

The Together Toolkit

Foundational Training for Inclusive Community Action by Grassroots Structures



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Introduction

In this ever-changing or dynamic world, there is not enough time given to small but important aspects of life. Mental health, positive outlook, understanding of others points of view, helping growth of child and many other aspects takes a backseat in this race to survive.

This manual looks at these aspects – the small but a vital ingredient of every human’s requirement to live and not just exist. The few things that they need to inculcate in their lives to make their own and their children’s life happy and secure. There is a look at community structure and how it can be strengthened. For years the focus has been on mortality and morbidity. It is now time to look beyond and augment the existing structure with more reinforcements with an aim to make every human life count. Working on skills, broadening their horizons and make them physically and mentally strong to take on the world.

Background

As part of strengthening Urban Primary Health Centres (UPHCs) to improve the delivery of Comprehensive Primary Health Care (CPHC) services, KHPT focused on enhancing community engagement. This involved working closely with various community groups, including Mahila Arogya Samitis (MAS), Self-Help Groups (SHGs), pregnant women, mothers, and adolescents.

During on-ground implementation, KHPT encountered several challenges specific to urban settings - mobilizing community groups, securing their time amidst busy routines, ensuring consistent participation from individuals with diverse educational and socio-economic backgrounds, and identifying accessible venues for these sessions.

To address these challenges, KHPT adopted an innovative approach. Trainings were conducted in easily accessible public spaces within the communities. Community facilitators led these sessions using short, interactive and engaging ‘capsule-based’ modules, each lasting around 40–50 minutes. Moving away from conventional lecture-style formats, the sessions were designed to be participatory, fun, and experience-driven.

Results and Adaptation

Following the initial implementation, KHPT observed increased interest and active participation from various community groups. This encouraged the scale-up of the approach, with content and delivery methods continually refined based on feedback from participants and facilitators.

This manual is a compilation of those field-tested training modules. Designed for field-level trainers with basic facilitation and communication skills, the modules make use of locally available resources to reinforce key messages. Simple games and activities have been integrated to help participants internalize concepts, recognize behaviours, and emotionally connect with the session themes.

These capsules have been improvised and adapted from original drafts through field-testing, real-time experiences, and feedback from both community members and implementation teams.

Content Overview

The manual is divided into four sections, covering training modules for:

1. Self-Help Groups and Mahila Arogya Samitis (SHGs and MAS)
2. Community Health Activists (CHAs)
3. Mothers' Groups
4. Pregnant Women (ANC groups)

These sessions focus on building knowledge, skills, and practices relevant to each group. The topics have been carefully selected to address the real and contextual needs of participants:

- ❖ **For adolescent groups**, sessions have been formulated to address issues such as responsible use of social media, civic sense, gender inclusion, and soft skills, helping them navigate the challenges of growing up in a fast-changing world.
- ❖ **For pregnant women (ANCs)**, sessions focus on importance of nutrition, celebrating pregnancy, child development, and emotional well-being, fostering a supportive and informed journey to motherhood.
- ❖ **For SHGs and Mahila Arogya Samitis**, the sessions emphasize leadership qualities, teamwork, self-care, accessing information and schemes, and understanding vulnerability, aimed at empowering women as community leaders and health advocates.
- ❖ **For Mothers' Groups**, these sessions highlight positive parenting practices, child nutrition, emotional bonding, health-seeking behaviour, peer support, enabling mothers to nurture healthier families and stronger communities, simultaneously focussing on self-care aspects.

Each session is structured to be participatory, drawing from participants' lived experiences and encouraging dialogue, reflection, and collective learning. Sessions are designed to be relatable, using real-life scenarios and participatory methods to foster deeper understanding and learning for the specific group requirements.

Some sessions in this module are newly developed, while others are adapted from various Training of Trainers (ToT) programs attended by staff. These have been customized with contextual relevance and finalized to suit the needs of the urban community. The distinctive contribution of KHPT lies in capsule-sizing the sessions and ensuring they remain interactive and engaging - an approach found to be both effective and sustainable in urban settings.

Scope for Adaptation

While the manual has been segmented into specific groups, many sessions can be contextualized and delivered across different groups depending on the skills of the facilitator. For instance, sessions on 'dreams and aspirations' or 'problem-solving' are relevant for all audiences, though

the content and outcomes may vary. The facilitator plays a critical role in interpreting the context, adapting examples, and guiding the group toward the intended learning objectives without diluting the message.

Suggestions for Effective Use

To enhance the effectiveness of this manual, it is recommended that:

- ❖ Trainers undergo a short orientation on facilitation techniques and participatory methods.
- ❖ Sessions be preceded by community mobilization and rapport-building efforts.
- ❖ Feedback mechanisms be integrated after each session to capture insights and improve future deliveries.
- ❖ Training materials be translated or adapted into local languages, with visuals and analogies that resonate with community realities.
- ❖ Peer learning and storytelling be encouraged during sessions to foster engagement and learning through lived experiences.

With these thoughtful additions, this manual can serve as a practical and flexible tool for grassroots trainers, helping deepen community engagement and strengthen the delivery of CPHC services.

Making the Best Use of The Manual

Facilitators are grassroots level staff who have to interact with people and communicate a lot of important information. They are responsible to bring behavioural change among the people through the change in the attitudes; they help the community to follow a path that will help them to aim to be better in all spheres – health, intra and inter family interactions, understand child growth and development, communication and many such areas. There is also new and advanced information that pours in every day. To keep the facilitators aware and to help them deliver correct information in a sensitive manner, manuals like these are of immense help. They will help to keep the information uniform, precise and to deliver the intended messages appropriately.

This manual provides an organised framework to work on. The sessions are placed so that the overall objective is reached by one session flowing into the other. Detailed instructions have been provided on how to present the material, use of local, understandable references, consistency in working method, and extra information of activities. It also encourages participation and open discussions. The methodology includes activities which boost thinking out of the box. The consistency in narrative helps the rookie and experienced facilitators both to deliver uniform training sessions. It also helps reduce the stress of performance of the facilitators.

At the end of every session is a feedback form for the facilitator. Here, all the aspects of the sessions are included and remarks or issues can be written. This helps the facilitator to improve/modify the area where there were challenges. It also gives the new facilitator a preview of how the session went the previous time. The supervisors of training will also have a documented proof of how the session went and later to adopt tweaks for the sessions, if required.

Guidance for Facilitators

The facilitator is the backbone of the training session. The whole outcome of the session depends on how the facilitator conducts it. There are some pointers given below which will help the facilitator to be efficient. As the participants come from a vulnerable sections – social, economic, educational, etc. - their vision may be limited. It is necessary to understand where they come from and to adjust the teaching style so that they understand the concepts being explained.

- ❖ Come prepared for the session
- ❖ Go through the session plan and prepare how you will go through it. Clarify any doubts that you have with programme staff or other facilitators.
- ❖ Ensure that all the material required is available
- ❖ If some other facilitator has done the same training before, ask for suggestions or feedback and delivery of content.
- ❖ A dry run of the training programme could help.
- ❖ Start on time ALWAYS.
- ❖ Be conscious of time. Do not let a discussion on one issue drag on. Cut it short – diplomatically.
- ❖ Ensure that the participants are relaxed and focusing on what is being said.
- ❖ Usually the current happenings in the society, country or world is fresh in the participants' minds. You can refer or use it to take the discussion forward. This has to be planned in advance.
- ❖ Ensure that there is clear communication.
- ❖ You are in charge. Do not let a strong vocal participant take over.
- ❖ Participants are looking at you as a leader whom they have to learn from. Any uncertainty, hesitation, dismissing questions by participants will be observed. Let your confidence show.
- ❖ Your body language and your interaction with participants and co-workers will be under scrutiny. So all that you are teaching them has to be practiced.
- ❖ Simple instructions to be given. One instruction at one time
- ❖ Use local language and real-life examples
- ❖ Be sensitive to personal or emotional stories; pause if needed, but do not let the emotional stories take over the session.
- ❖ Do not bring religion, caste, gender or any controversial topic in the discussion. If it does creep in by the participants, diplomatically change the flow of the discussion.
- ❖ Guide the flow of the discussion to the relevant topic.
- ❖ Reinforce that building trust takes time, but sessions like this help.
- ❖ There could be groups formed between the participants. Try getting them together on one platform.
- ❖ Keep the space non-hierarchical – every voice matters.
- ❖ Encourage everyone to participate.
- ❖ After a section of the session is finished, go back to it just to strengthen the information given.
- ❖ A feedback from the participants will be helpful to improve in the next session

Group Norms

Every session must have a set of rules that everyone will follow. These can be decided with the participation of the participants and the facilitators. Once these rules are set, no one will break them. This exercise should be done only once with each group, in the first session. Ask the participants about what rules they want. Write them down on a chart paper. Add all the rules that have not been suggested by the participants but are necessary. This chart can be put up in the room before every session starts. This is to remind the participants of the rules that have been agreed upon.

Some of them are:

- ❖ One person speaks at a time
- ❖ Listen with respect
- ❖ No blaming or judging
- ❖ What is shared here stays within the group
- ❖ No one is forced to speak; it's okay to just listen
- ❖ No ridiculing others questions or suggestions.
- ❖ All mobiles off or on airplane mode. This goes for facilitators too.

Feed Back Form for Facilitators

This feedback form is to help in the documentation and improvement/changes in the sessions conducted. It standardizes the feedback process to help review and upgrade of content and delivery methodology. This feedback form should be fill in by the facilitator immediately after every session so that no information is lost or missed out.

| General Information | | | |
|---|-----------------|----------|--|
| Group | ANC/CHA/SHG/MAS | | |
| Topic | | | |
| Date | | Time | |
| No. of Participants | | Venue | |
| Feedback on session | | | |
| Was the information and procedure given in the module easy to understand? (for the facilitator) | | Yes / No | |
| Were the materials mentioned enough for the session? | | Yes / No | |
| Was the time given to each section enough? | | Yes / No | |
| Did the participants understand the topic? | | Yes / No | |
| Did they ask questions? | | Yes / No | |
| Did they need more explanation to understand? | | Yes / No | |
| Did all the participants participate? | | Yes / No | |
| If not, why? | | | |
| Did the activities convey the message? | | Yes / No | |
| At the end of the session, were the participants able to recall what was conveyed to them? | | Yes / No | |
| Did the participants express their desire to implement what had been taught? | | Yes / No | |
| Facilitators remarks/notes of session | | | |

Self-Help Groups and Mahila Arogya Samitis

Self-Help Groups (SHGs) are grass root level groups of women that promote savings with an aim to reduce poverty, enhance empowerment and play a vital role in financial inclusion especially for marginalized communities. Besides this they are also take up issues of social relevance like child-marriages, dowry, alcoholism etc.

Mahila Arogya Samitis (MAS), or Women's Health Committees, are local groups of women in urban areas, primarily in slums and slum-like settlements, that focus on improving community health and health coverage.

In our health interventions, we have meaningfully engaged SHGs and MAS as key community institutions to strengthen last-mile delivery. SHG members have been instrumental in the identification of vulnerable individuals and households, particularly those at risk of non-communicable diseases, malnutrition, and poor access to healthcare. We have also leveraged these groups for recruiting community resource persons, such as peer educators, health volunteers, or link workers, from within their own networks. Once identified, selected members underwent capsule trainings tailored to enhance their understanding of key health themes, referral mechanisms, and basic counselling skills. These trainings were followed by continuous handholding support, regular review meetings, and capacity-building sessions to ensure quality engagement and sustained impact. Their existing credibility, reach, and solidarity have made them effective partners in amplifying health messaging and linking communities with public health services.

Training for these groups are given at the beginning. These trainings are specific to their requirements and responsibilities. As time goes by, there are some new information or techniques that emerge. These have to made aware of them. Both the groups also interact with people so communication is vital, so are their information gathering and disbursing skills. Listening is a skill they must cultivate so that they can get the correct information to and from the people they interact. As they are usually vulnerable groups or work with the vulnerable groups, their problem solving expertise would be advantageous.

As both these groups are beneficiaries of government programmes or work in the area that links beneficiaries to government schemes, they have to be knowledgeable about them and how to avail them.

As we talk of women empowerment the world has become very sensitive to gender disparity. The attitude of the people has to change to being gender neutral in their interactions especially when it comes to health. The health of a girl child is as important as that of a male.

We have built training modules around leadership, community health engagement, and personality development to holistically empower SHG and MAS members as change agents within their communities. Strengthening their leadership capacities helps them take informed

decisions, mobilize others, and engage confidently with health systems and governance platforms. Modules on community health engagement equip them with the knowledge and skills to identify local health challenges, mobilize community members, support behaviour change, and facilitate access to public health services. Simultaneously, focusing on personality development—including communication skills, self-awareness, and confidence-building—enables women to break social inhibitions, participate in public spaces, and become visible voices in health governance. These integrated modules aim to not just build functional skills, but also nurture identity, agency, and ownership, paving the way for sustainable community-led health action.

These set of modules are made to be a part of the in-service training for both the SHG and MAS groups. They are interactive and give the participants an opportunity to have their say or share their experiences. They will learn to amalgamate the new ways into their already existing knowledge to make their work better, stronger and more productive. The topics of trust in a group or team, the strength of empathy and ignoring undesirable influences can be a life changer in their personal like too.

SESSION 1

The importance of listening and sharing



Objectives

- To help participants understand the different types of listening
- To understand the need to listen and share their learning with others to help the community
- To emphasize the impact of not sharing information in various scenarios.



Duration

- 50 min



Methodology

- Storytelling and discussion



Materials Required

- Three similar dolls or cut out of dolls (all similar)
- Needle and thread.

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Start the session with a recap of the previous session. Encourage the participants to come up with what they had learned. Add anything that they had left out.

2. The Activity: (30 min)

Start by showing three dolls that look identical but is priced differently. Tell them how the dolls behave.



Rs. 10



Rs. 30



Rs. 50

Note: It will be more effective if these dolls were drawn on different papers so that the activity will be more effective

- Each doll looks the same.
- When a thread is inserted into the ear of the first doll, it comes out of the other ear.
- In the second doll, the thread goes into the ear and settles in the stomach.
- In the third doll, the thread inserted into the ear comes out of the mouth.
- Prices: First doll – Rs. 10, Second – Rs. 30, Third – Rs. 50.

Ask participants why these dolls are priced differently. If responses relate to appearance or material, clarify that the dolls are identical in those aspects.

Then explain how the dolls behave differently:

- The third doll listens and shares what it hears (thread comes out of the mouth).
- The second doll internalizes the message but doesn't share (thread stays in the stomach).
- The first doll doesn't retain anything (thread comes out of the other ear).

Thus the third doll is the most valuable as it shared what it hears and so priced highest. The second understand but does not bother to spread the information. So priced less than the third. The first one hears but does not listen, i.e., does not try to understand the information and so does not even retain the information. So it is least valuable. Ask participants if they understand. Repeat explanation if needed.

Emphasize that it is essential for participants to use and share what they have learned. Keeping it to themselves or forgetting it defeats the purpose of the training. Invite participants to share real-life stories where sharing information made a positive difference.

3. Importance of precise Communication: (15 min)

Examples where communication has to be accurate or grave mistakes can be made.

- a) An army captain with critical news fails to inform others.
- b) Rations are only given to a few, while others are left unaware.
- c) A mason hides a weak foundation, leading to possible danger.
- d) A driver who feels sleepy but doesn't inform the passenger.
- e) Not informing your family about the importance of handwashing.

Invite participants to share their own stories about how sharing information has helped them or others in their lives.

Key Messages

- As leaders, they will have more value when they spread the information, which they have acquired, among others.
- Listening to information correctly is important. Assimilate the information. Significant and vital information should not be kept to oneself, but shared with others for greater benefit.

SESSION 2

Being Deaf to Negativity



Objectives

- To learn to ignore negativity
- To understand that negativity can stop your growth
- To learn to be positive even in times of difficulty



Duration

- 45 min



Methodology

- Story telling
- Group discussions
- Flash cards with negative thoughts
- Board and markers.



Materials Required

- Story board of blind frog

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Ask the participants to recall what had been discussed in the previous meet. If there is gap in their recollection, remind them of the issues discussed.

2. The story of the frog: (15 min)

Put up the story chart on the board. Alternately make flashcards. Narrate the story using the chart or flashcards. Let the narration be slow and clear so that it is thoroughly understood.

Presentation for Session 5 (Tiny Frogs)



There once was a bunch of tiny frogs,...
... who arranged a running competition.



The goal was to reach the top of
a very high tower



A big crowd had gathered around the
tower to see the race and cheer on the
contestants...



The race began...



No one in crowd really believed
that,

The crowd continued to yell

"It is too difficult!!! No one will
make it!"



More tiny frogs got tired and
gave up...

But ONE continued higher and
higher and higher...



This one wouldn't give up!



At the end everyone else had
given up climbing the tower.

Except for the one tiny frog who af-
ter a big effort was the only one who
reached the top!

THEN all of the other tiny frogs naturally wanted to know how this one frog managed to do it?



A contestant asked the tiny frog how the one who succeeded had found the strength to reach the goal?



It turned out...

That the winner was

DEAF!!!!



The wisdom of this story is:



Never listen to other people's
tendencies to be
negative or pessimistic...

because they take your most won-
derful dreams and wishes away
from you. The ones you have in your
heart!

Always think of the power which
words have.

Because everything you hear and
read will affect your actions!

Therefore...

ALWAYS be...



POSITIVE!



And above all:



**Be DEAF when people tell YOU
that YOU can not fulfil YOUR
dreams!**

Always think:

I can do this!

**Pass this message on to 5 “tiny
frogs” you care about.
Give them some motivation!!!**



Once upon a time there was a colony of frogs. They decided to have a race. The race was to hop over to the tower and climb it. So the contestants got ready and a large crowd gathered to cheer them! The race started. Off they went hop hop hop!!! Some started racing ahead, some lagged behind and the rest were somewhere in the middle. The audience was quite sure that no one would be able to climb to the top of the tower. Instead of cheering the contestants, they said, “The tower is too high! No one can climb it!” “No one can succeed!”

Hearing this, some contestants really thought that the tower is too high and stopped hopping. But there were others who continued. The audience kept saying the same things again and again. Some more contestants were convinced that they could not climb so high and gave up. But there was one tiny frog which kept climbing the tower, however much the other frogs said he could not. And finally he reached the top! The other frogs were surprised! How could this frog do it? They waited for the frog to come down from the tower and asked him how he did it. That is when they realised that the frog could not hear!!

He never heard the frogs say that no one could climb the tower! He was deaf! So all the negative thoughts never entered his head!

What does one learn from this story?

- Never listen to people who are negative or pessimistic
- Negative thoughts will restrict your effort to progress
- Words have great power. They can make or break you.
- Be optimistic – it gives you the mental strength to realise your dreams.

3. Thinking positive: (15 min)

Make flash cards with negative thoughts written on one side. Give one to each participant. Tell them that they are facing these issues. Now, they have to look at the issues with a positive outlook. Let them write it on the other side of the card. Then each one of them reads out what they have written.

| Negative thoughts | Positive view of thoughts |
|---|---|
| I'm not going to get any better at this. | I'll give it another try. |
| No one bothers to communicate with me | I'll see if I can open the channels of communication. |
| It's too much of a change | Let's take a chance. |
| There's no way it will work. | I can try to make it work. |
| I'm too lazy to get this done. | I'm busy but I could find some time |
| I don't have the resources. | Necessity is the mother of invention |
| It's too complicated. | I'll tackle it from a different angle |
| I've never done it before | It's an opportunity to learn something new. |
| My uncle says I cannot do this work | How will I know that I cannot till I try? |
| I might fall and get hurt when I learn to cycle | I might fall, but I will feel so good if I did learn how to cycle |

4. Steps to stop negative thoughts: (10 min)

Tell the participants that now they know that negative views can also be looked at positively, as seen in the previous section, it is time now to learn to stop negative thoughts. One has to consciously take the bold step of getting oneself away from the negative things people say about you – it could be about you not being intelligent, not good looking, not as good as the other person, not getting good marks, not doing well at work, etc.

First tell them that being positive will psychologically help them to overcome negativity. It helps to think that one can do a task that others think they cannot. It also motivates to try new avenues which one had never thought possible.

Then ask the participants how they will try to become more positive. Here are some ways that can help.

1. Pause a Moment

Stop thinking! Take a break. If something is bothering you and you are stressed or scared, just stop for a moment. Think of where you are and what is that thing that is troubling you.

2. Is the negative thought helping?

Ask yourself if the negative thought is helping you. Usually negative thoughts don't help. So how do you get out of it? One way is to think of the worst case scenario. What if the thing I feared comes true? What will I do then? Find a solution. This will help you to reduce the stress with the problem. Take control of your thoughts.

Key Messages

- Ignoring negativity leads to positive mind-set and creates space for growth, clarity, and constructive action.
- Do not let anyone's negative talk make you feel less self-worth
- Positive thinking contributes to a healthy mind and body.

SESSION 3

Delegation of Responsibilities



Objectives

- To help understand the significance of delegation in managing tasks effectively and avoiding burnout.
- To identify group members' strengths and leveraging those for effective completion of tasks by delegating



Duration

- 40 min



Methodology

- Role-play
- Group Activity followed by discussion



Materials Required

- Resources available in the room. Should not be too small. Can use bags, books, tiffin box, water bottle, etc.

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

At the start of the session, recall the topic of discussion of the previous meet. Get the participants to bring out all the important points discussed. Keep it short.

2. Group Activity: (15 min)

Ask 5-6 volunteers to step forward. Let them select a leader amongst them. The task for the group is to arrange a health camp. The team leader has to allocate responsibilities to each member. As the leader allocates responsibility, she will give one item to that person. These items represent tasks - one to represent arranging the venue, another for inviting doctors, mobilizing the community, setting up registration desks, managing refreshments, or ensuring follow-up for referrals.

After the allocation of duties is done the leader changes her mind and decides that she will take up all the responsibilities herself. Thus, takes away all the items given to the team members. Now the leader stands with all the items (responsibilities) in her hand. As there are too many things in her hand a few things drop to the floor. She tries to pick them up but other items fall to the ground.

3. Discussion and Reflection (10 min)

Discuss the role play and ask the participants the following questions:

1. Why did the leader give the objects to the others?

Sharing responsibilities.

2. Why did she take them back?

No trust in team members. Took all the responsibility herself.

3. How long did she hold all the items?

Not too long! Too much to be done!

4. Why did things fall off her hands?

Could not do all the work on her own

5. Did she try picking them up?

Yes, she did

6. If she did, could she hold all of them securely for long?

No, other things kept falling. Showing that all work could not be done efficiently.

7. What was she thinking when she had all the things in her hand?

"How am I going to finish all the work in time?"

8. What was her mental state then?

Scared, worried, anxious

9. What did the others in the team feel when they were given tasks?

Felt that their individual qualities had been recognised and so work given to them

10. What did they feel when the responsibilities were taken away from them?

Unhappy, cheated, losing self-confidence. Realised that their leader did not believe in them and their abilities.

Note for facilitators: The answers are given in italics. These are the expected answers. If the participants are not able to get the correct answers to the questions, help them along.

4. Learning from the activity: (10 min)

The activity above shows that people in the group, if given responsibilities according to their strengths, can take the burden off the leader and complete the task efficiently. With everyone doing their work, the final outcome will be of work completed in time and done well. The leader's responsibility is to choose the correct person for the job and give them correct inputs so that the work gets done properly and in time.

Delegation of work is important for the for the following reasons:

a. Time Management and Strategic Focus:

- Allows leaders to focus on higher-level strategic thinking and decision-making, instead of getting bogged down in day-to-day tasks.
- Ensures that tasks are delegated to the right people.

b. Employee Empowerment and Development:

- Helps to empowers others in the group, giving them a sense of ownership and accountability.
- Provides opportunities for employees to develop new skills and gain experience.

- c. Increased Productivity and Efficiency:
 - When tasks are assigned to the right people, they can be completed more effectively and efficiently, leading to improved overall productivity.
 - Leads to make the group members to think outside the box and come up with newer ideas.
- d. Building Trust and Collaboration:
 - Fosters trust between leaders and their team members, as it demonstrates confidence in their abilities.
 - It encourages collaboration and teamwork as employees work together to achieve common goals.
- e. Reduced Stress and Burnout:
 - Delegating effectively can reduce stress and prevent burnout for both leaders and their team members by ensuring a more balanced workload.
- f. Building a Stronger Team:
 - Leaders can evaluate the strengths of each of the team members and can help them to improve in the areas they are weak. Helps to build a stronger team.



**AI generated image*

Key Messages

- Effective delegation helps distribute responsibilities, making tasks more manageable and preventing burnout.
- Successful leaders know how to rely on and trust their team members.
- Taking on too many responsibilities leads to inefficiency, stress, and dropping important tasks.
- Proper delegation ensures a balanced workload, contributing to better mental health and overall effectiveness.

SESSION 4

Understanding Power and Vulnerability in Society



Objectives

- To help participants understand the concepts of power and vulnerability.
- To understand the disparities in access to resources
- To understand the necessity to address the needs of vulnerable groups in society.



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interactive Game/Activity:
- Discussion and Brainstorming



Materials Required

- Balls or paper balls (made from crumpled newspaper)
- A bucket, basket, or bowl
- Space for participants to sit in a straight line

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Get the participants recall the topic they had discussed in the previous session.

2. The Activity

A. Setup (5 min):

- Select 10-12 participants and have them sit in a straight line, one behind the other.
- Give each participant a ball or paper ball.
- Place a bucket, basket, or bowl a few steps ahead of the first participant in the line.

B. Game Play (10 min):

- Ask each participant to try to throw their ball into the bucket from their seated position, one after the other.
- Observe that those sitting closer to the bucket are more likely to succeed, while those further away struggle to get their ball into the bucket.

3. Discussion and Reflection (30 min)

a. Initial Reactions:

Ask participants why they think some could get their balls into the bucket while others were not. Common responses might include distance, hand length, or positioning.

b. Drawing Parallels to Society:

- Use the participants' responses to explain that the game represents real-life scenarios where people have different levels of access to resources and opportunities based on their societal position.
- Discuss how those closer to power and wealth (represented by proximity to the bucket) have easier access to resources, while those further away (the vulnerable groups) face significant challenges.

Examples:

- People in cities have more access to health care than in remote villages.
- People who have a known person in the PHC or Hospital will get better and faster information about health services
- People who have the money to spend will go to a private doctor and get immediate help than wait for their turn in a government set up. This goes for getting medicines or for medical procedures

c. Identifying Vulnerable Groups:

- Highlight that in society, vulnerable groups such as women, children, immigrants, the poor, and marginalized communities often have limited access to essential resources, much like those sitting further from the bucket.
- Emphasize the growing gap between the powerful and the powerless, and the need for society to address these disparities.

d. Call to Action:

- Encourage participants to think about how they can contribute to bringing vulnerable individuals and groups closer to resources and opportunities.
- Discuss the importance of creating a more equitable society where everyone has access to the resources they need to thrive.

4. Conclusion (15 min)

- i. Reinforce the idea that power dynamics in society creates significant disparities in access to resources.
- ii. Stress the importance of identifying and supporting vulnerable groups to ensure they have equal opportunities.

Note to facilitators: As the information has already been given let the participants take over this session. Let them come out with what they have learnt. Help them in any way they need to help reinforce the learning, but let them take the lead. They can explain this by giving examples which is easier to contextualise and understand.

