



Parenting skills training

Northern Syria



Table of contents

SESSION 1: INTRODUCTION TO THE PARENTING PROGRAM	3
1.1 INTRODUCTION	5
1.2 OVERVIEW OF THE PROGRAM	7
1.3 FEARS & EXPECTATIONS	9
1.4 INTRODUCTION TO POSITIVE NURTURING PARENTING	10
1.5 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	11
SESSION 2: UNDERSTANDING PARENT'S STRESS	12
2.1 INTRODUCTION	13
2.2 IDENTIFICATION OF PARENTS' PSYCHOSOCIAL AND EMOTIONAL NEEDS	15
2.3 THE IMPACT OF PARENT'S STRESS ON CHILDREN	17
2.4 RELAXATION TECHNIQUES TO COPE WITH STRESS	18
2.5 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	20
SESSION 3: COPING & HEALING STRATEGIES	21
3.1 INTRODUCTION	22
3.2 WRITING & TALKING	23
3.3 MAKE YOUR OWN COPING & HEALING KIT	27
3.4 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	29
SESSION 4: THE IMPACT OF PARENTING	30
4.1 INTRODUCTION	32
4.2 CHILD BRAIN DEVELOPMENT: HOW IT WORKS	33
4.3 PARENTING, ENVIRONMENT & CHILDREN'S BRAIN DEVELOPMENT	35
4.4 DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES & REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS	37
4.5 HOW TO SUPPORT CHILDREN'S DEVELOPMENT	39
4.6 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	41
SESSION 5: EMPATHY & POSITIVE BEHAVIOR	42
5.1 INTRODUCTION	43
5.2 YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT: WHAT YOU CAN DO	44
5.3 UNDERSTANDING & DEVELOPING EMPATHY	45
5.4 EMPATHETIC PARENTING	46
5.5 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	50
SESSION 6: COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN	51
6.1 INTRODUCTION	52
6.2 HOW CHILDREN COMMUNICATE	55
6.3 HOW TO COMMUNICATE WITH CHILDREN?	58

6.5 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	61
<u>SESSION 7: NURTURING ALL CHILDREN</u>	62
7.1 INTRODUCTION	63
7.2 ADULT’S CONSISTENT BEHAVIOR WITH ALL CHILDREN IN THE HOUSEHOLD	64
7.3 ALTERNATIVES TO HARSH DISCIPLINE	65
7.4 SETTING RULES	69
7.5 CLOSING AND HOME ASSIGNMENT	71
<u>SESSION 8: UNDERSTANDING CHILDREN’S PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS</u>	72
8.1 INTRODUCTION	73
8.2 UNDERSTANDING THE PSYCHOSOCIAL IMPACT OF A WAR ON CHILDREN	74
8.3 RELAXATION EXERCISE	78
8.4 CLOSING AND HOME ASSIGNMENT	80
<u>SESSION 9: PROVIDING SUPPORT TO CHILDREN WITH PSYCHOSOCIAL NEEDS</u>	81
9.1 INTRODUCTION	82
9.2 TALKING AND LISTENING	84
9.5 REFERRAL	89
9.7 CLOSING & HOME ASSIGNMENT	91
<u>SESSION 10: CELEBRATION AND GRADUATION</u>	92
10.1 INTRODUCTION	93
10.2 PRESENTATION	94
10.3 PLEDGES AND CERTIFICATES OF PARTICIPATION	95
10.4 PRAISING AND THANKS	96
<u>ANNEXES</u>	
<u>HANDOUTS</u>	97
<u>FACILITATOR’S RESOURCES</u>	146
SESSION 4	147
SESSION 7	166
SESSION 8	167
<u>FACILITATOR’S DRAWING GUIDE</u>	168
SESSION 4: BRAIN DEVELOPMENT AND IMPACT OF TOXIC STRESS	168
SESSION 8: PTSD, WHAT IS HAPPENING IN THE BRAIN?	169

Introduction to the Parenting Program

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. Participants will understand the purpose of the training
2. Rules for the group will be set and fears and expectations will be acknowledged and addressed
3. Parents will understand the concept of positive/nurturing parenting

TIP:

Before starting the first session, facilitators/ group leaders should be familiar with the content of all training sessions and should read all Facilitator's Resources.

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts
- Markers of different colors
- Fidelity check
- Handouts:
 - 1.1 Nurturing your children
 - 1.2 Building parent – child bonding and attachment
 - 1.3 Session topics

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.
- Be there 15 mins earlier
- Ensure logistics the room is ready and conducive to uninterrupted dialogue

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 1

Time	Activity
30 min	1.1 Introduction
30 min	1.2 Overview of the program
20 min	1.3 Fears and expectations
30 min	1.4 Introduction to positive nurturing parenting
10 min	1.5 Closing & Home assignment

KEY MESSAGES FOR THE FACILITATOR:

The word “nurture” means to give tender care, to protect, and help a young thing to grow, develop, thrive and be successful. There are several principles that underlie positive, nurturing parenting:

- Children need to not only survive, but to also thrive. This requires nurturing their physical, emotional, mental, and social wellbeing. Caregivers and parents play the most important role in children’s development and wellbeing.
- Healthy feelings of love between parents and children help children develop socially, emotionally, and mentally and contributes to children’s growth and strength.
- A nurturing family is safe, supportive, caring and non-violent. Children learn from their environments and model their behavior on the behavior of those around them.
- Nurturing children requires empathy: the ability to feel, see, understand, and value what children are feeling and experiencing.
- Both children and caregivers benefit when caregivers have realistic, age appropriate expectations of children.
- Nurturing children requires nurturing one’s self. A parent that is not emotionally or physically well may have a more difficult time nurturing his/her children.
- All caregivers, regardless of gender or culture, have the capacity to be nurturing parents.
- Children need to be taught right from wrong. They need boundaries and to be taught respect for others. Positive, non-violent discipline has the most positive impact on children’s development and wellbeing.
- Violent or neglectful parenting can have a negative impact on children’s development.
- To successfully nurture children, caregivers need to be aware of positive, nurturing parenting practices and alternatives to violent discipline.

1.1 Introduction

**TIME:
30 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take detailed attendance: name, sex, age, etc. If they have telephone numbers and other ways of communication write them down. Two separate documents to register attendance at arrival and at the exit, so no one can sign for somebody else and we can monitor punctuality.

Both parents are invited and encouraged to attend. One session will be for mothers and another one for fathers. Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session. Outsider, friends, family members are not allowed to join the group to avoid disturbance.

WELCOME

WELCOME parents with smile and good attitude. Praise parents for being there for caring for their children.

Acknowledge that parenting is a difficult job, the most important job of our lives. Explain that our hope is that we can learn from each other, from our experiences and knowledge, traditions and science. Explain that each participant has a lot of important knowledge, since, as parents, they know their child better than anyone else.

INTRODUCE YOURSELF and tell parents about previous experience facilitating trainings (*don't show off ☺!*). If you are a parent, tell the participants a little about your children (i.e. how many, and their age).

ICE BREAKER: PRESENTATIONS!

Who are we?

- Inform participants that for this session they shall be working in pairs.
- Ask participants to move and sit in random pairs.
- Ask participants to discuss the following questions with their partner:
 - What is your name?
 - How many children do you have?
 - What is one hope that you have for your children?
 - Describe one thing that your caretaker or parent did when you were a child that made you feel loved, happy, and safe. For instance: "I loved when I was on my father's lap and he was telling me stories"; "I remember when my mother taught me how to cook her favorite meal"; "I enjoyed going to the market with my mother"; etc.
- Allow the participants to discuss for a period of 10 minutes.
- EXPLAIN: After the discussions you will share on behalf of your partner, for instance; "*my friend is called Jane, one thing that she hopes for her children is.....*"
- Ask participants to present their partners to the group. Ask them to share only their partner's name and a hope they have for their children.

On a flip chart, write down the hopes that participants have for their children. After everyone has presented their partner, ask if there are any other hopes for children that should be added to the list.

- Ask participants not to forget the positive things that they remember their caregivers doing when they were children to make them feel loved, happy and safe. Inform participants that, we will come back to this later in the session!

1.2 Overview of the Program

TIME:
30 MINUTES

OVERVIEW

SAY to participants: Now that we know each other better, I am going to tell you more about this parenting program:

“The objective of the parenting program is to support parents in managing the challenges of raising children in the midst of the crisis and helping their children to cope with the traumatic events and displacement they have experienced.”

SESSION TOPICS:

1. Introduction to the parenting program
2. Understanding parent’s stress
3. Parent’s coping and healing strategies
4. The impact of parenting
5. Empathy and positive behavior
6. Communicating with children
7. Nurturing all children
8. Understanding children’s psychosocial needs
9. Providing support to children with psychosocial need
10. A way forward

EXPLAIN:

- There will be **10 sessions** over the course of 2.5 months and we ask that you please attend all of them in order to obtain the final certificate. If a parent should miss any session, they will have to catch up to be able to receive the final certificate you need to attend the 10.
- Distribute the handout 1.3 and fill up the calendar together.
- **Parents Support Groups** of 4 to 5 people will be formed on voluntary bases among participants to support each other and help with catch-up sessions. The sessions will be held once a week and other family and community members can join as well. Agree with members on what day is convenient for them. Thus, you can:
 - Support each other beyond the sessions
 - Share ideas and feelings with other parents
 - Encourage each other to practice new parenting techniques
 - Inform other parents
- You need to **share** with your spouses and adults in the household the content in the sessions to be successful. Encourage other family members in your household to attend the next round of training or to attend the support group sessions so they can support you in positive parenting at home.
- Each session will be around 2 hours. You will register and sign at the beginning and at the end of each session.
- You have **home practice assignments** to do when you get back home to help you, as parents and caregivers nurture your children.

Each session is based on **dialogue and listening**, so don’t hesitate to ask questions and/or raise concerns. We will also learn

from each other. Anything you say is important, and also remember to respect anything other parents have to say.

- During the last session, the participants will present one session in groups of 2/3 so don't hesitate to take note!

ASK: Does anyone have any questions? Do you want to share any thoughts, feelings or ideas?

EXPLAIN:

- We are here *to learn from each other* and to share how difficult it is raising children. Parenting is not easy under normal circumstances and it is even more challenging in stressful environment. This program will provide a safe place to discuss the challenges that parents are facing and tools to help you to be the best mother/father you can, especially during this difficult time.
- Children are resilient. Mothers, fathers, and other adults in children's lives play a vital role in helping children to cope with the traumatic events and develop and thrive despite the challenges they and their families are facing.
- There are some basic things that mothers, fathers and other adults in children's lives can do.
- You are encouraged to invite your spouse to attend the sessions for fathers. You will need to communicate and educate your spouse at home about what we learn in each session if they cannot attend the sessions so that both parents/caregivers and the other adults are consistent with the parenting practices.
- We encourage you to talk to and support other members of your group, particularly to form **"PARENTS SUPPORT GROUPS"**. You can choose the people who will be in your group and identify a day in the week to meet. Every week, the place to meet will rotate between all the group members. Each group will have a maximum of 5/6 members. During these meetings, you and other group members might want to discuss ideas and feelings about the training, and encourage each other to practice the parenting techniques you have learned. This is not a group to talk politic or about the war. This is to talk about your children! Each one of you needs to be part of a Parents Support Group.

WRITE GROUP RULES on a flipchart (minimum rules). Do not spend too much time on this, but keep the flipchart as these rules will guide participants throughout the program:

- Respect others, no phones, punctuality and regular attendance. Ask members if they have additions.

EXPLAIN that a certificate will be given at the end only if you have attended the 10 sessions.

1.3 Fears & Expectations

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

Fears	Expectations

- Ask participants in pairs to think of two things they expect to learn from the discussions about parenting and two fears or concerns they have about the parenting program.
- Allow participants in pairs to think about their answers for 5 minutes.
- Get a flip chart and draw a line down the center. On one side, write “expectations.” On the other side, write “fears.”
- Ask participants to share their thoughts while you write on the two flip charts. After everyone has shared, summarize the issues based on similarities (ex. participants expect to acquire more knowledge)
- Review the expectations and explain which expectations will be covered in the discussion sessions. In case there are any expectations that are not covered by the discussion sessions. Inform participants that you shall have to see how they can be covered by end of the all discussion session **(PLEASE ENSURE THAT YOU SHARE THESE WITH YOUR SUPERVISORS)**
- After discussing the expectations, discuss also the fears and come up with suggestions for each of them together with the participants. You can for instance ask them what they think about addressing a particular fear.
- For those fears that may not be addressed, please record them and inform participants that you have further discussions and consultation and that you will be providing feedback as soon as you can. Have a discussion with supervisor regarding these fears. Ensure that feedback is provided to participants within TWO weeks.

1.4 Introduction to Positive Nurturing Parenting

TIME:
30 MINUTES

TIP:

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



Handout 1.1 Handout 1.2

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN:

- This program is about sharing and learning ways to cope with our stress and to raise our children through positive, nurturing parenting.
- Coping with stress in a difficult environment is essential for parents to be able to help their children to grow.
- The word “nurture” means to give tender care, to protect, and help a young child to develop and be successful.
- Children need to be nurtured. Nurturing parents or caregivers provide children with tender care and protection, their actions help the child to grow and develop, thrive and be successful. Share [handout 1.1](#) and [1.2](#)

DISCUSSION

- On one flip chart, write “Positive, Nurturing Parenting”.
- Ask participants to take a moment to remember back to earlier in the session today when they reflected with their partners on positive things that their caregivers did that made them feel loved, happy and safe.
- **SAY:** Thinking about the positive things your caregivers did, and about your community now, I would like for us to now share and discuss parenting practices that you consider to be part of positive, nurturing parenting,
- On the flip chart, the facilitator should make note of the ideas generated for future reference.
- After all ideas have been exhausted, recognize that they already have many positive parenting practices. Explain that this program will help us to share our positive practices with each other and develop new skills.
- Explain that the program will also help us to understand the importance of nurturing ourselves: we cannot be nurturing parents if we do not nurture our own physical and emotional well-being.

1.5 Closing & Home Assignment

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

FEEDBACK

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- Spend time with your children and show them love
- Do something for yourself. At least one thing every second day. Your favorite things that put you in a good mood. You will have to report on this home assignment next session.

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting: Parent's stress.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to them to invite their partners to the session and to share what they learn through the sessions.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

Fidelity Check-list

After the session the facilitators complete the fidelity check list.

Understanding parent's stress

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will identify their psychosocial and emotional needs
- Parents will have knowledge of the impact of stress on their children's wellbeing
- Parents will learn relaxation techniques

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers
- Color pencils
- Fidelity checklist
- Handouts
 - 2.1 Identification of parent's psychosocial and emotional needs
 - 2.1.1 Feeling and action drawings (only if the participants are not comfortable with writing)
 - 2.2 Sponge Bob
 - 2.3 Relaxation exercise 1
 - 2.4 Relaxation exercise 2
 - 2.5 Alternative meditation

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session
- Be in the room 15 mins before session time to prepare the room, so that there are no disturbances during the session and the place is conducive for the session
- Learn the names of participants, children and spouses

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 2

Time	Activity
10 min	2.1 Introduction
30 min	2.2 Identification of parent's psychosocial and emotional needs
30 min	2.3 The impact of parent's stress on children
40 min	2.4 Relaxation techniques to cope with stress
10 min	2.5 Closing & Home assignment

2.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take detailed attendance. Facilitators should make note of any other participants who have joined the session—i.e who brought a friend or a child or a partner (the sessions are not open to anyone). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Welcome parents. Be positive and smile a lot! You will need all of your energy to conduct this session successfully.

Ask parents to tell the group what it was done the previous session.

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share a way that they have spent time with their child and shown the child love since the last meeting.

Did you also do something for yourself as we agreed in the previous session? What was that? How did you feel?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today's session.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer, to be revisited during the next session.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Facilitators will spend a little time at the beginning of all remaining sessions teaching and practicing nurturing and positive activities for parents to try at home with their children.

For session 2, teach parents the following song. Tell parents that singing to children helps with language development and the following song also teaches children about feelings. In the future, ask parents about the songs they sing to their children or games they play; if possible, practice these during this period.

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will identify their psychosocial and emotional needs
- Parents will have knowledge of the impact of stress on their children's wellbeing
- Parents will learn relaxation techniques



Learning the feelings

When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).
When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).
When you're happy and you know then your face will surely show it.
When you're happy and you know it clap your hands (clap hands twice).

Repeat the song, with the parents clapping their hands, and then repeat with the following stanzas:

When you're mad and you know it stamp your feet.

When your sad... wipe your eyes

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

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

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

(Mimic with the parents each action while you sing)

2.2 Identification of parents' Psychosocial and Emotional needs

**TIME:
30 MINUTES**

INTRODUCTION

NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

Be sure to remind participants to ask questions at any time. Take time to make sure they understand it well and use examples for difficult concepts.

If the participants are not comfortable writing, you can use the handout 2.1.1. that represent various feelings and actions to cut and paste. Print enough copies in color for all participants. The participant can choose to combine drawing, collage and writing, as they prefer.

You can also do the exercise in plenary, drawing the table on the flipchart.

ACKNOWLEDGE: The situation that Syrians are currently experiencing is very difficult. Most of you had to leave your house, your job, your life behind to come to the camp/this country. Leaving a tent or limited space with other family members is difficult, there is not enough space and tension arises frequently. The children are dirty with mud or dust, access to water is sometimes difficult and it is easy to lose patience with children.

ASK: Did some of you experience similar situation or emotion? (Let the participant share experience if they want to but do not spend too much time on negative feelings and experience)

EXPLAIN: Stress is defined as “an organism’s total response to environmental demands or pressure¹.” It is a condition or feeling experienced when a person perceives that demands exceed his ability or resources to handle them.²

This is normal! Everybody would experience high level of stress in a similar situation. The war affects emotional comfort; it causes irreversible material and kin losses, physical exhaustion, psychological breakdowns, and makes futile all everyday routines. This is why your body reacts to cope with the high level of stress³:

- Changes in behavior (aggressiveness, confinement, silence)
- Hormonal impairments (secession of menstruation)
- Neurological disorders (muscle weakness, poor coordination, loss of sensation, seizures, confusion)
- All kinds of diseases. (eczema, somatic pain, diarrhea)

¹ The free dictionary, medical dictionary. <http://medical-dictionary.thefreedictionary.com/Stress>

² <http://theislamicworkplace.com/stress/>

³ M. Flögel & G. Lauc. *War Stress – Effects of the War in the Area of Former Yugoslavia*. 1998. Faculty of Pharmacy and Biochemistry, University of Zagreb, Zagreb, Croatia

EXERCISE

Let's see now what is your individual level of stress and how does it affect our daily life. *Distribute Handout 2.1*

Fill up the first two columns of the table by trying to be as honest as you can. Leave the third column for now.

EXPLAIN:

1st Column: **I feel.** What are the emotions, feelings that you are experiencing since you arrived in the camp/country?

Brainstorm examples with the participants and write on flipchart:

Example:

- Sadness
- Sickness
- Aggressiveness
- Tiredness/exhaustion
- Anger/hatred
- Stress
- Depression
- Sense of control
- Happiness

2nd Column: **I do.** What are the things that you do as a result of these feelings? It can be positive or negative.

Brainstorm examples with the participants and write on flipchart:

Example:

- I don't sleep, I don't eat
- I shout at, I beat my children
- I eat a lot
- I am obsessed with cleaning
- I have a very clear daily schedule
- I invite neighbors for tea to talk

Give at 10 minutes to the participants to fill up their table.

Debrief in plenary. Participants do not need to tell what they wrote if they do not want to.

How did they feel writing down their feelings?

2.3 The impact of Parent's Stress on children

**TIME:
30 MINUTES**

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

You can use the metaphor of a sponge. Children are like sponge, they absorb their parents' emotions and feeling.



Handout 2.2

EXPLAIN:

- Parent's stress affects babies and children. When you feel calm it's more likely that your baby will feel calm. When you feel stressed it's more likely your baby will feel tense.
- Research has shown that there are a number of undesirable behaviors associated with parenting stress. This means that the more stress parents feel the more children misbehave.
- The more children misbehave, the more stress parents feel. This is like a vicious cycle and perhaps one of the most important reasons for parents to address and deal with their stress.⁴
- Without telling them anything, they know deep inside that their parents are stressed. They also listen to what parents are saying when they discuss between adults. Do not underestimate the capacity of children to feel tension and to understand the current context, even for babies.
- Parents are allowed to feel sad or depressed but they should try to limit the impact on the children.
Distribute Handout 2.2 Sponge Bob and explain how children absorb their parents' stress.

EXERCISE

ASK:

How children may be affected by their parents' stress?

Write participants answers on a flipchart.

Answers may include:

- Aggressiveness, Disobedience Scared, Refuse to leave the tent Cry often, etc.

Take the table you filled up during the previous session and see if you can link some of your feelings and action with changes in your children behavior.

Give 10 minutes to the participants to fill up their table.

Similarly, you can use drawings to represent the impact of parent's stress on children.

⁴ <http://primarychildrenshospitalblog.org/2012/06/18/effects-of-parent-stress-on-child-development/>

2.4 Relaxation Techniques to cope with Stress

**TIME:
40 MINUTES**

RELAXATION EXERCISE⁵

EXPLAIN:

- Stress is necessary for life. We need to distinguish between healthy stress that helps us to survive as human being and toxic stress, repeated or intense stress that overwhelm our systems to the point that it is harmful and becomes a problem to us and the ones around including children. We need to be aware and to tackle it. Stress is only harmful when it becomes overwhelming and interrupts the healthy state of equilibrium that your nervous system needs to remain in balance.
- When stressors throw your nervous system out of balance, relaxation techniques can bring it back into a balanced state by producing the *relaxation response*, a state of deep calmness that is the opposite of the stress response.

ASK:

What is relaxation?

We define relaxation as a mental and physical state in which the individual is able to feel relieved from strain or tension. Reaching a relaxed state means to control our emotions.

When stress affects a person's normal functioning, relaxation has proved to be effective in lowering it.⁶

EXPLAIN:

We are going to experiment some relaxation exercises that you can practice at home when you feel stressed.

SAY:

When you feel the stress coming, when you feel that tension in your stomach or when you feel you are about to lose your temper, what can you do?

⁵ <http://islamicsunrays.com/islamic-meditation-for-relaxation-and-spiritual-comfort/>

⁶ <http://www.ummah.com/forum/archive/index.php/t-29139.html>

Here are few techniques that are easy to use.

For example:

1. Step away from the stressful event or situation.
2. Deep Breathing
3. Center yourself
4. Count from 20 to 0.
5. Muscle relaxation: visualize each part of your body getting relaxed, the right foot, the left foot, the right, the left leg, etc.

Let's start with **the breathing technique**.

Take 10 deep abdominal breaths (you should see your stomach moving back and forth). Say 10 times "Inhale deeply, exhale".

How does it feel?

Let's try now to **center yourself**:

Locate your physical center of gravity. It's usually around your belly button. Once you've found your center, breathe in and out deeply at least five times. Focus on your center. Feel the sensation of being stabilized and on the ground. Imagine all the negative energy in your body is collecting in one place. Find imagery that works for you. This could be a ball of energy that will suck all the negative feelings. Visualize this ball of negative energy. As you inhale, say "Let." As you exhale, say "Go." If your energy is a ball, identify a spot across the room, and imagine yourself throwing the ball to hit that spot. If your energy is a balloon, imagine it floating away above your head. Let go of everything that is stressing you. Now imagine your center filled with calm.⁷

To conclude this session, let's do a **relaxation exercise**.

Settle yourself in a comfortable position. Imagine yourself to be in the most relaxing, secure, peaceful place you have ever known. Breathe deeply in and out, breathing into your stomach.

Recite the text with a quiet voice, very slowly with a voice of love.

Tell the participant they can do this with their spouse, let one read and the other close his/her eyes and listen.

Use the *Handout 2.3 or 2.5 (depending on the sensitivity of religion in your context)* and distribute the handout to the participants at the end of the session.

⁷ http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/newTCS_83.htm#sthash.NUQBTmov.dpuf

2.5 Closing & Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

FEEDBACK

Have a brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

EXPLAIN:

- Practice breathing and centering exercises from the handout at least once a day before the next session.
- Practice relaxation/meditation exercises from the handouts at least twice before the next session.

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- **THANK** participants for coming to the discussion.
- **INFORM** participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- **REMAND** them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- **ENCOURAGE** participants to share the knowledge they learned with their partners and friends.
- **DISTRIBUTE** handout 2.3

GROUP HUG

- Ask a volunteer to be in come to the middle of the group
- Then ask the rest of the participants to praise that person for what s/he is and for what s/he does. This is the first lesson of praising the most important parental skill.
- The facilitator can be the first one. Be generous and positive praise and smile as much as you can.
- When all have praise the volunteer you all give them a hug that is the way you close the session.

Distribute Handout 2.3; 2.4 and 2.5 Relaxation and breathing techniques

ATTENDANCE: Take attendance before participants leave

Coping & Healing Strategies

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. Parents will identify and develop their own coping and healing toolkit
2. Parents will learn how to deal with their stress

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Fidelity checklist
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers, note book and large envelopes for each participant, cards for the session 3.3, color pencils and markers.
- Glitter, fun stickers, magazines, scissors, glue, stapler, tape.

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session, including the briefing notes, to acquaint your-self with the content of the session.
- Obtain the required materials before the training
- Be at the site 15 minutes before the session
- Learn names of participants and their family members
- Prepare the room so it is conducive to discussion, without noises or interruptions
- Inform the Community Protection Network to be ready for the session 3.2 if applicable.
- Print and cut the cards for the session 3.3

NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

This session is not a therapy group. Each parent has his own source of stress and ways to express it. This session is for parents to identify their mechanism and tools to deal with stress

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 3

Time	Activity
10 min	3.1 Introduction
40 min	3.2 Writing and Talking
50 min	3.3 Make your own coping and healing toolkit
10 min	3.4 Closing & Home assignment

3.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take detailed attendance. Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning (you then remove that page so someone who comes late do not sign the at-arrival attendance) and at the end of each session (separate sheet).

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Smile and be positive! Put all of your energy into the session, as this day can change the lives of these families. Welcome the parents and praise them for being there.

Who can remind us of the last session?

Ask participants to voluntarily share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment? Was it easy or difficult to find time and space to do the relaxation exercise? Why? Did they see any change in the way they felt during the past week? Did they notice any change in their children’s behavior? Request testimonials and experience. Does anyone have any thoughts or reflections they can share?

We saw during the last session how parent’s stress can affect the mood but also the behavior of your children. Without telling them anything, they know deep inside that their parents are stressed. They also listen to what parents are saying when they discuss between adults.

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

This session will help you to develop tools to cope with your stress. Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer and share them with your supervisor.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Ya Bah Ya bah⁸

Here is the one who brought the egg
 Here is the one who boiled it
 Here is the one who peeled it
 Here is the one who ate it
 And Here is the one who said “What about me? Where is my share?
 (Each finger is gently pulled starting with the thumb)

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. Parents will identify and develop their own coping and healing toolkit
2. Parents will learn how to deal with their stress



⁸ Arabic nursery rhymes, children’s songs and pems. Al Salwa publishing house.

3.2 Writing & Talking

**TIME:
40 MINUTES**

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN:

- Most of you experience stress, which has various sources. The purpose of this activity is not to address the source of stress but to learn techniques to cope with the stress.

- We learnt during the last session relaxation and breathing techniques. During this session we will learn how writing or talking can promote emotional processing and integration of traumatic memories or stressful events.

ACTIVITY Writing⁹

EXPLAIN:

One way of getting the stress and memories out is to write them. Spelling and grammar don't matter. The most important is to get all the details of the stressful situation or event out. I want you write to write about a particular stressful event or situation by asking yourself certain questions. This exercise is very personal. We will not read what you have written.

Distribute a notebook and pen to each participant.

Here are some question to think about (write the questions on a flipchart) :

- What happened before the stressful event or situation?
- How I first knew something was wrong?
- What happened next?
- What did I do?
- How did I know it was over (if applicable)?
- What did I do afterwards?
- What did others do afterwards?
- What was the very worst moment?

Give 15 minutes to the participants to write their story.

NOTE TO FACILITATORS:

You can also encourage participant to draw if they feel like. Have some color pencils and markers available.

If writing is not an option or people feel uncomfortable with writing, you can replace this activity with the safe space exercise.

⁹ *Workbook for the Child and War manual*, 2002, 2012 Children and War Foundation, Bergen, Norway

ACTIVITY (next)

Now, you've written about your stressful event or memories. Afterwards, you can reread the story when you feel relaxed and comfortable. You may want to rewrite it later, with more details as you remember.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

- Most of the participants experienced very traumatic events. It is important to acknowledge it but this is not a therapy group. We don't have the time and the human resources to address the psychological needs of all the participants
- It is easy to fall in the negative trap. Try to stay focus on the positive and encourage participants to identify positive and cheerful moments.

You may want to keep the book as a kind of diary where you can write your feelings on a regular basis. Make sure each time to write something negative you also identify a positive event during the past period. If writing stressful event helps to release stress it is also important to identify some positives ones as well. It can be something related to your children, your family or to yourself.

ASK the participants: What can be a positive event?

Examples:

- My daughter had good marks at school and I was very proud of her.
- My neighbor came yesterday. She has a lot of humor and we laughed all afternoon.
- My son made his first steps.
- I received a call from my sister, she is safe. etc

ALTERNATIVE ACTIVITY Safe Space¹⁰

(In case you participants are not comfortable writing)

I'm going to ask you to imagine a place or scene that makes you feel calm and secure and happy. This could be somewhere real that you remember, maybe from a holiday; or it could be somewhere you've heard about, maybe in a story; or it could be somewhere that you invent and make up yourself.

Take a few deep steady breaths. Close your eyes and carry on breathing normally. Bring up a picture of your safe place and imagine that you are standing or sitting there. Can you see yourself there? In your imagination, take a look around. What do you see? What can you see close to you? Look at the details of it and see what it is made of. See the different colours. Imagine reaching out and touching it. How does it feel? Now take a look further away. What can you see around you? See what's in the distance. See the different colours and shapes and shadows. This is your special place and you can imagine whatever you want to be there. When you're there, you feel calm and peaceful. Imagine your bare feet on the ground. What does the ground feel like? Walk around slowly, noticing the things there. See what they look like and how they feel. What can you hear? Maybe

¹⁰ Teaching recovery techniques. War and Child Foundation. 2010

the gentle sounds of the wind, or birds, or the sea. Can you feel the warm sun on your face? What can you smell? Maybe it's the sea air, or flowers, or your favourite food cooking? In your special place, you can see the things you want, and imagine touching and smelling them, and hearing pleasant sounds. You feel calm and happy.

