



# Family Programme

## **FACILITATOR MANUAL**

2021

Leila Patel, Tessa Hochfeld and Jenita Chiba



**sihleng'imizi**  
we care for families



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**Deborah Gorman-Smith, Dean and Emily Klein Gidwitz Professor, Crown School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, the University of Chicago**



The close partnership between the University of Chicago Crown School of Social Work, Policy, and Practice, and the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA) at the University of Johannesburg, has led to one of the most promising interventions designed to improve the lives of children, families and communities.

That intervention, the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, adapted from the SAFE Children program developed by my US research team, has shown positive effects on parenting and children's school attendance and achievement in South Africa – demonstrating that solutions to complex social problems can be adapted across borders and cultures with striking success.

The SAFE Children program began nearly twenty-five years ago in Chicago when we sought to understand academic success and the interventions needed to support positive social and behavioral outcomes among students in disadvantaged urban neighborhoods. We examined a broad range of community factors and conditions – poverty rates, neighborhood crime and violence, available resources, and family involvement – to understand gaps, identify strengths and risks, and develop interventions to support the health and wellbeing of children and families.

Successfully adapting this program in South Africa has hinged on the insights and cultural sensitivities of the team at CSDA, led by Professor Leila Patel. The researchers ensured that the Sihleng'imizi programme reflected local languages, literacy levels of caregivers, and the unique context of the community. We are proud to have partnered on this adaptation and look forward to results that test Sihleng'imizi's impact on family relations, social and community connections, and caregiver involvement.

In the coming months, we will continue to monitor the adaptation of the SAFE Children programme in South Africa and other global locales, including Azerbaijan and China. Above all, we believe the Sihleng'imizi programme is an inspiring and innovative community model that will help advance ambitious goals and neighborhood strategies – fostering greater economic and educational equity, and creating enduring policies that can inform adaptations in communities across the continent and around the world.

**Mayke Huijbregts, United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund (UNICEF) South Africa**



On behalf of UNICEF South Africa, it is a great privilege to introduce this important workbook developed by the University of Johannesburg through the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA).

For the past 75 years, UNICEF has been working around the world to ensure that every child grows up with a fair chance of thriving to their fullest potential. For this to happen, the

important role of families and caregivers – as children's primary duty bearers in creating a caring and nurturing environment – cannot be overstated.

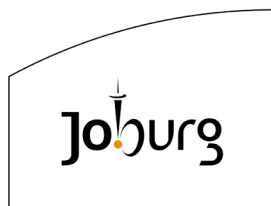
We hope that with the examples and practices shared in this workbook, parents and caregivers will feel empowered with the tools that they need to provide their child with nurturing care, nutrition, information, safety and support.

UNICEF is proud to partner with the CSDA to develop instruments that contribute towards empowering caregivers in creating a kinder world for children – one in which every child's dreams can become a reality.

**Professor Catherine L. Ward, Department of Psychology, University of Cape Town**

Families in South Africa are beset on all sides with numerous stressors: the cost of living, community violence, widespread substance abuse, and high unemployment rates. These stressors impact on children and on parents' ability to raise them. In this context, strongly evidence-informed, supportive interventions are desperately needed. Sihleng'imizi Family Programme comes into this space to offer skills for improving family relationships, nutrition and budgets; and, ultimately, hope and the possibility of thriving. Parents' and children's lives will be the better for it, and I look forward to its use in South Africa and other low-resource contexts.

## **Aletta Mzimela, Deputy Director, City of Johannesburg**



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The City of Johannesburg is home to a population of approximately 5.5 million people with diverse needs and social challenges. The City is challenged to address complex social ills of people from all walks of life. In our work we partner with various stakeholders, including institutions of higher learning. One such partnership is the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme in the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA) at the University of Johannesburg. Sihleng'imizi is a prevention and intervention programme.

The Department of Social Development, the City, social workers and childcare officers were at the forefront in implementing the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme in various communities characterised by socio-economic inequalities.

The Social Development team used the opportunity as a learning platform. This had positive spin offs such as enhancing family functioning and finding solutions to intergenerational gaps and communication. Lessons learned are used in implementing the effective parenting program that forms part of the substance abuse program intervention. Families are the cornerstone of society: "Healthy families result in healthy communities."

## **Percy Ntsoane, Acting Director for Families: Directorate, Department of Social Development**



**social development**

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The family is the core of society and is integral to the general wellbeing of individuals in relation to their psychosocial, emotional, physical, spiritual and economic needs. A well-functioning family provides members with emotional, social and material support that is sustaining throughout life. It is also a cradle from which the values and norms of a society are transmitted and preserved.

Families in South Africa are diverse and various family forms can be identified; thus the focus of the White Paper on Families is on family functioning rather than family structure. Services to families should be family-focused, and the needs of the family should be holistically addressed. The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme will assist in providing – vulnerable families in particular –and families generally, with the necessary skills to discharge their responsibilities when caring for vulnerable family members. The Department of Social Development will support any evidence-based programmes aimed at strengthening families.

## **Mastoera Sadan, former Programme Manager, Programme to Support Pro-poor Policy Development (PSPPD)**

How do parents and caregivers learn to parent their own children or children in their care? They invariably would have learnt from their own parents or caregivers. For some it is a largely positive experience, for others it may have been a difficult and traumatic experience. For many it is somewhere in between. The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme supports parents and caregivers who are often trying their best under very difficult circumstances.

The Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA) and their partners, of which the PSPPD was one, supported the initial research 'Family Contexts, child support grants and child well-being outcomes'. The research served as a basis to investigate an intervention to complement the positive impacts of the Child Support Grant (CSG). This Sihleng'imizi Manual is one of the products of that process. The design of the programme took into account the real world institutional capacity for implementation, which is far too often not the case, as pilot programmes often overlook this very important factor.

The research, undertaken by CSDA and others, shows that while the CSG has been successful to some extent at addressing income poverty, it is not sufficient. The initial research and the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme show that a complementary programme which supports parents and children can contribute to further improve child wellbeing.

The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme demonstrates what can be achieved when academia, policy makers, practitioners and community members work in partnership to collaborate to address societal challenges. It exemplifies evidence-based policy making and implementation.



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### **Reflections from family members who have participated in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.<sup>1</sup>**

"I have seen a big change in that we are now respectful towards each other with my boy. When one is talking the other one listens..." (Sindi, Caregiver)

"I can now calm down; I am a person who is loud. It has been able to calm me down, even if that thing makes me angry there and there. I am no longer that person who becomes jumpy, shouting." (Lindiwe, Caregiver)

"When she did something I like I hug her and tell her that I am happy. I also give her a high-5. She knows that this thing is good." (Nobuhle, Caregiver)

"Now there's a bigger change because I don't hit them anymore. I just sit with them down and talk, explain and advise them yes...because I was unable...When you find that I'm angry, I would pick up a stick and hit them." (Adeleide, Caregiver)

"I also have my calming corner so that I don't get worked up." (Nolwazi, Caregiver)

"I used to be loud, and shout and shout. But now I have seen that shouting makes her worse, so I better be polite and reprimand her while I am calm, then she understands better." (Lindiwe, Caregiver)

"There is a change because the younger one didn't like school but now he enjoys going to school." (Masego, Caregiver)

"When S comes back from school, I was checking his homework but sometime I would forget to check the books but now, even if I did not check, S will come to me and say, 'Mom they said at school we must do these.' And we will take the books and look and write the homework in time." (Samke, Caregiver)

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<sup>1</sup> Quotes from *Connecting cash with care for better child well-being: An evaluation of a Family and Community Strengthening Programme for beneficiaries of the Child Support Grant*. Authors: Leila Patel, Tessa Hochfeld, Eleanor Ross, Jenita Chiba, Karin Luck. February 2019

"[Since being at Sihleng'imizi] I am now able to communicate with them [aunts and cousins]. We are now able to talk...we are able to visit each other. They come a lot." (Khanyisile, Caregiver)

"We didn't understand budget but when we met with them [Sihleng'imizi], they were able to tell us what budget is about. So I know that when you budget you must take this much money and keep it for this and that, and you must buy food like this and that so you will be able to save the money you see. So we've learnt a lot." (Siphokazi, Caregiver)

"... now I know that when I have money I don't buy wants before needs." (Lesedi, Caregiver)

"We have learned that there are needs, there are wants, there are obligations from the things we need. You should know which one is more important than all of them. There are those we do for fun and there are those that are your needs." (Ayanda, Caregiver)

"It helped me to be able to budget for the future, and also not to take risk about loan sharking." (Muzi, caregiver)

"There is a change because now I am able to praise them when they have done something good, or sometimes I am able to give them rewards ... Even not to shout when I talk to them, [I] tell them in a right manner." (Nomvula, Caregiver)

"We started to re-structure the rules. For instance... their sleeping time is 8 o'clock... I don't like it when they are late for school, and now I don't have much challenges than before... We used to eat one by one....[now] we eat as a family because we can have some talks while we are eating." (Gugu, Caregiver)

"What makes me proud is that I am an uncle to these children. I am always with them to keep them away from fighting and also to keep them company so that they don't have to feel isolated like the way I felt isolated some other times." (Muzi, Caregiver)

"Some papers she was not taking out when she got home and we asked her if she has a homework, she would say she doesn't have a homework while she has it. But now she is able to say, 'Dad, here I have a homework. Please help me where I don't understand.'" (Aubrey, Caregiver)

"I talked to [the teacher] asking how he is doing and they said he is doing well ... In the beginning I never went, it was my first time going." (Phunzo, Caregiver)

"This thing of Sihleng'imizi buddy, it made me change in my life and be like other people, the way they live, and enjoy my life ... It was [also useful] by changing my relationship with the family, we were not getting along too much before." (Nkhensani, Caregiver)

"In December when [the children] were graduating, when they were all finishing their grade, we were sitting together at school as a group from Sihleng'imizi. People thought we were family, we were a family from Sihleng'imizi." (Nobuhle, Caregiver)

"...Sometimes it happens that you come across someone [from the Sihleng'imizi group] at the shops... It's like we are people who have known each other for long, the way [we greet]. Because even over the phone, I can just phone special and greet them, 'Are you still there? I am still here. When are you going to the rural areas?' And things like that." (Ayanda, Caregiver)

"... So, since we joined the group now we know what and how we are supposed to eat and that we should exercise so that we can stay healthy." (Oratile)

"My mother, me and my cousin and my aunt, we are outside taking pictures. We went for a picnic and all the stuff. My aunt picked up flowers for my grandmother and we went back home." (Child)

## Background

The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is a South African adaption of the Schools and Families Education (SAFE) Children Family programme developed by Professor Deborah Gorman-Smith at the School of Social Service Administration, University of Chicago, USA. This was a collaborative project between the University of Johannesburg and the University of Chicago. The South African adaption of the programme is geared to enhancing support for families receiving a Child Support Grant (CSG) to improve child and family wellbeing outcomes. This study was led by Professor Leila Patel, Department of Science and Technology (DST) / National Research Foundation (NRF) South African Research Chair in Welfare and Social Development, CSDA, University of Johannesburg with the late Professor Tessa Hochfeld, who was an Associate Professor, CSDA, University of Johannesburg. This study now continues under the leadership of Professor Leila Patel.

## Acknowledgements

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The original material in this manual was developed by Professor Deborah Gorman-Smith and adapted by Molly Coeling, Tessa Hochfeld and Jenita Chiba in 2016. Substantial parts of the manual were drawn from the Sinovuyo Caring Families Manual and the Sinovuyo Caring Families Teen Manual, which are open source material. This contribution is gratefully acknowledged. The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme underwent further adaption following the piloting of the programme by Jenita Chiba and Tessa Hochfeld in 2016. Subsequent advanced testing and evaluation of the programme in 2017 in ten of the poorest wards in the City of Johannesburg, supported by UNICEF, resulted in further adaption – and this version of the manual – by Leila Patel in 2021. Editorial support was provided by Karen Hurt, an editor and expert in the writing of learning materials for both children and adults. Karen Hurt provided invaluable insight and guidance on the content and presentation of the material which is gratefully acknowledged. We acknowledge and thank Tinovimba Patsika for proofreading the Sihleng'imizi Facilitator Manual, Family Workbook and Childcare Worker Manual.

I wish to thank the following people at the CSDA and the University of Chicago who were involved in the development and testing of the programme over the years. Thank you to Tessa Hochfeld, Jenita Chiba, Deborah-Gorman Smith, Franklin Cosey-Gay, Molly Coeling, Hema Kesa, Innocentia Kgaphola, Senzelwe Mthembu, Keletso Sello, Lauren Graham, Kgomotso Mangolela, Ruth Chauke and Sibusiso Mcanyana for inputs at varying stages of the development of this programme.

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### Leila Patel

DST/NRF South African Research Chair in Welfare and Social Development  
Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA), University of Johannesburg

May 2021

## **Dedication**

This Sihleng'imizi Facilitator Manual and its accompanying Family Workbook are dedicated to Tessa Hochfeld to whom we will forever be indebted.

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## **Childcare Worker Manual**

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# Introduction

## 1. Welcome to the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

Over 12.5 million children, or two thirds of all children in South Africa, received a Child Support Grant (CSG) in 2020. The CSG is a cash transfer that has had a positive impact on child nutrition, school attendance and in reducing income poverty in poor families with children. To enhance child wellbeing in a holistic fashion, and to further accelerate the positive benefits of the CSG, complementary family and community-centred care and support services are needed.

Drawing on our research at the Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA), University of Johannesburg, South Africa, and its partners on *Family contexts, Child Support Grants and child wellbeing in South Africa* (Patel et al, 2017), a family intervention was designed and piloted in 2016. It was further evaluated and tested in 2017. The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is a social development educational intervention that is preventative. It was specifically designed to complement and scale up the positive benefits of the CSG, one of the country's largest cash transfer programmes. The Sihleng'imizi intervention increases caregiver capabilities in key domains that are risk factors for compromised child wellbeing.

The programme is targeted at children under eight years of age who are in Grade R and Grade 1, and who are receiving a CSG. Trained social workers and childcare workers deliver the intervention. Adjustments were made to the programme content and delivery based on feedback from the pilot study in an urban and a rural area. Further advanced testing and evaluation was concluded in ten of the poorest wards in the City of Johannesburg in the second half of 2017. In each case, rigorous evaluation studies were conducted (Patel, Hochfeld, Ross, Chiba & Luck, 2019) and can be accessed at [https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/humanities/csda/Documents/CSDA\\_Sihleng%27imizi\\_REPORT\\_ConnectCashwithCare\\_Feb2019\\_ONLINE.pdf](https://www.uj.ac.za/faculties/humanities/csda/Documents/CSDA_Sihleng%27imizi_REPORT_ConnectCashwithCare_Feb2019_ONLINE.pdf).

These evaluation studies informed further adaption of the programme content. Sihleng'imizi is an evidence-based family programme which has undergone continuous strengthening based on empirical evidence (Patel and Ross, 2020; Hochfeld, Chiba & Patel, 2020; Ross, Patel, Sitshange & Matidza, 2020; Patel, Hochfeld & Chiba, 2019).

## The aim of the programme

The aim of the programme is to improve child wellbeing in the broad domains of social, material, emotional, physical and educational wellbeing. Domain-specific areas include:

- family social relations – positive family functioning
- success in school
- financial / budgeting awareness
- nutritional knowledge
- resource management and community connectedness
- social and emotional wellbeing.

You will find the specific goals of the programme on page 3. The strengthening of child wellbeing is to be achieved through increasing the knowledge and skills of parents/caregivers and their support systems. This in turn is assumed to yield positive personal returns for them, in addition to their families, and the identified child.

Sihleng'imizi is an isiZulu phrase that means *we care for families*. Sihleng'imizi is an adaption of the SAFE Children family programme which was designed for poor urban families in Chicago, USA. While the SAFE Children family programme was created for a different context, it contains some of the key programme components relevant to disadvantaged and poor families living in difficult circumstances in South Africa. These components relate to (a) family functioning, and (b) enhancing educational success. It was thus chosen as the basis on which to create a new, culturally relevant, locally appropriate programme for South African families that receive one or more CSGs. The history and trajectory of the development of SAFE Children family programme is outlined below.

## 2. SAFE Children family programme: Background and history

The SAFE Children family programme was developed by the Institute for Juvenile Research (IJR) at the University of Illinois at Chicago (UIC) in collaboration with a number of Chicago public schools. The project is designed to help families living in urban environments prevent substance misuse and related antisocial behaviour in their children by targeting key risk markers for this outcome, and improving school success.

Tolan, Gorman-Smith and Henry (2004) show that the SAFE Children family programme has been proven to:

- decrease child aggression.
- improve reading scores and academic functioning.
- maintain caregiver involvement in their child's schooling.

- improve or maintain the child's concentration and prosocial behaviour.

The SAFE Children family programme began in 1997 at seven schools in Chicago. Of the more than 400 families of Grade 1 children who agreed to participate, half were randomly selected to serve as a control group; families were interviewed periodically by staff from the SAFE Children family programme. The other half participated in a series of family groups that lasted throughout their children's 1st grade year. Their children received tutoring in reading as well. This initial intervention proved successful in increasing children's academic achievement and effecting change in several domains linked to risk for antisocial behaviour later in development. Three years later, a random half of the families who participated in the initial SAFE Children family programme were asked to participate in a second "booster" intervention. The booster successfully built on the positive academic, behavioural and social benefits that children and their families experienced in the initial intervention by extending these intervention effects and services for additional children and families.

The second round of implementation of the SAFE Children family programme intervention focused on the scalability of the SAFE Children family programme. In 2006, the families of all 1st grade children in each of six elementary schools in three disadvantaged communities of Chicago were invited to participate. Half were given the family programme and half served as a control group. SAFE Children family programme collaborated with the executive team at Habilitative Systems Inc. (HSI) and Children's Home + Aid to train their staff to deliver family groups in their community schools. To deliver the tutoring component of the intervention, they trained teacher-nominated 7th and 8th grade learners to administer the comprehensive, structured tutoring programme. Delivering at a larger scale also proved successful.

### 3. Design of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

The Centre for Social Development in Africa (CSDA), University of Johannesburg and the faculty of the Families and Communities Research Group, University of Chicago School of Social Service Administration collaborated to adapt the SAFE Children family programme for the South African environment. Drawing on the lessons learnt from the SAFE Children family programme and CSDA's research (Patel et al., 2017), as well as local literature (Richter & Naicker, 2013), a 12-week training programme was devised. Teams of practitioners and researchers in South Africa and Chicago collaborated in the adaptation. This involved a review of all aspects of the programme, including training of facilitators and supervisors.

While Sihleng'imizi was modelled on the SAFE Children family programme, the South African programme is new in that it was specifically developed to complement the positive gains derived from cash transfers in the form of Child Support Grants (CSGs) and to promote overall child wellbeing. Aspects of the SAFE Children family programme – such as its preventative and educational goals, the focus on reducing risk factors for child wellbeing in disadvantaged communities, the methodology, delivery principles, and its positive outcomes – inspired the adaptation and design of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. The rationale and goals of the SAFE Children family programme, its conceptualisation, identification of target groups, programme content, delivery principles and implementation were redefined to inform the design of a local family intervention that is more closely aligned to South Africa's developmental model of social welfare and priorities. For instance, the goals were broadened to include additional outcomes such as enhancing material wellbeing. Based on learnings from the pilot programme, an additional nutritional component has been added, and the recruitment and selection criteria were revised. Additional outcomes were added, such as addressing parent / caregiver depression, as this emerged as a factor that influenced child nutrition and child wellbeing outcomes among CSG beneficiaries in previous research (see Patel et al., 2017).

Taking into account the nature of cultural diversity in South Africa, Sihleng'imizi was specifically designed to reflect local languages, literacy levels of parent / caregivers, and the social relevance of the topics and activities. Accordingly, every session was adapted, changed and sometimes new parts added to fit the local context. New material was created by the team, as well as material drawn from the *Sinovuyo Caring Families Programme* and the *Sinovuyo Teen Programme* which are parenting and family support programmes developed in South Africa. This material is open source and thus available for use. We would like to gratefully acknowledge the Sinovuyo Programmes, their authors<sup>1</sup> and developers<sup>2</sup>. Modules on financial capabilities were adapted from the CSDA's *Siyakha Youth Assets* programme (Graham et al, CSDA, 2015) and the nutrition module was developed by Dr Hema Kesa, Senior Lecturer: School of Tourism and Hospitality & Director: Food Evolution Research Laboratory (FERL), University of Johannesburg.

The pilot programme was implemented in 2016 in Doornkop, Soweto, Gauteng, and in Moutse, Limpopo by the CSDA team and its partner organisations, *Humana People to People* (Doornkop) and *Ndlovu Care Centre*

1 The *Sinovuyo Caring Families Project Facilitator's Handbook* was written by Jamie McLaren Lachman and Judy Hutchings. The *Sinovuyo Caring Families Programme for Parents and Teens Facilitator Manual* was written by Jenny Doubt, Sibongile Tsoanyane, Lucie Cluver, Catherine Ward and Jamie McLaren Lachman.

2 The Sinovuyo Caring Families Project is a partnership between the Universities of Cape Town, Oxford and Bangor, Clowns Without Borders South Africa, UNICEF South Africa, UNICEF HQ, UNICEF Office of Research – Innocenti and the World Health Organisation.

(Moutse). The programme was facilitated with four family groups: two in the urban site and two in the rural site. Compliance and competence fidelity were monitored, and a qualitative short-term outcome evaluation was conducted. Results were positive and provided direction for further refinement and adaption. A five-month qualitative follow-up evaluation was conducted. The evaluation demonstrated sustained positive outcomes over this period.

This manual is the first published version of Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. It consists of 14 sessions and has been refined according to evaluation recommendations from the 2016 pilot study. The programme has been expanded by two sessions to include a family nutrition component and to allow for more time to cover the substantial material.

## Goals and outcomes of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

The overall aim of this intervention is to improve child wellbeing in poor households receiving a Child Support Grant (CSG). The programme aims to impact positively in the following dimensions:

- 1) **Strengthen child and parent / caregiver relations** through building family cohesion, bonding, improving family communication, and use of positive parenting skills, especially in relation to discipline.
- 2) **Promote social and community connectedness** through improved family connectedness and through positive engagement with community networks and services.
- 3) **Increase parent / caregiver involvement in the child's education** through active support for the child's school work, active addressing of school attendance barriers, and improved advocacy for the child's needs at school.
- 4) **Strengthen financial capabilities of the parent / caregiver and family** through basic financial literacy skills and family budgeting and saving.
- 5) **Improve parent / caregiver and family knowledge of nutrition and hygiene** through basic nutritional information and hygienic home food preparation skills.
- 6) **Enhance social and emotional capacities of caregivers** through knowledge, skills and strengthened social support systems.

## The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

The basic structure of the programme is as follows:

- 1) Multiple family meetings of between four to six families per group are used because previous research, including previous phases of the SAFE Children family programme, suggests that this number of families are efficient forms for service delivery, building social support among participants, and improving parent / caregiver and child interactions.
- 2) The content focuses on parenting / caregiving, family relationship characteristics, such as communication, support and cohesion, caregiver involvement and investment in their child's schooling, financial capabilities, and nutrition education.
- 3) All family members – caregivers, other adults, and all children – are invited to attend these meetings.
- 4) The intervention is delivered in two-hour weekly meetings / sessions for 14 weeks.
- 5) Each session has the same basic format: a review of the previous week's homework, discussion around a focused topic, in-session role plays and activities, and assignment of homework.
- 6) Each facilitator works in a team with a childcare worker who supports the group process by ensuring the full engagement of the children in the group. The childcare worker responsibilities and activities to facilitate are contained in this Sihleng'imizi Facilitator Manual.

The family groups serve four primary functions:

- 1) **Practising behaviour and applying skills.** In each session there are opportunities for families to practise - or observe others practising - family skills and effective ways of relating.
- 2) **Education.** This component helps families recognise their strengths, understand the consequences of negative reinforcement, and learn about risk factors for problem behaviour.
- 3) **Social support.** By facilitating family group coherence, and an atmosphere of mutual interest and concern, the facilitator helps provide families with a source of social support.
- 4) **Agency.** This component offers the space for participants to explore and reflect on their own perspectives and choices. The facilitators will facilitate exploration of the participants' own perspectives about caregiving, such as values, beliefs and practices. Through sharing research findings on the effects of certain behaviours, for example corporal punishment, on the child's development, participants are able to compare what they do with other options for how to manage their children's behaviour.

In addition to the work completed in group sessions, families are given specific tasks to work on and practise at home. Each task is intended to:

- 1) Help families practise what they have learned and to work towards independent / internal responsibility for addressing family issues.
- 2) Provide a sense of continuity between what happens in the group meetings and what happens at home. This continuity is important if families are to feel that what they learn during the session has relevance to their everyday lives.
- 3) Keep the session activities and real life family needs in the foreground of the thinking and discussions about family functioning.
- 4) Offer the opportunity for the co-creation of knowledge and learning in the group involving adults, children, the facilitator and the childcare worker.

Lastly, a buddy system is established early in the programme to help families develop their own support system in the community and to reach out to a peer to seek help.

#### 4. Sihleng'imizi Family Programme: Theoretical model and theory of change

The social development model of child and family wellbeing (Patel et al., 2017) informs the theoretical approach to the intervention. It builds on the principles of developmental social welfare.

The programme is aligned with the developmental welfare model (Patel, 2015) and is based on the following features:

- The right to a Child Support Grant (CSG) for all disadvantaged children is acknowledged.
- Voluntary participation of CSG beneficiary families in the intervention.
- Co-creation of learning between facilitators and group members.
- Acknowledgement of the agency of participants as change agents.
- Empowerment of the family group by strengthening their knowledge and skills.
- Delivery of a programme that is holistic to promote child wellbeing. Programme content includes all aspects relevant to child wellbeing: social, emotional, material, physical and educational.
- Working in a partnership with families, schools, local authorities, nongovernmental organisations (NGOs) and higher education institutions.
- Interventions that have the potential to scale up social impact through the delivery of integrated family and community-based information, education and preventative programmes.

The social development model draws on the developmental-ecological risk theory, systems thinking and the psycho-educational approach to family intervention. These are briefly described next.

**First**, the intervention focuses on specific risk factors that may compromise child wellbeing and that may require strengthening in specific domains. The concept of developmental-ecological risk provides a useful schema for identifying risks at the individual, relationship, community and societal levels. Individual development is thought to exist within different circles of social structures.

Individuals live in families, which exist in extended family and friendship systems. They, in turn, exist within larger social contexts, such as schools and neighbourhoods. Neighbourhoods are affected by the community and society as a whole. Each of these social settings affect human development both directly and indirectly (Bronfenbrenner, 1979; Tolan, Guerra & Kendall, 1995). The families in the intervention could be considered at risk due to the social, environmental and developmental context – the ecology – in which they live (Tolan et al., 1995).

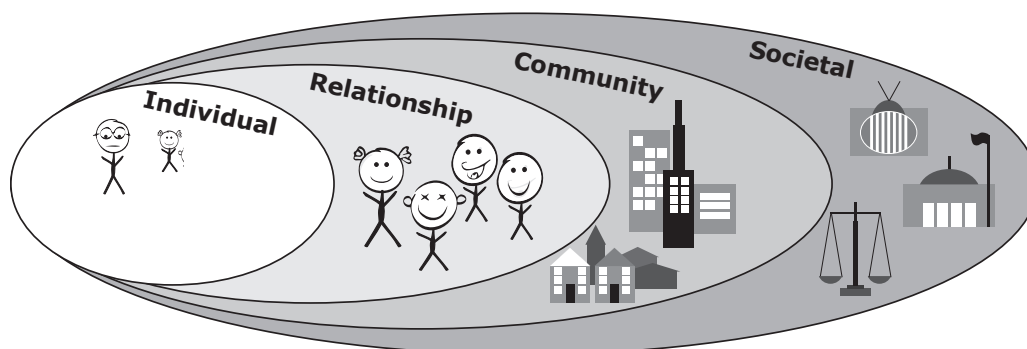


Figure 1: Development Ecological Model source: <http://www.wcsap.org><sup>3</sup>

3 [https://www.google.com/search?q=the+Sinovuyo+Caring+Families+Programme+and+the+Sinovuyo+Teen+Programme&rlz=1C1GCEB\\_enZA875ZA875&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&f](https://www.google.com/search?q=the+Sinovuyo+Caring+Families+Programme+and+the+Sinovuyo+Teen+Programme&rlz=1C1GCEB_enZA875ZA875&tbm=isch&source=iu&ictx=1&f) [Accessed 10.09.2020]



With reference to the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, all the families participating in the programme receive one or more CSGs, which is means-tested, and goes only to poor children. While many of the families display real strength and resilience, we consider them to be at risk due to poverty, a lack of resources and opportunities in employment and education, and other challenges that come from their difficult social environment. Complementary family interventions that address these risks specifically could promote optimal family functioning. In addition, positive parenting / caregiving is strongly associated with positive child wellbeing outcomes. By minimising risks, we are able to prevent future behavioural problems and promote positive social behaviours (Ward, Van Der Merwe, & Dawes, 2012; Ward & Wessels, 2013; Tolan, Gorman-Smith, Huesmann & Zelli, 1997; Webster-Stratton, Reid & Hammond, 2001).

**Second**, a systemic ecological approach to understanding families is widely used in social work with families. A family is made up of a network of interdependent relationships that need to work synergistically to achieve optimal social outcomes. Effecting systemic changes in family relationships, and how the family connects with the wider community (see Figure 1), could have positive benefits for the way in which the family is functioning.

**Third**, the psycho-educational approach to increase access to information, knowledge and skills in parenting / caregiving could promote and prevent social and behaviour difficulties in the short, medium and longer term. These findings emerged from longitudinal research of the SAFE Children family programme (Tolan et al., 2004). Further, in the South African context, many families lack information about where and how to access resource and services such as social grants, private maintenance for children, housing subsidies, access to public works programmes, and applications for identity documents, to mention a few. Information failures and knowledge gaps are widely recognised to be major obstacles to improved wellbeing and the empowerment of at risk groups. Addressing these knowledge and information gaps through a family intervention is assumed to have beneficial child wellbeing effects.

**Fourth**, the interventions in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme combine components of psycho-educational, functional and structural strategic approaches to family intervention. They are grounded in developmental-ecological theory (Tolan et al., 1995) and focus on helping families raise their children while acknowledging the constraints and opportunities of their social contexts. It is a preventive programme designed to assist families to manage the stresses and challenges of everyday life in poor or difficult circumstances.

The family relational components of the programme in particular work by:

- 1) helping families develop a daily organisational structure that promotes their children's social and academic success.
- 2) improving, or maintaining, positive family relations that have been shown to give children support, improve family connectedness, and decrease risk for antisocial or problem behaviour.
- 3) helping families understand and use their inner strengths to protect them from stressful environmental influences and to meet developmental and social-ecological challenges.
- 4) helping families ask for and use help when necessary.

To do this, the programme helps families to:

- identify strengths and goals.
- define and resolve concrete problems that are of concern to all family members.
- develop networks of support to help them understand and manage their children.
- develop skills in behaviour management, financial education and nutrition.

In summary, the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme was designed to bring about change in five domains of child wellbeing with specific benefits for caregivers as well. The intervention is based on theory-based assumptions about factors that are associated with child wellbeing (Patel et al., 2017). It uses psycho-educational family intervention models to effect change in the domains that follow (Tolan et al., 2004).

## **Family social relations**

The quality of relations, communication, social cohesion, behavioural management and caregiving capabilities are critical ways to improve family functioning and contribute to the social and emotional development of the child.

## **Educational development**

Helping children succeed at school, especially in the early years, is likely to yield long-term educational outcomes. One of the key factors in enhancing success at school is through parental / caregiver involvement in the child's education.

## **Physical development**

Improved knowledge and skills of caregivers about nutrition is associated with positive child health and educational benefits.

## **Financial capabilities to enhance material wellbeing**

Besides the financial support provided through the CSG, enhanced knowledge and skills in family financial matters could improve social and economic wellbeing.

## **Social wellbeing and community connectedness**

Knowledge and skills to access and sustain family support systems, social and basic services and connectedness to community support systems are known to moderate life stress and improve family functioning.

By increasing the knowledge and skills of parents / caregivers and the family group as a whole, we anticipate that the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme will lead to tangible changes in child wellbeing outlined above. We anticipate that the programme will be beneficial not only for the children, but also the parents / caregivers, in that it could result in lower caregiver stress levels and depression, improved self-esteem, confidence and social support.

# **The purpose and structure of this Sihleng'imizi Facilitator Manual and Childcare Manual**

## **Part One: Principles and issues**

This section has been designed to achieve two main goals:

- provide information about the application of the theoretical approaches in which the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention is grounded.
- address practical issues.

## **Part Two: Description of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme**

This section provides a brief and concrete overview of the structure and methods used in the Sihleng'imizi intervention.

## **Part Three: How to facilitate each of the 14 sessions**

This represents the bulk of the manual. It consists of the descriptions of each session of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention and how to facilitate each one. Families each receive a Family Workbook which contains information that aligns with each session's content and homework activities.

## **Part 1: Principles and issues**

The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is grounded in theory that assumes the following:

- The family serves as the primary support and socialising space for children.
- Behaviour in families is functional and is meant to help families maintain integrity and cope with challenges.
- What families must do, and the challenges they face, are dependent on the age / developmental stage of the children, and on the communities in which they live.
- Family-focused interventions are among the most powerful ways to produce positive child outcomes and prevent antisocial behaviour.

### **1. Applying the family systems approach**

A systems perspective maintains that a family is a network of interdependent relationships that works to maintain how things are and resists change. Each person fulfils a role, or performs particular tasks, and has reciprocal responsibilities and obligations in the family. This may be implemented in both productive and unproductive ways. There are often established patterns of behaviour in families that tend to be repeated. For a more detailed breakdown and application of the family system approaches, see Appendix I.

From this perspective – based on interacting relationships – problems are not the 'fault' of individuals. Families can work together to develop more useful ways of relating and solving difficulties. The family systems approach also assists with understanding and addressing family challenges, family strengths and styles to manage child behaviour; to support positive parenting / caregiving, and to promote caregiver involvement in the child's school.

The family systems goals for the intervention are to:

- encourage a shift in the minute-by-minute interactions of families.
- practice these shifts over one to three week periods.
- eventually create longterm behavioural shifts that can endure for months or years, such as decreasing failure in school and problem behaviours.

One goal of intervention is to clarify each family's style of interacting – its particular strengths and weaknesses – as it becomes apparent. Identifying a family's particular style of interaction will help the facilitator tailor the intervention process to fit each family's specific needs. It is the facilitator's role to help the family see the common thread of difficult management, problem solving and / or communication that weaves together family functioning at a variety of levels. Each task of this intervention addresses the specific here and now areas of family functioning related to development and risk.

The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme focuses on:

- child monitoring.
- consistency in the application of roles, rules and expectations.
- the use of social, school, community and institutional supports.

## **2. Applying the psycho-educational approach: Providing developmental knowledge and creating social networks**

Group work methods are considered most appropriate in the psycho-educational approach because the approach allows for knowledge and information to grow from the family or group rather than disseminating it from the top down, such as from the facilitator to the family. It is therefore considered to be a more effective method for co-creating knowledge and bringing about change. Families are more likely to accept and use information when facilitators can motivate and direct the families themselves to engage with and brainstorm the points of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.

A psycho-educational approach is useful for:

- providing information about how to help children succeed.
- making families aware of potential challenges in a non-threatening manner, such as helping family members see how the family can protect children, or decrease their vulnerability.
- providing families with information necessary to solve problems.
- creating an atmosphere where family members can examine their own ways of relating; and where family members are motivated to engage in the programme by normalising their concerns.
- helping normalise parenting / caregiver challenges and expectations about children's development, and the need for support and change over time.

## **3. The preventive intervention model in action**

### **Prevention**

In this context, prevention refers to interventions that seek to prevent or moderate social problems before they occur. An example of a problem could be the development of serious behavioural problems in children such as children in conflict with the law and school dropout. The model works through identifying risks and strengthening protective factors that could counteract such challenges.

Examples of protective factors include having someone to turn to when in need, and having a social support system. We know from research that food insecurity is a risk factor for behavioural problems in children and is associated with caregiver depression. Learning difficulties at school are also associated with lower self-esteem in children and poor school performance (Patel et al., 2017). The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is designed to tackle such risk factors that could prevent behavioural difficulties in children later on. The Child Care Act of 2005 provides for prevention programmes. But few welfare agencies render preventive services due to a lack of funds, or lack of knowledge of how to design such programmes.

The overall goal of this preventive intervention model is to support and promote processes that help prosocial and effective behaviours develop in children and, when needed, to disrupt and redirect or reorganise interaction patterns that encourage antisocial behaviour. Although children in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme might be showing some signs of difficulty, the programme focuses on preventing serious problems before they occur and become chronic. This focus differs from treatment in important ways, as described below (Tolan, Hanish, McKay, & Dickey, 2002).

The prevention model is different from the traditional social treatment approach that focuses on remedial action, social pathology, statutory welfare services, institutional care for children, and a deficit model. Social work services are over reliant on individual clinical practice only. Sihleng'imizi uses a strengths, proactive problem-solving, interactive and group-based learning model. It imparts appropriate psychosocial knowledge and skills to the participants. In addition, families in the programme participate voluntarily. They do not ask for help themselves, rather, they are invited to take part because they are exposed to significant ecological risks in their social environment. These risks include poverty, unemployment, overcrowding, exposure to crime and violence in communities.

### **Alert about the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme!**

- The programme is not expected – and was not designed – to address all needs within any given family.
  - Group facilitators will quickly realise that families often experience many different problems, and it is not possible to address all of these problems with one specific intervention.
- For serious family issues, group facilitators need to refer families to the appropriate help. Such issues could include substance abuse, domestic violence, child abuse and mental health conditions. Consequently, this programme is provided in the same manner, and to the same extent, with all families.
- Adherence to proper, systematic and consistent implementation of the programme is critical so that we can more confidently attribute changes seen in programme families to the usefulness of the programme itself.



Although the programme has undergone some empirical development in South Africa, it is not expected to be successful in decreasing all risks for every family it serves. Some families will not find it useful for their particular needs or style.

### **Basic assumptions of the Sihleng'imizi Preventive Intervention Model**

The basic assumptions of the Sihleng'imizi Preventive Intervention Model follow.

- 1) All families have strengths and assets as well as challenges they face. How well families are able to recognise their strengths, or are able to use these strengths to meet challenges, varies across families and within families over time.
- 2) Families experience problems for different reasons. Families may:
  - have difficulty with problem-solving or family management skills.
  - have chronic or acute stress blocking the use of strengths they possess.
  - be isolated and need additional support from family, friends and professionals.
  - have difficulty applying skills they already have.
  - need information about normal child and family developmental challenges in order to adjust family interactions to be more effective.
- 3) When problems arise, families tend to respond “automatically”. This often leads to quickly escalating sequences of emotionally charged – usually negative – interactions, with little verbal exchange, frequent blaming, and dysfunctional behaviours. Rather than arising from positive and thoughtful planning when families work together, automatic solutions may be counter-productive such as when one person withdraws and nothing is resolved. Such patterns of family interaction are also associated with increased risk for “problem” or antisocial behaviour among children.

When families’ characteristic ways of responding do not help to solve a particular problem, families need to try different and potentially more effective strategies. For some families, this change is quite difficult, but by establishing *positive helping relationships* with participating families in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, the facilitator can help families experiment with new behaviours, block habitual unproductive exchanges, and see both themselves and other family members as resources.

### **Intervention techniques**

The method of the Sihleng'imizi intervention is to take an active, directive approach to problem solving. The role of the facilitator is to help families use and build more effective parenting / caregiving practices, communication practices and problem solving skills. The following principles guide the group facilitator in achieving these goals:

- 1) Help families recognise, describe and more frequently use caring, problem solving and communication practices that have worked effectively for them in the past.
- 2) Support and encourage families clarify their own beliefs, values, styles and practices of caregiving and making choices around ways of caregiving that are acceptable to them.
- 3) Help families identify barriers that get in the way of applying problem solving and communication skills and, along with other group members, support families in finding new ways to remove or avoid these barriers.
- 4) Share information about the developmental challenges that their children are facing. Then help families develop and / or strengthen the strategies they use to help their children meet these challenges.

- 5) Encourage families within the group to offer support and feedback to one another. This includes sharing their own successful experiences with meeting the challenges of parenting / caregiving. This type of mutual support encourages feelings of pride and helpfulness in those families that are sharing. It also provides families with practical information and a sense that challenges arise as a normal and workable aspect of daily family life.
- 6) Help group members identify strengths and skills in themselves, their own families and other families in the group, as ways to meet challenges and solve problems.
- 7) Interrupt habitual sequences of behaviour that do not effectively address the problem at hand. The facilitator may ask family members to state more clearly what is happening between them, as well as having families “slow down” and move through the problem-solving process in a constructive step-by-step fashion. By slowing down the problem-solving process, negative behaviours are less likely to escalate.
- 8) Positively reframe problematic interactions by highlighting the underlying positive aspects in these interactions where these can be identified.
- 9) Help families experiment with new behaviours by blocking negative behaviour, suggesting new behaviours, and using other techniques to prevent conflicts between family members.
- 10) Give families the opportunity to practice problem-solving interactions in the sessions as a mode of practical learning about more effective communication and problem-solving.
- 11) Assign and facilitate weekly homework to help families learn how to practically apply the intervention content in their daily settings of home, school and community on their own without the direct support of the facilitator.
- 12) Help families become more adept at observing their own behaviour, identifying their own problems, and generating their own solutions independently of the facilitator both during and outside the group sessions.

This preventive intervention model recognises that change can occur in a nonlinear or “two steps forward / one step backward” fashion. The process of change is often discontinuous, involving both successes and failures over time (Tolan et al., 2002). Families who have made progress may return to problematic interaction patterns when they:

- focus on a new challenge.
- experience new or renewed stress.
- are blocked from using these new skills or strengths.

Despite the reoccurrence of these problems, facilitators must emphasise that change may not happen “overnight” for most families. More importantly, if a family re-engages in old behaviour, it does not mean that no changes have occurred in that particular family. When carefully tracking family interactions, facilitators will usually realise that a “better process” has occurred despite the continued or periodic use of less effective behaviour. A “better process” means that:

- it takes a more extreme situation to restart the old problematic sequence.
- the level of “escalation” is less extreme, of shorter duration, and more easily modified into more constructive alternatives.
- families recognise problematic interactions and then attempt to interrupt these sequences, which leads to less negative emotional outcomes.
- forgiveness and reconciliation, application of existing intervention skills, or development of new solution-seeking behaviour occurs more quickly after problematic interaction.
- families, on their own, solve inflammatory problems without resorting to problematic interactions.

In addition to the above information, see also Appendix L: *Considerations for facilitating discussions* and Appendix M: *Checklist for effective practice*.

## How the intervention works

In our view, achieving the desired family benefits from the Sihleng’imizi Family Programme depends upon three primary factors.

- 1) The quality of the facilitator’s and the childcare worker’s relationship with the family.
  - a) Unless people feel understood, respected and liked by both their facilitator and other group members, they are unlikely to continue to come to the programme.
  - b) By establishing and maintaining warm, supportive and collaborative relationships with families, the facilitator is modelling and demonstrating appropriate ways of joining and connecting with others (Henggeler & Santos, 1997).



- c) In addition to good interpersonal skills, building and maintaining quality relationships with families require self-awareness of how your own experience, feelings and behaviours may influence relationships with families.
    - Appendix K: Managing emotions through reflection provides some guidelines and questions the facilitators can ask themselves to increase self-awareness.
  - d) The facilitator should work to bolster each family's sense of selfworth and efficacy.
    - For more resources related to building quality helping relationships with families see Appendix H: Stages in the family-interventionist helping relationship, and the relationship-focused and strengths-based practice articles in Appendix B: Reading list.
- 2) In addition to offering emotional support, facilitators must maintain an action-oriented approach as well as providing concrete, pragmatic and useful aid to families.
- a) Beyond establishing a warm bond with participating families, the facilitator must possess the necessary skills to help families maintain and enhance families' already present skills and develop new problem-solving and communication skills. The facilitator must be comfortable with taking an active, direct approach.
    - Refer to the Appendix G: Strengths-based and relationship-focused approach to family centered interventions and Appendix J: Questioning for strengths for more information and practical strategies to identify family strengths.
  - b) In helping families work on solvable problems, the facilitator engenders families with a greater sense of competence and efficiency.
- 3) Facilitation of a family support network and family efficacy:
- a) By facilitating group cohesion among families participating in the intervention programme, and also facilitating an atmosphere of mutual interest and concern, the facilitator helps provide each family with a source of social support.
  - b) This cohesion, mutual support and concern among the families will hopefully continue after the formal programme meetings are finished. It will hopefully thereby provide a framework for establishing similar relationships with others outside the group.

#### **4. Issues related to ethnicity, cultural and other socio-demographic factors**

All families taking part in the Sihleng'imizi programme are poor and receive one or more Child Support Grants (CSG). They have limited resources and opportunities. The majority will be black Africans and will be from a variety of ethnic groups and speak a range of South African languages. Disadvantaged families are, however, diverse. Participants may also come from other population groups, religious and cultural backgrounds and language groups in South Africa. Families also have a diversity of forms such as single-parent families, extended families, and same-sex partnerships, to mention a few. In the programme, all families are acknowledged and respected. The group facilitators may or may not have similar backgrounds.

It is important that the group facilitator recognises and, when relevant, is able to comfortably discuss racial, socio-economic (class), language, cultural and other differences between themselves and the families in the groups. Even if facilitators come from families or communities with similar challenges, their own training, skill, experience and employment on this programme places them in a privileged position compared to group members. Therefore, an attitude of humility and respect is critical.

Building a relationship with group members has to be based on genuine acceptance and human dignity, even if the facilitators' cultural and social norms and values differ from those of group members. Facilitators must also be able to ask participants for help in understanding potentially culturally-influenced behaviours and attitudes. This will help make sure that the work of the group can proceed with everyone "on the same page". In addition, facilitators must be willing to reflect on their own beliefs and norms to ensure theirs are not being unquestioningly promoted in groups. Families are also encouraged to make necessary changes in some of their beliefs if they come to frame them as interfering with their child's ability to be successful in school, with friends, or in other aspects of their lives.

Awareness of cultural norms and values helps sensitise the facilitator to culturally accepted patterns of behaviour. Their awareness speeds up the process of identifying both adaptive and problematic patterns of behaviour. Facilitators who are conscious of these cultural influences will be better equipped to help families find realistic and culturally-congruent ways to handle challenges. In addition, culturally sensitive facilitators will be able to distinguish between behaviours that: (a) represent cultural differences or cultural conflicts such as, for example, apparent problems, and (b) behaviours that are problematic, regardless of culture such as, for example, actual problems.

Finally, facilitators also have to be mindful of the different literacy levels in the groups. They need to find ways to sustain the interest, participation and inclusion of some of the members of the group. Facilitation needs to be accessible, including for the children. The facilitator needs to find ways to provide appropriate support to individual members, especially with homework exercises.

## 5. Methodological considerations

Because the Sihleng'imizi intervention is part of a larger research project, the consistency and integrity with which intervention is carried out within a given session, across sessions over time, and across facilitators, is very important.

### 1) Reliability and fidelity

To maintain the integrity of the programme, it is important that all family facilitators remain true to the original design of the intervention procedure. Each of the intervention's qualities and activities needs to be consistently maintained over time. Reliability and fidelity – which is also sometimes called “intervention integrity” or “intervention adherence” – can be assessed by means of the evaluation tools provided. See Appendix O and Appendix P of this manual.

First, facilitators and families will complete brief evaluations at the end of some of the family group sessions. These evaluations describe the extent to which the session protocols were followed. Examples of session protocols include major activities which were successfully completed, and intended discussions that were successfully carried out.

Second, facilitators will complete more extensive evaluations at periodic junctures throughout the intervention. These evaluations pertain to the facilitator's approach to families as well as the methods and techniques they used to carry out the intervention. The goal here is to measure the consistency with which the principles that guided the design of the intervention will also actively guide the day-to-day work of the facilitator.

### 2) Validity

It is important that the Sihleng'imizi intervention approach remains an empirical one, that is, research-based, while also fitting with the needs and problems of the participating families. Evidence-based and culturally appropriate adaptations have been made. These will continue to make the intervention relevant to the South African context.

Because of these methodological concerns, a primary goal of supervision will be to ensure that the intervention follows the protocol which is the design laid out in this Facilitator Manual. We recognise that each family's style and needs will require some individualisation of the intervention. And we acknowledge that each facilitator will have a somewhat different style of working with families.

### The facilitator's overriding imperative

As a facilitator implementing the intervention, your overriding concern and responsibility for the Sihleng'imizi programme must be to follow protocol and maintain regularity, fidelity and validity.



## Part 2: Description of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention

This section describes the organisation of the Sihleng'imizi intervention itself. It includes:

- 1) The role of the childcare worker.
- 2) Target group, selection and recruitment of families.
- 3) Baseline data collection.
- 4) Engaging families.
- 5) An outline of the sessions.
- 6) Modes of intervention.
- 7) What we expect from you as a family group facilitator.

### 1. The role of the childcare worker

Each group has a childcare worker assigned to them. This practitioner is an integral part of the intervention team. Their role is to support the facilitator in activities, especially focusing on including the children in the programme. The programme is designed for the WHOLE family to take part. But there are periods in most session where the children and adults are given separate activities to do. The childcare worker's responsibility is to take the children to a different venue and facilitate the assigned children's activity. They will return with the children when the programme requires this, and assist the children to give feedback to the adults about their experiences.

The childcare workers are professionals in their own right. They have all undergone various training relevant to their task and will also undergo specific Sihleng'imizi training. Their tasks with the children are outlined in detail at the end of the Facilitator Manual (see the Childcare Worker Manual).

This programme cannot succeed without a good team relationship between the facilitator and the childcare worker. It is the facilitator's responsibility to work constructively with the childcare practitioner. Similarly, the programme cannot succeed if the children are considered peripheral to the process, and if the facilitator leaves all engagement with the children to the childcare worker. A central feature of this intervention is that the family works as a unit both in the sessions and when back at home. It is critical that the children are integrated completely into the intervention process.

### 2. Target group, selection and recruitment of families

The early phase of the Sihleng'imizi intervention has four main goals. They are to:

- decide on the approach to targeting and identifying the families.
- recruit families into the programme.
- help families begin their orientation and participation in the programme.
- help families begin to frame the programme as helpful to them and to their child's success.

Each of these goals are discussed next.

#### Targeting and identifying the families

The Sihleng'imizi programme was targeted at disadvantaged children who were beneficiaries of the Child Support Grant (CSG), and who were in Grade R and or Grade 1 and aged between six to eight years' old. The primary caregivers of CSG beneficiary children were either parents, relatives or non-relatives. The teacher did the identification of the children upon the social worker's request – who would ideally be the facilitator of the programme.

Children were selected in one of two ways over the lifespan of the programme, both of which proved to yield similar positive outcomes. The *first approach*, in the case of the pilot programme, identified children with difficulties and who were at risk due to poverty, loss or illness of a parent / caregiver or other such challenges. Since Sihleng'imizi is a preventative psychoeducation programme for children and their families, teachers were invited to identify children who were experiencing moderate difficulties in learning, problems with school attendance, behavioural challenges and, but not limited to the following: school absenteeism, late-coming, not doing homework, hunger and other indications of material deprivation, parental / caregiver disengagement and psychosocial problems emanating from challenges in the home environment which may have a bearing on the child's progress at school.

For the *second approach*, in the advanced testing and evaluation of the programme, a more generic method of identifying the target group was used. This approach was based on the assumption that poor and disadvantaged children in no fee paying public schools faced a common set of risk factors that could be mitigated by participating in the Sihleng'imizi intervention. In this case, teachers were invited to provide class lists and children were randomly selected from the lists to participate in the programme. Because it was randomised, facilitators found it very time consuming as they may receive two or three class lists with no children on the CSG. This impacted the recruitment phase. Some facilitators had started with the programme, whilst others were still recruiting.

Although there are pros and cons to using the first or second approaches, decisions about which to use will inevitably be based on a number of considerations. These include: having the available capacity to deliver the programme such as trained and motivated staff, workloads of social workers and childcare workers, agency mandates and commitment of senior managers to deliver preventive programmes, financial resources, commitment from teachers and principals, willingness of parents / caregivers and families to participate, accessible venues close to where families live, as well as other logistical issues.

The evaluation evidence however shows that disadvantaged children with limited to moderate difficulties are likely to benefit from early intervention to prevent the development of further social challenges. These are the children who can be expected to benefit from the Sihleng'imizi programme. The Sihleng'imizi programme is not designed for children and families with serious and complex psychosocial challenges that would require more specialist interventions. The social worker will need to make this assessment after the initial screening interview with the child and parent / caregiver before making the final selection of the children and families.

## **The recruitment process**

The process of recruitment is as follows:

- The initial contact with each family should be by phone.
- The next contact should be a home visit.
- Multiple phone calls and home visits are always needed during this phase of the programme. Each contact attempt must be documented as per Appendix D: Recruitment field form.

### **Please note**

- In addition to the information provided below, please read the pre-engagement handout Appendix F: Key things to remember when engaging with families. It highlights key pieces of information to convey during your initial contact with families.
- Also read Appendix C: Pre-engagement telephone script and checklist for recruitment. It suggests what you can say in the phone call and initial visit. We suggest you practice a few times before contacting families. We encourage you to role play with another facilitator playing the role of the family prior to contacting families to be recruited. This is to:
  - help you feel more comfortable when first engaging families.
  - ensure you convey all the necessary information.
  - prepare you to respond effectively to any questions or concerns a family may pose.
- We also must stress the importance of how you conduct yourself during this initial contact because it has serious implications as to whether or not a family decides to participate in the Sihleng'imizi intervention. Your interaction is imperative in two ways: not only is what you say important; it is also important how you say it. Having good interpersonal skills and an empathic approach is critical.

## **Initial contact (usually by telephone)**

- 1) Explain the goals of the Sihleng'imizi intervention. Emphasise the importance of parent / caregiver involvement in helping children to do their best.
- 2) Explain the expectation of regular attendance and participation in the sessions. Ask for and answer any questions about the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.
- 3) Invite the family to participate in the programme.
- 4) Request a home visit meeting to explain the programme in more detail. If a family is hesitant to agree to a home visit, offer to drop off material (Appendix E: *Recruitment letter*), and have a follow-up phone call. Consult with your supervisor if the family is still not keen. Your supervisor will assist you to review your approach and decide on the way forward.

## **Introductory home visit (for all families)**

- 1) When going on a home visit, remember safety comes first in communities when you travel to and from homes. Make sure that valuables such as cellphones are out of sight. If you feel unsafe, rather reschedule your home visit.
- 2) In the context of the Covid-19 pandemic, make sure that you take the necessary protective measures.
- 3) Begin by explaining (or, if the conversation was on the phone, begin by recapping) the goals of the Sihleng'imizi intervention.
- 4) Explain again the expectation of regular attendance and participation in the programme. Offer several potential time blocks for the sessions. Ask families which afternoon would be most suitable for them to attend, and what time would be best. Let them know that you will get back to them as soon as final decisions have been made about the group's sessions time.
- 5) Tell them where the meeting will be held.

- 6) Assess barriers to participation. Develop a plan to address them. Be proactive here. You can ask:
  - a) How will the family get to the meeting venue?
  - b) Which family members will attend?
  - c) How will childcare be arranged if there are siblings who won't come to the sessions?
  - d) How do parents / caregivers plan to handle it if the meeting time conflicts with schedules for work, homework, or other activities?
- 7) If the family is willing to participate, immediately obtain their consent. Confirm arrangements for reaching them via telephone. This could either be on their personal phone (home or cellphone) or, if they don't have a personal phone, then someone else's phone. This could be a neighbour or a relative's telephone where the family can regularly and reliably receive calls and messages.
- 8) Explain that should the family agree participate, they will be asked to provide feedback to help strengthen the programme for the future.
- 9) If a family is hesitant to participate, consult your supervisor to problem-solve ways of engaging the family in the programme.
- 10) During the first home visit, it will be helpful to find out and write a list of the names of all adults who are involved in the primary care and rearing of the Grade R and Grade 1 learners. This list will help you include these individuals and their roles in activities, whether they are present or not at a given session. For example, some adults on the list may never attend a session yet they play an important role in putting into place any strategies that come out of a session. They should therefore be kept in mind at all times.

### **Facilitator process notes**

During attempts to engage the family either by telephone or during a home visit, facilitators must be aware of the following key issues:

- 1) Begin contacts with the parents / caregivers by helping them to identify this programme as being helpful to their child's academic performance and functioning. From our experience, having them identify their own specific need for support and potential benefits of participation is perhaps the most useful approach to engaging parents / caregivers.
- 2) A primary goal for you is to establish a rapport with the parent/caregivers most likely to mobilise the family to participate in the programme. However, all family members' participation should be emphasised. If one caregiver describes the other as not willing to participate, problem-solve around how to address this. The facilitator could offer to talk with the other caregiver directly; suggest the willing caregiver discuss the programme with the unwilling caregiver, or send written information directly to the unwilling caregiver.
- 3) Even though parents / caregivers are informed that the programme is 14 weeks long, it is important to recognise that this commitment might prove difficult for a family to make immediately. Emphasise your willingness to be flexible around appointment times and days, and also your openness to work with the family to address any barriers to participation. In addition, stress that all children go through "ups and downs" over the course of a long school year. So, it is good to continue monitoring and supporting their children's academic and behavioural progress through structured programmes, such as the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.
- 4) Even when the family agrees to attend the first meeting, regular calls are important to keep their interest and encourage their participation in the programme:
  - Make a reminder call the day before the first meeting to remind families about the meeting and problem-solve any last minute obstacles.
  - Consider another call on the day of the meeting to reinforce the above.
  - Make a follow-up call a day or two after the first meeting to assess each family's reactions to the programme.
- When making home visits, always check with the parents / caregivers that they have time to speak with you. Always offer to return on another day, or at another time, if they are inconvenienced or unavailable.

### Help a family identify their strengths at your first meeting with them



One helpful step during your first meeting with a family is to help them identify their strengths. By initiating this discussion before the group sessions start, you help to encourage positive parent-child interaction

You can say the following in your initial meeting with the family:

- What is working well in your family?
- Think about something positive you, as the child's parent / caregiver, can say about your child.
- Think about something positive you, as the child, can say about your parent / caregiver?

It is helpful to have a list of strengths on hand to help families who are struggling to identify strengths. Make every attempt to leave the first meeting on a positive note with at least one strength identified, even if it is a minor one.

### 3. Engaging families in the intervention programme

#### Engaging and keeping families in the intervention is one of the most serious challenges in prevention work!



Given that the families participating in our programme may not perceive themselves as having serious problems, or being in need of immediate intervention, the difficulty of keeping families engaged in the Sihleng'imizi programme is even greater.

#### Obstacles to overcome

With keeping families engaged in the programme, two significant obstacles will emerge.

- Families will feel they don't "need" the programme because their children are already doing fine with their behaviour and because their family is already functioning well enough as a unit. Consequently, these families will refuse to participate in the programme.
- Families may initially agree to enrol in the programme, but then they will find the intervention demands, as well as their own daily lives, cause them to either drop out completely, or miss a significant numbers of sessions.

One of your top daily priorities is to keep families engaged. Structure each week to include the following:

- 1) **Make at least one phone call per family per week.** You can call either prior to or following the scheduled session to reinforce the importance of programme participation, provide information, and the importance of maintaining close relationships with group members.
- 2) **Follow up immediately with families who cancel or don't show up to group meetings.** Call a family if they are more than ten minutes late for a session. After the session, conduct a home visit to determine reasons for late coming and absences. Help generate solutions that will help enable the family's future attendance.
- 3) **Remind all families by sms / digital messaging of the weekly group meeting at least once every week.** This includes contact with parents / caregivers who have been attending sessions regularly.