Key Messages

- **Understanding Disparity:** Power and position often dictate access to resources, creating a gap between the privileged and the vulnerable.
- **Recognizing Vulnerability:** Vulnerable groups in society, such as the poor, women, children, and marginalized communities, often face significant barriers to accessing essential resources.
- **Promoting Equity:** It is crucial to bring vulnerable groups closer to the resources they need, ensuring a fair and just society.
- **Call to Action:** Participants are encouraged to actively contribute to reducing disparities and supporting vulnerable individuals and communities.

SESSION 5

Understanding Referrals and Linkages



Objectives

- To highlight the right point of contact for availing different services and networking with/ workers field level health functionaries, health and wellness centres and community-based organisations working for health in their localities.



Duration

- 50 min



Methodology

- Flashcard-based brainstorming
- Open discussion



Materials Required

- 15 flashcards

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Once the session starts do a recap of the previous session in brief.

2. Activity: (45 min)

This is an activity which is in two parts - A and B. Divide the time allotted to ensure good discussion during Part B.

Part A

- Ask a participant to pick a flash card and read out the question. Take back the card.
- Initiate discussions and arguments about the question.
- Then show the other side of the flashcard where the correct answers are given and summarise.

Questions are to be printed on one side and answers are to be printed on the other side.

| Sl. No | Question | Answer |
|--------|---|--|
| 1 | Your neighbour, a woman, who is pregnant is alone at her home. Suddenly she gets labour pain. What do you do? | i) Inform her family members. ii) Call the ASHA worker and inform her. iii) Call 108. Take her to the nearest PHC. |
| 2 | Your father-in-law feels weak, urinates frequently and experiences a burning sensation in the feet. You suspect diabetes. Where to ask ASHA workers about facilitating testing? | Nearest Primary Health Centre / Sub Centre. Inform ASHA workers for facilitating testing. |
| 3 | Your neighbouring woman is coughing continuously for two weeks, lost a lot of weight in a month, and gets fever every night and has chest pain. What do you suggest her to do? | Inform ASHA workers for facilitating testing; Suggest her to approach the nearest PHC immediately and get tested for TB. |
| 4 | What are secondary and tertiary care? Who provides it? | Secondary care is when your primary care provider refers you to a specialist. Secondary care is the care of a specialist. These specialists may include oncologists, cardiologists, and endocrinologists. It may also include hospitalisation. If you require hospitalization and require a higher level of speciality care, your doctor may refer you to tertiary care. |
| 5 | When do I need to go to Taluk or District hospital? | For secondary and tertiary care. Tertiary care requires highly specialized equipment and expertise. At this level, you will find procedures such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coronary artery bypass surgery • Dialysis • Plastic surgeries • Neurosurgeries • Severe burn treatments • Complex treatments or procedures A small, local hospital may not be able to provide these services. |
| 6 | I am willing to learn yoga and practice every day. Where can I get help? | Health and Wellness Centre (HWC) These are centres to deliver comprehensive primary healthcare that is universal and free to users; Focuses on wellness. Discuss the services available at HWCs in detail. |

| | | |
|----|---|---|
| 7 | I do not know which hospital should I go to for higher service needs. What should I do? | Visit the PHC; if there is a need for advanced services, PHC will refer to the appropriate referral centre. |
| 8 | Can you name the health insurance care provided by the Government? Where is it available? What are its benefits? | Ayushman Bharat Card. Cover of Rs. 5 lakhs per family per year for secondary and tertiary care hospitalization; Across public and private empanelled hospitals in India. |
| 9 | Where is the immunisation service for babies available in your locality? | Nearest Sub Centre. |
| 10 | I want to offer my feedback/suggestion to improve health service delivery in our village. Where should I provide this? | Mahila Arogya Samiti. / VHSNC. (Discuss MAS/VHSNCs) |
| 11 | There is a house construction going on in your locality. One of the migrant labourer ladies is bringing her 3-year-old child to the workplace. The child looks very weak, pale and thin. What will you do? | Link the child/parent to the nearest Anganwadi centre for addressing nutrition requirements. |
| 12 | You have been seeing a heap of waste dumped in a corner of the street where you are residing. Whom will you approach to clear this? | Gram Panchayat or any GP/ VHSNC member. (Additionally, discuss the types of issues addressed by GP) |
| 13 | An earning member of an extremely poor family in your village has expired. He has left an illiterate widow and three children behind. The widow is not familiar about going out to work. They need immediate help for a few days. Whom in your village do you approach? | Gram Panchayat. Gram Panchayat has funds to address such extreme cases of poverty and destitution. |
| 14 | You find a woman in your locality who experiences domestic violence. What do you advise? | Advise approaching the Women's helpline (telephonic) and counselling centre (if available in their locality). |
| 15 | You know someone who wants to donate money for improving infrastructure in the school of your village and donate some books. Whom will you link this person with? | School Development and Monitoring Committee. (Discuss this in detail) |

Part B

Now ask the participants about what they learnt from the previous activity.

- Then, tell them that now we all know there are various services for addressing our health problems. There are people who support us to avail these services. Still, why do people suffer from various illnesses? Ask them why these services are not accessed.
- Lead them to speak on barriers/challenges to accessing these services.
- The barriers to these services may include many things like no awareness or education on how to access the services, whom to approach, caregivers not interested, no one to accompany, services located far, no time, no money / can't afford, service providers not friendly, no proper conveyance available to go, indifference about one's own health, trying home remedies, beliefs, etc.
- Summarise as – there are specific services for specific ailments. There are specific people who are supposed to facilitate access / lead you to those services. Similarly, due to the barriers that we discussed just now, most people fail to access the services.
- Even though health facilities are mandated to provide good quality services, the system is not able to provide them due to several factors. There is always a gap between demand and supply.
- Hence the health issues remain unaddressed and lead to complications, worsening of health and morbidities.
- This will, in turn, result in loss of time, money, energy and many a time, towards poverty or exceeding out-of-pocket expenditure. Children's education, daily life maintenance, and peace of mind will be affected along with suffering, due to ill health.

Key Messages

- Various health services (functionaries and facilities) can be accessed in the area one stays.
- Seeking timely help will help address the health problem and avoid further complications.
- Various barriers influence people from accessing services meant for them – few like unawareness, financial constraints, logistical limitations including the distance to the location of the services, etc.

SESSION 6

Anticipating internal and external threats for collectivisation



Objectives

- To understand that threats can be internal as well as external for collectivisation
- To know how to resolve the treats without causing upheaval
- To know that team works best with open communication and understanding



Duration

- 45 min



Methodology

- Games
- Discussion
- Checklist chart



Materials Required

- Balloons
- Chart paper/board and markers

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Let the participants recollect the topic that had been discussed in the previous session.

2. The Balloon Game: (15 min)

Give the participants 1 balloon each. Let them blow them up and secure them.

Tell them whoever will retain the balloon in the air for longest time, will be rewarded. Allow them to play and enjoy. Meanwhile subtly provide a pin in the hand of one of the participants without the others noticing it. This participant will try and burst the other participants' (human tendency to win). Or else, ask one person to hold the pin between two fingers so that no one can notice and burst the balloons of the participants. Everyone will tend to protect their balloon.

Most of the balloons will burst. If not, halt the game after 10 minutes.

What does one infer from this game?

- Whatever is yours is precious.
- You have to look after your things (your thoughts, ideas, work, etc.)

Most of the time we tend to neglect the threat which is inherent (from among the group itself) we perceive the threats are only from outside.

These learnings are one set of learnings. The other, more vital, is that in a team there are all kinds of people with different mind sets. They could make or break the team by hindering the smooth working of the group. There could be external agencies that could impair the functioning of the team.

So let us see how to look out for these threats – both internal as well as external.

3. Internal threats: (10 min)

As mentioned above not all people in the group think and behave the same way. Let us look at some of the issues that can cause differences between team members.

- *Poor Communication*: Can lead to misunderstandings, wasted time and mismatched goals.
- *Personality Conflicts*: Can come out of different personalities and working styles
- *Unequal Contribution*: Resentment because some put in less effort than the others
- *Lack of Trust*: One crucial ingredient for issues between team members affecting the output
- *Ineffective Leadership*: Lack of clear directions by leader, no support or lack of encouragement affects productivity negatively
- *Goal Confusion*: Unclear goals lead to confusion and wasted effort
- *Accountability Issues*: Lack of responsibility by member/s creates chaos.
- *Withholding Information*: Deliberately withholding information can amount to not reaching the goal or not doing a good job of it.
- *Excessive Staff Numbers*: If team has too many members, it is difficult to manage them and get work done efficiently.
- *Interior Competition*: Individual achievements by team members creates an unpleasant environment which does not lead to combined success.

To overcome internal threats as mentioned above, trust and good communication among the team members are the chief requirements. Conflict management come in as close second. Let us look at some more of these.

For teams and team leaders:

- **Clear Communication**: Establish open and transparent communication channels to ensure team members feel heard and valued.
- **Trust-Building Activities**: Incorporate team-building activities that encourage collaboration and shared goals.
- **Recognize and Appreciate Contributions**: Acknowledge individual and team achievements to foster a positive and supportive environment.
- **Provide Feedback and Mentoring**: Offer regular feedback and mentorship opportunities to help team members develop their skills and confidence.

For individuals in a team:

- Work as a team member and not as an individual
- If there is a conflict/stalemate between members, either solve it by talking it out or take help of another team member to solve it
- Do not let the conflict affect your performance
- Be happy and appreciate someone else's good work. It will be reciprocated when your time comes.

4. External threats: (10 min)

External threats to a team or its performance can also derail the smooth functioning of the team leading to underperformance. Even if the team is strong, it is always good to know if there is an outsider –a person or a company/organisation that is trying to stop the team from doing well. Some of them are:

- *Competition*: Other teams or individuals working on similar projects can create a competitive environment that can hinder performance.
- *Market Changes*: Requirements of the kind of work done might change making the team's work obsolete.
- *Regulatory Changes*: Changes in regulations might change resulting in need for change in focus of goals, training, procedures, etc.
- *Technology Changes*: New technologies or software can make existing tools or processes obsolete, requiring the team to adapt and learn new skills.

External Threats could lead to:

- Reduced productivity
- Decreased morale
- Increased costs
- Damage to reputation
- Missed opportunities

How does one address External Threats?

- First thing to do is conduct a SWOT analysis. This will detect potential threats. Once you know of these threats they can be addressed.
- Keep eyes open for factors that may impact working of the group. This could be regulations, the change in requirement of the team's output, etc.
- A Plan B and/or Plan C should be in place. These are plans which can be taken up in quick time as they have already been thought out in detail and procedures put down.
- Build relationships with key stakeholders. They could help you go through difficult times.
- Keep your mind open to change – in innovation or adaptation. This change in using new technologies, new approaches to doing things effectively, may be more economical. Rigid ideas and not accepting change could hinder productivity.

5. Checklist for protection of team – Internal and External: (5 min)

Note for facilitators: These are some points that need to be reiterated. They can be just read out or a chart containing these points can be put up.

- Keep roles and responsibilities of team members clearly defined.
- Let there be trust among the team members
- Keep all communication channels open. If there are concerns, address them. Evolve a grievance system if required.
- Listen to all with equal concentration.
- Do not entertain personal remarks
- Let there be respect for each member, even if there are differences discussed
- Appreciate feed back
- Take criticism positively
- Prevent escalation of differences by mediation by leader
- Keep the team together so that external threats are addressed without being alarmed
- All sensitive matters are to be handled properly

Key Messages

- Threats can be both external and internal It is important to foresee the threats for collectivisation and address them
- Each threat has to be looked into seriously and addressed before it becomes a bigger problem
- Conscious efforts need to be done for identifying internal threats as well and protect the group from breaking
- Trust, communication, respect and willingness to listen and discuss can make work stress free.
- External threats can be easily identified, however is difficult to identify internal ones

SESSION 7

Exploring different Solutions for a Problem



Objectives

- To learn problem-solving techniques.
- To apply the participatory techniques to find solution to the problem.



Duration

- 50 min



Methodology

- Using a story to present a problem.
- Group activity focused on finding solutions



Materials Required

- A whiteboard or cardboard
- Markers
- Cut out/picture of a pig

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Start the session with recalling the information discussed in the previous meet.

2. Activity: (45 minutes)

Part A: Narration of story (stating the problem):

Draw or put up a picture of a fierce looking pig on the board/wall. Tell the participants that today they are going to discuss a pig, how it was troubling people and how they (the participants) had to find a solution to the troubles of the people.

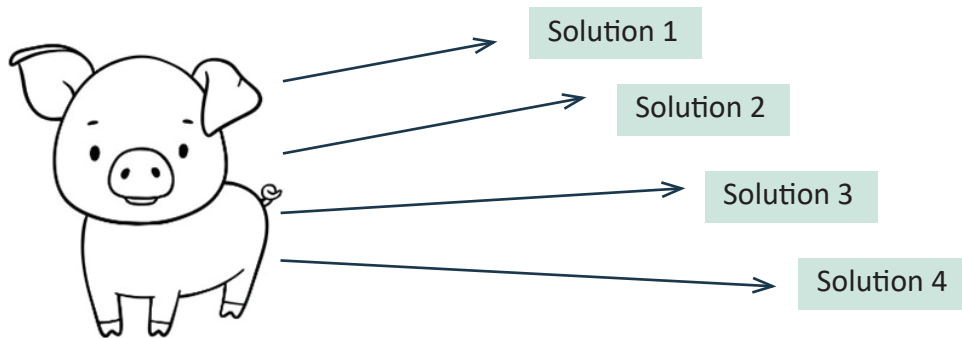
Narrate the story. A pig once entered the lanes of the of a town. The pig, as you know, is dirty, loves to go into filthy places, and wander around with the filth on its face and body. This pig did the same. It dug into the trash, scattered the trash all around the area, tried to enter the houses and even wandered around where the children were playing. The people tried to shoo the pig away but it would come back a while later and get back to what it liked best – dirty the place!

The people were frustrated and needed to find a way to stop the pig entering the area. As time went on, the pig became more adventurous and started becoming more problematic. There was filth strewn all over the place. The flies and insects started breeding there making

it very difficult for the people to live peacefully. The pig also made strange noises at night disturbing everyone's sleep. The distressed people got together to solve the problem. But how do they go about it?

Ask the participants how they would solve this problem. There will be various responses from the participants. Acknowledge each response and put them on the board.

Tell the participants that there are various solutions for one problem (pig).



Then, look at each solution and tell them that they need to prioritize the steps to the problem. If done systematically - the problem divided into smaller doable steps, delegation of work among the group - the problem can be solved to everyone's satisfaction.

This exercise reminds us that every problem has more than one solution. With collective thinking and a step-by-step approach, even the most difficult challenges can be tackled. Everyone's perspective matters, and when we come together, we can turn problems into opportunities for action.

Process of problem solving:

- a. Recognise the problem
- b. List information available
- c. Divide the bigger problem into small issues
- d. Find solutions to smaller problems
- e. Put the problems/solutions in order of priority
- f. Make action plan. Delegate or divide the work among the group (if it is a group problem) with timelines.
- g. On completion of the action plan find out if the problem has been satisfactorily solved.

Key Messages

"Every problem, no matter how big, can have multiple solutions. By breaking it down, thinking together, and taking small, practical steps, we can solve it. Everyone's ideas matter—and when we work as a team, we can turn challenges into opportunities for change."

SESSION 8

Sympathy and Empathy



Objectives

- To comprehend the meaning of Empathy
- To understand the meaning of Sympathy
- To understand the differences between sympathy and empathy and demonstrate the appropriate in situations



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Story telling
- Creating situations showing empathy and sympathy
- Role play



Materials Required

- Paper slips with situation to do a role play
- Paper and pencils

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Recap the topic that was discussed in the previous session

2. Sympathy/empathy role play: (30 min)

Make all the participants sit in a circle and give them a piece of paper. Ask them to write the name of the person sitting to their right and an activity that they would like that person to do (dance, song, mime, etc.). Once they are ready with the written request, tell them to keep the paper safely with themselves.

Now, tell them that there is a twist in the game! It is not the person on the right who will perform but they will do it themselves, i.e., what they have written for others will be now performed by them.

During the performances there will be many emotions that the participants will go through - anxiety, excitement, nervous, afraid, and many more. After the performances are done, ask the participants how they felt first when they wrote down what their friend should do. Then ask them what they felt when they had to do it themselves.

If they felt sorry for the person performing, as he could not do it well or not able to convey what he wanted to tell then that is sympathy. If they understood that the participant's uneasiness during the performance as they could picture themselves in the performers shoes, then it is empathy.

Explain to the participants what Sympathy and Empathy actually convey.

Sympathy is feeling sorry for someone who is sad or suffering. It's like feeling bad for them because of their troubles. It's a sense of understanding and compassion for their difficult situation.

Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person. It's like putting yourself in their shoes and seeing the world from their perspective, even if you haven't experienced the exact same situation. Essentially, it's about recognizing with another person's emotions.

3. Story telling Empathy: (10 min)

Get the participants to listen to this story.

There was a young boy called Chotu. He was the youngest in his house and everyone loved him. But he was not happy. He was not allowed to run and play like his elder brother, not eat ice cream and all the street food he loved. His mother and others would make and get him what he wanted but he wanted to go out and have them.

Actually Chotu was not very strong. He would get sick whoever he went out, especially in crowded places. His visit to the doctors also happened when there was no crowd at the hospital. The family always tried to keep him safe. But Chotu hated his life!

Once in the hospital, he met Shilpa. She was laughing uncontrollably at something she was seeing on the phone. Chotu did not like that this girl looked so happy! He was upset for not having got the ice cream he wanted and this girl was laughing! Horrible girl, he said to himself.

He also saw that many people, especially the staff would go over to and talk to her. She was having a great time loving all the attention. Chotu's curiosity got better of him and he asked her, "What's so funny?" Shilpa laughed a little more, still watching the phone. Chotu went closer. She was watching a cartoon. He had seen that cartoon many times and did not think it was funny! He had a puzzled look and thought, "Why was she laughing so much! How come she was so happy? She was in the hospital to see the doctor so she must be sick, but she was so happy! Weird girl!"

Just then he heard his mother discussing Shilpa's illness with her mother. Shilpa's mother said, "Shilpa cannot sit or stand for too long. Her bones are brittle and break easily. She has been house bound since she was a baby. We are poor so we cannot take her out often or send her to school. She has no friends and is alone at home. Can't afford a TV too so she has to make do with the books I get from the library. Only when she comes here, the nurse gives her the phone and she watches cartoons."

It suddenly struck Chotu that Shilpa was more unwell than him! But she was not sulking! He started talking to her. Shilpa had a lot of interesting things to tell him – all from the books she read. She also told him how lonely she felt but never said that to her parents. Chotu understood exactly what she was going through. They became friends. Would talk to each

other whenever she had a phone at her disposal and the parents made play dates so that they could spend time together.

In this story, Chotu and Shilpa understood what the other was going through. This is how they showed empathy for each other.

Explain to the participants that Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person as if you were experiencing them yourself. Experiencing the other person's emotions, both intellectually and emotionally. Putting yourself in the other person's shoes.

Examples:

- A classmate has lost a pet. You console him by sharing his grief as you had also lost a pet some years ago. You tell him you understand exactly how he is feeling.
- A friend comes to you for help. She has got two job offers. One is really good with good pay package but is far away with commute involving two changes of transport. The other is closer but the work is not really interesting and paying less. You have gone through the same dilemma a few months ago. So you sit with her and discuss the situation. Not that you need to give her a solution but break down the situation so that she can take an informed decision.

Note to facilitator: After the story has been told and explained, let the participants give their own experiences of empathy – if they were the receivers or the givers.

4. Story telling Sympathy: (10 min)

Tell the participants another story.

There was heavy rainfall and Raju's house was flooded. As the water started entering the house, Raju and his family tried to keep all the things that could be destroyed by the water at a higher level. But the water kept gushing in. It entered all the rooms including the kitchen! The rain stopped but the house was in a bad state. The furniture was wet, so were the mattress, the fridge could not be opened and the toilet could not be used. He didn't know how he was going to get everything back to normal. Raju was worried and in tears!

Just then Raju heard his neighbour Srini call out to him. He had come to see how Raju and his family were. When Srini saw the state of the house he said, "Come to my house, all of you. My house is on the third floor and there is no flooding there. You come and get into dry clothes, have something to eat and rest. Then we will plan how to clean up your house."

Here Srini did not have the same problem as Raju (flooding in the house) but could understand the difficulty that he was going through. He showed sympathy and offered help.

Sympathy is feeling sorry for someone else's misfortune or suffering, often expressing pity or compassion. Let us look at some examples of sympathy

- Feeling sorry for someone's loss
- Offering condolences
- Feeling compassion
- Offering support
- Recognizing someone's feelings

Ask the participants if they have done any of the above and explain the situation.

5. Comparing Empathy and Sympathy: (5 min)

As community workers, empathizing is generally considered more effective and meaningful than sympathizing—especially in personal, professional, or community settings—because of the following key differences:

| Aspect | Empathy | Sympathy |
|--------------------|---------------------------------|--|
| Emotional distance | Close and shared | Distant and observing |
| Message conveyed | “I understand how you feel.” | “I feel sorry for you.” |
| Impact | Connection and support | Pity and possible disconnection |
| Outcome | Trust, healing, and empowerment | Comfort, but potentially disempowering |

Note to facilitator: There are no wrong answers. Their reactions to situations in the past have a lot of parameters which we do not know. So no saying “That is wrong.” The aim of this session is to make them understand that kindness and thinking of others can help the other person and make one feel good. It will also train their mind to think of others and help them, even if it just to listen to their problems.

Key Messages

- Empathy is a quality to be developed while working for and with communities.
- Sympathy is feeling sorry for someone else’s misfortune, often involving pity or compassion.
- Empathy is the ability to understand and share the feelings of another person, as if you were experiencing them yourself.

SESSION 9

Gender and Health



Objectives

- To acknowledge that gender differentiation exists
- To know the kind of differentiation that exists between a boy and a girl
- To understand how the bias between genders affects the health of the child



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Watching the video clipping/short movie
- Discussion of bias in the movie



Materials Required

- Film and film projector/screen
- Chart paper /board, markers

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Get the participants to recall the discussion they had in the previous session.

2. Screening of the video clipping/movie 'Raja Rani': (10 min)

Tell the participants that they will be watching a film. Ask them to pay attention to how the children are treated.

Once they have watched the movie, ask them if they understood what the film wanted to convey. If they have not understood something explain it. They must have seen this difference everywhere – in the society, in films, in books, etc.

3. Differences in gender seen in the film: (15 min)

Now it is time to discuss the differences between Raja and Rani. Divide the participants into 2-3 groups and ask them to write down what differences they had seen between the twins. Then ask the groups to articulate the points of difference, one point by one group. Put all these on the board. Then discuss this point and then ask the next group to give another difference they had noticed. In this way all the differences should be addressed.

The differences seen in the film are shown below. If something has not been noticed by the participants tell them add it to the list on the board.

Differences

- Both Raja and Rani are hungry but Raja is given milk
- Girls don't need as much food as boys
- Raja has opportunity to go out of the house and interact with people
- Rani stays in the house and helps in looking after elders and siblings, works in kitchen
- Raja plays outside, allowed to go for late birthday party
- Rani not allowed out even if it is for studying at her friend's house
- Boys don't cry
- Girls don't laugh out loud
- Raja goes to college
- Rani gets a marriage proposal at 17 years.
- Rani feels her dreams have not been fulfilled
- Raja is happy, has a career, has a vehicle of his own
- Rani is weak, no nutritious food and saddled with family responsibilities.

4. Effect of biases on health – mental and physical: (15 min)

As seen in the film, the Raja and Rani are born on the same day in the same family. So the environment is the same but there is difference seen in how they are treated because Raja is a boy and Rani is a girl.

Ask the participants to put themselves into Raj or Rani's shoes and tell what they feel about how they are treated. What are their wishes and dreams?

Some of the points should be:

- Rani wants to go out and play, food when hungry, education and career, freedom from household chores, laugh out loud and spend time with friends.
- Raja needs to be able to give vent to his emotions (boys can cry!), share outside household chores with sister and should be given responsibilities in the house too.

5. How will they treat their children? (15 min)

Ask the participants how they will bring up their daughters and sons. Write these on the board and reinforce the thought that both girls and boys should have same nutrition, same opportunity to study, opportunity to have a career, have and fulfil dreams, access to good health and equal healthcare.

Key Messages

- Both boys and girls are equal; there should not be any discrimination.
- Health of both is should be a priority
- Give equal opportunities for both in all areas – health, education, chores, family responsibilities, liberty etc.
- Boys giving in to emotions is not a taboo, similarly girls performing the so-called male-suitable tasks is also acceptable.

SESSION 10

Circle of Trust



Objectives

- Understand different levels of trust circles among the society/community
- Strengthen trust and bonding among MAS members
- Create a safe and respectful space for open sharing
- Understand how trust affects teamwork, leadership, and health actions
- Encourage empathy, cooperation, and collective responsibility



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Discussion
- Partner trust game
- Circle time



Materials Required

- Chart paper and marker or blackboard
- A small talking object (e.g., flower, stone, or soft cloth ball)
- Trust Circle drawn on paper or board

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

At the beginning of the session go over the topics that had been discussed in the previous session.

2. What is Trust? (10 minutes)

Ask the participants what 'TRUST' means to them. Put the meanings they give on the board.

