



**Families Make the Difference**

# **Facilitator Training Guide**

This document outlines a five-day training program for facilitators of parenting skills. The program, part of the Families Make the Difference Toolkit, is intended for groups of parents with children 0-5 years old. The Parenting Facilitator Training Guide is informed by the Families Make the Difference Literature Review that takes into consideration 30 years of research on the influence of parenting on child development and builds on the Families Make the Difference Parenting Facilitators Competencies. Please note that only trained and approved trainers can deliver this training to parenting facilitators. To learn more about becoming an approved trainer, please contact the IRC's Child Protection Technical Unit.





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# Introduction to Parenting Facilitators Training Guide

This introduction provides an overview of the research that informs the Families Make the Difference Parenting Curriculum as well as an overview of the parenting facilitator training itself. The purpose of this section is to define the elements of positive parenting, child well-being and healthy development that underpin effective parenting programs.

## Child development and well-being

Child well-being means that children have their physical, cognitive, emotional and social developmental needs met and that they are safe from abuse, exploitation, violence and neglect. For children to develop properly, they need healthy food and good hygiene habits, as well as love and stimulation. Parents play a critical role in helping their children reach their maximum potential. The interaction of our genes and our environment literally shape the architecture of the developing brain. When parents engage with young children, they are helping them to learn language, develop motor and social skills, and regulate their emotions. Human brains are built over time and through repeated interactions. Parents who are abusive or neglectful can have lasting negative effects on their child's developing brain that can lead to behavioral and learning problems. Helping children develop cognitive skills, emotional well-being, and good physical and mental health from birth provides the scaffolding needed to become productive, cooperative citizens.<sup>1</sup>

Children are born with different abilities and develop at different rates. Some children learn new skills quickly and some more slowly. Just because a child may be slow to learn does not mean that parents are doing something wrong or that they should stop trying to teach their children new skills. It is important for parents to be patient with their children. It is equally important for parents of children with developmental disabilities to create stimulating environments for them. They may not be able to learn as quickly as other children, but their brains and bodies need love and encouragement just as much as any child.

## The science behind parenting

There has been over 30 years of research on the effectiveness of parent training programs. Most of the research has focused on methods to reduce behavior problems. Several elements of parenting programs have been found particularly effective in changing parenting behaviors and attitudes: teaching positive parent-child interaction

<sup>1</sup> The Science of Early Childhood Development. (2007) National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. <http://www.developingchild.net>.

skills; increasing emotional and empathetic communication skills; consistently setting limits across settings; and using time out correctly.<sup>2</sup>

**Relationships:** Parents engage in nurturing, positive, loving interactions with their children.

Teaching parents to interact positively with their children is one of the most effective components of parenting programs. Researchers have found that child-directed play, praise and positive attention decreases aggression and other misbehaviors, as well as increases parents' self-efficacy.<sup>3</sup> This parenting curriculum focuses on how parents can foster optimal development by creating a positive, supportive, nurturing relationship with their children. Parenting facilitators will spend *sessions 1, 2 and 3* teaching parents skills to increase their positive interactions with their children.

**Communication:** Parents spend quality time with their children using empathetic communication.

Empathetic communication includes active listening and the appropriate expression of feelings and learning to regulate emotions. Empathetic communication helps children feel valued, which in turn can lead to decreased misbehavior due to frustration and anger. *Sessions 4 and 5* specifically focus on teaching parents and children empathy skills. Parents will learn how to sensitively respond to children's difficult emotions. Parents will also learn how to manage their own anger and frustration in order to communicate more effectively with each other and their children.

**Household Rules and Consequences:** Parents provide age-appropriate, supportive guidance and routines.

Learning how to set limits, be consistent and follow through with developmentally appropriate expectations and limits are also effective components of parenting programs. Teaching parents how to create household rules and implement appropriate consequences for breaking the rules can significantly decrease children's externalizing behaviors.<sup>4</sup> When children understand what is expected of them at home, at school and in the community, they have a better chance of complying with rules. The Parenting Curriculum teaches parents about creating age-appropriate household rules and consequences in *sessions 6 and 7*.

**Discipline:** Parents use nonviolent discipline strategies.

Time out is a discipline strategy that has been adopted by a number of evidence-based parenting programs including The Incredible Years, Triple P, and Parent-Child Interaction Training. These programs have proved effective for families all over the world and research overwhelmingly supports the use of time out to decrease aggressive and oppositional behaviors. *Session 7* focuses on teaching parents the correct procedure for implementing time out with their children. When done correctly,

2 Centers for Disease Control and Prevention. (2009). Parent Training Programs: Insight for Practitioners. Atlanta, Ga.

3 Kaminski W. J., Valle, L.A., Filene, J.H., and Boyle, C. (2008). A Meta-analytic Review of Components Associated with Parent Training Program Effectiveness, in Journal of Abnormal Child Psychology, Vol. 36, Issue 4, pp 567-589.

4 Wessels I, Mikton, C., Ward CL, Kilbane T, Alves R, Campello G, Dubowitz H, Hutchings J, Jones L, Lynch M, Madrid B. (2013). *Preventing violence: Evaluating outcomes of parenting programmes*. Geneva, Switzerland, World Health Organization, .

time out teaches children to calm down and self-regulate, a lifelong skill children need in order to be successful in school and in their communities.

**Cognitive and Social Skills:** Parents learn to build children's cognitive capacity through positive interactions.

In *session 8*, parents learn how to help their children develop language skills, develop their problem-solving skills, increase their memory. *Session 8* also teaches parents how to prepare their children for school. Earlier sessions in the Parenting Curriculum also help parents learn to provide positive attention and praise to encourage prosocial behaviors like sharing, cooperation and respect for rules. It is important that cognitive and social skills are learned within the context of a supportive, positive parent-child relationship. These kinds of skills are taught best through play and games.

## **Overview of the Families Make the Difference Parenting Facilitators Training**

The Families Make the Difference Parenting Facilitators Training is a five-day workshop that prepares parenting facilitators to conduct parenting skills training for groups of 10-15 parents. Parenting facilitators use the Families Make the Difference Parenting Curriculum. By the end of this training, facilitators will:

- Understand how children's brains develop within the context of relationships.
- Demonstrate ways to promote children's positive development and behavior through positive attention and play.
- Demonstrate ways to decrease children's misbehavior.
- Understand the affects of "toxic stress" on children's development and identify ways of decreasing parental stress and anger.
- Demonstrate key group facilitation skills.
- Understand how to organize parent groups for parenting skills training and deliver the Families Make the Difference Parent Curriculum.

## **Structure of the Families Make the Difference Parenting Facilitator Training**

This training uses a variety of techniques to help facilitators learn to implement the Families Make the Difference parenting curriculum. Participants receive instruction, practice skills, and work in small groups to generate ideas. The following is a sample Families Make the Difference Parenting Facilitator training guide:

### **Day 1: Introduction to the Families Make the Difference (FMD) Program and Families Make the Difference Sessions 1 and 2**

- The introduction contains a fun, ice-breaker activity and an overview of the curriculum. The purpose of the introduction is to get participants excited for the day's session and to help them understand what they will cover in the training.
- **Session 1: Welcome to the Families Make the Difference Program**  
Parents are introduced to the program and to the concept of "Nurturing Young Children from Birth with Love and Care to Promote Healthy Brain Development."

➤ **Session 2: Loving, Playful Interactions Promote Healthy Growth and Development**

Parents influence and shape their children's development through loving, playful interaction.

**Day 2: Families Make the Difference Sessions 3 and 8**

➤ **Session 3: I Can Help My Child Learn Positive, Prosocial Behavior**

When parents provide good supervision and spend quality time with their children they can increase positive behaviors.

➤ **Session 8: Talking and Playing with my Child from Birth Will Help Her Grow into a Happy, Healthy Adult!**

Parents play a major role in their children's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development, helping their children learn language, solve problems and prepare for school.

**Day 3: Families Make the Difference Sessions 4 and 5**

➤ **Session 4: Empathy and Mutual Respect Between People of All Ages, Religions, Cultures, Races and Genders Promotes Peaceful Homes and Happy, Healthy Children**

Warm and empathic communication with children increases understanding and decreases frustration between children and parents, improves relationships, and reinforces attachments needed for healthy development.

➤ **Session 5: I Need to Take Good Care of Myself So I Can Take Good Care of My Children**

Parents who respect each other and themselves contribute to an environment that supports children's healthy development. Social and emotional well-being is a necessary ingredient for healthy parenting practices.

**Day 4: Families Make the Difference Sessions 6, 7 and 9, and Home Visiting and Parent Support Groups**

➤ **Session 6: Harmony and Responsibility in My Home**

All adults are responsible for creating a peaceful, structured home environment that enables children's healthy development. Children need supportive guidance and routines.

➤ **Session 7: My Home will be a Safe Place for My Children and Everyone Will Be Treated with Dignity**

All children in the home (biological and non biological) deserve to live in a safe, supportive environment. Parents will learn strategies to help all household members handle anger and frustration peacefully.

➤ **Session 9: Clean, Fed and Nurtured Children Are Happy and Healthy Children**

Parents can have lasting positive effects on children's health when they are involved in their children's hygiene and nutrition through simple routines and guidance

➤ **Session 10: Review and Celebration**

## Day 5: Group Facilitation Skills (and other program components)

- Group facilitation and leadership skills
- Participants practice the facilitation of parent groups and using the Families Make the Difference curriculum
- Fidelity monitoring

## Day At a Glance: Detailed schedule of parenting facilitators training

	Day 1	Day 2	Day 3	Day 4	Day 5
<b>8:30–9:30</b>	Welcome and introductions  Objectives for the day	Welcome back!  Review of yesterday's training  Objectives for the day	Welcome back!  Review of yesterday's training  Objectives for the day  The Five Parenting Constructs  Empathy: body mapping activity	Welcome back!  Review of yesterday's training  Objectives for the day  The Five Parenting Constructs continued  Appropriate roles	Welcome to our last day of training!  Review of yesterday's training  Objectives for today  Introduction to group facilitation skills
<b>9:30–10:15</b>	Pre-training Assessment  Expectations for the training	The power of parental attention and modeling in shaping child behavior	Empathy continued: The 4 Steps of Empathy	Supportive guidance and freedom  Age appropriate expectations	Group facilitation skills and group management
<b>15 min. break</b>					
<b>10:30–12:30</b>	Overview of Families Make the Difference Program  Group rules  What science says about parenting and attachment	Play- positive attention shapes positive behavior and builds brains!	Empathy continued	Family rules consequences  Discipline with dignity:  body mapping	Practice facilitating parenting groups and using the Families Make the Difference Curriculum
<b>1 Hour Lunch</b>					
<b>13:30–15:15</b>	Supporting and encouraging child development	The strategic use of parental attention: praise and ignore	Empathy continued  Self care for parents: social and emotional health	Time to calm down  Optional: Families Make the Difference Session 9: objectives and activities	Practice group facilitation

15 min. break					
<b>15:30–17:00</b>	Families Make the Difference Sessions 1 and 2: objectives and activities	Families Make the Difference Sessions 3 and 8: objectives and activities	Families Make the Difference Sessions 4 and 5: objectives and activities	Other program elements: Parent support groups Home coaching implementation considerations	Fidelity monitoring Post training assessment
<b>1700–1730</b>	Wrap up Evaluations  What to expect tomorrow	Wrap up Evaluations  What to expect tomorrow	Wrap up Evaluations  What to expect tomorrow	Wrap up Evaluations  What to expect tomorrow	Wrap up Evaluations

## Preparing for and conducting the training: The role of the trainer

- Prepare materials before each training day.
- Create a safe, fun environment so everyone actively participates throughout the training.
- Create a collaborative atmosphere by fostering discussions and encouraging participants to think critically about ideas and concepts. Trainers can also encourage collaboration by asking participants to contribute knowledge based on their own life experiences.
- Assess participants when practicing skills and provide feedback.
- Teach and model skills/behaviors/activities that participants can use when later they facilitate training for parent groups.
- Set a respectful tone. Everyone has a right to voice his or her ideas and opinions.
- Manage time well in order to complete as many of the training activities on the agenda each day.