## What facilitators should do to help make families stay engaged in the programme

Facilitators must understand that families have multiple and legitimate demands for their time and attention. The Sihleng'imizi programme is not always their highest priority each week. At the same time, facilitators must also remember that this programme requires regular attendance by most (if not all) families to accurately implement the programme. Families are more likely to stay engaged when facilitators do the following:

- 1) Facilitators need to make themselves available.
  - a) Establish a positive affective bond with the family, especially with the caregivers / guardians / parents who ultimately decide whether the family attends or misses sessions.
  - b) Convey an attitude of sincere respect for families' values and concerns that impact session attendance, as well as their lives in general, beyond the Sihleng'imizi programme focus.
  - c) Call families and / or visit them on a regular basis to facilitate home practice sessions and remind them of upcoming appointments.
- 2) Address barriers to participation directly and empathically with your families.
  - a) Accept the approach that "no facilitator or programme is perfect." Express openness to hearing negative reactions to yourself or the programme as a means of improving the family's experience and participation in it.
  - b) Give concrete and specific feedback to families about problems that occur with attendance, participation and / or compliance.
  - c) If a family feels the intervention programme is not meeting its needs, then address their concerns openly. Try to seek a mutually acceptable solution that is consistent with the programme's goals, objectives and strategies.
  - d) Consult with your supervisor when difficulties with families are anticipated, or have arisen.
- 3) Expect families to behave responsibly with regard to the programme expectations. But also be willing to acknowledge difficulties that families may have in committing to a 14-week programme. Acknowledge that other families have experienced similar difficulties yet have still been able to work with their facilitator to successfully complete the entire programme.
- 4) Stay focused on the practical aspects of the intervention. In addition to offering emotional support, facilitators must maintain an action-oriented approach as well as provide concrete, pragmatic and useful assistance to families.
- 5) Foster a collaborative, mutually respectful atmosphere between yourself and the family.
  - a) Don't "talk down" to families. Acknowledge the caregivers as being the experts on their family. The Sihleng'imizi programme should be described as an approach to helping children do their best. But indicate that the family will also need to adapt the programme to be the most useful for their individual children.
  - b) Openly acknowledge and discuss any racial, ethnic, language, socio-economic or other cultural differences. Whether it is actually true or not, the facilitator will be perceived as being from a higher socio-economic class and may also be of a different race or ethnic background than the programme families. You and your group members should negotiate mutually understandable and acceptable ways of communicating with each other.

### **You must make it really clear what the programme will and will not be delivering**

Families in difficult circumstances may well see the programme as a possible source for much needed material resources, job opportunities, training for job opportunities, access to university education for older children, or other services they may desperately need. You must make it clear what the programme will only be able to deliver.



## Referrals and unrealistic expectations

Some families might have social service needs beyond what the programme can offer. Specifically, in some families there might be indications of substance abuse, domestic violence towards women or older family members, or child physical, emotional or sexual abuse.

- It is imperative that families are referred to appropriate services to address these problems. Group facilitators MUST NOT engage with these issues in any depth. The first port of call is your supervisor, who will help you determine where and how the families can be referred.
- To help guide your pre-engagement efforts, consult Appendix C: Pre-engagement telephone script and checklist for recruitment.

## 4. Monitoring and evaluation plan

The monitoring and evaluation plan for the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme will provide a way to track the implementation of the programme as well as the effectiveness of the programme. By tracking this, the information gathered will be used to further develop the Sihleng'imizi programme.

The monitoring and evaluation plan consists of weekly session evaluations and selected fidelity evaluations by parents / caregivers, children, facilitator / social worker and childcare workers.

- Parent / caregiver evaluations. The weekly session evaluations require parents / caregivers to complete an evaluation form at the end of each session. Selected sessions (sessions 3, 7 and 11) will require the parents / caregivers to identify what has taken place during the session. This will provide information about the fidelity of sessions. These tools can be found in Appendix O: Session family evaluation tool (general) and Session evaluation with fidelity measure to be done with (a) Session 3, (b) Session 7 and (c) Session 11.
- Facilitator evaluations. Facilitators are required to submit a weekly process report to their supervisor. Along with this report, facilitators need to complete a weekly fidelity checklist to identify what was covered during the session and what was not. This tool is in Appendix P: Facilitator report template and weekly session fidelity checklist.
- Supervisor evaluations. Supervisors are required to observe two sessions per group out of the 14 sessions. These observations form part of the supervision process in addition to monitoring. Supervisors are to provide feedback to the facilitators about the way in which the sessions were facilitated as well as what the facilitator should take into consideration when running the session. Later in this section is a list of the sessions and their themes, and a schedule of the monitoring and evaluation plan for both caregivers and group facilitators.

## 5. Modes of intervention

This Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention model makes use of four interrelated modes of intervention:

- a) Multiple family group sessions.
- b) Home practice.
- c) Weekly outreach to families, such as telephone calls and / or home visits.
- d) The Sihleng'imizi Buddy System.

The general structure and purpose of the modes of intervention are outlined below:

### a) Multiple family group sessions

Each family is assigned to a group that consists of up to six families. These groups will be led and coordinated by the facilitator and supported by the childcare worker. The group meetings include a homework check-in and icebreaker, discussions, and group / in-family activities. These groups provide both education and social support.

### b) Home practice

Between weekly meetings, families will be given specific tasks to work on and practise at home.

Each task is intended to:

- help families work on key issues independently.
- provide a sense of continuity between what happens in the group meetings and what actually happens at home.

### c) Weekly outreach to families

The facilitator will make midweek / between session phone calls to each family. These phone calls may be quite brief or extensive, depending on a given family's need. The outreach's intended effect is to:

- maintain family consciousness about, and investment in, the intervention.
- assess the level of engagement in at-home practice and application of in-session work.
- help enhance / modify family issues arising from at home practice and application of the intervention material.

### d) The Sihleng'imizi Buddy System

Every family has another Sihleng'imizi family from the group assigned to them as a "buddy". The purpose of this relationship is to build community-level support and create informal opportunities for sharing and engagement outside of the group sessions. These relationships can become very important and sometimes be the most powerful lasting outcome once the formal intervention has come to an end. It is expected that buddies contact each other between sessions. The group facilitator actively supports this throughout the intervention process, and it is included as a check-in item in each session.

## 6. Expectations of facilitators

All facilitators in the Sihleng'imizi programme are expected to:

- 1) Attend the initial intensive orientation and training.
- 2) Be responsible for all aspects of conducting weekly family group sessions which includes:
  - initiating and maintaining contact with families through phone calls and home visits.
  - seeking 100% participation rate (and maintaining no less than 80%) in each group.
  - keeping all attendance and contact records.
  - preparing all group session materials, including protocols, activities and materials.
  - meeting the childcare worker every week to evaluate the previous session and to plan for the next session.
  - conducting make-up sessions as needed.
  - completing a weekly Family group facilitator report (Appendix P) after every group session.
- 3) Attend weekly two-hour group supervision sessions with an allocated Sihleng'imizi supervisor. The purpose is to address clinical and practical issues around conducting the intervention, and to share information, ideas and experiences.

**Note:** A more detailed *Overview of family group facilitator expectations and guidelines* is in Appendix A. Family group facilitators should become familiar with the information included in it.

## Part 3: Session descriptions

This section of the manual guides group facilitators on what to do in each session of the intervention. It includes "scripts" to help facilitators on what to say or do in each session of the formal intervention itself. Here are the sessions:

- |                    |   |
|--------------------|---|
| <b>Session 1:</b>  | Identify your family's strengths                                  |
| <b>Session 2:</b>  | At home: helping children do their best at school                 |
| <b>Session 3:</b>  | How to work in a cooperative way with your child's school         |
| <b>Session 4:</b>  | Healthy meal and nutrition guidelines / Food and personal hygiene |
| <b>Session 5:</b>  | Developmental expectations of Grade R and Grade 1 children        |
| <b>Session 6:</b>  | Strengthening communication and problem solving within the family |
| <b>Session 7:</b>  | How to manage difficult behaviour                                 |
| <b>Session 8:</b>  | Negative behaviour management using the Cool Down Corner          |
| <b>Session 9:</b>  | Ways to promote positive behaviour and ways to resolve conflict   |
| <b>Session 10:</b> | Redefining family rules and consequences                          |
| <b>Session 11:</b> | Doing a household budget  |
| <b>Session 12:</b> | Ways to save money and make a family savings plan                 |
| <b>Session 13:</b> | How to get and use social support services                        |
| <b>Session 14:</b> | Social support plus evaluate the programme                        |

### The contents of the manual: The sessions

The manual gives a detailed breakdown on how to facilitate each part of the programme for each session. For the purposes of reliability, fidelity and validity, facilitators must implement sessions as they are outlined in the manual. Facilitators should master the session content and then apply it in their own natural style in a way relevant for participating families. Because the needs of the group calls for a degree of flexibility in programme implementation, it is important that facilitators at least cover the main points of each session and carry out the programme activities. This manual is meant to be used as a well-structured guide rather than literal requirements for each session.

### Each session is divided into these main sections:

- 1) The **Goal** and **Objectives** for the session.
- 2) The **Welcome, Homework check-in** and **Icebreaker**.

The homework check-in at the beginning of each session reminds facilitators to openly do a check-in with each family as to how the homework went, and to get participants' reflections from the previous week. It links the previous session with the current session they are about to start.
- 3) The **Core** section provides a more detailed script, information and guide for the session's activities and content. It establishes the main points the facilitator must cover. Minor changes made to the script in the facilitator's own words are fine.
- 4) The **Homework** to be done in the week ahead.
- 5) **Wrap up and closing**.

### **These points are extremely important!**

- It is essential that facilitators prepare for and know each intervention session extremely well before they attempt to implement it in the family groups. Families will respond much more positively when they can see their facilitator is extremely well prepared and knows the content well.
- All session content should be reviewed in detail before each intervention and in ongoing weekly supervision sessions.



### **Tips for the facilitator**

- Firstly, have a set of notes or a lesson plan, for easy reference during the intervention session. Secondly, (a) test your knowledge of the session's content; (b) master the ins and outs of planning and facilitating each session, and (c) anticipate issues or questions that may arise before, during, or after the sessions with families.
  - It is critical that the facilitator includes the childcare worker in planning, and works with them as a team to achieve the session goals.
  - The setting of a time frame for each of the children's sessions is critical!

### **The materials you will be supplied with and must bring to every session**

The materials section in each session identifies what specific materials the facilitator must bring to that specific session. This is the set basic materials the facilitator must bring to every session:

- ☐ Games and story books for the children.
- ☐ Kokis / crayons.
- ☐ Colouring pages / paper for drawing.
- ☐ Reward stickers – stars or other stickers.
- ☐ Chart paper and a chart paper stand if possible.
- ☐ Prestick (sticky stuff you use to stick things on the wall with).
- ☐ Pens / pencils.

**Here are the icons used throughout the manual.**

Important!



Troubleshooting / Problem solving / Helpful tip



Remember!



Big group discussion with children



Big group discussion without children



Individual families with children



Individual families with children doing an activity with the childcare worker



Children leave with the childcare worker to do a children's activity




Children return with the childcare worker from their activity



# Session 1

## Identify your family's strengths

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| <b>Goals</b>      | <b>Goals for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• For participants to find joy, value and meaning while they learn new things that can help their family achieve their stated goals.</li><li>• Identify strengths of individual family members, and families as a whole.</li></ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b> | <b>Key objectives</b> <p>During this session, you will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• help families feel comfortable and enthusiastic about participating in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.</li><li>• illustrate the joy of learning and its benefits.</li><li>• help families make a commitment to return to the next session – and to stick with the programme.</li><li>• generate enthusiasm about helping the children do better in school.</li><li>• help each family identify their strengths.</li><li>• help families identify how their strengths help them manage challenging situations.</li><li>• explore multiple methods of learning.</li><li>• help families make a list of challenges they would like to work on during the programme. These could be challenges which persist despite the strengths they have as a family.</li></ul>  <p><b>Important for all sessions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Prepare all sessions to present the goals and objectives in a way that the young children in the programme, as well as the other family members, will understand and be able to relate to.</li><li>• When you return to self-review the session, you could score how you felt each goal and objective went out of ten, with ten being the highest score.</li><li>• When you write your report after the session, you can use the above to reflect on to what extent, and why, you felt the session's goals and objectives were achieved.</li></ul> |



|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook for each family. It is very important that families bring their workbook to every session.</li> <li>• Icebreaker materials for the chosen icebreaker, either A: The name game or B: Name swap game. Only A requires materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• pre-prepared chart paper with game questions written up on it</li> <li>• a ball, stuffed animal, or other soft toy for the icebreaker.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• A copy of a call-and-response song to demonstrate. You can make a copy for each family for the session and to take home.</li> <li>• Two large long-lasting poster boards to write up the group's expectations and agreements (you will add to this each week).</li> <li>• Write up on chart paper questions to help prompt families to think of a wide range of types of strengths for (6.1).</li> <li>• The attendance register.</li> <li>• A copy of the general evaluation form Appendix O for each family.</li> <li>• All the general materials needed for each session as listed in the introduction. Remember to include reward stickers in the general materials.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <p><b>Yes or No?</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I am confident with facilitating the:</li> <li>• icebreaker (A or B – decide which to do before the session)</li> <li>• songs</li> <li>• games</li> <li>• role plays.</li> <li>• I have read common questions and issues families raise for this session.</li> <li>• I'm prepared with some participants' goals for the programme.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>• Add a few more chairs than the number of people you expect. Additional family members might arrive and you need to make them feel immediately welcomed with a place to sit.</li> <li>• Put up one of the large poster boards to write the group's expectations for the programmes and agreements.</li> <li>• Put out copies of the general evaluation form, Appendix O, for each family.</li> <li>• Set out the materials, including the attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidy the room.</li> <li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>• Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

## Session 1 Programme

|   |   |            |
|---|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>                               | 1.1 Welcome the families! Introduction of facilitator and childcare worker (20 minutes)<br>1.2 Icebreaker introductions: Getting to know you <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Icebreaker A: The name game OR Icebreaker B: Name swop game (5 minutes)</li> <li>Icebreaker #2: Group song (5 minutes)</li> </ul> | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Orientation to the programme</b>          | 2.1 The goals of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme<br>2.2 How the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme works<br>2.3 The importance of confidentiality<br>2.4 Questions and comments  | 20 minutes |
| <b>3) Establishing families' goals</b>          | 3. In-group exercise: Establishing families' goals  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) How the family sessions are organised</b> | 4.1 The format for the families group sessions<br>4.2 Setting the group's ground rules<br>4.3 The Sihleng'imizi Family Rewards System   | 20 minutes |
| <b>5) Icebreaker</b>                            | 5. Icebreaker: Getting to know our family more  | 5 minutes  |
| <b>6) Core lesson for the session</b>           | 6.1 Our family strengths<br>6.2 Why praise is important<br>6.3 In-group family exercise   | 15 minutes |
| <b>7) Homework activity</b>                     | 7.1 What is Special Time?<br>7.2 Introducing Sihleng'imizi Buddies<br>7.3 Check-in before Session 2   | 10 minutes |
| <b>8) Wrap-up</b>                               | 8. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>Families fill in the evaluation forms</li> <li>Complete attendance register</li> </ul>          | 10 minutes |

# 1. Welcome

Time: 30 minutes

## 1.1 Welcome the families! Introduction of facilitator and childcare worker

Welcome the families and introduce yourself as the facilitator, and the childcare worker, by saying this:



Hello, everyone.

Thank you for the effort you have made to be here today.

### Appreciation

You can say you appreciate that parents and other childcarers in the family have to manage childcare and other demands to be able to be here. If the weather is challenging, you can mention things related to that, too.



[Introduce the childcare worker by name] and I are very happy that you have agreed to join the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. We are sure that we are going to have a great time working together. We hope you will enjoy the 14 sessions. By taking part in them all, you will help your children be successful in school and other areas of their lives. This is really great! Next, we will introduce ourselves to each other with an icebreaker.

## 1.2 Icebreaker introductions: Getting to know you

You will already have chosen whether you want to do icebreaker A or B. Tell people that we are going to do an introductions icebreaker followed by a song icebreaker.

### Each family is unique

Each family group is unique. Some activities may be more, or less appropriate, depending on your group's composition and dynamics. Think about your group. Choose and adjust activities to make them most effective.



### Remember to actively pay attention to, and include the children

Remember to actively include the children.  
Consistently acknowledge the childcare worker as your team member.

## Icebreaker A: The name game

Time: 5 minutes

### You need

- Your pre-prepared flip chart paper with the game questions written on it.
- A ball, stuffed animal, or other soft toy.

### How to play the game

- 1) Request everyone to stand or sit in a circle.
- 2) Go around the circle and invite each person say their first name.
- 3) Read out the questions on your pre-prepared chart paper. Explain that the group is going to go around the circle again, answering them. The questions are:
  - a) What is your favourite food?
  - b) What is your favourite colour?
  - c) When is your birthday?
  - d) What is your favourite TV programme?
  - e) What is your favourite song?
- 4) Answer one of the questions yourself e.g. My favourite food is .... and then throw the ball (or other soft object) to another person in the circle, saying their name at the same time.
- 5) The person catches the ball and answers one of the questions on the paper. They then throw it to another person (who cannot be the same person who tossed the ball to them) while saying their name.
- 6) Repeat this process until everyone has had a chance to answer at least one question.

**OR**

### Icebreaker B: Name swap game

- No items required for this game.

### How to play the game

- 1) Request everyone to stand in a circle.
- 2) Begin by calling out a participant's name and then move to where that person is standing.
- 3) This person immediately says another name and moves into that person's space.
- 4) Carry on until each person has said their name once or twice. Keep a note to make sure everyone has been included.

### Icebreaker #2: Group song

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Say the following:



Since we all come from different backgrounds and experiences, we can use songs to help us build a sense of community. Singing songs together at the beginning of a session helps us create unity and openness during our sessions. It is also a traditional way of beginning meetings in many cultures. So, each of our sessions will start with a traditional song.

We hope you'll enjoy this. And we hope you will volunteer to lead the songs as we meet for our sessions!

- 2) Introduce the song you have prepared by giving its context and background. You have your own copy of the call-and-response song and, if you made copies, you can hand out one to each family.
- 3) Teach the song, using a call and response style. Place your hand on your chest when you sing. Then gesture with your hand towards the group when they respond.
- 4) Go through the song once together. Add movements to make it more fun and encourage participants to add their ideas for movements, too.

- 5) Invite suggestions for songs for future family group session – the children might have ideas here, too. Ask participants to explain where they know the song from, and why they like it.
- 6) Choose one song together. If participants don't come up with another song, you can use the one you introduced for the future sessions.
- 7) Explain that when you sing the group song, one person leads. It can be a different volunteer leader each session.

## 2. Orientation to the programme

Time: 20 minutes

### Remember the children!

- It is essential that you, and adult participants, encourage and include the children to fully participate in activities as well as in the programme as a whole.
- Encourage the use of friendly words when relating to each other and the children. Naturally, when parents / caregivers praise their children they will use friendly words.
- When you go through the goals, objectives and all the parts of the programme, use language, explanations and concrete examples that the youngest children will easily understand and relate to. You will prepare for this for each session



### 2.1 The goals of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

- 1) Before you describe the goals and objectives of the whole Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, emphasise that the programme always focuses on each family's strengths and aims to build on these. Proceed with the script that follows:



As the people facilitating this programme, we want to assure you of some important points:

- We know that every parent and caregiver in the room cares very much for their child or children. The fact that you are here today is proof of this.
  - We regard parents / caregivers as the best experts on their children. We know that parents / caregivers already have a great deal of experience in and information about being parents / caregivers.
  - If there are times when I only say "parents" or "parenting" please know that I am including the children's caregivers as well since this is the role they play in the children's lives.
  - We assure you that Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is designed so that most of the information, skills and problem-solving strategies come from you.
  - We will focus on tapping into the knowledge and skills that you, as families, already have to:
    - support parents in achieving the hopes and dreams have for your children
    - help others in the group
    - figure out ways to manage both the day-to-day and the bigger challenges that many families face.
- 2) Describe the goals and objectives of the programme as a whole, using the introduction to the manual: (3) *Design of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, Goals and outcomes of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.*

- 3) Ask if there are any questions. Do your best to answer them. Say that if there are any questions you can't answer right away, you will get the answers as soon as possible and provide them to each family. Make a note of this to get answers and bring them to Session 2.

### How the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme works

- 1) Give each family a copy of the Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook. Say that it is very important that they bring it with them to every session because you will be referring to it in the sessions, and they will use it to share their reflections with the group.
- 2) Refer families to the contacts section and say that everyone will fill those details in at the end of the session.
- 3) Ask families to refer to the sections called *Programme summary* and *Summary of sessions and homework*. Talk through the parts about family groups, homework and evaluations, using the script that follows:



#### Family groups

### Please come every week

Family group sessions will be held every week. It is important that all families attend on a regular basis. The programme will only work if (a) families are involved in the sessions, and, (b) each week we can build on what we did in the week and weeks before. This programme works like building blocks in that way.

We will talk about and do activities that focus on a particular topic each week. The topics we focus on are important for helping our Grade R and Grade 1 under eight-year-olds to succeed in school, in friendships, understanding emotions, and in life. Supporting our children is something we all strive for – that is why we are here!

### We work in groups to harness family power

We meet as a group of families because each family is good at different things. We may not know each other well now, and some of the things we will talk about might not just yet feel natural to share with others. But when we discover that others in our group have the same, or similar, struggles and concerns – and that we are able to rely on one another for support and help – it will help us feel we are not alone.

### We need everyone to participate, including our children

We will need to:

- make sure we take our children into account at all times during our sessions.
- make sure children are included and feel comfortable to participate.
- be aware of what the children think and feel.
- believe that our children's voices and views are important in building a happy future for them, us and our futures.
- be always aware not to interrupt, or make children feel bad when they are being honest when speaking in the exercises or feedback sessions.

### In some activities, children and parents will work separately

There will be times when the children will leave with our Sihleng'imizi team's childcare worker to do an alternative age-appropriate activity. Sometimes, this will be directly linked to the topic the adults are exploring.



## Families need to practise their learnings at home

At the end of each meeting, we will give you an activity or two to do at home. These homework activities are meant to be fun, low stress and helpful for you and your family. The at-home activities are designed so that you can try out at home what we discuss and do here. You will be able to work out how useful what you learn here is in your everyday life. When you put the homework activities into practise, you might choose to change the way you do things in future. I'll call you, or stop by, a few days after each meeting to see how things are going. We will discuss the practicalities of that at the end of each session. We will also discuss an important part of the programme being a success and that is the Sihleng'imizi Buddy system. One of the values of the buddy system is that you can help and support each other with the homework.

## Evaluations help our programme grow stronger

At the end of group time, we'll ask you to fill out a questionnaire about your experiences in the group sessions. It is an evaluation of the session. Just like all the other interviews in the Sihleng'imizi programme, we will keep this information private. Only our intervention staff will read them.

I would very much appreciate you giving your honest views in your feedback. Please do not worry about how I will feel about it. These evaluations help me know how well I am doing my job as a facilitator, so that I can learn and grow. Your feedback also helps us as the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme to learn more about how family groups can be made most constructive, helpful and enjoyable for other South African families. And, in the future, maybe for families all around the world.

## 2.3 The importance of confidentiality

- 1) Say that we will now will discuss our expectations around confidentiality.
- 2) Use the script to help you with the discussion.



- It is important everyone feels OK about talking in our family space here. It is also important that we all have the same approach to keeping our personal lives private. Confidentiality means two things:
  - First, the things you say here, and the questionnaires you answer, will all be kept private by our intervention staff. Your information will not be shared with any other people. This includes teachers, neighbours and school staff.
  - Second, confidentiality means we respect each other's lives. We trust that no one here, whether we are parents, family caregivers or children, will share other peoples' stories outside of the group.
- 3) Ask whether there any questions or clarifications needed, and respond to what people ask or say.

## 2.4 Questions and comments

### Your reading prep

- Read *Common questions and issues families raise* before you facilitate this.



## Facilitator reading

### Common questions and issues families raise

**Question:** What is special about the Sihleng'imizi programme?

**Answer:** Sihleng'imizi is what is called a family group intervention. It is unique because most other programmes work with individuals in a family. We believe that by inviting a whole family to work together through sessions and homework activities, the family will build stronger togetherness. We think of it like this: Happy families grow happy and capable children.

**Question:** Why were we, or why was our child, chosen to participate in this programme?

**Answer:** As mentioned earlier, this programme was developed to work with children. Your family was selected because we believe you're the most important influence in your child's life. Therefore, you're the best people to help your child do their best in school, and to support the family to work together better, to be closer and happier.

**Question:** What happens if we miss a session, or a weekly family call or visit with you?

**Answer:** When you miss a session, you miss important information and sharing and learning with each other. It becomes more difficult to keep up with our discussions when we miss out. Also:

- Each person is an important part of this group. The group would not be the same if someone was missing.
- If something important happens in your life and you are not able to attend, we can always talk about the session. We can try to make arrangements to help you to catch up.
- When possible, let me as the facilitator know if you won't be able to attend. Otherwise, your group members and I will worry about you. This will take people's attention away from what we need to cover and do during our group meeting.
- Our weekly family check-ins are important because they help reinforce what we learn during the sessions, and also help us get the most out of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.

**Question:** Is the homework difficult?

**Answer:** The homework is not difficult. It is linked to day-to-day activities in your family. There are no right or wrong answers in the homework. Usually, the most difficult part is to get in the habit of really trying it, and trying out new ways of doing things.

**Question:** Do we have to do the homework activity?

**Answer:** The real work and change in your family happens between sessions when you put your homework activity into practice. So, it is important that you try as far as possible to do your homework activity every week. It will help you get the most benefit out of the sessions and the programme. Doing the homework will also help you participate during group meetings and enjoy them even more.

**Question:** Why do you call our family every week?

**Answer:** I call to:

- listen to your feedback about the previous session.
  - check in and see how the homework is going.
  - confirm the time of the next meeting.
- 1) Invite questions and comments about anything so far in the session.
  - 2) Thank everyone for their participation and say that you welcome more questions and comments happen all through the programme. We all learn from each other this way.

### 3. In-group exercise: Establishing families' goals

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) In this section, you're going to facilitate participants working in their own families. They will discuss and identify what they want to get out of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. Make sure you read the note about what to expect as participants' goals.

#### Use a listening style

- It is important to avoid using a lecture, top-down style in this session – and in all sessions.
- Your role is to listen to what families say, and guide them to be realistic.
- Facilitate in such a way that families engage in a meaningful discussion about what they hope to get out of the programme.



#### Goals to hope for

Here are some types of goals you hope families will identify that the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme will achieve.

- Help families to help their children do their best in school.
- Help families face challenges that come up, and to feel good about how they deal with them.
- Help families learn new ways to manage their children, and for the children to cope with their challenges, including dealing with their parents.
- Focus on the aspects of parenting and family life that research and experience show will help. This includes things like:
  - setting clear rules
  - making sure that rules and consequences are consistent
  - keeping track of where our children are; what they're doing, and what they should be doing.
- Help us set achievable expectations for family members. This includes how we should take our children's age into consideration when setting goals and new expectations.
- Help families prepare for the future, including fulfilling hopes and dreams for their children.

#### Be realistic

- Help each family and the big group to develop appropriate and realistic goals.
- Explain the limits of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme if you discover that participants want things that are not achievable e.g. "find me a job" or "fix my child".



- 2) Use this script to assist with your explanation of what the group is going to do.



We're going to do an activity in our individual families to find out what each family hopes to accomplish through the sessions and programme overall. We need parents, caregivers and children in each family to share your ideas.

- a) Each family must make a list of things that they would like to get out of participating in the programme. These are your goals for the programme.
- b) Write your goals on the *Family goals* worksheet in your Family Workbook. Also write them on flipchart paper, which I will give you.

## 4. How the family sessions are organised

Time: 20 minutes

### 4.1 The format for families group sessions

Discuss each part of the session format, the goals, and what participants can expect. Spend some time talking about in-session practise activities and homework. Say that some activities are done in the big group and some are done 'in-family' groups where individual families do an activity. Sometimes the children do an activity on their own while the adults do one on their own.

#### Meeting format

- 1) Meet and greet.
- 2) Sing the group's song.
- 3) Go over the last session's homework.
- 4) Discuss the main topic for the session.
- 5) Practise the topic discussed.
- 6) Discuss the homework.
- 7) Any other issues / Wrap-up.

#### Preparation

You would have written the generic meeting format on chart paper before the session. Alternatively, if you have been able to, hand out a piece of paper with them on to everyone.



### 4.2 Setting the group's ground rules

#### Background

In this part of the programme, participants discuss and agree to general behaviour guidelines. These will become their ground rules. The best way to create ground rules people will abide by is to invite participants to generate the entire list themselves. This way, they will genuinely feel that the rules are their own creation of what behaviour they want, and expect, of each other during the sessions and outside of them. Make sure you handle the issues of:

- substance use.
- including children in making ground rules.
- what to do if you are running out of time.

## Substances

A sensitive and very important issue to discuss is substance use before and during sessions. One way you could approach this is by saying:

“This group is a safe place for families and children to learn while having fun. We need to keep the environment comfortable for learning and for mutual support. We must all agree that we will not drink alcohol, or use any drugs before or during our group sessions.”



## Always include the children!

Encourage caregivers to engage with the children to encourage their voices to be heard and included when creating the ground rules.

## If running out of time

If you are short on time, you could discuss all the key ground rules in the list provided further down. But be sure to ask if people agree to each one.

Then ask for any more ground rules. When somebody suggests one, ask the other participants if they agree to it. If most do, add it to the list.

- 1) Invite participants to say why they think ground rules are important in a programme such as this one. If it has not been stated, then say that ground rules help everyone feel safe. Ground rules help everyone have a productive experience.
- 2) Ask what they, as individuals, need to feel to make this a safe environment. A place where they feel safe to discuss personal and sensitive information and their views. When someone mentions one of the ground rules in the *Facilitator checklist for general group ground rules*, affirm them by saying, “Previous groups have also said this was important.”
- 3) When someone suggests a new guideline, invite everyone to give their view on it. Strive for agreement on each ground rule. If it is generally agreed that it is a valuable ground rule, write it onto the poster board.
- 4) Sometimes, participants have difficulty coming up with ground rules. In such an instance, prompt them towards those in the *Facilitator checklist for general group guidelines* that you will find further down.
- 5) Write the general ground rules people have come up with on poster board. Ask everyone to sign it.
- 6) Tell everyone that you will bring the poster board to all the sessions for the group to check in on, and be reminded about.

## Facilitator checklist for general group guide rules

If participants have not raised the ground rules contained in this list, then you must. Make sure everyone understands and agrees to them.

### Ground rules



- To make agreements more concrete, ask the group members to give examples of how one observes a rule. For example, if a ground rule states that all members should be respectful you might ask, "What are some practical ways we can show respect to each other in our sessions?"
  - Ask specifically about how we can show respect to our children in the sessions.
- Request people to state ground rules in a simple, positive way. You can give this as an example of stating something in a positive way. Instead of saying, "Don't be late," let's rather say, "Let's always try to be on time".
- Make sure everyone has your contact details.

## Facilitator input

### Ground rules

#### Privacy / confidentiality

What we do and say during the sessions does not leave the room. Participants must not tell others what participants said or did.

#### Attendance

- Adults and children must attend group meetings regularly.
- If you can't come to a group meeting, you must let the facilitator know.
- If a parent cannot come to a group meeting, please try to arrange for another adult (18+ years old) to attend with the child. We don't want children to miss out on the group sessions. This is very important: children are not allowed to come to sessions without an adult.

#### Respect and boundaries

- Be on time.
- Hear and listen while others are talking. Wait for others to finish speaking before commenting.
- Children: we need to make sure they are included and that their views and feedback are respected.
- Physical distance
  - Keep hands to yourself – no touching other people and know the importance of physical boundaries.
- Respect and embrace differences
  - We are likely to have people with a range of different ethical, spiritual / religious values, cultural backgrounds, parenting styles and beliefs within our group. We can ask questions of each other, and comment on each other's beliefs and choices, without being judgmental.
- We commit to being respectful of each other's parenting styles, especially since we will have the opportunity to observe each other's parenting in the group.
- We can give constructive feedback, ask questions, or make suggestions in a friendly, non-judgmental and supportive way.



## Cell phones and other distractions

We will agree when our phones must be on silent and when we may check them for messages, or make calls.

## Safety

- All children must be accompanied by an adult to go outside the room, such as when going to the bathroom, or to go into a children's group for an activity.
- We have a responsibility to make each other feel safe in our meeting space.

## 4.3 The Sihleng'imizi Family Reward System

- 1) Explain the Sihleng'imizi Family Reward System and the stickers that go with it. Say that it is to encourage and motivate families to fully participate and engage in the sessions. Reward stickers are given for a variety of things, such as completing homework and participating in discussions and activities. As the facilitator, you will find your own special things to award stickers for – including for things that children make and do in the sessions. At the end of the programme, you will add up all the reward stickers families earn and families will receive reward sticker certificates.

### Make the Family Reward System work well

- Be sure to work with your childcare worker to implement the reward system consistently.
- Use the reward system frequently during the first few weeks. This will help participants, especially the children, learn how the system works. It will help them make connections between their behaviour, participation and rewards and privileges.



- 2) Tell the group that reward stickers will be given to those participants who stick with the ground rules that everyone has agreed to, and to those who participate in the group activities and complete the homework activities.



Everyone will automatically receive a reward sticker for showing up to the group session on time. There will be opportunities to earn more stickers every group meeting. However, if someone breaks an agreement, they will receive a verbal warning outside of the group. If the person continues to disregard the family group agreements, they will lose a sticker. Does anyone need to know more about the Family Reward System?

## 5. Icebreaker: Getting to know our family more

Time: 5 minutes

*Let's Talk About Strengths (this activity is adapted from McKay, et al., 2012)*

### Disclosure: start with you

During the initial phase of the programme, it is important that you, as facilitator, are the first to disclose in the relationship-building task.

You could do this at the beginning of the activity as a way of explaining how it works. You will be able to assess when it will be most effective and helpful for the group.



### Disclosure takes time

This is only the first group session. Some group members may not yet be comfortable sharing family details this early in the programme.

### You need a ball or a stuffed animal for this icebreaker.

- 1) Explain to participants that this icebreaker will help them to:
  - get to know group members at the family level.
  - build a group relationship.
  - increase the level of trust within and between family units.
- 2) Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Go around the circle and invite each person to say their name. Remember to include the children.
- 3) Demonstrate what to do in the icebreaker by starting with yourself. Hold the ball. Say your name. State one strength your family has. Then pass the ball on.
- 4) The person who receives the ball does the same. They name one strength of their family. They then pass the ball saying, "Here (insert name of person passing to)."
- 5) The person receiving the ball says, "Thanks, (insert name of person who threw the ball). One strength of my family is (state a strength)."
- 6) Say that in the next activity, we will focus more on our family strengths.

### Make sure participants take turns

To avoid having the same family member volunteer each time to share on behalf of a family unit, specifically request that different members take turns sharing in future sessions.



## 6. Core lesson

Time: 15 minutes

### 6.1 Our family strengths

- 1) After the icebreaker, which laid the foundation for this, prompt a discussion about family strengths. Say, "Everyone did a great job coming up with family strengths. Can you identify and write down other family strengths, or things your family does well?" Add that families will work on this a bit more at home.

#### Make these important points

- Sometimes, people overlook strengths because they're busy with or worried about other things.
  - Family strengths can help ensure children's success in school and in life.



#### Point out what the group has in common

As discussion happens, point out similar comments people make. This will help contribute to the development of a cohesive and trusting group both in this session and going forward.

#### Facilitator note

#### Helpful prompts for the family strengths icebreaker

Consider asking (you might have decided to write them up on chart paper before the session), questions to help prompt families to think of a wide range of types of strengths.

- What is your favourite memory as a family?
- What is something your family often does together?
- What is your favourite family meal?
- What are your family strengths? For example, are people in your family supportive and or loving?
- Do you have regular family meals?
- Do you celebrate your heritage / cultural traditions / family member achievements?

If people still have trouble identifying strengths, ask if they have, for example:

- loving family members
- physical and mental wellbeing
- enjoyable cultural traditions and rituals
- social support from neighbours, their community, other people or groups
- a way of sharing information about resources, such as organisations that help
- a positive way of working together to solve problems
- family members who can be patient even when they are angry
- clear rules and expectations about certain things in the family.

If you remember strengths identified by families during your initial home visit (you would have noted these down), you can draw from that as well.

## 6.2 Why praise is important

- 1) Say that from talking about family strengths, we're now going to look at whether, and if we do, how we praise each other for our strengths.
- 2) Ask parents / caregivers about how they recognise (a) their own strengths, and (b) their children's strengths.
- 3) Ask the children what their parents and caregivers say or do when they have done well at school, or have behaved well.
- 4) Ask the children how this makes them feel.
- 5) Say the following:



We can promote positive behaviours in our children through praise. When we recognise and praise their work, children learn to recognise, and feel good about the tasks they complete. Praise is also an important and great way for family members to recognise all of the things other people do to help and support the family.

## 6.3 In-group family exercise

- 1) Introduce the idea of the weekly in-group family exercise.



After each week's group discussion, each family will have an opportunity to practise working on an issue related to our topic of the day. After that, each family can share with the group about their individual discussion. We will all be able to learn from each other.

- 2) Begin a discussion with the parents / caregivers and the children. Ask these questions to set off the discussion:

- What are the roles of a parent / caregiver?

**Note:** Perhaps most will say they are there to provide for their children; look after their children; monitor and discipline their children.

- How are the parents / caregivers able to fulfill these roles?

**Note:** Perhaps most will describe how they discipline their child; and the measures they put in place to feed, shelter, educate and clothe their children.

**Note:** Try to move the discussion to things that families do together, whether watching TV, eating a meal, playing, or doing homework. *Prompt* families to think of and discuss the activities they do which build closeness between parents / caregivers and their children. Lead the discussion to asking what special time for parents / caregivers and their children would mean for them.

*Remember* to include the children in this discussion; ask them to reflect on these things as well.

## 7. Homework activity

Time: 10 minutes

### 7.1 What is Special Time?


- 1) Leading on from the previous discussion, ask participants to make suggestions about what Special Time might refer to in the context of children and family life. If participants don't cover it, say that Special Time is when parents and caregivers in the family spend time with their children in a happy and focused way. Parents and caregivers can support their children's learning during Special Time.
- 2) Explain that when parents and caregivers ask their child what they would like to do during Special Time, often the child does not know what to say because it is sometimes the first time a child has been asked this question. Say that parents and caregivers can help their child to choose. They can do this by suggesting ways in which they could play, or do chores in a fun way together.

- 3) Say you know it can be challenging for parents / caregivers to know what to do in Special Time with one's child, especially when there is only a little time and if their child presents with difficult behaviour. If families are stuck in thinking about what to do in their Special Time, assist by sharing ideas from the Ideas for Special Time activities to do with your child. You can refer families to the page in their Family Workbook so they can look at it again at home. Help parents / caregivers identify different Special Time activities they might enjoy to do with their children. Explain that they will continue this as their homework activity for this session.  
Refer the families to the pages in their Family Workbook about Special Time. Ask them to read through the notes at home.
- 4) Say that the homework for the coming week is to identify with their child what their child would like to do in their Special Time and to spend some Special Time together.

### Facilitator note and also in the Family Workbook

#### Ideas for Special Time activities to do with your child

It can be challenging to know what to do with your child, especially when there is only a little time and your child presents with difficult behaviour. To help you, here are some examples of activities you could do with your child this week:

- playing with a ball, a doll or another toy
  - dressing up in fun clothes
  - skipping rope in the yard
  - shopping game in the house
  - jigsaw puzzles
  - house cleaning side by side
  - singing a song together (this could include making up a new special group song)
  - eating a meal together
  - story-telling:
    - encourage your child to tell a story
    - you tell a story
    - have regular story times.
  - Include your own ideas, from your experience of meeting these and other families.
- 5) Ask families now to get together in their family unit. Ask them to discuss what Special Time activity they would like to do as a family. Tell them that they will share what they came up with when they return to the big group.
  - 6) Invite each family to share with the big group what activity they chose to do for Special Time. Affirm suggestions.
  - 7) Say this:  
 Just like we came up with ground rules earlier, we are going to come up with some ground rules around Special Time. You might find that some of the rules we came up with for group ground rules also apply to Special Time. What are some rules you think there should be for Special Time?
  - 8) Initiate a discussion that ties up the ground rules for Special Time.
  - 9) Follow up with a discussion about what families think might get in the way of being able to have Special Time. Ask families to think of solutions to those challenges.

### Do not take Special Time away as a punishment

Say to the group that parents / caregivers should not take Special Time away as punishment for something negative the child might have done.



- 10) Refer to the *Reflections* pages in the Family Workbook. Explain that it is for noting down experiences and thoughts linked to each session. Say that participants share reflections they would like to with the facilitator and with the group during the feedback on homework at the beginning of each session.
- 11) Make sure everyone understands what they need to do for the homework activity. Say you hope everyone will enjoy coming up with ideas for Special Time activities and that you look forward to hearing about them.

## 7.2 Introducing Sihleng'imizi Buddies

- 1) Explain what a Sihleng'imizi Buddy is, and how and why they fit into the programme (see the script below). Each parent / caregiver will need to find someone to support them – a buddy – from within the group. Parents / caregivers will team up with this person, who becomes their Sihleng'imizi Buddy. Explain how it works:



A Sihleng'imizi Buddy is someone who gives parents / caregivers support during the week in between sessions. You will pair up with another parent / caregiver from another family. Your buddy also helps you if you have to miss a session.

The purpose of being a Sihleng'imizi Buddy is to share experiences, successes, solutions, and to build a support network beyond the weekly meetings. Sihleng'imizi Buddies should be participants who live close to one another so that it is easy to meet once a week to discuss how your week is going. Your buddy and you can support each other through your homework activities.

- 2) Give participants a little time to understand the system and to choose their own buddy. Keep an eye on any difficult pairings and suggest alternatives, if you feel it is necessary.
- 3) Say that homework this week is for parents / caregivers to be in touch with their Sihleng'imizi Buddy.

## 7.3 Check-in before Session 2

- 1) Inform families that you will be checking in with them over the next week to discuss family involvement and session attendance.
- 2) Say that families can prepare for this by informing children and other relevant family members who will support their attendance and participation in the programme. This is a way to, in consultation with you, proactively remove or resolve attendance barriers. Families will also have the opportunity during the check-in to report on how things went in terms of orientation of the family to the programme, and attending Session 1.
- 3) Refer families to the contact section at the front of the Family Workbook. Give everyone time to fill in the different contact details. Make sure they have your contact details.

## 8. The wrap-up

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Answer questions about the programme and how it runs.
- 2) Compliment families on their participation and comment both individually and collectively.
- 3) Schedule between session contact. Explain that the purpose of the contact is to:
  - ask for feedback about session.
  - ask what ideas and responses the family has had since the group meeting.
  - review the homework activity.
- 4) Confirm time of next session and re-state the need for consistent attendance.
- 5) Confirm and complete the session's attendance chart.
- 6) Give each family a copy of Appendix O – the general evaluation form and ask them to fill it in and give it to you.
- 7) Ask families to bring a scarf, or a piece of cloth, they can use as a blindfold over their eyes for a fun activity next session. Each family member needs one.

### Points to mention before closing – and to repeat throughout the programme

- We will learn new skills and methods throughout the programme. Try to keep using all of them in your family life, even though each homework focuses on those from that particular session. You can think of each session as continuously adding to your “toolbox”.
- We are here to share and learn from each other in a safe space.
- Each week, we ask you to write some reflections in your Family Workbook. Reflecting helps you think through things. It helps you come up with new thoughts and ideas. You also use the reflection sheets when we have the homework feedback session.
- It is important that you try to remember to bring your Family Workbook to each session because we refer to it during sessions.



- 8) Close the session with these words, or a similar affirmation



We are very glad you are all here. We look forward to working with you. This group has a lot of promise, and your participation in it is going to be important! Remember that changes take time. Be patient and persistent.



# Session 2

## At home: Helping children do their best at school

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage parents and caregivers to feel confident and comfortable in helping their children do their best academically and in their behaviour at school.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>During this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>create, or improve, the family's current system to make sure that the family provides the time and space for children to do their homework.</li> <li>provide opportunities to discuss triumphs and difficulties in their children's school day</li> <li>help parents / caregivers develop information gathering and monitoring skills in relation to their children's school life</li> <li>help children learn how to tell their parents / caregivers about what they are learning at school, and about what is happening in their school lives.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbooks (for families who didn't come to Session 1). Remind families that it is very important to bring their workbook to every session because we use them a lot.</li> <li>All the general materials required for each session, including writing equipment and reward stickers.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>A blindfold for each person e.g. pieces of fabric or scarves – you asked participants to bring one for each family member but it would help if you brought a few spares.</li> <li>The Solution Plans worksheet in the Family Workbook.</li> <li>Write up the steps for activity 2.2 Solution Plans on chart paper.</li> <li>A copy of the <i>My hopes, dreams and goals</i> worksheet for each child to do with the childcare worker.</li> <li>Write up the skeleton of a typical day on chart paper for the in-group family exercise: A typical day in our family life (2.4).</li> <li>Evaluation forms – one for each family of Appendix O (general form).</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker: The Blind Walk</li> <li>songs</li> <li>role plays.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read through all the notes for this session, including those in the Family Workbook and Childcare Worker Manual section?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children's activity with the childcare worker?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 2.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

| <b>Session 2 Programme</b>    |  |            |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: The Blind Walk (10 minutes)   | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Discussion: Can parents / caregivers help their children get closer to achieving their goals? (15 minutes)<br>2.2 Warm up activity towards making solution plans and role plays (15 minutes)<br>2.3 Group discussion (adults): Involvement in our children's education (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children do an activity with the childcare worker and return for the in-group family exercise.</li> </ul> 2.4 In-group family exercise: A typical day in our family life (20 minutes) | 80 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Our family goals<br>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy   | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>Ask families to fill in the evaluation form Appendix O (general)</li> <li>Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>   | 10 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here.
- 2) Say that we will begin with a review of the group's ground rules. Don't allow the review to take up more than 5 minutes.
- 3) Refer to the poster board with the ground rules from Session 1. Invite discussion on whether participants think the ground rules are fine, or whether they think the ground rules need tweaking in some way, or adding to. Adjust or add a ground rule if everyone agrees. Say that, going forward in the programme, you'd like participants to feel free to raise a ground rule challenge or suggestion.
- 4) Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group has followed the ground rules so far. Demonstrate this rating system with your hands:
  - Create a zero with your hand if you don't think the group followed the ground rules at all.
  - Hold up 2 or 3 fingers if you think the group followed the ground rules to some extent but there is room to improve.
  - Hold up 4 fingers if you think the group followed the ground rules well.
  - Hold up 5 fingers if you think the group followed the ground rules excellently.

- 5) Keep this fairly light and affirming:
  - Ask the children to name one positive thing their parent / caregiver did since the last group meeting.
  - Ask the parents / caregivers to name one positive thing their child did since the last group meeting.
- 6) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements.
- 7) Thank the volunteer and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels. The idea is to reinforce that singing can lift up our spirits and mood.
- 8) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework went.

## 1.2 Homework check

15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 1. Affirm that homework was to:
  - Continue to think about what the child and their parent / caregiver would like to do in their Special Time.
  - Firm up their Special Time ground rules.
  - Have some Special Time.
  - Answer the questions on the parent / caregiver's reflection sheet about Special Time in their Family Workbook.
- 2) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share with the group what they did in their Special Time. They can refer to their *Reflections* sheet they wrote in their Family Workbooks. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did your family choose for the Special Time homework activity?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 3) Invite a discussion on what additional steps might help a family facing difficulties doing the homework activity in the future. Here are some guiding questions:
  - If you could not do the homework, why was this? What difficulties did you experience?
  - Can you work around the difficulties? If yes, how?
  - What tips could you share?

### We can find solutions together

Remember to reinforce this important principle  
in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme:  
each person here has experience, skills and wisdom.  
We need to use this important resource to help us find  
solutions throughout the programme.



- 4) Highlight the need for everyone to be committed to doing the homework activities throughout the programme. Use an example from the discussion you have just had to emphasise the benefits of doing the homework. Say that the *Reflections* sheets for the parents / caregivers in the Family Workbook for each session will hopefully help everyone gain more wisdom and become even more solution orientated. Encourage everyone to use them.
- 5) Have a check in whether Sihleng'imizi Buddies visited each other – do this every session. If buddies did not visit each other, identify the challenges people had and brainstorm some solutions with the families for how to make the buddy system work. Support in a system such as this is very important during the programme and also as a support system beyond it.
- 6) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

### What to do if families couldn't complete the homework

- If families were unable to complete the homework, discuss ways to complete the homework in the future.
- Emphasise that it is in doing the activities at home, we gain practice in using new ways of doing things. This is how we gain the most out of the programme.



### Draw on group wisdom to find solutions to challenges

- When you invite everyone to offer suggestions for how families can do things, you demonstrate how the group can help each other find solutions to challenges. You are facilitating the deepening of bonds and building of internal support networks.
- Remind everyone that their Sihleng'imizi Buddy is a source of support. People can make use of the buddy system between sessions, especially if they are struggling with homework activities.

## 1.3 Icebreaker

10 minutes

- 1) Request people to reintroduce themselves to help us remember one another's names.
- 2) Explain the purpose of The Blind Walk icebreaker and how to do it.

### The Blind Walk

*Adapted from Prendiville, P (2004).*

### Objective

Continue to build a trusting group relationship.

### You need

Blindfolds for each person (scarves or pieces of material).

### How to do The Blind Walk

- a) Ask everyone to line up one after the other and join hands.
- b) Give everyone a blindfold, or to take out the one they brought with.
- c) Everyone wears a blindfold except for you and the childcare worker.
- d) Go to the front of the line and lead the group along a path through the room. Give the first person next to you in line instructions on how to move or avoid obstacles in the room, such as chairs, tables and bags.
- e) The person who receives the information tells the next person and so on until each person maneuvers through or around the obstacles.
- f) When the whole group has successfully negotiated their way around the obstacles in the room, ask people to say what they got out of doing The Blind Walk. Ask whether they thought the icebreaker helped them feel a sense of trust in each other as a group.

## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Discussion: Can parents / caregivers and other family members help their children get closer to achieving their goals?

Time: 15 minutes

#### Include the children!

- Remember to include the children in the discussion.
  - Proactively ask for their thoughts and views.



- 1) Share this inspirational quote from Nelson Mandela: “Education is the most important weapon to change the world.” Have a few seconds asking participants whether they agree with Mandela or not.
- 2) Explain that in this activity we will explore if, and how, parents / caregivers can help their children get closer to reaching their goals in their school life. Follow the script:



Today, we’re going to discuss some topics to do with helping children manage school life. Children, we need your input in the discussions. Your feelings and views are very important for us to find ways to encourage and support you.

#### Topic 1: Is it ever difficult for parents / caregivers to help children in their school life?

- 1) After participants have spent a couple of minutes responding to the topic, wrap up by saying:



Every parent/caregiver faces a challenge at some point with their children’s school. This programme aims to help parents / caregivers to help their children do their best in school. Nelson Mandela said, “Education is our future,” and Sihleng’imizi agrees. That is why we will have an entire session dedicated to discussing problem-solving for the challenges you face in relation to your child’s school life.

- 2) Share the information that comes next.

#### Facilitator note to share with participants

There is a direct connection between active parent interest in a child’s school life and how a child does in their school life

Research shows there is a direct connection between a child doing better in their school life and having a parent / caregiver’s active interest, encouragement and support. Doing well at school often leads to children:

- feeling and being more self-confident.
- being more trusting in their own abilities to do different things.
- having more opportunities in their futures.
- being more prepared for school work.
- managing better socially and having and upholding positive values.

## Topic 2: Do children like to learn?

- 1) After you have given an opportunity for both children and parents / caregivers to share their views, wrap up with this:



### Children like to learn

Children do like to learn – many *love* to learn, don't you, children?! [Have eye contact with the children here.] Children are born with natural curiosity. Although sometimes endless questions may be annoying for adults, it is important to encourage your child to be curious. Curiosity leads to learning. So children, keep being curious – that's how you learn new things!

- 2) Go through the information that follows.

## Learning leads to growth

There are many different ways children can learn and there are many sources of correct information. The ways include:

- formal teaching
- reading books
- having conversations and discussions
- playing on their own
- playing with others, such as at school, and with friends and family
- watching and listening to appropriate programmes on radio, TV and elsewhere
- having interactions with people.

All of these can be very exciting for children and stimulates their brains. When children learn new things, it often helps them do things well, have confidence in themselves, and achieve in the future.

### A tip

A tip to helping your child learn is to ask them:

"What are you most interested in learning about?"

Your question doesn't have to relate to school. You can help your child when you know what they enjoy learning about and by encouraging them. Don't worry, you are not expected to have knowledge about everything they are interested in!

## Topic 3: Can parents / caregivers and children treat learning as desirable activities rather than as "chores"?

- 1) Give participants a couple of minutes to respond. Say this, always affirming and linking points the participants have made that relate to what you say:



### Promote the joy of learning

There is no need to bribe children to do their homework. Children who are given bribes or rewards to finish their homework are often more focused on the reward than on learning and becoming smarter.

When we encourage children to love learning new things generally, this alone brings bonding, enjoyment, and the desire to do well. As parents / caregivers, we can help our children do well in school when we:

- are curious and interested in our child's world
- share hopes and dreams with our child
- support our child to strive to do well in achieving their goals at school
- affirm our child's efforts.



### Let's remember the key points

- Parents/caregivers, you have the power, and the ability, to enhance and strengthen your child's progress by becoming involved with what they are learning.
- Children, you also have the agency and ability to share with your parents and others what you enjoy. In this way, you give adults clues about how they can support you.

- 2) Ask the children first, and, after that ask the parents / caregivers, to come up with ideas in response to this question:

"How can parents / caregivers encourage their children to learn and enjoy learning?"

- Write their responses on separate pieces of chart paper.
- 3) Wrap up in a way that appreciates, encourages and compliments parents / caregivers for sharing their beliefs, ideas and techniques they have used to encourage their child's learning.

### Use this opportunity!

This is your important opportunity to:

- Reinforce the ethos of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, which is to focus on people's strengths
  - Appreciate the children's participation.
- Say that we know it is sometimes more difficult for children to speak in front of adults.



## 2.2 Warm up activity towards making Solution Plans

*Solution Plans – Ciardiello, S (2003).*

Time: 15 minutes

### Objectives of the warm up activity

- To educate families on the importance, for their child's school life success, of having organisational skills, and of being organised.
- To 'warm families up' to be ready to make detailed Solutions Plans.

### You need

- The *Solution plans* worksheet in the Family Workbook.

### What to do

- 1) Divide your participants into three groups.
- 2) Ask participants to look at the Solution Plans worksheet in their Family Workbook and meet Messy Mandla, Forgetful Fikile and Last-Minute Lindiwe. Allocate one of the characters to each group.
- 3) Put up your chart paper with the steps for this activity that you prepared before the session. Take participants through the steps that they, first in the small groups, and then together as a big group, will follow.

**Step 1:** In your small group, brainstorm some ideas for what your child character and their parents / caregivers can do (a) at home, and (b) at school, to help the child character be better organised for the child's school life. These ideas are your solution plans.

**Step 2:** Write your solution plans on a piece of paper.

**Step 3:** Select what you think your best solution plan is, and prepare to role play it in front of the big group.

**Step 4 :** Come together and groups will take turns to perform the role plays.



**Step 5:** After each small group has done their role play, we ask the children to respond to the following questions:

- Do you ever feel like any of these characters? If so, which of them?
- Do you think you can try out some of the solution plans we saw today to help you be better organised for your school life? Say why.

**Step 6:** Let's give ourselves a round of applause!

4) Explain that next the children will accompany our childcare worker ..... (say their name) to (a) share with each other what things you enjoy learning about, and (b) to do a drawing and write on a worksheet called *My hopes, dreams and goals*. Say that the worksheet is also in the Family Workbook. Tell the children that they will share what they did later with their families.

### Children leave for a session with the childcare worker



- You will have discussed the activity with the childcare worker before the session.
- The children leave with the childcare worker to:
  - Talk about the things they enjoy learning about.
  - Draw and write on their *Hopes, dreams and goals* worksheet which the childcare worker will give them, along with stationery to write and draw with.
  - Chat about the things that keep them going when they are frustrated; the things they do that help them stay positive.

## 2.3 Group discussion: Involvement in our children's education

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Welcome the families to their adults-only group discussion. Explain what the children are going to do. Say that we will now focus on how to be involved in your children's education to strengthen how they do in their school lives.
- 2) Share with the family group members the points that some teachers have told the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme about the type of help they need families to offer children at home.

### Facilitator information-sharing note

#### How teachers would like families to help their child's school life

Teachers say they would like families to:

- help with homework
  - talk to the teachers more often
  - make sure children attend school
  - make sure children are on time for school
  - come to school meetings when invited
  - tell teachers if there are challenges or problems at home that are affecting the child
  - encourage children to learn
  - encourage children to use what they learn in the classroom at home
  - praise and encourage children when they use skills they have learnt at school
  - assist at home with the child's behaviour.
- 3) Give each person a copy of the information sheet from the Family Workbook called *What the research says about parent / caregiver involvement in children's education*. Read it aloud.

- 4) Using the points that come up in the information sheet, initiate a discussion on the ways family members think they can help their children do their best in school. Write up what they say on chart paper – even if you are only able to capture key words.
- 5) Ask people to respond to this: Why is it important that family members help children succeed in school? Complement what they say with the note that comes next.

### Facilitator information-sharing note

## Parental involvement has a powerful influence

- a) Parental involvement is a powerful positive influence on children's academic achievement in school.
  - The best ways to know whether a learner will be successful at school are not family income or background. It is how much the family:
    - makes sure the home environment encourages learning
    - expects good marks and hard work from the child
    - becomes involved in the child's education at school.

*(National PTA, 2000).*
  - Many researchers have shown over many years that, even if a family is poor, learners who have parents / caregivers who are involved in and support their schooling, will often:
    - have better marks
    - adapt well to school
    - be able to finish school
    - have better social skills
    - have better confidence and behaviour
    - use less drugs and alcohol
    - be less violent.

*Henderson, A. T., & Mapp, K. L. (2002).*
- b) School success often leads to overall greater confidence, more life opportunities, and prepares children not just with school work but also socially and morally, with help from the parents.
- c) The earlier in a child's education process that parent / caregiver and other family member involvement begins, the more powerful the effects.

### Make the connections

- Connect parental and family member involvement in children's education to success with the bigger picture: the hopes, dreams and goals they have for their children.
- Helping children succeed in school is a building block to achieving the bigger goals. For example, children with family members who are involved in their education tend to achieve more, and are less likely to drop out of school, than children with uninvolved family members.
- The above all holds true regardless of a family's ethnic or racial background, socioeconomic status, or parent / caregiver education level.



- 6) Ask participants to share things they already do, or could do, to help their children succeed in school life. After they have shared, affirm their inputs. Wrap up by reading out any of the points that they did not cover from the list that follows.

## Facilitator list

### Things that parents and caregivers can do to help their children succeed at school

Structure your child's time and environment at home so that it is conducive for doing homework. For example:

- Have a set time and a specific place for your child to be able to sit and to do homework. The place should be at a table, and not on a bed as far as possible. Your child might come home and play for a short while, and then get down to their homework.
  - Have a rule about the TV and radio so that your child is able to concentrate fully on their homework tasks, and is not easily distracted. This includes letting your child concentrate without being disturbed by family members.
  - Be involved in your child's learning, such as:
    - their reading, which you might listen to
    - ask what they are learning about
    - ask what their homework tasks are
    - do things like puzzles with them
    - make sure your child's homework is completed, and sign it off, if the teacher requires this.
  - Be involved in your child's overall school experience. For example, show an interest in what happens at school and attend school meetings and functions.
  - Praise your child for positive learning behaviour, such as doing homework, exercising and showing an interest in educational and fun reading.
  - Express realistic expectations for your child's achievements.
- 7) Invite parents / caregivers to give concrete examples of ways they provide, or could provide, structure to home life in a way that will help their child perform more strongly at school. After they have shared, affirm and consolidate with any of these points that they did not cover in the sharing.

## Facilitator note

### Ways parents and caregivers can help provide structure at home

- Set rules and stick to them. Include your child in ideas for the rules for when, where and how they must complete their homework. Make sure they understand that distractions will not help them complete their homework in good time. It would give them less time for play.
  - Create a specific time to check your child's homework.
  - Assist your child in using community resources, such as libraries or computer centres that can be helpful when doing homework or projects.
  - Set and stick to what time your child must go to bed and ensure that they get enough uninterrupted sleep.
  - Make sure that your child follows structured time for different things. For example, a daily routine which includes your child getting a good start in the morning by eating breakfast (the most important meal of the day) and which includes other important development needs, like time to exercise, be with friends and play.
  - Agree to, and stick to, limits on the amount of time your child may watch television.
- 8) Invite parents / caregivers and other family members to give examples of ways they do, or could, involve themselves in their child's school experience. After they have shared, affirm their ideas and cover any of points they didn't speak about.

