



# Ngoana Eo Ke Oa Mang?

## A Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity

by CRS Lesotho





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*By CRS Lesotho*

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Written By Edith Sebatane, Dr Pulane Lefoka  
and Sue Connolly

Since 1943, Catholic Relief Services (CRS) has held the privilege of serving the poor and disadvantaged overseas. Without regard to race, creed or nationality, CRS provides emergency relief in the wake of natural and manmade disasters. Through development projects in education, peace and justice, agriculture, microfinance, health, and HIV & AIDS, CRS works to uphold human dignity and promote better standards of living. CRS also works throughout the United States to expand the knowledge and action of Catholics and others interested in issues of international peace and justice. Our programs and resources respond to the U.S. Bishops' call to live in solidarity—as one human family—across borders, over oceans, and through differences in language, culture and economic condition.

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Since 2002, with the invitation of the Lesotho Catholic Bishops Conference, CRS has been working in Lesotho. Over the last 10 years, CRS has focused on helping rural Basotho to meet their food security needs and mitigate the effects of HIV and AIDS. This period has been marked by recurring drought combined with high HIV prevalence throughout the country, underscoring the need for CRS to support families, especially most vulnerable children, infected and affected by HIV and AIDS.

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## Letter from CRS/Lesotho Country Representative

Dear friends,

Catholic Relief Services Lesotho is pleased to present our *Ngoana eo ke oa mang? Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity*. This guide has come to fruition as part of the *Whose Child is This?* project, with generous support from the Sieben Foundation.

Teachers play a vital role in educating and ensuring the development of young children. It is our hope that this manual addresses the critical training gap faced by current Early Childhood Care and Development preschool teachers in Lesotho. This material has been developed in conjunction with an additional manual, the *Ngoana eo ke oa mang? Teacher Resource Guide*. Both manuals have been developed in Sesotho and include multiple pictures to increase content accessibility for teachers in rural communities. These two complementary manuals, when used in conjunction with one another, will provide teachers with both the technical knowledge and practical implementation skills to improve the development of children.

CRS Lesotho has a wealth of experience in developing training guides for rural Basotho communities. This new manual enriches our existing materials and allows us to bring our efforts into classrooms, focusing our attention on the country's most vulnerable children. Built upon the existing Ministry of Education and Training curriculum, this manual incorporates current best practices around early child development, while providing teachers with practical guidance for meeting MOET curriculum objectives. It complements our other training materials that are focused on household caregivers. By working to improve the teaching capacity of teachers and providing household caregivers with strategies for educating their children at home, rural communities will be better equipped to meet the holistic developmental needs of their youngest most vulnerable children.

A primary goal of the *Whose Child is This?* project is disseminating best practices and lessons learned. We look forward to collaborating with our governmental and nongovernmental partners on the implementation of the strategies contained within this guide. As they are grounded in evidence and contextually appropriate to Lesotho, we are confident that use of the guide will generate important learning that will be shared both nationally and internationally.

As you continue working with teachers to improve child development, I encourage you to share your experiences using this manual with others and with CRS. By working together, I am certain that we can help guarantee a brighter future for the children of Lesotho.

Khotso Pula Nala



Rita Billingsley



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# User's Guide

## Introduction to the guide

This *Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity* is part of the growing set of training materials that have been developed to support the Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development project, *Ngoana eo ke oa mang? Whose Child is This?* The project targets three districts in the country that are remote, mountainous and disadvantaged with large numbers of young children who do not have access to quality ECCD services. This guide complements previous project-generated training materials focused on household caregivers and is part of the project's overall focus to ensure that each child is receiving quality stimulation both in the classroom and at home.

This guide has been designed to be used by Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) trainers who will train teachers to support young children's development and education in Lesotho. The guide uses an ages and stages approach and reflects current MOET ECCD policy for targeting children between the ages of 3 and 5. Although there are three preschool types in Lesotho, this guide has been created to target those teachers most affected by the lack of training and materials: teachers at Home Bases and Centres.

The authors recognise the valuable ECCD training manuals already developed in the country and elsewhere; however, the purpose of this manual is to provide very basic content and guidelines to recognised teacher trainers, including National Teacher Trainers (NTTs), Area Resource Teachers (ARTs) and Centre of Excellence teachers who will be training teachers working in both Centre and Home-Base preschools.

## *Rationale for the guide*

This *Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity* is one of two manuals focused on improving teacher capacity being commissioned by Catholic Relief Services Lesotho. The *Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity* is specifically focused on providing technical information and training session ideas for teacher trainers that are built upon the MOET Curriculum while also incorporating more recent internationally recognized best practices in the field. This guide will help current and future teacher trainers to identify training strategies that will help their rural counterparts become better teachers in their Centre and Home-Base





preschools. The guide provides technical information on child development and includes a variety of practical training sessions at the end of each module. The second manual, the *Teacher Resource Guide*, is based upon the technical information contained in this guide and serves as a complementary component for teachers in the field to reinforce the training they received and provide them with activity ideas for classroom use.

A primary reason for the development of these training materials is to improve the accessibility of rural teachers to support materials and training, an existing critical barrier identified by teachers in the field. The development of the materials and their implementation addresses this accessibility issue in two ways:

1. Although a variety of training materials have been developed for teachers, few have been translated into Sesotho, thereby limiting their use in the field. To address this gap, this guide has been translated into Sesotho and incorporates a variety of illustrations to reinforce key messages for those not accustomed to heavy reading.
2. The second strategy seeks to extend the reach of the Ministry of Education and Training to consistently be able to provide monthly trainings for preschool teachers even in the most rural communities. Using Centres of Excellence<sup>1</sup> as training hubs, these materials provide guidance to teacher trainers for working with local teachers. In time, as these trainings happen with more consistency and these groups mature, community networks of trained teachers will be formed. By building teacher training networks at the community level, preschools will be able to develop their own teacher training support groups that will continue to function even when faced with governmental budgetary and human resource limitations.

## How the guide works

The guide is divided into nine modules, with a different topic for each module. The number of modules is based on the normal preschool year in Lesotho of around nine months. This corresponds to the number of training sessions that could be conducted over each nine-month school year.

Each module begins with a section of specific curriculum information related to the module's theme. This section is followed by a session guide with training activities that includes:

<sup>1</sup> Centres of Excellence are ECCD Centre preschools with trained teachers willing to host monthly trainings for ECCD Centre and Home-Base preschool teachers who are in the same geographic region.



- outcomes for the training session.
- an agenda and time frame.
- suggested training methods.

This guide is designed to accompany the *Teacher Resource Guide*, which trainee teachers will receive and use as a resource during their training. Each module's content includes information on child development and practical ideas for planning appropriate learning experiences for children.

## Our approach

Research has shown that young children learn through play. They are concrete learners and need real things to play with and explore. We do not believe that rote learning and pencil and paper activities like worksheets should be the main way that children learn in the ECCD programmes. Teachers need to be trained to provide lots of play experiences for children so that they do, explore and find out things for themselves. The activities in this guide have been designed to encourage children's active learning.

The following icons will make it easier for trainers to identify what activities are taking place.



The edges of margins have been coloured to help the reader find pages as follows:

|                               |                   |
|-------------------------------|-------------------|
| Developmental milestones..... | <b>Milestones</b> |
| Training Activities.....      | <b>Training</b>   |



## How adults learn

Teacher trainers working with this manual will be playing a facilitator role. It is therefore important to understand how adults learn best.

**Malcolm Knowles** was a well-known professor of adult education in the United States. He studied how adults learn in the 1970s and identified the following six principles of adult learning:

1. ***Adults are autonomous and self-directed.*** They know their own needs and can therefore share responsibility for decisions about what they should learn.
2. ***Adults bring life experiences and knowledge to learning experiences.*** Adults learn from one another. They bring experiences and valuable knowledge gained in their own lives that they can share with others.
3. ***Adults are goal oriented.*** They usually know what they want to achieve in their learning.
4. ***Adults are relevancy oriented.*** They need to see a reason for learning and know how it will help them in their life situation.
5. ***Adults are practical.*** They focus on learning things that will be useful to them in their lives.
6. ***Adult learners like to be respected.*** Adults learn best when they feel valued and respected by those around them.

It is important to apply these principles whenever working with adult learners; therefore, the structure and activities suggested in the training sections of this manual reflect these principles.

### *Being actively involved*

Studies show that people generally learn:

- 20 percent of what they **hear**.
- 3 percent of what they **see**.
- 50 percent of what they **see and hear**.
- 70 percent of what they **see, hear and say**.
- 90 percent of what they **see, hear, say and do**.



## Learning from experiences

People learn when they take the time to reflect on their experiences to better understand why things happened the way they did. This will help them think of ways to do things differently and improve on them for the next time.

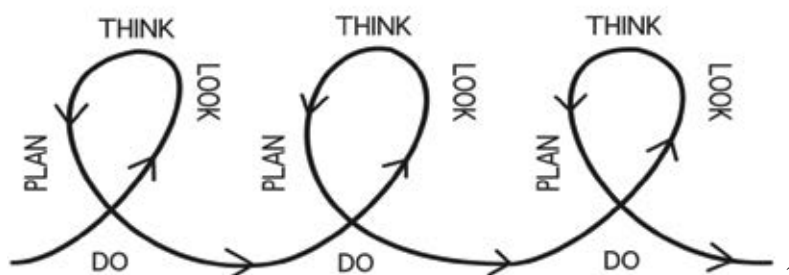
The experiential learning cycle is a model that ensures participants get the most out of a learning experience.

There are four steps to this cycle:

1. **Do** something.
2. **Look** back at (reflect on) what happened. What went well? What did not go so well?
3. **Think** about why things happened the way they did. What have you learned?
4. Use what you have learned to **plan** for next time.

A person needs to pass through each of these stages in the cycle in order to learn from the experience.

When we use the experiential learning model, we plan activities in which participants are actively involved and then asked to reflect on the experience in order to learn from it.



The training methods in this guide are based on the experiential learning model.

<sup>2</sup> Reproduced with permission. Van der Merwe, K. (2008). How children develop and learn. (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Early Learning Resource Unit.



## Facilitation skills

### *What is a facilitator?*

Each trainer will play an important role as a facilitator of a group of students. Some trainers may be familiar with the more traditional understanding of a teacher who has knowledge and skills that he/she needs to communicate to the students. This type of teaching is based on a passive learning process. Facilitating a group of students, in contrast, requires a participatory learning process. Facilitating and teaching a class are not the same, though they may be similar in some ways. Both require a lot of preparation beforehand. The table below illustrates the difference between these two concepts.

| <i>Passive Learning Process</i>  | <i>Participatory Learning Process</i>   |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Teacher is responsible and decides what students should learn.</li> <li>• Teacher in charge.</li> <li>• The focus is on the curriculum or subject matter.</li> <li>• Teacher has the knowledge and expertise.</li> <li>• Teacher talks and the students listen.</li> <li>• Teacher provides the right answers.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Facilitator believes that students are responsible for their own learning and endeavours to incorporate their goals and objectives.</li> <li>• Facilitator helps the group work towards a shared goal.</li> <li>• The focus is on the student, and the learning process.</li> <li>• Facilitator believes that everyone has knowledge and that students will learn from one another.</li> <li>• Facilitator encourages students to share their expertise, ideas and information.</li> <li>• Facilitator provides the right questions so that the students can discover the answers for themselves.</li> </ul> |

The role of the facilitator in guiding the group throughout the learning process is not an easy one. The facilitator will need to carefully prepare each training session and use a range of methods to make sure that everyone in the group participates and has the best possible learning experience.



## ***How to work with groups***

Facilitators need to look at the best way for group members to gain information and skills. This section provides ideas and methods that will make training sessions and workshops meaningful and fun.

### ***Learning by doing***

People learn best when they are actively involved in their own learning. *Participatory learning* is an approach to working with adults that encourages them to:

- think for themselves.
- learn from their own experiences.
- share their knowledge and ideas.
- learn from one other.
- work together to solve problems.
- take responsibility for their own learning.

The role of the facilitator or group leader in the participatory learning process is to create an environment in which everyone is able to participate equally.

### ***Guidelines for facilitation***

Successful facilitators will:

- Treat participants with respect. Encourage them to share their own knowledge and ideas. Using this approach will help them to learn from one another's experiences.
- Encourage everyone to fully participate in session activities and discussions. Be sensitive to shy participants who may take longer to develop confidence and contribute in the group.
- Speak clearly and try to avoid jargon. Use simple, everyday words to explain concepts and summarise discussions to make sure that everyone understands.
- Listen carefully. Show participants that you are listening by nodding your head or smiling and by not interrupting discussions. Try to understand what the person is saying and feeling. Repeat your understanding of the idea back to the participant and ask if you understood him/her correctly.





- Invite groups to address their own problems by giving them opportunities to find solutions from within their own community. There will usually be at least one person in the group who is able to “think outside the box” to solve a problem.
- Ask questions that help participants to think more about an issue. Questions that help people to think often start with:
  - “Why...?”
  - “How...?”
  - “What if...?”
- Be open and flexible. Be prepared to make changes to the agenda to accommodate the specific needs of the group.
- Remember that opinions are not “right” or “wrong”. Create a safe space where participants are free to express their opinions without judgement, and help the group members to understand one another’s viewpoints.
- Sometimes there is a dominant participant in a group who talks too much, or wants to control the group thinking, or wants to lecture rather than interact, or speak first at any opportunity. Here are some strategies to use to ensure that all group members can participate and contribute:
  - Deliberately say that for this round of questions you would like to give opportunities to others to speak first.
  - During a break, speak with the person in private and explain that this approach to learning involves full participation of all group members, and that you are trying to give everyone a voice.
  - As a last resource give the person a task such as keeping a record of the group discussions that will keep the person busy while the rest of the group carries on.

## *Techniques for working with groups*

Group leaders and facilitators can use a range of techniques during their meetings and workshops.

- **Small group discussions.** During small group discussions, participants share their ideas and experiences, or solve a common problem. In small groups, people feel more relaxed and willing to speak openly. This provides an opportunity for every person in the group to contribute. Following each small group discussion, it is important to have the group





conduct a report back session so that each group can share their ideas with the larger group.

### **Steps in facilitating small group discussions:**

1. Clearly explain the purpose of the small group discussion and any instructions that are required to complete the task.
  2. Divide participants into small groups (e.g., by counting off).
  3. Ask each group to choose a leader who will get the discussion started and make sure that everyone gets a chance to share their ideas.
  4. Give groups a time frame for the discussion. Let each group know a few minutes in advance when the time will be up.
  5. Have groups elect someone to take notes and someone to report the group's main findings. These can be transferred to a sheet of flipchart paper for all to see.
  6. Have groups share their ideas with one another.
  7. Where needed, prepare a few questions or points in advance for the larger group to take notes on during the report-back session. This encourages active listening in the larger group, and results in a recorded summary of the small group work.
- **Brainstorming.** This is a way to generate a collection of ideas. A topic is presented or a question is asked and people are invited to share their ideas freely.

### **Steps in brainstorming:**

1. In the first stage of brainstorming all ideas are written down without interruption or discussion.
  2. After the brainstorm the ideas are discussed and evaluated.
- **Role play.** Participants act out real life situations to demonstrate how a problem could be solved or to show how they would behave in a given scenario. After the role play, facilitate a participant discussion of the issues that have been raised. This method encourages a dynamic form of participation while exploring different points of view.

### **Steps in facilitating a role play:**

1. Provide groups with one scenario or different scenarios for each group. Explain the basic plot and ask group members to take on the role of different characters. Depending on the purpose of the role



play, you may need to provide details of how the situation should unfold.

2. Walk around as groups prepare their play to make sure that all group members are involved and that there is time for groups to practise before presenting their play.
  3. Make it clear that other groups need to carefully watch and listen as the play is being presented.
  4. De-role the players after each role play so that they know that they are stepping outside of the character they have played. For example, ask each player how she or she felt playing the role.
  5. Prepare guided questions in advance and then facilitate a discussion after each role play to bring out important points.
- **Presentations.** A presentation is used to provide information or to summarise key points of the workshop or meeting. Think carefully about how to present this information in a manner that will hold participants' interest.

#### **Steps in preparing a presentation:**

1. Read the information in the manual and any other resources that are available and know the topic well.
  2. Take time to plan what to say about the topic. Try to include practical examples and local experiences that will help participants to better understand.
  3. Write the main points that you want to share on paper first. Remember that most people can only listen for about 15 minutes without being distracted, so do not plan to talk for too long.
  4. Write the main points on flipchart paper:
    - Make sure that the writing is big enough for everyone to see clearly.
    - Don't write everything down, just the main points.
    - It is not necessary to use full sentences—write in point form.
  5. Practise what you are going to say with a friend or family member, especially if you do not have much experience as a facilitator. Time it in advance, to make sure that the presentation will fit within the planned timeframe and still leave time for questions.
- **Ice-breakers and games.** There are many uses for icebreakers and



games.

- Ice-breaker activities can help participants get to know one another better in the first meeting or at the beginning of a workshop.
- Games can re-energise participants when they are tired or have been sitting for a long time.
- Games can be used to introduce a topic or help participants to think about a subject.

Be sure to know how the game or icebreaker works. If not sure, try it out before you use it. Make sure that everyone understands what to do.



Some ideas for ice-breakers and games are provided in **Appendix 1: Icebreakers and Games** on page 310.

## Preparing for training using the guide

Whether embarking on your very first training programme as a facilitator or having conducted many trainings in the past, the important thing is to be well prepared. The better prepared you are, the more confident you will feel about what you are doing and saying.

1. When preparing training sessions, think about how to make experiences relevant to the lives of the participants.
2. Read the information in the Training Activities section of this guide, and organise the materials needed for each activity. Write up key points on flipcharts before the sessions. Have an agenda for every session written up to share with participants at the beginning of the session.
3. The guide gives a suggestion for the amount of time that should be spent on each activity. It is important, however, to be flexible to accommodate the needs of the training group; time may run out. Don't try to cover too much too quickly. Rather negotiate an alternate time with participants to complete the other activities.
4. Arrive at the training venue with plenty of time to prepare the room, organise refreshments, greet the participants and have them sign the attendance register when they arrive. Think about how to arrange the seating so that everyone can easily participate in the training. Think about how to use the space for small group work. Make the room as welcoming and comfortable as possible.



# Module 1:

## Child Development

The purpose of this module is to provide an overview of holistic child development and the stages of development that children go through from birth to 5 years. The developmental milestones chart provides information on what children should know and be able to do according to their ages. Teachers will learn how each child is unique, with different needs and learning styles, and that these differences need to be taken into account when planning their programmes. It is important that teachers understand the role that parents and caregivers play in their children's development and this module provides some guidelines for working with parents and caregivers.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- Describe children's developmental needs according to different areas of development and understand how to use the World Health Organisation's Disability Screen to identify potential developmental delays or disabilities.
- Set goals and share ideas to help children at different stages of their development.
- Identify factors that affect children's growth and development.
- Explain the importance of working in partnership with parents and explore ways to build trustful and respectful relationships within their programmes.

## What is Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD)?

According to the Lesotho Ministry of Education and Training, Early Childhood Care and Development (ECCD) is defined as the provision of:

*"...all the supports necessary for every child to realise his/her right to survival, to protection, and to care that will ensure the best development from birth to age 8."*

## Principles of child development

There are some basic principles of child development that will help teachers know what to expect from children. These principles will guide teachers to plan programmes to meet children's developmental needs and interests.

- Children's growth and development takes place across different areas. The Ministry of Education and Training has defined these areas as:
  - physical development
  - social and emotional development
  - cognitive development
  - language development





- approaches to learning
- moral development

The combination of these different areas influences the development of the whole child.



These areas will be explored in greater detail on pages 21 to 44 of this guide.

- One area of development is not more important than another. They fit together closely and influence each other. For example, a child's physical health will affect how she develops cognitively as well as socially and emotionally.
- Child development happens in stages. Children go through the same stages in their development at around the same age. The rate at which this happens may vary. One child may learn to walk slightly earlier than other children of the same age, while another may take a bit longer.
- Every child passes through every stage of development and does not skip a stage. She moves through the stages in the same order with one skill building on another. An example of this is that a child will crawl before she can walk.
- Children grow and develop at their own pace. Each child progresses differently. One child may reach a stage of development earlier or later than other children of the same age.
- Each child is unique and different from all other children. Each child has her own way of learning and doing things.
- Development takes place in all areas from simple to complex. For example, a child will walk before he jumps.
- Children learn by interacting with the people and places in their world. They learn when they are actively involved in what they are doing.
- Children learn by exploring and playing with things.
- Each child comes from a family, a culture and a community that influence his learning and development.
- Children learn best when they feel safe and secure and their needs are met.



## Brain development

New research in brain development shows that although the baby's brain starts to develop soon after conception it is not completely formed at birth. Even though the brain cells are present at birth, most of the connections with other cells are made during the first three years of life. Every sensory experience the baby has during this time helps build these brain connections. The care and experiences a child has within the first three years play a vital role in how the brain develops. ECCD teachers play an important role in helping children form strong brain connections.

## Developmental areas

A holistic approach to child development requires consideration of each area of development and the influence that these areas have upon the development of *the whole child*. To help teachers understand how children develop and learn, child development is divided into different areas. Recognising that in real life child development is not separated neatly into these categories, these areas have been established to make it easier to understand the depth of each area of development.

Each developmental area discussed in this guide includes a broad description of the area as well as a set of educational goals that describe what teachers can expect young children to know and be able to do. These goals will help teachers to plan activities that will support all areas of children's development.

### Physical development

Educational goals for young children in the area of physical development include:

- learning how to move their large muscles and feel confident about what their bodies can do.
- learning how to control the small muscles in their hands and fingers and develop their eye-hand coordination.
- being healthy and physically fit.
- Physical development describes how children's bodies grow and develop and how children learn to control the movements of their bodies.
- **Growth** is the physical change in children's height and weight.





- **Development** refers to how children gain control of their bodies.

During the first two years of life a child's growth in height and weight is very rapid. For example, by the time a child is 2 years old, he should have already reached half of his adult height.

For *healthy physical development* children need nutritious food and clean water, regular exercise, enough rest and health care when they are sick. They need safe, clean and open spaces, as well as time and encouragement to explore these and develop their physical skills. Children also need to complete the immunisation schedule so that they are protected against diseases. As children grow, it is important to check that they are growing and developing as they should, so that if there are any concerns these can be managed as early as possible. This means regularly weighing children to see if they are gaining enough weight for their age.

**Physical development** involves two types of skills:

1. **Large muscle skills.** Children need to move the different large muscles in their bodies so that they can do things like crawling, walking, running, skipping, climbing, hopping and jumping.
2. **Small muscle skills.** Children need to control the small muscles in their hands and fingers to handle things like a spoon or a crayon or to pick up an object. These skills are important for learning to write. They also help children to do things for themselves, like feeding and dressing. These activities involve developing the ability to use their eyes to guide the movements of their hands. This is called **eye-hand coordination**.

Physical development follows a natural progression, for example:

- Control of head movements happen before control of leg movements.
- Muscle development proceeds from the centre of the body outwards. This means that control of the head, upper body and arms happens before control of the hands and fingers.

Children need many opportunities to use the different muscles in their bodies in different ways and to practise their skills.

**Individual differences.**



It is important to remember that each child develops at his own pace and in his own way. One child may take longer to learn some skills than another. There is also a lot of overlap because a child will practise one skill and at the same time move on to learn a new skill. For example, he might practise throwing and catching a ball and, at the same time, want to learn how to skip.

Children need many opportunities to use the different muscles in their bodies in different ways and to practise their skills.

Physical development also includes sensory development. Children receive information through their senses of touch, sight, smell, taste and sound. For example:

- Children notice similarities and differences in the way things look. This is called **visual perception**.
- Children notice similarities and differences in the way things sound. This is called **auditory perception**.
- Children notice similarities and differences in the way things feel. This is called **tactile perception**.
- Children also recognise similarities in the way things taste and smell.

### Supporting children with disabilities

Children who have a physical disability may need additional support to develop and practise their skills.

### Teachers can help children practise their large muscle skills:

- Give them plenty of time and space to exercise and practice their skills outdoors.
- Play lots of movement games.
- Let children play hopscotch, *liketo*, *morabaraba*, racing games like *Toeba le katse* and other games involving use of large muscles.



**Teachers can help children practise their small muscle skills:**

- Let children draw and paint, model with clay, cut with scissors, thread beads and do puzzles.
- Encourage children to do things for themselves—pour water into a cup, dress themselves, wash their hands.

## ***Social and emotional development***

**Educational goals for young children in the area of social and emotional development include:**

- developing basic trust in other people and things.
- learning how to get along with others.
- feeling good about themselves, who they are and what they can do.
- learning to be independent and develop self-control.
- learning to express their feelings.

**Emotional development** relates to children's feelings about themselves and other people in their lives, and the environment in which they live.

**Social development** is about how a child gets along with other people in the family and in society at large.

Social and emotional development are closely tied. How children feel about themselves will affect how they interact with others. A child who feels good about himself will be more likely to feel good about being with other people. As children develop emotionally, they learn to express their feelings in ways that are acceptable.

A child's early relationship with his parents and primary caregivers is very important for healthy social and emotional development. A child who has not formed strong attachments in the early stages of development may be fearful of interacting with other children and adults.

### **A sense of trust**

During the first year of life, learning to trust is the most important need for babies. They are totally dependent on their mothers or caregivers to



meet their needs. If their needs are met over and over again in a loving and consistent way, they will learn to rely on other people and learn to trust them. If the caregiver does not attend to children when they are upset or address their needs, they may become mistrustful of others. If they have developed a sense of trust in the early stages of their lives, they will continue to form trusting relationships with other people as they grow older.

Teachers can help children develop a sense of trust by:

- providing a safe environment and following a regular routine so that children know what to expect every day.
- developing close relationships by getting to know each child better.
- having simple rules and helping children follow them.
- responding to children's needs for attention.

### A sense of self

A child's self-concept is the way he sees himself. A young child's self-concept centres on what she can or cannot do. For example:

- *"I can brush my teeth by myself."*
- *"I can put on my own shoes."*

A child's *self-esteem* is how he feels about himself. If he feels good about himself, he will have a high self-esteem. If he does not feel good about himself or does not feel valued and accepted, he will have a low self-esteem.

The way people respond to children will directly affect how they feel about themselves. When children are praised for their efforts and achievements, they will feel confident in what they can do. However, if they are constantly being put down or scolded, they will start to doubt their abilities.

Parents and teachers play an important role in making children know that they are loved and appreciated. Making children feel loved and appreciated helps them feel secure about themselves and positive about their abilities.

The best way to help to build self-esteem in children is to make them feel loved, challenged and competent. Parents and teachers play an important role in making children know that they are loved and appreciated. This helps them feel secure about themselves and positive about their abilities, which



results in higher self-esteem

Children's self-esteem is hurt when other children insult them or call them names. Children need to be helped to understand that these behaviours are hurtful and teachers need to make it clear that they will not be permitted in the preschool. Children should be helped to learn to care for and appreciate one another.

### **Supporting children with disabilities**

Children with disabilities may also develop low self-esteem if they are made to feel that they are helpless and dependent on others, or if they are left out of children's games and activities.

Children with disabilities will learn and will be a joy to their families as any other child. Children with disabilities have the right to be included in every aspect of family and community life. Parents, teachers and other children play a vital role in supporting and including them.

### **Cultural identity**

An important part of a child's self-concept is her cultural identity. All children develop within families and communities, giving them a sense of belonging. They are able to feel proud about who they are and where they come from. Language is an important part of cultural identity, and families need to be supported in teaching their children their home language.

Teachers need to be sure that children see themselves and their families in the learning environment. This includes play, teaching and learning materials, pictures and books.

Teachers should invite parents, caregivers and other community members to share their cultural heritage through stories and other activities in the preschool.

Minority children have the right to practise their own culture, language and religion, and it is important for teachers to find ways to bring these practices into the classroom. Children and families can be invited to share traditions and festivals with the other children in the preschool.



## Getting along with others

As children relate to different people, they learn important social skills that will help them to get along with others. This includes learning to care for and help others, learning to share and take turns, and learning how to behave in ways that are acceptable to other people. Very young children are more concerned with their own needs and will find it hard to share with others, but from around age 3, they start to practise the social skills they need to get along in the world.

Children go through different stages in developing making friends<sup>3</sup> :

| Age       | Stage of development  |
|-----------|---|
| 0–2 years | Children notice other children, particularly older ones. By the age of 2 years, children are playing side by side.  |
| 3–4 years | By the age of 3 years, children are beginning to play cooperatively and friendship preferences start to emerge. They often play with both genders and friendships are fluid, with the choice of activity being more important to children than who else is involved in the activity.  |
| 5–7 years | The first stable friendships begin to emerge. Children actively start to seek the company of their friends. They share willingly with their friends and having friends starts to become important. Sometimes a child may cry if his friend has not come to school that day. It is also common for children to start to choose same-sex friends. |

### Supporting children with disabilities

Children with disabilities love and need to play. Teachers can help by setting up activities in such a way that all children can play and talk together. Sometimes pairing a child with a disability with a typically developing child can encourage friendships and motivate development, moral values and social skills. This benefits both the child with a disability as well as the child without one.

## Independence and self-control

From a very young age children want to do things for themselves. At about 7 months, a baby starts to realise that he is separate from his mother. He starts to crawl and stand and move around on his own to explore the world around him.

During the toddler years, between about 1 and 2½ years, children want to

<sup>3</sup> Development from conception to age 16 years. CACHE Child Care and Education 2007 series. Heinemann Educational Publishers.



explore things they could not do or reach before. They want to do everything themselves including dressing and feeding themselves. This is also the time when they start learning to control their bladders and bowels. During this period, children are still developing their skills and it is important that they are not made to feel shame or guilt when they do not succeed.

From around 3 years of age, children further develop their ability to do things on their own, and start to make their own decisions, choose their own activities and explore and learn in their own way. They understand that there are things they should not do and are able to follow simple rules. Between 3 and 5 years of age, children are developing more self-control, and they can sit and concentrate for longer periods of time.

### **Supporting children with disabilities**

Children with disabilities need to develop a sense of independence, which is important in building their self-esteem. If they can do things on their own, they will feel good about themselves and learn that they can have control over their lives. A child may find some things difficult to do on his own and may need help. The teacher should check first whether the child needs help, then let him do as much as he can by himself, and help with those parts he cannot do.

### **Expressing feelings**

Children's emotional development involves identifying, understanding and dealing with their own feelings. It is also about learning other people's feelings and caring for them.

Very young children have angry feelings and get frustrated because they have not yet developed the language they need to express these feelings. They may also want to do things that they are not yet able to do. Once children are able to talk about their feelings, they develop better self-control. By the time they start school, children are more aware of their own feelings and the feelings of others.

This is a normal part of children's development and they need help from their parents, teachers and other caregivers to manage their emotions.





**Teachers can help children develop socially and emotionally**

Teachers can help children by learn to trust other people and things by:

- letting them know that they are cared about.
- being dependable.
- being consistent.
- being nearby to help when needed.
- acknowledging each child's unique set of skills and interests.

Teachers can help children feel good about themselves and what they can do by:

- praising what they do and try to do.
- taking an interest in what children do and say.
- teaching children in their home language.
- making sure children can see themselves and their families in pictures, teaching, learning and play materials.
- helping children feel proud of who they are, what they look like and where they come from.
- making sure all children are involved in the learning process.
- using positive discipline strategies.

Teachers can help children learn how to get along with others by:

- arranging activities so that children can sit and work together.
- planning lots of play time.
- playing games with children.
- praising children when they try to share or take turns.
- modelling social skills like being patient, respecting and helping others.
- ensuring that children understand and respect each others' differing cultural traditions, skills and abilities.



Teachers can help children learn to be independent and develop self-control by:

- storing play materials at a height and in areas that they can reach so that they can help themselves.
- encouraging children to do things for themselves.
- supporting children when they want to try something new.
- setting simple rules.
- helping children control their own behaviour.
- helping children resolve issues peacefully.
- modelling good behaviour.
- encouraging children to help with preparing and serving food, sweeping the floors, packing away toys, etc.

Teachers can help children learn to express their feelings by:

- encouraging children to talk about their feelings.
- listening to what children are saying.
- providing activities that help children express their feelings.

## *Cognitive development*

Educational goals for young children in the area of cognitive development include:

- learning about themselves, their families and the people around them.
- learning about the environment in which they live.
- learning to concentrate.
- acquiring thinking and problem-solving skills.

Cognitive development is the way that children learn about their world, learn to think and reason and learn how to solve problems. It is strongly influenced by the child's own experiences.

- **Learning about the world.** Children need to learn about themselves and their families, and the people around them. They also need to learn



about their environment— all the different objects around them, and the animals, insects and plants in nature.

- **Developing thinking skills.** For children to learn about concepts like colour, shape, size, texture and quantity, they need to develop thinking skills that help them recognise, match and classify (group) things that are the same and different. These thinking skills will help them to better understand numbers and other mathematical concepts. Concentration and memory are also important skills for children to develop.
- **Solving problems.** An important part of cognitive development is encouraging children to find out things for themselves and solve their own problems.

## Learning about concepts

Children go through different stages in learning about concepts:

|                          |   |
|--------------------------|---|
| Stage 1:<br>Discriminate | Young babies notice similarities and differences in things: in the way they look, feel, hear sounds, taste and smell.<br><br>Between 1½ and 2, children start to organise the information they receive through their senses. They match things that are the same and begin putting them together. |
| Stage 2:<br>Recognise    | From about 2, children start to recognise words for the different concepts. For example, a child will respond to “Give me the <i>small</i> cup.”  |
| Stage 3:<br>Name         | At about 3, children are able to use words for the concepts (e.g. “I need a long block to build my road.”)  |

Children use all their senses to explore their world and develop their thinking skills. The best way for children to learn is by playing and interacting with objects and people in their environment.

## Intelligence testing

Up until recently, it was believed that children’s intelligence could be measured by testing. They were then considered to be intelligent or not intelligent according to their IQ test score. Today it is believed that people are intelligent in different ways and being intelligent is about more than doing well in a test. It is important for teachers to value each child’s own learning style and strengths, so that they can plan suitable activities to suit the different learning styles.



### Teachers can help children develop cognitively

Teachers can help children learn more about themselves, their families and the people around them by:

- reading and telling stories.
- providing fantasy play and encouraging children to imitate what they see around them in their daily lives.
- building on children's interests.
- talking about how people and things are alike and different.

Teachers can help children learn about the environment in which they live by:

- taking walks around the neighbourhood to help them find out more about nature.
- providing books and pictures about the environment.

Teachers can help children learn to concentrate by:

- keeping noise levels down when children are playing .
- telling stories that encourage children to remember what happened.
- allowing children time to follow through with what they are doing.

Teachers can help children develop their thinking and problem-solving skills by:

- providing lots of things for children to play and experiment with, for example:
  - building with blocks and learning about shape and space.
  - making snakes with clay and learning about shorter and longer.
  - filling containers with sand and learning about more and less and how many.



- playing memory games, for example:
  - looking at a page in a book and then naming everything from memory.
  - putting cards face down and turning them up one at a time to find matching pairs.
  - remembering the events in a story or what happened the day before.
- encouraging children to work in their own ways and try to solve their own problems.

## *Language development and communication skills*

**Educational goals for young children in relation to language development include:**

- using language to communicate their thoughts and feelings with others.
- learning new words.
- enjoying books and showing an awareness of the purpose of print.
- experimenting with drawing and writing.

Language development is about how children learn to communicate. Children learn to speak and listen and later read and write.

Babies and young children need to use language to:

- express themselves and how they are feeling.
- communicate their needs.
- describe, explain and share their ideas and interests.
- listen and respond to others.
- think and solve problems.

Speaking and listening skills lay the foundation for reading and writing. Children need lots of practice in using words to talk to others about things that interest them, the things they know and the things they can do.

Children learn to read by being read to and given the opportunity to explore printed materials. When they look at books and enjoy them, they will want to



read on their own. They also they learn about important print concepts for their own language such as print is read from left to right and from top to bottom.

Research has shown that the way parents speak to their children plays an important role in language development. Teachers should encourage parents to provide a home environment that supports literacy and language. This will be further discussed in Module 6.

Although children are capable of acquiring more than one language at a time, they need to first master their home language before they are ready to learn a second language.

### **Supporting children with disabilities**

There are also children who use sign language to communicate with others. If teachers do not know sign language, they can:

- ask parents to teach them some basic signs and share these basic signs with the other children in the class.
- use their own gestures to make themselves understood.
- use pictures and real objects to help children understand.

### **Teachers can help children develop their language and communication skills by:**

- listening to children.
- talking to them about what they are doing and introducing new words.
- playing rhyming games.
- teaching nursery rhymes and songs.
- telling and reading stories.
- encouraging children to make up their own stories.
- providing a variety of books for children to page through.



## *Approaches towards learning*

Educational goals for young children in relation to approaches towards learning include:

- using their initiative and being creative in what they do.
- learning to persist and complete activities and tasks.
- learning to find different solutions to problems and tasks.
- learning to concentrate despite distractions.
- being able to reflect on an experience and apply what has been learned in new situations.
- learning to set goals, follow through and then reflect on experiences.

There are attitudes and behaviours that help children to become good learners and be successful throughout their lives, such as:

- creativity
- initiative
- curiosity and interest
- motivation
- thinking and problem-solving skills
- persistence
- attentiveness
- reflecting to build new knowledge

All children want to learn, and it is important to remember that each child learns in his or her own unique way. Children need to be supported as they explore and develop their own style of learning.

**Teachers can help children develop positive approaches to learning by:**

- encouraging children to use the play materials in their own way.
- allowing time for children to complete what they are doing.
- praising children's efforts.
- asking questions that will help children think of new ways of doing things.
- following children's natural curiosity and interest.





## *Moral and spiritual development*

**Educational goals for young children in the area of moral and spiritual development include:**

- developing a positive self-identity (feeling good about who they are).
- beginning to enjoy cultural events with their families.
- beginning to understand the difference between right and wrong.

**Moral development** is about knowing what is right and wrong and being able to make the right choices. Children between the ages of 2 and 5 years old believe that something is either right or wrong because they will be punished if they do something wrong. Conversely, if they do something right, they won't be punished. As children get older they develop a greater concern for doing what is right and socially acceptable.

Parents and teachers can support their children's moral development by praising them for good behaviour, being consistent when disciplining them for misbehaviour and helping them to understand the reason why something is wrong. There are also many traditional stories that parents and teachers can tell that involve having to make a choice between "good" and "bad".

**Spiritual development** means different things to different people. Spirituality is about searching for meaning in life and is often found through a belief in a higher power such as God or Allah. Many people also find meaning in life outside of organised religion.

Young children are curious and, by the age of 4 or 5, they start to wonder and ask questions about life and death and God. Children at this age are still concrete thinkers and do not understand abstract concepts of belief. Parents can help their children learn about the family's spiritual practices by including them in cultural and religious celebrations and customs. In this way, they will develop a sense of belonging within their family and community. Children also need to be helped to value cultural and religious differences in other people. Children learn common values such as kindness and compassion when they observe these in people and then imitate them.



## Supporting children with disabilities

Children with disabilities need as many life experiences as typically developing children and should be able to participate in all cultural and religious celebrations. Parents and teachers may need to work together to find ways to adapt the environment, change seating or help a child interact with other people.



## Teachers can support children's moral and spiritual development

Teachers can help children learn about right and wrong by:

- praising good behaviour.
- being consistent with the way they are disciplined.
- talking to children about why something is wrong.

Teachers and parents can support children's spiritual development by:

- including children in cultural and religious festivals.
- modelling behaviours like kindness and sharing.
- answering children's questions about spiritual matters respectfully.



## Developmental milestones

A developmental milestone is a skill or behaviour that most children can do by a certain age or within a certain block of time. Usually, milestones build on one another. Developmental milestones are useful because they help teachers know what is expected of a child at a particular age. It is important to remember that the age given for each developmental stage is just an average. Each child is different from every other child and develops and learns at his own pace. A child may also develop more quickly in one area and take longer to develop in another area. If a child cannot do what is expected for his age group, this does not necessarily mean there is a problem.

For children who develop at slower rates than others, the teacher's role will be the same as for typically developing children: to provide developmentally appropriate experiences to meet that child's needs. Teachers may need to adapt the environment, materials and the programme in some way. Even with these adaptations some children may need additional support.



