



Ministry of Education & Training  
Government of Vanuatu



# PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME



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Dubai Cares

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for every child



# PARENT SUPPORT PROGRAMME



## Facilitators' Handbook – English Version

Ministry of Education and Training

Republic of Vanuatu

2021



## Acknowledgements












This Handbook has been developed and published by the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) in Vanuatu with technical support from UNICEF and with Dubai Cares funding support. Bislama, English and French versions are available. All rights reserved.

MoET would like particularly to thank MoET ECCE Coordinator Smith Anderson, and also Edgar Tari, who steered implementation of the PSP in Penama. Both have been key at all stages. Thanks go also to Jennifer James and Caroline Arnold, the two consultants who developed the Handbook, with contributions from many organizations and individuals and multiple ministries (in addition to MoET, the Ministry of Health and the Ministry of Justice & Community Services). Appreciation also goes to UNICEF (especially Sandipan Paul and Fabiola Bibi, who have been key throughout) and VESP for their continued support and commitment to early childhood development in Vanuatu. Acknowledgement is also owed to Save the Children for providing some of the photos and support materials and for its commitment to supporting MoET's national roll-out of the PSP together with UNICEF.

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# Foreword from the Director of Education Services

The Government of Vanuatu is committed to meeting the needs of Vanuatu's children, ensuring that ALL young children have equitable access to health, nutrition, protection and early learning services that support their overall development. The Vanuatu Education and Training System Strategy (VETSS) 2020–2030 lays out a Vision for “A quality, caring education and training system that provides every person with lifelong skills, values and confidence to be self-reliant and to contribute to the development of Vanuatu.”

Within the early childhood portion of the education portfolio, the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) has until recently been focused mostly on preschool services. Big strides have been made in increasing access across the country, training and paying teachers, improving infrastructure and addressing quality issues. However, we now know that, in order to achieve our Vision, we must start right from the beginning – long before children go to preschool. A mass of new evidence from neuroscience and programme research confirms that young children who have good support from their parents are healthier, do better in school, get on well with others and go on to obtain better jobs.

The VETSS Mission highlights the importance of a strong relationship with parents and communities so that they support their young children's learning at home as well as engaging with their children's educational institutions. And this support must start early. Children support for their overall development from conception to school entry in the environments in which they spend the vast majority of their time – that is, at home. Parents and caregivers are children's first teachers and home is the most important influence on young children's overall development. Supporting parents and caregivers to provide their children with nurturing care and positive parenting is central to children achieving their potential.

Nurturing care means keeping young children safe, healthy and well nourished, responding to their needs and ensuring they feel safe and loved, and encouraging them to play and communicate. To reach their full potential, children need the five components of nurturing care:

- Health
- Nutrition
- Safety and security
- Opportunities for learning
- Responsive caregiving

The Parent Support Programme (PSP) is based on our understanding of the vital importance of parents' role in giving children a good start in life. The PSP was first implemented in Penama province and achieved considerable success, generating interest and increasing parental engagement with their youngest children. It has also resulted in demand from parents for additional opportunities to learn more about what helps and what damages development and ways in which they can support their young children's growth and development. Indeed, groups have got together to continue offering classes in many villages across the province.

MoET has decided to roll out the programme nationwide, and other Pacific Island countries have also indicated an interest in offering the programme.

Based on reflection workshops (both provincial and national), endline data and numerous discussions, a number of steps have been agreed and acted upon in order to further strengthen the PSP. These include:

- Revision of the PSP Handbook to incorporate new topics and methods
- Establishment of local taskforces responsible for PSP coordination in their areas
- An emphasis on greater involvement of fathers
- Use of more senior and experience facilitators
- Strengthened communications and monitoring and evaluation strategies

The PSP Handbook covers 11 workshops. It recognizes and respects what families already know and do and celebrates and builds on traditional cultural and community strengths, while also providing new information and opportunities to reflect on and discuss aspects that may need to change.

This Handbook has been developed in Vanuatu and produced in Bislama, English and French. Particular thanks go to the MoET Early Childhood Care and Education Coordinator, Smith Anderson, to Edgar Tari, who steered the implementation of the PSP in Penama, and to Jennifer James and Caroline Arnold, the two consultants who developed this new Handbook, with contributions from many individuals and organizations.

A big thank you to Fabiola Bibi from UNICEF Vanuatu for supporting the implantation, the reflection workshops, and data collection and analysis.

Special thanks also go to UNICEF and VESP for their continued support and commitment to early childhood development in Vanuatu and to this significant parenting programme in particular.



**Samuel Katipa**  
*Director Education Services*





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# Introduction to the Handbook



## Who knows best?

Worldwide, there is an emphasis on ensuring that early childhood development programmes are firmly family and community based. The increasing focus on the importance of the family is hardly surprising if we consider a few simple questions: “Who knows the child best?” “Where is the young child most of the time?” “For whom is it most important that the child develops well?”

Children learn who they are and what life is all about from the people they are with. For the vast majority of children it is the family, in its many and varied forms, that is the most important influence on their perception of self and others. The vital nature of the very early years (long before a child goes to preschool let alone school) is now well established. Evidence confirms that, the younger the child, the more critical the experience – whether it be positive or negative. The question for us therefore is: “How can we best influence the contexts in which young children live so that everyone is a part of supporting their overall development?” Worldwide, a plethora of parent/caregiver education programmes have emerged, and are an essential component of early childhood programmes.

The Parent Support Programme (PSP) is the first significant holistic initiative designed to operate nationwide in Vanuatu.

## CHILDREN LEARN WHAT THEY LIVE

If a child lives with criticism,  
He learns to condemn.

If a child lives with hostility,  
He learns to fight.

If a child lives with ridicule,  
He learns to be shy.

If a child lives with encouragement,  
He learns confidence.

If a child lives with shame,  
He learns to feel guilty.

If a child lives with tolerance,  
He learns to be patient.

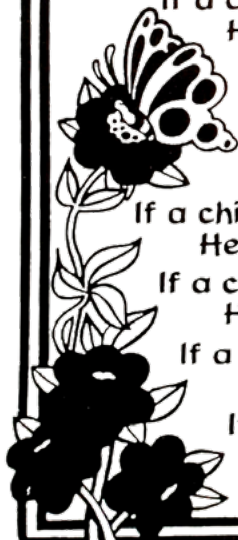
If a child lives with praise,  
He learns to appreciate.

If a child lives with fairness,  
He learns justice.

If a child lives with security,  
He learns to have faith.

If a child lives with approval,  
He learns to like himself.

If a child lives with acceptance &  
friendship, He learns to find  
love in the world.



# The Handbook's approach

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We have undertaken the revision and updating of this Handbook, and in this effort we have been very aware of both the challenge and the tremendous opportunity facing us.

The challenge and opportunity is to find the right balance.

On the one hand:

- Recognizing, respecting and celebrating what parents and caregivers already know and do and achieve, thereby building their confidence;
- Building on existing cultural strengths and traditions:
- Offering opportunities to share experiences.
- While at the same time:
- Acknowledging and responding to the demand and need for access to information;
- Building understanding of fundamental principles for effective support of child development;
- Addressing the fact that sometimes these fundamental principles are in conflict with dominant ideas;
- Identifying social issues and constraints that families face (usually linked to poverty or exclusion) or practices that may damage children, and then generating solutions together with people.

In order to find this balance, we have developed a new structure for the Handbook: a consistent outline for all sessions, in a coherent approach, to ensure sessions are clear for facilitators and accessible, enjoyable, interactive and affirming for participants.

As an example of just one change, the Purpose of each workshop has been reworked so that the focus is now firmly on what the participants will understand/feel/know/do by the end of the session. The emphasis is on respecting what parents and caregivers already know and do, making them feel good about their capabilities, and then also introducing them to new information and encouraging them to reflect on a variety of ways of doing things.

What do they realize that they already do that has been helping their young child's overall development? What additional ideas do they have for when they get home? How will they make decisions and take action that brings benefits for their young children? What changes might they make?



The sessions incorporate a range of evidence-based methods. The emphasis is on:

- Knowledge and skills but also, equally importantly, attitudes and values;
- Confidence, curiosity and problem-solving;
- Key concepts and factual information, practical ideas and personal reflection;
- Everyday stories and vignettes that relate to participants' own lives;
- Games, role plays and activities that are fun and help internalize understanding;
- Large and small group discussions drawing on what parents already know and do;
- Experience-sharing and open-ended questions to help participants explore the topic and generate questions, ideas and solutions;
- Separate sessions for mothers and fathers for some topics;
- Updated visual materials;
- Opportunities to raise questions and concerns and to make commitments.

The PSP's success is dependent on the quality of what is offered in the sessions. Strong materials and methodology provide the foundation for this. Further information on the "how" is included in the tips for facilitators section after the workshops, and in the individual workshops.

## Using the Handbook

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The PSP will roll out across the country, with facilitators and taskforces working together to ensure that parents and caregivers have the opportunity to participate in all 11 workshops ( and a final celebration session). The timing of the workshops will be organized in collaboration with the community in order to fit in with local activities.

However, other ministries or civil society organizations may wish to use particular workshops that respond specifically to their interests. For example, the Nurses' College or Teachers' College might incorporate some or all of the sessions in their training courses. A non-governmental organization might want to choose one or two that fit with a particular programme it is running (e.g. child protection; water, sanitation and hygiene). MoET and UNICEF welcome all to make use of this resource. Our aim is to ensure a good start for young children.



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WORKSHOP 1

# A Good Start in Life: Nurturing Care





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. **Have been introduced to** the Parent Support Programme and have an overview of what will be covered in the sessions.
2. **Feel enthusiastic about** participating in the sessions and confident that they will be able to contribute ideas and gain new understanding that will help them support their young children's development.



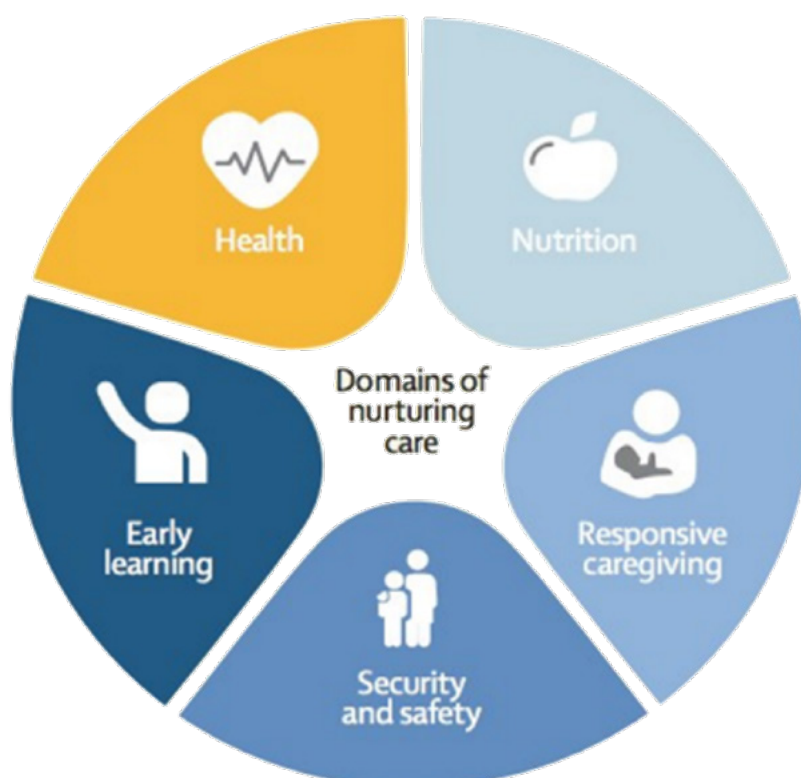
## Materials

- Nurturing Care posters
- Flipchart
- Markers

## Background information for facilitators

Early childhood development programmes are all about nurturing children. This means keeping them safe, healthy and well nourished, responding to their needs and ensuring they feel loved, and encouraging them to play and interact with people. To reach their full potential, children need the five components of nurturing care in the picture below.

The **NURTURING CARE FRAMEWORK** has been developed by multiple experts and organizations from around the world with the purpose of helping children survive and thrive.



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## Enabling environments for nurturing care

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An enabling environment is needed: policies, programmes (such as the PSP) and services (such as health centres and early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres) that give families, parents and caregivers the resources to provide nurturing care for young children. We need to recognize, respect and draw on the strength of communities – and empower them to take action on behalf of their young children.

Parents are the child's first teachers, and home is the most significant learning environment. Nurturing care enables children to establish the foundations vital for them to thrive and develop as healthy, capable, confident and caring people. It provides the basis for them to achieve their potential and contribute to their family, community and society. These early childhood supports are crucial for ALL children and even more vital for children who are unwell, are disabled, have been abused or are living in difficult circumstances. It protects them against the worst effects of adversity including disasters.



The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) sets out the human rights to which all children everywhere are entitled. The most widely ratified human rights treaty, the UNCRC emphasizes all aspects of children's development and the importance of protection from harm. Early childhood programmes are essentially about supporting families, communities and society to ensure their children's rights and always to be concerned with the best interests of the child and their right to be heard. ALL rights apply to ALL children everywhere without discrimination, whatever their ethnicity, sex, religion, language, abilities or any other status, whatever they think or say, whatever their family background. The Nurturing Care Framework stems from the universal acceptance of children's rights.

Efforts to support young children are also intrinsically linked to the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), which were set by the United Nations General Assembly in 2015. This is a collection of 17 interlinked goals designed to be a “blueprint to achieve a better and more sustainable future for all” by 2030. *Many of these are linked to the environment as climate change results in ever-increasing stresses on people and planet.*



Achieving these goals is critical for the wellbeing of young children; equally, supporting young children’s development is crucial in order to achieve the SDGs. Investments in young children result in improved education, health and economic indicators; fewer disparities (gender, class, ability, etc.); and a reduction in poverty and violence.

## Introduction

**Welcome**

**Prayer**

**Icebreaker**

### Sample introduction

“In these Parent Support Programme sessions, we will be discussing our young children and how we can support their overall development.

Because YOU are the MOST important people in the lives of your young children.

It is YOU who provide the strong foundations. You provide for your children and help them grow up healthy and strong, safe and secure, confident, capable and caring.

It is YOU as parents and caregivers who support your children to develop not only knowledge and skills but also attitudes and values. These things are vital for them to interact effectively with their world and contribute to their family and society.

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What YOU do today, tomorrow and in the coming days, weeks, months and years to support your children's overall development is more important than you may have ever imagined. You have the power to make a huge difference in your child's life.

Your children's early experiences have a huge impact on their development – on their health, learning, behaviour and – ultimately – adult social relationships, wellbeing and earnings. What I mean by this is that children who are well supported by their family in the earliest years do better in school, are less likely to get into trouble, are more successful economically (getting good jobs, setting up businesses) and have happier family lives.

In these sessions over the coming weeks, we can keep building our confidence in our knowledge and skills to help us do this better and better. You already know and do so much that helps your children. Communities everywhere have enormous stores of wisdom and understanding of how to raise children. However, climate change, the pandemic and economic and social pressures are all putting pressure on families everywhere.

At the same time, over the past 20 years science has made many new discoveries that can help us do even better and avoid things that may damage our children.

We are all here to learn together. I hope you will all feel comfortable in joining in and sharing your thoughts and ideas."



### ACTIVITY 1: Getting to know one another

Play a short game to get people talking to each other and thinking about their own childhood. When you ring the bell, each person introduces themselves to one other person and shares a good memory of their early childhood in 20–30 seconds. When you ring the bell again, participants find another person and repeat. This process continues until many people have met each other and spoken.

At the end of the game, bring everyone back together and ask each person to introduce one of the people they have met and share that person's good early memory. Each participant introduces a new person to the group.

Make a note for yourself of some of the good memories they mention so you can refer to one or two of these later on in the session.



## ACTIVITY 2: The Nurturing Care Framework

### Sample introduction to the Nurturing Care Framework

“ALL young children everywhere need nurturing care.

Nurturing care is about supporting children's overall development. It's about health, nutrition, security and safety, responsive caregiving and early learning.”

Show participants the Nurturing Care Framework posters.

## The Five Components of Nurturing Care



**To reach their full potential, children need the five interrelated and indivisible components of nurturing care.**

Use large posters illustrating the nurturing care domains and ask participants questions about each of these.

Show the participants the posters one at a time. Ask the parents the questions below (and additional ones you may want to ask to get discussion going). Allow time and let people express their ideas and ask questions. After the discussion, summarize the Key Points below each picture on the following pages.

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## GOOD HEALTH



Refers to the health and well-being of the children and their caregivers.



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## GOOD NUTRITION



Refers to the maternal and child nutrition.



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**Question:** Why are we concerned about the health and nutrition of both the mother and the child?

**Key point:** We know that the health and nutrition of the mother during pregnancy affects her unborn child. After birth, the mother's nutritional status affects her ability to breastfeed and provide nourishing care for her baby. There is so much valuable traditional knowledge about health and nutrition in our communities. In addition, science has helped us know more and more about how to keep children healthy and well nourished, and what can be damaging.

Explain that three sessions will be looking especially at this – including one on The importance of Caring for the Pregnant Mother and Her Unborn Child; one on Healthy Nutrition and one on Water, Sanitation and Hygiene.



# SAFETY AND SECURITY



Refers to safe and secure environments for children and their families. Includes physical dangers and threats, emotional stress, environmental risks.



**Question:** Why are safety and security so important?

**Key point:** Both physical and emotional security are crucial.

We know much more now about the importance of young children's safety and sense of security. This includes physical dangers and, very importantly, emotional stress, which can cause long-term damage to health, behaviour and learning – making it less likely children will do well at school or in life.

Explain that there will be two sessions covering this topic. One is focused on keeping children safe from physical dangers such as accidents in the home or from major disasters such as cyclones and volcanic eruptions. The other emphasizes the importance of children being and feeling secure and safe from hurt or abuse – either physical or mental.

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## OPPORTUNITIES FOR EARLY LEARNING



Refers to any opportunity for the infant or child to interact with a person, a place or object in their environment.



© VESP

**Question:** What are the main ways babies and young children learn?

**Key point:** We know so much more than we did about the importance of very early opportunities for learning. The most important ways young children learn involve interacting with people – babbling, singing, talking, laughing, playing games, doing things with their caregiver. They also learn by having the chance to interact with different objects through play and being able to explore their environment. We now understand that every interaction contributes to the child's brain development and learning.

Explain that there are four sessions that will explore how we can support our children's learning – on brain development, parent–child interaction, play and learning, and language and literacy.

## RESPONSIVE GIVING



Refers to the ability of the caregiver to notice, understand and respond to their child's signals in a timely and appropriate manner. Considered the foundational component because responsive caregivers are better able to support the other four components.



© VESP

**Question:** What is responsive caregiving and why is it so important?

**Key point:** Responsive care refers to the ability of the parent to notice, understand and respond to their child's signals in a timely and appropriate manner. Science has taught us so much about how even the tiniest babies are communicating and need us to respond to their signals. Responsive caregiving is therefore understood as being the foundation of nurturing care because responsive parents are better able to support the other four components (e.g. is the child hungry? In pain? Wanting to play or explore? Communicating? Needing comforting?)

Explain that, because it is so important, we will talk about responsive caregiving in almost all of the sessions, including in the parent-child interaction session and a session on supporting disabled children's development.

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### ACTIVITY 3: Discuss questions or concerns

Ask participants if they have any questions or concerns or if there are additional areas they would like to know more about or discuss. Do not worry if you cannot answer all their questions. Just explain that you will find out more and let them know the information at the next session.

#### Sample conclusion

“To reach their full potential, children need the 5 components of nurturing care. We have introduced this and will come back to these key components in the coming weeks when we talk about different topics.

Nurturing children means keeping them safe, secure, healthy and well nourished, paying attention and responding to their needs and interests, and providing them with opportunities for learning.

Here are some print outs of one of the posters we have looked at today for you to take home and here is a list of the topics we are going to cover”.

**ANNEX 1****Workshop 1: Nurturing Care****Evaluation Questions for Parents**

1. Which of the five main components of the Nurturing Care Framework do you feel we need to improve on? (Have the poster to hand out and to discuss)

.....  
 .....

2. What is something new that you have learnt?

.....  
 .....

3. After this workshop, what do you think you might do differently at home?

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## ANNEX 2

### Whole of Government and Early Childhood

The whole of government is already contributing to the First 1,000 Days programme and ECCE in Vanuatu. The question remains: How can we do it better? How can we meet global standards?

The Vanuatu government has developed “The People’s Plan,” which indicates where the government is already investing and across which key ministries:

<b>Ministry of Health</b>	Maternal Child Health programme, antenatal support to mothers, data collection and decision-making through the Health Information System, vaccination of infants. nutritional monitoring and support
<b>Ministry of Education &amp; Training</b>	Parenting skills and ECCE centres (preschools/kindergartens)
<b>Ministry of Justice &amp; Community Services</b>	Overall child protection legislation and policy
<b>Ministry of Internal Affairs</b>	Birth registration, citizenship, national ID cards, issues under the Family Protection Unit (Vanuatu Police Force)
<b>Ministry of Infrastructure &amp; Public Utilities</b>	Access, roads, buildings, infrastructure and safety of aviation across the country
<b>Ministry of Lands &amp; Natural Resources</b>	Through the Department of Water Resources, support to access to water, sanitation and hygiene, including water quantity and quality, public health through hygiene and sanitation, dignity and safety of children, women and girls
<b>Ministry of Agriculture</b>	Access to sustainable farming for good nutrition
<b>Ministry of Finance &amp; Economic Management</b>	Provision and management of recurrent budget to support government ECD programming



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WORKSHOP 2

Strong  
Beginnings:  
Caring for  
the Pregnant  
Mother and  
Her Unborn  
Child







## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. **Recognize** the importance of the mother's health and nutrition to her baby's healthy growth and development.
2. **Understand** more about the development of the unborn child in the womb and how to protect the foetus.



