutes





1



2



3

**3** | Ask participants what is their interpretation of the pictures

**4** | Ask the participants to form 2 – 3 groups.

**5** | Write on flipchart paper the following questions:

a) What childhood positive things do you remember in your relationship with your father/ mother/ caregiver

- b) What childhood negative things do you remember in your relationship with your care father/mother
- c) Name one thing about your father and mother that you want to take into your relationship with your children.
- d) Name one thing about your father and mother that you do not want to repeat with your children

6

**Read** the questions aloud and **ask** groups to discuss their answers for about 20 minutes. *(Each member of the group including the facilitator, should share their experiences in regard to the questions)*

7

Once everyone has finished sharing in the small groups, let participants join the plenary and summarise their discussions for another 10 minutes. Let one to two people from each small group share their feelings with the large group.

8

Use the question below to guide the discussion

- a) How can the bad practices or behaviours discussed be changed as we parent both girls and boys? *(Emphasize that in most cases, the negative patterns move with us for the rest of our lives. As parents/care givers, we need to make a deliberate effort to practice the positive things and avoid the negative ones)*

### **Close the activity by highlighting some of the following points:**

1. *From the moment a child is born, his/her life is shaped by those around him/her especially the parents/caregivers*
2. *Parents/ caretakers can have the greatest impact by teaching their child about different life issues e. g relationship skills, value of work, e. t. c. These shape the person a child may become*
3. *Parents/caregivers/ caretakers have a deep and long-lasting impact on their children's lives. For example, even as adults, we can still 'hear' our parent's voices or 'see' their actions in our lives (legacy). These legacies may be positive or negative and are passed on intentionally or unintentionally*

## **Activity 4.3: Home practice**

**Time | 5 Minutes**

**Materials |** Flip chart and markers

**STEPS**

1

Put up the flip chart that has the written homework and read aloud the home practice exercise to participants as follows:

- a) **Ask** the participants to practice one positive practice from their childhood that made them happy that they can carry on to improve parent – child relationship.

# Session 5: Bonding and attachment: Interactive play with children



## 5.0: Introduction

**Participants** | Women and Men together

**Objective** | Understand and support children's play.

**Duration** | 1 hr. 30 minutes

### Activity 5.1: Review of Home work practice

**Time** | 10 Minutes

**Materials** | Flip chart, markers and masking tape

#### STEPS

- 1 | Welcome everyone for session five
- 2 | Review homework practice by asking individuals to share their experience (*Encourage them to discuss results, challenges and benefits of trying to practice positive aspects from their parents/ caregivers*)
- 3 | If participants had problems, **ask** others to suggest ways that they might be overcome

## Activity 5.2: Interactive play with children

Time | 55 Minutes

### What the facilitator needs to know

#### **Attitudes and behaviours of parents / care givers that help children feel: safe**

- i) Children learn more from making mistakes if adults take the time to guide them through the journey, it helps them to realise right from wrong and to know how to do right next time.
- ii) Provide space for dialogue which involves active listening and open feedback. Be understanding during discussions in the family
- iii) Be consistent in rules and fair in responding to all situations.

#### **Feel loved**

- i) Create an environment or space within family to enable children to express themselves by allowing them to develop their independence and feel a sense of self.
- ii) Show gentleness in a considerate manner.
- iii) Use a soft and friendly tone.

#### **Feel respected**

- i) Understand children's needs and feelings for all the different age brackets and how they think differently at each stage of development.
- ii) Actively listen to children with concentration and attention and respect their opinions.
- iii) Take time to understand children's feelings.
- iv) Involve children in the development of family rules and activities.
- v) Clearly define limits for the children