Now imagine that someone special is with you in your place. [With younger groups especially, this might be a fantasy figure or a cartoon superhero] This is someone who is there to be a good friend and to help you, someone strong and kind. They are there just to help you and they'll look after you. Imagine walking around and exploring your special place slowly with them. You feel happy to be with them. This person is your helper and they're good at sorting out problems.

Just look around in your imagination once more. Have a good look. Remember that this is your special place. It will always be there. You can always imagine being here when you want to feel calm and secure and happy. Your helper will always be there whenever you want them to be. Now get ready to open your eyes and leave your special place for now. You can come back when you want. As you open your eyes, you feel more calm and happy.

ACTIVITY Talking¹¹

As well as writing, talking can help get stressful events or bad memories out. Sharing problems with others helps to release stress.

Discuss with the group about advantages and disadvantages of talking. Write their answers on a flipchart.

Examples of advantages

- Makes me feel better
- Helps me get clear what happened
- Find out if others experience is the same or similar
- Gets it all out
- Someone can help if you tell them
- You can get advice on what to do
- You can help other people

Examples of disadvantages

- People might laugh
- I don't have anyone to talk to
- You might upset the other person
- Don't know what to say
- It's difficult to talk about my feelings

¹¹ *Workbook for the Child and War manual*, 2002, 2012 Children and War Foundation, Bergen, Norway

-
- People will tell others about my problems

It is sometimes difficult to talk about our-self to people who have their own problems or people we barely know. It can be hard at times but in the end it helps if you can trust the person you are talking to.

EXPLAIN: Some of you have friends or relatives to talk to. They listen to you or they make you laugh. It is your **SUPPORT NETWORK**. You can also use the parents support groups to share ideas and problems. Mothers can meet on a fix day of the week and invite each other for tea. You can also organize daycare for your younger children. Each mother takes care of others children once a week. This will help you to free some time for yourself. Even two persons can do it!

3.3 Make your own Coping & Healing Kit¹²

Session 3

TIME:
50 MINUTES

ACTIVITY

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Encourage participant to express their creativity!

Preparation:

On a table, set out prepared cards that represent tangible items that can reduce stress (see *Handout 3.1*), as well as some blank index cards.

Distribute large envelopes (preferably brightly-colored 9x12 envelopes) and pens or fine-line markers.

Display out an assortment of stickers (displaying fun items), glitter, feathers, etc. that participants can use to decorate their cards and their envelopes.

Give each participant a large envelope that becomes the container for his/her kit.

Step 1: Each participant walks around the table and picks the cards that appeal to him/her, and then personalizes the card. For example, here are the titles of some of the cards (you can add other categories if you have creative ideas):

- My Favorite Places – a picture or description of a place (past, present, or imagined) where you feel or felt a great sense of peace and safety
- Gratitude List (things for which I am grateful)
- Drinks that I enjoy (herb tea, juice, cocoa, etc.)
- My Favorite Books (especially books that lift my mood)
- My Favorite Music (music that makes you feel good – not sad!)
- Ways to Draw or Write Down My Thoughts (a notebook or journal and pen)
- Humorous or Positive Sayings or Pictures
- Childhood Favorite Toys (things you loved playing with – if you no longer have the toy, a picture or a description will do)
- Peak Moments from the Past (write down a brief reminder of a wonderful memory)
- My Support Network (a list of people you can visit, call or email who always lift your spirits)
- Comfort Foods (food that you like and is easily accessible. Nothing that will make you feel bad because you ate it!)
- Reminders of other things that you can do to relieve stress such as

¹² Session inspired from *IPSV Support Group Guide: A Guide to Psycho educational Support Groups for Survivors of Intimate Partner Violence.* Washington Coalition of Sexual Assault Survivors.2006

taking a warm shower, taking the time to wash your hair, pamper yourself!

- Relaxation exercise that you have tested and work for you. It can be deep breathing, center your- self, muscle relaxation, praying.

Step 2: Participants will choose those cards that represent items they actually would like to have in a Coping and Healing Kit, and then write something about their personal choices; for example, on the Gratitude List card, participants can write down some things that they are grateful for, such as “My health,” or “My daughter’s smile.”

Step 3: Tell participants they could actually make a kit with the real items in it (such as some pictures clipped from a magazine or some packages of their favorite tea), or just use the cards as a reminder of the things that they might turn to when they are feeling stressed.

Step 4: After each person has assembled his/her kit, ask them to take a few minutes and look it over.

Step 5: Invite participants to talk about the contents of their kits. Make sure you let them know that they can choose not to talk, or to keep some of the items private.

Step 6: Ask participants to discuss how they can use their kits to help them to cope with trauma memories, current stresses, or troubled emotions.

Step 7: Discuss what participants want to do with their kits – take them home, leave them at the group site, or destroy them (just having gone through the process is useful, even if they don’t take anything tangible home with them). **IMPORTANT!** Have the group consider safety issues.

Learning Discussion

- Talk about the need for self-care and self-nurturing.
- Reinforce the points from the previous sessions about the process of healing and finding strength. Remind participants that sometimes the process of facing their situation or their past experiences can cause emotional turmoil and pain; this is part of the healing process.
- Discuss: How can you participate in self-care, even when it feels like you don’t have the time or space to do so?
- What do you need to do to stay safe and healthy?
- What are some ways in which you have successfully coped with difficult situations?
- What resources do you have to turn to when you feel overwhelmed?

CHECK-OUT: What are one or two items from your Coping and Healing Kit that you are really looking forward to using soon?

3.4 Closing & Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

FEEDBACK

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least? Why?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to?
- Suggestions comments?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- This next week, use your tool kit and try to use at least one of the tools you have in your kit.
- Practice one relaxation or breathing technique

RELAXATION ACTIVITY

Take 10 minutes to do the Visualization exercise, handout 3.2

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to share the knowledge they learned with their husbands and friends.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave
- Facilitators fill the fidelity check

The Impact of Parenting

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS****SESSION OBJECTIVES:**

- Parents will learn the basics of child development
- Parents will have knowledge of the impact of positive and harmful parenting on children's development
- Parents will reflect on techniques they can use to nurture their child's development

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers, information regarding child development
- Fidelity checklist
- Visual aids printed in color and laminated: neural circuit, brain architecture, Toxic stress, impact of profound deprivation, brain scan
- Handouts
- 4.1 Neural circuits are wired in a bottom-up sequence (for all participants and one in color laminated as visual aid for the facilitator)
- 4.2 Brain scan
- 4.3 Profound deprivation affects brain power (for all participants and one in color laminated as visual aid for the facilitator)
- 4.4 Brain scan
- 4.5 Your baby's development 0 to 3 months
- 4.6 Your baby's development 3 to 6 months
- 4.7 Your baby's development 6 to 9 months
- 4.8 Your baby's development 9 to 12 months

PREPARATION:

- Write the definition of growth and development and the different types of development on a flip chart
- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session
- Be in the room 15 mins before session time to prepare the room, so that there are no disturbances during the session and the place is conducive for the session
- Learn the names of participants, children and spouses

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 4

Time	Activity
10 min	4.1 Introduction
20 min	4.2 Child brain development: how it works
20 min	4.3 Parenting, environment & Children's brain development
40 min	4.4 Developmental milestones & realistic expectations
20 min	4.5 How to support children's development?
10 min	4.6 Closing & Home assignment

KEY MESSAGE FOR THE FACILITATOR:

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

Early childhood is an intensive period of brain development during the lifespan (80% of the brain structure is completed during the first three years of life). Adequate physical, emotional and intellectual stimulation and nutrition are essential for development during the first years of life. It is during these years that a child's brain is most sensitive to the influences of the external environment, particularly love and violence. Healthy development helps to ensure that each child reaches his or her potential.

The more stimulating and loving the early environment, the more a child develops and learns. High levels of stress during early childhood can increase the risk of mental and physical poor health, but also learning difficulties and social and emotional deficiencies or problems for the rest of their lives.

Parents have an essential role to play using key triggers of development and supporting health and mental structures: LOVE and intellectual and socio-emotional STIMULATION!

4.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will learn basics of child development
- Parents will have knowledge of the impact of positive and harmful parenting on children’s development.
- Parents will reflect on techniques they can use to nurture children’s development.



ATTENDANCE

Take detailed attendance. Facilitators should make note of any other participants who have joined the session—i.e who brought a friend or a child or a partner (the sessions are not open to anyone). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session in different sheets.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Welcome parents. Be positive and smile a lot! You will need all of your energy to conduct this session successfully.

Ask a volunteer to review the previous session and the group to help.

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share how they used their coping and healing kit since the last meeting. Did you do something for yourself as we agreed in the previous session? What was that? How did you feel?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today’s session. Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer, to be revisited during the next session.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Ask the parents if they have a song or a game they would like to share.

If not, here are few examples:

- **Hot/cold:** you hide an object and your child should find it. To guide him, you said “hot” when he is getting close, “cold” when he is moving away from the object.
- **Guess what I think of?:** think about an object in the room. Your child will ask you questions about this object but you can only answer with yes or no until he guesses it!

4.2 Child Brain Development: How it Works

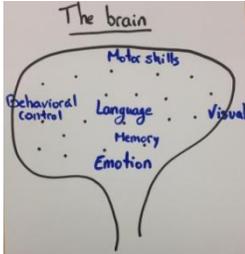
TIME:
20 MINUTES

INTRODUCTION

ACKNOWLEDGE: We all want our children and the children in our community to grow and develop well. We want our children to be healthy, intelligent, respectful and happy. We want our children to grow into responsible and productive members of society.

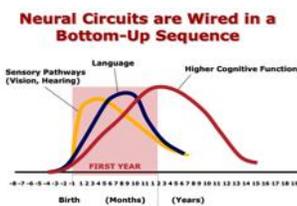
TIP:

Be sure to remind participants to ask questions at any time. This is difficult material and may be new to many parents. Take time to make sure they understand it well.



Sample A

Show the following visual aids



Handout 4.1

EXPLAIN: Scientific evidence shows that the environment in which children live, the experiences they have, the care they receive, and the type of interactions that children have with their parents/ caregivers have a significant impact on children's brain development. How the child's brain develops in these early years can affect the child for the rest of his or her life. The key to enhance brain development has been unveiled by science and has an old name: **love!**

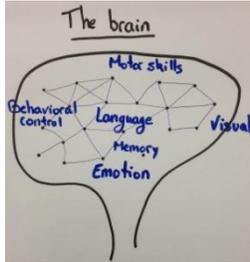


EXPLAIN: This part of the session will help us understand how children's brains develop and will provide some ideas for how to help our children develop as well as possible.

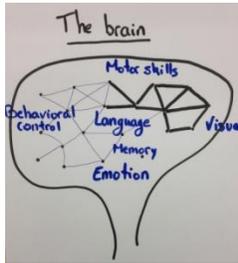
THE SCIENCE

- 80% of a child's brain structure develops during the first 3 years of life. The way the child's brain develops during these first 3 years of life has a significant impact on a child's ability to **learn**, how they **behave** and **communicate**, how they **interact** with others, and how they cope with change and stress throughout their lives. (Draw a brain with neurons, see sample A)
- Show the color visual aid *Neural circuit are wired in bottom up sequence* and explain that children develop skills very early and that parents have a role to play in stimulating their children in their first years.
- Distribute the handout 4.1 to the participants.
- Science shows that nutrition, a safe, positive, non-violent environment and positive, nurturing, loving relationships with parents/caregivers can help a child's brain develop to their full potential. Science also shows that toxic stress and early exposure to violence can have negative and lasting life consequences.

THE SCIENCE, CONTINUED



Sample B



Sample C

Show the following visual aids



Brain architecture visual aid

- While good nutrition, safe, positive, non-violent environments and positive, nurturing relationships can help children’s brains develop to their full potential, poor nutrition; unsafe, negative, violent environments; and lack of love and nurturing relationships with parents/ caregivers can have a *negative* effect on children’s brain development.
- We are born with around 80-100 billion brain cells called neurons.¹³ Throughout our lives, our brains will not grow many more neurons. Those neurons make us human as they work communicating among themselves with small electric impulses called synapses.¹⁴ (Draw connections between neurons. It’s like a web. Sample B)
- These synapses, or circuits, enable children to do things, like understand language, think, learn, walk, catch a ball, trust others, and manage emotions. They are like electrical wires that, when connected, enable the lights to turn on. If the synapses between neurons are used repeatedly, they become permanent and strong. (Draw stronger connection between the neurons. Sample C)
- If they are not used, they will remain weak and may die through a process called “pruning”. Stress and violence destroy these synapses; While love, caring and positive stimulation reinforce those synapses.

If possible, show the Brain architecture video. If not, use the facilitator’s visual aid Session 4, Brain architecture

TIP:

To explain how neurological pathways/circuits work, you may also want to use and draw the following example:

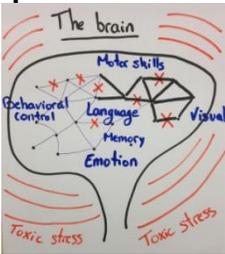
Imagine there is a village with many, many homes (neurons). Between these homes is the bush. For people in the homes to know each other, form positive relationships, and work together well, there must be paths that connect the homes. For the path to be clear and to not become overgrown, this path must be walked and cleared regularly. If you do not walk the path regularly between your home and other homes, the path will be difficult to see, the relationship between people in your home and in the other homes will suffer. It is similar with the pathways between cells in the brain. For positive neurological pathways to develop and become strong, the pathways must be used.

4.3 Parenting, Environment & Children’s Brain Development

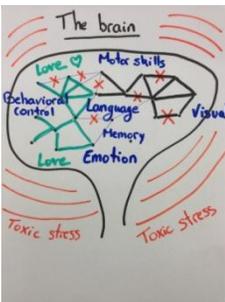
**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

TIP:

Be sure to remember to encourage participants to ask questions!



Sample D



Sample E



Toxic stress visual aid

THE IMPACT OF POSITIVE, NURTURING PARENTING

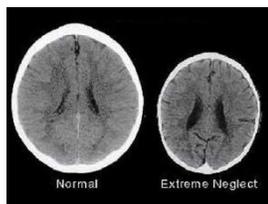
EXPLAIN:

- There is scientific evidence that shows that loving, nurturing experiences with caring adults from the time of birth activates the connections between brain cells. This helps children learn positive skills, positive ways of interacting with others and getting their needs met. Positive experiences with caring adults also helps connections in areas of the brain related to solving problems and complex thinking.
- Caregivers can do many things that can help stimulate children’s brains in positive ways and help them develop positive skills. But parents can also do things that can affect children’s development negatively.

THE IMPACT OF ABUSE, NEGLECT & VIOLENCE

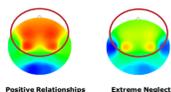
- Scientific evidence that shows that prolonged or repeated periods of physical or emotional stress can have a negative impact on children’s development.
- This stress might be due to abuse or neglect. It can also be due to repeatedly witnessing violence in their home or community, being exposed to violent images from the TV (such as watching the news) or having weapons at home.
- When children experience prolonged or repeated periods of physical or emotional stress, their brains produce hormones like *cortisol* and *adrenaline*. High levels of these hormones can deteriorate the connections between neurons and damage the way the brain functions¹⁵ (Draw the toxic stress and the disconnection of neurons. Sample D)
- Love and care strengthen the connection between neurons, prevents the disconnection causes by toxic stress and can contribute to repair once they are disconnected. (Draw the strong connections with love. Sample E)

¹⁵ ibid



Handout 4.2

Profound Deprivation Affects Brain Power



Source: G.A. Nelson (2005), Harvard, Fall 06/07 (2005)

Center on the Developing Child HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Handout 4.3



Handout 4.4

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Answer participant's questions if you are able. If you do not know the answers, take note of the questions and tell the group that you will get them an answer during the next session. Send any questions to your supervisor and the technical unit in New York. Remember, you are not expected to be an expert in child brain development.

- If possible, show the Toxic stress video or use the facilitator's visual aids, Toxic stress.
- In the next phase, you will show brain scans to highlight the physical impact of neglect on the brain.
- Show the black and white brain scan and distribute the handout 4.2. Ask the participants:

- *What is the difference between the two brains?*
- *These are brain of 3 years old children. Which one is the biggest?*

Explain the neglect and abuse will affect the size of the brain.

- Show the color visual aid *Profound deprivation affects brain power* and distribute the handout 4.3.and 4.4. Explain that the red part reflects brain activity. The brain on the left shows a lot of brain activity (in red) whereas the brain on the right shows very little brain activity due to neglect. *You can also show the brain scan and compare the 2 brains.*

DISCUSSION

When there are no more questions, explain that now you would like for the group to share ideas and discuss with one another. Read the discussion question below:

ASK: What can parents in our community do to help stimulate children's brains and help them develop positive skills?

Answer may include: reducing violence and promoting safe environments, but the most important one is loving and caring for their children. Also parents who take care of themselves are better prepared to take care of their children.

ASK: What are some things that parents/caregivers do in your community or *could do* to support children and help their children cope with stress or sadness?

4.4 Developmental Milestones & Realistic Expectations

**TIME:
40 MINUTES**

RESOURCES FOR FACILITATORS:

For an excellent visual of how children's brains develop at different ages, check out an article from the *New York Times* titled,

The Child's Developing Brain

<http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2008/09/15/health/20080915-brain-development.html>

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN: As different parts of the brain develop, children become capable of doing new things. All children are different, but most children develop certain skills at similar ages. **Watching these changes happen is a wonderful part of being a parent!**

ACTIVITY

ASK the group to get into pairs. Ask the parents to share with their partners a time during the first three years of their child's life when their child did something new. They do something new almost every day, don't they? Ask the parents to describe what the child did and to share how it made them feel. Give the pairs 5 minutes to share with each other. After 5 minutes, ask for one or two volunteers to share with the group. Take no more than 10 minutes for this activity.

DISCUSSION: DEVELOPMENTAL MILESTONES

ASK participants to think about their own children and children in the community. From their experience, what do they know that children can do within the first month? What can children do within three months? 7 months? 12 months? 2 years?

EMPHASIZE: While there are commonalities in what children can do at different ages, some children might learn new skills sooner or later than others. If your child is making progress, he/she is probably doing fine. However, if you have concerns, you should take your child to a health center.

We need to understand that children grow in their own way and we have to respect and enhance their growth and development stages.

DISCUSSION: EXPECTATIONS OF CHILDREN

RESOURCES FOR FACILITATORS:

As a reference for what children can do at different stages of development and how parents can support their children at each stage, use Age-Based Handouts from Zero to Three: <http://www.zerotothree.org/about-us/areas-of-expertise/free-parent-brochures-and-guides/age-based-handouts.html>

- **EXPLAIN:** Understanding how children develop at the different stages helps us as parents to understand our children. It helps us to know ways that we can nurture our children and support their development at each stage. It also helps us to know what we should not expect of our children at each stage.
- When we have unrealistic expectations of children, we as parents will become frustrated with our children. When this happens, a child's self-esteem can suffer because they will see that they are disappointing their parents and cannot make them happy. Having **realistic expectations** of children will enable us as parents to appreciate our children and it will help children gain confidence and feel loved and secure.
- **ASK:** Can you describe some expectations that people may commonly have of children that could be unrealistic?
- Distribute the Handouts 4.5, 4.6, 4.7 and 4.8

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Some examples could include expectation that the child will not cry; expectation that the child will tell the mother what he/she wants or needs before he/she is able; or expectation that the child will not wet itself before s/he is 2.

4.5 How to Support Children's Development

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

INTRODUCTION

- At each stage of a child's development, parents can do different things to help nurture their child and help the child learn new skills.
- Proper **nutrition** is one important thing you can do for your child's development.
- Two other important things that parents can do are **talking** and **playing** with children. Both of these are essential ways of communication and manner to build healthy relations and reinforce parent-child attachment. Even if your child is one-day old, the child is learning from you!
- **Talking peacefully** to your child in complete sentences can help the child learn language and increase vocabulary, which prepares her/him for school. It can also help the child understand how to communicate and can help them learn about their environment.
- You can help children learn to communicate by using words to explain your child's emotions or surroundings. For example, you can say: "You are angry that I took away the pot you were banging on. Here, you can play with this ball instead." Or "That is a cow. It gives us milk!"
- You can also teach your baby to connect words and actions by repeating things and encouraging them to copy and respond to you. For example, you can wave and say "hello" and "goodbye". Repetition is an essential skill for learning. **Be patient!**
- You have to play with your child to help your child develop new skills. Even a game like "yabah-yabah" stimulates your baby's brain. Playing with your child helps build positive relationships between you and your child. **ENJOY IT! HAVE FUN!**

INTERESTING FACT YOU MAY WANT TO SHARE:

The right to play is a right that all children have according to the Convention on the Rights of the Child. But why is play important for children? Here are just a few reasons:

- Studies show that children pay more attention in school if they have frequent, short periods of free time to play in a safe place without direction from adults.
- Play involving pretending can improve intellectual, linguistic, and social skills.
- Play can help children develop creativity, social interactions and learn problem solving skills.

Dewar, D., PhD. 2008. The cognitive benefits of play: Effects on the learning brain. *Parenting Science*. <http://www.parentingscience.com/benefits-of-play.html>

DISCUSSION

ASK: What are some games that parents can play with their children when they are babies? What are some games or song they can play or sing when the child is 2 or 5? What are some songs they can sing to children?

Answers may include:

Games

- Yabah-yabah
- Saturday, Sunday (hand clapping game)
- Guessing body part name
- Donkey tail game

Songs¹⁶

- This is the way fish swim
- Little chicks
- Fly bird fly

Distribute the nursery songs handout 4.9

¹⁶ Arabic nursery rhymes, children's songs and pems. Al Salwa publishing house.

4.6 Closing & Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

After the discussion, if the parents have children with them, give them time to practice playing a game with their children.

FEEDBACK

Have a brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

EXPLAIN:

- We have been discussing child development. During the week, try and be close to your children – in the morning greet them, ask them how their night was, and **say "I LOVE YOU son or daughter."** Do this even if your child is very young and cannot speak. In the evening, say good night to your child and touch your child kindly on the back or give the child a hug and a kiss.
- If the child is able to speak, spare 5 minutes, ask them how their day was. It's great if you can also **tell your child a story**, a traditional tale for example.
- Also, during the week, spend at least some time **playing with your child**. Ask the parents, How many times do you think you can commit to play with your child?

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- **THANK** participants for coming to the discussion.
- **INFORM** participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- **REMIND** them of the date for the next meeting.
- **ENCOURAGE** participants to share the knowledge they learned with their partners and friends.
- Parents Support Group to help absentees to catch up with the session.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance before participants leave.

Empathy & Positive Behavior

TOTAL TIME:
1h30 HOURS

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS:

The best way to reinforce a child behavior is to pay positive attention to desirable behaviors and to ignore unwanted ones. Many techniques are funded in this principle of psychology: **CHILDREN JUST WANT ATTENTION!**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. Parents will understand the concept of empathy
2. Parents will have knowledge of some alternatives to corporal and other harsh discipline techniques and why these alternative techniques are more effective

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Fidelity checklist
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers, information regarding child positive behavior
- Handouts
- 5.1: How would you like it?

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session, including the briefing notes, to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.
- Obtain the required materials before the training
- Be at the site 15 minutes before the session
- Learn names of participants and their family members
- Prepare the room so it is conducive to discussion, without noises or interruptions

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 5

Time	Activity
10 min	5.1 Introduction
10 min	5.2 Your child's development: what you can do
10 min	5.3 Understanding & Developing Empathy
50 min	5.4 Empathic parenting
10 min	2.5 Closing & Home assignment

5.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

1. Parents will understand the concept of empathy and why it is necessary
2. Parents will have knowledge of some alternatives to corporal and other harsh discipline techniques and why they work better.



ATTENDANCE

Take detailed attendance. Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning (you then remove that page so someone who comes late do not sign the at-arrival attendance) and at the end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Smile and be positive! Put all of your energy into the session, as this day can change the lives of these families. Welcome the parents and praise them for being there.

Start by asking participants to voluntarily share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment? Was it easy or difficult to say “I love you” every day? Why? How did the child respond to the story telling technique? How was the play and interactions with the child? Request testimonials and actual playing time experience. Does anyone have any thoughts or reflections they can share?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

There is much in this session with references to the 5 major elements for good parenting: appropriate expectations, balance between independence and guidance, appropriate discipline, empathy and adequate roles.

These 5 elements will be a recurring theme during the trainings. Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer and share them with your supervisor. You can add unanswered questions to the session evaluation for review at the end.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Ask the parents if they have a game or song to share. If not, you can use this song:

My turtle’s name is Nahia¹⁷

My turtle is Nahia
She walks ever so slowly
She eats greens and fruits
And carries her house on her back

¹⁷ Arabic nursery rhymes, children’s songs and pems. Al Salwa publishing house.

5.2 Your Child's Development: What You Can Do

Session 5

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN:

- In the last session, we talked about some of the things that caregivers can do to help develop children's brain structure. This is a reminder of the previous session.
- We also talked about different things that children learn to do at different ages.

ASK: What are your thoughts about this? Are there any other things that parents can do to nurture children and help them learn new skills at different ages? This is a way of introducing alternatives to corporal punishment linked to brain development and good parenting.

Be open to their ideas and write them on a flipchart (quick exercise). They might come up with great techniques and practices, but be ready to hear some techniques that are not nurturing, and even violent or oppressive. Then ask the other parents what they think. Remind them to avoid techniques that are oppressive, threatening or violent. This includes traditional harmful practices, screams and the like. Later in the session you will use these techniques and put them in the "Tamoura Box".

5.3 Understanding & Developing Empathy

TIME:
10 MINUTES



Handout 5.1

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

- Empathy helps us to care for others, to communicate better, and to have better relationships with other people. Empathy can help families and communities to be more peaceful and successful. To understand our others' point of view, and identify their needs, feelings, joys and pains.
- Empathy enables us to understand and relate to what children are experiencing and feeling. It enables us to "put ourselves in their shoes", we feel like if we were in their place.
- Empathy can help us to recognize the impact of our actions and decisions (both positive and negative) on our children. Empathy can also help us to feel compassion/sympathy for our children when they are hurt, tired, or frightened. Empathy can help us understand that other people, including children, have goals, desires, beliefs and emotions that matter.

INTRODUCTION

Write the word "Empathy" on a flip chart.

Empathy is the ability to understand and to feel what another person is feeling. Having empathy enables us to feel compassion for others. It is what makes us feel upset when others are suffering and it is what compels us to offer comfort to others who are suffering. Empathy makes us human; help us to cry when another is suffering and to rejoice when someone else is happy. Share handout 5.1 and discuss it with the group.

DISCUSSION

ASK: Why do you think empathy is necessary? What does empathy and compassion have to do with raising children? It is a key element that we need to develop as parents to be good parents.

NOTE for the facilitator: It is very difficult for a parent who lacks empathy to understand what the children need, how to respond to children, how to stimulate children to play and to enjoy parenting. If we develop empathy we can work on other areas of parenting: discipline, guidance, protection, stimulation, socialization, etc. If we don't build empathy, we will have a tough job!

- Being empathetic, understanding the feelings and needs of others, will help us to understand why they behave in a certain way. Understanding this will enable us to react in a more constructive and nurturing manner.
- Empathy can be developed and practiced. We help our children to learn empathy, and we learn empathy through them and with them.
- One basic thing that parents can do to help their child develop empathy is this: if your child hurts another child physically or emotionally, or if you and your child see someone who is suffering, take time to talk to your child about how that person

5.4 Empathetic Parenting

**TIME:
50 MINUTES**

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Remind participants that when "Taking Action" they should avoid giving advice. As empathetic listeners they should praise and encourage, however, say something like:

"You are smart and have a good understanding of the circumstances, I am confident you will make the right decision."

This teaches the child that you trust their judgment, builds confidence, and reinforces positive values. The child will make the decision not the parent.

INTRODUCTION TO EMPATHETIC PARENTING

EXPLAIN:

- Empathetic parenting is an important way to nurture your child and to promote good behavior in your child.
- We are going to learn a technique to improve empathy. There are 4 steps¹⁸ to parenting with empathy. Write these on a flip chart.

- ▶ **Step 1** Identify the child's feeling
- ▶ **Step 2** Determine the reason for the child's feeling
- ▶ **Step 3** Validate the child's feeling --every feeling is respectable and important
- ▶ **Step 4** Take constructive action

EXPLAIN:

Identifying a child's feeling is **the first step**. For example, "It sounds like you are very angry". Naming the child's feeling help young children to identify their own emotions. Giving these emotions names supports their emotional vocabulary.

Ask the parents:

What are the emotions that your child is likely to feel?

Answers may include:

- Frustration
- Sadness
- Anger
- Fear
- Shame
- Indignation
- Joy
- Disgust
- Trust
- Surprise
- Expectation etc.

¹⁸ Adapted from Parents Make the Difference Curriculum, IRC-Liberia

- **The second step** is determining the reason for the child's feeling. We might think that it is not a reason to be angry, but it is the reason why the child is angry, so try not to judge. "Why are you feeling angry"? Determining the reason for the feeling is important because many children (and many adults) are not aware of exactly what they are feeling or why they are feeling that way. "You're feeling angry because your sister does not allow you to play with her".
- **The third step** is validating the child's feeling: For example, "That must be very frustrating for you" or "I know that playing with your sister is very important to you". You take your child's feelings seriously. You show respect, you show empathy and you reinforce your bond with your child.
- **The fourth step** is taking constructive action. You can give the child alternatives and help him/her to manage her/his feelings in a peaceful and controlled way. This means addressing the child's feeling, helping the child to manage his or her emotions and finding solutions together with your child. Reinforcing positive behavior, or affirming your belief that your child will do the right thing builds self-esteem. The action you take will be different depending on the child's behavior, feeling or belief.

PRACTICING EMPATHETIC PARENTING

EXPLAIN:

TIP:

The facilitator should use as many role plays as possible, because they help parents comprehend the techniques and prepare them to use them.