## Materials

- Posters (First 1,000 Days, talking to baby in the womb, foetus development)
- Pikinini Helt Buk
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Blu Tack
- Paper
- Pens

## Background information for facilitator:

The journey from conception to birth is truly amazing and should be a joyful time. Eating healthy foods, knowing what to avoid and what medicines are safe or not, keeping vaccinations up to date and avoiding heavy work all increase the chances of a healthy pregnancy. Every pregnant woman receives the Pikinini Helt Buk, and this is a valuable resource.

**Early pregnancy** is very important. Organs such as the heart, lungs, stomach and brain are already developing in the first few weeks and mothers should be especially careful at this time. Substances such as alcohol, caffeine, betel nut, kava or cigarettes, as well as some medications, can harm the developing baby. Maternal infections such as rubella cause serious problems at this time. This is why it is so important to have the recommended immunizations before pregnancy.

**Health centre visits** are important, and the pregnant woman should visit a health centre regularly – and as soon as she suspects she is pregnant. (Only about 75% of pregnant women access antenatal care in Vanuatu). A urine test can confirm the pregnancy and a nurse can provide regular check-ups. Getting support from the local health centre will mean that the mother is more likely to have a good pregnancy and birth and the baby is more likely to develop well in the womb and be strong and healthy.

**Good nutrition:** The unborn child depends on its mother for food. During pregnancy and while breastfeeding, the mother needs increased quantities of nutritious food and adequate supplies of food with iron, folic acid, iodized salt and other minerals. If she has a nutritious diet during her pregnancy the baby is more likely to be born full term and healthy. A finding of the Save the Children Baseline Survey indicates that 88% of pregnant and lactating mothers are not eating a balanced diet.

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**Physical and mental support** of the pregnant woman is very important – and especially care from her husband/partner. Too often, the husband assumes his wife should continue carrying her full workload throughout pregnancy; husbands do not always provide needed support. A 2015 research study indicated that 15% of pregnant women in Vanuatu experienced intimate partner violence and 13% of those women miscarried (Harmful Connections, UNICEF 2015).

**Rest and stress avoidance:** Women are likely to feel more tired during pregnancy. They require enough sleep and rest. Pregnant women should avoid heavy work. During pregnancy, women may also experience emotional stress and the family needs to support them. Everyone can help by sharing the daily workload of the mother-to-be. Women must be able to make decisions about their health and to talk to their partners about the support they need during pregnancy, childbirth and child-rearing.

**Timing births:** Many births, births too close together and births to girls under 18 increase the risks to both mothers and their babies. The recommended timing between births is at least two years. Using contraceptives and being able to say “no” are behaviours that support this. One Save the Children Baseline Survey finding was that 59% of women were not using family planning method.

**Avoiding harmful substances:** Many substances, such as alcohol, nicotine, caffeine, kava, marijuana and drugs (prescribed medication), can harm the unborn child, especially in the early weeks of pregnancy. Smoking is harmful not only to the smoker but also to those around him/her, including the mother-to-be and her child.

**Care for the mother at and after the birth:** Planning for the birth of the baby is important – where the baby will be born and who will attend the mother during birth (this should be a trained medical professional like a midwife). Family members should be aware of the signs of labour and how to seek help when labour starts.

The father and other family members can help the mother's recovery by making sure she rests enough and eats nutritious food. Most of the chores normally done by the mother should now be done by other members of the family.

**Breastfeeding:** A mother should begin breastfeeding within one hour of birth. Skin-to-skin contact and breastfeeding soon after birth stimulate production of mother's milk. The thick yellow milk produced in the first few days after delivery is especially nutritious and helps build the baby's immunity. (See Workshop 7: Nutrition for information on healthy feeding practices for babies and young children.)

**Registration:** It is the legal right of the child to have their birth registered, and parents must register the birth of their child as soon as possible after the birth.

**Immunization:** Every baby and young child must be immunized according to the schedule in *Pikinini Helt Buk*.<sup>1</sup>

1. First 24 hours after birth: BCG and Hepatitis B  
At 6 weeks: Penta first injection and Polio first injection  
At 10 weeks: Penta second injection and Polio second injection  
At 14 weeks: Penta third injection, Polio third injection and IPV first injection  
1 year old: Measles and rubella vaccination



**Oral rehydration salts:** ORS is a special mix of salt that, when mixed well with safe drinking water, can help the body gain back fluid that has been lost during diarrhoea.

Give the ORS drink each time the child has diarrhoea.

This is in the Pikinini Helt Buk.

## Introduction

**Welcome** and thank everyone for coming.

**Prayer**

**Icebreaker**

**Review** Remind the participants of the previous workshop.

### Sample introduction

Explain the purpose of the workshop, and say the following:

“Today we want to discuss ways we as a family and the community can support the pregnant mother to ensure she is well looked after, has enough rest and eats nutritious food so her baby is born healthy. We are privileged to have our health specialist here with us and they will help take us through this session. [Introduce and thank the nurse for their presence.]”



### ACTIVITY 1: Leisau's story

Explain that you are going to read two versions of the same story about Leisau, who is very pregnant.

#### Story 1:

Leisau is going into her eighth month of pregnancy. She is feeling very tired after standing up and working all day in the shop. On her way home she had to collect Daniel (her three-year-old son) from her sister's house and walk home for another 15 minutes. When she arrives home, she has to cook the evening meal and her feet are very painful. Daniel is tired and hungry and wants mum to carry him but she needs to cook. Then Leisau gives Daniel a bath but she does it very quickly without taking any notice of him although he desperately wants her attention. When Daniel starts to cry Leisau smacks him and threatens to call the police to take him away. Daniel cries quietly till he goes to sleep. Leisau is afraid to wake him up because she wants to put her feet up while he is asleep. Daniel's dad comes home quite late and demands his evening meal; when she tells him that she is tired and her feet are swollen he hits her.

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### Ask the participants the following questions:

- What happened in the story?
- How did Leisau feel?
- How did Daniel feel?
- How did Daniel's father feel?
- Have you (mothers) felt the way Leisau did? What did you do when you felt like this?
- How could Leisau have reacted differently?
- What could Daniel's father have done differently to support Leisau?

See what ideas the participants can produce. Then explain that you are going to tell the story again, but this time Leisau and her husband handle the situation differently – and do some of the things that they have mentioned.

### Story 2:

Leisau is going into her eighth month of pregnancy and she is feeling very tired after standing up and working all day in the shop. On the way home she had to take Daniel (her three-year-old son) from her sister's house and walk home for another 15 minutes. When she arrives home, she must cook the evening meal and her feet are very painful. Daniel is tired and hungry and wants mum to carry him but mum needs to cook, then give Daniel a bath. When Daniel starts to cry because he is tired and hungry Leisau asks Daniel to come and sits near her while she cooks, and asks if he can help her by washing the island cabbage so she can cook quickly, and then they can both eat and have a shower together before dinner. As they are washing the cabbage, Daniel can see the dirt in the water; his mother tells him there is a lot of dust and dirt on the cabbage leaves, which is why we need to wash them well before cooking. Dad returns straight from work (Leisau had told him how tired she was and that Daniel needed him too). He gives Daniel a bath while Leisau finishes the cooking. While Leisau goes to have a shower dad feeds Daniel and reads him a story and Daniel falls asleep happy. Leisau can sit down, enjoy her dinner and chat with her husband. Her husband goes up close to Leisau's stomach and speaks to his unborn child. This was a practice he learnt about at the health centre as an effective way of bonding with the baby and making the baby and mother feel loved and wanted. (See Annex 2: Poster.)

### Ask the participants the following questions:

- What was the difference this time?
- Do you think she reacted positively this time? Why? Why not?
- How did Daniel feel? How did Leisau feel?
- What did her husband do? How did her husband feel?
- How did she influence her husband to help her?

(The two stories could be turned into a role play – a positive one where the husband is supportive and the other is being not supportive.)



## ACTIVITY 2: Sharing stories

**Explain** that you want the participants to have an open discussion regarding our culture, our beliefs and our practices around pregnancy and whether some of these need to change.

**Divide** the mothers into one group and the fathers in another group.

Invite participants to share their experiences:

For the mothers, questions might include:

- How were you supported (or not) during pregnancy?
- Who did you get support from?
- What changes would you like to see happen?

For the fathers, questions might include:

- Did you support your wife during pregnancy? How? What might you have done better?
- Is it okay in our culture for pregnant mothers to do all the work at home? (Wash clothes, clean, cook dinner and look after the younger children)
- Have you gone to the antenatal clinic with your wife? The Save the Children Baseline Survey found that only 17% of men accompanied their wives to the antenatal clinic.
- Are there things you think should change?



## ACTIVITY 3: Development of the foetus (see Annex 3)

Use photographs of the foetus at various stages of development to create interest and have a group discussion about what they observe.

Sample questions:

- What do you see?
- How is the foetus changing between the first photos and the later ones?
- How developed does the baby look in these photos?
- Did you expect to be able to see so much of how the baby is developing?
- Did you expect the foetus to look like this (at different ages)?
- How does it make you feel to see these pictures?

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## Conclusion

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Key messages for ensuring participants recognize the importance of the mother's health and nutrition to her baby's healthy growth and development and understand more about the development of the unborn child in the womb and how to protect the foetus:

- Pregnancy before the age of 18 and after the age of 35 increases the risk of complications for the mother and the baby.
- Both men and women are responsible for family planning – so many times men blame women for an unplanned pregnancy.
- Smoking, kava, alcohol, drugs, caffeine and some medicines are harmful for mother and the baby.
- Pregnant women need care. This means help around the home, lighter workloads and kindness.
- Violence against a pregnant woman is a serious crime and can damage both the mother and the unborn baby.
- Pregnant women should visit a health centre regularly during pregnancy.
- The birth should be attended by a skilled and trained attendant such as a midwife.
- Babies learn even while they are still in the womb and of course from the time they are born.

## Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain: we will continue to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

## Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to help build your baby or young child's brain?"

Participants share their ideas and facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes with a prayer.

**ANNEX 1**

**Workshop 2: Caring for the Pregnant Mother and Her Unborn Child**

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

4. Do you think that care for pregnant women is good in your area or are there some problems? Give some examples

.....  
 .....

5. Why is this so? Do you think it has anything to do with our culture?

.....  
 .....

6. How can we change our mentality and care more for our pregnant mothers?

.....  
 .....

7. Have you heard of anyone who talks/sings to their unborn child? Do they think it makes a difference to the child's relationship with his/her parents?

.....  
 .....

8. What support/advice will you give a mother who is pregnant?

.....  
 .....

9. Do you think all mothers, babies and young children in Vanuatu receive their immunizations? Are these on time?

.....  
 .....

10. Are your children's births all registered and do you know why it is important that this is done when children are born?

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**ANNEX 2**

Poster



**ANNEX 3****The developing baby in the womb****1. Your baby's growth: conception to birth**

Are you curious what a baby inside the womb looks like at various stages? These photos look inside the womb to see how a baby develops from month to month.

Fertilization happens when a sperm meets and penetrates an egg. At this moment, the genetic makeup is complete, including the sex of the baby. Within about three days the fertilized egg is dividing very fast into many cells. It passes through the fallopian tube into the uterus. The placenta, which will nourish the baby, also starts to form.

**2. Development at four weeks**

At this point the baby is developing the structures that will eventually form their face and neck. The heart and blood vessels continue to develop. And the lungs, stomach and liver start to develop.

**3. Development at eight weeks**

The baby is now a little over half an inch in size. Eyelids and ears are forming, and you can see the tip of the nose. The arms and legs are well formed. The fingers and toes grow longer and more distinctly.

**4. Development at 16 weeks**

The baby now measures about 4.3 to 4.6 inches and weighs about 3.5 ounces. The baby's eyes can blink, and the heart and blood vessels are fully formed. The baby's fingers and toes have fingerprints.



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### 5. Development at 20 weeks

The baby weighs about 10 ounces and is a little more than 6 inches long. The uterus is at the level of the mother's belly button. The baby can suck a thumb, yawn, stretch and make faces. Around this time the pregnant mother will feel the baby move.



### 6. Development at 28 weeks

The baby weighs about 2 pounds, 6 ounces, and changes position often at this point in pregnancy.



### 7. Development at 36 weeks

Babies differ in size, depending on many factors, such as gender, the number of babies being carried and the size of the parents. So, your baby's overall rate of growth is as important as the actual size. On average, a baby at this stage is about 18 inches and weighs close to 6 pounds. The brain has been developing rapidly. Lungs are fully developed. The head is usually positioned down into the pelvis by now. Your baby is considered at "term" when they are 37 weeks.



### 8. Birth!

A mother's due date marks the end of their 40th week. The delivery date is calculated using the first day of their last period. Based on this, pregnancy can last between 38 and 42 weeks with a full-term delivery happening around 40 weeks.

These photos are from the WebMD website

<https://www.webmd.com/baby/ss/slideshow-fetal-development>







PARENT  
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WORKSHOP 3

# Brain Development







## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Understand more about how the brains of babies and young children develop.
2. Be convinced of the important contributions they can make to support their children's healthy brain development and feel motivated to take action.



## Materials

- Poster
- Brain development leaflet: windows of opportunity
- Flipchart
- Markers
- Key messages for parents as handout
- Video clip on brain development

## Background information for facilitators

- The baby's brain is built over time. Brain development starts during pregnancy and continues through to early adulthood. But most of brain development takes place between birth and age five. And like a building, the brain needs a strong foundation.
- Babies are born with over 100 billion brain cells. As babies grow and experience new things, connections are made between these brain cells. By about age three, most of these brain cell connections have been made.
- Parents and caregivers support healthy brain development when they give babies and young children affection, attention and stimulation, as well as good nutrition, proper health care and protection.
- At birth the brain is only partly developed. The brain matures through interactions with the world. Early experiences are critical.
- Even very young infants can experience stress when the places they live feel unsafe or are frightening. "Toxic" stress – which is much more serious than short-lived, everyday stress – is caused by persistent problems like domestic violence, poverty, abuse, neglect, being exposed to violence, having a parent who misuses drugs or alcohol or having a parent with an untreated mental illness. Toxic stress is harmful to the baby's developing brain. The body produces too much cortisol when toxic stress occurs and this can lead to physical, learning and emotional problems in childhood, and these problems can carry on into adulthood.

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## Introduction

### Welcome

### Prayer

### Icebreaker

### Review

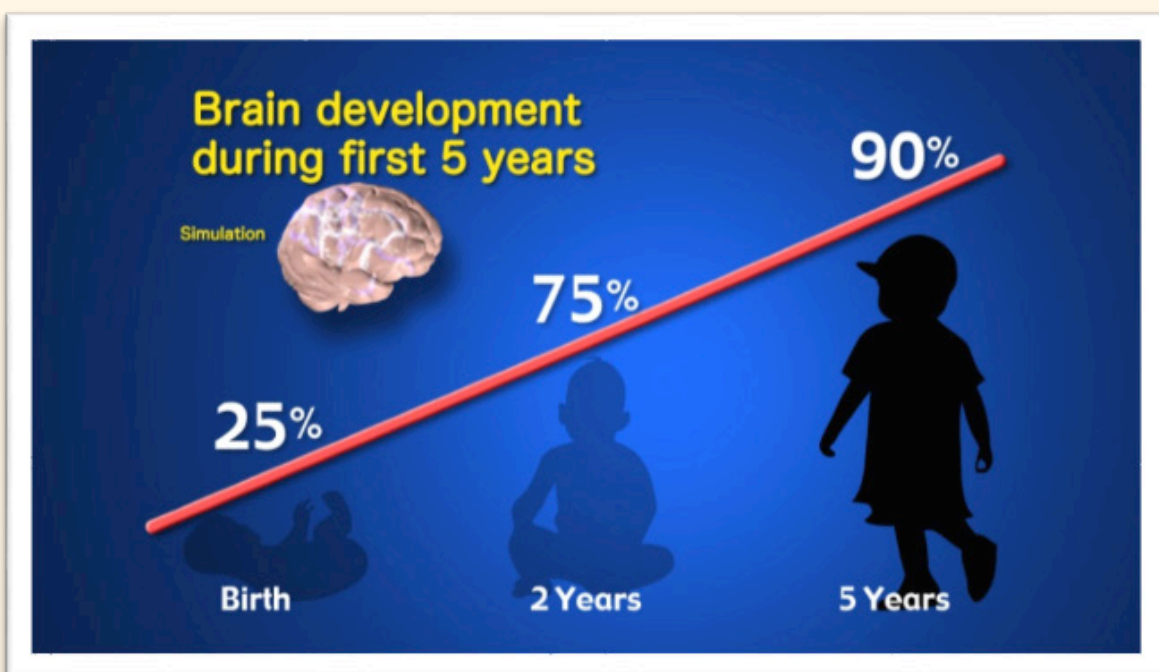
Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop

### Sample introduction

"Today we will be talking about a very important topic: babies' and young children's brain development."

Show participants the poster below. "The brain is only 25% developed at birth but 90% of brain development is completed by the age of five. What does this tell you about the importance of the early years?"

Wait for them to come up with their ideas and then explain, "This means that we cannot afford to miss opportunities to give our children the best start we can offer. In this workshop we are going to explore what that means, what we can do to help build our children's brains and what we must be careful to avoid doing."

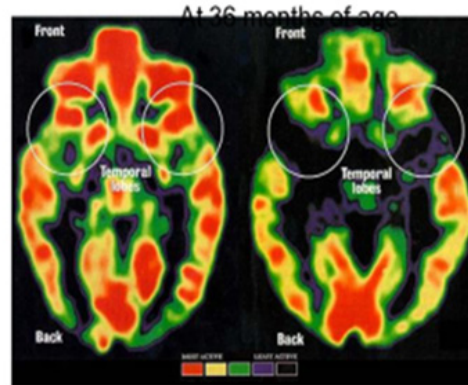


Then show the participants the poster below and point out the differences in the scans of the two brains.

## WHEN BABIES ARE NEGLECTED OR ABUSED

When children are not cared for properly the brain does not grow the way it should. This lack of growth has potential to affect the child throughout their life.

<http://mi-simh.msu.edu/publications/Wbrander>



On the left: is 'normal' brain activity; a "stimulated" brain.

On the right: brain of a neglected/abused child, same age. The dark areas show where the brain connections have not grown or were lost.



### ACTIVITY 1: Supporting brain development

**What are the ways we can stimulate babies and young children's brain development through everyday activities?**

Divide the participants into three groups.

- Ask one group to think of all the interactions they have with babies (holding the baby, bathing, talking, massaging, playing, etc.) and decide if these interactions are positive and helpful in helping the baby's brain grow and develop. Also identify what stresses their baby (ignoring the baby when he/she is crying, shouting and fighting, shaking the baby, etc.).
- Ask another group to think about children aged one or two and to identify both positive and negative aspects that can affect the toddler's brain development.
- The last group does this activity focused on children ages three to six. What supports and what hinders brain development?

**Key points to bring out as you summarize:**

- Responsive care (think back to our introductory session on Nurturing Care) is the key to how you can support your young child's brain development. That means affection, attention, talking with your children and providing opportunities to play and learn, as well as good nutrition, proper health care and protection. All of this will support the child's brain development regardless of age.
- Your relationship with your children shapes their brains. Nurturing care influences your young child's health, behaviour and learning. Research has shown that this has life-long impact.

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- Breastfeeding and healthy food are needed for the brain's healthy development. 60% of nutrition at the age of one year goes to the brain development. At the age of three years it is 30%.
- When parents are rough, hit the child, shout or do not respond to the child then brain development will be affected, especially in the first few years of life. This applies to ALL children, girls, boys, children in rural areas, children in cities, children who are disabled, children who are rich, children who are poor. Babies and young children experience stress when the places they live in feel frightening. "Toxic" stress is harmful to the developing brain and is caused by persistent problems like domestic violence, poverty, abuse, neglect or having a parent who misuses drugs or alcohol. It can lead to physical, learning and emotional problems in childhood which carried on into adulthood. A caring and supportive adult can help protect a child from stress.

The table below may be helpful to summarize some of the key points.

<b>Helps brain development</b>	<b>Has a negative impact on brain development</b>
Mother breastfeeding	Shaking
Making eye contact, smiling and having skin contact with baby	Hitting
Play games like hide face or object and show	Loud noises
Talking soothingly to baby	Shouting and fighting
Singing	Nothing to play with
Frequent healthy foods after six months	Mother is feeling stressed
Responding to child's signals	Not giving child healthy food
Giving safe objects for play	Ignoring cry of baby
Giving vaccinations needed	Failure to feed regularly
Regular check-ups	Keeping the nappy on all day
Baby and environment clean	No vaccination
Traditional massage	No handwashing before feeding baby



## ACTIVITY 2: Look, say, sing, play

Go through the following points with participants.

Right from birth, every time you talk, sing or play with your baby, you're not just bonding, you are building their brain.