# Developmental milestones

|            | Physical development  | Social and emotional development   | Cognitive development   | Language development   | Approaches towards learning  |
|------------|---|--|---|--|--|
| 0–6 months | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• lifts head and chest when lying on stomach</li> <li>• moves and kicks with arms and legs</li> <li>• pushes arms and legs when held</li> <li>• rolls over from stomach to back (and back to stomach)</li> <li>• lifts up knees</li> <li>• sits with support</li> <li>• stands up if held under arms</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• opens and closes hands</li> <li>• plays with fingers and toes</li> <li>• takes hand to mouth</li> <li>• grasps and tries to hold objects or a finger</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• cries to tell you she is hungry, tired, wet or needs a cuddle</li> <li>• gets easily excited or upset</li> <li>• loves to be held and cuddled</li> <li>• begins to smile in response to someone else</li> <li>• learns to recognise faces and voices of parents and caregivers</li> <li>• returns a smile</li> <li>• shows excitement through waving arms, kicking, wiggling</li> <li>• scared of loud noises, new situations and people</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• focuses on and follows moving objects with eyes</li> <li>• cries in different ways to say he is hungry, sore or wet</li> <li>• makes sounds—babbles, coos and gurgles</li> <li>• turns towards familiar voices and sounds (e.g., rattle, bell)</li> <li>• turns towards bright lights and colours</li> <li>• plays with fingers, hands and feet</li> <li>• forgets about objects she cannot see</li> <li>• explores things with his mouth</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicates needs by crying</li> <li>• babbles and coos when pleased or to get attention</li> <li>• knows familiar voices</li> <li>• begins to understand some words (tone of voice)</li> <li>• starts to make simple sounds</li> <li>• smiles back at parent</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• communicates needs by crying</li> <li>• babbles and coos when pleased or to get attention</li> <li>• knows familiar voices</li> <li>• begins to understand some words (tone of voice)</li> <li>• starts to make simple sounds</li> <li>• smiles back at parent</li> </ul> |

|             | Physical development   | Social and emotional development   | Cognitive development   | Language development   | Approaches towards learning  |
|-------------|--|--|---|--|--|
| 6–12 months | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• creeps on stomach and crawls</li> <li>• sits alone without support</li> <li>• pulls up to a standing position</li> <li>• stands holding onto furniture with support</li> <li>• stands alone</li> <li>• walks with help or by holding on to furniture</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• grasps objects with thumb and forefinger</li> <li>• lets go with hands</li> <li>• bangs and shakes things</li> <li>• uses finger to point</li> <li>• drinks from a cup</li> <li>• begins to eat finger foods</li> <li>• puts things in boxes and takes them out again</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• responds when called by name</li> <li>• talks to self in front of a mirror</li> <li>• needs to have parent or familiar person in sight</li> <li>• is afraid of strangers and new situations</li> <li>• imitates what other people do</li> <li>• has a favourite toy or blanket</li> <li>• shows frustration when needs are not met</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• repeats actions that cause a response (e.g. shakes a rattle to repeat a sound)</li> <li>• claps hands, waves bye-bye</li> <li>• solves simple problems (e.g. moves one toy to reach another toy)</li> <li>• drops toys over and over again</li> <li>• looks for things not in sight (e.g. a play thing under a blanket)</li> <li>• follows simple instructions</li> <li>• places objects inside one another</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands more words (e.g., body parts)</li> <li>• makes word sounds</li> <li>• begins to say first words (month 10 or 11) e.g., “<i>da-da</i>” or “<i>ma-ma</i>”</li> <li>• vocabulary between 2 and 12 words</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• feels different textures</li> <li>• tries new sensory experiences</li> <li>• interacts with an object in more than one way</li> <li>• experiments with objects for a purpose</li> <li>• uses different senses to explore objects by looking, touching, mouthing and banging</li> <li>• looks for objects that are out of view</li> <li>• shows pleasure when someone reads, talks or sings</li> </ul> |

| 1–2 years | Physical development   | Social and emotional development  | Cognitive development   | Language development   | Approaches towards learning   |
|-----------|--|---|---|--|---|
|           | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>walks alone</li> <li>takes a few steps backwards and sideways</li> <li>pulls or pushes toy when walking</li> <li>crawls up steps and climbs onto low furniture</li> <li>starts to run around</li> <li>dances to music</li> <li>tosses, or rolls a ball</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>begins to use a spoon</li> <li>stacks two to four blocks</li> <li>enjoys taking things apart</li> <li>takes things out of cupboards and boxes</li> <li>takes off pull-on clothing</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wants to do things on own</li> <li>plays alone or beside other children</li> <li>has difficulty sharing</li> <li>upset when separated from parent</li> <li>shy around strangers</li> <li>finds it difficult to remember rules</li> <li>imitates others (e.g., pretends to talk on a telephone)</li> <li>says “me” and “mine” a lot</li> <li>likes the attention of adults</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>looks for objects that are out of sight</li> <li>points to and names objects, body parts and familiar people</li> <li>imitates animal sounds</li> <li>starts to play make-believe and copies actions observed, e.g. feeds a doll</li> <li>begins to sort shapes and colours</li> </ul> | <p><b>12 – 18 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses single words to say the names of things and people</li> <li>points towards things or pictures when named</li> <li>says “hi” and “bye” if asked</li> <li>makes two-word sentences (e.g., “daddy”, “ball”)</li> </ul> <p><b>18 – 24 months</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses two or three words in a sentence</li> <li>vocabulary of a few hundred words</li> <li>says “please” and “thank you” if asked</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>moves towards object or asks to play with something that interests her</li> <li>uses senses to learn more about an object</li> <li>asks “What’s that?” or “Why?”</li> <li>approaches an unfamiliar adult</li> <li>tries new food</li> <li>plays near others</li> <li>watches how another child plays and then imitates them</li> <li>likes to try new skills and do them on own</li> <li>repeats actions to find out more</li> </ul> |

|           | Physical development   | Social and emotional development  | Cognitive development  | Language development   | Approaches towards learning  |
|-----------|--|---|--|--|--|
| 2–3 years | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>walks up and down steps two feet at a time</li> <li>runs easily and stop when needs to</li> <li>walks backwards</li> <li>jumps with both feet together</li> <li>kicks a large ball</li> <li>stands on one foot</li> <li>climbs well</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>holds crayons and scribbles</li> <li>turns pages of a book</li> <li>stacks four to six objects e.g. blocks, plastic containers or cardboard boxes</li> <li>eats easily with a spoon</li> <li>helps to dress self</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wants to do everything for himself: dressing, washing, feeding</li> <li>plays alongside other children</li> <li>plays simple pretend games and copies what she sees adults do</li> <li>enjoys helping with household chores</li> <li>says “no” a lot and has temper tantrums</li> <li>starts to do things with other children</li> <li>can hurt other children when angry</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>matches an object to a picture in a book</li> <li>plays make-believe with dolls, animals and people</li> <li>completes puzzles with three or four pieces</li> <li>understands the concept of “two”</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>recognises and names almost all common objects and pictures</li> <li>understand two-step directions</li> <li>uses pronouns (e.g., “I”, “you”, “we”, “they”)</li> <li>enjoys simple stories, rhymes and songs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>asks other children if he can join in play</li> <li>chooses what to play with</li> <li>asks questions to find out more</li> <li>cooperates with others to complete a task</li> <li>thinks ahead about how she will play with an object</li> <li>completes tasks in a sequence</li> <li>uses knowledge from previous situation to solve problems</li> <li>uses trial and error to complete a task</li> </ul> |



| 3–4 years | Physical development  | Social and emotional development  | Cognitive development  | Language development  | Approaches towards learning   |
|-----------|---|---|--|---|---|
|           | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>rides a tricycle</li> <li>catches a ball with arms straight</li> <li>throws ball to a large target</li> <li>jumps forward with two feet</li> <li>balances to walk across a plank</li> <li>walks on tiptoe</li> <li>stands on one foot</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>builds a bridge of three blocks</li> <li>makes snakes and balls from clay</li> <li>pours from jug into mug</li> <li>begins to put together simple puzzles and construction toys</li> <li>dresses fairly well</li> <li>can feed self (with some spilling)</li> <li>puts shoes on (but cannot tie laces)</li> <li>brushes teeth, washes hands</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>starts taking turns (but still can't share)</li> <li>follows simple directions</li> <li>is eager to please and wants adult approval</li> <li>wants to help with simple chores</li> <li>begins to play with other children</li> <li>likes to do the same things as other children</li> <li>enjoys playing house and copying others' behaviour</li> <li>is interested in similarities and differences between self and others (e.g., gender, hair, skin tone)</li> <li>has fears (e.g., the dark, strangers)</li> <li>may hit out at others when frustrated</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>asks lots of questions – “who”, “what”, “where”, and “why”</li> <li>stacks five to seven blocks, boxes or small containers</li> <li>draws a circle and a square</li> <li>puts together a six-piece puzzle</li> <li>matches objects to pictures</li> <li>names and matches common colours</li> <li>counts two or three objects</li> <li>solves simple problems</li> <li>can say own age</li> <li>enjoys make-believe play</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>uses three to five words in a sentence</li> <li>uses lots of verbs</li> <li>uses some prepositions (e.g., <i>in</i>, <i>on</i>, <i>under</i>)</li> <li>most of what is said is understandable</li> <li>likes to repeat words and sounds</li> <li>asks lots of questions: “who”, “what”, “where” and “why”</li> <li>enjoys singing, stories and rhymes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>wants to know how a story ends as well as guess what may happen next</li> <li>interested in new materials</li> <li>asks questions to understand better</li> <li>wants to try new things without asking for help</li> <li>follows one or two step directions</li> <li>completes activities from beginning to end</li> <li>uses trial and error to learn</li> <li>breaks tasks down into steps</li> <li>enjoys music, art and stories to express feelings</li> </ul> |

|           | Physical development  | Social and emotional development  | Cognitive development   | Language development  | Approaches towards learning   |
|-----------|---|---|---|---|---|
| 4–5 years | <p><b>Large muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• runs fast</li> <li>• climbs with ease</li> <li>• walks up and down</li> <li>• steps one at a time</li> <li>• stands on tip toes</li> <li>• throws, catches and bounces a ball</li> <li>• tosses beanbags into a container</li> <li>• runs slightly on tiptoe</li> <li>• hops on one foot</li> <li>• jumps with two feet over objects</li> <li>• gallops</li> <li>• skips with rope</li> <li>• runs and kicks a ball</li> </ul> <p><b>Small muscle development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• stacks 10 or more blocks; builds a complex structure</li> <li>• threads beads</li> <li>• makes shapes out of clay</li> <li>• uses eating utensils</li> <li>• cuts out simple shapes</li> <li>• draws a detailed picture</li> </ul> | <p><b>Social and emotional development</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• plays with other children and chooses whom to play with</li> <li>• begins to share</li> <li>• understands and obeys simple rules</li> <li>• enjoys involved make-believe play</li> <li>• has trouble understanding what is real and what is pretend</li> <li>• can be jealous</li> <li>• enjoys showing off</li> <li>• tells tales on other children</li> <li>• uses words to express emotions</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• work on one activity for 10–15 minutes</li> <li>• is curious about everything and asks lots of questions</li> <li>• places objects in line from largest to smallest</li> <li>• understands big, bigger, biggest; more, on, over, under</li> <li>• sorts by shape and colour</li> <li>• can count seven object</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• understands most of what is said</li> <li>• communicates clearly</li> <li>• talks in longer, more detailed sentences</li> <li>• asks lots of questions</li> <li>• follows simple commands</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• asks questions to find out more</li> <li>• predicts story endings</li> <li>• shares ideas and interests with others</li> <li>• follows two- or three-step directions</li> <li>• concentrates on one activity and completes it</li> <li>• completes activities from beginning to end on own</li> <li>• explores and tries out new ways of doing things to succeed with a task</li> <li>• combines different materials to create a piece of work</li> <li>• tries new roles in make-believe play</li> <li>• asks for help from a friend or an adult</li> </ul> |

## Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS)

The Early Learning Development Standards (ELDS) is a policy document produced by the Ministry of Education and Training and supported by UNICEF that provides statements of expectations of what young children in Lesotho should know and be able to do within a particular age range. It also suggests age-appropriate activities that parents and teachers can provide to stimulate children's development. It is important because it provides the standards that are necessary for a quality ECCD programme.

The areas of development and milestones described in this guide are consistent with ELDS, and trainers can reference this document for further ideas to share with teachers on how to enhance development.

### *Developmental delays*

If a child is far behind in meeting the milestones listed for her age group, there could be a developmental delay, and the child may need special help.

### 10-point disability screen

The World Health Organisation (WHO) has developed questions that can be used to identify potential disabilities in children over 2 years of age. If the parent or caregiver answers “yes” to any of these questions, they should be advised to take their child to the clinic for an assessment:

1. Does the child appear to have difficulty with hearing?
2. Compared with other children, does the child have difficulty seeing, either in the day or at night?
3. Does the child sometimes have fits, become rigid or lose consciousness?
4. Is the child struggling to do things like other children his/her age?
5. Compared with other children, did the child have any serious delay in sitting, standing or walking?
6. Does the child have difficulty in walking or moving his/her arms, or does he/she have weakness and/or stiffness in the arms or legs?
7. When you tell the child to do something, does he/she seem to understand what you are saying?



8. Is the child struggling to speak? (Can he/she make him/herself understood in words? Can he/she say any recognisable words?)
9. For children between the ages of 3 and 9, ask: Is the child's speech in any way different from normal (not clear enough to be understood by people other than his/her immediate family)?

If the teacher has a concern about a child's development, she should observe the child over several weeks and take notes about what they child is doing and saying. The teacher then cross-references her notes to the above questions and if she answers "yes" to any of them, she should discuss her concerns with the parents or caregivers and support them in referring the child to a health worker who will screen and have the child assessed.

## Individual differences

Teachers need to understand that each child is unique, has different needs and his own way of learning. This will help teachers to plan a programme of activities that will be appropriate for each child's learning and development needs.

- Children inherit physical characteristics from their parents through their genes (e.g., skin, hair and eye colour, height, gender).
- Children develop and grow at different rates. Some children grow more rapidly than others.
- Children belong to families with their own culture, language and traditions.
- Children are born with different temperaments, or ways of reacting to people and to situations. For example, some children might be easy-going while others may cry a lot.
- Children explore roles related to their gender.
- Children have different interests and often follow them over a length of time.
- Children have preferred ways of learning called **learning styles**:
  - **Auditory** learners learn best by listening and being told about things.
  - **Visual** learners learn best when they are shown how to do things.
  - **Kinaesthetic** learners learn best by moving and doing practical



things.

- Children have different life experiences. Some children may have ill health or a disability, or a member of their family may be chronically ill. Some children who live in dire poverty may experience neglect.

Teachers need to take individual differences into account when planning an appropriate programme for young children. This will be further explored in Module 5.

## Factors that affect development

Children begin to grow and develop from the moment they are conceived. Their growth and development is based on a number of factors:

- Children inherit characteristics from their parents (e.g., height, skin and eye colour, gender, blood type and temperament). Sometimes, medical conditions and disabilities are also inherited.
- Genetic differences from other children may cause a child to look different.
- A child can be affected by what happens before birth. If the mother is infected with HIV, she can pass this on to her unborn baby. The effects of alcohol, nicotine and drugs can delay development.
- The family is the most important factor in a child's development. All children need the attention of a warm and loving family, to feel safe and to have their basic needs met. A child who is neglected, abused or separated from his loved ones may fail to grow and develop. Some children may live in several different family structures during childhood and find it difficult to form close and trusting relationships with their families or caregivers.
- The environment in which children grow up plays a huge part in their development. An important way to support children's healthy brain development is to provide a safe and happy environment for them to grow up in, yet many young children live in unsafe communities. Some children are exposed to abuse or neglect, which has profound and long-term effects on their development.
- Poverty can negatively affect children in many ways. Families often have to live on very little money due to, for example, unemployment, sickness or disability. They may not have enough money for food, clothing or



- proper housing and sanitation. These problems often create stress amongst family members, which children can sense and be affected by.
- Children need nutritious food to grow and stay healthy. A child living in poverty may also suffer from poor nutrition, which in turn affects his ability to concentrate and learn.
  - Children need enough sleep for their growth and development. They need sleep to rest from the day's activities and to wake up full of energy for the next day's activities.
  - Cultural background influences development. There are different values and practices about the way things are done and how children should behave. For example, in some cultures boys and men are not supposed to cry and children are not allowed to express their anger.
  - Some disabilities (but not all) will pose obstacles for children to learn. For example, a child who was born without an arm and is considered to be capable will find other ways of doing things independently, playing and learning. Activities can often be adapted to suit a child's special needs. For example, a toy can be adapted to make it easier to grip, or a table can be lowered to make it possible for a child to participate in an activity.
  - Some children have health conditions that may affect their development. A sick child may miss out on opportunities to play and learn.
  - Sometimes, parents may have chronic health conditions that will prevent them from engaging in some types of play, and it may reduce interaction between child and parents. Examples of chronic health conditions include: diabetes, cancer, asthma, allergies, HIV, etc.
  - Children who are infected with or affected by HIV are exposed to a number of factors that can affect their growth and development:
    - HIV is a virus that can negatively affect the development of the child's central nervous system. A child with HIV may not grow normally, be slow to reach developmental milestones, or experience learning or language problems. He may also lose previously gained milestones.
    - Children with HIV and AIDS may get sick more often or have less energy to learn. They will also miss out on opportunities to play with other children and make friends.
    - In many cases, at least one of the child's parents will be infected with HIV as well. One or both parents may fall ill or die, which adds





to their emotional distress.

- Children who are not HIV-infected themselves are also affected. They may have to deal with the loss of their parents or have to care for sick family members. Many children are separated from their families and have to live with other relatives, foster parents or in a children's home.
- Children and their families may be stigmatised and discriminated against because of their or a family member's HIV status.

## Children with special needs

There are many kinds of disabilities that affect children in different ways:

- physical disabilities: motor and mobility difficulties
- visual impairments
- hearing impairments
- intellectual disabilities
- communication difficulties
- learning difficulties (e.g., attention problems, hyperactivity)

Some conditions, such as cerebral palsy<sup>4</sup>, may cause one or multiple disabilities (e.g., motor, intellectual and communication). The degree of the disability may vary from light to severe. In these cases the child will need additional support and longer periods to reach some milestones. However, with proper care and support, children with cerebral palsy may play sports and even excel on them.

Some children with disabilities or chronic illnesses such as HIV and AIDS may have special learning needs.

All children, including children with disabilities and those with other special learning needs, have the right to the same opportunities to grow and develop.

The Government has a policy that says that schools must admit and provide the support needed for children with disabilities. The Draft National Policy for Integrated ECCD stipulates the legal protection of children with disabilities:

*“The National Disability and Rehabilitation Policy of 2009 focusing on*

<sup>4</sup> Cerebral palsy is a condition caused by injury to parts of the brain that control the ability to use the muscles and body.



*children 0– 6 years should be fully implemented for children. The policy should be reviewed in the light of provisions and services for young children with developmental delays and disabilities.”<sup>5</sup>*

This means that a child may not be excluded from school or an ECCD programme because of a disability.

The programme needs to ensure that all children can play and learn together and participate fully in the planned activities. For example:

- planned activities need to be developmentally appropriate to meet the individual needs of all children.
- the environment, daily routines and activities may need to be adapted.
- each child is valued and respected for who she or he is.

## Working together with parents

Parents are the first and most important teachers of their children. They care deeply for their children and have the right to decide what is best for them. Parents need to be involved from the start in everything that concerns their children at the Centre or Home-Base preschools.

- Parents need to be helped to understand how their children develop and learn and how they can support this learning at home.
- Parents have important information to share about their children. They have definite beliefs about how their children should be raised; they can tell teachers more about the family's culture, their health and nutrition practices; they know what activities their children enjoy and they notice progress their children are making.
- Parents have much that they can contribute and should be encouraged to take an active part in the programme.
  - They can make equipment and toys during planned workshops.
  - They can collect materials for children's activities (e.g., egg boxes, plastic containers, bottles, tins, clothes for fantasy play).
  - They can share traditional songs, stories and village histories as well as information on special skills such as basket-making, farming, selling in the market.

<sup>5</sup> Kingdom of Lesotho. May 2012. Fourth Draft of National Policy for IECCD. Maseru, Lesotho.



- They can help with the programme (e.g., as management committee members, as volunteers for children's activities).

Teachers need to work together with parents and other family members to provide for their children's care and education. Many families believe that "teacher knows best" and that they have little of value to contribute towards their children's education. Teachers need to take time to build trustful and respectful relationships. They should take the time to get to know each family, listen to what they have to say and let them know that they are interested in them as people.

Parents are more likely to become involved when they know that their thoughts, ideas and feelings are valued. Teachers can help parents and caregivers feel valued by:

- greeting them by name and with a smile when they bring and fetch their children.
- inviting parents and caregivers to share their own knowledge and experiences.
- involving them in all decisions regarding their child.
- showing respect for the ways that they choose to raise their children and discussing how these will be accommodated in the preschool.
- being careful not to impose own beliefs and values.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Child Development*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- get to know one another, share their expectations and understand how the training programme will meet their expectations.
- describe children's developmental needs according to different areas of development and understand how to use the World Health Organisation's Disability Screen to identify potential developmental delays or disabilities.
- set goals and share ideas to help children at different stages of their development.
- identify factors that affect children's growth and development.
- explain the importance of working in partnership with parents and explore ways to build trustful and respectful relationships within their programmes.

## Session outline

| Activity                        | Suggested time |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Welcome and introduction        | 8. 30–9.30     |
| Principles of child development | 9.30–10.00     |
| Developmental areas             | 10.00–11.00    |
| TEA                             | 11.00–11.30    |
| Brain development               | 11.30–11.45    |
| Developmental milestones        | 11.45–12.45    |
| LUNCH                           | 12.45–1.45     |
| Individual differences          | 1.45–2.30      |
| Factors that affect development | 2.30–3.00      |
| Working together with parents   | 3.00–4.00      |



# Suggested training activities

## Welcome and introduction – 1 hour

### Preparation:

1. Write a brief overview of the course on flipchart paper – the topic of each module.
  2. Write up the day's agenda on flipchart paper.
- Greet participants warmly as they arrive and have them write their details on a registration form. Once everyone has arrived, welcome the group and introduce yourself. Invite the participants to present an opening prayer and song.
  - Use one of the “getting to know you” activities in **Appendix 2: Getting To Know You Activities** on page 311 to help participants find out a bit more about each other.
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off (1, 2, 3, 4, repeat and group by number) and tell each group where they should meet. Ask groups to discuss what they hope to learn from the training course and to write down their main points. Each group shares what they have discussed with the class. Write down each new point on flipchart paper.
  - Give a flipchart presentation on the course content so that participants know what to expect from the training and explain how it will meet the participants' expectations. Hand out the Teacher Resource Guides to each participant and briefly go through the different parts of it. Discuss the schedule for each module.
  - Ground rules help participants find appropriate ways of working together. Brainstorm a list of ground rules that everyone commits to keeping during the course. For example:
    - be punctual.
    - turn off cell phones.
    - everyone is to participate.
    - respect people's feelings and opinions.
    - ask questions if you don't understand.
    - one person talking at a time.



- Read through the agenda for the day.

## *Principles of child development – 1½ hour*

### **Preparation:**

1. Make a collage of pictures of babies and children of different ages doing different things (e.g., babies sleeping, eating, crawling and walking, young children talking, playing, running). Display the collage on a wall in the training room.
  2. Use the information on pages 19 to 20 to prepare a presentation on the principles of child development. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Invite participants to view the collage. Use the following questions to facilitate a discussion with the large group about how children in the pictures are developing and learning:
    1. What is the child doing? What are the children doing?
    2. How do you think the child is developing?
    3. What age do you think the child is? Why?
  - Give a presentation on the principles of child development using the prepared points on the flipchart and showing examples from the displayed pictures.

## *Developmental areas – 1 hour*

### **Preparation:**

Write the educational goals for each developmental area on a separate piece of flipchart paper. (These are provided at the end of each developmental area in this manual on pages 21 to 37.)

- Advise participants that they will now be looking at how children grow and develop and invite them to draw on their own experiences as parents. Explain that during this course we will be looking at the different areas of development that make up the whole child. Write each of the developmental areas down on flipchart paper:
  - a. Physical development





- b. Social and emotional development
- c. Cognitive development
- d. Language development
- e. Approaches to learning
- f. Moral development

Remind participants that in real life development is not divided but doing so makes it easier to study the different areas.

Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group one area of development to focus on for this activity.

*(If teachers are new to the field of ECCD, trainers may want to leave out the last two developmental areas for purposes of this exercise. If they do decide on this option, trainers should summarise the main points about each area after the activity.)*

The last two developmental areas are part of the Lesotho national curriculum and should not be overlooked.

- Refer groups to pages 14 to 23 in the *Teacher Resource Guide* on developmental areas. Each group reads the information together and then discusses:
  - From what you have read, what does a child need in order to develop and learn?
  - How can you use what you know about this area to help children develop and learn in an ECCD programme?
- Ask groups to share their points. Emphasise that all areas develop at the same time and that no one area is more important than the other. Give an example of how one developmental area can affect another (e.g., if a child does not get enough to eat [physical development], he may be too tired to play with other children [social] and learn more about the world [cognitive]).
- Display the flipchart posters with the educational goals for each developmental area and talk about how the goals meet the needs that were identified in the previous activity. Explain that *the ECCD programme is the way we reach our educational goals for children*. The activities we



plan should help children develop and learn across all developmental areas.



Keep the educational goals posters for the sessions that follow. You can reflect after each session on how the goals are being met.

## Brain development – 1/4 hour

### Materials:

- A ball of string.

### Preparation:

Use the educational goals that were written for the activity on developmental areas on a separate piece of flipchart paper. (These are provided at the end of each developmental area in this guide on pages 21 to 36.)

- Tell participants that there has been a lot of new and exciting research to understand how a person's brain works. Say that you would like to demonstrate this with the group. Find a space outdoors or in the training room and stand in a circle. Hold one end of the ball of string and throw the ball to a participant across from you. Ask her to hold onto the loose string and throw the ball to someone else. Continue in this way until everyone has had a turn and is connected to one another by the string. Explain that our brain cells are also connected to each other, and that what we now know is that a lot of the connections are made after birth and during the first three years of a child's life.
- Before completing the activity, give some examples of the way parents and teachers can help children's brains make connections, for example:
  - create safe places for them to play.
  - talk to children.
  - read to children.
  - sing songs with children.
  - dance with children.
  - provide opportunities for children to play outside.



- encourage children to explore through their senses.
- comfort children when they are upset.
- plan activities around themes.

## Developmental milestones – 1 hour

### Preparation:

Write headings for each of the developmental areas on separate sheets of flipchart paper.

- Start off with a general discussion with participants about the ages their children first learned to sit, crawl, stand up, walk and say their first words. Discuss whether they learned each skill at exactly the same time or not. Use the section from this guide on individual differences (pages 46 to 47) to explain that there are some things that most children can do by a certain age or within a certain block of time and that we call them developmental milestones. Emphasise that each child is different from every other child and develops at his own pace.
- Divide participants into five small groups and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group a different age group:
  - 0–1 year
  - 1–2 years
  - 2–3 years
  - 3–4 years
  - 4–5 years
- Ask the groups to think about what they would expect children of this age group to be able to do. Groups discuss and write down *each new idea* on a separate piece of paper. Display the headings of the different developmental areas. Ask each group to share their ideas and then tape each piece of paper onto the flipchart paper having a heading with the right developmental area.
- Refer participants to the developmental milestones chart on page 24 to 25 in the *Teacher Resource Guide* and explain that these milestones are important because they help teachers to know what children should be doing in each of the developmental areas at a certain age. They should refer to them when planning their activities to help children develop and learn.
- Explain that some children may be slower to reach the milestones than



others, and those teachers and parents need to know the signs that indicate a child may have a delay in one or more developmental area. Read through the World Health Organisation's 10-point disability screen to identify signs of possible developmental delays or disabilities on page 26 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*. Explain how the teacher can use the screen, using the information on page 46 of this guide.

- Introduce the Lesotho Early Learning and Development Standards (ELDS). Explain that these should be used alongside the developmental milestones as discussed in the previous activity. Show examples of the different “domains”.

If trainers do not have individual copies of the ELDS, these can be obtained from the Ministry of Education and Training.

### **Individual differences – 🌐 $\frac{3}{4}$ hour**

- Divide participants into small groups and give each group a scenario such as:
  - a child who is not able to walk.
  - a child who is not able to use his arms.
  - a child who is not able to see.
  - a child who is not able to hear.
  - a child with HIV who gets sick often.

Have groups discuss the activities that a child with such a disability would be able to do in an ECCD programme. Ask each group to present their ideas to the whole class. Explain that all children, including children with disabilities and other special learning needs, should have the same opportunities to play and learn. Sometimes this might mean making some small changes to the activities. Give a few examples like:

- simplifying a toy (e.g., removing some parts).
  - breaking a task into smaller parts.
  - taping paper for painting to the floor or table.
  - putting a cushion on a chair so that a child can more easily reach and use an activity.
- Remind participants that each child is unique and different from every other child. Brainstorm some of the ways children differ, for example:



- physical appearance
  - gender
  - cultural and family background
  - home language
  - life circumstances
  - interests
  - abilities
- Explain that children also learn in different ways:
    - Some children learn by listening and being told about things.
    - Some children learn best when they are shown how to do things.
    - Some children learn best by doing practical things.
  - Discuss how important it is for teachers to get to know each child in her group. This will help them plan programmes that will meet their individual needs.

### ***Factors that affect development – 🌐 1/2 hour***

Have the large group brainstorm different types of difficult situations that families and their children face in the community. The following are examples that may emerge. If the following themes are not mentioned in the brainstorm, be sure to highlight the missing topics:

- unemployment
- migrant fathers
- sanitation and water
- poverty
- HIV and AIDS
- drought

In the large group, discuss how each of the situations listed can affect a child's growth and development and re-emphasise that each child is an individual and teachers need to be sensitive to each child's unique set of needs. Teachers can also find out what support services are available locally and help families connect to these.



## Working together with parents – 1 hour

### Materials:

- Balls, enough for participants to work in pairs

### Preparation:

Draw smiley faces on each of the balls.

- **The role of parents and caregivers<sup>6</sup>**

Divide participants into two groups: one will play the mothers and the other will play the fathers. Ask them to line up in two lines. Make sure that there are at least 3 meters between the two lines. Pair one mother and one father (one in front of the other) and give each pair a ball. Ask fathers to turn so that mothers face their back.

Explain the exercise: When you say go, each mother should throw the ball to the father and turn around in a circle, while at the same time, the father has to turn the other way around and catch the ball. Let the group play for a few minutes. On the first try, the balls will fall to the floor many times.

Stop the game and explain that they will have another round and that they should try to stop the ball from falling to the ground. Let the group play for another few minutes.

After the exercise, explain that the ball is the child. At the first try the parents played for themselves and the ball fell to the ground many times. But when the two parents had the wellbeing of the “child” as a common goal, they worked together to protect the child.

Discuss the role of mothers and fathers in taking care of the children. Explain that children learn through imitating both their parents. Make the point that fathers also have parental responsibilities and discuss ways that fathers can become involved in their children’s lives.

- **Parent involvement**

Talk about how parents care deeply for their children and should be involved in the ECCD programme as much as they can.

<sup>6</sup> Adapted from: *Working with Preschool Children. E-toolkit on early childhood.* Terre des hommes Italia Foundation.





Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Have them discuss the following in their groups:

- What information do you have currently from parents about their child?
- How do you tell parents about what their child does every day?
- How do you find out what the child does at home?
- How are parents involved in the programme?

Each group reports back on the discussion. Discuss some of the reasons parents (and other main caregivers) do not get involved in the ECCD programme. Have the large group brainstorm suggestions for improving parental and caregiver involvement.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Have participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



# Module 2:

## Creating a Learning Environment

The purpose of this module is to help teachers create a safe and clean learning environment that supports children's learning in all developmental areas. The module introduces teachers to the different kinds of activities that help children develop and learn as they play, and focuses on the ways of organising these activities in the spaces that teachers have available to them both indoors and outdoors. Guidelines are given to help teachers create an environment that reflects all children and families in a positive way and includes ideas for adapting materials and activities for children with disabilities.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- understand the importance of play in young children's learning.
- identify activities to help children develop and learn.
- know how to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for young children.
- organise activities in their play spaces.

## How children learn

- Children are active and learn by exploring objects around them in their environment to find out what happens when they interact with them.
- Children learn by using all their senses and they need real things that they can see, touch and manipulate, smell, taste and listen to.
- Children learn best when they are interested in what they are learning.
- Children learn by watching and copying the behaviours of other children and adults around them.
- Children learn by talking about what they are doing as well as by listening to others.
- Children learn by repeating the same activities over and over again.
- Children learn by trying something and trying again until they get it right.
- Children learn by trying different ways of doing things.
- Children learn when they are successful and can feel pride in what they have achieved.
- Children learn when they are having fun.
- Children learn through play.



## The value of play

“Children need the freedom and time to play. Play is not a luxury. Play is a necessity.”<sup>7</sup>

The importance of play in young children’s development has been researched extensively for many years. This is what we now know:

### Play is children’s way of learning and finding out about the world.

When children play, they progress in all developmental areas. For example:

#### Physical development

- Children develop their large muscles and learn how to use their bodies when they run, skip and play outside.
- Children develop their small muscles and their eye-hand coordination when they draw a picture, string beads or button dress-up clothes.

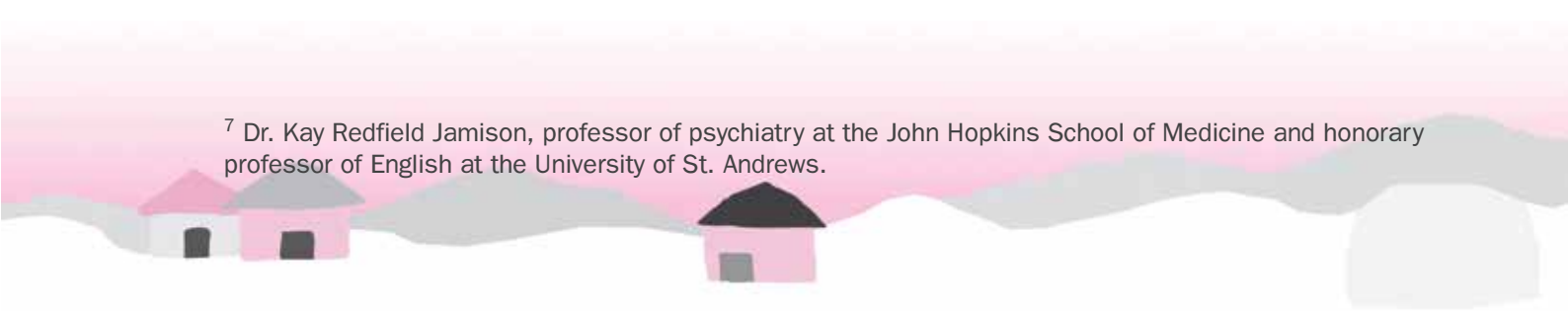
#### Social and emotional development

- Children learn how to share and take turns when they work together to build a tower from blocks or wait to use a skipping rope.
- Children try to understand their own feelings when they act out different experiences, both good and bad, during fantasy play.
- Children feel good about what they can do when they complete a painting and show it to their teacher.
- Children learn to become independent when they can start playing with something on their own without being told what to do or how to do it.

#### Cognitive development

- Children learn about the world around them when they look at books, sing songs or pretend to be mother or father, the shopkeeper, a nurse or a teacher.
- Children develop their thinking skills and learn about concepts when they match and sort different objects or pictures.
- Children learn to solve problems when they play with blocks and build things (e.g., make a round roof to cover their house).

<sup>7</sup> Dr. Kay Redfield Jamison, professor of psychiatry at the John Hopkins School of Medicine and honorary professor of English at the University of St. Andrews.



## Language development

- Children communicate their thoughts and feelings when they talk about what they are doing and why.
- Children learn new words when they sing songs and rhymes or listen to stories.
- Children show an awareness of print when they sit and look at books.

## Approaches to learning

- Children develop their initiative and creativity when they try out new things and use their own ideas.

## Moral and spiritual development

- Children learn about cultural and spiritual values during activities that celebrate traditional and religious practices. For example, songs and dances, special art activities, fantasy play with traditional dress-up clothes.

## Stages of play

Children go through four different stages of play as they grow and develop:

|                     |  |
|---------------------|--|
| 1. Solitary play    | This is the earliest stage of play when a baby plays alone, exploring objects around her. She does not pay attention to the other children around her.   |
| 2. Parallel play    | At about 2 years of age, as toddlers become more aware of others, they start to play alongside one another. They may watch one another and use the same play things but they typically do not play together.     |
| 3. Associative play | At about 3 years of age, young children start to become interested in one another. They may play together and talk about what they are doing, but they do not work together to complete a game or piece of work. |
| 4. Cooperative play | Between 3 and 4 years of age, children start to make friends and do things together. They will share ideas and materials and work together on a project sometimes for long periods of time.                      |



Not all children follow these stages. A shy child may take longer to make friends with others and want to play by himself or alongside other children until he develops his social skills and feels more confident to join others in their play.

## Activities to support development

Now that we know that children learn through play, they need to be given lots of opportunities to be *active*. They do not learn much from sitting for long periods of time and listening to their teacher. It is important when planning a programme for young children to make sure that most of their time is spent playing—doing, exploring and finding out things for themselves. They are concrete learners and need real things to play with and to explore with their five senses.

Teachers need to provide a variety of activities to help children learn. One way to do this is to divide their classrooms or other spaces into learning corners. A learning corner is a space that is set aside and that contains all the materials children will use for that activity. Learning corners are appropriate for children of different ages because they will use the materials in different ways. If the activities in the learning corners are well-planned, children can learn and progress across all developmental areas. Using the same areas of the room for the same learning corner activities at the same time of the day each time will help children to know that specific activities should be done in that part of the room. Scheduling activities for the same time of the day will also help children to begin to understand the concept of time.

The following *six learning corners* are recommended. (*We will go into more detail about each learning corner in Module 3.*)



The Ministry of Education and Training identifies 10 learning corners. These are 1) Science Corner, 2) Home Corner, Water Play Corner 3) Sand Play Corner, 4) Modelling Corner, 5) Painting Corner, 6) Book Corner, 7) Drawing, 8) Colouring and Writing Corners, 9) Puzzles and Threading Corner, 10) Construction Corner. This manual incorporates all of these corners, but they have been re-organised into the six corners as set out below.





## Fantasy play corner

In the fantasy play corner, children might play pretend games in the house, shop or clinic. This helps them learn about themselves and the world around them and thus contributes to their cognitive development. The fantasy play corner might include the following materials:

| Living area:   | Sleeping area:   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● child-sized furniture (e.g., tables and chairs, can be made out of cardboard boxes )</li> <li>● cooking and eating equipment (e.g., empty tins, bottles, empty boxes such as tea or milk containers, plastic containers, empty food packets and household product containers)</li> <li>● broom, mop dustpan</li> <li>● pictures on the wall</li> <li>● mats</li> <li>● play food</li> <li>● cell phone</li> <li>● radio/television</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● bed and blankets</li> <li>● dolls, doll clothes, doll bed, baby bottle</li> <li>● cupboard for clothes</li> <li>● clothes hangers</li> <li>● dress-up clothes for boys and girls (e.g., skirts, dresses, blouses, jerseys, trousers, shirts, jackets, ties, shoes, boots, headscarf or tuku hats, wigs, handbags, shopping bags, purses, keys)</li> </ul> |

## Building corner

Building activities help children develop their thinking and problem-solving skills and learn concepts like size, shape and balance. When children build things in their own way, they are developing their creativity; when they work together to do so, children develop their social skills. Materials in a building corner might include:



| Building blocks and equipment:  | Other materials to stimulate play:  |
|---|---|
| <p>Commercially available building blocks tend to be very expensive. Teachers can make or collect their own things that children can use for building:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● various cardboard boxes of different sizes and shapes (e.g., cereal boxes, shoe boxes, washing powder toothpaste boxes, round cheese boxes)</li> <li>● tins (remove sharp edges), cardboard tubes, margarine containers</li> <li>● low shelves</li> <li>● storage containers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● stones, sticks, leaves, strips of cardboard, pieces of fabric, string, plastic lids</li> <li>● pictures on the wall of different kinds of buildings</li> <li>● small plastic animals, people and vehicles</li> </ul> |

## Art corner

Basic art activities like painting, drawing, cutting and pasting (collage) and modelling encourage children to make things in their own way. This develops their creativity as well as their fine motor skills and eye-hand coordination. Materials for the art corner might include:

| Painting:   | Drawing:  |
|---|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● different colours of paint: powder or homemade paint (e.g., vegetable juices)</li> <li>● things to paint with (e.g., paintbrushes, feathers, grass stalks, fingers, sponges)</li> <li>● paper (e.g., newspaper, computer paper, newsprint, brown paper)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● thick crayons (e.g., wax, coloured chalk for younger children)</li> <li>● thin crayons, pencils and markers for older children</li> <li>● charcoal or burnt sticks</li> <li>● paper (e.g., newspaper, computer paper, newsprint, brown paper)</li> </ul> |



| Painting:  | Drawing:  |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● paint containers (e.g., margarine containers, tins, plastic cups)</li> <li>● basin of water for cleaning up spills</li> <li>● aprons</li> <li>● plastic floor covering or easel</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● children can draw in the sand using sticks</li> <li>● children can paint with water on rocks</li> <li>● containers for drawing tools and for paper (e.g., tins, margarine containers)</li> <li>● mat or table and chairs)</li> </ul>   |
| Cutting and pasting:   | Dough or clay modelling:  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● things to paste (e.g., magazine pictures, shopping fliers, leaves, feathers, string, wool, pieces of fabric)</li> <li>● glue or flour and water</li> <li>● children's scissors with rounded blunt ends</li> <li>● containers for scissors (e.g., an egg box)</li> <li>● containers for materials</li> <li>● low shelf</li> <li>● mat or table and chairs</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● clay dug out of the ground or playdough</li> <li>● flat surface for rolling (e.g., mat, board)</li> <li>● bottles for rolling the clay or dough</li> <li>● things to make patterns or prints (e.g., leaves, sticks, stones, bark from a tree, seed pods)</li> <li>● container with a lid for the clay or dough</li> <li>● mat or table and chairs</li> </ul> |

## Science and discovery corner

Children need to know and understand their world. The corner provides many hands-on experiences for children to explore and find out things for themselves, promoting their cognitive development. If teachers are new to these kinds of activities, we suggest starting with sand or water play. Later, other activities can be added to help children find out more about nature as well as man-made objects.



**Containers and equipment for sand and water play:**

- large plastic baths or containers
- half a drum on a stand (remove sharp edges)
- large tyres (for sand)
- for measuring: cups, jugs, plastic containers and bottles, tins, scoops
- sieves, funnels, bottles and tins with holes

**Sand play:**

- for making patterns: sticks, combs, rakes, forks, spoons
- digging tools: spades, scoops and own fingers

**Water play:**

- plastic hose or tubing
- sponges
- for floating and sinking: paper, stones, wood, leaves, bottle tops, corks, feathers, boats, polystyrene, safe metal objects

**Book corner**

Children enjoy looking at books and finding out more about their world. When children develop a love for books they will want to learn to read. Listening to stories, making up stories to go with pictures, and reading help children to expand their language development and creativity. Materials for the book corner might include:

**Books:**

- children's books suitable for the ages of the children including homemade books
- suitable magazines
- picture cards (cut out from magazines or drawn)

**Equipment:**

- cushions
- mat or blanket
- table and chairs
- low shelves



## Educational toy corner

Children develop problem-solving and thinking skills by playing with toys that help them learn concepts like colour shape, size and number. Toys are also important for helping children develop their eye-hand coordination. Materials for the educational toy corner might include the following:

| Examples of toys to develop concepts:  | Toys to develop small muscles and eye-hand coordination:   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● sorting boxes and activities</li> <li>● matching cards</li> <li>● feely box with texture cards</li> <li>● pattern cards and games</li> <li>● counting games</li> <li>● board games</li> <li>● card games</li> <li>● dominoes</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● threading beads and cards</li> <li>● puzzles</li> </ul> |

## *An inclusive environment*

The environment sends strong messages to children.

- When children see themselves, their families and their culture shown in a positive way in pictures, books and play materials, they develop a sense of belonging and feel proud about who they are and where they come from. This will help them to develop a positive self-concept.
- If children do not see themselves reflected in the environment, they will feel less confident about their identity and may be less willing to participate in programme activities.

The environment should be planned so that all children will feel valued.

- The play materials, pictures and books need to reflect the daily lives and experiences of all the children, their families and the community in a positive way.
- Children also need to know that there are people who are different from them and that these differences need to be respected (e.g., skin colour,



age, gender, culture, ability). Pictures and materials should include examples of people not only from their communities but also show people from other groups (e.g., Xhosa, Zulu, Indian, Chinese and Phuthi people).

Pictures and books should show:

- children and families like them in their daily lives at home and at work.
- children and families from different groups.
- people of different ages doing a variety of things.
- men and women doing a variety of different jobs.
- people with disabilities doing a variety of different things at home, at work and at school.
- different family structures (e.g., grandmothers, single parents).

### Play equipment and materials:

- Fantasy play
  - dolls that look like them (e.g., black, disabled, wearing glasses, boys and girls)
  - home furnishings, clothes and other things that reflect daily lives and experiences (e.g., if there is no electricity, the corner should not have a television or an electric stove)
  - devices used by people with disabilities (e.g., crutches, a hearing aid, a wheelchair)
  - male and female dress-up clothes
- Art
  - different colour paints, crayons and paper for children to use to draw or paint people with different skin tones
  - items found in the local community (e.g., basketry, brooms, grass mats and Basotho hats (mokorotlo) that the children can be shown how to make)
- Blocks
  - pictures of buildings and materials found locally (e.g., thatching, iron roofed or tiled roofed buildings [if in towns] and rondavels made of stone)





## Adapting the environment

Teachers want all children to be able to participate in the programme activities, which means that they may have to adapt the environment for a child with a disability. This can usually be done quite easily by making a few simple changes. It is best to start off by finding out from parents what their child's needs are and getting their advice about what changes will be necessary.

It is important for children's social and emotional development for them to develop a sense of independence. Guidelines and tips are provided throughout the guide to help teachers provide ways for children with disabilities to help themselves and join in activities without too much help.

## Organising the physical environment

The way teachers arrange their space will depend on:

- **Their beliefs about how children develop and learn.**
  - If teachers believe that:
    - children need to spend most of their time listening to what is being taught during formal lessons, they will arrange tables and chairs or mats so that they face the same way. There will be few or no play materials.
    - children learn through play, they will provide many play activities for children to actively explore and find out things for themselves.
  - If teachers believe that:
    - children are concrete thinkers, they will provide real objects for children to explore through their five senses.
    - children are abstract thinkers (understanding based on thoughts and ideas), they will give them lots of worksheets to complete.

Child development researchers have proven that young children are concrete learners and that they learn by using all their senses.

- **The type of setting and amount of space.**

The learning space may be in an ECCD Centre that has been specially built or a community rondavel. Some teachers may not have a building at all and therefore may organise activities for children in an open space.



In planning appropriate activities for the space, teachers should consider what they have learned about how children develop and learn.

Learning corners help children develop and learn across all developmental areas. The way the space is arranged should:

- help children learn to become independent.
- encourage children to take initiative.
- build on children's interests.
- help children to be creative and do things in their own way.
- provide opportunities for children to manage their own behaviour.
- help children learn how to get along with others.
- provide opportunities for children to play and work on a variety of activities on a daily basis.

Whatever the setting, teachers should divide the space, during a part of the day at least, into the different learning corners. The way the materials are organised in these corners should indicate to the children where they can go to do different things.

### ***Guidelines for organising the space***

There are two steps involved in planning the physical environment. First, decide where and how to arrange the learning corners. Once these have been set up, the equipment and materials need to be arranged in each learning corner.

#### **Arranging the space**

Every setting is different, so the way the learning corners are arranged will differ— there is no one right way to do it. Whatever the individual circumstances, there are some general guidelines to help teachers plan their spaces.

- **Take a close look at the setting.**
  - If the preschool is in a building, think about:
    - how large the space is.



- where the doors and windows are.
  - whether there is light and fresh air.
  - where the water supply is.
  - whether some activities could go outdoors.
  - where things will be stored.
  - how safe the building is (steady walls, roof leakages, etc.).
  - where the mats can be located and stored if children need to sleep.
  - a work space for the teacher.
- If there is no building for the preschool, think about:
    - how large the space is.
    - shady trees and flat surfaces where activities can be set up.
    - what shelter there is available in case of strong sunshine or bad weather.
    - how you can define the different learning corners.
    - how natural resources can be used (e.g., soft grassy areas for children to sit on, tree stumps for tables, pathways to separate the activities).
    - the distance between homemade or real toilets and the learning space.
    - how safe each part of the space is (e.g., distance from wells, cooking fires, major roads).
  - **Draw up a plan.** Invite other teachers or parents who work closely with you and the children to plan the space together and discuss:
    - **Which learning corners go together best.** Some activities are noisy and others are quieter.
    - **How much space each learning corner needs.** Some activities need more space than others.
    - **The number of children who can play in each corner.** This will be according to the amount of materials and space available.
    - **Whether children can choose what they want to play with.** Children should be able to choose their own materials. They need to be placed so that children can help themselves.



- **How to separate the learning corners.** Children need to be able to see where the corner begins and ends.
- **How children will find the activities.** Children will choose to play with what they are interested in. They need to be able to clearly see what choices they have.
- **How children will move.** Children need to move easily from one activity to another without disturbing other children.

Here are some suggestions:

- **Make an entrance area.** Whatever the setting, when children arrive in the morning, there needs to be a space where children are welcomed and greeted. It is also an important time when teachers can talk to parents away from busy activity areas.
- **Give each child a space for their own things.** Each child needs space for her personal belongings like jerseys or artwork. The space should be clearly marked with her name and/or a symbol that she can recognise.
- **Plan enough activities for all the children.** The amount of space available will dictate how many learning corners can be set up. If the play space is small, learning corners can be rotated on different days. Remember that learning corners can be set up outside if the weather is good.
- **Place corners that go well together next to each other.** For example:
  - Fantasy play and blocks are noisy activities and both encourage children to play imaginatively and cooperatively.
  - Books and educational toy activities are quieter activities and should be as far away as possible from more active activities so that children are not disturbed.
  - Sand and water play and art activities need to be near water.
- **Make each learning corner clearly defined.** Dividing learning corners helps children to stay in the play area, and they can concentrate better without being distracted. Many things can be used as dividers:
  - low shelves
  - a piece of fabric strung across the area
  - low furniture (e.g., fantasy play cupboard)
  - screens



- boxes
- mats

Whatever is used should be low enough so that children can see what is happening in other learning corners. Crouch or kneel low enough to get an idea of children's eye view when putting in dividers.

- **Make pathways.** Children need to be able to move easily from one area to another without walking through a learning corner or stepping over an activity. Create a pathway for children to move from one part of the room to another without disturbing other children. Try to avoid having large empty spaces as this encourages children to run up and down.
- **Create a space for group and rest times.** There will be times during the day when children will come together for group activities and, if these are held indoors, teachers will need to find a suitable space. As the amount of space available is often limited, the materials in a learning corner are usually packed away to create a space for children to sit. In full day programmes, children normally rest after lunch time, and the room is arranged for children to lie on mats, again making use of the space in the learning corners.

## *Setting up the learning corners*

The same learning corners are set out every day, but a variety of activities take place within each corner.

- Think about how much space will be needed for each learning corner. The fantasy play, building and art corners need larger spaces than the other activity corners. There should be spaces for children to play alone as well as with others.
- Work out how many children can play in each learning corner at any one time and make sure that there are more activities and materials than children so that they can choose what they want to play with. For example, if there are 30 children and all six learning corners are set out, at least six children should be able to play in each corner at the same time.

The learning corner needs to have enough space, according to the number of children that will play in it and the nature of the activities planned.

- Arrange the toys and materials in the area so that children can help



themselves. Children learn to be independent when they can choose what they want to play with, and are more likely to learn if they are doing something that interests them. They will also be able to put things away when they have finished playing. This teaches them responsibility.