### Trainer Tips

- Be on time.
- Be prepared.
- Be positive and enthusiastic.
- Create a respectful, safe environment.
- Manage time well.
- Encourage everyone to participate by asking questions.
- Provide praise and positive feedback.
- Keep the group on task.

## Adopting an active, participatory training approach

Trainers will use a collaborative, active approach when training parenting facilitators; create discussions with participants by asking questions, and encourage brainstorming activities, the practice of new skills and group discussion. Research shows participants are likely to learn best through active participation rather than passive listening. Some key tenets of this approach are outlined below.

**Creating Discussions Around the Materials:** Trainers need to balance the information they present with group discussion. One way to do this is to ask questions. This training guide provides several questions for trainers to ask participants during the program in order to encourage active participation and learning. This curriculum will also instruct the trainer when to use the strategy of brainstorming to encourage participants to generate ideas in collaboration with each other and the facilitator.

**Skills Practice:** Trainers will help parenting facilitators learn how to encourage discussions about parenting skills and how to set up role-plays and practice activities. That is to say, trainers will have parenting facilitators practice the same skills they will teach to parents in their parenting programs. The research on effective parenting programs strongly suggests that practicing new skills is a critical element in parent training programs. Setting up role-plays to ensure parents' success can be done by following these steps:

1. Select participants or ask for volunteers and give them appropriate roles. Praise parents for their willingness to participate in the role-play.
2. Provide each person with a description of his/her role. Role-plays are suggested throughout the curriculum with instructions regarding the skills to be practiced.
3. Make sure that all participants in the role-play understand the skills they are demonstrating. Have the entire group give suggestions about what participants might do or say. There are clear step-by-step instructions in the curriculum for each role-play and how to set it up.
4. If parents demonstrate skills incorrectly, ask them to pause the role-play and then give them further instruction to help them practice the skills correctly.
5. Ask participants in the role-play how they felt.
6. Ask the entire group to give positive feedback only to the person in the parent role.
7. Offer detailed praise of the role-play and what was learned.

**Working in Pairs and Small Groups:** Working in pairs and small groups promotes active listening and communication skills and helps activities feel varied and engaging. During the activity or discussion, the trainer should move around the room to assess the pairs/groups. Pairs/groups may be asked to present their ideas either in writing or out loud.

Pairs/groups can be formed in the following ways:

- Participants work with others sitting next near them or at the same table.
- Participants form groups according to their "animal avatars": cow, goat, duck or cat. Begin with one participant and move around the room clockwise and have the first participant call out goat, the next cat, the next cow, the next duck, the next

goat, and so on until everyone has called out one of the four animals. Have all participants stand up and move away from tables and chairs and stand in a circle. With their eyes closed, have all participants move about to find others making the same animal sound they are making. These participants make a group.

- Participants form groups by calling out numbers. Those who call out the same number form a group. If facilitators want groups to all have the same number of participants, divide the total number of participants by the desired number of groups. For example, if you have 20 participants, and want groups of 4, participants should count off from 1 to 5.

# Training Day 1

## Introduction to the Families Make the Difference Program and Sessions 1 and 2

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours, plus 1 hour lunch

### TIP

Before starting the first day of training, trainers should be familiar with the Families Make the Difference Parent Group Program materials and Days 1-5 of the parent group facilitator training.



### Session Objectives

1. Participants will understand the purpose of the Families Make the Difference parent group facilitator training.
2. Rules for the group will be established, participants will get to know one another, and expectations and concerns will be addressed.
3. Participants will understand how children develop cognitively, emotionally, socially, and physically.
4. Participants will understand and practice ways to promote child development.
5. Participants will learn about the first two sessions of the Families Make the Difference Parenting Program.



### Materials

Attendance sheet  
Flip charts/chalkboard  
Markers/chalk  
Handouts  
Pre-training assessments  
Training of facilitators manual  
Parenting curriculum



### Preparation

- › Read through all 10 of the Families Make the Difference parent program sessions.
- › Read through the Families Make the Difference training of facilitators manual.
- › Arrive at least 30 minutes early.



(1 hour 45 minutes)

## 1.1 Introduction and Expectations

### Attendance

There is a sample training attendance sheet in the appendix of this manual. Have trainees sign in each morning and sign out in the afternoon. Please explain to participants that they must attend **all five days** of the Families Make the Difference parent group facilitator training in order to receive a certificate.

### Welcome

WELCOME participants with a smile and enthusiasm. Praise participants for coming to this training to strengthen families in their communities.

Explain to participants that they will learn from each other as well as from personal experience.

Explain that each participant has a lot of important knowledge, since many of them are parents themselves!

INTRODUCE YOURSELF and tell parents about your previous experience facilitating trainings or parenting groups. Let them know a little bit about your work experience and professional background.

#### TIP

Show parents you are enthusiastic about being their parent group leader and the program! You can show your enthusiasm in the following ways:

- › Smiling
- › Active Listening
- › Presenting the materials positively
- › Praising parents to attending and contributing

### Introductions of Training Participants

- › Divide participants into groups of two.
- › Ask participants to discuss the following questions with their partners:
  1. What is your name?
  2. Where are you from?
  3. What is one hope or expectation that you have for this training?
  4. Describe one thing that your parents did when you were a child that made you feel loved, happy and safe.
- › Explain to the participants that after the discussions, they will share what they learned of their partners: "My friend is called Jane and her expectation for this training is..."
- › Allow the participants to discuss among themselves for 10-15 minutes.
- › Ask participants to present their partners to the group. Tell them to be brief with their introductions.

On a flip chart, write down the expectations that participants have for this training.

Now ask if anyone has any concerns or questions.

Make sure to make note of any questions so you can address them throughout the training.

### Pre-Training Assessment

Now pass out the pre-training assessment or use the power point slide with the 5 pre-training questions and give participants approximately 20–30 minutes to complete it.



(30 minutes)

## 1.2 Overview of the Training and the Families Make the Difference Program

### Overview

Review the daily schedule of the training with participants so they know what to expect.

### Explain:

- There are 10 sessions in the Families Make the Difference Program (Sessions 5, 8, and 9 are optional); all 10 sessions will be cover during this 5-day training.
- Each session will last around 2 hours and they will take place weekly or every other week.
- Tell participants they will also learn about setting up parents support groups and home coaching visits, and creating session handouts and program fidelity measures.
- Every second or third session, facilitators will visit homes to help parents reflect on the previous weeks' learning and to practice skills. These visits will also offer an opportunity for facilitators to coach positive interactions between parent group participants and their children. **Only say if you are implementing the home coaching portion of the program.**
- Tell participants that the training is based on dialogue, listening, skills practice and group work—they should feel free to ask questions and/or raise concerns. Anything they say is important.

## 1.2 Overview of the Program Continued

WRITE GROUP RULES on a flip chart. Do not spend much time on this, but keep the list as a guide for participants throughout the training. REMEMBER: you are modeling this activity for them, as they will do this in their parenting groups. Rules might include: respect others; no phones; be punctual; attend all sessions; only one person talks at a time; etc.

EXPLAIN that a certificate will be given at the end only if a participant has attended all five days of the training.

### Sing A Song Or Play A Game!

Ask participants if they want to suggest a song to sing; if they don't have a suggestion, use the one below:

When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).

When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).

When you're happy and you know then your face will surely show it.

When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).

Repeat singing the song with children and parents clapping their hands. Alternate verses, as below:

When you're mad...stamp your feet.

### TRAINER TIP

Have fun during this training and use the songs and games in this manual! Remember you are modeling for the facilitators!

When your sad...wipe your eyes.

When you're scared...scream out loud.

When you're cold...shake and shiver.



(1 hour 30 minutes)

### 1.3 What Science Says about Parenting, Attachment, Child Development, and Well-being?

#### Explain:

- There has been 30 years of research on the effectiveness of parent training programs to help improve child behavior, eliminate behavior problems, and prevent and mediate child abuse and neglect.
- Parents who support their children and show affection, supervise and provide them with safe discipline, influence their children's healthy development and well-being.
- Peaceful, nonviolent homes allow for more supportive and nurturing parent-child relationships that help children become good students and productive community members.

When parents engage with young children, they help them learn language, develop motor and social skills, and regulate their feelings and emotions. When parents are abusive or neglectful, they have lasting negative effects on a child's developing brain that can lead to behavioral and learning problems. Helping children develop cognitive skills and good physical and mental health from birth provides the scaffolding needed to become productive, cooperative citizens.<sup>5</sup>

#### Show if possible:

The three core concepts of early development videos from Harvard's Center on the Developing Child: [http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/three\\_core\\_concepts/](http://developingchild.harvard.edu/resources/multimedia/videos/three_core_concepts/)

#### Explain:

- The parent-child bond is the essential and primary force in infant development!
- Children develop within the relationships they have with parents.

#### Ask:

- Why is a healthy attachment between a parent and child important? Give participants a chance to think of some ideas before providing the following information (if needed).
  - Children learn how to interact with other adults and peers in relationships. Attachment security makes a difference in young children's immediate and long-term behavior.
  - They learn in relationships how to communicate effectively, how to cooperate with others, and how to negotiate with others.

#### TIP

Encourage participants to think of a seedling. A seedling needs nutrients from the soil, water, sun, protection and tender care in order to grow tall and strong. A plant may survive being regularly trampled or neglected, but it may be weak, or diseased and the harvest will not be as fruitful. (Human beings need more care and support, they are more complex; they also need love, attention, stimulation, social relationships, family and community, a sense of purpose...)

<sup>5</sup> The Science of Early Childhood Development. (2007).g National Scientific Council on the Developing Child. <http://www.developingchild.net>.

- Secure children play more harmoniously with their peers as they develop, and they score higher than insecure children on language and cognitive measures.<sup>6</sup>
- Ask: How do parents and family/community members create healthy attachments in your local communities?



(1 hour 30 minutes)

## 1.4 Brain Development

### The Brain

#### Explain:

- Human beings acquire information through experiences.
- The care that infants and young children receive from parents lays the groundwork for the development of a wide range of basic developmental processes that support children's psychosocial development and functioning. Safe, stable and nurturing caregiving early in life is also associated with better physical and mental health, fewer behavior problems, higher educational achievement, and better adult productivity.<sup>7</sup>
- BRAIN STRUCTURE: Explain each of the structures below.

Brain cells are called **neurons**. We are born with billions of these cells.

The connections between neurons are called **synapses**. Parents can create connections that build a healthy or an unhealthy brain structure, depending on the experiences they create for young children.