Look at what your baby's focusing on and how they react. Brain-building all starts with taking a cue from your little one. Look to see what they find interesting or funny, copy them and react to what they do. It's a game – going back and forth between the two of you.

look

Say what you're doing and copy the sounds your baby makes.

Talking to your little one and copying any babbling is an easy way to build their brain throughout the day. Talking about simple actions as you do them is a great place to start.

say

Sing songs you like and nursery rhymes. Your young children will love it and it is all part of brain-building!

sing

Play simple games and see what your child enjoys.

You don't need toys for this brain-building skill. Try playing peekaboo, mess about with soap suds when you are doing the laundry or turn sorting clothes into a game! Over time, you can add playful moments throughout the day.

play

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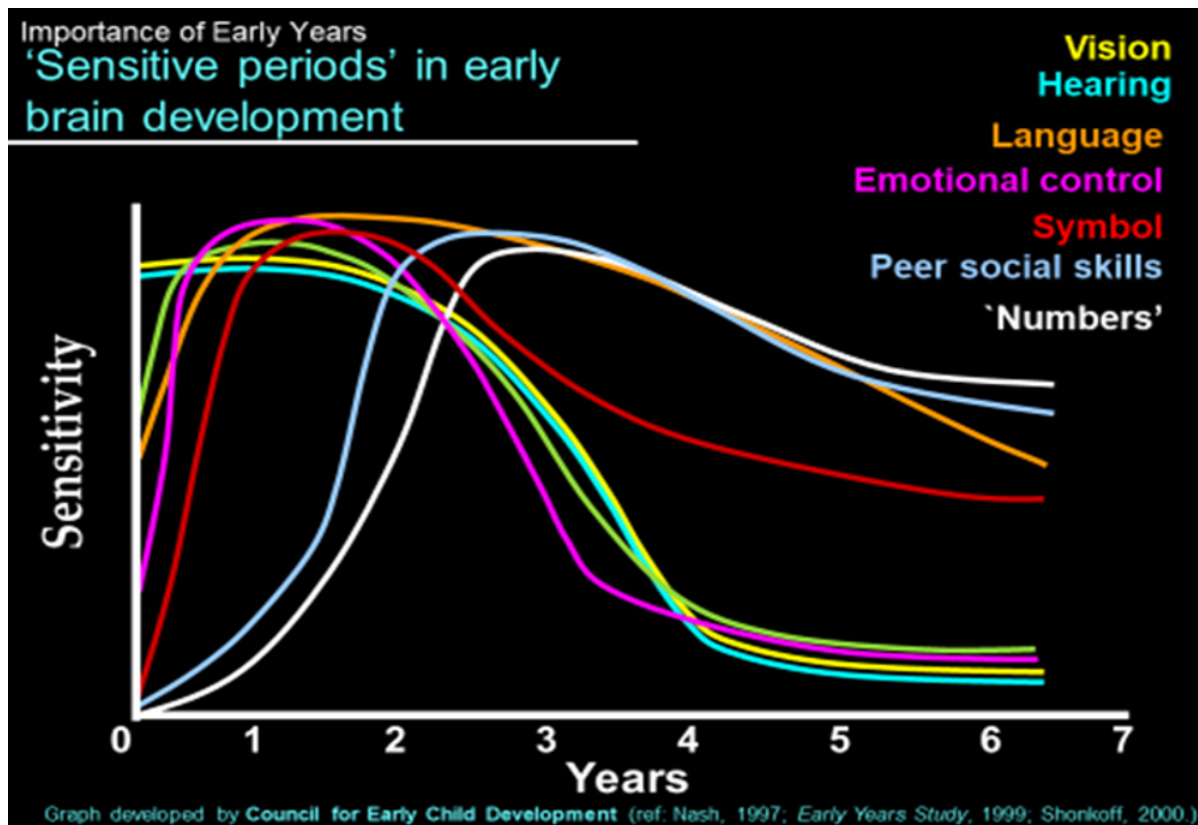




### ACTIVITY 3: Sensitive periods in early brain development

Bring the whole group together.

Using the graph below, talk with participants about sensitive periods in brain development. Discuss the different lines on the graph and emphasize that the development of most senses and skills happens well before children go to school.



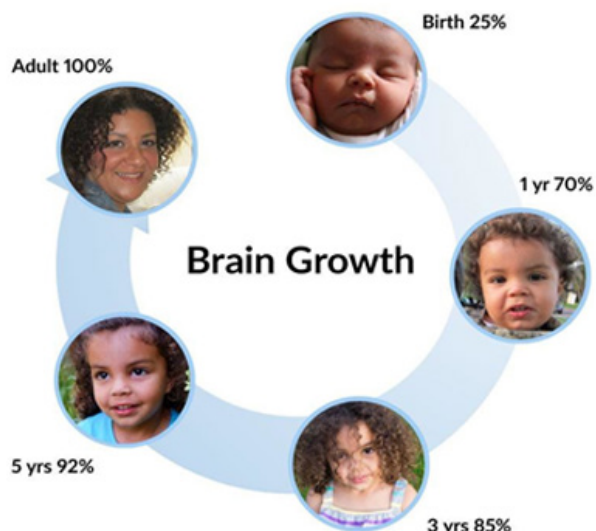
## Conclusion

### Review of key message

([http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/your\\_baby's\\_brain](http://www.caringforkids.cps.ca/handouts/your_baby's_brain))

Write the key messages in bold below on a flipchart as concluding remarks and go over them with the parents. Also use the poster below.

**Remember how fast young brains grow. You are the most important people in the lives of your babies and young children. What you do will help build their brains.**



**Supports to Healthy Brain Development the KEY**

What you can do to help your baby and young child develop a healthy brain:

- **Respond to your baby.** This is especially important when your baby is sick, hungry or upset, or just needs some comfort. But babies also reach out for you in countless positive ways – by babbling, making sounds or smiling. When you respond in a loving and consistent way, you help their brain develop. The same responsive approach to your toddler and preschooler will also help them feel secure and learn.
- **Provide a safe and loving home for your baby and young child.** Develop daily routines that your baby and young child can count on. Keep your home calm and without violence.
- **Help your baby and young child explore his/her surroundings, both inside and out.** Play helps children learn, and you are your child's first playmate. Playing simple games will help him/her learn about the people and the world around him/her. And remember to talk to your baby and young child as you go through your daily routines. Tell your baby what is going on, point out interesting things that you see together and help



- **Get regular health care for your baby and young child.** Your baby and young child should be seen by a health care provider like a village health worker on a regular basis. Keep vaccines up-to-date and talk to your provider about development and what to expect next.
- **Develop community connections.** Get to know the services and programmes available in your neighbourhood. Many communities have clinics or village health workers that serve young families. Early childhood care and education (ECCE) centres, play groups and community events are great places to meet other parents, and you can learn from each others' experiences. If you're not sure where to go, try contacting your village health worker, nurses at your aid post, your nearest health centre and your ECCE teachers.

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- **Reach out if you need help.** If you feel stressed, overwhelmed or depressed or need some support caring for your baby and young child, don't be afraid to reach out for help. Talk to health care providers like nurses in health centres or your family or contact your church or faith-based groups.

## Discussion of concerns and questions

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“Do any of you have any concerns or questions? Anything you feel uncertain or worried about or that you do not agree with?” Answer questions. If you do not know the answer, ask if anyone in the room knows. If no one knows the answer, then tell them that you will find out and let them know later. You can contact the ECCE coordinator in Vila with your question.

## Commitments

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Facilitator asks, “Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to help build your baby or young child's brain?”

Participants share their ideas and facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes with a prayer.

**ANNEX 1**

**Workshop 3: Healthy Brain Development**

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

2. What impressed you the most about the brain development workshop?

.....  
 .....

3. What new information did you get out of this workshop?

.....  
 .....

4. After the brain workshop what are you doing differently at home with your child?

.....  
 .....

5. How can parents help their babies' and young children's brain development?

.....  
 .....

6. Is responding to, talking to, singing with and playing with your baby, ensuring they eat the right food and keeping them safe is especially important at an early age? If yes, explain why?

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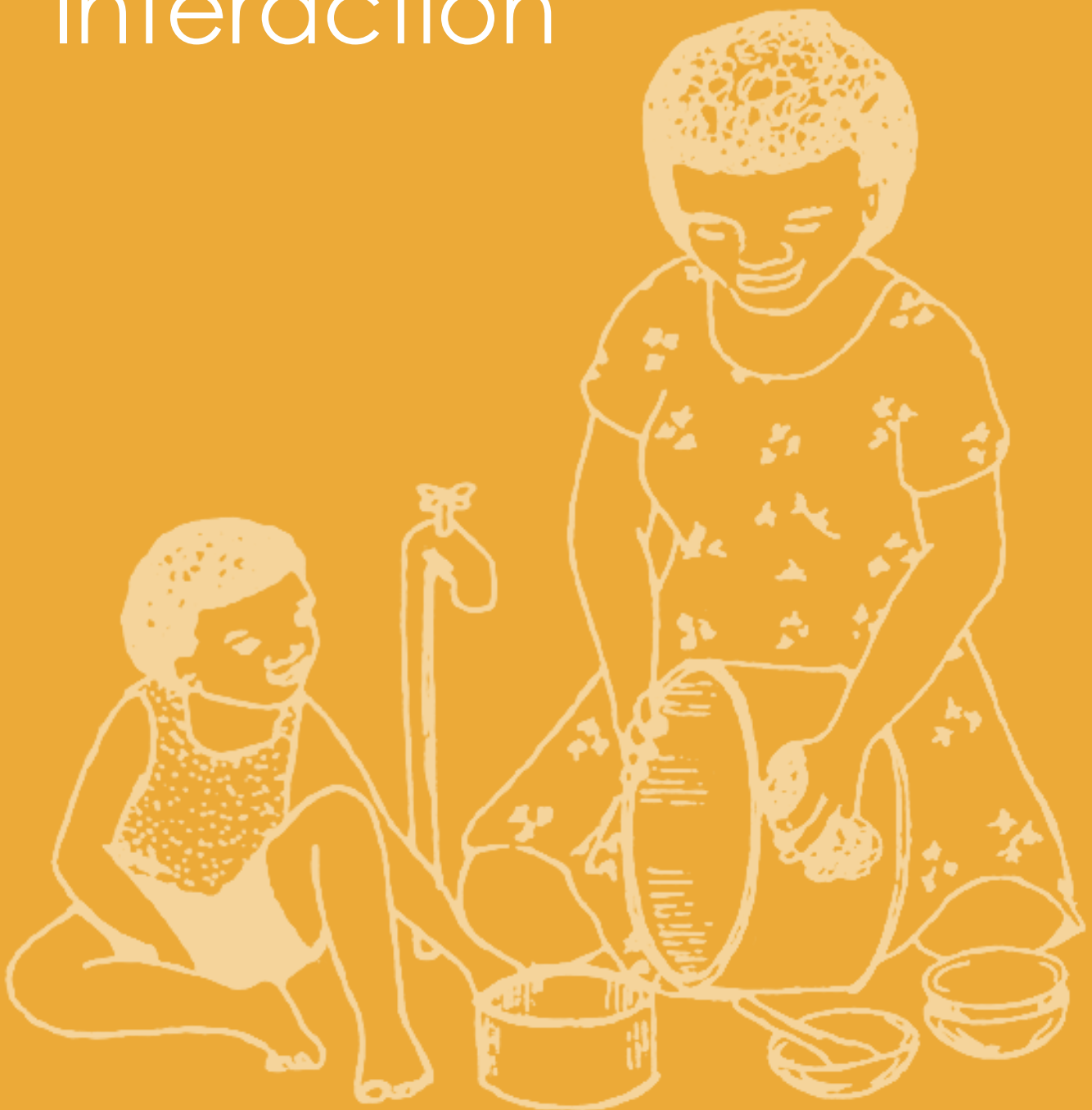
PARENT  
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WORKSHOP 4

# Parent–Child Interaction







## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Understand how their interactions with their young children provide the foundation for their children's development as confident, capable and caring people.
2. Feel confident that they can do a lot to support their children's development as part of everyday life, despite their workload.



## Materials

- Markers
- Flipchart
- Blu Tack
- Poster: Family Interaction with Children
- Poster: Early Childhood Developmental Milestones

## Background Information for facilitators

- Families play a crucial role in the development of the child – every child, whatever his/her abilities. Every child's needs go beyond feeding and clothing. They need to feel loved and safe, responded to and included in the daily activities of the family.
- Young children need to play. This is how they learn. And the parent is the person they want to play with most – crawling, jumping, climbing, tickling, singing and laughing!
- They also learn through doing things with us. Engaging and involving our children in our daily activities does not require money. All you need is a few minutes of your attention to the child and to include them in what you do.
- Babies will thrive when they are:
  - Frequently held, and cuddled by the parents and others;
  - Talked/sung to and stroked gently when breastfeeding or feeding;
  - Played with and given attention and stimulation (e.g. encourage baby to look at and handle safe things and interact with people);
  - Clean and comfortable.
- As children become toddlers and preschoolers, parents continue to be the most important people in their lives. Parents can:
  - Be good role models;
  - Show interest in their children and what they are doing;
  - Spend time with their children;
  - Talk and listen to them;
  - Encourage children to express their feelings, opinions and beliefs;
  - Set clear limits for behaviour and acknowledge and reinforce positive behaviour.

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# Introduction

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### **Welcome**

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

### **Sample introduction**

“Today we want to discuss ways parents and caregivers can spend more time with their babies, toddlers and preschoolers despite being busy.

This session is important, because the more mothers and fathers and others interact positively with the baby and young child, the better their brain will develop, as we learned in the previous session. They will feel more secure, will have more confidence and will be eager learners. Let us start with some activities that will help us see how parents and children can spend more time together, especially during the first five years of the child’s life. This is important for every child and perhaps even more important for a child with a disability, who may need more time interacting with family members.”



### **ACTIVITY 1: How do parents interact with their young children?**

Divide the participants into four groups and give each group at least one copy of the poster in Annex 2.

Ask the groups to look at the poster, which includes parents from Vanuatu and other countries around the world, and discuss the following questions:

- What are the parents in the pictures doing with their children?
- How do you think the children are feeling?
- What are they learning?
- Why is this important?

Sum up the discussions by pulling out key points, e.g. “You have pointed out that the children are feeling included, loved and happy. They are learning so many things – communication and language skills, how to use their bodies skilfully, concentration, following instructions, patience, sharing, helpfulness, etc.”



## ACTIVITY 2: Activities parents do with their young children

Ask the whole group the following questions:

- What kind of daily activities do you do with your babies and young children?
- How much do you talk with them while you are doing things with them?

Now ask:

- Why do you think sometimes we do not spend much time with our children or do not use that time well?

Start making a list on a flipchart of some of the issues they raise.

- What are some of the things we sometimes say to our children when we are busy and feel a bit stressed?

Facilitator can start discussions and then write a list of the common things the group comes up with that we say to our children when we are stressed – like “Don’t bother me!” “Go away and let me get on with this!” “Shut up and don’t ask too many questions!”

- What else do we say to our children?

Say to the participants, “We can laugh at ourselves for doing this but how does the child feel? It is not funny for them. It makes them feel rejected and sad.”

Go back to the list of issues they have raised and explain that they are now going to have a quick brainstorm – producing solutions so that they are using time when they are either nearby their children or doing things with them to support their development as capable, confident, caring people.

See examples below:

ISSUES RAISED	SOLUTION STRATEGIES
<p><b>Father is not at home</b></p> <p><b>Mother has too much work – no time</b></p> <p><b>All the children want attention at the same time</b></p>	<p>During daily activities listen, talk and sing to your child.</p> <p>If you are working in the garden, sing together while you work or tell a story.</p> <p>Take the child to the market with you and talk with him/her about the different fruit and vegetables.</p> <p>Organize the older children to help the younger ones and praise them so they feel valued and respected for their helpfulness.</p> <p>Before the child sleeps, say prayers together, read or tell a story or sing a song.</p>
<p><b>Do not have storybooks to read</b></p>	<p>Just tell stories – one of the best ways for children to develop their language skills.</p>
<p><b>Do not have toys to play with them</b></p>	<p>Leaves, coconut husks, shells, plastic bottles all make great toys. You do not even have to make a toy... children will just play with them.</p> <p>If you have some time, you can also make toys from these materials.</p>

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### ACTIVITY 3: How to engage with children and support brain development when you are busy

#### A Story

Tell the participants a short story about Grace, which shows what a positive role model this mother is despite her situation.

“Grace has four children aged one to six years. Her husband works outside the village and only comes back two or three times a week, so she is remarkably busy. One day, feeling quite tired, she returned from collecting small fish, crabs and shellfish from along the beach. The children all ran to greet her, except for Jonah, who is unable to walk following an accident and who was carried by his sister Rose. Grace asked the oldest son Antonie to get her a big dish to put everything in. He brought it and she tipped the catch onto the dish. Antonie wanted to keep the other children away and go through the fish himself but Grace sat down and got all four children to sit down in a circle. There were several types of fish and shellfish, and Grace answered the children’s questions about what they all were. They talked about their names, colours and patterns and which their favourites were. Grace sat the youngest on her knee so he could breastfeed and have a cuddle and then made sure the others all had the chance to ask questions and express their opinions. Two crabs started to move and Rose was scared but Grace reassured them that they were fine and would not hurt them. Grace picked out four small hermit crabs and said, “These are the small ones – one each for you to play with.” The children happily played crab races with their crabs while Grace cooked one of the big fat ones for supper.”

Ask the participants what they think of Grace. Is she a good mother? What did she do that showed this? Reflect the participants’ answers back to them making sure that you emphasize how skilled this mother is at maximizing the potential of everyday interactions in building all her **children’s thinking, language and confidence and giving them opportunities to play together.**



### ACTIVITY 4: Role plays

Explain that now they are going to use their own ideas and creativity to think what they could do in different situations so that they support their children’s development and learning.

Give each group one of the following scenarios and ask them to produce their ideas so that they can engage their children rather than just ignoring them and telling them to go away. If there is enough time have them show the solutions through role play.

**Scenario 1:** You must carry your baby on your back every day and work in your garden. How can you stimulate and interact with your baby as you work?

**Scenario 2:** You have just come back from fishing and are now cleaning the fish for your dinner. Your four year old runs to you and says, "Daddy, daddy what are you doing?" What can you do to address his/her curiosity?

**Scenario 3:** You are washing clothes and your two year old comes and sits next to you. What can you do to involve him/her and build his/her knowledge, skills and positive attitude?

**Scenario 4:** It is Sunday afternoon, and you see your three and five year old are bored, throwing stones around the yard and starting to argue. What can you do to stimulate their imagination? (One idea could be to ask them to collect different size stones/pebbles and to make shapes with these; call it stone drawing!)

Ask each group to demonstrate their ideas of involving and engaging the child through a role play. Ask if other groups have any additional suggestions. At the end of the activity, conclude by emphasizing how important this involvement in everyday activities is for children's learning. Emphasize how important this is for children with disabilities. Too often they are left out, but they need more, not fewer, chances to join.

## Conclusion

### Key messages

As a wrap-up, share the following six points with the parents:

1. **Responsive care is the foundation** of good parenting. (Think back to the first workshop (Nurturing Care). It is all about **relationships** and being **responsive** to your child's needs and interests. Responsive care refers to our ability to notice, understand and respond to our young child's signals. Science has taught us so much about how even tiny babies are communicating and need us to respond to their signals. When we are responsive, we are better able to support all aspects of development (e.g. is the child hungry? In pain? Afraid of something? Wanting to play or explore or have a conversation with us? Needing a cuddle?)
2. **Spend time with your child.** Take the opportunity to interact through prayer, talk, discussions, playing games from your childhood, laughing together, swimming and fishing, telling and reading stories, etc. (Note: There will be a whole workshop on how you can support your child's language and early literacy.)
3. **Establish routines**, for example every morning greeting and hugging your children. Ask them a



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question. Take an interest in what they tell you. This way they know you care, and it makes them feel happy and secure.

4. **Involve and engage your child to assist with daily home chores in a way that makes it fun.** Thank them when they help.
5. **Be a good role model.** Praise your child, be kind, take interest in their ideas and actions, and appreciate their efforts.
6. These points apply to EVERY child – girls as much as boys, five year olds as much as babies, children who have a disability as much as those who do not.

### Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will continue to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

### Commitments

Facilitator asks, “Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to do to interact more with your baby or young child?”

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes.



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**ANNEX 1**

**Workshop 4: Parent–Child Interaction**

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

7. Who usually plays with your child? When did you last play with your child?  
What games do you play?

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.....

8. How do you think your interactions with your child support different aspects  
of their development? (physical, language and thinking, social, emotional,  
spiritual)

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9. Do you take an interest in the things your child is interested in? Are you  
good at listening to what they are telling you?

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10. Are you and your young children close?

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11. How do you think you can improve your interactions?