## Facilitator note to share with the group

### Ways to be involved in your child's school life

- Regularly chat with your child about all aspects of their school life, including sport, social and schoolwork.
  - Do check-ins with your child's homework after every school day and notice their progress.
  - Remember to sign your child's homework if this is what the teacher and school require. This helps to you to build a positive relationship with your child's teacher.
  - Ask your child and / or your child's teacher for dates that projects or assignments are due so you can monitor and support your child in meeting deadlines.
  - Encourage other family members to take an interest in, and help where they can, with your child's school life – so long as your child is comfortable with them doing so.
  - Read and discuss your child's report with their teacher and your child. Remember to listen to what they say. It can help to write notes. Ask how you can help your child.
  - Attend parent / caregiver / family events and meetings at your child's school. This shows both your child and the school that you are involved.
  - Talk with your child's teacher to learn about what is happening in the classroom.
  - Talk about problems and challenges that your child has quickly, when they arise. Work with teachers and other staff to find solutions. Teachers can't solve all challenges – it's important to be part of your child's education partnerships and solutions.
  - Enthusiastically attend assemblies, concerts, sports matches or any other school event where your child will be. This has a very positive impact on your child feeling special.
- 9) Ask parents / caregivers to share obstacles that may prevent them from helping their child do their best in their school life. After participants have shared:
- Express empathy and reflect on how some challenges are difficult to manage.
  - Share any points in the list that follows which participants did not cover.
  - Ask if any of the points are relevant to them, in addition to the obstacles they shared.
  - Write the obstacles that are relevant to your participants on chart paper. This is in preparation for the next step.

## Facilitator note: list of examples to share

### Examples of obstacles parents and caregivers often face when wanting to help their child do their best at school

- Some children (and especially girls) have high levels of responsibility for chores at home. Families can figure out ways to more fairly allocate chores.
- We always need to assess whether each chore we expect children to do is age appropriate, or too difficult for a little child.
- It can be difficult to help, support and monitor children. This is especially so for working (for paid work) families and single parent / caregiver families, and when parents do not live with their children.
- Sometimes, it can be challenging for parents and caregivers to read and understand instructions in their children's homework. It is even more challenging when these are written in a language other than ones they are fluent in. It is a challenge, too, for parents and caregivers who have limited reading skills.
- When children become older, assisting them with schoolwork can become more confusing. This is especially difficult when parents / caregivers are not familiar with the school subjects.
- The prospect of helping with their children's schoolwork can, understandably, be daunting for many parents / caregivers. Many adults are haunted by their own memories of school, if school was not a happy time for them. They may be uncomfortable experiencing those memories return.
- Some parents / caregivers may feel it isn't their role to "challenge" the school and / or feel it is "unfair" to have to do the "teacher's work" in addition to their parental responsibilities. However,

we should remember that there is a vital partnership between children, teachers and parents that can be strengthened to help children succeed in their school life.

- It is an extra challenge for a parent / caregiver / family member who cannot attend school meetings and functions because they are not mobile, are not literate (this may cause feelings of embarrassment), have a disability, or where money for transport is a severe constraint. We have to find ways to make it comfortable and possible for those parents / caregivers to be part of their child's school life. Solutions can be to ask for help from family members or neighbours.
- 10) Go through the obstacles / challenges one by one that your parents / childcarers identified as ones they face. Pose these questions and facilitate the discussion:
- How have you dealt with these problems in the past?
  - What can you do to overcome this obstacle / challenge?

### The children return

The childcare worker will bring the children into the session to join their families in individual family groups.



- 11) Once the children are with their families, invite the children to share (a) one thing they love learning about, and (b) one goal or dream they drew during their children's session.
- 12) Once everyone has shared their feedback from their family groups, say that the key messages from this activity are:
- We can, by actively engaging, help children do well in their school life.
  - We can motivate our children to enjoy school and develop a love of learning.
- 13) Thank everyone for their valuable inputs during the activity. Say that next everyone is going to do an activity with their own family.

## 2.4 In-group family exercise: A typical day in our family life

Time: 15 minutes

### Objective

The activity will help with thinking about and planning how to do things at home in a way that will help support our children's school lives.

### You need

- A piece of chart paper for each family.
- The outline as in (1) below to prompt the structure of a day.  
You would have written it on chart paper before the session.

### What to do

- 1) Ask the group to gather in their family groups and write their family names on the top of their piece of chart paper. Show them the outline you have prepared. Ask families to:
- a) Discuss your day, starting from the morning, and include, for example, who goes to work or school / crèche, what happens after school, and their after work, and evening routines.
  - b) Pick a common problem you experience while going about your daily tasks.
  - c) Say why you think the task is not met.
  - d) Say how you dealt with this issue in the past.
  - e) Say you will assist families identify a solution that works for everyone, so the task will be fulfilled.

Give this as an example:

A child is not completing their homework. It might be because of things such as interruptions, TV, or loud talking that takes away the child's attention from their homework. The child may need some space for quiet work. Or, if the child doesn't want to start homework immediately after school, they may need a set period of time (about 15 minutes) after school to rest, play, or watch TV before they start their homework.

| A typical day in our family life   | Family member name | Family member name | Family member name | Family member name |
|--|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| My meal times are at .....   |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| My wake up time is at.....   |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| My bedtime is at .....   |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| My homework time is from<br>.....<br>to .....  |                    |                    |                    |                    |
| We talk about how our day has been at<br>.....<br>(especially the children's school experiences) |                    |                    |                    |                    |

- 2) Say it is important to have a regular time of 30 minutes in the day to engage with a child's schoolwork and progress. A family could also schedule time to be together to talk about their day. Share the following as suggestions to help families identify times that could work for them.

## For facilitator input

### Ideas for homework and family time scheduling

- Mealtimes can be a great opportunity for a family to share about their day, and to chat generally. It isn't always possible for all family members to be present every mealtime but everyone should make an effort if they are available.
- Try not to have the television or radio on during your mealtimes so that you can pay full attention to each other.
- Use these types of specific questions to chat about each other's days and to be kind, encouraging and supportive towards each other. Here are examples:
  - "What was the best thing that happened today?"
  - "What was the worst thing that happened today?"
- Encourage children to ask about what their parents / caregivers did during the day, too. This reinforces the importance of family communication and caring for each other.
- Try to initiate and then increase discussions about school in your family's daily routines.
- Try to create, or improve, daily routines and structure so that you make your child's schoolwork and life a priority.

- 3) Acknowledge that it is not always easy at first to find the best ways to encourage a child's learning. It helps to ask the child what kind of support they would appreciate. Remind everyone that earlier in the session we spoke about encouraging children's curiosity and finding out what children love to learn about. Offer the following examples, if they have not already come up, of ways to encourage children's learning.

### Facilitator note

#### Ideas of ways to encourage children's learning

- Compliment your child on doing their homework (especially their effort and determination when they are struggling with something).
- Set rules around watching television. TV is distracting for children when they are trying to do their homework. Try to make certain times that are TV-free, and turn off the TV.
- Try to identify a place to do homework in the home AWAY from the TV when others are watching.
- Children between the ages of 5 and 13 should have between 9 and 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night.
- Agree to a set bedtime for children under the age of 10 years old. Find a solution if the children are supposed to sleep in the living room. Perhaps they can fall asleep in another room and can be moved through when the adults go to bed?
- Play learning games and do puzzles with your children.
- Count objects for fun everywhere – and while doing household chores. For example, maths at home can be adding and taking away socks or other household things in a pile, or when doing the washing up.
- Play sports which help children develop physical coordination. For example, throwing and catching a ball, kicking a ball and playing hopscotch.
- Encourage children to solve problems.

Thank everyone for their participation in the activity. Remind participants that the children did an activity about hopes, dreams and goals. To follow on from this, one homework activity this week is for each family to identify two family goals and the rules / expectations that go with them.

## 3. Homework

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Our family goals

- 1) Refer participants to the worksheet called *Our family goals* in their Family Workbook. They will do this activity for one part of their homework for Session 2.
- 2) Say that when doing the homework activity on family goals, they must go back to what they did in the *A typical day in our family life* exercise. From what they came up with, they must identify two goals to practise consistently. Say that you'd like them to try as far as possible to make one goal something that the child is responsible for, and one goal something that the parent / caregiver is responsible for. To help get families started, you can give these as examples of goals to practise consistently.



### Examples of family goals

- Mama: "I will ask you.....(*state name of child*) about school every day this week during dinner."
  - Child: "I will complete my homework by 5 pm each school day."
  - Papa: "I will do homework with you ..... (*state name of child*) before I prepare supper (or another specific thing)."
- 3) Ask families to use the worksheet to write each goal, for example: homework is completed in the kitchen with the TV off, *with a rule*, for example: homework must be completed before the child is allowed to watch TV.
  - 4) Refer everyone to the Family Workbook page called Week 2: *Family goals to help with school: reflections*. Ask participants to write their reflections on the four questions a short while before the next session. Say that the reflections sheets help everyone to:
    - reflect on how things went when trying to achieve their goals.
    - think more deeply about how to make change happen for the better for their child's school life.
    - prepare for reporting back on the progress during Session 3.

### Changes take time

- Remind families that changes take time. We should not get frustrated or despondent if little or no progress is made at first.
  - Our motto is: patience and persistence are the keys to progress.



- 5) Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.

### 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Ask families to fill in Appendix O, the weekly general evaluation form.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 3

## How to work in a cooperative way with your child's school

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Encourage parents and caregivers to be assertive and helpful in supporting their child's success in school.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>In this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help parents / caregivers understand their own feelings about school, and the ways in which they communicate this to their child.</li> <li>convince parents / caregivers – including those who did not go to school, or who had a horrible time in school – that they play an important role in positively shaping their child's learning and progress at school.</li> <li>encourage parents / caregivers and family members to work cooperatively with their child's school to:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>foster their child's progress at school</li> <li>prevent problems</li> <li>quickly address emerging problems before they become major issues.</li> </ul> </li> <li>help parents / caregivers identify community resources that can assist in their child's life.</li> </ul>                 |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session as listed in the introduction.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board to have on hand to refer to.</li> <li>Icebreaker materials:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A copy of the <i>We love school!</i> forms for each participant (there is one for the children and a separate one for the parents / caregivers) in the Family Workbook. Participants will use the forms as interview guides.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Write up the questions that children and parents / caregivers respond to for activity (2.1) called <i>Our school experiences: Group discussion</i>.</li> <li>A stack of small cards or pieces of paper.</li> <li>A copy of evaluation form Appendix O (a) Session 3 evaluation with fidelity measure for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker</li> <li>songs</li> <li>charade game.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read through the whole session and discussed it with the childcare worker?</li> </ul>   |

|   |  |   |            |  |  |
|---|--|---|------------|--|--|
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li><li>• Set out the materials you will use.</li><li>• Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li><li>• Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li><li>• Set out the materials needed for Session 3.</li><li>• Put out the evaluation forms Appendix O (a).</li><li>• Put out the attendance register.</li></ul> |   |            |  |  |
| <b>After the session</b>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tidy the room.</li><li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li><li>• Write a report.</li></ul>   |   |            |  |  |
| <b>Session 3 Programme</b>  |  |   |            |  |  |
| <b>1) Welcome</b>   | <table><tr><td>1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)</td><td rowspan="3">35 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)</td></tr><tr><td>1.3 Icebreaker: What type of student are, or were, you? (15 minutes)</td></tr></table>  | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)  | 35 minutes | 1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)  | 1.3 Icebreaker: What type of student are, or were, you? (15 minutes) |
| 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)  | 35 minutes   |   |            |  |  |
| 1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)   |  |   |            |  |  |
| 1.3 Icebreaker: What type of student are, or were, you? (15 minutes)  |  |   |            |  |  |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>   | <table><tr><td>2.1 Our school experiences: Group discussion (60 minutes)</td><td rowspan="2">75 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>2.2 In-group family exercise: Parents / caregivers vs. children charades game (15 minutes)</td></tr></table>  | 2.1 Our school experiences: Group discussion (60 minutes)   | 75 minutes | 2.2 In-group family exercise: Parents / caregivers vs. children charades game (15 minutes) |  |
| 2.1 Our school experiences: Group discussion (60 minutes)   | 75 minutes   |   |            |  |  |
| 2.2 In-group family exercise: Parents / caregivers vs. children charades game (15 minutes)  |  |   |            |  |  |
| <b>3) Homework</b>  | <table><tr><td>3.1 Ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at school</td><td rowspan="2">10 minutes</td></tr><tr><td>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy</td></tr></table>   | 3.1 Ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at school  | 10 minutes | 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy   |  |
| 3.1 Ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at school  | 10 minutes   |   |            |  |  |
| 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  |  |   |            |  |  |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b>   | <table><tr><td>4. The wrap-up:<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li><li>• Compliment families for their participation</li><li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li><li>• Ask families to fill in the evaluation form Appendix O (a)</li><li>• Session 3 evaluation with fidelity measure</li><li>• Complete attendance register.</li></ul></td><td>10 minutes</td></tr></table>                     | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li><li>• Compliment families for their participation</li><li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li><li>• Ask families to fill in the evaluation form Appendix O (a)</li><li>• Session 3 evaluation with fidelity measure</li><li>• Complete attendance register.</li></ul> | 10 minutes |  |  |
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## 1. Welcome

Total: 35 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here.
- 2) Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group followed the ground rules so far.
- 3) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements.
- 4) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 5) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what Session 2's homework was.
- 2) Affirm that people's homework was to:
  - choose two goals to practise consistently (where possible, one goal was for something the child is responsible for, and one goal was something the parent / caregiver is responsible for)
  - write in the *Reflections* sheet on family goals to help with school.
- 3) Request families to take out their *Reflections* sheets. Invite them to share their successes and challenges with the Session 2 homework activity. They might like to refer to their Reflections sheets. During this time, help families problem solve around challenges they faced. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did your family choose for your two goals?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Acknowledge and applaud efforts that families have made.
- 5) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

## 1.3 Icebreaker: What type of student are, or were, you?

Time: 15 minutes

### Objective

Help parents / caregivers understand their own school experiences and feelings about school.

### You need

- Pens or pencils for everyone.

### What to do

- 1) Ask children and parents / caregivers from one family to sit opposite each other.
- 2) Ask participants to use the *We love school!* forms in the Family Workbook as an interview guide. There is one specifically for children and one for parents / caregivers.

#### A note about being sensitive to literacy issues

There may be instances where children have to assist the adults with reading the questions and writing the answers. In some cases, others in the family might need to help the children with this. Both facilitator and childcare workers should keep an eye out for this and assist families as needed.



- 3) In the first round, parents / caregivers will interview the child sitting opposite them. They will use the *We love school* form as a guide. The interviewers will record their child's responses on the form.
- 4) In the second round, children interview the parents / caregivers. Children will write down the adults' responses with the help of the parents / caregivers they interview.
- 5) Ask everyone how the interviews went. Accept a few responses and then say that the interviews will help us in the next activity.

### Remember your transition to the next activity

Use the interviewing activity to transition into the group discussion that follows. Regularly refer to the interview activity to help engage parents and children in the group discussion.



## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Our school experiences: Group discussion

Time: 60 minutes

#### Highlight commonalities

- It is important to highlight common points that come up among parents' and caregivers' school experiences, and the concerns they have around their children's school and education.
- Being aware of common points helps parents and caregivers know they are not alone in their frustrations with school, and in any feelings of inadequacy they may have in school contexts.



#### Include the children!

Make sure to include both children and parents throughout.

- 1) Begin this activity by saying:



As we discussed last week, parents and caregivers play a very important role in guiding their children through school.

Children, could you remember, and share with us, some of the benefits – the things that are helpful to you – of having parents and caregivers who are involved in your school experience?

- 2) If these points don't come up, add them to what the children say.

#### Facilitator input note

#### Examples of benefits of having parents and caregivers involved in children's school life

When parents / caregivers are supportive in their child's school life, children are more likely to:

- achieve higher marks
- get a matric
- have better school attendance
- be keener to learn
- have better self-confidence
- achieve the bigger goals (hopes and dreams) that they themselves have, and that their parents / caregivers have for them.

3) Say the following:



Parents and caregivers, the earlier you get involved in your child's education and school life, the more powerful your positive impact will be. Right now, your child is just at the beginning of their school career. This is a great opportunity for you to begin to establish patterns for your involvement, both at home, and at your child's school. Naturally, you would do this in a way that is age appropriate for your child's development.

It is very important that you connect what your child spoke about in their hopes, dreams and goals activity last week to working hard at school, and how school can help them achieve their goals. We want to motivate our children to see the value in school, and to take school seriously.

The interview icebreaker helped us find out what our children like and do not like about school, and what our parents and caregivers liked and did not like about school. It also helped remind our parents / caregivers about their school experiences. Often, our experiences affect the way we as parents and caregivers engage with our child about school life, and with our child's school.

Parents and caregivers, if you found school difficult – perhaps teachers gave you a lot of corporal punishment or brought you down in some way? – you may think negatively about school generally. These negative feelings may make it difficult for you to be positive about school when you talk to your child, or when you talk to your child's teachers.

Your experiences can affect how your child experiences school. For example, if you found school scary, you might transfer your feelings and make your child also feel scared of school. Therefore, it is important to be aware of how we talk about school with our children. We don't want to discourage them – sometimes we might even do this without realising it.

#### Ask this!

Ask parents to reflect on how they think about school, and whether they think this affects their relationship with their children's school and / or their level of involvement in their child's education.



- 4) Bring in the children's views here by facilitating a discussion between parents / caregivers and children about their school experiences. Try to cover each of these questions in the particular order below. Try to make sure each family has at least one parent / caregiver talk on at least one of the topics:
- a) What did / do you like about school?  
Encourage families to think of things that were positive, and how they can help their children to have positive experiences.
  - b) What was / is the most difficult thing for you about school?
  - c) What type of support do you have, or do you wish you had had, in dealing with these difficulties?

## Normalise adults' experiences of their school life

It is important to normalise adults' experiences of and feelings towards school.



- 5) Emphasise that there are many reasons why parents / caregivers might be negative about school. Say that their reasons are perfectly valid and normal. Invite participants to give some reasons of their own. If any of the reasons in the information panel that follows don't come up, and you feel it would be useful to add them into the mix, then do so. Include how negative feelings about school can impact on their reluctance to get involved in their child's school. Again, say this is understandable.

### Facilitator input check list

#### Reasons why parents / caregivers could have negative feelings about school

- They left school at an early grade. This could make them feel 'not good enough'.
- They might have experienced language barriers.
- Parents may have had a bad school experience and so they don't want anything to do with schools.

Having negative feelings about school can affect their involvement in their child's education and school life. And so, they might:

- not have realised the importance of being involved in their children's education and school life.
- not know how to be involved.
- believe that they are not welcome in their child's school.

- 6) Say the following:



Last week, we discussed what parents / caregivers and children can do at home to help the children succeed in their school life. Today, we will focus on how parents / caregivers can be involved in their child's school life. We will also look at expectations we, as parents and childcarers, have for our children while they are at school. We will also hear from the children how their families can be helpful to them in their school life.

#### Participants begin to work in their own family groups.



- 7) Request everyone to gather with their own family. Ask families to discuss child and parent / childcarer responsibilities linked to school life. Here is the question for families to respond to:
- What are some ways you already use, or could use, to monitor your child's school progress?
- 8) When people report back, add these points if they have not been covered by participants:
- Meet, and then stay in touch with your child's teacher.
  - Find out about and track what your child does at school every day.
  - Check up on what your child is learning each week.
- 9) Ask children and parents / caregivers to discuss the following questions. You would have written them up on chart paper ahead of time. Put them up on the wall now. Help families shape a reasonable plan of action for each.



## Family discussion questions

- a) Parents / childcarers: How would you know if your child is doing well in school?
  - b) Children: How do you let your parents know that you are doing well in school?
  - c) Parents / childcarers: How would you know if there was a school challenge (not only to do with passing at school, but any challenge)?
  - d) Children: What are some of the ways you let your parent or caregiver know that there is a challenge at school?
  - e) Parents / childcarers: Think about a horrible experience you had in school. How would you deal with it if your child started to have the same challenge?
  - f) Children: Think of a challenge at school. What are some ways you have dealt with, or could deal with such a challenge at school?
- 10) Have a discussion in which you ask parents how they feel about working with the school. Begin the discussion with the first question, and then go on to each of the others. Check with the list of issues to help as prompts, if you need to.
- a) Do you feel you know what is going on in your child's classroom?
  - b) Can you talk to your child's teacher, if you need to?
  - c) Are you worried or scared to go to your child's school to ask to talk with the teacher?
  - d) Do you ever find it difficult to engage with the school?

## Facilitator input check list

### Issues that parents / caregivers might raise in relation to engaging with their child's school

- teachers who are difficult to get hold of
- long work hours for parents so they can't meet teachers in the afternoon, or in other school hours
- scared to speak up to complain
- classes are too big so the teacher doesn't know your child
- teacher is not interested in helping.

#### Idea!

You could consider asking the parents / caregivers and children to team up and role play a difficult school situation and a solution to it. They could act as themselves, or do a reverse role play where the children are the adults. This could be fun!



- 11) Say that next the group is going to brainstorm and explore what resources are available to help children deal with tough challenges. Put up a blank piece of chart paper and write down the suggestions everyone makes. Ask parents / caregivers and children to discuss their options for extra help in supporting their child's schooling. After the activity, participants can take photos of the suggestions so they can refer to it and follow up if they want to.

## Facilitator input check list

### Examples of places to explore which support children's education and general wellbeing

Ask whether there are:

- schools with aftercare services
- community places nearby that offer aftercare services
- youth clubs that could provide extra support to children who are struggling at school
- churches / religious / spiritual institutions that might provide support to learners and children facing personal challenges affecting their school work and school life
- extra lessons at the school (not all parents / caregivers know when they are available)
- homework or study groups that children themselves organise
- school and local libraries where children can work and read
- people in the family and friends' networks and circles who can help the child learn
- educational assessment and treatment centres to go to if their child has a learning problem (schools should be able to refer parents / caregivers to relevant centres)
- healthcare services, such as clinics, where parents / caregivers can take their children with health challenges such as having difficulty seeing the board or when reading, or struggling to breathe during physical education classes.

12) Say the following:



Whether parents / caregivers had a positive or negative experience in school, or have access to strong schools with good resources, we must still take responsibility for supporting our children in their school lives. We can do this by providing the Three Basics of School Support. These are:

- 1) A belief that school is important.
- 2) Structure in home life.
- 3) Encouragement of our children.

We covered the first two points during today's and last week's sessions. Let's move on to the encouragement part. Encouragement has a powerful positive impact in supporting our children in their school life, and engaging with our child's school.

If you believe that your child *can* learn and succeed, and you believe that problems *can* be solved, and you communicate this to your child, you can go a long way in helping your child to be confident.

13) Invite parents / caregivers and family members to:

- share ways they already express these beliefs to their children
- share ways they think they could begin to express them.

14) Invite the children to give examples of how they think their parents / caregivers can help them learn and succeed and be confident in their school lives.

## 2.2 In-group family exercise: Parents / caregivers vs. children charades game

Time: 15 minutes

### In-group family exercise



#### Objective

- Generate a list of ways parents / caregivers can get involved in, collaborate and cooperate with, and create a positive experience with their children's schools.

#### You need

- A stack of small plain cards or pieces of paper.
- Things to write with.
- Chart paper.

#### What to do

##### Step 1

- Ask the children to make up one group, and the parent / childcarers to make up another group.
- Say that you as the facilitator, and the childcare worker, will be with the children's group to offer guidance and help.
- Distribute a stack of cards and a pen to each group.

##### Step 2

- In five minutes, groups must come up with examples of ways that parents / caregivers / family members can get involved at school.
- They must write each idea on a card (one idea on one card).
- A group gets one point for every card they write.

If you think that participants are struggling, you can help prompt ideas. See the list below.

#### Facilitator input activity prompts

#### Opportunities for parents / caregivers and family members to create positive experiences in their child's school life

- Stand for school governing board (SGB) elections and if you get on, give it your all.
- Get involved in the parents / caregivers / teachers association (PTA).
- Help out at school functions such as parents / caregivers evenings, fun days, sports events and end of year concerts.
- Offer your help to child's teacher to make things for classroom activities.
- Help with the school's food garden.
- Start, or join, a parents / caregivers group to encourage others to help with children's education. Examples include: give extra maths lessons, listen to children reading, read stories to the children, listen to children's stories and help with homework.
- Help children cross the road at home time if your school is on a dangerous road. Do this in partnership with the teachers and principal.

### Step 3

After 5 minutes, tell everyone what happens next. Someone from one group must select a card from the other group's pile of cards. They read the card and choose whether to do a drawing or act out what is written on the card. The other group has one minute to guess what is on the card. If they guess correctly, they get 2 points. Then the other group picks a card and the same thing continues until time is up. The members of the winning group each receive a reward sticker. Invite people to say what they got out of playing the game. Thank everyone for playing.

## 3. Homework

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at school

- 1) Explain that this week the homework activity is to implement one of the suggestions from the list of ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at their child's school. You would have written these on chart paper for everyone to read.
- 2) Touch base with each family and ask which activity they plan to implement. Write it down and say that you will ask how they are doing during your weekly check-in with them.
- 3) Refer to the page in the Family Workbook called *Ways for parents to be more involved at school: reflections*. Ask parents / caregivers to complete it and bring it to next week's group to discuss. Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.
- 4) Bring for the children's sessions coming up:
  - a cardboard box about the size of a shoebox for your child to make a Calm Down Box.
  - one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic cool drinks bottles.

### 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. Wrap-up and closing

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls / check-ins. Remind participants that the purpose of the check-in is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Give each family a copy of evaluation form Appendix O (a) Session 3 evaluation with fidelity measure and ask them to fill it in. Remember there are two sides to the form.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 4

## Healthy meal and nutrition guidelines / Food and personal hygiene

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goals</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen families' knowledge about healthy meal and nutrition guidelines.</li> <li>Encourage families to practise good hygiene in food preparation and make healthy food choices.</li> <li>Strengthen families' understanding around the importance of exercise and personal hygiene, especially handwashing.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>During this session, families will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>have fun as families.</li> <li>consolidate what they already know about nutrition and healthy eating, and learn more about them.</li> <li>feel motivated to eat and cook nutritious meals using the Healthy Food Guide.</li> <li>identify basic hygiene and safety practices as part of feeling empowered that their wellbeing is largely in their own hands.</li> <li>feel motivated to exercise.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbooks.</li> <li>Some cards or paper for families to write up their exercise action plans.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O, the general evaluation form for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker</li> <li>songs</li> <li>games</li> <li>role plays.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read all the notes and watched the video link related to this session?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 4.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |

|                        |  |            |
|------------------------|--|------------|
| After the session      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tidy the room.</li><li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li><li>• Write a report.</li></ul>   |            |
| Session 4 Programme    |  |            |
| 1) Welcome             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Blow wind, blow (10 minutes)  | 30 minutes |
| 2) Core lesson         | 2.1 Activity: Plan a nutritious and delicious meal (60 minutes)<br>2.2 Discussion: How is our wellbeing in our own hands? (10 minutes)<br>2.3 In-group family discussion and plan: Exercise makes us happy and healthy and why! (10 minutes)<br>2.4 In-family group song and demonstration: The correct way to wash hands (10 minutes) | 90 minutes |
| 3) Homework            | 3.1 Use the Healthy Food Guide<br>3.2 Put the family exercise plan into action<br>3.3 Bring bottles and boxes<br>3.4 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| 4) Wrap-up and closing | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li><li>• Compliment families for their participation</li><li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li><li>• Families complete Appendix O, the general evaluation form</li><li>• Complete attendance register.</li></ul>  | 10 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Review the group ground rules and check in to make sure everyone is onboard with them still. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group followed (a) the ground rules and (b) the sessions so far.
- 2) Ask children to name one positive thing that their parent / caregiver did since the last group meeting. Then ask parents / caregivers to name one positive thing their child did since the last family group meeting.
- 3) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 4) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 5) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 3 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - Implement one of the suggestions from the list of ways parents / caregivers can be more involved at their child's school.
  - Write their thoughts in the Family Workbook page called *Ways for parents to be more involved at school: reflections*.
  - Try to collect a cardboard box about the size of a shoebox for each child, and one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic bottles.
- 3) Ask the children and parents / caregivers and other family members to share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Remind participants to refer to their *Reflections* sheet. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did you choose to implement to be more involved in your child's school?
  - Did implementing the task change your view of your child's education?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?

### The value of the homework tasks and of discussing them

During one of the programmes being facilitated, a caregiver was about to stop coming to the group. But then she did the homework task. When she gave feedback in this session, she said she now understood the importance of the programme and being involved in her children's education. It was a game changer for her.



- 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

## 1.3 Icebreaker: Blow wind, blow

Time: 10 minutes

### Objective

Have fun together!

### You need

The same number of chairs as there are people present, minus 1 chair.

### What to do

- 1) Set the chairs in a circle facing inwards. Put one less chair than there are players.
- 2) Select one player to stand in the middle. They must call out, "Blow wind, blow". The rest of the group must ask, "Blow what?" Then the player standing in the middle responds with a conditional statement. Examples of conditional statements are:
  - Everyone with red hair.
  - Everyone not wearing shoes.
  - Everyone who was born in June.

All the players who fit into that category must get up and switch chairs with another player. The player who called the conditional statement must immediately rush to sit on a chair, too.

- 3) Once everyone has finished switching as quickly as possible, there will be a different player left stuck in the middle and without a chair. Then the process begins again, and again. Play the game for about 10 minutes.

## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Activity: Plan a nutritious and delicious meal

Time: 60 minutes

#### Include the children and affirm their knowledge!

- Make sure to include both children and parents throughout.
- The children learn about healthy eating habits and nutrition at school.
- Ask the children to share what they know, and affirm their knowledge.



- 1) Ask each person to say and act out things that come to their mind when you say the words “nutritious and delicious”. Make this fun and start off with something yourself that sounds delicious. For example, you could pretend to eat a mango and say, “A mango with its juice dripping down my hand.”
- 2) Ask children to share some of the important messages they learn at school about nutrition, exercise and healthy lifestyle.

#### Note for the facilitator

#### What young children should learn at school about nutrition and hygiene

Young children learn about nutrition and basic hygiene practices at school. Session 4 is an ideal opportunity for children’s participation to share what they already know. We include a range of topics that young children in the Foundation Phase learn at school.

Be mindful that:

- topics are taught in more detail the higher the grade children are in
- depending on when our programme is delivered in the school year, the children may not have covered a particular aspect in the curriculum when the programme is offered.

As they move through Foundation Phase (Grades 1, 2 and 3), the children learn about these topics:

- the importance of:
  - washing hands regularly
  - cleaning teeth, hair and nails
  - good toilet habits
  - how to wash our hands so we wash germs away
- how to protect ourselves from getting sick, such as sneezing and coughing into the elbow
- keeping our environment clean of litter
- different food groups
- different types of fruit and vegetables
- why we should wash fruit and vegetables before eating them
- foods we eat and where our food comes from
- healthy eating
  - healthy and unhealthy foods
  - healthy choices and the right amount of food
  - storing food: fresh, tinned, dried, frozen
- getting enough sleep
- why it is important to do some active exercise every day
- why it is important for children to play and to not watch too much TV.



- 3) Ask families (a) what the link is between healthy eating choices and children's wellbeing: intellectual, physical and overall development, and (b) how we know if a child is doing well nutritionally.  
Participants might mention weight, height growth and common health problems children in this age group have because of poor nutrition.
- 4) Refer participants to the note *Messages and information around healthy eating and healthy lifestyle* in their Family Workbook. Read it out and discuss as you go along. Explain that the Healthy Food Guide is from the National Department of Health (2016) recommendations. Go through the picture with the different size circles. Explain that the bigger the circle, the more of that food we should try to eat. Pick specific foods and ask whether we should have more or less of it so that everyone understands what the circles represent.

### Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook<sup>1</sup>

#### Messages and information around healthy eating and healthy lifestyle

We can all:

- learn and understand more about nutrition and how to continuously eat healthily.
- discuss what we learn with our family.
- share recipes with each other for delicious and nutritious meals (something you can do with your Sihleng'imizi Buddy).

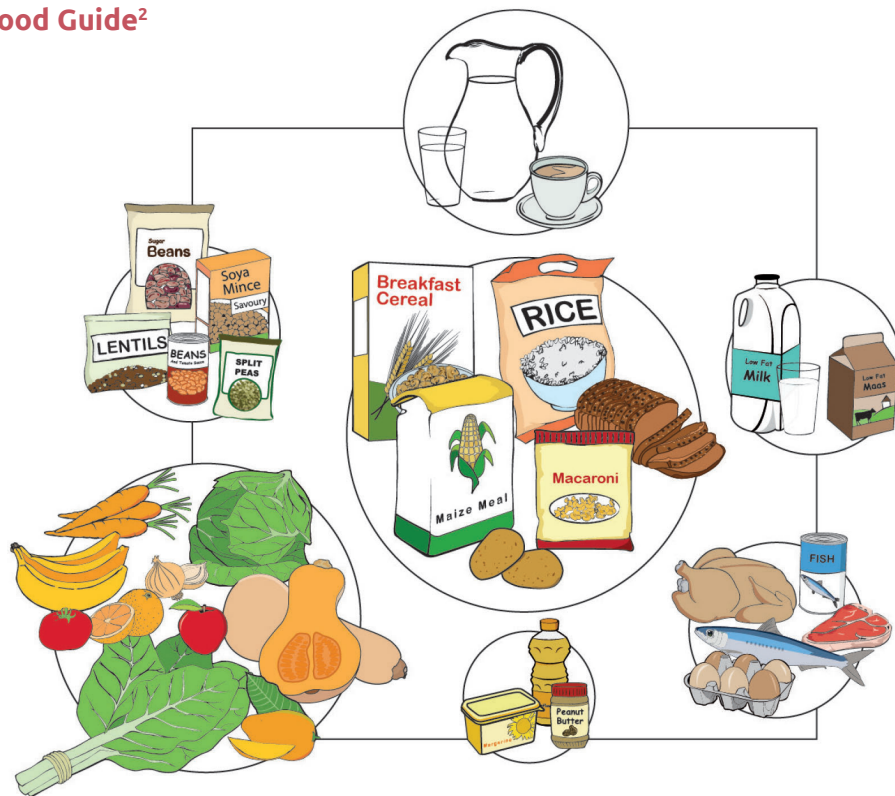
Discussing nutritious meals and preparing them together can be a great way to bond. Healthy food choices are not more expensive but they do sometimes taking adjusting to. They are a lifestyle choice. The Healthy Food Guide shows cost effective healthy food options.

- **Breakfast** is the most important meal of the day.
- You have a **healthy eating plan** when you eat a variety of *three mixed meals each day*. A mixed meal includes food from each circle in the Healthy Food Guide picture.
- It is healthier to eat **unprocessed food**. Unprocessed food has not been processed much, or not processed at all. For example, wholemeal bread is healthier than white bread. This is because it contains more fibre from the wheat grains. We need fibre to prevent constipation. Fibre is removed when white bread is processed.

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<sup>1</sup> Acknowledgement: we have used some information from the National Department of Health's publication called *Healthy Meal Provisioning in the Workplace* (2016) [https://www.google.com/search?q=healthy+meal+provisioning+in+the+workplace+\(2016\)+department+of+health&oeq=Healthy+Meal+Provisioning+in+the+Workplace+\(2016\)&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j35i39j69i59.3998j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8](https://www.google.com/search?q=healthy+meal+provisioning+in+the+workplace+(2016)+department+of+health&oeq=Healthy+Meal+Provisioning+in+the+Workplace+(2016)&aqs=chrome.1.69i57j35i39j69i59.3998j0j7&sourceid=chrome&ie=UTF-8) [Accessed 15.08.2020]

## Healthy Food Guide<sup>2</sup>



## The South African Food Based Dietary Guidelines<sup>3</sup>

- Enjoy a variety of foods.
- Be active!
- Make starchy foods part of most of your meals.
- Eat plenty of vegetables and fruit every day.
- Eat dry beans, split peas, lentils and soya regularly.
- Have milk, maas or yoghurt every day.
- Fish, chicken, lean meat or eggs can be eaten every day.
- Drink lots of clean, safe water.
- Use fats sparingly. Choose vegetable oils, rather than hard fats.
- Use sugar and foods and drinks high in sugar sparingly.
- Use salt and food high in salt sparingly. Sparingly means don't use much of it.

We should all aim to eat meals and snacks that only have a little fats, sugar and salt in them.

Some cooking methods are healthier than others. It is healthier to eat less animal fat.

One way to eat less animal fat is to remove the skin from the chicken and cut the fat off meat.

Other methods include:

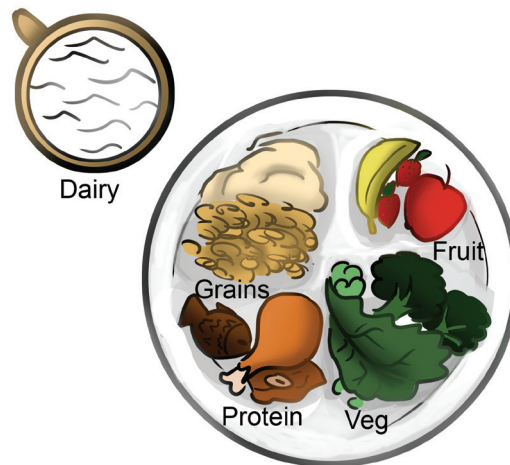
- Keep the skin on vegetables when you cook them. The skin contains nutrients.
- Steam vegetables instead of boiling them. Steamed vegetables keep in more nutrients than boiled vegetables.
- Eat washed raw vegetables and fruit. Some nutrients are lost when they are cooked.
- Eat lots of fruit and vegetables, and eat nuts, beans and lentils when you can.
- Make your own delicious sauces. Use ingredients such as vegetables, herbs, flour, and spices that don't have salt.

2 Ibid Healthy Food Guide illustration is from National Department of Health's publication called *Healthy Meal Provisioning in the Workplace (2016)*

3 Source: Food-Based Dietary Guidelines for South Africa © SAJCN 2013, [www.sajcn.co.za](http://www.sajcn.co.za) Published under a Creative Commons Attribution-Noncommercial-No Derivative Works 2.5 South Africa License, by Medpharm Publications (Pty) Ltd. Citation: Vorster HH, Badham JB, Venter CS. An introduction to the revised food-based dietary guidelines for South Africa. *S Afr J Clin Nutr* 2013;26(3):S1-S164 Front cover image: Reprinted with permission from the National Department of Health, South Africa [www.sajcn.co.za](http://www.sajcn.co.za) *S Afr J Clin Nutr* 2013;26(3) (Supplement):S1-S164

## A guide for portion sizes

Eating the correct portions of different foods helps you stay healthy, including with weight. You can see the guide for portion sizes for different foods on this plate.



- 5) Ask participants to get into their family groups and use the Healthy Food Guide drawing to create a delicious meal plan. They must:
  - use ingredients in the proportions shown by the circle sizes
  - decide on and write up a recipe for how they will cook it
  - use healthy cooking methods
  - pretend (role play) they have invited another family from the programme over and share their recipe and explain why they chose the different foods they did.Have fun with participants and imagine what it would be like being invited over and eating the meal with each other.

## 2.2 Discussion: How is our wellbeing in our own hands?

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Say that there is a lot we can do in our own homes around food and other hygiene to prevent sicknesses. In other words, our wellbeing is in our own hands through our food and other hygiene and health practices.
- 2) Ask families to share ideas and ways in which they look after their own wellbeing. Perhaps they have some hygiene rules in their homes to share? Use the check list *Our health is in our own hands* to make sure all the points are covered.

### Note on general hygiene for facilitator

#### Our health is in our own hands

We can reduce illnesses in our family by these kind of actions:

- Wash our hands regularly and correctly, especially after changing nappies, playing with animals, using the toilet and before preparing and eating food.
- Wash food preparation surfaces with a clean cloth before we work on them.
- Not eating raw or undercooked meat.
- Not eating food that has gone bad.
- Covering our food to keep flies off of it.
- Only drinking clean water.
- Wash fruit and vegetables with clean, safe water before eating them.
- Put left overs in the fridge and reheat them thoroughly before eating.
- Don't eat food that looks or smells off.
- Keep food that needs to be cool in the fridge.

- Keep your food surfaces clean.
- Don't mix utensils you use for cutting meat for cutting other things such as fruit or vegetables until you have washed the utensil thoroughly.
- Throw away food you cannot eat in a closed bin and put it out with the garbage.
- Make sure pot handles are turned inwards and follow other safety rules for the cooking areas.

### 2.3 In-family planning: Exercise makes us happy and healthy and why!

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Say that we can have fun and keep our bodies healthy by doing at least 30 minutes of active exercise every day. Active exercise is when we sweat and increase our breathing. Doing exercise as a family, such as fast walking, dancing or playing with a ball can keep us fit and also build our bonds.
- 2) Highlight the importance of exercise and being fit as part of promoting wellbeing. Make the point that around the world there is a problem with people being overweight and obesity. This has to do with:
  - eating foods high in fats, salt and sugar (often fast foods).
  - eating too great a proportion of carbohydrates.
  - people not doing enough exercise – 30 minutes a day of very active exercise is what we should aim for.

Say that there are serious health consequences of obesity. They include high blood pressure (hypertension), type 2 diabetes, heart disease and strokes.

- 3) Ask the children to act out a physical exercise they love doing and the adults can copy them. This should just be for a minute or so.
- 4) Now ask the older members of the family to do the same as the children did. When they have finished, asked families to sit together and plan and write a chart to show what they are going to do from Monday to Sunday to make sure they each do 30 minutes of active exercise. Some can be individually and some with family members. You can also plan to do exercise with other Sihleng'imizi families – you can motivate each other and have fun together.

### 2.4 In-family group song and demonstration: The correct way to wash hands

Time: 10 minutes

#### Facilitator preparation

Watch this simple presentation about hand washing especially with children.

<https://www.unicef.org/coronavirus/everything-you-need-know-about-washing-your-hands-protect-against-coronavirus-covid-19>

You can share the link with your participants and all watch it together, if that is possible.



- 1) Acknowledge that we are all aware how washing our hands in the correct way is a powerful method to wash germs away.
- 2) Invite each family, led by their children who learn this at school, to make up and present a song that goes with washing hands the correct way. Ask them to look at the poster in their Family Workbook when they prepare to make sure they do the hand washing the correct way.

- 3) Wrap up by saying that the simple act of washing hands regularly, and especially after using the toilet and before preparing food and eating, can prevent sicknesses. Remind participants how important hand washing was to help prevent the spread of Covid-19 but that it is also important for preventing other illnesses such as vomiting and diarrhea.

### 3. Homework activity

Time: 10 minutes

#### 3.1 Use the Healthy Food Guide

- Ask participants to use the *Reflections* sheet to capture some of the family's thoughts on what they learnt about in this session and any food choices and cooking methods they might like to try out.
- Make at least one new nutritious and delicious family meal this week using the Healthy Food Guide.

#### 3.2 Put the family exercise plan into action

Put the exercise plan card made in 2.3 into action in the week ahead.

#### 3.3 Bring boxes and bottles

- Bring a cardboard box about the size of a shoebox to the next session. Each child needs their own box.
- Bring in one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles to be used in Session 12.

#### 3.4 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

### 4. The wrap-up and closing

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Ask families to complete Appendix O, the general evaluation form.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 5

## Developmental expectations of Grade R and Grade 1 children

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents / caregivers and family members will understand what children in Grade R and Grade 1 should be expected to do developmentally for their age.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>During this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help parents / caregivers and family members understand the developmental stage of Grade R and Grade 1 children so they can tailor their expectations for young children.</li> <li>help parents / caregivers know more about what their children learn in the Foundation Phase at school for Grade Rs and Grade 1s.</li> <li>provide information and discussion opportunities for families to learn more about children's social relationships with other children.</li> <li>help families think about, and practise, how to constructively problem solve with children.</li> <li>help families explore ways to structure a child's day.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O general evaluation form for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker: Say what you see</li> <li>songs</li> <li>role play.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read through all the information for this session?<br/>Do I understand it all?</li> <li>Have I read what is in the Family Workbook and the Childcare Worker Manual for this session?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children's activity with the childcare worker?</li> <li>Am I familiar enough with the Grades R and 1 curriculum?<br/>This is easy to find by doing an internet search for the Department of Basic Education's website. In the browser, type in Grade R and Grade 1 curriculum. These grades are both in the Foundation Phase.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 5.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> </ul>  |

## Session 5 Programme

|                               |   |            |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Say what you see (15 minutes)  | 35 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Developmental expectations of a young child <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Children do an activity with the childcare worker and return for the in-group family exercise (30 minutes).</li></ul> 2.2 Group discussion: Expectations of young children (30 minutes)<br>2.3 In-group family exercise: Problem solving (15 minutes) | 75 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Say what you see<br>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li><li>Compliment families for their participation</li><li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li><li>Families complete Appendix O, the general evaluation form</li><li>Complete attendance register.</li></ul>                 | 10 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 35 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group is going up to now in the sessions.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this. You might consider this week asking for a song that goes with the correct way to wash hands to reinforce learnings from Session 4. This is something the children might be able to lead.
- 3) Thank the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 4 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - make at least one new nutritious and delicious family meal using the Healthy Food Guide
  - use the *Reflections* sheet to capture some of the family's thoughts on what they learnt about any food choices and cooking methods they might like to try out
  - put the exercise plan into action
  - bring along a cardboard box and plastic drinks bottles
  - visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy.

- 3) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did parents / caregivers choose to implement?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Because the Sihleng'imizi Buddy system is so important, ask how it is going and encourage participants to make it work for them.
- 5) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

### 1.3 Icebreaker: Say what you see

Time: 15 minutes

#### Objective

- Learn and practise a technique that will help you give support for your child's activities.
- Encourage parents / caregivers to engage with your children during play.
- Encourage your child's thinking and verbal skills through using the technique.

#### What are the benefits of the technique?

Explain that the icebreaker demonstrates a way to describe what your child is doing – their activities. Say that we think of this as “wrapping your child in language”. When you wrap your child in language, you are supporting them in what they are doing. You also expand their thinking and verbal skills.

#### Facilitating the icebreaker

- 1) Explain that there will be two rounds in the icebreaker to help everyone understand the technique, and practise saying what they see.
- 3) For round one, you role play how the parents / caregivers are to engage with their child. Invite two children to volunteer to act out playing together nicely and sharing a toy. Or, the children could be sitting together and drawing a picture. Describe what the children are doing, and how they are doing it. Then give an affirmation.
- 3) Thank the children for acting out the scene and ask them to describe what it felt like to have the attention of the group.
- 4) Recap: specify the steps and what is important when participants do round two. Parents / caregivers will take turns to:
  - Describe *what* the children are doing, and *how* they are doing it. Explain that asking these questions, and giving the details, helps children to think deeper and it expands their language skills.
  - Follow up by *asking a question* to show they are interested in the children and their activity. It is important to give *positive feedback / affirmation* to the children about how they are doing their activity. Explain that this reinforces the importance of giving praise to a child. Give this example: “You are sharing the toy very nicely. What are you playing?”
- 5) In round two, divide the group into pairs, or groups of three, with a child and parents / caregiver in each group. Ask them to practise *Say what you see* with the children acting something. This time, it could, for example, be doing homework, or an age-appropriate home chore. The parents / caregivers practise using “what” and “how” in describing what the child or children are doing. And following up with *positive feedback / affirmation*.



- 6) Move around the room to each group and provide support.
- 7) Ask everyone to come together. Host a group feedback discussion on how practicing *Say what you see* in small groups went. Do the following:
  - a) Ask parents / caregivers how they might use *Say what you see* differently for younger, and then for older children.
  - b) Explain this is a valuable technique for connecting with your children at home.
  - c) Refer to the Family Workbook where there are more examples of doing *Say what you see* that families can read again. Say that when people use the technique at home, it is can be part of their Special Time.

### Note in Family Workbook and for facilitator to refer to

#### Note about *Say what you see* technique

If you want to make playing with your child a special time, one way is to use “say what you see”. To do this, you sit watching your child play. Then describe what they are doing. It can be helpful to think of yourself as a radio reporter who is describing the action for someone who cannot see what is happening.

Give positive feedback while you do this. For example, you could say, “You are sharing the toy very nicely. I see that you are taking turns playing with it.”

#### Remember to describe using specific details

Remember, you are looking for details to describe what your child is doing. You are not making comments about how the activity or game is being played. For example, don’t focus on a rule. You are especially looking for things that your child is doing to praise. Here are some examples:

“Lonwabo, you are drawing such a nice butterfly.”

“Sophie, I can see you are being careful with your baby brother so as not to hurt him.”

“Thandile, you have become so good at catching the ball.”

Then you ask a question to show your interest and support. Think of some questions you could follow up the examples with.

#### When you practise the technique, it will begin to feel natural

Using the technique may feel strange at first. Many parents are not used to talking to their children during playtime. However, with practise it becomes easier, just like everything else!

#### Say your child’s name

It important to use your child’s name when speaking to them. When you say things like, “You are putting the red block on the blue block very well, Thabo.” Or, “You are singing a beautiful song, Thandie.” This shows that you are giving support and attention to your child. During Special Time, your job is to show an interest and say something nice. This is a new technique and takes time to learn! The more you practise it, the more it will become a natural way of showing an interest in your child.

- 8) Tell everyone that practising the technique is a homework task, and you hope all the children and the parents / caregivers will enjoy it.

## 2. Core lesson

Ask the children to go with the childcare worker. Say that you are sure the children will have fun chatting and playing.

### Prepare!

- Make sure you have read through all the information
- Make sure you have prepared answers to questions you anticipate from parents / caregivers.



### Children leave with the childcare worker

- The children will go with the childcare worker for a children's session while the adults learn more about early child development.
- Make sure you have discussed the activity for the children beforehand with the childcare worker on your team.
  - The children will do a drawing that shows what:
    - they like to learn in school
    - they like to do with other children
  - what kinds of physical activities they like.



### 2.1 Developmental expectations of a young child

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Say that we are going to focus on developmental expectations of a young child, and that it is important that we do not expect young children to be able to do things that older children are able to do.
- 2) Share this information with the parents / caregivers. Use what came up in the icebreaker where it helps to explain or develop a point. Say that there will be an opportunity after this to discuss developmental expectations of young children.

### Input note for facilitators

### How children develop and what development to expect for young children in Grades R and 1

#### All children are different and develop individually

We all have things we do well, and things we don't do as well. Children are no different. For example, one six-year-old may be totally different from another. And they are both developing normally.

As parents and caregivers, we must keep in mind the range of expected behaviours of children of this age group. This helps us to have realistic expectations of a child.

Since children are constantly developing, sometimes it can be difficult to know what they understand, and what they are not able to understand.

#### Realistic expectations around time and speed for young children

Most parents / caregivers get frustrated when their children take "too long" to do things, such as brush their teeth, get dressed, or eat their breakfast. While some children understand phrases like, "We have to hurry," they do not have a full understanding of time until they are approximately ten years old.

It is, for example, an unrealistic expectation for a parent / caregiver to tell a young child, "By the time I'm done with the dishes you must be done with your homework".

While a child may understand that the parent / caregiver would like them to work quickly, a six-year-old child would most likely not be able to pace herself to finish by the time the dishes are done.

## Monitor and supervise young children

Some things all children need – especially at young ages, include:

- monitoring, which is checking up on them
- reminders about things to do, and encouragement and praise.

It is very important to **monitor and supervise** your young child when you are with them, and also when you are not with them. Examples of this include that you know:

- who fetches your child from school
- which adult is watching your child, or children, while they play outside the house, or walk in the street
- who helps your child with their homework.

**Keeping children safe** is very important. When you are not with your children, it is important to leave them with an adult that you and your children trust. These are dangers we must watch out for, and try at all times to make sure your children are safe:

- traffic safety, for example when children cross the street
- other personal and health safety issues that you need to prevent, such as:
  - exposure to stoves, fires and hot water
  - playing in dirty or polluted water
  - playing in litter or near toilets
  - going to the toilet on their own, if it is not in the house or yard
  - walking unsupervised around in the neighbourhood.

**Reminders, encouragement and praise** can be related to many things your child does.

Here are examples:

“I’m happy you’re doing your homework.” (Reinforcing positive attitude towards school life)

“Did you remember to fold and put away your clean washing?” (Household tasks)

“You did a great job brushing your teeth!” (Personal hygiene).

## Structuring the day for your child

Children depend on their parents / caregivers to structure their day in a way that is realistic for their age. This helps children to be successful in school and at home.

Structuring the day is like building a house. To be a solid house, it must be built in the correct order and with the right materials. You start with the foundation and walls, then the windows and roof. Children cannot succeed in school if their parents and caregivers don’t help them build the foundation and the walls. When we translate this into everyday life, the foundation and walls are the structure and routine in each day. Having a routine each day – doing things at the same time and the same way each day – helps children to be organised, work hard and do better in their lives.

## Children do better when there is a structure and a set time to do homework.

Some parents and caregivers get frustrated that their child is not getting their homework done. The solution is to make sure the child has a regular daily homework routine.

## Children do better when they get homework done as soon as possible after school.

Getting homework done as soon as possible gives the child enough time for rest, play, and do other important activities. At first, young children may not understand that homework must be done by, say, six o’clock in the evening. However, they will become used to the way an organised day happens in the home.

In a particular home, for example, a child will know the structure: after they have done their homework, they will eat dinner, bath, watch a half-hour of TV, brush their teeth, read a story (or have a story read to them), and go to bed.

## **Children do better when there is realistic time to do everything they have to do.**

Parents / caregivers must make sure their child has time for homework, play, relax, and for their chores. There must not be too many chores – and the chores must be age appropriate. For Grade R and Grade 1 children, parents / caregivers have to help their children by waking them up on time to do everything they need to do before school starts. At the end of the day, parents / caregivers have to help children go to bed on time to get a good night's sleep. Children between the ages of 5 and 13 need between 9 and 11 hours of uninterrupted sleep each night.

## **Children do better when you praise them for their work at home and school one, two or more times every day.**

Always find one or two things your child has done well. Praise them for the things they have done well, even if your child has done some things that were not done well.

## **We can support each other**

Even the best parents / caregivers and children sometimes have difficulty with certain parts of their school day. One of the best things about the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is that you can discuss difficulties and help each other find solutions.

## **2.2 Group discussion: Expectations of young children**

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Invite parents / caregivers and other family members to share their experiences in response to this question related to structure and routine of the day: What is the most difficult part of your day as a family?
- 2) Guide the discussion to these questions around children and chores at home. Remember not to be judgmental and discourage judgementalism within your group. If parents / caregivers seem to expect inappropriate chores of their young children, guide them through thinking critically about what is age appropriate:
  - What should children in Grades R and Grade 1 be able to do?
  - How can parents / caregivers give overall structure for their child's day?
  - How might you be able to support your children's need for structure when it comes to bedtimes and meal times in your household?
  - Sometimes, do some children in grades R and 1 "act like babies"? Do some try to be too independent?
  - Which chores carry adult-like responsibilities? These are chores which are difficult, and could include looking after younger siblings when no one else is home. If you depend on your Grade R or Grade 1 child to do these chores, how could you change the situation so that they only do age-appropriate chores?
- 3) Say that we're going to focus on what our children are learning at school in Grade R and Grade 1.

### Prepare!



- Be familiar with what Grade Rs and Grade 1s learn at school to assist you in facilitating this activity.
- Do an internet search for the Department of Basic Education's website. In the browser, type in the grade /s you are looking for. Grades R, 1, 2 and 3 are all in the Foundation Phase.

- 4) Ask parents / caregivers to share what they have noticed their children are learning at school. Affirm what is correct.

### Facilitator input note

#### Some of what Grade R and 1 children learn about and learn to do

- Grade R and Grade 1 children are learning to read, sound out letters and simple words, count and do simple sums.
  - They also learn about a wide range of things, such as animals and the world around them. They do art projects, and have physical education lessons. They can understand some time concepts such as "yesterday" or "in the morning".
  - Children vary in how fast they learn. They do better if they are interested in and enjoy what they learn. They do better when their parents / caregivers help and encourage them.
- 5) Ask parents / caregivers to share examples of how they help their child's learning at home, and ideas for other things they could do to help.
- Add a point in here about families needing to think about when the best time is for doing homework. Say that many parents / caregivers struggle with this. Give an example of one parent who was previously on the programme. She was doing homework with her son at 8pm at night. It wasn't working well. Then she noticed a huge difference having her son do his homework earlier in the afternoon. This then set the tone for a new routine that worked for them both.
- 6) Ask parents / caregivers to share:
- examples of learning games they play at home that they think are useful for supporting children's learning at school.
  - how they do, or think they could, use different experiences during the day as learning opportunities.

#### Helpful tip for reinforcing school learning at home



- You could prompt with the idea of putting five spoons on the table, then taking away three as a very simple and practical way of doing maths and having fun at the same time.
  - Encourage everyone to think of things they do at home that can be turned into learning moments.
- 7) Say that we've discussed age-appropriate chores at home and how we can support our children's learning. Now, we'll turn to focus on another very important part of school life for a child in Grade R or Grade 1: their social relationships with other children. After asking the parents / caregivers to say a few things about this, and cover what is in the note that comes next.

## Facilitator input note

### Young children's social development and wellbeing

Socially, 6-year-old children start forming friendships which are important to them. At this age, they can start to show some empathy. This means they can think about and understand how others may feel in a situation. They generally enjoy being with other children.

Some 6-year-old children are shy, have some trouble making friends, or have trouble solving conflicts with other children. Social relationships are important to them. However, because their minds and their skills are still developing, young children have difficulty with conflict, such as arguments, because it is difficult for them to solve problems.

Bullying is a problem in all schools. Parents / caregivers should keep a close watch on whether this is happening in their child's life. If your child is being bullied, it is important to speak with both your child and your child's teacher. You can ask what the school policy is on bullying and problem solve together. A word of caution: always follow up after solutions have been put into action to make sure that the bullying has actually stopped.

- 8) Read the following story example and ask the parents / caregivers to say what they think the children learnt from the way the parent handled the situation. After they respond, ask for ideas on what the parent could have done instead to help the children learn more social skills.

## Facilitator story to read out loud

### Example: Children have a fight

A 6-year-old wants a toy her younger brother is playing with. She walks over and tries to take the toy away from her brother. This causes a fight. Her brother yells and tells on his sister. Their parent, who is busy cooking dinner, yells back, "Work it out yourselves!" But the children continue fighting. They are too young to know how to work it out on their own. The parent then threatens to smack the children. But the children still continue fighting.

- 9) State that parents and caregivers can help a lot with their young children's challenges in their social lives. They can help their children learn how to solve problems, and parents / caregivers need to guide their children around moral judgements – about what is right and wrong. Read the input and follow up with a discussion.

## Facilitator input

### How to help children develop problem-solving skills

Parents / caregivers can help their children develop problem-solving skills by discussing challenges with their children, listening to their suggestions and sharing ideas. As facilitator, you can use these as conversation deepening points:

- what to do about a challenge / possible solutions
- possible consequences if there is continued conflict / using different solutions
- how you believe the children can try to solve a problem
- soothing children when they're upset
- helping children hope for a better outcome next time
- behaviour ground rules, including with siblings and friends, such as acceptable ways of sharing toys.

## Guide children around moral judgement

By the time a child is six years old, they are just beginning to develop their moral judgment. Often, children decide what is wrong by what they've been punished for in the past, and how likely they are to be punished in the moment. Therefore, it is important for parents / caregivers to help their children develop more advanced problem-solving skills.

- 10) Ask parents / caregivers to:
  - a) Share your thoughts, giving concrete examples, about how you can help your children develop problem-solving skills.
  - b) Say what you think is the difference between children being afraid of punishment versus learning to solve problems.
- 11) Invite parents / caregivers to think about how 6-year olds generally like to be physically active. Then read the panel about it. Say that the information is also in the Family Workbook.

## Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

### Young children and physical activity

Physically, 6-year-old children are quite active. They are able to do things which require motor coordination. This includes skills such as catching a ball with both hands, opening a lock with a key, tying their shoe laces or shoe straps, and washing themselves.

It is not easy for Grade R and Grade 1 children to sit still. This may sometimes cause problems in school where they have to sit still, or when they can't go out and play as much as they like to at home.