Neurons, like trees, can be **pruned** away. We must use our brain cells or we will lose them!

Our brains have the ability to modify its own structure—it's called brain plasticity! This ability decreases significantly as humans age. Parents want to help modify the structure of children's brains when they are young to shape healthy growth and development.

**Cortisol** is a stress hormone that, when overproduced, can decrease the immune system's ability to fight off disease. Cortisol can break down muscle and bone tissues. This can happen when children experience high levels of toxic stress.

#### Ask:

participants to remember the brain videos they watched earlier. Ask participants to describe the “serve and return” processes described in the videos.

#### Show:

the brain scan slides.

<sup>6</sup> [http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb\\_24.pdf](http://csefel.vanderbilt.edu/briefs/wwb_24.pdf)

<sup>7</sup> Shonkoff, J. P., & Phillips, D. (2000). *From Neurons to Neighborhoods: The Science of Early Childhood Development*. Washington, D.C.: National Academy Press.

### Ask:

- › what is different about the two slides?
- › These two slides are pictures of children's brains. Put simply, chronic neglect or abuse of very young children can diminish their brain function well beyond their youth.<sup>8</sup>
- › Just as positive early experiences build healthy brain architecture, adverse early experiences can weaken it. Helping all children have supportive environments to learn and grow provides the foundation for better school achievement and adult productivity!

### TIP

This practice should take about 15 minutes. When the participants are practicing walk around and observe them. Make sure the help them if they need it!

### Skills Practice:

- › Divide participants into groups of three to practice "serve and return." One person will be the parent, another will be a 9-month-old baby, and the third person will be the observer/coach.
- › The person playing the parent should smile and make sounds imitating those of made by the person playing the 9-month-old infant. The parent will need to watch the infant and respond accordingly. The idea is have a positive interaction! The person playing the observer can observe or coach if the parent needs help. Have each person in the group take turns playing all three roles.
- › Bring everyone together after the skills practice and ask them to talk about how they felt as "parents" engaging in this kind of play/interaction with their "infant." What was easy? Hard? Why?



(1 hour 45 minutes)

## 1.5 Supporting and Encouraging Child Development

### Explain:

- › The key to children's healthy growth and development is positive interaction with parents.
- › Child development refers to the biological, social and psychological changes that happen to children from birth through adulthood. These changes influence children's physical, social, emotional and cognitive capacities.
- › Early childhood is an intensive period of brain development. Eighty percent of brain structure occurs during the first three years of life. It is during these years that a child's brain is most sensitive to the influences of the external environment. Adequate physical, emotional and intellectual stimulation and nutrition are essential for healthy development. Parents (both moms and dads) who provide love and positive attention to a baby help to ensure that the child reaches his or her potential.

### Emotional Development

- › Learning words to express emotions
- › Learning how to express emotions safely

<sup>8</sup> Source: C.A. Nelson (2008) and Marshall P.J., Fox N.A., & the BEIP Core Group. (2004). Journal of Cognitive Neuroscience, 16, 1327–1338.

- › Learning how to regulate emotions
- › Learning healthy ways to handle difficult emotions

**Ask:**

- › the group to think of and name as many emotions as they can. Write these emotions on the flip chart.
- › Now show the pictures (if available) of children expressing different emotions and ask the group to identify those emotions.

**Explain:**

When parents recognize and respond to their children's emotions in sensitive, compassionate ways, they help their children understand their emotions and learn to express them in safe ways, like talking about them.

**Show:**

(if possible) participants the "Still Face Experiment" video by Dr. Tronick at Harvard University: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=apzXGEbZht0>

**Ask:**

participants what they think of when they hear the term *social development*. Tell them the group will now discuss social, physical and cognitive development. Then provide the information below as needed.

**Social Development**

- › Sharing and taking turns
- › Being a caring friend
- › Greeting parents and other family members
- › Being a good student and community member

**Physical Development**

- › Growing
- › Learning to reach and grab for things
- › Learning to stand, walk, and run
- › Throwing or kicking a ball
- › Learning how to grip a pencil

**Cognitive Development**

- › Learning to talk
- › Learning to count
- › Learning to solve problems



## Small Group Activity: Ways To Promote Child Development

### Explain:

- Now we are going to think of some ways to promote children's thinking skills, emotional development, physical growth and abilities, and learn social skills. They need to think about promoting the development of children from birth to age 5.
- Split trainees into four groups. The easiest way to do this is to have them count off by fours.
- Group 1 will list ways to promote children's thinking skills.
- Group 2 will list social skills and some ways to promote these skills.
- Group 3 will list activities that parents can do with children to promote their physical growth and development.
- Group 4 will list ways to promote and support the emotional development of young children.
- After the groups have finished their lists, they need to prepare a sample role-play to encourage the use of one of the skills on the lists.
- For example: the group that developed a list of social skills might choose the skill of sharing. One person can be the parent and another a 5-year-old child. The parent could offer to share an item they are playing, and then comment, "Oh, it makes me feel happy to share and play with you!"

### TIP

Remember to generously praise participants after the role plays! You are helping to build their confidence and modeling how you would like them to support parents in their groups.



(1 hour 30 minutes)

## 1.6 Overview of Sessions 1 and 2

*NOTE: Trainers can pass out the manual at this point and let facilitators look at sessions 1 and 2 while they present an overview.*

### Session 1: Welcome to the Families Make the Difference Program

Introduction to the Families Make the Difference Program and the concept of Nurturing Young Children from Birth to Promote Healthy Brain Development

#### Session 1 Objectives:

1. Participants will meet each other and the trainers.
2. Participants will receive an overview of the Families Make the Difference program.
3. Participants will set up Parent Support Groups (PSG).
4. Participants will understand the importance of nurturing, positive parenting skills and will prepare themselves to empathize with parents' hopes for the program and for their children.

#### What is Nurturing/Positive Parenting?

- Ask participants what they think of when they think of the word *nurture*.
- Then tell participants something like, "We are going to spend the next several weeks talking about positive, nurturing parenting. We are going to talk about how

you can promote your children's development and positive behaviors by enjoying time with them, praising them and loving them.”

### Explain:

The next activity is from Session 1 of the parenting curriculum. Tell participants that they will get the opportunity to try out several of the parent activities in the curriculum throughout the training.



### Parent Activity: “When I Was A Child...”

1. Ask participants to remember when they were children and the experiences they consider nurturing. Offer the following formulations that parents can use to evoke memories:
  - One good memory I have of my childhood is...
  - The **positive** feeling I had then was...
  - The feeling I have remembering this today is...
2. Have the parents discuss their memories and feelings in pairs for about 5 minutes. The facilitator should walk around the room and listen in as parents are sharing. Then have each parent share the memory he wants his child to have of him as a parent.
3. You can write parents' desired memories next to their names on a flip chart and come back to these during the last session of the program.

## Session 2: I Love My Children, I Want the Best for Them

How parents Influence and shape their children's development through loving, playful interactions!

### Objectives:

1. Parents will understand how the brain develops during childhood.
2. Parents (both moms and dads) will understand their roles in helping children learn.
3. Parents will understand that the parent-child relationship is critical to healthy social, emotional, physical and psychological development in children.

### Explain:

Tell participants that they will do the following activity with parents in their groups. Tell participants you have already done this today so there is no need to do it again here in the training.



(30 minutes)

## 1.7 Wrap Up Day 1

### Summary

Review the following:

- The materials comprising the Families Make the Difference Program
- Research on parenting and the importance of parent-child interactions for healthy brain development

### Participant Feedback

Have a brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session?
- What did you like least?
- What would you have liked to discuss that was not?

### Closing and Preparation for Next Session

- THANK participants for coming to the first day of training.
- INFORM them of the topic for discussion for Day 2.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you have set it.
- ASK them to practice “serve and return” with their children. If participants do not have young children at home, ask them to share one thing they learned today with a family or community member.

# Training Day 2

## Families Make the Difference Sessions 3 and 8

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours, plus 1 hour lunch



### Session Objectives:

1. Review the first session.
2. Discuss the value and potential of parental attention in shaping children's behavior.
3. Discuss and practice ways to promote children's positive behaviors and cognitive abilities.



### Materials

Attendance sheet  
Flip chart  
Markers  
Handouts  
Training of facilitators manual  
Parenting Curriculum

### TIP

Today you will have participants practicing a lot of skills. Be sure to bring some children's toys for the practices!



### Preparation

- › Be at least 30 minutes early.
- › Prepare the space for the session and ensure it will be conducive to uninterrupted dialogue.



(1 hour)

## 2.1 Nurturing, Positive Parenting

### Attendance

Have trainees sign into the training and sign out in the afternoon.

Use a separate attendance sheet for each day.

### Welcome Back!

Greet participants with enthusiasm!

### Review Of Day 1

Experiences build brains! Ask participants to share with their neighbors some of the ways that they used their new skills with children, families or other colleagues. Allow 10-15 minutes for this activity. Ask for a few participants to share their experiences with the entire group.

Child development refers to the biological, social and psychological changes that occur in children from birth through adulthood. These changes influence children's physical, social, emotional and intellectual capacities.

Early childhood is an intensive period of brain development. Eighty percent of brain structure occurs during the first three years of life. It is during these years that a child's brain is most sensitive to the influences of the external environment. Adequate physical, emotional and intellectual stimulation and nutrition are essential for healthy development. Parents (both moms and dads) who provide love and positive attention to a baby help to ensure that the child reaches his or her potential.

The more stimulating and loving the early environment, the more a child develops and learns. High levels of stress during early childhood can increase the risk of poor health and lead to learning difficulties and social and emotional deficiencies throughout life.

### Ask:

Does anyone have any questions before moving on?

Sing a song: ask participants if they have a song they can suggest a song to sing. If no one has a suggestion, offer the following:

Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.

Head shoulders, knees and toes, knees, and toes.

Eyes and ears and mouth and nose.

Head, shoulders, knees and toes, knees and toes.

Have participants point to each body part as they sing. Sing the song at a normal pace the first time, then sing it again fast, and then sing it again slow. Children love it and they can sing it in their native language.

#### TIP:

If participants completed their home assignments praise them generously by saying something like, "that is really great that you shared about brain development with a parent or colleague."

It is important to encourage and praise training participants to do their home assignments because this will further their learning during the training!



(45 minutes)

## 2.2 The Power of Parental Attention and Modeling in Shaping Child Behavior

All Children Want and Need Positive Attention from their Caregivers!

### The Golden Rule of Psychology: Parental Attention

#### Explain:

- All children want attention from their parents and other adults they love and respect. Children learn to get attention in both positive and negative ways. Attention can reinforce both positive and negative behaviors.
- When a parent praises a child for good behavior, such as sharing, the parent encourages that behavior.
- Negative behaviors, such as hitting, are also reinforced by attention (both negative or positive). When a parent gives more attention to negative behavior, she is reinforcing that negative behavior.

Parents need to be strategic about giving attention! When children misbehave in ways that are annoying, but not harmful to themselves or others, parents can ignore that misbehavior. If no one listens to a child who whines, then there is no point for him to continue whining. When parents yell at or hit children who whine, they are providing them with negative attention and thus reinforcing that negative behavior.

#### Ask:

Ask participants to think about ways they can pay positive attention to their children. When are the best times during the day, and what are the best kinds of activities, for parents to pay positive attention to children?