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ANNEX 2

Parent Child Interactions – Having Fun Together









PARENT  
SUPPORT  
PROGRAMME



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**WORKSHOP 5**

# Language, Storytelling and Reading to Your Children







## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Understand more about children's language development and the importance of talking, singing and telling stories with their young children.
2. Recognize the importance of reading to children.
3. Increase their skills, confidence and motivation to tell stories and read to their young children.
4. Feel confident applying the skills and knowledge learned during this workshop in their daily lives



## Materials

- Handout for participants: Let's Read Together
- Key messages written on a flipchart
- Set of storybooks as an incentive for the community to set up a mini-library

## Background information for facilitators but that can also be shared with parents

- The more language babies and young children hear and the more they are encouraged to use language, the better their language and literacy skills will be. It's as important to talk to small babies as it is to preschool children.
- Children whose parents frequently talk with/read to them know many more words by age two than do children who have not been read to.
- Children who do not hear much language from early on suffer from language delays and struggle at school.
- Between two and three years old most children's speech develops very fast.
- Giving young children the opportunity to listen to stories and to look at pictures and books is important for parents/caregivers to help children grow up capable and clever.
- Being read to from a young age is one of the strongest predictors of school success. It boosts school readiness, develops language and literacy skills and prepares them to understand the written word; this is often referred to as emergent literacy.
- Reading books aloud to children stimulates their imagination and expands their understanding of the world while improving concentration, curiosity and memory.
- These facts apply to ALL children whatever their abilities or disabilities. It is important to support emergent literacy with all children. Low expectations limit children's development.

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## Introduction

### **Welcome**

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

Sing an action children song or do a group game.

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.



### **Sample introduction**

“Do you remember how in earlier workshops we talked a lot about how we support our young children’s overall language development through responsive caregiving – talking, listening, singing and playing with them? We talked about this in Brain Development, in Parent–Child Interaction, etc.

Today we are going to discuss how we keep building language skills that children need before they start to read and write. Telling stories and reading to our children will mean they develop a love of books. This is one of the most important things we can do to help children do well when they go to school.”

#### **Question: Where do children see written words before they go to school?**

Make sure participants’ responses cover the fact that children see and interact with print (e.g. books, posters, signs, magazines, grocery lists) in everyday situations (e.g. home, preschool, community) well before they start primary school.

Explain that:

- Parents can support their child’s growing appreciation and enjoyment of print as they begin to recognize words that rhyme, point out logos and street signs, and name some letters of the alphabet.
- Scribbling and drawing helps develop the fine motor skills of the child and his/her eye-hand coordination, which will enable him/her later to write and form letters.
- Gradually, children combine what they know about speaking and listening with what they know about print and become ready to learn to read and write.
- For children who may not hear or understand spoken words, it is important to take the time to explain words to them in a way they can understand.



## ACTIVITY 1: Telling stories to children

Think of a story suitable for young children and practise it before the workshop. Make it interesting by using something from the environment, such as a coconut: “How the first coconut came to Vanuatu” or “How the rat got its whiskers,” etc.

Explain to participants that you are going to tell them a children’s story. Note: The facilitator must:

- Make it interesting: use different gestures, tones and facial expressions and make eye contact with the participants.
- Ask questions along the way and allow them to make predictions about what will happen.
- At the end ask questions about the story.
- Tell the story and then ask questions to participants:
- Did you enjoy the story? What did I do to make it enjoyable? (They should mention the points above).
- Why is telling stories to young children important? Make sure the following points are covered:
  - ☑ Children love listening to stories and it strengthens family bonds.
  - ☑ Stories help develop language, thinking and concentration skills.
  - ☑ Children learn new words and ideas.
  - ☑ They get to ask questions and express their thoughts.
  - ☑ Vanuatu has some of the best stories and we do not want to lose the art of telling stories and preserving our culture.

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### ACTIVITY 2: Reading with young children

Read a short story to the participants in the most boring way possible.

- Do not introduce the book.
- Hold it so only you can see the pictures.
- Read in a monotonous voice – no expression.
- Do not look at the participants.
- Do not use any facial expressions or gestures.
- Read the story with no pauses.

After you have read the story ask, “Did you enjoy it?” Most will shout “No!” Ask them why it was not enjoyable.

Challenge them to do it better and read in a way that children will really enjoy.

Divide the participants into pairs and ensure each pair has a book. They can take turns being the parent and the child. Ask the parent to read the book to the child in an engaging way with the aim of both having an enjoyable experience.

Bring the participants back together and ask them to share what the person reading did to make it fun. This should include points like:

- Being enthusiastic about the story and talking about it before you start reading.
- Showing the child some of the pictures before you start.
- Encouraging the child to touch the book.
- Changing voices for different characters.
- Using gestures and facial expressions and making eye contact.
- Sitting close together so they can both see.
- Pausing occasionally to talk about the story or ask a question.
- Pointing to some of the words or pictures.
- Listening to the child when they point something out or ask a question.
- Praise (never scold) the child, for example if he/she identifies a picture or attempts to read a word.

Tell the participants that you will read another story, this time using as many of these strategies as possible. Ask parents to sit on mats in a semi-circle with you. Read the book TIK using the strategies in the list above.

Questions might include: What colour is the baby turtle? How many arms and legs does the baby turtle have? Where were mother turtle and baby turtle going? Why did baby turtle not want to go see the doctor? What happened next? What do you do when you feel afraid?

Ask the group to come up with at least four questions they can ask children about the story. Ask them to think about substitutes for children with disabilities – that is, can the child point to pictures or sign the image in the book?

After you have read the story ask them if they enjoyed it. The answer should be an emphatic “Yes!”

Explain that reading the book shows the children several things.

- “What I say can be written, what is written can be read.” This is the first pre-literacy discovery that every child needs to make.
- Children will learn to hold a book the right way up, turn the pages, learn to discriminate and tell differences – an important skill when learning letters and not mixing them up! It also builds vocabulary and concepts, for example big/small, numbers, colours, etc.
- Give the handout on **Yumi Rid Tugeta** to parents and go through it with them.



### ACTIVITY 3: Establishing mini-libraries

Ask the participants what the biggest challenge is for them that prevents them reading more to their children. They will undoubtedly have a lack of storybooks near the top of the list. Acknowledge the factors they identify, which may include:

- Lack of available, affordable illustrated storybooks;
- Limited literacy skills;
- Heavy workloads and lack of time;
- Underestimating the significance of their role in supporting children’s language, learning and sense of self.

Ask them how they might solve this problem. Someone will likely suggest some sort of small library. Explain that mini-libraries can operate out of a plastic box or any big durable and waterproof box, to enable parent/caregivers/siblings to borrow simple, illustrated storybooks to read to young children.

Divide the participants into groups to discuss how they can take action and start a mini-library. Some parents might decide to do fundraising – for example write and ask business houses for support to buy suitable children’s storybooks for their library. The group will decide who will look after the books, where the books will be kept (someone’s house, a church, a community centre, etc.) and how often and when to change the books. Ask them to sit with people from their local community and develop a plan on how they can establish a mini-library in each of their communities.

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## Conclusion

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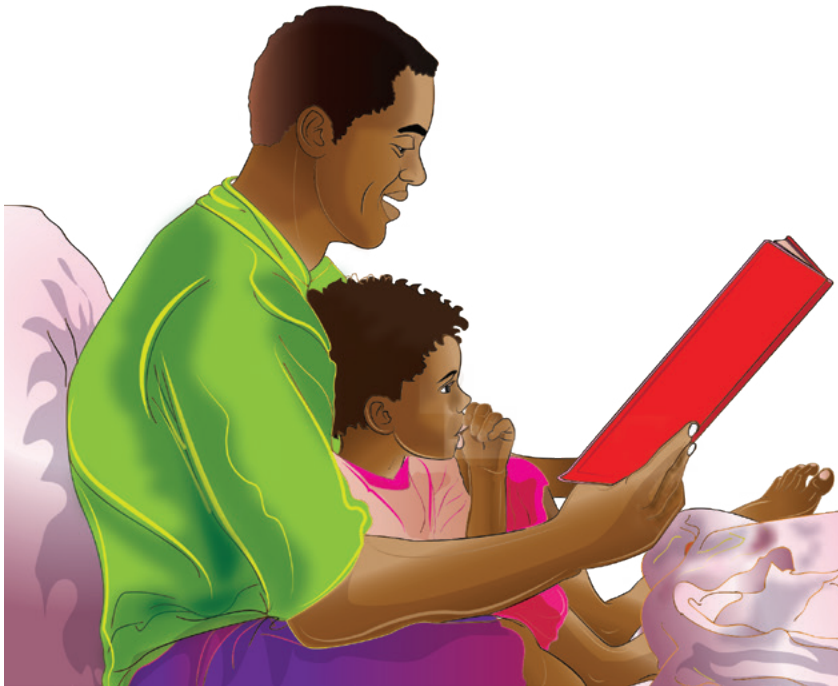
### Key messages

“Telling stories and reading to your child is one of the most important things you can do to help your child do well when they get to school.”

Tips on reading to young children:

### Read it together:

- Put your infant/child on your lap or next to you where he/she can see the pictures, and read the story together. For deaf children, sit in front of a mirror so the child can see both yourself and the book at the same time. For children with vision impairment, take the time to describe each image in detail. Use humour and expression when reading. After reading one page give your child a hug! Bedtime is an especially great time for reading together.



- Point to pictures and talk about them.
- You can build comprehension skills early, even with the littlest child. Discuss what is happening and point out things on the page, and answer your child's questions. Say things like, “Where's the little girl?” and then, “Where's her mom?” Listen to your child's responses.
- Say how much you enjoy reading together.
- Tell your child how much you enjoy reading with him/her. Look forward to this time you spend together. Talk about storytime as your favourite part of your day.



- Stop if your child gets restless, loses interest or has trouble paying attention. Just put the book away for a while. Don't continue if your child is not enjoying it.
- Your child may ask you to read this book over and over again. Go ahead and read the same book for the 100th time! Research suggests that repeated readings help children develop language skills.
- To help your children get interested in reading and writing, allow him/her to draw on paper with colouring pencils or with a stick on sand.
- When outside home, point to signs on stores and markets. Show the price of fruits and vegetables and say how much it is.
- When reading a book point to the written words in the book, show the shapes, count the objects you see in the book.



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## Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will be continuing to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

## Commitments

Facilitator asks, “Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to help build your baby or young child’s brain?”

Participants share their ideas and facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and asks them to start collecting everyday items such as shells, coconut shells, small stones, plastic bottles, small cardboard boxes and pieces of material to bring to the next workshop, which is all about play.



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**ANNEX 1**

**Workshop 5: Language, Storytelling and Reading to Your Children**

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

12. Do you have storybooks for your child at home?

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 .....

13. Who usually reads to your child?

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 .....

14. How often do you read or tell stories to your child?

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 .....

15. When do you usually tell stories or read books with your child? How many times did you do this last week?

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 .....

16. What language do you use?

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 .....

17. Can your child retell a story?

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 .....

18. After the workshop what are you doing/will you do differently with regard to telling a story or reading a story?

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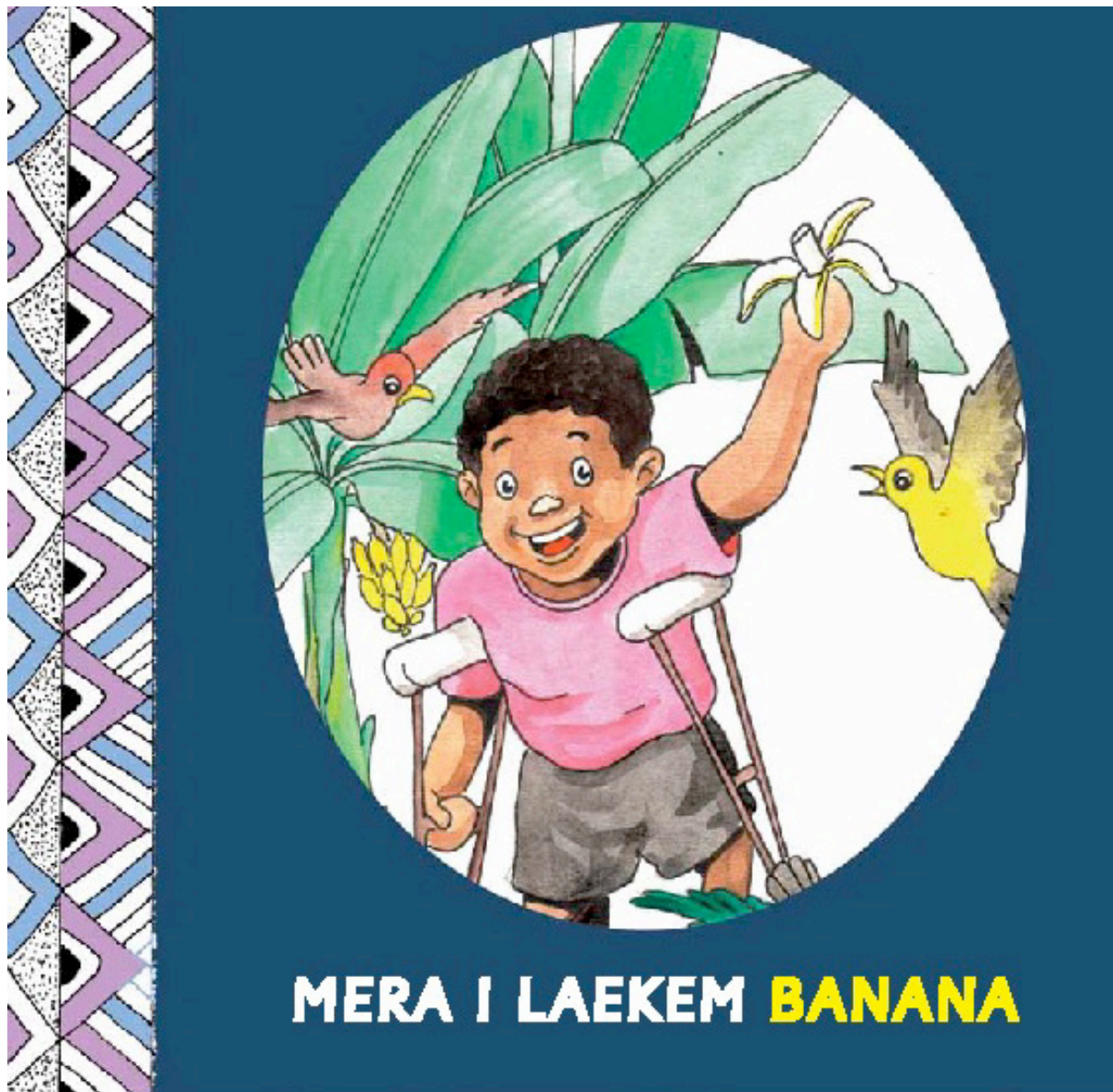
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ANNEX 2

Story: Mera I laekem Banana



This is an example of a very inclusive and enjoyable story. It would be a good one to have in your mini-library









PARENT  
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PROGRAMME



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WORKSHOP 6

# Play & Learning





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Recognize the importance of play as one of the best ways to help their children develop and learn.
2. Be equipped with many practical ideas for play materials and activities they can use with their babies and children.
3. Feel motivated to provide opportunities for their young children's play.



## Materials

- Collection of shells of different sizes and shapes
- At least 10 coconut shells
- At least five coconuts that have been halved and cleaned (each pair should fit together to make the full coconut)
- At least six pairs of bottle tops (each pair should be exactly similar, total 12 bottle tops)
- 10 small clean water bottles with their tops
- A ball or a fruit that can be used as a ball
- Scraps of colourful fabrics and plastic labels from bottles (removed)
- Pots/pans/buckets and wooden spoon with plastic containers
- A roll of string



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## Background information for facilitators

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### The importance of play

- Every child, rich or poor, girl or boy, whatever their abilities, has the right to play, as emphasized in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child.
- Play is the way young children learn about the world around them. Encouraging their play is one of the best ways to help them develop.
- All babies and children need time and freedom to play and explore. Play is the lifeblood of children. It is what is assigned by nature for this stage of life. Through play children practise skills they have acquired and learn new ones.
- Play helps children develop language and thinking skills – developing basic concepts such as classifying (size, colour, weight), trying out new ideas, working out how things fit together, how they can be used, problem-solving.
- Play helps children develop their physical skills – both large and small muscle skills. Large muscle skills help keep children fit and healthy and include running, jumping, skipping, etc. Small muscle skills include holding a stick, picking up small things, drawing, writing, etc.
- Play develops children's social skills – how to develop friendships, share, negotiate, plan and interact with others.
- Play supports children's emotional development – making them feel happy, allowing them to express their feelings and cope with stressful situations and events that may have frightened them.
- Young children learn through active physical exploration – touching, tasting, hearing, seeing, moving. Children learn through experimenting with materials and through the language they learn from talking with caregivers and other children.

## Introduction

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### **Welcome**

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

### **Heads shoulders knees and toes**

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

## Sample introduction

"Today, we will discuss play and its importance. To do this, we will have some discussions in which we think about what our young children learn when they are playing. We will try out some games ourselves and see how this unlocks our creativity and we will think about how we can do more at home to support our young children's play and learning."



### ACTIVITY 1: Discussion of what children learn from play

**Introduction:** "Play is the main way that young children learn. Children need to learn about people and things in their environment before they are ready to count and learn to read. The more children play with different things and with friends, the more enthusiasm they will have for learning and their chances of doing well in school later on will be better. Let's think about what children learn when they play. Who can share their ideas?"

The facilitator makes a list as the participants share ideas. These are likely to include points like:

- Become strong and able to move well
- Use hands skillfully
- Learn new words and basic concepts
- Use their imagination
- Have fun and feel happy
- Concentrate, are totally involved
- Solve problems and figure out how things work
- Learn to cooperate with others
- Feel in control of their environment

Summarize the key points and add if there are gaps. Remind participants that play does not need expensive toys. Everyday objects that are freely available make great playthings, stimulating all aspects of children's development. All that is needed is a bit of imagination and creativity.



### ACTIVITY 2: Playing some children's games

Explain that you are going to play a couple of simple games using everyday objects that they can play with their children at home. At the end you will discuss what children learn from this game.

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## What's missing? Memory game

- Ask four or five participants to sit in a circle with you. Others observe.
- Put six objects in a row in front of them. These objects could be a coconut shell, a small stick, a shell, a flower, a pencil and a stone, or any other object that is around you, but it should be small.
- Ask participants to tell you the name of the objects one by one.
- After they name the object, you describe the object more: "Yes, a brown coconut shell," "a red flower," etc.
- Ask the participants to close their eyes. Tell them you will now remove one object, then you want them to guess what object is missing.
- Remove one object and hide it behind your back and ask participants to open their eyes but not say anything yet.
- Ask parents to raise their hands if they want to answer. Choose one parent to identify which object has been removed.
- Repeat several times.

## What's the order? Memory game

- Explain that you will change the place of the objects and they have to put them back in order.
- Change the position of the objects and ask one participant to put them in order again. If not done correctly, ask who can help.
- Ask participants, "What do you think your children can learn from these simple games?"
- Acknowledge answers and, where needed, ask additional questions encouraging participants to think not about only memory skills but also confidence-building, language, following instructions, social skills such turn-taking, not cheating, etc.





### ACTIVITY 3: Value of traditional games for young children's development

- Divide participants into groups of five



- Ask them to list "traditional games" they do with their babies, one to two year olds (toddlers) and three to five year olds.

*ATTENTION: Make sure you remind them to think about safety. For example, avoid small objects that babies can put in their mouths and choke on!*

- Ask each group to give examples of the games with infants, toddlers and preschoolers.



- Ask the participants what they think babies, toddlers and preschoolers learn from these games?

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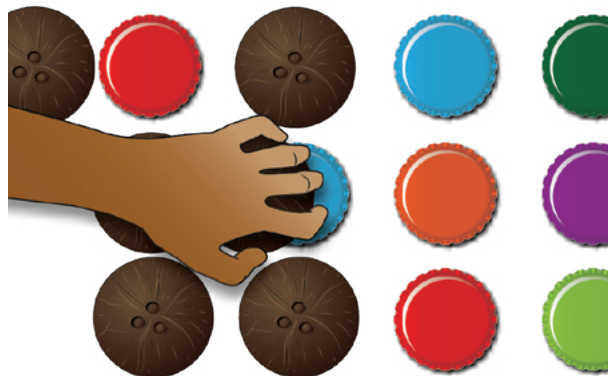
## ACTIVITY 4: Play corners

The purpose of this activity is for participants to experience playing with locally available materials and to inspire them to play with their children.

- You will have set up eight play corners. Walk the participants to each play corner (which you have already set up) and explain a few ways the games can be played.
- Divide the participants into groups and ask them to move around the corners and play with the materials.
- Challenge them to see how many new games each group can come up with in five minutes.
- Everyone comes back together and shares their ideas group by group.

### A. Matching pairs memory game

- Randomly put the 12 bottle tops on the floor in rows of four.
- Cover each bottle top with a half coconut shell.



- Each participant takes turns, removing two coconut shells at a time to reveal the bottle tops under it.
- If the bottle tops match, she/he will remove the tops and the coconut shells.
- If the bottle tops don't match, then she/he needs to put the coconut shells back over the bottle tops.
- The person with most matched bottle tops wins!





## B. Imaginative play

Set up a play corner as a store or a market with empty cartons or real vegetables and fruits so participants can come and buy things using shells or seeds for money.

## C. Skittles

- Place at least 20 coconut shells or plastic bottles on the ground.
- Ask participants to stack the coconut shells or set up the plastic bottles and see if they can roll or throw a ball and make them all fall down.



## D. Stone patterns and pictures

- Ask parents to bring stones/pebbles of different sizes, shapes and colours.
- Place the stones on the ground.
- Ask parents to make different designs using the stones/pebbles.