Some of them will be:

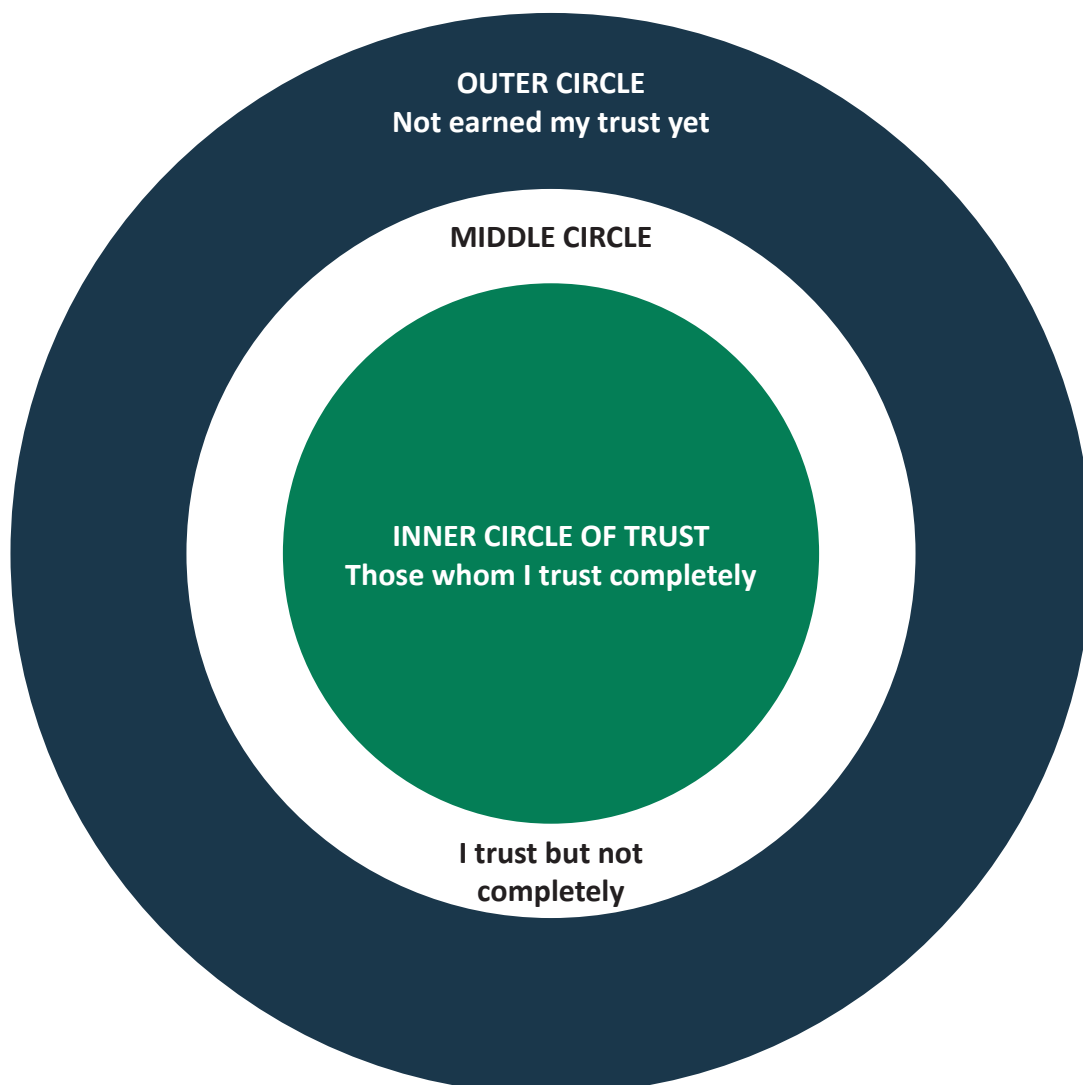
Faith, belief, confidence, reliance, conviction dependable, sincerity, assurance, support, loyalty, care, support.

Then ask them to sit in pairs. Ask them how they will trust the other person in the pair. Some of the replies will be:

- Will keep a secret
- Help when needed
- Listen to her problems
- Try to find solutions to challenges
- Will not doubt what she says
- Have open communication
- Will tell me when she wrong
- Will accept my shortcomings if she tells me
- Give me confidence, motivate me

3. Circle of Trust: (20 min)

A person will not trust everyone he/she meets or comes across. There are levels of trust – some you trust completely, the others who are trust worthy but not completely and those who have still not won your trust. These can be shown in the diagram shown below:



Use the above figure to do the next activity. Provide a sheet of paper to the participants; Ask them to draw three concentric circles. Name these circles as shown in the picture. Ask the participants to shut their eyes and think of two-three people who come into each of these three categories. Ask them to write those names in the corresponding circles. At random ask three of them to tell the group about these three people and why. Ask them to keep the reasons short. There is no wrong answer here. It is what the participant thinks and feels and has nothing to do with the other participants.

Note to facilitators: Ensure that the names that the participants take are not part of the group. Mention this at the start of the activity. This could cause unpleasantness.

Trust is a belief that somebody is good, honest and sincere. Will not try and harm or trick you in any way.

4. How does trust work? (10 min)

There are two types of trusts.

One is BLIND TRUST. This is where a person does not think if the person whom he is trusting is worth the trust - just trusts him/her. Usually this is seen in the case of having trust in God or the Supreme Being. But when it comes to people, it could cause harm. For example, if a person says, "Give me your gold when you go on a trip. I will look after it". And when you get back he says, "You never gave it to me!"

The other kind of trust is the one that is built on mutual respect and understanding. It takes time and effort to cultivate it but once formed can last a lifetime. Showing trust can be built through consistent, reliable actions, open communication, and demonstrating genuine interest and respect. Key behaviours include being honest and transparent, following through on commitments, actively listening, and showing vulnerability.

Some ways of building trust are:

- **Being open and truthful:**
Sharing your thoughts and feelings openly, without withholding information, builds a sense of truthfulness and trust.
- **Avoid keeping secrets:**
Transparency creates an atmosphere where others can feel secure and know they can rely on your honesty.
- **Admit mistakes:**
Admitting mistakes is not a let-down. The other person will trust you more if you show humility and a willingness to learn.
- **Keep your word:**
If you have committed something, see it through. This shows dependability and builds confidence in your ability to be trusted.
- **Meet your responsibilities:**
Consistently fulfilling your obligations shows that you take your commitments seriously and can be relied upon.
- **Be punctual:**
Arriving on time for meetings and appointments demonstrates respect for others' time and reinforces your reliability.

- **Listen attentively:**
Pay close attention to what others are saying, showing genuine interest in their perspectives and concerns.
- **Show empathy:**
Understand and acknowledge the feelings of others.
- **Ask clarifying questions:**
Ensure you understand what others are communicating, building a foundation of shared understanding. If you do not understand ask questions.
- **Share personal aspects:**
Sharing parts of yourself (always share only the information that is required) allows others to connect with you on a deeper level and build trust.
- **Be authentic:**
Don't try to be someone you're not. Genuine interactions are more likely to foster trust.
- **Respect others' boundaries:**
Be mindful of their comfort levels and personal space, demonstrate respect for their individual needs. Expect the same from them.

Trust in place of work is as important as it is between individuals. Trust between co-workers is an ingredient in the recipe of good working group. The division of work, the expectations from each member and sorting out challenges is done with ease resulting in more productivity.

5. Circle time: (15 min)

Make the participants sit in a circle. Each of them should be seen and heard by the others. Give an object to one participant. It is her chance to speak. Ask her to talk about trust or a person she trusts or why she cannot trust someone. No comments should be made to the statement given. Accept it as such. If a person does not want to speak let it go. Once the participant finishes, pass the object to the next one on the right. It is her turn to do the same. Continue till everyone has a chance to speak.

Note to facilitators: The outcome of this exercise is to give everyone a platform to express themselves. Sometimes speaking out loud will make a person feel good and will try and figure out some apprehensions they have on their own. Knowing that others are also in the same boat as them and have the same trust issues makes their mind feel lighter.

Key Messages

- It is important to know and understand trust dynamics - with whom one could be free to share everything, with whom one could share some things but not everything and those who still have to gain your trust.
- This understanding helps to resolve many problems and misunderstandings when we know what information can be shared with whom.
- Sharing confidential things with less trustworthy people will result in negative consequences whereas sharing things/issues with trustworthy people provides peace and also helps resolution.

Peer Support Groups of Pregnant Women

Community health workers / facilitators are the link between parents-to-be and the doctors or the medical help they will need. They are the people who help in all aspects of pregnancy right from conception till the child becomes a toddler. Access to quality health services, need for good physical and mental health of mothers, preparing prospective parents for pregnancy and so many other areas are explained in these sessions. Newer concepts and medical knowhow are emerging, and this knowledge needs to be passed on. Thus, the need for these sessions.

A lot of work has been already done in this field but there are some areas that need in-depth understanding. The first thing is to celebrate the arrival of the new life. Stress, anxiety, negative thoughts, unpleasant environment, etc., all have to be kept away. Some other areas are the growth of the baby in the womb, the effect of the mother's mental health on the unborn baby, development of brain, nutrition and care of new-born babies and many more.

In this section each of these issues have been taken up and explained in simple ways. In the session, 'First 1000 days', the health of the baby is taken up from the day of conception, as everything the mother does, even during pregnancy, affects the child. The role of the father and caregivers is explained as this has a great influence on the child. The parental attitude towards the child will affect the child even after he/she is an adult. Inequality in gender is another issue that needs to be looked into. These are taken up in detail.

The sessions stress on discussions and give the mothers-to-be a platform to express their views or apprehensions. The open forum for discussion enables a lot of learning even from peers. The fact that they are heard makes the participants courageous enough to come out with issues that they have been thinking and stressing about but not had the courage to voice. They have dreams about their babies which might sound silly to others but in this environment, it will be put into perspective and be taught how these dreams could be fulfilled.

To make things a little simpler a checklist, to ensure that all parameters are covered, is developed with the help of the participants. As they contribute to developing the checklist there will be a sense of ownership resulting in it being used to the best of their ability.

SESSION 1

Celebration of Pregnancy



Objectives

- To make the participants understand that a state of happiness of the mother positively influences the development of baby.
- To make the participants understand that the mother's mental and physical health affects the unborn baby in the womb
- To explain the importance of a supportive family environment.
- To understand how pregnancy is celebrated among different cultures and its importance



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interaction
- Question and answers
- Performing the Seemanta ceremony



Materials Required

- Emoji pictures
- Pre-prepared chart, 'To do list'
- Board/chart paper and markers
- Materials for Seemantha (flowers, turmeric, kumkum, betel leaves, arecanut, sweet, etc.)

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Start the session with a short recall of the previous session. Elicit response from the participants and if something is missed out, remind them of it.

2. Knowing the participants: (5 min)

- Get the participants to sit in a circle. Every participant should be able to see and hear every other participant and the trainer. Start the discussion on pregnancy.
- Is this your first pregnancy?
- Have you gone for the check-up?

- Are you taking supplements/medicines as advised?
- How often do you visit the doctor?
- Have you had immunisation and scan as advised?

These questions and answers will get the participants to become comfortable discussing their pregnancy with the group. The trainers will also know the level of understanding that the participants have about their pregnancy.

3. Experiences during pregnancy: (10 min)

Put up the emojis on the wall or board. Ask a few participants what their reaction was to the pregnancy – happy, sad, worried or anxious, confused, etc. Why did they have such reaction? Ask some others about what they experienced physically – no reaction, vomiting, nausea, etc. Ask participants to point out one emoji which is closest to their feelings.

This will help the participants feel that they are not the only ones going through this ordeal. There might be some participants who are already mothers, and they might be having different symptoms this time around.



**Images from Google*

Explain that each individual is different and pregnancy affects them in different ways. There is nothing to worry about. There will usually talk about some symptoms indicating a particular gender of the baby, but it should be explained that it is just a myth. If the symptoms are extreme, then they need to see the doctor and follow their instructions. Assure them that these symptoms will reduce or disappear after the body has got used to the changes which is usually 3 months or 12 weeks of pregnancy.

4. Celebration of Pregnancy: (20 min)

Perform the Seemantha – the celebration of pregnancy - by applying turmeric, kumkum, on the participants' forehead. Give them flowers to wear in their hair and give them a couple of beetle leaves with arecanut on it. Finally give them some sweet to eat.

This is the way how the mother-to-be is honoured. She is important as she is to bring a new life into this world. Her happiness and wellbeing will translate to the wellbeing of the baby to be born.

Explain that celebration of pregnancy is one of the ways to reinforce the happy state of the mother. Across cultures and boundaries, pregnancy celebrations like Seemantha (India), Baby Showers (Western cultures), and Blessing Ceremonies (various traditions) serve meaningful purposes.

The common thing in all these celebrations is that the mother is the centre of attention. There are songs sung in praise of the mother and the joy that the baby will bring to the family. There are games played, gifts given and food that the mother relishes or craves is served. This brings a lot of happiness to the mother. It also brings the family and friends, who will later impact the child, together. It acknowledges the emotional, physical, and spiritual journey of motherhood while ensuring the well-being of both the mother and baby. Then discuss the kind of celebration they have in their community.

Note to facilitators: This activity will have more impact if the facilitators can include health staff (ANM/ASHAs), WCD staff (Anganawadi Teacher/worker) and community women while carrying out this activity.

5. Importance of Celebrating Pregnancy: (10 min)

Now take each of the areas that affect the mental and physical state of the mother-to-be and explain them in detail using the information given.

a) Emotional and Mental Well-being

- Pregnancy can be emotionally overwhelming, with hormonal changes and physical discomfort.
- A celebration provides love, support, and encouragement to the mother, boosting her confidence.
- Feeling cared for reduces stress and anxiety, which is crucial for fetal development.

b) Strengthening Family and Social Bonds

- It brings family, friends, and loved ones together, reinforcing a strong support system.
- Elders pass down wisdom, traditions, and blessings, helping the mother feel connected to her roots.
- It creates joyful memories that the mother cherishes even after childbirth.

c) Spiritual and Cultural Significance

- Many traditions believe that positive energy, prayers, and blessings influence the baby's growth.
- Rituals like Seemantha, Godh Bharai (North India), or Western baby showers protect the baby and mother from negative energies.

d) Ensuring Proper Nutrition and Health

- In some cultures, pregnancy celebrations include nutritional rituals, ensuring the mother gets healthy food and supplements for a smooth delivery.
- Special foods like dry fruits, ghee-based sweets, and iron-rich dishes are traditionally given to boost maternal and fetal health.

e) Preparing for Parenthood

- Celebrations often involve gifting baby essentials, helping parents prepare for the new arrival.
- It provides a chance to discuss childbirth, parenting tips, and postnatal care with experienced mothers.

f) Boosting Positive Vibes for the Baby

- Science shows that babies in the womb respond to sounds and emotions.
- When a mother is happy and stress-free, it positively affects the baby's brain and emotional development.
- Music, mantras, and storytelling during celebrations may create a calm and nurturing prenatal environment.

6. Effect of mother's mental and physical health on the baby: (5 Min)

The first two sections of the session will lead to this section – the wellbeing of the mother and the child.

Ask them if they have any special desires/cravings during pregnancy and acknowledge their answers. Then ask them how their families will try fulfilling their cravings, desires and why they do it. Lead them on now to the mental state of the mother.

Firstly, a happy mother will have a well-developed baby. So it is of prime importance that the mother remains happy. Hence to make the mother stay happy, most of her desires are taken care of, during pregnancy, like cravings, taking them to their favourite places, movies, getting them new clothes, etc. Secondly, it creates a supportive environment indicating that the whole family is ready to welcome the new guest happily.

7. Supportive Family Environment (5 min)

A baby's arrival in the family is a time for happiness. The baby should come into this world where it will be wanted. So, the family should be supportive of the process the mother is going through. Escorting her for check-ups, providing nutritious food, encouraging exercise, helping with the older child if required, keeping the home environment happy are ways how the mother will feel safe and happy. Discuss how this is done in their homes.

8. End the session by putting up a chart of this list

To-do list for mothers-to-be

- Be happy. Find happiness in small things.
- Eat healthy food.
- Eat at regular times
- Keep hydrated. Water is as important as food. Tea/coffee/soft drinks are not hydrating.

- Happy songs, chanting, fun times with family and friends make the mind happy.
- Exercise is a must – walking, yoga or simple movements. This exercise is over and above the work one does at home or outside.
- Stay away from violent/scary/stressful movies and serials
- Keep away from conflicts
- Involve family in making the home environment safe for the baby
- Include the older child in the excitement of bringing home a younger sibling. Make the elder child also feel wanted.
- Happy mind and body makes the baby healthy
- Organising is a sure way of keeping stress at bay.

Key Messages

End the session with these three sentences said aloud by everyone:

I WILL TAKE CARE OF MYSELF!

I LOVE MY BABY!

I AM HAPPY!

SESSION 2

Importance of First 1000 Days



Objectives

- To understand the importance of care and nutrition during the first 1000 days of pregnancy
- To understand how ensuring proper nutrition during the first 1000 days supports good health throughout a person's life, starting from childhood.



Duration

- 90 min



Methodology

- Discussion



Materials Required

- Seeds
- A healthy and an unhealthy plant
- Chart of the nutrition for the first 1000 days
- Handout of the nutrition chart

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Start the session with recap of the discussion that took place at the previous meet.

2. Introduction: (10 min)

Show a few seeds to the participants. Ask them what they are and what they can do. Steer them towards the growth of the seed to a plant. This is how the conversation will go.

Facilitator: What are these?

Participants: Seeds.

Facilitator: How do they grow into plants?

Participants: Sow them in soil and water them.

Facilitator: Why not let them become saplings and then water them?

Participants: They will need water to germinate.

Facilitator: Water only once?

Participants: No, regularly.

Facilitator: Then what do you see?

Participants: Shoots and leaves

Facilitator: What else does it need?

Participants: Sunlight, water, fertilizer

Facilitator: What if it is not given?

Participants: They will either die or not grow properly.

Tell them that a plant needs care even as a seed and as a young plant. It is important to first see if the seed itself is healthy and the soil is conducive for growth. If done correctly and at the correct time, it will bear flowers and fruits. One should also find out if the person looking after the plant is ready to do it. Even if the healthy seed is planted in a rich soil, it can die if not looked after well.

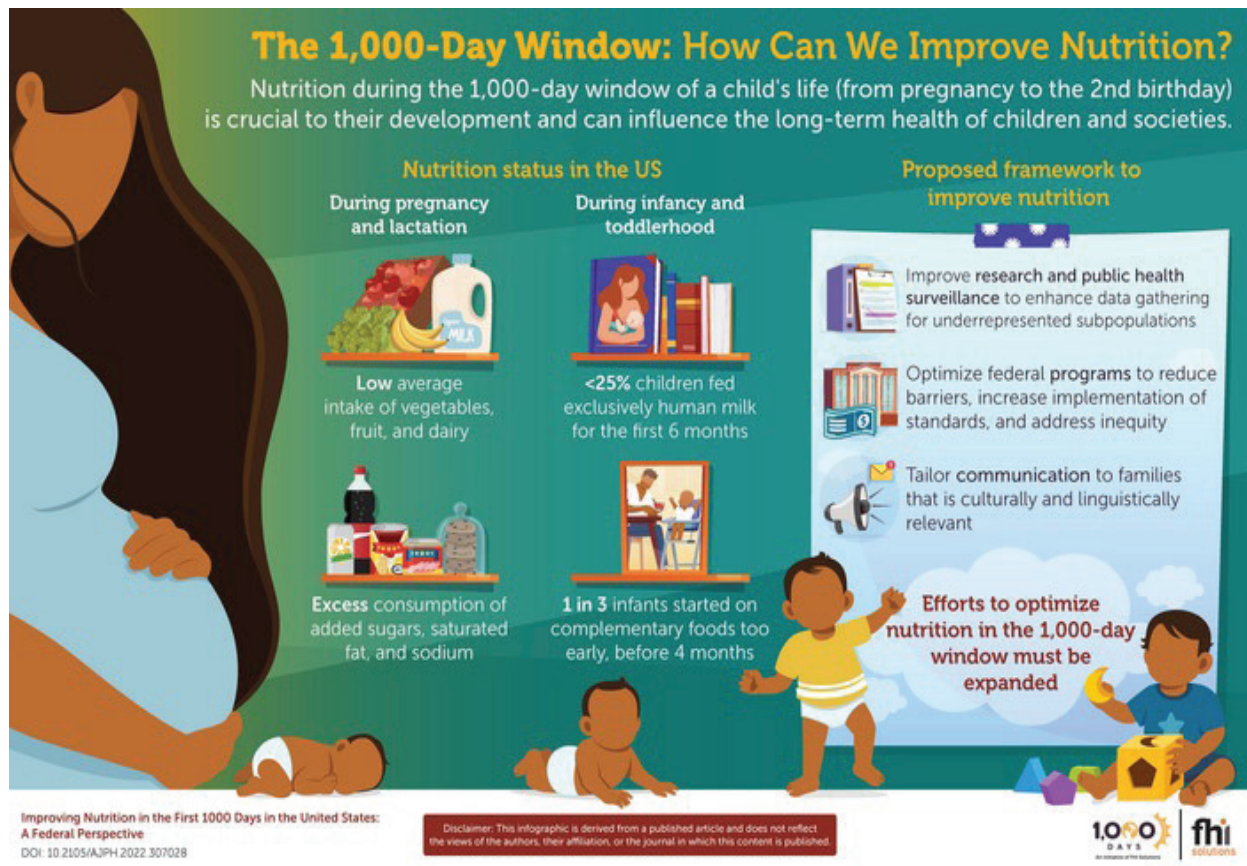
Show them the healthy and the unhealthy plant. Ask them why they are so. Why is one of the plant unhealthy. Encourage them to come up with reasons for the plant being unhealthy.

Now ask them to compare the seed and sapling with human beings. The seed is the just conceived baby. The correct environment and health of the mother are of primary importance. The most important thing in this journey is to know if the parents-to-be are ready to be parents. In order to plan your pregnancy, discuss with your spouse and set a goal about how many children you want and when you want to get pregnant. If there is an elder child, is he/she at least two years of age? This age gap is essential for nourishment and care of the older child. If the younger one comes too soon then the nourishment and care of both will be compromised.

The initial days are crucial for the development and well-being of the baby. This starts from the day it was conceived to the age of two years.

3. The nutrition chart: (5 min)

Put up the nutrition chart and let the participants read it. The explanations will be given in the following sessions. If there is someone who cannot read it, help them by reading the chart loudly yourself.



Source: Online Picture

4. For the baby in the womb: (10 min)

At birth the baby will be given breast milk or formula but the sustenance of the baby starts the minute it is conceived. There is physical and mental growth in the womb. For this growth the baby takes food from its mother. This means that the mother also needs to have proper nutrition. The focus should be on a balanced diet rich in nutrients which is necessary for the mother and the baby. To be healthy means also avoiding junk food, oily food and too many sweets. Fruits are better than fruit juices (especially packed juices). Fibre is important so salads and vegetable with high fibre content are essential. Let us look at some of them.

- **Vegetables:** Include a variety of colours and types, such as spinach, carrots, sweet potatoes, and broccoli. The thumb rule is that more colourful the plate the more variety of nutrients it will have.
- **Fruits:** Banana, pomegranate, grapes, apples, berries, oranges, and mangoes.
- **Grains:** Whole grains like wheat, rice, ragi, and bajra.
- **Dairy:** Include milk, curd, and paneer for calcium and protein.
- **Protein:** Lentils (dals), beans, eggs, fish, and lean meats.
- **Healthy Fats:** Incorporate nuts, seeds, and ghee (in moderation) for essential fatty acids. Limit consumption of oil.
- **Water:** Drink lot of water, fresh juices and coconut water. Avoid artificial or very sugary beverages.

- *Supplements:* If the doctor has prescribed any supplement/s take them as directed. These are to keep the micronutrient levels in the body to its required level. Low micronutrients could stunt the proper growth of the baby.

It is important to note that local vegetables, fruits and grains are the best. Have the same food that you have regularly at home, just add the fibres, vegetables, fruits and reduce oil, fat and too much of sweet. This will make the food intake more sustainable.

5. First Six Months: (5 min)

The first six months the baby should be completely breast fed. If this is not possible, for any reason, only then an infant formula should be used. This formula should be specific for the children of that age. There is also frozen breast milk available but its shelf life is very small, it is expensive and a lot of care should be taken when giving this to babies.

If there is a problem of the baby not feeding on mother's milk take the advice of the doctor before starting on formula milk or cow's milk (as some in India prefer this). It is also necessary to burp the baby after every feed so that the air trapped in the digestive track goes out and there is no reflux or throwing up of the milk.

6. Six Months to One Year: (5 min)

Now the baby is big enough to be introduced to other foods. Introduce them slowly, one at a time. The texture should be smooth so that the baby will be able to gulp it in and not choke. Give small morsels and wait till it has been swallowed before given the next one. Watch carefully and avoid him biting off a big piece and chocking.

- *Introduction of Solids:* Between 6 and 12 months, babies can begin eating soft, mashed solid foods. Make them fresh and only as much is required. Do not add salt or sugar. This is not required by the baby. Ensure that the baby does not choke on the food.
- *Continue Breast Milk or Formula:* Breast milk or formula should still be offered as a primary source of nutrition alongside solid foods.
- *Variety is Key:* Introduce a variety of foods, including fruits, vegetables, and iron-rich foods.

7. One Year and Beyond: (10 min)

- *Transition to Family Foods:* Babies can now start eating the same foods as the family, with appropriate portion sizes and modifications for texture and spice.
- *Continue Milk Products:* Include milk products (yogurt, cheese) as part of the diet.
- *Offer a Variety of Foods:* Ensure the child is getting a variety of nutrients from different food groups.

Foods to Include

- Animal Foods: Milk, dairy, eggs, meat, fish, and poultry.
- Legumes: Chickpeas, lentils, or peas. and beans.
- Fruits: Apples, bananas, sweet potatoes, etc.
- Vegetables: Broccoli, beets, etc.

Now that the baby is a year old and has started eating some solids it is time for introducing more variety of food. The same things that the baby has been eating till year one but more in quantity and variety. Once the baby has got teeth, some soft foods can be given to chew too. Introduce the baby to the regular food that everyone has at home as long as it is not spicy and difficult to chew. Avoid oily and sugary foods. By the end of year two, the baby should be having everything.

Keep in mind that water is necessary. Give boiled and cooled water if possible.

A meal plan for a baby in this age group should include three meals and two snacks daily, focusing on whole, nutritious foods. Prioritize fruits, vegetables, pulses, grains, and milk while gradually introducing a wider variety of textures and flavours.

Toddlers may be picky eaters, but with patience and persistence, you can introduce a variety of healthy foods. Avoid rushing or forcing your child to eat. Children will take time to eat. Make mealtime enjoyable. Finger foods like cooked vegetables, fruits, or small pieces of meat can help toddlers practice their fine motor skills, like picking up a piece and putting into their mouth and develop their independence.

8. Conclusion: (10 min)

Revisit the chart once again. Give them the handouts and take the participants through all the information given so as to reiterate the information given. Tell them to have a look at the handout at least once a week to remember all the information given to them and follow it.

Key Messages: Impact of good nutrition in the first 1000 days

- The baby is 10 times more likely to overcome life-threatening childhood diseases
- Do well in school as its body and mind is healthy.
- As learning and education will be good, they will be able to earn better (21% more) compared to children who have not been healthy during childhood.
- When it is their turn of having a family, the family will be healthier leading to healthy community and a healthy nation

SESSION 3

Brain development



Objectives

- To understand that the brain development in child happens in the early years itself and to provide suitable environment for the same
- To understand the different aspects of evolution of brain from foetus till the age of 5
- To understand the role of nature (heredity) and nurture (environment) in child's brain development



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Group Activity
- Interactive Discussion



Materials Required

- Rangoli powder
- Visual charts depicting brain development stages

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

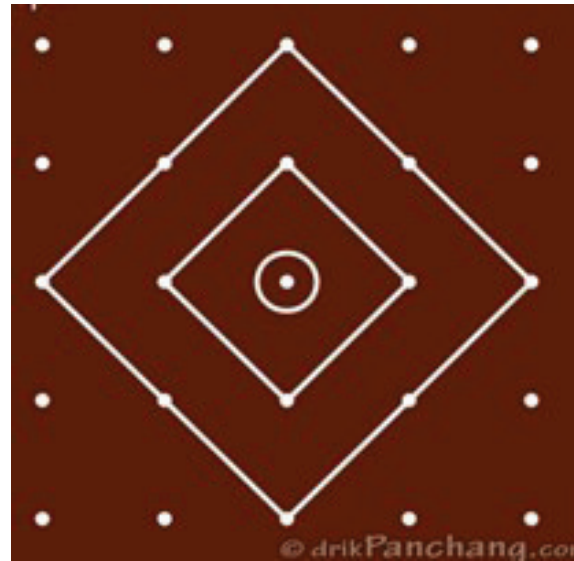
As the session starts, spend a few minutes recalling the information disseminated in the previous session.