Some suggestions:

- Playing with their children
- Having dinner or breakfast together
- Getting children dressed
- Giving children a bath

Tell participants the group will discuss the importance of play later!

#### Explain:

### Other Positive Ways of Shaping Young Children's Behavior

Parents can encourage polite, kind behaviors in their children by modeling these kinds of behaviors. Children learn from what they see more than what they hear. If you tell them act peacefully and work hard, but you are violent and lazy, expect your children to follow your example and not your words. **Children are like sponges that observe and absorb everything.**

ASK parents to think of examples of behaviors their infants recently copied. Then have them share these behaviors with the group.



## Parent Activity: Play Doba Doba

Have participants stand and ask them to place their arms above their heads, place their arms at their sides, place their arms in front of them, etc. At times, do something opposite than what you ask participants to do. For example, you might say, *“Put your arms at your side”* to participants, but you will put *your* arms above your head. The game will go something like this:

You say Doba and place your arms in front of you and the participants follow.

You say Doba, Doba and place your arms above your head.

You say Doba and place your arms at your side and participants will likely follow (when you say just Doba they were supposed to place their arms in front).

Keep playing until just one participant is left!

*Most participants will follow the trainer’s actions and not his/her words! Children will do the same thing with their parents!*

If this game seems unfamiliar or challenging, you can play a simple following directions game and you can tell participants to follow your directions and if they do something that you do not tell them to do they must sit down. It could look something like this:

I am going to tell you to raise your right hand, by saying right hand

Then I might tell you to raise your left hand by saying left hand

Next I might tell you to raise both hands above your head by saying both hands

Practice each of these and then ask if they re ready to begin.

You say right hand and you raise your right hand too.

You say both hands and you raise both hands too

You say right hand, **but you raise your left hand**

**The participants that followed your action and not your words must sit down.**

Keep playing until just one participant is left and you can make up other actions too like standing on your left foot, standing on your right foot, hopping up and down, there are many actions you can try. The point is to try and get parents to follow your actions and not your words to prove the point above!

### Explain:

Actions often speak louder to children (and adults) than words. Children will imitate their parents: if parents are cruel to other people, if they shout and yell, their children will act the same way.



(2 hours)

## 2.3 Play: Positive Attention Shapes Positive Behavior and Builds Brains!

### Children Learn through Play!

#### TIP

Let participants come up with ideas first and then look at your manual to help fill in gaps!

#### Ask:

How can playing with children encourage positive development and behavior? Allow 5–10 minutes for discussion. Offer one or two of the suggestions below if necessary:

- › Children learn social skills by taking turns while playing games.
- › Children learn how to use their imaginations; play fosters creativity.
- › Children gain self-esteem: they feel important to their parents when parents play with them.
- › Parents learn about their children's likes and preference, skills and abilities.

#### Explain:

These are some guidelines for parents playing with their children.

- › Sit near your child and interact with them on their level.
- › Follow your child's lead. Watch for nonverbal cues to determine when they get tired, angry, bored, etc.
- › Pace the play to suit your child's developmental level.
- › Talk with your child and describe to her what you are doing.
- › Avoid power struggles: a power struggle is an argument that does not need to take place. For example: A parent is playing a game with her 3-year-old child. The boy decides he wants to play a different game. If a parent tells the child they must finish the current game first, and the 3-year-old argues, and the parent joins in the argument, this is a power struggle. Remember: the goal of play is to have fun, learn and build positive relationships.
- › Encourage creativity: teach life lessons through imagination.
- › Describe and talk about what your children are doing: You can say something like, "Oh, you are playing with the nice doll with a blue dress."
- › Coach positive peer and sibling play.
- › Encourage independent problem solving.
- › Give positive attention and approval.
- › Always stop inappropriate play. If children play with something dangerous like a knife, or if they are hitting one another, adults should intervene immediately! In future sessions, participants will learn strategies for handling dangerous misbehavior.

### Tip for setting up practices

- › Select participants
- › Praise them for their willingness to practice!
- › Coach them while they are practicing.
- › Ask group members to give them praise when the practice is completed.

## Skills Practice: Child Directed Play

Set up the following practice. Allow 10-15 minutes.

1. Select two training participants, it would be good to select one male and one female if available/appropriate.
2. Tell both participants (privately) what they will be doing in this practice. You are going to instruct the person playing the 5-year-old child to respond to the person playing the parent. Instruct the parent to be bossy and direct everything the child does. If you are playing with a ball, the parent might insist that the child throw or kick it a certain way for a certain number of times.
3. Tell the parent and the child that you will stay close by to help out in case they have trouble with the role-play.
4. Begin the practice.
5. After 2 or 3 minutes, stop the game and ask the child how he or she felt; then ask the parent. It is likely that both of them will report this experience was frustrating and not much fun.
6. Reenact the role-play. This time instruct the parent to follow the child's lead. Tell the parent to say kind words to the child while they are playing.
7. Stop the practice after a few minutes and ask the child how he or she felt this time; ask the parent. They both will likely report this time it was more fun and it made them feel good.
8. Ask the group to offer positive comments to the parent and child for their participation in this practice. Praise them as well!

Now split participants into groups of three. They are all going to get a chance to practice child-directed play, taking turns playing the parent, child and coach. Concentrate on child-directed play! Only practice the positive parent-child interaction this role-play. Allow 15-20 minutes to complete the practice.

Bring everyone back together.

ASK: What did participants like about this kind of play? What did they find hard?

## Teaching Children through Play: Games that Support Cognitive Development

### Explain:

There is a relationship between listening comprehension and reading comprehension. Children who have more conversations develop better understanding than other children, read better than other children, and perform better in school overall.

Playing word games with children build their vocabulary, which in turn helps them learn to read and write (even if they attend schools where the lessons are taught in a language other than the one they speak at home!)

The more a child masters the language spoken at home, the better he or she will learn a new language in school. This requires a lot of language use—both listening and speaking.

**Ask:**

What are some ways we have already talked about to support babies and young children's school readiness? Prompt the group by suggesting one or more of the following:

- Singing songs, especially to babies.
- Practice "Serve and return" with babies, interacting with them from birth and using full sentences.
- Encourage positive play with and among children, including counting, piling objects, drawing and coloring, remembering words, etc.
- Maintain a loving, peaceful atmosphere at home.
- Encourage child participation in family matters.
- Use conversation and word play to support literacy skills and school readiness.

**Ask:**

Did anyone tell you stories? If so, who told you those stories? What were the stories about? Is there one you remember most of all? Give participants 10 minutes to share their memories with their partners. When the group reconvenes, ask if anyone wants to share a story with the group. Allow two or three participants to tell a story, depending on time. Then ask the group what they gained from hearing the stories. (Possible answers might include bonding with the story teller; learning about family, cultural traditions and history; learning how to listen for information; learning language and narrative skills).



(2 hours)

## **2.4 The Strategic Use of Parental Attention: Praise and Ignore**

### **Praising Promotes Positive Behavior**

**Ask:**

What is praise and why is praise good for children? Praise is telling your child that you like something that he or she is doing.

- Praise shows love and affection.
- Praise helps children build self-esteem.
- Praise helps children build healthy social and emotional connections!

How does praising children make parents feel?

- Praise helps parents feel good about their children and builds positive relationships.
- Praise reinforces desirable behaviors: parents spend less time punishing or disciplining children because the child spends more time seeking parent's positive attention.

Examples of praise statements:

*I am so proud of the way you are doing your homework so carefully.*

*Thank you for saying “please.”*

*That is very polite.*

*I think it is so nice that you are sharing the ball with your friend.”*

**Explain:**

**Effective ways to praise children:**

- Decide what values, positive character traits or new behaviors are most important for your child to develop at certain point in her life, and look for opportunities to reinforce them.
- Describe exactly what your child did to elicit praise. Say, for example, “Thank you for cleaning up after you finished coloring.” Don’t just say, “Good Job.”
- Try to give praise as soon as you notice good behavior. Prompt praise is best because your child will be most aware of what of what she did to deserve it.
- Don’t hesitate to praise your child daily. Your child needs to know that you notice the good habits he is developing.
- Praise your child for trying hard. Don’t wait for perfection!
- You can also praise children nonverbally with a hug or smile! What are some other ways to nonverbally praise children?



**Small Group Activity**

Have participants think of behaviors they want to encourage in their children. Write up the list on a chalkboard or flip chart.

Have participants pair off and think of a specific praise statement for each of the behaviors on the list. Allow 15 minutes for this activity.

**Skills Practice: Praise**

1. Select three participants, one male and two females if possible, or two males and one female. Remember you want to model gender equality in your training!
2. Tell the three participants (out loud, so the group understand show these practices are set up) what will be expected of them in this practice. Two participants will play children (ages 4 and 5). They are going to play cooperatively. The person playing the parent will offer praise statements.
3. Trainers should assure participants that they will be available to help out, if needed, in the role-play.
4. Begin the practice.
5. After about three minutes, stop the role-play and ask the “children” how it felt to be praise; ask the “parent” how it felt to praise. All three will likely report that the role-play was fun and it make them feel good.

6. Ask the group to offer positive comments to the role-players for their participation in this practice. Trainers should praise them as well!

Now have pair off and practice the following scenario: a parent playing with a child prompts the child to share a toy; the child does and then the parent praises the child for sharing. The parent can also praise the child for being friendly or kind, or tell the child he loves

Now have parents get into pairs and practice the following scenario. In this scenario, the parent is playing with their child. The parent prompts the child to share their toy and the child does and then the parent praises the child for sharing. The parent can also praise the child for being friendly or kind. The parent may also praise the child by saying something like they love spending time with their child. Then have the parent model sharing with the child by offering their toy to the child. Then have them switch roles. Given them 15-20 minutes to complete this practice.

ASK: After bringing everyone back together.

How did it feel when you were the child receiving praise?

What did the parent find hard about praising?

## **Ignoring: The Removal of Attention to Decrease Minor Misbehavior**

### **Ask:**

What are children seeking when they are misbehaving by whining, nagging or yelling?

### **Explain:**

One of the most powerful ways to eliminate annoying behavior is for parents to remove their attention. IGNORE IS NOT JUST THE LACK OF PRAISE, IT IS THE REMOVAL OF ALL ATTENTION, POSITIVE AND NEGATIVE!

Several factors are critical to successfully ignoring misbehavior:

- **Ignore immediately.** Delaying your response will confuse the child if too much time passes between her annoying action and your ignore response.
- **Ignore consistently.** Whenever annoying behaviors occur, be consistent in your response. This will help the child to learn the limits to her behavior and to determine which behaviors will result in the desired attention.
- **Ignore fully.** When you are ignoring, make sure to:
  - Look away.
  - Maintain a neutral expression.
  - Restrict eye contact and physical contact.
  - Talk with others (but not the child); however, do not talk negatively about the child.
  - Engage in regular tasks.
  - MOST IMPORTANT: Return your positive attention immediately after the child stops misbehaving.