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### E. Sea shell sorting

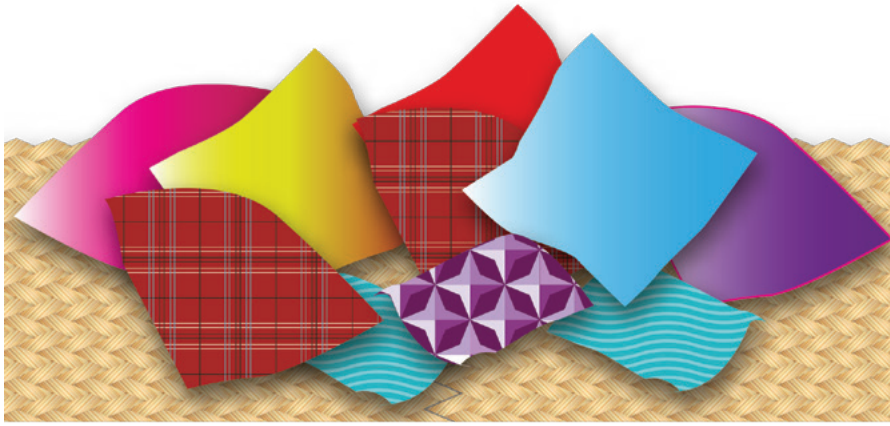
- If available around your community, ask parents to bring with them at least 20 shells each of different sizes and shapes.
- Place all the shells on the ground and have parents sort them out by size, shape or colour or any way they want to.
- Remind them that sorting objects will help improve their children's visual discrimination, which in turn will help children distinguish the letters from each other when they go to school.



### F. Fabric mobile for babies

- Hang up a sample fabric mobile you have made. Explain that parents can hang the mobile where the baby sleeps so he/she can enjoy looking at it and touching it, stimulating their vision and eye-hand coordination.
- Place all the fabric scraps in the middle of a mat, and ask parents to start making their own mobile for their own or someone else's baby.





### G. Bottle roller for infants

- Have one or two samples available and explain how the baby can lie on a clean surface and roll the bottle around (see picture below). Parents can talk about the objects inside the bottle, help the child roll it back and forth, shake it, etc.
- Provide clean, clear plastic bottles with caps, scraps of colourful paper from wrappers or fabric or large seeds or shells.
- Explain to parents that they can place colourful items in the bottles, add water if they like and tighten the caps so no water leaks.

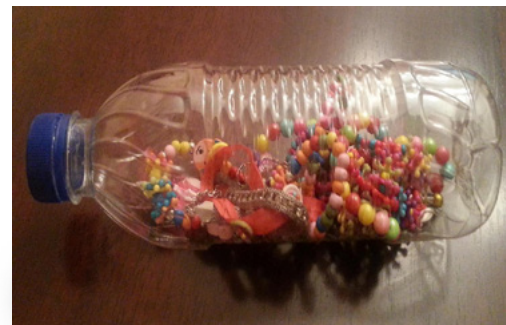
### H. Musical instruments for babies

#### Bottle rattles

- Have samples on display.
- Put small empty and clean water bottles in the middle with some shells, stones, seeds and bottle tops.
- Have participants put a few objects in the bottles and tighten the top very securely so that children are not able to open it.
- They can then shake the bottle to see if baby would turn toward the sound. This is also a good way to check a baby's hearing.

#### Banging on pots and pans

- Place some pots, pans, plastic buckets with some wooden spoons on the mat.
- Have the parents bang on them and make



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### Plenary discussion

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After the parents have played in each corner, bring them together in a plenary discussion and ask them the following question:

#### **What do you think your children will learn from playing with these locally made games and toys?**

Give them 10 minutes to discuss.

Summarize their discussions:

- Explain that all of these activities help with developing their child's cognitive development and thinking capacity. For example, in the memory game, the child has to remember which bottle top is under which coconut shell in order to find the match.
- They will learn about size, shape and colour of objects and how they feel. They learn names of objects, and about similarities and differences – all important pre-literacy skills.
- Babies' brains will be stimulated by seeing different objects and touching them.

### Conclusion

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#### Key messages

Write a summary of these points and go over them with the participants.

- Play is the way children learn. Children who have lots of chances to play go on to do better in school.
  - Through play children practise language and learn new words and concepts.
  - They use their minds to plan, make decisions and create.
  - They use their muscles, become strong and learn how to use their hands skillfully.
  - They learn how to cooperate and work together with others.
  - They feel happy, confident and secure.
- Adults support their children's healthy overall development when they give children time and space to play.
- Often you don't need anything at all for play... moving in different ways, copying each other's sounds and faces, chasing each other, hide and seek, looking at things together, hugging and tickling and laughing are all great ways to play.
- You don't need expensive toys to support children's play. In fact, the simplest toys are the best as you can use them in so many ways. And, as you have seen today, there are endless materials available in the environment that are perfect for play.



- Many toys and games can be made from local and natural materials and there are many traditional games that are fun and build young children's brains.
- Allow your babies and young children to play as much as they can! That's how they learn!

### Discussion of concerns or questions

Ask participants if they have any questions or concerns or if there are additional areas they would like to know more about or discuss.

### Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something you want to change at home so you and your family are playing more with the young children to support them in learning?"

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes the session with a prayer.



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**ANNEX 1**

Workshop 6: Play & Learn

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

19. Have you played with your child in the past two days?

.....  
.....

20. What kind of games did you/or whoever plays with your child play?

.....  
.....

21. What game can you play with your child using local materials?

.....  
.....

22. What do you think your child is learning when you are playing with him/  
her? E.g. playing with leaves, shells, sand, etc.

.....  
.....

23. What new information did you learn in the workshop? What might you do  
differently now that you have gone through this workshop?

.....  
.....

## ANNEX 2

### Play corners

1. Market place: set up with different vegetables for sale, prices of produce attached
2. Reading corner: storybooks that children come and sit down and look at
3. Block corner: blocks of different sizes and shapes that children can use as building blocks
4. Drawing corner: crayons and paper for children to draw or write
5. Threading corner: shells, straw, small pieces of bamboo and string so children can thread, or flowers and leaves and coconut fronds for threading
6. Sand corner: wet and dry sand, make sure there are containers that children can use to make sand moulds
7. Water corner: water and containers that children can fill
8. Literacy corner: letters and numbers matching games (e.g. caterpillar game)



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PARENT  
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PROGRAMME



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WORKSHOP 7

# Healthy Nutrition





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Recognize the importance of good nutrition in the brain development, body growth and health of babies and young children.
2. Have increased their practical knowledge of important foods to include and avoid in their children's diet.
3. Use feeding and mealtimes as opportunities for interaction with their children.



## Materials

- Posters
- Pikinini Helt Buk
- Flipcharts
- Markers
- Blu Tack

## Background information for facilitators

- Good nutrition, together with nurture and love, is key to a child's healthy growth and development. Children who do not have enough nutritious food are more vulnerable to disease and disability. A child who does not receive the essential health and nutrition he/she requires is at risk of stunted cognitive, as well as physical, development.
- Good nutrition is VITAL for ALL children. (Refer to Pikinini Helt Buk for information on this and all child health topics, such as care for sick children and immunization).
- Children with disabilities may have difficulties eating, and extra time and support must be given if needed.
- Exclusive breastfeeding of infants for the first six months gives the baby everything she/he needs. It helps the baby and mother bond, protects the child against diarrhoea and other common infections, boosts the immune system and gets the baby off to a good start in life.
- From six months, a child's diet should be diverse and include foods from a number of food sources, in addition to continued breastfeeding until at least two years of age. The child should be given soft mashed vegetables, fruits, grains, dairy products, eggs, fish and chicken. (The Save the Children 2018 Baseline Survey found that only 57% children had a balanced diet.)
- Young children should have sugar cane juice, green coconut water, milk without sugar or plain water to drink.
- Children between one and five years old need to eat little and often and should be given healthy snacks in between meals – for example fresh fruit and raw vegetables such as bananas, papaya and carrots that have been cut into pieces.



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- Communicate with the baby and child while feeding (e.g. skin and eye contact, cooing, singing, talking to the child). Encourage meal-time conversations where the family interacts and engages with the child. Making eye contact and communicating with your baby while breastfeeding will support all aspects of their development.
- Create a defined routine for meal-times and be physically present while the child eats.
- Without good nutrition, a young child can suffer serious and often permanent damage to his/her developing brain and body. We often may not see this damage but we can measure it by looking at how well a child is or is not growing. A child who doesn't grow well and is too short for their age suffers from a condition known as stunting.

## Introduction

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### **Welcome**

Thank everyone for coming and try to have a health worker with you to co-facilitate

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

Use a song about food and eating healthy and teach it to the parents

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

### **Sample introduction**

"In today's session we will discuss nutrition and think about the foods that help our children's brains develop and keep them healthy. A young child's brain consumes 50–75% of all energy absorbed from food and good nutrition.

Healthy, well-nourished and loved children are happy and active; they do well at school and are able to become an active part of their community. Here in Vanuatu there are so many delicious, fresh, healthy foods easily available and many of our traditional dishes are very healthy. However, keeping children healthy can be difficult for some families, especially if they are very poor and do not grow or collect fresh food, or if they live in communities where drinking water is dirty or where people do not have good sanitation or hygiene practices.

Remember that having a disability does not mean a child is unhealthy. Children with disabilities have the same right to health and good nutrition as all children and may need more attention to keep them well nourished if they have difficulty eating."



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## ACTIVITY 1: Finding the healthy local foods in our community

- Divide the participants into two groups.
- Ask Group A to come up with the name of a healthy local food that is eaten by all in that community (kumara, simboro, laplap yam, sosor, fish in coconut cream, island cabbage, nalot, taro, etc). They have to describe this food WITHOUT mentioning its name. Describe its colour, how it is made, etc. For example, you can say, "This food is green and we plant it in our gardens. We cook it with coconut cream and eat it with rice or kumara. What is it?"
- Group B has to guess the name of the food. If they do, they will get a point.
- Group A explains why that food is healthy.
- Now Group B chooses a food and describes it for Group A to guess.
- Repeat this a couple of times. If they mention cake, biscuits and sugary foods they lose!
- Explain that in our community we have many good foods that can help our children grow well and stay healthy.
- Discuss different types of foods that can be provided based on the age of the child (soft or semi-solid foods for infants – e.g. enriched porridge (rice with mashed and boiled pumpkin and local greens), mashed banana, mashed ripe papaya; finger foods – e.g. boiled kumara).

Show the food groups poster in Annex 2 to them and explain that children need a variety of good foods, such as:

**Body building foods** like meat, chicken, fish and eggs and dairy products like milk

**Energy foods** – roots like taro, manioc, kumara, potato

**Protective foods** – legumes/nuts such as beans, lentils, peas, peanut, nangai, natapoa, navele; Vitamin A-rich fruits and vegetables (mango, pawpaw, passion fruit, orange, dark green leaves, carrot, yellow/orange sweet potato, pumpkin); and other fruits and vegetables (banana, pineapple, watermelon, tomato, avocado, eggplant and cabbage).

- Participants draw the different type of food under the correct groupings.
- Explain what portion is needed for each groupings and its importance.
- Draw a picture of a plate. Give half of the plate to protective foods, a quarter to energy foods and another quarter to body building foods.
- Remind participants that these are the kinds of food that will help the brain and the body to grow and develop.
- Both parents as well as other family members should be involved in feeding their child.



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## ACTIVITY 2: Making healthy snacks for young children

Explain that small children have smaller stomachs and need to eat five to six times a day. Besides breakfast, lunch and dinner, they also need healthy snacks to give them energy and nourishment.

- Divide the group into teams of four or five, and ask each team to come up with two suggestions for a healthy snack that children can take to kindergarten or play group (e.g. a piece of kumala and an egg or pawpaw and banana).
- Snacks that are sugary like donuts/sweet breads, biscuits and sweet drinks will not be accepted!
- Have each group present their suggestions and make a list of healthy snacks.



## ACTIVITY 3: Learning about stunting

- Show copies of the poster above and ask the parents how old they think each child is. Explain that both girls are the same age (five years old) but one is stunted, meaning she is short for her age because her nutrition was not adequate before and after birth.
- Explain that stunting affects child growth and development. The child will fall ill frequently. Brain development is affected. The child will not be able to study well, is more likely to drop out of school and will probably not have a good income as an adult. The stunted child is at risk of growing into an obese adult and suffering from non-communicable diseases like diabetes or heart disease.
- Ask the participants what age they think a child becomes stunted.
- Explain that it is the period from pregnancy to the child's second birthday that is VITAL in preventing stunting. This period is called the first 1,000 days. Explain that 29% of children in Vanuatu are stunted (DHS 2013). This means they have not been getting enough nutritious food, especially during the first 1,000 days of their lives. After the child reaches two years of age, stunting is irreversible.
- Ask participants how this can be prevented. Listen to their answers and make sure the following key points are covered
  - The mother must eat nutritious local food during pregnancy, take iron tablets and visit her health centre regularly.
  - A child should be exclusively breastfed until six months of age. From six months the child should be started on soft, semi-solid foods in addition to breastfeeding. Children should eat many different healthy foods and be fed frequently (snacks as well as meals).



- Other reasons for stunting are that the child suffers from frequent diarrhoea and infections resulting from inadequate access to clean drinking water and clean toilets and not practising good hygiene. It is vital that parents/caregivers wash their own and their children's hands with soap and water before eating or preparing food, and after using the toilet or touching animals.

## Conclusion

### Key messages

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child states that, "Children have the right to good quality health care, clean water, nutritious food and a clean environment so that they will stay healthy." This applies to ALL children whatever their gender, abilities, social status, etc.

### Breastfeeding

Breast milk is the best food for babies and the only food or drink baby needs for the first six months; no other food or drink, not even water, is needed during this time. In Vanuatu, only 50% of children are given only breastmilk until they are six months old. Only 8% of children continue to be breastfed until they are 23 months old (First 1,000 Days Project, Save the Children).



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### Child nutrition/complementary feeding

- From the age of six months to two years, children need to be fed five or six times a day with a variety of foods, as well as continuing to be breastfed.
- At six months of age, all children should be taken to the health facility to check growth and development and to receive Vitamin A and de-worming medicine every six months.
- If a child falls ill they need to continue eating and drinking regularly. After being ill children should be given additional food and drink for at least a week. (It has been found that only 39% of children in Vanuatu are given enough water to drink: First 1,000 Days Project, Save the Children).
- If a baby or child has difficulty feeding, take the extra time needed (some disabled children have feeding difficulties) and if needed visit the health facility to seek advice.

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### Communication while feeding

Talk with your babies and young children while they are feeding. This is a great opportunity to support their sense of security, wellbeing and language development at the same time as their healthy growth

### Discussions of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will be continuing to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

### Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to do to make sure your young child eats food from the three food groups and brings healthy snacks to school?"

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes.



**ANNEX 1**

**Workshop 7: Healthy Nutrition**

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

9. Did you breastfeed your child until he/she was six months old before introducing solid food?

.....  
 .....

10. What does your child usually take to kindy/play group for his/her snack?

.....  
 .....

11. Since the workshop are you providing different food for your child? In what way is it different?

.....  
 .....

12. Give me examples of a balanced diet that you should give to your child who is two to four years old.

.....  
 .....

13. What is the cause of "stunting?"

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ANNEX 2

Healthy food for everyone

VANUATU GOVERNMENT  
MINISTRY OF HEALTH



VANUATU GOUVERNEMENT  
MINISTERE DE LA SANTE

# HELTI KAKAE BLONG YUMI EVRIWAN

**Kakae blong blokem sik**



**Kakae blong givim paowa**



**Kakae blong bildimap bodi**



 World Health Organization



ANNEX 3

The First 1,000 Days

270 from pregnancy to birth + 365 days From birth to 1<sup>st</sup> year + 365 days From 1<sup>st</sup> year to 2<sup>nd</sup> year =



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WORKSHOP 8

# WASH (Water, Sanitation and Hygiene)





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Reflect on the health of babies and young children in their community and discuss ways of addressing any major concerns.
2. Know more about the most common diseases and conditions related to unclean water and lack of hygiene that threaten babies' and children's health, including causes and preventions.
3. Understand how handwashing can help protect you from COVID-19.



## Materials

- Printouts of the annexes and other WASH posters, if available, one set per participant
- Blu Tack
- Butcher paper, flipchart, chalk board or whiteboard, with markers
- Baby powder or crushed chalk/small ball (for Activity 1)
- F-diagram labels and arrows (for Activity 2)
- Handwashing station with soap

## Background information for facilitators

Proper handwashing with soap at critical times (for children this is after using the toilet and before eating; for parents it also includes after cleaning a child's bottom, before feeding a child and before preparing/handling food) keeps parents and infants safe from faecal-oral transmission that can cause diarrhoeal diseases/conditions and can lead to infant stunting (cognitive and physical), mortality, influenza, meningitis, conjunctivitis, mumps, COVID-19 and other transmissible diseases.

Good hygiene practice requires collaborative input from many sectors: access to clean and sufficient water (supported by the Department of Water Resources); soap supply and hygiene awareness (supported by the Ministry of Health); and education in and out of school (supported by the Ministry of Education and Training).

A few interesting statistics:

Wash in Schools (WinS) programmes in Kenya have reduced:

- Diarrhoea by 50%, absenteeism by 35%

WinS programmes in Egypt have reduced:

- Influenza by 50%, diarrhoea by 30%, conjunctivitis by 67%

WinS programmes in the Philippines have reduced:

- Absenteeism by 27%, worms by 47%

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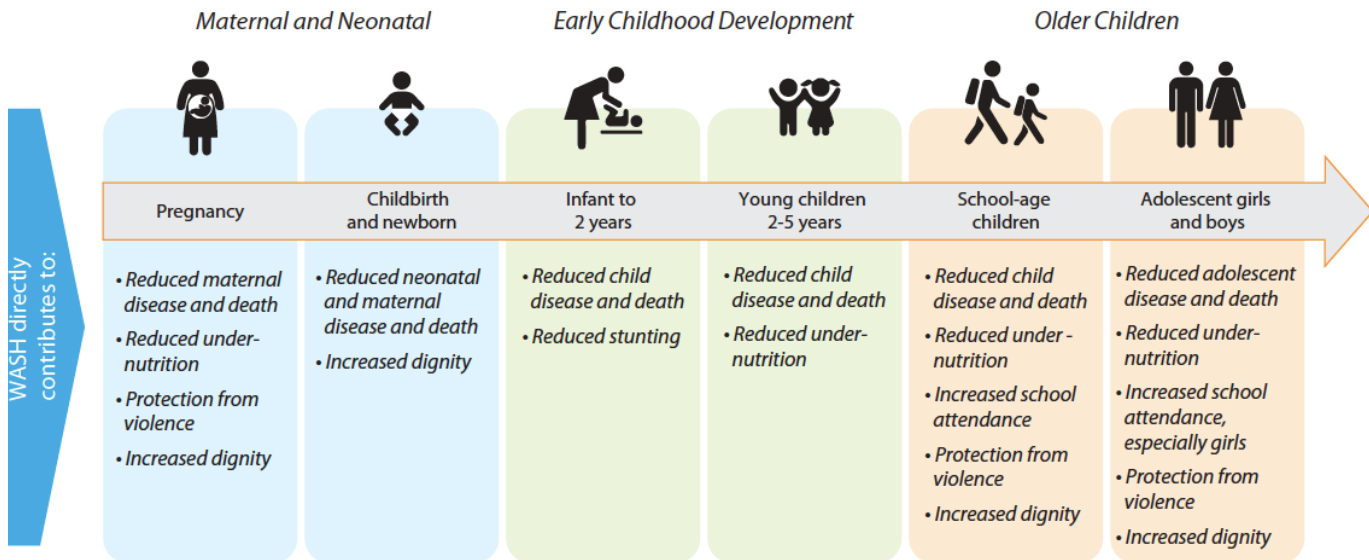
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### WASH contributions to children over the life course

The diagram illustrates the importance of WASH in optimizing child health and wellbeing from pregnancy to adolescence.



(UNICEF Global WASH Strategy 2016–2030).

## Introduction

### Welcome

### Prayer

### Icebreaker

Sing, “This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands, wash our hands.”

### Review

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

### Sample introduction

In this session we will be discussing water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH), and why WASH is so important in the development of your children and your whole family. During pregnancy, good WASH facilities (such as good toilets) and practices (such as regularly washing your hands) can reduce maternal disease and death, and reduce under-nutrition. WASH reduces neonatal deaths and directly contributes to reduced stunting, disease and death for infants to two year olds and reduced under-nutrition, disease and death for three to five year olds.”

### WASH in preschools cycle of opportunity

Explain that safe, adequate water and sanitation facilities in preschools, coupled with hygiene education:

- Reduce the incidence of stunting, diarrhoea and other hygiene-related diseases.
- Have a significant impact on school enrolment and absenteeism.
- Improve preschool and subsequent school performance.

**FIGURE 2. WASH IN SCHOOLS CYCLE OF OPPORTUNITY**



(WASHPLUS Blog)

### Effectiveness of handwashing

Explain the following:

- Handwashing is a low-cost disease prevention solution that prevents infections and saves lives.
- Handwashing is the single most effective way of reducing disease and deaths from diarrhoea (more effective than water treatment, sanitation, hygiene education and water supply).
- Everyone can prevent disease and improve health with handwashing.
- Water alone is not enough: washing hands with soap is significantly more effective than washing with water only.