2. The Rangoli activity: (20 min)

Start the session by giving the participants some rangoli powder and ask them to make dots in the way it is shown in the figure below:



Then ask them to make a design joining the dots. All the dots have to be joined. It could look like the figures below.



Let them make their own designs.

Ask them what they noticed while making the designs.

- Some were able to do it easily
- Some found it difficult,
- Some missed a few dots
- Others made a mistake, tried to erase it and redraw.

This exercise can be inferred in this way.

- There are cells in the brain which need to be connected to make the brain work. The dots placed before drawing the rangoli are the brain cells.
- Just as in the process of drawing a rangoli, the cells of the brain need to be connected. All the cells need to be connected in the proper way. If some are left out, the brain will not function to the best of its ability
- It is not possible to erase and redo the connections in the brain as it can be done in the rangoli.
- The cells need to be strong and healthy to have proper connections.
- There should be no wrong connections.
- The hand that draws the rangoli is the stimulation the brain gets to make the connection. So correct stimulation is essential.

3. Importance of looking after the development of the child's brain: (15 min)

- **Prenatal Stage (Conception to birth):**

Brain development begins within weeks of conception. By the third trimester, the brain starts preparing for learning and adapting to the world after birth. To ensure that the cells in the baby's body are healthy, the mother needs to take care of her nutrition, exercise, avoid stress and refrain from substance abuse (alcohol, smoking, etc.)

- **Birth to 6 months:**

The brain focuses on sensory input, building connections between what the baby sees, hears, tastes, and feels. Babies begin to recognize familiar faces and sounds, indicating progress in memory and recognition.

- **6 months to 1 year:**

There is development of motor skills. Babies will try and reach out to things, put them in their mouth and may like some taste while reject others. They also start recognising the touch - usually the mother's. Language development also begins, with babies starting to say simple words and follow basic instructions.

- **1 to 3 years:**

Toddlers continue to develop language, forming two-word sentences and engaging in more complex problem-solving. They begin to imitate others, especially adults, learning through observation and mimicry.

4. How we could help child development: (5 min)

Discuss with the participants how they could help the child develop. The following should be part of the response.

- Talking to the child, singing and reading help to stimulate the child.
- Carrying the child also gives them a sense of security. Overdoing it will get them too used to it and will be difficult to undo this habit.
- Activities like given a massage and a bath stimulate the body and brain.
- Get the child to use his five senses – touch, smell, taste, hearing and sight – by playing with him
- Good and adequate nutrition and sleep help the child to grow healthy.
- Children understand safe and unsafe environment. Give them a happy secure space to grow, both in physical and mental space. Do not subject them to angry sounds, uncomfortable position of carrying them, stress in the people around them. All these affect the child.

5. Influence of Nature and Nurture on Brain Development (15 minutes)

Explain to the participants that there are two main factors that influence the development of the brain – Nature and Nurture.

Nature (Genetics):

This is what the baby will inherit from its parents through biological process i.e., genetic traits of the parents pass on to the child.

Examples:

Eye, skin and hair colour, height, blood type, etc. Certain illnesses or susceptibility to illness is also genetic and so part of the nature's gift from parents.

Nurture (Environment):

Nurture includes all the external factors that shape an individual's development, including upbringing, education, social interactions, and cultural influences.

Examples:

Habits, social behaviour, way of communicating, emotional makeup, language, skills, cultural values, etc.

Both nature and nurture are important for the growth of the child. Not much can be done with what the child has inherited from the parents but looking after the child (nurturing) can help to make the child grow to be a healthy individual in all respects.

Let us look at what can be done. All these have an effect on the development of the brain of the child and have to be taken seriously. Till the age of three their brain has the ability to learn and grasp a large amount of information. So do the best you can.

- Even before the child is born ensure that the baby has good nutrition. What the mother eats is what the child gets. So mother-to-be should have healthy diet. This will help the child to get all the correct nutrition when required.
- A healthy and fit mother will bear a healthy child. So the mother should take enough exercise, rest, and have a happy environment (no stress)
- Once the child is born, give it love, good food, keep it clean so that there are no illnesses due to poor hygiene.
- Talk and play with the child. Children learn to respond. This stimulates the brain to learn new things.
- As the child grows, he will imitate the parents and people around him. So see that you are a good influence on him with respect to language, habits, interactions, etc.
- Introduce him to things like music, books and games that use hands. The brain of the child is like a sponge; it will absorb all that it is exposed to!
- Do not disrespect or talk down to the child. The child's self-esteem and self-worth starts at this tender age. The parents do not need to say anything; the child understands the tone of the voice.
- Show love and care. This makes the child feel secure. This security gives the child the confidence to go ahead and learn new things and thus have all-round development.
- By the age of 3, the child starts making memories. So help him to make happy memories.

Remember: Just as the child absorbs good influences, he will inculcate the bad things too. So, as parents, it is necessary that they recognise toxic influences and keep the child away from them. Some could be as simple as using foul language or not sharing belongings while some could be more dangerous/alarming like unhygienic lifestyle, no control over their food or giving in to all demands. These could be small in the beginning but can become bigger problems later with far reaching consequences like bad behaviour, health problems, social misfit, etc.

Key Messages

- Brain development starts from conception
- Itself. By age 5, 90% of brain development is complete, laying the foundation for later learning.
- Hence, it is important to ensure proper nutrition, responsive caregiving, and stimulation during the early years itself to support optimal brain development and lifelong well-being.

SESSION 4

Importance of Nutrition



Objectives

- To understand the importance of nutritious food
- To learn the components of food
- To plan our daily diet with inclusion of right amount of food components
- To understand that local food is the best food option



Duration

- 45 min



Methodology

- Different food items or pictures of different kinds of food
- Chart paper/board
- Markers
- Basket
- Charts with constituents of food written on them
- Healthy plate chart if available



Materials Required

- Drawing food rangoli
- Food charts
- The nutrition game

Process

1. Recap: (5min)

Begin the session with a recap of the previous session. Recall the learning and go through the important points quickly, preferably by the participants themselves.

2. Know your food activity: (20 min)

Tell the participants to make a Rangoli or a design on the ground using chalk or Rangoli powder and fill each section with some food item. One section may have vegetables, one section may contain grains, one pulses, fruits, etc.,

Tell them to observe the kind of food seen in the rangolis. Ask them why we eat different type of food. Answer: Different types of food give us different things which altogether help the body to be strong.

Now, introduce them to different components of food. Draw a circle on the board and divide it into five parts. Name them fat, carbohydrate, protein and vitamins and minerals. Then write and explain how each one of them helps.

Carbohydrate: Gives energy

Fat: Stores energy, protects organs, helps dissolve vitamins.

Protein: Building blocks of cells, maintains and supports bodily functions

Vitamins: Needed for growth, development and maintenance

Minerals: Keeps bones, muscles, heart, and brain working properly.

Next ask them to link the food components to the drawing/design that they have made on the ground. Add the components if missing. Each of the designs should have all the components - proteins, vitamins, fat, carbohydrates, and vitamins. This activity will help them to play the game in the next section.

3. The Nutrition Game: (20 min)

Name four corners of the room as FAT, CARBOHYDRATE, PROTEIN and VITAMINS AND MINERALS.

In a basket have pieces of paper with food items written on them (one each food to a paper) or have pictures of food, milk, vegetables, oils, fruits etc.

Make each one of the participants pick up one randomly and go to the correct corner. I.e., the participant with the picture of potato will go to the carbohydrate corner while the one with cheese will go to the protein corner.

The participants in each corner will say the appropriate line

Carbohydrate: I am carbohydrate. I give energy

Fat: I am Fat. I store energy, I protect organs. I help dissolve vitamins.

Protein: I am Protein. I am the building block of the body.

Vitamins and Minerals: I am vitamin and mineral. I help in regulating the body functions.

This activity will help the participants know the properties of the food they eat.

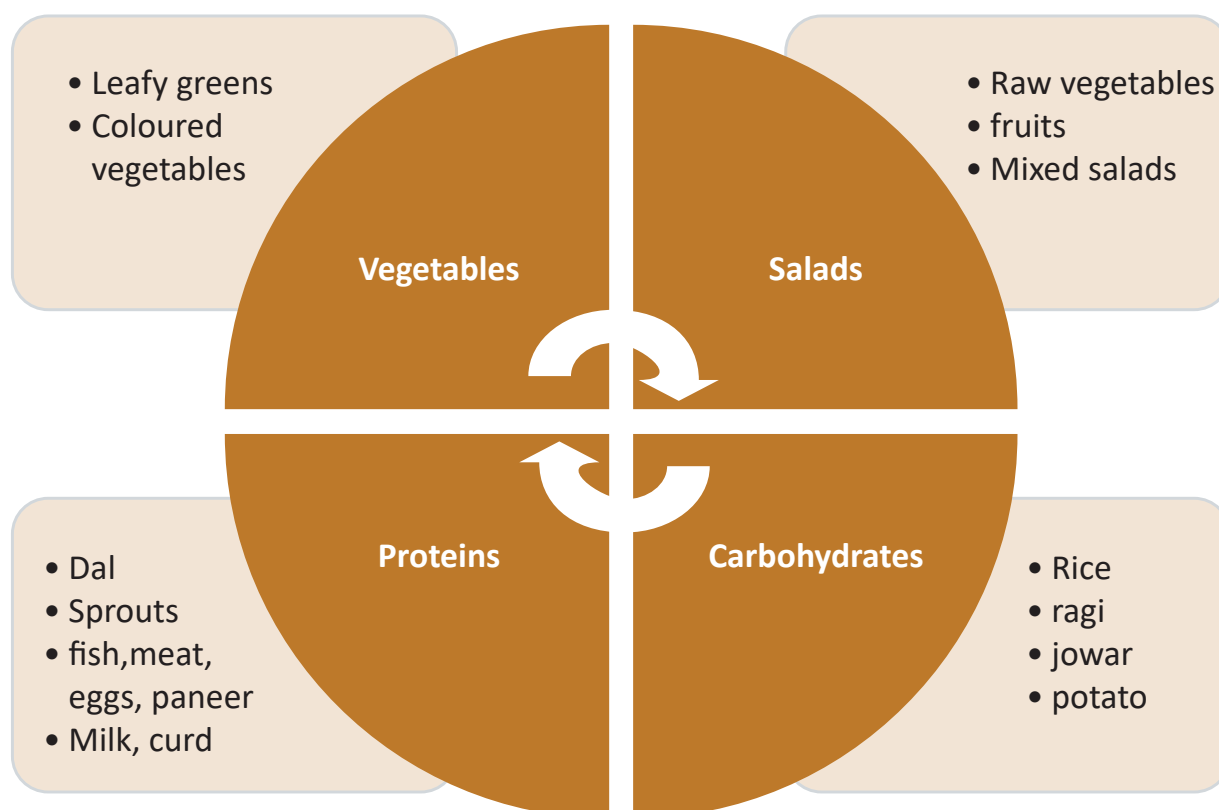
4. The healthy plate (10 min)

Ask the participants what do they normally have in their plate for lunch. Discuss what they eat more and what in smaller quantities. Then tell them about the concept of the healthy plate.

All food items are not required in the same quantity. If taken in random proportions of just some of them while neglecting the others, then the body does not get all the nutrition in the required quantity and then the body does not function properly. So one must know how much of each should be consumed.

Draw a plate on the board. Divide it into four portions

Label them as shown below



This healthy plate ensures a balanced diet, a diet that will give the body all the required food types in the required quantity.

- Half of the plate should be made up of vegetables and fruits. The vegetable could be cooked or raw. It is advisable to have some raw vegetables in every meal.
- One fourth of the plate should be of protein. This could include all dals (with or without cover), fish, meat, eggs, paneer, milk, curd, etc.
- The final one fourth should be made up of carbohydrates like rice, roti (made from wheat, maize, jowar, bajra, ragi). These can also be had in the form of mudde (flour mixed with water and steamed), or porridge. Potato and pumpkin are also carbohydrates.

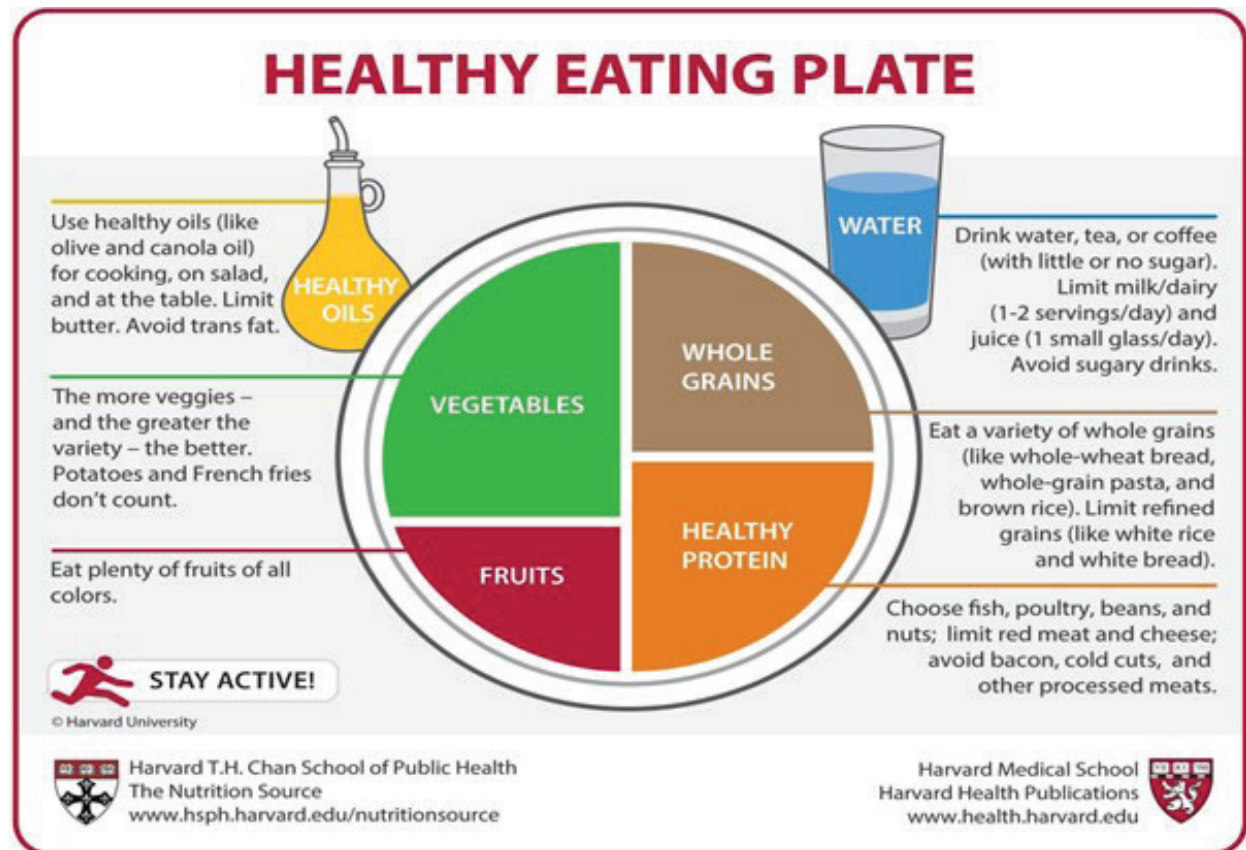
Ask the participants to revisit the rangoli plate they had made and see if they need to make any changes to it.

5. A Balanced Diet: (5 min)

Tell the participants that maintaining a balanced diet is mandatory to have a healthy body. Well balanced means to have all the required nutrition in the required quantity. These quantities can change when circumstances change, e.g., for a pregnant woman, a person with health issues, athletics while training, etc. The diet has to be adjusted to those requirements.

- **Balanced Diet is Essential:** A healthy body needs a mix of carbohydrates, proteins, fats, vitamins, and minerals. No single food can provide all nutrients, so it's important to eat a variety of foods daily.

- **Nutrient Deficiency Leads to Health Issues:** Lack of proteins can lead to weakness and poor growth, while vitamin deficiencies can cause issues like poor immunity, fatigue, or vision problems. Identifying and addressing these early can prevent complications.
- **Affordable Local Foods Are Nutritious:** Many protein-rich, vitamin- and mineral-rich foods are available locally and at low cost—like dals, green leafy vegetables, seasonal fruits, eggs, and millets. Including these in regular meals supports family health without much extra expense.



6. Importance of water: (5 min)

Water is as important for the body as food is. Our body is made up of 70% water. This helps to transport the essentials to and from the organs. It also helps in removing toxic substances and waste from the body. At least 8 glasses of water is the minimum requirement of a body. During summer and if working in the sun, the water evaporates through our skin to keep the body temperature down. At this time more water could be required. This cannot be replaced by juice, tea or any beverage. Water's role in the body is as follows:

- Regulates body temperature.
- Moistens tissues in the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Protects body organs and tissues.
- Carries nutrients and oxygen to cells.
- Lubricates joints.
- Lessens burden on the kidneys and liver by flushing out waste products.

7. Some important information about food: (5 min)

Note to facilitator: This can be just read to the participants. This is as important as the type of food eaten.

- Try and eat all types of food
- Avoid too much of sugar, oil, salt.
- Use good quality of oil.
- Use iodised salt. There is fad about different salts but know about them before you use them. Safest is the iodised white salt.
- Overcooking destroys the nutrition in the food. Cook only as much as is required.
- Raw vegetables are good for the body. It provides the fiber that helps in digestion
- There is a simple rule – eat different coloured vegetables. They give you different kinds of vitamins and minerals.
- Green leafy vegetables are very good for health. But when cooking do not discard the water they are cooked in.
- Try and eat local food. Your body and environment is more used to these foods and will absorb them better.
- Avoid deep fried, too spicy or too much of sugary foods.
- Oil after used for frying goes bad. Discard it. Do not use the same oil for frying over and over again.
- Use full grains as much as possible. Eat dals with its cover, avoid maida. Processed food do not give any nutrition. It is better to eat chapati than bread.
- Onions, garlic, ginger, turmeric are some superfoods. Use them in your daily diet.
- All vegetables, fruits, meat, eggs, etc., should be fresh before they are cooked. If you feel it is not good then discard it. Could lead to food poisoning.
- The food, once cooked, should be either eaten immediately or kept in a cool dry place and covered. Reheat them before eating.
- Raw vegetables and fruits that are consumed as such should be washed with clean water.
- The water used for drinking should be clean. There are many water borne diseases that could harm you.
- Plan your meals in advance, even the daily meals. This way a lot of time is saved thinking about what to make and helps in keeping the meal balanced.
- Some people have different dietary requirements like those with high blood pressure, lactating and pregnant women, diabetics, sports persons, children and teens, menstruating girls, etc. If you have such people in your home, find out what their requirements are and then plan the meal.
- Remember that all 'healthy' food available in the market may not be actually healthy. Read labels and ask questions to people who know before you buy or use them.

Key Messages

- Daily food should contain all nutrients – carbohydrates, fats, minerals, vitamins and proteins.
- A balanced diet is important for a healthy body.
- Water is as important as food.

SESSION 5

Dreams and Aspirations



Objectives

- To help community reflect on what is their dream and share it with peers.
- To provide a platform for members to discuss their goals and find ways to fulfil their dreams/aspirations



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interactive discussion
- Individual reflection
- Group activity and sharing



Materials Required

- Charts/whiteboard with markers
- Sheets of paper
- Pens, colour pencils

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Begin with recap of the previous meeting. Encourage the members to recollect what had been discussed. If there are any points that have been left out do mention them.

2. Aspirations and goals: (15 min)

Explain the meaning of aspiration and goal to the members. They are two completely different things but there can be no goal if there is no aspiration. This is like achieving a dream for which one has to dream first.

Aspiration is something that the person wants. It is a hope or a desire to have something or reach a particular situation.

Goal: This is what a person aims for. Goal is the destination of a desire for which the person will have to work towards. The process could be long or short but needs a plan to reach the aim.

Example:

Aspiration is to want a college education, want to own a house or have good health.

Goal is to work to get admission to a college, earn more and save to have a house and exercise, have nutritious food and healthy lifestyle to have good health.

Example: One of the participants says that he/she wants to be a cricketer.

To achieve this goal, what could be the way? In short, improve physical strength, take coaching for the sport, overcome all difficulties on the way to achieve the goal with mental strength. Do not give up! Take help from someone who knows about the game. Keep abreast of all that is happening in the game by reading.

Give a few more examples for them to understand the meaning of these two terms.

Examples:

- Travel to new places (Planning, funds, what to see, documents required if out of the country, health requirements, etc.)
- Have one's own house (Where, what kind of house, how big, who will stay there, funds for the house, how to do a search, checking of documents, loan, etc.)

3. Common goals: (15 min)

This can be an interactive session. Elicit members to voice their aspirations and goals. Take up two or three which are common to many of them. These aspirations will have many ways in which they can be achieved. Discuss them. Accept the fact that there can be more than one way to achieve the same goals.

Example: Do well in school/college, have a healthy body, earn a good salary, etc.

4. Individual goals: (25 min)

Based on the group type, provide them charts/white sheets, pencils and colour pens to depict their dream. Tell them to visualise their dream and ask them to depict in any way like a statement, picture, collage, song, poem, etc. Give them 15 minutes.

Once they are ready, ask the participants to share their dreams by showing how their creations. Encourage each one to share. There is no dream or aspiration that is not valid.

Now explain them that to reach those dreams / aspirations they have to follow few steps. Explain that a systematic way to achieve an aspiration is to plan a proper route and follow it meticulously. Those steps are smaller goals which lead to the realisation of the biggest goal (the dream). Ask them how they will work towards making their dreams come true. Try to get them to come up with solutions but help them along if required. This is an important aspect of learning – to know how to make concrete plans to achieve goals. Slowly and surely the final goal will be achieved. To achieve these goals there might be a need to take help from someone else. Do not hesitate to take help. It will be helpful in achieving the final goal.

One more aspect of realising a goal is the time involved. There are some goals that might take time – sometimes days or weeks or even years! It is important to understand this timeline and not get discouraged. Pursue the dream and have the confidence that it will come true!

Discuss their goals and encourage them. Summarize by saying that they all had dreams to fulfil and its equally important to work towards those to realise them. Tell them that you are wishing all of their dreams to come true and close the session.

Having a goal, planning and acting on it gives the success, i.e., get what one aspired for.



**Image from [pinterest.com](https://www.pinterest.com)*

Note for facilitator:

- *No aspiration or goal is incorrect or unachievable. The trainer should not belittle the aspiration of the members at any point. Be a moderator and steer the discussion so as to not have differences or conflict in the session. If an idea is put down, the member will be discouraged. This goes against the idea of having this session of letting people voice their aspirations aloud.*
- *Ensure that all members participate. Encourage those who are shy.*
- *Moderate the discussion to include varied individual opinions.*

Key Messages

- Aspiration: It is a desire
- Goal: It is what will help achieve the aspiration.
- Having aspirations is healthy.
- Goals can be achieved if planned properly
- It is important to dream and as important to work towards making the dreams come true.

SESSION 6

Daily Self-Care Checklist



Objectives

- To understand the importance of self-care during pregnancy
- To help monitor themselves through a simple checklist to keep track of all the necessary activities during pregnancy



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Discussion
- Making personal checklist



Materials Required

- Plain or ruled sheet to make a checklist
- Charts showing self-care
- Handouts – personal checklist and important information

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Begin the session with a recap of the topic that had been discussed in the previous meet.

2. Introduction: (10 min)

Ask the participants how they felt when they came to know that they were pregnant. Were they happy, sad, confused, nervous or excited? After the initial emotions, what did they do? Get them to come out with what all happened after the pregnancy was confirmed. Write it down on the chart paper.

Now look at what the responses were. We can categorise them into emotions, care, advice and even indifference!

Tell them that the pregnancy needs to be confirmed by the doctor. This will be the first visit to the antenatal clinic. This is when the parameters like blood pressure, blood work and other things will be done. This is when there will be a lot of dos and don'ts told to the mother-to-be. These are important and to be taken seriously.

3. Self-Care During Pregnancy: (20 min)

Now ask them how they look after themselves. Do they give themselves more time or it is business as usual? A little me-time is important. A pregnant woman should prioritize regular antenatal care, a balanced diet, moderate exercise, sufficient hydration, and adequate sleep. She should also avoid harmful substances like alcohol, tobacco, and certain medications, and be mindful of her emotional well-being. These are some things that are crucial. The mother-to-be should take up the responsibility of taking care of herself. Others can and will help but it is her duty to look after herself and take it up as a priority. This is what she owes to the little one in her womb.

a) Prenatal/Medical Care:

- Regularly attend prenatal appointments with healthcare provider.
- Follow doctor's recommendations for screenings and tests.
- Discuss any concerns or questions with healthcare provider.

b) Nutrition:

- Eat a balanced diet rich in fruits, vegetables, whole grains, and lean protein.
- Take supplements recommended by the doctor regularly.
- Stay hydrated by drinking plenty of water throughout the day.

c) Physical Activity:

- Engage in moderate-intensity exercise like walking, stretching exercises and gardening. This is besides the daily work you do. This helps your body to become strong enough to carry the baby as it grows.
- Avoid high-impact activities that could increase the risk of injury like lifting heavy weights or doing anything with a jerk. Refrain from activities that have a risk of fall like standing on a stool or climbing stairs without support.
- Listen to your body and stop if you feel any pain or discomfort.

d) Sleep:

- Aim for 7-9 hours of sleep per night.
- Create a relaxing bedtime routine to help you wind down. Avoid screen time during this routine.

e) Avoiding Harmful Substances:

- Do not smoke or drink alcohol.
- Avoid exposure to second-hand smoke (someone else smoking or even firewood smoke) and other harmful substances.
- Do not take any other medication other than those given by your doctor. If anything else is required, consult the doctor first.

f) Emotional Well-being:

- Practice relaxation techniques like meditation or deep breathing.
- Connect with other pregnant women or support groups.
- Pregnant women do go through mood swings. It could get her stressed. It is always relaxing to talk to someone. Choose a person who will understand your emotions and mental state of being overwhelmed or stressed.

g) Food Safety:

- Avoid raw or undercooked meat, poultry, and fish.
- Wash fruits and vegetables thoroughly before eating.
- Eat fresh food at home. If eating outside do not eat stale or preserved food. Even when eating idli outside in a restaurant, eat it with sambar and avoid chutney as it is not cooked.
- Salads are fine to consume if cut and eaten immediately. Do not eat them if eating outside the house as you do not know when they have been cut.

h) Other Tips:

- Get enough rest.
- Take precautions and know about medicine safety, food safety, vaccines, and exercise safety.
- Practice safe sex.
- Be aware of the signs of labour.

4. Relaxation during pregnancy: (10 min)

Make groups of the participants and give them a paper to write on. Tell them to write down how they take time off from regular work and household obligations to spend on themselves. Relaxation is not only resting or sleeping. A feel-good movie, humorous conversation with friends, interesting read or even a quiet time with oneself with a cup of coffee is relaxing. Mental and physical relaxation is important – both for the mother and the baby. Once the groups are ready with their list, ask them to share it with the other groups and come up with a list of ‘CAN DO for RELAXATION’.