### Skills Practice: Ignore

1. Select two participants, male and female if possible. Allow 10-15 minutes for the exercise.
2. Explain to the participants that one will role-play a 5-year-old child who wants biscuits from the market, and one will play a parent with no money to buy biscuits today. The parent explains this once to the child and offers him a banana. The child cries that he wants biscuits. The parent immediately turns his back to the child and ignores him. The child continues to cry until he grows tired of begging. As soon as the child stops crying, the parent returns his attention and asks the child to help pick out vegetables. The child complies. The parent praises the child for helping.
3. Trainers should assure the role-players that they will stay close to help out in case they have any difficulties with the role-play.
4. Begin the practice.
5. After 2-3 minutes stop the practice and ask the child how it felt to be ignored, and the parent how it felt to ignore.
6. Ask the rest of the participants to give some positive comments to the parent and child role-players.

Now split your training participants into groups of three. They are all going to get a chance to practice ignore. They will take turns each of them being the parent once, the child once, and then a coach for the parent. Repeat the scene that was just role played in front of the whole group. Give them about 15-20 minutes to complete this practice.

ASK: After bringing everyone back together.

Was it hard to ignore, why?

How did the child's behavior change when the parent ignored?



(1 hour 15 minutes)

## 2.5 Overview of Sessions 3 and 8

### Session 3: I Can Help My Child Learn Positive, Prosocial Behavior

When Parents provide good supervision and spend quality time with their children they can increase positive behaviors.

#### Session 3 Objectives:

1. Parents will learn how proper supervision of children increases safety, and how spending quality time with them shapes positive, desirable behavior.
2. Parents will understand the power of attention (positive or negative) to reinforce behavior.
3. Parents will explore loving interactions with children during feeding and bathing and while performing daily routines and chores.

## Session 8: Talking and Playing with my Child from Birth Will Help Her Grow into a Happy, Healthy Adult!

Parents play a major role in their children's social, emotional, physical and intellectual development, helping their children learn language, solve problems and prepare for school.

### Session 8 Objectives:

1. Parents will be aware of their capacity to prepare young children for school and life.
2. Parents will learn a variety of techniques to help children prepare for school and develop life skills.
3. Parents will learn age-appropriate expectations of young children.



### Parent Activity

Earlier we completed one activity from Session 8 about story telling. We are going to practice one more activity from Session 8.

#### Word Games: Playing the Animal Game

The "animal game" is a fun vocabulary game you can play with your child anytime. Games help children from getting bored and misbehaving!

Parents can play this with more than one child at a time. Tell the child or children, "I'm thinking of an animal, and you are going to ask me questions about it until you can guess what animal I am thinking of. But I can only answer yes or no!"

Conduct a demonstration. The facilitator can say, "***I am thinking of an animal. Ask me any yes/no questions so that you can figure out which animal I am thinking of.***" The group responds with questions:

<i>Is it bigger than a dog?</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Does it have four legs?</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Does it make a lot of noise?</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Is it dangerous?</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Can you eat it?</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Is it a cow?</i>	<i>No</i>
<i>Does it give milk?</i>	<i>Yes</i>
<i>Is it a goat?</i>	<i>Yes! Congratulations!</i>

Point out that children learn a lot of vocabulary when they play words games. In the above game, they heard or used the words *bigger, dog, leg, noise, dangerous, eat, cow, milk*. The thinking that your children do asking and answering questions is good practice for school.

*(If you have time, you can play another word game from Session 8.)*



(30 minutes)

## 2.6 Wrap Up Day 2

### Summary

Highlight the following:

- Today we learned about shaping children's behavior by modeling and providing positive attention through play and praise.
- We also learned about how to withdraw attention to help decrease minor misbehaviors.
- We discussed how to promote children's cognitive development through play and conversation.

### Participant Feedback

Have a brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session?
- What did you like least?
- What would you have liked to discuss that was not?

### Closing and Preparation for Next Session

- THANK participants for coming to the first day of training.
- INFORM them of the topic for discussion for Day 3.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you have set it.
- ASK them to practice “serve and return” with their children. If participants do not have young children at home, ask them to share one thing they learned today with a family or community member.

# Training Day 3

## Families Make the Difference Sessions 4 and 5

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours, plus 1 hour lunch



### Session Objectives

1. Review the previous session.
2. Learn about the five parenting constructs.
3. Discuss the meaning of empathy and practice empathy-building skills and communication.
4. Learn to manage stress and anger.



### Materials

Attendance sheet  
Flip chart  
Markers  
Handouts  
Training of facilitators manual  
Parenting curriculum



### Preparation

- › Be at least 30 minutes early.
- › Prepare the meeting space and be sure it's conducive to uninterrupted dialogue.
- › Review Sessions 4 and 5 in the parenting curriculum.

### TIP

Today we will be completing the body mapping activity. Make sure you have enough markers and paper for all participants.



(30 minutes)

### 3.1 Review of Session 2: Play Promotes Positive Relationships and Brain Development

#### Attendance

Have trainees sign in each morning and sign out in the afternoon. Use a separate attendance sheet for each session.

WELCOME everyone back for day 3 of training and thank them for making a commitment to deliver this program!

#### Review from Day 2

##### Ask:

Pair off participants and have them discuss the following questions:

1. What are some ways of playing with children that promote brain development?
2. Did they have a chance to play with their own children (if they don't have children, did they play with a friend's or relative's children) in a way that promotes brain development?

Allow participants 10 minutes to talk. When the group reconvenes, have three or four people share their experiences.

##### Sing:

*When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).*

*When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).*

*When you're happy and you know then your face will surely show it.*

*When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).*

Repeat the song with the following stanzas:

*When you're mad...stamp your feet.*

*When you're sad...wipe your eyes*

*When you're scared...scream out loud.*

*When you're cold...shake and shiver.*

*When you're hot...fan your face.*



(3 hours)

### 3.2 The Five Parenting Constructs

#### Explain:

The following five parenting behaviors or constructs are adapted from a standardized assessment created by Dr. Stephen Bavolek called the Adult-Adolescent Parenting Inventory (the AAPI 2).<sup>9</sup> The Families Make the Difference Parenting Strategies for parents are anchored in these parenting behaviors.

<sup>9</sup> [www.nurturingparent.org](http://www.nurturingparent.org)

The five constructs are:

1. Empathy
2. Discipline with Dignity
3. Roles and Responsibilities
4. Guidance and Freedom
5. Appropriate Expectations



### **Group Activity: Empathy**

To introduce the topic of empathy, trainers can guide participants through the following activity. This activity will take about 45 minutes to an hour.

#### **Body Mapping Exercise: When I was a child...**

1. Have participants draw their bodies on a piece of paper.
2. Have participants remember happy memories from their childhood when they were 4 or 5 years old.
3. Have them remember unhappy memories as well.
4. Now ask participants to make a blue dot on the pictures of their bodies where they felt good remembering a happy memory.
5. Ask them to make a black cross on the pictures in the areas where they felt pain while remembering.
6. Have participants pair up and discuss their memories and the following questions with their partner: Did adults around you understand your feelings? Did they acknowledge your feelings?

#### **Explain:**

Children experience strong feelings that shape their personalities as they grow up. That is, they build memories through experiences. Children want and need their parents to understand and help with their difficult feelings.

Our children are just like us when we were little many years ago. Children need their parents to be empathetic, and understand their feelings. Empathy helps children feel safe and secure. It helps children become sensitive to other people's needs, and to be able to handle difficult feelings in acceptable ways.

Empathy is a human characteristic that allows us to understand and feel with our fellow human beings. Much of human behavior is driven by two neurological responses:

1. *Cognitive*: thoughts and memories in the frontal lobes.
2. *Affective*: our feelings stemming from the limbic system.

Empathic responses contain both cognitive and affective dimensions.

## **Stages of Empathetic Development**

- A 1-year-old child feels distress when another child falls or cries.
- A 2-year-old child becomes more aware that they are distinct from others and may even try to soothe another child in distress.
- In late childhood, children can understand the feelings of another person when he or she tells a story about a prior experience.

## **Human Beings Are Born with the Capacity to Be Empathetic! It Is a Parent’s Job to Teach Children How!**

### **Ask:**

What kinds of qualities or personal attributes do people need in order to be empathetic? (Give participants 5 minutes to generate ideas, then write their ideas on a flip chart paper or chalkboard).

### **Explain:**

There are four critical attributes or qualities of empathy:

- Awareness:  
You recognize the emotional state of another person.
- Understanding:  
You know what it is like to feel angry, happy, or sad.
- Identification:  
You have experienced or can imagine what the other person has experienced or is feeling.
- Appropriate response:  
You identify a person’s feeling, comment or show that you understand, and even help them if you can.

ASK: Does anyone have any questions about empathy.

Tell participants you are going to teach them a technique to improve empathy—to help children understand their feelings and handle emotions in a calm, gentle manner. The method is a four-step process:

- 1.** Identify the feeling.  
Example: “Oh, you look like you might be feeling sad.”
- 2.** Determine the reason.  
Example: “Please tell me what happened, I would like to help.”
- 3.** Honor the feeling.  
Example: “I am sorry your friend hit you, I would feel sad, too.”
- 4.** Take action.  
Example: “How can I help?”

## Skills Practice: Empathy

Now everyone is going to get a chance to practice this empathy building process. The exercise should take 10–15 minutes.

1. Select two participants, male and female if possible.
2. Tell the participants that they will role-play a 5-year-old child who is sad because a friend called her a mean name, and the parent who now must respond to the child's emotion by following the four-step empathy-building process.
3. Trainers should assure the role-players that they will stay close to help out in case they get bogged down in the exercise. This process is likely to be new and it is very possible that the parent may get stuck and need support.
4. Begin the practice.

Here is an example of what the parent could say and do:

*Parent: I see you are sad.*

*Child: I am sad today.*

*Parent: Please tell me what happened.*

*Child: My friend called me stupid.*

*Parent: I am so sorry. It does not feel good when our friends are not kind.*

*Child: No, it doesn't feel good and I hate her!*

*Parent: What can I do to help?*

5. Stop the practice after the parent completes the four steps and ask the participants role-playing the child and parent how it felt to practice empathy.
6. Ask the rest of the participants to give positive comments to the role-players. Trainers should praise them as well!

Now split your training participants into groups of three to practice empathy building. They will take turns playing the parent, the child and a coach for the parent. Allow 20 minutes to complete this practice.

ASK: After bringing everyone back together, ask the group: How did the 4 steps work? Was the process difficult? What did they like about it?

This four-step process can also work for parents who are caring for children with mental and physical disabilities. It can be hard sometimes to know how to meet the needs of children who are blind, deaf, or learning disabled. These children need love, nurturing and positive attention as much as other children.

Let's imagine for a moment what it would be like to be a child who learns more slowly than others, is not able to walk, or cannot hear. What kinds of things would we want from our caregivers? (Have participants brainstorm a list and fill in with the below suggestions as needed):

- Patience
- Understanding
- Playful, fun interactions with parents and other children

- Someone to help me learn at my own pace.
- Someone to take me outside and into the community.
- Someone to help me be part of family mealtimes and other activities.

Although it sometimes can be hard to figure out what any child is trying to tell us, parents must remember the power of kind words and loving care. Children with disabilities have feelings just like other children, even though they may not be able to express their feelings and needs as other children do.

#### Ask:

1. What are some other ways parents can be empathetic and nurturing with children who with disabilities?
2. How can parents promote empathy for children with disabilities among their siblings and friends?

Divide the group in half. Have one group address the first question and the other the second question. Allow 15–20 minutes for discussion and they have the groups share their ideas.