### ACTIVITY 1: Catch the germs

Purpose: To emphasize how germs are transmitted through lack of handwashing

Materials:

- Glitter/baby powder/crushed chalk/anything that can leave a trace on skin
- Or, a Glo-Germ kit, if available
- A tennis ball (or similar) or a small dry coconut

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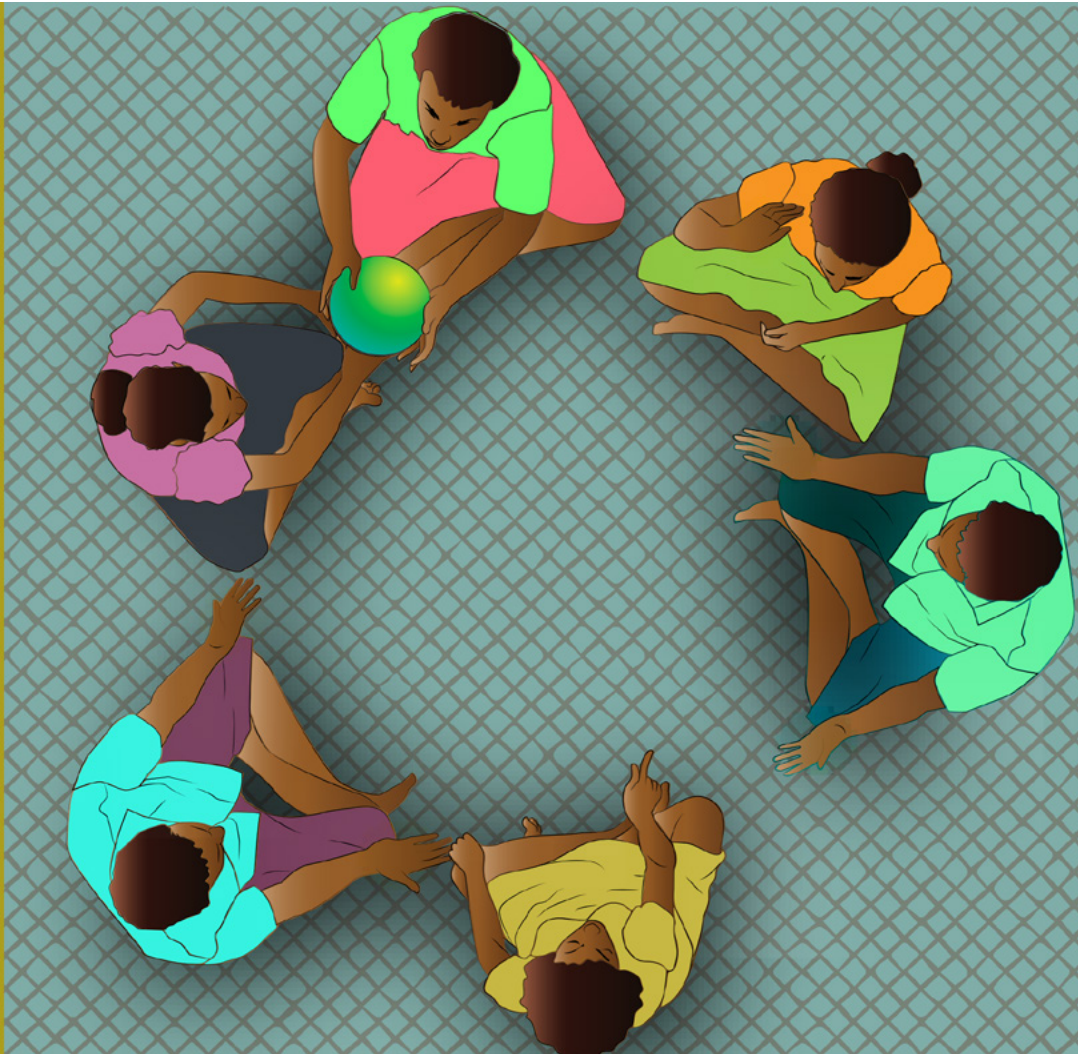
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- Handout of how to build a handwashing station for the schools or a tippy for home (if there is no running water).

Steps:

- Rub the glitter or chalk/powder on the ball.
- Ask three to five participants to come to the front and pass the ball among them for one minute.

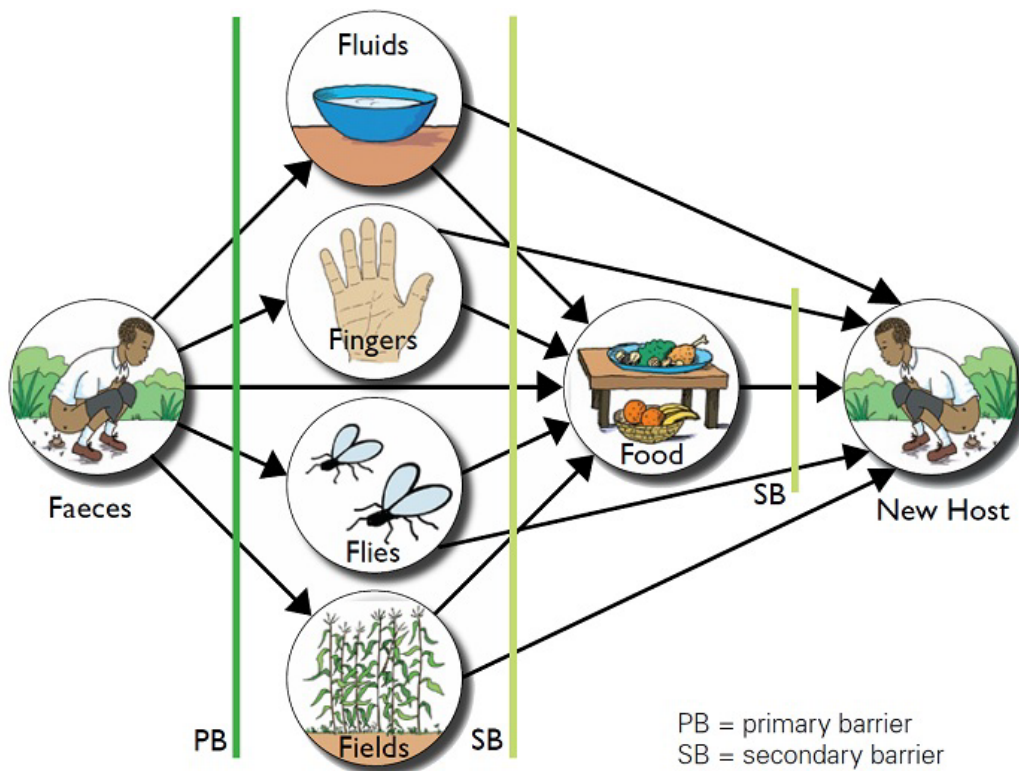


- Ask the participants at the front to high five or shake hands with the other participants.
- Ask everyone to look at their hands and say what they can see.
- There should be evidence of glitter/chalk/powder.
- Explain that this is how germs are transmitted through what we touch, and when we prepare and eat our food without washing our hands that is how we get sick!
- Because of COVID-19, there has been a lot of awareness and emphasis put on handwashing because the COVID-19 germs can be passed on through hands, especially when touching your face or touching anything, and can be easily transferred to another person.



## ACTIVITY 2: The faecal-oral cycle (F-diagram)

Look at the F-diagram and spend 10 minutes discussing how transmission of disease and transmissions paths can happen if we do not use proper water (safe and sufficient), sanitation (quality, clean toilets) and hygiene (good handwashing practices). What can a participant do to be an effective barrier to stop transmission of diseases via faecal-oral pathways?



(Helioz 2017)

Time: 20 mins

Materials:

- Labels (one page or a cut-out) of carriers and barriers of the F-diagram (to be prepared during facilitators' training); labels with simple illustrations are best!
  - *Carriers labels:*
    - Faeces – one page
    - Fingers – one page
    - Flies – one page
    - Fields – one page
    - Fluids – one page
    - Food – one page
  - *Barriers labels:*
    - Bush/pit toilet – three pages
    - Improved toilets (e.g. VIP or flush) – four pages
    - Handwashing – three pages
    - Safe water – two pages
  - *New Host label* – one page – can also be named "Friend" or "Family"

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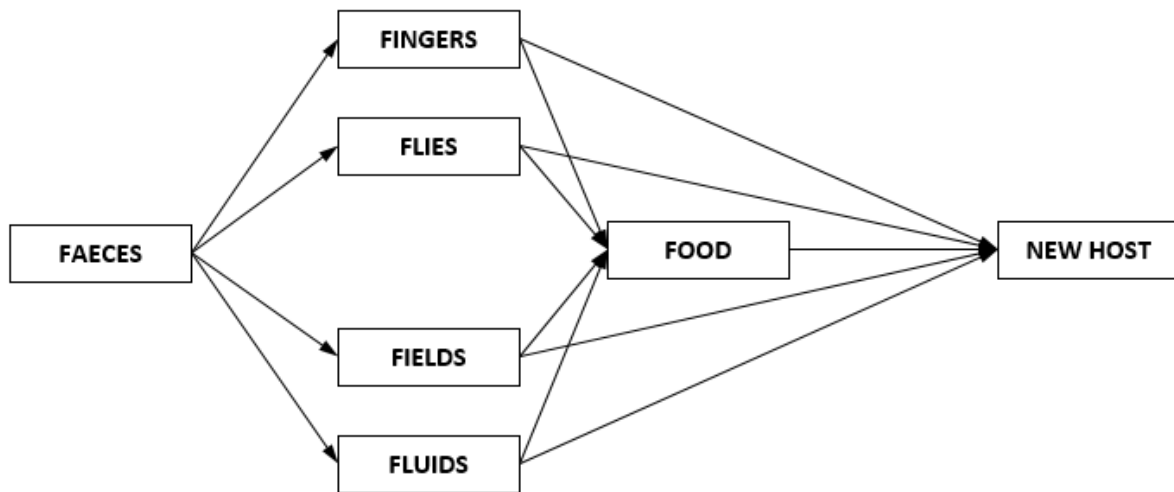
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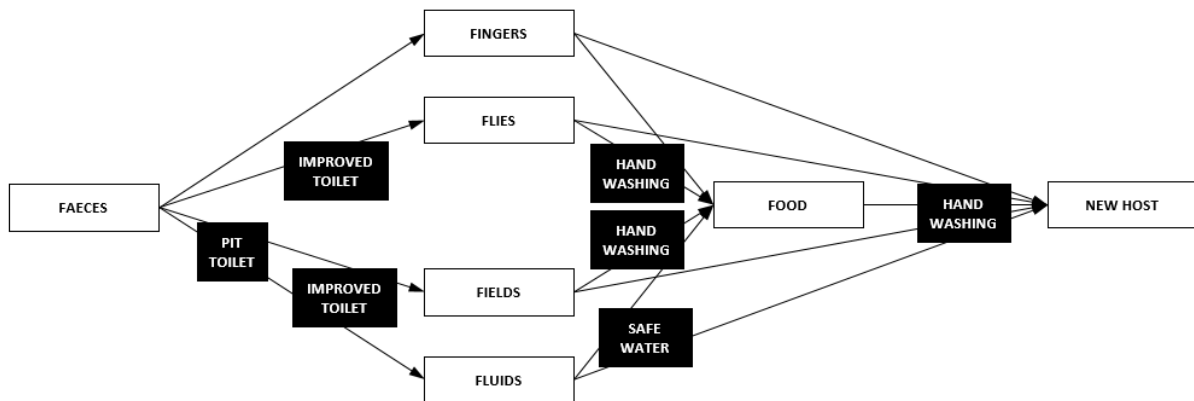
- Arrows (at least 15) to link carriers – these can be made from paper, sticks, string, tape or other materials

Steps:

- Explain the carriers of faecal disease (the 6 Fs).
- Ask everyone to stand in a large circle.
- Place the Faeces label on the ground near one side of the inside of the circle, and the New Host (or “Friend” or “Family”) label near the opposite side.
- Pass the Carrier labels and the arrows/links to the participants.
- Ask them to map, on the floor or wall and using arrows, the possible transmission routes (without any barriers) from Faeces to the New Host. Every context is different, though the result should look similar to the below (the facilitator may need to provide a little guidance).



- Ask participants what could possibly be done to block the transmission process.
- After the discussion, pass them the Barrier labels and explain them if necessary.
  - Add additional Barrier labels if they have been identified and agreed by the participants (e.g. “Inaccessible water source or toilet”).
- Ask participants to place the Barrier labels on the arrows where they can block the transmission.
  - If there are some transmission routes without barriers, troubleshoot options with the participants.
- Again, every context is different, though the final diagram may look similar to that below.



- Ask participants how they will apply and endorse the barriers at home, in the community and at school/kindergarten



### ACTIVITY 3: Handwashing competition

Purpose:

- To practise proper handwashing with soap
- To develop a handwashing plan for homes and schools
- To explore different handwashing options

Time: 15 minutes

Materials:

- A handwashing station
- Basin, bucket, tippy-tap, tap or otherwise
- Soap
- Handout be made available if parents would like to know how to make a tippy tap for home or a handwashing station for their early childhood care and education centre or school

Steps:

- Explain that “handwashing with soap is the best way to prevent disease and child stunting” (see Annex 3), and that you are going to demonstrate how to wash your hands properly with soap.
- Explain that children will often need help and ongoing encouragement to correctly wash their hands.

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- Using the sequence of steps shown in the Ministry of Health handwashing poster as a guide, demonstrate handwashing using the handwashing station you have set up.
- Give participants a moment to review the poster, then remove the poster from view.
- Ask the participants to wash their hands, while other participants observe and provide a score for every correct step they follow (as per the handwashing poster).
- Ask participants if they know of any handwashing songs to help them and others remember the steps.

Below are some examples.

### **Wash, wash, wash your hands**

*(Sing to the tune of "Row, Row, Row Your Boat")*

Wash, wash, wash your hands  
Play our handy game  
Rub and scrub and scrub and rub  
Germs go down the drain  
(repeat)

### **Good and clean**

*(Sing to the tune of "Happy Birthday")*

Wash my hands good and clean  
Wash my fingers in between  
Watch the germs all go away  
Now they're clean, I'll go play  
(repeat)

### **This is the way we wash our hands**

*(Sing to the tune of "Here We Go 'round the Mulberry Bush")*

This is the way we wash our hands, wash our hands, wash our hands  
This is the way we wash our hands, every single day  
This is the way we scrub our fingers, scrub our fingers, scrub our fingers  
This is the way we scrub our fingers, every single day



© UNICEF

This is the way we rinse our hands, rinse our hands, rinse our hands

This is the way we rinse our hands, rinse those germs away!



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# Conclusion

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## Key messages

Throughout the session, facilitators must explain the below messages to ensure parents understand that the healthy development of our children depends greatly on the good decisions we as parents and caregivers take to preserve their health.

- The Ministry of Health is working with village health workers and health facilities to support improved health and hygiene. Make sure your community is getting better WASH facilities.
- EVERYONE has a part to play in ensuring good hygiene practice at school and in the community. Only 24% of caregivers wash their hands with soap and clean water at five critical times: before preparing food, before eating, before feeding a child, after using the toilet and after attending to a child who has defecated (Save the Children First 1,000 Days Project).
- Parents and caregivers must always act as good hygiene role models. Lead by example and wash your hands at all critical times.
- Many common diseases facing children are preventable with the easy and low-cost action of handwashing. Handwashing with soap and clean water reduces the risk of many diseases and child stunting.
- Young children are more vulnerable than any other age group to the harmful effects of unsafe water, poor sanitation, animal-borne diseases and poor hygiene.
- Caregivers should help children develop good habits of proper handwashing practice before eating and after using the toilet.
- Clean water should always be available at critical places.

## Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will be continuing to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

## Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try to encourage everyone at home or in your community to develop good habits of proper handwashing practice before eating and after using the toilet?"

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes.

## ANNEX 1

## Workshop 8: WASH

### Evaluation Questions for Parents

14. Do you have access to clean water at home?

.....  
 .....

15. Do you have running water at home?

.....  
 .....

16. What new knowledge did you learn at the handwashing workshop?

.....  
 .....

17. What change will happen in your home after attending this workshop?

.....  
 .....

18. After attending the workshop what will you do to make sure that your whole family washes their hands with soap and water during critical times?

.....  
 .....

19. Are you confident with your understanding of faecal-oral transmission (F-diagram)?

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ANNEX 2

Ministry of Health handwashing poster



ANNEX 3

Critical times to wash your hands



Education Support Program (Vanuatu)  
is managed by Colfey on behalf of the  
Australian Government



NEW ZEALAND  
Ministry of Education & Training  
Aid Programme  
Supported by the New  
Zealand Aid Programme.

This Poster was developed with the support of the aid  
programs of the governments of Australia and New Zealand  
provided through the Education Support Program (Vanuatu).



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WORKSHOP 9

# Child Protection: Keeping Children Safe





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Be able to raise and discuss issues related to young children's care and safety.
2. Feel the importance of actively protecting their children from harm and keeping the home safe.
3. Be confident that they have practical ideas on how they can protect their young children.



## Materials

- Flipchart
- Blu Tack
- Markers and pens
- Objects (medicine bottles, rattles, knife, stick, pen, kerosene, etc.)
- Paper

## Background information for facilitators

- Nurturing care for ALL babies and young children alike – girls and boys, children with and without disabilities – is vital. Nurturing care includes keeping children secure and safe from dangers in the home and community. This involves protecting them from accidents, from natural disasters, *which will become increasingly common as a result of climate change*, and from all forms of abuse and violence within the home and community.
- Many children get hurt, become disabled or die each year from accidents. The most common accidents among young children and babies are burns, falls, drowning, poisoning, road accidents, electrical faults and cuts from sharp objects. Most of these accidents can be prevented. Young children do not understand the risk of accidents. It is up to parents/caregivers to protect them from danger and injury and help them slowly learn how to be careful. The risks change with the age of the child. It is the responsibility of parents and caregivers and community members to ensure that children are protected from places and people that pose danger.
- We must protect all children from danger at home, at school and in the community, even if the children do not belong to our family. Fights, bullying, threats and physical violence and a sense of danger harm the brain development of the child and affect his/her overall wellbeing. Social, emotional and cognitive development is especially damaged and there are negative impacts on learning during school years. Children who experience these phenomena are more likely to drop out and get into trouble. Children who are exposed to lengthy periods of arguments, abuse and threats will grow up to repeat what they see and experience as children.
- We discussed in the introductory session (Workshop 1) how the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Children provides an overall frame for the PSP. Article 19 states that children have the right to be protected from being hurt and mistreated, physically or mentally. Children – girls just as much as boys – must be properly cared for and protected from harm including accidents, violence, abuse and neglect by their parents, or anyone else who looks after them.

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## Introduction

### **Introduction**

### **Welcome**

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

Tell the participants that they must listen very carefully. Play music and they can move around to the tune of the music; when they hear a number, they must quickly gather to make that number. This goes on until a winner is left.

### **Sample introduction**

"In this session we will be thinking, sharing and finding ways to make sure our children are safe from danger and living a peaceful life, because young children and babies can get hurt very easily. We will also briefly be looking at how we as responsible parents can prepare our family to remain safe during a disaster, thinking especially of ALL our young children."



### **ACTIVITY 1: Dangers to our children at home**

- Put some objects on the table (bottles, scissors, pens, sticks, small stones/ seeds, knife, insecticide or bleach or another common harmful chemical, medicines, etc.)
- Ask each participant to pick one object.
- Ask questions:
  - What do you think might happen if the objects are left lying in places that young children and babies can reach?
  - What can we do to ensure our environment is safe from these dangers?
  - What are other dangers in and around our homes?
  - What are the most common accidents children have in this community? Where do they occur?

- Allow time for discussion. Draw a table with three columns (see below). Have someone help with making a list of the key points. Record the accidents in a few words (such as “fall from a tree,” “fall into the toilet pit.”) Keep it moving, so that people are telling incidents and not long stories. You can do this verbally if participants cannot read and write.

Accidents that have happened or can happen to babies and young children in this community		
AT HOME	ON THE ROAD	AT OTHER PLACES

- Look at the list together and ask participants what accidents seem to happen most. Ask why these accidents happen and what can be done to prevent them.
- Encourage everyone to look out for places in and around their homes and their communities where accidents could happen, and to take some action to fix the problem. Emphasize that fathers are equally responsible for their children’s safety.



### ACTIVITY 2: Preparing our family in case of a disaster

Sample introduction: “Vanuatu is in a part of the Western Pacific where almost every year we experience disastrous events like cyclones, tsunamis, earthquakes or volcanic eruptions. Cyclones in particular are likely to become increasingly severe as a result of climate change.

There has been a lot of awareness on what to do as a community or a school but we have not really sat down and thought about the safety and wellbeing of our families and what we need to do in order to reduce the risk as much as possible, especially thinking about protecting our young children.”

*Ask participants what sort of steps they should be taking to reduce risks, especially from rising sea levels and flooding. Make sure their responses include points about avoiding cutting down trees, planting more mangroves and not building homes or preschools close to the beach.*

*Questions for group discussion*

#### A) Cyclone

Before a cyclone hits how can we protect our family? What preparations can we make?

Brainstorm together: What are the priority things we can do to protect our family?

Suggestions:

- Fill containers with clean drinking water.