- Empathetic parenting is not always easy. It is especially difficult when you are angry and/or tired and you have to control your own feelings. You are also human and you need to deal with your own feelings; the more you control yourself, the more your children will control and manage appropriately their own feelings (this is called **role model**; We will come back to this concept later as a major parenting technique)
- You can expect children experiencing different emotions from happiness, to frustration, anger, pain, surprise. They are human. Enjoy your children's feelings: identify them, label them, understand them, validate/embrace them and deal with them in a nurturing way.
- With practice, empathetic parenting becomes easier. You will learn to put things in perspective. Each lesson for your young child is a life lesson beyond what is happening at the moment. You are modeling how to deal with situations and feelings for the rest of their lives.

If done consistently, you will see that empathetic parenting can have a positive influence on your children and improve your relationship with your children, too.

TIP:

The facilitator should first demonstrate this activity to provide an example to participants. The facilitator should use as many role-plays as possible because they help parents comprehend the techniques and prepare them to use them. The participants can role-play until they get all the 4 steps.

Role-Play: Practicing Empathy

ASK participants to find a partner.

EXPLAIN:

- In this role-play, one person will be the empathetic parent. The other person should be the upset child (you can role play with other feelings like fear, insecurity, uneasiness, surprise, pain, pleasure, content, happiness, excitement, etc). Please decide now what roles you and your partner will play.
- The Empathetic Partner will practice the 4 steps of empathy.

ASK participants to switch roles so that both partners have an opportunity to practice.

EXPLAIN:

- The empathetic listening and response that is part of empathetic parenting can be applied to any relationship.

Examples of script

1. The child who hurt himself

Child: (Crying)

Parent: You are crying (Step 1), what's wrong Nadia/Mustafa?
What happened to you? (Step 2)

Child: I was playing with the other children and one of them pushed me and I felt on my knees. It HURTS!!

Parent: Oh! That's not nice. I understand why you are upset. Let me look at your knee. Oh yes, it's bleeding! That hurts. (Step 3)

Let me disinfect it. (You finish with a good hug!) Come here, mum/dad is always there for you. Let's see if we can find other children to play with. (Step 4)

2. The child who doesn't want to go to bed

Parent: It's time to go to bed now. Leave the toys and come to put on your pajamas

Child: No, I don't want to! I'm still finishing this....

Parents: I understand that you are frustrated (Step 1); you would prefer to play (Step 2). I like when you play, I know that you are having fun and it's upsetting to stop in the middle of something, but now it's time to go to bed (Step 3). You will be tired for school

tomorrow. When there no school the next day, you can play later. Next Thursday, you can play until 8pm. (Step 4)

3. Children fighting over a toy

Child: (beating his sister) Give it to me!!!!

Parent: I can see that you are very angry at your sister. (Step 1).
What is happening? (Step 2)

Child: she is playing with my car; it's my car!!!!

Parent: I understand that you are upset but it would be nice of you to share your toys with your sister (Step 3). Nadia, which toys can you share with your brother? (Step 4)

4. Child feeling sad

Child: (withdrawn, sobbing)

Parent: Oh you seem very sad today (Step 1) What makes you feel sad? (Step 2)

Child: I miss my toys and friends from before the war. I have no toys to play with here.

Parents: That's true; you don't have many toys and friends here. I understand that you are sad and that you miss them. (Step 3) For today, let's play together Guess what I think?

And tomorrow, we can go to the CFS/SHLS to see if you can do some activities there and make new friends. (Step 4)

5.5 Closing & Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

FEEDBACK

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least? Why?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to?
- Suggestions comments?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- Also practice the 4-step technique to improve empathy:
 1. Identification of the feeling
 2. Understanding the reason
 3. Validating the feeling,
 4. Constructive action

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to share the knowledge they learned with their husbands and friends.

GROUP HUG

- Ask a volunteer or select one person (maybe a shy participant, if appropriate) to come to the center of the group and ask everyone to praise that person for what s/he is and has done.
- Then give a group hug and close the session. Maybe with applause.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave
- Facilitators fill the fidelity check

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will have knowledge of ways to better understand and address their children's feelings and needs in order to help children grow healthy and respectful.
- Parents will understand the importance of parent-child communication.

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts
- Markers of different colors
- Handouts at the end of the session
- 6.1 Communicate with children from 12 to 18 months

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.
- Be on the meeting place 15 minutes in advance.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 6

Time	Activity
20 min	6.1 Introduction
20 min	6.2 How children communicate
1h10 min	6.3 How to communicate with children
10 min	6.4 Closing & Home assignment

6.1 Introduction

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will have knowledge of ways to better understand and address their children’s feelings and needs in order to help children grow healthy and respectful.
- Parents will understand the importance of parent-child communication.



ATTENDANCE

Take attendance upon arrival (different paper at departure). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment? Did you praise your child? Did you practice the 4-step technique to improve empathy (identification, cause, honoring the feeling, constructive action)? Was it easy or difficult? Why? How did the child respond? Does anyone have any thoughts or reflections they can share?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today’s session. Maybe we have more things to add to the Tamoura.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Dynamic (we communicate in different ways)

- To set up a pleasant environment let's ask parents to stand up. Be smiley and positive.
- Let's do some stretching exercises that will wake them up and awake also their mind to prepare them for what they are going to learn
- What about a little group dynamic? Let's sing a song that everyone knows. These are the kind of things you should also do with your children. HAVE FUN!
Here are few example of songs¹⁹

This is the way fish swim

*This is the way fish swim
This is the way birds fly
This is the way wheels turns
This is the way kids clap
Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!*

(Each movement is mimicked by hand and arms)

These little chicks

*These little chicks (cluck cluck)
are so cute (cluck cluck)
They happily go around,
And round their mother. (cluck cluck)
They drink water, (cluck cluck)
And say ahhhh. (cluck cluck)
They raise their heads,
And gratefully thank the lord (cluck cluck)
They put their new clothes (cluck cluck)
They are happy, (cluck cluck)
because it is the Eid. (cluck cluck)*

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN:

In this session we will learn how important communication is. For children to grow into the adults that they and their parents desire them to be, **positive, peaceful and nurturing communication** is critical. How and what we talk about with children, what we share with other people in the presence of children, influences how children develop emotionally and socially. It influences how they will communicate with their parents, their peers, and with others as they grow older. Children need to share their feelings and needs and parents need to give children room for them to communicate.

¹⁹ Arabic nursery rhymes, children's songs and poems. Al Salwa publishing house.

Ask parents to suggest a reenergizing children's song that everyone knows and you can sing together, preferably a children's song (avoid political, patriotic or religious songs that could offend any participant.)

Children need positive, nurturing responses from their parents/caretakers in order for them to understand, feel safe, secure and cared for.

TIP:

The facilitator may use a flip chart to list characteristics of positive and negative communication.

Examples of what positive communication might look like could include: respect, peaceful environment, laughing, playing, looking into the eyes, proximity, investing time, honoring child feelings, listening.

Examples of negative communication could include shouting or using violence, not listening to the other person, etc.

Remind participants that we communicate through behavior as well as through words, including body language.

Empathy is an important part of positive communication with your children. When you communicate with empathy, you not only are able to better understand and respond to your children, you also help them to care for others and understand and respond to others, including elders and their peers, in a respectful and caring way.

The discussion today will focus on how children communicate and ways parents can communicate with children in a way that supports their development.

EXPLAIN:

- Communication is a process of sharing information with another person. We communicate through speech, song, writing, images, body language, and through behavior.
- We communicate with different people in different ways depending on different things like our relationship with the person, the person's age and role in the community, and often, the person's gender. We learn from our culture and from people around us how to communicate with others starting from when we are very young.

DISCUSSION with parents about general communication not specifically with children:

- What are the best ways you can use to communicate with others?
- What are the elements that hinder/that are an obstacle to communication? E.g. Time, prejudices, discrimination.

What are the elements that help to engage in meaningful communication?

Answers may include:

- Love
- Tolerance
- Respect
- Respect

6.2 How Children Communicate

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

INTRODUCTION TO HOW CHILDREN COMMUNICATE: A LOT! Crying and smiling are the key

Crying is a formidable means of communication; it is complex and more sophisticated than what people think...

EXPLAIN:

- Next, we are going to talk about how children communicate.
- Children communicate with parents from the time they are born and even from the womb.
- In the first three months of their lives, babies use sounds, facial expressions or body movements to communicate.²⁰ They also cry. Crying is a means of communication! If the child does not have the ability to speak or to name their feelings or needs, they might cry to let you know that they are hot, uncomfortable, hurt, scared, hungry, thirsty, tired or maybe simply confused.
- In the first three months, parents can learn how their baby communicates. Is her/his cry when s/he is hungry different than her cry when s/he is tired? What things make her smile?
- The way you respond to your baby when she is communicating with you influences the lessons s/he learns:
 - S/he might learn that when she smiles, you smile. You love your child, let the him/her know!
 - S/he might learn, that when she cries and communicates that she is hungry or scared or uncomfortable, you will feed her and protect her. Your baby learns to trust that you will respond to her signals.

²⁰ Zero to Three. Birth to Three Months: Your Baby's Development. Session 5 Handout 2.

INTRODUCTION TO HOW CHILDREN COMMUNICATE, CONTINUED (focused on 0/5-year-olds)

EXPLAIN:

- As babies get older they continue to learn new ways of communicating. When s/he is 3-6 months, s/he starts communicating with different sounds “cooing...”, crying and smiles.
- When children are 6-9 months, children begin using their voice to communicate feelings and they copy your sounds... They discover their voice and start experimenting sounds they learn, they can modulate and scream loud!
- When they are 9-12 months, they understand words. They communicate with sounds and body movements and they may say a word or two.
- *Ask parents about these stages of development: is that true? Ask for their testimony and experience on how they learn how children improve their means of communication.*
- You can help your baby learn language by speaking in full sentences and explaining the world to the baby... “You are telling me you are tired. It is time to sleep.” Name things and feeling: “That is a tree; trees are green and give fruits and shade; mommy loves trees” (the facilitator can add these techniques to the Tamoura box... talk in full sentences since birth)
- YOU ARE THE MOST IMPORTANT TEACHER: The teacher of life!
- Each child is different some talk when they are 2 and others need more time. Don't worry every child is potentially brilliant and has an amazing brain!!
- 3-years-old children understand complex sentences, ask questions, and remember things like their first and last name. Children should ask a lot of questions: That is GREAT! They are inquisitive, curious... Learning life, learning everything. HELP THEM TALKING AND ANSWERING QUESTIONS, ENCOURAGE QUESTIONS... Be patient! Before you answer, try asking the child what she thinks. This helps them develop critical

TALK TO YOUR CHILD SINCE BIRTH!!

TALK IN FULL SENTENCES AND RICH VOCABULARY!!

Things and feelings, colors and animals, traditional stories and tales, family life and history... you teach that...



The younger the child is the more attention and stimulation he requires. We all need a lot Affection and children even MORE!

thinking skills, memory skills, intelligence, and shows them you care about what they think.²¹

- *Ask parents about these stages of development: is that true? Ask for their testimony and experience on how they learn how children improve their means of communication.*

-
- Remember, children are imaginative. Sometimes the things they say and do seem strange to adults; they are not adults and their world is different from the adults' world; but also each child, as each adult, is unique and wonderful!
 - Fantasy and imagination help children to process information and learn new skills. Many children play and talk with imaginary friends until they are 8 or 9. That is great! You can even ask your child how those friends are doing. "What is the name of your friend? Mustapha. Oh how nice! I like that name! Is your (imaginary) friend Mustapha happy? I bet he loves as mommy loves you!" Do not discourage them or ridicule them.

²¹ Zero to Three. 30 to 36 Months: Your Child's Development.

6.3 How to Communicate with Children?

TIME:
1H10 MINUTES

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

The following are some basic ways to learn what children think, feel, or need:

- **Observation:** pay attention to the body and facial expressions of the child, e.g. while eating, playing, or when you are talking to him/her.
- **Asking:** for instance, “You have been silent for long, are you feeling ok?” This will make children feel cared for and will help them learn that it is safe to communicate their needs and feelings.
- **Seeking their opinion:** Always ask the child what they think about the issue at hand and listen respectfully to their response, honoring thoughts and feelings empathetically whatever they are.



DISCUSSION: Group dynamic WHEN I WAS A CHILD!

- Divide participants into three groups and ask them to respond to the following questions:
 - ASK: Think back at the time when you were still a child to answer two questions:
 - *How did your parents/caregiver communicate (or did not communicate) with you? How did you feel about it?*
 - *What type of communication would you like to have with your child?*
- After the group discussion, ask them to reconvene and let each participant make a brief presentation.
- After all the presentations have been made ask the group to make comments and/or ask questions.
- After the whole discussion, ASK: “What techniques do you use to know your children’s thoughts, feelings, or needs?” (NOTE: the facilitator might want to add the positive ones to the Tamoura box as good parental practices; do not pay attention to negative ones unless you think they might be harmful to children and then you need to challenge them)
- Allow members to share randomly and take note of all the responses on a flip chart.
- After the discussion, provide participants with additional ideas for how to know their children’s feelings and needs.

BASIC PRINCIPLES FOR COMMUNICATING WITH CHILDREN

EXPLAIN: There are some basic principles (rules) for communicating with children in a way that is positive and nurtures their development; like the basic principles of communicating with adults we talked about at the beginning of the session.

Write the key words (in bold letters) on a flip chart

- Have age **appropriate expectations**. For example, you cannot expect a child not to cry, that is like asking an adult not to talk or to breathe!
- Be **calm, peaceful and loving** manners activate the smartest areas of the child brain (cortical frontex), while screaming, insults and violence creates stress and inhibits those areas of the brain (remember session 4).
- Be **respectful** and **empathetic** (Session 5) of children's ideas and feelings. Children also learn to imitate, we call it **modeling**, if you are respectful to them you are teaching them respect and vice versa.
- **Listen** attentively, make eye contact, and take them seriously. Communication takes **time**; give time to your children, be available. Do not make fun or ridicule them.
- Be **honest and truthful**. Do not lie to children. Keep promises. This helps them develop trust.
- **Do not discriminate** among children, or you will be teaching discrimination. All the children at home should feel loved and cared for the same way. i.e. communicating with some children only and leaving others out.
- **Have fun** so children also enjoy communicating with you! Play with your children!
- What do parents want to add to the list?

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Encourage participants to think back to the list they made of types of communication they value. There are most likely some similarities between how the participants want people to communicate with them, and how parents should communicate with children.



DISCUSSION

Explain that children below 18 months don't understand the negative. Negation requires two things: building the mental image and then the opposite of this image. This is too much for a young child's brain.

You facilitate his understanding when you indicate what to do instead of what not to do.

EXERCISE

Brainstorm with the parents on possible answers with 12 to 18 months old children to the following scenarios:

1. The child is going to town with his father. He sees a cat on the other side of the road and wants to cross.
Usual reaction: don't cross the street!
Appropriate answer: Mohammad, stay on this side of the road with me.
2. The child wants to open the suitcase/cupboard.
Usual reaction: don't touch it!
Appropriate answer: the suitcase/cupboard should stay close.

Distribute the handout 6.1

DISCUSSION



ASK: When parents communicate and have dialogue with children, what might some of the benefits be for children? How might adults benefit from dialogue with children?

ROLE PLAY: before I go to bed...

- Ask two volunteers to role-play how a mother talks to the child before going to sleep.
- During 3 minutes the mom is going to have a conversation about the day with a 4-year-old child who she just put in bed. The mom will ask the child about the day and will tell the child about her day.
- Ask the rest of participants to observe and afterwards comment on the good techniques (focus on the positive)
- Change the roles.

Example of script

Parent: What are things that you did today? Did you play with your friends?

Child: Yes, I played with the doll with my friend Asmaa.

Parent: Oh nice! Did you give a name to the doll?

Child: We called her Jamila!

Parent: What a beautiful name! What was Jamila doing in your game?

Child: She was a princess with very beautiful dresses! She had so many! Etc.

Note: what is important is to show genuine interest in what they did during the day, use simple language that they understand and ask questions. Don't hesitate to enter into their imaginary world if needed!

TIP:

There is no need to force a child to go sleep if he is not sleepy but letting him awake if he is tired is not a better option. It's important to respect the sleep cycle of your child. When he is 2 to 3 years old, it's helpful to establish a routine before going to bed such as pajamas

6.4 Closing & Home Assignment

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

FEEDBACK

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

EXPLAIN:

- This next week, continue practicing praising your child's good behavior.
- Spend time with your child and practice communicating with your child. If your child is too young to speak, notice how she/he communicates. Think about what she/he is trying to communicate and be sure to respond positively. If your child is older, ask him/her about his/her day before going to bed. Be sure to pay attention and show interest.
- Find some time to play with your child!

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

-
- **THANK** participants for coming to the discussion.
 - **INFORM** participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
 - **REMINDE** them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
 - **ENCOURAGE** participants to share the knowledge they learned with their spouses, partners and friends.

GROUP HUG

-
- Ask a volunteer or select one person (maybe a shy participant if appropriate) to come to the center of the group and ask everyone to praise that person for what s/he is and has done.
 - Then give a group hug and close the session. Maybe with applause.

ATTENDANCE

-
- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will understand the consequences of care givers' actions on the growth and development of all children
- Participants will understand that the positive parenting techniques (setting rules) they have been learning are as important for the most vulnerable children in their home (orphans and step-children) as they are for their own children.

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Fidelity checklist
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers, information regarding child positive behavior
- Visual aid in color laminated: *Family rules*
- Handout
 - 7.1 Praising
 - 7.2 Reaction to a mistake
 - 7.3 Give responsibility rather than guilt
 - 7.4 Set up rules rather than interdictions

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session, including the briefing notes, to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 7

Time	Activity
10 min	7.1 Introduction
10 min	7.2 Adult's consistent behavior with all children in the household
50 min	7.3 Alternative to harsh discipline
30 min	7.4 Setting rules
10 min	7.5 Closing & Home assignment

7.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take attendance upon arrival (different paper at departure). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment: continue praising their children, communicating with them/spending quality time with them, and ***playing with their children?*** How did it go? Does anyone want to share the experiences of the week, testimonies, any thoughts or reflections they can share?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today's session.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the parents if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer.

PARENT ACTIVITY

Ask the participants if they have a song to share. If not, you can suggest the following:

Ten fingers²²
 This is uncle Abu Hatem (pinkie)
 This is the ring wearer (ring finger)
 This is Mr. Tall and useless (middle finger)
 This is the labaneh licker (index finger)
 This is the nit killer (thumb)
 This is the dinar holder (palm)
 This is the bracelet wearer (wrist)
 This is the basket hanger (elbow)
 And this is the water jar holder (shoulder)
 And this is... the little mouse nest (arm pit) tickle...tickle...tickle...

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will understand the consequences of care givers' actions on the growth and development of all children
- Participants will understand that the positive parenting techniques (setting rules and time-out) they have been learning are as important for the most vulnerable children in their home (orphans and step-children) as they are for their own children.

²² Arabic nursery rhymes, children's songs and poems, Al Salwa Publishing House

7.2 Adult's consistent behavior with all children in the household

TIME:
10 MINUTES

“We often treat different children differently”

- ▶ We need to teach children with consistency not only with our words but with our deeds, actions and examples. What do you think about that statement “*We often treat different children differently*”?
- ▶ Children need to be treated consistently to learn about justice. Consistency gives children a sense of control and helps them to understand their environment. Parents and caregivers should all use the same techniques, treat them the same way. For example: if a child is beloved and praised when she does something good like playing peacefully or doing her homework, but the next day the parents are angry and do not show love or praise her when she does the same good action, the child (the child's brain connections) will have problems to process that information rationally and intellectually.

This bring us to our discussion two important elements:

- Parents need to guide and set up the rules of the house to help understand the child the way parents want and expect the child to behave. This technique is called **Setting Rules** and we are going to explain it in detail.
- **Treating all children the same way:** A child has to be treated consistently, BUT the child also needs to see that all the children in the household are treated the same way. If parents treat some kids (for example their own) in a certain way and other kids in the household (for example step kids or orphans) differently the caregiver is teaching discrimination. The child's brain will register “IT IS OK TO TREAT PEOPLE BADLY” “LOVING PEOPLE ALSO HIT AND TREAT OTHERS BADLY” “IT IS OK TO SAY ONE THING AND DO ANOTHER”, ETC. Treating all children the same teaches fairness, justice, peaceful resolution of conflicts, love and consistency.

7.3 Alternatives to harsh discipline

TIME:
50 MINUTES

INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVES TO HARSH PUNISHMENT

EXPLAIN:

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

Harsh punishment can cause serious physical and psychological harm to a child.

Just a few of the many negative effects of harsh punishment include slow brain development, depression, fear of parent or adults, anger, negative attitudes, low-self esteem, bad behavior towards others (bad social manners).

Shaking a very young child hard could cause brain damage and even death. Hitting a child in the head could cause damage to his/her ears, eyes or brain.

- There is a difference between discipline and punishment. Discipline teaches children to learn from their mistakes. Punishment makes children suffer for making mistakes. Examples of punishment include hitting or beating the child, burning a child when he steals, or humiliating the child through verbal abuse, ridicule, or isolation.
- Why do we need to discipline children? You can have a discussion here: Children can have behaviors that violate rules and rules are necessary. Children need to learn rules and to follow them: **WELCOME TO SOCIETY, CHILDREN!** Discipline is necessary for the wellbeing of family life, for the good functioning of the household and it is the responsibility of parents.
- What we want as parents is for children to act properly throughout life, and not only in the short term. We want them to respect the rules, to behave and to be happy. We do not want them to have to feel miserable in order to obey. Rules should have a reason.
- Harsh punishment may stop a behavior in the short term, but it probably will not work in the long term and might have negative effects on the child. Why?
- There is a scientific explanation for that—

You need to understand the psychology of the child: children have to learn everything. Don't assume children know the rules. You just have to teach them the rules you want them to follow. Do not assume that children know the way they are expected to behave.

- Children's brains react and learn through a simple mechanism: **ATTENTION!** There are two ways of giving attention to children:
 - **Positive attention:** You praise the child when s/he behaves the way you like: "I love when you wash your hands and you are proper". "Wow, your hands are so clean! Let me help you, my love and we can also clean the cloths together". "Good for you, I am so proud of the way you cleaned yourself today".

- **Negative discipline:** You show your dislike when s/he does something you don't like: "I hate when you don't wash yourself". "I am hitting you because you are dirty again".
- The problem is that both ways of attention reinforce a behavior. Positive attention reinforces a positive behavior and, on the way, reinforces the relationship between parent and child. Negative attention also reinforces the behavior ('my father doesn't like me when I am dirty, so if I am dirty he will pay attention to me'). You just reinforced the behavior you wanted to avoid in the long term.
- The negative attention also has other psychological consequences that might be quite damaging. Negative attention reinforces behaviors such as hiding and lying. It promotes mistrust and creates stress that can be toxic if it is frequent, which affects brain development. Also children learn through modeling--violent discipline teaches children violent behaviors.
- If you do not like a behavior that your child displays, for example being dirty, you can discipline your children two ways. These are the two basic tools of **Positive Parenting:**
 - **Practicing positive attentions-** Praising your child for positive behavior. For example, congratulating, praising, encouraging, helping them with that behavior, when the child cleans her/himself or tries to do so. Distribute the handout 7.1
 - **Ignoring negative behaviors-** The worst feeling a child can have is being ignored by parents. "If my father does not pay attention when I am dirty, I better clean myself and then he will love me".

ASK: What are some of the negative effects that harsh punishment might have on a child? Remember from last session: exposure to violence and stress reduces the connection of our neurons and can damage the development of the construction of the brain of small children. You want smart children? Socially active? Happy children who love you? ***THEN DO NOT HIT THEM!!*** YOU NEED ALTERNATIVES FOR DISCIPLINE THAT WILL ACTUALLY WORK AND WORK BETTER IN THE LONG TERM WITHOUT DAMAGING YOUR CHILD'S DEVELOPMENT!

EXPLAIN:

- There are effective ways to teach, correct or discipline children without using physical and humiliating punishment. These "positive" methods of discipline are better for the child's development and relationships with parents and community.

Here are some examples of positive discipline:

Love, giving good advice, talking nicely, being an example, praising your children, giving encouragement for a well-done job, congratulating for trying something good, participating in family decision, reading with your children, showing interest for children's ideas and feelings, parents respecting each other and treating each other peacefully and lovingly, creating a peaceful home, trusting in your child, believing in your child, setting of achievable and ambitious objectives (like finishing school), making children part of community events, privileges, ignoring negative behaviors, showing empathy, pushing children to do what they can do within their age and capacities, time-out, diverting, setting clear rules that everyone understands in the household, establishing positive and nurturing routines, taking care of oneself, teaching them love for the community and the family, sharing family history, giving children responsibilities they can assume, make children feel loved, playing with children, talking to children, helping children with school work, making children feel safe, treating all children in the home fairly and lovingly.

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

Share examples of PRAISE.
For example:

"I love the way you are doing _____." Or "That is very polite, it is so nice of you to share your toy with your friend; I am proud of you."

Distribute the handout 7.2 and 7.3 and explain.

THE "TAMOURA BOX" EXERCISE: LET'S THINK TOGETHER OF ALTERNATIVES TO CORPORAL PUNISHMENT OR POSITIVE DISCIPLINE:

- Represent on a flipchart a saving box to put coins and bills in. Tell the participants that if they fill that box in a family, that family will be rich. We are going to fill this box with the most important treasure a human family can accumulate: LOVE! Techniques to build a strong caring family. You will be adding those coins and bills during the sessions of this training.
- What are some of the positives alternatives to punishment that parents can use to discipline their children? Each team will have its own techniques, encourage participation and give hints but let them add their own techniques...
- Remember some of the examples you mentioned in the first session, the things that you remember your parents did for you that made you happy and help you in your life; you can also add for the list of things you wrote on the flipchart until now: (praising and ignoring techniques are the key)

Let parents add all the positive things they want!

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

Emphasize to participants that ignoring bad behavior is not the same as ignoring the child! You can ignore specific bad behaviors while still being attentive, empathetic, and caring.

INTRODUCTION TO ALTERNATIVES TO HARSH PUNISHMENT, CONTINUED

- Essentials you need to underline.

1. **PRAISE** your child's good behavior. PRAISE is the key parenting skill that can improve your relationship with your child, build your child's brain connections, and help your child to behave well. All people like being praised. Praise helps children feel confident and loved. Praise is a reward. You praise for being good and for doing well.
2. **IGNORE** bad behavior that isn't harmful behavior. Sometimes children will behave badly when they don't want to do something you have asked them to do. In this case, sometimes it is appropriate to ignore a behavior. Children do not like to be ignored, so sometimes ignoring them will make them act up more. Don't give up! If you respond, children will learn that bad behavior gets them the attention they want. This is not a lesson you want to teach your child.
3. **MODEL BEHAVIOR: BE A LIFE EXAMPLE.** Remember that children learn from watching others especially you as a parent. Demonstrate to them what you want them to do and how you want them to behave. For example, if you want your child to wash her hands before she eats, show her how by doing this together. With repetition, the child will learn and will be able to do it herself as part of her daily routine. Routine is necessary for children, it provides them comfort and security. Be peaceful, understanding and honest and your child learns to do the same. You cannot teach a child to not shout or hit others, if you are shouting or hitting others.

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

Be sure to emphasize that harmful behaviors should not be ignored—for example, behaviors that cause physical or emotional harm to another person or that put the child him/herself at risk of physical harm.

7.4 Setting Rules

TIME:
30 MINUTES

SETTING RULES

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

Be sure to mention that consequences for not following rules should be **non-violent** and should be **reasonable**. Consequences for misbehavior should be intended to teach good behavior. The goal is **NOT** to punish the child and make the child suffer.

Remind participants to practice empathetic parenting when setting limits.

Be sure to emphasize that harmful behaviors should not be ignored—for example, behaviors that cause **physical or emotional** harm to another person or that put the child him/herself at risk of physical harm. Make sure to mention that parents should not ignore a baby that is crying. Before the child can speak, crying is how the child communicates with you. Ignoring the baby might make the baby stop crying, but it doesn't address the reason the baby is crying and teaches the baby that she cannot get comfort: is the baby too hot, too cold, hungry, does her stomach hurt?

4. **REMEMBER:** Bad behavior is often due to lack of understanding between parents and children. Many times we expect children to follow rules, but we do not tell them what the rules are. **CHILDREN NEED TO LEARN THE RULES: AGREE WITH THEM IN ADVANCE!!!** Inappropriate expectation is one of negative practice that lead to bad parenting.
5. **SET RULES AND LIMITS:** Children need rules and limits. Setting limits in a clear and loving way helps children learn but also can help them feel safe. You need to explain to your child what is **expected** of them and what the **consequences** will be if they do not follow the rules. Agree with them on both before you implement them. This is not the same as threatening your child; Rules replace threatening! Setting limits by threatening harsh punishment is neither necessary nor positive for the child's development. Instead of saying *"If you don't do your chore I will beat you!"* You can, for example, say, *"If you do not do your chores, you cannot have time to play with your toy today."* But if the child does her chore, don't forget to praise her/him enthusiastically--Don't be stingy in praising!

Setting limits is positive communication with children so that they know, **in advance**, what is expected of them and what they can expect if they break the rules.
6. Set up the rules with your child and be opened to negotiations; that would be a great life lesson. Ex: "I want you to go to bed at 9" "But mom, I want to go at 10:30" "Why?" "Because my friends go to bed at 10:30" "That is too late and you will be too tired the next day to go to school" "But I want to play with my friends" "What about 9:30?" "Ok!"
7. Rules need to be **age-appropriate**, clear, comprehensible and manageable. Consequences need to be fair and understandable to the child.