(2 hours)

### 3.3 Parental Self-Care

#### Parents Can Take Best Care of Others When They Take Good Care of Themselves.

Present the idea that parents can also use the four-step process of empathetic development on themselves and their spouses as well as other important adults in their lives. We can identify our own feelings, understand why we are feeling them, honor those feelings, and then respond to them. It is important to show compassion to ourselves and other important adults in our lives—not just our children!

#### Ask:

Is there an adult in your life who responds to you in empathetic ways when you are experiencing a difficult time? What does she do that shows empathy? (Give several participants a chance to share out loud with the group.)

Parents who treat each other with kindness, compassion, respect, tolerance and dignity are modeling healthy, loving relationships for their children. When parents act in nurturing ways with each other, they are also nurturing their children and themselves.

#### Managing Anger and Other Difficult Feelings

#### Explain:

In order for parents to respond to children and significant others in empathetic ways, they must first take care of and manage their own feelings.

There are times when everyone reacts in negative ways to certain feelings. When angry or frustrated, some people yell at or physically hurt others, some drink to mask their feelings, some people ignore their friends and family, even refusing to talk at all.

#### TRAINER TIP

Empathy may be a new concept to several training participants. Take your time here and make sure to do all of the practices!

Often, when people fail to address their negative feelings, those emotions stay inside them even longer.

**Ask:**

What do participants do to manage their own negative feelings; write responses on the flip chart.

**Explain:**

Tell the group they will learn some specific strategies for how to handle negative feelings in a constructive way.. They will practice three different.

**Skill #1: RELAX body and mind (10 mins.)**

Research shows that relaxing our bodies and our minds reduces negative feelings like sadness and anger. It is also a way to reduce worry and general stress.

**Deep Breathing:** One way to relax is to breathe deeply and slowly. Breathe in through your nose and breathe out through your mouth. When you breathe IN, let your stomach fill OUT. This is a different kind of breathing, so it will feel strange at first.

Have participants:

- Close their eyes and put their hands on their stomach.
- Breathe in slowly and try to pull the air all the way into their stomachs so that their stomachs stick out.
- Breathe out VERY slowly through their mouths. Participants should feel their stomachs go back down. Counting to three slowly as they are breathing in and out can sometimes help to slow their breathing down.
- Tell participants to try to relax all of their muscles as they breathe out.
- Repeat the exercise five times. (Wait for everyone to finish this activity.)
- Have participants open their eyes. Ask how they feel? (Get their feedback.)
- If participants practice this exercise a few minutes every day, they should feel more relaxed. They can practice this breathing technique when they feel stressed to help calm their bodies and minds.

**Ask:**

What are some other ways to relax? (Possible answers: prayer, meditation, naps, imagining pleasant experiences.)

**Explain:**

**Skill #2: Think POSITIVE Thoughts**

Spouses, neighbors and children inevitably make us angry, sad, nervous and scared. Have participants try the following to help them calm down and respond to friends, family, and children in loving, kind ways. *It is never okay to act violently toward another adult or child because you are angry.*

Identify the feeling: Ask yourself why you are getting angry with someone? Then tell

yourself something positive about that person. For example, you could say:

*"He is stubborn sometimes, but I love him because he has a big heart, because he takes care of the house, because he loves me, or because when I am sad he makes me laugh."*

Imagine something positive about a situation that is causing you negative feelings. For example:

*"My child broke a dish today and although I am really angry, I know it was an accident and I can stay calm, I can handle the situation nonviolently."*



### Small Group Activity

Pair off participants and ask them to think about a recent situation in their life that made them sad, angry or scared. Then ask them to share that situation with their partner. Next ask each pair to come up with a positive response or statement to the difficult feeling. Allow 15 minutes for this exercise before asking some of the pairs to share their coping statements with the group.

### Skill #3: Take TIME for yourself

Parenting is hard work!

#### Ask:

How do you care for yourselves? Where do you go for help? Write down their answers on a flip chart.

When parents take care of themselves, they are able to respond to their children and significant others in empathetic, nonviolent ways.



## 3.4 Overview of Sessions 4 and 5

(1 hour 15 minutes)

### Session 4: Empathy and Mutual Respect Between People of all Ages, Religions, Cultures, Races and Genders Promotes Peaceful Homes and Happy, Healthy Children

Warm and empathic communication with children increases understanding and decreases frustration between children and parents, improves relationships, and reinforces attachments needed for healthy development.

#### Session 4 Objectives:

1. Parents will improve the quality of communication with their children by learning how to respond sensitively to children's emotions.
2. Parents will explore the concept of empathy and learn techniques to increase empathy.
3. Parents will spend quality time with their children using empathetic communication skills.

Now would be a good time for trainers to review the entire session structure with the group. Have participants take out their Families Make the Difference parenting curriculum and turn to Session 4. Explain to them that all sessions in the program

follow this structure.

Have participants take turns reading through the Session 4 steps that are numbered in the curriculum and at the end tell them they will all have a chance to practice facilitating a session on the last day of this training.

## **Session 5: I Need to Take Good Care of Myself So I Can Take Good Care of My Children**

Parents who respect each other and themselves contribute to an environment that supports children's social and emotional well-being is a necessary ingredient for healthy parenting practices.

### **Session 5 Objectives:**

1. Participants will explore their own psychological, social and emotional needs and how to take care of themselves.
2. Participants will understand the impact of parental stress on children.

### **Explain:**

Participants have learned some of the stress management strategies for parents included in Session 5. Ask them to complete the following homework assignment that they will give to parents when they conduct Session 5.

Tell participants to pick one way to take care of themselves during the coming week before the next meeting. They can practice positive thinking, deep breathing or other techniques.

Tell them you will ask them about their self-care at the beginning of Day 4 training.



(30 minutes)

## **3.5 Wrap Up Day 3**

### **Summary**

Highlight the following:

- Today we learned how to nurture parent-child relationships by communicating empathetically.
- We learned and practiced the four-step process to help us respond to children and other adults with empathy.
- We discussed and practiced strategies for anger and stress management.
- We reviewed Sessions 4 and 5 in the Families Make the Difference facilitator manual

### **Participant Feedback**

Have a brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session?
- What did you like least?

- What would you have liked to discuss that was not?

### **Closing and Preparation For Next Session**

- THANK participants for attending.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion for Day 4 of the training.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting

# Training Day 4

## Families Make the Difference Sessions 6, 7 and 9

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours, plus 1 hour lunch



### Session Objectives

1. Learn about appropriate roles for children and adults in the home.
2. Discuss developmentally appropriate expectations for all family members.
3. Learn and practice nonviolent discipline techniques.
4. Learn to conduct home visits and how to coach parents.
5. Learn to set up support groups.



### Materials

Attendance sheet  
Flip charts  
Markers  
Handouts  
Training of facilitators manual  
Parenting curriculum



### Preparation

- › Be at least 30 minutes early.
- › Make sure the meeting space is ready and conducive to uninterrupted dialogue.
- › Review Sessions 6 and 7 in the parenting curriculum.

Start your session  
with a song, game or  
energizer!



(30 minutes)

## 4.1 Review of Session 3: The Parenting Construct of Empathy

### Attendance

Have trainees sign the attendance sheet in the morning and sign out in the afternoon. Use a separate attendance sheet for each session.

WELCOME everyone back for day 4 of training!

### Ask:

Did participants manage to practice self-care since the last meeting? Ask if anyone practiced any of the skills discussed during the last training session, including positive thinking and deep breathing? Allow 15-20 minutes for discussion.



### Group Activity

Have everyone stand and make a circle. Then give them the following instructions:

- *We are going to tell a story.*
- *I will start out by saying, "When I was a child..."*
- *The person to my right will then add a word, if that word keeps the story going, the next person will add another word, and so on until someone says a word that does not make sense or ends the sentence/story. Then that person chooses the next person to begin a new story.*
- If you have time let the group create three or four stories.



(3 hours)

## 4.2 Appropriate Roles and Expectations for Young Children

### Children Need Discipline, Predictable Routines, and Structure

### Ask:

What is discipline? Ask participants to describe their idea of discipline.

### Explain:

- Children need to be guided by parents to become good community and family members. They need to know which values/principles will help them thrive (respect for others, caring for the most vulnerable, loving family and community, respecting yourself and learning to be happy).
- Parents can help children learn to be good people and citizens by guiding their behavior. Parents can set household rules, use their attention strategically, and follow through with consequences for negative behavior.
- Parents need to make clear to children what they expect of them, and children should feel confident that they can look to parents for security and guidance.

### TIP

Use all the questions in the manual to encourage participation and interaction during the training!

### **Explain:**

When all members of the household have clear roles and expectations:

- Children tend to have needs met appropriately and equally.
- Children are allowed to express developmental needs.
- Parents take ownership of their own behavior.
- Parents find comfort, support and companionship with peers.
- Parents tend to feel worthwhile and develop a good awareness of themselves.

### **Ask:**

What are some of the appropriate roles that parents play in the home? Some suggestions: helping children get the right kinds of food; supervising children at play... what else?

What are appropriate roles for young children to play in the household? Let participants generate some ideas for about 10 minutes.

### **Explain:**

Parents need to make clear to children what they expect of them, and children should feel confident that they can look to parents for security and guidance.

- The following guidelines will help parents understand how children's cognitive abilities develop and what are age-appropriate expectations of them.
  - 0–18 months: Infants learn to grasp and suck open and close their fingers, kick their feet, and finally to reach for and objects By 18 months, children can do things like pull a ball toward them in order to roll it away.
  - 18–24 months: Children begin to solve simple problems, like getting a toy from a cupboard in order to play with it.
  - 2–4 years: Children increase their verbal skills and begin pretend or imaginary play.
  - 4–7 years: Children begin to exercise judgment and follow simple commands (but they are still learning how to follow the rules of games and more complex procedures).
  - 7 years: Children begin to have more organized, logical thoughts.
- Return to the list of expectations the participants created and compare it to the above. If participants' expectations for young children were too high, help them develop more age-appropriate roles or tasks.

## **Age-Appropriate Expectations**

### **Explain:**

When parents' expectations of children are developmentally appropriate (not asking too much or too little from a child), the following tend to be true:

- Parents understand growth and development.

- Children exhibit developmental behaviors according to their age.
- Parents understand that children are different and do not all perform the same way! Expectations are set for children as individuals.
- Parents have good self-esteem and feel confident about parenting.
- Parents are supportive of children, follow their cues and are responsive to their needs.



### **Small Group Activity**

Break the larger group into smaller ones of 3-4 participants. Ask each group to pick an age of child: 1, 2, 3, 4 and 5. Then ask them to think of age-appropriate expectations for the child.

Allow 15 minutes for the groups to generate ideas and then bring everyone back together to share their lists.

### **Creating Family Rules**

#### **Explain:**

The group now has a better understanding of age-appropriate expectations and can turn to the subject of family rules and guidelines.

#### **Ask:**

What kinds of family rules do participants already have in place at home? What expectations do they have of children and adults in the home?

Let participants brainstorm for 5-10 minutes to create rules and guidelines.

#### **Explain:**

- For children between 9 months and 3 years, parents must have appropriate expectations regarding household rules. Parents will likely have to repeat rules and commands, as young children are only learning about limits! If parents want their 18-month-old child to clean up after herself, they will need to help her do it until she can realize it is her task to do on her own.
- For children 3-5 years (and older), parents should make sure to communicate rules and guidelines clearly and effectively. Make sure the rules are age-appropriate. If the child follows a rule or a request, thank and praise the child. This way, the child will know what kind of behavior is expected of him or her!
- Adults in the home must also follow the family rules. For example if there is a rule about using kind words toward family members, then adults need to be good role models and use kind words, too!