Some of them are given here:

- **Meditation:** Take a few minutes each day to focus on your breath. Try to remove all other thoughts. Concentrate on your breathing.
- **Reading a book or magazine:** Engage in intellectual stimulation and escape from daily tensions.
- **Learning a new hobby or skill:** Expand your interests. Learn something new. It will give your mind something new to think about. This is also a form of meditation. Remember, that the activity should be of your liking!
- **Listening to music:** Relax your mind and enjoy. Music can be really soothing. Again, remember to choose the music that will relax you and not get your heart beat racing.

- **Digital detox:** Take a break from screens and social media. Yes, screens can be stressful! Too much of time and energy used when looking at reels and television can impact the mind. If the content is stressful – fights, abusive language, characters going through problems – it will affect the thinking of the mother-to-be and thus the baby.
- **Journaling:** Write down your thoughts and feelings, or simply express gratitude for things you appreciate. This exercise gives a release to the stresses in the mind. If writing about happy things that has happened that day, it will bring up a smile and so helps the mind!
- **Spending time in nature:** Go out and enjoy nature. If there is no place for a calm walk, go to a place where you can see the sky, the birds flying, clouds floating past. It's better to find a park or an area to walk in as it will take care of both the requirements – physical exercise and calming the mind.
- **Spending time with loved ones:** Connect with family and friends, and build strong social support networks.
- **Having a conversation with someone who makes you laugh:** Laughter can be a great stress reliever.
- **Praying:** Praying or chanting is also meditation. Reflect on your spiritual beliefs and find peace.
- **Pamper yourself:** Have a hot oil hair massage, a relaxing bath, a face mask or put your feet in warm water – great relaxing techniques!
- **Craving for food:** Indulge in it! Eat what you are craving but remember not too much and not too often if it is not good for your body and the baby!



Self-care tips

5. Making a self-care checklist: (15 min)

Now that the mothers-to-be have learnt that it is necessary to look after themselves, it is time to make a checklist so that it reminds them what needs to be done and at what time. This checklist is of two types

- Daily activities
- Important days during the pregnancy

It will be helpful for the women to have both of them displayed in a prominent place where they will see them every day and remind them if they have missed out on anything. It will also remind them of the important dates and activities, e.g., date of doctors' visits, date of vaccination, date of scans, etc.

Make the participants write them down on a paper and advise them to put it up at home.

Have you done these today?

1) Daily Activities checklist

a) Nutrition / Diet – Did I eat nutritious food today?

- Balanced Nutrition.
- Ate variety of coloured food.
- Adequate and timely meals
- Sufficient water intake

b) Rest – Did I rest enough today?

- Enough rest and sleep
- Relaxed and de-stressed
- Indulged in self-care
- Looked after your personal hygiene

c) Activity/Exercise – Did I involve in light stretching and exercise today?

- Some kind of physical activity
- A walk
- Yoga

d) Positive thinking – Did I invest my mind in good thoughts today?

- Talked about my feelings
- Talked to my baby

e) Treatment – Did I take all medicines which I was supposed to take today?

- Prenatal vitamins (list them)

Give this handout to the participants. This table will help keep track of all activities that should be done daily.

Daily activity table

| Did I do this today? | Eat a balanced meal | Take my supplements | Drink enough water | Do any physical activity | Get enough rest or sleep | Take care of my mind and emotions |
|----------------------|---------------------|---------------------|--------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------------------------|
| Day 1 | | | | | | |
| Day 2 | | | | | | |
| Day 3 | | | | | | |
| Day 4 | | | | | | |
| Day 5 | | | | | | |
| | | | | | | |

2) Important dates and information during the pregnancy

Write down important dates and contact information of service providers:

- Date of last period
- Date of first check-up with the doctor
- Next date of check-up
- Date of scan
- Date of vaccination
- Expected date of delivery (if you have been told)
- Phone numbers of doctor, PHC, Hospital

Information and important dates during pregnancy

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| Date of last period | | | | |
| Date of first check-up with the doctor | | | | |
| Next date of check-up | | | | |
| Date of scan | | | | |
| Date of vaccination(s) | | | | |
| Expected date of delivery (if you have been told) | | | | |
| Phone number of doctor | | | | |
| Phone number/s of PHC | | | | |
| Phone number/s of Hospital | | | | |

Key Messages

- Self-care is important for a mother-to-be. It is non-negotiable.
- Food, water, mental and physical rest, supplements and exercise are important
- Doctor's appointments, scans and vaccination should not be neglected
- Make time for yourself and do what gives you peace.

Peer Support Groups of Mothers

When a child is conceived, the common assumption is that the mother alone bears the responsibility for the child's health, growth, and development. While the mother plays a central role, this notion overlooks the shared responsibility of both parents. Parenthood is a partnership—and a child's well-being is shaped not just by the mother, but also by the involvement of the father, the family, and the surrounding environment.

However, since mothers often spend more time with young children and are primary caregivers in most households, this capsule is specially designed for them. It recognizes the vital role mothers play, while also encouraging dialogue around shared parenting and supportive family environments.

These training sessions aim to:

- Help mothers understand the broader influences on a child's development—not just biological, but emotional, social, and environmental.
- Encourage reflection on traditional beliefs, cultural norms, and family practices around child-rearing, and compare them with scientific understanding.
- Introduce key components of child development—nutrition, stimulation, communication, emotional support, and preparation for school.

We believe that empowered mothers, supported by informed fathers and families, can create nurturing environments where children thrive. This manual and training capsules are small steps towards that vision—where mothers gain knowledge, question assumptions, and make informed choices in raising their children.

SESSION 1

Concepts of Parenting



Objectives

- To understand the concept of parenting in child development.
- To highlight the key roles and responsibilities of parenting.
- To identify the stages of parenting and the right time to start.
- To explore the influence of the people around on the growth of the child



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interactive discussion
- Group activity and brainstorming session



Materials Required

- Flip charts and markers
- Parenting message cards
- Handouts detailing key parenting practices
- Stationery for participants

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

In first five minutes of the session recall what was discussed in the previous session. If there is a chart or a list of learnings, put it up and give it a quick go-through.

2. Introduction to 'Parent': (5 minutes)

Start the session with an open discussion on the concept of 'Parent'. Ask them these questions. Keep this short.

- Who are parents?
- Why do children need parents?

Answers:

Parents are the primary caregivers of a child - most often the mother and father -who take responsibility for the child's overall growth and well-being. Parents are not just people who give birth to a child, but those includes those who raise, nurture, protect, and guide the child with love, care, and responsibility. They play a foundational role in shaping the child's physical, emotional, social, and intellectual development. Children need parents because they cannot grow, survive, or thrive on their own and their presence is essential for the child's holistic development.

Tell them that parenting is the process of raising the children and providing them with protection and care in order to ensure their healthy development into adulthood. This kind of nurturing is done by all mammals in the animal world. Ex, lions, elephants, etc. They look after their young ones till the young ones can look after themselves. Humans are also mammals and 'Parent' them till they are adults.

3. Timeline of parenting: (10 min)

Ask the participants when they think parenting starts.

Tell them that it starts long before the baby is born – actually nine months before.

- Parenting starts at conception. Calm and friendly environment, good and proper food at correct times and in required quantity, regular check-ups and following doctor's advice and avoiding stress helps the child to grow healthy even in the womb. This is the first stage of parenting.
- The way the parents think and feel also sets the foundation for parenting.
- Parenting is also when parents start making decisions that affect the child's future, such as health check-ups, nutrition, and creating a safe environment.

Parenting is not just what happens after birth—it is a journey that starts before birth and continues through every stage of a child's life.

Now ask them when parenting ends.

Parenting never truly ends. It changes form over time.

- In the early years, parenting involves hands-on care—feeding, bathing, protecting, teaching, and nurturing.
- As the child grows into a teenager, parenting shifts towards guidance, emotional support, setting boundaries, and helping them make responsible choices.
- In adulthood, parenting becomes more about being a support system—offering advice when asked, being present in times of need, and respecting the child's independence.

While the type of involvement may reduce or change as children grow older and become independent, the emotional connection and the sense of responsibility as a parent often continue throughout life.

So, **parenting doesn't end—it evolves.**

4. What does parenting include? (10 min)

Tell the participants that now that they have understood the concept of parenting, let us see

how it is done. Encourage them to respond and write them on the chart. Urge them to give varied inputs which point towards physical, mental and social developments.

Then use a red pen to circle the points that ensure physical development. Then go to the mental development and mark them in green and finally social development with yellow.

Parents provide:

1. **Safety and Protection** – From the time a child is born, parents ensure the child is kept safe from harm.
2. **Love and Emotional Support** – A child's emotional security and confidence come from the affection, attention, and bonding they receive from parents.
3. **Nutrition and Health Care** – Parents ensure the child receives proper food, hygiene, and medical care for healthy growth.
4. **Learning and Guidance** – Parents are the child's first teachers. Through everyday interactions, they teach language, values, social behaviour, and problem-solving.
5. **Stimulation and Development** – Parents help in the child's brain development through play, stories, talking, and responding.
6. **Preparation for the Future** – They help children get ready for school, social life, and facing challenges in life.

In essence, parents are the first environment a child experiences

Note to facilitator: The examples given above can be used as a tool to start a discussion on parenting rules. Take for example of the child throwing a tantrum. Ask how they will address this. There will be many answers but the ones that show listening to the child and explaining why a certain thing cannot be done/given is the right way to go. Difficult but when this method used often, the child will accept it.

5. What are the four stages of parenting: (15 min)

Note to facilitator: The four stages of parenting are only differentiated by the requirements of the child. Each one of these stages will include what has been discussed in the keys of parenting. So this section can be addressed with an activity. Do any one activities given below.

Activity 1:

Divide the participants into 4 groups and give them one stage each mentioning the age group, i.e., 0-5 years, 5-12 years, 12-18 years and above 18 years. Instruct them to discuss and write about how they will deal with a child in this stage. Give them 10 minutes to write it down and present it. This will help to recap what they have been told in the previous segment.

Activity 2:

Divide the participants into four groups. Give them four situations. See how they address the issue

- i. A child of 4 years does not want to go to school.
- ii. A child does not want to interact with a certain individual.

- iii. A child of 10 years does not want to go out and play with friends
- iv. A child has done well in school (PUC II) but not sure what she wants to pursue.

Then, to conclude, Tell them about the four different stages of parenting (Andy and Sandra Stanley*).

- **Discipline Years (Ages 0-5):**

This stage focuses on establishing foundational behaviours, teaching consequences for actions, and ensuring safety and well-being.

- **Training Years (Ages 5-12):**

Parents begin to explain the 'why' behind rules, instil values, and guide children's understanding of right and wrong.

- **Coaching Years (Ages 12-18):**

Parents transition from being the primary authority to acting as a coach, supporting children's exploration of the world, and helping them develop their own values and decision-making skills.

- **Friendship Years (18+):**

As children become young adults, parents aim to build a strong, respectful, and trusting relationship based on friendship, while allowing their children to navigate their own paths.

Emphasise on the importance for parents to adjust their approach with the children as and when they transition through these phases. Example: During the Disciplining years, it is just enough to explain that walking down the stairs one should hold the railing for support or one could fall and hurt oneself. While in the Training years they will have to be explained why running down the steps could result in fall, grave injury, pain and will need medical help and that going slowly will ensure that there is no trauma.

6. Role of Various Caregivers (15 minutes)

Introduce each one of these topics and ask the participants for their inputs. Add those that have not been brought up.

A. Mother and Father: The Nurturer, Protector and Role Model

(It is important in this age to emphasise that the mother and father have similar responsibilities and it is not that the responsibility of the mother is more. That is why the Mother and Father have been put in the same point.)

Mother (who is usually the hands-on caregiver), and Father are the main providers to the child.

- Play a key role in the child's health, nutrition, and day-to-day care.
- Provide emotional support, affection and a sense of security, which is crucial for the child's early attachment and trust development.
- They are the first educators, introducing the child to language, social behaviours, and emotional regulation.
- Act as a role model, often influencing the child's sense of identity, behaviour, and confidence.
- Encourage building resilience and problem-solving skills.

- Inspire risk-taking, exploration, and independence.
- Play a unique role in the social, emotional, and cognitive development of the child.
- Ensure that there is no sibling rivalry between the children. These can be subtle but are necessary to observe and address immediately. It is the duty of the parents to treat all children with the same rules/love/freedom. Sometimes these rivalries can change the way the child thinks and behaves and hinders the relationship with people in the family.

B. Siblings:

- Siblings are an important part of the child's growth - mental, physical and social.
- They are the people who will introduce the child to the outside world first, by either taking them out or talking about the life outside the home.
- They will learn a lot of things (right or wrong) from the siblings. So the parents need to keep an eye on this aspect.
- In later years these siblings could be their only support and so the bond between them has to be made strong.

C. Grandparents and Elders: Tradition and Wisdom

- Serve as a link to cultural heritage, values, and family history.
- Provide emotional support and a sense of stability, often stepping in as additional caregivers.
- Contribute wisdom, patience, and life experience that helps shape the child's worldview.
- Act as secondary caregivers in many families, offering help with nurturing and discipline.

D. Teachers: Educators and Guides

- Have a significant impact on intellectual, social, and emotional development.
- Help the child develop social skills, independence, and problem-solving abilities.
- Serve as role models, encouraging curiosity, creativity, and critical thinking.
- Help to reinforce values like discipline, respect, and cooperation in group settings.

E. Extended Family Members and Caregivers: Support System

- Aunts, uncles, and cousins contribute to a child's social network, often providing a broader family perspective.
- Hired caregivers (nannies, day-care staff) play an important role in the child's daily routine, development, and safety, especially in dual-income households.
- Each caregiver has a distinct influence on the child's values and behaviour.

F. Community Members: The Social Environment

- Neighbours, friends, and local role models help in the child's socialization, teaching them how to interact with diverse groups.
- Community programs (sports, cultural activities) provide spaces for learning teamwork, discipline, and cooperation.

- Positive community influences support a child's development, providing mentorship and broader perspectives.

G. Peers: Early Social Influence

- Help children learn sharing, cooperation, and negotiation.
- Influence behaviour, identity, and self-esteem during school years.
- Friendships help in the development of social skills and emotional regulation.

Key Messages

Parenting is

- The process of promoting and supporting the child's physical, emotional, social, intellectual, and moral development.
- About providing a nurturing, loving, and secure environment.
- Lifelong commitment which starts at conception and continues later; it does not end at a particular point of time
- A collective responsibility involving not just parents, family, caregivers, teachers, and community members.

** Parenting: Getting It Right – by Andy and Sandra Stanley*

SESSION 2

Domains of Child Development



Objectives

- To know about the domains of child development
- To understand each of the child development domains



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Observation
- Discussion



Materials Required

- Domain charts
- Handouts
- Chart paper/board and markers

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Recap the topic discussed in the previous session.

2. Introduction to different kinds of development in a child: (10 min)

Tell the participants that there is a one-year-old child in front of them. What can they observe? Write this down on the chart paper.

Now, tell them that the one-year-old child has grown up and is now three-years-old. What would they observe now? Put this down on a different chart paper.

Ask them to compare these two children with respect to the growth and the development they see.

Usually the observations for the one-year-old child will be:

- Can sit
- Can crawl/started walking. Unsteady on his feet
- Cannot articulate but can make one understand what he wants or does not want
- Recognises family and but hesitant to go to new people
- Puts everything in his mouth

- Recognises his name
- Understands the tone of the person who speaks to him
- Attracted to bright and moving things

The observations for the three-year-old child will be:

- Grown taller
- Runs around
- Has a mind of his own
- Can speak clearly and has a large vocabulary
- Likes to play with people/children
- Understands what is spoken to him
- Can keep himself occupied in what he is doing for some length of time
- Does pretend play
- Eats by himself and eats a variety of food
- Expresses preferences for particular dress, food or toy

Here ask the participants what changes they have observed. The child has grown up and learnt a lot of new things. This development is because the brain and body have grown/developed. The stimulus has been provided by the parents and the environment for this development. This development is in many spheres.

Note to facilitators: In this section the idea is to just make the parents aware that the development has taken place in many areas. The domains will come in the next section.

3. Domains of child development: (25 min)

Tell the participants that the change that is seen in the child as it grows up can be seen in four different areas. These are called 'domains of child development'. Developmental domains are crucial aspects of a child's overall progress, focusing on different aspects of their being. Understanding and nurturing these domains are essential for unlocking a child's full potential and setting the stage for a successful and fulfilling life.

Let us first understand the difference between growth and development.

Growth refers to physical changes in the child like the height, weight, body shape, length of arms and legs, etc.

Development refers to continuous progress of complex knowledge like interacting, recognising, etc.

The difference between might be subtle but needs to be understood.

FIVE DOMAINS OF CHILD DEVELOPMENT



* AI generated image

Child development is typically discussed within five major domains: physical, cognitive (intellectual), language, and social and emotional.

Domains of Development

Emotional Development:

Recognizing, understanding, and managing one's emotions like happiness, sadness, anger, fear, etc.

Developing the ability to express and control emotions appropriately.

Social Development:

- Learning to adjust and interact within a group.
- Developing good relationships with others.

Physical Development:

- Growth and changes in body parts and structure.
- Development of physical strength and capability.
- Proper nourishment and a healthy environment are essential for this.

Cognitive and Intellectual Development:

Developing curiosity, observation, memory, problem-solving, and reasoning skills.

Enhancing learning through experiences and education.

Language Development

- Understanding words, sentences and context.
- Increase in vocabulary.
- Expressing thoughts and opinions using words.

All these areas of development are interrelated and influence each other. Hence, all aspects should be considered together while supporting a child's growth and development.

Let us look at each one of them in detail

Physical Development

In the first years of growth young children are physically developing at a rapid pace. There is both large motor (crawling, walking, running) and fine motor development (eye-hand coordination, lifting and waving objects, putting things in their mouth) happening all at once. During the early childhood years, children learn to manage and take control of their bodies. They become more

aware of what their bodies can and can't do. Coordination and balance play an important role alongside fine motor skills when children are learning life skills like buttoning or using spoon when they are a little older.

Physical development includes:

- Reflexes like sucking and grasping, learn to hold their head up during tummy time, and begin to roll over and sit up
- Toddlers develop walking skills, run, climb, and learn to jump. They also refine fine motor skills, like using cutlery and manipulating toys.
- These skills involve the small muscles in the hands and fingers and are crucial for tasks like reaching, grasping, and manipulating objects. (picking up small objects, scribbling, and turning knobs)
- Muscle control, balance, and coordination (climbing stairs, opening doors, and putting on clothes)
- Self-help skills (feeding, brushing teeth, dressing)

Cognitive Development

Cognitive development pertains to skills regarding learning and thinking. Infants begin to track objects with their eyes, recognize faces, and exhibit basic attention skills. They also begin to imitate actions and use objects correctly. As memory and processing skills advance, the child knows the outcome of an act and develops new problem-solving strategies. Toddlers begin to use language to communicate and understand, solve simple problems, and engage in imaginative play. They start to sort objects by shape and colour, play make-believe games, and follow simple instructions.

Young children are always processing information about their world. They do so through both structured and unstructured activities, play, and interaction with others. They develop their understanding and abilities in such areas as math, science, language, art. The mind of a young child absorbs information like a sponge. They practice the same thing again and again, love hearing the same stories, ask questions, take risks and try new things. These develop their cognitive abilities and should be encouraged.

Cognitive skills include:

- asking questions
- developing an increased attention span
- problem solving
- visual discrimination, matching, comparing, sorting, and organizing
- understanding fact and fiction (or the difference between a truth and a lie)
- understanding cause and effect
- simple reasoning

Social Development

Children are naturally social and curious. Social development starts early and includes forming attachments and learning to interact with others. Infants learn to recognize and respond to caregivers. Toddlers learn to making friends, develop bonds with family members, and learn to interact positively with peers and adults. They learn to share, take turns, and communicate effectively. Another crucial aspect they learn is to comprehend social rules, expectations, handle disagreements and conflicts and appropriate behaviours in different settings.

Understanding how to communicate, share, make friends, and get along with others is just the beginning of future social development – a tip of the iceberg. They build on these towards a positive self-esteem and self-confidence adult.

Emotional Development:

Emotional development in children refers to the process of learning to understand, experience, express, and regulate emotions, alongside building meaningful relationships. Babies learn to express basic emotions like joy, sadness, anger, and fear through facial expressions, vocalizations, and body language. Children start to label and understand emotions, develop self-awareness, and begin to learn strategies for managing their feelings. They develop empathy, and learn to regulate their emotions more effectively in social situations. Parents need to understand that children are developing their thinking.

Language Development

Children are social animals and language is one way they interact. They start responding to sounds and voices from birth. Crying is their first way of communication. They have different cries for different needs. They then learn to laugh and show pleasure or displeasure. They start to imitate and thus starts their journey into language and a communication tool. Once they learn a few words and get responses their vocabulary increases rapidly. Single words turn in to combining two words to make better conversation/communication. By the age of three toddlers can speak short sentences, give a reply to questions, ask for what they want and understand stories read to them.

It is important to talk to a child so that the language skill is enhanced. What the child hears, he imitates and learns. Adults here have to be careful not to use words or tone that they don't want the child to learn. They will pick up everything! Making them unlearn is a more difficult task. Another thing to avoid is baby-talk. While talking to the child use correct words and articulate them correctly. This is what the child will learn.

4. The Role of Parents in nurturing Developmental domains: (20 min)

Now that the participants have learnt about development domains ask them how parents can help in these developments. Tell them that parents and caregivers have a very important role to play in the child's development. They provide the stimulus for this progress. They are the child's first teachers and role models, shaping their development across various domains. Their nurturing, supportive and encouraging presence is essential for a child's healthy growth and development.

Some of these areas of encouragements are:

- Encouraging curiosity, talking, asking questions, reading, and interactive play
- Helping children understand and regulate emotions, develop social skills, form healthy relationships, teaching empathy and encouraging positive interactions
- Good and adequate nutrition, safe play environment, encouraging physical activity which includes jumping and running
- Drawing, colouring, playing with clay using hands and fingers
- Impart as part of daily routine good health education, promoting healthy habits
- Self-care activities like dressing, eating, clearing up play area after play
- Cultivating independence and self-sufficiency

Note for facilitators: The age old play with chapatti dough, mud and clay, pretend play with saris and dupatta, listening to grandma stories, imitate parents cleaning house, eating with hands, etc., are excellent stimulus for growth across domains. All these should be encouraged.

Key Messages

- The first few years of the child is where the growth and development is the fastest
- Development is of five types – cognitive, physical, social, emotional and language
- Proper development is seen when the children are given the correct environment and encouragement

SESSION 3

Styles of Parenting



Objectives

- To understand different styles of parenting.
- To realise that every type of parenting has different effect on the development of the child
- To take an informed decision on the type of parenting style that a parent should adopt to have a child with good overall development.



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interactive presentation
- Role-play



Materials Required

- Charts and markers
- Script for role play
- Chart of parenting styles

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Once the participants have settled down, do a quick recap of what had been discussed in the previous session. If there are any questions, address them without going into detailed discussion.

2. Role play by participants: (30 min)

Start the session with the activity. Divide the participants into four groups. Give each group a name and a script to enact. Give them 5 minutes to decide how they will do it. Then get each one of them to perform one by one. At the end of the fourth performance put up a chart paper and discuss each one of the parenting styles, writing down the pros and cons of each.

Then tell them about the four types of parenting styles. Each type of parenting has different effect on the child. Let us look at them.

Input for play:

Group 1: Uninvolved Parent

Parents in the drawing room of the house. Parents watching TV, talking to friends on phone, discussing outings, reading the newspaper, etc. No attention to child. Dismissing all that he says. Child trying to get their attention. Telling them about his marks in school, showing where he has got hurt, wanting to talk about bullying by peers. When he says he is hungry, he is just told to go help himself from the kitchen.

Group 2: Authoritarian (Strict) Parent

Parents and child at the dining table. Parents angry for getting only 96% marks. Keep abusing him verbally. He has been told to only study and not waste time playing or listen to music. They keep telling him that he came 10 min late from play the other day and also had a story book in his bag.

The child tries to explain about everything but they do not let him talk. He sits there with his head bowed and crying. This crying infuriates the parents more!

Group 3: Permissive Parent

The parents and child are dressed to go out to watch a movie. The child reminds them that he has a test the next day but the parents say its fine, he can write what he remembers. The child coughs but the parents are talking about ice cream after the late night movie. The child says that he also wants the red sports shoes he has seen in an advertisement. The mother says that it looks expensive but they will get it for him. Just then their maid comes in to ask something but the child shouts at her and says "Shut up."

Group 4: The Authoritarian (midway parent)

Father comes back from work. Child runs to him to show his test results. He has got 18/25 in mathematics. The father says he has done well but looks at his answer sheet to find the mistakes and tells him how to work on it. To practice more. The child agrees. Just then the mother comes home from work. She asks the child to go wash up and change and get ready for dinner. They gather for dinner but the child makes a face at the food. The mother says that she knows he doesn't like the vegetable but he has to eat it as it is good for his stomach. She also insists that he eat the salad. The child eats it without the fuss. The phone rings and the grandparents have called. The child picks up the phone and wishes them before he hands the phone to the parents.

3. Discussion on the plays: (20 min)

Once all the skits have been presented, have an open discussion taking one group at a time. Which part of it was good and likely to be adopted or why it has to be rejected. In the table below is the explanation of the parental behaviour and the effect on the child. Try and get the participants to come out with all the points. If not tell them.

| Type of parenting | Role of parent | Effect on child |
|--|--|--|
| The Dictatorial/ Dominating | What the parent says is law. It has to be followed. There is no flexibility. Child cannot ask questions. If asked there is no satisfactory answer. Punishment is used as a tool to get their way. | The child feels suffocated. They follow rules because they have no choice. They either grow up to be totally submissive or rebels. They have low self-esteem. |
| The Permissive | Parents are lenient. Any wrong is forgiven. Lot of privileges to the child to the extent to spoiling them. Friends with child. No boundaries set for the child. | Poor self-discipline, self-control, lack in social skills and do not have the ability to understand other's point of view. Usually, these children are not good academically as they have not been pushed to do better. Do not like to follow rules and resent authority. |
| The Neglectful | Parents do not have any idea of what the child is doing. What the child needs and what he is doing in life. There is no involvement in the child's emotional as well as physical/mental wellbeing. | Lack self-esteem. Have to do the growing up on their own. No help or guidance from parents. As there is no one to share their happiness or troubles, they behave in weird manner at different times. They could be outgoing and happy at one time but at the same time hide their problems as they do not know how to share them. Could get involved with people who could harm them or lead them up a wrong path. |
| The Authoritative (Trustworthy, dependable, reliable, convincing) | Highly supportive parents. Have rules but listen to the children when they ask questions. They work on the strategy of positive discipline by encouraging them, helping them to set goals and achieve them, understand their failures and do not let them be depressed by not able to achieve their goals. There line of communication is always open and they do let them have their way but only till it does not affect their goals. Healthy environment for the child. | Children tend to learn to think for themselves and can take informed risks. Usually successful in what they have planned for themselves. Have high self-esteem, good social skills and show empathy. |

Note: Explain that the authoritative style is most preferred. But no parent fits completely into one category. Sometimes, they move from one category to another depending on the circumstances. This is fine as long as the effect of the parental behaviour does not affect the child adversely.