Parents / caregivers and teachers should give children the time they need to play and do other physical activities during the day. This helps these young ones to settle down for schoolwork or do chores.

- 12) Invite parents / caregivers to suggest ways they can help their young children have a healthy amount of physical activity and play time in their days. Make sure families are able to think this through for their specific contexts.
- 13) Say that next our children will rejoin us. Suggest that the adults use the opportunity to practise giving praise and positive encouragement about the children's drawings.

### Children return with the childcare worker.

Welcome the children back and ask everyone to get into their family groups to chat about the children's drawings.



## 2.3 In-group family exercise: Problem-solving

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Say that parents and caregivers and children will all get a chance to give their responses in this activity. First, ask parents / caregivers:  
"What do you think your child would do if another child took their toy?"  
Write down their responses on chart paper. You might get answers such as these. They would:
  - ask for the toy back.
  - hit the other child.
  - take the other child's toy.
  - cry and / or scream.
  - talk to an adult / go tell an adult.

### Why children cry, hit or scream

Be sure to mention that many children cry, hit and scream not because they are bad children, but because they are frustrated and don't know the appropriate steps to take to solve the problem. Or, they may have tried to solve the problem without success. They are still very young.



- 2) Invite each child to either tell, or role play, what they would do if another child took their toy. Say that you will role play the other child.

### The role play

Most children will enjoy the role play. Of course, if a child is particularly shy, don't pressure them too much to do it. Role plays make for a great transition into the dialogue on "what to do" and "what not to do" that follows.



- 3) Ask families to gather in their own family groups to think through the consequences of the various solutions that the big group came up with. Once they are settled, say for example, if the child hits the toy grabber what will happen? The other child may hit back, and the two children may not be able to play together anymore.
- 4) Put up the problem solving table that you wrote on chart paper before the session and ask families to use it to structure their brainstorm. Ask the family groups to brainstorm positive and alternative responses from the parent / caregiver and the child in the toy grabbing story. Go around to the family groups to support them in their brainstorming where necessary.

| Incident                   | Consequences | Alternative responses from adult | Alternative responses from child |
|----------------------------|--------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Child hits the toy grabber |              |                                  |                                  |

- 5) When families report back on their constructive responses in the big group, help them discuss and apply positive / constructive methods of problem solving. See the alert that comes next.

### Positive / constructive methods of problem solving

- Examples of positive methods of problem solving include being proactive and saying things in a constructive way.  
For example, rather than say "what not to do" say "what can we do"?
  - Use praise.
  - Teach children constructive solutions, such as trading one toy for another toy, taking turns, and asking nicely and respectfully to borrow things.





## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Say what you see and structure your child's days

- 1) Ask parents / caregivers to practise *Say what you see* with their children during the coming week.
- 2) Ask families to think about:
  - how their child's day is structured
  - whether they could introduce more structure and routine to help their child succeed at home and school
  - what the structure and routine could be if they want to do the above, and try it out.
- 3) Remind people to write in their *Reflections* sheets and also that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.

### 3.2 Boxes and bottles

Ask families to try to collect the following:

- a cardboard box about the size of a shoebox; we need one box for each child
- one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles for Session 12.

### 3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Give each family a copy of Appendix O, the general form section and ask them to fill it in.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 6

## Strengthening communication and problem solving within the family

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthen constructive communication with children and between family members so that it becomes easier to solve problems.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>In this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help families to gain more insight into the importance of praising their children – and themselves as individuals and family members – for positive behaviour and things done well.</li> <li>help family members make it a habit and a practice to praise and reward positive behaviour.</li> <li>help families deepen their understanding of why clear communication, including active listening, is necessary.</li> <li>share techniques parents / caregivers can use to communicate with their children – and each other – to resolve conflict and solve problems in a more constructive and effective way.</li> <li>highlight the technique of giving children limited options around rules.</li> <li>help participants foster a more positive learning environment for the child.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>You will be using these handouts during the session which are in the Family Workbook:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Communication tips</i></li> <li><i>Problem solving steps with children</i></li> <li><i>Techniques for communicating rules effectively with children</i></li> <li><i>Illustrated stories for Session 6 (two)</i></li> <li><i>Parenting decision steps and tips</i></li> <li><i>Family communication game</i> (children's handout) in the Family Workbook for the children's session with the childcare worker</li> <li><i>Family communication game</i> (parent / caregiver's handout) in the Family Workbook</li> <li><i>Week 6: Problem solving: reflections.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>The general evaluation, Appendix O, for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker</li> <li>songs</li> <li>games</li> <li>role plays.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read the whole session beforehand, and particularly the facilitator alert note at the beginning of the session?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>   |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>• Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>• Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>• Set out the materials needed for Session 6.</li> <li>• Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>• Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>After the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidy the room.</li> <li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>• Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

### Session 6 Programme

|                               |   |            |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Broken telephone (10 minutes)  | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Communication and problem solving (30 minutes)<br>2.2 In-group family exercise: Ready ---- Set ---- Role play! (10 minutes)<br>2.3 Group discussion: Communicating with adults who relate to our children (15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children leave with the childcare worker for an activity.</li> </ul> 2.4 In-group family exercise: Let's problem solve (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children return towards the end of this activity.</li> </ul> | 75 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Problem-solving<br>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy   | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>• Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>• Ask each family to fill in Appendix O, the general evaluation form</li> <li>• Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>  | 10 minutes |

## Important note for Facilitator

### The importance of praise

Some families, especially with older or more traditionally orientated parents and caregivers, might find it difficult to praise children for doing things they regard as what children are supposed to do.

This includes things such as doing chores at home, and being respectful to elders.



### Why praise? Because praise strengthens a child's self-confidence

Parents / caregivers might worry about "spoiling" their children, or being "too soft". During the course of this session, you can raise this to find out if this is a worry that some participants have.

Explain that Sihleng'imizi uses the method of praise to encourage positive behaviour because universally everyone likes to be praised and complimented, whether it is by an intimate partner, a boss at work, a child, or a friend. Praise makes us feel good about ourselves.

Assure parents and caregivers that when they praise and compliment their child on things they have done well, they help their child improve their self-confidence. Their respect for you will also grow because you have noticed and appreciated their efforts.

### Focus on a person's strengths

Some families may have such bad disagreements and conflicts that they never say anything nice to each other. During the session, make sure you say: "People are never ALL bad". Highlight that each member of the family probably has at least one strength. This strength is a valuable starting point for improving problems and relationships within the family.

### Be sensitive around family beliefs and encourage everyone in the programme to be so too

- Families are different in what things they feel are alright to discuss in a group, and what things they feel are not. Some families may feel insulted if they perceive anything about their family communication is being criticised by you and / or members of other families. To get a sense of and navigate this, you could say, "Are there some things that are best not spoken about in your family? Tell us about this, and how it affects the way in which you communicate with one another."
- Some families may have strong beliefs about who is the head of the household, and who gets to make decisions. They might not want this to be challenged. Sometimes, you might need to accept this, and say it is fine. As you go along with this and future sessions, they might be more open to listening to other ways of doing things, or thinking about things.
- Some families have many, or even most, of the parenting responsibilities shared between two or more people. Everyone responsible for parenting needs to understand the family context before they can plan for better communication and family structure.

### Difficult conversations

You could find that activities in this session may bring about difficult conversations and questions in the group. From previous experience, there have been times when parents / caregivers have become emotional. Be aware of this possibility and prepare for it. Be mindful of how to deal with such situations. Also, try to bear in mind that some conversations may go over the time limit. Try to strike a balance between not rushing the conversation and not letting the conversations go off track.

### Include the children

Often the conversations during this session can be quite adult focused. Remember to engage the children as much as possible.

## 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group did in Session 5. Check in to make sure everyone is onboard with the ground rules.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 5.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was:
  - For parents / childcarers: to practise *Say what you see* with your children.
  - For families: think about:
    - how the child's day is structured
    - whether you could introduce more structure and routine to help the child succeed at home and school
    - to think of a way to introduce more structure and try it out.
- 3) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share successes and challenges with their homework activity. Invite participants to share some of their reflections from their *Reflections* sheet. Use these questions to guide feedback:
  - How did practicing *Say what you see* go?
  - If you made any changes in structuring your child's day, what were they and how did it go?
  - If you made changes to your child's routine, how did that go?
  - Overall, what went well?
  - Overall, what did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

### 1.3 Icebreaker: Broken telephone

Time: 10 minutes

#### Objectives

- Demonstrate:
  - the importance of active listening and communicating clearly
  - how easy it is to miss exactly, or mistake / misunderstand, what others are saying.
- Understand what makes up effective communication.

## Steps for the icebreaker

- 1) Ask everyone to stand in a circle. When settled, ask participants if anyone has heard of, or played, the game called Broken Telephone. If anyone says yes, invite them to say something about it.
- 2) Say that Broken Telephone is a communication game. Explain how to play:  
I will whisper a statement into .....’s ear (say the name of the 1st person).  
..... (1st person’s name) will then whisper what they heard into  
.....’s ear (say the name of the 2nd person). We will go clockwise around the circle with each person whispering the statement they heard into the next person’s ear.

### Make sure the children can understand

Remember to say a statement in the Broken Telephone that the children will understand.



### Statement examples for Broken Telephone

- Communication in the family has to include all family members.
  - Families who share their hopes and dreams with each other will have good communication skills.
  - We communicate with words and also through actions.
- 3) Say that the rules in this game are:
    - a) You have to whisper the statement.
    - b) You are not allowed to repeat the statement.
    - c) You are not allowed to answer questions about the statement. Whatever you hear, just say it the best you can to the next person. Warning! You may think you hear the weirdest of statements but just pass it along.
  - 4) The last person will be ..... (say the name of the last person in the circle). They will say out loud what they heard. Then you, as the facilitator and starter of the game, will state the original phrase and compare it with what the last person heard and said.
  - 5) Engage in a brief discussion using these:
    - How is it that (name of the last person) heard “...” when the original statement was “...”?
    - What rules of Broken Telephone were responsible for the changes in the statement?  
Possible answers you can say if they are not mentioned: people had to whisper the statement; there was no repeating of the statement, and you couldn’t ask questions about the statement to clarify.
    - How do you know when people are really paying attention to you? For example:
      - What are some of the ways a person sits when they are listening to you?
      - What are some of the ways they talk?
      - What are some ways they look at you?
      - What does it feel like when someone is listening to you deeply?
  - 6) Refer to the *Communication tips* handout in the Family Workbook. Say that you’ll read through the handout now, and then people can go over it again at home.

Note for facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

## Communication tips

### Be available for your child

- Notice times when your children are most likely to talk. This might be at bedtime, before dinner, or walking home with you. Be available to them during those 'talking times'.
- Start a conversation. This lets your children know you care about what's happening in their lives.
- Find time each week for a one-on-one activity with each child. Don't do other things during this one-on-one time.
- Learn about your children's interests. For example, their music and friends. Show an interest in what your children are interested in.
- Start conversations by saying what you have been thinking about. This is better than beginning a conversation with a question. You could begin with, "I've been thinking about how you love to play with your marbles. It's almost like they are your friends." And wait for a reply.

### Let your children know you're listening

- When your child is talking about worries, stop whatever you are doing and listen.
- Show them you are interested in what they are saying, that you care, and that you are happy they told you.
- Listen to them, even if you don't like what they are telling you.
- Let them finish their point before you respond.
- Repeat what you heard them say to ensure that you understand them correctly.

### Respond in a way your children will hear

- Be careful not to be too strong in your response straight away. If you are very angry or upset they will stop listening to you.
- Say what you think but don't tell them their opinion is wrong. You can say that it is OK to disagree.
- Don't argue about who is right. Instead say, "I know you disagree with me, but this is what I think."
- Focus on your child's feelings rather than your own during your conversation.

### Remember

- Ask your children what they may want, or need, from you in a conversation. They might want or need things such as advice, for you to simply listen, to have help in dealing with feelings, or help with solving a problem.
- Children learn by doing what they see you do. If you get violent when you are angry, or you spoil everyone's day when you are upset, they will do the same. They need to learn the right way of doing things from YOU.
- Talk with your children. Don't lecture, criticise, threaten, or say hurtful things.
- Children learn from their own choices. As long as the consequences are not dangerous, don't feel you have to step in if they are doing something you think might fail.
- Your children may test you by telling you a small part of what is bothering them. Listen carefully to what they say, encourage them to talk, and they might share the rest of the story.

### Parenting is hard work

- Listening and talking is the key to a healthy connection between you and your children. But parenting is hard work and maintaining a good connection with teens can be challenging, especially since parents / caregivers are dealing with many other pressures.

## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Communication and problem solving

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Explain that we are going to talk about specific ways to communicate and solve problems.  
Say the following:



Many parents and caregivers experience their children begging for something; sometimes it is through whining.

This is not easy for parents / caregivers to deal with.

*(For each question you ask next, allow only a very short time for responses. No need for discussion, just listen).*

- When your child is begging for something, what do you do?
  - Does your child usually get what they want?
  - How do you deal with the situation when your child whines?
- 2) Ask a parent / caregiver to volunteer to role play a situation in which a child begs or whines for something. You, as the facilitator, will role play the child. The parent / caregiver responds to the situation as they would at home. Do the role play then invite participants to comment on the role play.
  - 3) Refer to the *Problem solving steps with children* handout in the Family Workbook.  
Discuss the steps one by one.

Facilitator input (see version in the Family Workbook)

#### Problem solving steps with children

**Step 1:** Identify the problem by asking: What is the problem? And then state the problem.

**Step 2:** Brainstorm solutions to the problem. Include in the brainstorm what consequences you think are appropriate for the behaviour.

**Make sure you cover all of these points  
when you explain Step 2**

#### Brainstorm

Explain what brainstorm means, if not everyone knows.

#### Creative thinking

Ask parents / caregivers to be creative in their thinking.

#### Accept all ideas without criticism

Request that ideas are listened to without anyone criticising anyone else's ideas. Write down all the ideas on chart paper.

#### Help the child to understand your reasoning

Say that once the solutions and consequences have been established, parents / caregivers must go through each one with the child to help the child understand the reason or reasons for the rule.



**Step 3:** Choose an acceptable solution for everyone involved.

After you have gone through the steps, cover the points in the note that comes next.



## Facilitator input

### Points for problem solving with children using the steps method

- Put the problem solving steps into action when a problem occurs. Sometimes, you might need to wait until child (and / or you) has cooled off. This gives you time to let the child think about the situation so they can more easily accept your decision and directions.
  - Discuss the outcome of solving the problem with the child. It's important to help the child evaluate the solution, and recognise clear and constructive thinking.
- 4) Say that we are going to role play the same situation we role played earlier. This time, however, we are going to use the problem solving steps. Invite a parent / caregiver to volunteer to role play the same situation as before. Once again, you will role play the child. Together evaluate, after you've done the role play, whether the problem solving steps helped.
  - 5) Say that earlier we spoke of the problem of when a child whines. We will focus on this some more. Lead the discussion using these prompt questions.
    - a) What happens when your child cries or whines about a limit you have set? For example, you tell your child they can have one sweet before dinner. But then your child asks and asks and asks for more.
    - b) What happens if you say, "No more sweets," but they continue to cry about it until you give in to calm them down (or to stop the whining)?
    - c) How is the whining behaviour made more difficult to deal with once the parent / caregiver has given in? They have rewarded the behaviour they don't want.
    - d) How difficult is it to set a limit after rules have been changed?
  - 6) Say that we're going to think about the value of giving children limited options. Explain that this means setting clear limits which are fair and do not change. The limited options method teaches children that rules are rules and that they can't manipulate parent / caregivers. Discuss what 'fair' rules mean in the group, and invite them to all give their opinion about what is fair and what is not.
  - 7) Say:



When we communicate clearly, calmly and respectfully with our children, they are more likely to listen and engage with us. Effective communication is a two-way process. This means we need to listen to and hear what our children are saying. When we communicate our limited options around what our children may do (and we need to listen back to their responses) around something such as eating sweets, watching TV, and play times, we can use some specific techniques.

- 8) Read through the information note *Techniques for communicating rules effectively with children*, which is also in participants' Family Workbook. Stop after each technique to discuss. Concrete examples always help with understanding, so encourage parents / caregivers to give and discuss their own examples.

## Facilitator input

### Techniques for communicating rules effectively with children

Try using these techniques to help you communicate effectively with children. The techniques give your child a chance to respond appropriately, which makes what you communicate feel fair and reasonable for them.

#### **“I statements”**

For example: “I feel upset when I see you taking sweets when I told you that you may not have any more.”

“I statements” are very powerful because you begin with how you feel and not with a blaming of the other person. When you start with blaming the other person, it puts them on the defensive. This can be the cause of negative outcomes.

#### **If / then statements with a consequence**

For example: “If you take another sweet, then you will not be allowed to watch TV this evening.” This also tells the child of very specific and fair consequences.

#### **Give children more information**

For example: “Please bring your toys inside. A toy that gets left outside might get stolen or spoiled by the weather.”

#### **“Do” commands**

It is often more constructive to tell children what to do instead of what not to do. For example: “Carry your cup carefully so you keep all the juice in it.” Rather than, “Don’t spill the juice.”

#### **Giving warnings / alerts ahead of time**

When you give an alert ahead of time, it helps your child make a transition to do something else that you want them to do. For example: “Lonwabo, you need to put your schoolwork away in five minutes so we can clear the table for supper.”

#### **Selective ignoring**

With the selective ignoring technique, you deal with what the child is doing promptly and let them know you will ignore the behaviour you don’t want after that. For example, “Lindiwe, please stop asking for another sweet. It is against the rules for you to have more than one before supper. I am going to ignore your whining for a sweet from now on.”

- 9) Say that we’ve discussed techniques for communicating with our children around rules. Now we are going to take a deeper look at how praise can motivate our children and build their self-confidence. Praise can be a behaviour management tool. Ask people to consider the impact when you compare saying these two things to a child:

“I’m so proud of you for getting a good mark on your test. I know you worked really hard.”

Compared with:

“Finally you got a decent mark; I thought I’d never see the day.”

### Make sure you say these important points about praising good behaviour



- Children get many more directions to follow, and corrections of what they do wrong, compared to praise they get for what they do well. That is why praising a child for a job well done helps them increase self-confidence.
- Praise motivates children to keep trying even when it might be easier to give up. Praise does not spoil a child. It builds them up.
- Ask parents if they ever praise themselves. Encourage them to do so. Say: "Give yourself a pat on the back when you do something well." It is important to do this. It teaches children to value your efforts, as well as their own accomplishments. They are more likely to role model you. For example: "I'm so pleased with myself for running an extra kilometre during my exercise today." You could ask parents / caregivers to stand right now and give themselves a pat on the back now for being part of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.
- Adults who were not praised as children often feel uncomfortable giving or accepting praise. Try hard to praise yourself if you are one of these people. Ask yourself: How does it feel when someone recognises, acknowledges and appreciates it when I've done a really good job? Children love recognition, too. It motivates them to keep trying and to improve themselves.

- 10) Ask participants: "Why is it important to praise our children for good behaviour and other things they do well?" After the discussion, ask who thinks that praise:
  - can be powerful in shaping children's behaviour in a positive way
  - can spoil a child
  - can help adults too.
- 11) Refer participants to the pages about praise in their Family Workbooks. Ask them to go through them as part of their homework activity.
- 12) Refer everyone to the illustrated stories in their Family Workbooks. Have a few copies to hand out for those who don't have their workbooks with them. Read the illustrated stories one by one and discuss the questions that follow.

## Story 1:

### Lonwabo plays quietly so that his father can listen to his favourite radio programme



- How does Lonwabo's father encourage Lonwabo to play quietly?
- How does Lonwabo's father specifically describe Lonwabo's good behaviour?
- What might have happened if the father totally ignored Lonwabo?



### Key messages from this story:

- Pay attention to behaviour you want more of.
- Praise your child for good behaviour, even when you expect this of them.

## Story 2:

### Lindiwe's mom takes her praise away from Lindiwe



- How does Lindiwe's mother's praise get spoiled?
- How does Lindiwe feel when her mother criticises her?
- Do you think how her mother responded by taking away praise might affect Lindiwe in the future? If yes, how?
- How could Lindiwe's mother have handled the situation differently?



### Key message from this story

Do not use the word BUT after you have praised your child.

## 2.2 In-group family exercise: Ready ---- Set ---- Role play!

Time: 10 minutes

### In-group family exercise



### Objective

Practise effective communication skills to problem solve a conflict.

### Steps for the family exercise

- 1) Say that in this in-group family exercise we're going to practise effective communication.
- 2) Ask a family to volunteer to do a role play with each other showing the "wrong way" of communicating in this scenario:
  - The parent / caregiver will play the role of the child. The child will play the role of the parent / caregiver.
  - The child wants to go to visit a friend. But the parent / caregiver is busy preparing dinner. The parent / caregiver feels it is not safe for the child to walk to the friend's house on their own.
  - The parent / caregiver is busy cooking after a long day of working. They do not want to take the child to the friend right now.
- 3) After the family has presented their role play, thank them. Invite the rest of the group members to offer some advice. Write down their ideas on chart paper.
- 4) Ask the family who did the role play to now do it again and this time use constructive and respectful communication.
- 5) Invite observations and reflections from the children and adults on the difference in outcomes between the first and the second role play.

### Children do an activity with the childcare worker

- The children will do go with the childcare worker to do the Family communication game (children's handout) in the Family Workbook.
- Be sure to have explained the activity to the childcare worker beforehand.



## 2.3 Group discussion: Communicating with adults who relate to our children

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Begin by introducing context as the programme understands it:



We know that many parents and caregivers have different adults in your, and your child's life, in the journey of raising your child. This includes those people who help you look after your child. For some of us, these could be adults who live in the same house, or who our child stays with often. They also include relatives, our child's teachers, doctors and other healthcare workers, social workers, aftercare service providers and helpful neighbours.

Having lots of helpers can take some stress off of us, as the primary parents and caregivers. But it also means that children might take chances to manipulate the situation to get what they want when rules are not clear and the same for all of the people looking after the child.

I'm sure you will agree that – especially after what we have covered in this and previous sessions – children need to have consistency with rules. This means that the other adults caring for your child need to know about, and apply, the same rules that you have decided on.

Consistency with rules teaches children how you want them to behave. It makes it easier for the other people looking after your child to know what they are. And it makes it easier for your child to behave in the expected way at home, at school and in the community. Children need to know what is expected of them. Boundaries, such as rules, help them know this.

Children are smart and observant because they are very young still. They have to get their needs met. Often they see and remember more than adults realise. Adults need to be aware that children take in a lot around them. This includes their own and others' feelings and behaviours. Children make sense of their world – and as adults, we should not underestimate this.

We're going to talk further about how to constructively engage the other adults in your child's life so that they apply consistency of rules that you have set.

- 2) We're going to share our experiences around having other adults who play a role in caring for our child.
  - a) Ask someone to share an instance when they might have disagreed with their partner, or any other adult, about how to deal with a problem with their child.
  - b) Where there has been inconsistency and disagreement between you and another adult involved in your child's life in a caregiver role, could you share how your child, or children, respond to it?
  - c) Ask people to discuss how conflict can create much stress in the family, and resentment if one person, such as a parent, feels the other person who is also involved in the child's life does not back them up.
  - d) Could you share an example of what happens when caregivers or parents disagree with each other about childcare challenges?

- 3) Ask families to share what they think works and what doesn't work when making parenting decisions with other adults. Help parents to surface common practical examples so that everyone can benefit from the collective experiences. Include in the discussion prompting parents and caregivers to say whether they find it difficult to talk about the problems, and give examples for how they handle them.
- 4) Refer to the *Parenting decision steps and tips* handout in the Family Workbook and go through each step. Stimulate discussion around how people feel about the steps, and about putting them into practise.

## Facilitator input

### Parenting decision steps and tips

Here are some helpful steps when there are arguments between adults about how to parent your child or children.

- a) Give yourself a time-out and cool down (walk away, breathe deeply, sing a song, or have a cup of tea).
- b) Talk about the problem clearly, with details. Don't blame others. Blame makes the argument worse. Try to find the right role for everyone in resolving the problem.
- c) Say what you want clearly. These are your goals. Make only realistic goals. Your goals must not be impossible to do.
- d) You and the other person or people involved brainstorm solutions, or answers, to the problem together.
- e) Agree on a plan together.

### Tips for resolving parenting disagreements

- If possible, plan times to talk about rules, upcoming events and challenges, and make agreements on how to manage with children.
  - Follow up at a later meeting to see if the solution you've decided on is working, and whether the goal was met.
- 5) Say that you'd like to wrap this activity with this important issue:



Communicating with parents and caregivers who do not live with you and the child as co-residents can be a very sensitive and emotional issue. It is important, though, that we discuss how children not living with their biological father can benefit from contact with him. Even if a non-resident father is not contributing financially, it can be positive for a child and their sense of belonging and security to have regular contact with their father.

There are a lot of cultural expectations about fatherhood such as financial support; paying lobola; relationships with ancestors, and so on, but unless a father is abusive, it is a good thing for children to know and see their father, or at least to speak with him over the phone.

## 2.4 In-group family exercise: Let's problem solve

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Say that we're going to practise some problem solving around a parenting disagreement, using what we already know and what we have learnt in this session so far. Ask the adults to select a situation all the families are dealing with to apply the problem-solving steps we discussed earlier. If this doesn't work, see the helpful alternative.



## Helpful alternative for problem solving scenario

If families can't agree on one situation to discuss, offer this one:

Every day their son or daughter walks home from school with a group of children.

Today, their child comes home complaining that one of the other children hit them.

The child's father tells his child to hit back to teach the bully a lesson.

The child's mother thinks that teaching the child to hit back will only cause more problems.

She becomes angry that the father is giving out this advice without first consulting her.

2) Ask people to apply the three problem-solving steps.

**Step 1:** Identify the problem by asking: What is the problem?

**Step 2:** Brainstorm solutions and consequences.

**Step 3:** Choose an acceptable solution for everyone involved.

3) Ask individual families to work on a problem solving challenge of their own. They will apply the three steps. After this, families will come together to share their own family's individual discussions, and ideas – both agreements and disagreements – on the pros and cons of how the adults in each family suggested resolving this disagreement.

### Alerts for when you facilitate this activity

- Help families resolve to be realistic about the outcome of each decision / solution to their challenge.
  - Intervene if families insult each other.
- Help families focus on and apply constructive steps.



4) Ask that, to prepare for the return of the children, parents / caregivers fill in the *Family communication game: Parents / caregivers' sheet* which is also the Family Workbook. Say that the children have filled in their own one.

### Children return – welcome them back!



- 5) Welcome the children back. Ask individual families to look at the answers they have each given, as child and adults, for the *Family communication game*. Then, with the whole group, briefly discuss the *Family communication game*. Ask: How well are you communicating with each other? Were you able to answer some of, or all, the questions correctly?
- 6) Thank everyone for their participation and urge them to use the steps they have learnt to help with clear communication and resolving problems.

## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Problem solving

- 1) Say that for this week's homework activity, families – and especially encourage the children to participate – will choose a topic where the parent / caregiver(s) / relatives have different opinions about a challenge linked to their child. The challenge could be school, community, or behaviour-related. Ask families to pick a challenge (not the toughest nor the easiest) so the exercise is useful without being impossible.
  - Go around to each family in the group and ask which challenge they plan to practise problem solving with for homework. Write down their response. You will enquire about their progress during weekly check-ins.
  - Ask that when families do the homework, they should *practise praising* how family members may have handled parts of problem solving their challenge if they did it well. And also ask them to *practise encouraging* each other to continue to address the challenge.
- 2) Refer parents / caregivers to the Family Workbook and remind them to:
  - re-read the *Communications tips* we covered in this session
  - read the pages about the importance of praise
  - complete the *Week 6: Problem solving: reflections* and bring it to next week's meeting for discussion.
- 3) Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.
- 4) Request families to bring in a shoe box, or a box a similar size for next week's session. We need one for each child. And also to bring one or two empty 2 litre plastic drinks bottles. They will be used in Session 12.

### 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Give families Appendix O the general evaluation form to fill in.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 7

## How to manage difficult behaviour

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families learn more about how to use constructive anger management methods in their families.</li> <li>Families learn new methods to handle negative behaviours.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>The key objectives are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help participants:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand anger more deeply</li> <li>recognise that uncontrolled anger is destructive</li> <li>understand that children sometimes present with difficult / negative behaviour because they need attention</li> <li>learn and practise nonviolent and constructive methods to manage children's difficult behaviour, and to manage anger.</li> </ul> </li> <li>help children work with methods to calm themselves down when they feel angry with someone.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Materials for the session</b> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>A picture of a tree to use as a metaphor for anger for Core activity 2.1. You will need to draw it. The tree will be a prompt to help people understand anger more deeply. When you facilitate, you will add to it during the activity from participants' inputs.</li> </ul> <b>Instructions</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Draw a tree on chart paper. There must be a line to represent the ground. The tree's trunk and branches are tall and large above the ground. The roots are under the ground.</li> <li>On the tree trunk above the ground write the label "anger."</li> <li>Below the ground, draw several roots.</li> <li>Write feelings labels on each root that might happen before anger. Some examples are: sadness, embarrassment, worry, frustration and powerlessness.</li> </ol> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>You will be using these pages from the Family Workbook:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>Understanding anger</i></li> <li><i>Ways to calm down</i></li> <li><i>Illustrated stories 1, 2, 3 and 4</i></li> <li><i>Tips and important information for ignoring negative behaviour</i></li> <li><i>Tips for staying calm when ignoring a child for their negative behaviour</i></li> <li><i>Family self-care plan.</i></li> </ul> </li> <li>A copy of evaluation form Appendix O (b) Session 7 evaluation with fidelity measure for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am I confident with facilitating the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• icebreaker</li> <li>• songs</li> <li>• games</li> <li>• role plays.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have I read all the notes in the session?</li> <li>• Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>    |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>• Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>• Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>• Set out the materials needed for Session 7.</li> <li>• Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>• Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidy the room.</li> <li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>• Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

### Session 7 Programme

|                               |   |            |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Feeling Charades (10 minutes)  | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Big group discussion: Understanding anger and its roots (20 minutes)<br>2.2 Parent and caregivers' session: Methods to manage negative behaviour (includes using discussion with illustrated stories) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Distract, redirect, praise</li> <li>• Ignore low risk negative behaviour</li> <li>• Keep calm during tantrums</li> <li>• Do not reinforce negative behaviour (25 minutes)</li> </ul> • Children have their own session with childcare worker.<br>2.3 Parents and caregivers group discussion: <i>Ignore and distract</i> negative behaviour methods (15 minutes)<br>2.4 Parents and caregivers group exercise: Using the <i>Ignore and Distract</i> methods to handle negative behaviour (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children return to big group and show what they have made (5 minutes).</li> </ul> | 85 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Practise a method for handling negative behaviour<br>3.2 Complete the <i>Family self-care plan</i><br>3.3 Calm Down Box<br>3.4 Mood Balls<br>3.5 Bottles<br>3.6 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4) The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>• Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>• Fill in the evaluation form Appendix O (b)</li> <li>• Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>  | 10 minutes |

**Use this as your guiding note throughout  
this session**

- Make sure you cover all of the information here during the course of the session. You will find some information is embedded in the different notes in the session activities.



**Facilitator note**

**How we choose to give attention influences our children's behaviour  
and creates patterns**

**Constructive approaches to  
managing difficult behaviour**

- In this session, parents / caregivers begin recognising that uncontrolled anger is destructive.
- You will help them begin to learn how to use nonviolent methods when managing their children's negative behaviour. These are the building blocks for the various methods.



**Motto that parents and childcarers can repeat to themselves**

- I will ignore my child's negative behaviour, not my child.
- Children are good. Behaviours can be bad / negative.
- When I redirect my young child from negative behaviour, I can guide them to positive behaviour.

**All children need attention for their personal and emotional growth**

Children require attention as part of their development. When we give children plenty of attention for just being themselves, as well as for the helpful, interesting and creative things they do, it helps children feel good about themselves.

When we choose to praise and engage with our children in what they do, we encourage them in life. They will have more self-confidence. We also cultivate a behaviour pattern where they generally also do what we ask them to do. This helps us have happier, more peaceful families and bring up children who are more likely to be motivated and constructive. This can also help them socially and academically in their school lives.

However, when we, as the people who matter most to them, do not give our children enough attention for positive behaviour, they soon discover other ways to get the attention they need. When we choose to pay attention to negative behaviours, we teach children to do more and more of the things we do not want them to do. Negative behaviours include things like:

- whining
- being over demanding for unreasonable things
- breaking reasonable home rules
- doing things in a sneaky way
- having tantrums
- doing destructive things such as destroying something
- snatching toys from other children.

When a child displays lots of negative behaviours it can make us think of them as a "bad" child. But

there is no such thing as a bad child. A child may do or say negative and destructive things just to get our attention. Paying attention to the positive things our child does, or says, encourages them to do more of these things. In the same way, the more we pay attention to problem behaviours, the more our children will do them.

### **Constructive ways to handle children's negative behaviours**

It is completely normal to feel the need to do something to stop your child's negative behaviour. But when we give negative attention for negative behaviours, we teach children that they will get a response from us for it. Here are some constructive methods to use when you have to deal with your child's negative behaviours.

#### **Important:**

These methods are only for negative behaviours that do not endanger other people or serious damage to property.

#### **Method: Distract, redirect, praise**

We help our children improve their behaviour when we do these quick steps:

**Step 1:** Distract your child from potential problem behaviour.

**Step 2:** Get your child's attention. Use their name when you talk with them. Reach their level and establish eye contact with them.

**Step 3:** Quickly redirect them to positive behaviour. Give your child a positive instruction to do something else in an enthusiastic way:

For example: "Lonwabo, bring the ball here so we can play together!"

Or, distract your child: "Listen, Thabo! I can hear your mom at the front door!"

**Step 4:** Praise them for the next positive behaviour they do. Don't go back to their negative behaviour. Like this:

Do say: "What a big helper you are, Lonwabo!"

Do not say: "I am glad you didn't take that piece of cake."

**Tip:** It is important to get in early before the child's behaviour becomes too difficult to manage, or out of control. See stories 1 and 2 for examples of this.

When we praise children for constructive behaviour, we reinforce future constructive behaviour and helpfulness.

#### **Method: Ignore low risk negative behaviour**

Ignore the child's behaviour, not the child as a person. Ignoring problem behaviours is a powerful method in appropriate situations where the child or someone else is not at risk. It is important that parents / caregivers are clear that it is the child's behaviour that is being ignored.

Appropriate situations would include dealing with a child's negative attention seeking behaviour, such as whining, crying, or pestering. An example of ignoring and then praise is Story 3. When we ignore a child's negative behaviour, we can choose from among these types of things:

- do not speak about the behaviour
- appear not to hear or see the negative behaviour
- act as if the negative behaviour has not happened
- change the topic of conversation
- walk out of the room.

It can be very difficult to ignore negative attention seeking behaviour, especially when our children are annoying us and we cannot get away from it. These steps help.

**Step 1:** Ignore the child's negative behaviour. Do not give the child's unhealthy behaviour any of your attention.

**Step 2:** As soon as the child stops their negative behaviour, straight away give your attention, using praise, for the child's next positive behaviour.

## Heads up

- Sometimes, when we begin to use the method, the child's behaviour might get worse for a while. They may even throw a tantrum. This is because the child can't believe what is happening. So they try even harder with negative behaviour that we have rewarded in the past. Be patient. After a while, the child's negative behaviour will start to decrease, especially when you give your child other positive ways of getting attention.
- Generally, younger children respond better to the *Distract, redirect and praise* method.
- You can offer your child the option to behave in a different way. This puts the choice into their hands and is a bit empowering for the child.
- Let's always remember that children do negative attention seeking behaviours mostly because they are not receiving enough positive attention.

## 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Review the group ground rules and check in to make sure everyone is onboard with them still. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group is going up to now in the sessions. Alternatively, ask them to rate how Session 6 went.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 6.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was for parents / caregivers to practise problem solving for something they have different opinions about within their family. It could be linked to a school, community or a behaviour issue concerning their child.
- 3) Ask families to take out their *Reflections* sheets, and share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did they choose to do for their problem solving?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - Ask the children what they liked about the exercise.
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

## 1.2 Icebreaker: Feelings Charades

*Feelings Charades adapted from McDonald (2000).*

Time: 10 minutes

### Objective

Provide a structured opportunity for children to identify their feelings and act them out with their families in a safe environment.

### Steps for the icebreaker

- 1) Ask everyone to sit in a circle. Once settled, everyone must choose a feeling they have recently had and act it out. The rest of the group guesses what the feeling is. Remind people not to criticise or judge, just to encourage each other.
- 2) After the group guesses that person's feelings, encourage them to talk about the context of the experience that induced that particular feeling.
- 3) After everyone has had a turn, initiate a discussion and make sure that during it, the following are covered:
  - a) Sometimes, experiencing certain feelings, and acting on them without thinking enough about it, can cause consequences we do not like.
    - Ask participants to talk about a time a feeling they had made them act out in a way they later regretted.
  - b) When we get angry, we sometimes do things that are harmful.
    - Ask participants to share the types of things that make them angry. Make sure you encourage the children to speak.
    - Ask everyone to share examples of harmful things that people might do when they are angry. Write participants' responses on the flipchart as they say them.
    - Go through each answer one by one. Ask participants to identify consequences for each angry action.
  - c) Initiate a short discussion on this topic:
    - In what alternative ways can we act on our feelings without having destructive consequences? Write people's answers on chart paper.
- 4) Thank everyone for sharing their experiences, ideas and suggestions. Say that they have laid the foundation for the rest of the session.

## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Group discussion: Understanding anger and its roots

Time: 20 minutes

#### Alert with preparation

From experience when implementing the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme, facilitators found this activity a useful way to get the discussions going. This session is not an easy one to facilitate and you need to prepare for encouraging discussions and handling questions and emotions from the parents / caregivers.



- 1) Say that we are going to explore anger further in this activity.



- 2) Put up the drawing of the tree you prepared before the session. Explain that you will use the tree as a metaphor for understanding anger. Develop the discussion using your drawing and the following prompts:



Imagine the tree represents anger. The tree's trunk and branches are tall and large above the ground. The roots are under the ground.

- Think of the trunk and branches as the anger on your outside. It is the part of you that people see.
- What do the roots do for the tree? (Answer: they feed the tree.)
- Underground, below the surface are the roots of your anger. They fuel your anger.

**Here is an example:**

A learner, let's call them X, is walking along the school corridor. Another learner, Y, deliberately trips them. Or calls them a horrible name. X responds in anger, ready to fight. But, immediately before that, they might have felt embarrassed to be tripped, or teased in a nasty way. Which is the trunk in this situation? What are the roots?

- 3) Ask people, making sure you use language that the children will understand, whether they think anger is sometimes just anger (like the tree trunk and its branches above ground), and whether at other times it is a reaction to other emotions you're feeling (like the roots fueling your anger). Basically, you are asking people to check in: what is making me angry and what can I do about it? Ask people to give some concrete examples.
- 4) Go through the note about anger. Say that it is also in the Family Workbook.

## Facilitator note as input

### Understanding anger

Anger is a complicated emotion. It is "primary" in the sense that it allows us to defend ourselves, or those we love, in the face of serious and immediate threats. Sometimes, though, anger is called a "secondary emotion" or a "cover feeling". This is because people often get angry to protect themselves from, or cover up, other sad or vulnerable feelings they have. These feelings could be things like frustration, disappointment, fear, worry and pain. They are caused by different things. Often, people don't want to have these feelings or talk about them.

Often, people think about anger as negative and something to be ashamed of. However, anger is a natural and healthy response to something threatening the physical, psychological and spiritual life of a person. For example, getting upset when someone continues to cut you off in a conversation, or insults you, is a natural response and one that allows you to set a limit or firm boundaries.

Anger itself is not a negative emotion. We all feel angry for valid reasons at times. Unhealthy responses to anger, however, such as pretending you do not have anger inside you, or allowing yourself to lose control, can be destructive and dangerous to yourself and to others. The first step to healthy managing of anger is to accept that you have that feeling.

### Younger children require special understanding

Younger children's anger and tantrums are because they are not able to express themselves verbally. Also, emotionally, they are not mature enough to understand how to deal with and speak about their emotions.



### Chronic anger is when you:

- are angry all, or a lot of the time
- have uncontrolled anger, when you react negatively or violently.

People who have chronic anger can get illnesses such as high blood pressure. They can also be part of causing destructive family relationships, abuse, lack of trust, fear and loneliness, among other serious social, mental and emotional problems.

- 5) Ask children and parents / caregivers to share examples of some of the things that make them angry.

### Alerts for when you facilitate this activity

- Remember to take responses from both parents / caregivers and children. Gently encourage children to talk if they are quiet. Tell them that their voices and views are very important.
- If parents / caregivers mention that work, or something else outside the home, stresses them out, ask, "What happens when work, or a situation outside the home, gets you really angry? Do you take that anger home with you? What do you do?"



- 6) Ask children if they think anger is a positive or negative emotion.
- 7) Ask children and parents / caregivers to share some methods they use to deal with anger. Write them on chart paper.
- 8) Help parents / caregivers analyse whether the ways they use to deal with their anger is constructive and helps them to be more rational.
- 9) Ask participants to look at the *Ways to calm down* note in their Family Workbook. Hand out copies to those people who need one. Invite participants, including the children, to discuss each one as you go through them.

### Facilitator input note and also in the Family Workbook

#### Ways to calm down

All these calm down techniques are to help you release angry thoughts. Don't use the time to hold on to angry thoughts.

#### Take a time out: It works for children, teenagers and adults

Walk away from the situation to cool down. It is better to walk away from a situation when you feel out of control than doing something you might regret.

Take a time out again when you feel your anger start to rise before you say or do anything you will regret.

When you get back, check in with the other person. Approach them with a positive attitude and willingness to work through the problem.

#### Do something physical for about an hour

Do something physical to let go of stress and anger. This could be walking fast, stretching, bouncing or throwing a ball while you are away from the situation.

#### Breathe deeply in and out

Breathe deeply in and out. You could count up to eight both ways.

## Listen to calm or happy music

Listen to calm or happy music. Dance to it, if you feel like it. It helps you to empty your mind.

## Use positive self-talk

Use positive self-talk. Say things like, “I care about this person, and I’d really like to solve this problem together.”

### Children go to do an activity with the childcare worker.

The children will make a Mood Ball and decorate their  
Calm Down Box.



## 2.2 Parent and caregivers' session: Methods to manage negative behaviour

Time: 25 minutes

- 1) Explain to the group that today you will be taking them through two behaviour management methods to help them deal with their children's negative / difficult behaviour. These are:
  - Ignoring.
  - Distracting (redirecting the child's attention).
- 2) Explain the two concepts as follows:



**When you ignore** your child's bad behaviour, you take your attention away from your child. Ignoring is when you pay no attention to the child when they are misbehaving. It means not looking at the child and not talking to them while they misbehave. Examples for when you could ignore your child's behaviour are when they whine or cry for something, or when siblings are arguing over a petty issue.

**When you distract and redirect** your child who is misbehaving, you turn the child's attention to something else. For example, if your child is doing something negative like banging on the wall, you could *distract* their attention from the wall and *redirect* it to bouncing a ball outside. You redirect by giving your child something else to do. You could introduce a new activity, toy or game, or show the child something new they can do with the toy they already have.

Remember to **praise** your child after they have responded positively.

- 3) Facilitate a discussion on this: Why do you think it is helpful to ignore some of our children's negative behaviour?

### Cover these points: Reasons to ignore some negative behaviour

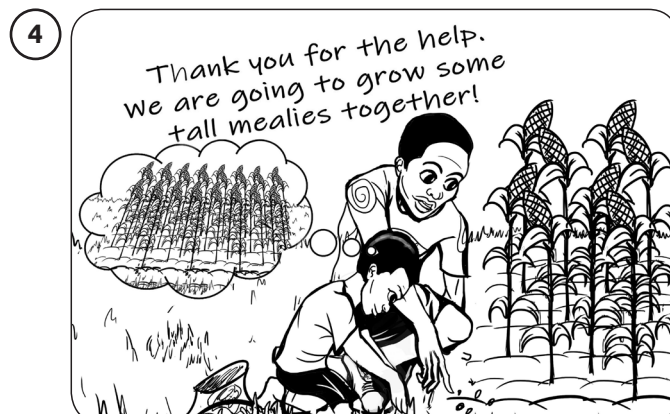
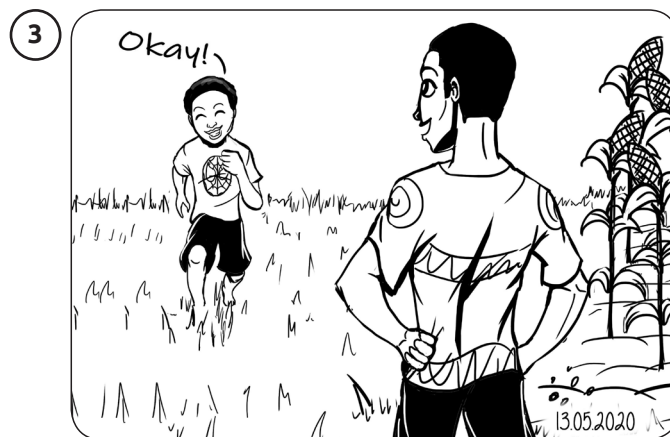
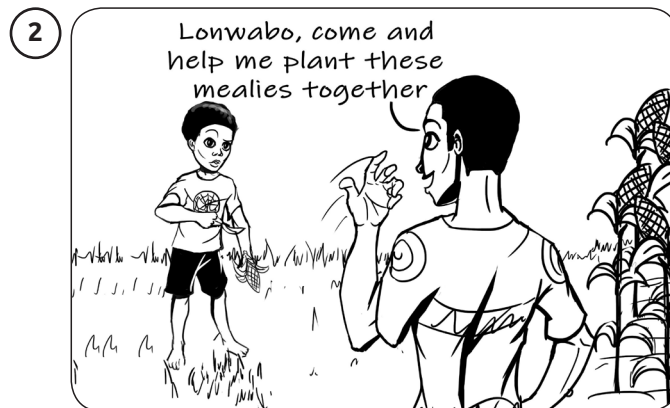
- You will teach your child – and they will learn – that you do not give them attention for misbehaving.
- When you ignore them, it removes your own attention from the difficult behaviour. It gives you the opportunity to calm yourself.
  - When we get angry, things get worse.
- You will teach your child that when they behave well, you will give them your attention.



- 4) Go through the illustrated stories one by one and facilitate the questions for each. Help participants draw on what they have already learnt in this session and apply it. Also draw on themes from previous sessions, such as the importance of praise and setting rules.

## Story 1:

**Lonwabo's father redirects his child from doing something destructive to doing something helpful and fulfilling.**



### Discussion for Story 1

- Read the story and say how it made you feel, and what you thought about. For example, did the story trigger any memories or reflections?
- How did Lonwabo's father redirect Lonwabo's attention?
- What might happen if Lonwabo's father ignored Lonwabo's behaviour without redirecting him to an alternative and constructive activity?
- How did Lonwabo's father ignore his son's behaviour after giving the instruction?
- How do you think Lonwabo felt when his father acknowledged, appreciated and encouraged him?

### Remember!

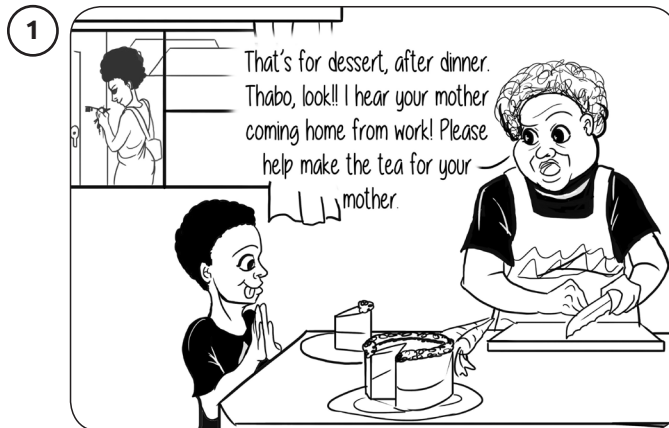
Ignore the behaviour, not the child.

Children are good. Behaviours can be negative.

Redirecting younger children can help them find a positive behaviour.

## Story 2:

**Thabo's grandmother distracts Thabo from potential negative behaviour and redirects it towards doing something positive.**



### Discussion for Story 2

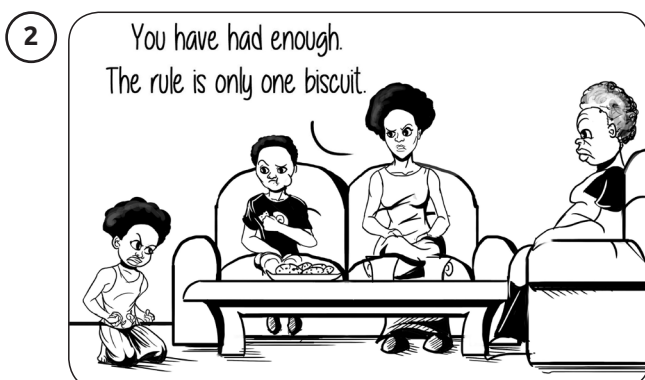
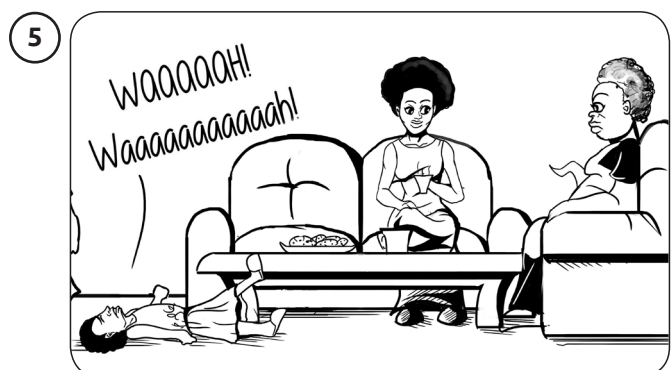
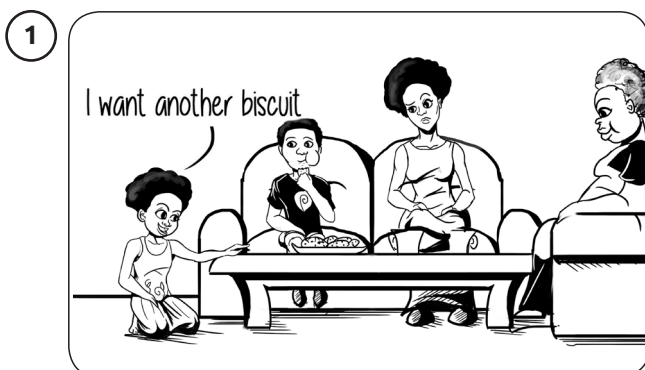
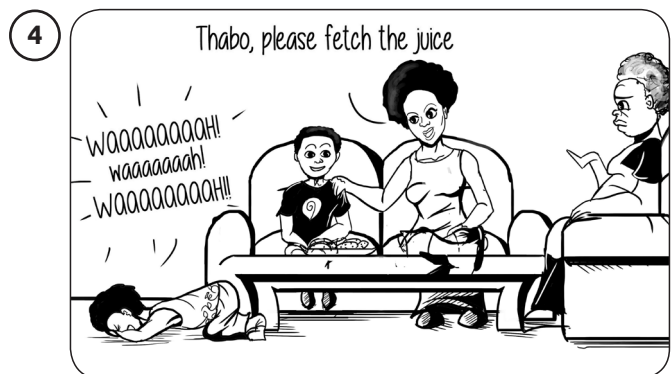
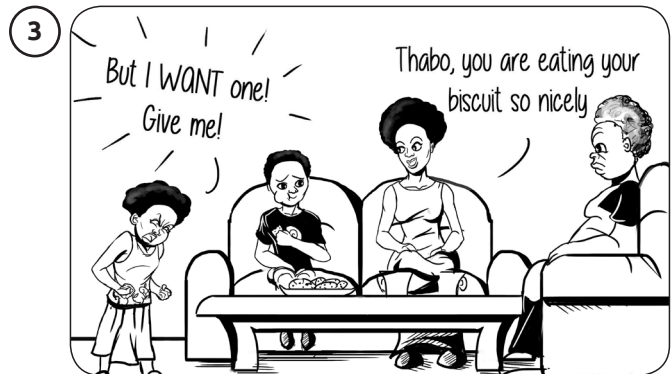
- How does Thabo's grandmother distract Thabo from taking and eating a piece of cake before supper?
- How does Thabo's mother support Thabo's positive behaviour?
- Identify where Thabo's grandmother and mother apply the steps for *Distract, redirect and praise*.
- When would a distraction be useful in your household?
- Why is it important that different caregivers in the home know and use the same steps for promoting positive behaviours?

### Story 3:

#### Keep calm during tantrums.

#### Discussion for Story 3

- Read the story and say how it made you feel, and what you thought about. For example, did the story trigger any memories or reflections?
- How do Thabo and Nosipho's grandmother and mother work together to ignore Nosipho?
- What do you think would have happened if Nosipho's mother had argued with Nosipho?
- How does Nosipho's mother reinforce good behaviour during Nosipho's tantrum?
- How does Nosipho's mother respond when Nosipho stops her tantrum?
- In what way do Nosipho's mother, grandmother and Thabo work as a team?



#### It's a team effort!

- Ignoring a tantrum or other negative behaviour is a team effort.
- Everyone in the family must help.
- When the negative behaviour ends, give immediate positive attention with praise.
- Help your child to live in the sunshine of positive attention!



## Story 4:

**Lindiwe's mother reinforces negative behaviour.  
It is not constructive to do this.**



### Discussion for Story 4

- What does Lindiwe do to get her mother's attention? Does it work? Why do you say this?
- What type of behaviour is Lindiwe's mother rewarding?
- Why might it be a problem to say, "I will tell your father"?

### Give attention to positive behaviour

- Children want attention. Positive or negative.
- They will do anything to get attention.
- When we only respond to negative behaviour, our children learn that such behaviour will get them our attention.
- Give attention to the child who is behaving well and not to the child who is misbehaving.

## 2.3 Parents and caregivers group discussion: *Ignore and Distract* negative behaviour methods

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Introduce this exercise like this:



We have engaged with different stories that show parents and caregivers handling a child's negative behaviour in different ways. We hope you enjoyed thinking through ideas around practical methods and strategies that can work in your own homes.

We know that children sometimes misbehave because they need attention. We know escalating conflict doesn't resolve things. So, we learnt methods for nonviolent, healthy and constructive management of children's misbehaviour.

It is easy to identify the behaviours we do not like in our children. However, it is equally important to recognise their positive behaviours – and praise our children for them. This is how we teach, and encourage, our children to use constructive ways to handle situations. This is how they learn and know what behaviours we praise and reward them for. This will motivate them and help them be successful in their lives.

- 2) Facilitate a discussion to explore when parents and caregivers think the *Ignore and Distract and redirect methods* won't work. Write the negative behaviours they identify on chart paper.

### Suggestion for leading the activity

- a) Parents / caregivers identify negative attention seeking behaviours they want less of from their children.
- b) Encourage participants to be as specific as possible using these prompts to cover the what, when, where, why, who and how:
  - When does the child do that behaviour?
  - Where does this usually happen?
  - Who is involved?
  - What happens to you? In other words, how do you feel when this happens?
  - Why do you think the behaviour happens and how does it happen?
- c) Using the chart paper from (a) ask parents / caregivers to identify which negative attention seeking behaviours can be ignored. Make a note of them.
- d) Ask parents / caregivers to name the opposite positive behaviour that they would like to see more often for each of these negative behaviours. Write them on the chart paper.
- e) Now, parents / caregivers identify which behaviours cannot be ignored or distracted from. These are aggressive behaviours such as hitting, dangerous behaviours such as putting a finger in the electrical socket, and behaviours around safety such as coming home late from school. The behaviours that cannot be ignored or distracted will be saved in the "fridge" for later in the programme. Remember to make a note of them.

## 2.4 Parents and caregivers group exercise: Using the *Ignore and Distract* methods to manage negative behaviour

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Ask parents / caregivers to choose one negative behaviour from those identified earlier. This should be a behaviour that they would like to change during the coming week with their child. It must be a behaviour that can be ignored or distracted.
- 2) Ask parents / caregivers to identify how they will handle this behaviour using the *Ignore or Distract* method.
- 3) Ask the parents / caregivers to choose a calming method to manage their own emotions in the coming week.



- 4) Give each parent / caregiver a chance to practise (1) and (2) with the participants supporting.
  - For the first practice, you will role play the “child” who is ignored and then behaves well. The parents / caregivers role play the parents / caregivers.
  - Give this scenario for the role play:
    - A child is whining for some money to buy a sweetie.
    - The parent / caregiver ignores child.
    - The child stops whining when she notices she is not getting attention.
    - The child starts playing quietly.
    - The parent / caregiver praises child for playing quietly.
  - Use the behaviours that the parents / caregivers have suggested for these practices.
  - Make sure everyone gets a chance to practise.
  - Use these prompts for discussion around the group practice:
    - What was it like to be a child and be ignored?
    - What was it like to ignore as a parent / caregiver?
    - What challenges came up?
  - During the group practice, be supportive and praise the parents / caregivers for trying.
  - Remind parents / caregivers that the ignore is not over until parents / caregivers have praised the next positive behaviour of their children!
  - At the end of the group practice go through the information sheet that comes next *Tips and information for ignoring negative behaviour*. Tell participants that it is also in their Family Workbook.

### Facilitator input note

#### Tips and information for ignoring negative behaviour

The following are behaviours you can experiment with using the ignoring method: arguing, sulking, screaming, interrupting, whining, teasing, and, sometimes even swearing.

When you ignore someone for negative behaviour, you make no eye, physical or verbal contact.

#### Important to know

- The negative behaviour usually gets worse at first when you ignore it. Your child may try to test you when experiencing this new response to their behaviour. Be patient!
- Ignoring must be done consistently or you can make the problem worse.
- Everyone must agree to ignore the negative behaviour. Involve your partner or the rest of your family.
- Try to encourage a behaviour that is the opposite of the problem behaviour. Do this by using simple rewards and praise.
- Ignoring is easier if we have already decided how we are going to behave and be when ignoring.
- Ignore is best for children from the age of four and older. For younger children, try to distract them. This can work for older children too.
- Ignore does not work for dangerous behaviours when the child’s safety is at risk.
- Ignoring never ends until you praise your child for good behaviour afterwards.
- Give praise / positive attention immediately after the negative behaviour ends.

#### Alert!

If you find that you are ignoring a particular difficult behaviour most of the time, there are two main reasons:

- You are not giving your child enough positive attention.
- You are not being consistent with your ignoring your child’s negative behaviour.

- 5) Affirm that it can be very difficult when trying to manage negative behaviour. Go through the tips for staying calm that come next.

Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

## Tips for staying calm when ignoring a child for their negative behaviour

### Emotions

- 1) Check in with yourself to take note of how you are feeling.
- 2) Try to name your emotions. You might be feeling any of these, or others: angry, scared, sad and confused.
- 3) Feel the emotion, or emotions, in your body.
- 4) Remind yourself that although it is okay to feel these emotions, you don't have to react to them in a negative way towards your child.

### Your calm down

To calm down so that you don't say or do anything you might regret, you can:

- take deep breaths in and out (count up to ten and down from eight or ten)
- take a short time out
- tell yourself, "It is okay; I can handle this."
- walk to another place and keep moving if your child follows
- distract yourself with things like preparing a meal, singing a song – doing something you find joy in.

Be kind to yourself. These things are not easy. Try to treat yourself to something nice afterwards for your effort!

### The children return

Time: 5 minutes

- The children are always excited to show what they have done. So, allow at least five minutes for this.
  - Tell parents and childcarers that the children will be returning to the big group.
  - Remind them (a) about the importance of saying positive things to their children, and (b) how praise is important for children's self-esteem.
  - Ask the children to show the parents / caregivers what they have made, and to explain how they will use it.



## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

Explain that there are several parts to the homework activity for Session 7.

### 3.1 Practise a method learnt in this session

In Session 7, we looked at two key methods for handling negative behaviour:

- Method: Distract, redirect, praise.
- Method: Ignore low risk negative behaviour.