-
8. If you have hundreds of rules, your child will not meet expectations. Focus on the most important rules. The rules that will teach the child a life lesson: Know to value the important things and learn how to prioritize.
 9. AVOID disciplining your child when you are really angry and stay in control of your emotions. Take a deep breath or step away to calm down before you act. REMEMBER IGNORING BAD BEHAVIORS AND PRAISING GOOD ONES IS MORE EFFECTIVE THAN CORPORAL PUNISHMENT! Try to avoid punishment that is done out of anger or that is done to make the child suffer because he or she has made you angry. This type of punishment teaches the child fear and promotes anger in a cycle that is registered in the child's brains. **SIMPLY FOLLOWED YOUR OWN RULES AND CONSEQUENCES!** That teaches consistency, but remember you are not a robot and your child is not either a machine to follow rules.
 10. Distribute handout 7.4 and discuss the situation in plenary.
 11. Remind the participants that setting up rules can also be done as a family. All family members have roles to play and rules to follow. Show the visual aid *Family rules* and explain how family members can put their hands together in a circle and draw around them. The rules will be added inside and the consequences outside.

Let's role play!

Ask for two volunteers to play the role of the child and parents and role-play a scene where children and parents agree on the rule in front of the group. The participants will comments on the positive aspect of the performance.

Example of script

Parent: Nadia, Mohammad, we are going to set up some rules for lunch and diner. Every body in this house should wash his hands before eating and should be present at 12.30 for lunch and at 7 pm for diner. This is important so we can all be together to eat and have a good time as a family. What do you think should be the consequences if the time and hand washing is not respected?

Children: (let the children think of something, could be no dessert or wash the dishes, etc.)

Parent: Very good ideas. Now we all agree and will respect the rules and accept the consequences decided together.

7.5 Closing and Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- Play with your child
- If you have a child old enough. Sit with him and try to agree upon the rules of the house.

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to share the knowledge they learned with their husbands and friends.

GROUP HUG

- Ask a volunteer or select one person (maybe a shy participant if appropriate) to come to the center of the group and ask everyone to praise that person for what s/he is and has done.
- Then give a group hug and close the session. End with an applause.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

Understanding children's psychosocial needs

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will understand the psychological needs of their children during emergency
- Participants will learn how to identify and address the psychological needs of their children.

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Fidelity checklist
- Flip charts, masking tape, markers
- Visual aid printed in color and laminated: *Ignoring stress symptoms*
- Handouts
 - 8.1 Impacts and symptoms
 - 8.2 Ignoring stress symptoms: a vicious cycle

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session, including the briefing notes, to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 8

Time	Activity
20 min	8.1 Introduction
1h15 min	8.2 Understanding the psychosocial impact of a war on children
15 min	8.3 Relaxation exercise
10 min	8.4 Closing & Home assignment

8.1 Introduction

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take attendance upon arrival (different paper at departure). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment: setting up rules, practicing time out and communicating with them/spending quality time with them, and **playing with their children?** How did it go? Does anyone want to share the experiences of the week, testimonies, any thoughts or reflections they can share?

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Participants will understand the psychological needs of their children during emergency
- Participants will learn how to identify and address the psychological needs of their children.

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES

After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today's session.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the parents if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer.

PARENT ACTIVITY (10mins)

Prepare in advance 10 small pieces of paper with one word on each. (Cow, plane, cooking pot, bird, news paper, apple, flower, shower and a car).

- Divide the group in two teams and ask one volunteer from each team.
- The volunteers have to make their team member guess what the word is without talking, just with mime.
- If the volunteer talks or sing, he is lost the point.
- Each volunteer has 5 words to mime and the facilitator time each team.
- The team that has taken less time wins.

8.2 Understanding the psychosocial impact of a war on children

TIME:
1 HOUR 15 MINUTES

INTRODUCTION

EXPLAIN:

War affects children in all the ways it affects adults, but also in different ways. First, children are dependent on the care, empathy, and attention of adults who love them. Their attachments are frequently disrupted in times of war, due to the loss of parents, extreme preoccupation of parents in protecting and finding subsistence for the family, and emotional unavailability of depressed or distracted parents.

Children as young as few months old perceive that their environment has changed. They also feel, as we saw in session 2 that they feel what their parents feel, their stress, their emotions, etc.

Some children are exposed to traumatic events during war. Losses of loved ones and disruptions in their lives and routine can lead to depression and anxiety for children.²³

Psychosocial impact of the war on children

During this session we are going to brainstorm about the psychosocial impacts of the war on children.

Distribute the *Session 8 handout 1* to all the participants.

Divide the participants into 4 groups and ask them to think for one of the age group:

- What is the impact of a war on children?
- What are the psychological symptoms that can be observed?

Give about 15 min to each group to brainstorm and 15 min to present their work.

Use the second page of the handouts for example of answers.

²³ [Joanna Santa Barbara](#). Impact of War on Children and Imperative to End War.

DISCUSSION (30 mins)²⁴

Ask the parent how their children have been affected.

Parents will hear that they are not the only parents whose children have been affected, they will understand their children's reactions and begin to make the links between adult and child reactions, and can start to develop ways to help their children.

These are common reactions! They are normal in the sense that most children will experience some of these reactions at some point, although most children will recover. Every child responds differently (according to their age, gender, background, temperament etc.), and there are **no right or wrong reactions**. It can sometimes be helpful for parents to discuss positive changes in their children's behavior that they have seen, as well.

THE SCIENCE

Sometimes, the event was very scary for children (and for adults too). They witnessed death, torture; they saw dead bodies or experienced shelling. These traumatic events can lead to what we call Post-Traumatic Stress Disorders (PTSD). PTSD is a delayed response (diagnosed 3 months after the event) to a stressful event or situation of an exceptionally threatening or catastrophic nature.²⁵ The symptoms of PTSD include repetitive flashbacks or dreams of the event. Often, the child will be scared and try to avoid things that would remind him of the event. Sometimes they can represent the event through repetitive play. Other usual symptoms are hypervigilance (the child is nervous, constantly checking if somebody is coming, jumping at every loud noise, etc.), they can have insomnia, anxiety or depression. The children are not in control of these symptoms; **you cannot blame them for their reaction, this is not their fault!**

Since the event, some sounds, smells, taste, things they touch or see trigger a reaction that are among the 4 F:

- **Freeze:** stop moving, like a statue
- **Fight:** violent reaction, scream, beat
- **Flight:** run away
- **Flop:** faint, cry, wet their pants, etc.

The research has shown that the earlier we start helping children to cope with the stresses of war, the more likely it prevents more serious psychosocial problem from developing, even if children are leaving in a

²⁴ Session inspired from the guidebook : "Children and war. Teaching survival techniques" from Children and War Foundation.

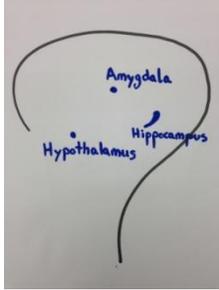
²⁵ The ICD-10 Classification of Mental and behavioural disorders. WHO. 1992

context of on-going violence.²⁶

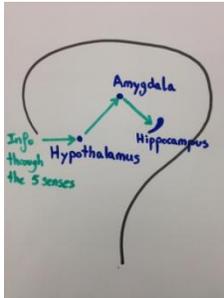
Remind the participants of the session on brain development and how toxic stress can affect the brain and neuron connections (Session 4) and complete with the following information.

SAY: We are now going to explain what is happening in the brain of a child who has PTSD.

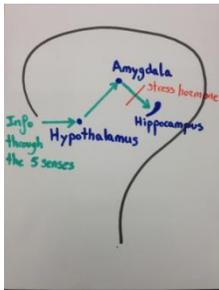
Sample A



Sample B



Sample C



Draw a brain with the hypothalamus, the hippocampus and the amygdala. (See ample A)

Explain that all information are transmitted to the hippocampus through our 5 senses (vision, hearing, touch, smell and taste). The information will be sent to the amygdala very fast and to the hippocampus but more slowly at the same time. In the case of a traumatic event, the amygdala will react very quickly to the information received with one of the 4 F reaction (Flight, Fight, Freeze and Flop) to protect the individual from immediate danger and then send the information to the hippocampus to be fully analyzed.

Draw the flow of information. See sample B.

Sometimes, because of the high level of the stress hormone (cortisol) the information is blocked in the amygdala and cannot go to the hippocampus to be analyzed.

Draw the stress hormone that blocks the information flow to the hippocampus. See ample C.

The information is then stuck in the amygdala that cannot process rationally the information and will keep reacting with the 4F reactions.

Discussion

Adults are very good at noticing changes in behavior, but it is much harder for them to know about children's internal distress. In this case, it is helpful for them to make the links between adult and child distress.

ASK:

- Do you have distressing memories yourselves, and do you think your children have some as well?
- Did you children have told you about distressing memories?
- Did you notice any behavior that would suggest that they have distressing memories?
-

Children do commonly have distressing intrusive memories after exposure to war time stressors as discussed previously. Use case examples of your own, or ask for examples from the group. As with adults, the natural reaction of children is to try to push these thoughts away, or to avoid reminders of the event that can trigger them.

²⁶ Children and war. Teaching survival techniques. Children and War Foundation.

Ask the parent examples of ways they push away or avoid difficult memories in themselves or in their children.
Do you have ways to avoid repetitive thoughts about a specific event?

Pushing away or avoiding difficult memories may provide temporary relief, but in the long term, it prevents recovery. It is the same as a wound. If you don't treat it, it will get worse and worse and the wound will be infected.
Show the cycle below and explain:

NOTE to FACILITATOR:

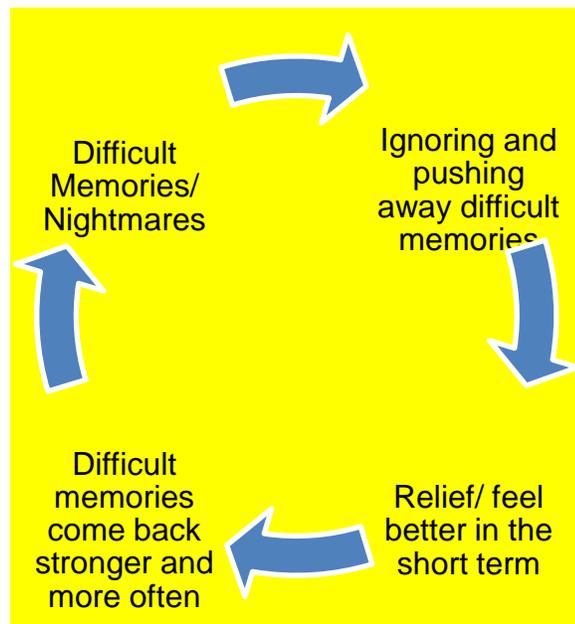
The aim of educating parents about posttraumatic stress is for them to have a framework to understand the changes seen in their children, and to know that they cannot blame or punish their children for such reactions.

Ensure that parents understand that talking about posttraumatic stress does not mean they are labeled as sick, mad or crazy!

- **Difficult memories/nightmares:** some thoughts, difficult memories and nightmares of traumatic events that keep coming to your mind.
- **Ignoring and pushing away:** the immediate reaction is to push away or ignore these difficult memories
- **Relief in the short term:** you feel better for a short period of time
- **Difficult memories/nightmares come back stronger and more often:** but the bad memories come back more often and stronger. It's a vicious cycle.

Show the visual aid *Ignoring stress symptoms. Vicious cycle* or draw the cycle below on the flipchart and distribute the handout 8.2.
To break the cycle, talking about traumatic event and finding comfort is the key! We will discuss in details in the next session how to address symptoms of stress for children.

Ignoring stress symptoms: a vicious cycle



8.3 Relaxation exercise

**TIME:
15 MINUTES**

Ask the participant to remove their shoes, loosen their clothing, take a pillow under their head and lay down comfortably.

- Take a few minutes to relax, breathing in and out in slow, deep breaths.
- When you're relaxed and ready to start, shift your attention to your right foot. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your right foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your right foot. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your left foot. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your left foot, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your left foot. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your right leg. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your right leg, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your right leg. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your left leg. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your left leg, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your left leg. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your foot feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your stomach. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
- Slowly tense the muscles in your stomach, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
- Relax your stomach. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your stomach feels as it becomes limp and loose.
- Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you're ready, shift your attention to your chest. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.

- Slowly tense the muscles in your chest, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
 - Relax your chest. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your chest feels as it becomes limp and loose.
 - Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
 - When you're ready, shift your attention to your right shoulder Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
 - Slowly tense the muscles in your right shoulder, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
 - Relax your right shoulder. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your right shoulder feels as it becomes limp and loose.
 - Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
 - When you're ready, shift your attention to your left shoulder Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
 - Slowly tense the muscles in your left shoulder, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
 - Relax your left shoulder. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your shoulder feels as it becomes limp and loose.
 - Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
 - When you're ready, shift your attention to your back. Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
 - Slowly tense the muscles in your back, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
 - Relax your back. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your back feels as it becomes limp and loose.
 - Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
 - When you're ready, shift your attention to your neck Take a moment to focus on the way it feels.
 - Slowly tense the muscles in your neck, squeezing as tightly as you can. Hold for a count of 10.
 - Relax your neck. Focus on the tension flowing away and the way your neck feels as it becomes limp and loose.
 - Stay in this relaxed state for a moment, breathing deeply and slowly.
- When you are ready, you can sit down.**

8.4 Closing and Home Assignment

TIME:
10 MINUTES

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

- Play with your child
- Show him/her love
- Practice relaxation exercises

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to share the knowledge they learned with their husbands and friends.

GROUP HUG

- Ask a volunteer or select one person (maybe a shy participant if appropriate) to come to the center of the group and ask everyone to praise that person for what s/he is and has done.
- Then give a group hug and close the session. End with an applause.

ATTENDANCE

- Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

Providing support to children with psychosocial needs

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will learn how to provide support to children with psychosocial needs
- Parents will be able to identify and refer their children with severe psychosocial needs.

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts
- Markers of different colors
- Handouts at the end of the session
 - 9.1 Providing support to children with psychosocial needs
 - 9.2 Tips for parents with toddlers and pre school children
 - 9.3 Referral pathway (to adapt locally)

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.
- Be on the meeting place 15 minutes in advance.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 9

Time	Activity
20 min	9.1 Introduction
45 min	9.2 Talking and Listening
15 min	9.3 Daily routine & Play
20 min	9.4 Touch & Physical comfort
20 min	9.5 Referral
10 min	9.6 Mindfulness
10 min	9.7 Closing & Home assignment

9.1 Introduction

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take attendance upon arrival (different paper at departure). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment? Did you play with your child? Did you identify any new symptoms of stress? Does anyone have any thoughts or reflections they can share?

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES



After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today's session.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer.

PARENT ACTIVITY

For this last session before the graduation, ask again if parents have a song or game to suggest. If not here is one more song.

Ya Mnaimneh, Ya Mnaimneh²⁷

Tickle, tickle
Oh little seed
My teacher sent me
To buy a jar with onions
It fell and broke
Toot toot little one
Hide your hands in the box

(The child's hands are placed palm down on the lap. The parent gently pinches the top of each hand while reciting the rhyme. At the end, the child puts his hands behind his back)

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will learn how to provide support to children with psychosocial needs
- Parents will be able to identify and refer their children with severe psychosocial needs
-

²⁷ Arabic nursery rhymes, children's songs and poems. Al Salwa publishing house

Remind parents that talking about posttraumatic stress does not mean they are labeled as sick, mad or crazy!

EXPLAIN:

In this session we will learn how address the psychosocial need of our children as parents. As we saw during the last session, children are resilient. They don't need necessarily to be referred to a psychologist. As parents, there is lot that you can do!

Ask one participant to summarize the last session and give examples of symptoms of psychosocial distress.

Since the last session, did you notice changes in behavior or symptoms of psychosocial distress that you haven't noticed before?

ASK:

Brainstorm in plenary with the following questions.

Write their answers on a flipchart.

- How did you help children with their difficulties?
- Which one worked?
- What are the most difficult problems to deal with?
- What are the obstacles to helping children?

9.2 Talking and listening²⁸

**TIME:
45 MINUTES**

EXPLAIN:

During and after war, children can feel vulnerable, frightened, and insecure. Families are commonly split up and normal daily life seems impossible. Children can become confused as well as scared at what is happening around them. They often become afraid of their own reactions, fearing that they are going crazy or losing control. They may worry about the future and about their own safety as well as that of those closest to them.

Some parents think that by not talking to children about the terrible events of the war, children will forget them. **This is a mistake!** Although children, like adults, need to have time to switch off from thinking about war, they will not be able to forget what has happened to them. Talking about what has happened in the past and about their worries for the future with someone they trust will help children to make sense of what is happening around them and their memories will become less distressing.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

It is important to remind parents that they should not encourage violence or revenge towards “the enemy”. Maintaining a culture of revenge prevents recovery of the child and strengthens his stress.

For example: don’t encourage children to repeat that they are going to kill so and so.



- Children need to **make sense** of what is happening around them, at a level appropriate to their development and age, if they are to feel safe and secure.
- They need time to talk about what has happened to them, and to **express their feelings** associated with bad memories. This requires parents to be ready to listen to children.
- **Sensitive listening** means finding the right time to talk, and leaving enough time for children to talk and express difficult things fully.
- It means showing you are attending to what the child is saying, and that you are interested, by making encouraging comments and questions, and by your body language and tone of voice.
- It means **accepting all the child’s feelings** as natural and normal and OK in this war situation, even if these are difficult for a parent to hear.

²⁸ Session inspired from the guidebook : “Children and war. Teaching survival techniques” from Children and War Foundation.

-
- Sometime parents are not ready to hear their children and may say: “Don’t cry now” or “we don’t need to talk about that”.
 - If the children are willing to talk, it’s important to give them the opportunity to do so. If you are busy at that particular moment, fix a time where you will make yourself available to listen and answer questions.

ASK:

ASK

- Did some parents already tried to talk to their children about the war and what is happening?
- What was the reaction of the children?
- Did some parent experience the opposite, the children refuse to talk?

Sometime the children are unable or refuse to talk. **Children cannot be forced to talk!** But parents can show them and tell them that they are ready to listen and help whenever the child wants to.

Children may respond to physical comfort, hugs, stroking hairs. Drawing or playing can also help the child to express his/her feelings. Sometimes you will find your children reacting the traumatic event through repetitive play. This is their way to process it. You can use this as an opportunity to discuss the event with your children.

Brainstorm with the group on the following questions. Write their answers on a flipchart and complete the suggested answers.

- ***Why is it important to talk with children?***

Answers may include

- Gets things out in the open
- Parents understand the child better
- Relieves tension for parents and child
- Makes the child feel better
- Talking makes it easier to forget
- Child can start to distance self from painful memories
- Puts their fear in perspective
- Means they don’t bottle everything up
- We can help them if we listen to their problems
- The child can get a different perspective on things
- The child can hear his feelings are normal and he’s not going crazy

- ***Why is it hard to talk with children?***

Answers may include

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Children might ask what has happened to someone who has died or what happened to their fathers or brothers are if they have gone to join the fighting.

It is important to be honest with children, and to answer in a way that they can understand without expressing negative feelings.

-
- It is too painful, they don't have the words
 - Feelings and emotions are contradictory
 - They feel guilt and confusion
 - They are afraid of not being heard
 - They are afraid of losing control
 - They don't feel the need to talk
 - They talk to others (adolescents talking to friends, e.g.)

- **Why parents sometimes do not want to listen?**

Answers may include

- It is too painful to hear their child's distress
- They fear the child will get more upset
- They fear they will get upset themselves
- Don't know what to say to child
- Reminds them of their own traumatic experiences
- It's too exhausting, I don't have the time
- Believe it can be harmful for children to talk like this

- **When the child is silent, what should we do?**

Answers may include

- Respect their silence
- Be patient, look for appropriate occasions
- Set aside a special time each day: the child will use it when he is ready
- Don't push for more than the child wants to tell
- Find ways other than talking to communicate, like drawing and playing

Group the parents in groups of 3 and ask them to role-play talking to their child about a difficult experience. One parent plays the child, another the parent and the third person observe to notice what helped in communicating and what seemed to hinder it. Remind parents of the 4 steps of empathy. (Session 5)

Example of script

Parent: I notice recently that you were getting very upset easily and that you are fighting a lot with your brother. Is there something that bothers you that you would like to talk to me about?

Child: silence and cries

Parent: (give a hug and comforting touch). You can always talk to me, today or whenever you want.

Child: I'm fed up of this situation, I don't like it here! I want to go back to my previous life.

Parent: I understand your frustration. I'm frustrated too. But we are here because it's safer. We have to make the most of it while we are here. You can always talk to me when you feel sad.

9.3 Daily routine and play²⁹

**TIME:
15 MINUTES**

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

Sometimes parents think that they protect more their children by keeping them inside the tent. Children need to interact with other children of the same age.

Sending their children to organized and structured activities will help them to recover.

Talk about the school and recreational activities organized by IRC in the camp



EXPLAIN

After and during very stressful events of war, normal life can seem chaotic. To develop children's sense of security, safety, and stability, it is important to re-establish as much as possible a normal daily routine. This might include getting children back into school, or regularly attending clubs or activities. At home, it might mean regular family meal times, and set bedtime routines.

When normal daily routines are kept to as much as possible, the child's world becomes more predictable and comprehensible!

Children also need time to play and to do enjoyable activities, even in times of war. Play is part of normal development. At times of war, it can also help to distract and relax children.

DISCUSSION

ASK: What sorts of things they would like to see their children doing?

Write the answers on a flipchart.

Answers may include

- Reading,
- Drawing,
- Listening to music,
- Playing sports,
- Getting involved in children activities,

How can parents encourage this? Can parents get together to set up activity groups for children? Can parents from the same neighborhood agree to share supervision of groups of children?

²⁹ Session inspired from the guidebook : "Children and war. Teaching survival techniques" from Children and War Foundation

9.4 Touch and physical comfort³⁰

**TIME:
20 MINUTES**

EXPLAIN

Each culture, each family has various level of physical contact that is expected or permissible between adults and children. Equally, individuals vary in the extent that they like to give or receive physical comfort.

We know that after natural disasters or during conflict, parents tend to offer less physical comfort to their children.

Touch and massage may have beneficial effects for children, reducing tension, anxiety, and depression.

DISCUSSION

ASK: What kind of touch and physical comfort can you give to your children?

Write the answers on a flipchart.

Answers may include

- Hugging,
- Cuddling,
- Stroke the hair,
- Massage a baby,
- Skin to skin contact with babies,
- Sleeping next to each other

Show the video in Arabic

Ask: What are the important messages of this video?

Distribute the [handouts 9.1 and 9.2](#) and explain the various tips given based on the age of the child.

NOTE TO FACILITATOR:

The types of physical contact may vary according to the age of the child and his/her gender.



³⁰ Session inspired from the guidebook : “Children and war. Teaching survival techniques” from Children and War Foundation

9.5 Referral

TIME:
20 MINUTES

EXPLAIN:

When parents feel that despite all their effort their children are still showing signs of psychosocial distress, they should contact the focal point for psychosocial cases. (adapt here to your context).

If the children are showing any of the following sign, they should refer the case immediately to the appropriate focal point.

- Suicidal
- Self injuries
- Violence towards others
- Bed wetting
- Loss of speech ability
- Anorexia
- Bulimia

Write on a flipchart the following chart and explain the referral pathway.

Distribute handout 9.1

9.6 Mindfulness exercises³¹

TIME:
10 MINUTES

Exercise 1: One Minute of Mindfulness

This is an easy mindfulness exercise, and one that you can do anytime throughout the day. Take a moment right now to try this. Check your watch and note the time. For the next 60 seconds your task is to focus all your attention on your breathing. It's just for one minute, but it can seem like an eternity. Leave your eyes open and breathe normally. Be ready to catch your mind from wandering off (because it will) and return your attention to your breath whenever it does so.

Keep in mind that this mindfulness exercise is not a contest or a personal challenge. You can't fail at this exercise, you can only experience it.

Use this exercise many times throughout the day to restore your mind to the present moment and to restore your mind to clarity and peace.

³¹ <http://www.the-guided-meditation-site.com/mindfulness-exercises.html>

9.7 Closing & Home Assignment

TIME: 10 MINUTES

FEEDBACK

Have a very brief discussion with the group:

- What did you learn today?
- What did you like best about the session today?
- What did you like least?
- Is there anything you didn't learn or discuss today that you would have liked to have learnt or discussed?

HOME ASSIGNMENT

EXPLAIN:

- This next week, try to implement some of the techniques taught during this session such as talking to your children, establishing daily routine and physical comfort with your children.
- You can also try to implement some of the tip from the handout.
- Find some time to play with your child!
- Divide the participants in 8 groups and assign one session to each group (from session 2 to session 8)
- Distribute 1 flipchart paper and markers to each group and ask them to prepare a 5 min presentation of the session for the next meeting.

Session 2: The impact of parenting

Session 3: Coping toolkit

Session 4: Child's development

Session 5: Empathy

Session 6: Communicating with children

Session 7: Consequences of parent's actions on child's growth

Session 8: Understanding children's psychological needs

Session 9: Providing support to children with psychosocial needs

CLOSING & PREPARATION FOR NEXT SESSION

- THANK participants for coming to the discussion.
- INFORM participants of the topic for discussion at the next meeting.
- REMIND them of the date for the next meeting, if you already set it.
- ENCOURAGE participants to share the knowledge they learned with their spouses, partners and friends.

ATTENDANCE

Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

**TOTAL TIME:
2 HOURS**

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will summarize each of the session and present it to the rest of the group
- Post test
- Certificate
- Tea break

MATERIALS:

- Attendance sheet
- Flip charts
- Markers of different colors

PREPARATION:

- Read through the session to acquaint yourself with the content of the session.
- Be on the meeting place 15 minutes in advance.

SUMMARY OF THE SESSION 10

Time	Activity
10 min	10.1 Introduction
1h15 min	10.2 Presentations
25 min	10.3 Pledges and Certificates of participation
10 min	10.4 Praising and Thanks

10.1 Introduction

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

Take attendance upon arrival (different paper at departure). Facilitators will need to take attendance at the beginning and end of each session.

REVIEW OF PREVIOUS SESSIONS AND HOME ASSIGNMENT

Start by asking participants to volunteer to share their experience with the home assignment from the previous session. Did parents do the assignment? Did you talk to your child? Did you establish daily routine or try more physical comfort with your children? Did anyone tried to implement one of the tip? Was it easy or difficult? Why? How did the child respond? Does anyone have any thoughts or reflections they can share?

SESSION OBJECTIVES:

- Parents will summarize each of the session and present it to the rest of the group
- Post test
- Certificate

OVERVIEW OF SESSION OBJECTIVES



After reviewing the previous lesson and homework, explain the objectives of today's session.

Once you have explained the session objectives, ask the caregivers if they have any questions. Address those questions that can be addressed and take note of any questions that you cannot answer.

10.2 Presentation

TIME:
1 hour 15 minutes

This exercise should be fun!

This is not a test, just a way for parents to summarize what they learnt in their own words.

This is also an opportunity to correct any misunderstanding.



ASK

Ask each group to come and do a 5 minutes presentation of the key messages from each session.

Session 2: The impact of parenting

Session 3: Coping toolkit

Session 4: Child's development

Session 5: Empathy

Session 6: Communicating with children

Session 7: Consequences of parent's actions on child's growth

Session 8: Understanding children's psychological needs

Session 9: Providing support to children with psychosocial needs

At the end of each presentation, thank the participants and make a round of applause!

10.3 Pledges and Certificates of Participation

**TIME:
25 MINUTES**



- Post test: distribute the post test to all participants
- Write the pledge on a flipchart in advance
- Parents will read the pledge together--

"I declare in front of my family and my community that I will try my best to be a good parent. I will use the techniques I have learned. I will continue loving and nurturing my child with all my capacity and my heart. I will talk to my children and play with them, I will guide them and help them in peaceful and positive ways. So please help me to succeed".



- Certificates of Participation will be presented in recognition of parent's efforts and great contributions to the program.
- The certificates will be distributed randomly and each participant will have to say something nice to the parent while giving him/her certificate.



Share cake and tea!



10.4 Praising and Thanks

**TIME:
10 MINUTES**

ATTENDANCE

- Facilitators will lead the closure of the session and the program praising participants, spouses, families, communities and children.
- Parents are invited to address the group with their closing thoughts.
- A big round of applause and a celebratory song can serve to conclude the ceremony.

Take attendance at the end of the session before participants leave.

Handouts

Session	Handouts
Session 1: Introduction to the parenting program	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 1.1 Nurturing your children • 1.2 Building parent – child bonding and attachment • 1.3 Session topics and calendar
Session 2: Understanding parent’s stress	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1 Identification of parent’s psychosocial and emotional needs <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 2.1.1 Feeling and action drawings • 2.2 Sponge Bob • 2.3 Relaxation exercise • 2.4 Relaxation techniques • 2.5 Alternative meditation
Session 3: Coping and healing strategies	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 3.1 Coping and Healing cards
Session 4: Impact of parenting	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 4.1 Neural circuit • 4.2 Brain scan • 4.3 Profound deprivation affect brain power • 4.4 Brain scan • 4.5 Your baby’s development 3 to 6 months • 4.6 Your baby’s development 6 to 9 months • 4.7 Your baby’s development 9 to 12 months • 4.8 Arabic nursery Rhymes and children’s songs
Session 5: Empathy and positive behavior	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 5.1 How would it feel?
Session 6: Communicating with children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 6.1 Communicate with children from 12 to 18 months
Session 7: Nurturing all children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 7.1 Praising • 7.2 Reaction to a mistake • 7.3 Give responsibility rather than guilt • 7.4 Set up rules rather than interdictions
Session 8: Understanding children’s psychosocial needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 8.1 Impacts and symptoms • 8.2 Ignoring symptoms of stress: a vicious cycle
Session 9: Providing support to children with psychosocial needs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 9.1 Providing support to children with psychosocial needs • 9.2 Tips for parents • 9.3 Referral pathway (to adapt locally)

Handout 1.1

Nurturing your children

Nurturing is the most powerful force on earth

It means to promote, nourish and support life

All life needs to be nurtured to exist

Without nurturing, there wouldn't be any life

Children need to be nurtured. Nurturing parents provide children with tender care and protection, their action help the children to grow and develop, thrive and be successful.



Nada Al Joundi International Rescue Committee

Adapted from *J'ai tout essayé !*, I. Lilliozat. 2011

Handout 1.2

Building parent-child bonding and attachment

The feeling of closeness between the parent and the children is called bonding.

The positive bond that began at birth continues to develop as the child grows older. This long term bond is called attachment.