4. Recap of parenting styles: (5 min)

The figure below can be used as a quick recap of the session. Either have a printout of this or write the types of parenting styles on the board. Get the participants to recollect the role of the parents and effect on the child in each case.

| Permissive | Authoritative | Dictatorial | Neglectful |
|--|---|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Agrees to everything child says/wants• Usually no enforcement of rules• Overindulgence to avoid conflict | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Listens to the child• Helps solve problem• Rules and expectations set• Good communication between parents and child• Emotionally strong child | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Parent driven• Strict rules and punishment• One-way communication• No consideration for child's emotional and social needs | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Uninvolved or absent• No guidance• Unemotional interaction• Not available when needed |

Key Messages

- There are different styles of parenting; Understanding each of these are important for good parenting.
- Different styles may be used in different contexts during the child rearing.
- There is no good or bad style, some styles may work in some situations and some may not work. As parents, you can figure out which works better for your child. However, neglectful style causes more harm than good, hence it should be avoided as long as possible.

**The four main parenting styles are based on the work of Diana Baumrind, a developmental psychologist, and Stanford researchers Eleanor Maccoby and John Martin*

SESSION 4

Parental behaviour and effect on children



Objectives

- To help participants understand the effect of parental behaviour towards the child



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Group discussion



Materials Required

- Flash cards with Parental Behaviour on one side and Effect on Children on the other

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

At the beginning of the session, recall the discussion of the previous meet.

2. Activity: Knowing effect of parental behaviour on child (40 min)

The flash cards containing positive and negative behaviour of the parents should be mixed up. Make the participants sit in a circle. Hand over one card to each participant. If the participants are more than the cards, let two of them share a card. If participants are less, give two cards to each participant, till all cards have been distributed.

Let one participant read the behaviour of the parent on his/her card. Ask him/her what the reaction of the child will be and what the child will feel. Then open it for discussion in the group. After the discussion, tell the participant to read the effect of the behaviour on the child written on the other side of the card. Repeat it with every card. Summarize the effect of each behaviour before closing the discussion on each card.

3. Discussion: (15 min)

Once all the cards have been read and understood, ask the participants if they knew these effects on the child. Have they ever tried to understand that the behaviour of the child could stem from the way the parent or elder interacts with them? Let them give their own examples and voice their concerns. Will they be able to change their behaviour for better mental state of the child?

Note to facilitators: There will be instances where the participants might not give importance to mental health as much as to physical health and the children doing well in school (measured in marks they obtain). It is necessary that you stress the point that mental health is as important. You can relate it to how mental health will affect the learning and love, or lack of it, towards the parents.

Key Messages

- Every behaviour of the adult is observed and has an effect on the child – positive or otherwise.
- It is necessary to change the way the adult interacts with the child to see positive mental, psychological and social growth in the child.
- Adults/parents might face challenges to stay positive all the time but a sincere effort has to be put in to make the child feel wanted and increase his/her self-esteem.

Flash card details Constructive Behaviour

| Parental Behaviour | Effect on children |
|--|--|
| I like to spend time with my son and tell stories because it helps the child to develop a bond. | Fosters parent-child bond. Gives child the feeling of belonging. Improves self-worth. The child has a good opinion of himself because you spend time with him giving him importance. Communication and language development is good. |
| My family and I let my child grow up with other members | The child grows up with everyone and a sense of security arises. It encourages the child's learning, creates a good atmosphere, encourages children to study, and makes it convenient for them to make friends with everyone. |
| I don't watch TV when my child is there. | The child feels important and loved, as he is the centre of his universe and not the TV. |
| I interact and speak gently with my child. | The child grows up in an atmosphere of trust and security, and have communication without fear. They learn to communicate without getting angry or violent. Their ability to listen and understand increases. |
| I listen carefully when the child is talking and resolve any stubbornness peacefully and lovingly. | The child understands that communication can be done calmly. Understands that solutions can be found for any problem without being stubborn, raising voice or getting violent. Increase in communication skills, and self-esteem. |
| I don't compare my son to anyone and accept him as he is. I am happy for other children who win and show their talent. | Learning to lose is as important as winning! This will happen only when the parent accepts it also. The feeling that they can make mistakes and still be loved makes the child feel good about learning and encourages him to do better. |

| | |
|--|--|
| I let my child play with other children. | The child learns to interact with other individuals, who could be peers or children older or younger. The idea of team work, sharing, sharing responsibilities and making informed decisions is important education. |
| I understand my child's needs and act accordingly. | When people pay attention to the child's needs, the child feels that he has a voice. Even if the 'need' is more of a 'want' or is not possible to fulfil, the act of elders listening to him increases his self-worth. |
| I am interested in my child's studies and teach him without scolding. which creates a feeling without fear and builds trust. | The child listens to the adult and understands what is being taught. He also has the courage to ask questions and clarifications. Learning process becomes enjoyable. |

Challenging Behaviour

| Parental Behaviour | Effects on Child |
|---|--|
| I keep hitting the child. | This creates fear in the child. The child will have low self-esteem and relationship with the parent is impaired. It could also lead to health problems – physical and mental. Social behaviour could swing from completely submissive to being a rebel. This could affect the interest in anything including studies. |
| I don't make eye contact with the child. | Shows disinterest in the child. The child is not sure if the parent is listening or understanding him. Thus there will be trust issues and lack of communication. |
| Marks are very important. If my child does not get good marks, he gets beaten up. | Fear and anxiety. Low self-worth. Learning and exams become a phobia. Concludes that only marks are important to get love. Could start hiding low grades and lying. Negative impact on the child as he grows. |
| I don't let the child play outside. | Physical development will not be appropriate. Will not develop team spirit as outdoor games are team games. Will not develop the knack of interacting with other people. Can feel frustrated and lose interest in play/work indoors. |
| I am looking forward to my son's success. If it is not as I wish, I punish him without discussing it. | Creates fear and mental stress. The child will associate the activity (play, studies, extracurricular activity, etc.) with only making the parent happy and not really enjoy the activity itself. The fear and stress may lead to mental and psychological distress in the child. Lying habit may develop. Inferiority complex, loss of self-confidence will creep in. The child might become a rebel and go astray. |

| | |
|--|--|
| When I'm on the phone, if the child bothers me, I scold them. | Scolding does not help. The child will continue disturbing you. They feel that the person you are talking to is more important than them. If this happens regularly, the children think the parent/s are not bothered about them. So they lose respect for the parent/s. |
| I get very angry if the child bothers me while watching TV. | They feel the TV characters are more important to you than them. If it happens often the child-parent bond becomes weak. They will move on to something that interest them more and disconnect with you. Here the loss is of the parents. |
| I compare my son with others. I get very angry if someone else's child is better than my child. | Comparison does not make the child do better. In fact, it creates a hatred for the person compared with. Self-esteem goes down, communication is broken and the child will give up and stop trying. |
| I will bring whatever my son asks for immediately. | Because everything is available immediately, 'wants' become more than 'needs'. The desire to strive hard to achieve decreases. If he is not given what he wants, there are tantrums. May lose the ability to withstand defeat. |
| I criticize the child a lot. Even if they do something, I want them to do it in a way that satisfies me. | The child's creativity, however small it may be, is curtailed. They will start thinking of how you would want a work done and not use their own mind. The feeling that nothing they do is correct, leading to mental stress. If criticized in front of others they feel small and lose self-worth. They feel they are worthless. |
| The child should be as I say. The child's needs and priorities don't matter. | Self-doubt and disbelief about oneself. Not being able to decide anything for oneself. Loses confidence in their ability to think and act. Inferiority complex develops. Causes hesitation. Because his feelings have no importance, he does not come forward to try to do anything on his own. |
| I am not interested in the child's learning. They will grow up somehow. | They feel unwanted. They crave for love but don't get it. They will gravitate towards someone who will give them attention. This could lead them to people who could make them go astray just for want of some attention. Will mentally or even physically distance themselves from parents. |

| | |
|---|---|
| I only love my child if they are beautiful to look at. Otherwise I neglect them. | Looks are not a criterion for love! If the child thinks or knows that his look, or lack of it, is what makes a parent love them, the world of the child will come crashing down. He has low self-worth and will try to improve his looks and that could get out of hand and cause irreparable damage to the child. Will not want to face the world and become social misfit. On the other hand, he will distance himself from his parents as he knows he is not good looking and they don't love him. |
| Losing is very difficult for me. Even if the child loses, I punish them. | In anything the child undertakes, the only aim is to win and make the parent happy. The fear of losing can make the child lose his confidence, his ability to think logically and only think of what will happen if he lost! The shame after a loss is frightening. He is convinced that the parent will love him only if he wins! Will have long term negative influence on his mental makeup. |
| I lie, and if the child lies, I don't correct them. | The child thinks it is fine to lie. Gets into the habit of doing so to get his way. If corrected, he might say that you did it too! |
| If the child insists, I will give whatever they ask for out of fear. | It becomes a habit to get everything by being stubborn. He will not work hard for what he wants and this attitude will trouble him as he grows older, especially when he has to interact with outsiders and not family. |
| The child is very scared and if any of the elders in the house come to comfort the child, I don't like it. I quarrel. | Why is he scared? There is an underlying reason for that! Look into that first! This attitude of the parents keeps him away from forming a bond with others. The quarrelling also has negative effect on the child's mind and hinders his natural growth. |
| I am very comfortable if the child is watching TV. I always leave him there. | Watching TV is a very passive way of spending time. Makes no contribution to the development of the child. Does not make the body or the mind work. There is no thinking involved. Everything is presented to him (as in the TV shows). No play, no interaction with people thus no social skills learnt, no need to exercise the mind and no learning will hinder his all-round development. |
| I don't listen carefully when the child is talking. | If you don't listen carefully, the child feels you are not interested in them. Gives rise to low self-esteem. A feeling of not being worth the parent's time and thought. The feeling of neglect will affect him in many ways – his trust in you, lack of encouragement could result in his apathy towards learning and physical activity. To get your attention, they might do something that may be dangerous for the child's safety. |

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|---|---|
| I don't have patience when the child is talking. They should understand what I said immediately. I get angry if they don't. | The child is just learning to communicate. Your listening to him patiently is the only way for him to better his communication skills. If you do not give this time and hearing, he will shy away from expressing anything to you. Will try to keep things to himself. Could lose the ability to convey message or information. Could hold back information which could be potentially harmful to him. Increase in stress levels will also affect him negatively. |
| I don't pay much attention to cleanliness. | This is a matter of concern for the health of everyone in the house, especially for the child. Could lead to health related problems and affect the development of the child. |
| I don't like cooking at home. I often bring food from outside. | This is a major reason for the deterioration of children's health. The child needs home cooked food as it takes care of the nutrition, cleanliness and health of the child. Food should be considered an important part of life and not just something that is required to survive or give in to the dictates of the taste buds i.e., eat for the taste not for the nutrition it gives. |
| We don't play with the child or spend time with them. | A child is a social animal and likes to play with everyone around. If you do not play with him, he feels that you are not interested in him. If the only communication with him is to tell him what to do – eat your food, get ready for school, do your homework, etc., there is no bonding with the parents. They lose interest and respect for their parents. |
| I don't pay attention to the child's studies. I don't pay attention to his needs. I feed him properly on time. I have my own work. | When children are allowed to do whatever they want they have a feeling that there is no one to pay attention to them. They get used to doing as they please, which can lead to bad habits and impair the child's development in every way. The child may not get the necessary preparation and experience deficiencies in everything. |
| In our house, the child is discriminated against and neglected, causing quarrels and a quarrelsome atmosphere that creates fear in the child. | Discrimination depresses the mind, and there is a lack of self-confidence. A kind of disappointment and sadness arises, along with the feeling that they are not wanted or capable, and that no one loves them. Detaching themselves from the family becomes a survival instinct. In the future, they may welcome idea of leaving home – could be running away when they are young or go away to study or work – without wanting to come back. |

SESSION 5

Learning Through Play: Sensory Games



Objectives

- To enhance children's development of emotional, cognitive, and physical growth by using sensory play.
- To understand the importance of play in child's development
- To understand role and behaviour of parents in child's play



Duration

- 30 min per session. Can be made up of multiple sessions with break in-between to make it more effective.



Methodology

- Involving children in single or multiple sensory play.
- Guiding through the play process but allowing them to explore, think, discuss, ask questions and generally letting them learn by hands on experience.



Materials Required

- Things with different textures, smell, look, taste and smell are needed to simulate the five senses.
- Materials needed will be guided by the type of play that has been chosen to be conducted for the day. Available resources can be used and sessions can be tweaked according to the material available.

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Recall the discussion done in the previous session.

2. Sensory Stations Activity for mothers

Set up five stations (areas, tables) spread over the room

On table 1 place at least three of the following - sand, soft cloth, rough stone, dough and water

On table 2 place flowers with smell, spices, mint leaves, neem leaves and garlic

On table 3 place coloured paper, glitter, picture, a pen, a bangle

One table 4 place Bells, rattles, metal spoons, plastic bottles with stones, a whistle, metal container

On table 5 place salt, sugar, lemon, bread and neem leaves or bitter gourd.

Ask the mothers to go from one table to another and feel, taste, smell, observe and hear the items.

After every mother has visited all the tables, ask them what they saw and heard and felt. They will come out with replies that will be like sugar was sweet, the garlic had a strong smell, the rattles made a ringing sound, etc.

Then explain to them that they used their senses to differentiate between all the things they saw and touched. There are five senses that all of us have – sight, smell, touch, sound and taste. Explain to them that over the years they have been using these senses so they were able to distinguish better the different items.

Now, it is the turn of the children who need to develop these senses. There are many ways that the mothers and adults could help the child to enhance their sensory understanding.

3. Introduction: Sensory play

Human beings have five basic senses – touch, sight, smell, taste and hearing. Sensory activities are those which involve one or more of these senses. A child needs to develop these senses. The sensory play or activity is an activity that will stimulate these senses. It helps them to understand the world around them, connecting the senses to the development of the brain along the way. So it is important that the child has access to these stimulations in the first three years of his life when there is rapid growth and development of the child.

Another aspect of sensory play is the development of the child in the field of motor skills, communication, social interaction, interacting with peers, observation and thinking out of the box. These are necessary skills that will help the child in future years.

Sensory play works on the principle that the children explore the different things around them by feeling, touching, hearing, smelling, etc. If allowed to do freely, they will also develop a sense of curiosity which is a very important part of learning.

These sensory play activities can be made interesting and educational if the teacher takes them through the process, asks them leading questions and gets the children more excited about the activity. In a group there will always be some who will understand quickly while the others will take time. It is necessary to get these shy/introvert children to be a part of the process and not let the quick ones take away all the attention. Using these activities in regular teaching also makes the understanding of a topic more interesting and thus the information is retained.

4. Sensory play ideas and activities

The material requirements for sensory play are simple and do not require too much of investment. They can be tweaked to use the things available around the place where the children are. Some such activities are listed below. These activities usually use more than one of the senses so can be used in multiple situations. Also it is important to choose those activities that the child can do depending on the age and understanding. Activities planned should be safe and the child should come to no harm. Supervision is non-negotiable.

Activities for touch:

- Take five objects that have different feel to them, e.g., soft cloth, grainy paper, sticky tape/glue, ice, sharp pencil, sand, cotton balls, rubber ball, etc. Make the children touch it and teach them the name of the touch, e.g., soft, coarse, sticky, cold, sharp, etc. After they have touched and felt all of them, blindfold them and give them the articles again and see if they recognise the touch.
- Play dough, plastic clay, kneaded flour or clay (mud and water mixed). Let the children play with this. They will learn to manoeuvre the clay using their fingers. This will also help in improving the dexterity of their fingers. If there are different coloured clay given, they will try and make things with them by mixing them up. Exercises their thinking and colour coordination. Can be part of the sight sensor activity too.
- Put a lot of different textured things on the table. Place few empty boxes too. Ask the children to put segregate the types of articles according to their touch and place the things with the same feel in one box.

Activities for smell:

- Introduce the child to different smells in the room, e.g., the flower, the soap, the perfume, lemon, cinnamon, etc.
- In the same context as above, ask them if they liked the smell. They all could have different reactions but the object of differentiating smell is reached.
- Give the children a piece of lemon. Tell them to smell it. Then ask them to taste it. It will be sour. Tell them the relation between the smell and taste. Both are sour. Can be used for the taste activity too.

Activities for taste:

- Keep five different tasting things in plates on the table. Make each child taste it and see the reaction. The little older children will also be able to identify the taste too – sweet, salty, sour, bitter, bland, etc.
- Keep a plate full of different tasting things and five empty plates. Each child will pick up one thing, taste it and put it in the appropriate empty plate.

Activities for sight:

- a Fill a box with different colour papers. Ask the children to separate them according to their colour. This can be done for the activity for touch if the papers have different feel.
- Give each child bits of paper. Tell them to find the other children who have the same coloured paper and form a group – the red group, the green group etc. It can become more exciting if different articles are used, i.e., paper, cloth, pencils, balls. All they need to do is to get the colour correct.
- Get the children to point out and tell what they can see. In the room they can see the walls, the furniture, the clock, wall hangings, etc. Outside they can see the trees, the birds, the next building, the things kept outside the vehicles if there are any.
- Fill up a transparent bottle half full with water, some glue and glitter. Close the cap so that the water does not leak. Let the children enjoy the colour play in the bottle.

Activities for hearing:

- Take tin (or metal) boxes and fill them with different things like large seeds, small stones, sticks, etc. Shake them and ask the children what could be inside. Then open the lid and show them what is actually inside. Tell them that different things make different sounds.
- A wind chime can be an interesting activity for the children to understand sound.
- Play an audio recording with different sounds of birds and animals and let them recognise them.
- Let the children try out the sounds with hitting a stick on wood, metal, cloth, etc. They can try it like drums with soft and high pitched sounds.

Activities for multiple sensory play:

- Let children help in the kitchen with things like vegetables, fruits, kneading dough, filling water, exploring spices. These will introduce them to senses in daily life.
- Obstacle race with jumping over small stools, under larger tables, around tree, touching the hedge and getting back.
- Get the children to do gardening. It's a great way of using their senses.
- Reading, writing, playing, running, talking, laughing and such activities also come under sensory activities if not done under pressure or made mandatory, e.g., writing class work or reading to a class are not pleasure activities for some children and cannot be considered as helping them cognitively.
- Use the activities of the sensory play in daily activities or conversation. Ask the child if the stone he walked on was hot, if the grass he was playing was soft or if the fruit he was eating was sour. Use these words and sensations in your regular teaching class. Helps them to increase their vocabulary too.

Key Messages

- Sensory play is fundamental to emotional and cognitive development: It allows children to explore and understand the world around them, stimulating curiosity and problem-solving skills.
- Engaging multiple senses builds stronger neural connections: This multi-sensory engagement helps children refine their sensory thresholds and enhances their ability to process complex information.
- Children learn through exploration, creativity, and scientific inquiry: During sensory activities, children naturally observe, ask questions, experiment, and make conclusions—all of which are essential components of early learning.
- Sensory play helps develop brain connections, language, curiosity, and problem-solving.

SESSION 6

School Readiness



Objectives

- To make parents understand how to make children ready for school
- To understand the anxieties that children have regarding school
- To find a way out to address the going to school anxieties
- To make the participants/mothers understand how they/families should be prepared for school readiness of their child
- To know what children want from their parents with respect to school



Duration

- 30 min



Methodology

- Discussion
- Group activity



Materials Required

- Chart paper/board and markers
- Handouts
- Flash cards/pictures - child crying at the school gate, happy child with a bag, nervous-looking child clinging to a parent

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Get the participants to recall what they had discussed in the previous session. If something has been left out add to the discussion.

2. Group Activity: “What Does My Child Feel?” (10 min)

Divide participants into 3–4 small groups. Give each group one of the flash cards These flashcards will have the following pictures.

- A child crying at the school gate
- A happy child with a bag
- A nervous-looking child clinging to a parent

Ask each group to observe the picture and answer the following questions.

- What might the child be feeling in this picture?

- Why do children feel like this before school?
- What can parents do to reduce these feelings?

Then invite each group to show their picture to all the participants and explain what they inferred from the picture given to them.

Discuss the situations with everyone. There could be various interpretations and solutions. The aim of this activity is to get the participants understand that every child has different reactions with the idea of going to school. These reactions should not be taken lightly and child friendly solution should be found. Stress on the fact that each child is different so there should be no comparison between children, even if they are siblings. Parents tend to compare siblings which harms the relation between them.

3. Role play: The Day Before School Starts (10 min)

Enact three scenarios for the group. Take the help of the participants if needed.

The scenarios should be 2-3 min long and show the following situations:

- A mother calmly preparing the child—talking about school, packing the bag together. Child asking questions which the parent listens to and answers.
- A parent yelling, rushing, and pressuring the child.
- A child saying that he is afraid of going to school and crying. The parent giving confidence to the child that he will have other children to play and teachers whom he can go to if he feels insecure or needs help.

Ask the participants what they inferred from the scenes enacted.

- a. Will the child in each case react differently?
- b. Which child would feel ready and secure?
- c. What did the supportive parent do differently?
- d. Will the attitude of the parent help the child?

Note to facilitators: Connect the role play with the flashcards used in the previous activity. These will bring out the situation of the child and what the parent can do to help.

4. Group Brainstorm: “What Can We Do as Parents?” (10 min)

On a chart paper, write this question in bold:

“What can I do to help my child feel ready for school?”

Invite responses from mothers. Put down their points on the chart paper.

Expected answers may include:

- Talk to my child about school
- Visit the school before the first day which the child
- Buy bag and books together. Make it a fun activity.
- Ensure proper sleep and meals
- Listen to child’s fears
- Avoid shouting or comparisons

Wrap up the discussion by recalling all the points that have been articulated.

5. Preparing child for school: (10 min)

Explain that there are some small things that the parents can do to make the child ready and happy to go to school. One aspect of parenting is that the parents should be non-judgmental in what the child is conveying about what happened in school. Encourage children to talk about activities in school. Make even little things matter. This fosters good communication and will help parents to tag red flags and act on them.

- **Open Communication:**

Create a safe space for your child to express their feelings and concerns about going to school. Listen actively and address their worries openly and honestly.

- **Positive Reinforcement:**

Focus on the positive aspects of school, such as making new friends, learning new things, and having fun. Acknowledge and celebrate your child's accomplishments, both big and small, to boost their confidence and motivation.

- **Encourage Independence:**

Help your child develop the skills they need to navigate school independently, such as packing their lunch, getting dressed, and following routines.

- **Establish Routines:**

Create a predictable and structured routine for your child, especially in the days leading up to school, to help them feel more secure and confident. This also helps to save time for the child and the parents.

- **Collaborate with Teachers:**

Maintain open communication with your child's teacher to stay informed about their progress and address any concerns. A word of caution here. Do not over do this to the extent of irritating the teacher. It could have a negative impact on the teacher's behaviour with your child.

- **Model Flexibility:**

There will be setbacks or failures – small or big. Show your child how to cope with challenges and setbacks, both at school and at home. Encourage them learn from their mistakes. Also teach them how to follow a different/alternate path to achieve the goal.

- **Address Anxiety and Fears:**

Acknowledge your child's feelings. Help them develop coping strategies for anxiety and fear. Do not dismiss these feelings or get anxious yourself. If they continue and are severe consider seeking professional help.

- **Embrace a Growth Mind-set:**

Encourage your child to see challenges as opportunities for learning and growth. Focus on effort and progress, rather than just outcomes.

6. Preparing Parent for school: (5 min)

Explain to the participants that it is as important for the parent to be ready for the child going to school as it is for the child. The child is going into a different environment from the home. This could make parents anxious. This anxiety could percolate down to the child and make

him anxious too. A parent's body language and attitude is a good example for the child to incorporate. So be confident and have confidence in the child too. Scaring the child will have negative impact on the child's will to go to school. This will affect the learning which is the main reason the child is sent to school. So relax, calm down and let the child enter the new phase of life with self-confidence and the secure feeling that his parents are there for him anytime.

7. What's in the child's mind? (5 min)

Children are essentially smart. They can manipulate the parents to their way of thinking if they feel they can get their way. For example, not feeling well (actually not wanting to go to school), hand/wrist pain (not wanting to do homework), asking parents to take permission to stay at home from school (wanting to go out with parents on their shopping spree). Parents need to learn how to separate acting from reality. Parents also need to learn how to give clear instructions. The thumb rule is to give one instruction at one time. Don't belittle them in front of others, do give them a patient hearing.

8. School Phobia: (5 min)

School phobia is very common. It is an anxiety disorder in children who have an irrational, persistent fear of going to school. There are many factors that influence this behaviour, however school avoidance and refusal to attend school are common. The behaviour of children suffering from school phobia is very different from those children who are not wanting to go to school.

Children with school phobia are often insecure, over-sensitive and struggle to cope with their emotions. On many instances, they may become physically ill at the thought of attending school. This could be because of overprotective parents, children who have never been away from their parents/caregivers, bullying in school, heard something frightening about school or people in school, etc. These sometimes go away after simple heart-to-heart talk and removing the cause of anxiety. This might take some days but can be addressed.

If the phobia still does not go away and the child is depressed or withdrawn or crying, then it is a matter of concern and some kind of counsellor/ medical help might be required. Parents and teachers need to view themselves as part of a team working together for their child's best interest. For a parent or caregiver, it is without a doubt a frightening thought but as the adult they must be open to all possibilities. They must be supportive in order to achieve a mentally strong child who enjoys school.

Note to facilitator: This section of the session is a serious topic. Take it up only if you are sure to explain the phobia. There will be a lot of comparison between simple reluctance or laziness to go to school and having a genuine problem. Take a call on this after assessing the level of understanding of the participants. If not explained well, it could be daunting for the parents.

Key Messages

- Getting children to go to school starts long before they actually enter the school premises.
- The parents have to actively work towards making the school going process exciting.
- Do not demonize school. Talk to the children about school positively.
- Listen to the children attentively.
- Ascertain that the child is happy in school and with the learning.

Adolescent Health Ambassadors

Adolescents represent a powerful force for change within their communities. As they navigate the critical transition from childhood to adulthood, they not only face unique health and social challenges but also have immense potential to influence their peers, families, and local environments. The concept of **Adolescent Health Ambassadors (AHAs)** stems from the recognition that young people, when informed and empowered, can play a pivotal role in promoting health awareness, addressing taboos, and fostering positive behaviour change among their peer groups and within the larger community.

Training adolescents as Health Ambassadors helps bridge the gap between health systems and communities, especially in areas where youth voices are often unheard. These ambassadors serve as role models and peer educators, equipped with accurate information on nutrition, mental health, menstrual hygiene, sexual and reproductive health, and substance use. Through structured training, they learn to facilitate open discussions, dispel myths, and guide their peers towards available services and safe practices. Their presence adds credibility and relatability to health messages, especially in contexts where young people may hesitate to engage with adult facilitators or formal institutions.

By investing in Adolescent Health Ambassadors, we invest in sustainable, community-led change. These young champions gain confidence and life skills and also contribute to building a more informed, inclusive, and health-seeking generation. Their involvement strengthens intergenerational dialogue, encourages community participation, and supports the long-term goals of adolescent health policies and programs. In essence, they are drivers of change.

These sessions look at educating the adolescents to a better and healthier way of life, which, if it becomes a habit, will last with them for ever. The approach is to get their minds thinking. A game, a role play, putting them in someone else's shoes are some ways to get them interested in what is being taught. The opportunity to ask questions and accept different points of view is also learning. The areas this manual looks at are health, relationships and responsibilities, civic sense and more. One important issue taken up is that of internet and social media. The digital world is now a huge part of everyone's life. Understanding and correct use of the internet and social media is of importance to these young minds.