Say that parents and caregivers' homework is to:

- 1) Practise one of the methods you used today for one particular type of negative behaviour. For example, you could choose whining. Do what you normally do with any other negative behaviours for now. Doing more would be too much at once for your child.
- 2) Practise taking a time out whenever you feel stressed.
- 3) Use a couple of the tips for calming down.
- 4) Write in your *Reflections* sheet.

### 3.2 Complete the Family self-care plan

(McKay et al., 2012)

Ask families to look at the *Family self-care plan* in the Family Workbook. Have spare handouts for anyone who might need it. Go through the plan where parents and caregivers must:

- a) Fill in two ways to have less stress at home.
- b) Write something you can do to feel better when you are stressed out.
- c) Come up with three things you can do as a family to have fun together at least one activity from #3 on the *Family self-care plan* and complete the *Reflections* sheet.

### 3.3 Calm Down Box

Work together on the Calm Down Box.

### 3.4 Mood Balls

Encourage children to use their Mood Balls when they experience anger or other overwhelming feelings.

### 3.5 Bottles

Ask families to try to collect one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles and bring them to the next session (this is needed for Session 12).

### 3.6 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week. Have a quick discussion with participants highlighting how important the buddy system is in the programme and for support when the programme is over.

#### Reward stickers

- Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing all the homework.
  - Families will receive an additional stickers for:
    - using their Mood Balls
    - filling the Calm Down Box with items and using it.



## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - ask for feedback about the session
  - ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting
  - review homework activity
  - confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Ask families to complete Appendix O (b) Session 7 evaluation with fidelity measure. Remind families to fill in both sides.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Say we are now halfway through the programme, and it is very important to keep on building the Sihleng'imizi Buddy system which, if participants can use it and make it strong, will continue after the formal programme is over.
- 7) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 8

## Negative behaviour management using the Cool Down Corner

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help families to continue to strengthen their skills in using methods to manage children's difficult behaviour.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objective</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Share and practise the Cool Down Corner method to manage difficult behaviour.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>• List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>• Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>• Appendix O, the general evaluation form for each family.</li> <li>• Attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Am I confident with facilitating the:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• songs</li> <li>• role plays (this is in the homework feedback activity as a suggestion at the beginning of the session).</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Have I carefully prepared for facilitating the homework feedback activity, since it is fairly complex and there was a large amount of homework?</li> <li>• Have I discussed the children-only session on difficult behaviour that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> <li>• Have I read all the notes, understand the concept of the Cool Down Corner, and am I able to clearly explain the negative behaviour types that the corner may be used for?</li> </ul> |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>• Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>• Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>• Set out the materials needed for Session 8.</li> <li>• Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>• Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tidy the room.</li> <li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>• Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

## Session 8 Programme

|                               |  |            |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker (optional): Family role play of how they managed a difficult behaviour method, either <i>Ignore or Distract and redirect</i> (10 minutes)  | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children go with the childcare worker for an activity.</li> </ul> 2.1 Goals around positive behaviour and methods to manage difficult behaviours (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>What the research says about different discipline methods / discussion.</li> <li>Introducing the Cool Down Corner – as a constructive discipline method for particular negative behaviours.</li> <li>Story 1: Lonwabo breaks a house rule – introducing a Cool Down Corner with discussion points.</li> </ul> 2.2 Discussion: How to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story 2: How to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child with discussion points and information.</li> </ul> 2.3 Group practise: Explaining the Cool Down Corner to your child (15 minutes)<br>2.4 Group discussion: Using the Cool Down Corner for breaking a rule (10 minutes)<br>2.5 Parents and caregivers' activity: Plan the Cool Down Corner (15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children return to show everyone what they drew.</li> </ul> | 90 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Implement the Cool Down Corner<br>3.2 Collect bottles<br>3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4 The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>Ask families to fill in the general evaluation form, Appendix 0</li> <li>Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>   | 10 minutes |

# 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

## 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group did with Session 7 last week.
- Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

### Alert!

The homework for Session 7 was a large amount and fairly complex in parts. Pay careful attention to the guide for homework feedback in the notes.

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 7 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - a) Practise a method for handling negative behaviour, either:
    - Distract, redirect, praise, or
    - Ignore low risk negative behaviour.
  - b) Practise taking a time out whenever you feel stressed.
  - c) Use a couple of the tips for calming down.
  - d) Complete the *Family self-care plan*.
    - Fill in two ways to have less stress at home.
    - Write something you can do to feel better when you are stressed out.
    - Come up with three things you can do as a family to have fun together.
    - Complete *the reflection* sheet.
  - e) Work together with your child on the Calm Down Box, and encourage your child to use their Mood Balls when they experience anger or other overwhelming feelings.
  - f) Collect one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles. (You can thank people who have brought them in).
  - g) Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy.
- 3) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework. Families were promised an extra reward sticker for completing all the homework, and additional stickers for using their Mood Balls and filling the Calm Down Box with items and using it.
- 4) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Invite them to share what they might like to from their *Reflections* sheet. Follow these general questions to guide this feedback, and read the key points alert for specific homework sections:
  - What did parents / caregivers choose to implement?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?

### Alerts about the methods to manage negative behaviours



- Make sure that parents /caregivers are only ignoring one specific behaviour.
- It is common for parents / caregivers to have changed their behaviour, or chosen behaviours, to ones that cannot be ignored. That is, to dangerous or aggressive behaviours that need a Cool Down Corner, or behaviours that require consequences.
- Remind parents / caregivers about the different methods for different negative behaviours.
- Remind parents / caregivers that the Ignore method is for attention seeking behaviours.

### Key points to be aware of regarding the homework for handling negative behaviour – and for possible follow up

- Did the parents / caregivers choose only one behaviour to ignore, or distract and redirect?
- Did the parents /caregivers choose a negative behaviour that the method will work for? That is, for behaviours such as whining, crying, tantrums, or any other *attention seeking behaviour*?
- Was the approach sensitive to the child's developmental age?
- Are the parents / caregivers spending plenty of time supporting the positive opposite of these negative behaviours with praise and rewards?
- Ask the children to say something about their experience of the new way in which their parent / caregiver is dealing with their difficult behaviour.
- Does anyone need extra support? You could do a quick role play, or plan a home visit to provide extra support.

### Possible questions for home practice discussion

#### Handling negative behaviour

- What behaviour did you decide to ignore during the week?
- How challenging was it to ignore your child when they were misbehaving?
- What were some of the problems you encountered?
- Were you able to praise the opposite positive behaviours?
- What were these behaviours?

#### Tips for calming down

- How were you able to manage your own emotions?
- Were you able to stay calm?
- Did you use any of the calming techniques we discussed last week?

#### Family Health Care Plan and general

- Ask if anyone wants to share an experience they had when playing with, praising, rewarding, or giving instructions to their child.
- Facilitate a discussion on the Family self-care plan.
- Find out what worked well, and what was challenging.
- Ask if the use of the Mood Balls and the Calm Box assisted.

### 1.3 Icebreaker (optional):

#### Role play managing a difficult behaviour method for Ignore or Distract and redirect

Time: 10 minutes

#### Objective

Share how the use of one of the managing difficult behaviour methods (*Ignore* or *Distract and redirect*) went so as to learn from it and be supportive of each other.

#### What to do

- 1) Invite a volunteer family to demonstrate how they managed a difficult behaviour in the previous week in a way that went well.
- 2) When giving feedback, make sure everyone is supportive, encouraging and that by the time you have completed the icebreaker, that families remain true to understanding the specific methods for specific types of negative behaviours, and the specific processes for handling difficult behaviour.
- 3) Ask participants to refer to the illustrated story about always praising good behaviour, and sometimes rewarding it, to remind them about the importance of praise.

## 2. Core lesson

Time: 75 minutes

### Children's separate activity with the childcare worker

What the children will do

Children will do a drawing that shows (a) a way that they misbehave at home, (b) a punishment they think they should receive for that misbehaviour, and (c) an idea on how to prevent the misbehaviour in the first place.

Prepare with the childcare worker before the session

Be sure to discuss the activity with the childcare worker beforehand.



### 2.1 Goals around positive behaviour and methods to manage difficult behaviour

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Say that we are going to explore parent and caregivers':
  - a) current behaviour management practices at home and in the family.
  - b) goals they hope to achieve with the methods they use. Write participants' responses on chart paper.

#### Points that need to be highlighted

It is important to manage children's behaviour to help children:

- be safe
- learn self-control and self-discipline
- develop a sense of responsibility
- develop important values, such as the value of Ubuntu, which means to respect and care for each other and to share with others.



- 2) Go through the information sheet *What research says about different types of discipline*.



## Facilitator note to read through

### What the research says about different discipline methods

From: Schools and Families Education (SAFE) Children Family programme

| Discipline strategy  | Effects of the discipline strategy  | Sources of research information   |
|--|---|---|
| <b>Corporal punishment</b><br>Physical discipline method that does not result in significant physical injury. Spanking is an example of corporal punishment.     | Research shows these effects of corporal punishment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Higher levels of immediate compliance. This means the child temporarily stops the behaviour, only to return to it soon after being administered the punishment.</li> <li>• Smacking creates more violent behaviour that parents / caregivers don't necessarily notice because it develops over weeks, months, and years.</li> <li>• The above is true even in cultures where hitting is seen as OK.</li> <li>• Higher levels of aggression in childhood and adulthood.</li> <li>• Lower levels of self-control and self-discipline.</li> <li>• Increases likelihood of depression, anxiety, cheating, and criminal behaviours when the child becomes an adult.</li> <li>• Lower intelligence quotient (IQ) levels.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gershoff, 2002 (systematic review of 88 studies)</li> <li>• Straus, Sugarman &amp; Giles-Sims, 1997</li> <li>• Durrant &amp; Ensom, 2012</li> <li>• Straus &amp; Paschall, 2009</li> <li>• Kotz, 2012</li> </ul> |
| <b>Harsh verbal discipline</b><br>This includes things like excessive shouting, screaming, swearing, and name-calling e.g. saying the child is "dumb" or "lazy". | Research shows these effects of harsh verbal discipline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Harsh punishment, such as screaming, swearing and name-calling are linked to increased risk of bad or problem behaviour in children, adult problems, and symptoms of depression.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Wang &amp; Kenny, 2014</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Extinction</b><br>Examples of extinction as a discipline methods are Timeout and taking away, or delaying privileges.   | Research shows these effects of extinction discipline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increased compliance with parental expectations.</li> <li>• Highly effective as a long-term strategy, although it might not be effective immediately.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Paediatric Society, 2004</li> <li>• American Academy of Pediatrics, 1998</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Praise / rewarding</b><br>Where desirable or effective behaviours are praised or rewarded.  | Research shows these effects of praise / rewarding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Most powerful motivators for good behaviour.</li> <li>• Promotes growth into a more mature human being.</li> <li>• Increased self-discipline and positive self-esteem.</li> <li>• Improvements in parent-child relationship.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Canadian Paediatric Society (2004)</li> <li>• American Academy of Pediatrics, 1998</li> </ul>  |

- 3) Say that now we have the facts from the information sheet, we're going to talk about punishments that are harsh and cause the child being punished to feel emotions that are not helpful for their development. Shame and guilt are examples of such unhelpful emotions.

**Ask:**

- a) Where did these harsh punishments originate, and why did they originate?
  - b) Should they continue with today's children?
  - c) Are they helpful for a child's sense of wellbeing and positive development?
- 4) Say the following to reinforce the information sheet:



Harsh punishments are ineffective for various reasons. The reasons include that because children don't learn as well when they're scared; children stop their negative behaviour for a short time but return to that behaviour afterwards. Even if a child is shamed into behaving better in the moment, insulting a child will not teach a child the appropriate steps to take when they are in a difficult situation.

- 5) Acknowledge that hitting or smacking often stops a targeted behaviour for the moment. Follow on by asking parents / caregivers to say, after learning from research about it, how they feel about hitting or smacking children as a discipline method.

**Corporal punishment is illegal**

Make sure that before the session is over to check in with parents and caregivers that they know that corporal punishment is illegal.



Note that some children aren't harmed at all by physical punishment, just like some heavy smokers suffer no harm from cigarettes, but they are the lucky ones as opposed to the unlucky majority who suffer harmful side effects.

- 6) Initiate a discussion by asking this question: What types of discipline do you think work? Encourage parents / caregivers to share their ideas based on their own experiences and also from what they have learnt from the evidence. Don't lecture. Then say:



To summarise our discussion and learnings to far, the following positive discipline methods and strategies are more effective in the short- and long-term:

- distraction
- time out and consequences, such as losing a privilege, or the delay of getting a privilege
- strategies to increase the behaviours you want in addition to decreasing the behaviours you do not want. Examples include strategies such as praising and rewarding good behaviours.

When we use these constructive discipline methods, we help increase our child's self-discipline and self-esteem. These methods help us have healthier and happier relationships with our children.

Let's move on to learn about and practise some constructive discipline methods we can use to manage our children's difficult behaviour.

## Introducing the Cool Down Corner

A constructive discipline method for particular negative behaviours

- Your Family Workbook has tips for explaining the Cool Down Corner to your child. The corner is a good way of dealing with behaviours you don't want.
- When you use the Cool Down Corner, you remove your child from the problematic situation for a short time. This allows the child to "cool down".
- The Cool Down Corner is mainly for children aged 4 years and over. With children younger than this, rather use the methods we focused on in Session 7, such as:
  - Distract, redirect, praise
  - Ignore low risk negative behaviour.

## What are Cool Down Corners?

Cool Down Corners are structured ignores. They are not punishments. Think of them as opportunities for a child to take a pause, calm down, and reflect on what they did.

Just like we need to cool down sometimes when we get angry or stressed, so do our children when they are aggressive, destructive, do something dangerous, or fail to follow instructions.

If you do give your child under the age of four a Cool Down Corner, give it for a shorter time, such as one minute.

- 7) Ask parents and caregivers to suggest specific behaviours which *would not* be suitable for ignoring, and for which the Cool Down Corner should instead be used. See examples in the panel.

### Make sure everyone is clear

It is very important that you make the type of behaviours appropriate for the Cool Down Corner very clear. Reinforce the distinction between behaviours suitable for the Ignore and the Distract methods and those (see below) for the Cool Down Corner. You can make the distinctions clear through reiterating concrete examples. Behaviours which are suitable for the Cool Down Corner include:

- aggressive and destructive behaviours such as hitting, destroying objects, rough play
- not following certain instructions
- behaviours that need a consequence, such as when a child breaks the agreed rules repeatedly.



### Consider the age of the child!

Remind participants that we must always consider the age of the child they are needing to discipline. For example, we can ignore a small child hitting a parent / caregiver's leg because they cannot have another biscuit if they have already had one as a treat, as agreed.



### Be alert to participants' behaviour suggestions that are inappropriate

Parents and caregivers will often suggest behaviours that are inappropriate for the Cool Down Corner because the behaviour could either be ignored (such as whining or back chatting), or require a consequence (such as coming in late from school or not doing chores).

Be sure that parents / caregivers identify a behaviour that will work with the Cool Down Corner.

- 8) Say that next we're going to look at stories about using the Cool Down Corner. Highlight that being able to appropriately use the Cool Down Corner is a skill parents / caregivers can develop and strengthen with practise. In the story that follows, the Cool Down Corner is being used when Lonwabo broke this household rule: Do not destroy things.

## Story 1:

### Lonwabo breaks a house rule – using a Cool Down Corner



### Discussion for Story 1

- Read the story. Say how it made you feel, and what you thought about. For example, did the story trigger any memories or reflections?
- How would you describe Lonwabo's behaviour?
- Do you think Lonwabo's mother could ignore Lonwabo's behaviour?
- How does Lonwabo's mother explain a Cool Down Corner to Lonwabo?
- What is effective about Lonwabo's mother's use of the Cool Down Corner?
- What does Lonwabo's mother do to keep herself calm?
- Imagine yourself in a situation where you need to use a Cool Down Corner. What could you do to ignore your child during Cool Down Corner time?

## 2.2 Discussion: How to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Tell parents and caregivers that the Cool Down Corner is a new method to manage difficult behaviour. Say it is important that everyone understands why it must be done in the way Sihleng'imizi programme sets it out. If it isn't, the method won't work how it is meant to. We need to learn more and practise each step before we introduce it to our children.
- 2) Say that we're going to use another story to analyse how Thabo's mother explained the Cool Down Corner. Talk through the illustrated story showing Thabo's mother explaining the Cool Down Corner to Thabo. Unpack each thing that Thabo's mother does in each frame.
- 3) To reinforce the process, read through the information sheet, which is also in the Family Workbook. It is called *Tips for explaining the 5-minute Cool Down Corner to your child*
- 4) Brainstorm specific behaviours that each parent / caregiver says would be appropriate for using the Cool Down Corner with their child. Remind participants that each of our children is unique and special.


## Story 2:

### How to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child

- Explain what is happening in each frame of the story, one by one.
- Analyse the process and think about why each step is important to follow in the order that Thabo's mother explained.

**1**


Thabo and his mother are just finished reading a story together...  
..... The end.



**4**


That's a wonderful idea, Thabo.  
We can call it the cool down chair.

It could be on the big chair.



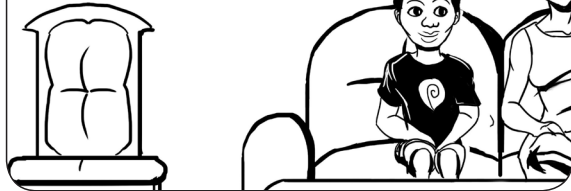
**2**

Thabo, I really enjoyed reading that story with you.  
Now, I would like to talk with you about how sometimes you hit your sister. You are doing such a good job controlling your anger. I know it is sometimes difficult. But we can work together to help you remember this household rule of no hitting.




**5**

When you go to the Cool Down Chair, you will have to go for about 5 minutes to think about how you could behave differently. You will have to be quiet before you can come off the chair.



**3**


We are going to use a 5-Minute Cool Down to help you. When you forget it is against our household rules to hit your sister, you will have to go for a Cool Down time on this mat.



**6**

It won't be easy to take a 5 Minute Cool Down but I know you can do it. Would you like to practice?


Okay!



**7**

After practicing

That was fun! You know, I don't think you will do this very often because you are a great child.





## Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

### How to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child

Use the story that shows how Thabo's mother explains a Cool Down Corner to your child as a basis.

#### Tips to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child before you use the method

- It is important to explain the Cool Down Corner to your child before you use it.
- Your child also needs to know which specific types of behaviours you will use the Cool Down Corner for.
- Do not use the Cool Down Corner with children under 3 years' old. You can use the methods we learn about in Session 7:
  - a) Distract, redirect, praise.
  - b) Ignore low risk negative behaviour.



### How to explain the Cool Down Corner

**Step 1:** Find a time when your child is calm. This should not be when your child is misbehaving.

**Step 2:** Explain to your child that you can see they are having difficulty with a specific household rule. Tell your child that you can work together to manage this in a different way.

**Step 3:** Explain to your child that you and he or she will use the Cool Down Corner as a consequence for a specific negative behaviour or breaking a household rule. You will state what that behaviour is. Explain what a consequence is in a way that your child will understand, and the specific negative behaviour it is for. It could, for example, be for deliberately damaging property, or for hitting a member of the family.

**Step 4:** Discuss with your child where the Cool Down Corner will be. Cool Down Corners should not be in a separate room to where you will be. Often a chair, or a mat on the floor, or a stool in the corner of the room works best. You can decide this together.

### What to tell your child

Tell your child these things:

- How long the Cool Down Corner will be (not longer than 5 minutes).
- It will not be easy to do the Cool Down Corner but that together you will get there.
- The Cool Down Corner is not punishment.
- You will have some time together to practise using the Cool Down Corner now so that they know what to expect for that behaviour.
- You do not think the Cool Down Corner will be used often because they are doing such a good job of behaving (affirmation).
- You are proud of them for listening and working hard to behave. Remember, praise encourages positive behaviour going forward.

## 2.3 Group practise: Explaining the Cool Down Corner to your child

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) In this activity, we're going to practise explaining the Cool Down Corner to our children. Ask parents / caregivers to choose one aggressive, destructive, or dangerous behaviour to work with at home during the week. Put up some chart paper with these columns and the example on it. Go through it and then ask each parent / childcarer to say what they want to do for each column.

| Behaviour to work with                                | When to explain the Cool Down Corner | Where to explain it                         | Comments  |
|---|--------------------------------------|---|---|
| Child yells at me when hungry – and sometimes swears. | After supper.                        | In the kitchen after supper and washing up. | I will need to ask the other children to give me privacy when I am going to explain the cool down corner. |

- 2) Demonstrate how to explain the Cool Down Corner to a child using role play. Use one of the negative behaviours that came up in Session 7 to role play. You will role play the parent / caregiver and one of the participants will volunteer to role play the child.
- 3) Ask people to get into pairs and practise how to tell their children about the Cool Down Corner. They should use the example for how to use it from (1).
- 4) Group reflection: invite everyone to take turns to say how their practise run went. Discuss challenges people say they think they might have. Do some problem solving together through sharing ideas.
- 5) As a way of wrapping this activity, go through the summary of the Cool Down Corner. Refer participants to the page it is on in their Family Workbook.

### Facilitator input and in the Family Workbook

#### Cool Down Corner summary

- First, remind your child that the Cool Down Corner is a consequence of not following a household rule or a specific behaviour that you have already spoken about. Then tell them that they must take a Cool Down. Say, “The rule is \_\_\_\_\_. You broke the rule. Take a Cool Down.”
- The Cool Down ends only after you have praised your child for their next positive behaviour.
- Stay calm when you tell your child to go into the Cool Down Corner, and remain in the same place with them and be calm throughout the Cool Down.
- Children are not naughty. It is their behaviour that is inappropriate or negative.
- Cool Down only works if your child has lots of time in the Sunshine of Positive Attention.

## 2.4 Group discussion: Using the Cool Down Corner for breaking a rule

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Read through *Tips for using a Cool Down Corner for breaking a rule* and discuss the information.

### Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

#### Tips for using a Cool Down Corner for breaking a rule

##### Important!

A Cool Down Corner is for breaking a household rule.

It is only for behaviours that are:

- dangerous for the child or others
  - destructive
  - aggressive.



Other behaviour problems that break rules, such as forgetting to use friendly words, or asking for something politely, can often be dealt with by the Ignore method, or with a gentle reminder. For example, “Remember to use friendly words.” Naturally, you will praise your child when they remember to use friendly words.



## Process for instructing your child to have a Cool Down:

**Step 1:** If your child hits a sibling, or breaks a household rule that warrants using the Cool Down Corner, you must immediately tell them: "You forgot the rule; you need to take a Cool Down". You do not give them a warning.

**Step 2:** Once your child is in the Cool Down Corner, ignore the child for no more than 5 minutes, unless the child is not being quiet. If the child is not quiet, the Cool Down Corner continues until they are quiet for at least 30 seconds (or a short time you specify).

**Step 3:** Your child must be calm before you allow your child to leave the Cool Down.

**Step 4:** When the Cool Down Corner is over, engage your child in a positive activity. You must praise their first positive behaviour. The Cool Down is not over until you have praised them.

## To remember

- Only use a Cool Down Corner for children 4 years of age or older. Younger children can usually be managed by redirecting or distracting or, if necessary to calm down, a shorter 1-Minute Cool Down.
- 2) Say that all parents / caregivers will take turns to practise doing a Cool Down Corner for aggressive or destructive behaviour that is breaking an already established household rule. It will be done in the big group. This will help us to work together and be sure we are doing it correctly.
- 3) Explain that this group practice will be with a child who goes directly into a Cool Down Corner. Go through these steps to help participants know what to do.

**Step 1:** "We had a rule (State the rule. For example, the rule in the house is to play nicely with your brother). You broke the rule."

**Step 2:** "You need to sit on the Cool Down mat or chair. Your Cool Down starts now and will end in five minutes, so long as you are quiet after five minutes has passed."

**Step 3:** "Five minutes is up and you are nice and calm and quiet."

**Step 4:** Praise first positive behaviour. For example, "You did well to sit quietly like you did. I am very happy about that."

- Provide lots of support and encouragement while parents / caregivers practise.
- Remind parents / caregivers to use their calming techniques.

## Parents and caregivers' activity: Plan the Cool Down Corner

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Say that now we are going to prepare for using the Cool Down Corner at home during the coming week.
- 2) Ask parents and caregivers to identify one behaviour they can use practise introducing the corner with their children.
- 3) Remind parents / caregivers that the behaviour must, as previously discussed, be one that is appropriate for a Cool Down Corner. Facilitate this process, and write the rule the parents / caregivers choose and the behaviour. You might find this table useful. Ask participants to write down what they have decided. Say that you will also write what they decide down to help remind you when you do the check in with them during the coming week.

| Household rule if broken will lead to the Cool Down Corner (CDC) | The (appropriate for the method) CDC behaviour I want to address | This is when and where I will explain CDC to the other adults in my family | This is when and where I will explain CDC to my child | This is where I will have the CDC in the house |
|--|--|--|---|--|
|  |  |  |   |  |
|  |  |  |   |  |

#### The children return

The children rejoin the adults' group with the childcare worker at this point.



- 4) When the childcare worker and the children return, welcome them back. Invite the children to show the adults what they drew. Have a round of applause after each child's presentation.

## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Implement the Cool Down Corner

Parents / caregivers' homework activities for this week:

- 1) Discuss the Cool Down Corner strategy with other adults in the house.
- 2) Introduce the Cool Down Corner to your child.
- 3) Do a practice of the Cool Down Corner for the specific type of behaviour appropriate for it.
- 4) Spend at least 5 minutes Special Time with your child.

### Emphasise this to parents and caregivers before the session ends



- Do not go home and try the Cool Down Corner straight away. You must first discuss it with other adults in the family, and gently and clearly introduce it to your child. Re-read the story of Thabo's mother introducing it to Thabo before you use this new parenting skill.
- Only use the Cool Down Corner as a last resort!
- Do not use the Cool Down corner for everything. The method will not solve all your problems.
- Only use the Cool Down Corner for one difficult behaviour at a time.
- If you do not use the Cool Down Corner exactly as it is taught, it will not work. You will end up going back to square one, and old parenting styles that don't work.

- 5) Children's homework activities for this week
- 6) Encourage children to use their Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes when they feel angry, or have other difficult feelings that seem to overwhelm them.

### 3.2 Bottles

Ask families to try to collect one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles (this is needed for Session 12). Thank those who have already brought bottles in.

### 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - ask for feedback about the session
  - ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting
  - review homework activity
  - confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Give each family a copy of Appendix O, the general evaluation form to fill in.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 9

## Ways to promote positive behaviour and ways to resolve conflict

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Parents / caregivers gain new ways to promote positive behaviour and resolve conflict.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>The key objectives for this session are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>help families understand the Consequences Method and explore using it when managing a child's negative behaviour.</li> <li>help families work together to resolve problems at school.</li> <li>help children learn appropriate methods to use when there is conflict in a school setting.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Icebreaker materials:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One envelope for each person with their name written on it</li> <li>Sweets with wrappers on to put inside the envelopes.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Copies of the drawn outline <i>What makes a good friend?</i> for the children. It is in the Family Workbook as well.</li> <li>List of <i>Behaviours you want less of</i> that parents / caregivers developed in Session 7.</li> <li>Cards with all six scenarios for each family for the in-group family role play activity.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O, the general evaluation form for each family to fill in.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreaker</li> <li>songs</li> <li>role plays.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read all the notes for this session?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children's drawing activity with the childcare worker?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 9.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms for Session 9.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

## Session 9 Programme

|                               |  |            |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (20 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Group tangle and fetch (10 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children will go with the childcare worker for an activity.</li> </ul>   | 35 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Group discussion: Why use consequences as a way to manage a child's difficult behaviour? (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Warning of a consequence (Story 1)</li> </ul> 2.2 In-group family exercises: How to use the Consequences Method to manage difficult behaviour (20 minutes) <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Giving a logical consequence for not following a household rule (Story 2)</li> <li>Giving a warning for a logical consequence</li> <li>Alert around using unrealistic consequences (Story 3)</li> <li>How to follow through on household rules (Story 4)</li> <li>Link specific behaviours to specific consequences               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The children will return to the big group and share what they have done.</li> </ul> </li> </ol> 2.3 Group discussion: Conflict resolution (10 minutes)<br>2.4 In-group family exercise: Role play resolving a problem (20 minutes) | 80 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Use consequences the Consequences Method<br>3.2 School life and solving a problem<br>3.3 Reflection sheet for Week 9<br>3.4 The Behaviour Chart<br>3.5 Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes<br>3.6 Bottles<br>3.7 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy   | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up and closing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>Ask each family to fill in the general evaluation form, Appendix O</li> <li>Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>   | 10 minutes |

# 1. Welcome

Total: 35 minutes

## 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group is going up to now in the sessions. Alternatively, ask them to rate how Session 8 went.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 1.2 Homework check

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 8.
- 2) Confirm the homework.
  - The parents and caregivers' homework was to:
    - discuss the Cool Down Corner strategy with other adults in the house.
    - introduce the Cool Down Corner to your child.
    - do a practice run of the Cool Down Corner for the specific type of behaviour appropriate for it.
    - spend at least five minutes Special Time with your child.
  - The children's homework was to use their Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes when they felt angry or had other difficult feelings that seemed to overwhelm them.
  - For the families, the homework was to use the Behaviour Chart.
- 3) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Follow these generic questions to guide feedback. Use the *Facilitate the homework feedback* note to get the full value and sharing of ideas out of this session.
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Encourage families to keep practising all the skills they are picking up during the sessions since Session 1.

### Points to remember with the homework activity



- The most challenging aspects in the homework activity will be:
  - (a) whether the parents / caregivers are using the Cool Down Corner correctly, and
  - (b) whether they are specifically using it for an appropriate behaviour that they previously discussed with their child as a household rule.
- The Cool Down Corner is for breaking household rules that are about aggressive, destructive, or dangerous behaviour.
- Parents / caregivers may have started using the Cool Down Corner for lots of behaviours. Emphasise that it must only be used for one behaviour at a time.

### Facilitator note

#### Facilitator note to facilitate the homework feedback for Session 8

- What happened when you explained the Cool Down Corner for household rules around aggressive, destructive or dangerous behaviour to your child?
  - Were you able to explain the Cool Down Corner to other adults in your house? How did it go?
  - Which behaviour did you choose to use Cool Down Corner for? Where is your Cool Down Corner?
  - Describe your experience of using the Cool Down Corner.
  - Children, what was your experience of having the Cool Down Corner? How did it make you feel? (Specifically address the children.)
  - If you experienced problems, what were they?
  - How were you able to manage your own emotions? Were you able to stay calm? If yes, share with us how you did it.
  - Are you able to continue practicing using 'Ignore' for other negative behaviours?
  - Let's share your experiences when you played with (including your Special Time), praised, rewarded, or gave instructions to your child.
- 5) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework. Hand out additional reward stickers for using their Mood Balls, Calm Down Boxes and the Behaviour Chart.

### 1.3 Icebreaker: Group tangle and fetch

*Adapted from Ciardiello, 2003.*

Time: 10 minutes

#### Objective

Build listening, teamwork and problem-solving skills through cooperative play.

#### You need

- One envelope for each person with their name written on it.
- Sweets with wrappers on to put inside the envelopes.

## Steps for the icebreaker

- 1) Place the envelopes around the room in places where they can easily be seen and reached.
- 2) Everyone stands in a circle and tangles themselves by linking their arms together.
- 3) Once everyone is tangled, they will travel together as a group to each envelope. When the tangled group reaches an envelope, the person whose name is on it must pick it up without using their hands. Move from envelope to envelope until everyone's envelope in the group has been picked up. During the icebreaker, keep reminding everyone that they must stay tangled and may not use their hands.
- 4) Once all the envelopes are retrieved, everyone can untangle. They may open their envelopes and get their reward for working so well together.

### Children's separate activity

The children will go with the childcare worker.  
They will complete the drawing activity called *What makes a good friend?*



### Be sure to:

- 1) Discuss the activity with the childcare worker before the session.
- 2) Have copies of the outline for the children to draw in. It is in the Family Workbook for Session 9.



## 2. Core lesson

### 2.1 Group discussion: Why use consequences as a way to manage a child's difficult behaviour?

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Explain the discussion as follows:



Today, we will be talking about what to do when we cannot use the Ignore Method or give a Cool Down Corner. We need to use another method when our children do things such as coming home late from school, or when they wander into the community unsupervised.

In this session, we will also talk about how to deal with conflict. We will build on what we covered in Session 8.

- 2) Say that we're going to revisit the list of behaviours parents and caregivers made in a previous session they want to change. Select the negative behaviours that will work using a Consequences Method.
- 3) Lead a discussion about why using consequences as a method may help parents / caregivers manage a certain type challenging behaviour. See the note for *Useful questions to guide the discussion*.



### Useful questions to guide the discussion



- What is meant when something has a consequence? Share some examples. Make sure that everyone knows that a consequence is a direct result of a specific action or behaviour.
- Do you think giving a consequence for negative behaviour would be helpful for your child? Why or why not?
- For which specific behaviours might you feel you need to issue a consequence? Write down parents / caregivers' ideas on chart paper.

- 4) Say that parents / caregivers can use consequences, such as the removal of privileges, as another method to manage misbehaviour. Go through the note *Two types of consequences: natural and logical*.

### Note for facilitator's input

#### Two types of consequences: natural and logical

There are two main types of consequences to think about.

*Natural consequences* require no intervention from parents / caregivers. They are a natural result of a child's behaviour. Examples of natural consequences:

"If you break the toy, you will have no toy to play with because we do not have enough money to buy another one."

"If you do not put a jacket on, you will get wet because it is raining outside."

*Logical consequences* are chosen by parents / caregivers as a result of a specific behaviour. You can involve your older children in discussions about consequences. Examples:

"If you come home after dark today, you cannot play with your friends tomorrow."

"Because you didn't eat your carrots, you cannot have dessert."

#### How does using consequences as a method help?

Consequences help children learn:

- independence
- decision-making
- responsibility.

#### Consequences:

- are not punishments; they are opportunities for children to learn that their actions have an impact on themselves and others.
- prepare children to take responsibility for their decisions and actions.
- are an important step for parents / caregivers to teach and prepare their children for their life outside of the family – and throughout their lives.

- 5) Say that we're going to look at some illustrated stories to get the hang of how to use consequences for managing difficult behaviours.

## Story 1:

### Warning of a consequence

#### Discussion for Story 1

The story shows how a parent / caregiver can use a warning of a consequence to help a child choose to avoid getting the consequence.

- How could Lindiwe's mother have avoided this situation?
- If Lindiwe had difficulties with coordination (it was difficult for her to keep drawing only on the paper), what could her mother do?
- If Lindiwe was 4 years old, how long do you take away the crayons for?

#### Tips

- When you make it easier for your child to follow your instructions, you can avoid needing to give your child a consequence.
- State clearly what the unwanted behaviour is, and what the consequence will be if the child ignores what you have told them.
- Give your child a warning before using the consequence when possible.



## 2.2 In-group family exercises: How to use the Consequences Method to manage difficult behaviour

Time: 20 minutes

Introduce the in-group family exercises for using consequences as a method by saying that we will cover:

- Giving a logical consequence for not following a household rule
- Giving a warning for a logical consequence
- Alert around using unrealistic consequences
- How to follow through on household rules
- Link specific behaviours to specific consequences.



### a) Giving a logical consequence for not following a household rule

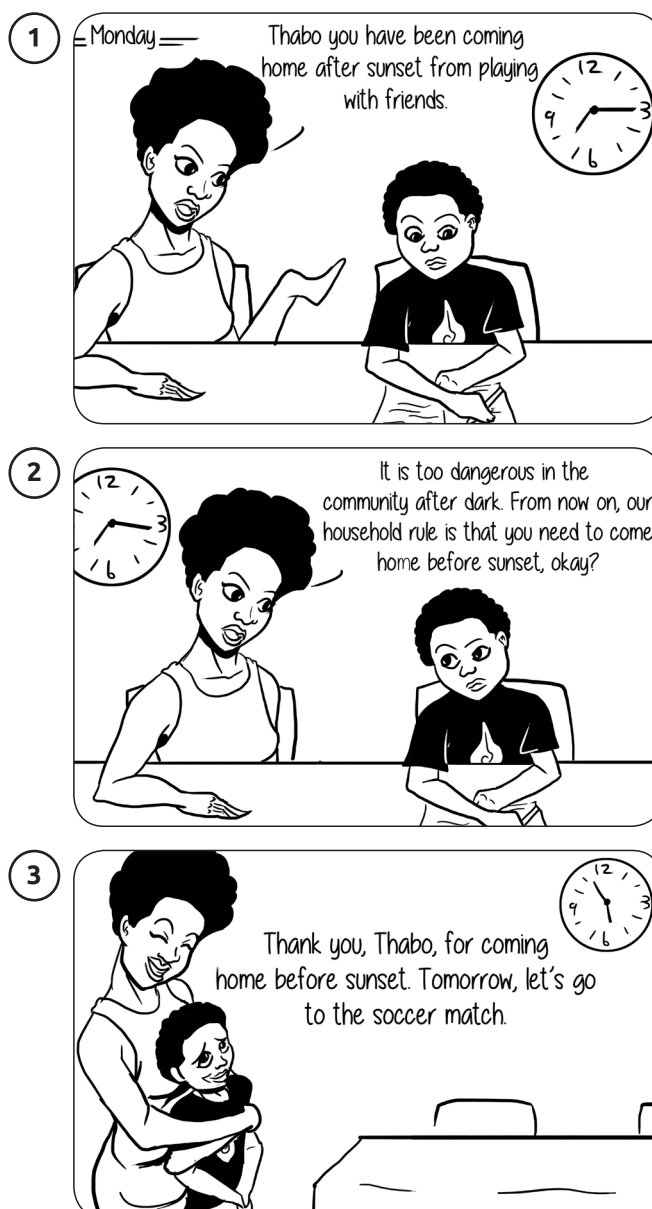
- Say that the behaviour management methods we have learnt about so far in the Sihleng'imizi Programme will not work for some household rules, such as doing homework or coming home at a reasonable time. Ask parents / caregivers to remember which methods we have already covered. Reiterate that the methods are:
  - Method: Distract, redirect, praise
  - Method: Ignore low risk negative behaviour
  - Method: Cool Down Corner.
- Go through Story 2 as a way of showing how a parent / caregiver can introduce a consequence for not sticking to a household rule.

### Story 2:

#### Giving a logical consequence for not following a household rule

##### Discussion for Story 2

- What did Thabo's mother start with to introduce the consequence for not sticking to the household rule?
- How do you think Thabo felt?
- What do you think of the reason she gave for the household rule?
- Discuss how Thabo's mother applied a specific consequence to breaking a specific household rule.
- What do you think of the reward she offered?



## **b) Giving a warning for a logical consequence**

### **When a child does not listen to an instruction**

This exercise is for giving a warning for a logical consequence where a child does not listen to an instruction.

The context is not related to a house rule being broken.



- 1) Say that for this session's in-group discussion, we will practise a method for when a child does not listen to instructions in a context that is not linked to a house rule. If it was linked to a house rule, parents / caregivers would give a Cool Down Corner.
- 2) Take participants through the following steps for giving a consequence. Use Story 1 to illustrate each step.  
Say that parents / caregivers can follow the same note in the Family Workbook.

### **Giving a consequence for not following instructions**

**Step 1:** Give instruction.

**Step 2:** Wait five seconds. If your child does as you asked, praise them immediately! If not, proceed to the next step.

**Step 3:** Give an instruction with a consequence: "If ....., then ....."

**Step 4:** Wait five seconds. If your child does as you asked, praise them immediately! If not, proceed to the next step.

**Step 5:** Follow through with consequence.

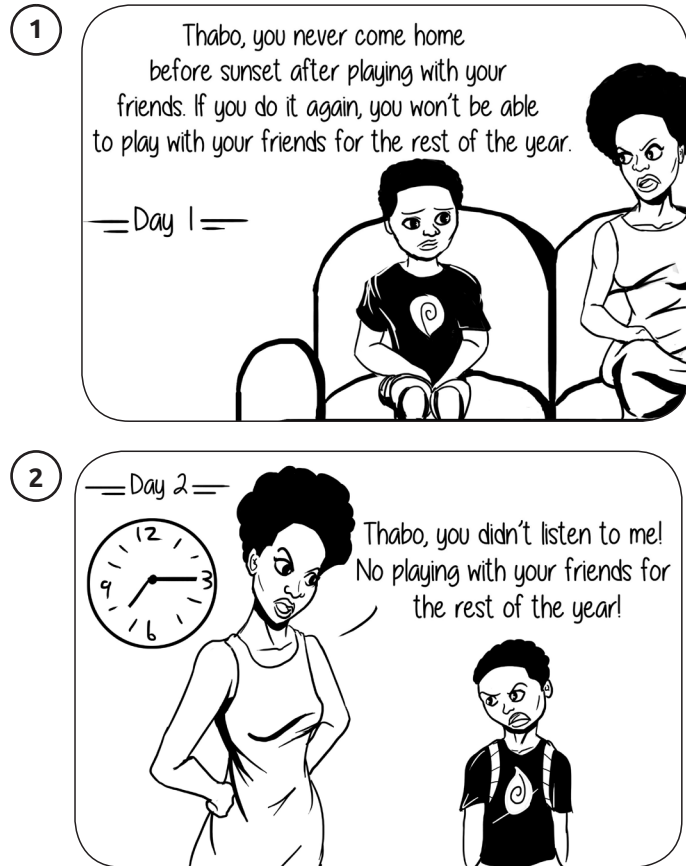
## **c) Alert around using unrealistic consequences**

- 1) Ask participants to read through Story 3. It is an example of a parent / caregiver using an unrealistic consequence. Then ask families to engage with the discussion points for Story 3.

### Story 3: Using unrealistic consequences

#### Discussion for Story 3

- Read the story and say how it made you feel.
- Did Thabo's mother give Thabo a realistic consequence for coming home late? Why do you say so?
- What do you think Thabo might have felt and thought about the consequence his mother gave him?
- What effect do you think taking away a reward as a consequence could have on your child?
- How could Thabo's mother have stated her instruction in a different way so that it was more realistic?



#### Tips and reminders

- Be consistent when giving consequences.
- Be prepared to follow through with your warning.
- When you use consequences do not take away agreed rewards for positive behaviour.



## How to follow through on household rules

- 1) Ask participants to read Story 4 and engage with the discussion points for it.

### Story 4: Reinforcing a household rule with a consequence

#### Discussion for Story 4

- Read the story and compare it with how Thabo's mother handled Thabo's difficult behaviour in Story 3.
- Would you agree that Thabo's mother takes a more helpful and realistic approach to reinforcing the household rule with a consequence in Story 3? Explain why you think so.



#### Tips and reminders

- Connect the consequence to the specific behaviour.
  - Give a reason for the consequence.
- It is okay to show your disappointment when your child misbehaves.



#### Big group discussion without children begins



### e) Link specific behaviours to specific consequences

- 1) Thank participants for engaging with the illustrated stories in their family groups and welcome them to a big group discussion going forward.
- 2) Tell participants that this activity will help us identify specific behaviours and appropriate specific consequences they can use with their children.
- 3) Put up the list of *Behaviours you want less of* that parents / caregivers developed in Session 7. Ask people to identify whether there are additional behaviours that they would like to add to the list. If there are, add them.
- 4) Draw two columns on a blank piece of chart paper. The first column is headed 'Behaviours' and the second one is headed 'Consequences'. Participants discuss and decide which behaviours should go into the first column. These behaviours should be ones that would be appropriate to use the Consequences Method for. As your participants decide which behaviours to select, write them in the first column.
- 5) Say that for each specific behaviour, we'll discuss, decide and write suggestions for appropriate specific consequences in the second column opposite that behaviour.

#### Facilitator preparation

As part of preparing for this exercise, go through *Examples of consequences* and *Tips for using the Consequences Method*. These notes are also in the Family Workbook.



### Examples of consequences

**Important!** Do not use a consequence that removes something your child has earned as a reward.  
Examples of consequences:

- If you are late for dinner, your food will be cold.
- When you eat your dinner, then you can have dessert.
- If you continue splashing water, bath time will be over.
- If you break your toy, you will have no toy to play with.
- If you can't play close to home outside, then you will have to come inside.
- If you do not turn off the television now, you will not be allowed to watch it tomorrow.
- If you do not come home straight from school, you cannot play with your friend after school.
- If you do not put away your toys then you cannot play with them tomorrow.
- If you do not get out of bed and get dressed, you will have an early bedtime tomorrow.

### Tips for using the Consequences Method

**Important!** Consequences are not punishments. When you use consequences for negative behaviour, you teach your child to take responsibility for their actions.

- Identify the specific consequence to use with a specific behaviour.
- Choose a consequence that is connected to the behaviour.
- Make sure the consequence will work for your child's age. It must not be too severe.
- Make sure you can follow through with the consequence.
- Ideally, tell your child of the consequence beforehand.
- In some situations you can give your child the choice to comply, or to receive the consequence.
- Use a friendly voice and try to stay calm when giving a consequence.
- A consequence should happen immediately or as soon as possible after the specific negative behaviour. This works the same way as with praise and rewards that we covered in a previous session.

- 6) Ask parents and caregivers to choose one specific behaviour with its one specific consequence to work with during the week.

### **The children will return to the big group**

They will have worked with their  
*What makes a good friend?* activity.



- 7) Welcome the children back and invite them to share with the adults what they say makes a good friend. Make sure the children feel encouraged and affirmed.

## **2.3 Group discussion: Conflict resolution**

Time: 10 minutes

### **Include the children!**

Remember to consciously include the  
children in this discussion.



- 1) Begin with this:



Children spend a lot of time at school. When there, they don't only learn academics; they also develop socially. They learn to relate to and problem solve with others.

Parents / caregivers can help their children learn to problem solve by opening a conversation with them every day about what they like and don't like about school.

We, as parents and caregivers, need to be able to help our child practise problem solving skills for school problems so that they become stronger at it. We spoke about how to support our children's school life a lot in Session 2 and 3. Here, we take it further.

We, as parents and caregivers, need to:

- help our child deal with school and teachers
  - know, and keep in contact, with our child's teacher(s)
  - talk and work with our child's teacher if any problems occur.
- 2) Ask parents and childcarers whether any of their children have had any problems in school so far this year. And last year? Ask the children to say whether they have had problems at school. Follow on through exploring, for each example that participants gives:
- What was the problem?
  - Why do you think it was a problem?
  - What did you do?
  - What could have helped reduce or get rid of the problem?



## 2.4 In-group family exercise: Role play resolving a problem

Time: 20 minutes

### Prepare

You would have made copies of each of the three scenarios on cards for each family group before the session. They will choose which to work with.



### Objectives for the role play

- Give families a chance to practise resolving problems that occur at school.
- Teach children appropriate techniques to use when there is conflict at school. This could be either with peers or teachers.

### You need

A set of six notecards with scenarios. In the set are three scenarios that are child-focused and three that are parent / caregiver-focused.

| Child-focused cards  | Parent / caregiver-focused cards   |
|--|--|
| <b>SCENARIO 1</b><br>A child in Grade 3 is mean to you. One day this child kicks you as you walk past. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul>  | <b>SCENARIO 1</b><br>Your child is accused of starting a fight at school. The principal calls you in for a meeting about it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul>  |
| <b>SCENARIO 2</b><br>You are walking home from school and a child keeps teasing you and shouting at you. He throws some mud at you and hits you. There is an adult nearby who notices and doesn't say anything. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul>               | <b>SCENARIO 2</b><br>Your child is complaining that the teacher always ignores them. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul>  |
| <b>SCENARIO 3</b><br>You are in class and want to answer the question. The teacher doesn't call on you all day to answer a question. You raise your hand for almost every question and the teacher still doesn't call on you. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul> | <b>SCENARIO 3</b><br>Your child hasn't brought back homework in a week. Your child tells you that they did their homework in class and that there was nothing to take home. <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• How do you feel?</li><li>• What do you do?</li></ul> |

**Step 1:** Explain the objectives of the activity to everyone, and explain how it will work. Also explain that people will work in their own families.

**Step 2:** Hand out the six cards to each family. Read them out loud.

**Step 3:** Ask each family to take five minutes to work on a solution to one of the child-focused and one of the parent / caregiver's scenarios. They must do it in such a way that the child in the family generates ideas for solutions with their parent / caregiver's help.

**Step 4:** Invite a member from each family to act out the solution the family generated. You will play the role of the other child (e.g. the bully) or teacher, depending on which scenario they choose.

**Step 5:** After each role play, ask for constructive feedback from the group. You can prompt with questions such as:

- What do you think worked well?
- Do you have suggestions for how the problem solving could be strengthened?

**Step 6:** Ask families to choose a parent / caregiver scenario to generate solutions for. Make sure you include the children so they give input. Once again, they have five minutes for this and then they will act out their solution.

**Step 7:** Families act out their solution to the problem. Proceed with feedback as with Step 5.

**Step 8:** Wrap the role play activity by asking what participants felt they got out of it with regards to strengthening a problem solving skill.

### 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

#### Motivate families with stickers

Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework. They can also receive stickers when children use their Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes. There's an additional sticker for filling in the Behaviour Chart.



#### 3.1 Use the Consequences Method

Ask parents and caregivers to practise using the Consequences Method at home. Highlight that they should choose only one specific behaviour to apply a specific consequence to at home.

#### 3.2 School life and solving a problem

- Ask families to discuss how to try to solve a problem in the child's school life. This could include any dimension of school life, such as academic, social or sport. Together they are to identify any concerns and resolve these issues together.
- Ask parents and caregivers to make a list of any concerns or worries about their child's school experience to bring the list for discussion during Session 10.

#### 3.3 Reflection sheet for Week 9

Ask families to complete the reflection sheet that is in the Family Workbook.

#### 3.4 The Behaviour Chart

- Refer to the Behaviour Chart and worksheets in the Family Workbook. Read through with the participants and make sure everyone understands what to do.
- Ask families to fill it in at home.

#### 3.5 Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes

Encourage the children to use their Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes, and request parents / caregivers to do so too at home.

### 3.6 Bottles

Ask families to try to collect one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles for Session 12.

### 3.7 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 5) Ask each family to fill in the general evaluation form, Appendix O.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 10

## Session 10: Redefining family rules and consequences

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Help families share, explain and adjust family household rules and consequences where necessary.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b> <p>The objectives for this session are to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>provide an opportunity for families to share their household rules and usual consequences for breaking them.</li> <li>help families who have not explicitly discussed family rules to put some rules on paper.</li> <li>examine how chosen rules could affect family members differently.</li> <li>help families explore the consequences, both positive and negative, for when rules either are, or are not, followed.</li> <li>following from the point above, offer families an opportunity to examine the impact and effectiveness of these consequences.</li> <li>discuss the value of including everyone in the process of making household rules and consequences.</li> <li>practise implementing a rule.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Icebreaker materials:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Red, yellow, and green cards.</li> </ul> </li> <li><i>Our five most important family rules</i> note in the Family Workbook.</li> <li>Paper and drawing materials for the children.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O, the general evaluation form for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>icebreakers</li> <li>songs.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read all the information and activities in this session?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 10.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> </ul>  |

| <b>Session 10 Programme</b>   |  |            |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (20 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Simon Says (5 minutes)<br>1.4 Icebreaker: Let's talk about rules (15 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Children leave to do their own activity.</li> </ul>  | 45 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Group discussion: Rules, consequences, communication and problem solving (15 minutes)<br>2.2 Let's practise making a rule that will work (10 minutes)<br>2.3 Let's figure our effective consequences (20 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The children return from their activity.</li> </ul> 2.4 In-group family exercise: Our five most important family rules (20 minutes) | 65 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework activities</b> | 3.1 Put family rules into practice<br>3.2 Bring bottles<br>3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>• Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>• Ask families to fill in Appendix O, the general evaluation form</li> <li>• Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>  | 10 minutes |

### Time management for Session 10

- There are two icebreakers in this session. You will have noticed that the Core section of the programme is not as long as usual. Adjust your time allocation to gain the best possible outcome for the goal and objectives of the session.
- The Simon Says icebreaker can be used at any time during the programme for a fun energiser.



## 1. Welcome

Total: 45 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group is going up to now in the sessions. Alternatively, ask them to rate how Session 9 went.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader. Make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 1.2 Homework check

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - Use a specific consequence for a specific behaviour as a method for managing behaviour.
  - Select at least one day to discuss as a family how to try to solve a problem in school life.
  - Make a list of any concerns or worries about the child's school life experience to bring in for discussion today.
  - Complete the *Reflections* sheet.
  - Use the Behaviour Chart.
  - Use the Mood Ball and Calm Down Box.
  - Bring in one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles for Session 12.
  - Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy.
- 2) Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share their successes and challenges with the various homework activities. Remind participants to see if there is anything from their *Reflections* sheet they would like to share. Adapt the first question below for the other homework feedback, such as for selecting one day to discuss a problem in school life.
  - Which specific behaviour and consequence did parents / caregivers choose to implement?
  - Which problem in school life did the family address?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 3) Ask those who used their Mood Balls, Calm Down Box or other calm down strategies to say how it went.
- 4) Check in to see if families are using the Behaviour Chart and how it is going.
- 5) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework. Give extra stickers as stated in the previous session.

## 1.3 Icebreakers

Time: 20 minutes

### a) Icebreaker: Simon says

Time: 5 minutes

#### Objective

Have fun!

#### How to play the game

- 1) Explain that you are called "Simon" for the game called "Simon says". Say that you will stand in front of everyone and give commands. Each command will be different. Players must only do what you say when your command begins with: "Simon says..." For example: "Simon says touch your nose!" Then everyone must touch their nose. But, if Simon says: "Jump!" without first saying "Simon says..." then players must not jump. Those that do jump are out. The last person standing is the winner.
- 2) When you have finished playing, making sure you encourage the children to add their ideas, discuss:
  - Why are rules important when playing games?
  - Why are rules important for families?

## Facilitator input

### Why are rules important?

Just as rules help us organise a game, rules also help us organise the family. Rules also help organise a child's life in areas outside of the family, such as school and in the neighbourhood.

Parents / caregivers play a huge part in deciding which rules are appropriate for which age child. Parents / caregivers have to set up systems for knowing when rules are being followed, and when they are not. They also have to decide how they are going to tell their children when they are doing a good job following the rules, and what to do if children are not. Some rules work fine in a family while others don't work well at all. In the next activity, we will discuss some of the rules you have in your family.

### b) Icebreaker: Let's talk about rules

Time: 15 minutes

You must do this icebreaker because it sets the foundation for further activities in the session.

#### Work in individual families with children

Participants will cluster in their families for this icebreaker, and give feedback to the big group.



#### You need

- Paper
- Pencils
- One red, green and yellow card for each person.

#### What to do

**Step 1:** Give each family a sheet of paper and a pencil.

**Step 2:** Ask families to write down three important rules in their family. Write their responses on chart paper when they share them with the big group.

**Step 3:** Give each person a red, a green and a yellow card. Ask them to revisit each rule and vote by showing one of their cards if the rule is:

- Red: Not often / never followed
- Yellow: Sometimes followed
- Green: Mostly / always followed.

**Step 4:** Ask participants to record the number of red, yellow and green responses next to each rule. Take note of different opinions between parents / caregivers and children and reflect on them during the discussion.

**Step 5:** Have a brief discussion of the following, with each family taking a turn:

- What happens when you follow the first rule you put on your list?
- What happens when you don't follow the first rule?
- How do you know when you broke a rule in your home?

### Taking this forward

- The red card rules are those the families are struggling with the most.
- You could refer back to this activity later in the session when parents / caregivers discuss why rules work or don't work (the red card responses), clarity about rules, perceived importance and fairness around rules.



### Children's activity

- The children will go with the childcare worker while the adults go into a group discussion.
- Be sure to discuss the activity with the childcare worker before the session.



## 2. Core lesson

Time: 65 minutes

### 2.1 Group discussion: Rules, consequences, communication and problem solving

Time: 15 minutes

#### Remember

Families sit together within the big group. They will discuss among themselves after you have given the instruction to the whole group.



- 1) Say that today's session will focus on rules, consequences, communication and problem solving.
- 2) Refer to the list of rules participants generated during the icebreaker *Let's talk about rules*. Choose a few rules from the list and ask the following questions for each of them:
  - Is this rule effective? (Include here: do family members follow the rule?)
  - Why do you think this rule is effective, or ineffective?
  - What message does this rule send to family members?
- 3) In this step, families will think about what their household rules say about what is important to them. Initiate the discussion with these examples, followed by this question for each: What does the rule seem to mean regarding what is important in this family?
  - A family's rules for cleaning are strict and everyone follows them.
  - There are no rules for homework.
- 4) Ask families to think about what their own rules say about what is important to them. Families answer these questions:
  - Do all family members have rules to follow?
    - How much is responsibility for rules shared and equal in your family?
    - Do boys and girls, or children of different ages, have different rules in the family?
    - Are there any family rules that some people are angry or upset about? (Families might realise that this is an example of a rule that doesn't work).
- 5) Give the input below, saying that these are very important points to take into account with household rules.



## Facilitator input

### Setting rules that work

#### Should children be involved in rule setting?

During this phase of their development, Grade R and Grade 1 children have better language skills. This means they are often able to discuss and help with making rules. The more children take part in this process, the better they understand, and the more likely they are to follow the rules.

#### Taking part does not mean children take control

When we talk about children taking part in setting rules, it does not mean that children take over and become the decision makers in the home. It only means that children can take part in the discussion and give suggestions. We are not trying to challenge the authority of the parents / caregivers.

#### Make sure everyone understands the family rules

It is very important that everyone in the family understands the rules. Many families have rules that are not always clear to everyone in the family. Some families have many very specific rules that no one can remember; other families have only one or two rules. Some families change their rules easily. Some families make rules but don't worry about whether the rules are followed. In all these families, it is unclear what you should do. The goal is to have rules that:

- fit your family
- are clear
- are the same for everyone and don't always change
- family members can understand.

#### The benefits, both at home and at school, of having a CLEAR set of family rules

- Children are able to do better at school when family rules are clear.
- It helps children to have rules which support their learning on how to behave consistently both in and out of the home.

- 6) Ask a parent / caregiver to share one rule that they believe is clear to all members of the family. Then ask parents / caregivers to refer to their Behaviour Charts they have been using in their Family Workbooks.
- Ask the group if the rule is clear.
  - Note differences in understanding. Help parents / caregivers to clarify their rules.

#### Highlight these points with the group

- Most organised families need rules, including families with children who are generally well-behaved.
- Even simple and clear rules can be understood differently by different members of the family.
- Explanations of rules is important. Explanations help children learn why their parents / caregivers want them to follow a particular rule.
- When children understand a rule they are more likely to follow it outside the home and beyond childhood.



## 2.2 Let's practice making a rule that will work

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Ask participants to choose a rule from the *Let's talk about rules* icebreaker they did earlier. Say that you would like them (and help them, if necessary) to choose a rule the families have in common and which received mostly red card responses.
- 2) Go through the following steps as a group, using that rule as an example. To assist you, we have applied an example of a rule which may or may not be the rule you will use for this activity. The general steps should still apply. Tailor the activity to the rule your group identified.
- 3) Write everything in bold on chart paper and write up participants' responses.

**Step 1:** Write the rule parents / caregivers chose on the flip chart. For example:

**Rule: Don't make a mess.**

**Step 2:** Ask parents / caregivers: What do you think is wrong with this rule?

**Answer: Rules work best when stated in positive language.**

**Step 3:** What changes would you make to the rule so that it is stated in a positive way?

**Change to: Clean up your mess.**

**Step 4:** What is still a problem with this rule?

**Answer: The clearer a rule is stated, the better.**

**Step 5:** What changes would make this rule clearer?

**Change to: Put your toys away when you're done playing with them.**

- 4) Give this input on age appropriate rules.

### Facilitator input

#### Age appropriate rules work best

For a **7-year-old**, cleaning messes might be:

"Put your dirty plate in the sink when you have finished eating."

**Or:** "Put your dirty clothes in the basket when you take them off."

**Or:** "Wash your socks every day."

For a 12-year-old, cleaning messes might be:

"Wash your plate when you're done eating."

**Or:** "Wash your clothes every Wednesday and Saturday, and wash your socks and underwear every day."

#### Every rule must have a stated consequence and a reward.

It is very important that you do what you said you would do every single time! For example, follow through with consequences AND rewards every time. For example, if you said a consequence for not following a rule is that you are going to take the game away, then you must take the game away. If you said a reward might be that you will allow five minutes extra of playtime before bed, then you must stick to the reward.