Ways to build strong parent-child attachment:

Committee

Drawing from Nada AlJoundi International Rescue

- Play with your child
- Talk to your child
- Hold your child in times of sadness and happiness
- Use positive discipline
- Show interest in your child's day
- Have appropriate expectation

Handout 1.3

Session topics and calendar

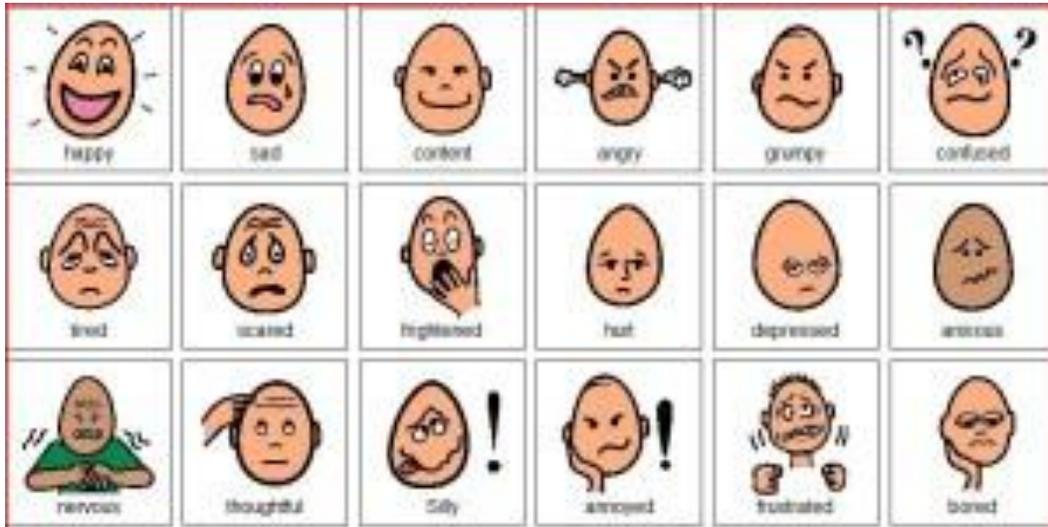
SESSION TOPICS	MEETING DATES
1. Introduction to the parenting program	
2. Understanding parent's stress	
3. Parent's coping and healing strategies	
4. The impact of parenting	
5. Empathy and positive behavior	
6. Communicating with children	
7. Nurturing all children	
8. Understanding children's psychosocial needs	
9. Providing support to children with psychosocial need	
10. Celebration and graduation	

Handout 2.1

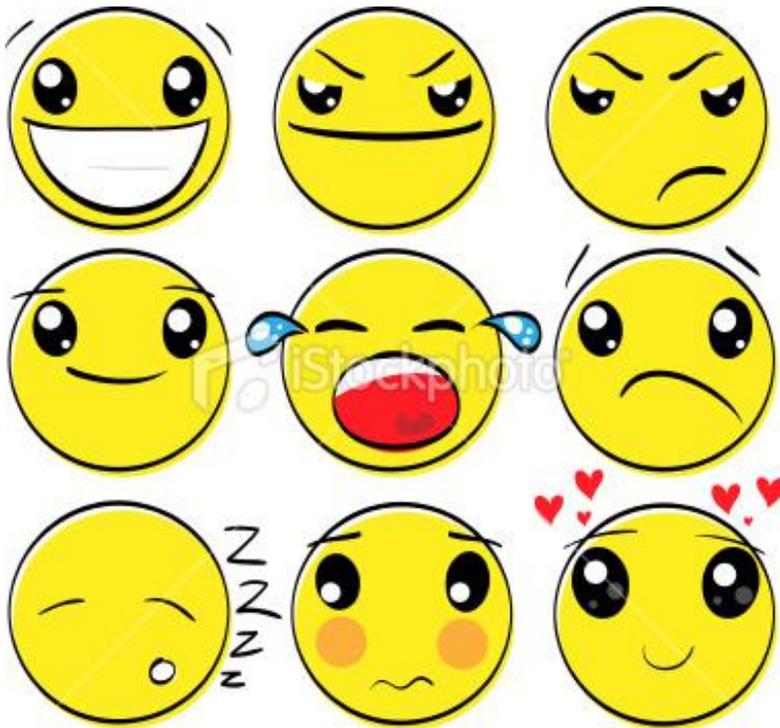
Identification of parents' Psychosocial and Emotional needs

I feel (emotions)	I do (if applicable, what are the changes in your behavior, things that you do or don't do) it can be positive or negative	Possible consequences for my health/family/children

Handout 2.1.1



32



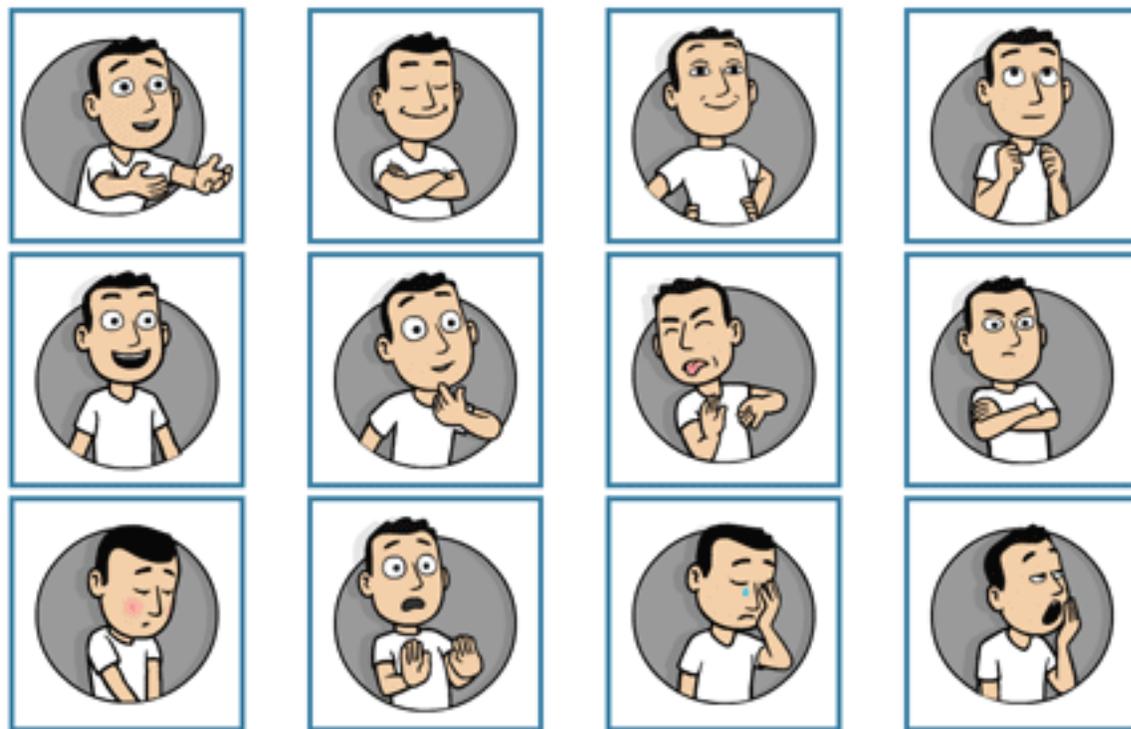
33

³² <http://adiaryofamom.wordpress.com/2011/02/09/sweet-emotion/>

³³ <http://rofl-lol.com/emotion-faces-cartoon/>



34



35

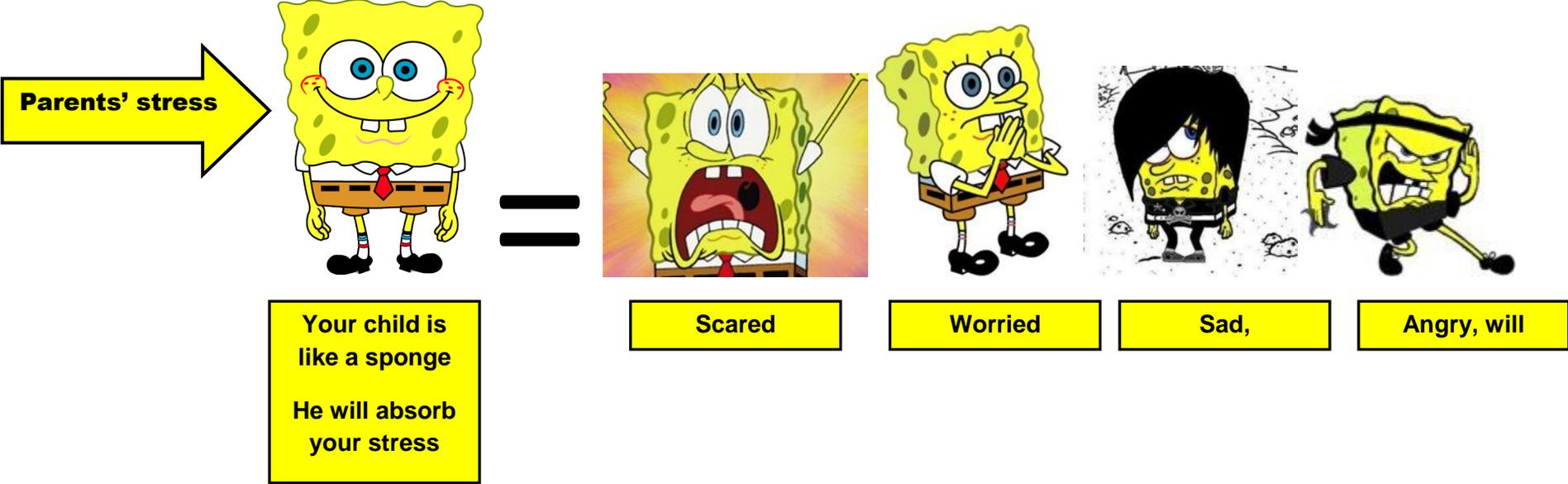
³⁴ <http://speakanddeliver.blogspot.co.uk/2011/09/speaking-of-emotions-keeping-it.html>

³⁵ <http://www.swisswuff.ch/tech/?p=463>

Example of answers to guide the participants (for the facilitator only)

I feel (emotions)	I do (if applicable, what are the changes in your behavior, things that you do or don't do) it can positive as negative	Possible consequences for my health/family/children
Sad	I cry	My children are sad when they see me crying. I don't have the energy to do housework
Sick	I don't eat much	I'm losing weight and I feel weak. I have no energy to take care of my children.
Angry	I don't sleep well, I have nightmares	I'm tired and lose my temper easily on my children. I beat them.
Stressed	I am more sociable, I invite my neighbors for tea regularly	It helps me to overcome my stress and my children are happy to see my smiling.
I am in control of the situation	I organize my time very carefully. Every activity is timed up according to a daily schedule	My children know always what to do and at what time

Handout 2.2
SPONGE BOB



Handout 2.3

Relaxation exercise

Settle yourself in a quiet place, in a comfortable position. Imagine yourself to be in the most relaxing, secure, peaceful place you have ever known. Breathe deeply in and out, breathing into your stomach. Recite the following to yourself, with a quiet voice, very slowly, but imagine it is being spoken to you by a voice outside yourself, by a voice of love. If you do this with your spouse, let one read and the other close his/her eyes and listen: *Your breath is warm and soothing. As it spreads through your body it makes you warm. It brings peace and tranquility to every cell in your body.*

Let every cell in your body know and feel that you are loved. Allah loves you. Many people love you. You are surrounded by love and caring. The love is all around you like warm light, comforting you, taking away all your pain.

The air that you are breathing in is warm and soothing. That warmth is spreading all through your body. As it spreads through your body, it causes your muscles to relax.

Now the warmth spreads to your head. Relax the top of your head. Relax your mind. There is nothing to think about right now, nothing to worry about. Release the burdens that you carry in your mind.

As you breathe deeply, the warmth spreads to your face. Let your face relax. Relax your eyes. Whatever your eyes have seen that is unhappy or that causes you pain, let it go. Release it with your breath.

Relax your cheeks and your mouth. Whatever you have spoken that you regret, let it go, release it with your breath. It's in the past and is gone now with your breath.

Relax your ears. There is nothing for you to listen to right now except the peacefulness of your own breath. Whatever you have heard that has hurt you, at any time in your life, let it go now. You don't need it anymore. Release it with your breath.

Relax your jaw. Any tension that you are holding in your jaw, let it go, release it. Feel the warmth spread through your mind, your face, your neck. Relax your neck.

Know that you are safe. You are protected. You are in a place of shelter. You are in Allah's care. You are in a safe place, a good place. You have nothing to fear, nothing to regret. The past is gone, and the future has not arrived. All that exists is this peaceful moment, this safe place where you are protected and warm.

Continue to breathe deeply and softly. Your breath warms you. The warmth spreads now into your shoulders and relaxes your shoulders. Whatever burden you have been carrying on your shoulders, let it go. Give to Allah, and He will hold it for you until you are ready to take it back. For now, let it go with your breath. Relax your shoulders.

Let go of your fear and your worry. You are following Allah's guidance and that is peaceful. You are at harmony with the entire universe and that is peaceful.

Breathe deeply and softly. The breath spreads now into your back and warms your back. Relax your shoulder blades, and the middle of your back. Relax your lower back. As you breathe out, release the burdens that you have borne on your back. All the troubles, all the weight on your back, release them with your breath, and let them disappear. You don't need them anymore.

Allah is on your side and He will always be with you. You have the strength of Imaan. Know that whatever challenges you face in life, you are strong and capable.

As you breathe, warmth continues to spread through your body, now moving into your chest and your stomach. Relax your chest. Whatever fears you have for the future, let them go. Release them with your breath. Trust in Allah; He is with you right now, at this moment, and He will protect you. Relax your stomach. Whatever tightness you have in your stomach, whatever tension you carry there, release it, let it go with your breath.

Know that Allah created you pure, with the purity of fitrah. That purity is always inside you, like a light. Allow yourself to feel it, to be in touch with it; let that purity come out, and with it comes peace.

Your breath is warm and soothing. As it spreads through your body it makes you warm. It brings peace and tranquility to your mind, to your soul, and to your heart. Feel it now spreading into your arms. Relax your upper arms, and your forearms. Relax your hands and your fingers. Relax your thumbs. Your hands work hard for you every day, but right now let them relax. Whatever burdens you carry in your hands, release them. Whatever private pain or shame your hands have witnessed, release it. You don't need it anymore. Let it escape with your breath, let it go.

Know that Allah created you beautiful with the best of forms as He said in the Quran. That beauty is inside you. Let yourself feel it and believe it.

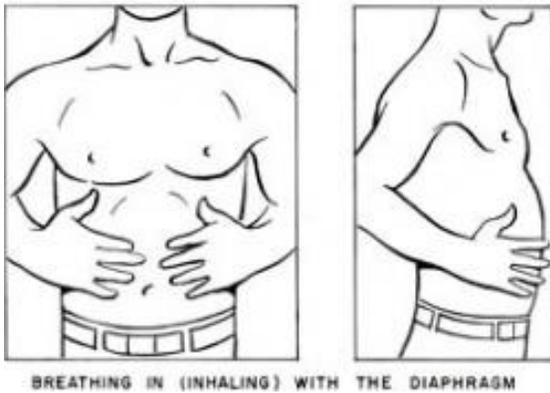
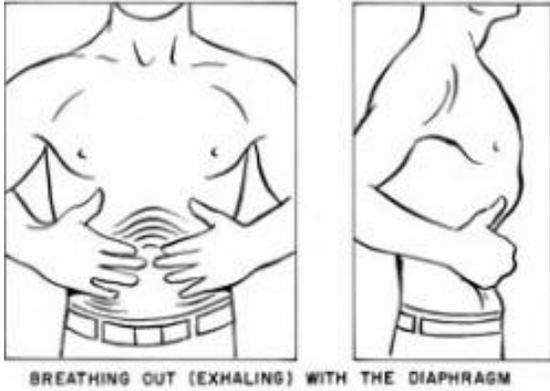
Breathe deeply now and let it flow into your legs. Relax your thighs. Relax your knees. Relax your calves. Relax your feet. Relax your toes. Your legs work hard for you every day, they have earned a rest. Relax your legs and let the tension flow out of them; release the tension with your breath.

Now all of your body is relaxed and warm. Every cell in your body, every part of you inside and out is soothed and peaceful. All of your body is pure and light and warm.

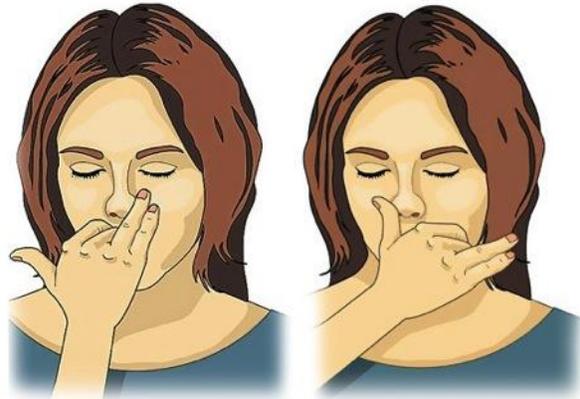
Allah is with you now, and He is As-Salam, the giver of peace. Allah created you in peace. Inside you, at your center, is peace. That peace is your birthright. Your breath is peace. Your center is peace. Your soul is at peace, your mind is at peace, your heart is at peace, your blood is at peace, your breath is at peace, your eyes are at peace, your hearing is at peace, your tongue is at peace, your hands are at peace, your feet are at peace, every part of you is at peace with Allah. Every part of you is at peace with yourself. Every part of you is at peace. Every part of you is peaceful.

Handout 2.4 Relaxation techniques

Take 10 deep breaths³⁶



Breathing exercises³⁷



Count from 20 to 0



³⁶ <http://cranberrycorner.ca/deep-breathing-exercises/>

³⁷ <http://breathing-exercises.net>

Handout 2.5

Alternative meditation

- 1) Allow the participants to stand, feet firmly planted into the ground; back straight, shoulders down/alternatively for a deeper meditative state allow the person to lie flat and imagine their body sinking down.
- 3) Ask the participants to breath in, allowing the belly to expand and out allowing it to reduce. (The participants can put their hands on their belly for a while to get used to this form of breathing)
- 4) If there are any tensions/stress in the body allow the participants to breath into that part of the body until it loosens (he/she can breathe light or a color to that part if that helps)
- 5) Ask the participants to follow the breath going in and out, allowing all thoughts to fall away. At any stage if the participants get lost in thought, let them come back to the flow of the breath.
- 6) Now, as they breathe in, imagine breathing Allah's love/the energy of love into their heart; as they breath out imagine releasing stress and tension from the body (explain that Allah/energy of love is helping release it; allow the participants to give a color or image to the out breathe)
- 7) After a few minutes allow the in breath to expand, bringing Allah/energy of love into the rest of the body.
- 8) Breathe Allah's love/energy of love from your heart out of the body to fully surround the body in a protective light.

Handout 3.1

My Support Network (a list of people you can visit or call and who always lift your spirits):



My Favorite Places – a picture or description of a place (past, present, or imagined) where you feel or felt a great sense of peace and safety:



My Favorite Books (especially books that lift my mood):



Comfort Foods (foods such as snacks or pastries that you could put in your kit or something you can easily obtain or make—nothing that will make you feel bad because you ate it!):



Gratitude List (things for which I am grateful):



Reminders of Other Stress-Busters (such as taking a warm bath, cooking or doing a craft project):



Relaxation exercise (deep breathing, praying, muscle relaxation, center yourself, etc):



Nonalcoholic drinks that I enjoy

(herb tea, coca, etc):



Humorous or Positive Sayings or Pictures:



Ways to Write Down My Thoughts

(a notebook or journal and pen):



Childhood Favorite Toys (things you loved playing with - if you no longer have the toy, a picture or a description will do):

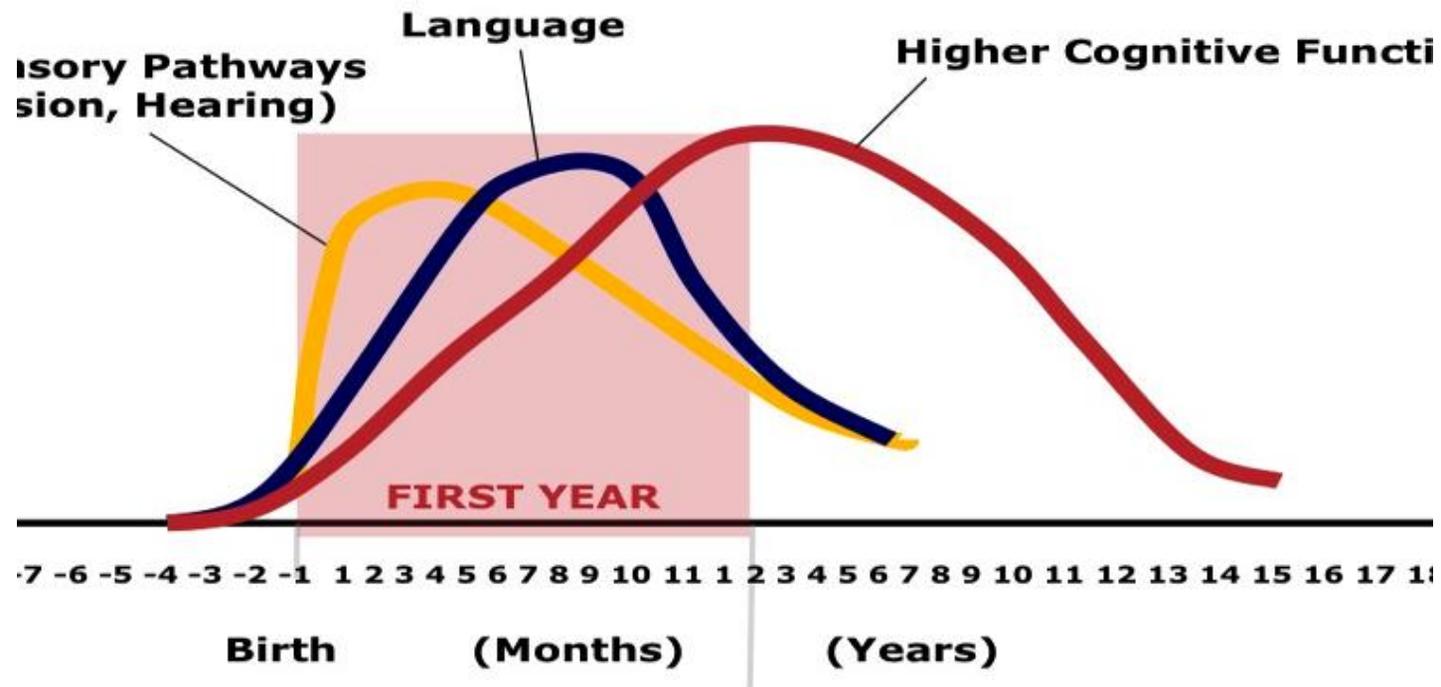


Peak Moments from the Past (write down a brief reminder of a wonderful memory):



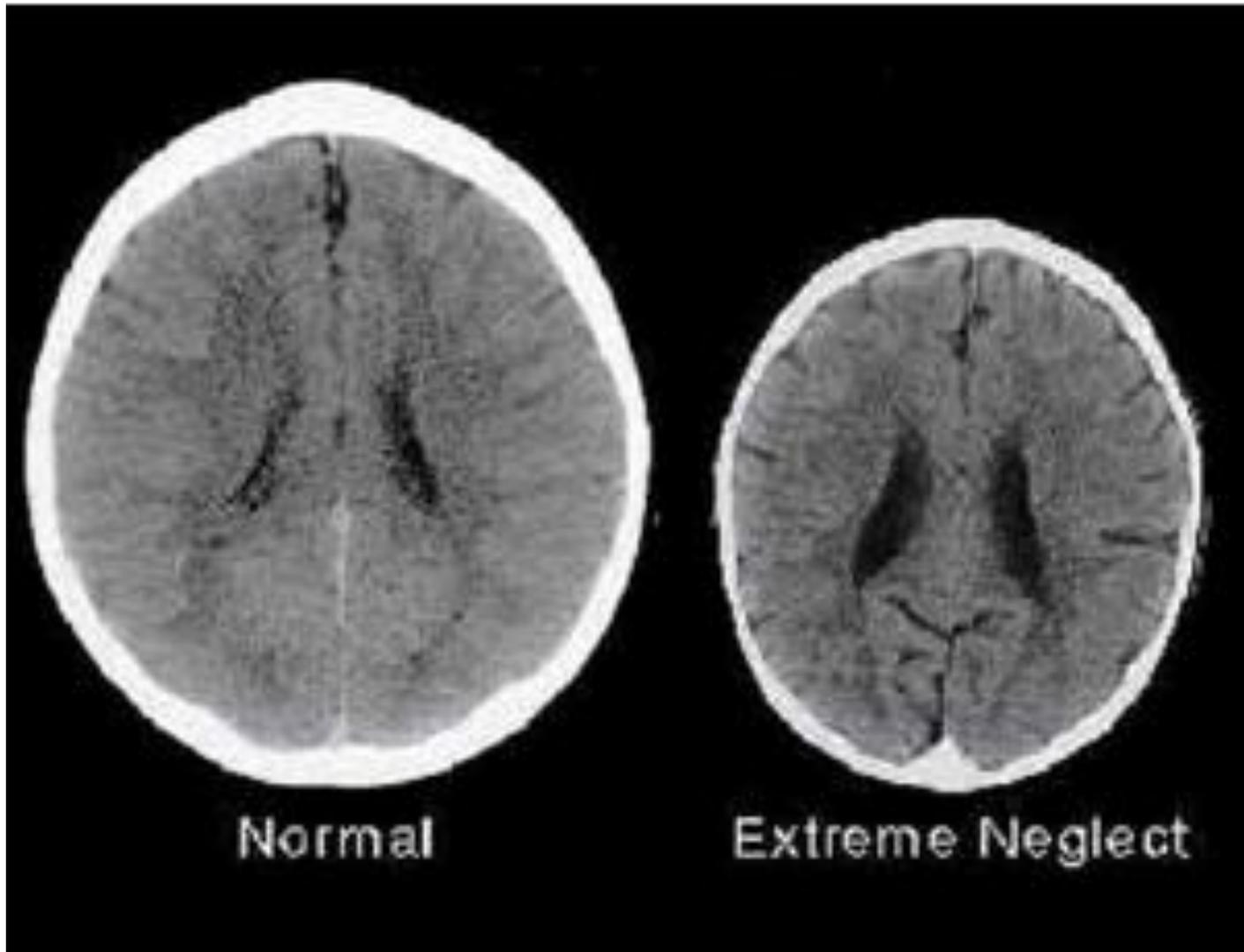
Handout 4.1

Neural Circuits are Wired in a Bottom-Up Sequence



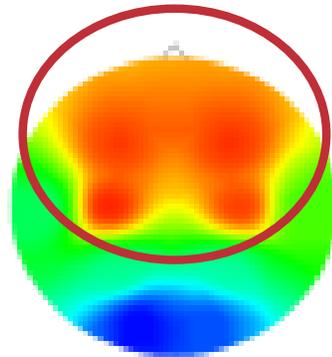
Source: Nelson (

Handout 4.2

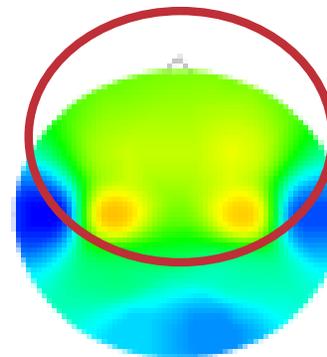


Handout 4.3

Profound Deprivation Affects Brain Power



Positive Relationships

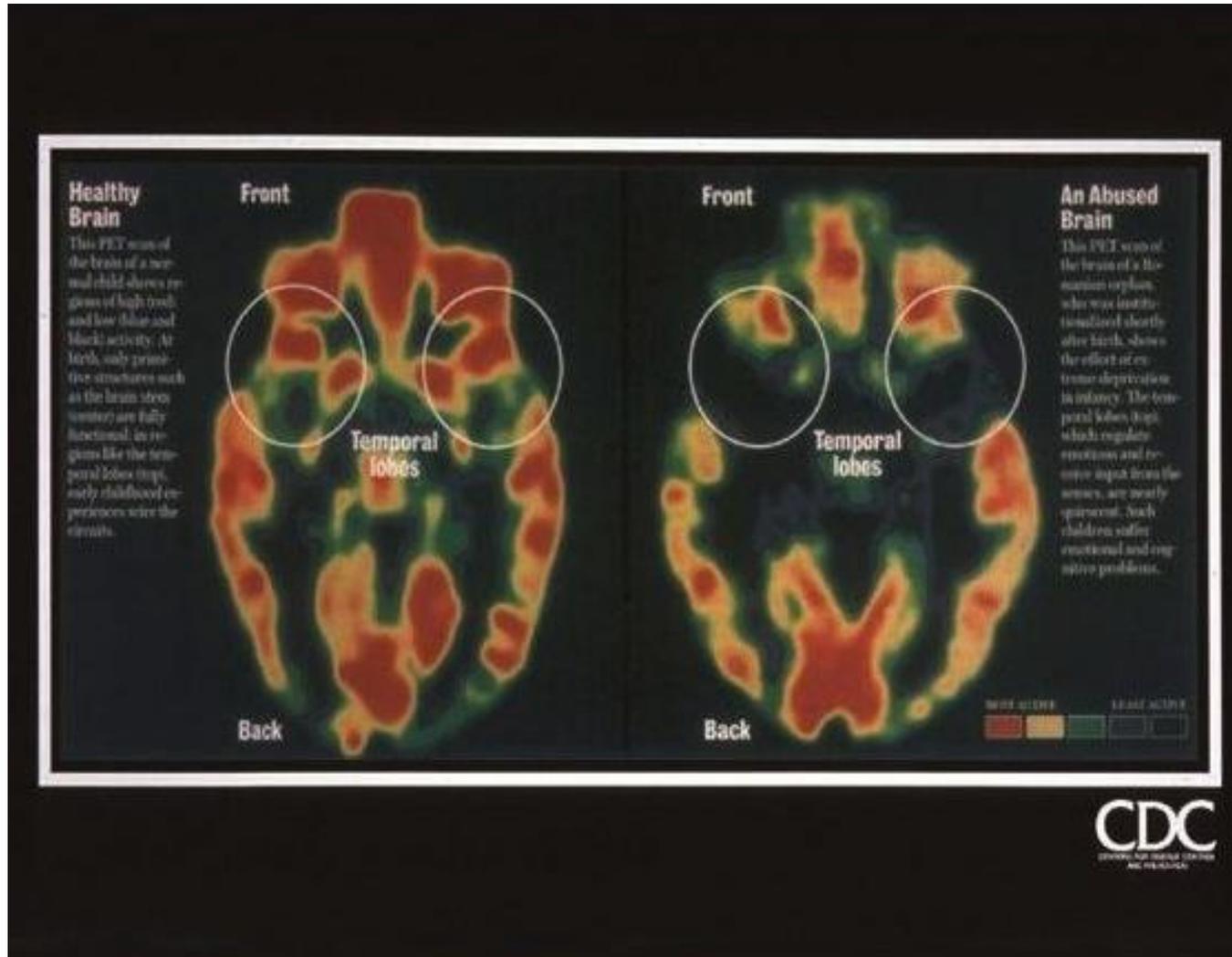


Extreme Neglect

Source: C.A. Nelson (2008); Marshall, Fox & BEIP (2004).