### **Skills Practice: Creating Rules**

Break participants into three groups, using one of the fun activities mentioned at the beginning of this manual. Then assign one group to think about, a 3-year-old child, another group a 4-year-old child, another a 5-year-old child. Give each group 15-20 minutes to generate 3-5 rules important for a child that age.

Remind participants that good rules:

- Tell children what they can do as well as what they should not to do.
- Are developmentally appropriate.
- Are simple and easy to follow.
- Are few in number (1-5) to avoid confusion.

Remember, parents use rules to guide new behaviors and keep children safe and healthy!

Bring the entire group together and have them share their rules for each age.

Note to trainer: If participants generate rules that are not developmentally appropriate, invite the whole group to discuss this and create developmentally appropriate ones.

Ask if anyone has questions about rules before moving on to consequences.

### **Skills Practice: Explaining Rules**

Select two participants to practice a role-play in which a parent explains rules to a 5-year-old child. Emphasize that the “parent” needs to explain the rules of the house in a clear, positive, polite manner. Here's a sample script:

*“I am really proud of you and I want to continue to help you do well at home and with your friends, so I want to tell you about our family rules. There are three important rules in our house—they are rules for everyone in the house, not just you! The first rule is to treat everyone in the house with respect by using kind words; the second is that everyone will do their chores; and the third is that everyone will wash their hands before eating.”*

### **Consequences for Breaking Household Rules**

#### **Explain:**

So far we have talked about ways to encourage good behavior from children. Now we will talk about the consequences of misbehavior.

All children misbehave. Some neglect their chores, others take something that does not belong to them, and so on. As children grow, they will test limits in order to gain their own independence. This is just part of growing up!

When rules are set and agreed upon, parents do not need to threaten children with punishment, because children will know the predetermined consequences.

- For example, parents may establish a rule that children will go to bed at 8 p.m. If they do not follow this rule, they will not be allowed to play outside the next day (or must go to bed even earlier, 7:30 p.m., the following night). Make sure to follow through with the consequence so the child learns that it is better to follow the rules than not.
- Consequences for young children are most effective when they are immediately given and short-term in length.
- Earning Privileges: If children comply with the rules, show appreciation for their good behavior by rewarding children with an extra story or outside play with the

parent. Parents need not reward children every time, but occasional rewards go a long way in reinforcing their good behavior!



### Small Group Activity

Ask participants to split into their three groups once more. Have them exchange their lists of rules, each group passing its list on to the one on the right, for example. Allow the groups 20 minutes to generate age-appropriate consequences for breaking the rules on their lists. Then have the groups share the consequences with the larger group.

Note that:

- For children ages 1-2 years they are just learning about boundaries and rules. These children are not old enough to remember and follow rules consistently. It will require parents to be patient when guiding young children!
- It can be helpful to distract and redirect young children when they are upset, rather than levy consequences for breaking rules they may not remember or understand.
- Ask participants if they have any questions about consequences.



## 4.3 Nonviolent Discipline

(2 hours)

### Toxic Stress: The Effects of Violence on Children

#### Explain:

When children experience harsh physical discipline or are verbally abused, or when they are exposed to violence between adults in their home, they can suffer from toxic stress.

#### Ask:

What is toxic stress and how does it affect children's development?

- Suffering violence and witnessing violence have similar effects on children. Toxic stress can disrupt the development of a child's brain, interfere with a child's ability to think and solve problems, and increase a child's susceptibility to illness.
- These outcomes can express themselves well into adulthood.
- Children learn that violence is an acceptable way of reacting to stress, frustration and difficulty. Children may be more likely to use violence when they are angry.

#### Explain:

Tell participants that the following practice is something they will do with parents when they facilitate parent group sessions. The goal of the activity is to encourage parents to think about how their actions (nurturing and not nurturing) have lasting affects on children.

#### Explain:

Children experience strong feeling that shape their personalities as they grow up. That is, they build memories through experiences. Children want and need their parents to understand and help with their difficult feelings.

Discipline is about teaching children and can be done in safe and empathetic ways.

## Parents Need for Personal Time

HARAKA HAINA BARAKA (Tanzania proverb: rushed actions have no blessings)

ASK participants to think about the relaxation skills and strategies the group discussed in a prior session.

- › Deep breathing
- › Positive thinking
- › Setting aside time for relaxation

ASK participants to think about behaviors (by their children or other adults) that make them feel angry.

Ask them to think about their physical reactions to anger. Examples are clenched fists, tight jaws, tense muscles.

## Skills Practice: Giving Consequences

Have participants pair off, one to role-play a parent, the other a misbehaving child.

The parent will practice walking away or deep breathing before responding calmly to the child.

Have the parent give a consequence for breaking the rule, such as an extra chore.

## Teaching Children To Calm Down with Time Out

### Explain:

When a child has exhibited a negative behavior (hitting, kicking, or biting), parents can place the child in a “time-out space,” a separate area with no contact or communication with adults or other children. Parents should keep the child in time out until she has calmed down. Remember that young children love attention, and in a time out parents remove all attention. Time outs are best used when children behave aggressively.

### **Time out will only work if time in is quality time.**

Parents and children need to enjoy quality time together if they are to develop loving and nurturing relationships.

Before using time out, certain conditions need to exist:

Time out will not work for children younger than age 3, because younger children need their parents to help them calm down. It is best to use distraction and redirection for children under 3.

Time out works best for children between the ages of 3 to 10.

Be sure to explain clearly the reason for a time out: *“You hit your brother and that is not acceptable, so you have to go to time out.”*

Make sure you have an appropriate area to use for time outs, a place that is quiet and away from other people engaging in fun activities.

Everyone in the home needs to understand and respect the rules of time out; no one should talk to or interact with the child until time out is over and the child has calmed down.

Establish (if possible) the duration of a time out. It usually takes three minutes for a child to calm down. A child is ready to come out of time out when he or she:

- No longer yells and screams.
- Sits quietly.
- Breathes slowly and peacefully.

It is critical that parents reengage the child soon after he or she has calmed down. Parents should give positive attention to any positive behavior they observe after time out ends.

Time out works best for aggressive behavior. Parents have learned other strategies for other misbehaviors.

When using time out:

1. First explain time out to your child and then practice it. *Tell children, "From now on, when you hit or hurt another person you will need to take a time out to calm down."*
2. Once you tell the child that he or she is going to time out, they must go, no matter what they do or say. They may say, "I promise to be good now," or "But I love you!" Ignore such statements and lead the child to the time out place peacefully (or with minimum force, such as calmly taking the child by the arm or carrying the child).
3. Remind the child that time out starts when he or she is quiet. Help your child take deep breaths to calm down.
4. After time out, praise the child for calming down and redirect his activities appropriately.

### **Skills Practice: Time Out**

Have two participants practice time out (allow 15-20 minutes for the activity). One will be the "parent," the other adult will be the "child." The trainer will coach them in front of the whole group.

- Have the "parent" initiate a time out for the child.
- Next instruct the "child" to try to avoid the time out: he might whine, protest, sulk, blame others, promise to be good, complain of illness—anything to avoid the punishment.
- Then have the "parent" gently but firmly lead the "child" to the time out place.
- Encourage other participants to positively comment after the role-play. Ask how the "parent" felt and then how the "child" felt.
- Ask parents to think about a good time out space they can use in their homes.
- Now have everyone in the group pair off to practice time out.

**Ask:**

Does any one have any questions about time out or other discipline strategies discussed today?



(30 minutes)

## 4.4 Overview of Session 9

### **Session 9: Clean, Fed and Nurtured Children are Happy, Healthy Children**

Parents can have lasting positive affects on children's health when they are involved in their children's hygiene and nutrition through simple routines and guidance.

**Explain:**

- ▶ When we allow children to play on their own, they play in the dirt and put their hands in their mouths. It is developmentally appropriate for young children to put their hands in their mouth—we cannot stop children from doing this. It is one way they explore and experience the world around them!
- ▶ Unfortunately, dirt is often mixed with animal feces and is full of harmful bacteria called *E. coli*.
- ▶ This bacteria causes invisible damage to children's intestines, making it harder for them to absorb the nutrients in their food, and making it easier for the bacteria to cross through the thin lining of the intestines and into the blood stream. This causes a chronic infection.

Tell participants that in this session they will also practice proper hand washing with parents.

**Ask:**

Participants to list some of the critical steps of hand washing. You can refer to Session 9 for the steps if needed.



(1 hour)

## 4.5 Home Coaching and Parent Support Groups

### **Home Coaching**

**Explain:**

As part of the Families Make the Difference Program, facilitators will make at least two home visits with each family/parent in the group beginning after the third session.

If home visits will be part of your parenting program, please see the Home coaching guideline that is part of this toolkit and review the home coaching guidelines with the facilitators.

### **Skills Practice: Explaining home visits**

Have participants pair off to practice introducing home visits to parents.

## Parent Support Groups

### Explain:

Another part the Families Make the Difference Program is parents establishing parent support groups. Facilitators will explain this in the first session.

Please see the Parent Support Group Guideline that is part of this toolkit and review the parent support group guidelines with facilitators.



(30 minutes)

## 4.6 Wrap Up Day 4

### Summary

Highlight the following:

- Today we learned about nurturing parent-child relationships by communicating in an empathetic way.
- We learned and practiced four steps to responding with empathy to children and other adults.
- We discussed and practiced strategies for parent anger and stress management.
- We reviewed Sessions 4 and 5 in the Families Make the Difference parenting curriculum.

### Participant Feedback

- Have a brief discussion with the group:
- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session?
- What did you like least?
- What would you have liked to discuss that was not?

### Closing and Preparation For Next Session

- THANK participants for attending the training.
- INFORM them of the topic for discussion for Day 5.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you have set it.
- ASK them to practice calming down strategies the next time they get angry or upset. If they have young child ask them to teach their young children one of the strategies for calming down.

# Training Day 5

## Group Facilitation Skills

TOTAL TIME: 8 hours, plus 1 hour lunch



### Session Objectives

1. Learn and practice parent group facilitation skills.
2. Practice with the Families Make the Difference group leader fidelity checklists (found in the implementation manual).
3. Discuss ongoing help and support for working with families.
4. Plan for implementation.



### Materials

Attendance sheet  
Flip charts  
Markers  
Handouts  
Training of facilitators manual  
Parenting curriculum



### Preparation

- › Be 30 minutes early.
- › Ready the meeting space and be sure it's conducive to uninterrupted dialogue.

#### TIP

Make sure you have certificates for all participants who have completed the five days of training. You can find a copy of the certificate in the appendix.



(2 hours)

## 5.1 Group Facilitation Skills

### Tools for Facilitation Success and Group Management

#### Ask:

What skills will facilitators need to manage parent groups?

Have participants pair off for a 10-minute discussion. Then have the group reconvene to share their skills sets. Write the skills sets on the flip chart and keep them posted throughout the day for reference.