- 5) Ask participants to come up with realistic consequences they can follow through for the tidy up a mess rule. List their responses on the flip chart under these words that you write on the chart paper.

**If my child does not clean up their messes, the consequence is**  
.....

**If my child does clean up their messes, their reward is**  
.....

6) Go through the *Tips for developing positive consequences* note.

## Facilitator note and also in the Family Workbook

### Tips for developing consequences that work

- Identify the behaviour to use with a consequence. Ideally, tell your child of the consequence beforehand.
- Use a friendly voice, and try to stay calm, when you give a consequence.
- Remember! Consequences are not punishments. Consequences teach your child responsibility for their actions.
- Choose a consequence that is connected to the behaviour.
- An example that should work is: *"If you don't turn off the TV when you are asked to, then tomorrow there is no TV."*
- An example that is unlikely to work is: *"If you don't turn off the TV when you are asked to, then I won't bake a cake for your birthday like I promised."*  
This is a threat to remove something you promised that is very special for the child and should not be used. A promise is a promise. Use a different consequence.
- Make sure the consequence you choose will work for your child's age, and that it is not too severe.
- Consequences should happen immediately, or as soon as possible after the child has not obeyed the rule. Note: do not give something like this as a consequence: *"Then you can't visit Gogo next Christmas."* Because this type of consequence is too far away and is therefore ineffective. Depending on the relationships in the family, it might also be too harsh.
- Just like praise and rewards are given straight after positive behaviour, so should consequences be given as immediately as possible after negative behaviour.
- Make sure you can follow through with the consequence you have given.  
An example of an ineffective consequence is: *"If you can't stop crying while we are in the taxi, I will make the driver stop and leave you behind."*
- In some situations, you can give your child the choice of complying with your instruction or receiving the consequence.

## 2.3 Let's figure out effective consequences

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Ask the parents / caregivers to come up with ideas for effective consequences, bearing in mind what we have covered so far in this session. Affirm their ideas, especially the ideas that seem most effective.
- 2) Refer parents / caregivers to the note in their Family Workbook titled *Examples of consequences* from Session 9. Read them out.
- 3) Discuss the importance of *positive consequences* for following rules with parents / caregivers. Ask: How do you think giving children positive consequences for following a rule can produce positive results?
- 4) Give the note as an input.

## Facilitator input note

### What to know about consequences

- Note going forward in bringing up your child how easy it is to focus on the negative consequences when children break the rules and playing down positive consequences when children follow the rules.
  - Children in grades R and 1 are developing strong reasoning and thinking skills. This allows them to understand and discuss the reasons and purpose for rules. The ability to reason allows them to understand the cause and effect relationship of rules and behaviour. In turn, this helps them change from positive behaviour because it is what YOU want to them to do, to positive behaviour because it is what THEY want to do.
  - During this process, children need a lot of positive reinforcement. You could, for example, give them a star on their Behaviour Chart for following a rule, and support and encouragement for when they behave well – just like when you “catch your child being good”.
  - Since children actually don’t take criticism well, children of this age tend to react better to positive guidance instead of negative judgment and reprimand.
  - Rewards do NOT need to be MONEY. You are not BUYING your child’s good behaviour. Praise such as “Thank you” or “Good job!” can be the reward, or simply a few extra minutes of play time.
- 5) Ask parents / caregivers to give examples of simple rewards (positive consequences) for when a child follows a rule. Then, as a wrap to this activity, go through the *Examples of simple rewards* in Session 8 in the Family Workbook.

### Welcome back the children!

Invite each child to share what they did in the children’s group. Encourage everyone to encourage and appreciate the children’s efforts.



## 2.4 In-group family exercise: Our five most important family rules

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Say that in this activity, we are going to focus on family rules. Refer to the *Our five most important family rules* handout in the Family Workbook. Give those who do not have their Family Workbook with them a copy of it. Say that before they get going on the rules handout, you want to offer some guidelines.

### Facilitator input

#### Guidelines to help families think through their rules

To assist families think through and write down how the rules for their house will work:

- a) Give different ‘what if’ examples. Here are some:
  - What happens if homework doesn’t get done?
  - What happens if Nandi comes home late from school?
  - What happens if Sihle took Nomsa’s new pencil bag to school and lost it?
- b) Help families to be clear and specific. Share this guideline: if a child from outside the family were to see the list of rules, would they understand exactly what is expected of them?

For example:

- Instead of saying, “Do your homework”, say, “In our home, all children must complete their homework right after their snack when they get home from school.”
- c) Encourage families to think about rules relating to how money should be spent in the home.

- 2) Ask families to identify their five most important rules and write down their responses in the handout.

### Involve all family members

Encourage participants to involve all family members in making a list of reasonable rules and consequences. Say this will help the rules to be effective.



A family rule is

---

The rule is important because

---

Positive consequences related to the rule are

---

Negative consequences related to the rule are

---

- 3) When the families have completed their task and are in the big group, emphasise the importance of having *all* family members understand why each rule is important. Ask families to share their process of deciding on their five house rules. Use these questions to guide you.
  - a) How did your family come up with your five most important rules?
  - b) Did one or two people make all the rules, or did all family members help decide?
  - c) What message do the rules you chose send to your family?
  - d) Are the consequences you picked ones that will help learning and problem solving skills?
  - e) Are all family members in agreement that the rules are clear and fair? If not, what can you change to make the rules more clear and fair?
- 4) Wrap the activity by reinforcing the message that rules are easier for children to follow when they understand the importance of them, and are involved in the making of the rules. Thank families for their participation in this important activity and wish them well with putting what they have gained into action.

## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Put family rules into practice

- 1) Ask families to display their *Our five most important family rules* sheet that is in their Family Workbook at home in a visible, central place.
- 2) Ask families to choose at least one rule to work on in the upcoming week. Ask each family to identify the rule they plan to work on. Write down which rule they chose and ask about the family's progress during the weekly check-in.
- 3) Ask families to complete the *Family rules and consequences reflection sheet* in their Family Workbook. Say that when they do this, to include:
  - Monitoring whether or not rules were followed.
  - If rules weren't followed, what happened?
  - Keeping track of how consistently (or inconsistently) families were able to stick to the list of rules they came up with.

- 4) Remind and encourage parents / caregivers to acknowledge and affirm when children follow the rules on their own.
- 5) Remind and encourage families to continue praising their children for positive behaviour, and for using stress management methods such as Mood Balls, Calm Down Boxes and Behaviour Charts.
- 6) Remind parents / caregivers to write in their *Reflection* sheets.

### **Sticker reminders!**

- Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.
- Say that families have an opportunity to receive three extra reward stickers for using their:
  - Mood Ball
  - Calm Down Box
  - Behaviour Chart.



### **3.2 Bring bottles**

Ask families to try to bring one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles (this is needed for Session 12)

### **3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy**

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week. Reiterate that with only four sessions of the programme left to go, the buddy system remains very important for keeping going beyond the programme.

## **4. The wrap-up and closing**

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Remind families that there are only four sessions left of the programme. However, you hope that once the 14 sessions are completed, families will continue to practise the skills and methods they have learnt during the programme. And say you also hope that families continue to keep up their Sihleng'imizi Buddy support and encouragement system way into the future.
- 4) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 5) Ask families to fill in the general evaluation form Appendix O.
- 6) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 7) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 11

## Doing a household budget

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Everyone in the family understands why it is important to manage money, including knowing that reducing stress about money can reduce family stress.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families understand: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>the difference between wants, needs and obligations.</li> <li>budgeting, which includes making plans around money and saving, shows us what our choices are when it comes to money.</li> <li>having budget goals can help save money.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Families identify ways to manage money and reduce stress about money.</li> <li>Families practise budgeting.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Icebreaker materials: a ball or soft toy.</li> <li>Children's activity: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>three pieces of blank paper for each child to draw on</li> <li>magazines, newspaper pictures or advertising price catalogues from shops for children to cut out of</li> <li>paper, glue and children's scissors.</li> </ul> </li> <li>A printed pack of needs, wants and obligations cards for each family (see end of this session).</li> <li>A big piece of paper, markers, and crayons for each family group for the visual budgeting activity.</li> <li>Write up on chart paper the list to guide their visual budgeting exercise.</li> <li>Materials for visual budgeting: a bag for each family with 5 sticks and 10 stones in each bag.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O (c): Session 11 evaluation with fidelity measure.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>songs</li> <li>games</li> <li>sticks and stones budgeting activity.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read through the notes carefully and am I especially prepared for the different contexts of my families for the wants, needs and obligations inputs and discussions?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 11.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |

|                        |   |            |
|------------------------|---|------------|
| After the session      | <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tidy the room.</li><li>• Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li><li>• Write a report.</li></ul>  |            |
| Session 11 Programme   |   |            |
| 1) Welcome             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)   | 20 minutes |
| 2) Core lesson         | 2.1 Introduction: Money, stress and budgeting (10 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Children who need to will leave with childcare worker to do artwork linked to wants and needs. Others might stay.</li></ul> 2.2 Group discussion: Needs, wants and obligations (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Needs and wants game</li><li>• Needs, wants and obligations.</li></ul> 2.3 In-group family exercise: Sticks and stones visual budget exercise (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The children return for this activity<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>a) What is a budget? Parts One and Two of a visual budgeting exercise</li><li>b) Discussion about the visual budgeting exercise.</li></ul></li></ul> 2.4 Group discussion: Money shocks (20 minutes) | 90 minutes |
| 3) Homework            | 3.1 Family budget<br>3.2 Bring bottles<br>3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| 4) Wrap-up and closing | 4 The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li><li>• Compliment families for their participation</li><li>• Schedule the between session phone calls.</li></ul> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Each family to complete both sides of the Appendix O (c): Session 11 evaluation with fidelity measure.</li><li>• Complete attendance register.</li></ul>  | 10 minutes |



## 1. Welcome

Total: 20 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group did last week with the rules and consequences session.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

## 2. Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 10. Confirm that the homework was for families to:
  - Display *Our five most important family rules* sheet at home in a visible, central place.
  - Choose at least one rule to work on.
  - Complete the *Family rules and consequences reflection sheet* in their Family Workbook. When doing this, you asked them to:
    - Monitor whether or not rules were followed.
    - Keep note of what happened when the rules weren't followed.
    - Keep track of how consistently (or inconsistently) families were able to stick to the list of rules they came up with.
  - Acknowledge and affirm when children follow the rules on their own.
  - Use stress management strategies such as Mood Balls, Calm Down Box and the Behaviour Chart.
  - Write in their *Reflections* sheet.
  - Visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy.
- 2) Guide a discussion about the previous week's home practice.

### Practise discussions at home

Remind participants that practising discussions at home are opportunities for families to share successes, reinforce core principles and problem solve ways of overcoming challenges.



Ask families to take out their *Reflections* sheets to look at and to think about the week's home activity tasks. Use these prompts:

- What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 3) Collect in the empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles. Thank families for bringing them in, and store them for Session 12.
  - 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

## 2. Core lesson

Time: 90 minutes

### 2.1 Introduction: Money, stress and budgeting

Time: 10 minutes

1) Begin by saying the following:



Today we will talk about one very specific kind of problem: money. Money can sometimes make all of us feel worried and sad. It can make us feel stressed when we don't have enough, and happy when we do. Dealing with problems around money can help to reduce stress in families.

In today's session we will focus on a very particular and important kind of stress: stress about money. We will:

- discuss why it might be important to save money
- learn how to plan carefully with the money we have
- learn how to make a budget with our money.

Budgeting means making plans around money. When we budget, it is easier for us to avoid running out of money from one grant day, or pay day, to the next. We can try to reduce stress by budgeting.

Let's remember that this is a safe space where we can feel free to talk about difficult things, such as money.

The children who need or want to can leave to do an activity with the childcare worker, ..... [say the person's name] and we will continue to discuss budgets.

#### Children's activity

The children who need to will go with the childcare worker to a children's activity.



### 2.2 Group discussion: Needs, wants and obligations

There are two main parts in this discussion section:

- Needs and wants.
- Needs, wants and obligations.

#### a) Needs and wants game

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) For those children who stay, check whether they understand the difference between needs and wants. Ask them first before explaining because they might have learnt needs and wants at school already.
- 2) Say:



We all sometimes struggle to get from one grant day, or pay day, to the next without running out of money at the end of the month. We will play a game that will help us to think very carefully about how we spend our money from the first day we get money to the next time we get money in. But we start by thinking about "needs" and "wants".

- 3) Ask for a volunteer to:
  - Describe what “needs” are and what “wants” are.
  - Explain the difference is between wants and needs.
- 4) Participants will work in their own families. Have one sheet of chart paper headed WANTS and another headed NEEDS for each family. Or, you could stick labels on the wall with the same headings. Hand out the pack of WANTS and NEEDS cards only to each family. Ask families to discuss which are “wants” and which are “needs” and to put them into the relevant headings.
- 5) All the families will come together to discuss which cards they put into “needs” and which into “wants”.
- 6) In wrapping up the game with further discussion in the big group, make sure these points are raised:
  - Each person has a different way of deciding between their wants and needs.
  - We all have basic needs, such as food and shelter that HAVE TO be met first.
  - There is no mention of money / cost in the WANTS or the NEEDS column.
  - Money is not a goal. It is not a want or a need. Money is a tool that can help us get our wants and needs.
  - We need to learn how to use all tools properly, including money. We can do this by budgeting.

### b) Needs, wants and obligations

- 1) Refer participants to the note *Needs, wants and obligations* that is in the Family Workbook. Read it out, or invite a participant to read it out.

### Facilitator input and also in the Family Workbook

#### Needs, wants and obligations

**NEEDS:** What you must have to survive, such as basic food and water.

**WANTS:** What you really would LIKE to have, but you don’t need this to survive, such as new clothes.

**OBLIGATIONS:** Payments you have to make because other people expect you to, or you expect yourself to. This could include things like church contributions, or sending money to your sick auntie.

When you think about and discuss needs, wants and obligations, there are no right or wrong answers. Every family will have different opinions on whether something fits into a need, want or obligation. The important thing is for your family members to discuss these categories and agree. If you do not agree, you will all need to compromise.

- 2) Say that we have now added a third category of expenses to discuss, in addition to WANTS and NEEDS, write the word OBLIGATIONS on chart paper (or stick a new heading label on the wall).
- 3) Say that OBLIGATIONS spending is money we HAVE to spend on a certain thing. Sometimes we *don’t want* to spend on this obligation e.g. giving birthday presents. Sometimes, we might *want* to spend on the obligation but need to delay it for a later time. Ask participants to share things that they can think of that could be considered OBLIGATION spending. Write what they say on the chart paper. An example of an obligation in a fee-paying school, would be to pay school fees so children can get an education.

## Reading for session preparation for the facilitator

### Facilitator information for obligation spending

Most obligation spending is culturally related. Even spending on things like Christmas presents is sometimes an OBLIGATION rather than a want or a need. Other examples of obligation spending are sending money to a sick uncle, giving money to your church, or contributing to a family funeral.

### Respectful discussions are needed around obligations

During this exercise, participants will critically examine their OBLIGATION spending. They will consider whether they *really* HAVE to spend the money on a particular thing, or if they are doing so out of social pressure. While this can be a difficult decision to make, thinking about it opens the door for conversations and debates on this topic. Having the space to do so in this session allows people to discuss these expenses rather than to simply accept them as non-negotiable. When you facilitate this discussion, ensure that among participants there is respect for each other's different cultural explanations, even if there is no agreement.

### Activity objective: discuss and express

Be aware that the objective is not to get everyone to agree on wants, needs and obligations. Nor is it to ensure that everyone makes the same choices. The objective is to get the participants to discuss and express their opinions about why they think something falls into one category rather than another. Individuals with different wants and different needs will have different priorities.

- 4) Ask families to work in their in-family groups. They should return to their needs and wants cards and go through them again to identify any OBLIGATION spending. Go around to the families and:
  - Ask families to say whether adding this category makes their budgeting lives easier or more difficult.
  - Ask families to re-arrange their cards so that what they consider to be obligations are in another pile.
  - Explain that when it comes to drawing up their family budgets, families should try to ensure that all of their NEEDS are met, and that some allocation is made to WANTS and OBLIGATIONS, depending on their individual situations. Reiterate this to the big group again later.

## 2.3 In-group family exercise: Sticks and stones visual budget exercise

Time: 30 minutes

### The children return with their artwork

- The children who went with the childcare worker will return with their pictures.
- Create an opportunity for the children to share their pictures with their families.
- Remind everyone about the importance of praise.



### This activity includes:

- What is a budget? Parts One and Two of a visual budgeting exercise.
- Discussion about the visual budgeting exercise.

### a) What is a budget?

- 1) Ask participants to share ideas about what a budget is. Write their ideas on chart paper. Then summarise with the note below.

## Facilitator input: What is a budget?

Put in a simple form, a budget:

- describes how we decide what we spend our money on.
  - helps us to find out how much money we can afford (according to our income) to spend on our needs, wants and obligations.
- 2) Ask participants to remind us of the needs we discussed earlier. Pick one and ask this question: How much does this cost? After participants respond, say: "You have just made your first budget!"
  - 3) Say that the goal of the visual budgeting exercise we are going to do next is to practice making a budget with "pretend" money.

## Facilitator process note

### Steps and tips for facilitating Part One and Part Two of the visual budgeting exercise

#### Be aware of these points

- Families work as a team. The children are actively included. If younger children are not able to concentrate, they can go with the childcarer to do an activity.
- Tell families that when they do their drawing in this exercise, they should give lots of room between the circles they will draw because they will need to fit in information.
- You will need to walk around to each family to check everyone understands what to do, and how to do it.



**Step 1:** Say that we are going to begin Part 1 of our visual budgeting exercise. Give each family a big piece of paper, markers, and crayons. Tell families that while they discuss a family budget, the children will draw what is said. Their drawing will become a visual budget. Note that children might need assistance with this depending on the discussion.

**Step 2:** Say that each family's visual budget will have circles for all the things that the family spends money on in each month. Ask the children to leave a good amount of space between the circles they draw.

**Step 3:** Put this list (or hand it out if you have printed it) up on chart paper on the wall to make it easy for families to follow.

- a) What are all the needs for your family and for your household?
  - Make a circle for each need and label it.
  - Write in the circle how much that need costs.
- b) What are wants for your family?
  - Make a circle for each want.
  - How much do these wants cost?
- c) What are obligations for your family?
  - Make a circle for each obligation.
  - How much do these obligations cost?

**Step 5:** Give each family a chance to present their visual budget. Give a special "Well done!" to the children for helping with the drawing. Invite participants to suggest things to add. Write down what people say on chart paper. Give families the opportunity to add anything they missed to their visual budget. They can take it home to work on further if they would like to.

**Step 6:** Say that we are going to move on to Part Two of our visual budgeting exercise. Set the scene by saying:



Imagine that today is grant day and pay day. This is when we will all get money for the next month. I am going to give you stones and sticks. You will pretend that this is your grant or pay day money. The sticks are worth more money than the stones. Each stick is worth R300 and each stone is worth R100. This means you can buy more expensive things with the sticks, such as school fees. You can use the stones to buy cheaper things – for example rice, washing powder, or airtime.

**Step 7:** Distribute the bags you have prepared for each family with 5 sticks (worth R300 each) and 10 stones (worth R100 each). Lead the families through the process as follows:

- a) Each family will make a budget – a plan – with the sticks and stones “money”.
- b) The sticks and stones in the bag is all the money each family has available for the next month.
- c) Each family has drawn all of the things they spend money on in the month in their visual budget. Now each family will start to think about how many things they want to buy, and how many sticks and stones they have to buy them with. Families put their visual budget on a surface and place the sticks and stones in the various circles.  
Give an example such as: you buy an expensive thing by putting down a stick on the circle; you buy a less expensive thing by putting down a stone on the circle.
- d) Say to families that they should think about these two things when they make their choices:
  - Which things are most important to you as a family?
  - Which things do not mean too much to you?

Remind everyone that this is a game and that they should play around with the sticks and stones to find the best budget.

#### Make sure that you...

- Walk around to check that each family understands the visual budgeting task.
- Support those who have difficulties.
- Praise families for the decisions they are making in each of the family groups.



**Step 8:** Give families a set time to play around with their “money” to create a family visual budget. Say that they should keep in mind that with the fixed amount of “money” we have, we will all have to make choices between being able to have different things. And that sometimes these choices can be very difficult.

### b) Discussion about the visual budgeting exercise

- 1) Say that we’re going to think about why we did the visual budgeting exercise. Prompt discussion with these questions:
  - Why do you think we asked you to make a visual budget?
  - Did you learn anything about how to handle your money? If yes, please share what you learnt.

#### Note

- The exercise may have helped participants think about:
- how to spend their money without being stressed.
  - things they spend money on that they might want to change.



- 2) Ask the children: What did you learn about how your parents / caregivers spend money?
- 3) Ask everyone:
  - Did you have enough stones and sticks to cover your needs? What about your wants? And your obligations?
  - What things could you try to spend less money on as a family?
- 4) Did you find that the parents / caregivers and children in the family wanted to spend money on the same things? If yes, what were they? If no, could you tell us about the differences?

## 2.4 Group discussion: Money shocks

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Do an energiser with the participants before you go onto discussing money shocks. You could sing the group song together, using movements, you could play Simon Says, or invite a volunteer to facilitate an energiser they know and enjoy.
- 2) Say that all families experience money shocks at some time or another. Read this as an example of a money shock:



One night there was a terrible storm outside your house. The wind blew and blew. It blew so hard that your house was shaking. All of a sudden the roof flew off! After the storm, you suddenly had to find money as quickly as possible to get your roof fixed.

Shocks like this can happen to all of us and they usually come very unexpectedly and cause money stress.

- 3) Ask participants to share things that could cause money stress. The list could include things such as a funeral, severe illness of a friend or family member, and a robbery. Write what people say on chart paper to affirm such money shocks that happen.
- 4) Say you are now going to go around to each family's visual budget and remove one stick and two stones. Say that this is "money" for families to now put away for an emergency.
- 5) Go from group to group and draw a separate circle labelled "emergency" on their big piece of paper. Ask families to remove one stick and two stones from elsewhere in their visual budget and put them into the emergency circle.
- 6) Say that now that families have less money, they have five minutes to move around their stones and sticks to adjust their visual budget to accommodate saving money for an emergency.
- 7) After five minutes is up, ask people to think about the way they have just changed their budgets. Ask families to respond to these questions:
  - If there is an emergency, where can we as a family take the money from to cover the costs?
  - How could having some savings help us in a situation like this?

### 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

#### 3.1 Family budget homework activity

##### Make sure everyone knows what to do

- Go to each family to make sure everyone knows what they need to do.
- Remember to praise whatever suggestions the participants make.



- 1) Say that to prepare for thinking more about this in the week, ask families to think about (a) their own visual budget for each month, and (b) the need for saving money. Prompt with these:
  - Look at how you allocated the stones and sticks.
  - Would it be possible for you to save some stones each month?
  - Why might it be important to put away some stones each month? Think of things you might need those savings for, such as emergencies, the future, events like a wedding or a funeral.

Say this:



It is important for us to be aware that setting a budget will help with spending less. But bigger changes and results will take time – just like with other new methods we've learnt so far in the programme.

- 2) Invite families to take some stones and sticks home to try to make a visual budget together with the whole family. Ask families to think about:
  - How much money does your family have available each month?
  - Where does this money come from?
  - How can this money cover all of your family's NEEDS for the whole month?
  - How to include savings in your budget.
- 3) Remind people to write in their *Reflections* sheet.

##### Sticker reminders!

- Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.
- Remind families that they have an opportunity to receive three extra stickers for using their:
  - Mood Ball
  - Calm Down Box
  - Behaviour Chart.



#### 3.2 Bring bottles

Ask families, if they haven't already, to bring one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles next week as we will be using them in Session 12.

#### 3.3 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.



## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - ask for feedback about the session.
  - ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - review homework activity.
  - confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Each family to complete both sides of the Appendix O (c): Session 11 evaluation with fidelity measure (both sides of the form).
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Remind families that there are only three sessions left to the programme.
- 7) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

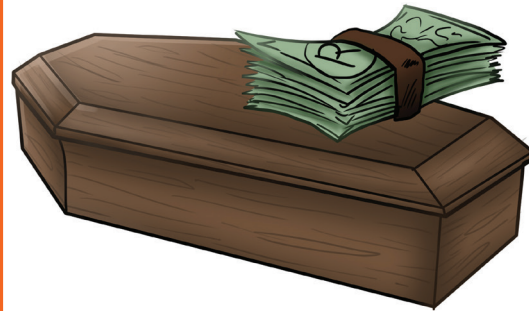
### Medicine

Umuthi  
Sethlare



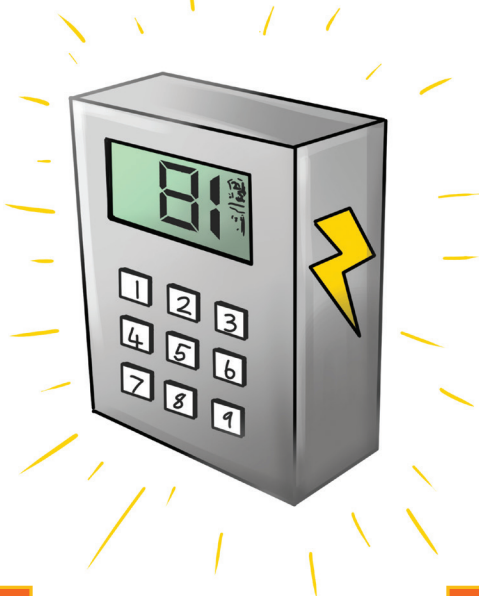
### Burial society payments

Ukukhokhela inhlagano yomncwabo  
Ditefo tsa mogatlo wa poloko



### Electricity

Ugesi  
Motlakase



### Smart phone

I-smartfoni  
Smatefoune



### Cell phone

Umakhalekhukhwini  
Sellathekeng



### Transport money

Imali yokugibela  
Tshelete ya ho palama



### Stokvel contribution

Umnikelo westokfela  
Tefo ya stokfele



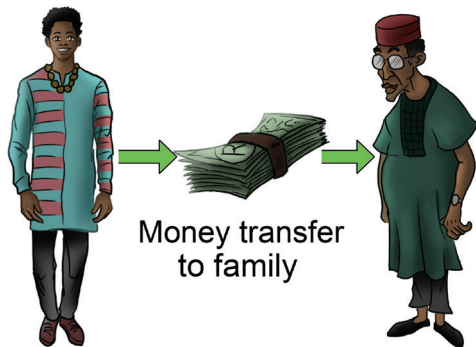
### School uniform

Izingubo zesikole  
Diaparo tsa sekolo



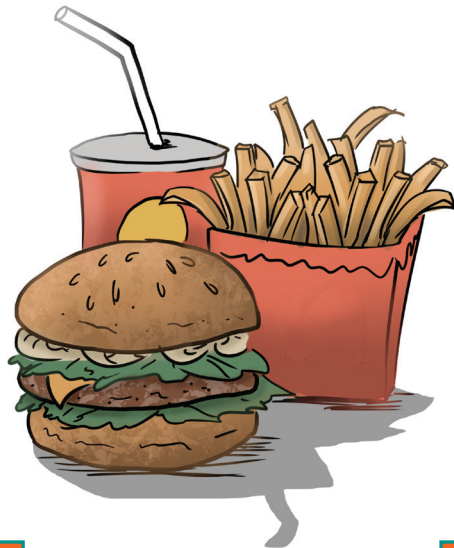
### Sending money to sick uncle

Ukuthumela imali kubabekazi ogulayo  
Go romela tshelete go mmane olwalago



### Fast food / Eating out

Ukudla okuthengwa kuphekiwe  
Go ja ntle

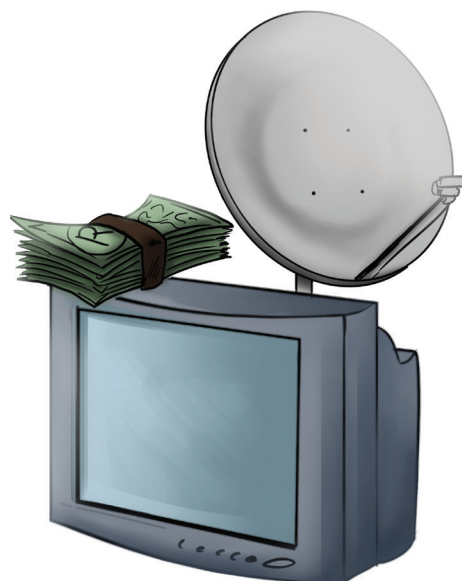


### Money for rent

Intela  
Rente



### TV channels you pay for



### Clean water

Amazi ahlanzekile  
Meetsi a hlwekilego



### Clean air

Umoya ohlanzekile  
Moya o hlwekilego



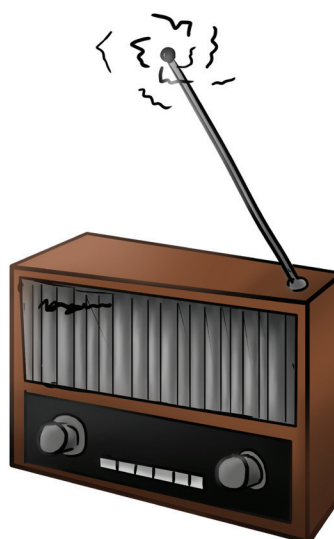
### Food / groceries

Ukudla  
Dijo



### Radio

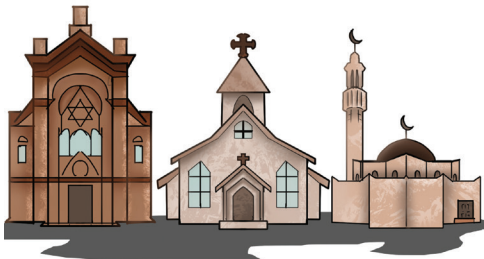
Umsakazo  
Seyalemoya





### Church

Isonto  
Kereke



### A bicycle

Ibhayisikili  
Paesekele



### Cool drinks

Iziphuzo eziqandayo  
Dino tsa go tonya



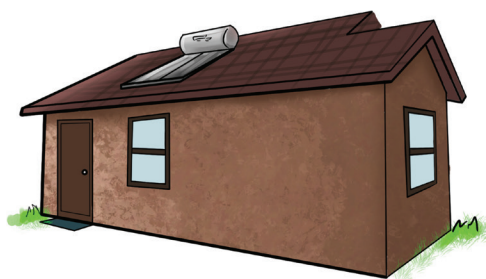
### Right to express opinion

Ilungelo lokuveza umbono  
Tokelo ya go tswelletsa gopolo



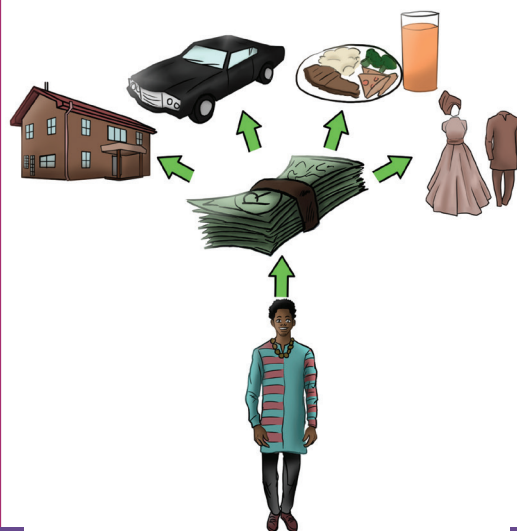
### Shelter

Igumbi  
Bodulo



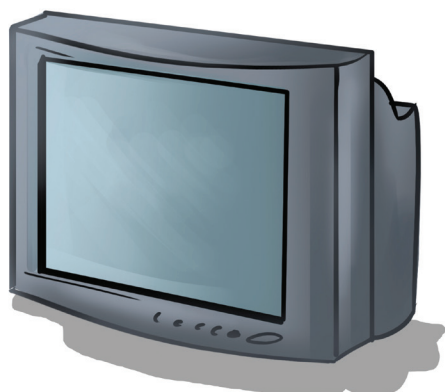
### Money to spend as you like

Imali yokuchitha ngokuthanda  
Tshelete ya go sumisa ka mogwa wo o nyakago



### Television

Umabonakude  
Thelevishene



### Doctor, clinic

Isangoma, udokotela, umtholampilo  
Ngaka, ngaka ya setso, kliniki



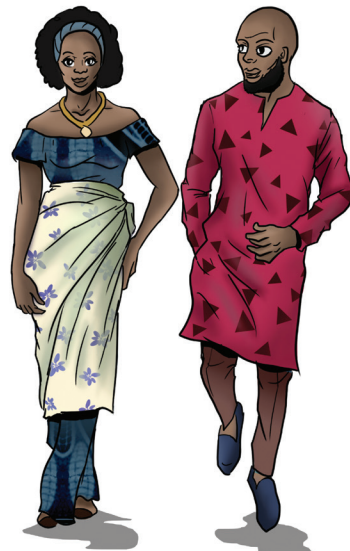
### Own bedroom

Igumbi lokulala  
Phaposi ya go robala



### Fashionable clothes

Izigumbo zemfashini  
Diaparo tsa feshene



### Savings

Ukonga  
Poloko





# Session 12

## Ways to save money and make a family saving plan

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families will know about ways to save money and make a family saving plan.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b> <p>Participants will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>understand different ways to save money.</li> <li>understand the risks of borrowing money.</li> <li>identify a saving goal as a family and identify small steps to it.</li> <li>find a way to save that will work for the family.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Chart paper, paper, pens, markers and prestick.</li> <li>A 2 litre plastic bottle for each child (you have been collecting these from families for some time).               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Things to use to decorate the bottles with e.g. coloured paper, beads, string, wool, little stones, bottle tops, crayons, paper, kokis (be creative and also use ordinary things that can be recycled for decorations).</li> </ul> </li> <li>A copy of the role play for a volunteer to read from.</li> <li>Some stones that you used in Session 11.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix O, the general evaluation form for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Am I confident with facilitating the:               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>songs</li> <li>role play.</li> </ul> </li> <li>Have I read all the activities?</li> <li>Do I have the correct information to answer questions about the SASSA card, grants, money lenders and ways to save?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 12.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> </ul>   |

| <b>Session 12 Programme</b>   |   |            |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)   | 20 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Let's think about saving (5 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children leave with the childcare worker to do an activity – they make savings bottles.</li> </ul> 2.2 Group discussion: Nonhlanhla's Savings Story (20 minutes)<br>Part 1: Nonhlanhla thinks ahead<br>Part 2: Nonhlanhla starts to make her saving goals real <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Children return with the childcare worker.</li> </ul> 2.3 In-group family exercise: Making saving choices (20 minutes)<br>2.4 Borrowing from a loan shark: role play (30 minutes) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Story: Zandile and the loan shark.</li> </ul> 2.5 Know your SASSA card (5 minutes)<br>2.6 Discussion about the story of Nonhlanhla: Introducing "Stepping Stones" to save (15 minutes) | 95 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | 3.1 Make a family savings plan<br>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>Complete attendance register.</li> </ul>  | 10 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 20 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group did last week with the needs, wants, obligations and visual budgeting session.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements. Each week try to have a different volunteer for this.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 11 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - Look at your visual budget from Session 11 with its sticks and stones some more with a special focus on how it might be possible to save for emergencies.

- Try to make a visual budget together with the whole family.
  - Write in your *Reflections* sheet.
  - Bring one or two empty 1 or 2 litre plastic drinks bottles for this session.
  - Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy.
- 3) Guide a discussion about the previous week's home practice. Ask families to take out their Reflections sheets to look at and to think about the week's home activity tasks. Use these prompts:
- What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework.

## 2. Core lesson

Time: 95 minutes

### 2.1 Let's think about saving

Time: 5 minutes

#### Encourage parents / caregivers to have an open mind about saving



You could encounter some participants being negative about saving. They may say they really don't have any money to save because the grant is a small amount. Encourage them to have an open mind. Say that saving money can take place in various ways.

Anecdote from a Sihleng'imizi session: a caregiver said it wasn't really possible to save. At the end of the session, the facilitator encouraged that caregiver to try and save even a rand that week. The following week, the caregiver came back and shared with the group that her attitude towards saving had changed. She had managed to save at least R10 that week!

- 1) Begin the activity this way:



Today, we will build on the discussion about money we began in Session 11. We will talk more about saving money and ways in which we can save. Could everyone, including the children, share thoughts and feelings about saving money. For example:

- Do you save?
- Is it important to save?
- In which ways can money be saved?

Let's remember that every family is in a different situation and has different needs. Luckily, there are many different ways to save!

In today's session, we will:

- Introduce a list of saving tips that will hopefully give you ideas about different ways you can save your money. Each family can use this list to think about how saving might work best for them.

- Talk together about the risks of borrowing and owing money, and about the dangers of borrowing from loan sharks (*mashonisa*).
- Work together on making a specific savings plan for your family.

### Children's activity with the childcare worker

All children under the age of 8 will go with the childcare worker to make savings containers from the bottles families have collected.



## 2.2 Group discussion: Nonhlanhla's Savings Story

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Explain that during this activity, you will read a story for everyone to engage with.

### Part 1: Nonhlanhla thinks ahead

Once upon a time, in a township not so far from here, there lived a woman called Nonhlanhla. She lived with her children, Ayanda and Sibusiso. Ayanda was 14 years old and had great marks in school. Sibusiso had just turned 13 years old. He would soon start high school. He was a fantastic soccer player.

Nonhlanhla looked after her children alone since their father went to live in KwaZulu-Natal. Nonhlanhla's parents died when her children were still very young. They struggled, but Nonhlanhla received a small child grant for each of the children. Combined with her taking in ironing and mending clothes for the community, and a little money from Ayanda and Sibusiso's father every few months, Nonhlanhla could almost make ends meet. Just the last days of each month – eish! – those were tough!

One day, Nonhlanhla watched her children come in from school. She thought: "Ayanda is so clever! She will pass her matric next year and surely get a bursary to study at university! But she will need all those books for university! And money to pay for transport to get there each term. And Sibusiso, he is so passionate about soccer. He cannot stop talking about the A team soccer tour to Durban at the end of Grade 8. But sending him will cost money! Hayibo!"

Nonhlanhla then thought to herself: "Times are so tough. But I want the best possible future for my children. They deserve all of the happiness and success in the world. I don't know how and I don't know where the money will come from. I could borrow the money but yoh! – these loan sharks are so dangerous. I must save. But how?"

- 2) Say:



Sometimes in life there are times when it feels impossible to save money, or to avoid borrowing more and more money.

Money can often feel like a problem that needs to be solved. Nonhlanhla's goals at this point are to make sure her son can go on soccer tour, and that her daughter can fulfil her dream of going to university.

Let's think together about how she can solve the problem of saving a lot of money with the little money she has.

- 3) Use a sheet of chart paper to write what people say. Ask people to make a visual budget for Nonhlanhla's situation. Ask these questions to help everyone get going:
  - What does Nonhlanhla have to spend money on each month? In other words, what are her NEEDS? As the participants give input, draw circles for NEEDS. For example, a circle for needs such as food, electricity and cellphone airtime.

- What OBLIGATIONS do we think Nonhlanhla might have? As the participants give input, again draw circles for obligations.
- Now draw an additional obligation circle and write: SAVINGS. Say that Nonhlanhla will have to put a little bit of money in here every month. Say that this is money that Nonhlanhla does not spend; it is money she holds back for her son's soccer tour and her daughter's university education.

4) Continue reading Nonhlanhla's story Part 2.

## Part 2: Nonhlanhla starts to make her saving goals real

First, Nonhlanhla sat down and made a budget. This was her plan for how she could save money. Then she began to save just a little bit of money at a time: R60 each month from the money she earned doing ironing and mending, and R180 from the money that Nonhlanhla's brother sends home each month.

Nonhlanhla asked Sibusiso and Ayanda to choose little things that she could spend just a little bit less on each week. The children were great at helping her! They thought about the things they didn't need. They said they no longer needed money for buying sweets as a treat on the way home from school on a Friday.

Over the next few years, as her children grew, Nonhlanhla was finally able to fulfill her dreams. Without borrowing any money from friends or loan sharks, she managed to pay for Sibusiso's soccer tour – where he performed excellently! And for Ayanda's matric graduation. She could not have been more proud!

- 5) Let's discuss Part 2 of Nonhlanhla's story.
- How did Nonhlanhla manage to reach the savings goals for Ayanda and Sibusiso?
  - What role did Ayanda and Sibusiso play in reaching the savings goals?
  - How do you think Nonhlanhla felt when she finally saved enough?
- 6) Make a list of your family's saving goals.

### The children will return to join the in-group family exercise

- The children return to the group with their decorated savings bottles.
- Remember to encourage parents / caregivers to praise the children for the savings bottles they have created.
- You could suggest families immediately think of ways to use them at home.



## 2.3 In-group family exercise: Making savings choices

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Say that in this exercise, we will find out more about ways / methods to save money. We will:
  - talk about what we know about savings
  - share the information we have
  - find out what is true, and what is not, about ways to save money.
- 2) Say that we will use the space of the whole room for this exercise. We will discuss different ways to save money. Request everybody to gather in the middle of the room. Stick one piece of chart paper with a smiley face on it on the wall on one side of the room. On the other side of the room, stick up a piece of chart paper with a sad face.
- 3) Say that we are going to discuss three specific choices / methods around how to save money. Say that in the exercise, as you state different methods, participants will vote with their feet by moving to either the smiley or the sad face to show whether they think the method will work for their family. Add that we will have lots of discussion to help us think through realistic savings plans.
- 4) Introduce participants to the three saving methods to choose from.

### Choice 1: Saving at home

For example, we could save money by hiding coins somewhere in the house. When we do the exercise a bit later, we need to think about things like:

- Is hiding money in your house a good idea or a bad idea?
- Is it safe, or is it dangerous?
- Is it for free, or does it cost something?

### Choice 2: Saving at the bank

We could save by opening a bank account. A bit later in the exercise we will discuss the pros and cons of this method.

### Choice 3: Saving in a savings group / stokvel

We could save money by being part of a savings group. In the exercise we will discuss the pros and cons of this method.

#### Remember!

- Remember to let the participants be the experts!
- Remind the participants that there is no right or wrong answer.
- Like we said before, every family is different. What might work well for one family might not work well for another family. So, for some families hiding money in the house as a saving method might be a great idea, but for another family it might cause a lot of problems.



- 5) Say that you regard participants as the experts and that you will ask them to share their experiences (whether positive or negative) with each saving method. Remind everyone that this is a very good example of how we can learn from each other.
- 6) Say that now we are going to vote with our feet in families. When you read out an example of a method to save money, if a family thinks it is a good idea, they walk to stand next to the smiley face poster. If the family thinks an example of how to save money might cause problems, they walk to stand next to the sad face. Once families have chosen a side, you will facilitate deep discussion (see note that follows).

## Facilitator input note and activity process guide

### Choice 1: Saving at home

- Once you have stated a method and everybody has chosen where to stand, ask people to explain why they are standing where they are.
- Brainstorm saving at home as a method to save. Here are some discussion points that might arise.

**Question 1:** What are the pros “good things” and cons “problems”, or risks, for this method?

**“Good things”** about saving this way could be:

- It doesn’t cost anything.
- It is easy to keep track of how much money we spend / save.

**“Problems”** about saving this way could be:

- It is dangerous because the house can get robbed.
- We could lose money in a fire or a flood.
- It is more difficult not to spend the money.

**Question 2:** If we decide to keep our savings at home, let's brainstorm ideas about where we could put it.

The list could include:

- Hide money in a book, or in socks
- Hide money in more than one place in the house
- Buy a lock box with a padlock (e.g. for R100–R300), and nail it to the floor
- Invest in livestock

This is what participants in the Sihleng'imizi Programme said about investing in livestock: "We don't think of this as savings, but it's actually very similar! If we have enough money to buy a goat, it can help us hold on to that money. The goat we buy can grow and give birth to more goats. And if we need the money sooner, we can always sell the goat." *Risk:* "But of course, the goat could get run over, or get sick and die."

## Choice 2: Saving at the bank

Once everybody has moved to either the smiley or sad face posters when responding to saving at the bank as a method, once again ask for a discussion and brainstorm around the positives and negatives of the method. Ask about people's experiences.

### **Ask: do any participants use bank accounts?**

Encourage participants to share their experiences (whether positive or negative) with the others.

These are discussion points from previous participants in the Sihleng'imizi Programme:

- You can choose from different banks.
- Once the bank account is open, you do not have to go in person to move your money. You can also use your phone banking app. This is called mobile banking.
- Banks are useful as you can then use an ATM, which is convenient.
- BUT bank accounts have fees. This means EVERY TIME you deposit, or withdraw money, you pay the bank a little to do this. Some banks are cheaper than others. So, it is only worth using a bank account once you have quite a bit of money to save. For example, because of the bank fees, putting R50 in a bank account is not worth it. But R400 may be worth it. Remember, you must ASK the bank about bank fees so that you know what to expect.
- Some banks will let you open a group account, or joint account. With these accounts, you cannot decide on your own that you want to make a payment, or that you want to withdraw some money. Everybody who is sharing the account with you needs to agree before you can do these things. A joint account will also allow you to split the bank fees with the other people in your group account.
- If you have quite a bit of money (such as R2 000), you can put the money in a 30-day notice account. Then your money earns a bit of interest (you earn money on it), and it is safe. You have to give the bank 30 days' notice if you want to use it. This makes it a good savings plan.

## Choice 3: Saving in a savings group / stokvel

Once everybody has moved to either the smiley or sad face posters when responding to a savings group / stokvel as a method, once again ask for discussion. Brainstorm around the positives and negatives of the method. Remember to ask about people's experiences, both positive and negative, and brainstorm different forms of stokvels and savings in this way.

### **Ask: Can participants who are part of a savings group explain to us how it works?**

Remember, there are:

- Rotating stokvels. Each month a different member gets the whole amount and the next month it is someone else's turn to get it.
- Longer term saving groups. For example, a savings or a grocery stokvel (savings club) where everyone shares the amount at the end of the year for December shopping. There are also food savings groups, and others.

## 2.4 Borrowing money from a loan shark: Role play

Time: 30 minutes

- 1) Say that we are going to look at the negative impact of taking money from a loan shark. Explain that you will ask a participant to volunteer to act out the part of Zandile in a role play with you. You will be the narrator and also play the role of Amandla, the loan shark. Give the volunteer a copy of the role play to read from.

### Loan shark: Role play script

#### Facilitator reads:

Zandile only has R100 left of her South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) money this month. There are still two weeks left before the next grant day. Zandile still needs to buy food for her three children. She is very worried about her children not having food. Zandile decides to borrow money from Amandla, a money lender in town. She borrows R1 000. On grant day, she realises she now has a huge debt to pay back to Amandla.

**Amandla (yelling at Zandile):** What do you mean you can't pay me my R2 000?! You have to give it to me now!

**Zandile (shaking):** But I only borrowed R1 000, and my grant is only R1 300. How can I pay you that much money?

**Amandla:** That's too bad. It's what you owe me after interest. I'm going to have to take your SASSA card.

**Zandile (crying):** But...but... What will happen to my three children?

Amandla takes Zandile's SASSA card away.

- 2) Have a discussion about the role play. Ask:
  - Why does Zandile feel the need to borrow money?
  - Is there a risk of borrowing money from Amandla? What is the risk?
  - How could Zandile reduce the risks of borrowing money?
  - Do you think it would be better to borrow from family members or friends than from a loan shark? Why?
- Does Zandile have more money after she has borrowed money from Amandla? Or does she have less money?
- State that if the loan shark / *mashonisa* does not have a licence, they are acting against the law and you can ask ward counsellors for help.
- 3) Say that before we continue any further we need to make sure we all understand what we're talking about when we say "debt." Ask participants to explain debt in relation to the loan shark story. Then make sure the group discussion covers the contents of the next note.

### Facilitator discussion check list

#### Note about debt and interest

- We are in debt when we have borrowed money from someone and must give that money back. Like Zandile, who is now in debt to Amandla, the loan shark in the story.
- The problem with debts is that the person who lends the money wants to earn something by doing this, like Amandla in the story. What the loan shark charges on top of the amount that they lend is what we call "interest".
- It is the same when you open a clothing account. You pay MORE for your clothing because you have to pay back the money PLUS INTEREST.



## What is “interest” and “interest rate”?

If we borrow money from a loan shark, the interest rate is often very high. This means that the money we owe increases by a lot and becomes much more than the amount we borrowed.

If Zandile borrows R1 000 from the loan shark Amandla, she will have to pay back more than R2 000 after only two months. That is already double the amount of money than she originally borrowed! The longer Zandile waits to pay back what she borrowed, the more and more money she will have to give to Amandla. If Zandile can't pay Amandla for a full year she will owe him thousands and thousands of Rands.

- 4) Use some stones that you used in Session 11 to visually illustrate Zandile's debt. Use these steps:

**Step 1:** Let's look at Zandile's debt by using our stones from last week. Let's say that Zandile has borrowed two stones from Amandla. How many stones would she have to pay back to Amandla after one year? Illustrate with the stones that this is much more money!

**Step 2:** Ask: “If the debt gets too big to manage, what will happen?”

**Step 3:** Ask the group to explain what might happen to a person, and their family and possessions, who has debt they cannot repay.

See the note for things that participants are likely to say. If they don't cover all of them, make sure to add them to the discussion.

## Facilitator discussion check list

### What can happen when you can't repay your debt?

- Debt collectors will come and bother you and phone you.
- If a *mashonisa* is a tsotsi he might get someone to come and threaten you and your family.

### Definition of *mashonisa*

The word *mashonisa* is an informal word for a person or company that provides loans to consumers. The general word used in the National Credit Act is a credit provider. ... In townships a *mashonisa* is usually an individual that gives small loans to people in the community.

– Soul City Institute for Social Justice<sup>1</sup>

- If the debt is for rent you could get evicted.
- If the debt is for a clothing account, the company will send you lawyers letters and blacklist you. When you are blacklisted it will be very, very difficult to open another account or rent a place to stay again.
- The Sheriff of the Court can come and “attach goods”. This means they take away things you own, such as a TV, stove and furniture, to offset the amount you own.
- If you bought furniture on hire purchase, the company you bought it from will come and take the furniture away.

<sup>1</sup> <https://www.soulcity.org.za/news-events/news/201cmashonisas201d#:~:text=%E2%80%9CMashonisas%E2%80%9D,Act%20is%20a%20credit%20provider.&text=In%20Townships%20a%20%E2%80%9CMashonisa%E2%80%9D%20is,to%20people%20in%20the%20community.> [Accessed 21.06.2020]

## 2.5 Know your South African Social Security Agency (SASSA) card

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Say that we all need to know the facts about the SASSA card we use to manage our social grant money from the government. Explain that you will read out statements about the SASSA bank account and card and ask participants to vote whether they think the statement is true or false. After each vote, you will give the correct information. They must then write the correct information in their Family Workbooks.

| Statement  | Answer and reason  |
|--|--|
| You can use your SASSA bank account to save.   | <b>FALSE</b>   |
| Even if you save a lot of money in your SASSA bank account, your grant will still continue.  | <b>FALSE</b><br>If the money is not withdrawn within a period of three months, the grant will be cancelled.  |
| Anyone is allowed to take deductions off your SASSA card.  | <b>FALSE</b><br>No one is allowed to deduct.   |
| If a deduction is taken from your card and you don't remember what it is for, you are not allowed to go and ask at a SASSA office. | <b>FALSE</b><br>You can go through the office, or call or email the service provider who deducted.   |
| If you don't draw all your money out at once you will lose the rest of the money.  | <b>FALSE</b><br>The money carries over to the next month.  |
| SASSA cards have no bank charges.  | <b>FALSE</b><br>You will have to pay a bank charge if you withdraw money from the ATM.<br>But if you withdraw at a shop such as a big supermarket, there are much lower charges. |
| You can give your SASSA card and pin to someone if they promise to look after it.  | <b>FALSE</b><br>This is not allowed.   |

- 2) Tell participants they will find the statements and answers in their Family Workbook and can share them with other family members and people they know so that everyone has the correct information.

## 2.6 Discussion about the story of Nonhlanhla: Introducing “stepping stones” to save

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) You are coming to the last part of the core lesson. It is important to use it to wrap up the new learnings.
- 2) Say to participants:
  - a) What do you remember from the story we read earlier in this session about Nonhlanhla and her two children, Ayanda and Sibusiso?
  - b) What do you remember about Nonhlanhla's goals?

3) Say:



Nonhlanhla had to save for many months. She had to be patient to achieve her goals. Sometimes, she struggled a lot. But she managed to put aside R150 every month from her income and save money that way.

Nonhlanhla put the R150 directly in the lockbox that she had nailed into the floor and hidden in her closet. She made sure that she never opened the lockbox to take out money to buy something she didn't absolutely need. This became her saving plan. It was her rule.

Today, we want to come up with a strong plan for how we can reach our own savings goals. These goals sometimes feel far away and hard to reach. This is why we need "stepping stones." Stepping stones are little steps we can take each day, each week, and each month that will help us get closer to our goal. These little stepping stones are small rules, or routines, that we make so we can take steps to save money at home.

Imagine making savings happen as being a ladder. We need to climb one step after the other until we reach the top of the ladder – our goal. Let's think about these climbing steps together.

- 4) Draw a ladder on a piece of chart paper. Invite one or two group members to draw, or write, their family saving goals on top of the ladder. Now ask, while pointing to the goal:
  - Does anyone have an idea for a good stepping stone or saving step?
  - To help the discussion, you can ask:
    - What were Nonhlanhla's stepping stones?
    - Would any of these help us to get to the top of our ladder – to our goal?
- 5) Encourage participants to praise each other for every suggestion. Write the ideas for stepping stones next to the ladder. You can add the ideas from the stepping stones note if they do not come up.

### Ideas for practical stepping stones to reach a savings goal

- Decide to put aside a certain realistic amount into your lockbox every week.
  - Put another realistic (perhaps a bigger amount) into your lockbox on every grant day.
  - Decide to spend only a certain limit amount on airtime each week.
  - Open a bank account the next time you are doing your shopping near a bank and then make it a habit to put R200 into your account every time you go in town.
- 6) Say that next families will think about the stepping stones they are willing to take as a family. Ask families to sit together to respond to this:
    - What saving steps can your family try to take every day, every week, and every month? Acknowledge and remind participants that this is not an easy task. Go around to each family to check participants understand the task.
  - 7) Invite families to tell the group what saving steps they decided on. Encourage applause and affirmation from everyone. Say that as part of their Sihleng'imizi Buddy role they can support and encourage each other with their savings goals and steps.

## 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

### 3.1 Make a family savings plan

- 1) Refer families to the *Family saving plan* in their Family Workbook. It has the list of the different saving choice that we discussed earlier.

- 2) Say that we are going through the *Family saving plan* now to make sure we all understand what to do at home in the coming week. We will begin to do a bit now for families to complete at home.  
Say:
  - Let's think together: what saving method does each of the pictures represent?
  - Can someone tell us what the first picture is, and a bit about this way of saving money?
  - What is positive about it, and what might be a problem?
- 3) Ask families to discuss which saving strategy could work best for their own family. Give everyone a sheet of paper and ask someone in each family to draw a savings plan while they discuss. Help the process by saying:
  - Think about the small saving steps we discussed today.
  - How much money can you save each week?
  - How much money can you save each month?

Walk around to check that family members understand and review their saving plans to make sure you know that each family understands. Request families to continue this exercise at home and to enjoy it and complete it .
- 4) Suggest that the savings containers the children made could be used for the family.
- 5) Remind families to fill in their *Reflection* sheets.

#### Sticker reminders!

- Remind families that they will receive an extra reward sticker for completing the homework.
- Remind families that they have an opportunity to receive three extra reward stickers for using their:
  - Mood Ball
  - Calm Down Box
  - Behaviour Chart.



### Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

## 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation. Remind everyone that there are only two sessions left until the end of the programme. Encourage participants to continue to use the Sihleng'imizi Buddy system this week and going forward.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session and restate the need for consistent attendance.
- 4) Ask families to fill in the general evaluation form, Appendix O.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week.

# Session 13

## How to get and use social support services

|  |  |
|--|--|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goal for this session</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Families will understand how to get and use social support services.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>During this session, families will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>identify formal and informal support systems that exist in their own community.</li> <li>identify what services exist in the community so they can make use of them.</li> <li>learn strategies to engage effectively to get support and services.</li> <li>learn concrete strategies to strengthen their use of support organisations over time.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Chart paper, paper, pens, markers and prestick.</li> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>List of ground rules from Session 1 on the poster board.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Copies for each family of the list of resource organisations that you prepared.</li> <li>Pamphlets, leaflets and booklets on services and social education.</li> <li>Icebreaker materials: bring a couple of extra items that could be used in the icebreaker.</li> <li>A copy of the general evaluation form, Appendix O, for each family.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have I prepared an extensive and wide ranging list of resource organisations?</li> <li>Have I discussed the children-only session that the childcare worker is going to do in the activity?</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Make sure you are familiar with the songs, games and role plays.</li> <li>Put up the ground rules from Session 1 on the wall.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 13.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Keep the poster boards in a safe place to bring to the next session for participants to review.</li> <li>Write a report.</li> <li>Prepare the certificates to hand out in the final session next week. There are samples in Appendix T. There are two types of certificates:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) A <i>family participation certificate</i> for each family. It would be great if you could frame the family participation certificates. Families can put it on the wall at home and it helps to make them feel that they achieved something from the programme.</li> <li>2) A <i>reward sticker certificate</i> for each family. You will only be able to fill in the final totals of stickers after the homework check. Each family gets a certificate, and the families that get 1st, 2nd and 3rd place for the number of stickers get this as a special mention on their certificate.</li> </ol> </li> </ul> |

| <b>Session 13 Programme</b>   |   |            |
|-------------------------------|---|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)<br>1.3 Icebreaker: Shoe mix (10 minutes)  | 30 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Family in-group exercise: Social support mapping (45 minutes)<br>2.2 Group discussion: Getting to know resource places better (30 minutes)<br>• Children go with the childcare worker for an activity.  | 75 minutes |
| <b>3) Homework</b>            | • Children return<br>3.1 Ask for help!<br>3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy  | 10 minutes |
| <b>4) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 4. The wrap-up: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Invite, receive and answer remaining questions</li> <li>• Compliment families for their participation</li> <li>• Schedule the between session phone calls</li> <li>• Families complete the general evaluation form, Appendix O</li> <li>• Complete attendance register.</li> </ul> | 10 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 30 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group did in last week's session on savings.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 12 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was to:
  - Make a family savings plan (which families started in Session 12 during the homework time).
- 3) Ask families to take out their *Reflections* sheets to assist with the homework discussion. Ask the children and parents / caregivers to share successes and challenges with the homework activity. Follow these questions to guide this feedback:
  - What did families discuss for the homework?
  - What went well?
  - What did not go well?
  - How can the group help you with this in the future?
- 4) Check in to find out if families are using the Behaviour Chart and how that is going.
- 5) Check to see who visited their Sihleng'imizi Buddy.
- 6) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework and an extra sticker for using any of the following: Mood Ball, Calm Down Box, Behaviour Chart and have used the savings container the children made.

### 1.3 Icebreaker: Shoe mix

Time: 10 minutes

#### Objective

Fun!

#### Steps for the icebreaker

**Step 1:** Ask everyone to stand in a circle and take off one of their shoes.

**Step 2:** Everyone puts that one shoe in a big pile in the centre of the circle.

**Step 3:** Say you will count one, two, and on the count of three everyone must randomly rush in and grab a shoe.

**Step 4:** Each person must find the person whose shoe they are holding as quickly as possible. Tell people to try to end up in a line with the person who found your shoe on one side of you, and the person whose shoe you found on the other.

**Note:** You might find it is challenging for participants to try and get everyone to stand in a line with these rules! You can expect lots of fun and laughter. Should it happen that someone isn't wearing shoes, then use something else to throw in, such as a jersey, or a glove.

## 2. Core lesson

Time: 75 minutes

### 2.1 Family in-group exercise: Social support mapping

Time: 45 minutes

#### The children

- This activity is designed for the children to take part, but if younger are getting restless, the childcare worker can take them to play.
- Children from about the age of six years old can remain and take part in the conversation.
  - Remember to very consciously include children in the discussion.