- Display materials on low shelves or tables, or in containers in each learning corner. Make sure there are not too many toys, books or other items on display that would make the shelf appear cluttered.
  - If activities are set up outside, store the materials for each corner in a separate labelled box to be taken to the different corners.
  - If the activities have to be packed away every day, they can be stored in cardboard boxes to make it easier to carry them to the storage place.
- Enclose each corner on three sides, leaving enough space for children to move easily in and out.
  - Set out mats, chairs and tables to show children where they can sit to do their activities.
  - Store materials and toys in clearly labelled containers (e.g., shoe boxes, baskets, plastic containers). Draw or cut out pictures and paste them on the containers to help children know what is inside.
  - Make the play space an attractive area that will invite children to learn. Display pictures, posters and children's art work at children's eye level. Print labels and posters so that they are clear and readable.
  - The way the environment is set up has a lot to do with how children behave.
    - Children may bump into each other or knock down other children's work if the space is crowded which can be upsetting.
    - If there are empty spaces where nothing is happening, children may be tempted to run up and down.
    - The more children are actively involved in play activities, the less chance there is for them to misbehave.

The teacher's first attempt at organising the environment may not work well the first time, and it may be necessary to make several changes over the first few weeks until what works best is found. It will be well worth the effort. If the children are busy and learning, there will be more time for the teacher to support their individual development





# A safe and clean environment

## Keeping things clean

Germs spread very easily in an early childhood environment. Children learn through their senses. They touch everything in sight, they crawl around on the floor, and they put lots of things in their mouths. Teachers need to make sure that the surfaces and equipment are kept clean and disinfected.

### Cleaning involves:

1. Washing or scrubbing with soap and water.
  2. Disinfecting with a Jik solution (1 part Jik to 9 parts water).
- Keep the floors clean. If the floor is covered with tiles or vinyl, sweep the floors daily and wash and disinfect them once a week. If the floor is smeared with mud, sweep the floor daily.
  - Wash and disinfect cooking and eating surfaces and tables and chairs every day.
  - Dust and wipe shelves and surfaces once a week. Clean and disinfect them once a term.
  - Wash and disinfect the walls about once a term.
  - Toys that children put in their mouths need to be put in a separate container immediately and washed and disinfected later that day.
  - Wash other toys and dress-up clothes regularly, once every two or three weeks.
  - Clean sand and water play containers once a week. If there is a permanent sand play area outside, disinfect it with salt water once a week.
  - Keep the indoor and outdoor areas free of litter or rubbish. Put a litter bin or box in the indoor play area and empty it every day into a larger bin outside. Pick up litter lying around outdoors.
  - Clean and disinfect the latrine area every day. Keep soap and water next to the latrine.



## Keep children safe

Measures that need to be put in place to keep children safe:

- Put cooking fuels, medicine, household cleaning products, plastic bags, matches, knives, scissors and other sharp tools out of children's reach.
- Keep children away from the stove or an open fire. Turn pot handles towards the back of the stove.
- Don't let children play with or put small things in their mouths that they can swallow or choke on (e.g., buttons, small beads, nuts, seeds, coins).
- Regularly check outside and remove dangerous things that can hurt children (e.g., pieces of glass, tins, rusty metal, plastic bags, poisonous plants, rotten foods or any other harmful things).
- Cover buckets of water with lids. Do not leave children alone near water. They can drown in very shallow water in a matter of minutes.
- Teach children about safety, particularly safety in the road, safety around fire, safety around strangers, safety around water-filled dams and rivers, and safety around deep dongas and hanging cliffs.

## Keep things in good condition

There need to be regular checks on all furniture, equipment and toys to make sure that they are in good condition and safe for children. Look for:

- splinters or sharp edges.
- rust.
- peeling paint.
- loose parts that may break off and be swallowed.
- broken items that need to be repaired or thrown away.

## Keep drinking water clean

Water may look clean but may still contain germs or chemicals that can make people very sick. We need to make sure that water that comes from other places such as springs or wells or community taps is safe for drinking. Don't take a chance, even if it looks clean.



To purify water, first clean the containers well with soap and water and then use one of the following methods:

- Pour water into clean glass or plastic containers and leave them in bright sunlight from morning until evening. This will kill most of the germs.
- Boil it for 5–10 minutes. Only do this if there is no other way to purify water because it uses a lot of fuel.
- Add a teaspoon of Jik to 25 litres of water and mix it well. Let it stand for 2 hours or more before using it.

## The outdoor environment

Outdoors is also a place where children develop and learn, and the space needs to be safe and well-planned.

### *A safe outdoor space*

- Regularly check outside and remove dangerous things that can hurt children (e.g., pieces of glass, tins, plastic bags, poisonous plants, rotten foods or any other harmful things).
- Make sure that equipment is in good repair and works (e.g., no splinters, sharp edges or rust, no loose pieces).
- If there is large piece of equipment like swings, make sure there is enough space around it to prevent accidents. It is important to strictly enforce rules regarding use of large equipment. For example:
  - One child at a time.
  - No crossing or standing in front of a swing.
  - Sit on the swing and hold onto the rope with both hands.
  - Stop the swing before getting off.
- Do not leave children alone near water. They can drown in very shallow water in a matter of minutes.
- Supervise children at all times when they are playing outdoors.



## Arranging the space outdoors

Children need to have a range of outdoor play experiences, some directed by the teacher and others that children can choose for themselves. The outdoor play area can be planned using similar guidelines as for indoor play.

- The space needs to be large enough for all the children to play without bumping into one another. There also needs to be enough space around each piece of large equipment to prevent injuries.
- There need to be enough activities and materials for the number of children.
- The materials need to be varied and suitable for the ages of the children.
- Children should be able to choose what they want to play with.
- The activities should be set out so that children know where they can do things.
- Active activities and quieter activities should be separated.
- Equipment should be stored in suitable containers that are easy for children to carry.

*We will go into more detail about outdoor play in Module 3.*

## Adapting the environment

Children with disabilities should be able to move freely from one place to another:

- when they arrive.
- during the day when they move from activity to activity.
- going inside and outside.
- going to the latrine.

Think about how the space and furniture can be arranged so that children can develop a sense of independence.

- Ask parents how best to accommodate their child.
- Make sure there are wide paths so that children in wheelchairs or on crutches can move through the spaces and easily reach the different activity areas. There should be enough space for a wheelchair to be able



to turn.

- Provide enough space inside each corner for children in wheelchairs or children who need to lie down to play.
- Put materials on low shelves so that children who cannot stand will be able to reach them.
- Make seating comfortable for children (e.g., pillows to give back support or let them lie on a mat).
- Make sure the floor surface is safe for all children who need to crawl or pull themselves along. Provide mats where possible.
- Keep things in the same place every day particularly for a child with a visual disability, and be sure to tell him if anything has changed.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Creating a learning environment*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- understand the importance of play in young children's learning.
- identify activities to help children develop and learn.
- know how to provide a safe and healthy learning environment for young children.
- organise activities in their play spaces.

## Session outline

| Activity                           | Suggested time |
|------------------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection           | 8.30–9.00      |
| How children learn                 | 9.00–9.15      |
| The importance of play             | 9.15–10.00     |
| Activities to help children learn  | 10.00–11.00    |
| TEA                                | 11.00–11.30    |
| An inclusive environment           | 11.30–12.15    |
| A safe environment                 | 12.15–1.00     |
| LUNCH                              | 1.00–2.00      |
| Arranging the physical environment | 2.00–3.30      |
| How to make papier-mâché           | 3.30–4.00      |





## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity – 1/2 hour*

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the first module.
  - what changes they have made in their own Centres or Home-Bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *How children learn – 1/4 hour*

Start off by asking participants to call out the different ways that children learn. Using the information in this guide on page 63, give them a few examples to get them started. Write their ideas on the flipchart. Add any that haven't been mentioned.

### *The importance of play – 3/4 hour*

#### **Preparation:**

1. Make three signs: AGREE, DISAGREE, NOT SURE. Put these up on the wall in different places in the training room.
  2. Prepare a presentation on the value of play using the information from pages 64 to 65 in this guide. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Explain that much research has been done to find out how young children learn and that we know that children learn as they play. Give a few examples of how children progress in each of the developmental areas when they play.
  - For this next activity, explain that you will show a statement, and participants should go to the sign according to which best matches their



viewpoint. Those who agree with the statement will go to the AGREE sign, those who disagree will go to the DISAGREE sign. Those who are unsure will go to the NOT SURE sign.

- Show the first statement, and once everyone has moved to a different sign, ask groups to discuss their views with other people who are standing with them. Each group then shares their views with the whole group. Continue in the same way with the remaining statements.
- Statements:
  - There is so much to teach young children about reading and mathematics that there isn't time for them to play.
  - Children should finish their work before they can play.
  - Play is the way children learn and they develop important skills as they play.
  - Children need lots of time to play every day.
- Give a brief presentation on the value of play using the information in this guide from pages 64 to 65, including examples of how children develop and learn across all developmental areas.
- Summarise by saying that the kinds of activities that teachers plan for children should give them opportunities to learn through play.

### ***Activities to help children learn – 🌐 1 hour***

- Talk about how important it is that teachers start to understand that children do not learn much when they sit for long periods of time and listen to the teacher giving them a lesson on a topic. They learn more when they play and find out things for themselves.
- Explain that this means that the teacher needs to provide lots of play activities to help children learn. Say that one way to do this is to divide the room or space into different learning corners and explain that it is in these corners that children will play and learn.
- Divide participants into six groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group one of the following learning corners to focus on:
  - fantasy play corner
  - building corner
  - art corner



- science and discovery corner
- book corner
- educational toy corner
- Refer the groups to the relevant pages in the *Teacher Resource Guide* about the learning corners (pages 57 to 78). Ask groups to look at the picture of their learning corner in the *Teacher Resource Guide* and then discuss:
  - What would children enjoy doing in this corner?
  - How could children develop and learn in this corner?
  - Which of these activities are you already doing in your preschool?
  - What difficulties, if any, would you have in setting up this corner in your preschool? How could you solve these difficulties?

Groups share their ideas on the above questions with the whole class.

- In the same groups, ask participants to read through the kinds of materials that are needed for their learning corner and to discuss which materials they already have and ways of getting those materials they do not have as yet. Have them write their lists on flipchart paper.
- Groups share their ideas.



Keep the flipchart papers for the next session.

## An inclusive environment – $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Materials:

A variety of magazines, including local magazines; if possible, at least one per participant.

### Preparation:

1. Write the questions for the small group discussion on flipchart paper.
2. Prepare a presentation on an inclusive environment. Write key points on flipchart paper.

- Start by talking about how important it is for children to develop a



- positive identity— a sense of belonging. When they can see themselves and their families in their play environment, they will develop a sense of belonging and feel proud about who they are and where they come from.
- Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Hand out magazines to each group and ask them to look at the pictures of the people and have the groups discuss:
    - Do the pictures show people like them in their daily lives at home and at work?
    - Do the pictures show homes like theirs?
    - Do the pictures show people who are different from them?
    - Do the pictures show homes that are different from theirs?
  - Groups report back on their findings. Discuss how participants felt when they saw themselves reflected in the pictures, and when they did not.
  - Give a brief presentation of what an inclusive environment should look like.

## *A safe and clean environment – ¾ hour*

### **Preparation:**

1. Cut out pictures of a variety of common household products and objects
  2. Make a copy of the self-evaluation checklist on page 92 for each participant.
- Display pictures of the household items and products you have collected one at a time. Ask the group whether each item is safe to have around young children. If an item is not safe but is needed in an ECCD environment, discuss where it could be stored out of children's reach.
  - Discuss how important it is to keep things safe and clean. Hand out the copies of the checklist on page 92 to participants and read through each item. Ask participants to make a tick when they feel their ECCD environment meets that standard. They can then share with a partner what they still need to do to ensure that the environment indoors and outdoors is safe and hygienic for children.



## Arranging the physical environment – 1 hour

### Preparation:

1. Use the section called *Organising the physical environment* on pages 73 to 78 to prepare a presentation on the guidelines for organising the space. Write key points on flipchart paper.
  2. On three separate pieces of flipchart paper draw outlines of:
    - a rectangular shape.
    - a round shape.
    - an outdoor space where there is no building (e.g., a pathway, grass and a few trees).
- 
- Explain that the way the learning corners are arranged in the space needs to be planned very carefully so that it will give children the best opportunities to learn through play. Every ECCD Centre or Home-Base will look different. It will depend on the type of building and even if there is no building at all, teachers need to think about how to set out the activities.
  - Give a presentation of what to consider when arranging the space. Be sure to include the following:
    - There must be enough activities for all the children.
    - Quiet activities need to go together.
    - More active or noisy activities should go together.
    - Learning corners should be separated from each other with dividers.
    - Pathways need to be made for children to get from one activity to another (without walking through a learning corner).
    - Materials should be stored in a way that they are easily accessible.
    - An entrance area is needed.
    - A space should be reserved for children's materials.
    - Storage boxes can be used for classrooms with limited space.
  - Divide participants into three small groups and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group one of the prepared flipchart classroom outlines. Their plan should show:



1. where they would place each learning corner in the space.
  2. how they would separate the different corners.
  3. where the doors and window are (if any).
  4. where the water supply is.
- Ask each group to display their plan and give reasons for how they have arranged their space. After each group report-back, refer to the guidelines and check that everything has been covered. Encourage the group to help one another think of additional arrangement ideas appropriate to smaller spaces.



Keep the plans for the training session in Module 3.

- Explain that there is no one right way to arrange their spaces and that teachers may have to try things different ways over a few weeks to find an arrangement that works best for them. Tell participants that they will learn more about each learning corner in the next module.

### ***Adapting the environment – 🕒 20 minutes***

- Remind participants that children with disabilities should be able to move freely from place to place. In the large group, discuss the layouts that are on display and what changes they could make to ensure that children with physical disabilities would be able to move freely. The following are key ideas that should be mentioned if the participants do not come up with them on their own:
  - Widen the paths.
  - Add more space in each learning corner.
  - Put mats on the floor.

### ***The outdoor environment – 🕒 10 minutes***

Explain that the outdoor play area needs to be planned using similar guidelines. Briefly go through these, using the information in this guide on pages 81 to 82.





## Papier-mâché – 1/2 hour

Papier-mâché is a soft mixture made out of paper and glue that feels a little like soft clay. When it dries, it becomes very hard and can be painted. It is easy to use and almost anything can be made using papier-mâché. Teachers can make improvised shelves, dividers and children's lockers. This would be a good time to demonstrate how to make it.



Instructions are in the *Teacher Resource Guide* pages 47 to 49.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



## Handout 1: MAKE A COPY FOR EACH PARTICIPANT

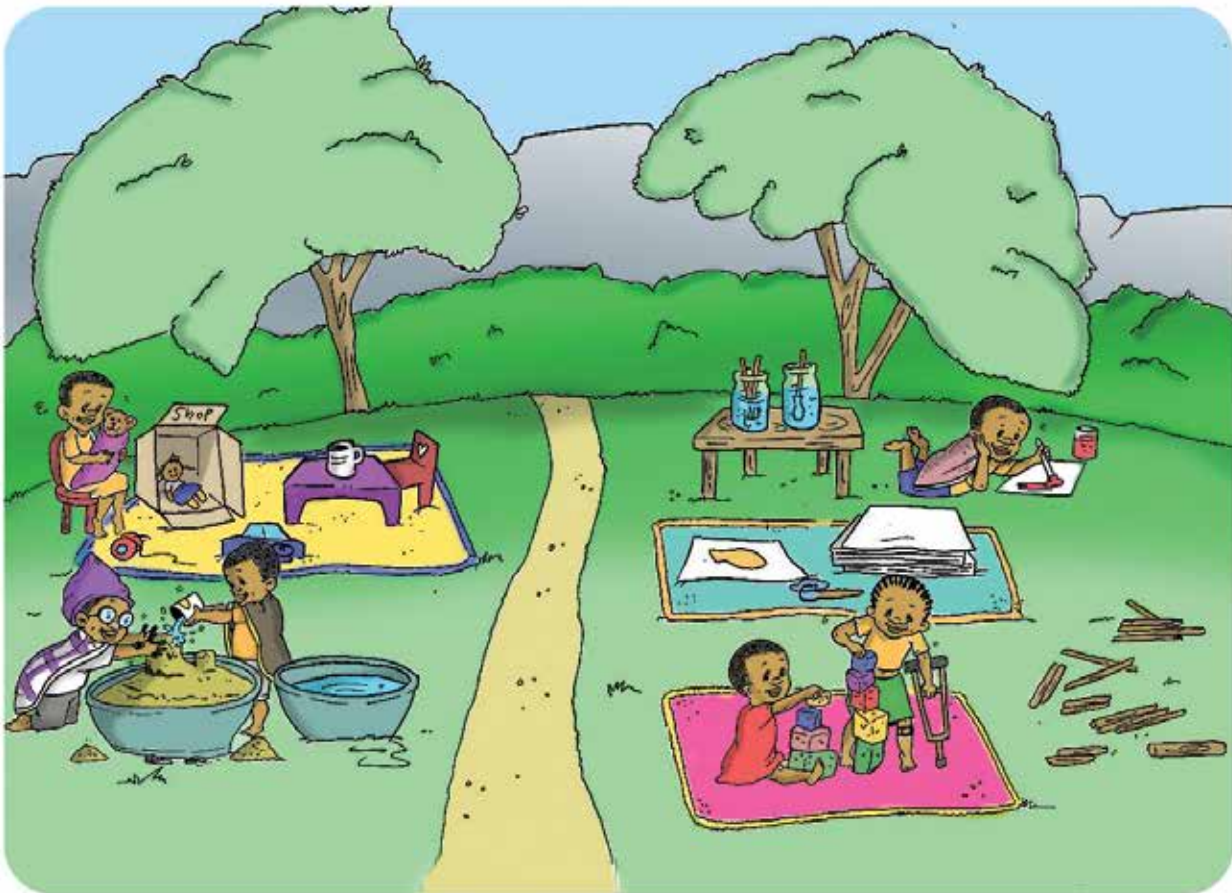
| Checklist: Is your environment safe and hygienic?   |                          |
|---|--------------------------|
|   | Tick                     |
| Are the floors and walls kept clean?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the shelves and other surfaces dusted kept clean?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there enough space for children to move around indoors?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there enough space for children to move around outdoors?                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is there enough light and fresh air?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the furniture clean and in good condition?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the toys safe for children?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are household products, matches, knives and other harmful things kept out of children's reach?    | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are stoves safe for children?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is the latrine kept clean?  | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Are the water buckets and basins covered?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Is rubbish taken out every day?   | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| Do you check the outdoor area for things like rusty tins, broken glass and other harmful objects? | <input type="checkbox"/> |
|   |                          |



# Module 3:

## Free Play Activities

The purpose of this module is to extend teachers' understanding of free play activities indoors and outdoors. Teachers will develop an understanding of why free play activities are important in meeting the educational goals for their programmes and explore ways of equipping learning corners and outdoor activity areas, making the best use of local materials available to them. Teachers will explore their role in getting involved in children's play and practise skills in helping children learn as they interact with the materials and equipment.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- explore free play activities and understand their importance in children's development.
- reflect on the value of free play activities in meeting the educational goals of the programme.
- set out free play activities in a physical space.
- practise skills in helping children learn as they play.
- explore and share ideas for outdoor play activities.

## Types of activities

A good programme for young children provides a balance of different kinds of activities.

1. **Free play activities.** Children learn through play, and they need lots of time to play. A large block of time is planned every day during which children choose from the toys and materials that have been set out in the learning corners and play with them in their own way. During free play, the child takes the lead.
2. **Group times.** During these activities all the children are together and the teacher **leads** them (e.g., music, movement and story).
3. **Routine times.** These are the times that are set aside every day to meet children's basic health and nutrition needs, like mealtimes, toilet and wash times and, if it is a full day programme, a rest time.

## Why free play activities are important

During free play, children choose their own activities without being told what to do. Teachers may think that children do not learn very much during this time because they are not being taught in a lesson, but in reality children make important developmental progress through unstructured play time, as detailed below.

During free play, children:

- learn to be independent when they help themselves to materials and put



them away when they have finished playing.

- take initiative when they choose what they want to play with.
- develop their imagination and creativity when they use the materials in their own way.
- satisfy their curiosity when they are interested in what they are doing.
- solve their own problems as they explore and experiment.
- learn to share and take turns.
- use language to talk to one another.

These are things that cannot be done in worksheets. Children learn when they are actively involved and when they have many opportunities to learn through meaningful situations.

## The teacher's role

Although children lead during free play times, that does not mean the teacher does not get involved in their play and help them learn.

The teacher facilitates free play time by providing a variety of activities for children to choose from and play with in their own way. While children play, the teacher moves around and watches how children are playing and what they are trying to do. It is important that the teacher is present and attentive during free play, as being there lets children know the teacher is available if and when she is needed. There may be moments when it is necessary for the teacher to get involved in free play, for example, if a child:

- finds it difficult to choose what he wants to play with.
- is using new materials for the first time.
- appears to be stuck.
- asks for help.
- exhibits behavioural problems.
- continues to play with the exact same materials or in the same learning corner every day for an extended period of time.

**Follow the child's lead.** When a teacher joins in a child's play, she needs to be very careful that she does not interrupt what the child is learning.



Unintentionally, by intervening in free play, the teacher may give the child a whole lot of facts, turn the experience into a lesson, or even tell the child what to do to solve a problem. If children are to learn through play, they need to be able to try out their own ideas and find solutions to their own problems.

**Talk to the child.** Get down to children's eye level and talk to them as they are busy with their activities. Ask them what they are doing and introduce new words by describing what you see, for example:

- *"I see you have drawn a picture of your house with lots of **long, straight lines.**"*
- *"You have put all the **blue squares** together."*
- *"The leaf is **floating.**"*

**Listen to the child.** Show an interest in what children are saying and give them enough time without interrupting— do not prompt them if they don't answer right away. Try to understand and see things from their point of view and let children know that you think their ideas are important.

**Ask questions.** There are different kinds of questions that teachers can use to help children think and respond:

- **Closed questions:** Closed questions have a right answer, for example:
  - *"What colour is your dress?"*
  - *"Do you like bananas?"*
- **Open-ended questions** do not have a correct answer, for example:
  - *"How can you make your building wider?"*
  - *"Why do you need such a long piece of string?"*

Using open-ended questioning is an important part of the role teachers play in facilitating children's learning. Open-ended questions invite children to explain their ideas, think more about what they are doing, and solve their own problems. Open-ended questions often start with:

- *"How...?"*
- *"Why...?"*
- *"What would happen if...?"*

When using open-ended questions, give children time to respond and don't





answer for them.

**Include all children.** Teachers need to make sure that all children are able to participate and learn in the ECCD programme. Teachers need to get to know each child in the group and his or her individual needs. One child might need more individual attention; another child might need less help. Some activities and materials may need to be adapted for children with disabilities or special learning needs. The important thing is for the teacher to spend time learning each child's capabilities and work with each one in the manner that will improve child development.

**Praise and encourage children for their achievements.** Children feel good about themselves when they achieve success. Teachers should not only praise children for successes but also when they try something new. When the focus is on the effort and not the end result, children are more likely to become self-motivated.

**Let children learn to be responsible.** When teachers do things for children, children will think that they, themselves, are not capable. Encourage children to take on responsibilities according to their ages and stages of development. Younger children can be encouraged to pack away their toys, dress and feed themselves, and to wash their hands. Older children can help with chores like sweeping, preparing food, setting the table for mealtimes, and cleaning up spills.

**Meet individual learning needs.** If there is a child with a disability or special learning need in the group:

- Think about how that child can choose and do things for himself without help where this is possible. Some activities, like blocks, fantasy play and art, are particularly suitable because they allow children to use the materials in their own way and at their own pace.
- Arrange the activities so that children can talk to each other and play together.
- Allow plenty of time for the child to finish what he is doing and to practise his skills.
- Activities and tools can be adapted to meet children's individual needs. Some ideas are provided throughout the guide.

The free play activities are set up indoors (or in a space outdoors if there



is no building) during the same time every day. They are organised in the different learning corners:

- fantasy corner
- art corner
- building corner
- science and discovery corner
- book corner
- educational toys corner

## Fantasy play corner

Fantasy play is pretend play that lets children act out things that are happening in their lives.

### *Why fantasy play is important*

Here are some of the ways in which children develop and learn:

- Children learn about the world around them. When they imitate what they see around them in their homes and neighbourhoods, children learn more about the people in their lives and what it is like to be them.
- Children learn to think by using symbols. Learning that something stands for the real thing is an important part of learning to read and write.
- Children develop their language and communication skills as they talk to one another about their ideas.
- Children learn to get along with others and discover ways of working together in a game. They also learn how to share and take turns.
- Children learn about their feelings when they play out things that make them happy, sad, upset or frightened.
- Children learn to use their initiative and develop creativity when they use their own ideas and decide how they want to play.
- Children learn important thinking skills as they play pretend games. They sort and put things together according to size, shape and colour when they put away the laundry or pack shopping onto a shelf. They learn about numbers when they set the table for mealtimes.



- Children develop their large and small muscles when they play pretend games.

## Stages of play

Children go through **different stages** of fantasy play:

|                              |  |
|------------------------------|--|
| Stage 1: Imitative play      | A very young child will play simple games about what they see at home (e.g., hold and feed a doll, or talk on the telephone). Later, children start to copy household chores like sweeping, mopping and washing clothes. Their play things need to look like the real thing.                               |
| Stage 2: Make-believe play   | Children start to use their imaginations, and their play extends to people and places in their neighbourhood. They also make up their own stories. During this stage, children may pretend that a box is a car or that a block is an iron. They are learning to use symbols that stand for the real thing. |
| Stage 3: Socio-dramatic play | In the third stage children start to play pretend games with other children. There can be complex story lines and children will plan their games before carrying them out. Children can make what they need for their play and don't need to have real objects.  |

## Setting up fantasy play

Fantasy play activities can be set up indoors or outdoors away from quiet activities. You will need a large space to let children act out their pretend games.

Use low shelves, boxes or small pieces of furniture to divide the corner on three sides from the other play areas.

Children's home lives are what they know best, so set up a house area that is divided into two areas: a sleeping area and a living area. All the furniture needs to be child-sized. Try to make these areas look as much like the children's homes as possible.

- In the sleeping area, have a bed/mattress and blankets and dress-up clothes.
- In the living area, have a place for cooking and for sitting and eating.
- Add finishing touches like a vase of flowers, pictures on the wall or pretend windows and curtains (at children's eye level).
- Include traditional clothes, pots, baskets, blankets and weaving that are typically found in the home.



- Store the materials and utensils in the areas (e.g., kitchenware can be kept in a cupboard in the kitchen; dress-up clothes can be hung in a closet on hooks against the wall, or folded on a shelf).
- Makes sure a child with a disability can reach and use the materials and furniture.
- Include dolls with different kinds of disabilities and individual differences (e.g., a doll with a crutch or a missing arm; a doll with glasses).



See the table on page 67 for a detailed list of suggested equipment and materials for this learning corner.

In addition to these, add things like different-sized cardboard boxes, pieces of cloth, string or blocks of wood. These can be used as anything children wish them to be.

### *Helping children with fantasy play*

Young children between 3 and 5 years of age enjoy playing together. Children play imaginatively with one another, so teachers usually allow children to play on their own without directly intervening. There are times, however, when teachers will want to get involved in children's play. Teachers should only intervene if they are sure that a child cannot go further by himself. Teachers can best learn what children's needs are by carefully watching them as they play.

When teachers do join in play, they should remember that it is the child's game and not to take over; the child still needs to use his own ideas and to play in his own way.

Teachers can:

- Talk to children about what they are doing and introduce them to new words: *"You poured the tea into the cup. How will Khotso stir the sugar? Can you find a small spoon?"*
- Help a child to join in a game: *"Mommy, Likeleli has come to visit. Can she stay for supper?"*

### **Gender roles**

Children learn different roles when they play pretend games. The kinds of materials that are set out will determine which roles children play. Teachers need to provide a wide range of materials that allow children to do many



things, whether they are boys or girls. Teachers may have noticed that more often girls tend to play in the fantasy corner and boys in the building corner.

One idea is to set up the building corner next to the fantasy corner and encourage children to carry things between the two corners. Children should also be encouraged to try out different roles (e.g., boys can wash the dishes and girls can water the vegetables).

## Art corner

When children can use their own ideas and express themselves in their own way, they are being creative. Teachers can help children develop their creativity by providing a variety of art materials that children can freely explore, and encouraging them to choose what they want to do, and to use the materials in their own ways.

It is not the finished work that is important, but the experiences and enjoyment that children have and how they feel about what they have created as they paint, draw, model with clay or make a collage.

### *Why art is important*

Here are some of the ways in which children develop and learn:

- Children learn to use their initiative when they experiment with the art materials and use their own ideas to create different things.
- Children learn to control the small muscles in their hands and fingers and develop their eye-hand coordination. These are important skills which will help them later when they start writing.
- Children develop cognitively. They practise thinking skills that will help them learn important concepts like colour, texture and shape. They also learn about cause and effect. For example:
  - “What will happen if I add yellow paint to the blue paint?”
  - “What will happen if I press harder with the crayon?”
- Children learn skills that are important in getting along with others. They share crayons, paint and scissors and may have to wait their turn if there are only four spaces for drawing.
- Children experience pride in their work, which helps them feel good about themselves and what they can do.



## Stages of play

Children go through different creative stages:

|                                      |  |
|--------------------------------------|--|
| <p>Stage 1<br/>18 months–4 years</p> | <p><b>Uncontrolled scribbles</b><br/>At about 18 months, a child will start to use crayons to scribble on paper. In the early stages of hand muscle development, he does not have control over his movements and just enjoy making marks on the paper.</p> <p><b>Controlled scribbles</b><br/>As the child gains better control over his muscles, he will start to make repeat patterns, like an unclosed circle over and over on his page. Later in this stage, he will start to draw things, and then point to and name what he has drawn.</p>                                       |
| <p>Stage 2<br/>4–7 years</p>         | <p>Children draw or paint people and objects, although you may not know what it is until you are told. In the early stages, objects float across the page and are drawn through the child's eyes. A child's father may be drawn as bigger than his house because he is important to the child. Children draw the same things over and over again and may cover their whole page with the same thing. Later on, people and things start to look more like the real thing and are in proportion. Children enjoy experimenting with colour and may draw a green sky or a purple tree.</p> |
| <p>Stage 3<br/>7–9 years</p>         | <p>During this stage, children's drawings are more realistic, detailed and more in proportion.</p>   |

## Setting up art activities

Young children need a variety of art experiences. We suggest four basic art activities that children can choose from:

1. Painting
2. Drawing
3. Collage (cutting and pasting)
4. Modelling



See the table on page 68 to 69 for a detailed list of suggested equipment and materials for this learning corner.

- Depending on the space available, the teacher can set out all four activities every day, or, if the space is small these could be rotated during the week, for instance:





- Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays: Drawing and modelling activities
  - Tuesdays and Thursdays: Painting and collage activities
- 
- When the weather is nice, take the activities outdoors.
  - Use low shelves, boxes or small pieces of fantasy play furniture to divide the corner on three sides from the other play areas.
  - Art activities can be set out on mats on the floor or at tables, each activity in a separate space.
  - For a child with a physical disability, tape paper to the table or other surface. This will make it easier for her to draw or paint.
  - There should be enough room between the activities so that children will not upset paint or bump a child while she is busy.
  - Keep the materials for each activity nearby so that children can help themselves to the materials that they want to use.
  - Arrange the materials attractively and in an organised way so that children can clearly see what is available. For example, crayons can be sorted according to colours and kept in individual tins.
  - Cover the floor with a mat, newspaper or plastic for messy activities like painting and collage. Find a space for paintings to dry.
  - Have a basin of water and a cloth nearby for cleaning up messes.
  - Aprons should be set up in a central place for children to put on and protect their clothing.

## *Helping children be creative*

Many teachers think that they are being helpful when they give children stencilled shapes to colour, pages to colour in or things to copy. These are not creative activities because children cannot choose their own materials and use their own ideas to express themselves.

Teachers help children express their creativity when they:

- Encourage children to choose what they want to do and use the materials in their own ways. It is fine to ask children to draw a picture of a story that has been told, but if a child chooses to draw something else, she should be allowed to.



- Don't draw things for children or show children how to draw. This sends the message that their artwork is not as good as yours.
- Teachers do need to show children how to use tools like paintbrushes and scissors when they are using them for the first time.
- Talk to children about what they are making and encourage them to tell you about their work. Don't try to guess what they have drawn— you will probably be wrong! Rather describe what you see, for example: *"You have used lots of lovely bright colours and filled your whole page."*
- Praise children for their work, even if it looks like a lot of scribbles, or the sun is blue. Don't correct them— these are stages that children go through in their development. Display *all* children's artwork, even those that are scribbles.
- If a child with a disability is not able to use the art tools think of other ways to let him join in. For example, attach a paintbrush to his wrist or his hat; let him tear pictures instead of cutting them.

## Building corner

The building corner is an important part of the early childhood programme. Building activities help children grow and learn in all developmental areas. It is an exciting and popular learning corner enjoyed by both girls and boys.

### *Why building activities are important*

Here are some of the ways in which children develop and learn:

- Children develop their imagination and creativity when they make their own designs for buildings, roads and bridges.
- Children practise their large muscles skills as they build tall structures. They also develop their small muscle skills and eye-hand coordination when they pick up, stack and balance things one on top of another.
- Children learn important mathematics skills and concepts (e.g., size, number, seriation [putting things in order], classifying [grouping according to shape or size], height and length).
- Children learn how to solve problems (e.g., how to build a tall structure without it falling down, how to build something big enough to fit an object inside, or how to find things of the same length and size).
- Children learn about their world when they build roads, bridges, fences



and houses that they see around them and then play pretend games.

- Children develop their social skills as building activities encourage children to make things together. As children build together, they learn to cooperate.

## Stages of play

Children go through different stages in their play:

|                         |   |
|-------------------------|---|
| Stage 1<br>1–2 years    | Very young children carry blocks around or put them into a container or a wheelbarrow and push it along. They are exploring how blocks feel and how many they can carry without dropping any.   |
| Stage 2<br>2–3 years    | Children begin making rows of blocks on the floor or piling them one on top of another. They start to make roads and simple buildings. They will play alone or next to one another.   |
| Stage 3<br>2–4 years    | Children start to make enclosures (e.g., a kraal, simple bridges). They also enjoy arranging the blocks in a repeat pattern (e.g., a wall). They use their structures for fantasy play and add props like road signs, cars and trees. |
| Stage 4<br>From 5 years | Children can create and name all kinds of buildings that they see around them. They spend a lot of time creating complex scenarios and need a large variety of building blocks to build with.   |

## Setting up building activities



See the table on page 68 for a detailed list of suggested equipment and materials for this learning corner.

- Building activities can be set up indoors or outdoors, away from quiet activities. The floor surface needs to be flat.
- Children need a large space to spread out their blocks and build, in a corner of a room if this is possible. There should be enough space for children to build alone or with other children.
- Use low shelves, boxes or furniture to divide the corner on three sides



from the other play areas.

- If homemade building materials are provided, try to have at least six blocks or shapes of the same kind.
- Store building materials on low shelves so that children can see what is available and help themselves.
- Arrange them in an organised way with all the same kinds of materials grouped together. Draw outlines of the different shapes on the shelf surface to make it easy for children to put materials back where they have taken them from.
- There should be enough building materials so that children can play alone or together.

## *Helping children with building*

### Rules for play

Have a few simple rules for children to remember that will keep them safe:

- Blocks are used only for building.
- Respect other children's buildings.
- Use only your own blocks.
- Build only as high as you can reach.
- You can knock down your own building but not anyone else's.
- Remember the number of children that can play (e.g., six).
- Put things away when you have finished.

Teachers can do the following to help children with building:

- Watch children as they play to find out how they are learning and see if they need help.
- Encourage girls as well as boys to play with the materials.
- If you do join in play, remember the guideline discussed earlier to follow the child's lead. Don't interrupt their learning by giving a lesson on different sizes. Let her find out for herself by using her own ideas.
- Talk to the child to find out what they are doing and to introduce new words:
  - *"I see you have used **square** shapes to make your tower. They are*



*all the same size”.*

- “You put the **longest** block **across** the other two blocks to make a bridge.”
- Ask open-ended questions to help the child think about what they are doing and to solve problems they may have:
  - “Why do you think your bridge fell down?”
  - “Is there another way to make it work?”
  - “How can you make your road longer?”
- If a child has a physical disability, make sure to find a way for her to be on the same level as the other children when she builds. Some children could build at a table, or use a cushion to prop a child on the floor.

## Science and discovery corner

Science is about trying to understand why things happen the way they do in the world.

Children are naturally curious and want to find out more about:

- the people, plants and animals around them.
- how things work.
- earth and space.

This is called **scientific knowledge**.

The processes that children use to understand their world are:

- **predicting**. Coming up with own ideas about what they think will happen.
- **experimenting**. Trying out their ideas to see if they are right.
- **observing**. Looking closely to see what happened.
- **measuring results**. Trying to understand what happened. They may talk about their ideas or draw a picture about it.

These are called science **processing skills**.

In the past, teachers would set up display tables to help children learn



more about nature and living things. Because children find out about things by actively exploring, experimenting and investigating, and discovering for themselves, teachers are now encouraged to think of hands-on activities that will encourage children to find out things for themselves. (Teachers should be very careful that plants and living creatures are not hurt.)

For teachers who are new to these kinds of activities, it is recommended that they should start with sand and water play activities. Later, other activities can be added to help children find out more about nature as well as man-made objects.

### ***Why sand and water play are important***

Here are some of the ways that sand and water play are important:

- Children practise their *science processing skills* when they explore and experiment with sand and water.
- Children develop intellectually when they find out about the properties of things. For example:
  - Some things float and some things sink.
  - Things change and look different (e.g., when water evaporates or sand and water are mixed).
  - That wet sand and dry sand feel different.
  - They learn mathematical concepts like more, less, the same, full, empty, how many small containers are needed to fill a bigger container, etc.
- Children develop their language skills and they learn new words and phrases (e.g., cupful, how much, float, sink, empty, half-full).
- Children develop their initiative and creativity when they try out their own ideas.
- Children develop their pride and self-confidence when they discover for themselves and find out something new.
- Children develop their small muscles and their eye-hand coordination.





## Setting up sand and water play



See the table on page 70 for a detailed list of suggested equipment and materials for this learning corner.

- Sand and water play can be set up indoors as well as outdoors.
- Set up the sand and water play corner near the building or fantasy play corner as it is a fairly noisy activity and can be distracting. If indoors, try to find a secluded place out of the way as the floors tend to get wet and slippery.
- If indoors, put waterproof plastic, newspapers or mats under the containers to protect the floor.
- If inside, use low shelves, boxes or furniture to divide the corner on three sides from the other play areas.
- Provide enough space for children to be able to work. Allow for about four to six children to play at one time, depending on the size of the containers.
- Set up the materials that children will use on shelves or in containers near to where they will play so that they can help themselves. The materials can be arranged according to their functions (e.g., all the measuring things together).
- If a child with a disability is not able to sit at the sand or water play activity, put sand or water in a basin on a tray and add a few pieces of equipment. Place the tray on the child's lap or on a table where the child can reach.
- Make sure that water is emptied from the containers every day and cover the sand play area.

## Helping children with sand and water play

- Watch children as they play to find out what they are trying to do and see if they need help.
- Give children plenty of time to experiment and practise the science processing skills.
- Talk to children about what they are doing and introduce new words:
  - *"The leaf is staying on top of the water. It is floating. Do you think*





*the stone will float or sink?”*

- *“You have poured water into the cup. It is half-full.”*
- Ask open-ended questions that help children think more about what they are doing:
  - *“How can you find out ...?”*
  - *“Why do you think that happened?”*
  - *“How did you do that?”*
  - *“Why are you doing that?”*

## Book corner

Children learn to read by being read to and given the opportunity to explore printed materials. When they look at books and enjoy them, they will want to read on their own. They also learn about important print concepts for their own language such as print is read from left to right and from top to bottom. Having a special place where children can look at books is an important way of helping them learn to become readers.

### *Why books are important*

Here are some of the ways that books are important:

- Children learn that books give information that will help them learn more about the world.
- When children look at books they learn about print, for example:
  - How to hold a book the right way up, which is the front and which is the back.
  - Pages are turned in a certain direction.
  - Print is read from left to right and from top to bottom (in English, Sesotho and many other languages).
  - Printed words tell a story or give them information.
  - Pictures on the page are connected to the print.
- Children learn new words and increase their vocabulary. They increase their vocabulary when they name things, people and places in books and they hear new words being read.
- Children learn about people who are different than them in some way, and start to understand how other people feel as they see characters in



the story experience emotion.

- Books excite children's imaginations and curiosity.

## Stages in using books

Children go through different stages in learning to use books:

|                       |   |
|-----------------------|---|
| Stage 1<br>7–9 months | Babies start exploring books. They imitate how they have seen other people reading. They pick up books and pretend to read.                   |
| Stage 2<br>1–2 years  | Children will listen to a book being read. They have their own favourite books which they enjoy being read over and over again.               |
| Stage 3<br>2–3 years  | Children start to understand that stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. They are able to re-tell a story that has been read to them. |
| Stage 4<br>3–4 years  | Children start to understand that the words on the page are connected to the pictures.  |
| Stage 5<br>4–5 years  | Children start to understand that the printed letters represent words.  |
| Stage 6<br>4–5 years  | Children recognise words by looking at them and will point to these in books and the environment.   |

## Setting up the book corner



See the table on page 70 for a detailed list of suggested equipment and materials for this learning corner.

Children need different kinds of books:

1. **Storybooks.** These books tell stories that are not true and can be very enjoyable. Stories can be about things that happen in children's everyday lives, fantasy stories that include talking animals or traditional stories that have been handed down through the years and pass on cultural beliefs and values. Some stories help children to deal with their problems or fears such as going to the clinic or being afraid of the dark.



2. **Factual books.** These books give children information about people, places, animals, plants, transport, seasons and other things in their world. There are books that teach children concepts such as colours, shapes, magnets or sounds. Some books explain how things are done.
3. **Rhyming books.** These are books that have repetitive words and phrases and help children learn about the sounds of words.

Teachers can do the following to help children with books:

- The book corner should be a quiet, cosy place, away from noisy activities like blocks. This could be on a blanket or mat under a tree outside.
- There should be enough space for children to read alone, with another child or with the teacher. Some children like to look at books at a table, if this is available.
- If inside, the book corner should be near a window where there is some light.
- Use low shelves, boxes or other furniture to divide the corner on three sides from the other play areas.
- Put a blanket, mattress, grass mat or rug on the floor with some pillows or cushions and any other comfortable furniture.
- Children need a variety of books to choose from, in their home language.
- Display them on low shelves where children can see the cover of each book. Make sure the books are the right way up.

## *Anti-bias books*

Books need to reflect the values you want children to develop. They should show:

- children of different races playing together.
- children with differing abilities playing together.
- people that look like the children, families and community as well as other people. that look different to them.
- people with disabilities at work or doing things at home.
- people of different races having a variety of jobs.
- both girls and boys doing the same things.
- both men and women in a variety of jobs in and out of the home.



## Helping children with books

- Let children choose their own books.
- Teach children to respect books. Show them how to turn the pages carefully so that they don't get torn, and to put the books back on the shelf when they have finished looking at them.
- Model how to read books— from front to back and from left to right.
- Children learn to read when they have books read to them. Read books aloud to children every day.
- Show children that you are interested in the books that they are looking at by talking to them and asking questions about the books they have chosen.
- Remove books that have torn pages and repair them.
- If you have a child with a visual disability in the group, have some books with large print.

*Books will be discussed in more detail in Module 6.*

## Educational toys

Educational toys are toys and games that are especially good for helping children develop their thinking skills and learn about different concepts.

### *Why educational toys are important*

Here are some of the ways that educational toys are important:

- Children develop control of their hands and fingers and develop their eye-hand coordination when they handle the toys in different ways or fit puzzle pieces together.
- Children develop social skills by learning to play together and share their toys.
- Children learn to solve problems for themselves when they think things out for themselves.
- Children develop the thinking skills they need to organise their learning. As they play with the toys, they learn to:
  - **match** things that are the same.
  - **classify** or group things according to what they have in common (e.g., colour, shape).



- **seriate** or arrange things in order (e.g., from biggest to smallest, shortest to longest).
- understand **number**: quantity (e.g., more, less, the same) and counting real objects.
- **measure** in different ways.
- understand where things are in **space** (e.g., behind, under, next to).

## Stages in developing thinking skills

Children develop their thinking skills in the following ways:

|                      |   |
|----------------------|---|
| Stage 1<br>Recognise | From about 18 months, very young children start to recognise things that are the same and not the same according to colour, shape, size and texture.  |
| Stage 2<br>Match     | From about 2 years of age, children begin to pick out and match things that are the same (e.g., flower, cat, cup, colours).   |
| Stage 3<br>Compare   | Children start to compare things and find out the ways that they are alike and different.   |
| Stage 4<br>Classify  | Older preschool children are able to group or classify things that are the same in some way (e.g., according to colour, size or shape). They will also group animals, people, vehicles, clothes, etc. |

## Choosing educational toys



See the table on page 71 for a detailed list of suggested educational toys and games.

Toys are often expensive to buy. They are generally easy to make, and the *Teacher Resource Guide* gives ideas and instructions for making a variety of toys. If teachers do buy toys, here are a few guidelines:

- Try to choose toys that can be used in more than one way (e.g., toys that children use to build things [construction toys], pegboards, sorting and matching cards).



- Make sure that the toy is sturdy and safe for children and that there are no parts that can easily break off. Painted toys should be free of lead. Most toys should be washable.
- Think about the ages of the children. The toy should be suitably challenging but not too difficult. If the toy is too easy for children, they will lose interest.
- Make sure that the pieces fit together as they are supposed to.
- Choose a variety of different kinds of toys.