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- Pack some clothes and food and any vital medicines in a safe plastic bag.
- Know where to go if your house is not safe.
- Have a radio and torch/light ready.
- Get rid of or fasten down things that can be blown away.
- Explain to your children that an intense storm is coming and so it will be important for you all to stay together and for them to do exactly what you ask so you can keep them safe.

### B) Earthquake

In case of an earthquake, what should you and your children do to protect yourselves? Practice the Drop, Cover Hold On drill with your children: drop to your knees and duck under something solid and strong, put your hands over your head and neck and hold on to your cover.

1. DROP
2. COVER
3. HOLD ON

If you are outside, face away from windows, drop to the ground, place your head between your knees and cover your head with your arms and hands. Cover your young children with your body if they are too young to drop, cover and hold on.



### C) Tsunami

If immediately after an earthquake the sea bed is dry, indicating that a tsunami may occur, does your family know what to do and where to go?

- If you hear a tsunami warning, experience a strong and long earthquake – lasting longer than 60 seconds – or become aware of any of the warning signs (unusual change in sea level, roaring noise, draw-back of the ocean, unusual animal behaviour), run to higher ground immediately, carrying your babies and young children. Do not wait to be told. Do not wait until you see the wave.
- Do not stay in low-lying coastal danger areas after an earthquake has been felt for at least three hours in case of a tsunami. Carry young children and head for higher ground fast. Never go to the shore to watch a tsunami and make sure your children stay right with you.

## D) Volcanic ash

Discuss what people can do to protect their family if there is a volcanic eruption and there is ash falling in the community.

- Cover your head and face.
- Make sure you have drinking water in covered containers/tanks/wells, etc.
- Protect important documents.
- Prepare a small bag of things your children need (clothing, food, etc.) and important documents in case you are evacuated.
- Put food away safely.
- Prepare a torch/light, etc.



### ACTIVITY 3: Protecting our children from domestic violence and abuse

Explain to the group that we all know that domestic violence is a big problem in Vanuatu: 60% of women who have ever been in a relationship have experienced physical and/or sexual violence by their partner. We must protect our children from being damaged by verbal and physical abuse in the home.

It is important that children do not witness any form of violence, fighting or verbal abuse as it can affect their healthy brain development. And this means that domestic violence must be tackled. Children will know if things are “wrong” even if they do not actually see their father hitting their mother, for example. By tackling domestic violence, we are protecting our children so they can live a safe and happy life and learn better. Note that we will talk about tackling direct abuse of children in the next workshop. Children who are exposed to prolonged periods of arguments, abuse and threats even when it is not directed at them specifically will grow up to repeat what they see and experience as children.

#### Case study:

Alice and Joseph have been married for seven years and have three children, aged one, three and six. Early every morning, Alice goes into the garden to farm with her one year old. The farm is close to the house so she can keep an eye out on her other two children. The children's father, Joseph, has a small store in the village. Each day after work, Joseph stops to have a few drinks, returning home drunk. When he returns from work, Joseph shouts out to his wife to serve him dinner. If dinner is not served, he starts fighting with Alice. Alice argues back by yelling and crying. The children watch their mother and father yell and push each other. They begin to cry because they are afraid. Alice does not know where to get help and she is hurt all over. Joseph repeats this practice twice to three times each week. The eldest child refuses to attend school and the youngest child has stopped crying and is sick all the time. Alice is tired and does not know what to do.

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Put the participants into two or three groups. Ask them the following question: How can the village community support Alice and Joseph to stop fighting in their home and to protect their children? Give the participants 10 minutes to discuss and share their answers with everyone.

Below are a few points that should be shared:

- Seek help from the local authorities, such as the police, the chief, church leaders or the women against violence representative, if domestic violence is a problem.
- If the situation is causing harm, report it to the police or the village Family Protection Unit, the village chief, community leader or church leader.
- Find out about the closest women's crisis centre or any service that provides counselling or legal advice or can offer a safe place to go.
- Make sure that Alice receives medical treatment.
- Get the help of community-based organizations to support Alice and keep her children safe from violence and abuse.
- Encourage the men in the village to form a support group for Joseph to help him stop drinking and care for his wife and children.
- Link Alice to organizations or services that can support the children and herself.

## Conclusion

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### Key messages

- Supervise babies and small children always. Never leave babies and young children unattended near water.
- Make the kitchen area safe and make sure children cannot reach pots on the stove.
- Keep insecticides, cleaning liquids and other chemicals out of the reach of children. Never keep kerosene or chemicals in soft drink bottles, which children might be tempted to drink. Keep medicines out of children's reach.
- Hold your child's hand when crossing the road.
- Cover exposed electrical wires and keep knives and scissors out of reach.
- Make sure the community has a disaster preparedness plan and that you understand it. Also have your own family plan and be prepared in case of disasters such as cyclones and tsunamis.
- Protect every child, girls and boys, vulnerable and disabled children, from violence. Everyone, including the extended family and neighbours, must protect children from violence.

Ask everyone to take a few minutes to think about something they will do after the workshop to improve child safety in their community.



### Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will be continuing to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

### Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try?"

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes.

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**ANNEX 1**

Workshop 9: Child Protection

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

4. Are you sure your child is safe at home all the time? Are medicines and poison put away, are sharp objects out of reach, does the child know the danger of fire or going near the sea or a river, etc.?

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5. What happens when you need to go out for a while and your child is asleep at home?

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6. Who looks after your child if you have to go to work?

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7. If there is a fire, an earthquake or a tsunami, do you have an evacuation plan and do your children know that they must stay right with you?

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8. What do you do if your child witnesses a fight or argument in the home? What do you do to get help if you need it?

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PARENT  
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WORKSHOP 10

# Values: Raising Caring & Moral Children





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Be aware of the importance of their own behaviour in the development of their children's attitudes and values.
2. Understand the damaging effects of physical punishment and verbal abuse and the fact that there are alternatives that work better for both the child and the parent.
3. Be committed to trying out strategies to guide their young children's behavior using positive discipline approaches that help their child understand the situation and want to behave appropriately.



## Materials

- Markers
- Flipchart
- Blu Tack

## Background information for facilitators

The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child is very specific regarding ALL children's right to protection from physical and psychological abuse and harm. All children, including those with disabilities, must be protected. There should be no harsh discipline.

Physical punishment – spanking, slapping, hitting, beating – hurts children both physically and emotionally, and should never be used. Children who are beaten are far more likely to hit others and get into trouble with the law as adults. Verbal abuse and shaming can be just as damaging. Shouting, screaming, saying unkind things to a child (like “You are bad/ stupid/ugly,” etc.) can seriously damage a child. It has been found that 78% of adults surveyed report – physically hurts a child in their household (Vanuatu Government and UNICEF 2008).

There are much more effective ways to inculcate good values and behaviour in our children. The goal is to guide and teach, not to punish, and positive discipline is key. The foundation of positive discipline is a warm and trusting relationship, where you help children learn to:

- Behave appropriately for their age in different situations.
- Recognize, express and manage their emotions.
- Communicate.
- Get along with others.
- Solve problems.

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Guidance should be fair and consistent. If you respond differently in similar situations or to similar behaviours, children will be confused. They won't know what to expect.

Using positive discipline techniques not only helps guide children but also strengthens the connection you have with them.

For young children, difficult behaviour is often a way to get the parent's attention. When a child behaves in a challenging way, it's important to understand what has led to the behaviour. Ask yourself:

- Do they need something – food, a nap, attention or some time with you?
- What happened before and right after the behaviour?
- Is your child responding to something in their environment? Examples include noise, other children or a perceived threat.
- Are they stressed in some way?
- Are they expected to do something that is beyond their skill or developmental level? For example, asking toddlers to share.

Understanding the cause of your child's behaviour will help you decide how to respond.

Being a parent is rewarding but can be tiring as well. Take care of yourself, for you and your child. When angry or upset about something else take five minutes before you take any action that you may regret later.

## Introduction

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### **Welcome**

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

### **Sample introduction**

"Today, we will discuss ways to instill positive values and good behaviour in our young children.

Often, we decide to teach our children about doing something right only after they have done something wrong, and so we usually discipline them by hitting them!

Today, we want to explore ways to instill values and good behavior so that our children can practise these all their lives.

We will be talking about positive discipline. This is a way of teaching and guiding

children about right and wrong in a way that is firm and kind. Positive discipline uses calm words and actions. The focus is on reasoning, setting boundaries, encouragement and finding solutions not punishment. We will be exploring alternative ways other than beating or shouting to discipline our children, so that they understand what is okay and what is not and are intrinsically motivated to behave well."



### ACTIVITY 1: Values and discipline: is it making sense?

#### Brainstorm – general discussions

- Ask the participants what are some values that we want our children to learn and practise. Ask them to reflect on and share some positive childhood memories.
- Write down some of these values on the flipchart. Some answers could be honesty, respect for elders, cooperating, being helpful, kindness, responsibility, etc. Point out that these are important cultural values.

#### Sharing and pairing with partners

Ask the group to answer the following questions to the person next to them:

- How do they usually discipline their child?
- What happens when they do this? Does misbehaviour happen again?
- What has worked and what has not worked well?
- What can you do to positively discipline your child when he or she misbehaves at home?

Allow them 15 minutes to discuss the questions then ask a few pairs to share how they discipline their children.

#### Positive discipline: information-sharing and discussion

Go through the following points (have a few points on a flipchart).

- Traditionally, we have been taught to discipline our children mostly through beating them. If we beat another adult, we might go to jail. Why then is it okay to beat a child, who is defenceless?
- Vanuatu has one of the highest rates of violence against young children in the world (UNICEF 2015). More than one in three children aged two to four years old in Vanuatu experience severe physical punishment. This is the third highest rate in the world. This is a terrible thing to be famous for. It causes long-term damage to children's development.
- Beating might stop the child doing something in the short term because the child is afraid of the adult. But it does not help the child understand the situation and behave differently the next time.

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- Beating a child tells the child that violence is the only way to solve a problem, not discussion and other peaceful ways.
- Many of us in Vanuatu were not shown other ways to discipline our children. Today we are going to explore some of these other ways.

Introduce the definitions below and encourage participants to ask questions and raise concerns they may have.

### Positive discipline definitions

**Positive discipline** is a way of teaching and guiding children by letting them know what behaviour is acceptable in a way that is firm yet kind.

**Punishment** describes methods of control, gained by requiring rules or orders be obeyed and punishing undesired behaviour.

Positive discipline is a set of non-punitive parenting tools you can use to raise children who are:

- Responsible
- Respectful
- Resourceful

Often, people think that, when we talk about not punishing children, we mean being permissive and letting children do whatever they like. It does not mean that at all!

It's about:

- Modelling the values and behaviour you expect from your children;
- Being kind and firm;
- Explaining what the expected behaviour is;
- Show and tell. Teaching children right from wrong with calm words and actions;
- Setting limits;
- Giving consequences – for example, "If you want to go outside and play you need to share that toy with your little sister otherwise you will need to stay inside";
- Hear them out. Really listen;
- Give them your attention. A lot of misbehaviour is to get attention;
- Catch them being good. When children are praised for good behaviour, they tend to repeat that good behaviour again;
- Know when not to respond. Often, it is helpful to ignore misbehaviour as giving it attention can encourage it.



## ACTIVITY 2: Kwevira's story

### Sample introduction

"Today we are going to have a story that looks at how the way we react in everyday situations can have either negative or positive consequences in terms of guiding our young children's behaviour."

Read to the group:

### Story 1

Kwevira is very tired. She has been washing clothes piled up in a dish, weeding around the yard and cutting firewood and now she must prepare the evening meal. Last night she did not sleep well because Joel is suffering from diarrhoea and was very fussy whenever she tried to breastfeed him.

Now it is time to prepare the meal and there is no one to help her. Joel is asleep in bed and three-year-old Anna is outside throwing stones at the chickens. Kwevira fetches some kumala and Anna calls out, "I'm hungry. I want something to eat." "Be quiet!" says Kwevira. "I'm busy now." She fills a basin with water and begins to wash the kumala. Anna comes inside and puts her hand in the basin. Kwevira slaps her hand and says, "Go away! Your hand is dirty." Anna runs to the corner and starts to cry. Kwevira pays no attention to her so she cries louder. The noise wakes Joel up, and he also starts to cry. Kwevira wonders how she will ever get the meal prepared. Her head aches with all the noise, and she shouts at Anna, "Be quiet, or the devil will come and get you."

Ask the participants the following questions:

- What happened in the story?
- How did Kwevira feel?
- How did Anna feel?
- Have you ever felt the way that Kwevira did?
- What could Kwevira have done differently?

See what ideas the participants produce. Then explain that you are going to tell a second version of the story where Kwevira handles the situation differently – and uses some of the positive discipline approaches we have just been discussing.

### Story 2:

Kwevira is very tired. She has been washing clothes piled up in a dish, weeding around the yard and cutting firewood and now she must prepare the evening meal.

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Last night she did not sleep well because Joel is suffering from diarrhoea and was very fussy whenever she tried to breastfeed him.

Now it is time to prepare the meal and there is no one to help her. Joel is asleep in bed and three-year-old Anna is outside throwing stones at the chickens. Kwevira fetches some kumala and Anna calls out, "I'm hungry. I want something to eat." "Come inside," Kwevira calls. "I know you're hungry. Let's try to hurry up and make some dinner." Anna comes into the house whining that she is very hungry. "Let's try to be quiet so your sister doesn't wake up," she whispers, giving Anna a hug. "That way you and I can get the food ready more quickly. I really need your help because I'm so tired. Maybe you could help me wash these kumala that I have peeled? Anna please go fetch the basin over there." Anna runs and brings the basin and Kwevira pours the water into it. "Oh, your hands are dirty from playing outside," she says. "What should we do?" "Wash my hands!" says Anna. Kwevira pours water over her hands. "Rub them together," she says. Anna rubs her hands together, laughing, and says, "Now kumala." "Yes, now kumala," says Kwevira. Let's see if you can wash them just as clean as your hands. While you do that I'll get the wood for a fire." Anna likes washing the kumala. The water feels nice and cool and she likes the unusual colours that can be seen in the kumala – some are orange, purple and white. "Look, the kumala are almost clean," says Anna." "Here. Move them in to this other basin of water," says her mother. She picks them up one handful at a time, and moves them to the other basin. She notices that the bottom of the first basin is covered with the dirt from the kumala. "Mama, look!" she says. "Yes," says her mother, "look at all the dirt that you washed off the kumala. Well done! Now wash them once more in the clean water. See if that water has any dirt in it. They are so clean that they will be ready to go into the pot of boiling water. Soon we can have dinner."

Ask the participants the following questions:

- What was different this time?
- Do you think it took more time for Kwevira? Why/why not?
- How did Anna feel? How did Kwevira feel?
- What were some of the positive discipline strategies Kwevira used in this story? (They will mention being kind and firm, being a good role model, listening, paying attention to good behaviour, explaining consequences etc.)
- How did she Kwevira get Anna to be helpful, think of others and communicate?



### ACTIVITY 3: Role play

Divide the participants into two groups and read the below scenarios to them.

**Scenario 1:** *Your two year old has broken your expensive phone that was given to her by your four year old, whom you had told repeatedly not to touch your phone. What would you do to encourage the children to take care of things and obey your Instructions?*

**Scenario 2:** Your five-year-old son is deaf and has just taken scissors and cut the sheets on your bed. How are you going to let him know that this was not a good thing to do and encourage him not to do it again?

- Have one group produce a positive way to discipline the two and four year olds and another group a positive way to discipline the five year old.
- When one group is presenting have the other note the questions they want to ask.
- In plenary, discuss which method of disciplining would be most effective and why.

## Conclusion

### Key messages

- **Show your children you love them.** Many behaviour problems in children and adults can be traced to a lack of bonding in the early years.
- **Acknowledge good behaviour.**
- **Accept children making mistakes.** By making mistakes, children learn to do things right.
- Be alert for good behaviour. Too often, we respond only to unruly behaviour. **Pay attention and respond when they are doing something good:**

“Oh you are helping your baby sister... What a kind brother you are.” Young children crave their parents' attention, approval and affirmation.
- **Listen** to children's explanation. Really pay attention to what the child wants to tell you then it is possible to have a conversation and help the child work out a better way of doing things. If you have listened to them, they will be more able to listen to you about the importance of being honest, fair, kind, etc.
- **Model the values and behaviour you want in children.** Remember that children are watching what you say and do all the time and will copy your behaviour, either good or bad.
  - If you are kind, they will learn to be kind. If you are patient, they will learn patience.
  - If you shout, they will think it is clever to shout. If they are hit, they will be aggressive to others.
- **Set clear limits and guidelines for behaviour and explain consequences.** Explain why you have a certain rule that you want your child to obey. This





helps children understand that their choices and actions all have consequences and that it is the choices the child makes that determines these consequences. This gives them a sense of control.

This father is quietly talking to his child explaining what was dangerous about what she was doing and that she cannot go and play for the next 10 minutes because she did not listen to what he asked her to do and could have hurt herself or someone else. He asks her to sit quietly and think about it for a few minutes.



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How will the parents talk with these children so that they understand the dangers and do not do this again?

### What should I do? What should I say?

This father has picked up his baby, who was crawling towards the cooking fire, and taken her away, saying, "That is dangerous and will hurt you."

This four year old has broken his mother's phone. She says, "You need to stay here inside for the next 15 minutes because you did not listen when I said not to play with my phone. The phone is so important because we may need it to call the doctor or daddy in an emergency."

When this five-year-old brother and sister fight, their mother holds the ball and says, "it is much more fun when we share and play together, come let's play together and have more fun."

Three small children are playing and smiling. Their grandmother says, "How well you are all playing together."

A plate of food has fallen on the floor. The mother praises her daughter, saying thank you to her for telling the truth. "Remember, **truthfulness is the foundation of all human virtues**. Now let us clean this up together."

All children, regardless of abilities or gender, flourish and grow in homes where there is love, care, boundaries and positive discipline. They will repeat good behaviour when it is acknowledged and encouraged and will learn from positive modelling

## Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain we will be continuing to look at these issues in subsequent workshops.

## Commitments

Facilitator asks, "Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or some new positive discipline approach you might try?"

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone, confirms the date of the next workshop and closes with a prayer.



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**ANNEX 1**

Workshop 10: Values: Raising Caring and Moral Children

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

9. What sort of people do you want your young children to be as they grow up?

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10. When your child does something good what do you do? How often do you praise your child and appreciate their efforts?

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11. Before the workshop, how did you use to discipline your child?

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12. After the workshop, have you made or will you make changes in the way you discipline your child?

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13. If your child accidentally breaks a cup what will you do?

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WORKSHOP 11

# Difference and Disability: Including Everyone





## Purpose

By the end of the session participants will:

1. Feel more empathy towards children who are different or vulnerable – whether they have a disability or whether they come from an extremely poor family, from a family in which there is a disabled parent or a family member who is struggling with alcoholism or mental health or from a family with a different religion or language, etc.
2. Understand more about the key ways they can support the development of children with disabilities. (Prevention is dealt with in other workshops<sup>2</sup>).
3. Be motivated to include children who are vulnerable in family and community life and be aware that the single biggest problem facing children who are different is other people's attitudes.



## Materials

- Poster: Children with Disabilities
- Flipchart, markers, Blu Tack, paper, pens
- Leaves from tree
- Handout with key points from Conclusion
- Handbook on how to support a child with a disability

## Background information for facilitators

- Disability is common. According to VEMIS, 7–8% of primary school children have a disability and the statistics are likely to be similar for younger children. There are many types of disability, including difficulties with seeing, hearing, moving, learning and communication. Some children are born with a disability; sometimes, a disability develops after birth. Some disabilities are caused by injury or illness. Disabilities can be mild, moderate or severe.
- ALL children have the same rights – and this includes disabled children and any children who are in some way seen as different. Within these groups, girls are often especially discriminated against. The United Nations Convention on the Rights of the child (UNCRC) and the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities have both been ratified by the Government of Vanuatu. UNCRC Article 23 states that children who have any kind of disability have the right to special support, as well as all the rights in the Convention, so they can live full and independent lives.

2. There is information on prevention of disabilities in Workshop 2: Strong Beginnings :Caring for the Pregnant Mother and Her Unborn Child, Workshop 3: Brain Development, Workshop 7: Healthy Nutrition, Workshop 8: Keeping Children Safe and Workshop 9: Values – raising caring and moral children.

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- It is important to remember that the biggest problem disabled children face is other people's attitudes. People assume a disabled child cannot do something and often either pity, neglect or bully them.
- It is very important to ensure that parents understand that having a child with a disability does not mean that they did something wrong or are bad people.
- If families suspect something is wrong they should immediately seek help from a trained health worker. They can provide advice, referrals and links to support groups like disabled people's organizations (DPOs). Early intervention is key. Equally, when a disabled child is unwell, they need prompt attention – just like any child.
- Children who come from families that are struggling with any of a number of social problems (extreme poverty, addiction, domestic violence, parent in prison, etc.) can often face social exclusion in similar ways to that often experienced by disabled children. The same can be true for children of families that are simply seen as "different" because of religion, language, etc. Social exclusion is associated with higher rates of disability.
- As we have talked about in other workshops, the important thing is to recognize the capabilities and diversity of ALL children. This applies just as much to children with a disability or who are seen as different in some way because of their family situation. Who they are and what they can do and are interested in should be recognized, developed and respected.