SESSION 1

Civic Sense



Objectives

- To understand the meaning of civic sense
- To learn what civic sense involves
- To acquire information of how an individual must do his/her civic duty



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Story telling
- Role play
- Open discussion
- Display of pre-prepared charts



Materials Required

- Chart of what civic sense means
- Chart of civic duties
- Situations for role play

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Recall the discussion that had taken place in the previous session.

2. Stories to start sessions: (15 min)

Tell the group:

“We’re going to act out real-life situations where people behave like good or not-so-good citizens. Let’s see if we can spot the difference.”

- Divide participants into small groups (3–5 members in each group).
- Give each group a situation to perform – they will create a short skit (1–2 minutes) and present it to everyone.
- After each skit, ask the larger group:

- o What did you see?
- o Was that a good citizen behaviour or not?
- o What could have been done differently?

Sample Situations (Facilitator explains one to each group quietly):

- A person throws garbage on the street vs. someone picking it up and throws it in the dustbin.
- A child helps an elder cross the road.
- Someone disrespects a public wall by spitting or writing on it.
- A group cleaning their surroundings together.
- Someone teasing a peer vs. someone standing up for them.
- Voting day: “My one vote doesn’t matter” vs. someone going to vote.
- Two people fighting over water vs. sharing it fairly.
- Someone stopping another from cutting in line.

3. What is civic sense? (15 min)

Ask these questions to the participants.

- Which of act(s) or yours made you feel good or proud?
- Which actions of yours you are not proud of? Why?
- Which of these do we see in real life in our schools, homes, or streets?
- What can we do differently starting today?

Now explain how small actions of yours can help people around you and also make you feel good for doing your little bit for the betterment of the society.

- Helping others
- Not littering
- Respecting elders, property, and rules
- Using toilets properly
- Caring for animals
- Being honest and kind
- Standing up against wrong
- Voting when you’re eligible. Make this right an informed choice.
- Knowing what’s happening around you
- Being fair and responsible
- Use simple examples from their daily life – like school, bus stops, parks, etc.

Civic sense is social ethics or integrity. It is the foundation for a well-functioning society and a fundamental element in building a strong and positive community. It includes keeping public spaces clean, respecting laws, showing consideration for fellow citizens and maintaining decorum. These are norms of society that everyone must follow.

The main points of civic sense are:

1. Respect for laws and regulations:

This includes adhering to traffic rules, paying taxes, and following other legal guidelines.

2. Respect for public property:

Maintaining cleanliness, avoiding vandalism, and respecting public infrastructure like parks and buildings.

3. Respect for fellow citizens:

Being courteous, understanding others' perspectives, and avoiding disruptive behaviour in public spaces.

4. Awareness of social norms and etiquette:

Understanding and following unwritten rules of conduct in various social settings.

5. Active participation in civic life:

Voting, volunteering, engaging in community initiatives and contributing to the betterment of the society.

6. Sense of responsibility and accountability:

Taking ownership of one's actions and their impact on others.

7. Pride in one's community:

Feeling a sense of belonging and contributing to the overall well-being of the community.

Note for facilitators: Some of the above points are easy to understand. Ask the participants to give examples to show that they have understood. A chart of these points can be displayed so that the information is reinforced.

4. Why is civic sense important? (15 min)

Civic Sense among the people helps in these ways:

1. Stronger communities:

Civic sense fosters a sense of belonging and loyalty among citizens, leading to stronger communities where individuals feel supported and respected.

2. Improved quality of life:

By promoting respect for public property and personal space, civic sense contributes to a cleaner, more pleasant environment for everyone.

3. Enhanced social harmony:

Civic sense encourages individuals to consider the impact of their actions on others, fostering a more harmonious and respectful society.

4. Economic benefits:

A society with strong civic sense is more likely to attract investment and support businesses, as it creates a positive environment for growth and development.

5. Stronger democracy:

Civic engagement and participation in local governance are essential for a functioning democracy, and civic sense is a prerequisite for informed and active participation.

6. Personal development:

Cultivating civic sense helps individuals develop a sense of responsibility and empathy, contributing to their overall personal development.

5. “I Can, I Will” – Circle time: (10 min)

Make the participants stand in a circle.

One by one, each person takes a step forward and says:

“As a good citizen, I will...”

(e.g., “... do not litter”, “...be kind”, “...speak up if someone is bullied”, “...help my mother at home”)

Keep it light and fun. Applaud each person after their turn.

Key Messages

- Public property belongs to you and others; respect it.
- Keeping surrounding clean and healthy has a lot of benefits – for self and community.
- Help country by voting, paying taxes and follow rules.

SESSION 2

Numbers That Care - Navigating Help with Confidence



Objectives

- To understand why there are helpline numbers
- To know about various helplines
- To learn how to use these helpline numbers



Duration

- 40 min



Methodology

- Role Play
- Discussions



Materials Required

- Script/situations that need helpline numbers
- Handouts

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Once the participants are settled recall the issue that was discussed in the previous meet.

2. Activity: (15 min)

Make the participants sit in pairs. Tell them that they will be given a situation and they have to decide how they will react. Give them five minutes to discuss between themselves and then ask them to present the situation and their response to it. This activity will get the participant's mind thinking of finding a solution to a problem and not to panic or stay uninvolved.

Situations for the activity:

- Grandfather not well. Difficulty in breathing. Not able to get up from bed.
- A lady sitting on the roadside in tattered clothes and crying. No one with her.
- Child working in a tea stall is being beaten up by the owner of the tea stall.
- There is peculiar smell in the kitchen. You realise it is the smell of the cooking gas.
- Guests have to leave but the train is late and do not know the new time of arrival of the train.
- Thieves have entered the shop and taken away a lot of stuff.

- A building near your house is collapsing
- There is fire in the garbage dump near your house.

Explain that in such situations, it would be helpful to know whom to call and have an access (phone no. or address) to this help.

3. Discussion on helpline numbers: (10 min)

Emergencies are unforeseen. It could be a fire, accident, crime, or medical problem; the one thing that everyone requires in these situations is prompt assistance. During these times, having the right number to call can prove to be a lifesaver.

India has a series of national helpline numbers that address most emergency scenarios. Some of them are 24/7 and can directly connect you with police, ambulance, disaster response, and child or women's protection units.

Explain to the participants that there are helpline numbers that they could call in times of emergency. First it is essential to understand the situation and analyse whom they should contact for help. Then wait till the help arrives and explain the situation to the people who come to help.

One should remember that there is no need to panic in difficult situations. Helplines are a fast and effective way to ensure that correct help is given in the fastest of times and could save a lot of time, effort and pain to the people who need this help.

All citizens, old and young, must have these numbers stored on their phone and noted down in a place where they can see them at home. You might not use them frequently, but during a crisis, they can be lifesavers

4. The handouts: (10 min)

Give each one of the participants these handouts with emergency numbers. Read through the numbers and explain what they are for. Tell them to keep these numbers safe and accessible. They should also share these numbers with family and friends.

| S. No | Area | Number |
|-------|-----------------------------------|---------|
| 1 | National Emergency Number | 112 |
| 2 | Police, Fire | 112 |
| 3 | Fire | 101 |
| 4 | Ambulance | 102/108 |
| 5 | Hoysala | 103 |
| 6 | Disaster Management Services | 108 |
| 7 | Women Helpline | 1091 |
| 8 | Women Helpline - (Domestic Abuse) | 181 |
| 9 | Earthquake / Flood / Disaster | 1092 |
| 10 | Indian Railway Security Helpline | 1322 |
| 11 | Railway Enquiry | 139 |

| | | |
|----|---|-----------------------|
| 12 | Senior Citizen Helpline | 14567 |
| 13 | Road Accident Emergency Service | 1073 |
| 14 | Road Accident Emergency Service On National Highway | 1033 |
| 15 | Children in Difficult Situation | 1098 |
| 16 | LPG Leak Helpline | 1906 |
| 17 | Cyber Crime Helpline | 1930 |
| 18 | Covid 19 Helpline | 011-23978046 or 1075 |
| 19 | Tourist helpline number | 1363 |
| 20 | Kiran Mental Health Helpline | 18005990019 |
| 21 | Arogya Karnataka | 104 1800 425 8330. |

Note to Facilitators: The information given below is to help facilitators to explain to the participants the different helpline numbers and when and how they can be of help.

1. Universal Emergency Helpline: 112

- One number for all emergencies — police, fire, or ambulance.
- Dial 112 from any phone for fast help. It connects you to the nearest emergency service.
- You can also use the 112 India app.
- The app sends your location to nearby police and emergency responders.

2. Police Helpline: 100

- Call this number to report a crime, theft, or any danger.
- It connects you to the nearest police station for quick action.
- Use it if you feel unsafe or see someone in trouble.
- It is one of the oldest and most trusted helplines.

3. Ambulance Services: 102 or 108

- Dial 102 for free ambulance services for medical emergencies.
- Pregnant women and sick children can also use this service.
- Dial 108 for general medical help, accidents, or serious injuries.
- It connects to hospitals and emergency medical response units.

4. Fire Brigade: 101

- In case of fire, explosion, or gas leak, call 101.
- Share your full address clearly, so help can reach you fast.
- This number is active in both cities and rural areas.
- You can also call 112 in case 101 is not working.

5. Special Helplines for Women, Children, and Disasters

- Women's Helpline: 1091 — For women in danger or facing harassment.
- Child Helpline: 1098 — For reporting child abuse or helping children in need.
- Disaster Management: 1078 — For floods, earthquakes, or other natural disasters.
- Railway Helpline: 139 — For help during train travel.
- Cyber Crime: 1930 — To report online fraud, scams, or hacking.

Keep important numbers handy

Having these emergency numbers memorised or in easy reach is just as crucial as locking your doors or buckling up. Ensure that your family members, particularly children and the elderly, are also aware of how to use them. Be safe, be vigilant and help is only a call away.

State Level Emergency Contact Numbers in Karnataka

The state level single emergency numbers in Karnataka are mentioned below:

- Citizens call centre: 155300
- Child Helpline: 1098
- Women Helpline: 1091
- Rescue & Relief: 1070
- Crime Stopper: 1090
- Ambulance: 102/108

Key Messages

- Helpline numbers are there to help in emergency
- Keep them in easy access
- Tell people around you – family, friends, neighbours – about these numbers
- Do not hesitate to use them

SESSION 3

My dream neighbourhood



Objectives

- To make participants (AHAs) understand the importance of a clean and hygienic neighbourhood



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Drawing of neighbourhood around their homes
- Discussion
- Action plan to improve neighbourhood



Materials Required

- Drawing sheets, one per child
- Pencils, Colour pencils, erasers
- Chart paper and markers.

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Get the participants to recall what they had discussed in the previous meet.

2. Drawing activity: (20 min)

Start the session with asking them what they see when they step out of their homes. Enquire what they observe when they walk around their house. Some will have similar answers while the others will come up with something unique which is seen only near their home.

Then give each one of them a drawing sheet and ask them to draw their house and the surrounding area. No one should put their name on the drawing sheet. Request them to include all the clean and unclean areas. Once they have finished, collect the papers and distribute them randomly.

Now ask each one of them what they found clean and hygienic and unhygienic in the drawings. Put these points on the chart paper. Ask how could the area could be made clean and safe.

Ask them why they need the changes. Then explain how clean and hygienic surrounding are important for a healthy living.

3. Advantages of clean environment: (15 min)

Let's look at how public hygiene builds a healthy community:

1. Prevents disease:

Clean water, sanitation, and hygiene practices can help preventing the transmission of waterborne diseases like diarrhoea, typhoid, and cholera. With cleaner area, there will be less mosquitos and so illness like malaria and dengue will not exist.

2. Good Health:

Hygiene practices, such as regular handwashing, keeping clothes clean, not leaving food open to dust and insects, oral hygiene, all help to keep infectious diseases away and keep people living around such areas healthy.

3. Economic Benefits:

With healthy surrounding leading to healthy people the expenditure on health care will reduce. A healthy person can work better and so income also increases.

4. Increased School Attendance:

Clean sanitation, at home, public places and in school will keep children healthy. This will lead to more attendance in school.

5. Environmental Protection:

When environment is kept clean by proper disposal of waste and good and proper sanitation facilities, there is considerable decrease in environmental pollution and improvement of water quality.

6. Gender Equality:

Unlike boys, girls need proper sanitation facility to move out of the house. If such sanitation facilities are available in public places it will help improve the safety and dignity of women and girls.

7. Improved Social Well-being:

A clean and well-kept neighbourhood is always makes people feel good. People would like to visit such places. It gives a sense of dignity and pride to the people living there, resulting is a healthier and robust community.

4. Action plan to improve neighbourhood: (20 min)

Divide the children into 3-4 groups. Let them discuss what they would want in their neighbourhood. Give them chart paper to write down these requirements. Let each group make a presentation.

Then ask them who can make these changes. Can they do it themselves or they need help from others? If help form others required, who will they ask for help. Write these down next to each requirement.

Finally, they have to decide what five things they want to improve in their neighbourhood. Make an action plan for that. Write down the changes/improvement they want to see, whom do they need to talk to or take their problems to, distribution of work and timeline for the work to be done.

Note for facilitators: The Action Plan can have simple things like asking the neighbours to keep the common areas clean by throwing the waste in designated place, not use/discard/throw plastics, get the sewage cleaned (will only go and tell the authority/sanitary worker) and doable things like that. Keep telling that everything begins at home and their house should be clean first. This will give them confidence to take up some responsibility, the courage to talk to concerned people, etc. Tell them things will not improve at once but they have to be persistent to see that their neighbourhood becomes clean.

Show the poster to the participants. Explain that if one wants to see the change, one must be take part in changing it. It will not happen on its own. It cannot be done alone too! Everyone needs to do their little bit.

Key Messages

To maintain community hygiene,

- Use public trash cans and recycling bins.
- Wash hands before eating and after using toilets.
- Cover mouth/nose when coughing/sneezing.
- Keep community spaces pest-free.
- Report hygiene concerns to authorities.

SESSION 4

Personal Hygiene-The Power of Personal Care



Objectives

- To understand what is personal hygiene
- To understand the importance of personal hygiene
- To know how to maintain personal hygiene



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Discussion
- Activity
- Game



Materials Required

- Glitter (preferably in different colours) or talcum powder
- Chits with personal hygiene activity written on them
- chart paper/board, markers
- Personal hygiene chart
- Facility to wash hands
- Soap

Process

1. Recap: (5 min)

Ask the participants to recall what they had learnt in the previous session.

2. Introduction to personal hygiene: (15 min)

Give each participant a small amount of talcum powder or glitter on their hands (to represent germs). Ask them to shake hands with others as they greet them. Ask them to observe how the glitter or powder transfers from one to the other. Then, ask them to wash their hands without soap and then with soap. Enquire what they observed, both when they shook hands and when they were trying to wash off the glitter from their hands.

Explain to the participants that this is how the germs carried by one person can spread to others. Washing hands with soap is the solution to removing all the germs.

Encourage them to discuss and understand how germs spread. Then ask them the common things that they all do – wash their face/had a bath, change into clean clothes, comb their hair, wear footwear, etc. All these help in keeping germs and in turn any infection/disease away.

Prevention is always better than cure!

3. Playing a game of Dumb Charade: (15 min)

Paper slips with personal hygiene activity is written - one activity for every slip (e.g., brushing teeth, washing hands, taking a bath, combing hair, etc.). These are folded and kept in a box. A participant picks up one and enacts it so that the other participants guess the activity. There will be no words spoken, only action.

Alternatively, this can be played with two groups. One participant from one group enacts while the other group guesses. The group that gets the maximum number of correct answers is the winner.

After each act, discuss why is it important to cultivate that particular habit. Use the narratives from below.

Hygiene list:

- **Bathing:** A daily bath helps remove dirt, bacteria and sweat, preventing body odour.
- **Handwashing:** Frequent handwashing with soap and water is essential for preventing the spread of germs.
- **Oral Hygiene:** Brushing teeth twice a day will help remove all the infections in the mouth. It is also helpful to rinse your mouth after eating.
- **Body Odour Management:** Using deodorant or antiperspirant helps control body odour. But the best way is to have regular bath and wash off the sweat with water. Sometimes rich and spicy food can also lead to strong body odour. Find out if this happens with you and avoid that food.
- **Skin Care:** To keep facial skin clean, wash it at least twice a day. Remove sweat whenever it appears. Do not use harsh chemicals. For the rest of the body, washing with mild soap and water is the best. Apply oil or moisturiser if the skin is getting dry. A sweaty skin can have acne so keep it clean and dry.
- **Clothing:** Clothes should be clean every time you wear them, especially undergarments and socks. Wear clothes that are comfortable and those that will absorb sweat. They will help to prevent infections.
- **Hair Care:** Hair should be kept clean and well brushed. Get a haircut regularly if you keep it short. See that there is no dandruff on your scalp. If there is an infection addressed it immediately. Too much of oil in the hair also attracts dust. So wash your hair regularly. Hair colouring is a fad but will harm the hair in a long run. Avoid it.
- **Nail Care:** Nails are one route to infection entering our body. Keep them trimmed and clean. Nail polish can also be dangerous if ingested.
- **Menstrual Hygiene (for girls):** Using sanitary pads or menstrual cups and changing them regularly is important. Disposing of these are also as important as using them. Keep your private parts clean with water. Do not use unhygienic pads or cups.

- **Shaving (for boys and girls):** Learning how to shave safely. Cuts can cause infection which could be dangerous. Use clean blades. Do not share your toilet items with anyone even at home. In a saloon, insist for a sterilised blade. It is your right to ask for it.
- **Coughing, sneezing:** Cover your mouth while coughing or sneezing. The best way is to sneeze or cough in your elbow. This way your hand remains clean.
- **Tissue and handkerchief:** If using a handkerchief, wash it regularly. If using a tissue, throw it into a dustbin after every use. Do not reuse the tissue.

4. Making a to-do list: (15 min)

Give the participants a sheet of paper and pencil. Tell them to make a list of how they will look after their own hygiene. The best way to do this would be to start with would be daily routine from the time they get up to the time they go to bed. It should look like this. Add more to the list.

The to-do list

| S. No | Activity | Day 1 | Day 2 | Day 3 | Day 4 | Day 5 | Day 6 | Day 8 |
|-------|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 1 | Brushing teeth when I get up | | | | | | | |
| 2 | Wash my face with water | | | | | | | |
| 3 | Have a bath | | | | | | | |
| 4 | Comb/brush my hair | | | | | | | |
| 5 | Trim my nails | | | | | | | |
| 6 | | | | | | | | |
| 7 | | | | | | | | |

Tell them that this is a list that they should follow. Tick each activity every time it is done. Some are done daily while some (like trimming nails) are done maybe once a week. At the end of the week, explain to them how to do a self-analysis of which things they have missed and why. They could correct that in the next week.

5. Hygiene of private parts: (10 min)

Note to facilitator: This part can be taken separately for boys and girls, if required. If you feel confident that they can be taught together it is fine. You can take a call on this.

Growth and changes in boys:

During puberty, teenage boys will experience changes. This is because of increase in production of the hormone testosterone. The changes seen are physical as well as emotional. These include growth spurts, deepening of the voice, development of facial and body hair, increased muscle mass, and changes in body odour. Additionally, hormonal fluctuations can impact emotions, sleep patterns, and even lead to acne or other skin problems.

Physical Changes:

- *Growth Spurt:* Boys experience a significant increase in height and weight.
- *Voice Changes:* The voice deepens, often with a 'cracking' phase as the vocal cords grow.
- *Hair Growth:* Body hair, including pubic hair, armpit hair, and facial hair, develops.
- *Muscle Development:* Increased testosterone leads to muscle growth and strength.
- *Skin Changes:* Acne and increased oil production are common due to hormonal fluctuations.
- *Sexual Development:* Testes and penis grow larger, and boys become capable of ejaculation.
- *Body Odour:* Increased sweating and oil production can lead to stronger body odour.

Girls should take utmost care of their body especially during their periods. These are some tips of what is to be done.

Washing the Genital Area:

- Wash with warm water and mild soap to keep the area clean and prevent infections.
- Avoid harsh soaps, or scented products, as they can disrupt the natural pH balance.

Changing Sanitary Products Regularly:

- Change sanitary pads frequently, especially during heavy flow, to prevent odours and infections.
- If using a menstrual cup, clean it thoroughly after each menstrual cycle.
- If using reusable pads wash them properly with soap and water, ensure that all the soap has been removed and dry them in a clean dry place. The best place to dry them is in direct sunlight. This helps disinfect the cloth.

Proper Disposal:

- Wrap the used pads properly and dispose them in sealed container or garbage can.
- Do not flush pads down the toilet.

Washing Hands:

- Wash hands thoroughly with soap and water before and after handling menstrual products, as well as before and after using the restroom.

Breathable Underwear:

- Wear cotton underwear or period underwear to reduce moisture and promote air circulation.
- Underwear should not be too tight or too loose.

Proper Storage:

- Store sanitary products in a cool, dry place to prevent them from becoming wet or damaged. They could catch fungus and cause infection. Be careful.

Additional Tips:

- Take regular baths or showers: This helps to stay clean and fresh.
- Don't be afraid to ask for help: If you have questions or concerns about menstrual hygiene, talk to a trusted adult, a school nurse, or a doctor.

Key Messages

- Personal hygiene is important to stay healthy
- If practiced every day, it will become part of a routine
- It helps to keep germs, worms, bacteria, etc., away
- Makes a person feel confident.

SESSION 5

The Responsible Netizen



Objectives

- To understand what the internet and social media can offer
- To recognise the drawbacks of use of internet and social media and cyber crimes
- To know about responsible use of social media/internet



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Interactive discussion
- Games



Materials Required

- Chart paper/board and markers
- Green and red cards/flags for all participants
- List of questions to be asked in activity 3

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Start the session with a recap of the discussion of the previous meet.

2. Understanding 'internet': (15 min)

Ask the participants what they understand by the word 'internet'. They will come out with things like learning, Facebook, Instagram, games, keeping in touch with friends, posting pictures and messages, etc. Put these up on the chart paper/board. Do not judge what the participants have to say. If they are judged, then they will not come out with what they have faced.

Then ask them these questions:

- Do they have their own phone/tablet?
- Did they use the internet to learn something?
- Was it entertainment they used it for?
- How much time did one spend on the net?

- Do parents monitor their viewing?
- Do they do it without their parents/elders knowing?
- Do the parents/elders know what they are watching?
- What did they learn?
- Do they know that they could get into trouble by being bullied or get into wrong company or get blackmailed?
- Has anyone faced that?

Note to facilitator: The above activity is to just get the participants to focus on the topic that is under discussion.

3. Activity: Understanding the role of internet – positive and negative (20 min)

Give all participants a green and a red cards /flags. Tell them that a scenario would be read out or told to them. If they think is responsible/positive, then they have to raise the green flag/card. If they think it is risky/negative/dangerous then they should raise the red flag.

Read out short internet/social media scenarios. Let the participants think and raise either of the flags according to their understanding of the situation. Pick out the scenarios at random. After each one of them have been voted for or against, discuss why a decision was correct and if wrong, why it was wrong. Go to the next situation only when everyone has understood the issue under discussion.

Positive Scenarios

- You join a private online study group with classmates.
- You find a website that offers free educational resources.
- You receive a message from a friend inviting you to a safe online event.
- You share a helpful article about mental health with your friends.
- You use privacy settings to control who can see your posts.
- You report a fake news post to the platform.
- You ask for help from a trusted adult when you see something confusing online.
- You create a strong password and keep it private.
- You participate in a positive online challenge promoting kindness.
- You verify information before sharing it on social media.

Negative Scenarios

- A stranger messages you asking for personal photos.
- You receive a friend request from someone you don't know.
- You see a post that spreads false information but you share it without checking.

- Someone tags you in a meme you're uncomfortable with.
- You click on a suspicious link in a message.
- You share your password with a friend.
- You receive threatening messages from an unknown user.
- You post personal information publicly without privacy settings.
- You participate in online bullying or harassment.
- You download an app from an untrusted source
- You get messages asking for personal photographs

Note to facilitators: The points given above need to be discussed in detail. There could be someone who has faced problems but is shy to voice it. Tell them it is not a shame to admit the problem if there they accept that there is a mistake and it can harm them and ready to made amends. Tell them that all this information given to them is to ensure that they do not get into any trouble – for themselves as well as others. If they feel that they are already in trouble and need help, talk to them in private after the session.

Some of the benefits and risks are as follows:

Benefits:

- Social Support and Connection
- Self-Expression
- Access to Information and Learning
- Creativity and Expression
- Building Social Skills

Risks:

- Cyberbullying and Harassment
- Social Comparison and Negative Self-Image
- Exposure to Harmful Content
- Addiction and Excessive Use
- Mental Health Concerns

4. Ensuring cyber safety: (20 min)

Tell the participants that after knowing the pros and cons of use of internet, it is necessary to stay alert and not be drawn into cyber abuse. Using internet is of great help to us but we need to learn how to use the technology responsibly and safely, minimizing risks while maximizing opportunities. It's about understanding potential online threats like cyberbullying, grooming, and inappropriate content, and learning how to protect personal information and build a positive online reputation.

a) Secure your online presence just like you secure yourself: If you have not selected the right settings on your social media accounts, then photos and videos posted can be viewed, downloaded and used by others without your knowledge.

- Select the right privacy settings and content sharing filters on social media so that you are sharing your information, photos and videos only with your trusted ones.
- Be selective about accepting friend request of strangers on social media
- Learn how to block someone who is making you uncomfortable
- Learn how to remove someone from your friends list if they are doing something that you are not comfortable with. There is no need to be shy of doing this.
- Remember to logout from social media websites after use
- Secure your phone with a strong password
- If you notice your fake account has been created, you can immediately inform social media service provider so that the account can be blocked

b. Be mindful of your appearance on video chat and video calls: Your video chats on social media sites can be recorded by the person on the other side

- There have been instances where video chats which were supposed to be private in nature have been recorded and shared on social media groups and websites. Keep them to a minimum and only when required.
- Be careful while accepting chat requests from strangers

c. Do not use Smartphone for taking sensitive personal photographs and videos:

- Most of the smartphones are connected to internet and cloud storage. If a picture or video has been clicked/ recorded by using smartphone connected with the cloud, it may get saved automatically into the cloud. Even if users delete their photos or videos from their phone, the same photo or video can be recovered from the cloud account or any other device/ PC connected to the cloud using same account.
- If someone has taken such photograph using Smartphone, then take it seriously and make sure to get it deleted from their smartphone, the cloud and any other device connected using the same account.

d. Protect yourself from Cyber stalking: Cyber stalkers will repeatedly connect with you even when you show disinterest. They use internet, email, social media or any other form of electronic communication for stalking

- Disable location services for social media sites, mobile devices etc.
- Refrain from sharing your personal information like phone number, e-mail address, photographs with unknown persons
- Consult your relatives and friends, if you think you are a victim of Cyber stalking

e. Beware of fake social media accounts:

- Not all the accounts are real and not all information provided on accounts are true

f. Be cautious with sensitive Browsing:

- One should browse shopping or banking websites or apps only on a device that belongs to him/ her or on a trusted network.
- Avoid using friend's phone, public computer, cyber cafe or free Wi-Fi for sensitive browsing as data can be stolen or copied.

g. The deleted data on your communication devices can be recovered:

- Be careful while you give your mobile devices, PC's for servicing/repairing/selling
- Personal computers and mobile devices contain private information which needs to be erased before sending it for repairing, servicing or selling.

h. Protect your communication devices:

- Prevent others from accessing your devices by providing password, PIN, pattern or biometric information.
- Always install applications to your mobile phones, computers, etc., from a trusted source only e.g. Play store, App store or from official company websites

i. Report if you find content related to of Child Pornography (CP)/Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit material

- Any content related to of Child Pornography (CP)/ Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit material such as Rape/ Gang Rape (CP/RGR) content should be report to the concerned social media website
- If anybody of your acquaintance shares Child Pornography (CP)/ Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit material with you, it is your duty as a responsible citizen to inform the concerned person that publication, collection and distribution of Child Pornography (CP)/ Child Sexual Abuse Material (CSAM) or sexually explicit material is illegal and he should refrain from doing such activities.