#### **About the role plays**

- i) Just like adults, children like attention. When David feels that the mother is not attending to him like most children, he tries to behave and act in a way that draws the mother's attention. Even when busy, parents must try to pay attention to their children and be interested in their initiatives.
- ii) It is good practice for parents to be involved in helping out their children during their play time but this should be done respectfully with the full consent of the child. The play should meet the needs of the child and not the parents. Praise the child for their initiatives and follow their lead. All children, just like most adults, like praise. A parent/caregiver giving attention and praise to the child, leads to obedience without necessarily controlling the child.
- iii) This leaves both the child and the parent/caregiver happy and in a proper relationship



**Objective** | Understand and support children's play.

**Materials** | Flip chart, markers and illustration

**STEPS**

**1** | **Provide** an overview of the objective for the activity.

**2** | **Ask** participants to role play the following scenarios:

- When we do not pay attention (**pic1**)
- Too much control during play (**Pic 2**)
- Following your child's lead (**pic 3&4**)

**3** | Use the questions below to guide the discussion.

**Question for 'When we do not pay attention' (pic 1)**

- a) How does David feel when his mother ignores him?
- b) How does the mother feel about David?
- c) What could the mother do to give attention to David?

**Question for 'Too much control' (pic 2)**

- a) What do you think is wrong with the way Paul's father acted in the play?
- b) How does it make him feel?
- c) What could the father have done differently?
- d) How does too much control of a child affect parent-child relationship?

**Question for 'Following the child's lead' (pic 3&4)**

- a) How does a parent/ caregiver show attention to the child?
- b) How does the parent help the child to do what he/she wants without controlling her?
- c) How does this make the child feel?

**Distribute/ Pin** the illustration where everyone is able to see and let participants study the pictures for two minutes



**4 | Ask participants what they learn from the pictures**

**5 | Explain to the participants that ‘*Children must have time to play in order to learn through play*’. For children to become skilled at play, they need uninterrupted time.**

**6 | It is important to spend time with individual children in play so that you support each child's learning adequately**

**7 | The facilitator can then explain the implication for each scenario as follows:**

- **‘When we do not pay attention’** for example the mother is busy on phone and the David keeps talking to her trying to get the mother’s attention to join and enjoy play. The child gets disappointed, both parent and the child feel bad about each other.
- **‘Too much control’** father finds his son Paul playing and asks to join. In the process, the father insists that the child should play his way since he knows the game better. Child gets disappointed and moves away. The father destroys the child's initiative and this destroys his self esteem, creativity and negatively affects their relationship. The child can start distancing and the parent will lose the opportunity support the child to learn through play.

- **‘Following the child’s lead’ (Pic 3)** –The child is interested in playing a risky game and the father knows that it is risky. However, he first praises her, Doreen is happy and later the father convinces her to play other games and both of them are happy. It is important for parents to give children an opportunity to lead, so that parents can also learn from the children. This boosts their self esteem and sharpens their critical thinking.

**Close the activity by highlighting the following key points especially those that did not come out properly during the discussion**

1. *Play promotes every aspect of children’s development – physical, social, feelings, the brain and thinking*
2. *In play, there are games that focus on the child’s interests, those that require cooperation and those between two or more children i.e. games that focus attention on the child. Parents need to provide an environment that is supportive.*
3. *When children play, learning occurs that we do not realize. Learning in play is integrated, powerful and largely invisible to the untrained eye. Much of this learning happens without direct teaching; it is learning that is important to the child.*
4. *This learning has a central value in childhood and long-term development benefits.*
5. *Games like block building, sand, water play and similar ones (facilitator should list examples of the games) lay the foundation for mathematical thinking, scientific reasoning and using the brain to solve problems.*
6. *Rough and fall over play develops social and self-regulation of feelings as well as social competence.*
7. *Pretend play improves communication, develops conversational skills, encourages turn taking and fosters creativity and flexibility in thinking.*

### Activity 5.3 Home practice:

**Time | 5 Minutes**

**Materials | Flip chart and markers**

**STEPS**

**1**

- Put up the flip chart that has the written homework and read aloud the home practice exercise to participants as follows:
- a) Take five minutes each day and practice interactive play with one of your children while following your lead and asking them to choose the game.





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