### ***Setting up educational toys***

- Choose a quiet space where children will be able to concentrate without distraction (e.g., next to the book corner or on a mat under a tree outside). There needs to be enough space for children to play alone or in groups.
- Use low shelves, boxes or other furniture to divide the corner on three sides from the other play areas.
- Children can play on the floor on mats and at tables if these are available. Place the toys on low shelves where children can help themselves. Group them by type (e.g., matching games, puzzles, threading activities, construction, board games).
- Toy pieces can easily get lost. Store each game in a separate container with a picture and label so that children know where each toy is kept. Write the number of pieces of a puzzle or a toy on its storage container. Do a daily check to be sure all the pieces are there.

### ***Helping children with educational toys***

- Let children choose what they want to play with and leave them to play on their own.
- Observe children as they play to find out what they are doing and how they are learning.
- Follow the child's lead. If you do join in play, remember the guidelines discussed earlier. Don't interrupt their learning by giving a lesson on colour, shape or size. Let her find out for herself by using her own ideas.
- Encourage children to explain what they are doing.
- Ask open-ended questions that will help children about what they are doing:





- *“What do you want to do? How will you do it?”*
- *“Why do you think that happened?”*
- *“Is there another way to ...?”*
- Praise children when they try to do something new, as well as when they complete a puzzle or other activity.
- Help a child who is stuck with a puzzle by talking and asking questions:
  - *“You have put the pieces together and I can see the picture of the car is nearly finished.*
  - *“What part is missing?”*
  - *“Yes, you’re right the car still needs a tyre. What shape is it? Can you find that piece?”*
  - *“What will happen if you turn the piece around and try to make it fit?”*
- If a child has a physical disability, put an activity or puzzle on a tray and place it across a wheelchair or on his lap. Gluing beads or other grips onto puzzle pieces can make it easier for a child to complete it.
- If a child has a visual disability, make texture toys like a feely box or other touch and feel games.

## Physical and outdoor activities

Children love being outdoors! There is lots of space for them to move around, make noise and breathe in fresh air. During outdoor play, children use their large muscles as they run, jump, tumble, somersault, hop, balance on beams or other things, climb and do many other physical activities.

They need time to play outdoors every day. Unlike many children in big cities, most children in Lesotho are fortunate that they can play outside in a safe and beautiful environment.

Outdoor play activities can also be free play activities where children can choose what they want to play with.

### *Why outdoor play is important*

- It is important for children’s health. Fresh air and sunshine are good for their growing bodies.



- Exercising outdoors builds strong bodies. Children develop their large muscle skills when they run, skip, hop and jump as well as their hand and foot muscles when they throw and kick balls.
- Children learn to coordinate their movements when they skip or catch balls.
- Children learn about the world outside, about nature, weather and other science concepts.
- Children learn to share, take turns and cooperate when they play games.

## ***Outdoor activities***

There are a variety of activities that can be planned to do outdoors.

### **1. Equipment to help children practise their muscle skills**

- Think about local things that can be set out for children to practise different movement, for example:
  - ropes for jumping and skipping.
  - balls and beanbags for throwing, catching and kicking.
  - skittles and other targets for children to aim at.
  - wire cars, tyres and other toys to push and pull.
  - boards or stepping stones to balance on.
  - tunnels to crawl through.
  - make an obstacle course with things for children to balance on, crawl through and jump over.
- The space needs to be large enough for all the children to play without bumping into one another.
- There need to be enough activities and materials for the number of children.
- The materials need to be varied and suitable for the ages of the children.
- The activities should be set out so that children know where they can do things.
- Active activities and quieter activities should be separated.
- Equipment should be stored in suitable containers that are easy for children to carry.



- Make a pathway with a rope for a child with a visual disability.

## 2. Games children can play

Give children opportunities to play hopscotch, *liketo*, *morabaraba*, racing games such as *Toeba le katse* and other games involving the use of large muscles.

There are some other ideas for games in the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

If a child with a disability cannot join in some of the games or other outdoor experiences, involve her in activities like gardening or a free play activity that can be brought outdoors.

## 3. Free play activities

Many of the indoor activities can be set up outdoors as well, particularly sand and water play. Children also enjoy playing fantasy games outdoors such as building a structure with stones and other materials and then playing house. Children also enjoy painting outdoors. Set up these activities away from where children are moving around.

## 4. Gardening activities

Find a space to make a key hole garden (parents can help build it) and involve children in growing vegetables. Children can learn to care for the garden. They can learn how to rake up the soil, plant seeds, water the garden and spread compost.

**Children need to be closely supervised at all times during outdoor play.**

## Safe risk

Children learn when they try out new and challenging things. When children play outside, they want to take risks, and it is to be expected that they will fall hurt themselves along the way. A child will not learn to walk or run or climb without falling. The teacher's responsibility is:

- to provide a safe and stimulating environment.
- to help children be aware of any dangers.
- to closely watch over children as they try to master new skills so that they are not exposed to dangerous situations.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Free play activities*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- explore free play activities and understand their importance in children's development.
- reflect on the value of free play activities in meeting the educational goals of the programme.
- set out free play activities in a physical space.
- practise skills in helping children learn as they play.
- explore and share ideas for outdoor play activities.

## Session outline

| Activity                        | Suggested time |
|---------------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection        | 8.30–9.00      |
| Types of activities             | 9.00–9.15      |
| Why free play is important      | 9.15–10.15     |
| The teacher's role              | 10.15–11.00    |
| TEA                             | 11.00–11.30    |
| Setting up learning corners     | 11.30–1.00     |
| LUNCH                           | 1.00–2.00      |
| Helping children learn          | 2.00–3.00      |
| Physical and outdoor activities | 3.00–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity – 1/2 hour*

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the first module.
  - what changes they have made in their own Centres or Home-Bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *Types of activities – 1/4 hour*

Explain that a good programme for children should have a balance of different kinds of activities. Briefly explain the three types of activities (free play, group times and routine times). Say that this module focuses on free play activities. Participants will learn more about the other kinds of activities in future training modules.

### *Why free play is important – 1 hour*

#### **Preparation:**

Prepare two role play scenarios as follows:

1. Set out a water play activity in the training room with lots of different materials for children to test if the objects will float or sink. Put all the materials on a low table so that children can help themselves.
  2. Set out a small bowl of water on a table and have some of the floating and sinking objects (from Scenario 1) at hand.
- Explain to participants that you are going to present two different role plays and that those involved should pretend to be young children. For **Scenario 1**, ask participants to gather around the bowl of water and tell



them that you are going to teach them about floating and sinking.

- Explain the terms float and sink (i.e., if an object stays on top of the water, it floats; if it goes to the bottom of the container, it sinks). Say that you will now demonstrate.
- Take an object that will float (e.g., a feather) and say, *“This feather is light and it will float.”* Ask participants to repeat.
- Take another object that will sink (e.g., a stone) and say, *“This stone is heavy and it will sink.”* Ask participants to repeat what you say.
- Continue in this until all the objects have been placed in the water.

After the activity, discuss how the “children” were learning. Explain that when the teacher provides the information the children are **not active**. They learn what they are told.

- For **Scenario 2**, invite three or four volunteers to play with the water play materials that have been set out. They can choose what they want to play with and play with the materials in their own way. You can play the role of the teacher, but at this stage just ensure that the “children” have enough to play with. The next activity will demonstrate how the teacher interacts with the children to help them learn.
- After the activity discuss how the “children” were learning. Explain that when children can choose the materials and play in their own way, they are **active** and find out things for themselves.
- Discuss the two different approaches and in which scenario children were actively learning. Summarise by discussing the value of free play. For example, children:
  - learn to be independent when they help themselves to materials
  - take initiative when they choose what they want to play with.
  - develop their imagination and creativity when they use the materials in their own way.
  - satisfy their curiosity when they are interested in what they are doing.
  - solve their own problems as they explore and experiment.

Point out that these things cannot be learned by giving children worksheets or asking children to repeat concepts.

*(Keep the water play out for the next activity.)*





## The teacher's role – ¾ hour

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a presentation on the teacher's role. Use the materials from pages 95 to 98 in this guide to write key points on flipchart paper.
  2. Gather a selection of everyday objects such as a spoon, a bunch of keys, a pencil, etc. There should be enough for each participant. Place these in a container.
- Explain that even though children learn through play, the teacher has an important role to play in the learning process.
  - Give a presentation on the teacher's role, using the information in this guide from pages 95 to 98. Clearly explain that teachers need to be very careful not to interrupt children while they are busy to give them a lesson.
  - Before discussing open-ended questions, play this game with participants: Have participants find a partner. Invite participants to choose an item from the container and to put it behind their backs so that their partner can't see what it is. One of the pair must try to guess what her partner has behind her back by asking questions. When she guesses right, they swap roles.
  - After the activity, discuss the kinds of questions that participants asked and write examples on the flipchart. Say that some questions are more useful for finding things out. Explain what closed and open-ended questions giving real examples. For instance, ask a participant:
    - *"What colour are your shoes?"* and wait for a response.
    - Then ask, *"Why did you wear those shoes today?"* and wait for a response.
- Talk about how open-ended questions invite children to talk about what they are doing, and work out things for themselves.
- Ask for a few volunteers to return to the water play activity and to play with the materials. Demonstrate some open-ended questions as they play:
    - *"Why are you doing that?"*
    - *"Why do you think that happened"*



- “How did you do that?”
- “How can you find out?”
- After the activity, discuss what happened. Emphasise that asking children questions is a skill that will improve with lots of practice.

## Setting up learning corners – 🕒 1 ½ hours



The best way for teachers to understand how to set up and equip free play learning corners is to have them physically set up the room (or outside area) themselves. This will require a lot of preparation on your part, as you will need to provide as much equipment and activity materials as possible for each of the learning corners. Before the session, contact participants to find out what materials they can bring from their own classrooms. Display all the equipment and furniture at one end of the training space.

### Preparation:

1. Bring the flipchart classroom outline from Module 2 that best fits the shape of the room (or outside space) that you are in for this session.
  2. Gather activity materials for each learning corner and set them up in an organised way at one end of the training room (or outside if there is limited space). Include things that can be used as dividers, mats, furniture, shelves, etc.
- Divide participants into six groups and give each group one learning corner to focus on. Alternatively they could return to the groups they were in during Module 2 for the learning corners activity.
  - Explain that each group is going to set up their learning corner according to the floor plan that was created in the previous module. They are to set up the corner just as they would for the children in the Centre or Home-Base preschool:
    1. They should first read the information in the *Teacher Resource Guide* about how to set up the corner.
    2. Groups then select what they need from the equipment and materials that have been collected for the workshop. Show participants where the equipment and materials are and explain that groups will have to



- negotiate with one another for space, dividers, mats, etc.
3. Groups set up their learning corners.
  4. Once everything has been set out, invite participants to stand at the entrance and look at the overall layout. Discuss:
    - whether the learning corners fit well next to one another.
    - if the learning corners are separated from another.
    - how children will move around the space.
    - whether all the space has been used (or is there “dead” space in which children will be tempted to run around?).
    - whether there is an entrance and a space for children’s belongings.
  5. Now take the group to each learning corner and discuss:
    - how many children could play with the materials that have been set out.
    - whether the space is big enough for children to play alone as well as with other children.
    - whether children can help themselves to the materials.
  6. Discuss how the learning corners and activities could be adapted if there was a child with a disability in the group. Finally, ask participants to think about and estimate how many children could be accommodated in the space.

**Note to trainer.** If it is not possible to physically set up the learning corners, have groups draw a plan of how they would set up their learning corner.

## Helping children learn – 1 hour

**Preparation:** Write the following task on flipchart paper.

1. Review the general guidelines on the teacher’s role discussed earlier in the session.
2. Read the information in the *Teacher Resource Guide* on helping children learn.
3. Plan a role play to demonstrate how the teacher will interact with the children in your learning corner.



- Participants return to their groups and to their learning corners. Explain that they are going to have an opportunity to play the role of the teacher. Give groups the role play task.



If this is the first time for participants to prepare and act out a role play, explain what it is and give a few guidelines (e.g., each person is to take on the role of a different character– in this case, either a child or the teacher). The group will then demonstrate to the whole class

- Groups prepare and then present their role plays to the entire group. The larger group will gather around the individual learning corners to observe.
- Comment on each scenario and give suggestions where needed. Remind participants that these are skills that will improve with practice.
- Remind participants of the open-ended questioning technique demonstrated earlier. Ask participants to return to their groups and brainstorm some open-ended questions that they could ask children who are playing in the learning corner.
- Groups share their ideas with the large group.

## Physical and outdoor activities – 🌐 1 hour

- Brainstorm how children develop and learn outside. Divide a flipchart page into different columns and record participants' ideas in the appropriate columns. Talk about the importance of taking children outdoors every day for their growth and development. Explain that a variety of activities need to be planned outdoors to support children's development.
- Ask participants what equipment they have for children to play outside. List the equipment on the flipchart. Refer to additional ideas for equipment in the *Teacher Resource Guide*.
- Discuss the other kinds of activities that can happen outside (e.g., sand and water play, fantasy play, art). Talk about how to involve children in gardening activities.
- Explain that there are also many games that children can play that help develop their muscles. Use pages 85 and 86 of the *Teacher Resource Guide* of this guide to give a few examples.



- Divide participants into small groups and ask each group to prepare and demonstrate a traditional Lesotho game to the rest of the group.
- Groups prepare and then teach the rest of the class how to play their game.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



## Workshop 1: Making educational toys

The purpose of these workshops is to provide teachers with opportunities to make different resources to better equip their classrooms. The trainer will need to negotiate a time with teachers over a weekend or during holidays. In this first workshop, teachers will make educational toys.

**Time:** 4 hours

### Preparation

1. Decide on three or four toys and make a sample of each toy. There are ideas for toys in the *Teacher Resource Guide*.
2. Note what materials are needed and inform teachers what they need to bring.
3. On the day of the workshop, display examples of the toys on a table.
4. Prepare work tables with additional materials that teachers might not bring such as scissors or glue.

### On the day of the workshop.

- Greet teachers and start the session with a prayer and song.
- View the examples of the toys and explain how to make each one.
- Display written instructions for making each toy.
- Teachers decide which toy to start with and find a work space.
- Rotate to the different tables to make sure that teachers are clear about the instructions.
- Teachers may be able to make all of the toys. If time runs out, they can finish their toys later at home.
- Display the completed toys and demonstrate, or have volunteers demonstrate how to play with them.
- End the day with a prayer and song.





# Module 4:

## Group Activities

The purpose of this module is to help teachers understand how group times are organised and to explore a variety of group activities for morning rings, story time, music and movement rings and field trips. A major focus of this module is to build on the rich tradition of Basotho culture in songs and dance as well as stories in order to help children understand more about their culture and develop a strong sense of identity.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- extend their understanding of group activities that involve children's active participation.
- share stories, songs and dances with each other.
- practise skills in preparing and presenting group activities.

## What are group times?

During group times, children have the opportunities to progress in all developmental areas. The main difference from free play activities is that the children come together as a group to do an activity and the teacher leads the activity. At certain times during the day, teachers gather the children for different kinds of group activities such as:

- morning ring.
- music and movement activities.
- story time.
- educational trips.

### *Why group times are important*

- Children develop a sense of belonging when they feel that they are part of a group. This helps them feel a sense of community.
- Children are introduced to new concepts and learn more about their world and how things work.
- Children learn to follow instructions.
- Children develop their social skills when they listen to others, share their own ideas, and wait their turn to speak.
- Children develop their concentration skills when they pay attention for a period of time.
- Children develop their large muscles during active group activities like music and movement.
- Children develop their language skills when they listen and learn new words, ask and answer questions.



## Organising group times

### Divide the children

Children of different ages are at different stages of development and have different needs and interests. In order for them to be able to listen and participate, it is better to put all the children of the same age together in a smaller group. This will make it easier for the teacher to keep their attention and attend to the needs of individual children.

The children in the ECCD Centres and Home-Bases can be divided according to the following age groups:

3–4 years

4–5 years

Ideally, the size of the group should not be more than 20 children and, if possible, fewer, particularly for the younger group. However, many teachers are working in less than ideal conditions with large numbers of children. A good practice is for teachers to try not to have more than 25 children in any group activity. Because younger children need more attention, try to keep this group as small as possible. If the teacher is working with another teacher or volunteer, the lead teacher can supervise one group of children while the other teacher or volunteer works with the other group. On the other hand, if the teacher is completely on her own, one suggestion is to organise a few quieter activities for the children who are not participating, such as drawing or doing puzzles, while the teacher instructs the principal group.

If there is more than one teacher, it is better for the same teacher to be with the same group of children every day for group times so that she can get to know them better and form relationships.

### Length of group times

The length of time for group activities will differ according to the ages of the children and the kind of activity.

- Children cannot sit still for long periods of time, so story times are generally shorter than more active group activities like music and movement.
- Younger children can only concentrate for short periods of time.



The following times are suggested:

### 3–4 year olds

Morning ring: 10 minutes

Music time: 15 minutes

Story time: 10 minutes

### 4–5 year olds

Morning ring: 15 minutes

Music time: 20 minutes

Story time: 15 minutes

These times are only a guide. Teachers should take cues from the children. If they look bored or seem restless, shorten the activity; or if they are very involved in what they are doing, the activity can be extended.

**Educational outings** are also group activities that are led by the teacher but that do not take place every day. They will be discussed further in this module.

## When to have group times

Every ECCD Centre or Home-Base is different, and teachers will need to decide for themselves how best to fit group times into their daily programme. The programme should be balanced so that active times alternate with quieter times.

- A morning ring can start the day before free play activity time.
- If the space is small and the free play activities have to be packed away for group time, it may be better to combine story and music times.
- A good time to tell a story is before lunch as it settles children down.
- A good time to have a music or movement activity is before children go outside to play or when they come inside afterwards.

## Where group times can happen

Group activities can take place indoors or outdoors. There should be enough space for children to sit comfortably next to each other without being on top of one another. When they are crowded together, behaviour problems often arise. Music and movement activities need a lot of space.

Group times will be successful when they are well planned with suitable activities to meet the individual interests as well as the developmental needs



of all the children. Teachers will find that some activities are more successful than others, and should take the time to reflect after each activity about what worked well, what did not work well, and possible reasons for each. This information will help them to plan for similar activities in the future.

## Morning ring

Morning ring is a daily group time at the beginning of the day when the children gather together with their teacher. It can involve a number of activities such as:

- sharing things that have happened to children over the weekend, at home, or whatever is important to them.
- finding out which children are at the ECCD Centre or Home-Base and which children are absent.
- discussing what the weather is like for the day.
- celebrating a birthday.
- listening to a religious story and saying a short prayer (e.g., requesting the day's blessings or other prayer such as "The Lord's Prayer").
- explaining the free play activities for the day.
- introducing a new concept, theme or new materials.

As with all group activities, the teacher should think of ways to involve the children so that they don't have to sit and listen for too long. For example:

- Teach children a greetings song or a song related to a new theme.
- Children can bring something interesting from home or related to a theme that other children can explore and discuss.
- When discussing the weather, ask a child to go and look outside and then describe to the rest of the group what he sees. If there is a weather chart, a child can choose the correct picture and place it next to the weekday.
- If a new concept is being introduced, bring a box of objects and invite children to look at or touch them and then ask open-ended questions that invite children to explain their ideas and think more about what they are doing, like:
  - *"How does it feel? Look? Smell? Taste? Sound?"*



- “Where have you seen something like this before?”
- “What do we use it for?”

At the beginning of the year, teachers can introduce a few rules for children to follow during morning ring such as:

- one child speaks at a time.
- everyone can have a chance to speak.
- we all listen when someone is speaking.

## Music and movement

*“Children have a natural interest and love for music. Love of rhythm and melody are awakened by the child’s earliest experiences with sound. Right from birth they have listened to their mother’s voices. They have heard ... lullabies, jingles, poems and the like ...”* (– Ministry of Education and Training, 2007)

During their early childhood years, children enjoy music, dance and rhythmic movements to musical sounds. From birth, babies are exposed to different musical sounds and in many cultures, mothers and caregivers sing to children to calm them.

In the ECCD Centres and Home-Bases, young children learn a number of skills through music, dance and movement.

### *Why music is important*

- Music and movement play a vital role in every child’s growth.
- Children express themselves creatively through music and dance.
- Children learn to understand their emotions.
- Children learn to listen to and compare different sounds.
- Children develop and gain control of their large muscles when they dance, hop, leap and march around.
- Children learn about rhythm when they clap and stamp their feet
- Children learn to play and get along with other children when they share music and movement experiences.





- Children learn new words and increase their vocabulary when they sing songs.
- Children develop their imaginations when they make up their own movements or play musical instruments.
- Children learn about their own and other people's cultures.
- Children enjoy music.



Music is an important part of Basotho culture. Teachers can teach songs and dances and use musical instruments to help children understand more about their own culture. For example:

- Nonyana tse peli
- Apole tse hlano mohaolaneng.

## Music and movement activities

Music and movement activities are an important part of the programme for children in ECCD Centres and Home-Bases. Teachers can provide daily music activities including the following:

- Singing. Young children enjoy singing many different kinds of songs together. There are many songs for young children, such as traditional songs in their home languages, action songs, nursery rhymes and favourite songs that they want to sing over and over again. Children also enjoy making up their own verses of songs.

- Some songs have words that describe big actions which encourage children to move their bodies in different ways as they sing, for example:

*Sello otle ka le leng, ka le leng, ka le leng*

*Sello otle ka le leng, hona joale* (stamps once with one foot)

*Sello otle k'a mabeli, a mabeli, a mabeli*

*Sello otle k'a mabeli, hona joale* (stamps once with each foot)

*Sello otle k'a mararo, a mararo, a mararo*

*Sello otle k'a mararo, hona joale* (stamps once with each foot and swings one hand)

*Sello otle k'a mane, a mane, a mane*

*Sello otle k'a mane, hona joale* (stamps once with each foot and swings two hands)

*Sello otle k'a mahlano, a mahlano, a mahlano*



*Sello otla k'a mahlano hona joale* (stamps once with each foot, swings two hands and nods head)

- Other songs describe small actions and children use their fingers and hands as they sing. These are called fingerplays. For example:

*Song: 'Ngoe, 'ngoe*

*Ngoe, ngoe o ka ena?*

*Ke 'na enoa ke 'na enoa*

*Bona ke etsa joang*

*Peli-peli o kae na?*

*Peli-peli o kae na?*

*Ke 'na enoa, ke 'na enoa*

*Bona ke etsa joang*



A **fingerplay** is a rhyme or song that uses hand or finger movements matched to the words that children sing or chant.

- **Rhyming.** Rhythm is the pattern of sounds in music. Children explore rhythm when they clap hands to a beat, or march to the beat of a drum. Children enjoy using simple musical instruments like shakers, sticks, cymbals and drums to explore rhythm.
- **Listening.** Once children start to become aware of rhythm they enjoy listening to music. They move in time to music and learn that music can be loud or soft, and fast and slow.
- **Dancing and moving.** Children can dance and move to a rhythm in different ways as they sing or listen to music. This also changes if the child is alone, with a partner or with a group. Many songs have rhythmic movements and dance. For example, the cultural dances of *mokhibo* and *mohobelo* are performed through song and dance.



There are some guidelines for teaching cultural dances in the *Teacher Resource Guide* on page 102 to 103.

Movement can be a part of music time when movement activities are included in the music, or it can be a separate activity that does not involve music.

- There should be opportunities for children to move their bodies freely to express themselves, for example, “*We are all trees*”



*blowing in the wind ...”*

- There are times when the teacher tells the children how to move, for example, *“We are snakes crawling on the ground”... now we are frogs jumping high in the air ... everybody is an elephant stomping through the bushes ...”*

## **Musical instruments**

Children enjoy making their own music. Teachers can provide instruments like shakers, drums and pipes and other traditional instruments that make a variety of sounds. Teachers should be prepared for a lot of noise as children explore and express themselves. Young children should not be expected to be able to beat out a steady rhythm. The main purpose of the activity is for children to explore the different sounds that the instruments make.

Teachers can offer children a time to play musical instruments during a music ring.

- The first time they are to be used, she should show children the instruments one at a time and explain how to play them.
- Establish a few simple rules with the children for using the instruments such as:
  - Handle each instrument with care and respect.
  - Pack the instrument away in its place after use.
- Divide the children according to the instruments they have so that all the children with instruments that make the same kinds of sounds stand together.
- Adapt the words of a familiar song to lead the children, for example:
  - *“This is the way we beat our drums, beat our drums, beat our drums ...”* (all the drums play)
  - *“This is the way we shake our shakers, shake our shakers, shake our shakers ...”* (all the shakers play)



There are some ideas for making simple instruments on page 100 to 101 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.



## Planning music and movement rings

Teachers should plan to have a music ring every day if possible. Music rings can happen indoors or outdoors. If the music ring takes place indoors, there should be enough space for children to be able to move around freely. Teachers will decide for themselves where to fit music into their daily programme. A good time to have music is before children go outside to play, or after they have played outdoors.

As discussed earlier, children should be divided into smaller groups according to their ages. A suggested appropriate length of time for a music ring is 15 minutes for 3–4 year olds and 20 minutes for 4–5 year olds.

Teachers should prepare an outline of the activities that they plan to do with the children to make sure that there are a variety of different activities to help children develop and learn.



There are planning sheets on pages 267 to 274 of the *Teacher Resource Guide* to help teachers plan.

### Outline of a music ring

Teachers should plan music ring activities that help children listen to and compare sounds, learn about rhythm and song, and express themselves creatively.

1. **Gather the children.** Bring them together and sit in a circle. Start off with a familiar song or a finger play that all the children know.
2. **Songs.** Plan songs that the children will sing. Sing songs they know first and give children the opportunity to choose their favourites. Teach a new song every few days and practise it regularly every day until children know it well.
3. **Movements and dance.** Some of the songs children know may have actions. Provide additional movement activities or dances for songs. On some days, it is also important that the teacher lets children play musical instruments.
4. **Ending.** Bring the children back to the circle and end with a quiet activity or song.



## Teaching a new song

- Know the song well before you teach it to the children.
- Tell the children what the song is about.
- Teach children one verse at a time.
- Sing the song or verse once to the children while they listen.
- Invite children to sing along with you the next time round. (Don't try to teach it line by line.)
- Sing the song one or two more times (but not more as children will get bored).
- Repeat the song over the next few days until the children know the song. Don't force children to sing if they don't want to.

### Supporting children with disabilities

Find a way for all children, including those with disabilities, to join in with activities. They should not just sit and watch.

Think of an activity that a child with a physical disability can do with his body parts that work, for example:

- A child can nod his head or clap hands in time to the music.
- A child can beat a drum while the other children move around.

## Storytelling

All children love to listen to and tell stories. We all remember the stories that were told to us when we were children. Many of these were used to teach us about the beliefs and practices of our family and culture. Today, this is still the main way of passing on ideas, traditions and values.

### *Why stories are important*

Children learn more about the people, places, animals and things in their world.

- Children live in a world of make-believe and stories stimulate their imaginations as they create mental images of the story.
- Children develop their speaking, listening and memory skills.



- Children develop their language skills as they explore and play with words and increase their vocabulary.
- Children express their thoughts and ideas and solve problems.
- Children learn to understand their own feelings when they identify with characters in a story.
- Children learn about sequence and start to understand that things happen in a certain order.
- Children learn about their own culture as well as other cultures.

## *Kinds of stories*

Children enjoy different types of story at different ages and stages of their development.

- **3–4 year old children** enjoy stories with a simple plot about their everyday experiences like getting up in the morning, visiting the shop or riding in a taxi. They like listening to stories about a favourite character and will ask for it to be read over and over again. They also enjoy stories that have repeating rhymes. Children at this stage are not yet able to tell the difference between fantasy and reality. They need to see as well as listen to a story, whenever possible, and should be shown clear colourful pictures or objects.
- **4–5 year old children** are developing their imaginations and like stories about a wide range of topics. They enjoy stories about real things, how things are made or why things happen. They like stories that capture their imaginations like talking animals and fairies, but they still confuse fantasy with reality. They like books that have a predictable plot and stories with lots of repetition and rhyme.

Teachers can tell different kinds of stories:

- **Stories about real life.** These are stories about things that happen every day in the real world in children's families and neighbourhoods. Stories about real life help children find out more about the people, places and other things in their world.
  - Some stories explain how things work or how things are done.
  - Some stories tell life stories of children and other people who have different abilities and different family, racial, cultural and religious backgrounds from their own.





- Sometimes stories connect to a theme.
- **Stories about fantasy things.** These are stories that are not true and often have animals that talk and do things that humans do. This type of story might help children dream creatively about a fantasy world and/or help children understand how to express emotions.
- **Traditional stories.** These are stories that are handed down through the years and are a part of each culture, and usually have some moral value about what is right and wrong. Teachers may need to adapt these stories to suit the ages of the children in their groups.
- **Made up stories.** Sometimes teachers make up stories to help children face their problems or deal with their feelings.



The Basotho culture has a strong oral storytelling tradition. Parents and community elders can be encouraged to tell traditional stories and community histories.

Teachers should remember that what people in another culture think is a good story might not be a good story according to their own culture. Teachers and parents should tell stories that reflect the values that they want to pass on to the children.

## Story time

Teachers should plan to tell a story every day to their group of children, if possible. Children should be divided into groups according to their ages. We suggest a story of about 10 minutes for 3–4 year olds and about 15 minutes for 4–5 year olds. Teachers will plan where to fit story time into their daily programmes. A good time to tell a story is before lunch to settle children down, or after rest time if children are at the Centre for a full day.

Stories can be told indoors or in a special place outdoors like under a tree.

## Preparing a story

Teachers need to prepare their stories well before they tell them. It is a good idea to start with familiar stories, such as traditional stories that are remembered from childhood. The story should be told in a way to get the children's attention.



- Think about why you want to tell the story and what you want children to learn from it.
- Give the story a structure and work out the details of what will happen. Every story has a beginning, a middle and an end.
  - The **beginning** describes when and where the story takes place and introduces the children to the people and other characters like talking animals.
  - The **middle** establishes the plot. The main events of the story take place. Usually there is a problem that has to be solved.
  - The **end** explains how the story finishes or the problem is solved.
- Think about any new words or ideas that will be need to be explained and when you will do this.

Teachers should know their stories well before telling them. It is a good idea to start with familiar stories such as traditional stories that are remembered from childhood.

## *Telling the story*

- Make sure you have all the necessary materials to tell the story.
- Gather the children. There should be enough space for them to sit comfortably next to each other without touching. It is best to seat children in a circle, or a semi-circle with the teacher seated on a low chair, blanket or tree stump so that all the children can all see and hear. Begin the story with a rhyme, a song or a fingerplay to get the children's attention.
- Think of a way to get children interested in the story. For example, *"Can you see what I have brought today? That's right; it's a hat ... a big, floppy hat. This is Granny's favourite hat that she likes to wear when she goes to the shop. One day ..."*
- Tell the story in an animated manner. Speak in different ways to add excitement and suspense. Use different voices to distinguish between characters in the story. Tell the story in an exaggerated manner to express emotion.
- Show children objects while telling the story. Stop every now and then to show them the illustrations or objects and emphasise how each relates



to the story.

- Allow children to comment and ask questions as the story is being told.
- Ask questions during the story to help children predict or guess what will happen next. Stop the story every now and then and ask questions. For example, “*The frog went down to the river and tied the rope around his leg. What do you think happened next?*”
- Let children join in parts of the story as some parts may repeat themselves. For example, “*The frog told his friend that he was not a fish. What did he say?*” Children chant: “*Frogs are frogs and fish is fish, and that’s it!*”<sup>8</sup>

Some stories have sound effects such as animal noises. Children can make these when signalled by the teacher.

Children can do repeat actions along with the characters in the story.

- After the story, ask children about the story to find out if they understood it. Another option is to encourage children to retell the story from the beginning.

### Supporting children with disabilities

Find ways for all children, including those with disabilities, to join in with the story.

- If a child has a hearing or visual disability, arrange for the child to sit near you.
- Involve different senses to tell the story to keep all children involved. For example a child can touch or smell an object if she cannot see it.
- Make sure a child with a physical disability is comfortably seated.

**Dramatising stories.** Children enjoy acting out stories they know well to other children and their teacher. Let children take turns to become the characters of the story and act it out. Provide dress-up clothes and other props for this activity.

## Story illustrations

Children need to see as well as listen to the story. Illustrations and other things for children to look at, touch or smell make the story come alive.

<sup>8</sup> Chant from Ntataise Theme Guide series: Small Animals. Ntataise Trust



These do not have to be perfectly drawn illustrations.

Teachers can use:

- pictures that have been drawn or cut out from magazines and pasted onto cardboard.
- real everyday things that can be found in or around the home and can be shown as the story is being told.
- props like a hat, an umbrella, a broom. a shopping basket, a straw hat or a wooden chair.
- children's drawings, paintings and clay models.
- puppets.

### Using puppets

There are different kinds of puppets: sock puppets, finger puppets and hand puppets.

Although teachers might feel that they do not have the skills to work with puppets, the children will love them anyway. It may take some time to get comfortable with the puppet, but keep working at it to get positive impacts.

- Each puppet should have its own personality and voice. One puppet could always be very curious and always want to know everything. Another puppet could be shy and need the children to encourage her to speak or do things. Give the puppet a name and let her visit during story time. Ask the puppet her name and other things that will help the children get to know her.
- Start with just letting the puppet sing a song with the children. Once they are used to it, you can start to involve it in your storytelling.
- Talk to the puppet about what is happening in the story, or get it to ask children a question about the story.
- Keep the puppet upright during the story.



There is an idea for making puppets on page 122 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.



## Field trips

Children are curious about the things around them, and field trips are an important and fun way for them to understand more about the real world through first-hand experiences. Children look at, smell, listen to and touch things they might not normally notice. Children can use these trips to interact with the people in their community.

Trips do not have to be expensive or to places far away. They can happen close to the preschool and around the neighbourhood. They can also be organised so that children can be taken farther away to different areas and communities.

Children must be able to listen and follow instructions, so trips are usually better for older children (e.g., 4½–5 year olds). The first few trips should be short and not too far away from the Centre or Home-Base.

### *Why trips are important*

- Children learn about the different people in their world and what they do.
- Children explore nature and living things around them.
- Children develop their thinking skills as they observe things around them.
- Children extend their learning about a topic or theme. For example, if the theme topic is Community Helpers, a trip can be organised to the police station, the clinic or the village chief.
- Children learn to listen and follow instructions and rules.
- Children learn how to get along with others.
- Children develop their language skills and learn words and they describe and ask questions about what is happening.

### *Planning the trip*

Careful planning is necessary however simple the trip.

**Visit the site.** The teacher must be familiar with the place to be visited and where possible, she should visit it before the trip to find out what will be interesting for the children. This will help her plan how to help them learn



during and after the trip. She can also see where the toilets are and if there is a place to sit and talk or have a snack. She will need to check that sites such as building or roadworks are safe for children, and make the necessary arrangements with the building foreman or roadworks operator.

**Consider each child.** All children in the group need to be able to participate in the trip. If there is a child with a disability in the group, the teacher needs to think about whether the trip will be suitable and what changes could be made so that the child could join in. For example, a parent volunteer could accompany the child and assist when needed. If this is not possible, the teacher should think of another place to visit so that no child feels excluded from a special and exciting experience. Think about where a child could take a nap should she get too tired during the trip.

**Get permission.** All parents need to consent to their children going on the trip. It is recommended that parents sign permission forms so that the preschool is not held liable in case of accidents. Some teachers ask parents to sign a general permission form for all trips at the beginning of the year.

**Inform the parents.** Tell parents everything about the trip beforehand– the purpose of the trip, when and where you will go, how the children should dress and what they need to bring (food, money, etc.). Telling the parents the purpose of the trip in advance will help them to think of different questions to ask their children when they return home from the trip.

**Put safety measures in place.** Children need to be well supervised during trips. There should be one adult for every five children. Ask parents and other volunteers to go along on the trip to help supervise. This will also give parents the opportunity to share the experience with their children. Allocate a small group of children to each adult to care for their needs on the trip and go through the rules for the trip.

Take basic supplies as well as any medicines that children may routinely need, such as an asthma inhaler. Take a list of whom to contact in case of an emergency with you.







| Basic supplies  |                             |
|---|-----------------------------|
| Drinking water and cups                               | Disposable plastic gloves   |
| Snacks (if needed)                                    | Extra clothing for children |
| Tissues   | Cell phone                  |
| Plasters  | Toilet roll                 |
| Extra umbrellas or rain jackets (if rain is expected) |                             |

Go over these important safety rules with the children, as well as others that may pertain to the field trip or your situation:

- Walk at all times.
- Each child is assigned a partner and should stay with his or her partner/group.
- Do not go away from the group.
- If a stranger calls you, tell the teacher immediately.
- Hold hands with your partner.
- Cross the road when the teacher/parent says so.
- Sit down when you are in the taxi or other vehicle.
- You can touch something if the teacher says so.

Safety should be top on the list of priorities about vehicles to be used for trips. Teachers should consult with a taxi owner whose vehicles are known to be safe and have good drivers.

**Prepare the children.** Children should be prepared for the trip beforehand. A few days before the trip, teachers can tell them where they are going, and what they will do and see. Answer any questions the children may have so that they will feel comfortable about the trip. Children can draw pictures of what they think they might see or the teacher can tell a story or teach a song related to the trip. Invite parents who are available to join the trip to help manage groups of children and keep children safe.

### *Where to go on trips*

Every trip should have a purpose. In order to decide where to go, the teacher should:

- plan with the educational goals in mind.



- link the trip to a theme topic.
- watch the children to see what interests them.

The teacher can also work together with parents. For example:

- Arrange a visit to a farm, because the father of one of the children works there and can help to organise the visit.
- Take a walk to the local store because a child's mother works there.

Here are examples of places that could be visited:

- Near the preschool: Go on a walk to look at the living things close by (e.g., trees, leaves, small animals and insects, worms , common birds, butterflies).
- Around the neighbourhood:
  - different houses and building (e.g., the chief's house, the nuns' house, the teacher's house)
  - local stores to learn about what happens in a shop
  - clinic
  - police station
  - the church hall
  - the primary school
  - a playground to play different games
  - visit community members such a grandmother
  - roadworks
  - building sites
  - taxi rank
  - workplaces of parents (e.g., the post office)
  - the path
  - the tar road





Be resourceful and look around the community to see what common work activities are done and which could be of importance and interest to take children to visit. Different communities will have different things. Teachers should take children to places where they can experience things through their five senses– and not have to stand or sit and listen for long periods of time.

## *Going on the trip*

On the day of the trip, the teacher should tell the children and adults what will happen and explain the rules. Talk about any special things that children should look out for and discuss with adults what children can learn and how adults can help children to meet these learning objectives.

Adults should be prepared for unexpected events. Each child is different and will react differently to new experiences. One child may find a new situation a bit frightening; another child may have trouble following the rules. Adults need to respond calmly to any difficulties that arise.

During the trip, the adults talk to the children and help them notice things they see and hear along the way. For example:

- *“Why does the house have a roof?”*
- *“How are the houses the same? How are they different?”*
- *“How many people do you think are in that taxi?”*
- *“What sounds are the birds making?”*
- *“How does it smell?”*
- *“Why do you think she is dressed like that?”*

If there is something interesting that happens, children may want to stop and talk about it. Adults should encourage children to talk about the things they find interesting and ask follow-up questions. Adults should encourage children to look closely at things around them and describe what they see, and be prepared to answer children’s questions. Adults should ask open-ended questions that encourage children to think more about what is happening. For example:



- *“How do you know it’s a tortoise?”*
- *“Where do you think it is going?”*
- *“Why do you think it moves like that?”*
- *“Does anyone know what a tortoise eats?”*
- *“Where do you think it sleeps at night?”*

Adults should avoid simply telling children what is happening.

### ***After the trip***

If it is a short day trip, when children return to the preschool they will probably still be very excited about the trip. Plan a quiet activity like a group time or snack to settle the children.

Over the next few days after the trip, teachers can plan follow-up activities to extend what children have learned on the trip. For example:

- During morning ring, children can talk about what they saw and did.
- Children can draw the story of what happened and dictate it to the teacher. Children’s drawings and stories can be made into books.
- Put extra props relevant to the trip in the fantasy play or building corner so that children can act out their experiences.
- Tell a story or teach children a song that relates to the trip.
- Provide books and pictures about the topic.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Group activities*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- extend their understanding of group activities that involve children's active participation.
- share stories, songs and dances with each other.
- practise skills in preparing and presenting group activities.

## Session outline

| Activity                 | Suggested time |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection | 8.30–9.00      |
| Group times              | 9.00–9.30      |
| Morning ring             | 9.30–10.00     |
| TEA                      | 10.00–10.30    |
| Music and movement       | 10.30–12.00    |
| Storytelling             | 12.00–1.00     |
| LUNCH                    | 1.00–2.00      |
| Storytelling (continued) | 2.00–3.00      |
| Field trips              | 3.00–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### Reflection activity – 1/2 hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the first module.
  - what changes they have made in their own Centres or Home-Bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### What are group times – 1/2 hour

#### Preparation:

Prepare a presentation on group times using the information on pages 129 to 132 of this manual. Write key points on flipchart paper.

- **Talking wheel.** Participants form two circles of even numbers and then have one circle stand inside the other circle. Those in the inner circle face outwards and those in the outer circle face inwards, so that everyone faces someone who will be her partner. Explain that you will sing a song together (or play a musical instrument like a drum or a whistle). Everyone will move in time to the music, to their right. When you yell “Stop!” they will be facing a new partner. Do this and then ask the first question. Have each pair discuss the question. After a few minutes, start the song again and ask the circles to rotate again. When the music stops ask the next question. Continue in this way until participants have discussed all the questions.

Questions to discuss around circle time:

1. What are group time activities?
2. Why are group times important?





3. What do you enjoy about group times?
4. What do you find difficult about group times?

After the activity, come back into the large group and invite participants to share some of the ideas and concerns they discussed with their partners.

- To close the session, give a presentation using the prepared flipchart points on group times and how to organise them in a preschool programme.

### **Morning ring – 1/2 hour**

- Invite participants to join you in a circle.
  1. Find out if there are any absentees from the group.
  2. Invite volunteers to share something that happened to them on the way to the training this morning.
  3. Discuss the weather that day.
  4. Explain what activities will be taking place during the day and invite participants to comment and ask questions.

Explain that you have just demonstrated a morning ring. Discuss how this would be different for children and encourage participants to share what they do during their own morning rings. Emphasise the importance of involving children in the activities so that they do not have to sit and listen for too long. Make sure all the points on page 132 to 133 of the guide are covered.



## Music and movement – 🌐 1 ½ hours

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a music and movement ring using the outline on page 137 of this guide. Make sure to have activities for each of the following:
  - **Gathering:** Sing a familiar song or do a finger play.
  - **Songs:** Sing a few known songs. Teach a new song.
  - **Movements and dance:** Sing songs with actions; do movements, activities or dance.
  - **Ending:** Bring everyone back to the circle and end with a quite song or activity.
2. Prepare a presentation on music and movement activities using the information on pages 133 to 138 of this guide and write the main points on flipchart paper.
3. Collect a variety of simple handmade musical instruments, including traditional instruments.

- Start off by doing the prepared music and movement ring with the participants.

After the activity brainstorm the different kinds of activities they observed. As participants call them out, list them under headings. For example:

- gathering: fingerplays with actions
- songs: traditional song, new song, song with clapping
- movements and dance: song with big actions, dance
- ending: quiet song
- Explain how each kind of activity serves a purpose.
  - Gathering. Activities are planned to bring children together and get their attention.
  - Singing songs. Children develop their memory skills as they sing familiar songs and their listening (and memory) skills as they learn new songs. They learn about rhythm as they sing and clap their hands



- Movements and dance. Action songs and dances have large movements that require children to use their whole bodies to move. This helps them develop body awareness.
  - Ending. A quieter activity helps to settle the children at the end of the music ring.
- Briefly explain how and when music should take place, using the information on page 131 to 132 of the manual. Explain how children should be divided into smaller groups according to their ages and give the recommended time for each age group. Explain that movement activities can be a part of the music ring or can be done as separate group experiences, for example, during outdoor play.
  - Discuss whether the activities would be suitable for young children, and talk about the importance of having a balance of songs and movement activities, and of quiet and active activities. Discuss ways that music and movement rings could be modified so that children with disabilities could participate.
  - In the large group, discuss why music is important, particularly as a part of children's cultural learning.
  - Show participants the musical instruments and talk about how children can use them during a music ring. Let participants explore the different sounds and rhythms of the different instruments. Talk about how some of the traditional instruments are made. Discuss ways that a child with a disability would be able to participate in such an activity.
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Ask groups to plan a song or a dance that they would teach to children during a music and movement ring.

Each group demonstrates the song or dance. After each group presents, ask the group to explain what children will learn from the activity and the age group for which it would be suitable.



## Storytelling – 2 hours

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a children's story to tell to the group. Use one of the stories in the Teacher Resource Guide on pages 116 to 119 or a favourite story you know well.
2. Bring props and other visual aids to use as illustrations such as real objects, puppets, pictures or children's artwork.
3. Prepare a presentation on how to tell a story using the information on pages 141 to 143 of this guide and write the main points on flipchart paper.

- Gather participants into a circle for a storytelling session. Tell the story making sure that all the points on pages 141 to 142 are included in the demonstration.

After the story, ask participants whether they enjoyed the story and their reasons. Discuss:

- the age group for which the story would be suitable.
  - what children could learn from the story.
  - the different techniques that were used to get and hold children's attention and any other techniques that could have been used.
  - the kinds of questions that were asked.
  - how they participated in the different parts of the story.
  - what illustrations were used.
  - how the story ended.
- Brainstorm why stories are important for young children and write the responses on flipchart paper.
  - Give a presentation on how to tell a story using the prepared flipchart points. Review the different parts of the story that was demonstrated. Use the information on page 141 to explain that every story has a beginning, a middle and an end and give details about what goes into each story part.
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group a different prop or



visual aid. Instruct the groups to prepare a story to tell the rest of the group using the materials they have been given. The group elects one person to be the storyteller, and the other members of the group act as the children.

- Encourage groups to use the storytelling strategies that were discussed in their presentation. Give groups ample time to prepare their stories.

Each group demonstrates their story to the entire group. Ask the same questions that were asked previously:

- *“What age group would the story be suitable for?”*
  - *“What could children could learn from the story?”*
  - *“How did the teacher get and hold the children’s attention?”*
  - *“What kinds of questions were asked?”*
  - *“How did the children participate in the different parts of the story?”*
  - *“What illustrations were used?”*
  - *“How did the story end?”*
- Close this part of the session by informing participants that storytelling will be further explored in Module 6 (Early Literacy).