Key Messages

- Internet is in important tool but should be used for the right purpose and with caution.
- Do not get addicted to social media as it could affect physical and mental wellbeing.
- Keep your identity, password, pictures and personal information safe.
- Report cyber bullying and inappropriate content.
- For children, it is important to keep their parents about their internet usage - amount of time spent at it, the content accessed and the new contacts they make.

SESSION 6

Fuel for Growth Best Food Practices for Adolescents



Objectives

- To understand how nutrition affects their growth, energy, and mental well-being.
- To identify the components of a balanced and healthy diet.
- To learn hygiene and safety in food handling.
- To recognize and reduce unhealthy food habits.
- To read and understand food labels



Duration

- 90 min



Methodology

- Individual drawing activity
- Quiz
- Reading labels on food packages



Materials Required

- Individual paper and pencils for drawing
- Healthy plate chart
- Packaged food for label reading exercise
- Charts/board, markers
- Myths busting cards
- Pictures of food to play the components of food game

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Once the participants are settled quickly revise what they had learnt in the previous session.

2. Introduction to food: (5 min)

Start the session with asking why they eat food. Answer should have fuel, energy, strength, growth. There will also be taste, liking the activity of eating, etc., which also should be acknowledged.

3. Components of food: (20 min)

Give each of the participants a drawing sheet and pencils. Ask them to draw a circle to depict a plate. Tell them to draw the food they usually have in a meal and label them. Also explain that what they eat more should have more space in the plate and the one that they eat less should have less. Then explain to them what each of their things on their plate will give them – Protein, carbohydrates, fats, vitamins and minerals. Show them the chart of the components of food.

Now ask them why it is important to have food. How does it help? Put their answers on the chart.

The answers should have the following:

- Provides fuel or energy. This helps the body to do its work.
- Helps growth
- Repairs body
- Maintains vital functions like heart, digestion, respiration, purifying blood etc.
- Prevents and treats diseases.

Explain the role of the components of food:

Take a couple of the drawings of the plates that the participants have made and show them what they have been eating in terms of food components.

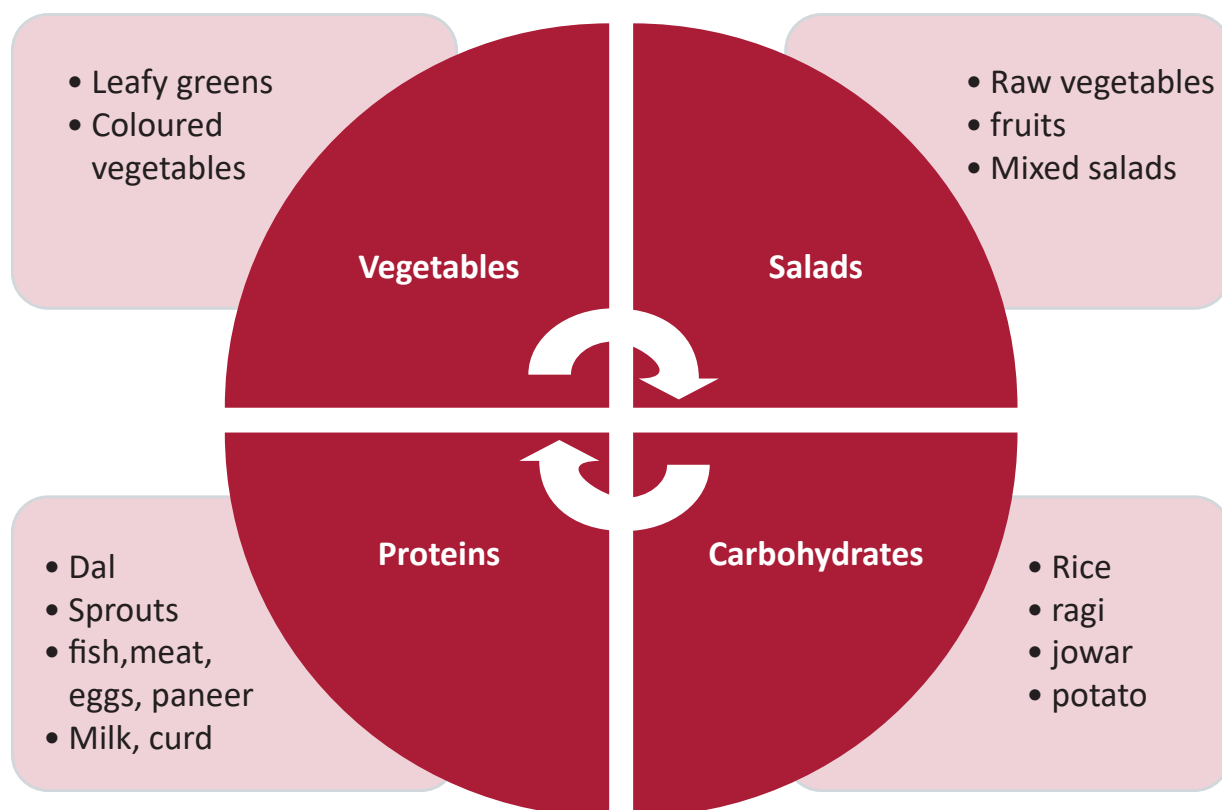
- Carbohydrates: This is the base of the food. Breaks down to release energy to run the body. Like electricity makes the light work. E.g., rice, wheat, ragi, jowar maize, potato, etc.
- Proteins: They act as building blocks for tissues, repairing cells, supporting the immune system, and providing energy. It also plays a crucial role in maintaining healthy bones, hair, skin, and nails. E.g., dals, milk, curd, fish, meat, eggs, paneer
- Fats: The energy that the body makes is stored as fat. When required, the body sources the energy in form of fat. Fat also protects organs, absorbs nutrients and help in hormone production. E.g., Oil, ghee butter are pure fats but coconut, most dry fruits are also high in fat.
- Vitamins and Minerals: Vitamins and minerals are essential for bodily functions such as helping to fight infection, wound healing, making our bones strong and regulating hormones. They are needed in small quantities but cannot be neglected. We get them for fruits and vegetables.

4. The healthy plate (15 min)

Ask the participants what they have in their plate for lunch. Discuss what they eat more and what in smaller quantities. Then tell them about the concept of the healthy plate. All food items are not required in the same quantity. If taken in random proportions - eating some more while neglecting the others - the body does not get all the nutrition in the required quantity. This results in the body not functioning properly. So one must know how much of each should be consumed.

Draw a plate on the board. Divide it into four portions

Label them as shown below



This healthy plate ensures a balanced diet - a diet that will give the body all the required food types in the required quantity.

- Half of the plate should be made up of vegetables and fruits. The vegetable could be cooked or raw. It is advisable to have some raw vegetables in every meal.
- One fourth of the plate should be of protein. This could include all dals (with or without cover), fish, meat, eggs, paneer, milk, curd, etc.
- The final one fourth should be made up of carbohydrates like rice, roti (made from wheat, maize, jowar, bajra, ragi). These can also be had in the form of mudde (flour mixed with water and steamed), or porridge. Potatoes and pumpkin are also carbohydrates.

Note for facilitators: Encourage the participants to tell what they eat. If they say they do not like something (like salads or dal) explain what their body will be missing and what effect it will have on the functioning of the body.

5. Importance of water: (10 min)

- Water is as important for the body as food is. Our body is made up of 70% water. This helps to transport the essentials to and from the organs. It also helps in removing toxic substances and waste from the body. At least 8 glasses of water is the minimum requirement of a body. During summer and if working in the sun, the water evaporates through our skin to keep the body temperature down. At this time more water could be required. This cannot be replaced by juice, tea or any beverage. Water's role in the body is as follows:

- Regulates body temperature.
- Moistens tissues in the eyes, nose and mouth.
- Protects body organs and tissues.
- Carries nutrients and oxygen to cells.
- Lubricates joints.
- Lessens burden on the kidneys and liver by flushing out waste products.

6. Quiz Game: What food group is this? (15 min)

Name four corners of the room as FAT, CARBOHYDRATE, PROTEIN and VITAMINS AND MINERALS.

In a basket have pieces of paper with food items written on them (one food to a paper) or have pictures of food, milk, vegetables, oils, fruits, etc. Make each one of the participants pick up one randomly and go to the correct corner. I.e., the participant with the picture of potato will go to the carbohydrate corner while the one with cheese will go to the protein corner.

The participants in each corner will say the appropriate line

Carbohydrate: I am carbohydrate. I give energy

Fat: I am Fat. I store energy, I protect organs. I help dissolve vitamins.

Protein: I am Protein. I am the building block of the body.

Vitamins and Minerals: I am vitamin and mineral. I help in regulating the body functions.

This activity will help the participants know the properties of the food they eat.

7. Myths and Misconceptions (15 min)

There are certain beliefs that we all grow up with. These differ from place to place and community to community. Some of them are good practices but some are only myths. Let us look at some of these and know the truth. Tell the participants that statements about food will be told to them and they have to tell if they are true or false and why.

1. Myth: Packaged snacks are okay if labelled 'low-fat'

Fact: A food can be low in fat but still be high in other things like sugar, salt, or unhealthy fillers. 'Low-fat' labels can sometimes lead to overeating.

2. Myth: Energy drinks are healthy

Fact: No, energy drinks are generally not considered healthy. They contain high levels of caffeine and sugar, which can lead to various negative health effects.

3. Myth: Sugar from jaggery and honey is healthier than white sugar.

Fact: No, they provided roughly the same amount of calories as white sugar. So it must be consumed in moderation.

4. Myth: Non-vegetarian food makes you more aggressive.

Fact: No, there is no scientific evidence to support the notion that non-vegetarian food directly causes aggression.

5. Myth: Microwaving food causes cancer.

Fact: No, microwaving food is safe. The electromagnetic waves used in microwaves heat food by shaking water molecules at a high speed, thus increasing temperature.

6. Myth: Eating carrots improves eyesight.

Fact: Carrots do have vitamin A, which is essential for eye health, but they cannot cure existing vision problems or improve eyesight beyond normal levels.

7. Myth: Eating late at night leads to weight gain.

Fact: No, weight gain is determined by the total number of calories consumed throughout the day, not the timing of meals.

8. Myth: Brown eggs are healthier than white eggs.

Fact: The colour of an eggshell has no impact on its nutritional value. The nutritional content of eggs remains the same, regardless of shell colour.

9. Myth: Eating spicy food causes stomach ulcers.

Fact: It can cause temporary discomfort for some individuals, but it does not directly cause stomach ulcers.

10. Myth: Skipping meals helps in weight loss.

Fact: Skipping meals can disrupt your metabolism and lead to overeating later in the day. So does not help in weight loss.

11. Myth: Eating red meat is bad for your heart.

Fact: Excessive consumption of processed and fatty meats may increase the risk of heart disease. Balance is the key.

12. Myth: Eating fat makes you fat.

Fact: Fat is required by the body. Excess of fat can cause many problems, making you fat is only one of them. So have them in moderation.

13. Myth: Eating curd (yogurt) at night causes cold.

Fact: Eating curd at night does not directly cause a cold. Colds are caused by viral infections.

14. Myth: Eating fruits and dairy (curd, milk) together is harmful.

Fact: There is no scientific evidence to support this claim. It is safe and nutritious to consume them together.

15. Myth: Eating green leafy vegetables raw is more nutritious.

Fact: Cooking green leafy vegetables can enhance the availability of certain nutrients by breaking down their cellular structures. Some nutrients are better absorbed when cooked.

16. Myth: Drinking water immediately after a meal hampers digestion.

Fact: Drinking water during or after a meal does not significantly impact digestion. In fact, it can aid in the digestion process by helping to break down food.

17. Myth: Chewing gum stays in your stomach for seven years.

Fact: Chewing gum is not digested like regular food but passes through the digestive system within a few days. It does not stay in the stomach for seven years.

8. Learning to read labels on food packages: (10 min)

Ask the participants if they have ever read the label of any of the packaged food they buy. If yes, what do they read and understand? If not, then why not?

Reading the label on any food that is bought is so important that one must make a habit of it. One has to know what they are consuming. It can start initially about basic things like ingredients and 'best before' date, warning information and storage information. Then go into things like preservatives added, colour added, nutrition information, etc.

Also remember that 'low sugar' might mean less sugar but could be high in fat giving the same amount of calories. 'No chemical preservative' could be no chemical preservatives but high in salt or sugar, which are also preservatives but are natural. These have to be understood before consuming the product.

The things that we need to look at on the label:

- **Product Name:**

This is the name of the product, which should accurately describe the food or item.

- **Ingredients List:**

This list will have the most abundant ingredient listed first. This is crucial for understanding what you're consuming and for those with allergies.

- **Nutrition Information:**

- o **Serving Size:** This indicates the portion size for which the nutritional information is provided.

- o **Calories:** The number of calories per serving.

- o **% Daily Value:** This shows how much of a nutrient is provided by the product in relation to daily recommendations.

- o **Other Nutrients:** This section details the amount of fat, protein, carbohydrates, and other key nutrients per serving.

- **Expiration Date:**

'Best Before' or 'Use by': This indicates how long the product is expected to be at its peak quality or should be consumed by for safety. Also remember that after the 'best before' date the food does not become toxic or poisonous but will not give you the amount of nutrition written on the label.

- **Storage Instructions:**

This tells you how to properly store the product to maintain its quality and safety.

- **Allergen Information:**

This section will highlight ingredients that are common allergens, such as nuts, dairy, soy, etc.

- **Warnings:**

Pay attention to any warnings regarding the product. They could be unsafe for children or for pregnant and lactating mothers or for people with high blood pressure, etc.

Key Messages

- It is important to know what one is eating – the nutritive value, how it helps the body and how much to have
- Overdoing anything is harmful. So is having less than required. Balance is a requirement.
- Water is important
- Read and understand labels

SESSION 7

Values Quest



Objectives

- To teach adolescents importance of values
- To understand the meaning of different values - teamwork, empathy, honesty, and responsibility and others



Duration

- 60 min



Methodology

- Activity with Cards



Materials Required

- Set of value cards. The value on one face and definition/explanation on the other.

Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Recap the information given in the previous meet.

2. Personal Reflection and Sharing (20 minutes)

Begin the session with a game.

- Spread the value cards face down on a table.
- Invite each participant to select one card.
- Once everyone has a card, ask one of them to read the value aloud.
- If unfamiliar with the value, ask him/her to read the explanation given on the other side of the card.
- Once the value is understood, ask him/her to share one incident where they practiced that value.

- Encourage them to discuss:
 - o The context of the situation.
 - o How they demonstrated the value.
 - o Their feelings during and after the incident.
- Facilitate a group discussion, allowing others to ask questions or share similar experiences.

Note to facilitator: The participants could, at first, hesitate or not understand what they have been told to do. Help a couple of them out, with a personal example if required. This will overcome their inertia and they will take over.

3. Group Activity: Value Prioritization (15 minutes)

Now that they know about the values, go on to this activity. Get the participants to form groups. Let the groups not be too large, about 3-5 participants to a group. Let them sit together and discuss the following:

- Share their selected values.
- Discuss the importance of each value
- Collaboratively rank the values in order of significance to the group.

Once they have completed their discussion, reconvene and have each group present their rankings and rationale – why they have ranked the values so.

4. Defining 'Value': (5 min)

Now as the participants know what comprises of Values, explain the concept of Value is.

Values are individual beliefs that motivate people to act as they do. They serve as a guide for their behaviour. Generally, values are what they people have seen through their families and what they have grown up with. Values also differ from one culture to another but most of them are common to all mankind. Values are principles and ideals that guide our beliefs and motivate our actions. They help us determine what is important to us and what we prioritize in our lives.

5. Debrief and Reflection (10 minutes)

Now, with all participants together, do a small debrief of the activity and leanings from that. It can be done by asking the following questions:

- Was did the participants learn?
- Would they apply these to situations in their lives?
- Did listening to other participant's experiences give them confidence to apply these values in their lives?
- Were they able to articulate their thoughts?
- Did they feel uncomfortable sharing personal stories?
- In what way are the values that they learnt influence their life from now on?

6. Conclusion (5 minutes)

- Summarize key takeaways from the session.
- Encourage participants to continue reflecting on their values and consider how they can align their actions with these values in everyday life.

Facilitator Notes: *Some of the most important values that we will look at today are honesty, empathy, teamwork, and responsibility, assertiveness, punctuality, compassion etc.*

a) Honesty: Generally, we say honesty is speaking the truth. It also includes showing respect towards others, having integrity and self-awareness. It also includes not willing to lie, steal or deceiving anyone in any way. Shows self-discipline and uprightness of character.

Example: You and your sister were given a job to do at home. You did not but your sister finished doing it. Both of you were praised by your parents. Honesty will be telling the parents that your sister did all the work and you did not help.

b) Empathy: It means understanding and sharing someone else's feelings. It's like putting yourself in their shoes to see the world from their point of view. It means being supportive of their feelings. If someone is feeling sad, you understand why and feel sad with them. If they are excited about something, you recognise their reason to be happy and be happy with them.

Example: A friend had made a very nice project for the science fair but it fell and was destroyed. He is feeling very sad. If you are a real friend, you will tell him that he did put in a lot of effort and it was really good. You will help him to put it together again. Your understanding his sadness will help him to recover and maybe get him ready to do the project again.

c) Teamwork: In simple words, it is a group of people who work towards a goal to achieve success. It also means working with a team, understanding everyone on the team along with their strengths and weakness. The ability to work together with the skills that each one brings to the table is team work.

Example: The school function is to be held and a group of you are told to set up the stage for the play. The group is the team. Some are good at making posters, some good at arranging furniture needed, some will help with sound system and so on. Those who are capable of each of these smaller responsibilities will take them up. But all have to work together to have everything ready and working by the final day.

d) Responsibility: This means being accountable for the work one takes up as one is committed to it. When a commitment is done, or responsibility taken up, then it has to be seen through till the very end. If a person does not take responsibility, then he/she is not considered trustworthy or dependable.

Example: Cleaning up your room and completing your homework. You are responsible for that. If you do not do it regularly and properly, then you are shirking your responsibility.

Key Messages

Values are somethings that will stay with us all our life. They might be the very things that could deter us from doing the wrong thing. Some of them as listed below.

- Respect
- Compromising and Adjusting
- Developing a Helping Mentality
- Not to Steal
- Gratitude
- Compassion
- Cooperation
- Perseverance
- Acceptance
- Generosity
- Respecting Other Religions
- Justice
- Honesty
- Not to Hurt Others
- Appreciation for Education
- Sharing
- Courage
- Self-control
- Responsibility

SESSION 8

Values of Relationships and Responsibilities



Objectives

- To understand the importance of relationships
- To know about family structure and the values of relationships
- To learn about responsibilities of a family member
- To get an insight of the relationship of family in the Indian context.



Duration

60 min



Methodology

- Drawing family tree
- Discussion on relationships and responsibilities of individuals
- Discussion on the dynamics of the family in India



Materials Required

- Chart paper/board and markers
- Drawing sheets and pencils
- Chart of values of responsibilities and relationships in a family

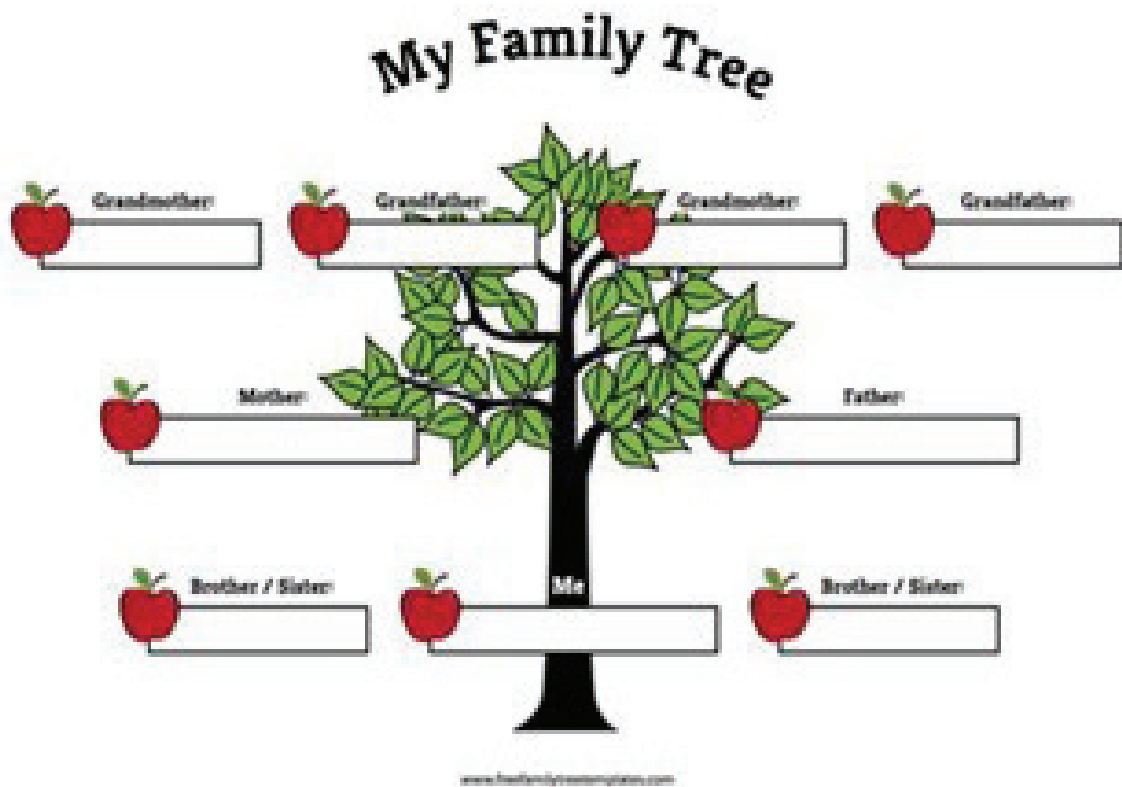
Process

1. Recall: (5 min)

Do a quick recap of the topics that were discussed in the previous session.

2. Family tree: (15 min)

- In the beginning of the session call out one participant and ask her who all are there in her family. Ask her about grandparents too. Then try and draw a family tree on the board – with grandparents, parents and siblings.



Tell them the family is not only those shown in the family tree but also Aunts, Uncles and cousins. Then give the participants paper and pencil and let them draw their own family tree.

3. Relationship with family members: (10 min)

Get the participants talk about their relationship with their family members. These could be the questions asked to elicit required responses.

- Who is the person who is always happy and laughing?
- Does your grandmother make your favourite dish when you visit her?
- Who takes you for an outing?
- Do you fight with your siblings?
- Who is strict with you?
- Do you share secrets with your siblings?
- Who is the person you discuss your day with?
- Does your Uncle tell you stories?
- Do you go out as a family to watch a movie or on a trip?

These will give an idea how their relationship is with their family. This will also lead them to the subject of having a healthy relationship with their family.

4. Values and responsibilities in Relationships: (20 min)

Explain that these family members are the people who are very important part of their life. They are the ones who will help you to grow and the first people who will help you in your good times or bad. So it is important have good relationship with them.

The relationship with family has an impact on you from the day you are born. Their values are the ones that you inculcate. Along with learning from them, there is some responsibility that one has to take up. This is done by every member of the family. In relationships, values and responsibilities are intertwined, creating a foundation for healthy and rewarding associations. Shared values, like communication, respect, and trust are crucial for building strong bonds. Taking responsibility means being accountable for actions and sharing within the relationship, promoting growth and mutual respect.

Note to facilitator: As participants are young children, they might not understand these concepts or might not like accept their worth. They will have to be explained with examples with context to their lives or environment.

Values in Relationships

1. Communication:

Be open and honest in your communication. It is essential for finding a way to resolve challenges and understanding each other's needs.

2. Respect:

Valuing each other's opinions and boundaries cultivates mutual respect and equality within the relationship.

3. Trust:

Trust is one of the most important ingredient for a healthy relationship.

4. Loyalty:

Remaining dependable in the relationship, even during difficult times, shows commitment and loyalty.

5. Appreciation:

Recognizing and acknowledging each other's positive contributions strengthens the bond.

6. Forgiveness:

Learning to forgive mistakes and misunderstandings is crucial for building a long lasting bond.

7. Openness:

Sharing thoughts, feelings and weaknesses allows for deeper connection and understanding.

Responsibilities in Relationships:

1. Accountability:

One has to taking ownership of actions and their consequences, both positive and negative.

2. Reliability:

Being dependable and fulfilling commitments builds trust and the family's confidence in you.

3. Support:

In difficult times offering emotional support and encouragement. This shows that you care.

4. Growth:

Nurturing personal growth and development within the relationship will help both to reach their full potential.

5. Conflict Resolution:

There will always be some conflicts – big or small – in a family. One has to look at them constructively and seek solutions together. This solution will make the family bond stronger.

6. Boundaries:

In any relationship, it is necessary that personal boundaries are respected. Crossing these boundaries will strain or break the relationship.

5. Relationship and responsibilities in Indian Society: (10 min)

In the above section we saw the individual requirements to be part of a healthy and robust family. Now let us look at them from the point of view of the family as a unit.

In Indian society, relationship values emphasize mutual understanding, respect, and responsibility. Key aspects include family unity, the importance of elders and honesty. Strong family bonds, community support, and upholding social norms are also crucial.

Family Unity:

Indian culture places a high value on family, often extending beyond nuclear families to include extended relatives.

Respect for Elders:

Respecting elders is a deeply ingrained value, with older family members often having significant influence and authority.

Honesty and Trust:

Honesty and trust are considered fundamental for building and maintaining strong relationships.

Community Support:

A strong sense of community and collective responsibility is often seen in Indian society, with people relying on and supporting each other.

Social Norms and Customs:

Following social norms and customs is important, with a focus on maintaining social harmony and order.

Forgiveness and Tolerance:

The ability to forgive and be tolerant of others' mistakes is also seen as a valued trait in strong relationships.

Service and Compassion:

Many Indian traditions emphasize service to others and compassion for those in need, which can also be applied to relationships.

Note for facilitator: All the points given above can be better understood with examples. Ask the participants themselves to come up with examples. This makes a stronger impact of the teachings.

Key Messages

- A healthy relationship among family and society is necessary to have a strong bond.
- Strong bonds are built with careful thought and understanding
- Responsibilities have to be taken up and duties done
- Equality, understanding, help, comradery, family and society values are part of our life as humans as social beings

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