Handout 4.4

Brain scan



Handout 4.5

Birth to 3 Months

Your Baby's Development

The first 3 months are all about babies learning to feel comfortable, safe, and secure in the world. By responding to their signals and providing lots of love and comfort, you help them form a trusting bond with you.

How are you helping your baby learn to feel safe and secure?

What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am getting to know you and the other people who love and care for me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I recognize your faces, voices, and smells. • I respond to your smile and touch with pleasure. 	<p>Talk and sing to your baby. This makes him feel loved and helps him bond with you.</p> <p>Hold your baby. Enjoy some skin-to-skin cuddle time with your little one.</p>
<p>I am learning how to “tell” you what I need.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can use my sounds, facial expressions, and body movements to tell you how I’m feeling—sleepy, hungry, happy, or uncomfortable. • I can show you when I want to play and when I need a break. 	<p>Watch your baby to learn her signals. Does she have a “hunger” cry? Does she rub her eyes or look away from you when she is tired? Smiles are easy to figure out.</p> <p>Respond to your baby’s signals. When her eyes are bright and she is awake and alert, it is time to play. Slow things down when she cries, turns away, or arches her back.</p>
<p>I am beginning to use my body to make things happen.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can grip your finger or a toy you put in my hand. • When I am hungry, I might move my head toward my mother’s breast or the bottle. 	<p>Give your baby something to reach for and hold onto—a finger or toy. Let him touch objects with different textures and shapes. Hold a toy within your child’s reach so he can swat it with his hands or feet.</p> <p>Watch to see how your baby is “discovering” his body. Does he look at his hands, suck on his feet, or try to roll?</p>
<p>We are becoming closer and closer every day.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am learning to trust that you will read and respond to my signals. • I rely on you to comfort me. This helps me learn to comfort myself. 	<p>Comfort your baby whenever she cries. You can’t spoil a baby. Soothing makes her feel safe, secure, and loved.</p> <p>Help your baby calm herself by guiding her fingers to her mouth, giving her a pacifier, or offering her a blanket or soft object that is special to her.</p>



As you use this resource, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated here and still be growing just fine. Talk with your child’s health care provider or other trusted professional if you have questions.

Your family’s cultural beliefs and values are also important factors that shape your child’s development.

For more information on parenting and child development, go to: www.zerotothree.org.

3 to 6 Months

Your Baby's Development

This time is all about parents and babies falling in love. Most babies are eating and sleeping more regularly. They are also responding more actively to parents and caregivers. Over the next few months, you will begin learning about your baby's preferences—what he likes and dislikes, how she prefers to sleep, eat and play. *What are you learning about your little one?*



What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am learning to control my body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I push myself up to see the people I love and the things that interest me. I roll to try to get closer to you or to an interesting toy or object. • I can sit with help and hold my head steady. • I may start to rock back and forth on my hands and knees to get ready to crawl so I can get moving and explore. 	<p>Place your baby in different positions to help her develop new skills like rolling, creeping, and crawling.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Make sure she gets time to play on both her back and stomach. • Help her sit with support. This allows her to explore in new ways. • Be sure she is always put to sleep on her back.
<p>I use my hands and fingers to explore.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I reach for and grasp objects and toys. I explore them with my fingers, hands, and mouth to figure out what they can do. 	<p>Offer your baby toys to explore that have different shapes, sizes, textures, and sounds. Show him ways to use these objects by shaking, banging, pushing, and dropping.</p>
<p>I communicate by using sounds, actions, and facial expressions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When you shake my rattle, I may smile and move my arms and legs to let you know I want to keep playing. • I can make a few different sounds in response to your sounds—babbling, coos, and gurgles. 	<p>Watch and respond to your baby's signals. <i>You are smiling—I think you like looking in the mirror. Do you want to look at yourself again?</i></p> <p>Have back-and-forth “conversations” with your baby. When you reply to her babbles, she knows you care about what she is saying. This helps her learn to talk.</p>
<p>I am getting used to the world around me.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may be starting to develop a more regular eating and sleeping schedule. • I am beginning to notice daily routines. When you turn the lights down, I am learning it is time for sleep. 	<p>Create routines for your baby.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help him learn it's time for sleep by doing the same things in the same order each night, such as bath, books, feeding, and then a lullaby. • Make up a song that you sing as you are getting ready to feed your baby. Each time he hears it, he'll know milk is coming. This may calm him and also help him learn to wait.

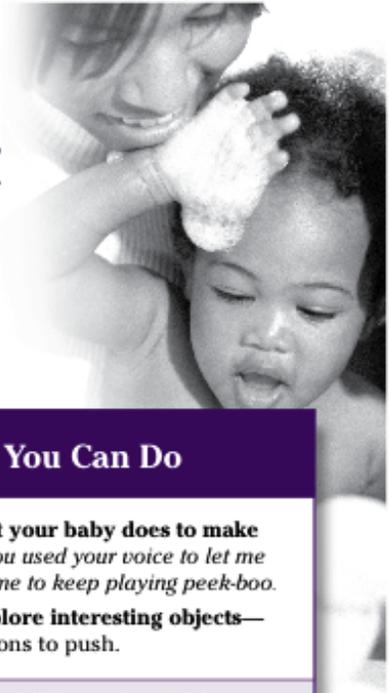


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6 to 9 Months

Your Baby's Development

This is a time of great fun for parents as they watch their babies become eager explorers who are thrilled to discover that they can make things happen. A 7-month-old knows, *When I smile, mommy smiles back!* A 9-month-old lifts her arms to tell her dad, *I want you to pick me up.*
How is your baby making things happen?



What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I am learning to think and solve problems.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When a toy drops to the floor, I look to see where it went. • I figure out how things work by copying what I see you and others do. 	<p>Comment on what your baby does to make things happen. <i>You used your voice to let me know you wanted me to keep playing peek-boo.</i></p> <p>Let your baby explore interesting objects— like toys with buttons to push.</p>
<p>I can control my body.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I can pick up small objects using my thumb and other fingers. • I can sit on my own, which helps me explore in new ways. • I may crawl or scoot to get around. I might even pull up on furniture to stand. 	<p>Begin letting your child practice picking up baby-safe foods like slices of banana, if you'd like your child to learn to feed himself.</p> <p>Give your baby time to move around on his own. This builds muscle strength and coordination.</p>
<p>I am working hard to communicate with you.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I babble a lot. When someone talks to me, I make sounds back. • I use my voice to express feelings, like joy and anger. • I copy actions you make, like waving "bye-bye" and shaking my head "no-no." 	<p>Use words to describe your baby's feelings: <i>You are mad that Daddy took away the crayon. You can chew on this rattle instead.</i></p> <p>If your baby is looking at something, point at it and explain: <i>That's a radio. It plays music.</i></p> <p>Copy your baby's sounds and actions. If she waves, wave back and say <i>Hello!</i></p>
<p>My personality is starting to show.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may love to meet new people or need time to feel comfortable with someone I don't know yet. • I may like lots of sound and activity or I may prefer things to be more quiet and calm. • I may be very active or more interested in watching. 	<p>Notice how your baby likes to play and explore. Does she like to move or does she prefer to sit and watch the world around her?</p> <p>See how your baby reacts to sounds, sights, and social activity. What does she seem to enjoy? What does she seem to dislike or get overwhelmed by?</p>



As you use this resource, remember that your child may develop skills faster or slower than indicated here and still be growing just fine. Talk with your child's health care provider or other trusted professional if you have questions.
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Handout 4.8

9 to 12 Months

Your Baby's Development

How does your baby "tell" you what he wants?

ing 1 year
ctions and
to a parent

What Your Baby Can Do	What You Can Do
<p>I can understand more words than I can say.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I am starting to understand what you say to me. I can even follow simple directions like <i>Go get the ball</i>. • I tell you what I want with my sounds and body movements. I may say a word or two, like <i>mama</i>. 	<p>Tell your baby what is happening and what you will do next: <i>After your milk, it is time for a nap.</i> This helps her learn language. Routines also let her know what to expect.</p> <p>Put your baby's sounds and actions into words. <i>You are pushing your food away. I think you are telling me you are all done.</i></p> <p>Name things your baby looks at or points to: <i>That's the moon. The moon comes out at night.</i></p>
<p>I can creep and crawl.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I have found my own way of crawling—on my hands or knees, on my stomach, "crab crawling" by moving backwards and sideways, or even scooting on my bottom! • I walk while holding on to furniture or your hand. I may even start walking on my own. 	<p>Give your baby lots of time and a safe place to practice new skills like crawling and walking.</p> <p>Make a "trail of toys" in a child-safe place in your house. Line up several interesting objects (a wooden spoon, a plastic bowl, a brightly colored dishcloth) that your child can crawl to and explore.</p>
<p>I know that things still exist even though I can't see them—especially you!</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I may cry when you leave because I know you are still out there somewhere and I want you to come back! 	<p>Play hide-and-peek games. This helps your baby learn that things that disappear also reappear.</p> <p>Be sure to say good-bye to your baby. Never sneak out. This builds his trust in you and helps him learn to deal with difficult feelings.</p>
<p>I love to do things over and over again.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This is how I practice and figure out how things work. • Repetition also helps build my memory. 	<p>Help your child take the next step in her play. If she is banging two blocks together, see if she'd like to try stacking them.</p> <p>Offer your child a ball to toss, a rattle to shake, or a scarf to swing. These activities help children learn how things work. They also build the muscles in their hands that will help them learn to write.</p>

Handout 4.9

Arabic Nursery Rhymes, Children's Songs and Poems

Al Salwa Publishing House

Arabic Lyrics and English Translations

These Little Chicks

These little chicks (cluck cluck)
are so cute (cluck cluck)
They happily go round,
and round their mother. (cluck cluck)
They drink water, (cluck cluck)
and say ahhhh. (cluck cluck)
They raise their heads,
and gratefully thank the lord. (cluck cluck)
They put on their new clothes. (cluck cluck)
They are happy, (cluck cluck)
because it is the "Eid" (cluck cluck)
(*Eid: means feast*)

Yasmeen the Hen

I have a white hen.
Her name is Yasmeen.
She gives me an egg,
every other day.
She has a red spot
on her right wing
And her ten chicks
are yellow and pretty
1,2,3,4,5,6,7,8,9,10

Two Dancing Cats

We are two cats,
pretty and small.
I am the white cat,
and I am the black cat.
My name is Mishmisha,
and my name is Mabissa.
Together we go to school,
and learn our ABC.
We draw a duck and a goose,
and multiply 5 by seven.
We dance and sing!
We dance and sing!

Tutu the Rabbit

There was a little girl,
her name was Susu.
She played with a rabbit called Tutu.
Whenever she sewed a pink dress for her doll,
Tutu the rabbit would help her
thread the needle.

I Used to Have a Bird

I had a bird.
It was cute and playful,
with red and yellow feathers,
and eyes as black as night.
Early each morning,
before the other birds,
he would wake me up,
even though I still wanted to sleep,
saying "wake up, you're lazy!
wake up, enough sleeping!"

Our Donkey.

Our donkey, our donkey
has a headache.

Mama made him a "tarboosh"(fez) that he likes
and also a red red hat

EEEEEEE Ahhhhhhhhhh

EEEEEEE Ahhhhhhhhhh

The Butterfly

I saw a butterfly with my own eyes.
It was flitting around me.

I ran trying to catch it,
but it escaped from my hands.

Where is the butterfly?

Where is the butterfly

It flew, it flew away.

My Sheep

Oh sheep of mine

maaaaaa' maaaaaaaaa'

Answer me...

maaaaaa' maaaaaaaaa'

what shall I feed you?

maaaaaa' maaaaaaaaa'

follow me...

maaaaaa' maaaaaaaaa'

you are my life...

maaaaaa' maaaaaaaaa'

I Have a Duck

My name is Sami.

What a blessed name!

I have a duck,

That jumped a jump,

when Bobby (the dog) saw her,

he said "Come little duck,

play the Piano,

make some music,

do a little dance."

My Turtle's Name is Nahla

My turtle is called Nahla.

She walks ever so slowly.

She eats greens and fruits,

and carries her house on her back.

Olive Oil - Zait, Zait Ya Hajeh

Oil oil oh Hajeh.

Put oil oh Hajeh.

Add more oil to the pot.

So we can fry some kibbeh.

(Kibbeh: stuffed meat ball

A child's hand is held with the palm open.

*The parent then moves a finger circling the palm
round and round while repeating the rhyme.)*

Hanna and the Bees

Hanna who is small

fell in a well

He got stung by wasps.

Poor Hanna

Poor Hanna

How did you fall in the well?

(The rhyme is accompanied by gentle pinches and tickles.)

My Birdie

I had a little bird.

I looked after him,

and when his feathers grew and he was big,

he started to peck my cheeks.

Zik zik zik zik zeek

(The child's cheeks are gently pinched.)

Ten Fingers

This is uncle Abu Hatem (pinkie)
This is the ring wearer (ring finger)
This is Mr. Tall and useless (middle finger)
This is the labaneh licker (index finger)
This is the nit killer (thumb)
This is the Dinar holder (palm)
This is the bracelet wearer (wrist)
This is the basket hanger (elbow)
And this is the water jar holder (shoulder)
And this is.....
the little mouse nest (arm pit)
tickle..... tickle.... tickle

(The child's hand is held and each finger is gently pulled while the rhyme is recited – the palm is smoothed- the wrist is circled with fingers.

The elbow is touched (traditionally baskets were carried on the elbow). The shoulder is touched (traditionally water jars were carried on the shoulder). Fingers are walked up the child's arm to the arm pit where the child is tickled.)

Arnab Noot

Rabbit in the cave is sleeping.
Rabbit in the cave is unhappy.
Poor rabbit does not know how to jump.
Jump Rabbit!
Rabbit! Jump!
Jump! Jump! Jump!

(The hands are held on the head like bunny ears. The hands are then put on the side of the head to imitate sleeping. The child is then encouraged to jump! Jump! Jump! like the bunny.)

Ya Bah Ya Bah

Here is the one who brought the egg.
Here is the one who boiled it.
Here is the one who peeled it.
Here is the one who ate it,
and here is the one who said
"What about me? Where is my share?"
Tickle, tickle, tickle, tickle

(The child's palm is smoothed and some soothing words are repeated Ya bah – ya bah is a baby word meaning nothing-empty. Each finger is then gently pulled starting with the thumb.)

Ya Mnaimneh, Ya Mnaimneh

Tickle tickle
Oh little seed
My teacher sent me
To buy a jar with onions
It fell and broke
Toot toot little one
Hide your hands in the box.

(The child's hands are placed palms down on the lap. The parent gently pinches the top of each hand while reciting the rhyme. At the end of the rhyme the child puts his hands behind his back.)

The Hajje's Kibbeh

You are as small as a kibbeh.
As small as the Hajje's kibbeh,
Oh Hajje, give us some oil
so that we can fry (child's name) an omelette

*(Hajje: old woman
Kibbeh: stuffed meat ball
The closed hand is moved from wrist up only, and side to side to show how small a baby is, like the size of a kibbeh.)*

Hijjallah ya Hijjallah

There is butter and honey in the earthen jar
(Baby's name) and I will eat from it.
And will throw everybody else out

(Hijj: means pilgrimage The child is seated in the lap facing the parent The hands are held and the child is swayed back and forth while the rhyme is recited.)

What the Donkey Said

The big donkey said to the small baby donkey:
"if you do not obey your mother, there will be no hay for you."
EEEEEEEEEEEE AAAAAAAAhh
EEEEEEEEEEEE AAAAAAAAhh

(Hand movements show big- by placing hand up high- and small -by placing hand down low- and when donkey brays is imitated hands go up to show donkey ears.)

This is the Way the Fish Swims

This is the way fish swim.
This is the way birds fly.
This is the way the wheel turns.
This is the way kids clap.
Clap! Clap! Clap! Clap!
Clap little hands!

(Each movement is mimicked by hands and arms.)

Hazourah Fazourah (A Riddle)

Its' shape is round.
It sinks in the water.
Its' inside is like pearls,
and its' outside is like copper,
what is it?

Zuzu Has a Car - Toot Toot

Zuzu has a car,
and I have a train.
I suggested we trade,
but I am hesitant.
My car goes: Toot! Toot! Toot!
and the train goes
Tchek! Tchek! Tchek!

Elegant Salwa

Elegant elegant Salwa,
Tall and pretty.
If all the people were a box of apples,
you would be the finest apple on top.

Bounce Bounce Ball

Bounce Bounce Ball,
higher than the gate.
When the ball bounces back,
we'll throw it once again
Bounce Bounce Ball,
higher than the gate.
Bounce from the alleyway
to the neighbor's house.

Dear God Let it Rain

Dear God let it rain,
so I can visit my Grandma (Sitti).
She will bake me a pie,
as big as a mat.
I will eat it and sleep,
and wake up hungry again.

Peanut, Hazelnut

I went up on the roof.
The wind blew me away.
The doctor examined me and,
gave me medicine.
A peanut, a hazelnut, a chestnut!

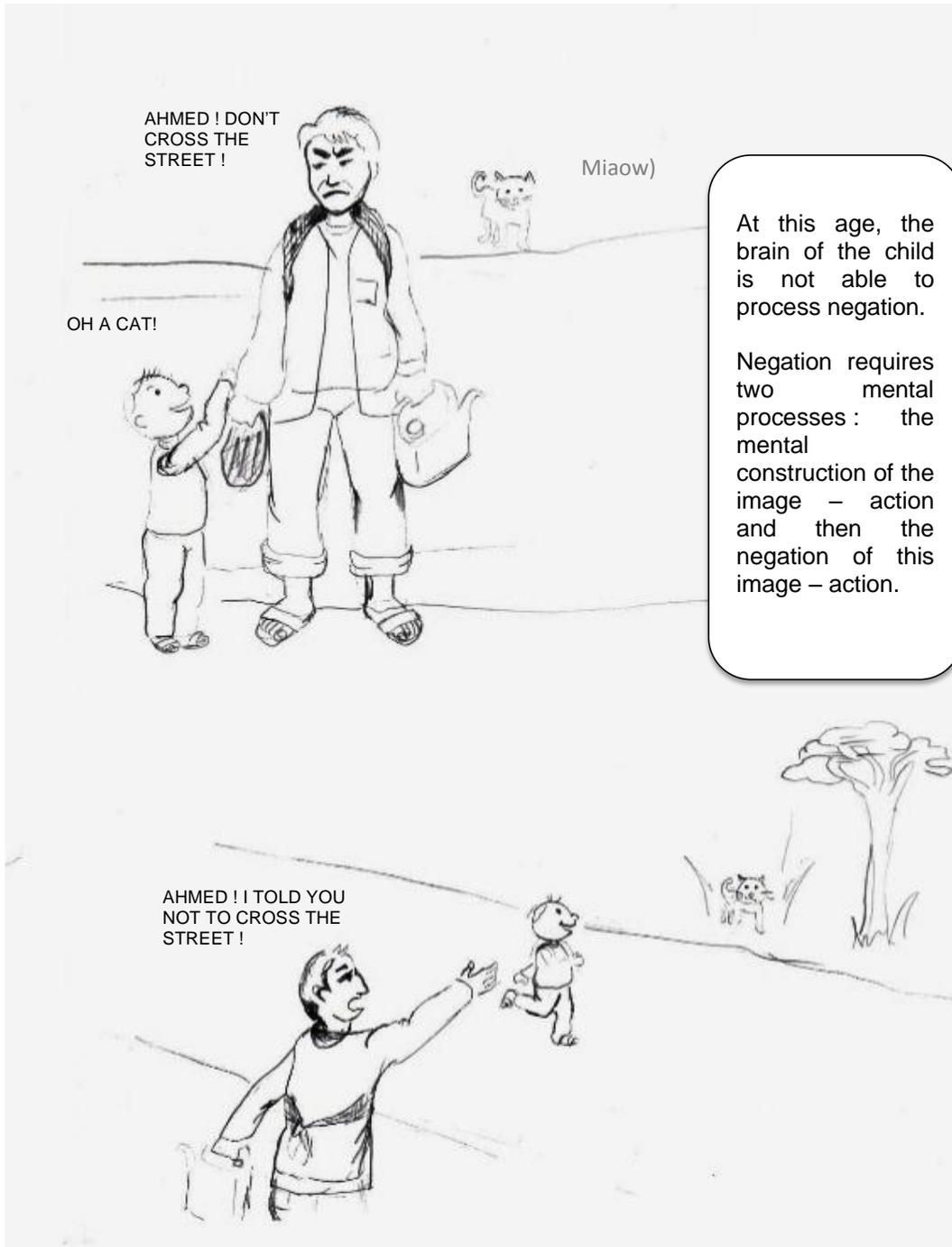
Handout 5.1



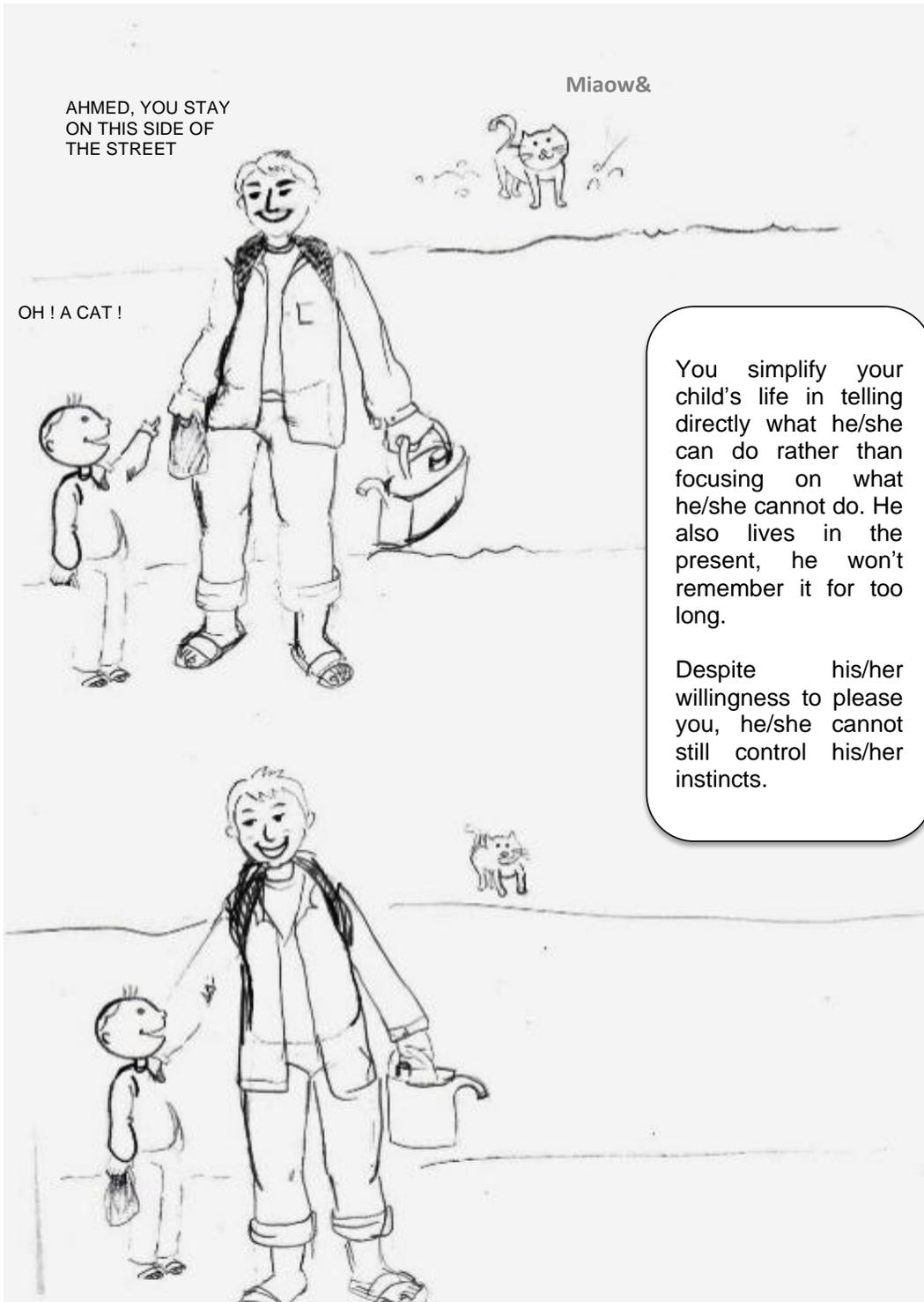
*How would you like it
if the mouse did that to you?*

Handout 6.1

Communicate with children from 12 to 18 months old



Drawings from Nada Al-Joundi (International Rescue Committee)
Adapted from 'J'ai tout essayé'. Lilliozat. '2011'



Drawings from (Nada Al Joundi) International Rescue Committee
Adapted from 'J'ai tout essayé'. Lilliozat. 2011'

Handout 7.1

Praising



HERE IT GO! I DID ALL THE DISHES BY MYSELF!

YOU SEE! WHEN YOU WANT, YOU CAN!



IT'S ALWAYS THE SAME, EVEN IF I'M TRYING HARD!



IT'S VERY GOOD!



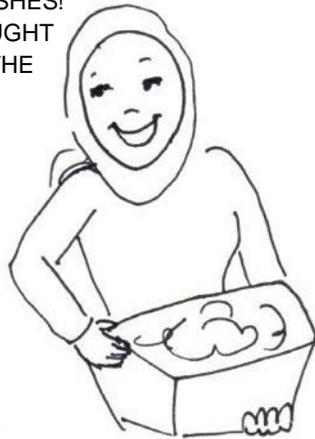
I DID GOOD!



I HAVE TO!



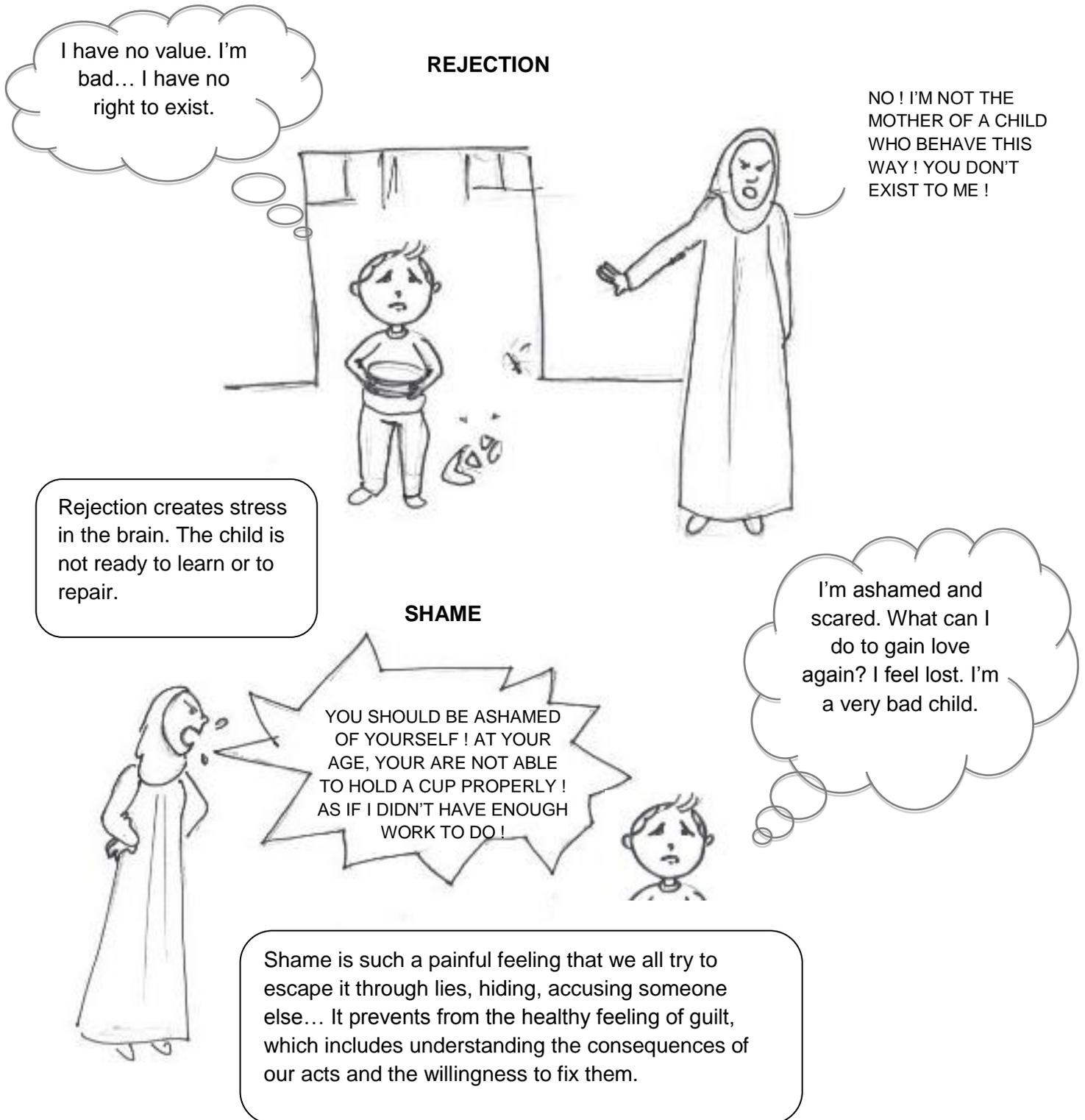
THANK YOU FOR
WASHING THE DISHES!
YOU EVEN THOUGHT
OF WASHING THE
TRAY!