## Field trips – 1 hour

### Preparation:

1. Prepare separate sheets of flipchart paper for different groups. Each page should have a trip experience as the title, and spaces to write down what children will see and what they will learn:

| Going to the shop      |                         |
|------------------------|-------------------------|
| What children will see | What children can learn |
| Preparation            | Follow-up activities    |



2. Prepare a presentation on planning and going on field trips using the information on pages 144 to 149 of this guide and write the main points on flipchart paper.

- Ask participants if they ever take the children in their groups on trips around the neighbourhood. After the group has mentioned several examples, explain that there are many learning experiences for children close at hand.
- Divide participants into as many small groups as you have prepared flipchart page topics. Display the flipchart pages on the wall in different parts of the training room. Ask each group to stand next to one of the pages. Give each group a (different colour) marker and explain that they will have 10 minutes to write down their ideas. After 10 minutes, ask groups to rotate to the next page and give another 5 minutes to add new ideas to the existing brainstorm. Continue in this way every group has contributed ideas to every trip.
- Brainstorm other places to take children on trips.
- Give a presentation on planning and going on a trip using the prepared flipchart points.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.





# Module 5:

## Programme Planning

The purpose of this module is to provide teachers with a basic understanding of different aspects of planning a programme for young children including a daily programme, long and short-term planning, and the use of themes in planning. Ongoing observations of children are an important factor in planning to meet children's individual needs. This module provides simple guidelines and tools for observation.





### The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- reflect on their own programmes and identify areas for improvement.
- plan a balanced daily programme to meet children's developmental needs.
- have a basic understanding of long-term planning.
- be equipped with the knowledge of how to use weekly planning sheets.
- understand the importance of objectively observing every child on a continuous basis to build up a picture of how each child is progressing in all developmental areas.

For children to learn in the best possible way, teachers must carefully plan their programmes. When teachers set goals and work out how to meet these goals they will feel confident about what they are doing. This module will get teachers thinking about their own programmes and changes that need to be made to best meet children's developmental needs.

## Principles of planning

There is no one right way to plan a programme for young children but there are some general principles that will guide teachers in their planning:

- The plan should be guided by the educational goals that the preschool is trying to achieve across all developmental areas.
- All activities should be age and developmentally appropriate.
- Each child's individual needs should be considered, including children with disabilities or other special learning needs.
- Each child's family, culture, language, religion and gender should be reflected in the programme.
- The different parts of the programme should connect in some way. When teachers plan according to themes they group topics together and link them to other topics. The flow chart on page 177 shows how topics can be grouped and linked.



- Planning should consider the resources that are available and how these can be used to meet programme objectives.

Planning starts with the creation of a *daily programme*.

## A daily programme



**A daily programme** means that children do the same kinds of activities at the same time every day.

It is important to have a daily programme because children like to know what to expect every day. It makes them feel safe and secure. For example, they know that they can choose their own activities after breakfast and that later they pack away the toys and other activity materials to go to the toilet and wash their hands. This helps them learn that things happen in a certain order, which is important for learning about time. Children learn to be independent and take initiative when they know what to do next without having to wait for their teacher to tell them what to do.

A daily programme also helps families to know what their children are doing every day so that they can talk to their children about what happened during the school day. It is also helpful for teachers because they know that they need to set out free play activities in the learning corners and plan morning ring, music and movement and story activities every day. This helps them to be more organised.

The daily programme “*should not control the caregiver but be a guide hence responding to the interests and needs of the children*” (Ministry of Education and Training, 2007).

### *How to plan a daily programme*

When planning a daily programme consider the following:

#### **1. Children’s physical health needs**

- Children have *nutritional* needs. Meal and snack times are planned depending on how long the preschool is open and whether or not children receive nourishing food before they arrive in the mornings.



Younger children need to eat more often.

- Children have *hygienic* needs. Children need to learn how to use the toilet and when to wash their hands. If the latrine is far away a teacher or volunteer should be available to supervise and help where necessary. If there is no latrine or pit, children should go far from the building, and then be helped to cover it with sand.
- Children have *health* needs. A daily health check should be done every day when the children arrive to check that they are healthy.



A list of signs of ill health is provided on page 163.

- Children need to *rest*. Depending on how long the Centre is open children need to have a rest period.
- Children need to be *active*. They need time to play and exercise their bodies.

## 2. Educational goals

The programme should support children's growth and development across all developmental areas. The educational goals for young children are listed in Module 1.

## 3. Teachers' needs

In planning the daily programme the needs of the teachers and other staff need to be considered.

- Teachers need time to prepare for the day's activities and also be available when the children arrive.
- Teachers need to manage the children when they go from one activity to another. Teachers also need to make sure that everything is tidied up.
- Teachers need time during the day to observe individual children and keep records of their observations. This is an important part of meeting children's individual needs.
- Teachers need time to write down their plans and keep necessary records like attendance, daily and weekly planning, and observation notes.
- Teachers need tea times, if possible, away from the children.



#### 4. Type of programme

Each daily programme will be different according to:

- the hours the Centre or Home-Base is open.
- the type of structure (if there is one) and space for activities.
- the number of adults in the programme (if there is only one teacher, she will take on all the responsibilities and need to consider the time it will take for the transition to each new activity).
- the weather.

#### *Different parts of a daily programme*

In Module 3, teachers were introduced to the different parts of an ECCD programme:

1. **Free play activities.** Children learn through play and need lots of time to play. A large block of time is planned every day during which children choose from the toys and materials that have been set out in the learning corners and play with them in their own way. When planning a daily programme, teachers should remember that children are most alert and ready to learn in the mornings, and this is the best time for free play activities.
2. **Group times.** During these activities, all the children are together and the teacher leads them (e.g., music, movement and story).



Free play activities and group times were discussed in Modules 3 on pages 93 to 113 and Module 4 on pages 128 to 149.

3. **Routine times.** These are the times that are set aside every day to meet children's basic health and nutrition needs, like mealtimes, toilet and wash times and— if it is a full day programme— a rest time.

Much has been discussed in the previous modules on free play and group activities. The following section looks at the routine times that should be included in a daily programme.

#### *Routine times*

Routines are a very important part of the ECCD programme. In addition to



meeting children's basic health needs, they are important learning times. As in other parts of the programme, children should be given opportunities to be as independent as possible.

### *Arrival and departure times*

There needs to be enough time planned for the teacher to greet each child as he arrives and to talk to family members about their children. As she greets the child, she looks for any signs of ill health such as:

- cuts or sores that may need attention
- fever
- skin rashes or spots
- irregular breathing
- coughing or sneezing
- discharge from the eyes, nose or ears
- sleepy or other unusual behaviour

If the teacher is concerned by something she observes she can talk to the family member right away so that if the child is sick or thought to be infectious to other children, he can be taken home immediately.



**Appendix 3: Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)** on page 312 to 313 provides a list of danger signs that parents and teachers need to learn so that they will know when a child needs to receive immediate and urgent medical help.

At departure time, the teacher makes sure that children are ready with their belongings and anything else they have made during the day. She talks to family members about their child's day.







The Ministry of Education and Training sets out clear requirements for departure times to ensure children's safety. The teacher has to know the children who walk home alone, those who are accompanied by their older brothers and sisters, and those who are collected by their parents or other relatives and guardians. In a case where a child is not picked up at that time, or is late to be collected by the parent or guardian, the teacher needs to find a way of making sure that the child gets home safely.

## ***Toilet and wash times***

Although children can go to the latrine or toilet when they need to, there are also planned times for this routine to teach the children to use the latrine or toilet and to wash their hands with soap properly afterwards. If there is more than one adult working with the children, take a few children to the toilet and wash area at a time.

Children should be taught how and when to wash their hands. They should wash their hands:

- before eating or preparing food.
- after using the toilet or latrine.
- after playing outside.
- after touching animals.



During this routine, the teacher helps children understand that washing hands helps stop them getting sick.

*It is important to use running water and soap to clean off germs. When children share basins of water, germs spread. As most Centres do not have running water, it is best to pour a small amount of water from the container*

for the child or adult to wash their hands and then rinse with the water from the container.



An idea for a tippy-tap is provided in **Appendix 4: Tippy-tap** on page 314.

Children usually shake their hands dry. This is preferable to having children share a towel.

Regular toilet and wash routines should be planned throughout the day and particularly before eating and after playing.

### Supporting children with disabilities

There may be a special routine for a child with a physical disability or he may need help with certain hygiene activities. The teacher should discuss with the caregivers of the child how routines are carried out at home and plan ways to support similar routines in the preschool for consistency with the child. This may mean planning to allow more time for the child to get to and use the latrine. The teacher should think about how the child can do things independently and plan appropriately. For example, the child can hold the toilet roll or wash her hands. During toilet routines, the child's right to privacy and her dignity needs to be respected at all times.

### Cleaning teeth

Providing an opportunity for children to brush their teeth in the ECCD Centre or Home-Base at least once after a mealtime helps them develop good hygiene habits. What is important is that children learn why it is important to keep their teeth clean and that they do so every day with whatever materials are available in the preschool.

- Each child should have his or her own toothbrush. If there is no toothbrush or toothpaste, they can rub their teeth with salt and bicarbonate of soda.
- The teacher should teach children how to brush their teeth properly.
- Toothbrushes need to be stored so that they do not touch one another and are clearly marked with the children's names.
- This routine needs to be supervised. The teacher hands out each child's



toothbrush and lets them brush their teeth, rinse with water and the spit out on the grass.

- The teacher talks to children about the importance of teeth brushing and how brushing keeps their teeth and gums healthy.

## Meal times

Children need to eat a balanced diet with many different kinds of foods to stay strong and healthy. In Lesotho, many families are not able to provide enough food or the right kinds of food, and children often fall below the normal weight for their ages. Furthermore, many children with chronic illnesses also often lose weight and become malnourished. Many preschools run for a few hours in the morning and no meals are provided. If, however, the preschool does provide meals or snacks for children, it is important that nutritious food is provided. When planning weekly menus, teachers should make sure that meals include energy, growth and protection foods. If food is brought from home to eat at the preschool, teachers should help parents and caregivers understand the kinds of foods they can send that best meet their child's nutritional needs. If possible, have nutritional food available in case the food sent from home does not meet the child's needs, or parents and caregivers are not able to send food from home.



Guidelines for planning balanced meals are provided in **Appendix 5: Healthy Food for Young Children** on page 315 to 316.

Young children have small stomachs, so it is best to feed them small meals at regular intervals. The number of meal and snack times served in an ECCD Centre or Home-Base will depend on the hours that each preschool is open. For example:

- If the children spend the entire day in the preschool and arrive early in the morning, it is recommended, resources permitting, that breakfast and lunch are served, as well as a morning and an afternoon snack.
- If the children are only there for a few hours in the morning, a healthy snack could be served some time mid-morning.

When planning a daily programme, teachers should make sure there is enough time for children to help set out the tables and serve food.



Meal times should be pleasant times of the day. They are good learning times when the teacher sits with the children and talks to them about the food they are eating and teaches them appropriate eating behaviours.

Meal times are a social time when all children should be able to communicate with one another. Make sure that children with disabilities are not seated separately. If a child needs help with feeding, an adult can sit with her at the table, or bring her to the table where other children are sitting after she has been fed, so that she can spend time with her friends. The teacher might need to make some adaptations so that a child can feed himself independently. For example, she can wrap foam around a spoon to make it thicker and easier to hold, or provide a straw if the child cannot hold a cup. Finger foods can be provided if a child is not able to use a spoon.

## *Rest times*

Rest is essential for children's physical development and is an important part of any programme longer than 5 hours. Children should rest for at least 1 hour and longer for younger children, usually after lunch time. Teachers should allow for time for children to fetch and lay out a mat, take off their shoes and lie down. Children will not sleep for exactly the same length of time, as the rest needs of each will differ. Children who are awake earlier should be encouraged to sit on their mat and look at a book or do another quiet activity.

## *Transition times*

Transitions are those times when children change activities. When children move from one activity to another, these times need to be well-organised so that children do not have to stand in line or wait for a long time. Standing in line or waiting for a long time is when misbehaviour most often happens and proper planning can minimise transition times between activities and help children to avoid misbehaving. Consequently, these times should also be included when planning a daily programme.

- At the end of free play activities, give children plenty of warning and allow time for them to clean up and pack away. A child with a disability may need to start earlier than other children.
- Allow time for children to help with preparing and serving meals.



## Guidelines for planning a daily programme

When teachers plan their programmes, they set aside large blocks of time for different activities. So far we have described the following activities to include in a daily programme:

| Free play times  | Group times                                      | Routine times                                   |
|--|--|---|
| Fantasy play, building, art, science, books and educational toys<br>Outdoor play | Morning ring<br>Music and movement<br>Story time | Arrival<br>Toilet and wash<br>Mealtimes<br>Rest |

The next step is to present an overview of what you need to consider when deciding when and how much time to give to each activity.

- Children need to spend most of their day playing. Teachers should plan for children between 3 and 5 years of age to have about 1–1½ hours of free play indoors and ¾ –1 hour of outdoor free play every day. This can be provided in one block of time, as in the example on page 169, or in smaller blocks of time during the morning, as in the example from the Ministry of Education and Training on page 170.
- Group times use shorter periods of time because children have short attention spans. Teachers should plan for children between 3 and 5 years of age to have group times of between 10 and 20 minutes.
- Routine times will vary between 20 minutes for toilet and wash times to an hour or more for rest times. They should not involve children standing in lines or waiting for a long time.
- Children are most alert and ready to learn in the mornings, and this is the best time for free play activities.
- Active activities should alternate with quieter activities so that children will not get too tired.
- The daily programme is only a guide, and it is important to be flexible. If children are restless during an activity, it is best to shorten it and do something different. It may also happen that unplanned activities may occur or that children may want to spend longer with an activity, which will also affect the daily programme. Having a flexible programme will allow teachers to adjust it as the day unfolds.
- A child with a disability may need more time to complete a routine or an activity.



**Example 1 of a daily programme for 3–5 year olds**

| Time        | What happens  | Breakdown of time |
|-------------|---|-------------------|
| 7.00–7.30   | Arrival<br>Health check                                   | 30 minutes        |
| 7.30–8.15   | Breakfast<br>Clear away                                   | 45 minutes        |
| 8.15–8.30   | Morning ring  | 10–15 minutes     |
| 8.30–9.45   | Free play activities<br>Pack away materials and toys      | 1¼ hours          |
| 9.45–10.05  | Toilet and wash hands                                     | 20 minutes        |
| 10.05–10.30 | Snack   | 25 minutes        |
| 10.30–10.50 | Music and movement<br>Children divide into groups         | 20 minutes        |
| 10.50–11.40 | Outdoor play  | 50 minutes        |
| 11.40–12.00 | Toilet and wash hands                                     | 20 minutes        |
| 12.00–12.15 | Story time  | ¼ hour            |
| 12.15–1.00  | Lunch time  | ¾ hour            |
| 1.00–2.00   | Rest  | 1 hour            |
| 2.00–2.20   | Toilet and wash   | 20 minutes        |
| 2.20–2.45   | Snack   | 25 minutes        |
| 2.45–3.30   | Free play activities                                      | ¾ hour            |
| 3.30–4.30   | Outdoor or indoor free play                               | 1 hour            |
| 4.30–5.00   | Prepare to go home<br>Quiet activity<br>Departure at 5.00 | ½ hour            |





### *Example 2 of a daily programme for 3–5 year olds<sup>9</sup>*

| Timing     | Activity   |
|------------|--|
| 15 minutes | Indoor free choice activities  |
| 45 minutes | Arrival, toileting, assembly and prayers   |
| 30 minutes | Language activities  |
| 45 minutes | Outdoor play and break, snack and toileting  |
| 30 minutes | Mathematics activities   |
| 30 minutes | Science and Social studies (3 days), Creative activities (1 day), Music and Movement (1 day) |
| 10 minutes | Preparation for home   |

Teachers can adapt these examples according to their own schedules using the following guidelines for planning:

| Activities                | 3–4 years     | 4–5 years     |
|---------------------------|---------------|---------------|
| Free play indoors         | 1 hour        | 1½ hours      |
| Free play outdoors        | ¾ hour        | 1 hour        |
| Group times               | 10–15 minutes | 15–20 minutes |
| Toilet and wash routines  | 20 minutes    | 15 minutes    |
| Snack times               | 20 minutes    | 15 minutes    |
| Breakfast and lunch times | 45 minutes    | 30–40 minutes |
| Rest times                | 1½ hours      | 1 hour        |

<sup>9</sup> Source: Ministry of Education and Training (2007). Early childhood Care and Development Training Manual for Home-Based Caregivers.



## Mixed age groups

Mixed age grouping, also known as multi-age grouping or family grouping, means that during free play activities, children of different ages play together. There needs to be a wide enough range of activities that will meet the developmental needs of all the children, so that each child can develop at his own pace and so that older children don't get bored.

When children of different ages play together, it provides younger children with the opportunity to watch and imitate children who are older than them. It is also beneficial to older children as they learn about caring and sharing when they let younger children play with them and teach them how to play games correctly.

Mixed age grouping works well for 3–5 year olds as children from both age groups will learn from the different kinds of activities. However, mixed age grouping is not recommended for children younger than 3, as they will need shorter activity times and longer routine times than older children.

## Team teaching

It is best to have at least two teachers working together as a team. Those teachers who are working alone in their settings should try to enlist the help of one or more volunteers, especially if they have large numbers of children, at least during certain times of the day.

Team teaching means sharing the work in order to make the daily programme run as smoothly as possible. For example:

- As children arrive, one teacher is responsible for greeting the children and their parents and completing the health check. The second teacher (or volunteer) sets up and prepares things for breakfast. When children sit down for breakfast one teacher supervises them while the other teacher begins setting out the activities for free play.
- In team teaching, each teacher takes responsibility for particular learning corners. One teacher may be responsible for art, fantasy play and building corners, and the other teacher (or volunteer) for the science, book and educational corner. During free play times, she does not work with her own group of children, but with those children who choose to do activities in her learning corners.



- Towards the end of free play time, as children start to pack away the materials and toys they have been using, one teacher takes a few children to the toilet and wash area and then stays there to supervise the children during this routine. The other teacher stays with the rest of the children. She sets out chairs for snack time so that she is ready for children as they come from the toilet and wash area.

The day continues in the same way so that the programme flows smoothly and the children always have something to do. The children do not have to wait in line or sit quietly until everyone is ready before moving on to the next activity. Before each new activity starts, a teacher needs to be ready and waiting for the children who arrive first.

During group times, children are divided according to their ages for music and movement and story time. The teacher should lead the children through these activities.

Careful planning is needed for team teaching to be effective. Teachers need to work out what duties are needed and how these can be divided equally between the numbers of adults. Teachers will also need to be able to get along with each other.

## Planning for the year

### *Long-term plan*



The long-term plan outlines the general content areas that will be covered for the whole year. It is only a basic guide for the year that gives an indication of the kinds of activities that can be planned to meet the educational goals.

There are different strategies that teachers use to develop a plan for the year.

### **Educational goals**

One way is to use the educational goals as a guide. At the beginning of the year, the teacher will not know very much about the individual children in her group so she plans according to the educational goals that set out what



children should achieve in each of the developmental areas.

1. The teacher considers the ages of the children. The information on developmental milestones that children are expected to achieve on pages 39 to 44 guide her planning.
2. The teacher lists the kinds of activities for free play and group activities that will help children of a particular age group develop and learn.

**For example:**

**Age group: 4–5 years**

**Developmental area: Cognitive development**

| Educational goals   | Free play activities   | Group activities   | Routines   |
|---|--|--|--|
| <p>To learn about themselves, their families and the people around them.</p> <p>Theme: My home and family</p> | <p>Fantasy corner:<br/>Dress-up clothes for different members of the family and different cultural events, different community people.</p> <p>Building corner:<br/>Add materials for children to make houses and other structures; pictures of different structures to stimulate play.</p> <p>Art: Drawing and painting, collages, modelling of families, and people around them.</p> <p>Books: About family life, cultures; traditional stories; books in home language; books about people in the community.</p> <p>Educational toys: puzzles and games of family and community members.</p> | <p>Morning ring:<br/>Discussions about family, how they are alike and different, growing up in a family, caring, roles of family members, working, people in the community, going to school, the clinic, what the police do.</p> <p>Stories:<br/>About family members (e.g., grandmother, older sister, new born baby), traditional events, family outing. Stories about community events (e.g., going to the clinic, first day at school, how a policeman helped), holidays such as Moshoeshoe's Day and Independence Day.</p> <p>Music and movement:<br/>Movements related to what happens in the home, around the community.</p> <p>Songs and fingerplays about the family, going to school, the clinic, the police, etc.</p> | <p>Meal times:<br/>Set up mealtimes in the way that children have them at home.<br/>Talk about kinds of foods children eat at home, special foods for special occasions.</p> |



3. The next step is to decide on the order in which the activities should be offered. This involves using certain sequencing principles:
  - **From the known to the unknown.** Start with what children already know and build on this. For example, children first learn about what happens in their family in their daily lives. Later, they will find out what happens around them in their community, and much later children will be ready to learn about things that are not familiar to them, such as life in the city.
  - **From the concrete to the abstract.** Young children learn when they can see and touch real things, and later start to understand that pictures stand for things they see in real life.
  - **From the simple to complex.** Start with simple ideas and then move on to more complex ones. A child will understand that aeroplanes fly through the air, but what keeps them in the air is something more complex they will only start to understand later.

The teacher lists the activities in the order in which they should happen.

4. The teacher uses a calendar for the year, and she marks in the school and national holidays and any other important community events that may affect the programme. She then divides the activities into the four school terms.
5. The teacher reviews the yearly plan to see if there is a balance of activities.
  - Are activities planned for each developmental area?
  - Is there a variety of free play and group activities?
  - Are the activities divided more or less equally for each term?
  - Is there enough time for children to practice their skills?

## A theme approach

One way to organise the long-term plan is to organise it according to themes. Many teachers find it easier to break down the year into themes with different topics and then plan a variety of related activities around each topic.

A theme approach to planning is useful because it helps children to make sense of their world in a meaningful way. The topics are organised in such a way that they link to one another, which helps children understand how things in the world are connected.



Teachers can choose topics for themes based on:

- **The calendar year.** Teachers plan around the seasons of the year and important events such as cultural and religious festivals and national holidays.
- **Children's interests.** Teachers closely observe children at play and take note of what they are interested in. This will help them to decide on what topics to choose.
- **The national curriculum.** *Learn As You Play*, the Lesotho curriculum for ECCD, provides a complete guide to planning themes.

Teachers should keep in mind that the topics need to be relevant to the children's lives.

## *Learning through themes*

- **Children need to learn through play.** Children use their senses to find out and know more about things in their environment. They learn by observing, comparing, talking about, investigating and experimenting through the use of their eyes, ears, noses, mouths and bodies (Ministry of Education and Training, 2007). Teachers should not teach children about a topic in a formal way. They should plan free play and group activities that will arouse children's interest in a topic and encourage children to explore and find out for themselves.
- **Plan suitable activities to fit the topic of the theme.** It is not necessary or appropriate to make every learning corner and group activity relate to the theme. Too many activities related to a theme can be overwhelming for children and learning corners often do not fit the topic. It is useful to plan morning rings, stories and music around a theme topic but there should also be a balance of other activities that are not connected to the theme during the week.
- **Children should follow their own interests.** Children should be free to use the materials in their own way. Children may be asked to draw or paint something related to the theme, but if a child chooses to use her own ideas to create something else she should be allowed to do so.



Review the section on *Helping children be creative* on page 103 to 104 of Module 3 for suggestions on helping children use their own ideas.





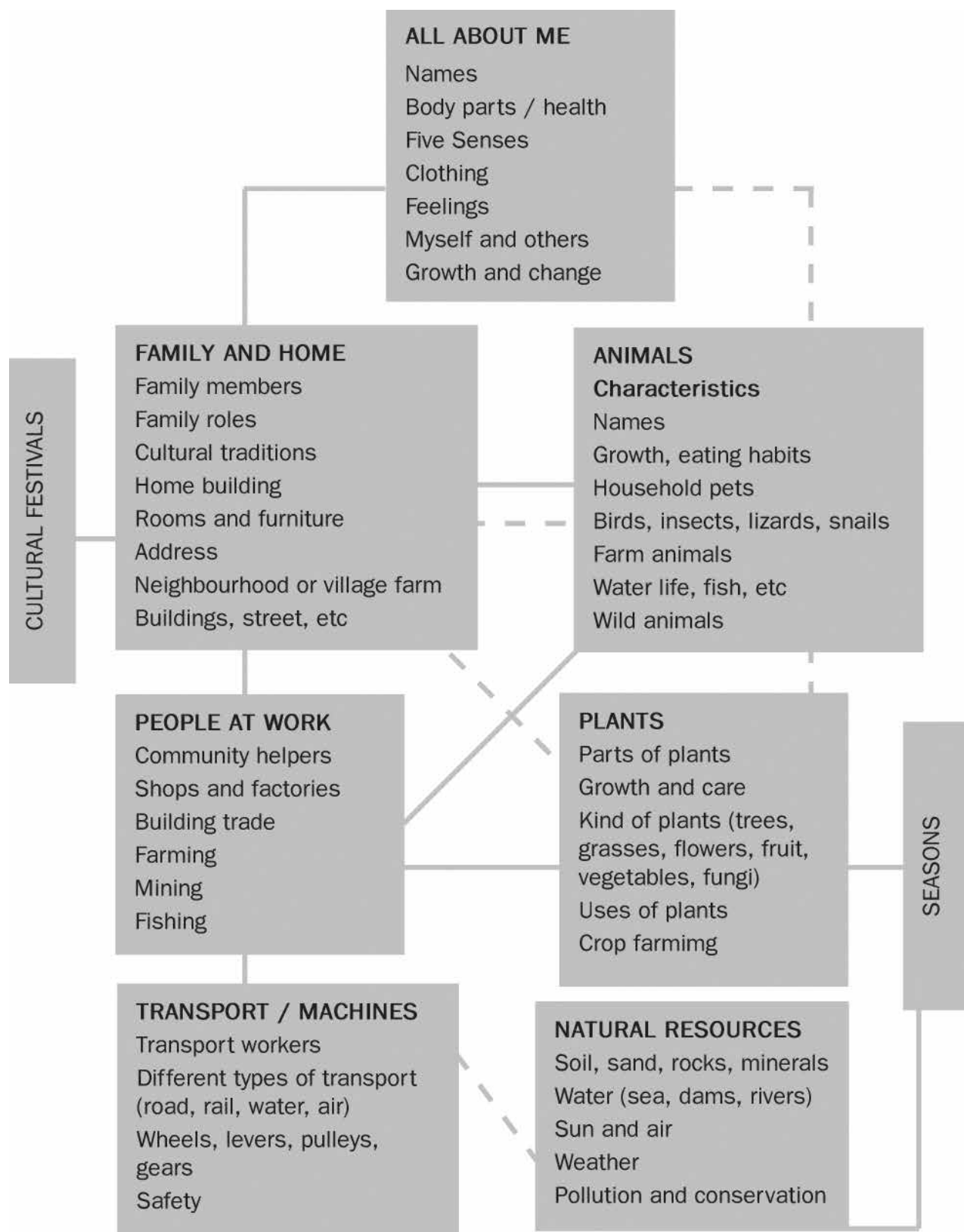
## *Planning according to themes*

- **Consider the ages of the children.** Younger children (3–4 years) are more interested in familiar topics about things that happen around them. Older children (4–5 years) start to become more interested in the world that is less familiar to them. Most theme topics can be used with both age groups, but activities should be planned to include less familiar things that children do not see in their everyday lives for older children to explore.
- **Sequence the themes.** Teachers need to think about the order in which the themes should be offered, starting with what the child knows. Use the sequencing principles as a guide:
  - from the known to the unknown
  - from the concrete to the abstract
  - from the simple to complex

Begin with the child and his home and family and then move on to people and places in the community and finally to the world beyond. Think about what topics need to be included in each theme and how to link one topic to another in a way that makes sense to children. An example of a flow chart is provided on the following page.

- **Allocate time to topics.** Themes can be for a few days, a week or several weeks at a time. Once the teacher has identified what and how children will learn from each topic she can allocate an appropriate amount of time to each theme in her plan. There should be enough time for children to explore and follow their interests about each topic.
- **Incorporate into the long-term plan.** The teacher fits the theme topics on the calendar plan for the year.





<sup>10</sup> Reproduced with permission. Van der Merwe, K. (2008). Learning Together. (2nd ed.). Cape Town: Early Learning Resource Unit.

## Medium-term planning

Some teachers find it helpful to have a medium-term plan that provides more detail for each term or each month. Most teachers find that they can plan their weekly and daily activities using the yearly plan, which is broken down into terms, as a framework.

## Weekly and daily planning

The **short-term plan** for weekly and daily activities is based on the long-term plan. The short-term plan provides the details of exactly what the teacher will do. Teachers usually combine a weekly with a daily plan. It is at this stage of planning that teachers think about the individual developmental needs and interests of the children in their groups and plans ways to meet these.

### *Steps in planning*

1. **Plan to meet developmental needs and interests.** The developmental milestones on pages 39 to 44 of this guide will inform the teacher's planning. The teacher looks at the year plan to see what has been planned for the term. This will include:

- the ongoing activities to meet the educational goals in the learning corners; for example: drawing, puzzles, bead threading to develop small muscles and fine motor coordination.
- theme topics.

She references the developmental milestones to find out what children are expected to achieve for each developmental area according to children's age groups. This will help her plan age-appropriate activities. Most free play activities can be used with both age groups, but teachers need to be sure that activities include suitably challenging materials for older children. More consideration needs to go into planning age-appropriate group activities when children are divided according to their ages.

2. **Individual needs.** This does not mean providing different activities for each child. The programme activities should already be meeting most of children's developmental needs. If a variety of materials with different levels of difficulty is set out every day, children with different learning styles and abilities can use the materials in different ways. The teacher needs to carefully observe and get to know each child in her group and



find out what skills each child has mastered and where he still needs help. During weekly and daily planning, she thinks about the kinds of activities that will help individual children and any extra materials that may be needed or how an activity could be adapted for a child with a disability.

**3. Set objectives.** An important part of the planning process is for teachers to decide what they want children to be able to know and do for each goal that has been set. This will help them in planning suitable activities. For example, one of the educational goals is for children to *learn about themselves, their families, and the people around them*. Some objectives might be:

- Children need to know and appreciate their families.
- Children need to be encouraged to talk about and develop a sense of pride in their own family and culture.
- Children need to recognise that not all families are alike.

If teachers are using curriculum such as *Learn As You Play* or the *ECED Training Manual for Home-based Caregivers*, the objectives may already have been identified.

Here are some objectives that the Ministry of Education and Training has set out for:

### 1. Classification activities

Children should be able to:

- discriminate and estimate sizes and shapes.
- develop mathematical vocabulary.
- develop reasoning and logical thinking.

### 2. A theme on plants

Children should be able to:

- name plants growing in their environment.
- identify plants that are useful.
- explain and appreciate the use of plants.
- demonstrate how to care for plants.
- name major parts of plants.



## Plan free play activities

Even though children choose and use the materials in their own way during free play times, the learning corners need to be planned. The materials are always available in each learning corner, but the teacher looks at the educational goals and any theme that has been planned for the week. She thinks about the materials that will help children learn according to the educational goals. She considers other suitable materials that can be added to help children learn more about the theme topic.

For example, for the *building corner*, if the educational goal is for children to *learn about themselves, their families, and the people around them*, and the theme topic is *My home and family*, the teacher will want to add other materials and find or draw pictures of different kinds of homes and other buildings found in the community that can be put up in the corner to stimulate play.

She fills in the weekly planning sheet for the building learning corner:



Page 268 in the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

|  |  |  |
|--|--|--|
| <b>Learning corner:</b> Building<br><b>Week ending:</b> 5th October 2012   | <b>Theme:</b> <i>My home</i><br><b>Sub-theme:</b> <i>My family</i> | <b>Age group:</b> 3-4 years<br><b>Size of group:</b> 22  |
| <b>Objectives:</b><br>To encourage children to create and talk about their own homes and families.<br>To provide opportunities for children to develop their large and small muscles.<br>To provide opportunities for children to practise problem-solving skills.<br>To help children develop their thinking skills and learn concepts like size, shape and number.<br>To encourage children to learn to cooperate and share. |  | <b>Learning materials:</b> <i>Building blocks</i><br><br><b>Extra materials:</b> <i>Thatch, leaves, twigs, cardboard boxes of different sizes, pieces of cloth, strips of cardboard, string</i><br><br><b>Pictures:</b> <i>Rondavels, Mohlongoa faatse, Heisi, brick or stone buildings, school building, thatch roofs, corrugated iron roofs, tiled roofs, kraals, polata (rectangular flat iron roofed building)</i> |
| <b>Evaluation :</b><br>There were children busy in the corner every day.<br>The older children built houses and other structures together.<br>Children talked about the kinds of houses they live in with their families.<br>There were not enough materials for children to make roofs for their buildings.   |  |  |



## *Plan group activities*

During weekly planning, the teacher looks at the educational goals and objectives and the theme for the week. She uses the developmental milestones to guide her in planning stories, music and movement activities, morning rings and field trips that will help children develop and learn.

Each group activity should be individually planned with details of the objectives, what materials will be needed and how the activity will be carried out.

## *Evaluate the activities*

An important part of planning is evaluating whether an activity worked or not.

- Were there enough materials for the children?
- How did the children use the materials?
- What did children learn?
- What worked well?
- What didn't work well?
- What could (or should) be done differently next time?

Planning sheets should include a space to record an evaluation.

## Observing and recording children's progress

Teachers need to collect as much information as they can about each child in their group so that they can plan how to support each individual child's development. There are a number of ways to get this information. For example, they can:

- talk to family members about what children do at home and any difficulties they may be experiencing.
- collect samples of children's work over time.
- use checklists to tick off skills or behaviours that have been observed.

The best way to find out how children are developing and learning is to





observe them as they play. Teachers can find out what skills and behaviours children have mastered, and where they still need help. Through observation, teachers discover each child's learning style and if he has any special interests. When observations are recorded on an on going basis, over time and of children doing different things, these records give teachers a picture of how each child are progressing. It is important to gather records over time to establish patterns of behaviour. A single observation may lead to an inaccurate judgement. For example, a child may be ill or upset at the time of observation. It is also an important tool for recording any concerns the teacher may have about suspected developmental delays.

Gather records over time in order to see trends and patterns in behaviour. Limited observation can lead to faulty conclusions based on a bad day or a single point of upset in a child's life.

## *Types of observation*

Observation is both planned and unplanned.

- In *planned observations*, the teacher sets aside time every day to observe one or two children and writes down what she sees and hears. To build up a true picture, each child needs to be observed in different activities and routines and over a period of time. Teachers need to be realistic about just how much time they can spend every day on observation; probably only 10 or 20 minutes. At the beginning of each term, the teacher works out a schedule to make sure that all the children in her group will be observed on a regular basis. For example, if a teacher has 20 children in her group she plans to observe two children every day, which means that each child will be observed once every two weeks.
- In *unplanned observations*, the teacher makes notes of important events as they happen during the day. She keeps a small notebook in her pocket or close at hand for these moments and writes only a few key words to remind her later when she has time to write a more detailed account of what happened. For example, "*Liboko doll. Sechaba wanted. Liboko: it's mine.*"

Teachers use both planned and unplanned observations of children involved in a variety of activities and at different times of the day over a period of time. In this way, they are able gather information about all aspects of each child's development and note any difficulties they may have.



## How to observe

- Children may behave differently if they know they are being watched. Teachers will want to observe children as they naturally behave and play. Children should not be aware that they are being observed and their play should not be interrupted.
- An observation needs to describe a behaviour that was seen; in other words, what a child actually did or said—the facts. The teacher needs to be careful that she does not offer her own opinion or interpretation of what is happening. For example:

*“Liboko was playing with a doll. When Sechaba tried to pick it up, she said, ‘It’s mine.’”*

NOT

*“Liboko got angry when Sechaba tried to pick up the doll.”*

- She should avoid words like *good*, *bad*, *right* and *wrong*.
- During planned observations, the teacher should try to describe what is happening in as much detail as possible and in the order in which things happened.
- During weekly planning, the teacher reads the information she has recorded and uses it to plan suitable activities or make adaptations to meet individual needs.
- All observation records are confidential. They should not be left lying on a table where parents or other people passing by see them. Teachers need parents’ permission to share the information, even with their colleagues.

## Using checklists

A checklist is a list of observable skills or behaviours related to particular aspects of development.

Each time a skill or behaviour is observed, the teacher ticks it off and writes in the date that it took place. It is important to date each entry because a child needs to repeat a skill or behaviour many times before it is mastered. By keeping dates of child skill attainment and usage, a pattern of development is recorded over time which can demonstrate the progress a child has made towards skill mastery. Checklists should cover all developmental areas.



Checklists are useful because they help teachers note the areas where children still need help. A checklist will guide teachers in planning the next step in their learning. Checklists can also identify where there may be a possible delay in development.

Checklists should never be used to test children. For example, a child should not be called up and asked to demonstrate a skill. Instead the teacher decides on the skills or behaviours that children should be focused on attaining, plans the appropriate activities so that children can practice and demonstrate their development while playing, and then observes children as they play.



Checklists for each developmental area and can be made using the developmental milestones for each group on pages 39 to 44 of this guide.

An example of a checklist is given in the *Teacher Resource Guide* on page 158.

## ***Recording observations***

The best way to record observations is to write down what has been observed according to the developmental areas. The teacher reviews what she has observed about the child and then organises it according to physical development, cognitive development, etc.

There should be a separate record kept of each child. Teachers can put all observations in a single file or there can be an individual file for each child.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Group activities*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- reflect on their own programmes and identify areas for improvement.
- plan a balanced daily programme to meet children's developmental needs.
- have a basic understanding of long-term planning.
- be equipped with the knowledge of how to use weekly planning sheets.
- understand the importance of objectively observing every child on a continuous basis to build up a picture of how each child is developing in all developmental areas.

## Session outline

| Activity                         | Suggested time |
|----------------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection         | 8.30–9.00      |
| Reflection on programme planning | 9.00–9.30      |
| Daily programme                  | 9.30–10.30     |
| TEA                              | 10.30–11.00    |
| Daily programme (continued)      | 11.00–12.00    |
| Team teaching                    | 12.00–12.30    |
| Planning for the year            | 12.30–1.15     |
| LUNCH                            | 1.15–2.15      |
| Weekly and daily planning        | 2.15–3.30      |
| Observation and recording        | 3.30–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity* – 1/2 hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the first module.
  - what changes they have made in their own Centres or Home-Bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *Programme planning* – 1/2 hour

**Preparation:** On four flipchart papers write the following headings:

- Planning a programme for young children involves ...
- Planning a programme is important because ...
- Planning a programme is hard when ...
- Planning a programme is easy when ...

Display the flipchart papers on the wall in different places in the training room, with markers nearby. Ask participants to move around freely and write their comments on the flipchart papers. When everyone has finished, stick the papers up in front of the group and read through what has been written. Note what participants find hard about programme planning and make sure that their concerns are addressed in the session.



## Daily programme – 2 hours

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a presentation on routine times using the information on pages 162 to 168. Write key points on flipchart paper.
2. Write a list of the different parts of a daily programme on flipchart paper as follows:

|                          | Physical development | Social and emotional development | Cognitive development | Language |
|--------------------------|----------------------|----------------------------------|-----------------------|----------|
| Arrival and departure    |                      |                                  |                       |          |
| Mealtimes                |                      |                                  |                       |          |
| Toilet and wash routines |                      |                                  |                       |          |
| Rest                     |                      |                                  |                       |          |
| Free play                |                      |                                  |                       |          |
| Group times              |                      |                                  |                       |          |



The Ministry of Education and Training identifies two other developmental areas: Approaches to Learning and Moral and Spiritual Development. At the time of writing these materials, there was insufficient curriculum guidance in the identified areas. It was therefore decided to focus on the above critical developmental areas.





3. Write the different parts of a daily programme on separate small strips of cardboard or flipchart paper for each small group as follows:

|                   |                    |                    |
|-------------------|--------------------|--------------------|
| Arrival           | Departure          | Breakfast          |
| Lunch             | Snack              | Snack              |
| Toilet and wash   | Toilet and wash    | Toilet and wash    |
| Brush teeth       | Rest               | Free play indoors  |
| Free play indoors | Free play outdoors | Free play outdoors |
| Morning ring      | Music and movement | Music and movement |
| Story             | Story              |                    |
|                   |                    |                    |

(Groups can write additional parts on the blank cards if they need to.)

4. Write the guidelines for planning a daily programme on flipchart paper.
5. Write down the main points that teachers need to consider when planning a daily programme using the information on page 160 to 162 and 168 to 170.

- Ask participants to discuss with a partner the kinds of daily routines they have at home, starting with when they wake up. In the large group, write down some of the common routines that were discussed on flipchart paper. Talk about what would happen if there was no routine at all. Talk about the importance of having a daily programme for young children using the information on page 160 of this manual.
- Review the three types of activities in an ECCD programme: free play activities, group times and routine times (on pages 162) with the large group.
- Explain that much has already been discussed in previous modules on free play and group activities, and that teachers also need to look at the importance of routine times in their programmes. Give a presentation on routine times using the prepared flipchart points.
- Display the flipchart paper with the programme components and developmental areas. Ask participants to call out how children grow and learn in each of the programme components. Write their responses



down on the flipchart paper.

- Briefly talk about teachers' needs and how these should be met, using the flipchart points on page 160 to 162 and 168 to 170 of this guide.
- Go through the prepared guidelines, including the recommended times for each activity. Explain that each programme will differ according to the hours the preschool is open, the type of structure and the number of adults working in the programme. Make it clear that there is no right or wrong daily programme and that each preschool will have a different programme according to the individual circumstances.
- Divide participants into small groups according to the above description so that participants are in groups with similar programmes to their own. Hand out the card strips, a piece of flipchart paper and glue. Ask participants to use the guidelines to design a daily programme.
- Each group reports back. After each presentation, ask the large group to comment and add suggestions. Remind participants of the importance of planning transition times and giving children plenty of warning when activities are about to change. Talk about how a child with a disability may need to start earlier than other children.
- Review how mixed age groups of children can play together during free play time but need to be separated according to their ages during group times, using the points on page 171 of this guide.

## *Team teaching – 🕒 1½ hour*

### **Preparation:**

1. Bring props for the role play: broom, a few toys, a shelf, a table and chairs for snack time.
  2. Prepare a presentation on team teaching using the information on page 171 to 172. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Ask participants to think about how the adults in the preschool share responsibilities. Talk about whether everyone knows what their role is. Give a presentation on team teaching using the flipchart points. Give examples of how teachers can share responsibilities so that one teacher is preparing for the next activity while the second teacher helps children pack up the existing activity. Talk about how this method allows for the



programme to flow smoothly without children having to wait in lines for the next activity. Explain that when children have to wait while the teacher gets everything ready for the next activity, they often misbehave because they are bored. For those teachers who work alone, discuss ways they could get volunteers to help during busy times of the day.

- Use a few props and some volunteers to role play how this would work in practice. One “teacher” tells some “children” to start packing away the toys and materials they have been using. She starts sweeping and preparing a table for snack. The other “teacher” takes some of the “children” outside to the “latrine”. When they return, they sit at the table.

## Planning for the year – $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a presentation on long- term planning, including the three sequencing principles, using the information on pages 172 to 174. Write key points on flipchart paper.
2. Make a chart on flipchart paper as follows:

| Educational goals | Free play activities | Group activities | Routines |
|-------------------|----------------------|------------------|----------|
|                   |                      |                  |          |

- Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Ask groups to discuss the following questions in their groups:
  - How do you plan for the whole year?
  - How do you plan on a weekly and a daily basis?
  - How do you know that what you have planned meets children’s needs?



- What records do you keep of your planning?
- Each group reports back on all the questions before a general discussion with the entire group.
- Give a presentation on long-term planning using the prepared flipchart points. Demonstrate how to draw up a list of activities according to developmental areas, using the prepared flipchart paper.



Teachers can attend Workshop 2 (page 194 to 195 of this manual) to learn more about long-term planning according to themes.

## Weekly and daily planning – 🌐 1 ¼ hours

### Preparation:

1. Prepare planning sheets on flipchart paper for each learning corner as below. Make an extra copy for demonstration purposes.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Learning corner: _____ Week ending: _____ |  |
| Size of group: _____ Age group: _____     |  |
| Objectives                                | Materials                                |
| <br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br>  | <br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br><br> |

- List the learning corners on flipchart paper. Explain that even though the same activities are set out every day, teachers need to look at the educational goals and provide materials in the corners to help children develop and learn according to the different developmental areas.
- Explain that an important step in planning is to set objectives that spell out how the goals will be reached. Write a few examples. (Some objectives are provided on page 179 and 180 of this guide.)
- Use one of the weekly planning sheets on flipchart paper to complete a weekly planning sheet for one of the learning corners (e.g., fantasy play corner) with the group. Encourage participants to share their ideas for



- suitable objectives. Discuss the kinds of materials that can be provided in the learning corner to meet the objectives.
- Divide participants into five groups by numbering them off from 1–5 and tell each group where they should meet. Assign each group one of the remaining learning corners and hand out a flipchart planning sheet. Ask groups to draw up a weekly plan for their learning corner.
  - After each group has shared their plan with the large group discuss:
    - what children can learn from the planned activities.
    - whether these activities will meet the objectives.
    - whether the activities are suitable for the age group.
  - Talk about how individual needs are built into the weekly planning. Explain the importance of evaluating activities in the planning process.
  - Go through the examples of planning sheets in the *Teacher Resource Guide* for planning group times. Explain that these are examples and that teachers should feel free to use their own planning sheets, but they should be sure that all the required information is there. Emphasise that there is no right way or wrong way of planning and that Centres will be different from Home-Bases.

### **Observing and recording children's progress – 1/2 hour**

- Ask participants what they could find out about children by spending time observing them as they play. Write down their responses on flipchart paper.
- Refer participants to the picture in **Appendix 4: Observation Task** on page 280 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*. Tell them that this is a picture of a little girl whose name is Palesa. They should write on a piece of paper exactly what they see in the picture. They may not discuss their thoughts with anyone.