- 1) Explain to the participants that they will work in their own families. And that, by the end of the activity, each family will have created a social support map. Explain that this is a map with all kinds of social support places and people they have in their area.
- 2) Give each family a blank piece of paper and things to write with. Say they have 20 minutes to create their map.
  - a) Encourage all members of each family to participate in this exercise, including the children.
  - b) Ask families to draw a simple map of the area / community in which they live.
  - c) When drawing the map, families will identify the formal and informal support structures that exist in their community. You can ask them to share some examples. You can also assist by adding some in from the list.

## Facilitator input

### Examples of places on a social support services map

- schools
  - aftercare / daycare mother / early childhood development
  - clinic / hospital / doctor
  - library
  - park
  - SASSA office
  - police station
  - social worker office
  - church
  - people such as these who you have a good relationship with
    - friends
    - relatives
    - child's friend
  - ward councillor's office
  - stokvel meeting place.
- d) While families are creating their map, ask them to discuss how they use each resource, and if they could use it better – more effectively. Ask them to ask questions about each one to figure this out. For example:
- Could they visit the library more as a quiet place to do homework?
  - Could they ask their neighbour to share childcare more, to benefit both households?
  - What day is best to go to the clinic to have the shortest queues?
  - Have they ever been to ask the ward councillor to intervene in a community problem, such as a lack of street lights?
  - Who should the children go to if there is an emergency?
  - Do they know the phone number for their local South African Police Service?
- 3) When 20 minutes is up:
- ask families to explain their map to the rest of the group
  - when families present, ask that they give ideas for using resources more effectively based on the questions they asked themselves
  - the rest of the group can give tips and suggestions.

### 2.2 Group discussion: Getting to know resource places better

Time: 20 minutes for (1) and (2) + 10 minutes for (3) = 30 minutes

#### Children's activity

The children will go with the childcare worker for a children's session while the adults work further on social support service information.



- 1) Hand out to each person the list of resources that you have prepared.



### Your resource list is very important



- The list needs to include referral resources for a wide range of services such as:
    - general health services
    - HIV testing and counselling
    - individual and family counselling
    - social work services
    - child abuse services
    - special education needs
    - libraries
    - ward councillor
    - municipal services such as electricity, sewerage, water
    - SASSA offices
    - legal aid services, such as the Black Sash.
  - As many as possible of the places on your list should be local so that they are easy to get to. Some, however, might be further away, such as legal aid.
  - Take as many pamphlets, leaflets and booklets as you can on services and social education. Examples of trusted organisations include LoveLife, Soul City Institute for Social Justice, Black Sash, and SASSA; relief of distress organisations such as for food aid.
- 2) Refer people to the Session 13 page in the Family Workbook related to social support services. Go through the list and explain what each service is, and what to expect when contacting each one. They should fill in as many support organisation contact details as they know going forward. For example:
- Do you have to make an appointment before you go?
  - Do you need to go very early to get a place in a queue?
  - Do you need to take your child, or leave the child at home?
  - What documents must you take with you?
- 3) Say: Let's talk about the future. Ask the group the following questions, and encourage discussion and input:
- What other help do you need to continue to do well? Where might you be able to get it?
  - What could get in the way of your family still doing well in the future?
  - How can you deal with challenges so that you can continue working together well as a family?
- 4) Say to the participants that they have had a Sihleng'imizi Buddy for 13 weeks now. Ask: How has that been going?
- Remind people that their buddy is an important part of their social support network.
  - Ask participants if they included their buddy in their map.
  - Encourage participants to continue this friendship, and others they have created, during this programme going into the future.
- 5) Thank everyone for their contributions and helping us all to know where to get social support.

### Children return

The children will return with the childcare worker. Ask them to share what they have learnt about and give praise and affirmation.



### 3. Homework activities

Time: 10 minutes

#### 3.1 Ask for help!

Say that the homework is for families to discuss and identify one thing they think they need help with in their family. They should discuss how to ask for this help, and then approach the person / organisation during the course of the week. Remind people to write in their *Reflections* sheets.

#### 3.2 Visit your Sihleng'imizi Buddy

Remind parents and caregivers to book some time to visit their Sihleng'imizi Buddy during the week.

### 4. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 10 minutes

- 1) Invite, receive and answer remaining questions participants have.
- 2) Compliment both individuals and families for their participation.
- 3) Schedule the between-session phone calls. The purpose of the call is to:
  - Ask for feedback about the session.
  - Ask what ideas and reactions the family has had since the session about the group meeting.
  - Review homework activity.
  - Confirm time of next session.
- 4) Ask each family to fill in the general evaluation form, Appendix O.
- 5) Complete the attendance register by confirming who attended.
- 6) Wish everyone a wonderful week, and remind everyone that the last session is next week and you look forward to celebrating families' participation in the programme. Remind everyone about the importance of keeping in touch with their Sihleng'imizi Buddy.

# Session 14

## Social support + Evaluate the programme

|  |   |
|--|---|
| <b>Goals</b>                                     | <b>Goals for this session</b><br>The goals for this session are to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>consolidate the focus from the previous session on accessing support services.</li> <li>evaluate and then celebrate the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Objectives</b>                                | <b>Key objectives</b><br>During this session, you will: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recap all the topics covered in the Sihleng'imizi family programme.</li> <li>help families identify support structures and systems they can utilise.</li> <li>evaluate the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.</li> <li>encourage families to keep in touch for encouragement and support – especially with their Sihleng'imizi Buddy system.</li> </ul>   |
| <b>Materials for the session</b>                 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Refreshments for the final session celebration.</li> <li>All the general materials required for each session.</li> <li>Chart paper, pens, markers and prestick.</li> <li>The handout <i>Letter to my family</i> in the Family Workbook for each family.</li> <li>A copy of Appendix S: <i>Parent process measure / Final evaluation form</i> for each family.</li> <li>Certificates: reward sticker certificates and Sihleng'imizi Family Programme participation certificates.</li> <li>Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.</li> <li>Attendance register.</li> </ul> |
| <b>Your check-in and prep before the session</b> | <b>Yes or No?</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have the childcare worker and I discussed the session and how it will run?</li> <li>Have I printed colourful reward sticker certificates and the participation certificates for each family?</li> <li>Have I made sure I can create a celebratory vibe that I know the families will appreciate and enjoy?</li> <li>Have I factored in that the final session evaluation form will take longer than the previous evaluation forms to fill in because Appendix T is a longer form and requires more thinking and writing time?</li> </ul>       |
| <b>Arrive at the venue ahead of time</b>         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Make sure the venue is clean and that the chairs are in a circle.</li> <li>Set out the materials needed for Session 14.</li> <li>Put out the evaluation forms.</li> <li>Put out the attendance register.</li> </ul>  |
| <b>After the session</b>                         | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Tidy the room.</li> <li>Write a final report which includes everything that came up in the evaluation, and insights from the <i>Letter to my family</i> where relevant.</li> </ul>   |

| <b>Session 14 Programme</b>   |  |            |
|-------------------------------|--|------------|
| <b>1) Welcome</b>             | 1.1 Welcome families (5 minutes)<br>1.2 Homework check (15 minutes)  | 20 minutes |
| <b>2) Core lesson</b>         | 2.1 Recap the topics covered in programme (20 minutes)<br>2.2 Evaluation of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme both oral and Appendix T (20 minutes)<br>2.3 Letter to my family (20 minutes)<br>2.4 Closing discussion (20 minutes)  | 80 minutes |
| <b>3) Wrap-up and closing</b> | 3.1 Invite, receive and answer remaining questions<br>3.2 Hand out certificates and celebration! <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Compliment individuals and families on their participation</li> <li>• Reward sticker certificates (with totals including this session)</li> <li>• Participation certificates</li> <li>• Sing the group song</li> <li>• Complete attendance register</li> <li>• Celebration!</li> </ul> | 20 minutes |

## 1. Welcome

Total: 20 minutes

### 1.1 Welcome families

Time: 5 minutes

- 1) Welcome families back and thank everyone for being here. Ask everyone to indicate how well – on a scale of 0 to 5 – they think the group managed understanding social support services last week.
- 2) Invite a volunteer to lead the group song, using movements.
- 3) Thank the volunteer and the song leader and make an affirming remark about how the singing feels. Say you hope families will continue to sing the songs from the programme at home.
- 4) Say that next we're going to look at how the homework activity went.

### 1.2 Homework check

Time: 15 minutes

- 1) Invite a volunteer to remind the group what the homework was for Session 13 to present today.
- 2) Confirm that the homework was for families to discuss and identify one thing they need help with. They were to discuss how to ask for this help, and then approach the person / organisation during the course of the week.
- 3) Say that last week we looked at formal and informal social support for families. Ask families to report on:
  - how it went
  - what help they asked for
  - who they asked
  - whether the help was forthcoming
  - whether there were challenges, and if yes, what they were
  - whether it was easy or difficult.

- 4) Distribute reward stickers to families who completed the homework and an extra sticker for using any of the following: Mood Ball, Calm Down Box, Behaviour Chart and savings container the children made.

### **Final count on the reward stickers!**

You will need to do a final count, including of Session 14 reward stickers, to finalise awarding 1st, 2nd and 3rd places for the reward sticker certificates.



## **2. Core lesson**

Time: 80 minutes

### **2.1 Recap the topics covered in programme**

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Begin the session by reminding the families of the time when they chose to be part of this group. Ask them to:
  - remember how they felt in their first session
  - say how they feel now that the group is coming to an end.
- 2) Ask the participants to identify some of the topics they covered in the 14 sessions. After they have identified the topics, quickly read through the titles of the sessions.

### **2.2 Evaluation of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme**

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Ask participants to gather in their family groups to discuss their highlights from the different sessions, and what they remember was really helpful. Say that the participants' inputs will help to strengthen the whole Sihleng'imizi Programme. A family member will then report on their discussion back to the big group. Record this to assist you with the programme evaluation and your report.
- 2) Go around the room and ask each person to say a word or a sentence about what they feel they gained out of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. Once again, record what people say.
- 3) Ask families to fill in the evaluation form, Appendix T. Provide assistance to those who may struggle to do this. The childcare worker will look after the younger children who are not able to concentrate in this activity.

### **2.3 Letter to my family**

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Explain that this activity is a way of rounding up participants' experience of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. Say that you are going to ask people to write a letter to their families to help them to recognise and celebrate positive changes that came out of being part of the programme. The letter is a way of expressing and documenting this.
- 2) Give each family a copy of the handout *Letter to my family* that is in the Family Workbook. Say that they will also find it in the Family Workbook. Give each family something to write with.
- 3) Ask families to choose one family member to write the letter, and everyone will work together to decide what they want to say. Families must make sure they include everyone's input.
- 4) Go through the instructions for the letter with everyone so you know that everyone understands what to do. Say that when they have completed their letter, each family member must sign it.
- 5) Ask everyone to stand in a circle. Invite a family volunteer to read out their family's letter. Allow other participants to respond in a constructive, affirming way and to ask constructive questions after each letter.

- 6) Round off by thanking families for their letters and the discussion. Say that each family will be able to take their letters home after you have made a photocopy or taken a photograph of each one before the group ends. Remember to keep a copy to go with your report.

## 2.4 Closing discussion

Time: 20 minutes

- 1) Refer families to their *Family contact list* in the Family Workbook. Ask families to fill in their contact details if they haven't done so before. Perhaps some details require updating? Each family should have other families' contact details after this. Initiate a brainstorm for why it is a great idea to stay in touch and different ways people can do this. Here are some ideas to add if they do not come up.

### Facilitator input

#### Ideas for ways to stay in touch

- Set up a WhatsApp group / or other type of group for sending messages.
- Set up a time to meet together for a group event, maybe to watch a sports match, exercise, or meet after spiritual gatherings, such as church, one Sunday.
- Make weekly times as Sihleng'imizi Buddies to meet and talk to keep the support and encouragement going.
- Go together to school events.

#### Self-organising is best

You can be involved in ideas for people to keep their connection going, but it is better for the group to arrange this themselves as a way of building natural community and social supports.



## 3. The wrap-up and closing

Time: 20 minutes

### 3.1 Invite, receive and answer remaining questions

Say that we have come to the end of our activities and sessions. Invite questions and respond to them.

### 3.2 Certificates and celebration!

- 1) Create an important sense of occasion vibe. Compliment and congratulate both individuals – using their names so that everyone feels special – and families for their participation in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.
- 2) Hand out reward sticker certificates.
  - a) Hand out the reward sticker certificates for first, second and third place, on the basis of how many reward stickers each family got over the 14 weeks.
  - b) Hand out every family a certificate for their own number of reward stickers they achieved.
- 3) Hand out each family a certificate for participating and completing the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. Congratulate each family individually so each member of the family can feel proud of their accomplishments.
- 4) Once the certificates are handed out, everyone can sing the group song together for the last time.
- 5) Complete attendance register.
- 6) Begin your celebration and enjoy!

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## Appendix A: Family group facilitator expectations and guidelines

This appendix is a guide for family group facilitators on the Sihleng'imizi Family Group Intervention. All facilitators in the Sihleng'imizi programme are expected to follow the processes and approach that follow.

### To do prior to family group intervention

- 1) Attend the initial intensive orientation and training for the intervention.
- 2) Collect baseline data from each family during the recruitment phase so that we have a baseline against which to assess change.

### During the intervention process

- 1) The two keys to a successful family group intervention delivery are:
  - having strong relationships with families.
  - meeting the OBJECTIVES for each session, as listed in the Facilitator Manual at the beginning of each session.
- 2) Involve the entire family as much as possible from Day 1 – including both adults and children.
- 3) Use icebreakers and interactive activities to make the content fun and allow your personality and the group's dynamic to shine.
- 4) Explain the programme's expectations to families early on, such as attendance and doing the homework. Hold families accountable while being compassionate.
- 5) Be responsible for all aspects of conducting weekly family group sessions as detailed below.
  - a) Initiate and maintain contact with families through phone calls and home visits when needed, such as if a family misses a session, or if specific issues arise.
  - b) Seek a 100% participation rate – and maintain no less than 80% – with each group.
  - c) Keep all attendance and contact records.
  - d) Prepare all group session materials such as protocols, activities, and materials.
  - e) Do all the relevant reading for the session.
  - f) Meet the childcare worker every week to evaluate the previous session and to plan for the next session.
  - g) Conduct make up sessions as needed.
  - h) Complete a weekly *Facilitator report template and weekly session fidelity checklist* after every group session. A report template can be found in Appendix P.

### Supervision

- 1) Each facilitator should have a Sihleng'imizi supervisor allocated by their agency.
- 2) Weekly supervision sessions are essential to ensure programme fidelity, coaching and mentoring of facilitators, in performance management work load issues, addressing challenges relating to programme delivery, and in the professional development of the practitioner. Supervision meeting agendas may include:
  - Administrative tasks, such as supplies for children's activities, handouts. Please note:
    - You will need to transport materials for group sessions every week to the meeting venue. Please plan accordingly.
  - Review of the previous session:
    - Review the session feedback from participants
    - Review session goals and outcomes
    - What worked and what did not work and why?
    - Facilitator reflection on their role in conducting the session.
  - Review session content for the upcoming week.
    - Everyone should have read through the week's session ahead of time. You need to have thought about the flow of the session, and how it will work with your group.
  - Address specific issues and challenges that arise.
- 3) In addition to supervision meetings, a weekly facilitator report is required. The report is approximately one page per family group. This report allows for self-reflection as well as a written record for future reference by you and / or your supervisor. Reports are due by the beginning of the supervision meeting. A report template can be found in Appendix P: *Facilitator report template and weekly session fidelity checklist*.

## **Childcare worker**

- 1) Assign a childcare worker to each weekly family group.
- 2) Childcare workers will need a basic orientation training on what is expected of them as set out in the manual. But you will need to engage closely with your childcare worker to ensure you work as a team and they know exactly what to do.
- 3) Make prior arrangements with your childcare worker to plan for each session. Ensure the childcare worker is appraised of all the practical arrangements for each week. Confirm their attendance and arrangements ahead of each session.
- 4) If challenges arise, please liaise with your supervisor. Challenges could include things like the childcare worker is going to be unavailable, or you are having difficulty working with or communicating with your childcare worker.
- 5) In your weekly facilitator report, please note the childcare worker's name and comment on how you worked together as a team.
- 6) You may need to meet agency contractual arrangements with the childcare worker. Appraise yourself of this. Some suggestions may be noting the number of hours your childcare worker works. The agency may require that they sign attendance forms or complete time sheets. A suggested time sheet can be found in Appendix Q.

## **Supplies**

- 1) You will need the necessary supplies for each session which should be arranged with your agency supervisor such as paper products, toys and games, stickers, markers and flip chart paper.
- 2) Ensure that you have enough supplies and when you need to replenish these. You will need to alert your supervision a week prior to a supervision meeting to ensure that you do not run short of supplies.

## Appendix B: Reading list

We hope you enjoy these readings. They will inspire you and deepen your understanding of making meaningful family interventions. The following readings are useful sources for you to consult. Some of these can be downloaded from the internet. These are indicated with an \*.

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## Appendix C:

### Pre-engagement telephone script and checklist for recruitment

Use this telephone script to guide and support you when you call a family to make home visit appointments.

Hello. How are you? Is this \*\*\* speaking?

My name is \*\*\* and I am a social worker / programme facilitator working for \*\*\* organisation in your community. I was given your phone number by the principal of \*\*\* Primary School, where your child, \*\*\* [child's name], is a learner. Please may I have a few minutes to talk with you?

Are you getting a Child Support Grant for \*\*\* [child's name]? *[If the answer is yes, continue as below. If no, you may ask them if they would like their child to participate in programme. If they are unwilling to do so, thank them for answering your questions so far.]*

I am going to be running a programme for families that is going to start in [month] this year.

The programme will run for 14 weeks. It will be a fun group for your family to come to each week. In the group, we would like families to share what has worked for you to support your child's school work, how you have succeeded with some of the challenges of parenting, and ways this has made your family closer. We will also spend time discussing ways to deal with any other challenges you may have with parenting.

We want to invite you to join this programme. I am happy to answer some questions now. But what I would really appreciate is if I could come and talk with you at home to tell you all about it so you can decide if you want to be a part or not.

Could we make a time for me to come to your house to tell you about the group? Are you the person who looks after the child at home? *[If yes, make the meeting with them. If no, ask if that person can please be at the meeting.]*  
*[Confirm address, directions, time and date]*

Thank you so much. I look forward to meeting you.

*If they ask why they were selected, say:*

We are inviting a few families who are receiving a Child Support Grant from the school. We are not choosing each family for any reason, we just picked these names randomly from school lists given to us. Some of the children in the group may be struggling at school or at home, but many are just families who can be given a bit more support.

Answer any further questions, but keep the answers short.

### Basic information

**Question:** Who is invited?

**Answer:** Your whole family is invited. This means all the children, and any adults you live with who you consider to be part of your family. It doesn't matter if a few people choose not to come. There will be about five families coming to the group.

**Month:** Month / Year

**Day and time:** The exact day will be finalised later.

It will most likely be in the afternoon or at a time that is best for all the families. This is probably from 4pm to 6pm or 3pm to 5pm. We will have a childcare worker to run activities with the children when they aren't with the big group.

**Duration:** It will run for 14 weeks

**Venue:** In the community. We will confirm the venue with you.

## Checklist for recruitment

Before you meet or speak with the family, are you aware of any preconceptions you may have as a result of what you read or heard about the family?

- ☐ Did you introduce yourself, the agency, and your role in the programme?
  - Remember to stress that this is a collaboration with the school and that the programme is community based.
- ☐ Did you explain the goals of the programme?
  - The goals are to share your family strengths with other families about what works to meet your academic and behavioral goals for your child.
- ☐ Did you explain the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme's expectations of the family?
  - These include homework, attendance and participation.
- ☐ Did you discuss the family's expectations of the programme?
- ☐ Did you point out that families would serve as a resource for other families during the sessions so we all learn from each other?
- ☐ Did you address barriers and concerns to participation directly? This involves:
  - Reluctance to participate.
  - Validating their concerns and then explain how other families have worked it out in the past and were glad they participated in the programme.
  - Consulting a supervisor whenever an issue prevents the family from remaining engaged in the programme. When you seek such support, you model for the family how to seek appropriate support and help.
- ☐ Did you follow up with the family?
  - Even when the family agrees to attend the first meeting, make a follow up call the day before the first meeting to remind them.
- ☐ Did you ask the family about what their needs and overall concerns are about their child?
- ☐ Did you ask what they are doing to address these concerns?
- ☐ Did you point out strengths in the way the family is managing their situation when the opportunity arose?
- ☐ Did you find out the names of all adults who are involved in the primary care and rearing of the child in the group?
  - Some adults on the list may never attend a session yet they play an important role in putting into place any strategies that come out of a session. Remember to bear this in mind at all times.

## Appendix D: Recruitment field form



|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name of Ward and referral school     |  |
| Contact phone number                 |  |
| Address and directions, if necessary |  |
| Recruiter's name                     |  |

### Identified child information

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| Name     |  |
| Surname  |  |
| Age      |  |
| Grade    |  |
| Teacher  |  |
| Language |  |
| Gender   |  |

### Adult information

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| Name                                 |  |
| Surname                              |  |
| Language                             |  |
| Gender                               |  |
| Relation to child                    |  |
| Phone number                         |  |
| Best time for the programme sessions |  |

### Telephone recruitment

|                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| Recruiter's name                 |  |
| Date and time of the call        |  |
| Who did you speak to?            |  |
| Did you get permission to visit? |  |
| If yes, when?                    |  |



**Notes, including level of interest, type of questions and any concerns**

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**Home visit**

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Recruiter (+ name of anyone accompanying them)  |  |
| Date, day of week and time                      |  |
| First attempt?<br>If not, explain previous ones |  |
| Consent signed?<br>If yes, write the date       |  |

**Field notes, including names, age and gender of other family members as the facilitator meets them**

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## Appendix E: Recruitment letter



### Invitation to attend the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme

You and your whole family are invited to join us for the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.

The programme will be running from month \_\_\_\_\_ for 14 weeks.

In the group, we would like families to share what has worked for you to support your child's school work, how you have succeeded with some of the challenges of parenting, and ways this has made your family closer. We will also spend time discussing ways to manage challenges you may have with parenting.

Some of the topics we cover include parenting skills such as:

- Helping your child through school
- Family communication
- Financial literacy
- Healthy food guides and healthy lifestyles

If you and your family are interested, you can contact \_\_\_\_\_

on phone number \_\_\_\_\_. You can call or sms on this number.

## **Appendix F: Key things to remember when engaging with families**

### **Who are you and who do you work with?**

Give your name and the institutions the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme is working with, namely the agency that you work with and the University of Johannesburg (UJ). Say that UJ that may, from time to time, conduct research on the programme.

### **What is the programme about?**

The Sihleng'imizi Family Programme focuses on sharing your family strengths with other families about what works to help meet your child's academic and behavioural goals.

### **How does the programme work?**

The programme runs every week for 14 weeks. It is made up of small family groups. There are no more than five or six families in the group. The whole family is invited. The programme focuses on strengthening family, parenting, and children's development. Meetings are full of activities such as icebreakers, games, role plays, discussions, learning new things around parenting – and more! At the end of the 14 sessions, we have a graduation celebration with songs, certificates and fun.

### **Why do we work with families?**

- Research shows that working with whole families works better. This programme has been shown through research and practice to be successful.
- We focus on bringing families together to share their strengths and solutions, and to support each other to reach their goals.

### **When do the sessions happen and how long are they?**

There are 14 sessions. Sessions last for two hours and happen once a week, generally after school. The day and time will be whatever day and time works best for families. The time is usually between 3pm and 5pm or between 4pm and 6pm.

### **Where are the sessions run?**

We will try to secure space at a venue that is easy for all families to get to.

## Appendix G: Strengths-based and relationship-focused practice in family-centered preventive interventions<sup>1</sup>

### Definitions

#### *Family-centered*

Recognising the primacy of family in a child's development, and partnering with families to increase familial functioning and improve their children's school achievement and social functioning.

#### *Relationship-focused*

The process of establishing collaborative (rather than hierarchical) and mutually supportive relationships between families and service providers that are based on respect and trust.

#### *Strengths-based*

Focusing on family strengths and needs, and acknowledging what the family is doing well.

### What we know about families

We know that:

- Families are the essential protective factor for children living in risky environments.
- Families are the foundation for prevention of social problems or ill-being.
- Familial functioning is influenced by all members of the family.
- All families have strengths and want what is best for their children.
- Parents / caregivers are the experts on their children.
- Parents / caregivers can see what works and what doesn't, usually on their own, almost always with support.

### Guiding principles

- The relationship formed between the service provider and families directly influences family engagement. It serves as a model for relationships within and between families.
- Establishing a relational focus helps families see the systemic and reciprocal nature of their difficulties and decreases blaming.
- Building on familial strengths will increase competence, build parental / caregiver self-confidence, and empower the family to affect positive change.

### Working with families

When you work with families:

- Strive to build positive and nurturing relationships with families so they feel understood and supported.
- Focus on families' strengths and what *is* working.
  - Ask yourself, "What is going right?"
  - Help group members identify strengths and skills in themselves, their own families, and other families in the group.
  - Highlight and demonstrate ways the family can use these strengths in new ways meet challenges and solve problems.
- Facilitate parents / caregivers observations and understanding of their children's behaviour and their own responses to it.
- When moving into the teaching mode, be mindful of glazed eyes.
  - Use inquiry as intervention to gain more information.
  - Make sure that you let parents / caregivers know you care. Think about why you should care about families you don't know? Then think back to why you wanted to work for this programme. You may have reasons such as the greater issue of children's well-being.
- Remain objective:
  - Keep what you *see* and *hear*, and what you *think* separate.
  - Understand and differentiate your own needs from those that might be central to the family. Focus on helping families within the framework of the programme rather than, let's say, perhaps misunderstanding, or incorrectly presuming that your own views or suppositions should guide your work with the family.

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<sup>1</sup> Adapted from "Logic Model for Relationship-Based Practice" by Victor Bernstein. Bernstein, V.J. (2003). Strengthening families through strengthening relationships: Supporting the parent-child relationship through home visiting. Reprint from IMPrint, Newsletter of the Infant Mental Health Promotion Project (IMP), 35., 1- 5, Winter 2002-2003.

## **Appendix H:**

### **Stages in the family-interventionist helping relationship<sup>2</sup>**

#### **1 Recruitment phase**

- Families learn about the purpose and services provided by explicitly defining programme goals, components and expectations.
- Validate and address barriers and concerns to participation directly.
- Normalise and acknowledge the difficulties of parenting and the need for support.
- Ground rules are created in collaboration with families in the first formal group session.
- Lays the foundation for all future work.

#### **2 Acceptance – even when we disagree**

- We must accept the family's choices so long as they are not unacceptable. Unacceptable things are things such as being against the law, or established rules, or doing something that places the child in danger.
- Good listening, and your acceptance of racial and cultural issues as part of the discussions and meetings, will be a critical factor in fully engaging families.
- If a family member feels like they are being judged, they will resist the programme, so being nonjudgmental is essential.

#### **3 Understanding: listen first then provide information**

- a) Understand the family's perspective.
- Get to know and understand each family's culture, beliefs and practices, especially those related to child-rearing.
- Having awareness of issues related to ethnicity and culture will help the facilitator "join" with families. In other words, you will be able to define problems and implement interventions in a manner that is consistent with families' cultural norms and values.
- Hearing the family's point of view helps you to accept family practices that may differ from your own. It helps prevent you from imposing your own beliefs.
- Practice genuine curiosity:
  - Find out more by sharing observations and asking questions. This helps family members reflect on how they think and behave. You may comment on or ask in these ways:
  - "Help me understand..."
  - "I noticed that..."
  - "Tell me more about..."
  - "What are your reasons for...?"
  - "How is it working out?"
  - "Have you tried any other ways to...?"
- Encourage families to offer support and feedback to one another in the group.
- b) Share information

Facilitation over education. This means that it is most effective to allow knowledge and information to spring from the family or group rather than disseminating it from the top down from you to the family.

The more the group leader can facilitate group transactions that generate useful ideas from a range of group members, the more likely the information is to be accepted and applied.

#### **4 Mutual agreement**

Help families define their own goals after open dialogue in which perspectives and information are exchanged.

#### **5 Accountability / Follow up**

- Keep detailed notes from all the sessions to ensure continuity from one meeting to the next. But make sure that your note taking doesn't hinder your engagement in the session.
- Remember to follow up on what was discussed during the previous session, and inquire about homework and family progress. This gives the family a sense that they are important.

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<sup>2</sup> Adapted from "Logic Model for Relationship-Based Practice" by Victor Bernstein. Bernstein, V.J. (2003). Strengthening families through strengthening relationships: Supporting the parent-child relationship through home visiting. Reprint from IMPrint, Newsletter of the Infant Mental Health Promotion Project (IMP), 35., 1- 5, Winter 2002-2003.

## Appendix I: Family systems approaches

### Perspectives on Family Systems Intervention

The SAFE Children intervention is grounded in three primary models of family systems theory: the functional perspective, the structural-strategic perspective, and the sequential perspective.

#### Functional Perspective

The functional perspective (Alexander & Parsons, 1976; Alexander, 1983) assumes that: (1) family behavior is interdependent; (2) family behavior has a positive motivation (e.g. to maintain stability and / or the integrity of the family); and (3) focusing on finding solutions is more effective than explaining how problems developed. The functional model is oriented toward articulating each family member's function and helping them modify their behavior or find new ways to better fulfill those functions. This model also assumes that certain changes in families can lead to problems in functioning. These changes include:

- 1) Developmental changes in role relations / demands.
- 2) Situational or trauma related changes in family resources and demands.
- 3) The loss or addition of a family member.
- 4) The exacerbation of maladaptive parenting or problem-solving practices.

These changes can lead to problems if the family lacks the necessary skills, resources, or understanding to cope effectively. Persistent reliance on ineffective or developmentally inappropriate family organization and use of inconsistent and ineffective parenting practices correspond to well-demonstrated patterns of family interaction that can promote antisocial behavior (Beyers, Bates, Pettit & Dodge, 2003). In contrast, families can promote effective child development by meeting developmental and social challenges through organization and adaptation.

The functional model is particularly useful in:

- 1) Helping families to identify problems in a way that doesn't focus on ascribing blame to one family member (e.g. "scapegoating") or undermine the goal and values of the family.
- 2) Helping families identify strengths and contributions of each family member.
- 3) Helping families to clarify goals and articulating the developmental nature and systemic function of the behavior of each family member with an eye towards how to achieve these goals.
- 4) Identifying and practicing ways the family can better achieve its goals.
- 5) Eliminating or modifying family patterns that are maladaptive.

#### Structural-Strategic Perspective

The structuralstrategic model is one systemic approach to family intervention. Its distinct theoretical underpinnings are that (1) family problemsolving behavior has observable and regular patterns; and (2) these behavior patterns are expressions of current family relations / organization. By changing how family members interact around difficult problems (especially those where current relations are least positive or functional), therapists can instigate change in family relations and mitigate the need for dysfunctional symptoms. In recent research, this perspective has incorporated a view that includes focusing on family capabilities, identifying problem-solving and management tasks that are handled well, and applying these approaches to less functional areas of family life.

The structuralstrategic model combines structural techniques for facilitating in-session change (ex., directly working on family issues) and strategic techniques for facilitating outofsession change (ex., reframing and praising behaviors). This model is thought to be particularly useful in helping families with children at risk for antisocial behavior (Kazdin, 2002; Santisteban, Coatsworth, Perez-Vidal, Kurtinez, Schwartz, LaPerriere & Szapocznik, 2003; Santisteban, Coatsworth, Perez-Vidal, Mitrani, Jean-Gilles & Szapocznik, 1997). This approach is oriented toward helping the family improve organization and functioning, and, thus, becoming more developmentally and situationally adaptive in dealing with their children.

The goals of intervention from a structural perspective are:

- 1) To facilitate the emergence of more adaptive generational boundaries and alliances.
- 2) To articulate and modify shared values and conflicts and help family members express these values and conflicts more appropriately.
- 3) To build and / or maintain communication and social skills.
- 4) To improve problem-solving skills that can be applied across different situations.
- 5) To help families develop more adaptive relationships within their communities (e.g. clarify boundaries, build support systems), particularly their children's school or community-based center (i.e. YMCA).

Family therapist scholars and researchers (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006) outlined five fundamental assumptions of structuralstrategic family therapy:

- 1) Family problems arise due to failure to adapt to situational or developmental demands that strain or may require shifts in the organization of the family. Behavioral problems (e.g., persistence of behaviors that are no longer effective, application of behaviors that are illfitting to the context) can arise because of limitations in skills, knowledge, or support for managing family needs. These habits can be relied on and perceived as "adaptive" because they end tense family exchanges / behavioral sequences. Thus, less adaptive behaviors provide quick, habitual, coercive responses to commonly occurring family problems.
- 2) The major assessment and intervention focus is on the family's hierarchy (e.g., parents in charge), organization (knowing roles and rules), and problem-solving skills that constrain and determine the roles, behaviors, and meanings of family members' activities and exchanges.
- 3) Intervention is pragmatic and problemsolving oriented. Problems and family interactions to be modified, generalized, replaced or refined are readily approached through the behaviors and relationship characteristics observed during these interactions.
- 4) Behavior – as opposed to internal experience (e.g., insights, opinions, etc.) – is regarded as the most efficient focus for intervention. If family members can be helped to behave differently, they will begin to experience themselves and others differently. Targeting internal experiences may help to promote or maintain change, but it is not a necessary or sufficient prerequisite for implementing change.

The primary mode of intervention is to interrupt or redirect routines and habits regarding child management. Two important strategies for interrupting / redirecting behavior are:

- 1) Insession practice: reframing problems to redirect family interaction and practicing minute-by-minute skills and problem solving interactions.
- 2) Out-of-session practice: assigning home practice tasks oriented toward applying insession changes and facilitating the development of a more adaptive family organization.

## Sequential Perspective

The sequential model outlined in numerous family systems treatment approaches (Nichols & Schwartz, 2006) proposes that the pattern of greatest interest is the family's sequence of behavior when a problematic behavior occurs or a new requirement for managing child behavior arises in family life. Sequences of problematic behavior are embedded in an overall pattern of interaction so they may not be immediately evident to you or to the family. Sequenced patterns of behavior may repeat themselves over the course of a few minutes (e.g., a family fight over homework); over the course of few days (e.g., patterns of school attendance); over the course of months and years (e.g., problems related to school failure); or even over generations (e.g., family attitudes about school).

The sequential perspective is especially useful for:

- 1) Helping families identify how they get "stuck" around solving a problem.
- 2) Changing patterns of interaction around problems.
- 3) Changing sequences over time by changing patterns of behavior that occur over shorter periods of time.

## Family Systems Summary

| Perspective                 | Assumptions   | What is it useful for?   | How / When can it be applied? (Brainstorm examples)   |
|-----------------------------|---|--|---|
| <b>Structural-strategic</b> | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Family problem solving follows a consistent pattern</li> <li>2) Patterns reflect family relations, organization, and capabilities</li> </ol>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Applying existing positive and functional capabilities of the family to problem solving and conflict resolution</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine how family is organized / hierarchy</li> <li>• Examine roles and meanings attached to rules &amp; communication</li> <li>• Focus on modifying BEHAVIOR               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interrupt</li> <li>• Redirect</li> </ul> </li> </ul> |
| <b>Sequential</b>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Families have a typical sequence of behaviors around a problem which sheds light on their problem-solving style in general</li> <li>2) By changing “here and now” areas of family functioning, family will be able to shift patterns over domains and time</li> </ol> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Helping families identify how they get “stuck” around solving a problem</li> <li>• Changing patterns of interaction around specific problems</li> <li>• Changing sequences of interaction over time by focusing on more immediate problem solving interactions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Address specific problems</li> <li>• Translate the solving of specific problems into more holistic changes</li> </ul>  |
| <b>Functional</b>           | <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Behavior is interdependent</li> <li>2) Behavior is functional</li> <li>3) Dysfunction results from key changes</li> <li>4) Focusing on solutions is more important than focusing on how problems developed</li> </ol>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Avoiding blame</li> <li>• Identifying strengths</li> <li>• Clarifying goals and how family members' behavior correlates</li> <li>• Identifying &amp; practicing new ways to achieve goals</li> <li>• Eliminating or modifying maladaptive behavior</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Developmental changes</li> <li>• Change in economic situation</li> <li>• Loss of a family member</li> </ul>  |



## Appendix J: Questioning for strengths<sup>3</sup>

In trying to discover the strengths within the family and around the community, what sort of questions might one ask? There are several kinds of questions one might ask including. This obviously does not exhaust all likely questions. These questions are not meant to be a protocol. They rather reflect the kinds of concerns and interests that might arise, and help direct your attention, during conversations with the families, and to facilitate listening their stories.

### Survival questions

- How have you managed to thrive thus far, given all the challenges you have had to contend with?
- How have you been able rise to the challenges put before you? What was your mindset as you faced these difficulties?
- What have you learned about yourself and your child during your struggles?
- Which of these difficulties have given you special strength, insight, or skill?
- What are the special qualities (parent / caregiver and / or child) on which you can rely?

### Support questions

- What people have given you special understanding, support, and guidance?
- Who are the special people on whom you can depend?
- What is it that these people give you that is exceptional?
- How did you find them or how did they come to you? What did they respond to in you?
- What associations, organisations, or groups have been especially helpful to you in the past?

### Exception questions

- When things were going well in life, what was different?
- In the past, when you felt that your life was better, more interesting, or more stable, what about your world, your relationships, your thinking was special or different?
- What parts of your relationship with your child would you like to recapture, reinvent, or relive?
- What moments or incidents in your life have given you special understanding, resilience, and guidance with regards to child-rearing?

### Possibility questions

- What now do you want out of life for your child?
- What are your hopes, visions, and aspirations for your family / child? How far along are you toward achieving these?
- What people or personal / family qualities are helping you move in these directions?
- What does your family like to do?
- What are your / child's special talents and abilities?
- What fantasies and dreams have given you special hope and guidance?
- How can I help you achieve your goals or recover those special abilities and times that you have had in the past?

### Esteem questions

- When people say good things about you, what are they likely to say?
- What is it about your life, yourself, and your accomplishments that give you real pride?
- How will you know when things are going well in your life? What will you be doing, who will you be with, how will you be feeling, thinking, and acting?
- What gives you genuine pleasure in life?
- When was it that you began to believe that you might achieve some of the things you wanted in life? What people, events, and ideas were involved?

### Perspective questions

- What are your ideas or theories about your current situation?
- How do you understand, what kind of sense do you make of your recent experiences and struggles? How would you explain these to yourself, to me, or anyone else?

### Change questions

- What are your ideas about how things such as thoughts, feelings, behaviour, and relationships might change?
- What has worked in the past to bring about a better life for your family?
- What do you think you should or could do to improve your family's current status / affairs? How can I help?

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3 Saleebey, D. (2009). *The Strengths Perspective in Social Work Practice* (5<sup>th</sup> edition). Boston: Pearson Allyn & Bacon.

## Appendix K: Managing emotions through reflection<sup>4</sup>

It is important to be mindful of your emotions and how they are being portrayed. Being able to regulate your emotions while in the presence of families will help you be fully present and decrease the opportunity for a family to put up a guard. Reflection helps you learn to acknowledge those emotions and regulate them. The following guidelines are to help facilitators better understand, and work through, strong emotions that may arise while working with them.

### 1) Acknowledge your gut reactions and feelings

- Something a family member says or does may incite strong emotions within you. This is NORMAL. But it is important that it does not prove destructive to your relationship with the family.
- Acknowledge and learn from these feelings rather than suppress them.
- Make a conscious decision to try to understand what these feelings tell you about your own and the family's experience.

### 2) Asking for help is ENCOURAGED!

If you have a challenge, talk it out with a colleague, or raise it during group supervision. More likely than not, we have all experienced negative emotions toward a family member.

### 3) Inquire about your reactions and feelings

To help guide you in this process, ask yourself:

- How do I feel about this person?
- What about him / her rubs me the wrong way?
- Who does this person remind me of?
- Why do I think this relationship is difficult?
- Why do I feel defensive, angry, intimidated, anxious – or another emotion you identify?
- Why don't I like what the "other" is doing?
- What is it like to be this person? What is his / her experience?
- How are we alike and / or different?

### 4) What is the best way to move forward?

You may ask yourself:

- What can I do to change the relationship dynamic?
- How will I manage future interactions in which I am likely to feel the same way?
- What can I do to stop myself from immediately reacting?
  - For example, count 5 seconds before responding; repeat a soothing phrase to yourself
  - Any other suggestions?

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4 Parlakian, R. (2001). The Power of Questions: Building quality relationships with families. Washington, D.C.: ZERO TO THREE.

## Appendix L: Considerations for facilitating discussions<sup>5</sup>

### Goals of facilitation

The goals of facilitation are to:

- create a forum for group discussion
- educate
- articulate and respond to the group members' questions
- clarify and address issues.

### Facilitating behaviours checklist

- ☐ **Clarifying:** Interpreting, clarifying misunderstandings, defining terms.
- ☐ **Encouraging:** Being warm, friendly, responsive and respectful.
- ☐ **Evaluate:** Ask questions that encourage group members to examine an issue from a different perspective.
- ☐ **Gatekeeping:** Manage time and group participation.
- ☐ **Giving:** Offering facts or personal experiences to clarify a point.
- ☐ **Initiating:** Suggesting new ideas, definitions and approaches.
- ☐ **Orientating:** Bringing the group back to task.
- ☐ **Resolving conflicts:** Conciliating differences and cooperative problem solving.
- ☐ **Seeking:** Asking for suggestions and probing for more information.
- ☐ **Summarizing:** Pulling it all together and restating points.

### Characteristics of a good facilitator<sup>6</sup>

- active listening
- confidence to deal with conflict
- communicates effectively
- sense of humour (and the ability to use humour appropriately)
- ability to create a comfortable, cohesive, and safe environment
- good mediation skills
- ability to hear differing point of views
- ability to self-reflect
- integrity
- empathy
- flexibility.

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5 Kaba, M., Mathew, J.C. & Haines, N. (2009). Something is Wrong: Exploring the Roots of Youth Violence. Chicago: Chicago Freedom School.

6 Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. (2005). Substance Abuse Treatment: Group Therapy. Rockville (MD): Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (US). (Treatment Improvement Protocol (TIP) Series, No. 41.) Available from: <https://www.ncbi.nlm.nih.gov/books/NBK64220/>

## Appendix M: Checklist for effective practice

- ☐ Are you modelling behaviour and attitudes you want group members to follow?
- ☐ Are you focusing on strengths?
  - Ask yourself: "What is going right? And why?"
  - Ask yourself: "What is not working?" And why?"
- ☐ Are you treating the parent / caregiver as the expert on his / her child?
- ☐ Are differences such as race, class and power between the facilitator and group members acknowledged and discussed?
- ☐ Are you focusing on what the family's goals are?
- ☐ Are you providing information not evaluation?
  - When moving into the teaching mode, be mindful of glazed eyes. If you notice this, have an energiser, a song, or do something different for a couple of minutes to make everyone be engaged again.
- ☐ Are you being genuinely curious, using inquiry to gain more information, but not with questions you know the answer to?
  - Avoid cross-examining group members.
- ☐ Are you remaining objective?
  - Keep what you observe and your interpretation separate.
  - Remember to be mindful of your emotions and how they are being portrayed.
- ☐ Are you building upon small changes rather than hoping for big ones?
- ☐ Are you asking open-ended questions?
  - Avoid questions that permit only a "yes" or "no" response. Instead, ask what / when / how questions. For example, "Tell me what evenings are like in your home." Or, "How does your family make decisions about....?" Or, "What did you do after your mother scolded you and you felt bad?" Or, "When do you think is a better time to work on homework?"
- ☐ Are you engaging group members to identify strengths and skills within themselves, their own families, and other group members? Are you demonstrating how these strengths can be used to meet family challenges and solve problems?
- ☐ Are you encouraging families to offer support and feedback to one another in the group?
- ☐ Are you allowing knowledge and information to spring from the family or group rather than disseminating it from the top down?
- ☐ Did you reflect back on your interaction and take note of what went well and what did not?
- ☐ Did you follow up with families either by phone or home visit to facilitate in-home practice of exercises and to remind families of appointments?

## Appendix N: Practice scenarios: What would you do?

### Scenario 1

#### You can't trust it: Engaging a resistant family

The facilitator is conducting a home visit with a Sihleng'imizi family who missed the second group. The facilitator was unsuccessful with contacting this family prior to the second session but successfully contacted the family prior to the third session.

When checking in about their thoughts on the first group session and encourage future consistent attendance, the mother expressed that she wasn't comfortable being in the group. She said she did not want those other bad kids in the group to be a bad influence on her child. The mother also expressed that she did not trust that other families actually cared about their children's academic and behavioural goals. What can you say to this mother to encourage her to reconsider?

### Scenario 2

#### Grandmother negative about Nthando

It's Day 1 of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention. Two families are present. One of the families is led by a grandmother. She has been raising her Grade 1 grandson and his three siblings for the past nine years. Her husband (the child's grandfather) is also in the household and was the person who told you they would attend the family groups but Grandma is clearly the most outspoken.

You, the facilitator, never got a chance to speak with Grandma directly during the recruitment process, so this is the first time you're meeting each other. When Grandma walked in today, she was visibly skeptical. Grandma is clearly concerned about her grandson's behaviour and academic performance. Her grandson himself states that he has trouble controlling his anger. Grandma mentions how it's been really hard on her, working full time, raising her grandsons, and that they really need their mom (her daughter) in their life.

As the dialogue continues, you notice that Grandma repeatedly mentions her grandson's negative behaviour in school and at home. You notice that nothing positive is said about him. Yet prior to the session, when he arrived early and on his own, you talked to him about what he likes to do, and he mentioned that he loves playing soccer, is in the team, and attends practice every day after school. He is quiet and respectful but tends to defer to his Grandma and doesn't seem to want to talk a lot in front of the group.

**What do you do?** You'd like to encourage a more positive dynamic and more positive statements from Grandma about her grandson.

### Scenario 3

#### Old school, new school: A scenario in the "At home: Helping children to do their best at school"

During the activity in Session 2 called *At home: Helping children to do their best at school*, the facilitator begins a discussion about monitoring. The facilitator specifically asks them to share which ways to help their child at school work well, and which ways do not. Thabisa is a frustrated parent who explains that nothing she does works well because her only child, Lunga, always lies about what he is doing at home. When he should be reading, he is watching TV. When he should be doing homework, he is playing. Thabisa is a single mom, who works fulltime and recently enrolled in a nursing programme.

Thabisa expresses some guilt that she can't be as involved as she would like because she is not at home to keep an eye on him two nights a week when she has class. On these nights, Lunga is with Thabisa's mother who lives in the street behind Thabisa. Thabisa complains that her irresponsible brother, an uninvolved father of three, has overburdened their mother because her mom has been raising his children for the past ten years. As result, Thabisa believes that her mother, burnt out from her responsibilities with her son's children, is no longer the disciplinarian she used to be. On nights when Thabisa is in school, Lunga, without permission from Thabisa or his grandmother, spends time watching TV and playing games.

Thabisa expresses disappointment in her son for not being more responsible, for lying to her about his activities, disrespecting her rules and his grandmother, as well as causing her constant stress when she is not with him.

#### How should you respond to Thabisa?

## Appendix O: General session family evaluation tool



**Facilitator:**

**Date:**

**Group session:**

**Where:**

Please think about today's session and tell us your answers to these questions.  
Circle the face that show how you feel about today's group.

| Reflections   | Yes | A bit | No |
|---|-----|-------|----|
| Did you enjoy the group today?  |     |       |    |
| Did you understand everything you did in the group today?               |     |       |    |
| Do you think today's group was helpful for your family?                 |     |       |    |
| Do you think the pages in the workbook were useful for the group today? |     |       |    |
| Do you think the facilitator did a good job today?                      |     |       |    |

**Please tell us more about your answers. What was good? What was not good?**

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## Appendix O (a): Session evaluation with fidelity measure to be done with Session <sup>3</sup>



**Facilitator:**

**Date:**

**Group session:**

**Where:**

Please think about today's session and tell us your answers to these questions.  
Please circle the face that show how you feel about today's group.

|   | Yes | A bit | No |
|---|-----|-------|----|
| Did you enjoy the group today?  |     |       |    |
| Did you understand everything you did in the group today?               |     |       |    |
| Do you think today's group was helpful for your family?                 |     |       |    |
| Do you think the pages in the workbook were useful for the group today? |     |       |    |
| Do you think the facilitator did a good job today?                      |     |       |    |

**Please tell us more about your answers. What was good? What was not good?**

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PLEASE TURN THE PAGE OVER

|  | Yes   | It was a rush  | No   |
|--|---|--|--|
| We talked about the homework from last week.                                   |   |   |   |
| We talked about our school experiences.  |   |   |   |
| We talked about ways that parents / caregivers can be more involved at school. |   |   |   |
| We talked about how to ignore a child's bad behavior.                          |   |   |   |
| We talked about ways of monitoring children's school progress.                 |   |   |   |
| The facilitator gave us homework.  |  |  |  |



## Appendix 0 (b): Session evaluation with fidelity measure to be done with Session 7



**Facilitator:**

**Date:**

**Group session: 7**

**Where:**

Please think about today's session and tell us your answers to these questions. Please circle the face that show how you feel about today's group.

|   | Yes | A bit | No |
|---|-----|-------|----|
| Did you enjoy the group today?  |     |       |    |
| Did you understand everything you did in the group today?               |     |       |    |
| Do you think today's group was helpful for your family?                 |     |       |    |
| Do you think the pages in the workbook were useful for the group today? |     |       |    |
| Do you think the facilitator did a good job today?                      |     |       |    |

**Please tell us more about your answers. What was good? What was not good?**

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|  | Yes  | It was a rush   | No  |
|--|--|---|---|
| We talked about the homework from last week.                       |    |    |    |
| We talked about where anger might come from.                       |    |    |    |
| We talked about ways of dealing with anger.                        |    |    |    |
| We talked about how to ignore when a child is misbehaving.         |    |    |    |
| We talked about how to distract a child when they are misbehaving. |    |    |    |
| We talked about how to keep calm in a tantrum.                     |    |    |    |
| The facilitator gave us homework.                                  |  |  |  |

## Appendix O (c)

### Session evaluation with fidelity measure to be done with Session 11



**Facilitator:**

**Date:**

**Group session: 11**

**Where:**

Please think about today's session and tell us your answers to these questions. Please circle the face that show how you feel about today's group.

|   | Yes | A bit | No |
|---|-----|-------|----|
| Did you enjoy the group today?  |     |       |    |
| Did you understand everything you did in the group today?               |     |       |    |
| Do you think today's group was helpful for your family?                 |     |       |    |
| Do you think the pages in the workbook were useful for the group today? |     |       |    |
| Do you think the facilitator did a good job today?                      |     |       |    |

**Please tell us more about your answers. What was good? What was not good?**

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|  | Yes  | It was a rush   | No  |
|--|--|---|---|
| We talked about the homework from last week.       |  |  |  |
| We talked about wants, needs and obligations.      |  |  |  |
| We did a sticks and stones visual budget exercise. |  |  |  |
| We talked about money shocks.                      |  |  |  |
| The facilitator gave us homework.                  |  |  |  |

## Appendix P: Facilitator report template and weekly session fidelity checklist



|                                 |                                |
|---------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| <b>Facilitator's name:</b>      | <b>Date of session:</b>        |
| <b>Childcare worker's name:</b> | <b>Session number:</b>         |
| <b>Venue:</b>                   | <b>Number of participants:</b> |

| <b>Attendance information</b>   |  |
|---|--|
| a) Which families attended and who from those families?<br>b) Who was missing and note information about why. |  |

| <b>Evaluate the planning for the session</b>   |  |
|--|--|
| a) What was challenging about the planning?<br>b) What do you feel worked well?<br>c) Please comment on how well you worked with the childcare worker. |  |

|   |  |
|---|--|
| <p><b>Evaluate the session</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) What do you feel went really well?</li> <li>b) What was challenging about the session?</li> <li>c) Were you able to complete all the planned activities for the session? If no, please explain.</li> <li>d) What could be improved?</li> <li>e) How did your teamwork go with the childcare worker?</li> </ul> |  |
| <p><b>Evaluate the group participants</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Are there any participants that are of concern to you?</li> <li>b) Are families participating in the activities? Adults? Children? Siblings?</li> <li>c) Do you have any additional thoughts on this?</li> <li>a) <b>And how to respond?</b></li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>Notes for supervision</b> (refer to Appendix 1 to refresh)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) Please note down any concerns you would like to raise in supervision.</li> <li>b) What kind of support do you need?</li> </ul>   |  |
| <p><b>Sign:</b> _____ <b>Date:</b> _____</p>  |  |

## Appendix Q: Timesheet for childcare worker

[illegible]

Name:

**Signature:**

Date:

## Appendix R: Family consent form



- ☐ I agree to take part in the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.
- ☐ I understand that I may be contacted to be interviewed for research about the programme.
- ☐ I also agree that my child can take part in the programme and that he / she may be asked to provide feedback on the programme.
- ☐ I also confirm that the content of the programme has been explained to me and that I can withdraw at any time if I wish to do so.
- ☐ I confirm that the facilitator explained to me that any information shared with the facilitator or researchers will be kept confidential.

**Name:**

---

**Signature:**

---

**Date:**

---













## Appendix S: Parent process measure / final evaluation






**Date:**

**Area:**

Please circle the number from 1-5 that shows how much the following statements are true at this time.

| <b>A. About the programme</b>  | <b>Not at all</b>   |   | <b>Somewhat</b>  |   | <b>Very much</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1) The programme is well-organised.  | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 2) I believe the programme is helping my family.                             | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 3) I have received some useful information about how to help my family.      | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 4) I have been feeling better recently about the challenges my family faces. | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |

| <b>B. My family's participation in the programme</b>                      | <b>Not often</b>  |   | <b>Somewhat</b>  |   | <b>Very Much</b>  |
|---|---|---|--|---|---|
|   |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1) I participate in the group discussions.                                | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 2) My child participates in discussions.                                  | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 3) I participate in the group activities.                                 | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 4) My child participates in the group activities.                         | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 5) I encourage other caregivers in the group.                             | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 6) Other caregivers encourage me in the group.                            | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 7) Participating in the group makes me feel hopeful about my family life. | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 8) I feel that I learn something useful from the activities.              | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 9) I complete the homework activities.                                    | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 10) I look forward to the next session.                                   | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 11) My child looks forward to the next session.                           | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |

| <b>C. About the facilitator</b>                  | <b>Not at all</b>   |   | <b>Somewhat</b>  |   | <b>A lot</b>  |
|--|---|---|--|---|---|
|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| 1) I trust my facilitator.                       | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 2) My child trusts the facilitator.              | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 3) The facilitator is easy for me to understand. | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 4) The facilitator is helpful to me.             | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |
| 5) The facilitator understands me and my needs.  | 1   | 2   | 3  | 4   | 5   |

#### **D. Feelings you have about the programme**

1) Since starting the programme, what changes have you noticed in your family?

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2) How often do you used the methods discussed in the programme? Do you find these easy or difficult to use? Please explain.

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3) How useful was it having a Sihleng'imizi Buddy?

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4) Would you recommend the programme to your friends? Please explain your answer.

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5) What do you think should be changed about the programme?

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6) Is there anything else that you would like to share with us about the programme?

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**Appendix T:**  
**Samples of certificates to award at the end of Session 14**







# Childcare Worker **MANUAL**

2021

Leila Patel, Tessa Hochfeld and Jenita Chiba



**sihleng'imizi**  
we care for families



**science  
& technology**

Department:  
Science and Technology  
REPUBLIC OF SOUTH AFRICA



CENTRE FOR SOCIAL  
DEVELOPMENT IN AFRICA



**National  
Research  
Foundation**

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## Acknowledgements

We would like to thank Nal'ibali for the work they do in making beautiful illustrated children's stories available for others to use – as we have gratefully done in this manual.



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## Introduction

Helping children succeed in their home, school, social relationships and all aspects of their wellbeing is the reason for the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme. Your role as the childcare worker in the team and the programme is extremely important. You are a professional in your own right, and will have had training in understanding and implementing the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme.



### Your role and responsibilities

Your role is to support the facilitator in activities, and to especially focus on including the children in the programme. You and the facilitator must prepare for each session ahead of time, and also make sure that you have the necessary resources required for each of the children's activities.

The programme is designed for the WHOLE family to take part. But there are parts in the programme in most of the sessions where the children and adults are given separate activities to do. Your responsibility is to take the children to a different venue and facilitate the activities that align with each session.

It is essential that you and the facilitator are clear on how much time you will have, and when to return with the children.

When you do return, you will assist the children to give feedback to the adults about their experiences, and to show what they have made. You and the facilitator play an important role in demonstrating affirmation and praising of the children's efforts.

### You and the facilitator are a team

This programme cannot succeed without a good team relationship between the facilitator and yourself. It is the facilitator's responsibility to work constructively with you. Similarly, the programme cannot succeed if the children are considered peripheral to the process. So, it is important that both you and the facilitator engage and consciously integrate the children.

A central feature of the Sihleng'imizi Family Programme intervention is that the family works as a unit both in the sessions and at home. It is critical that the children are integrated completely in the intervention process.

We are sure you will find some fun games and other activity ideas in the *Extra resources: Games and stories* section at the end of the manual.

We hope you will enjoy your role, your contribution – and have fun with the children!

### **Plan and prepare for each session with the facilitator**



- You and the facilitator are a team. The success of each session lies with both of you because the children are essential participants in the programme.
- Schedule time before each session to go through the programme for that session together with your facilitator.
- Make sure you set a clear time frame for the children's sessions.
- Identify resources you will need over and above what is always to be brought to each session.
- Be sure to arrange with the facilitator on how to get the resources.
- From Session 3 for homework, families are asked to bring along a shoe-size cardboard box and 1 or 2 litre plastic bottles.

### **Resources**

Make sure you know what specific resources you need for each of the children's sessions, and that you have enough for each child. The facilitator and you can discuss this when you prepare for the session.

### **List of resources you need at every session**

- ☐ Games and story books for young children
- ☐ Felt pens (kokis) / crayons
- ☐ Colouring pages / paper for drawing
- ☐ Reward stickers
- ☐ Flip chart / chart paper
- ☐ Prestick (sticky stuff you use to stick things on the wall with)
- ☐ Pens / pencils

### **Time frames and time keeping are essential**

The children's sessions are breakaway sessions from the main sessions where the adults do their own activities with the facilitator. The children's sessions are generally fairly short. Make sure you know how much time you have for each of the children's sessions. Keep a check on the time when you are with the children so that you pace yourself with their activities and stick to the agreed time. Discuss the time frame when you go through the programme with your facilitator before each session. After the children have had their breakaway session, they rejoin the big group, and usually tell about or show what they have done.

### **Reading is rewarding!**

You may find opportunities here and there during the children's sessions, when they have completed their task, for reading and storytelling. Reading:

- stimulate children's imagination.
- helps children develop empathy.
- is a wonderful way families can bond through reading books together, or telling oral stories.
- helps children think of their own stories.

## Reading resources and tips

You can find many lovely short and beautifully illustrated stories by African authors to read online on a phone, laptop, or tablet or download on paper for free here:

<https://bookdash.org/books/> and <https://www.nalibali.org/story-resources/multilingual-stories>.

When you read a story, stop every so often and ask the children things like:

- What do you think happens next?
- How many (apples, animals, anything in the story) can you see?
- How do you think such and such a character feels?
- Do you like how the story ended?

Engaging like this helps children to think deeper about the story.

## Make up a story together

It can be lots of fun to make up a story together. Sit in a circle and ask one of the children to begin a story with just one phrase or sentence. The next child adds another phrase or sentence or two. You go around and around the circle until the story ends.



Examples for starting off –  
it can often help to begin with,

“Once upon a time....”:

- ...there was a very clever dog and it went on a mission to find....
- ...there were two children who loved to....
- ...a child called ..... won a competition to go and play chess in....
- ...in a little village far away there was a group of children who always solved mysteries together.....

## Language

Keep touching base with the children when you do activities to make sure they understand. Use languages the children are most comfortable to speak, and encourage the children to help and affirm each other throughout. Bear in mind the age range in your group of children and assist them in the way they need for their developmental stage.