#### Explain:

The group will discuss and practice five key facilitation skills:

The five key skills are:

- › Creating helping relationships
- › Listening actively and reflectively
- › Asking open-ended questions
- › Affirming and validating parents
- › Eliciting change talk

### Helping Relationships: Letting Parents Know You Care

#### Explain:

- › Parents need to know that facilitators care about them.
- › Facilitators will learn parents' hopes and dreams for their children, as well as their expectations for this program.
- › This is a collaborative program and parents' opinions and expectations need to be honored.

#### Ask:

What are some ways facilitators can show parents they respect and care about them?

Suggestions:

- › Refer frequently to parents' hopes and dreams for their children.
- › Provide refreshments during the parenting sessions.
- › Praise parents.
- › Encourage participation by asking open-ended questions.

"Everyone deserves the experience of being held in another person's mind," writes Jeree Pawl, an American psychologist.<sup>10</sup> When you listen to parents' hopes and dreams, when you ask parents how they are doing, when you help them solve

<sup>10</sup> Pawl, Jeree H. *The Therapeutic Relationship as Human Connectedness: Being Held in Another's Mind*. Zero to Three. February/March 1995. Retrieved from [www.zerotothree.org](http://www.zerotothree.org)

#### TIP

Today you will be discussing group facilitation skills. Remember to model good facilitation by using the skills you are teaching!

problems and follow up on their questions, you are holding them in your mind. They feel valued and important.

## Creating a Helping Relationship

### Explain:

There are four aspects to creating a helping relationship:

*Respect:* value parents as individuals, believe in their ability to parent in loving, nurturing ways.

*Empathy:* show an understanding of the challenges a parent faces, and see situations from their point of view.

*Genuineness:* be sensitive, honest, open and trustworthy.

*Humility:* work in the context of an equal relationship and using parents' strengths, views and knowledge alongside your own at every stage of the process.<sup>11</sup>



### Small Group Activity

Split the group into four smaller ones and give each group one of the four skills above. Ask each group to list ways to support and help parents according to their assigned skill.

For example, facilitators can show *genuineness* by keeping their word and accepting their limitations. If parents ask a question the facilitator can't answer, the facilitator should say, "I am not sure about that, but let me look into it and get back to you."

Allow participants 15 minutes to work on their lists and then bring everyone together so each group can present their findings.

## Listening Actively and Reflectively

### Explain:

Active and reflective listening involves:

1. Showing you hear and understand the person speaking by providing cues through body language.
2. Reflecting the feelings and thoughts you hear by repeating them back in your own words, with a positive tone of voice.

Skills for active and reflective listening include:

### Attending Skills

*Eye Contact:* steady, not staring

*Posture:* relaxed, forward leaning

*Gestures:* nodding

*Environment:* comfortable and confidential

<sup>11</sup> Roberts, K. (2009) *Early Home Learning Matters: A Brief Guide for Practitioners*. Family and Parenting Institute, London.

## Following Skills

### *Acknowledgment of Responses*

*Allowance of Time* (for a person to think and respond, known as active silence)

### *Open-ended Questioning*

## Responding Skills

*Reflect: Feelings:* identify the feelings you believe the person is experiencing.

*Reflect Meanings:* share your thoughts about what you believe the other person is trying to convey.

*Summarize Ideas:-* briefly rephrase or paraphrase the main ideas the person is expressing.

## Asking Open-Ended Questions

### Explain:

Open-ended questions begin with words and phrases such as *like, how, tell me more, can you describe that...*

Open-ended questions invite conversation and collaboration between the parent group facilitator and the parents.

### Ask:

- Facilitators can ask questions or prompt discussion: *Tell me how your home assignment (of playing with your children) went this week.*
- *Describe what it felt like to praise your children? How do you think your children felt and why?*

Your Families Make the Difference facilitator manual is full of open-ended questions designed to create a collaborative, participatory environment.

## Affirming and Validating

There are two ways to affirm or validate another person:

### *Verbally:*

- I can see why you would feel upset about that.
- You must feel proud about your accomplishment

### *Nonverbally:*

- Nodding
- Making eye contact
- Showing concern (making empathetic facial gestures)



### TIP

Make sure you as the trainer are walking around and checking in on each group and you are available to answer questions or provide guidance.

## Small Group Activity: Facilitation Skills

Have participants divide into groups of three. In each group, everyone will take a turn role-playing a parent, a facilitator and a coach. Allow 15-20 minutes for this exercise.

The parent should make up a story about struggling with a child.

The facilitator will ask the parent open-ended questions, and practice active, reflective listening by with verbal and nonverbal cues.

The coach will take notes on the skills he/she observes the facilitator using.

After each round of role-playing, the coach should list the skills he or she saw the “facilitator” using.

## Eliciting Change Talk

Motivational Interviewing is a set of skills developed by an American psychologist, Bill Miller, based on eliciting or encouraging change talk. Facilitators can use these skills to encourage parents to make a commitment to positive parenting. If parents are struggling with the techniques presented in the Families Make the Difference curriculum, facilitators should:

- Talk about the disadvantages of maintaining the status quo.
- Address the advantages of change.
- Express optimism about change and encourage good intentions.

The following types of questions occur throughout the Families Make the Difference parenting curriculum.

Questions that explore the need for change:

- Why would you want to make this change?
- What would it mean to you or to your child to make this change?

Questions that address the process of change:

- How would you make this change if you decided to do it?
- What would it take for you to try out praise or this new discipline strategy?

Questions that underscore the reasons for change:

- What are the benefits of trying this new technique or strategy?
- Why would mean to you children for you to play with them?

Questions that confront the desire to change:

- How important is it for you to try these new skills?

Questions that search the commitment to change:

- How will you keep practicing positive parenting skills even after this groups ends?
- How will you share your knowledge with others?

## Skills Practice: Encouraging Change Talk

Have participants pair off and to ask each other the above questions. Provide an example of how a parent might answer.

Example:

Facilitator: *What would it mean to your daughter for you to play with her?*

Parent: *Well, I think she would feel special and good.*

Facilitator: *How does that make you feel knowing your daughter would feel so good and special?*

Parent: *I would feel happy and good, too.*

When you bring everyone back together, ask them what it was like to be asked those questions. What was it like to answer them? Allow 10-15 minutes for this exercise.



(3 hours)

## 5.2 Group Facilitation Skills Practice

### Practicing Families Make The Difference Session 1

#### Explain:

This will be a “fish bowl” exercise. Divide participants into two groups. The first group will practice Families Make the Difference Session 1, Activities 1- 4.

Pair up participants in the first group and assign each pair one of the activities (Pair 1 will practice Activity 1, and so on). Allow the group 20-30 minutes for this exercise.

Next have participants in the second group pair off, practice Session 1, Activities 5-8, with the first group observing and providing only *positive* feedback.

After 20 minutes, call everyone back together and tell them that group one will put their chairs in a circle in the middle of the room and group two will put their chairs in a circle outside of group number one's circle. The facilitators of Activity 1 will begin and all the other participants in group one will be the parents. They will proceed this way until they have completed the fourth activity. **The second group will place their chairs in circle around group one and observe while group one is practicing activities 1-4.**

#### Ask:

Facilitators in group one how they think it went.

Finally add your own positive and constructive feedback. Then have the group observing giving positive feedback as well.

Then have the groups switch spots and group two will now be in the middle practicing Activities 5-8. Repeat the same process that you did for group one.



(1 hour)

## 5.3 Handling Difficult Situations

### Group Management Strategies

#### Ask

participants to think about potential problems or difficulties they might encounter while facilitating parent groups. If participants need examples to get started, share the following.

- One parent in the group talks all the time.
- Some parents are very quiet and rarely talk.
- A parent may get upset and cry or get angry.

Have participants pair off and brainstorm potential problems for 15 minutes. Have the group reconvene and share their findings. Pairs can trade lists of problems with another pair in the group. Then send the pairs off again to brainstorm some solutions to the problems the pair they traded with noted. Give participants 15-20 minutes to do this.

Select four parents: one will be the facilitator, another can role-play a talkative, somewhat dominating parent. The facilitator might ask the group of four what they think about praising their children. The talkative parent will interrupt. The facilitator can kindly remind the talkative parent that everyone needs a chance to talk, or offer another solution the group generated moments earlier. After the role-play, ask the group how the solution worked and generate more solutions if needed.

### Managing Risk of Harm

#### Explain:

There is a strong likelihood that group leaders will encounter families experiencing violence during the implementation and delivery of the Families Make the Difference Program.

It is important to report concerns for children or anyone experiencing abuse/neglect to the proper authorities.

Children experiencing the following need help:

- Physical abuse
- Sexual abuse
- Neglect (not being fed or clothed properly)
- Exploitation (child labor or sexual)
- Intention of self harm (or harm to others)

### Reporting and Referral

#### Explain:

The reporting and referral structure will depend on context. The Families Make the Difference Program should be implemented as a part of a comprehensive child-

#### TIP

Remember to set up the practices well. You need to help guide participants in the scripts and skills they are practicing and you need to help them if they get stuck or demonstrate a skill incorrectly.

protection and case-management system. In rural Tanzania, child abuse is reported to local government social workers, and there are child-protection teams in the villages that assist with these kinds of cases.

The reporting and referral process should ensure confidentiality. The best interest of the child should be the priority. Respect applicable laws in the country you are working in.

Facilitators should not act as child-protection caseworks while working with Families Make the Difference parent groups.



(1 hour)

## **5.4 Fidelity Monitoring**

### **Monitoring Fidelity**

#### **Explain:**

In order for programs to be effective, facilitators must maintain program fidelity.

#### **What is fidelity?**

It is the process of ensuring that the protocol and methods of a program are followed.

#### **Why do we promote fidelity?**

To ensure core elements are maintained throughout the program so that it will be as effective as possible.

As part of the Families Make the Difference Program, facilitators will fill out a fidelity monitoring form after each Families Make the Difference session. A copy of this form is located in the Families Make the Difference parenting curriculum and implementation guide.

It is important that facilitators fill out this form honestly and accurately, thereby helping creators of the program make improvements.

The fidelity form asks the facilitators to record parent feedback from each Families Make the Difference session. Recording parents' feedback helps the creators of this program make necessary changes.

NOTE to trainers: Please go through the fidelity monitoring form step-by-step with participants to answer any questions they might have.



(1 hour)

## **5.5 End of Families Make the Difference Training**

### **Summary and Presentation of Training Participation Certificates**

Review and reflection:

Ask participants to discuss the following with their neighbors:

- What is something new they learned during this training?
- What was their favorite part of this training?
- What do they want to learn more about?
- Did the training meet their expectations and were their fears alleviated?

Give participants 10 minutes to talk and then ask for volunteers to share thoughts with the group.

If there are government officials present, give them a few moments to say some words to the participants.

Finally, hand out certificates of participation for this training. There is an example certificate in the appendix of this manual.

## Appendix A

## Facilitators Training Attendance Sheet

**Note to Trainers:** You need to make one of these for each day of training and participants must sign in and out each day.

[illegible]

# Appendix B

## Sample FMD Facilitators Certificate

**Certificate of Participation**

this certificate is awarded to:

\_\_\_\_\_

On this day of:

\_\_\_\_\_

Date

**Families Make the Difference Parent Group Facilitator Training**

Families Make the Difference is a positive parenting program that aims to improve developmental outcomes for young children by promoting positive parent-child relationships and the use of non violent discipline strategies.

\_\_\_\_\_

Families Make the Difference Trainer

 123 certificates