When everyone has finished, ask participants to take turns to call out what they have written. Write down each new idea on flipchart paper, *exactly as it is called out*.



Explain that observations need to describe what is actually seen and heard— **the facts**— and that teachers need to be careful that they don't make **judgments** about what they think might be happening.

Go back to the list. Read through each point and decide whether it is a fact or a judgment. Write F next to those statements that are factual, and J next to those statements where personal opinions or judgments are offered. For example:

- Palesa is standing with her face to the wall. F
- Palesa is in the corner because she has been naughty. J
- Palesa is sad. J
- Palesa has covered her face with one of her hands. F

Discuss what will happen if a teacher makes judgments about a child's performance. Talk about the importance of observing a child over time to get a true picture of how he is developing and learning.

Using the information on page 181 to 184 of this guide, have a discussion with participants about how to observe children on a regular basis in both planned and unplanned observations. Talk about how the information is used in ongoing planning of activities.

- Refer participants to the checklist on page 158 of the Teacher Resource Guide, and explain how to use it. Emphasise that children must not be put in testing situations but observed as they play. Reflect on how each of the behaviours listed is observable and does not require the teacher to make judgement.

Talk about keeping a separate record for each child and how to write down the observations according to the developmental areas.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.





## Workshop 2: Theme Planning

The purpose of this workshop is to provide teachers with opportunities to further practise their skills in programme planning, specifically to use themes to plan their programmes for young children. The trainer will need to negotiate a time with teachers over a weekend or during holidays.

**Time:** 4 hours

### Preparation:

1. Photocopy examples of weekly planning sheets for free play and group activities (page 267 to 274 of the Teacher Resource Guide).
2. Prepare a presentation on learning through themes and planning according to themes (pages 174 to 177 in this guide). Write the main points on flipchart paper.
3. Make a flipchart presentation of the Theme Flow Chart on page 177 of this guide.

### On the day of the workshop:

- Greet teachers and start the session with a prayer and song.
- Explain that planning according to themes is one way to help children learn about the world around them in a meaningful way and help them understand how things in their world are connected.
- Give a presentation on how to plan according to themes using the prepared flipchart points.
- Brainstorm topics that young children are likely to find interesting and write each new idea on a separate piece of paper and display these on the wall.
- Explain that themes should be offered in a way that makes sense to the children. Review the sequencing principles discussed in Module 5 (page 174 of this guide), giving examples.

Display the Theme Flow Chart and discuss how the topics have been grouped together so that they link to one another. Return to the brainstormed topic ideas and, with the help of participants, group related topics together.



- Choose one topic from the list and discuss the kinds of free play and group activities that can be planned around it.
- Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Have each group choose a topic and discuss the activities that can be planned around it. Emphasise that teachers should not plan all their activities to relate to the theme as this can be overwhelming for children.
- Each group shares their ideas.
- Ask participants to return to their groups and ask groups to plan for one week as follows:
  1. Write down what the theme topic is.
  2. Free play activities: List the activities that will be set up in each corner and then include one or two special activities in some corners (not all) related to the theme topic.
  3. Group activities: List the morning ring, music, movement story, and educational outings that will be planned for the week. Include some activities (not all) related to the theme topic.

Each group reports back on what they have planned.

- Hand out copies of the planning sheets to participants. Ask participants to individually complete the planning sheets according to the activities discussed in their groups. Alternatively, participants can work in pairs so that they can discuss and assist one another.
- Following the activity, discuss any problems participants had in completing the planning sheets and clarify any misunderstanding.
- End the day with a prayer and song.



# Module 6:

## Language and Literacy

The purpose of this module is to introduce teachers to learning experiences for children that provide the foundation for early literacy: speaking and listening, reading and writing. The focus is on providing children with meaningful activities to help them understand the purpose of reading and writing in their everyday lives, rather than teaching them to read and write. A variety of teaching strategies to support children's early literacy development is explored.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- define early literacy and the skills that are important for learning to read and write.
- know how to provide a print rich learning environment for children in their preschools.
- provide listening and speaking, reading and writing activities to facilitate the development of children's early literacy.
- make connections between the different areas of literacy: speaking and listening, reading and writing.

## What is early literacy?

Early literacy is everything children know about listening and speaking, reading and writing, before they have actually mastered the skills of reading and writing.

According to the Ministry of Education and Training, “*many ideas and concepts which children learn through talking and listening serve as the basis for reading and writing skills*”.

In recent years, there has been much research done to find out how children learn to read and write, and there are new theories on how literacy develops.

It has now been established that:

- Learning to read and write starts very early in life.
- Language development is an important foundation to promote strong reading.
- Children do not learn to read first and then to write. They learn to read and write at the same time.
- Children learn to read and write when they understand its purpose in everyday life.
- Children learn to read and write when they have many diverse opportunities to read and write.



- Reading aloud to children every day is one of the best ways for children to learn how to read.
- Children go through different stages in becoming literate.

Many teachers in ECCD preschools think that children need formal “reading readiness” lessons and activities before they start school. They give them pre-reading and pre-writing activities, and have them chant the alphabet to teach children letters and words.

Children do need many different kinds of experiences before they are ready to read and write, but teachers will need to look at new ways of helping children develop literacy skills. Teaching children to recite the alphabet or giving them worksheets to form letters properly are not the most suitable activities for young children. Teachers can help children develop understandings about literacy by making them aware of how listening, speaking, reading and writing are useful in their everyday lives.



Instead of “reading readiness”, the term “early literacy” is used to describe children’s early experiences with literacy. They are not just getting ready to read; they are learning to read and write.

This module will focus on the following six literacy skills that are important for learning to read and write:

1. Having an interest and enjoyment of books.
2. Being able to understand and tell stories and describe things.
3. Having a good vocabulary.
4. Having an awareness of how books and print work.
5. Hearing and using the different sounds of language.
6. Knowing letter names and the sounds they make.

Children’s develop literacy skills most easily in their home language. This is the language they use to express their thoughts and feelings. It is through their home language that children come to know the values and beliefs of their culture, and learn to appreciate and accept themselves and their culture.



## How language and literacy develop

Language and literacy are interconnected, as an important part of literacy involves listening and speaking. At the same time that children develop their listening and speaking skills, they are also finding out about reading and writing. Evidence demonstrates that from an early age, babies start exploring books and enjoy having books read to them. Their scribbles are the first stages of learning to write.

|                   |  |
|-------------------|--|
| 0–6 months        | Babies communicate by smiling, making eye contact, cooing and babbling. They respond to sounds around them by imitating and repeating them.  |
| 6–18 months       | <p>Babies start to show an understanding of words. They make word sounds and from about 9 months, start to say their first words. One word may stand for different things. At about 12 months children will point at things or use single words.</p> <p>Between 7 and 9 months, babies start exploring books. They imitate how they have seen other people reading. They pick up books and pretend to read. They point to pictures of objects, animals and people as they are named in the book.</p> |
| 18 months–2 years | <p>Children's vocabulary increases and they can learn new words quickly. They refer to themselves by name. Children can use two or three words in a sentence but miss out connecting words. They start to sing.</p> <p>Children will listen to a book being read. They have their own favourite books which they enjoy being read over and over again.</p>   |
| 2–3 years         | <p>Children start putting short sentences together. Children enjoy simple stories, rhymes and songs. They are able to remember rhymes.</p> <p>Children start to understand that stories have a beginning, a middle and an end. They are able to retell a story that has been read to them.</p>   |





|           |   |
|-----------|---|
| 3–4 years | <p>Most of what children say can be understood. They like to repeat words and sounds. They ask questions like “<i>who? what? where? why?</i>”. They like to sing. By the age of 4, children are speaking in sentences of five to six words.</p> <p>Children start to understand that the words on the page are connected to the pictures. They can identify familiar signs and labels in the environment. They can also identify some letters and match some letter names to sounds.</p> <p>Children enjoy listening to stories and talking about them. They also take part in rhyming games.</p>   |
| 4–5 years | <p>Children talk in longer and more difficult sentences of about nine words. They can tell stories about things that have happened to them and retell stories they have heard. Children can follow directions with three or more steps. They ask a lot of questions.</p> <p>Children start to understand that the printed letters represent words. They recognise words by looking at them and will point to these in books and the environment. They understand print concepts like the direction print is read, and begin to match spoken words with written ones. They recognise letters and match them to sounds. They enjoy rhyming.</p> <p>They begin to write letters of the alphabet and some familiar words.</p> |

## A print-rich environment

Teachers can help children understand the purpose of print by having different types of print in the classroom. When surrounded by a print-rich environment, children will see how reading and writing are useful in everyday life.

- **Labelling.** Make labels for various items in the room. This tells children that things can be identified by written words.
  - Label learning corners and containers for toys and other play



materials. There should be pictures that go with the words to help children identify the different things and places.

- Label children's personal belongings and spaces with their names (e.g., their art work, toothbrushes, hooks or lockers).
- Children can be encouraged to write their own names on their art work.
- For a child with a visual disability, make some of the labels from textured materials and encourage the child to feel the words.

Do not label everything, as this will be overwhelming for the children. All labelling should be neat and spelled correctly. The format of the written letters should be consistent with what children will be taught to use when they get to school. All letters should be lower case, with a capital first letter for a child's name or the beginning of a sentence.

- **Charts.** These should be displayed at children's eye level (e.g., an alphabet chart, a weather chart and days of the week).
- **Word wall.** A word wall is a list of words that are commonly used. The words should be arranged alphabetically beneath each letter of the alphabet chart. The teacher and children add new words to the word wall as they are used and discussed during story and other activity times. A good place to start is to write children's names on the lists according to the first letters of their names. The word wall is not intended to be used to teach children formally. They should be free to use it as they choose as they explore and develop their literacy skills.
- **Learning corners.** Meaningful print materials can be added to the learning corners that encourage children to explore print.
  - **Fantasy play corner.** There is print on everyday household products, which children quickly learn to recognise because of its trademark packaging (e.g., Jungle Oats, Marmite, Coca-Cola, Omo, matchboxes, rice plastic containers, empty maize meal bags). This is often the first kind of print that children are exposed to. Empty packaging can be added to the fantasy play area as well as other reading materials like advertising leaflets, magazines, newspapers and books. Writing materials can be added to encourage children to make shopping lists or mark a calendar.
  - **Building corner.** Make signs for roads and logos for buildings such as BP, Pick 'n Pay, Shoprite. Have writing materials in the building



corner so that children can write their own signs.

- **Educational toy corner.** Environmental print is print that children see around them every day on product packaging, advertising leaflets, shop signs and road signs. Young children often learn to recognise this print before print in books because of its unique design. Teachers can make matching and sorting cards from environmental print items like advertising leaflets. Matching games (like memory games) can also be made by drawing pictures of animals as well as writing their names on cards. Cereal boxes can be made into puzzles by cutting the front of the boxes into different piece.
- **Book corner.** Make sure that the book corner is an inviting place that will encourage children to look at books, magazines, newsprint cuttings and pictures. Books can include those that children have made and self-made booklets.

## Oral language

*“Young children learn language by hearing language as their teachers, parents, caregivers and other people around them speak. Hearing speech is the first step towards reading because it helps children love language and build vocabulary.”* –Baxten and Kabba, 2012

Oral language is a part of literacy development that is often overlooked in ECCD classrooms, but speaking and listening lead the way to reading and writing.

### *Speaking and listening*

- As children develop speaking and listening skills, they start to make connections between spoken words and written words.
- Children need words to help them understand concepts. The greater their vocabulary, the better they are able to understand and learn new things. A large vocabulary is also helpful for children learning to read because they already know a lot of the words.

### Have shared conversations

Having conversations with children is one of the best ways to help children



develop their oral language skills. A shared conversation involves the adult listening to a child as well as speaking.

Here are some ways teachers can help children:

- Ask children about what they are doing and help them develop language skills and learn new words. For example, *“It’s good that you are watering the garden. The soil was very dry. What kinds of vegetables grow under the ground? Let’s name them all. What kinds of vegetables grow above the ground? Let’s name them.”*
- Listen to children when they want to talk and do not interrupt them.
- Use open-ended questions to encourage children to talk about what they are doing, thinking or feeling. For example, *“How do you think the water will help the plants to grow?”*
- Model the correct use of language rather than correcting it. Children will be discouraged from talking freely if their grammar is repeatedly being corrected. Teachers can help children learn by saying the correct word or phrase. For example:

Child: *“I **forgetted** to water the plants.”*

Teacher: *“Oh, you **forgot** to water the plants. Why don’t you ...?”*

- Introduce new words and sentences to explain concepts. For example:

Child: *“What is happening to the water? It just goes and goes?”*

Teacher: *“Yes it is **soaking** into the ground. The soil **absorbs** the water.”*

- Answer children’s questions.

Children should also be encouraged to have conversations with each other and practise their language skills.

- During morning rings, ask children to take turns to tell the group what they saw or did over the weekend. Ask children to bring something from home to show and talk about. Have children talk about what activity they would like to do.



- Encourage children to play in the fantasy corner. Children use language to discuss the various roles they play with one another and talk to each other about what they are doing.
- During other free play activities encourage children to share their ideas with one another.

### **Plan activities that encourage listening and speaking.**

- Encourage children to play different roles in the fantasy play corner and practise their listening and speaking skills. Providing children with these types of opportunities is important as children imitate the words and sentences they have heard other people use and will use these interactions to imitate and practice.
- Read to children and encourage them to talk about what they see and hear.
- Plan field trips around the community to expand their vocabulary.
- Provide props and dress-up clothes for children to act out well-known stories.
- Tell stories and encourage children to create their own stories.

## **Exploring the sounds of language**

An important part of learning to read and write is being able to hear that language is made up of words. Children learn that:

- sounds make up words.
- sentences are made up of words.
- words are made up of separate sounds (syllables).



A syllable is a unit of pronunciation. Some words are single syllables such as “hat”. Some words have several syllables such as “app-le” and “cat-er-pill-ar”.





Phonological awareness is the child's ability to hear and play with the smaller sounds of words. It should not be confused with phonics.



Phonics is a way of teaching reading that involves print where the child must connect a sound to a letter of the alphabet.

Children need to first be able to hear the sounds that make up words:

- the sounds at the ends of words (rhyming)
- the sounds at the beginning of words
- breaking down words in a sentence
- breaking down words into syllables

This does *not involve* print at *all* but is an important step towards understanding that words are composed of letters that represent sounds. This important step in language development does not involve connecting the sounds to the written letters of the alphabet. Before this happens, children need to have lots of practice in hearing and playing with the sounds that make up words. These experiences will help children to sound out words when they start to read.

There are many games and activities that teachers can plan to help children hear and play with the sounds of language.

- **Singing.** When children sing a song the words are naturally broken down into smaller parts. For example:

*"I hear thun-der  
I hear thun-der  
Oh don't you. Oh don't you.  
Pit-ter, pat-ter, rain-drops, pit-ter, pat-ter rain-drops  
I'm wet through. So are you."*

Children can clap the beat of each words as they sing the song.





- **Rhyming.** Poems, nursery rhymes and songs that rhyme help children learn that words have similar end-sounds. For example:

*“Hey, diddle, **diddle**,  
The cat and the **fiddle**,  
The cow jumped over the **moon**.  
The little dog laughed  
To see such sport,  
And the dish ran away with the **spoon**.”*

When children know the song or rhyme well, the teacher can ask children to guess the missing word. For example:

*“The cow jumped over the **moon**.  
The little dog laughed  
To see such sport,  
And the dish ran away with the \_\_\_\_.”*

- **Listening games.** Listening games can help children hear the sounds of words, to hear the beginning and end sounds of words, and break words into smaller parts.

Play the “telephone” game. Children stand in a line and the child at one end of the line thinks of a sentence and whispers it to the child next to him. The message is passed on to each child in turn and the last child says the sentence out loud.

Here are some more games.

- *“Clap if the word starts with a ‘S’ sound.” “Can you find other things that begin with the same sound?” “Whose name begins with this sound?”*
- *“Stand up if the word rhymes with ‘hop’.”*
- *“Clap out your name. Le-ra-to. Let’s all clap Le-ra-to.”*
- *“Can you guess whose name I am clapping? Is it Lerato or Kelebogile?”*
- *“Clap this beat with your feet.”* (different beat patterns, e.g. three fast beats, two slow beats)
- Find a way for all children to participate in the games.



- A child with a physical disability can move a different part of her body, choose a song or give directions.
- Slow down movements to encourage all children to join in.

## Storytelling

Storytelling and its value were discussed in Module 4 on pages 138 to 143. It is particularly important for early literacy. When children listen to and participate in stories, they:

- develop listening skills and start to recognise patterns in sounds.
- get a sense of how a story is structured and the order in which it is told.
- learn the meanings of new words and improve their vocabularies.
- start to recognise words.
- talk about what they hear as the story is being told.
- increase their enjoyment of language.

Children usually become very involved in stories that have lots of repetition and rhyme and a predictable plot. These types of stories provide opportunities for children to guess what the story will be about or what will happen next.

Before reading or telling a story, make a list of all the new words and concepts that will be introduced. Plan to incorporate these words into the story with strategies to explain the words to the children. For example:

- Before telling the story, introduce key words or concepts.
- Stop briefly during the story to explain the meaning of new words or concepts.
- After the story, remind children of new words and concepts introduced.
- Ask for other examples to help children make meaningful connections.

### Retelling stories

When children listen to and then retell familiar stories in their own words they:

- learn to sequence the events in a story in the order in which things happened.



- develop their narrative skills—their ability to describe events and tell stories.
- are better able to understand the story.
- improve their vocabulary.



Narrative skills refers to the child's ability to tell stories and to describe things and events.

It also helps the teacher to see how well the child has understood the story. Well-known and repetitive stories are good for children to retell. The teacher can support the child by using questions to prompt the child as he tells the story. For example:

- *"What happened next?"*
- *"Why did he feel that way?"*

## Print awareness and print motivation



Print awareness is about noticing print.

Children need to develop some basic knowledge and skills before they can begin learning to read. As they explore print, children learn important print concepts and how to handle books.

### Knowledge of books

- A book is for reading.
- There is a top and a bottom to a book.
- The book must be held the right side up.
- The book has a back and a front and the book is read from front to back.
- The cover gives information about the book.



## Knowledge of print

- It is the printed words that are read and not the pictures.
- The pictures give meaning to what the print says.
- Start reading on the first line of a page.
- The printed text runs from left to right and when the line is finished moves to the next line.
- Print runs from top to bottom down a page.
- Pages are turned in a certain direction.

## Letter and sentence knowledge

- Words are made up of letters that represent sounds.
- Letters can be upper case (capital letters) or lower case.
- Many words combined make a paragraph or a sentence.
- There are spaces between the words.
- Full stops on a page separate sentences.
- Spoken words can be written down and then read.
- A sentence does not necessarily end with a page or line end, but with a full stop.



Print motivation is children's enjoyment and love for books.

## *The book corner*

Teachers can help children develop a love for books by choosing books with topics that children will enjoy and displaying these in the book corner. Children can select books that interest them.

A teacher can help children learn print concepts by:

- showing children how to hold books the right way up and which is the front and back of a book.
- helping children know where to begin reading and how to turn the pages.
- encouraging children to look at the words as well as the pictures.



- reading a book with a child or a small group of children and pointing to the words as she reads.
- encouraging children to talk about the books they have chosen and asking them to explain what the story is about.

### Supporting children with disabilities

Make page tabs to help a child with a disability turn the pages of a book by adding large paper clips to the pages.

## Letters and words

Children need to know the names of letters and to connect them with the sounds that they make. As children explore print around them, they start to understand that books and other print contain letters of the alphabet. They should not be formally taught the “ABC” in rote fashion but in play activities. For example:

- Sing songs with the letters in children’s names.
- Provide writing activities.
- Let children make letter shapes with their bodies.
- Let children trace over letters or words with their fingers/trace letters in the air.
- Read books to them.
- Put alphabet books in the book corner.
- Say the child’s name and let him identify the letters that spell his name.

## Reading aloud



Reading aloud is a planned reading of a book. When children listen to stories being read, they start to develop a love for books. They also learn basic skills that will help them become readers.



Research has shown that the best way to help children develop the understanding and skills they need to read is to read aloud to them as frequently as possible. This is particularly important for children living in poverty who may have no age-appropriate books in their homes. When books are read aloud, children:

- listen to the rhythm and sounds of words.
- learn how to hold and read a book.
- make connections between letters and sounds.

Teachers should plan to read a book aloud to children every day, either in the book corner with just a few children or during group times with a larger group of children.

Although there is no one way to read aloud to children, there are some skills that teachers can learn.

## ***Guidelines for reading aloud***

### **Prepare to read aloud**

- Choose a book that will be of interest to children.
- Read the book several times before reading to the children to identify any new words or concepts. Plan when and how to stop the story and explain.

### **Introduce the book**

- Hold the book so that everyone can see the words and the pictures.
- Show children the cover. Using the cover picture, ask children to guess what they think the story might be about.
- Read the title of the book, the author and the illustrator, moving your finger along the words.

### **Read the book**

- Read slowly and clearly so that children can understand and have time to look at the pictures.
- Move your finger under the words as you read them. This will help children understand that the print tells the story, not the picture.





- Point to the pictures after you read the print about them so that children connect the words to the pictures.
- Use different voices to add drama to the story.
- Stop every now and again to make sure everyone understands. Ask questions about what is happening and what children think will happen next.

### After reading

- Invite children to tell you what they thought about the story. For example:
  - *“What did you think about the story?”*
  - *“What did you like best?”*
- Ask open-ended questions to help children remember the story. For example:
  - *“What was the first thing that happened?”*
  - *“Then what happened?”*
  - *“How do you think she felt when ...?”*

Teachers can ask if any children would like to retell or dramatise the story.

### Supporting children with disabilities

- Make sure that a child with a hearing or visual disability is seated nearby so that he can hear or see the pictures and text.
- Make sure that a child with a hearing impairment is seated so that he can see the pages of the book.



## Early writing

### *How writing develops* <sup>11</sup>

Research has shown that children go through seven stages of writing. These stages might not be sequential, but all children will go through all of these stages.

|  |  |
|--|--|
| Stage 1<br>Writing by drawing                        | Children use drawing as a means of communicating a specific and purposeful message. Children will read their drawings as though there is print on it. In this stage, children are working out the relationship between drawing and writing, not confusing the two.                                       |
| Stage 2<br>Writing by scribbling                     | Children intend scribbling to be writing because for children it resembles writing. The process of scribbling is similar because the pencil moves from left to right. The forms of scribbling can be “wavy” or “letter-like”. Pretend writing in any form is an important stage of literacy development. |
| Stage 3<br>Writing by making letter-like forms       | Children make markings that resemble letters, but are actually their own creations.  |
| Stage 4<br>Writing by reproducing well-learned units | Children reproduce letter sequences that are familiar to them, such as the letters from their names. The forms can be random, patterned or parts of their names.   |

<sup>11</sup> Adapted from Headstart Emergent Literacy Project, Training Manual. Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, D.C., Headstart Bureau. 1996.

|   |  |
|---|--|
| Stage 5<br>Writing by copying                 | Children will frequently copy shop receipts, their siblings' school work and other literature that they see in their homes or school. This is good practice.   |
| Stage 6<br>Writing by using invented spelling | Children write using many varieties of spelling and at different levels. The use of invented spelling comes about when children do not know the conventional spelling of words that they want to use. One letter can represent an entire syllable. As the writing matures, it will begin to include more conventionally spelled words. |
| Stage 7<br>Writing using conventional print   | Children's writing begins to look more like an adult's writing because they can now spell words in the standard way.   |



Reading and writing develop together. As children play and explore print in their environment, they start to make sense of written language. Their first attempts at writing are closely related to what they are learning about words.

Children teach themselves to write and do not need handwriting lessons or to be taught how to form letters. The most important thing they need to learn is why writing is important. Children learn this by watching others use writing for a purpose or to accomplish a task. For example:

- making a shopping list
- writing a letter
- writing their names
- writing an appointment in a diary
- writing reports
- signing their names



When children see other people write, they will want to try to write themselves.

## ***Help children become writers***

- Children must develop the small muscles of their fingers and hands as well as develop their eye-hand coordination to be able to write. Give children many opportunities to learn to control their small muscles and develop their eye-hand coordination. Provide activities like drawing and painting, cutting and threading beads.
- Encourage children to write their names. At first this will look like scribbles on the page, but gradually letters will begin to appear until all the letters are present and in the right order.
- Children learn to write when they practise writing. Let children decide what they want to write during play activities. They need to express themselves in their own way. It is not appropriate to give children handwriting worksheets or teach them how to form letters or spell correctly.
- Show children that their attempts to write are valued, even if the letters are not fully developed.
- Model writing. Show children the many uses of writing throughout the day. For example, send a text message, complete planning sheets when children are at rest, or write lists.
- Make books together. Writing down what children say also helps them understand how writing is used. A child can draw pictures and then dictate the story. Write the words under the pictures exactly as the child has said them, and then read them aloud.

## **Partner with parents and caregivers**

It has already been said that parents and caregivers are children's most important teacher. There is much that they can do to support their children's literacy in the everyday activities at home and around the community.

Teachers should help parents and caregivers understand the ways that children develop literacy when they:

- sing songs and tell stories.
- point out print when they go shopping.



- give children things to write with.
- read and send text messages.
- talk and listen to their children.
- have suitable reading materials in their homes.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Group activities*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- define early literacy and the skills that are important for learning to read and write.
- know how to provide a print-rich learning environment for children in their preschools.
- provide listening and speaking, reading and writing activities to facilitate the development of children's early literacy.
- make connections between the different areas of literacy.

## Session outline

| Activity                 | Suggested time |
|--------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection | 8.30–9.00      |
| Early literacy           | 9.00–9.30      |
| Print rich environment   | 9.30–10.15     |
| Oral language            | 10.15–10.45    |
| TEA                      | 10.45–11.15    |
| Sounds of language       | 11.15–11.45    |
| Storytelling             | 11.45–12.00    |
| Print awareness          | 12.00–12.45    |
| LUNCH                    | 12.45–1.45     |
| Reading aloud            | 1.45–3.00      |
| Early writing            | 3.00–3.30      |
| Partner with parents     | 3.30–4.00      |





## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity* – 1/2 hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the first module.
  - what changes they have made in their own Centres or Home-Bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *What is early literacy?* – 1/2 hour

#### **Preparation:**

1. Make three signs: AGREE, DISAGREE, NOT SURE. Put these up on the wall in different places in the training room.
2. Write up the statements (below) on strips of cardboard or newsprint.
3. Write the six literacy skills on page 218 on flipchart paper.

- Start off by defining early literacy as everything children know about listening and speaking, reading and writing before they can actually read and write.
- Explain that there are many approaches to teaching literacy, and that the following activity will explore what participants think about early literacy. Explain that a statement will be shown or read and participants should go to the sign according to which best matches their viewpoint. Those who agree with the statement will go to the AGREE sign, those who disagree will go to the DISAGREE sign and those who are unsure will go to the NOT SURE sign.



- Show the first statement, and once everyone has moved to a different sign, ask groups to discuss their views with other people who are standing with them. Each group then shares their views with the whole group. Continue in the same way with the remaining statements
- Statements:
  - The best way to teach children to prepare children for reading in the preschool is to drill them in the “ABC” and to teach them letters.
  - Children learn to write before they learn to read.
  - The best way for children to learn to read is to read aloud to them every day.
- Acknowledge that participants have different ways of teaching literacy, and say that in recent years, there has been much research and new information. Explain to them that this module proposes innovative strategies based upon this research for promoting early literacy that will stimulate and challenge them to look at new ways of helping children develop early literacy skills.
- Explain that research has shown that the best way to help children develop literacy skills is to help them understand how reading and writing are useful in people’s daily lives. This module focuses on strategies to help teachers understand how they can do this by focusing on the following early literacy skills for young children:
  - Having an interest and enjoyment of books.
  - Being able to understand and tell stories and describe things.
  - Having a good vocabulary.
  - Having an awareness of how books and print work.
  - Hearing and using the different sounds of language.
  - Knowing letter names and the sounds they make.

Explain that these six skills are interconnected and that literacy and language develop together.



## A print rich environment – ¾ hour

### Preparation:

Prepare a sample word wall to demonstrate how it can be used in the classroom. (page 163 in the *Teacher Resource Guide*).

- Ask participants to look around the training room and see what print there is in the environment. Write these on flipchart paper as they are named. Discuss the kinds of print children might see every day in their classroom (e.g., alphabet chart and other charts, labels on toy containers, books). Explain that children start to understand that print has a purpose when they see print around them. Talk about the kinds of labels and charts that teachers can provide. Emphasise that there should not be too much print as this can be overwhelming for children.
  - A few objects in the classroom can be labelled to help children connect the printed words with the objects they represent (e.g., chair, window).
  - Labels can show children where things belong or where they can play.
- Explain that the format of the written letters should be consistent with what children will be taught to use when they get to school.
- Explain that the learning corners provide opportunities for children to learn about the purpose of print. Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Ask participants to discuss:
  1. the kinds of materials that could be set out in each of the learning corners to help children understand the purpose of print
  2. how children would use them.
- Groups take turns to share their ideas with the whole group.
- Explain what a word wall is and how it can be used in the classroom, using the information on page 220 of this guide and the prepared sample word wall.



## Oral language – 1/2 hour

### Preparation:

1. Bring a variety of play things for participants to use in this activity.
2. Write a list of conversation techniques on flipchart paper using the information on page 202 to 204.

- Start off by explaining that oral (spoken) language is a very important part of literacy development. Teachers often overlook it because they are so focused on helping children learn about reading and writing. Explain that as children listen and speak they start to make connections between spoken and written words. An important role that teachers play is to have meaningful conversations with children. Explain what this involves, using the prepared list. Give some practical examples from the information on pages 203 in this guide.
- Ask participants to work with a partner to practise their conversation skills. They should decide who will play the part of the teacher and who will play the role of the child. Each pair selects a toy or activity, and while the “child” is busy playing, the “teacher” starts a conversation with the “child”, using techniques like describing, listening, asking open-ended questions and modelling language.

Participants swap roles and repeat the activity. When everyone has had a turn, discuss in the large group how participants found the activity, and which strategies they found easy and which ones they found more difficult.

- Brainstorm activities that encourage children to talk to one another. Answers should include fantasy play and other learning corner activities, morning ring, field trips, etc.
- Discuss how a child with a disability would be able to participate in these activities. Answers could include using signs as a way to encourage communication with children with hearing impairments.



## Exploring the sounds of language – 1/2 hour

### Preparation:

Plan a few of the rhyming and singing activities from the Teacher Resource Guide on page 170 to 171 to demonstrate:

- how words can be broken up into smaller parts (syllables).
  - rhymes (similar end sounds).
  - alliteration (similar beginning sounds).
- Gather participants in a circle and do the prepared sound activities together.
  - After the activity explain that a very important part of learning to read and write is being able to hear that language is made up of words. Emphasise that this does not involve connecting the sounds to the written letters of the alphabet, but rather the sounds of oral language. Explain that before this happens, young children need to have lots of practice in hearing and playing with the sounds that make up words. Teachers can help by providing activities that help children hear:
    - the sounds at the ends of words (rhyming).
    - the sounds at the beginning of words.
    - breaking down words in a sentence.
    - breaking down words into syllables (beats).
  - Encourage participants to come up with their own ideas for activities, and refer them to the activities on page 170 to 171 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.
  - Discuss how these activities could be modified so that a child with a disability could participate.

## Storytelling – 1/4 hour

Remind participants that storytelling was explored in Module 4 and talk about how important storytelling activities are for early literacy, using the information on page 207 to 208 of this guide. Talk about what children learn when they retell stories and discuss how they can be encouraged to do this.



## Print awareness and print motivation – 🕒 $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Bring a selection of books for young children, enough for participants to work in pairs. Display them in the training room.
  2. List the print concepts that children need to learn (page 208 to 209 of this guide) on flipchart paper.
- Explain that as children become aware of print they learn important print concepts. Read through and explain these from the prepared list.
  - Ask participants to find a partner and to choose a book from the display. Pairs look at the book and discuss the print concepts that children learn:
    1. about the book.
    2. about the print and pictures.
    3. about the letters and sentences.
  - Discuss how teachers can help children learn print concepts, using the information on page 209 to 210 of this guide.
  - Explain that children need to know the names of letters and connect them to sounds, and that they do this as they explore books and print around them. Emphasise that teaching children to chant the “ABC” in rote fashion is not appropriate for young children. Instead teachers should provide play activities like singing songs with the letters in children’s names, letting children make letter shapes with their bodies and their fingers, and putting alphabet books in the book corner.





## Reading aloud – 🕒 1 ¼ hours

### Preparation:

1. Bring a selection of books for young children that are suitable for reading aloud to children between 3 and 5 years. There should be enough books for participants to work with in small groups. There are a few stories in the Teacher Resource Guide that can be printed and made into improvised books, if trainers have a shortage of suitable books.
  2. Prepare to read a story aloud to the group using the techniques used in the Guidelines for reading aloud on page 210 to 212 of this guide. Read the story several times in advance so that you know it well, and plan how and when you will:
    - get participants' attention.
    - talk about the front cover and title of the book.
    - use your voice.
    - show the pictures.
    - ask questions.
- Start the session by saying that research has shown that the best way to help children develop the understanding and skills they need to read is to read aloud to them. Teachers should try to read aloud to children every day, either in the book corner with a few children or at story time with a larger group.
  - Explain that you are going to read a book aloud to participants and that they should note the techniques you will use. Model how to read aloud. Be sure to move your finger along the words as you are reading them.
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them and tell each group where they should meet. Give each group a book and let members take turns reading the book, then have the rest of the group evaluate their performance according to the Guidelines for reading aloud.
- After the activity, remind participants that this is a skill that needs lots of practice.
- If there is a shortage of books to read aloud, discuss ways that teachers can acquire books. They can make their own, or set up a small



community library where different local communities can share the books they have with local preschools. A book-making workshop outline is suggested at the end of this session guide.

## *Early writing – 1/2 hour*

### **Preparation:**

Bring a few examples of children's writing (e.g., attempts to write their names, making a list or a dictated story).

- Share the practical examples of children's writing. Explain that children teach themselves to write when they see people around them writing. This helps children to understand that writing serves a purpose. Explain that teaching children how to form letters at this early age is not appropriate.
- Brainstorm some of the ways we use writing in our daily lives. For example:
  - making a shopping list
  - writing a letter
  - signing our names
  - work tasks
  - making notes during training sessions
- Divide participants into small groups by numbering them and tell each group where they should meet. Divide participants into small groups. Ask groups to discuss what writing materials they can provide in the learning corners to help children become writers.
- Groups share their ideas with the whole group. Add any points not mentioned using the information on page 213 to 215 of this guide.

## *Partner with parents and caregivers – 1/2 hour*

- Explain that families play an important role in supporting their children's literacy in their everyday activities at home and around the community.
- Ask participants to return to their groups and discuss ways in which they can encourage parents and other caregivers to support children's literacy.



- Groups report back to the large group.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their preschool, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



## Workshop 3: Making Books

The purpose of these additional workshops is to provide teachers with opportunities to make resources for their classrooms. The trainer will need to negotiate a time with teachers over a weekend or during holidays. In this third workshop, teachers will make books.

**Time:** 4 hours

### Preparation:

1. Decide on what kinds of books to make. There are instructions for making books in Module 3 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*. There are also a few stories in Module 6 that could be made into books to read aloud to children.
2. Note what materials are needed and inform teachers what they need to bring.
3. On the day of the workshop, display examples of self-made books on a table.
4. Prepare work tables with additional materials that teachers might not bring such as scissors or glue.

### On the day of the workshop

- Greet teachers and start the session with a prayer and song.
- View the examples of the books and explain how to make each one.
- Display written instructions for making the books.
- Teachers find a work space.
- Rotate to the different tables to make sure that teachers are clear about the instructions and help where necessary.
- Teachers may be able to make more than one book. If time runs out, they can finish their books later at home.
- End the day with a prayer and song.



# Module 7:

## Early Mathematics

*“In order to develop a better understanding of, and appreciation for mathematics, children must have opportunities to be actively involved in doing mathematics, exploring interesting mathematics situations, looking for patterns and developing their own strategies for solution of problems.” — Southwood and Spanneberg, 1999*

The purpose of this module is to help teachers understand how mathematical concepts of number, patterns, measurement, shape and classification can be developed through the activities provided in the ECCD programme throughout the day. Teachers will discover the many ways that children learn mathematics through play as they explore and experiment with real objects, look at books, sing songs, dance and listen to stories.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- develop an understanding that children develop mathematical concepts as they play with real objects in real-life situations.
- learn how to create a learning environment for children to develop mathematical skills and concepts.
- explore ways of helping children develop mathematical skills and concepts.
- help parents and caregivers to support their children's mathematical development at home and in the community.

## What is early mathematics?

Early mathematics refers to the processes that young children go through to learn concepts and skills that they need to understand mathematics. Many teachers still use the traditional methods that were used when they were at school, such as rote learning and worksheet activities to solve problems. There are now new and exciting ways to help children learn mathematics that focus on knowledge about the real world.

Like all other areas of learning, children in preschool settings start to understand mathematical concepts in real-life situations throughout their day as they:

- explore and experiment with hands-on materials (not worksheets).
- sing songs and listen to stories.
- help with routines like setting the table and packing away toys.
- play games.
- observe adults using mathematics in their everyday lives.





## Young children's developing mathematical skills<sup>12</sup>

Children begin to learn some specific ways of thinking about mathematics in their first six years. Below is a brief listing of when some of these basic skills typically develop.



Every child is different and will learn each of these skills at a slightly different time.

|               |  |
|---------------|--|
| 0–2 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● use all of their senses to identify familiar objects and people.</li> <li>● begin to predict and anticipate sequences of events.</li> <li>● notice cause-and-effect relationships.</li> <li>● start to classify objects in a simple but thoughtful manner (e.g., toys that roll, toys that don't).</li> <li>● use words to classify objects according to basic characteristics, such as type (e.g., toy animals, blocks).</li> <li>● begin to use relationship words and comparative language, such as bigger and under.</li> </ul>   |
| 2–3 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● begin to understand the concept and use of numbers (e.g., realize that when they count their crackers, each is given one number).</li> <li>● count three or four objects, but then count the same object twice or skip objects.</li> <li>● understand many directional and relationship words, such as “straight” and “behind”.</li> <li>● can fit large puzzle pieces into place, demonstrating an understanding of the relationships between geometric shapes.</li> <li>● notice patterns in the things they see and hear.</li> <li>● make cause-and-effect predictions.</li> </ul> |

<sup>12</sup> Adapted from Headstart Emergent Literacy Project, Training Manual. Administration for Children, Youth, and Families (DHHS), Washington, D.C., Headstart Bureau. 1996.



Geometric shapes are shapes that are studied in mathematics.

There are flat geometric shapes like circles, rectangles, squares and triangles.

There are solid geometric shapes like spheres, cubes and pyramids.

|               |   |
|---------------|---|
| 3–4 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● recognize and look for geometric shapes in the environment.</li> <li>● enjoy sorting and classifying objects, usually only one characteristic at a time (e.g., colour, shape or size)</li> <li>● begin to classify things by their uses.</li> <li>● notice and compare similarities and differences.</li> <li>● use words to describe size and quantity relationships (e.g., “My bowl is the biggest!”).</li> </ul>  |
| 4–5 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● enjoy playing games involving numbers.</li> <li>● like to classify objects in their own way rather than being told how to classify.</li> <li>● count up to 10 or 20 objects or people with less skipping of numbers or double counting.</li> <li>● understand that symbols represent complex patterns</li> <li>● solve multiple-piece puzzles by recognizing and matching geometric shapes.</li> <li>● use concepts such as height, size and length to compare objects.</li> </ul> |
| 5–6 year olds | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● start to add small numbers in their heads, but still are more comfortable adding real objects they can actually touch and move.</li> <li>● classify objects according to more than one characteristic (e.g., sorting the round and blue blocks and the red square ones) .</li> <li>● use positional words to explain spatial relationships (e.g., “on top of the table,” “behind the chair”).</li> </ul>   |



## Mathematical skills and concepts

There are important thinking skills and concepts that children need to develop that form the basis of their mathematical understanding.

### Classification

This means putting objects together according to what they have in common such as colour, size, shape and sound.

Classification develops in stages:

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Stage 1 | By the time children are 2 years old, they can recognise that things are alike or different.   |
| Stage 2 | 3–4 year olds can match things that are the same. They can sort things into groups according to a single feature such as “all the blue objects” or “all the round objects” or “all the children who are wearing hats”. |
| Stage 3 | Older preschool children start to group things together or classify in more than one way (e.g., by shape and colour or by size and texture).   |
| Stage 4 | By the time children are 7 or 8, they can explain why they have grouped things together.   |



### Seriation

Seriation means to place objects in order according to “what comes next?”

As children play, they begin to order things and describe them. They make comparisons according to size, length, weight, shades of colour, sound, texture and differences in temperature. For example:

- big, bigger, biggest
- heavy, heavier, heaviest
- rough, rougher, roughest
- long, longer, longest
- soft, softer, softest



- dark, darker, darkest
- cold, colder, coldest

Seriation develops in stages:

|         |   |
|---------|---|
| Stage 1 | Seriation begins when a baby can recognise that one noise is louder than another.   |
| Stage 2 | Between 1 and 2 years of age, a child can build towers with large blocks on the bottom.   |
| Stage 3 | Between 3 and 4 years, of age a child can compare as he plays. For example:<br>“This block is heavy, this one is heavier, this is the heaviest block.” A child cannot arrange more than three to four objects in the correct order. |
| Stage 4 | Between 4 and 5 years of age, a child can arrange 7 to 10 things in order, by trial and error until she gets it right.  |

## Mathematical questions

The kind of questions that teachers ask children as they explore and experiment is important to their mathematical development.

Teachers can ask open-ended questions like:

- “What would happen if ...?”
- “Can you think of a way to ...?”
- “Is there another way?”
- Why are you doing that?”
- “How is it the same? How is it different?”
- “How can you make it work?”
- “What can you try next?”
- “How can you find out?”
- “How do you know?”
- “How did you do that?”
- “Why do you think that happened?”
- “How could you ...?”





For more guidance on open-ended questions, see page 96 of this guide.

## Areas of mathematics

In this module, teachers will learn about the mathematical concepts and skills that children need to develop in the following five areas of mathematics:

1. Number
2. Patterns
3. Space and shape
4. Measurement
5. Organising data

### 1. Number

#### *Numbers and numerals*

For children to understand numbers they will need to know that:

- A numeral is the figure that stands for a number (e.g., 5, 16, 23).
  - Parents, as well as teachers, can help children understand numerals by drawing attention to them in the environment (e.g., on cell phones, on food packaging, clocks, etc.).
  - Teachers can play games that involve numerals and provide books with numerals.
  - Teachers can encourage children to copy numerals from wall charts or cards when they want to represent the number of things they have counted (but they do not need to be taught how to write numerals).
- A number name is the name for the numeral (e.g., five, sixteen, twenty-three).
  - Teachers help children learn number names by using them whenever the opportunity arises, for example:
    - “Yes there are **five** green crayons in the tin.”



– “You have drawn a dog with **four** legs.”

## Counting

### Rote counting

Rote counting involves saying the number names in the correct order.

Young children enjoy reciting numbers in games and songs, for example:

*“One, two, three, four, five  
Once I caught a fish alive  
Six, seven, eight, nine, ten  
Then I let it go again”.*

OR

*“Nonyana tse hlano holim’a sefate  
E ‘ngoe ea kena ka sehlaheng, ho setse tse ‘ne  
Nonyana tse’ne, holim’a sefate,  
E ‘ngoe ea kena ka sehlaheng, ho setse tse tharo  
Nonyana tse tharo holim’a sefate  
E ‘ngoe ea kena ka sehlaheng, ho setse tse peli  
Nonyana tse peli holim’asefate  
E ‘ngoe ea kena ka sehlaheng, ho setse e le ‘ngoe  
Nonyana e le ‘ngoe holim’a sefate  
Ea kena ka sehlaheng, ha hoa sala letho holim’a sefate”.*

When children sing songs and recite verses, they learn the number names that they need to know before they can begin to count and memorise saying them in the right order. This does not mean that children know how to count.

Rote counting is an important part of learning to count but children should not be drilled in counting. Teachers should plan many songs, fingerplays, stories and counting games for the children in their groups.



There are ideas for rote counting songs and games on page 209 to 212 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.





## *Rational counting*

Children will only be able to count with understanding when they can match number names to objects.

Rational counting is about counting real objects in order with meaning. A child uses the rules of counting to do this.

- He understands that counting can begin with any object and the final count will be the same (**order-irrelevance** rule).
- He says the number names in the correct order. He may not be completely correct, but he is consistent (**stable order** rule).
- He touches one object for each number that he counts aloud (**one-to-one** rule).
- He understands that the last number names the total and tells him “how many” (**cardinal** rule).
- He understands that any kind of object, real or imagined, can be counted and the above rules will apply no matter what is counted (**abstraction** rule)

An ordinal number is the place a number has in a sequence: first, second, third, fourth, fifth. Children use ordinal numbers to count the position of something.

## *One-to-one correspondence*

Children need to understand one-to-one correspondence. This is the ability to match one object to one object or number and understand that it only gets counted once. For example:

- Set out one plate for each child during mealtimes.
- Deal one card for each child playing a card game.
- Put a lid on every container.

Teachers need to give children many opportunities to count real objects and develop an understanding of one-to-one correspondence. The concept is important for understanding quantity: more than, less than, the same, etc. For example, a child who is setting the table may count one fork for each



plate. He finds out that he needs one **more** fork or that there are **less** forks than plates.