---

## Session 1: Identify your family's strengths

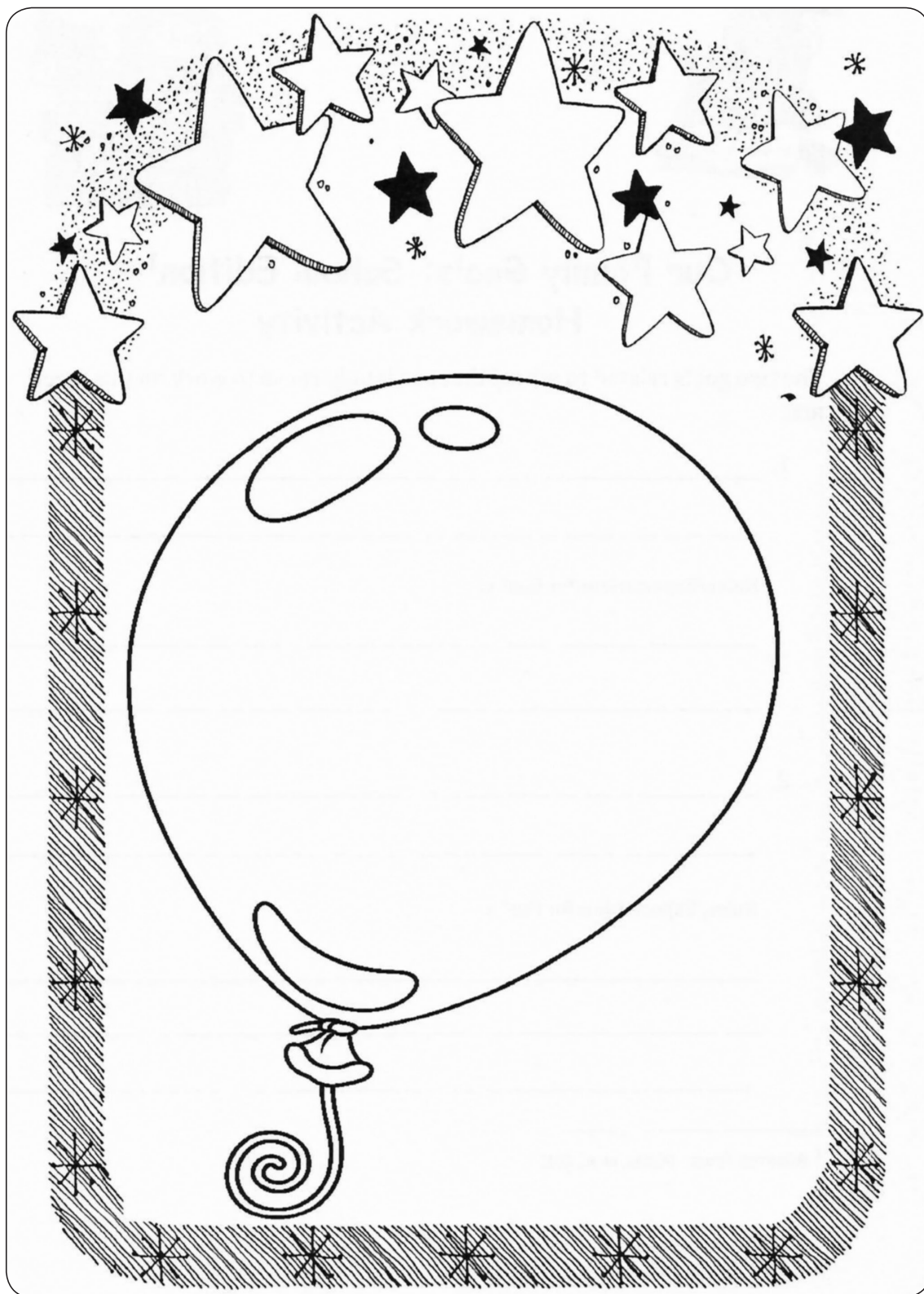
### You need:

- Paper and things to draw with.

In the programme for Session 1, there is no separate session with the children. However, if you and your facilitator feel at any point during the session that the younger children (under 5-year olds) are becoming bored, disruptive or distracting the group's work, the children can do a drawing activity whilst the group discussions take place. If the children are a bit too noisy, you can reassess whether to go to another venue.

- 1) Give each child a blank page piece of paper and some things to draw with.
- 2) Ask them to draw a picture of their family.
- 3) Ask them to draw the types of things they like to do with their family members.

## My hopes, dreams & goals



## Session 2:

### At home: Helping children do their best at school

The children will go with you to another venue before the parents and caregivers start their activity  
*Group discussion: Involvement in our children's education.*

#### You need:

- A copy of the *Hopes, dreams and goals* picture for each child. (See previous page).
  - Things to write and draw with.
- 1) When you are all settled, first ask the children to say what things they enjoy learning about. Show interest and ask encouraging questions.
  - 2) Give each child their own copy of the *Hopes, dreams and goals* picture on the previous page. It is also in the Sihleng'imizi Family Workbook.
  - 3) Give the children things to write and draw with.
  - 4) Ask the children if they understand these terms: hopes, dreams and goals. Explain as necessary.
  - 5) Invite the children to draw their hopes, dreams and goals on the picture you have given them.
  - 6) Wrap up by asking them to chat about the things that keep them going when they are frustrated. And the things they do that help them stay positive. Affirm all their constructive inputs. Remember not to judge what the children say.
- 

## Sessions 3:

### How to work in a cooperative way with your child's school

The children stay in the big group for the whole of Session 3. However, if you and your facilitator feel at any point during the session that the younger children (under 5-year-olds) are becoming bored, disruptive or distracting the group's work, here are some activity ideas. They might have to go to a separate venue.

#### Idea 1

- Ask which children go to school.
- Ask them to take turns to share a story about (a) what they like most about school, and (b) what they like least about school.
- Ask those children who don't yet go to school what they think happens at school.
- Ask all the children to chat about why it is important to go to school. If necessary, suggest some things to help them understand why it is important to go to school. Examples include: they will learn new things and new skills, they can make new friends, and they have time to play and have fun.

#### Idea 2

Ask the children to sing and act out songs they like. Prepare some fun songs for young children to teach them. Ask them to do movements and actions that go with the songs.

## **Session 4:**

### **Healthy meal and nutrition guidelines / Food preparation and personal hygiene**

The children stay in the big group for the whole of Session 4. However, if some of the younger children need to do something else so the big group can focus, you could do reading, storytelling, singing or a fun physical activity with them.

Key elements of Session 4 are nutrition and healthy lifestyle, including the importance of regular exercise every day. If the facilitator and you feel that some children are being restless or distracting the group's progress, here are some ideas for what you could do with the children:

- Ask them to mime (act without speaking) types of sports and other physical exercises. The others must guess what they are doing. You can start off by demonstrating something yourself.
  - Ask them to sing a song and do the actions to show the correct way to wash their hands so they can wash germs away and stay nice and healthy.
  - Ask the children to use their hands to show which foods are healthy. The others have to guess what they are describing with their hands. For example, you could demonstrate the shape of a spinach leaf and ask the children to guess what vegetable it is.
- 

## **Session 5:**

### **Developmental expectations of Grade R and Grade 1 children**

All of the children will go with you for this session after the icebreaker.

#### **You need**

- Paper and things to draw with.

Ask the children to chat about, and then draw, all or some of these things, depending on your available time:

- What things are you interested in, and enjoy doing?
- What do you like to learn about in school?
- What do you like to learn about in the world?
- What do you like to do with other children? For example, what games do you enjoy playing?
- What kinds of physical activities do you like to do?
- What chores do you think children your age could be helping with at home?

You can do a reading / storytelling activity with the younger children if they need to have something to do while the adult group is busy.

## Session 6: Strengthening communication with children and family members

The children will all go with you to play a game.

### You need:

- A copy of the *Family communication* game for each child
- Things to write and draw with.

- 1) Explain that this is a game where you think about the main person who looks after you. Then you think of some special things you know about them. Tell the children what the four questions are (see the table).
- 2) Give an example from your own life to help the children understand. You will need to assist children who can't yet write. It doesn't matter how children who can write spell things, just so long as it is understandable.
- 3) Ask the children to now think about the person they want to answer the questions about.
- 4) Explain that when they go back to join the big group, they will share what they said in the game with their family. It will be fun to see whether they were accurate in what they said.

### Family communication game for children

Answer these questions about the one main person who looks after you. It could be your mom, dad, granny, aunt, uncle or another caregiver.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| What is their favourite food?                    | Who is their best friend?                                    |
| What is their favourite thing to do as a family? | What is something they do well that you can praise them for? |



## Session 7: How to manage difficult behaviour

In this session, all the children will go with you to make and decorate Mood Balls and Calm Down Boxes. Both objects are very important because we ask families to use them throughout the programme. Families can earn reward stickers for this. It is especially important to discuss making them in the limited time with your facilitator. Completing their Cool Down Box is part of Session 7's homework. Please bring along your own examples of a Mood Ball and Calm Down Box.

### Time alert!

You will most likely find the children are very enthusiastic about making their own Mood Ball and Cool Down Box. Please be extra mindful of the time frame your facilitator has given for this activity. Before you begin, explain to the children that they will be able to complete their boxes at home.

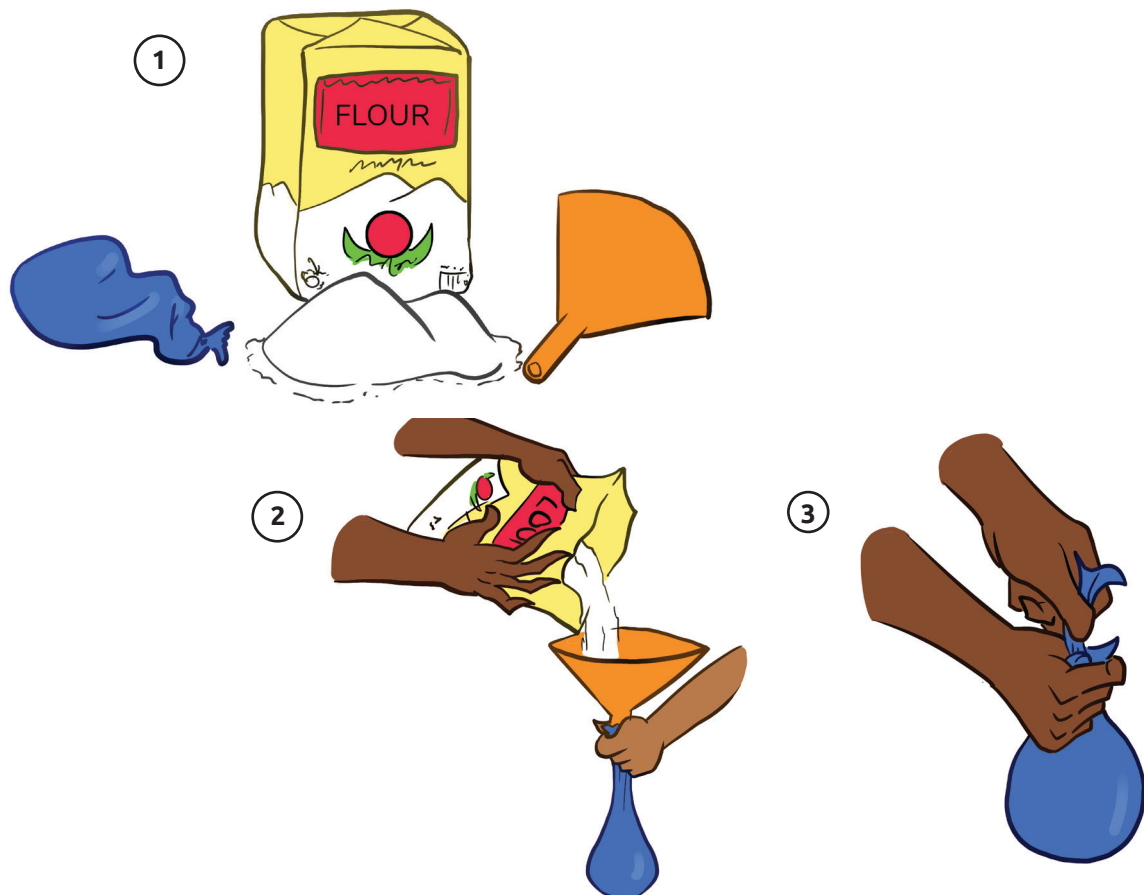


## Mood Ball

### Example of a Mood Ball

#### For the Mood Ball you need:

- A Mood Ball that you prepared before the session.
- A balloon for each child.
- If the opening of the balloon is quite small, you might need a funnel to help pour the filling into it.
- A safe filling for the Mood Ball such as flour, small beans or dry mealie-meal.
- Something, such as string, to tie the Mood Ball's opening, if it is difficult to tie it.





- 1) Ask the children to sit in a circle. Go around the circle and ask each child to say whether they ever get difficult feelings. For example, do they ever feel frustrated, angry, irritated or another emotion that isn't a happy one? Give an example of your own to start off with and then ask them to share their own (don't spend too long on this).
- 2) Show them your Mood Ball and explain that it is a really special thing that they will also make for themselves and it will belong to them. Say that when they have those difficult feelings, they can squeeze the Mood Ball to help release stress and other difficult feelings.
- 3) Give each child what they need to make their Mood Ball and they can start making them.
- 4) Assist the children who might find it difficult to pour in the filling, or to tie their Mood Ball nice and securely.
- 5) Say, "Let's use our Mood Balls now!" Make a fun thing of squeezing yours using appropriate facial expressions. Ask them to join you in practising using their Mood Balls.
- 6) Say that families can earn reward stickers when they use their Mood Balls.

4



# Calm Down Box

## Example of a Calm Down Box

### For the Calm Down Box you need:

- A Calm Down Box you have made, decorated very simply, with a couple of items in. You don't want your Calm Down Box to look way out of the realm of what the young children are likely to be able to make. Write your name on your Calm Down Box.
- A shoe box size cardboard box for each child. You and the facilitator would have started to request families to bring them in since early in the programme.
- Things to draw on and decorate the boxes with and to stick things on them. Examples include: nontoxic paints, crayons, glue, magazines, ribbon, glitter, buttons, shells, empty chip packets or sweet wrappers, bottle tops (preferably not alcohol ones), and wrapping paper (brown or coloured)
- Child-friendly scissors.



- 1) Show the children your Calm Down Box. Lift the lid and show them the things that calm you that you have put inside. One thing could be a photo of someone looking happy. Explain that the things you put inside help you to feel calmer when you have difficult feelings.
- 2) Tell the children that they are each going to make their very own special Calm Down Box. Ask them, "When do you think your Calm Down Box will come in useful for you?"
- 3) Explain that a Calm Down Box is a perfect way to help us feel better. It can:
  - help us calm down from having a tantrum.
  - keep us busy and creative while we are waiting for something.
  - help us feel less upset when we have difficult feelings, such as when we are frustrated, angry, left out or sad.
- 4) Ask the children to start decorating their Calm Down Box. Ask them to write their name on their Calm Down Box. You might need to help the very young children do this. Say that it will be their own unique and special Calm Down Box.
- 5) Say that in the coming week, together with their parent / caregiver's help, they need to find things to put into their Calm Down Box. A Calm Down Box should have in it things that are nice to look at, touch, smell, or listen to. Ideas could be a smooth stone, a soft cloth, a pretty smelling flower, a special photograph, or something they might have been awarded for doing well. Other good ideas to include are things that require concentration, like books, colouring pencils, Play-Do, and puzzles. We calm down when we breathe deeply, so blowing bubbles can help too.
- 6) When the time is up, take the children back to the big group where they will have an opportunity to show what they have made. The children can also say what they have to do with their Calm Down Box for homework with their parent / caregiver.



## Session 8: Negative behaviour management using the cool down corner

All the children will go with you for this activity.

### You need

- Paper and things to draw and colour in with.
  - A copy for each child of the illustration at the bottom of the page.
- 1) Say, "All children misbehave and make mistakes sometimes. When we know the rules in our family and we break them, we must expect a consequence. A consequence is when, because someone did something negative, like breaking a rule, they are likely to receive discipline as a result of it. The discipline is a consequence. Think of a rule at school and what happens – what is the consequence – when someone breaks it?"
  - 2) Say that the adults are doing an activity about rules and discipline. You want the children to do a drawing with three panels.
    - The first panel shows a way that you misbehave at home.
    - The second panel shows what punishment you think you should get for that misbehaviour.
    - The third panel shows an idea on how to prevent doing that misbehaviour in the first place.
  - 3) If there is time, ask the children to explain their drawings to each other. Remember to affirm their efforts.
  - 4) If you have any time left, give the children each a copy of this drawing to colour in here, or at home.



## Session 9:

### Ways to promote positive behaviour and ways to resolve conflict

All the children will come with you to do this activity.

#### You need

- A copy of the outline on this page for each child.
- 1) Sit in a circle and say, "Today we're going to talk about friendship. Let's go around the circle and end this phrase: 'A good friend is someone who...'"
  - 2) Give each child the outline to draw and write on. Ask them to write and draw a picture to show the different things that make a person a good friend. Whilst the children are busy with the activity, you can read the story you will find in the *Extra resources* to them. It is called *The best, best friend* written by Jude Daly.

## What makes a good friend?



## Session 10: Redefining family rules and consequences

All of the children will accompany you to do an activity while the parents / caregivers discuss rules and consequences.

### You need

- A copy of the illustrated story for each child to follow.
  - Colouring pencils / crayons.
- 1) Give each child a copy of the illustrated story. Sit in a story-telling circle.
  - 2) Read the story to the children, and ask them to say what happens in the story. Also ask:
    - a) What do you think the father asked his children to do before the picture story begins?
    - b) Did the children do what their father asked, do you think?
    - c) What reward did the children get for playing nicely, as their father asked them to?
    - d) Do you think Special Time is a nice reward? Why?
    - e) What would be an okay consequence for the father to give the children if they didn't let him work?
    - f) How do you feel when you get punished for doing something against the house rules?
    - g) How do you feel when your parent / caregiver notices your good behaviour and you get a reward for it?
  - 3) If there is time, put out the stationery and invite the children to colour in their pictures.



## Session 11:

### Doing a household budget

All the children will go with you to do a drawing activity.

#### You need

- Three pieces of paper for each child – before the session, write the following headings on each of the three pieces of paper in each child's set:
    - 1) Not expensive.
    - 2) Quite expensive.
    - 3) Very expensive.
  - Magazines, adverts for different things ranging from essentials to luxury goods from shopping catalogues.
  - Child-friendly scissors.
  - Glue.
  - Things to draw and colour in with.
- 1) Tell the children that the adults are talking about family budgets. Explain that budgets are how we work out how much money comes in to a family, and how much money must be spent on different things.
  - 2) Give each child their three pieces of paper with the different headings. Say that you would like them to make pictures of things that are not expensive, are quite expensive and that are very expensive on the different pieces of paper.
  - 3) Chat with the children as they think about what to draw, or cut out and stick in the different categories.
  - 4) Encourage them and praise them if they are doing well. Say that they will have a chance to show what they have done to the big group.

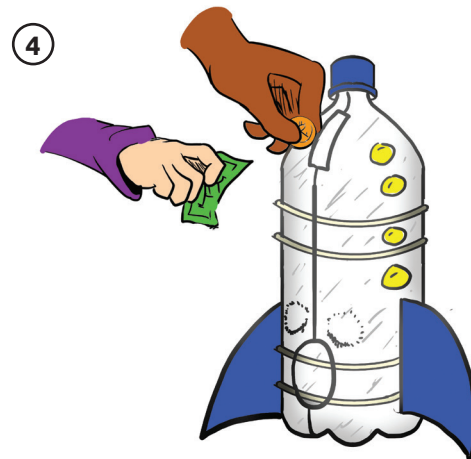
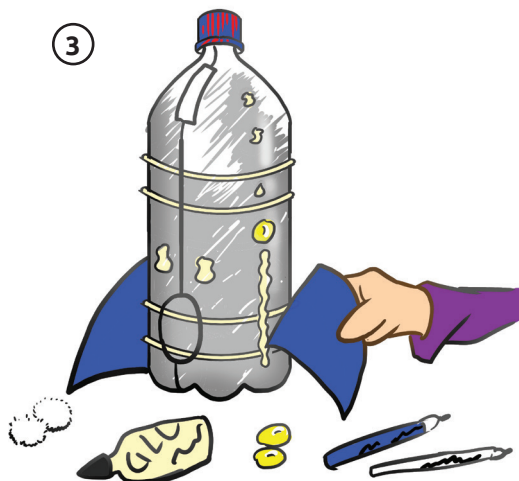
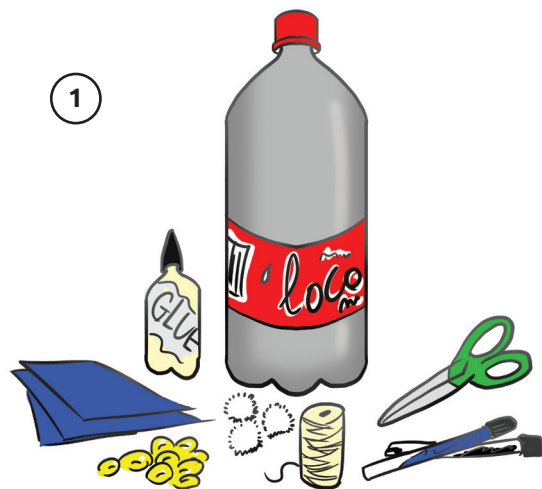
## Session 12:

# Ways to save money and make a family savings plan

All the children will leave with you for this activity.

### You need

- To have already made a very simple money savings container to show the children, or show them the pictures on the page.
  - The plastic bottles with lids that everyone has been collecting. They must be clean and dry.
  - Coloured paper to wrap around the middle of the bottle.
  - Corks for the feet, if any children choose to make an animal.
  - Glue and sticky tape.
  - Things to draw with, such as felt pens.
  - Things to decorate the savings container with, much the same as for the children's Calm Down Boxes.
- 1) Explain that they are going to use the bottles to make savings containers.
  - 2) Either show the children the savings container you made, or show them the pictures on the page. Show how coins and notes get put in through a slit that you will cut out of each child's bottle. Explain that they will use it with their families at home to slide in coins and notes for savings.
  - 3) Give each child a bottle and ask them to strip off the label and to make their own savings container. Say they can decorate it however they would like to. Say their own savings container will be special.
  - 4) When the time is up, ask all the children to give each other a round of applause. Say you are sure that the adults are going to be very impressed to see their creativity.





## Session 13:

### How to get and use social support services

All the children will accompany you to complete an activity about their support systems.

#### You need

- A copy of the support system form for each child, in addition to the general resources you bring for each session.
- 1) Say, "All of us, even older children, teenagers, adults and elders, need help every so often when we face a challenge." Ask them if they agree. Give an age appropriate example of someone or somewhere you go to when you need a particular type of support.
  - 2) Say that you are going to read through a form. It asks who they can trust to ask for help them if they ever need it for the different challenges you will read out one by one.
  - 3) Also mention that if they ever get lost they should approach a policeman, or someone who resembles a mother or granny.

#### Potential child at risk

If, whilst doing this activity, you find there are children unable to provide a go-to person, alert the facilitator.



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## Support System

### Who can I call when...

I'm feeling lonely:

I need some company:

I need someone to talk to:

I need someone to encourage me to get out of the house and do something fun:

I need someone to remind me to follow my self care plan:

Who I need to contact if I ever get lost:

Other:



## Session 14:

# Social support & Evaluate the programme

This is the final session and there is no separate children's activity.

### Extra resources

## Games

Here are some ideas for games to play with children, if there is time after they have completed their activity, or with the children under five years of age who might not manage sitting with the big group all the time. If you have children three years or under, who might put objects in their mouth, rather don't play the game *Kudoda or Button, button, who's got the button?*

### Red light, green light

With enough room, this game can easily be played inside. One person is the traffic light at one end, and the other players are at the other end. When the traffic light faces the group, he or she says, "Red light!" and everyone must freeze. The traffic light then turns his or her back and says, "Green light!" while the group tries to get as close to the traffic light as possible. The traffic light turns around quickly, again saying, "Red light!" If anyone is spotted moving, they have to go back to the starting place. The first person to tag the traffic light wins and gets to be the next traffic light.

### Kudoda

There are a few variations of this game, all which need at least three players to make it fun. The game is all about quick fingers. In Kudoda, players sit in a circle around a wooden or metal bowl filled with 20 to 30 small stones or marbles. The first player picks up one of the stones and throws it up in the air. Before it drops down, the player tries to pick up as many other stones in the bowl as they can. After all players have had a chance, the stones are counted and the one who collects the most is the winner.

### Nyama-nyama-nyama

"Nyama!" is what you have to shout out when the leader in the game mentions an animal that can be eaten. In nyama-nyama-nyama you stand in a circle, with a leader in the middle. The group jumps up each time an animal is named. So the leader might say: "Potatoes! Horse! Rice! Chicken!" The other children jump when "chicken" is said.

### Skipping

This game starts from the ankle, working all the way up to the neck. All you need is a skipping rope. Two players hold each end of the rope. They swing the rope in a circle motion often while singing a song. A third player jumps in the middle, skipping as the rope turns. The two players on each end start swinging the rope low, which is easy for the jumper, then gradually progress by lifting the rope higher and higher – to the knee, thigh, then waist, until the third player can't jump high enough. A fourth player can also be introduced, which makes it more challenging.

### Red rover

Divide everyone into two teams. Each team forms a long line. The two teams should be around 20 or so feet apart. Each team holds hands and they face each other. The teams take turns to call out, "Red Rover, Red Rover, let <insert child's name> come over!" That child leaves their team's line and runs as fast as they can toward the other line where they try to break through the team's held hands. If they break through, they get to take someone back to their own team. If they don't, they join the new team. When a team only has one person left, that person tries to break through the other team. If they do not, then their team loses. If they do, they gain a player and the game continues.

### **Button, button, who's got the button?**

Played inside or outside, the group sits or stands in a circle. Each player holds their hands together in front of them. One person takes the button and goes around the circle, pretending to put the button in someone's hands. They actually put the button in another person's hands, but they continue the rest of the way around the circle, pretending to put it in everyone else's hands. Then, going around the circle, each player tries to guess who actually has the button.

Before each person's guess, the group asks together, "Button, button, who's got the button?" Then the player can state their guess. Once the player with the button is finally correctly guessed, that person gets to distribute the button during the next round.

Because a button is used in this game, be sure that all the children playing are old enough so as to not choke on the button. In another version of this game, one child stands in the middle of the circle, and the button gets passed around the backs of the rest of the group. Those without the button pretend to pass it. When the passing stops, the player in the middle has to guess as to who actually has the button.

### **Stand up!**

Children stand back to back in pairs and link arms. One bends down so that the other lies flat on her back, with her legs in the air. Then they return to the middle, and the other bends down. Still linking arms, each pair sits on the floor. Now, without letting go of their arms, they try to stand back up again!

### **My favourite things**

**You need:** A piece of paper divided into four sections for each child, colouring pens and pencils.

Ask the children to draw, one in each section: their favourite toy, food, person and animal. When they have finished, ask the children to sit in a circle with all the pictures in the middle. Can they guess whose picture is whose?

### **Never have I ever**

Children sit around in a circle and put ten fingers out in front of them to keep score. One child starts by saying, "Never have I ever...." and then states something that they have never done. If any of the other children have done that particular thing, then they must turn one finger under. Play continues until someone has turned all 10 fingers down. Then they are out.

It won't take long before children realise that the idea "Never have I ever" is something that they haven't done but lots of other children have. For example, "Never have I ever been on an airplane" or "Never have I ever worn pink" or "Never ever have I eaten meat".

### **Puzzle it out!**

#### **You need**

- Magazines or newspapers.
- Cardboard.
- Child-friendly scissors.

Make your own puzzle! Cut a picture out of a magazine or newspaper – or draw your own. Glue the picture onto a piece of cardboard and draw lines on it to divide it into the number of pieces you want your puzzle to have. Now cut along the lines. Mix up the pieces and do your puzzle, or give it to a friend to build.

## Story seeds

These stories only have the beginning written. After listening to the beginning of the story, the children make up the rest of the story.<sup>1</sup>

### Cat catty

Here's a silly little story to read and act out like a play, with 3 or more parts. The ending is left open for you to finish yourselves.

One day a mouse went to visit a cat and can you guess what the cat was doing? She was sitting and sewing...

The mouse said:

What are you doing Cat Catty, Cat Catty,  
What are you doing Cat Catty Cat Cat? The cat answered proudly:  
I'm sewing pyjamas, Mouse Mousie, Mouse Mousie,  
I'm sewing pyjamas Mouse Mousie, Mouse Mouse!

The mouse laughed and said:

I can't wait to see them Cat Catty, Cat Catty,  
I can't wait to see them Cat Cattie, Cat Cat!

The cat replied, with just a hint of anger in her voice:

You're laughing at me Mouse Mousie, Mouse Mousie  
You're laughing at me Mouse Mousie Mouse Mouse!

The mouse laughed again, pointing at the cat and squeaking:

A cat in pyjamas Cat Catty, Cat Catty  
A cat in pyjamas Cat Catty, Cat Cat!

At that moment, the cat stopped sewing and ... **what do you think happened next?**

### Thandi's new hairstyle

One day, Thandi went to school feeling a bit shy. Her older sister had put braids in her hair. Thandi really liked them but she was worried that the other children would stare at her because she looked different. First, a boy came up to her and tugged at one of her braids.

"What are these?" he asked laughing.

Thandi felt like crying. Just then Zulfah and David ran up to her.

Zulfah said, "Oh, Thandi, you look..." **What did Zulfah say next? What happened next?**

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1 These seed stories are from Nal'ibali <https://www.nalibali.org/story-resources/multilingual-stories>.

### **Animal rescue**

Early one rainy morning, David woke up to the sound of “Miaow, miaow, miaow” outside the window. He woke up his dad and together they went outside to look. They saw a tiny, thin, black kitten hiding up a tree.

“She looks very scared and weak,” said David.

The kitten looked at David and miaowed even louder.

“I think she might be hurt,” said David’s dad. “Let’s get the ladder and...” **What happened next?**

### **The giant cabbage**

One day Zinthle’s granny sat and watched Zinthle picking tomatoes in their garden.

“Here, Granny, taste this,” said Zinthle handing her grandmother a round, red tomato. “I grew it myself!”

“Thank you, Zinthle, you really have green fingers,” said Granny.

Zinthle laughed. “I don’t think so, Granny. I just use Uncle Lazola’s growing recipe.”

“Oh yes,” said Granny. “Your uncle is very proud of his recipe! Have I ever told you the story of Uncle Lazola’s giant cabbage?”

“No,” answered Zinthle. “Can you tell me now?”

“Alright,” replied Granny. “One Saturday morning Uncle Lazola bought a packet of cabbage seeds...”

**What happens next?**

### **A silly thing to do**

One rainy break time, all the children had to stay inside the classroom. After they had finished eating, some of the children decided to make up a new hip hop dance together.

It was fun until Themba said, “Hey, I know, let’s dance on the desks!”

He jumped onto a desk and... slipped right off onto the floor!

“Ow, ow, my ankle,” cried Themba. “It’s burning!”

Themba’s friends ran off quickly to find their teacher... **and ...**

# Stories

## The best, best friend<sup>2</sup>

Author: Jude Daly

Illustrator: Magriet Brink and Leo Daly

Layla loved jigsaw puzzles. She loved everything about them – from the picture on the box to the moment when she fitted the last piece in its place. She even liked the sound and the feeling of the pieces as she shifted them around on the table. So every Saturday morning, when Layla's mother took her to the library to change her library books, Layla also took out a puzzle.

Now, the librarian kept all the puzzles on a shelf behind her desk and each Saturday when Layla asked if she could look for a puzzle to borrow, the librarian would say, "Wow, Layla, but you are puzzle mad!" And Layla didn't mind at all because she WAS puzzle mad!

Most Saturdays after the library, Shireen, Layla's best friend, came over to play. Well, she was almost Layla's best friend, except for one thing – Shireen had to be the best at everything.

One Saturday morning, Layla borrowed a puzzle of an African fish eagle from the library. The picture showed the bird high up in the sky with its wings spread wide and a fish in its claws. The puzzle had more pieces than any puzzle Layla had ever done. And not only that, the pieces were also smaller than any puzzle Layla had done. Layla could not have been happier! But Shireen was not at all happy because all Layla wanted to do was start the puzzle.

"I don't want to do a boring puzzle," said Shireen. "Let's rather play shop-shop."

"Okay," said Layla, "and then we'll do my puzzle."

"I'll be the shopkeeper," said Shireen, "because I'm best at being the shopkeeper, and you can be my customer."

Soon Layla had spent all her money. Then Shireen said, "Let's play hospitals."

"No," said Layla. "I played shop-shop. Now let's do my puzzle."

But for some reason, Shireen still did not want to do the puzzle, so she said, "Let's play hospitals now and then we can do the puzzle after lunch."

And so that's what they did.

"I'll be the doctor," said Shireen.



<sup>2</sup> This story is from Nal'ibali <https://www.nalibali.org/story-resources/multilingual-stories> [Accessed 22.10.2020]

"No, you were the shopkeeper," said Layla. "I'll be the doctor."

"But you can't be," said Shireen, "because I'm best at being the doctor."

So, Shireen was the doctor and Layla was the sick person!

When Doctor Shireen started to examine the sick person, she tickled the sick person and the sick person got the giggles and wouldn't lie still. So Doctor Shireen shouted, "Keep still or I won't play with you anymore."

But before Doctor Shireen could get any more cross, Layla's mother called them for lunch.

"I hope you girls are having a good time," said Layla's mother.

"Yes," said Layla who was about to bite into her yummy roti filled with peanut butter, grated carrots and sultanas. "After lunch we are going to do my puzzle."

"I don't want to do your puzzle," said Shireen.

"But you promised," said Layla.

"Well, now I don't want to. I want to do some colouring in," said Shireen.



By now, Layla was tired of Shireen's "I-am-the-best-at-everything" talk and cross with her for breaking her promises. Nothing was going to stop her from doing the puzzle. So after lunch, Layla gave Shireen a colouring-in book and some crayons so that Shireen could colour in while she did the puzzle. But there was only one picture left to be coloured in in the colouring-in book and Shireen soon finished it. Then she held it up to show Layla and said, "You're so slow!"

"That's because this puzzle is hard," said Layla.

"I bet I could do it faster than you," said Shireen.

"Okay," said Layla, "when I have finished it, you can try doing it and then let's see!"

"Okay," said Shireen, "but only if I want to."

Once Layla had finished the puzzle, she broke it up. She put all the pieces back into the box except for the piece with the eagle's eye on it. And then she gave the box to Shireen.

"Here you go," she said, "your turn now."

"I don't feel like it," said Shireen.

"But you promised!" said Layla.

"No, I didn't!" Shireen shouted. "I said only if I wanted to and I don't want to."

"Maybe you don't want to because you can't do puzzles," said Layla.

"I can!" Shireen shouted back. "I'm the best at puzzles!"

"So do it then," said Layla.

Shireen grabbed the box from Layla. "I will," said Shireen, "but only if you go and play outside. I'll call you once I've finished it." Layla went outside and drew some pictures in the sand with a stick while, inside, Shireen opened the puzzle box and started turning the puzzle pieces picture-side up. Outside, Layla found a piece of old rope and tied it around the loquat tree so that when Shireen was finished with the puzzle they could play skipping. But inside, Shireen was struggling to fit the pieces of the puzzle together. She wished that she had not said that she was the best at puzzles. Quickly, she broke

up the bit of the puzzle she had managed to do and put all the pieces back into the box. Then she ran outside and called to Layla who by now had climbed high up in the loquat tree, "I've finished!"

"All of it?" asked Layla.

"Yip," said Shireen and she began climbing up into the tree.

"Stop!" Layla shouted back. "I'm coming down to see."

"But I have packed the puzzle away already," said Shireen.

"Why?" asked Layla.

"So that you don't have to pack it away later," replied Shireen.

"Oh," said Layla, "but what about this piece?" She held up the piece with the eagle's eye on it that she had kept.

Shireen went very quiet. She sat in the tree feeling foolish.

After a little while, Layla shouted, "Hey, guess what, I found some ripe loquats. Do you want some?"

"Yes, please," said Shireen in a teeny little voice.

Layla climbed down to the lower branch where Shireen was sitting and handed her some. And there they sat, eating loquats and seeing how far they could spit the pips.

Shireen spat the furthest.

"You're the best," said Layla.

"And you," said Shireen, "are the best, best friend."

## IsiZulu

ULayla wayewathanda amaphazili akhipha umfanekiso othile. Wayethanda konke nje ngawo – kusukela esithombeni esisebhokisini ukuya esikhathini lapho efaka ucezu lokugcina endaweni yalo. Wayethanda nomsindo kanye nendlela okuzwakala ngayo izingcezu lapho ezinyakazisa etafuleni. Ngakho-ke njalo ngoMgqibelo ekuseni, lapho umama emhambisa emtatsheni wezincwadi ukuze ayoshintsha izincwadi zakhe zasematsheni wezincwadi, uLayla wayethatha nephazili.

Manje-ke, umsizi wasematsheni wezincwadi wayegcina wonke amaphazili eshalofini elingemuva kwedeski lakhe futhi njalo ngoMgqibelo lapho uLayla ecela ukuboleka amaphazili, umsizi wasematsheni wezincwadi wayethi, "Ncinci, Layla, kodwa uyazifela ngamaphazili!" NoLayla wayengenandaba ngoba WAYEZIFELA ngawo!

IMigqibelo eminingi ngemva kokuya emtatsheni wezincwadi, uShireen, umngani omkhulu kaLayla, wayezodlala. Empeleni, wayecisheabe ngumngani kaLayla omkhulu, ngaphandle kwento eyodwa – uShireen kwakumele kube nguye ohamba phambili ezintweni zonke.

Ekuseni ngomunye uMgqibelo, uLayla waboleka iphazili yeNkwazi yase-Afrika emtatsheni wezincwadi. Lesi sithombe sasikhombisa inyoni iphezulu esibhakabhakeni ivule amaphiko ibambe inhlanzi ngamazipho ayo. Iphazili yayinezingcezu eziningi kunamaphazili uLayla ake wawenza. Kwakungekhona lokho kuphela, izingcezu zazizincane kunazo zonke ezamaphazili uLayla ake wawenza. Wayengajabule nje uLayla! Kodwa uShireen wayengathokozile neze ngoba into nje uLayla





ayefuna ukuyenza kwakungukuqala ukwenza iphazili.

“Angifuni ukwenza iphazili eyenza isithukuthezi,” kusho uShireen. “Okungcono masidlale ukuthenga esitolo.”

“Kulungile,” kusho uLayla, “sizobe sesenza iphazili yami.”

“Ngizoba umninisitolo,” kusho uShireen, “ngoba ngimuhle kakhulu ekubeni umninisitolo, wena-ke ungaba yikhasimende lami.”

Kungaphelanga sikhathi eside uLayla wayesesebenzise imali yakhe yonke. UShireen wabe esethi, “Make sidlale izibhedlela.”

“Cha,” kusho uLayla. “Ngidlalile ukuthenga esitolo. Manje masenze iphazili yami.”

Noma kunjalo uShireen, ngesizathu esingaziwa, wayengafuni ukudlala iphazili, ngakho-ke wathi, “Make sidlale izibhedlela manje bese senza iphazili ngemva kwesidlo sasemini.”

Benza kanjalo-ke.

“Ngizoba ngudokotela,” kusho uShireen.

“Ngeke, ubungumninisitolo,” kusho uLayla. “Yimi ozoba ngudokotela.”

“Angeke ukwazi,” kusho uShireen, “ngoba mina ngifanele kakhulu ukuba ngudokotela.”

Ngakho-ke, uShireen waba ngudokotela uLayla waba isiguli!

Lapho uDokotela uShireen eqala ukuxilonga isiguli, wakitaza isiguli isiguli sabe sesiqala ukugigitheka, singasakwazi ukulala singanyakazi. Ngakho-ke uDokotela uShireen wasithethisa wathi, “Yeka ukunyakaza, uma ungayeki angeke ngisadlala nawe.”

Kodwa ngaphambi kokuba uDokotela uShireen athukuthele nakakhulu, umama kaLayla wababizela isidlo sasemini.

“Ngiyethemba ukuthi ninesikhathi esimnandi mantombazane,” kusho umama kaLayla.

“Yebo,” kusho uLayla owayesezoluma urothi wakhe omnandi ofakwe ibhotela lamantongomane, izaqathi eziqhahleziwe namasulthana. “Sizokwenza iphazili yami ngemva kwesidlo sasemini.”

“Angiyifuni iphazili yakho,” kusho uShireen.

“Kodwa bewethembisile,” kusho uLayla.

“Yebo kunjalo, angisafuni-ke manje. Ngifuna ukuhlobisa ngombala,” kusho uShireen.

Ngalesi sikhathi, uLayla wayesekhathale uShireen othi, “Ngimuhle ekwenzeni yonke into” futhi wayemthukuthelele ngokwephula izithembiso. Ayikho into eyayizomvimba ukuthi enze iphazili. Ngakho-ke ngemva kwesidlo sasemini, uLayla wanikeza uShireen incwadi yokuhlobisa ngemibala ukuze uShireen ahlobise izithombe ngombala ngesikhathi yena enza iphazili. Kodwa kwakusele isithombe esisodwa esizofakwa umbala kanti uShireen wasiqeda kungaphelanga sikhathi. Wase esiphakamisela phezu ukuze akhombise uLayla wase ethi, “Awuve wenza kancane!”

“Yingoba le phazili inzima,” kusho uLayla.

“Ngingayenza ngokushesha ukudlula wena,” kusho uShireen.

“Kulungile,” kusho uLayla, “uma sengiyiqedile, ungazama ukuyenza ngokushesha, sizoke sibone-ke!”

“Kulungile,” kusho uShireen, “kodwa ngizokwenza lokho kuphela uma ngithanda.”





Lapho uLayla eseqede iphazili, wayihlukanisa. Wabuyisela zonke izingcezu ebhokisini ngaphandle kokezu olunehlo lenkwazi kulo. Wase enikeza uShireen ibhokisi.

“Nanso-ke,” kusho yena, “sekuyithuba lakho manje.”

“Angithandi ukuyenza,” kusho uShireen.

“Kodwa wethembisile!” kusho uLayla.

“Cha, angizange!” kumemeza uShireen. “Ngithe kuphela uma ngithanda kanti-ke angifuni.”

“Mhlawumbe awufuni ngoba awukwazi ukwenza amaphazili,” kusho uLayla.

“Ngiyakwazi!” kuthetha uShireen. “Ngiphambili kakhulu ekwenzeni amaphazili!”

“Yenze-ke phela,” kusho uLayla.

UShireen wagxavuna ibhokisi kuLayla. “Ngizoyenza,” kusho uShireen, “kodwa kuphela uma uhamba uyodlala phandle. Ngizokubiza uma sengiqedile.”

ULayla waya ngaphandle wase edweba izithombe esihlabathini ngenduku, ngesikhathi, endlini, uShireen evula ibhokisi lephazili wase eqala ukuphendula izithombe zibe ngaphezulu.

Phandle, uLayla wathola intambo endala wase eyibophela esihlahleni sikamalukwata ukuze uma uShireen eseqede iphazili bezodlala umdlalo wokugxuma. Kodwa endlini, uShireen wayehluleka ukuhlenganisa izingcezu zephazili ndawonye. Wayefisa sengathi ngabe ubengashongo ukuthi uphambili kakhulu ekwenzeni amaphazili. Ngokushesha, wahlakaza izingcezu ezimbalwa zephazili abekwaze ukuyenza wase ebuyisela zonke izingcezu ebhokisini. Wase egijima eya phandle eyomemeza uLayla owayesegibele wayofika phezulu esihlahleni sikamalukwata ethi, “Sengiqedile!”

“Yonke?” kubuza uLayla.

“Yebo,” kusho uShireen, wase eqala ukukhwela emthini.

“Yima!” kumemeza uLayla. “Ngiyehla ngizobona.”

“Kodwa sengiyibekile iphazili,” kusho uShireen.

“Ngoba?” kubuza uLayla.

“Ukuze ungabuyiseli zonke izingcezu wedwa kamuva,” kuphendula uShireen.

“Bala bo,” kusho uLayla, “kodwa manje uthini ngalolu cezu?” Waphakamisa ucezu olunehlo lenkwazi aluginile.

UShireen wathula wathi du. Wahlala esihlahleni ezibona ubuwula.

Ngemva kwesikhashana, uLayla wamemeza wathi, “Ake ubheke, bona ukuthi ngitholeni, ngithole amalukwata avuthiwe. Uyawafuna?”

“Yebo, ngiyawacela,” kusho uShireen ngezwi elincane kakhulu.

ULayla wehlela egatsheni elingezansana lapho kuleli khona uShireen wase emnika amanye. Base behlala lapho, bedla amalukwata, futhi bebhaka nokuthi bangaziphimisa ziye kude kangakanani izindumbuluzi.

UShireen waziphimisa zaya kude nakakhulu.

“Ungumpetha,” kusho uLayla.

“Kanti wena,” kusho uShireen, “ungumngani omkhulu ukudlula bonke abanye.”

## SeSotho

Layla o ne a rata di phazele tsa jigsaw. O ne a rata tsohle mabapi le tsona – ho tloha ka setshwantsho se lebokosong ho isa ho motsotso oo a kenyang karolwana ya ho qetela moo e lokelang. Hape o ne a rata le modumo le kamoo dikarolwana tseo di utlwalang ka teng ha di ntse di eya kwana le kwana tafoleng. Kahoo ka Moqebelo o mong le o mong hoseng, ha mme wa Layla a mo isa laeaboraring ho ya nka dibuka tse ntjha a siya tsa kgale, Layla Jwale, mosebetsi wa laeaboraring o ne a boloka diphazele tsohle shelofong e kamora deske ya hae, mme ka Moqebelo o mong le o mong ha Layla a botsa hore na a ka batla phazele eo a ka e adimang, mosebetsi wa laeaborari o ne a re, “Helang, Layla, o fela o hlanyetsa diphazele!” Mme Layla o ne a se na taba hobane o ne a HLILE a hlanyetsa diphazele!

Ka Moqebelo e mengata kamoraho kgutla laeaboraring, Shireen, motswalle wa Layla wa hlooho ya kgomo, o ne a tla ho tla bapala. Tjhe, kwana e ne e batla e le motswalle wa hlooho ya kgomo wa Layla, ntle feela le nthwana e le nngwe – Shireen o ne a rata ho hlahella ka pele dinthong tsohle.

Hoseng ha Moqebelo o mong, Layla a adima phazele ya ntsu ya tlhapi ya Afrika laeaboraring. Setshwantsho se ne se bontsha nonyana e hodimo marung ka mapheo a yona a phatlaletse mme e tshwere tlhapi ka dinala tsa yona. Phazele eo e ne ena le dikotwana tse ngata ho feta phazele efe kapa efe eo Layla a kileng a e etsa. Mme ha se seo feela, dikotwana di ne di le nyane haholo ho feta tsa phazele efe kapa efe eo Layla a kileng a e etsa. Layla o ne a thabile haholo! Empa Shireen o ne a sa thaba hohang hobane seo Layla a neng a se batla feela e ne e le ho qalella ka phazele.

“Ha ke batle ho etsa phazele e tenang,” ha rialo Shireen. “Ha re bapale mabenkele.”

“Ho lokile,” ha rialo Layla, “mme kamora moo re tla etsa phazele ya ka.”

“Ke tla ba monga lebenkele,” ha rialo Shireen, “hobane ke tswa pele ha ke le monga lebenkele, mme wena o ka ba moreki wa ka.”

E se kgale Layla o ne a rekile ka tjhelete ya hae kaofela. Yaba Shireen o re, “Ha re bapale sepetlele.”

“Tjhe,” Layla a araba. “Ke bapetse lebenkele. Jwale ha re etse phazele ya ka.”

Empa ka lebaka le itseng, Shireen o ne a ntse a sa batle ho etsa phazele, kahoo a re, “Ha re bapale sepetlele hona jwale mme re ka bapala phazele kamora dijo tse motsheare.”

Yaba ba etsa jwalo.

“Ke tla ba ngaka” ha rialo Shireen.

“Tjhe, o ne o le monga lebenkele,” ha rialo Layla. “Ke tla ba ngaka.”

“Empa o keke wa kgona,” ha rialo Shireen, “hobane ke tswa pele ka ho ba ngaka.”

Kahoo he, Shireen ya eba ngaka mme Layla ya eba motho ya kulang!

Ha Ngaka Shireen a qala ho hlahloba motho ya kulang, a tsikinyetsa mokudi mme mokudi a keketeha mme a sa kgone ho se sisinyeha. Yaba Ngaka Shireen o a omana, “Tlohela ho sisinyeha hoseng jwalo ha ke sa tla bapala le wena.”

Empa pele Ngaka Shireen a ka omana hape, mme wa Layla a ba bitsa ba tlo ja.

“Ke tshepa hore le bapala ha monate,” ha rialo mme wa Layla.

“Ee,” ha rialo Layla pele a loma roti ya hae e kentsweng pinabatha, dihwete tse kereitilweng le disultana. “Kamora dijo mona re ilo etsa phazele ya ka.”

“Ha ke batle ho etsa phazele ya hao,” ha rialo Shireen.



"Empa o ntshepitsitse," ha araba Layla.

"Ha ke sa batla he. Ke batla ho kenya mebala ditshwantshong." Ha rialo Shireen.

Jwale Layla o ne a se a kgathetse ke ho utlwa Shireen a bolela kamoo a tswang pele ka teng nthong tsohle, mme a kgenne hobane Shireen a sa phetise ditshepiso tsa hae. Ho ne ho se letho le ka mo thibelang ho etsa phazele. Kahoo kamora dijo tsa motsheare, Layla a fa Shireen buka ya ditshwantsho le dikerayone hore Shireen a tle a kenye mebala ha yena a ntse a etsa phazele ya hae. Empa ho ne ho ena le setshwantsho se le seng feela se setseng se sa kenngwang mebala bukeng mme Shireen a qeta ka pele. Yaba o phahamisa buka ho bontsha Layla mme a re, "O lenama haholo!"



"Ke hobane phazele ena e thata," ha rialo Layla.

"Ke nahana hore nka e etsa kapele ho feta wena," ha rialo Shireen.

"Ho lokile," ha araba Layla, "ha ke e qeta o ka nna wa iteka mme re tla bona!"

"Ho lokile," ha rialo Shireen, "feela haeba ke a batla."

Eitse ha Layla a qeta phazele, a e heletsa hape. A kenya dikotwana tsohle ka hara lebokoso ntle le sekotwana se le seng se nang le leihlo la ntsu. Mme yaba o fa Shireen lebokoso.

"Ke eo," a rialo, "sebaka sa hao ke seo."

"Ha ke batle ho e etsa," ha rialo Shireen.

"Empa o ntshepitsitse!" ha rialo Layla.

"Tjhe, ha ke a o tshepisa!" Shireen a omana. "Ke itse feela haeba ke a batla, mme jwale he ha ke batle."

"Mohlomong ha o batle hobane ha o kgone ho etsa diphazele," ha rialo Layla.

"Ke a tseba!" Shireen a omana le yena. "Ke tswa pele diphazeleng!"

"E etse he," Layla a mo qala.

Shireen a hlotha lebokoso ho Layla. "Ke tla e etsa," ha rialo Shireen, "empa ha feela o ka ya bapala ka ntle. Ke tla o bitsa ha ke qetile."

Layla a ya ka ntle mme a taka ditshwantsho santeng ka thupa ha ka tlung, Shireen a bula lebokoso la phazele mme a qala ho phethola dikotwana tsa phazele a di shebisa hodimo.

Ka ntle, Layla a fumana sekotwana sa thapo ya kgale mme a e fasella sefateng sa loquat hore e tle e re ha Shireen a qetile ka phazele ba kgone ho bapala kgati ka yona. Empa ka tlung, Shireen o ne a thatafallwa ke ho aha dikotwana mmoho ho bopa setshwantsho sa phazele. O ne a lakatsa eka a ka be a sa ka a re o tswa pele diphazeleng. Ka potlako, a heletsa bonyane ba phazele eo a neng a se a e entse mme a kgutlisetsa dikotwana tsohle ka lebokosong. Yaba o mathela ka ntle mme a hoeletsa Layla eo nakong ya jwale a neng a palame hodimo sefateng sa loquat, "Ke qetile!"

"Kaofela ha yona?" ha botsa Layla.

"Ehlile," ha rialo Shireen, mme a qala ho palama sefateng.

"Butle!" Layla a araba a hoeletsa. "Ke a theo ha ke tlo e bona."

"Empa ke se ke pakile diphazele ka lebokosong hape," ha rialo Shireen.

"Hobaneng?" ha botsa Layla.

"Hore o tle o se ke wa di paka ka bowena ha morao," ha araba Shireen.

"Oo," Layla a araba, "empa o reng ka sekotwana see?" A phahamisa sekotwana se nang le leihlo la ntsu ho sona seo a neng a se bolokile.

Shireen a thola. A dula sefateng a ipona e le sephoqo.

Kamora nakwana, Layla a hoeletsa, "Hela, o a tseba keng, ke fumane diloquats tse butswitseng. Na o a di batla?"

"Ee, ke a di kopa," ha rialo Shireen ka lentswe le lesesane.

Layla a theohela lekaleng le tlase moo Shireen a neng a dutse teng mme a mo fa tse ding. Mme ba dula moo, ba eja diloquats mme ba sheba hore ba ka tshwella dithotse tsa tsona bohole bo bokae.

Shireen a tshwella hole ho feta.

"Ke wena ya tswang pele ka ho fetisisa," ha rialo Layla.

"Mme wena," ha rialo Shireen, "o motswalle wa nnete, wa hlooho ya kgomo."

## Afrikaans

Layla is dol oor legkaarte. Alles oor legkaarte is vir haar lekker – van die prent op die boks tot die oomblik wanneer sy die laaste stukkie in sy plek pas. Sy hou selfs van die geluid wat die stukkies maak en hoe dit voel as sy dit op die tafel rondskuif. Elke Saterdagoggend wanneer Layla se mamma haar biblioteek toe vat om nuwe boeke uit te neem, neem Layla ook 'n legkaart uit.

Die bibliotekaresse hou al die legkaarte op 'n rak agter haar lessenaar, en elke Saterdag wanneer Layla vra of sy na die legkaarte kan kyk sodat sy nog een kan uitneem, sê die bibliotekaresse: "Sjoe, Layla, maar jy is omtrent dol oor legkaarte!" En Layla gee glad nie om nie, want sy is REGTIG dol oor legkaarte!

Die meeste Saterdag nadat hulle by die biblioteek was, kom Shireen, Layla se beste maat, by haar speel. Wel, sy is byna Layla se beste maat, behalwe vir een ding – Shireen moet altyd die beste met alles wees.

Een Saterdagoggend neem Layla 'n legkaart van 'n Afrikavisarend by die biblioteek uit. Die prent wys hoe die voël hoog in die lug vlieg met sy vlerke wyd uitgesprei en 'n vis in sy kloue. Die legkaart het meer stukke as enige legkaart wat Layla nog ooit gebou het. En nie net dit nie, die stukke is ook kleiner as enige legkaart wat Layla al gebou het. Layla is blyer as bly! Maar Shireen is glad nie gelukkig nie, want al wat Layla wil doen, is om die legkaart te begin bou.

"Ek wil nie 'n vervelige legkaart bou nie," sê Shireen. "Kom ons speel liever winkel-winkel."

"Goed," sê Layla, "en daarna kan ons my legkaart bou."

"Ek sal die winkelier wees," sê Shireen, "want ek is die beste daarmee, en jy kan dan by my kom koop."

Sommer gou het Layla al haar geld uitgegee. Toe sê Shireen: "Kom ons speel hospitaal-hospitaal."

"Nee," sê Layla. "Ek het winkel-winkel gespeel. Kom ons bou nou my legkaart."

Maar om een of ander rede wil Shireen steeds nie die legkaart bou nie, en daarom sê sy: "Kom ons speel nou hospitaal-hospitaal en dan kan ons die legkaart na middagete bou."

En dit is toe wat hulle doen.



"Ek sal die dokter wees," sê Shireen.

"Nee, jy was die winkelier," sê Layla. "Ek sal die dokter wees."

"Maar jy kan nie," sê Shireen, "want ek is die beste daarmee."

Toe is Shireen die dokter en Layla die pasiënt!

Toe Dokter Shireen die pasiënt begin ondersoek, kielie sy haar, en die pasiënt begin giggel en wil nie stil lê nie. Toe skree Dokter Shireen: "Lê stil of ek speel nie verder met jou nie."

Maar voordat Dokter Shireen nog kwater kan raak, roep Layla se mamma hulle vir middage.

"Ek hoop julle meisies speel lekker," sê Layla se mamma.

"Ja," sê Layla, wat net 'n hap wil vat van haar heerlike roti met grondboontjebotter, gerasperde wortels en sultanas. "Na middage gaan ons my legkaart bou."

"Ek wil nie jou legkaart bou nie," sê Shireen.

"Maar jy het belowe," sê Layla.

"Wel, nou wil ek nie meer nie. Ek wil inkleur," sê Shireen.



Teen hierdie tyd is Layla moeg vir Shireen se praatjies dat sy die beste met alles is, en sy is kwaad vir Shireen omdat sy nie haar beloftes hou nie. Niks gaan haar keer om haar legkaart te bou nie. Na middage gee Layla toe vir Shireen 'n inkleurboek en kleurkryte sodat sy kan inkleur terwyl Layla haar legkaart bou. Maar daar is net een prentjie in die inkleurboek oor om in te kleur en Shireen is sommer gou klaar daarmee. Sy hou dit op om vir Layla te wys en sê: "Jy's so stadig!"

"Dis omdat hierdie legkaart moeilik is," sê Layla.

"Ek is seker ek kan dit vinniger as jy doen," sê Shireen.

"Reg," sê Layla, "wanneer ek klaar is, kan jy dit probeer en dan sal ons sien!"

"Goed," sê Shireen, "maar net as ek wil."

Toe Layla die legkaart klaar gebou het, breek sy dit op. Sy pak al die stukkies terug in die boks, behalwe vir die stukkie met die arend se oog daarop. En toe gee sy die boks vir Shireen.

"Hierso," sê sy, "dis nou jou beurt."

"Ek voel nie lus om dit te doen nie," sê Shireen.

"Maar jy het belowe!" sê Layla.

"Nee, ek het nie!" sê Shireen. "Ek het gesê net as ek wil, en ek wil nie."

"Dalk wil jy nie omdat jy nie legkaarte kan bou nie," sê Layla.

"Ek kan!" skree Shireen terug. "Ek is die beste met legkaart bou!"

"Doen dit dan," sê Layla.

Shireen gryp die boks by Layla. "Ek sal," sê Shireen, "maar net as jy buite gaan speel. Ek sal jou roep as ek klaar is."

Layla gaan buitentoe en teken prente in die sand met 'n stok terwyl Shireen die legkaartboks oopmaak en begin om die legkaartstukkies om te draai sodat die prent na bo wys.

Buite vind Layla 'n ou stuk tou en bind dit om die lukwartboom sodat hulle kan touspring wanneer Shireen klaar is met die legkaart. Maar binne sukkel Shireen om die legkaartstukkies inmekaar te pas.

Sy wens sy het nie gesê dat sy die beste met legkaarte is nie. Sy breek vinnig die deel van die legkaart op wat sy klaar gebou het en pak al die stukkies terug in die boks. Toe hardloop sy buitentoe en roep vir Layla wat tot hoog bo in die lukwartboom geklim het. "Ek is klaar!"

"Met die hele legkaart?" vra Layla.

"Jip," sê Shireen en sy begin die boom klim.

"Stop!" skree Layla. "Ek gaan afklim om te kom kyk."

"Maar ek het al klaar die legkaart weggepak," sê Shireen.

"Hoekom?" vra Layla.

"Sodat jy dit nie later hoof weg te pak nie," antwoord Shireen.

"O," sê Layla, "maar wat van hierdie stukkies?" Sy hou die stukkies met die arend se oog op.

Shireen is skielik baie stil. Sy sit in die boom en voel afgehaal.

Na 'n rukkie sê Layla: "Haai, raai wat, ek het ryp lukwarte gekry. Wil jy ook hê?"

"Ja, asseblief," sê Shireen met 'n dun stemmetjie.

Layla klim af na die laer tak waar Shireen sit en gee vir haar van die lukwarte. En so sit hulle in die boom en lukwarte eet en kyk hoe ver hulle die pitte kan spoeg.

Shireen spoeg die verste.

"Jy's die beste," sê Layla.

"En jy," sê Shireen, "is die beste, beste maat."