## Introduction

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### **Welcome**

Thank everyone for coming. If possible, have a representative from a DPO present to co-facilitate.

### **Prayer**

### **Icebreaker**

### **Review**

Remind participants of the previous workshop and allow a few minutes for participants to talk about what they learned and any changes they have made at home since the workshop.

### **Sample introduction**

"Today we want to think together about the ways we as a community can include children who are 'different' in family and community life and how we can ensure their rights. This might include children from especially poor disadvantaged families and families who are struggling with different social issues; especially, we want to discuss young children with disabilities and their needs for recognition, opportunities and support. We will explore how we can support their development and examine our own attitudes. We need to be aware that the single biggest problem facing children who are 'different' is other people's attitudes."



## ACTIVITY 1: Leaves on a tree

The purpose of this icebreaker is to help the participants see the uniqueness of each individual and oneness of humanity.

- Put enough leaves on the table for each participant to take one.
- Ask them to look carefully at their leaf for one minute.
- Ask a few participants to describe any feature of their leaf, like if it has a spot, is torn, is dry, has a part missing, has a hole – anything special about their leaf.
- Explain that, just as these leaves are all unique, human beings are all unique.
- Ask them to put their leaf in the bag you are passing round.
- Ask the participants to identify their leaf in the bag and take it out.
- Ask, “How did you identify your leaf?” “How did you get to know your leaf so well?”

Concluding points:

- We are all special in our own ways.
- All children have special characteristics, talents and capacity, and this applies to EVERY child, whether or not they have a disability or come from a family facing big problems. The more we notice these individual characteristics the more we can support every child’s development. This is responsive caregiving (as we discussed in the first workshop, on nurturing care).
- To live in a community, we all have to accept who we are and who EVERYONE is.
- Human diversity is one of the wonderful things of life. We should respect differences and ensure ALL children are part of the preschool, school, church and community regardless of differences.
- We as humanity are like the leaves of one tree, so we need to respect and welcome all in our community regardless of any differences.



## ACTIVITY 2: “Engleflip”. How does it feel?

This is an activity to help participants experience what it would be like to not understand what the parent or teacher expects, to reflect on those feelings and to think about simple things that can be helpful.

Engleflip is a nonsense word. It does not have a meaning in any language as far as we know! For this activity, it means “stand up,” but the participants do not know that. Only the facilitator knows its meaning.

- Say, “OK, now I am going to give some of you an instruction and I want you to follow my instruction.” Then go and stand in front of a participant and say, “Jenny [or whatever the person’s name is], Engleflip.” The individual will not know what he or she is expected to do and so will probably be embarrassed and do nothing.

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- Repeat the instruction. And again. And again. Repeat it louder and start to sound cross.
- Say in an exasperated voice, "Well this is no good, Lavinia [or whatever the person's name is], you will be able to do this. Engleflip." Repeat the same process. Do this with another participant.
- Go back to the original participant and say quietly, "Oh dear... let's try this again. Look at me. Engleflip." This time, as you say "Engleflip," make a clear gesture raising both hands, palms up – indicating that you want the person to stand up. The participant will immediately understand and be able to follow the instruction. (If not help the person to stand.) Praise them immediately. "Yes that's great. You Engleflipped!" Repeat with the other two participants.

Questions:

- How did you feel when I asked you to Engleflip? (Explain it is a nonsense word and they could not have known what it meant).
- Did it help when I kept repeating it? Said it louder? Got cross?
- What was it that I did that made you understand?
- How did you feel when you understood?

Explain that this is the sort of experience that children who cannot hear or who have difficulty understanding what people say because of a learning disability have all the time. Ask them what it would be like to be that child.

Conclude by explaining that it is our job as adults to try and get to know a disabled child just as we do any child and work out how we can support them to do things and learn. And, just as with EVERY child, this means observing, noticing what they like and are interested in, what they already know and can do, and then building on that.

We must remember that the biggest problem disabled children face is other people's attitudes. It is attitudes that really matter. We often think that a disabled child just cannot do a particular thing. But, if we remove the barriers that are preventing the child from joining in, they can participate in family and community life. And that's the most important thing. "You experienced an example of this and how a sign helped you."

Ask the participants to think about:

- How we can help a child who cannot see to move around using his/her sense of touch and hearing. See what ideas they come up with. These should include walking with a stick and another person as a guide and later on their own.
- How we can help a child who cannot use their legs to move around. Ideas should include being carried, being provided with a trolley, crutches or a wheelchair, ramps into home, school, church, etc.



### ACTIVITY 3: What do you see?

- Divide the participants into 3-4 groups.
- Give each group a copy of the below picture.
- Ask them to look at the pictures for a few minutes.
- Now ask them the following question:
- What do you see in these pictures?
  - What do all these children have in common? *They all have a disability*
  - Is the disability visible in all of them? *No, explain that some children have learning disability or hearing and visual difficulties that may not be visible to all and interpreted as child being naughty or lazy!*



- Are these children seen in their communities or hidden by their parents? *Seen!*
- Why are they seen? *Because it is their right to play, learn, socialize and have fun!*

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### ACTIVITY 4: Beliefs and attitudes towards young children with disabilities

Write these questions on a chart and go through them with the participants:

- How do people in your community treat a baby or young child who looks different or perhaps has a limp, learns slowly, stammers or sometimes has fits?
- What are the local beliefs and myths about the causes of disability?
- How can we involve babies and young children with disabilities in activities carried out in the community?
- How can we as a community support parents who have a baby or young child with a disability?

Divide the participants into four groups. Each group discusses one question. Make sure there are men and women in each group. Each group reports back their ideas and there is time for discussion.



### ACTIVITY 5: Mini case studies: finding solutions

- Divide the participants into groups and hand out one mini case study to each group.
- Each group discusses the case and comes up with solutions to the problems being faced by the disabled child and the family.
- Groups report back to the rest of the group.



#### Mini Case study 1

Angelic is four years old. She walks with a limp and often struggles with her balance. She never engages in any play activities outside but would love to play with other children. They often tease her and she feels very hurt and lonely because they exclude her from some activities. She often walks home alone and her closest friend is her sister. She does not feel that other children understand her.

Questions:

- Why is Angelic excluded from play activities?
- How can the family support others to understand Angelic and include her?

These are the sort of points that participants will share (add to them if necessary):

- They do not know what she can or cannot do and are afraid of hurting her.

- Talk with other families and the kindergarten or Year 1 teacher. Discuss how they could include Angelic and talk with the children about all the things Angelic can do and the importance of being welcoming

### Mini Case study 2

Gideon is five years old. He has never gone to school. He has a speech problem and cannot talk well, but he is very good at playing football and drawing, and loves listening to stories his grandpa tells.

One day, his parents decided to take Gideon on a picnic. When Gideon approached other children to play with them, many teased him and laughed at him. Gideon's parents were very upset and now keep him at home. He only goes places on special occasions and often hides behind his parents so that no one can see him.

Questions:

- Why did the children tease Gideon?
- How can his parents support him to nurture his talents?
- What can the community do to include Gideon more in community activities and in going to school?
- These are the sort of points that participants will share (add to them if necessary):
- People are afraid of difference but everyone is unique and everyone is valuable
- Ask the children who are being unkind how they feel when they are teased and excluded.
- Link parents to an organization like VSPD to help them work on Gideon's speech or other ways to communicate.
- Community discussions can be held, maybe with the chief and Head Teacher, to ensure Gideon is welcomed to join in community activities, including going to school. Talk with teachers and children so they understand he can do everything other children do but expresses himself in a different way.

## Conclusion

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### Key messages

- There are many causes of disabilities and many types of disability, including difficulties with seeing, hearing, moving, learning and communication. Disabilities can be mild, moderate or severe.
- Some children are born with a disability. Taking good care of health and wellbeing during pregnancy prevents some conditions that can cause disability. Sometimes, a disability develops after birth. Some disabilities are caused by injury or illness. Making sure children are vaccinated, treating illness early and keeping

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children safe from harm can prevent some disabilities but we cannot explain why many disabilities develop.

- Having a child with a disability is something that can happen to any of us and is nothing to be ashamed of. The important thing is for us to focus on what children can do, rather than on what they cannot do, and to care for them as any child – keeping them healthy and happy.
- Remember that the biggest problem facing disabled children is other people's attitudes. So often, people pity, neglect or are unkind to a child with a disability or a vulnerable child from a family facing severe problems such as destitution or alcoholism.
- It's all about removing the barriers that prevent children with disabilities from being able to participate. EVERY child needs support with their overall development, whatever their abilities. Focus on what they are interested in and what they can already do and start from there – step by step. It's very important for the disabled child to be encouraged to do whatever they can even if it takes a long time.
- Responsive care is the key. We have talked about this in many sessions; it entails our ability to notice, understand and respond to our child's signals in an appropriate way – e.g. is the child hungry? In pain? Wanting to move or play or explore? Communicating? Needing comforting?
- If you as a parent suspect your child or a friend's child is not developing as expected, you should be sure to seek advice from a medical person as soon as possible. Parents can also get support from impairment-specific DPOs in order to receive advice. This will help the family understand and realize their child's potential.
- Remember **Every Child Is Special**. Each is born with particular features and qualities, and into a family situation that will influence what the child becomes. Support from the family and wider community is necessary if the child is to fully develop his or her abilities. This is particularly true for children who are born with a physical or mental condition that disables them in some way or if they are vulnerable because of a difficult family situation like extreme poverty, alcoholism or mental health issues of a parent.

### Discussion of concerns and questions

Ask participants to share any concerns and worries they still have. Accept these as valid and explain where they can obtain additional advice if you cannot answer the question.

### Commitments

The facilitator asks everyone to take a few minutes to think about something they will do after the workshop to improve the situation for children in their community who are disabled or are different in some way.

“Would anyone like to share something they will do differently at home after this session? Or something new you might try like encouraging the community to support a family with a child who has a disability?”

Participants share their ideas and the facilitator thanks everyone for participating in the workshop and closes with a prayer.



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**ANNEX 1:**

Workshop 11: Difference and Disability

**Evaluation Questions for Parents**

14. Have you got a child with disability? What sort of disability?

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15. Are there children in the community who have a disability? If yes, what is the disability?

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16. Are there some families in the community who are not really included?

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17. What can we all do to better include all children in family and community life?

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18. What can we do to encourage children with disabilities to do whatever they can and how can we respond to their interests and needs better?

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19. Is there a child with a disability in the community who is not in kindy? If yes, how can you support the parents to make sure the child comes to kindy?

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20. Do you feel you understand more about disability and difference and the importance of including everyone after this workshop and has it changed any of your beliefs and attitudes?

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PARENT  
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# Taskforces

Following the PSP reviews (regional and national), it was agreed by all that it was important to strengthen commitment and ownership at the local level. The facilitators should be able to focus on conducting the workshops and key respected figures from the area should have responsibility for organization and establish early engagement with the community to mobilize interest and participation.

MoET issued a directive mandating the establishment of local taskforces.

## Terms of reference for the taskforce team

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### Taskforce composition

The support team should comprise at least five members with support from the ECCE team at MoET and provincial ECCE coordinators. The members should include most of the following:

- Community leader/chief's representative
- Chair of the school council
- Church representative
- Youth representative
- Parents' representative
- Health representative
- Women's organization representative
- DPO representative

The team may involve others as needed (e.g. a health worker to talk about pregnancy and health and hygiene).

### The responsibilities of the team include:

- Coordinate the logistics, planning and budgeting for the PSP workshops (decide on date, time and venue of workshops) in the respective zone.
- Raise awareness and invite parents-to-be and parents of young children to attend the workshops.
- Observe, get feedback and provide data/information as requested by MoET.
- Collect evaluation sheets from parents and return them to Mobile ECCCE Officers or Provincial Co-ordinators.
- Assist with language translation if needed in multilingual communities.
- Help facilitators prepare materials for the workshops, for example collect shells, empty bottles, coconut shells, etc.

- Make follow-up visits to homes of participants with a focus on reaching disadvantaged families.
- Assist in organizing and facilitating other consultations, meetings and workshops as required with for example School Improvement Officers, teachers, parents and the community.
- Write a brief report of each workshop (what went well, what did not go well, how did they solve challenges, lessons learnt).

### **Duration, hours, workplace, equipment**

The taskforce will operate from two months before the first workshop until the programme is completed and the evaluation undertaken. This is likely to be approximately 18 months. This could include weekends, particularly for workshops in the communities. Taskforce members know their communities and how they can work with them, fitting in with the demands on families' time etc.

### **Desired qualities and experience**

- Playing a key role in the community such as working in/supporting a school;
- Good relationships with men, women and children in the community and strong communication skills;
- Experience in facilitating workshops/community meetings;
- Ability to identify what helps or hinders effective rollout or adaptation of the PSP;
- Curiosity, imagination, flexibility and openness to finding new, creative ways of helping parents and caregivers of young children;
- Sensitivity to the situation of parents and the challenges they face;
- Ability to work well in a team, share ideas freely and listen.









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# Tips on Facilitation

Being a facilitator is different from being a “teacher.” Your role is to plan the learning and GUIDE the implementation of the workshop. The taskforce members make the arrangements for the workshops. You do not need to know everything about each topic, although you do have to be well prepared. You can always invite experts from the community, like a health worker, to co-facilitate certain workshops, such as those on Caring for the Pregnant Mother and Healthy Nutrition, for example. You might ask a representative from a DPO to help with the Difference and Disability workshop.

Working with adults is different from working with very young children. Most of the parents in the community have a lot of experience in child care and know a lot about their children. Your job is to build on their experience, and provide them opportunities to share their experience and exchange ideas, while getting new information on child development.

## What is my role as a facilitator?

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A good facilitator is one who facilitates the learning process and does not simply provide information or lecture the participants.

You need to encourage the participants to become involved in the activities through talking, asking questions, discussing issues, finding solutions and trying out new practices.

Key points:

- Listen to the participants
- Give them time to talk about their experiences
- Show respect for everyone and their opinions
- Be inclusive so that quiet participants have a chance to express their opinions
- Speak clearly, using simple words
- Use local examples that people understand
- Encourage discussion
- Guide the discussion so that important questions are answered
- Share new information as indicated in the Handbook
- Support people in taking action

## How do I organize for the workshops?

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You are to hold 11 workshops for the parents of your community with children under eight years old. Aim to hold one workshop per month. There will also be a final celebration get-together after all the workshops are completed.

The purpose of these workshops is to encourage parents of young children to become more confident, motivated and knowledgeable to provide holistic care for their children, which will help their children's physical, mental, social, emotional and language development and hence benefit in both the short and long term their health, learning and behaviour.

Workshops are to be held at where the taskforce feels is most central and convenient, indoor or outdoor, but if the taskforce thinks the space is limited, it may organize for the church to give a space to be used.

The workshop duration should not be more than one and a half hours, so you need to plan accordingly.

When planning and organizing your workshops, keep in mind the following:

**Know your centre's parents well:** By establishing a good relationship with the parents in the community, you will feel more comfortable with them and can communicate with them easily. Most likely, they will also come to the workshop, because they respect you.

**Decide on dates with the taskforce and let it announce the workshop date and venue:** The taskforce should announce the workshop two weeks before the workshop date. It will put a sign outside the kindy/primary school notice board door and in other places in the community, such as the church and health centre, so all parents can see it. Announce the date and time of the workshop in church and community gatherings.

**Be flexible:** It is important to respond to the needs and interests of the parents in your community. Use the workshop plans as a guide; reduce or extend the information and activities as needed. You do not have to use all the activities.

**Work with others:** It is usually more enjoyable and less stressful to conduct a workshop when you have someone to help you organize and implement. Encourage community members and other workshop participants to help you in conducting the workshops. This will develop their interest, confidence and skills. If there are people in your community who are well informed on some topics, like your health workers, ask them to share their expertise by speaking at one or more of the workshops.

**Be sensitive to those who cannot read or write:** Find out before the workshop how many participants are literate (can read and write). If most participants cannot read and write you will need to adjust the activities, for example use more pictures, diagrams and have more discussion. If you have just a few participants who cannot read or write, then you could select a volunteer from the group to read things to them when required and record their ideas and comments during the small group discussion.

**Practise the workshop:** Take time to go through the workshop handbook and rehearse the activities before you conduct the workshop. Do this at least a day before. This will give you time to make changes or gather any necessary materials. If you are doing the workshop with someone else, practise the workshop together so that you know your roles and how to work together.

**Have a space for children:** Some parents may bring their children with them to the workshop. You may set up an area with play materials for children to play and ask a volunteer (a youth for example) to watch them until the workshop is finished.

## How do I engage the participants in activities?

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**Be organized:** In order for the workshop to run smoothly and on time, arrive early and organize the room and materials. Review the background information and key messages in advance of the workshop and have all the activities prepared. Check you have everything you need. Place all materials for the workshop in a designated place so that you can reach them easily.

**Make people feel welcome and comfortable:** Greet everyone individually as they arrive. Try to learn everyone's name. Make participants feel comfortable and respected. **MAKE IT CLEAR AT THE BEGINNING OF THE WORKSHOP THAT YOU ARE NOT THERE TO CRITICIZE OR DICTATE WHAT HAS TO BE DONE, BUT TO LEARN WITH THE PARTICIPANTS, TO HELP THEM DISCUSS ISSUES IMPORTANT TO THEM AND SHARE IDEAS.**

**Take short breaks:** Look at the facial expression of participants from time to time. If their energy levels are low, it is a good idea to stop and do a short energizing activity like a game, an action song – anything that will get them moving.

**Listen to everyone: THE FACILITATOR SHOULD SPEND MOST OF THE WORKSHOP LISTENING TO WHAT THE PARTICIPANTS HAVE TO SHARE AND ENCOURAGING PARTICIPANTS TO SPEAK.**

**Be open minded:** Let everyone express their opinions even if you disagree with some of them. Always thank the participant for their contribution to the discussion.



**Allow participants to discuss and absorb the information:** While it is good to stick to time, if you see the participants are really engaged in discussion on a topic let them continue and do not worry about moving to the next activity. This may mean you cannot get through all the activities. This is a decision that you may have to make. If interest is high, participants may like to have a follow-up workshop or discussion group. PEOPLE ARE MORE LIKELY TO CHANGE THEIR BEHAVIOUR IF THEY HAVE OPPORTUNITIES TO QUESTION AND TALK ABOUT NEW IDEAS.

### **Use interactive strategies:**

Below are some examples of how you can make the activities interactive and avoid lecturing the participants.

**Grouping:** In the Handbook, you will see that the participants are often divided into groups to do the activities. Groups should not have more than six or seven people. Based on this, you can group the participants by asking them to count off around the room. If you want group of six, for example, have people count themselves off: 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, 6. Following this, ask people with the same number to gather in a certain part of the room. You can use mats for people to sit on.

**Brainstorming:** Brainstorming is way to encourage all participants to think quickly and share ideas. The rule for brainstorming is to accept and acknowledge ALL ideas even if they sound silly or incorrect.

**Pair and share:** This method encourages individuals to think about an issue or topic and then share their ideas with another person (often the person sitting next to them). This is a good approach especially for those individuals who do not want to speak up in a large group or feel shy.

**Role play:** Through role play you want the participants to discuss an issue and then present the solution in a role play. This is a good approach to share solutions without lecturing the participants.

**Games and icebreakers:** These are short activities to do any time during a workshop when you think participants are losing interest or getting tired. They should be active and fun-filled. Many children's games and action songs can be used or adapted for this purpose.

**Debate:** Debate can be used to introduce other point of views and allow for discussion and to enable participants to support a point of view. Teams have to provide evidence to argue their position. Participants can change positions after listening to each group.

Introduction game: A lot of participants feel shy coming to such workshops. The more you make them feel at ease, the more they will participate – because they feel secure and they know no one will laugh at their ideas.

## **Where do I get the materials for the workshop?**

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MoET will give you a workshop package consisting of flipchart papers, markers, pens, tape, scissors and papers. In addition, it will give you the posters to use as visual aids to make the points for some of your workshops.

Other local materials, like coconut shells, stones, shells, string, empty plastic bottles and bottle tops, you will need to collect yourself or ask parents to collect them and bring to the workshop.

## **What if I cannot answer the questions asked from me?**

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If you do not know the answer to a question asked of you, it is OK to say you do not know but that you will try to find out the answer from the ECCE coordinators in your province and in Port Vila. Contact numbers and address will be provided to you during your training workshop.

Nobody expects you to know the all the answers. Make sure you write down the question in your notebook and the name of person who asked the question, so that in the next workshop or on another occasion you can answer their question.

# Sample of Registration Form

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## Registration of Parents Attending Workshop

**Title of Workshop:** Workshop 1: Good Start in Life

**Date:** September 3<sup>rd</sup>, 2021

**Venue of Workshop:** Marino Chief's Nakamal **Island:** Nth Maewo **Province:** Penama

**Facilitators:** Mildreth Sale (MEO), Mr: Eric Maeto (Yr 1 Teacher), Edgar T (ECCE Prov Coord)

	<b>Name of Participant</b>	<b>Gender: Male/ Female</b>	<b>Relationship with Child (Mother/Father/Grandfather/Grandmother)</b>	<b>Village &amp; Contact</b>	<b>Sign</b>
1	<i>Hanson Mera</i>	<i>Female</i>	<i>Mother</i>	<i>Gamelalau, Nth Maewo 5568914</i>	<i>HMera</i>
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