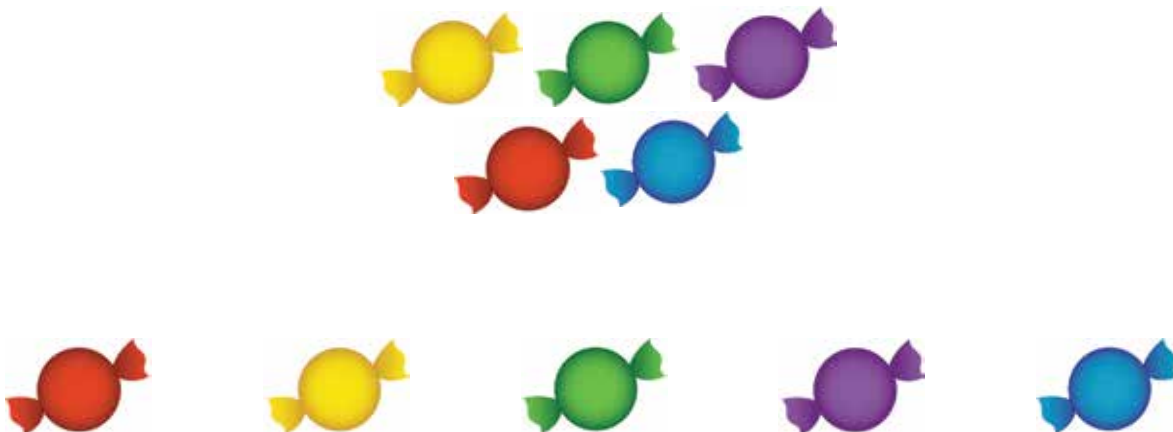
Counting and one-to-one correspondence form the basis for understanding number.

## Conservation

Conservation is a mathematical term that means the child understands that something stays the same even when it is rearranged and looks different.

### Conservation of number

This is the child's ability to understand that the number of objects remains the same, no matter how they are arranged. Young children often believe that when a group of objects that are closely arranged are spread out, the number of objects becomes greater, for example:



Both groups have five sweets.

If a child understands that the number of sweets in both sets is the same, then he is able to conserve.

As children explore objects, they gradually start to realise that the number of objects remains the same no matter how they are arranged.






## Working with quantity

When children compare things, they begin to identify similarities and differences in the things. Children begin to understand quantity (how much?) when they make comparisons between the numbers of things. For example:

- “There are **more** spoons than plates.”
- “Lisebo has poured a **little** sand into the bucket. I have **a lot**.”
- “There are **not enough** blocks for me to build my bridge.”

During the preschool years, young children learn to add and subtract in real-life situations as they start to understand how numbers are built up and broken down to make other numbers. They combine and separate quantities in different ways. For example, these eight blocks can be arranged in different ways:

| 4 and 4  |
|--|
|   |
| 3 and 5  |
|  |
| 3 and 5  |
|  |

Children learn as they share out things so that everyone has the same, or when they give and take as they play. For example:

- “I will share my sandwich with Mpho. She can have this **half**.”
- “Thabiso wants two of my sticks. I have five sticks. If he **takes away**



two, *I will only have three left over.*”

Children in preschool need to have real objects with them as they learn to add, subtract, multiply or share equally. Paper activities like worksheets do not give children opportunities to solve simple mathematics problems in their everyday experiences. It is also not appropriate for children to memorise sums like “ $1+1 = 2$ ”; “ $2+2+4$ ” as it does not build true understanding of the relationship between numbers. Children need many opportunities to learn through play to explore and find out for themselves.

## Helping children develop number sense



Number sense is the child’s ability to understand and use numbers in many different ways.

Teachers can provide activities and use experiences throughout the day to encourage children to use numbers in different ways:

- Plan songs, fingerplays, stories and counting games.
- Provide a variety of real objects for children to sort, match, compare and count in all the learning corners.
  - Sorting trays with different compartments help children compare and count objects.
  - Household objects in the fantasy play corner encourage children to count cups, spoons and plates as they “set the table”.
  - Building materials of different shapes and sizes encourage children to choose and count those that are the same shape or size.
- Encourage children to point to and touch each object as they are counting.
- Let children use their fingers to count.
- Use routine times to encourage children to think about and use numbers.
  - Let children take turns to help set up for snack and mealtimes. They can count while they set out plates, cups, chairs and spoons for each child.
  - During morning ring, children can find out how many children are at



school when the teacher counts the children.

- Ask children to help set out materials (e.g., five green crayons, five blue crayons, etc).
- Help children learn mathematical language.
  - “There is still **some** porridge in the pot if anyone would like some more?”
  - “There is **nothing** left over.”
  - “Everyone has the **same** amount.”
  - “Pour a **little** water into your hands. No, that’s **too much**.”
- Ask questions to help children solve simple mathematical problems. For example:
  - “How can you make sure that you and Lekhotla have the same number of blocks?”
  - “How much sand do you think you will need to fill the bucket?”

### Supporting children with disabilities

- Let children do as much as they can by themselves.
- Allow enough time for children to practise their skills.
- If there is a child with low vision, have cards made with larger numbers and colour contrast.
- A rug with no patterns and dark colour will help a child with low vision to see objects placed on the rug better.
- Encourage a child with a visual disability to touch each object as she counts.
- A child with an intellectual disability may need to have a task broken down into small steps. The teacher can demonstrate with steps and then ask the child to repeat the steps, one at a time. Encourage the child to ask for help if needed.
- Pair a child with a disability with another child to help with activities like setting the table, counting out building materials, etc.



## 2. Patterns



Algebra is a part of mathematics that uses letters and symbols in the place of unknown numbers to find out what the unknown number is. Algebra is used to work out real-life problems in our everyday lives.

A pattern is a regular arrangement of objects (or numbers or shapes or sounds).

Copying and making patterns helps children to develop important mathematical skills that will help them understand algebra later at school.

- They learn to sequence, which means predicting what comes next.
- They notice how things stay the same and how they change.
- They recognise that there are patterns in numbers. For example, when counting from 1 to 100, there is a pattern that recurs in which all numerals go from 1 to 9 and then start again at 0.

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10  |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20  |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30  |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40  |
| 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50  |
| 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60  |
| 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70  |
| 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80  |
| 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90  |
| 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |

- They learn to solve problems as they make patterns.
- They follow rules to repeat a pattern.





## Types of patterns

Teachers in preschools can help children learn about:

- **Repeating patterns.** A repeating pattern is a sequence of objects, shapes, sounds or other features that is repeated again and again. For example:



(The pattern is 2 squares, 3 stars, repeated again and again.)

Teachers can show how there are repeating patterns everywhere:

- on clothing, fences, walls
- on flowers and leaves
- on caterpillars and snakes
- in movements and sounds
- in numbers
- **Growing patterns.** This is a pattern that grows and changes in a predictable manner. For example,



or



There are songs with growing patterns, such as “*The ants go marching*” (page 210 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*).

There are also growing patterns in many children’s stories such as *The Great Big Carrot* in Module 6 on page 116 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

## Helping children learn about patterns

To help children learn about patterns, teachers should:

- Provide a variety of materials for children to create patterns.
  - Threading beads of different colours and shapes. Children can make their own patterns or teachers can provide patterns cards for



children to copy and extend patterns.

- A collection of objects for children to make their own patterns.
- Play games with movement patterns for children to follow:
  - hop, clap; hop, clap
  - jump to the left, jump to the right, jump to the left, jump to the right
  - move slow move fast, move faster, move slow move fast, move faster
- Let children use their bodies to make patterns (e.g., bend, arms out, legs out, bend, arms out, legs out).
- Teach children a dance that has patterns.
- Create sound patterns for children to follow by clapping or stamping feet:
  - soft, loud; soft, soft, loud; soft, loud; soft, soft, loud
  - clap, clap-clap, clap-clap-clap; clap, clap-clap, clap-clap-clap
- Sing songs and chant rhymes with repeated words like these songs from pages 209 to 212 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.
- Encourage children to listen to sound patterns inside and outside (e.g., a clock ticking, a frog croaking, a bird singing). Ask children to repeat the sounds.
- Let children look for patterns around them: on buildings and gates and on the clothes they are wearing. Talk about the pattern, where it starts and what the parts are that make up the pattern.
- Read stories that have repetitive words and verses.
- Talk about patterns as children play, and help them understand what a pattern is. Encourage them to predict what will come next. For example, *“I see you are making a gate that has a pattern with one block lying down and the next block standing up, and you have repeated this over and over again. How will you arrange the next block?”*
- Ask open-ended questions to help understand pattern, such as:
  - “What will you do first?”
  - “What will do you next?”
  - “How can you repeat it?”
  - “What is the same?”



### Supporting children with disabilities

- Provide textured pattern cards, threading beads and games to help children with visual disabilities learn. Encourage the child to feel the small differences in things.
- Be supportive of a child with low -vision, who brings objects closer to the eyes to see them better.
- Find a way for a child with a physical disability to join in with movement activities. For example:
  - The child can nod his head or clap hands in time to the music.
  - The child can beat a drum while the other children move around.
  - During group activities, place children who are visually or hearing disabled nearby so that they can see the pictures or hear.

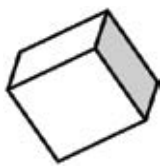
## 3. Shape and space

### *Exploring shapes*

As children explore objects in their environment, they learn that objects have shapes and can be called by the name of a shape. After much hands-on practice with three-dimensional shapes, children will begin to identify basic two-dimensional shapes such as squares, circles, rectangles and triangles, for example in drawing. Learning about these shapes will help children understand geometry when they get to school.

There are two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes:

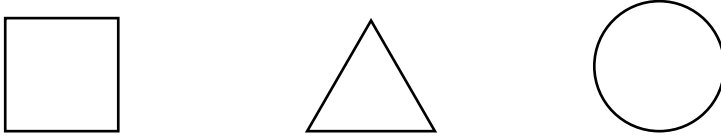
- **Three-dimensional shapes** are solid shapes. They have height, and width and depth. For example:



Three-dimensional shapes are readily available in the children's environment: ball (sphere); tin can (cylinder); box (cube); rooftop (pyramid or cone).

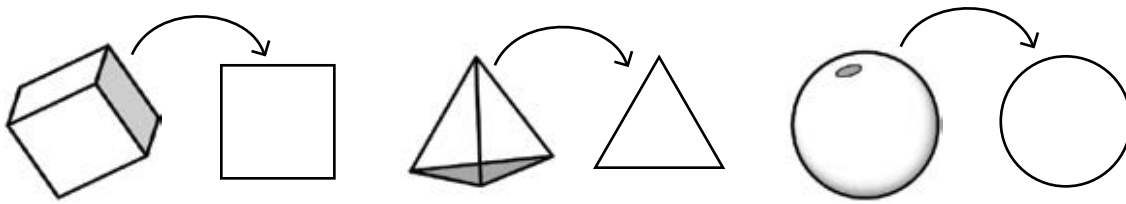


- **Two-dimensional shapes** are flat shapes. They have height and width but not depth.



Children may see two-dimensional shapes in books, on signs, on building, etc.

Many two-dimensional shapes can be seen on the flat surfaces or “faces” of three-dimensional shapes.



Children in preschool need many opportunities to explore solid (three-dimensional) shapes in order to understand the concept of flat (two-dimensional) shapes. Many teachers overlook this stage and give children worksheets and lessons on geometric shapes.

### Three-dimensional shapes

It is more important for children to experience what solid objects can do than to learn their names. For example, some:

- can be used to build in different ways.
- can roll.
- can be used to store things.
- are the same shape but different sizes.

### *Helping children learn about shape*

Teachers should provide activities that help children learn about both two-dimensional and three-dimensional shape:

- Provide materials and give children many opportunities to explore and make their own shapes. For example:
  - Building and art activities are important ways in which children



- develop and learn about shapes (three-dimensional and two-dimensional).
- Provide sorting boxes with different shapes and let children group them according to how they look alike (three-dimensional).
- Select or make books that have a variety of shapes. Let children point out different shapes in the pictures (two-dimensional).
- Name and talk about the geometric shapes in the environment, such as on paving stones, windows and rondavels. It is important for teachers to use the correct geometric names for the shapes (e.g., sphere or circle).
- Encourage children to describe other kinds of shapes such as tree shapes, cloud shapes, sun, moon and star shapes, leaf and flower shapes.
- Let children make shapes by moving their bodies in different ways, alone and with other children.
- Display pictures of real things like balls, wheels, boxes of different sizes, tins, etc., as well as the geometric shapes on their 'faces' to help children make connections between three-dimensional and two-dimensional concepts.
- Ask questions as they explore to help them learn more about how objects look and what they can do. For example:
  - *"How is this shape the same as this one?"*
  - *"How does it look?"*
  - *"How many sides does it have?"*
  - *"What shape can you use to make the bridge?"*
  - *"What shape can you use to make the wheels?"*
  - *"What will happen if you use the square shape to make the wheels?"*

## Understanding space

As children play and move around, they become aware of where objects and people are in relation to one another and themselves. For example:

- *"Khethang is at the **front** of the line. Liboko is at the **back** of the line. I am standing **next to** Lebo."*
- *"All the children sit **under** the tree for story time."*



- “I found the book on **top** of the shelf.”
- “I built a tunnel **over** the road. “

## Helping children learn about space

- Introduce spatial language as children play and during daily routines. Talk about the position of people and things. For example:
  - in front of, at the back of, behind, in the middle
  - on top of, under, above, below
  - before, after, behind
  - near far, close to, far from
  - high, low
  - inside, outside
  - up, down
  - forward, backward
  - toward, away from
- Give directions using spatial language. For example, “Please find the plates **inside** the cupboard and bring them to me.”
- Provide movement games outdoors that help children explore position in space.
  - Obstacle courses allow children to climb onto, under and through; jump over, step up and down, etc.
  - Children learn about high and low, near and far away, over and under, as they throw and catch balls.

### Supporting children with disabilities

Help a child with a visual disability to learn about shape through touch. Encourage her to pick up an object and move her fingers around its edges and then describe how the object feels.

- Keep the furniture in the same place so that a child with a visual disability starts to feel confident to move around in space.
- Encourage a child with a disability to take part in movement activities and learn about her body in space. If a child is not physically able to participate, let him direct the activity.





## 4. Measurement

Measurement involves finding out how much of something there is. Children learn the following concepts of measurement as they play:

- length, height
- weight and volume
- time

Children learn about measurement as they compare different lengths, sizes and amounts.

They will first compare two objects: “*This apple is bigger than that one.*”

Later they will compare three or more objects: “*This stone is heavy. This one is heavier. This is the heaviest stone.*”

They are learning to seriate, or place objects in order according to “what comes next?”

### *Length and height*

- Children can measure length and height by using blocks, sticks, footsteps, their hands or their bodies.
- Children can measure things in their environment, such as:
  - how many big steps to the door.
  - who is the tallest.
  - who has the biggest feet.

### *Weight and volume*

- Children use a balance scale to measure weight.



An idea for making a balance scale is provided on page 219 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.



- Children measure volume when they pour water and sand into and out of different sizes of containers.



Volume is the amount of space an object takes up.

Children go through different stages in developing concepts of weight and volume <sup>13</sup> :

|         |  |
|---------|--|
| Stage 1 | Very young children begin to notice differences in the weight of things they play with and in the quantity of liquid in a bottle or glass.   |
| Stage 2 | Children aged 3 to 4 years can make general comparisons between different weights and quantities in terms of whether one thing weighs more or less than another (heavy and light) and whether a container is full or empty or contains a little or a lot.<br>They can also judge whether two containers have the same (equal) amounts of liquid or sand and whether two things have the same weight if the containers are the same size and shape. |
| Stage 3 | Children begin to understand that if the same quantity of liquid is poured into a different shaped container it remains the same, but sometimes they get confused (e.g., when water is poured from a wide glass into a long thin glass, because it looks as if it has more).   |
| Stage 4 | Around the age of 6, children work out for themselves that the quantity (volume) or weight of something remains the same no matter how often its shape is changed or it is divided up (conservation).  |

## Time

Time is an abstract concept and difficult for young children to understand. They learn about the sequence of time when they understand that things happened in a certain order during their daily activities. For example, in the morning, when it's light, they wake up, get washed and dressed and then eat breakfast.

<sup>13</sup> Sue Connolly and Ann Short (2005) Ntataise Further Training Programme Learner Materials. Ntataise Trust.



Children also learn about time when they remember something that happened the day before or talk about something that will happen the next day. For example:

- “Yesterday it was raining.”
- “Tomorrow it is my birthday.”

## Estimation

Estimation is an important part of measurement. This involves making a reasonable guess about measurement. For example:

- “How many blocks will be needed to make a road?”
- “How many cups of water will fill a jug?”
- “How long will it take for the porridge to cook?”

## How teachers can help children learn about measurement

- Provide lots of different objects and things for children to compare and measure in the learning corners.
- Give children the language they need to compare things:
  - “Is that the **biggest** paintbrush you can find?”
  - “Are those jugs the **same size**? “
  - “Who is the **tallest** child?”
  - “Which cup do you think will hold **more** water?”
  - “No they are not the same. This side is **high** and the other side is **higher**.”
  - “How can you make the clay **flatter**?”
  - “Which is **longer**? Which is **shorter**?”
  - “How can you put these in order from **shortest** to **tallest**?”
  - “Do you think it will be **warmer** tomorrow?”
- Talk about time and how long things take to do. For example:
  - “Palesa has finished already. You did not have to wait a long time



*to wash your hands.”*

- *“There is still enough time to have another song before you have lunch.”*
- *“Do you think there will be more rain tomorrow?”*
- Provide daily opportunities to discuss the weather today and yesterday, and predict what it will be *tomorrow*.
- Use the morning ring to encourage children to talk about what they did yesterday at home or at the centre (and help them put events in chronological order). For example: *“Did we eat lunch before or after story time?”*

## 5. Organising data



Data is a collection of facts or information about things or people or places.

### *Sorting and classifying*

An important part of data handling is being able to sort and classify objects. This involves sorting and grouping objects together because they are alike in some way. Children may group things according to type (e.g., all the animals) colour, shape, size, texture or sound. They should be encouraged to explore as many ways as they can to sort and group the objects, although between the ages of 3 and 5, children mostly sort and classify by one characteristic at a time (e.g., all the yellow objects).

### *Helping children to sort and classify*

- Provide a variety of sorting trays in the educational toy corner with many different objects and pictures (e.g., stones, sticks, leaves, seeds, beads, pictures of food, people, animals and plants).
- Let children decide for themselves how to group objects.
- Choose children to go in groups to the next activity. For example: *“All those children who are wearing shoes with laces can go outside first.”*
- *Encourage children to put things away into the places where they belong* (e.g., all the puzzle pieces in the box, all the red crayons in the red tin, all the spoons on the tray).



- Ask questions to extend children's thinking. For example:
  - *"In what ways are they the same?"*
  - *"In what ways are they different?"*
  - *"Which ones go together?"*
  - *"Why did you put these together?"*

## Making graphs

Graphing helps children learn how to organise information. This will help them to compare things and find common patterns. Even young children can start to make simple graphs about what they have found out by placing objects in different columns.



In this example, children are placing all the objects that float in one column and all the objects that sink in the other column. After the activity, the children can draw or make their own graph about what they have discovered.

A daily weather chart is another graph that organises information. Every day, the children can place an appropriate picture in the column for that day. At the end of the week, they discuss how many days the sun shone, the wind blew or it rained.

- *"On how many days did the sun shine?"*
- *"On how many days did it rain?"*
- *"Did the sun shine more or did it rain more this week?"*



Other graph activities for young children include:

- graphs of children's birthdays (how many in January, how many in February, etc.)
- graphs of children's favourite foods
- graphs of children's clothing colours (how many children are wearing pink? brown? blue?)

### Supporting children with disabilities

- A child with a hearing disability may miss important words that describe objects or concepts. Face the child and use simple language. Use gestures, real objects and pictures to highlight concepts.
- A child with low vision will need good contrast with colours to see it better. Have the background of the weather chart to be black. When white clouds and the yellow sun are placed on it, there will be contrast, which will facilitate the child to see it.
- If there is a child who is visually impaired, adding texture to the weather chart will help. The clouds can be made of cotton or other soft material while the sun can be made of any other material in a round shape. Explain that the soft cotton means clouds and that if there is no sun with the clouds, it is likely to rain.

## A mathematics environment

It is important for children to learn that mathematics is useful and necessary in their everyday lives. Teachers can set up their classrooms so that children learn mathematics skills naturally as they play and explore their environment.

### Print around the room

- Display birthday and weather charts at children's eye level.
- Display charts of mathematical concepts like shape, number and measurement at children's eye level.
- Label toy containers to tell children how many items there are (e.g., 12 puzzle pieces or six blocks).
- Write the daily programme in the shape of a clock.
- Display a poster of numerals in the classroom.





- Make signs for the learning corners to say how many children can play there. For example:




## Learning corners



Children learn mathematics best when they interact with real objects during play. Every learning corner provides opportunities for children to develop their mathematical thinking.

| Fantasy play corner:   | Building corner:   |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● measuring tools like cups, jug and spoons, empty tins and bottles</li> <li>● plates, cups, plastic utensils, pots and pans</li> <li>● clock</li> <li>● play cell phone</li> <li>● pairs of clothing items (e.g., socks, shoes, earrings)</li> <li>● handbag or purse with play money</li> <li>● shop with a cash register, priced items</li> <li>● advertising leaflets with prices</li> <li>● empty boxes such as tea or milk containers, empty food packets and household product containers</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● different shapes and sizes of building materials— at least six of the same type (e.g., cereal boxes, washing powder boxes, toothpaste boxes, round cheese boxes tins [remove sharp edges], cardboard tubes)</li> <li>● road signs such as for speed limits, inclines, arrows, etc.</li> <li>● shapes on shelves for children to match the same shape when they pack away</li> <li>● pictures of buildings and shapes</li> </ul> |

| Art corner:   | Science and discovery corner:  |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● painting and drawing</li> <li>● collage items such as leaves, feathers, string, wool, pieces of fabric</li> <li>● modelling out of clay dug out of the ground, or playdough (children learn about colour, shape, size, patterns)</li> <li>● things to make patterns or prints (e.g., leaves, sticks, stones, bark from a tree, seed pods)</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● sand and water play</li> <li>● household items such as plastic containers, cups, bottles and tins of different sizes. sieves, funnels, scoops</li> </ul>  |
| Books:  | Educational toys:  |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● self-made as well as commercial books about counting, size, money, shapes, patterns, numbers, measuring, the weather</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● sorting boxes for children to group according to size, shape, colour, texture, etc.</li> </ul> <div data-bbox="778 1048 954 1211">  <p><b>References</b></p> </div> <p data-bbox="991 1081 1359 1216">See pages 216 and 217 of the <i>Teacher Resource Guide</i> for ideas on how to make sorting boxes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● beads and string to develop pattern and number concepts</li> <li>● matching games</li> <li>● counting games (e.g., dominoes, board games, card games)</li> <li>● puzzles</li> </ul> |



## Mathematics in the home and community

It is important that teachers help parents and caregivers understand how they can help their children learn mathematics during daily activities in the home and around the community.

Here are some of the ways in which they can help children:  
When children's friends visit:

- encourage them to play hopscotch, *liketo*, *morabaraba* and other games outside to learn about number and counting.
- adapt games like "Simon Says" to include numbers:
  - "Simon says turn around two times."
  - "Simon says jump five times."

When preparing food and serving food:

- ask the child to help measure spoonfuls, and cupfuls of flour or water.
- let the child scrub different numbers of vegetables for cooking; for example, put four carrots in the pot.
- use words like "full", "half" and "left-over".
- ask the child to serve one potato on each plate or to put more beans on another child's plate.
- ask the child to set out a plate and a cup for each family member.
- let the child find the matching lids to the saucepans or food containers.

When doing the laundry:

- let the child hand out the pegs for each item being hung on the line and count them; sort and match the clean washing together.
  - Let the child put all the things that are the same together (e.g., underwear, t-shirts, clothes belonging to different family members).
  - Talk about the patterns on the clothes.
  - Ask the child to find the matching socks.

When going shopping:

- On the way, talk about the numbers on taxis or people's huts.



- Ask the child to count out different quantities of fruit for the basket, like four apples or six peaches
- Ask the child to work out how many more: “*We need six peaches but there are only four here—how many more do we need?*”
- Discuss how much each item costs and *which* brand is cheaper.
- Explain the total cost of all the groceries, the amount of money being given and the change being received.
- After returning home, let children sort and pack away the groceries according to where they are stored.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Early Mathematics*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- develop an understanding that children develop mathematical concepts as they play with real objects in real-life situations.
- learn how to create a learning environment for children to develop mathematical skills and concepts.
- explore ways of helping children develop mathematical skills and concepts.
- help parents and caregivers to support their children's mathematical development at home and in the community.

## Session outline

| Activity                          | Suggested time |
|-----------------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection          | 8.30–9.00      |
| Introducing mathematical concepts | 9.00–9.45      |
| Number                            | 9.45–10.45     |
| TEA                               | 10.45–11.15    |
| Patterns                          | 11.15–12.00    |
| Shape and space                   | 12.00–12.45    |
| LUNCH                             | 12.45–1 .45    |
| Measurement                       | 1.45–2.15      |
| Data                              | 2.15–3.00      |
| Mathematics in the environment    | 3.00–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### Reflection activity – 1/2 hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the last module.
  - what changes they have made in their own centres or home-bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### Introducing mathematical concepts – 3/4 hour

#### Preparation:

1. Collect the following items for different mathematics stations:

| Number   | Pattern  | Shape   | Measurement   | Data  |
|--|--|---|---|---|
| An assortment of objects for children to count<br><br>A number game like <i>morabaraba</i> | Threading beads of different colours and shapes and string | Building blocks of different geometric shapes and sizes | Large container of water<br><br>Measuring tools like cups, jugs, spoons, containers of different sizes, sieves, funnels, etc. | Sorting trays with a variety of objects to sort and match |

2. Set out the materials on different tables and label each table clearly according to the different mathematical concepts.
3. At each station provide a sheet of flipchart paper with a heading for the mathematical concept.
4. Write up a brief introduction of what children need to learn about each mathematical concept as follows:
  - Number: Children learn how to count and solve problems with numbers.
  - Pattern: Children learn how things are arranged in different ways.





- Shape: Children learn that objects have shapes.
  - Measurement: Children learn how much of something there is.
  - Organising data: Children organise things according to how they are the same (e.g., colour, shape, size, texture).
- Start by explaining that there are different mathematical concepts and skills that children need to develop. Briefly introduce each mathematical concept according to the prepared flipchart points.
  - Divide participants into five small groups by numbering them off, and tell each group where they should sit according to the mathematics stations that have been set out. Explain that they should use the materials and discuss and write down the ways in which children could use the materials to learn more about the mathematical concept assigned to them and write down their ideas on the flipchart paper provided. They should also discuss one other activity that could also promote this mathematical concept. This could be an activity, a song, story or game.
  - Give groups time to complete the task and then display the flipchart papers and read through the ideas.
  - Explain that participants will learn more about each of these concepts during the remainder of the module.
  - Explain that teachers can help children develop thinking skills to solve mathematical problems when they ask open ended questions like:
    - *“What would happen if ...?”*
    - *“Can you think of a way to ...?”*
    - *“Is there another way?”*
    - *“Why are you doing that?”*
    - *“How is it the same? How is it different?”*
    - *“How can you make it work?”*
    - *“What can you try next?”*
    - *“How can you find out?”*
    - *“How do you know?”*
    - *“How did you do that?”*
    - *“Why do you think that happened?”*
    - *“How could you ...?”*



## Number – 1 hour

### Preparation:

1. Write down the definitions of a numeral and a number name on flipchart paper, using the information on page 261 of this guide.
  2. Bring a variety of objects and games that will encourage children to count (e.g., lotto games, sorting boxes).
  3. Prepare a presentation on how to help children to work with quantity and develop their number sense, using the information on pages 234 to 240. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Explain the difference between a numeral and a number name, using the prepared flipchart paper.
  - Ask participants to share with a partner how they teach children about numbers. Pairs share their experiences with the whole group. If the methods used are largely drilling and filling in worksheets, remind participants that children learn through play and that these kinds of activities are not the most effective ones for young children.
  - Sing a number song with participants. Explain that there are two ways that children learn to count and that they first learn to rote count by chanting numbers in the correct order. Discuss how children memorise the number names and learn to say them in the right order, but they do not really know how to count with understanding. Emphasise that rote counting is an important part of learning to count and that teachers need to plan fun singing games that help children learn to count.
  - Divide participants into small groups and ask each group to prepare a counting song or game for children. Groups prepare and then demonstrate their game or song.
  - Explain that children will really understand how to count when they count real objects. Use real objects to demonstrate each of the following:
    - Counting can begin with any object.
    - Say the number names in the correct order.
    - Touch one object for each number that the child counts aloud.
    - The last number name is the total and tells you “how many”.
  - Summarise with a presentation on helping children learn about number using the prepared flipchart points.



## Patterns – $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Bring a 100 board.
  2. Prepare a presentation of flipchart paper on how to help children learn about patterns, using the information on page 241 to 244. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Display the 100 board and discuss the kinds of patterns in the numbers. For example:

|    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |    |     |
|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|----|-----|
| 1  | 2  | 3  | 4  | 5  | 6  | 7  | 8  | 9  | 10  |
| 11 | 12 | 13 | 14 | 15 | 16 | 17 | 18 | 19 | 20  |
| 21 | 22 | 23 | 24 | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 | 30  |
| 31 | 32 | 33 | 34 | 35 | 36 | 37 | 38 | 39 | 40  |
| 41 | 42 | 43 | 44 | 45 | 46 | 47 | 48 | 49 | 50  |
| 51 | 52 | 53 | 54 | 55 | 56 | 57 | 58 | 59 | 60  |
| 61 | 62 | 63 | 64 | 65 | 66 | 67 | 68 | 69 | 70  |
| 71 | 72 | 73 | 74 | 75 | 76 | 77 | 78 | 79 | 80  |
| 81 | 82 | 83 | 84 | 85 | 86 | 87 | 88 | 89 | 90  |
| 91 | 92 | 93 | 94 | 95 | 96 | 97 | 98 | 99 | 100 |

- From left to right, each number increases by 1.
- From top to bottom, the number on the right stays the same but the number on the left increases every time.
- Brainstorm where patterns can be found in the environment and write down participants' ideas on flipchart paper.
- Involve participants in a demonstration of patterns in movements, for example:
  - Clapping or stamping feet:
    - soft, loud; soft, soft, loud; soft, loud; soft, soft, loud
    - clap, clap-clap, clap-clap-clap; clap, clap-clap, clap-clap-clap
    - hop, clap; hop, clap
  - Movement patterns:
    - jump to the left, jump to the right, jump to the left, jump to the right



- move slow move fast, move faster, move slow move fast, move faster
- dance movements that repeat
- Body patterns:
  - bend, arms out, legs out, bend, arms out, legs out
- Divide participants into small groups. Explain that each group should create some kind of pattern to demonstrate to the group. They can do this with their bodies, facial expressions, clothing items, etc.

After each group has presented their pattern the remaining participants guess what the pattern is.

- Summarise with a presentation on how to help children learn about patterns using the prepared flipchart points.

## Shape and space – 🌐 $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Collect building blocks of different geometric shapes and sizes (e.g., square and rectangular boxes, boxes that have a circular and triangular shapes [some cheese boxes, cones], cylinders, etc.). The collection should have as many blocks of the same kind as possible.
  2. Prepare a game of hopscotch outside.
- Display the building materials and have a few volunteers experiment with the blocks for a few minutes. Encourage them to stack blocks and arrange them in different ways. As participants explore, ask questions like:
    - *“How is this shape the same as this one?”*
    - *“How does it look?”*
    - *“How many sides does it have?”*
    - *“What shape can you use to make the bridge?”*
    - *“What shape can you use to make the wheels?”*
  - After the activity, explain that children need to learn that objects have



shapes, and that it is more important that children have opportunities to explore objects with different shapes than to learn their names. Explain that children learn about flat shapes when they draw pictures, for example, a roof with a triangular shape.

**Note to trainers: At this introductory stage, it is not necessary to explain the differences between two-dimensional and three-dimensional shapes. What is important is that teachers provide hands-on activities for children to learn about shapes as they play and that they are not given worksheets.**

- Brainstorm other activities that teachers can provide for children to learn about shapes. Add any ideas not mentioned using the information on page 244 to 246 of this guide.
- Explain that children also need to understand the concept of space—where they are in relation to objects and other people. Give a few examples (under, over, on top of, between, over, etc.).
- Take participants outside and have a few volunteers play a game of hopscotch. As they play, ask the remaining participants to write down words that describe where the players are in relation to the stone, the lines and one another.
- After the game, have participants call out the words they wrote down. List each new word as it is called out. Words might include:
  - in front of, at the back of, behind, in the middle
  - on top of, under, above, below
  - before, after, behind
  - near, far, close to, far from
  - high, low
  - inside, outside
  - up, down
  - away from
- Explain the importance of introducing these words to children as they play and during daily routines. Discuss how obstacle courses allow children to climb onto, under and through; jump over, step up, etc., and talk about how children learn about high and low, near and far away, over and under, as they throw and catch balls.



## Measurement – $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Bring and set out the following items in different parts of the training room:
  - a balance scale and things to weigh
  - water play and containers of different sizes
  - about 10 sticks of different sizes
  - weather chart
2. Prepare a presentation of flipchart paper on how to help children learn about measurement using the information on page 248 to 251. Write key points on flipchart paper.

- Start this part of the session by reviewing the definition of measurement—how much of something there is. Demonstrate different aspects of measurement:

**Volume** (the amount of space an object takes up): Go to the water play activity and ask for a few volunteers to use the materials. Ask the volunteers questions like:

- “How many cups do you think will it take to fill the bottle?”
- “How many cups will it take to half fill the bottle?”
- “Which container has the most water?”
- “Which container has the least water?”
- “Which container has the same amount of water as another?”

**Length:** Ask for (different) volunteers to compare the different size sticks. For example:

- “Choose two sticks. Which stick is shorter?”
- “Choose three sticks. Which stick is the longest?”
- “Arrange all the sticks from shortest to longest.”

**Weight:** Ask for volunteers to compare the weight of different things. First they should estimate which item they think will weigh more than the other item and then use the balance scale to find out if their estimate was correct. Ask questions like:

- “Which two objects do you think will weigh the same?”





- “Which do you think will be heavier?”
- “Which do you think will be lighter?”
- “Which do you think will weigh the most?”
- “Which do you think will weigh the least?”

**Time:** Review how to use the weather chart and talk about how children learn about time when they remember something that happened the day before or talk about what might happen the next day.

- Summarise with a presentation on how to help children learn about measurement using the prepared flipchart points.

## Organising data – $\frac{3}{4}$ hour

### Preparation:

1. Bring sorting boxes with a variety of objects for each group.
  2. Gather a variety of items for a floating and sinking activity (e.g., leaves, sticks, coins).
  3. Use the same water play container as used earlier.
  4. Make a floating and sinking chart as shown in the illustration on page 252.
- Review the definition of data (a collection of facts or information about things, people or places). Explain that children sort and group things together because they are alike in some way. Give examples of the way people sort and group things in their daily lives (e.g., organising shelves, sorting laundry, stands selling produce in the market, etc.).
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where to meet. Give each group a sorting box and give participants time to sort and group the objects in any way they want (e.g., according to size, colour, shape or texture).
  - Groups share their ideas of the different ways their objects can be grouped.
  - Explain that as children sort and group things, they can start to make simple graphs about what they have found out. Ask for a few volunteers to participate in the floating and sinking activity. They place the objects that float on the “float” side of the chart and the objects that sink on



the “sink” side of the chart.

- Remind participants of the weather chart and talk about how children organise information about the weather, for example:
  - “On how many days did the sun shine?”
  - “On how many days did it rain?”
  - “Did the sun shine more or did it rain more this week?”

## Mathematics in the environment – 1 hour

### Preparation:

1. Prepare a presentation on a mathematics environment using the information on page 253 to 255. Write key points on flipchart.
  2. Prepare a presentation on how parents and caregivers can support children’s mathematics learning using the information on page 256 to 257. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Reflect on the day’s activities and discuss how children develop mathematics concepts as they play. Explain that the learning corners provide many learning opportunities. Divide participants into six small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where they should meet. Ask each group to focus on one of the following learning corners:
    - fantasy play corner
    - building corner
    - art corner
    - science and discovery corner
    - book corner
    - educational toy corner

Ask groups to discuss the following:

1. What mathematical concepts can children learn in this corner?
  2. What materials would help children learn these concepts?
- Groups report back on their discussions.



- Talk about the different kinds of mathematical print that teachers can provide, using the information on the prepared flipchart paper.
- Explain that mathematics happens throughout the day in all routines and activities. Ask participants how teachers can help parents and caregivers understand how to support their children's mathematical learning during daily activities. Summarise with the points on the prepared flipchart paper.
- Encourage participants to identify ways that a child with a disability would be able to participate in different mathematical activities. Here are a few examples:
  - Encourage a child with a visual disability to touch each object as she counts.
  - Break a task down into smaller steps.
  - Provide textured pattern cards, threading beads and games to help children with visual disabilities learn. Encourage the child to feel the small differences in things.
  - Find a way for a child with a physical disability to join in with movement activities, such as clap hands in time to the beat.
  - Make sequencing picture cards to help children to understand the order in which things happen.
  - Face a child with a hearing disability and use simple language. Use gestures, real objects and pictures to highlight concepts.

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three ways that they will incorporate the different mathematical concepts into their existing programmes, based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



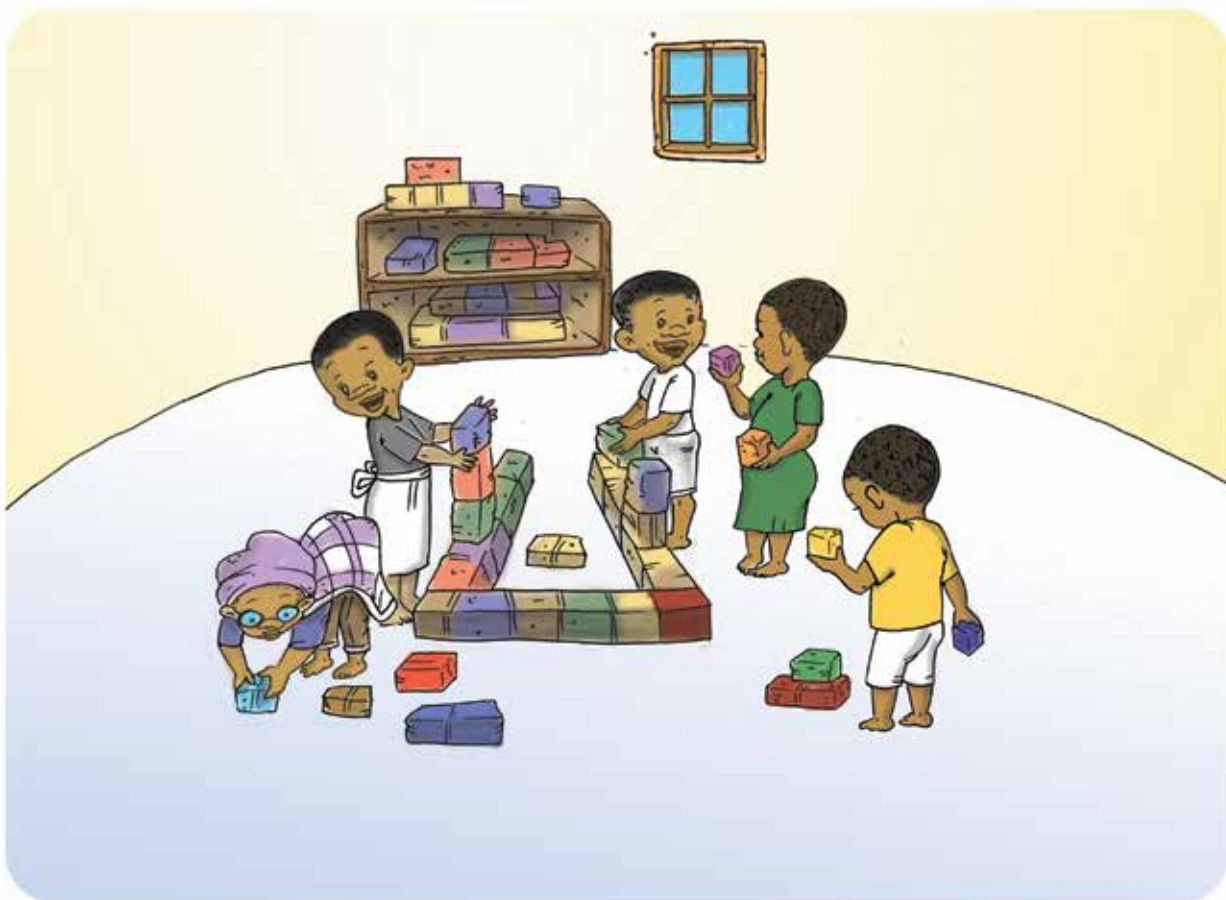
# Module 8:

## Supporting positive behaviour



Positive discipline strategies focus on the positive aspects of a child's behaviour and help children learn to control their own behaviour.

The purpose of this module is to help teachers to manage children's behaviour positively. Teachers will be helped to understand what causes children to misbehave and given ideas for preventing behaviour problems before they start. The Child Welfare and Protection Act 2011<sup>14</sup> protects children's rights and prohibits corporal punishment in schools. Physical punishment is not acceptable under any circumstances in ECCD programmes. The module emphasises positive discipline strategies that help children control their own behaviour.



<sup>14</sup> Source: Government of Lesotho (2011). Child Welfare and Protection Act, 2011. Maseru, Lesotho.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- develop a clearer understanding of the causes of misbehaviour in children.
- explore ways to prevent misbehaviour from happening.
- develop positive discipline strategies to help children control their own behaviour.
- learn different styles of parenting in order to work together with parents and caregivers to support positive behaviours in their children so that there is consistency between home and the preschool.

## Why children misbehave

All young children misbehave at one time or another for various reasons. Teachers often do not understand what causes children to act this way and most children are too young to explain their actions. It can be frustrating for teachers when children do not listen or behave as expected. Understanding some of the reasons why children misbehave can help teachers be more effective when dealing with this type of behaviour. Teachers will also be able to support parents and caregivers to find positive ways to manage their children's behaviour at home.

- Children's show different types of behaviour as they grow and develop. It is helpful for teachers to know which kinds of behaviour are normal for the ages of the children in their care, so that they know what is reasonable to expect from them.

For example, many preschoolers get angry and hit, push or shout nasty words when other children try to take their toys away. This is an example of the frustration children feel when they can't express in words what they want to say. Teachers can help children learn the words they need to say how they are feeling and what they want.



Teachers can read the Developmental Milestones Chart on page 39 to 44 of the Teacher Resource Guide to further their understanding of typical developmental stages that children go through.



- Children need to feel a sense of control over their lives. When all their decisions are made for them by others, they often feel that they have no choice. Children often respond by misbehaving or breaking rules to show that they can have their own way and be in control.
- Children need routine in their lives to feel secure. When there are changes in the daily programme at the preschool, children may feel uncertain about what is going to happen and react in different ways. For example, if a field trip has been planned, children may find it hard to control their excitement.
- Children feel secure when they know what their limits are. Rules tell children how to behave. However, having too many rules makes it difficult for children to follow them. Rule setting for children should focus on explaining how the children should behave rather than how they should not behave.
- Children misbehave when they are made to feel bad about themselves.
  - When children are made to feel that they can do nothing right, they may become discouraged and believe that there is no reason to behave well.
  - When children feel hurt, they will often want to hurt others.
- Children sometimes misbehave just to test their limits, to learn about whether rules are consistently applied and to find out what will happen if they break a rule.
- Many children live in stressful environments. For example, families living in poverty may not have enough money for food, clothing or proper housing and sanitation. These problems cause stress amongst family members, which children can sense and be affected by. Children may respond by expressing their feelings of fear, hurt or anger in unacceptable ways.
- Changes at home can be upsetting for children. There may be a new baby in the family, sickness or even death. Children may get less attention than they usually do and as a result feel unloved. They may respond to this by seeking attention through misbehaviour at preschool as well as at home.
- Children who are tired, hungry or ill may not have the language to explain that they feel bad and often become short-tempered and misbehave.
- The way the preschool environment is set up and the kinds of activities that are provided can contribute to children's misbehaviour.





- If there are large empty spaces in the classroom, children may be tempted to misbehave.
- If the activities are not suitable for the children's ages or there is not enough for them to do, children may start to misbehave.
- If children have to sit for long periods of time without being actively involved in their learning, they will get bored and start to misbehave.

### Supporting children with disabilities

- Children with intellectual and physical disabilities often get frustrated or may have trouble concentrating on an activity and disrupt other children's play.
- A child with a visual disability may feel frustrated if denied the opportunity to touch and feel things with his hands or sometimes mouth.

## Preventing behaviour problems

The best way for teachers to manage problem behaviours is to stop them before they start. When teachers understand what causes misbehaviour, they can look at the early childhood environment, the daily activities and routines in the preschool, as well as their own interactions with children and plan ways to prevent problems.

### ● Organise the environment and activities

The way that the classroom is arranged and the materials that are provided may be one of the reasons that children misbehave. If there are enough interesting things for children to explore, there are fewer chances that children will get bored and start to misbehave.

- There needs to be enough space for children to play and move around without bumping into one another or knocking things over.
- Check the classroom layout to make sure that there are no large open spaces or long pathways where children will be tempted to run up and down.
- Provide hands-on activities that do not involve children having to sit still for long periods of time.
- Provide enough age-appropriate activities and toys for the number of children so that they will not have to share. If possible, have



duplicates of favourite toys so that children do not have to wait too long. This will also help to prevent children fighting over them.

- Arrange the materials on low shelves so that children can choose what they want on their own.
- Divide the learning corners to help children concentrate better without being distracted.
- Plan activities that will encourage children to express their feelings (e.g., fantasy play, painting and drawing).
- Provide lots of physical activities throughout the day so that children can run around and move in different ways to release their energy.
- Keep group times short and find ways for children to actively participate in some way. Avoid telling children to sit still or to stop fidgeting. Plan to sit near children who may cause problems or pair them with more responsible children.
- Be aware of when children become bored, and add new and stimulating materials for them to explore.



For tips on how to organise the classroom, refer to pages 73 to 78 in Module 2.

### ● Review the daily programme

- Children often misbehave when they do not know what they are supposed to do. A daily programme provides the same kinds of activities in the same order every day. This helps children to know what they are expected to do.
- Children will be less irritable if their basic needs for food and rest are provided in the programme.
- Provide enough time for children to be involved in free play activities. Give them plenty of warning to start packing away the things they are playing with and help to clean up. If children have not finished with what they are doing, find a way for them to return to the activity later that day or the next day to complete it.
- Be prepared for challenging times when children move from one activity to another. Make sure that children do not have to wait in line or sit quietly for long periods of time. This is most often when



they start to push one another around or fight.