It's important to notice the details and mention them to your child. When you describe the action, the child visualize mentally the action. The mother helps her son to memorize the successful action and to reiterate it.

Handout 7.2

Reaction to a mistake³⁸



³⁸ Drawings from Nada Al Joundi International Rescue Committee
Adapted from *J'ai tout essayé !*, I. Lilliozat. 2011

EXCUSE AND REPAIR FOR HIM/HER

IT'S NOTHING, I
TAKE CARE OF IT



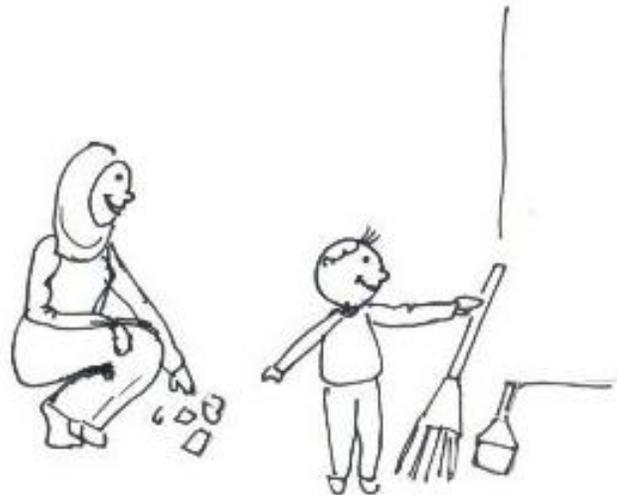
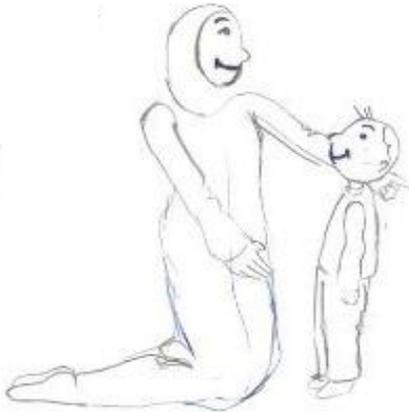
Excusing all his/her mistakes does not educate a child. Taking care of all the consequences prevents the child from learning from his/her mistakes. As soon as the child is old enough to do it him/her self, it's important to let him/her fix it otherwise you teach your child that:

- he/she is not capable
- his/her actions have no consequences so it's not necessary to pay attention to them
- others are at his/her service

SO, WHAT TO DO ?

SANCTIONS THAT FIX THE MISTAKE

OH! THE TEA POT IS BROKEN. WE
NEED A BROOM TO CLEAN IT. THERE
IS ONE OTHER THERE !



If the child is old enough to understand that his/her mistake has created a problem, the sanction has already happened. This is an educative approach and a constructive alternative to punishment because the child is able to understand the consequences of his/her actions and give him/her the responsibility to fix the mistake.

Handout 7.3

Give responsibility rather than guilt³⁹



STOP IMMEDIATELY
TOUCHING THIS ZIP!



I like playing with the zip
but I like even more to
understand how things
work and feel intelligent.



HOW CAN YOU MAKE
SURE THE TENT STAYS
CLOSED?

It seems a bit artificial but
questions are often magic!
Almost immediately the child
mobilizes his frontal brain. He
observes, analyze the situation
and find sometimes solutions
you haven't thought about.

³⁹ Nada Al Joundi International Rescue Committee
Adapted from *J'ai tout essayé !*, I. Lilliozat. 2011

Handout 7.4

Set up rules rather than interdictions



To set limits, permissions and information are more effective than interdictions.

Permission focuses the attention of the child on the expected behavior. Interdictions focus the attention on the problematic behavior.

It's not necessarily forbidden to touch the benzene heater for instance, but it's dangerous! It's risky to forbid a dangerous behavior because at some point the interdiction is transgressed. Whereas if the child understand the concept of danger, you don't need to repeat yourself.

It's also important to remind yourself that the children attention capacity is not perfect. Information needs to be repeated.

\$



!"#%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?@.12).\$(44+-..\$
!"#\$%&'()*+!,"#\$%&'()*+,-./:;<=>?@.12).\$(44+-..\$

Handout 8.1

Impacts and symptoms

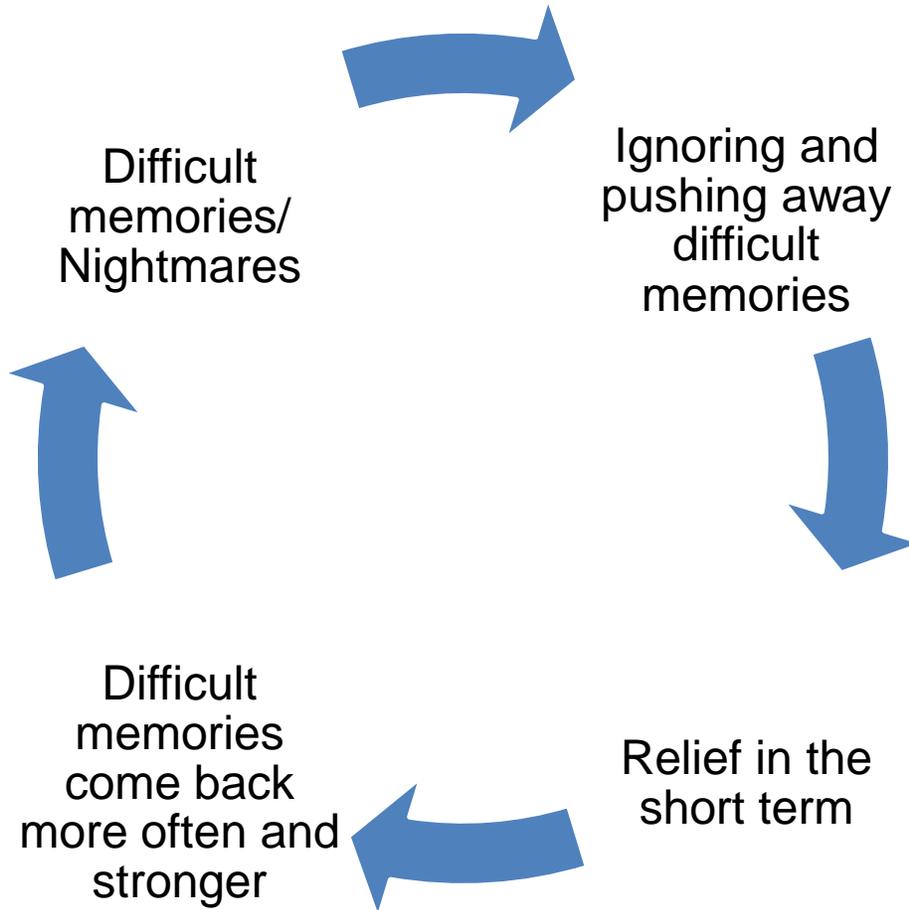
Age	What are the impacts of a war on children?	What are the psychosocial symptoms that can be observed?
6 month		
4 years old		

Examples of answer (for the facilitator only)

Age	What are the impacts of a war on children?	What are the psychosocial symptoms that can be observed?
6 month	More dirty, no baby powder Not the same food Not the same diapers Less attention from his/her parents, less cuddle, less interaction with parents and sibling	More crying Difficulty to fall asleep Refuse the food Rashes Diarrhea
4 years old	Loss of friend, toys, clothes, loss of marks of identity, change of food, of environment, loss of routine. Less attention from his/her parents, less interaction, less stimulation. Memories of the war, exposed to a violent environment	Crying Difficulty to fall asleep, nightmares Refuse to eat, eat too much. Isolation, refuse to leave the tent, scared of everything, no energy Bedwetting (enuresis) Feel sick, eczema, stomach aches, playing war games, jumpiness, especially at loud noises

Handout 8.2

Ignoring stress symptoms: a vicious cycle



Handout 9.1

Providing support to children with psychosocial needs

Daily routine



P. Biro IRC, Domiz camp, Iraq

Playing, laughing



G.Martone IRC, Domiz camp, Iraq

Talking, listening



N.Colt IRC, Northern Syria

Touch and physical comfort



N.Colt IRC, Domiz camp, Iraq

Handout 9.2

Referral pathway (to contextualize)

Handout 9.3



Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters

If Your Child	Understand	Ways to Help
<p>... has problems sleeping, doesn't want to go to bed, won't sleep alone, wakes up at night screaming.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When children are scared, they want to be with people who help them feel safe, and they worry when you are not together. If you were separated during the disaster, going to bed alone may remind your child of that separation. Bedtime is a time for remembering because we are not busy doing other things. Children often dream about things they fear and can be scared of going to sleep. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you want, let your child sleep with you. Let him know this is just for now. Have a bedtime routine: a story, a prayer, cuddle time. Tell him the routine (every day), so he knows what to expect. Hold him and tell him that he is safe, that you are there and will not leave. Understand that he is not being difficult on purpose. This may take time, but when he feels safer, he will sleep better.
<p>... worries something bad will happen to you. (You may also have worries like this.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It is natural to have fears like this after being in danger. These fears may be even stronger if your child was separated from loved ones during the disaster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remind your child and yourself that right now you are safe. If you are not safe, talk about how you are working to keep her safe. Make a plan for who would care for your child if something did happen to you. This may help you worry less. Do positive activities together to help her think about other things.
<p>... cries or complains whenever you leave him, even when you go to the bathroom. ... can't stand to be away from you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children who cannot yet speak or say how they feel may show their fear by clinging or crying. Goodbyes may remind your child of any separation you had related to the disaster. Children's bodies react to separations (stomach sinks, heart beats faster). Something inside says, "Oh no, I can't lose her." Your child is not trying to manipulate or control you. He is scared. He may also get scared when other people (not just you) leave. Goodbyes make him scared. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Try to stay with your child and avoid separations right now. For brief separations (store, bathroom), help your child by naming his feelings and linking them to what he has been through. Let him know you love him and that this goodbye is different, you'll be back soon. "You're so scared. You don't want me to go because last time I was gone you didn't know where I was. This is different, and I'll be right back." For longer separations, have him stay with familiar people, tell him where you are going and why, and when you will come back. Let him know you will think about him. Leave a photo or something of yours and call if you can. When you come back, tell him you missed him, thought about him, and did come back. You will need to say this over and over.
<p>... has problems eating, eats too much or refuses food.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Stress affects your child in different ways, including her appetite. Eating healthfully is important, but focusing too much on eating can cause stress and tension in your relationship. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Relax. Usually, as your child's level of stress goes down, her eating habits will return to normal. Don't force your child to eat. Eat together and make meal times fun and relaxing. Keep healthy snacks around. Young children often eat on the go. If you are worried, or if your child loses a significant amount of weight, consult a pediatrician.

Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters

If Your Child	Understand	Ways to Help
<p>... is not able to do things he used to do (like use the potty).</p> <p>... does not talk like he used to.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often when young children are stressed or scared, they temporarily lose abilities or skills they recently learned. This is the way young children tell us that they are not okay and need our help. Losing an ability after children have gained it (like starting to wet the bed again) can make them feel ashamed or embarrassed. Caregivers should be understanding and supportive. Your child is not doing this on purpose. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Avoid criticism. It makes him worried that he'll never learn. Do not force your child. It creates a power struggle. Instead of focusing on the ability (like not using the potty), help your child feel understood, accepted, loved, and supported. As your child feels safer, he will recover the ability he lost.
<p>... is reckless, does dangerous things.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> It may seem strange, but when children feel unsafe, they often behave in unsafe ways. It is one way of saying, "I need you. Show me I'm important by keeping me safe." 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Keep her safe. Calmly go and get her and hold her if necessary. Let her know that what she is doing is unsafe, that she is important, and you wouldn't want anything to happen to her. Show her other more positive ways that she can have your attention.
<p>... is scared by things that did not scare her before.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young children believe their parents are all-powerful and can protect them from anything. This belief helps them feel safe. Because of what happened, this belief has been damaged, and without it, the world is a scarier place. Many things may remind your child of the disaster (rain, aftershocks, ambulances, people yelling, a scared look on your face), and will scare her. It is not your fault—it was the disaster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When your child is scared, talk to her about how you will keep her safe. If things remind your child of the disaster and cause her to worry that it is happening again, help her understand how what is happening now (like rain or aftershocks) is different from the disaster. If she talks about monsters, join her in chasing them out. "Go away, monster. Don't bother my baby. I'm going to tell the monster boo, and it will get scared and go away. Boo, boo." Your child is too young to understand and recognize how you did protect her, but remind yourself of the good things you did.
<p>... seems "hyper," can't sit still, and doesn't pay attention to anything.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fear can create nervous energy that stays in our bodies. Adults sometimes pace when worried. Young children run, jump, and fidget. When our minds are stuck on bad things, it is hard to pay attention to other things. Some children are naturally active. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Help your child to recognize his feelings (fear, worry) and reassure your child that he is safe. Help your child get rid of nervous energy (stretching, running, sports, breathing deep and slow). Sit with him and do an activity you both enjoy (throw a ball, read books, play, draw). Even if he doesn't stop running around, this helps him. If your child is naturally active, focus on the positive. Think of all the energy he has to get things done, and find activities that fit his needs.
<p>... plays in a violent way.</p> <p>... keeps talking about the disaster and the bad things he saw.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Young children often talk through play. Violent play can be their way of telling us how crazy things were or are, and how they feel inside. When your child talks about what happened, strong feelings may come up both for you and your child (fear, sadness, anger). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> If you can tolerate it, listen to your child when he "talks." As your child plays, notice the feelings he has and help him by naming feelings and being there to support him (hold him, soothe him). If he gets overly upset, spaces out, or he plays out the same upsetting scene, help him calm down, help him feel safe, and consider getting professional help.

Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters

If Your Child	Understand	Ways to Help
<p>. . is now very demanding and controlling.</p> <p>. . seems “stubborn” insisting that things be done her way.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Between the age of 18 months to 3 years, young children often seem “controlling.” It can be annoying, but it is a normal part of growing up and helps them learn that they are important and can make things happen. When children feel unsafe, they may become more controlling than usual. This is one way of dealing with fears. They are saying, “Things are so crazy I need control over something.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember your child is not controlling or bad. This is normal, but may be worse right now because she feels unsafe. Let your child have control over small things. Give her choices over what she wears or eats, games you play, stories you read. If she has control over small things, it can make her feel better. Balance giving her choices and control with giving her structure and routines. She will feel unsafe if she “runs the show.” Cheer her on as she tries new things. She can also feel more in control when she can put her shoes on, put a puzzle together, pour juice.
<p>. . tantrums and is cranky.</p> <p>. . yells a lot – more than usual.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even before the disaster, your child may have had tantrums. They are a normal part of being little. It’s frustrating when you can’t do things and when you don’t have the words to say what you want or need. Now, your child has a lot to be upset about (just like you) and may really need to cry and yell. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Let him know you understand how hard this is for him. “Thing are really bad right now. It’s been so scary. We don’t have your toys or TV, and you’re mad.” Tolerate tantrums more than you usually would, and respond with love rather than discipline. You might not normally do this, but things are not normal. If he cries or yells, stay with him and let him know you are there for him. Reasonable limits should be set if tantrums become frequent or are extreme.
<p>. . hits you.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For children, hitting is a way of expressing anger. When children can hit adults they feel unsafe. It’s scary to be able to hit someone who’s supposed to protect you. Hitting can also come from seeing other people hit each other. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Each time your child hits, let her know that this is not okay. Hold her hands, so she can’t hit, have her sit down. Say something like, “It’s not okay to hit, it’s not safe. When you hit, you are going to need to sit down.” If she is old enough, give her the words to use or tell her what she needs to do. Tell her, “Use your words. Say, I want that toy.” Help her express anger in other ways (play, talk, draw). If you are having conflict with other adults, try to work it out in private, away from where your child can see or hear you. If needed, talk with a friend or professional about your feelings.
<p>. . says “Go away, I hate you!”</p> <p>. . says “This is all your fault.”</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The real problem is the disaster and everything that followed, but your child is too little to fully understand that. When things go wrong, young children often get mad at their parents because they believe they should have stopped it from happening. You are not to blame, but now is not the time to defend yourself. Your child needs you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Remember what your child has been through. He doesn’t mean everything he is saying; he’s angry and dealing with so many difficult feelings. Support your child’s feeling of anger, but gently redirect the anger towards the disaster. “You are really mad. Lots of bad things have happened. I’m mad too. I really wish it didn’t happen, but even mommies can’t make hurricanes not happen. It’s so hard for both of us.”



Parent Tips for Helping Infants and Toddlers after Disasters

If Your Child	Understand	Ways to Help
<p>... doesn't want to play or do anything.</p> <p>... seems to not really have any feelings (happy or sad).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your child needs you. So much has happened and he may be feeling sad and overwhelmed. When children are stressed, some yell and others shut down. Both need their loved ones. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sit by your child and keep him close. Let him know you care. If you can, give words to his feelings. Let him know it's okay to feel sad, mad, or worried. "It seems like you don't want to do anything. I wonder if you are sad. It's okay to be sad. I will stay with you." Try to do things with your child, anything he might like (read a book, sing, play together).
<p>... cries a lot.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Your family may have experienced difficult changes because of the disaster, and it is natural that your child is sad. When you let your child feel sad and provide her with comfort, you help your child even if she remains sad. If you have strong feelings of sadness, it may be good for you to get support. Your child's well-being is connected to your well-being. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow your child to express feelings of sadness. Help your child name her feelings and understand why she may feel that way. "I think you're sad. A lot of hard things have happened" Support your child by sitting with her and giving her extra attention. Spend special time together. Help your child feel hopeful about the future. Together think and talk about how your lives will continue and the good things you will do, like go for a walk, go to the park or zoo, play with friends. Take care of yourself.
<p>... misses people you are no longer able to see after the disaster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Even though young children do not always express how they feel, be aware that it is difficult for them when they lose contact with important people. If someone close to your child died, your child may show stronger reactions to the disaster. Young children do not understand death, and may think that the person can come back. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> For those that have moved away, help your child stay in touch in some way (for example, sending pictures or cards, calling). Help your child talk about these important people. Even when we are apart from people, we can still have positive feelings about them by remembering and talking about them. Acknowledge how hard it is to not be able to see people we care for. It is sad. Where someone has died, answer your child's questions simply and honestly. When strong reactions last longer than two weeks, seek help from a professional.
<p>... misses things you have lost because of the disaster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> When a disaster brings so much loss to a family and community, it is easy to lose sight of how much the loss of a toy or other important item (blanket) can mean to a child. Grieving for a toy is also your child's way of grieving for all you had before the disaster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Allow your child to express feelings of sadness. It is sad that your child lost her toy or blanket. If possible, try to find something that would replace the toy or blanket that would be acceptable and satisfying to your child. Distract your child with other activities.

Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters

Reactions/Behavior	Responses	Examples of things to do and say
<p><u>Helplessness and passivity</u>: Young children know they can't protect themselves. In a disaster, they feel even more helpless. They want to know their parents will keep them safe. They might express this by being unusually quiet or agitated.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide comfort, rest, food, water, and opportunities for play and drawing. ▪ Provide ways to turn spontaneous drawing or playing about traumatic events to something that would make them feel safer or better. ▪ Reassure your child that you and other grownups will protect them. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give your child more hugs, hand holding, or time in your lap. ▪ Make sure there is a special safe area for your child to play with proper supervision. ▪ In play, a four year old keeps having the blocks knocked down by hurricane winds. Asked, "Can you make it safe from the winds?" the child quickly builds a double block thick wall and says, "Winds won't get us now." A parent might respond with, "That wall sure is strong," and explain, "We're doing a lot of things to keep us safe."
<p><u>General fearfulness</u>: Young children may become more afraid of being alone, being in the bathroom, going to sleep, or otherwise separated from parents. Children want to believe that their parents can protect them in all situations and that other grownups, such as teachers or police officers, are there to help them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be as calm as you can with your child. Try not to voice your own fears in front of your child. ▪ Help children regain confidence that you aren't leaving them and that you can protect them. ▪ Remind them that there are people working to keep families safe, and that your family can get more help if you need to. ▪ If you leave, reassure your children you will be back. Tell them a realistic time in words they understand, and be back on time. ▪ Give your child ways to communicate their fears to you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Be aware when you are on the phone or talking to others, that your child does not overhear you expressing fear. ▪ Say things such as, "We are safe from the earthquake now, and people are working hard to make sure we are okay." ▪ Say, "If you start feeling more scared, come and take my hand. Then I'll know you need to tell me something."
<p><u>Confusion about the danger being over</u>: Young children can overhear things from adults and older children, or see things on TV, or just imagine that it is happening all over again. They believe the danger is closer to home, even if it happened further away.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give simple, repeated explanations as needed, even every day. Make sure they understand the words you are using. ▪ Find out what other words or explanations they have heard and clarify inaccuracies. ▪ If you are at some distance from the danger, it is important to tell your child that the danger is not near you. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Continue to explain to your child that the disaster has passed and that you are away from the danger ▪ Draw, or show on a map, how far away you are from the disaster area, and that where you are is safe. "See? The disaster was way over there, and we're way over here in this safe place."
<p><u>Returning to earlier behaviors</u>: Thumb sucking, bed-wetting, baby-talk, needing to be in your lap.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Remain neutral or matter-of-fact, as best you can, as these earlier behaviors may continue a while after the disaster. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ If your child starts bedwetting, change her clothes and linens without comment. Don't let anyone criticize or shame the child.

Parent Tips for Helping Preschool-Age Children after Disasters

Reactions/Behavior	Responses	Examples of things to do and say
<p><u>Fears the disaster will return</u>: When having reminders—seeing, hearing, or otherwise sensing something that reminds them of the disaster.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Explain the difference between the event and reminders of the event. ▪ Protect children from things that will remind them as best you can. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ “Even though it’s raining, that doesn’t mean the hurricane is happening again. A rainstorm is smaller and can’t wreck stuff like a hurricane can.” ▪ Keep your child from television, radio, and computer stories of the disaster that can trigger fears of it happening again.
<p><u>Not talking</u>: Being silent or having difficulty saying what is bothering them.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Put common feelings into words, such as anger, sadness, and worry about the safety of parents, friends, and siblings. ▪ Do not force them to talk, but let them know they can talk to you any time. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Draw simple “happy faces” for different feelings on paper plates. Tell a brief story about each one, such as, “Remember when the water came into the house and you had a worried face like this?” ▪ Say something like, “Children can feel really sad when their home is damaged.” ▪ Provide art or play materials to help them express themselves. Then use feeling words to check out how they felt. “This is a really scary picture. Were you scared when you saw the water?”
<p><u>Sleep problems</u>: Fear of being alone at night, sleeping alone, waking up afraid, having bad dreams.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Reassure your child that he is safe. Spend extra quiet time together at bedtime. ▪ Let the child sleep with a dim light on or sleep with you for a limited time. ▪ Some might need an explanation of the difference between dreams and real life. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Provide calming activities before bedtime. Tell a favorite story with a comforting theme. ▪ At bedtime say, “You can sleep with us tonight, but tomorrow you’ll sleep in your own bed.” ▪ “Bad dreams come from our thoughts inside about being scared, not from real things happening.”
<p><u>Not understanding about death</u>: Preschool age children don’t understand that death is not reversible. They have “magical thinking” and might believe their thoughts caused the death. The loss of a pet may be very hard on a child.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Give an age-appropriate consistent explanation—that does not give false hopes—about the reality of death. ▪ Don’t minimize feelings over a loss of a pet or a special toy. ▪ Take cues from what your child seems to want to know. Answer simply and ask if he has any more questions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Allow children to participate in cultural and religious grieving rituals. ▪ Help them find their own way to say goodbye by drawing a happy memory or lighting a candle or saying a prayer for the deceased. ▪ “No, Pepper won’t be back, but we can think about him and talk about him and remember what a silly doggy he was.” ▪ “The firefighter said no one could save Pepper and it wasn’t your fault. I know you miss him very much.”

Facilitator's resources

Parenting skills visual aids

Session 4

- Neural circuit are wired in a bottom-up sequence
- Brain architecture
- Toxic stress
- Profound deprivation affects brain power
- Brain scans

Session 7

- Family rules

Session 8

- Ignoring stress symptoms: a vicious cycle

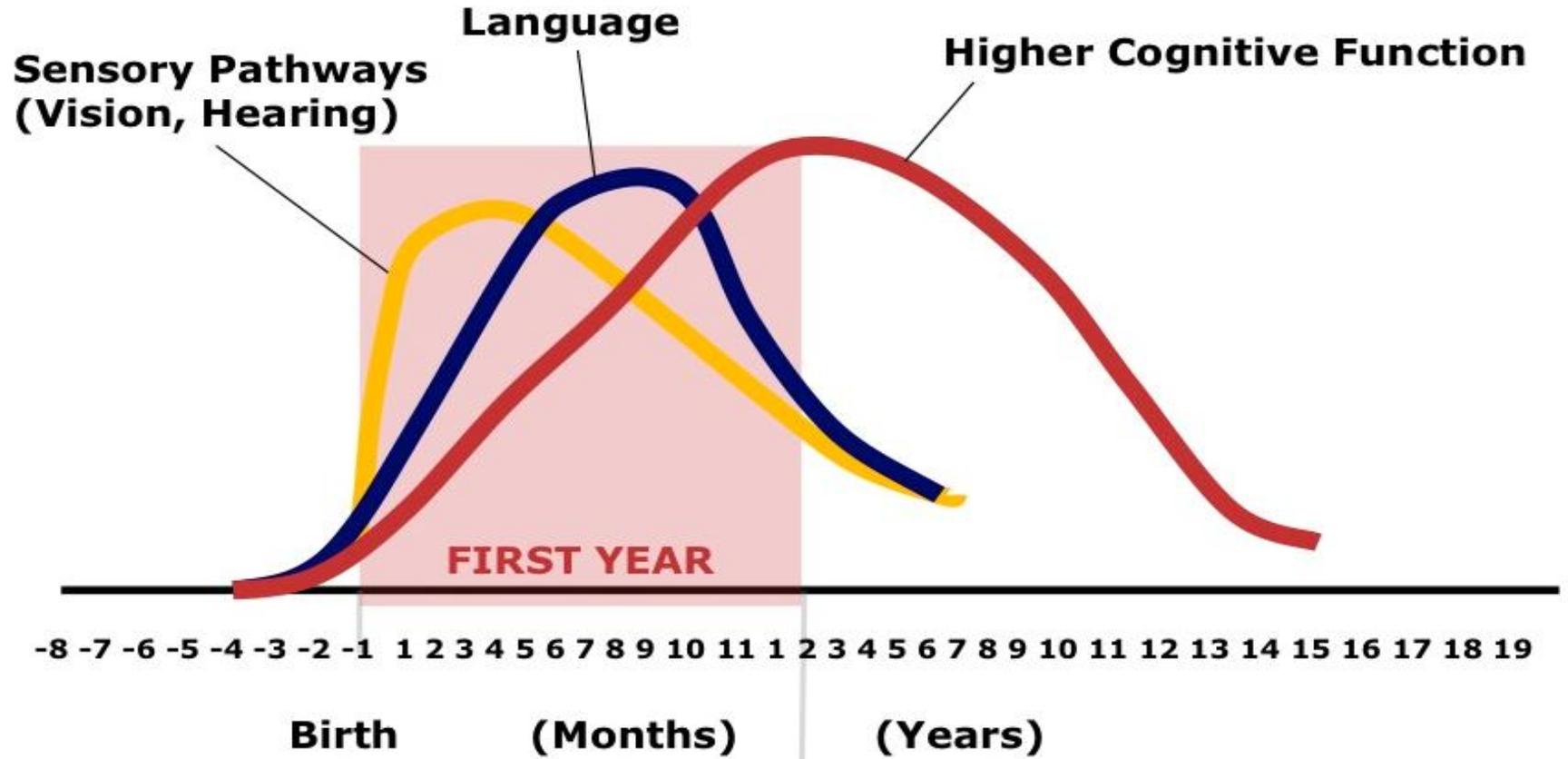
Facilitator's drawing guide

Session 4

- Brain development and impact of toxic stress

Session 4

Neural Circuits are Wired in a Bottom-Up Sequence

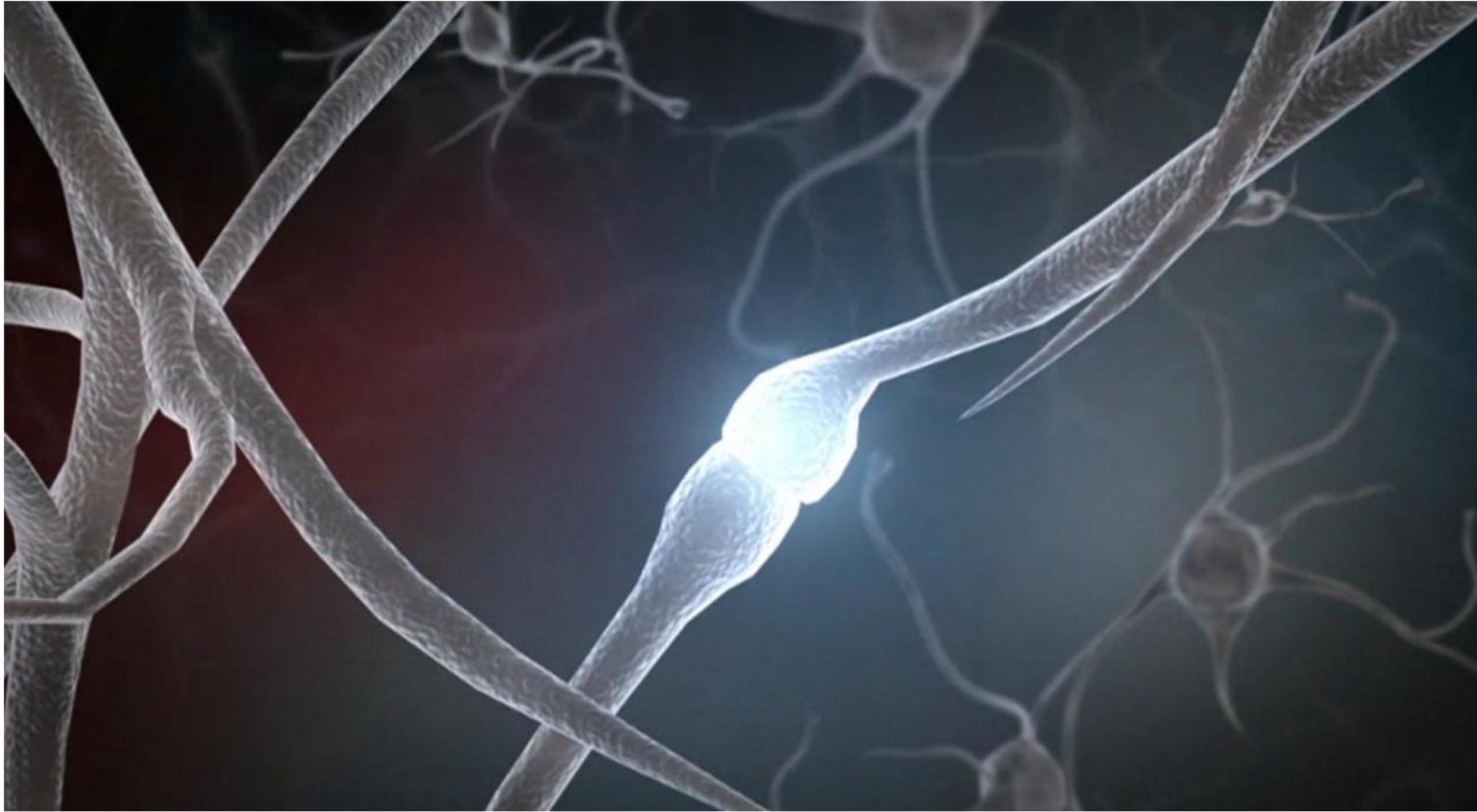


A child experiences during the earliest years of life have a lasting impact on the architecture of the developing brain. Genes provide the basic blueprint but experience shape the process that determined whether the child brain will provide strong or weak foundation for all future learning, behaviour and health.

Brain architecture



During this important period of brain development, billions of brain cells called neurons send electrical signals to communicate with each other, these connection forms circuits that become the basic foundation of brain architecture. Circuits and connection proliferate a rapid pace and reinforced through repeated use. Our experiences and environment dictate which circuits and connection get more use, connection that used more grow stronger and more permanent, meanwhile connection that are used less fade away through a normal process called pruning. Well used circuits create lightning fast pathways for neurons signals to travel across regions of the brain. Simple circuits form first providing the foundation for more complex circuits to build on later.



Through this process neurons forms strong circuits and connections for emotions, motor skills, behavioural control, logic, language and memory during the early critical period of development. With repeated use this circuits become more efficient and connected to other areas of the brain more rapidly.



Motor Skills

**Behavioral
Control**

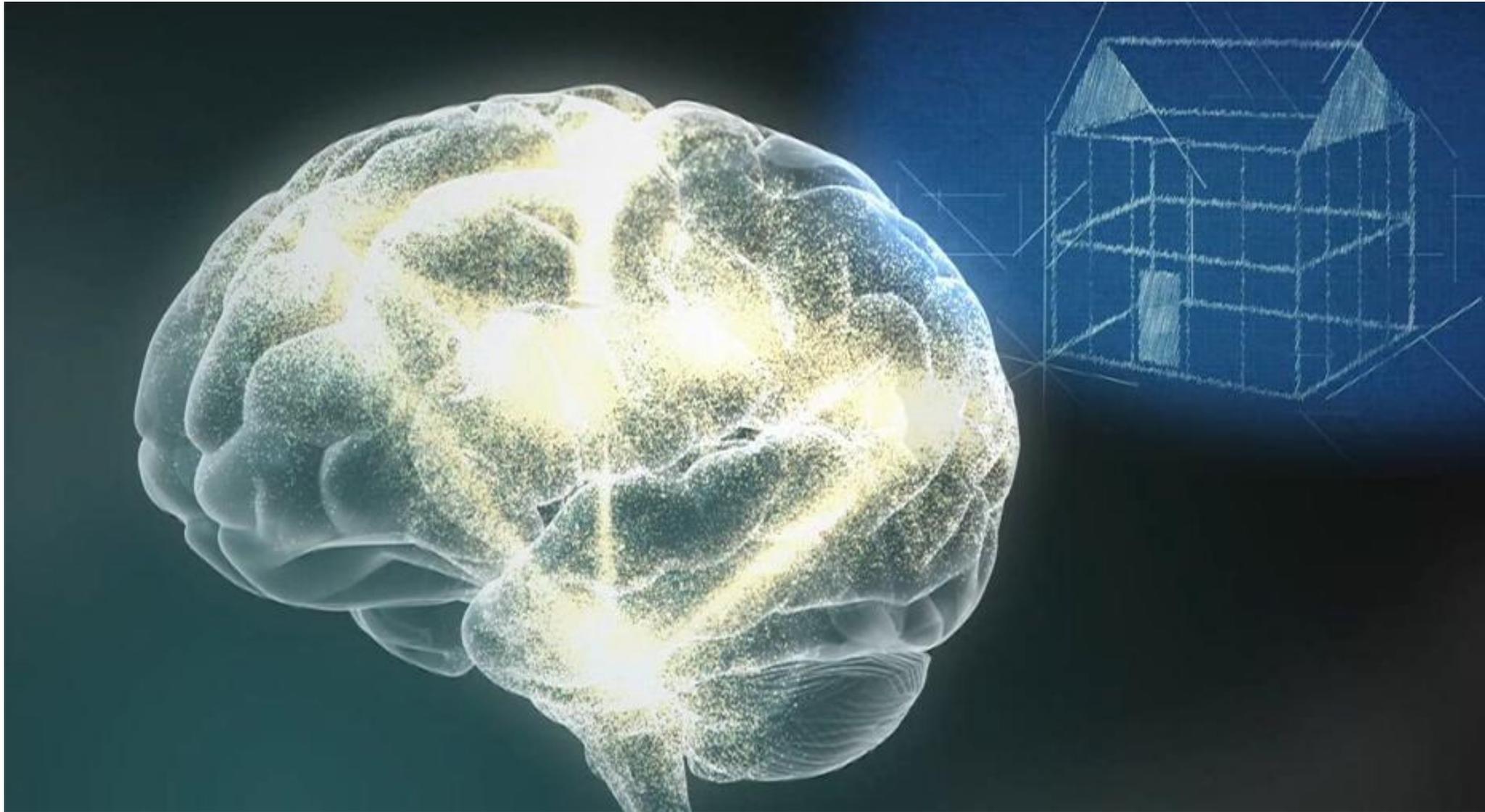
Language

Visual

Memory

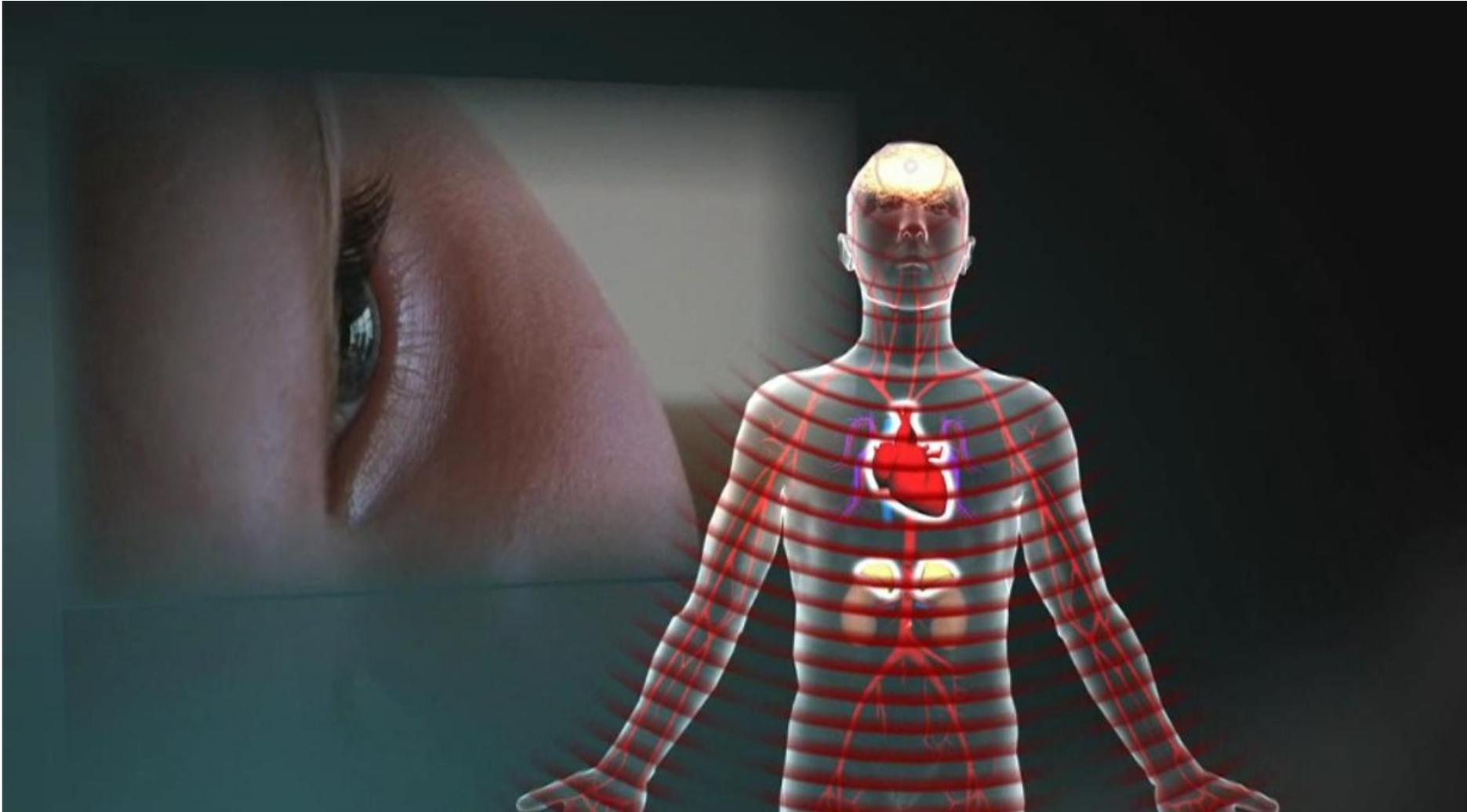
Emotion

While they originated in specific areas of the brain the circuits are interconnected you can't have one type of skill without have the others to support it is like building a house everything is connected and what comes first forms a foundation for all that comes later.

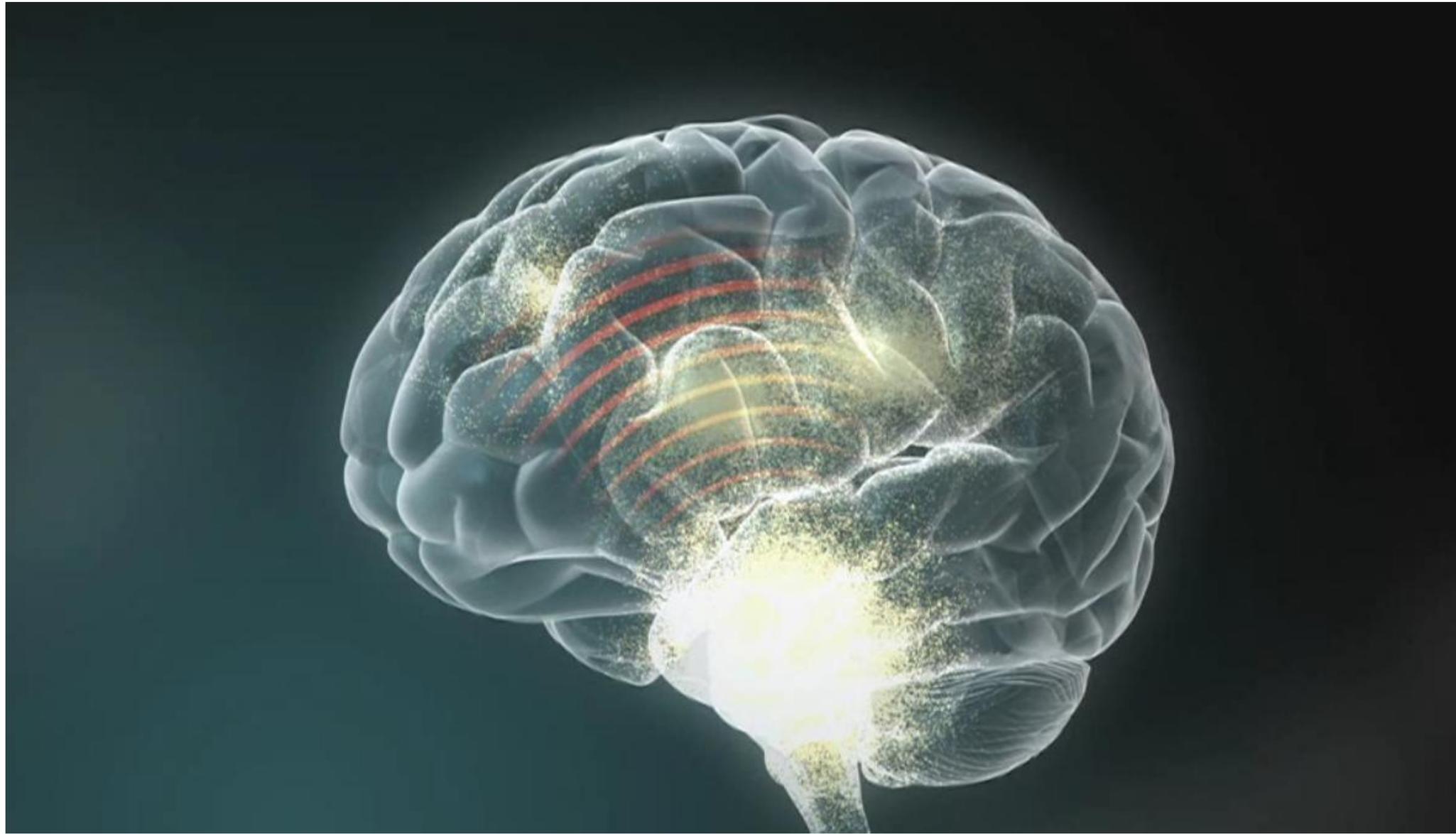


Learning to deal with stress is an important part of healthy development. When experiencing stress, the stress response system is activated, the body and brain go on alert there is an adrenalin rush increase heart rate and increase stress Hormone levels. When the stress is relieved after short time or a young child receive support from caring adults the stress response once down and the body quickly returns to normal. In sever situations such as on going abuse and neglect whether there is no caring adult to act as a buffer against stress the stress response stays activated. Even when there is no apparent physical harm they extended absence of response from adults can activate the stress response system. Constant activation of the stress response over load developing systems with serious lifelong consequences for the child. This is known as toxic stress. Over time this result in a stress response system set permanently on high alert.

Toxic stress



In the areas of the brain dedicated to learning and reasoning the neuron connection that comprise brain architecture are weaker and fewer in number.



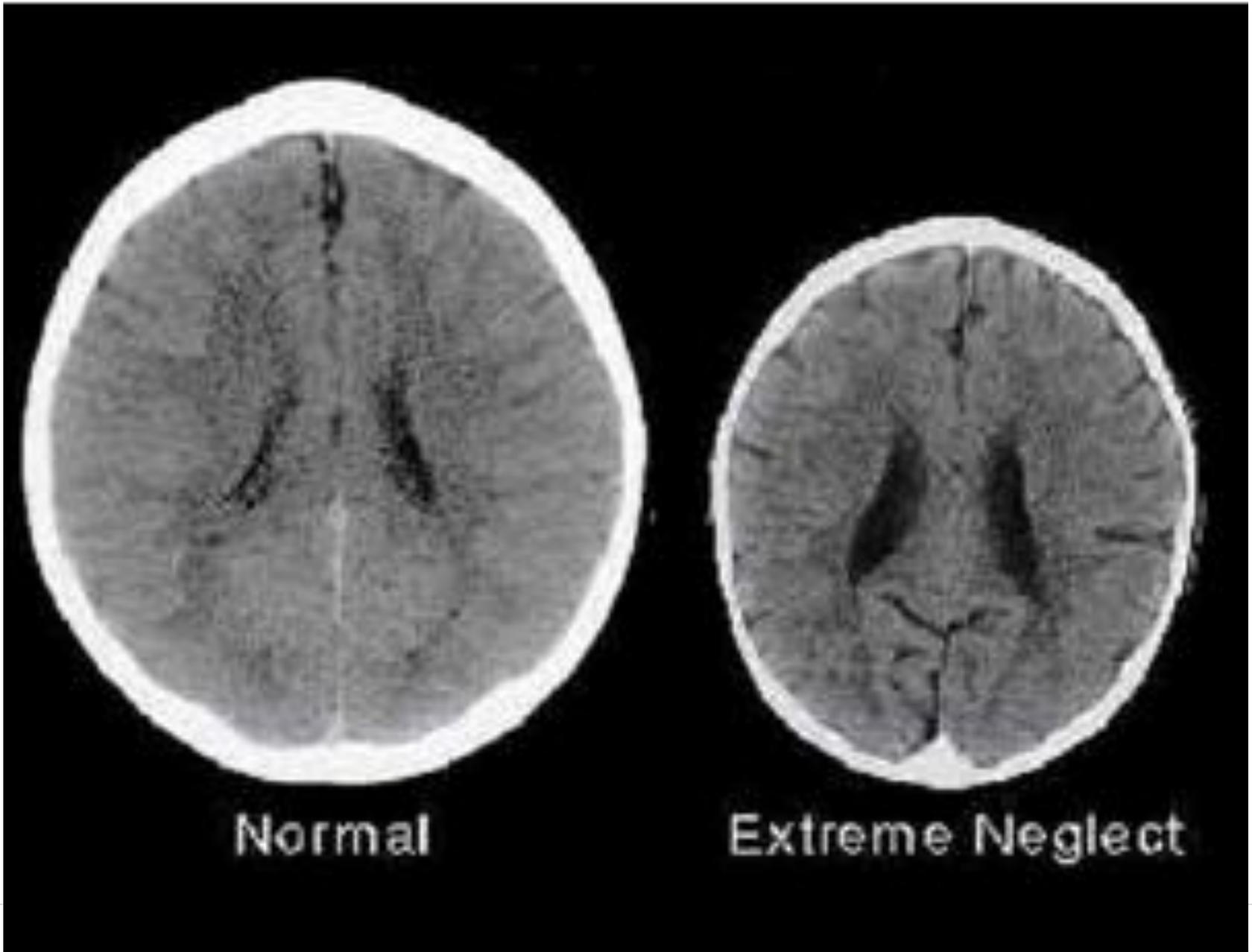
Science shows that the prolonged activation of stress Hormone in early child hood can actually reduce neurons connection in these important areas in the brain in just the times they should be growing new ones.

Toxic stress can be avoided if we insure that the environment which children are growing and develop are nurturing stable and engaging.

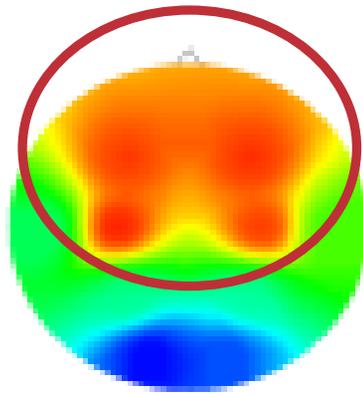
Facilitator's tips: highlight how due to the toxic stress the connection between the neurons is fading.



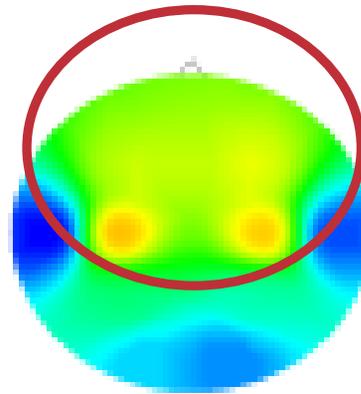




Profound Deprivation Affects Brain Power



Positive Relationships



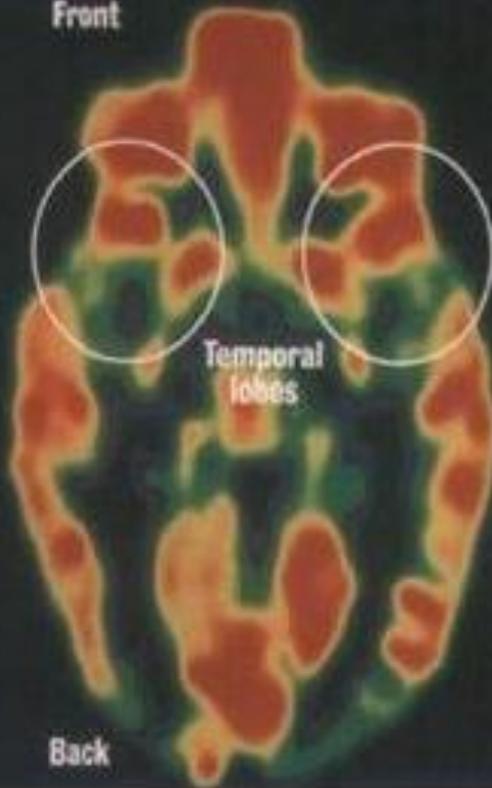
Extreme Neglect

Source: C.A. Nelson (2008); Marshall, Fox & BEIP (2004).

Healthy Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a normal child shows regions of high (red) and low (blue and black) activity. At birth, only primitive structures such as the brain stem (center) are fully functional, as regions like the temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.

Front

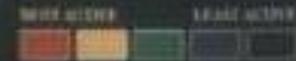


Front



An Abused Brain

This PET scan of the brain of a Romanian orphan, who was institutionalized shortly after birth, shows the effect of extreme deprivation in infancy. The temporal lobes (top), which regulate emotions and receive input from the senses, are nearly quiescent. Such children suffer emotional and cognitive problems.



Session 7: Visual aid Family rules⁴⁰

Consequences

Consequences

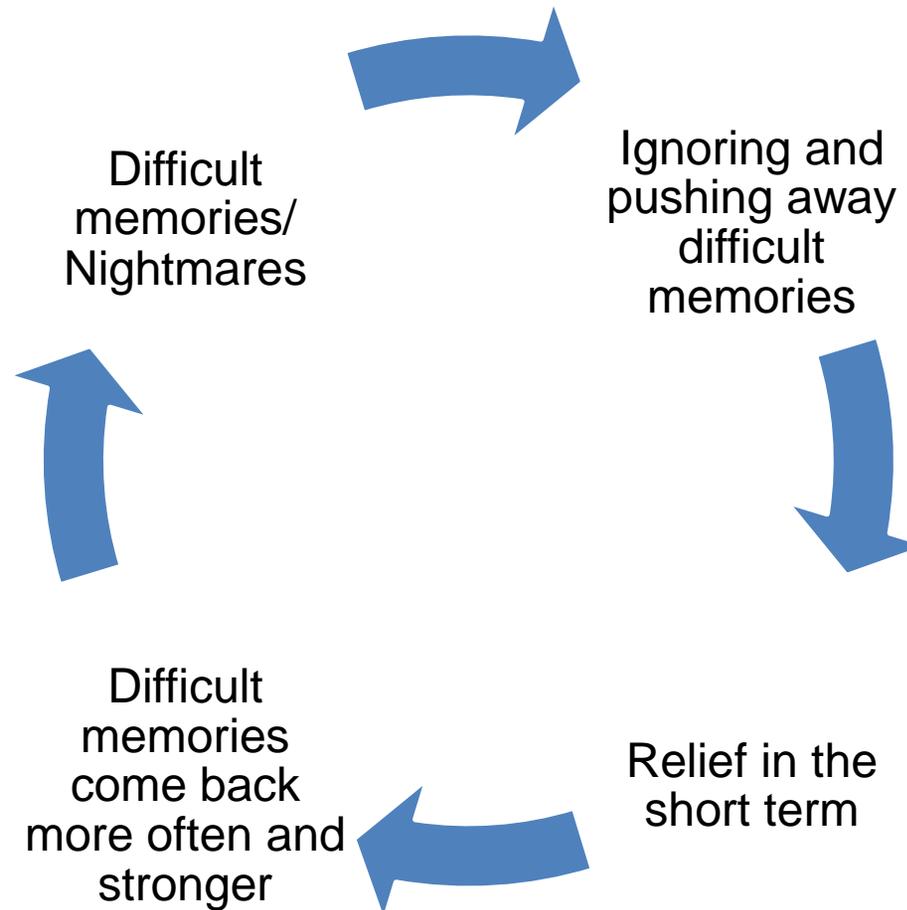


Consequences

⁴⁰ <http://www.marriottschool.net/womeninbusiness/women-entrepreneurs-not-the-exception/>

Session 8 visual aid

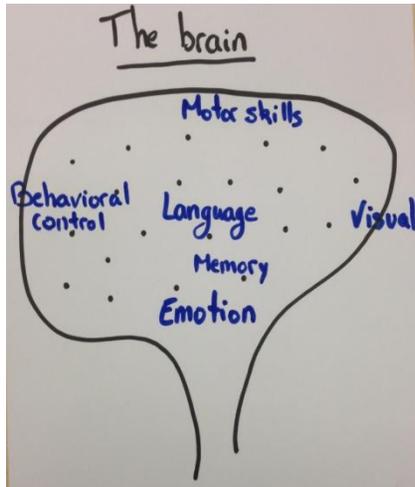
Ignoring stress symptoms: a vicious cycle



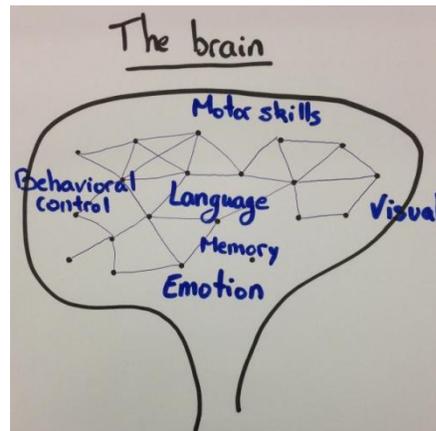
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Session 4: Brain development and impact of toxic stress

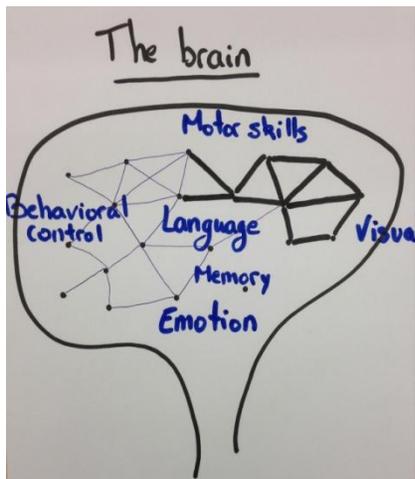
Sample A



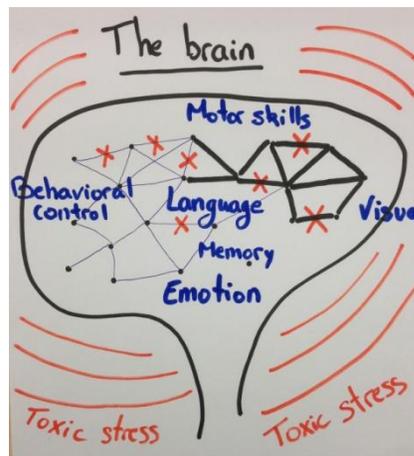
Sample B



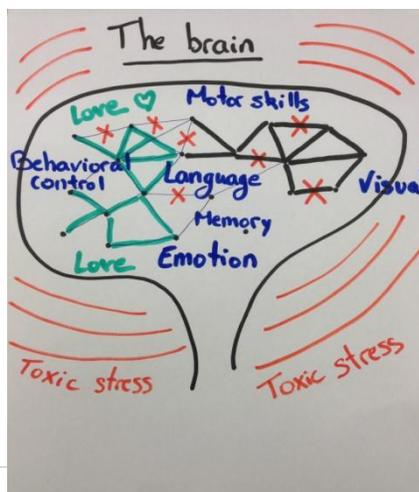
Sample C



Sample D

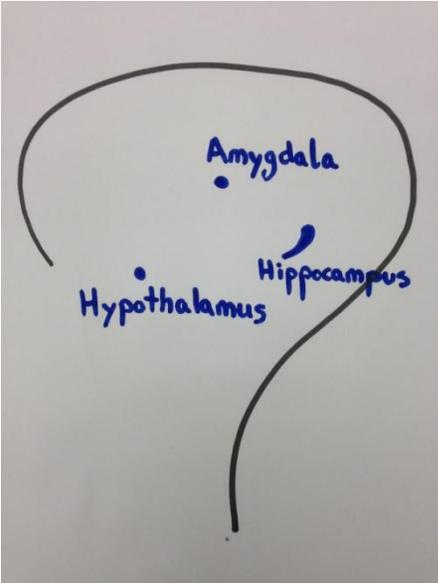


Sample E

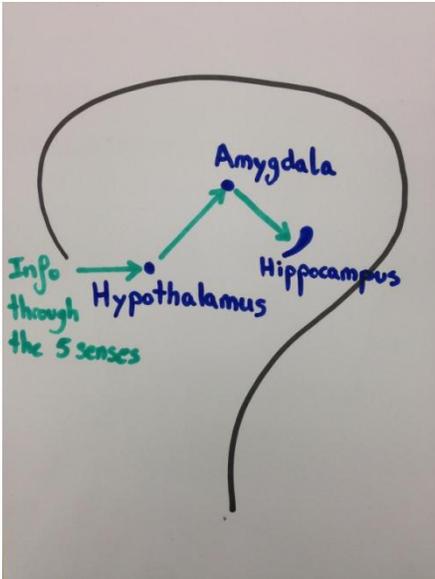


Session 8: PTSD, what is happening in the brain?

Sample A



Sample B



Sample C