For tips on how to plan a daily programme, refer to pages 160 to 170 in Module 5.

### ● Establish clear rules

Children need limits to help them understand what behaviours are expected of them. This allows them to be in control within the limits, and at the same time, feel safe and secure. Rules help children to know what the limits are as well as what will happen if they break the rules. Young children are still learning how to behave, and they often break the rules unintentionally. Teachers need to be patient and accept that children will make mistakes as they gradually learn how to behave in acceptable ways.

- Have rules that are based on keeping children and others safe from harm and that protect the environment from damage.
- Choose a few essential rules for the classroom. When there too many rules children will find it hard to remember and follow them all of them. Thinking about what will happen if children break a rule will help teachers decide whether the rule is necessary. For example, will someone be hurt or put in danger if the rule is broken? Will something get damaged or broken if the rule is broken? If not, is there really a need for the rule?
- Help children understand the reason behind each rule. When children understand what will happen if the rule is not kept, it will be easier for them to follow it. For example, *“Sit down when you cut with scissors. If you run or walk with scissors, you may fall and cut yourself.”*
- Have rules that teach children what to do rather than what not to do. For example, instead of a rule that says *“Do not run around”*, make the rule *“Walk from one place to another”*.

Instead of a rule that says, *“Do not leave toys lying around”*, make the rule, *“Put the toys away when you have finished playing with them”*.

- Children of 4 years and older can help the teacher to come up with ideas for rules. This will help children to feel that they have



made their own rules, making it easier for them to understand the reason for a rule and remember to keep it. For example, if there is a problem with the children leaving toys lying around, the teacher can ask the children what rule they would suggest that might solve the problem.

- Be consistent in upholding the rules and let children know what will happen if they break a rule. For example, “*The rule is to put the toys away when you have finished playing with them. You will not be able to play in another learning corner until you have put these toys away.*”
- Teachers need to remind children often of the rules as they play. They can also create and display illustrated posters at children’s eye level as a reminder.
- Make sure that parents understand the rules and the reasons for them and agree to them, so that they can be consistent with putting them into practice at home. All adults working in the preschool should also all agree on the same rules. (Working in partnership with parents will be discussed in full later in this module.)

### ● Catch children being good

Teachers often spend a lot of time telling children when they are not behaving well and forget to let them know when they have done something well.

Teachers can acknowledge good behaviour with a smile or a hug and a few words of encouragement. Praise the child for the positive ways in which he behaves. Describe the behaviour, not the child. Instead of saying what a good child he is, let him know that you noticed and like what he did. For example: “*I like the way you shared your crayons with Thabiso.*”



Teachers also need to focus on the behaviour and not the child when he or she misbehaves. When adults routinely label children as naughty or lazy or dishonest the children start to believe what adults tell them and behave accordingly.

### ● Give children choices

Children often misbehave to prove that they are in control. Children can



be helped to feel that they have control over their lives when they are given choices as it sends the message that what they think and prefer is important. Children start to learn the difference between a good choice and a bad choice and take responsibility for the choices that they make.

Giving children choices does not mean allowing children to do whatever they want. Teachers should give children limited choices with a few options that allow them to make decisions for themselves. For example:

- *“Would you rather draw or paint this morning?”*
- *“Would you like an apple or a peach?”*
- *“Would you like to learn a new song first, or would you like to sing a favourite song?”*

### ● **Know what behaviour to expect**

If teachers understand the stages of development that children go through, they will know what kinds of behaviour to expect. This will help them to plan ahead.



Review the stages of development on pages 39 to 44 of this guide.

### ● **Give children the words they need**

Children need to learn the words to express how they are feeling. Teachers can help by listening to children and helping them find the words for feelings. For example, *“You looked really angry when Refiloe wanted to join your game. Is that how you felt?”*

### ● **Model good behaviour**

Children learn by imitation. If they see their teacher or parent shouting or getting angry, they will get the message that this is acceptable behaviour. Teachers should behave in the same way as they expect children to behave. When children see how adults are getting along with others and solving their problems peacefully, they will learn to behave in more socially acceptable ways.



- **Support children with behavioural problems**
  - Clearly explain the rules and routines and repeat them often.
  - Try to be aware in advance of when a child is about to misbehave or lose control and step in quickly. Put a hand on the child's shoulder or give him a hug to help him calm down.
  - Provide activities that help children release their frustrations such as beating a drum or hitting a punch bag.
  - Prepare the child for any change in advance by telling her what will be different and how this will affect her.

## Discipline versus punishment



Discipline is a strategy that guides and shapes children's behaviour and helps them understand limits in a positive way. It aims to teach children to understand, be responsible for and control their own behaviour.

Punishment is a strategy to make children "pay" for what they have done wrong and forces children to behave in a certain way. It teaches them that adults are responsible for the way children behave and that adults have the power to control their behaviour.

The most effective ways to manage children's behaviour do not involve punishment. Teachers need to use positive discipline strategies that help children understand that some behaviours are wrong.

## Why physical punishment does not work

Physical and other harsh punishment is often used as a way to hurt children and correct their behaviour. These punishments include hitting, locking the child in a room, forcing the child to stay outside the house, threatening or shaming the child, or keeping food and water from him.

Many parents and teachers feel that this is the way misbehaviour was managed when they were children and it worked.

Research shows that not only are punishments harmful and affect the way





they children grow and develop, punishment does not work.

- Punishments are designed to make children behave in a certain way rather than to make them want to control their own behaviour. Children may stop the behaviour for a short time, but will do so out of fear of punishment rather than having an understanding of how the behaviour affects other people or what to do instead.
- Punishments make children feel bad about themselves and lower their self-esteem.
- Children learn that they will be punished if the bad behaviour is found out. They often find ways to repeat the behaviour without being caught.
- Children learn by imitating the behaviours of others. When children are punished by being spanked or hit, they get the message that it is then acceptable for them to hit other people. Research shows that children who are spanked or hit are more likely to become aggressive themselves.
- Children lose trust in parents and caregivers who hurt them.

## Positive discipline strategies

In spite of teachers doing all that they can to prevent misbehaviour, there will still be times when children will misbehave. Teachers need to use positive discipline strategies to guide children's behaviour and not punish them. It is not acceptable under any circumstances, even with the permission of parents, for teachers to physically hurt a child.

Teachers need to have a variety of strategies at hand so that when one method does not work, they can try another way to discipline children.

Here are some positive discipline strategies that teachers can use to handle unacceptable behaviour.

### *Time out*

Time out is used to remove a child from the place where the misbehaviour is happening to sit in another part of the room and calm down for a few minutes (and not more than 5 minutes). The purpose of the time out is to help the child gain control of her emotions and give her time to think about her behaviour.



Time out should never be used as a punishment; children should not be put in another room or left alone.

Time out is not suitable for children younger than 3 years of age, as they will not understand the concept of waiting. A guide for time out is one minute per year of age:

3 minutes for 3-year-olds

4 minutes for 4-year-olds

5 minutes for 5-year-olds

### How to use time out

1. Identify a time-out place that is quiet and safe in the classroom that can be seen at all times and where there are no activities or toys.
2. Give a child fair warning. Explain that the next time she behaves in a certain way, she will need to stop playing and sit in the special time-out place.
3. If the behaviour reoccurs, calmly tell the child exactly what will happen so that she understands how long she will need to stay in the time-out chair before she can return to the activity. Tell her that she needs to sit quietly during this time and that she will be told when the time is up. Stay near her during the time out.
4. After the time out, sit with the child and explain to her why she was in time out and talk to her about how she is feeling. Help her to understand what she has done wrong and how she can return to the activity without breaking any rules.
5. Praise the child when she behaves appropriately.

Time out does not work when it is used too much or when it is used as a form of punishment.

When the child is sent to another room or is made to spend an unreasonably long period in the time out area, this is a punishment. The child may correct his behaviour but does so out of fear of being treated in the same way again if he misbehaves. He is not helped to understand why the behaviour is wrong.



## ***Natural and logical consequences***

Consequences are the result of something a person has done. Teachers and parents can use consequences to help children learn what happens as a result of the choices they make about their behaviour. It is an effective way to help children learn to make decisions and then take responsibility for their actions.

### **Natural consequences**

Natural consequences are what happen naturally as a result of something the child did. They happen without the teacher or parent getting involved. For example:

- A child does not wear his blanket to school. He gets cold.
- A child leaves a ball outside instead of putting it away. It gets stolen.

Natural consequences as a discipline strategy is effective only if the teacher does not interfere. If the teacher brings the ball inside, the child will not learn that bad things happen as a direct result of his behaviour.

Natural consequences are the best way for children to learn. If something unpleasant happens as a result of their behaviour, they will not want to repeat it.

Sometimes natural consequences are not suitable or safe. For example:

- A child who plays with matches can get burned.
- A child who walks around with scissors may fall and cut herself badly.

When natural consequences are not appropriate, teachers can use logical consequences to help children understand and learn to control their behaviour.

### **Logical consequences**

Logical consequences also happen as a result of the child's behaviour, but they are arranged by the adult to help the child understand what will happen as a result of his behaviour such as when rules are broken. For example: If the child handles a book roughly and the pages tear, he must help to repair the pages while other children are playing.



Logical consequences work best when they are:

1. **Made in advance.** Tell the child what the consequences will be if the rule is broken.
2. **Related directly to the behaviour.** The consequence needs to make sense to the child. If the child runs with scissors, it does not make sense for her to have to sweep the classroom.
3. **Reasonable.** The consequence should help the child learn from the experience, not punish the child. In the above example, removing the scissors would help the child to make a better decision in the future.
4. **Consistent.** Children will not respect the rule if it is not followed through every time the behaviour occurs, and will probably repeat the behaviour because they think they can get away with it.

For example: *“Lineo, the rule is to sit down when you cut with scissors. If you carry on walking around with the scissors, I will pack them away for the rest of the free play time.”*

Teachers who choose this strategy will need to be well prepared and think of what consequences will encourage children to think for themselves.

## ***Redirect the behaviour***

Redirection involves removing a child from a problem situation and guiding him to an alternative activity. When the teacher notices that something a child is doing or about to do is unacceptable, she stops the behaviour immediately and directs the child’s attention to another activity.

The teacher lets the child know that she understands the reason for the behaviour and explains why it is not acceptable. She gives suggestions for another activity that is in keeping with their needs.

For example: *“I see that you want to draw a picture, but you may not draw on the wall. It is hard to scrub the marks off the wall. Let’s go to the art corner where there is paper for you to draw your picture.”*

This strategy works well for younger children who are too young to understand what will happen as a result of their behaviour, so the teacher takes responsibility for solving the problem. Other strategies should be explored for older children who need to take more responsibility for their actions and for solving the problem.



## Active listening

Active listening involves encouraging children to talk about what they are feeling:

- to try to understand their behaviour.
- to help them work through their feelings and find solutions to their problems.

When children have someone to listen to them and try to understand how they are feeling, they will feel accepted and loved and encouraged to work through their problems and behave differently in the future. For example:

Teacher: *"Why are you sitting here on your own?"*  
 Child: *"Puleng bumped the table."*  
 Teacher: *"You sound upset. What happened?"*  
 Child: *"The water splashed all over my painting."*  
 Teacher: *"What did you do?"*  
 Child: *"I threw her painting on the floor."*  
 Teacher: *"I wonder why she did that."*  
 Child: *"I think she was trying to reach the paint."*  
 Teacher: *"Oh, do you think it was an accident?"*  
 Child: *"Yes."*  
 Teacher: *"Do you think it was fair to throw her picture on the floor?"*  
 Child: *"No. I was just mad."*  
 Teacher: *"What can you do to make it better?"*  
 Child: *"Maybe I can give her a hug."*  
 Teacher: *"Yes, that's a good idea, but she may still be upset. If she does not want your help, maybe you need to give her some time on her own."*



Children should not be forced to say they are sorry when they may not be ready to apologise. If children are not really sorry, the words are insincere (and often angry). The goal is for children to understand why the behaviour was hurtful and regret it, and to think about how to make the situation right.



## Rewarding behaviour

Giving rewards is one way that teachers respond to positive behaviour. For example many teachers give children stars or sweets.

Rewarding children for good behaviour does help them learn to control their own behaviour, but children tend to be motivated by the reward for doing something good rather than by a desire to do something well.

Teachers can reward children with a hug or a smile and words of encouragement. This will make them feel appreciated for what they have done and encourage children to repeat the behaviour.

Teachers may use these strategies or any combination of them in response to children's challenging behaviour. Whatever method is used, teachers should remember a few general guidelines.

- Stay calm and keep personal feelings under control. Here are a few suggestions:
  - Take deep breaths, count to 10. Think about how best to respond to the behaviour while counting.
  - Plan ahead of time when calm how to respond to the problem behaviour when it happens.
  - When very frustrated, leave the situation for a few minutes to calm down.
- Treat each child as an individual and with respect.
- Discipline the child immediately after the behaviour.
- Be on the alert for problems and try to prevent them.



Culturally, many parents still believe in spanking a child, but this practice is being discouraged in preschools, and the Ministry of Education discourages this in all schools and takes serious action against teachers and schools that are known to punish children harshly. This is one of the Teaching Service Regulations. Teachers are encouraged to use positive discipline strategies as described in this section. There are also cultural practices that are often used such as:

- staring at the child who misbehaves without speaking until the child realises she is doing wrong,
- explaining the reasons why something is wrong.





## *Dealing with extreme behavioural problems*

When the teacher has tried a number of discipline strategies and these don't work, she should try to understand what is causing the misbehaviour. She should talk to the parents or caregivers to find out if the behaviour happens at home and get their ideas. She should also observe the child over time to see if there are any patterns. For example:

- What happens just before the behaviour occurs?
- Where and when does the behaviour take place?
- Who is involved?
- What is the teacher's response?

## *Work together with parents and caregivers*

Parents have definite beliefs about how their children should be raised, and they have the right to decide what is best for them. It is important for teachers to work together with parents and caregivers to find ways to promote children's good behaviour as well as to manage their misbehaviour in ways that are positive as well as consistent between home and the preschool.

## *Parenting styles*

It may be helpful for teachers to understand the different ways in which in which parents raise their children. These can be grouped into different types, based on how much or how little control parents use to teach their children the rules of life and guide their behaviour. In reality, families may not fit neatly into just one of these groups, and they may use one or another style at different times.

- **Authoritarian parenting**

Authoritarian parents or caregivers value obedience and are strict and controlling. Children are told how they should behave. Rules are made without discussion, and children are expected to obey them. When children disobey the rules, they are punished. Children are not allowed to question authority and to do so is considered disrespectful and impertinent. Independence is discouraged and children are seldom given choices.

- **Permissive parenting**

Permissive parents make no demands on their children. Children are



allowed to do whatever they choose. Parents leave it up to the children to set their own rules and make their own decisions.

### ● **Moderate parenting**

Moderate parents set clear and reasonable rules and explain to children why they are important. When children break the rules, their parents and caregivers help them to take responsibility and learn from their mistakes. Parents and caregivers recognise children's rights to be heard, encourage independence and give children choices. Parents and caregivers praise children's good behaviour rather than focus on negative behaviour.



Children will be taught the rules of good behaviour by their families and the community. These may differ from culture to culture and from family to family. Teachers need to be respectful and sensitive to these practices. They should find out from families how each child is expected to behave so that behavioural issues can be managed in the same way at the preschool.

One of the educational goals for young children is to help them learn to be independent and develop self-control. Whatever the preferred parenting style, parents and teachers can help children learn how to manage their own behaviour by finding a balance between setting limits and encouraging children to take responsibility for their own actions.

There will be times when the teacher will need to discuss the child's behaviour with a parent or caregiver. She needs to arrange a time and a place to do this in private. Here are a few guidelines that the teacher can use for such a meeting:<sup>15</sup>

- Bring specific observations of the challenging behaviour.
- Be sure to mention things she appreciates about the child.
- Describe the behaviour and why she is concerned about it.
- Ask parents about their experience with, and understanding of, the behaviour.
- Listen carefully and with empathy in order to fully understand families' expectations and viewpoints.
- Engage parents in brainstorming possible causes and solutions.

<sup>15</sup> Source: Resource Sheet; Practitioners and Families Together: Encouraging Positive Behaviour. Canadian Child Care Federation, 201-383 Parkdale Ave., Ottawa, Ontario, K1Y 4R4.

- Find a mutually acceptable approach that draws upon the strengths of all perspectives.
- Develop a plan of action that shows how practitioners and the family will address the behaviour.
- Plan for another meeting to discuss progress.

Teachers need to show respect and honour parents' decisions about their children's behaviour. At the same time, it is important that parents understand that they have the responsibility to protect their children from harm. They need to know that harsh punishments are harmful to children and affect the way they develop and learn. These include hitting, locking the child in a room, forcing the child to stay outside the house, threatening or shaming the child, or keeping food and water from him.

The topic of physical punishment needs to be handled sensitively so that parents and caregivers do not become distrustful. They should be advised to discipline their children without hurting or shaming them.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Supporting positive behaviour*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- develop a clearer understanding of the causes of misbehaviour in children.
- explore ways to prevent misbehaviour from happening.
- develop positive discipline strategies to help children control their own behaviour.
- learn different styles of parenting in order to work together with parents and caregivers to support positive behaviours in their children so that there is consistency between home and the preschool

## Session outline

| Activity                                   | Suggested time |
|--|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection                   | 8.30–9.00      |
| Why children misbehave                     | 9.00–10.00     |
| TEA  | 10.00–10.30    |
| Preventing behaviour problems              | 10.30–12.00    |
| Positive discipline strategies             | 12.00–1.00     |
| LUNCH                                      | 1.00–2.00      |
| Positive discipline strategies (continued) | 2.00–3.00      |
| Working together with parents              | 3.00–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity* – 1/2 hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the last module.
  - what changes they have made in their own centres or home-bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *Why children misbehave* – 1 hour

- Ask participants to remember a time when they were children and did something very naughty. Have them share the incident with a partner:
  - Describe what happened.
  - Explain why they acted in this way.
  - Describe how they were disciplined and how this made them feel.

Start the ball rolling with one of your own memories. When everyone has shared, ask for a few volunteers to share their experiences with the entire group. Talk about how participants feel when a child in their class misbehaves.

- Brainstorm what good behaviour is and what bad behaviour is. Write down participants' responses on flipchart paper in columns:

| Good behaviour | Bad behaviour |
|----------------|---------------|
|                |               |



- Discuss whether participants agree with one another about what makes behaviour good or bad. Explain that we all have our own sets of rules for good behaviour according to our cultural and family beliefs. Discuss the need to find out and respect the rules for good behaviour of each family in the ECCD programme.

Explain that there is always a reason why a child misbehaves. Give a few examples such as:

- It's a normal stage of development.
  - The child is hungry, tired or sick.
  - It's a way of being in control.
- Divide participants into five small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where to meet. Ask groups to discuss possible reasons for children's misbehaviour.
  - Groups report back on their discussions to the large group. Add any other ideas not mentioned, using the information on pages 270 to 272 of this guide. Explain that when teachers understand the reason behind a child's actions, they will be better able to deal with the behaviour when it occurs or even take steps to prevent it before it happens.

## *Preventing behaviour problems – 1 1/2 hour*

### **Preparation:**

1. Bring a selection of toys and other play things for the demonstration.
2. Prepare a presentation on preventing behaviour problems, using the information on pages 272 to 277 of this guide. Write key points on flipchart paper, starting with the section on establishing rules on page 274 to 275.
3. Prepare a flipchart paper as follows:

| DO NOT  | DO |
|---|----|
| Do not run inside.<br>Do not shout.<br>Do not hurt other children.<br>Do not break the toys.<br>Do not throw toys.<br>Do not run with scissors.<br>Do not leave toys lying around.<br>Do not write on the wall. |    |





- Put out the toys at the front of the training room and ask for a few volunteers to come and play the role of children playing with the toys. As they play, move around and talk to the “children” by telling them what *not* to do. For example:
  - *“Do not walk with that toy.”*
  - *“No shouting.”*
  - *“Do not grab the toy from her.”*
  - *“No running.”*
  - *“Don’t leave the toys just lying there.”*
- After the activity, ask the volunteers who played the role of children how they felt being told not to do things throughout the activity.
- Give a presentation on establishing rules, using the prepared flipchart points. Highlight the need to have rules that teach children how they are expected to behave rather than being told what they should not do.
- Ask participants to return to their groups and display the prepared DO NOT flipchart paper. Ask participants to turn each of the negative rules into a positive rule. Give a few examples, such as:

Do not shout.

Talk quietly.

Do not run with scissors

Sit at a table to cut with scissors.

- Groups share their ideas with the entire group.
- Give a presentation on other strategies to prevent behaviour problems using the prepared flipchart points.
- Ask participants to individually sit and think for a few minutes about their own programmes. Each participant should write down three specific ways that they are going to improve their practice to help prevent behaviour problems. Participants share these briefly with the group.



## Positive discipline strategies – 2 hours

### Preparation:

1. Prepare flipchart definitions of punishment on flipchart paper, using the information on page 277.
  2. Make three signs: AGREE, DISAGREE, NOT SURE. Put these up on the wall in different places in the training room.
  3. Read the information on why physical punishment does not work on page 277. Write the points on flipchart paper.
  4. Prepare a presentation on different discipline strategies using the information on page 278 to 283. Write key points on flipchart paper.
- Explain that there are many different views about how teachers and parents should manage misbehaviour, and that the following activity will explore participants' viewpoints. Explain that a statement will be shown or read and participants should go to the sign according to which best matches their viewpoint. Those who agree with the statement will go to the AGREE sign, those who disagree will go to the DISAGREE sign. Those who are unsure will go to the NOT SURE sign.

Show the first statement and once everyone has moved to a different sign, ask groups to discuss their views with other people who are standing with them. Each group then shares their views with the whole group. Continue in the same way with the remaining statements

### Statements:

- Spanking is the best way to teach a child how to behave.
- Children who are repeatedly spanked are more likely to become violent.
- Making a child stand in the corner with his back to the class for 5 minutes is a good way to keep him out of trouble.

After the activity, thank participants for their contributions and summarise the main viewpoints.

- Write the word PUNISHMENT on flipchart paper and draw lines out from the word. Ask participants to come up to the flipchart and write down words that come to their minds when they hear that word.



Next, write the word DISCIPLINE on a new flipchart paper and draw lines from the word. Once more ask participants to write down words that they think of when they hear the word.

Display the definitions of punishment and discipline and highlight the differences.

Briefly explain some of the reasons that punishment does not work, using the prepared flipchart points. Highlight the fact that research shows that children who are physically punished are more likely to become violent themselves.

- Give a presentation on different discipline strategies using the prepared flipchart points.
- Brainstorm common behaviour problems that teachers are faced with in the preschools. Write these on flipchart paper as they are called out.
- Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where to meet. Ask each group to choose one of the problems listed and to discuss in their group which of the strategies they could use to resolve the issue. Groups prepare role plays to demonstrate one of the strategies they have listed.

Groups present their role plays. After each play, de-role the players by asking how they felt playing their character. Then discuss whether the selected strategy was effective, and if not, what other strategy could be tried.

Explain that sometimes teacher may try a number of strategies, and if these do not work and the behaviour persists, steps should be taken to try to understand the problem. The teacher needs to find out if the behaviour happens at home. She should also observe the child at the preschools to try to establish patterns of behaviour.

## *Working together with parents – 1 hour*

**Preparation:** Prepare a presentation on the different parenting styles, using the information on page 284 to 286 of this guide. Write key points on flipchart paper.



- Remind participants that each family has their own beliefs about how to rear their children and that there is no right way. Explain that research has helped us to understand that there are different parenting styles. Give a presentation on the different parenting styles using the prepared flipchart points. Emphasise that every family has the right to decide what is best for their children. Remind participants that one of the goals for young children is to help children to learn to control their own behaviour.
- Divide participants into three groups and give each group one of the parenting styles to demonstrate in a role play.

Groups prepare and then present their role plays. After each role play, de-role the players by asking them how they felt to play their characters. Reflect on what children would learn from each parenting style. Talk about finding the balance between enforcing rules and helping children learn to take responsibility.

Explain that parents and caregivers need to understand that they have the responsibility to protect their children from harm, and they need to know that harsh punishments are harmful to children and affect the way they develop and learn. Parents and caregivers need to be given information on positive discipline strategies. Discuss how this information could be shared (e.g., a parent workshop).

**Closure:** Summarise what has been covered during the session and ask if there are any questions or anything that is not clear. Ask participants to think about three changes they will try to make to improve their behaviour management strategies based on the training session. Participants write these down on a sheet of paper with their names, and hand them in to the trainer. Explain that participants will be given the opportunity to share their progress at the next training session.



# Module 9:

## Administration of ECCD Programmes

The purpose of this module is to introduce teachers to the administrative procedures necessary for the smooth running of the preschool. Teachers will learn how to record daily amounts of money going in and out of the preschool. They will be provided with opportunities to practice filling in necessary administrative forms.



A booklet and workshop guide for principals and management committee members responsible for the overall management of the preschool is part of the *Ngoana eo ke oa mang: Guide for Strengthening Teacher Capacity Training Pack*.





The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- learn how to keep up-to-date financial records and record the day-to-day income and expenditure of the preschool.
- administer the day-to-day income and expenditure of the preschool.
- identify the records that need to be kept in the preschool.
- learn how to keep up-to-date administrative records.

## Administration of preschools

Administration refers to the daily running and operations of the preschool. It is concerned with the day-to-day operations of the preschool, ensuring that the teachers are present and in their classrooms, and that there are teaching and learning materials and resources for work to continue on a daily basis.

In a preschool that has more than one staff member, there has to be a leader, the principal. The principal is a key person in the preschool, as she is responsible for its day-to-day administrative and educational functions.

## Financial records<sup>16</sup>

### *Receiving fees*

All fees received from parents and caregivers are recorded in the Receipt Book.

- **Step 1**  
Issue the person paying fees with a receipt signed by whomever receives the money.

This receipt comes from a special Fees Receipt Book. This book has carbon copies of all receipts issued.

<sup>16</sup> Adapted with permission. *Handbook 4: Looking After the Money* (1992) Grassroots Education Trust





Keep the collected fees in a locked cash box in a safe place. Try to keep as little as possible in the cash box.

- **Step 2**

The principal should regularly total and check all fees collected in the Fees Receipt Book and sign next to the total (see Step 4).

- **Step 3**

Hand over the fees collected to the treasurer.

|   |          |           |
|---|----------|-----------|
| <b>Receipt No. 26</b><br><br>Date: <i>2<sup>nd</sup> March 2012</i><br><br>Received from: <i>Mrs Hlapho</i><br><br>The sum of<br><br><i>Five</i> Rand<br>/                              Cents<br><br>For <i>Fees</i><br><br><b>Signature: <i>E. Sebatane</i></b><br><br>With thanks | <i>5</i> | <i>00</i> |
|---|----------|-----------|

- **Step 4**

Prepare a Fees Register of all the children at the preschool. This should be separate from the attendance register.

Enter the fees paid in the column for that week, and put the receipt number next to it. This register should be completed monthly and



checked by the principal and treasurer. It will show which parents are in arrears (behind with paying fees).

| FEES REGISTER   |                         | MONTH: March 2012       |                          |                          |                          |                 |                      |
|-----------------|-------------------------|-------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Child's Name    | Week ending<br>2012/3/2 | Week ending<br>2012/3/9 | Week ending<br>2012/3/16 | Week ending<br>2012/3/23 | Week ending<br>2012/3/30 | Total for month | Balance of fees owed |
| Hlapho Pulane   | 5.00                    | 5.00                    | 5.00                     | /                        | 5.00                     | 20.00           | /                    |
| Lefoka Mpho     | 20.00                   | /                       | /                        | /                        | /                        | 20.00           | /                    |
| Letsatsi Kabelo | 10.00                   | /                       | 5.00                     | /                        | 5.00                     | 20.00           | /                    |
| Likoti Hlompho  | /                       | /                       | /                        | /                        | /                        | /               | 20.00                |
| Maromo Lekhotla | 10.00                   | 5.00                    | /                        | /                        | 5.00                     | 20.00           | /                    |
| Matsabisa Lebo  | 5.00                    | 5.00                    | 5.00                     | 5.00                     | /                        | 20.00           | /                    |
| Mokoena Thabiso | /                       | /                       | /                        | /                        | 15.00                    | 15.00           | 5.00                 |
| Motsapi Puleng  | 10.00                   | 5.00                    | 5.00                     | /                        | /                        | 20.00           | /                    |
| Sebatane Palesa | 5.00                    | 5.00                    | /                        | /                        | /                        | 10.00           | 10.00                |
| Tlou Refiloe    | /                       | /                       | /                        | /                        | 20.00                    | 20.00           | /                    |
|                 |                         |                         |                          |                          |                          |                 |                      |
| TOTAL           | 65.00                   | 25.00                   | 20.00                    | 5.00                     | 50.00                    | 165.00          | 35.00                |



Sometimes, teachers and principals have difficulty collecting the fees, which renders the smooth management of their centre more difficult. Here are some suggestions for encouraging the collection of fees:

- Discuss fees (reduced if necessary) at enrolment.
- Discuss reduction for more than one child at enrolment.
- Have a sliding scale according to the parent or caregiver's income.
- Do not allow the amount of arrears to become too big and impossible for parents or caregivers to catch up on.
- Talk to parents or caregivers who have not paid to discuss their problems.
- Negotiate part payment or paying-off of fees in arrears.



## Petty Cash Book

Record every payment under a suitable type of expenditure category, such as food, cleaning materials and maintenance materials, in the Petty Cash Book, with a duplicate copy. Keep this book in the petty cash box, if possible. This will be helpful in staying up to date with the balance of petty cash.

When the petty cash gets low and more cash is needed, total the column of entire expenses with the totals of the types of expenditure. The person responsible hands over the top copy from the Petty Cash Book to the treasurer, with all the relevant vouchers stapled to it.

|  |    |                       |
|--|----|-----------------------|
| <b>PETTY CASH VOUCHER</b>                            |    | <b>DATE: 2012/3/2</b> |
| Requested for<br><i>Bread, peanut butter<br/>mop</i> |    |                       |
| Amount given   | 60 | 100                   |
| Amount spent (attach receipt)                        | 53 | 43                    |
| Change   | 7  | 57                    |
| Signature: <i>E. Sebatane</i>                        |    |                       |
| Voucher No. 46                                       |    |                       |

The treasurer checks the expenses, signs the book and makes out a cheque (to replace the amount of money spent) that is the total of expenses.

## The Cash Book

The Cash Book records all the income from the Fees Receipt Book and all the expenditure from the Petty Cash Book.

- The Cash Book provides a record of the total for the month for all income and expenditure.
- An up-to-date Cash Book is important for keeping control over the finances because it provides information on the balance (what is left over) at the end of every month.



## How to fill in the Cash Book

- Start each month on a new page.
- On the left hand page, in each column, write the main headings for the preschool's income.
- On the right hand page, in each column, write the main headings for the preschool's expenditure.
- Complete the income page for each month by referring to the Fees Receipt Book and fill in the information according to the receipt numbers and dates on which money was received.
- Complete the expenditure page by referring to the petty cash book and fill in the information according to the voucher numbers and their dates.
- Add up all the items in each column of the income for the month and write the total for each in the total income column.
- Double-check the Cash Book by adding up all the columns across and down. The totals should be the same.
- Work out the balance (the money that is left over) for the month by subtracting the total expenditure from the total income.
- Write the balance amount at the bottom of the income page. This amount will serve as the opening balance for the following month.

| INCOME       |      | MONTH: <i>March 2012</i> |              |              |       |  |               |
|--------------|------|--------------------------|--------------|--------------|-------|--|---------------|
| Receipt no.  | Date | Received from            | Fees         | Fund-raising | Other |  | Total income  |
| 26           | 3/2  | <i>Mrs Hlapho</i>        | <i>5.00</i>  |              |       |  | <i>5.00</i>   |
| 27           | 3/2  | <i>Mr Lefoka</i>         | <i>20.00</i> | <i>80.00</i> |       |  | <i>100.00</i> |
| 28           | 3/2  | <i>Mrs Letsatsi</i>      | <i>10.00</i> |              |       |  | <i>10.00</i>  |
| 29           | 3/2  | <i>Mrs Maromo</i>        | <i>10.00</i> |              |       |  | <i>10.00</i>  |
| 30           | 3/2  | <i>Mr Matsabisa</i>      | <i>5.00</i>  |              |       |  | <i>5.00</i>   |
| 31           | 3/2  | <i>Mrs Motsapi</i>       | <i>10.00</i> |              |       |  | <i>10.00</i>  |
| 32           | 3/2  | <i>Mrs Sebatane</i>      | <i>5.00</i>  |              |       |  | <i>5.00</i>   |
|              |      |                          |              |              |       |  |               |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |      |                          | <i>65.00</i> | <i>80.00</i> |       |  | <i>145.00</i> |



| EXPENDITURE |      | MONTH: March 2012         |       |                    |             |       |                   |
|-------------|------|---------------------------|-------|--------------------|-------------|-------|-------------------|
| Voucher no. | Date | For                       | Food  | Cleaning materials | Maintenance | Other | Total Expenditure |
| 46          | 3/2/ | Bread, peanut butter, mop | 32.44 | 19.99              |             |       | 52.43             |
| 47          | 3/4  | Bread, Jik                | 10.90 | 19.99              |             |       | 30.89             |
| 48          | 3/9  | Bread, soap               | 10.90 | 4.99               |             |       | 15.89             |
| 49          | 3/11 | Bread, hammer             | 10.90 |                    | 30.00       |       | 40.90             |
|             |      |                           |       |                    |             |       |                   |
|             |      |                           | 65.14 | 44.97              | 30.00       |       | 140.11            |

## Administrative records

The following records are very important for the smooth administration of the preschool.

### Admission records

1. Admissions book. This lists all the children who are enrolled in the preschool, and it provides each child's personal information such as birth date, address, gender, address and parents' or guardians' names, and the contact details in the event of an emergency.
2. Admissions form. This is a detailed form that is completed with parents and caregivers at registration of their child in the preschool.



An example of an admissions form is provided on pages 260 to 261 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

### Attendance register

The attendance register tracks children's daily attendance at the preschool. It is completed for each day that the preschool is open.

- The teacher enters the date on the page for every day.
- The teacher marks a tick (✓) for present and an "a" for absent.

The teacher should try to ascertain and record the reason for a child's absence.





An example of an attendance register is provided on pages 262 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

## Health records

It is important to have records of the status of each child's health, such as:

- whether the child has had any contagious illnesses.
- any allergies.
- whether the child's Bukana is up to date.

This information can be included in the admissions form and updated on a regular basis.



See the example of the admissions form on pages 260 to 262 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

## Accident or incident records

Any accident or other incident outside out of the normal routine of the day, such as changes in a child's behaviour or signs of illness, needs to be recorded. Records should include the date and time that the incident took place, a brief description of the incident, as well as what action was taken.

All accidents and other incidents must be recorded and reported to the child's parent or caregiver, who should sign the record to indicate that he or she has received the report.



An example of an incident record form is provided on pages 263 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

## Medical administration forms

There are two kinds of forms that need to be completed for administering medicine at the preschool:

1. Written permission from the parent or caregiver needs to be kept on





record.

2. Details of how, when and by whom medicine is administered need to be recorded.



Examples of medical administration forms are provided on pages 264 to 265 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

### Copies of birth certificates

It is very important for children to have birth certificates so that they can have access to health and other important services. The birth certificate contains information about the child's date of birth as well as who the parents are and where they live. If possible, a copy of each child's birth certificate should be kept on file. Teachers can help parents and caregivers to understand the importance of getting birth certificates for their children and provide guidance on the procedures.

### Log Book

This is used to keep a record of all official visits that are made to the preschool by government officials, health officers and other important visitors. Visitors record their names, addresses and purpose of the visit and any relevant comments. Each visitor dates and signs the Log Book.

### Inventory records

An inventory is a way of keeping track of all the equipment (stock) in the preschool. The teacher makes a list of all the equipment and checks in on a regular basis, such as once a term. She records which items are broken or lost and informs the management committee, which is responsible for making the decision on how to replace these items.



An example of an inventory form is provided on page 266 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.



## Parents' register

A record is kept of fees payments and balances where applicable.

# Educational records

## Planning records

Records must be kept of the yearly, weekly and daily planning. Standard forms can be photocopied and completed as needed, or the teacher can write all the planned activities in a book.



Examples of planning forms are provided on pages 267 to 274 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.

## Developmental records

An individual record of each child's progress should be kept on file and shared with parents and caregivers once a term.

Records can be:

- written in individual exercise books.
- organised in a file, with pages separated between each child's records.
- kept in large used envelopes.
- organised in self-made files.

# How to file records

Teachers deal with many documents and files. and time is often wasted looking for the right file. It is, therefore, important to organise all paperwork so that it can be easily found when needed.

- Files do not have to be expensive. Records can be kept in large used envelopes that are clearly labelled, or in cardboard boxes such as soap powder boxes with their tops cut off.
- File everything related to one topic together, for example:
  - admissions forms
  - children's developmental records
  - inventory



- staff meetings
- Keep completed work separate from current work. All records from the previous year should be moved to a storage place.
- Organise the documents in the files according to date. Write the date on each document and file them in order, with the most recent documents at the top.
- Remember that children's records are confidential and need to be filed in a secure place.



# Training Activities

**Session topic:** *Administration of ECCD Programmes*

**Session length:** *6 hours*



The learning outcomes of this module are for teachers to:

- learn how to keep up-to-date financial records and record the day-to-day income and expenditure of the preschool.
- identify the records that need to be kept in the preschool.
- learn how to keep up-to-date administrative records.
- evaluate the training programme.

## Session outline

| Activity                             | Suggested time |
|--------------------------------------|----------------|
| Greetings and reflection             | 8.30–9.00      |
| Financial administration and records | 9.00–10.30     |
| TEA                                  | 10.30–11.00    |
| Administrative records               | 11.00–1.00     |
| LUNCH                                | 1.00–2.00      |
| Evaluation of the training course    | 2.00–4.00      |



## Suggested training activities

### *Reflection activity* – 1 ½ hour

- Start the session with a prayer and song. Explain the purpose of this session and read the agenda.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to share:
  - what they learned from the last module.
  - what changes they have made in their own centres or home-bases, according to those identified in the last training, and which changes worked the best.
  - any concerns they would like to discuss.
- Groups report back to the entire group. Write down a list of best practices that might encourage other teachers to try out these ideas in their own preschools. Discuss any concerns that may have arisen.

### *Financial administration and records* – 1 ½ hour

#### **Preparation:**

1. Bring an example of a Fees Receipt Book and a Fees Register.
  2. Make a copy of the receipt form on page 296 for each participant.
  3. Prepare a presentation on how to record income from fees using the information on pages 295 to 297. Write key points on flipchart paper.
  4. Prepare a stack of cards or pieces of paper of the same size for each group. Bring markers for the group task.
- Ask participants how they record money coming in from fees and find out whether they use Receipt Books.
  - Hand out a receipt form to each participant and explain how it is filled in. Let participants practise filling in the form.
  - Summarise with a presentation on how to record income from fees using the prepared flipchart paper. Show participants examples of Fees Register on page 297.
  - Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where to meet. Give each group a stack of cards and two markers of different colours. Ask participants to think of all the things



that typically cost money each month in a preschool and to write each new thing on a separate card with an estimated amount. (Explain that for purposes of the activity, approximate amounts are fine.)

When all groups have finished, ask groups to add up the total amount of all the items they have identified. Explain that this is the preschool's expenditure.

Now ask the groups to write down all the money that comes into the preschool in a month, and write each new item on separate card with an estimated amount. Ask groups to add up the total and explain that this is the preschool's income.

Ask groups to deduct the expenditure amount from the income amount and call out what the total is. Discuss whether the expenditure is more than the income.

- Refer participants to the example of the Cash Book on page 299 and 300 of the Teacher Resource Guide and read through the points on how to fill in the income and expenditure pages.

## Administrative records – 2 hours

### Preparation:

1. List all the administrative records that need to be kept on flipchart paper, using the information on pages 300 to 304.
2. Prepare flipchart medical administration forms like the ones on pages 264 and 265 of the *Teacher Resource Guide* for each small group.
3. Write the following dosage on flipchart paper:

|                   |   |
|-------------------|---|
| Name of child:    | Pulane Sebatane                               |
| Name of parent:   | Setungoane Sebatane                           |
| Name of medicine: | Ventolin                                      |
| Dosage:           | 2 puffs of the Ventolin inhaler every 4 hours |

4. Bring examples of a variety of files and their contents including self-made files such as old envelopes and household product boxes. Make sure the content in the files is not of a confidential nature (e.g., actual children's records).





- Brainstorm the kinds of administrative records participants keep. Display the prepared flipchart list, and compare this to what participants have come up with.
- Admission form. Discuss the kind of information that is needed about each child and family in the ECCD programme. Refer to the example of an admission form on pages 260 to 261 of the *Teacher Resource Guide* and discuss whether the necessary information will be provided when the parent or caregiver completes the form.
- Attendance register. Refer to the example of the attendance register on page 262 of the *Teacher Resource Guide* and explain how to complete the form.
- Accident or incident records. Find out from participants what procedures they follow when a child has an accident at the preschool. Explain that each accident or other incident outside out of the normal routine of the day, such as changes in a child's behaviour or signs of illness, needs to be recorded. Read through the example of the incident form on page 263 of the *Teacher Resource Guide*.
- Medical administration forms. Explain the safety measures in place for recording all medications taken by children, including a permission form from the parent (page 264 and 265 of this guide).

Divide participants into small groups by numbering them off and tell each group where to meet. Hand out the prepared flipchart medical administration forms to each group. Display the prepared medical dosage flipchart and have groups fill in the forms.

Each group displays their completed form for the entire group to view.

- Refer to the other administrative forms in the *Teacher Resource Guide* on pages 266 to 274 and make sure that participants know how to complete them.
- Ask participants to discuss with a partner how they are progressing with recording their activities on weekly planning sheets (Module 4). Encourage participants to share their progress in the large group.
- Talk about and demonstrate how to file records using the points mentioned on page 303 to 304. Explain that files do not have to be expensive, and that they can be made from everyday household items.



## Evaluation of the training course – 2 hours

### Preparation:

1. Write down the modules and list all the topics covered in each module on flipchart paper.
2. Write the following evaluation questions on flipchart paper:
  - 1) What have you learned in this training course that has helped you the most?
  - 2) Was there anything that you did not enjoy? Explain why?
  - 3) How have you used what you have learned at your preschool?
  - 4) What are you still going to do?
  - 5) Was there anything that you found difficult to understand? What would help you to understand it better?
  - 6) What suggestions do you have for improving this course?



These questions can also be presented on an evaluation form that participants complete individually.

- Read through the prepared flipchart list of the modules and the topics covered.
- Ask participants to sit with a partner for this activity. Display and read through the prepared evaluation questions on flipchart paper. Participants share individual experiences with their partners.
- Pairs share their evaluations with the whole group. Write down each new point on flipchart paper next to the corresponding number.
- In the large group discuss:
  - what participants still need to do to improve their preschools.
  - any difficulties that need to be overcome.
  - suggestions for follow-up workshops that could be organised to further assist participants.
- Close the course in a suitable way (e.g., a reading, song or prayer).



## Appendix 1: Ice-breakers and Games

Here are a few ice-breaker activities:

- **Body greeting game.** Participants find a space to stand in. The facilitator shouts out a part of the body (such as knee). Everybody has to greet as many others as quickly as possible saying a greeting and using that part of the body (for example, saying “good morning” and touching knees together). The facilitator then shouts out another part of the body and the activity is repeated. As this game involves touching, it may not be culturally appropriate in some countries.
- **This is how I feel.** Participants stand up one at a time, state their names and use an adjective, starting with the same letter as their name, to describe how they are feeling at that moment. (For example, “*I’m Nthati and I’m nervous*”.)

Here is an energiser activity:

- **Ball game.** Make five balls using paper and tape. Everyone stands in a wide circle. Each participant throws the ball to a different participant across the circle until everyone has caught and thrown the ball once. Ask the participants to throw the ball around the circle again in the same order until a pattern is established. Keep the pattern going and slowly introduce more balls one by one until the group is effectively “juggling” a number of balls at the same time.

Here is a game to help people think:

- **Knotty problem.** This game shows people that they are in the best position to solve their own problems rather than outsiders. Two people from the group should volunteer to leave the room. The remaining participants form a circle, holding each other by the hand. They should then tie themselves—without letting go of the hands!—into a firm knot. The volunteers are asked back in the room to untangle the knot, giving only verbal instructions to the group. After 3 minutes, the facilitator calls stop. Participants will see that the volunteers will not succeed in solving the problem. Ask them to join the group and repeat the exercise, this time let the group disentangle itself: this should take about 20 seconds. As a feedback, encourage people to relate the game to their own lives.



## Appendix 2: Getting To Know You Activities

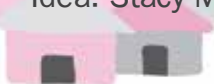
1. **Everybody who**<sup>17</sup>. Arrange the chairs in a circle—one less chair than the number of participants. Ask for a volunteer to stand in the middle of the circle. That person calls out, “*Everybody who ...*” For example, “*Everybody who has three or more children*”, or “*Everybody who speaks three or more languages*”, or “*Everybody who was born in another country*”. Then everyone who fits that description stands up and switches chairs as quickly as possible. They cannot stand up and sit back down in the same chair, and they cannot sit in the chair next to them. They should stand and run to a chair across the room. The volunteer tries to sit, too. Whoever is left standing should<sup>18</sup> be the next to call out “*Everybody who ...*”.
2. **String match**. Cut string into pieces of different lengths. Each piece should have a matching piece of the same length. There should be enough pieces so that each participant will have one. Give each participant one piece of string, and ask them to find the other participant who has a string the same length. After participants find their matches, have them sit and get to know their partner. Each member of the pair then introduces her partner to the rest of the group.
3. **Four squares**. Hand out pieces of paper to each participant. Have them divide their pages into four by folding it in half twice. In each square, they should draw a picture as follows:
  - Square 1: My family
  - Square 2: My work
  - Square 3: Things I like to do
  - Square 4: My hopes and dreams

(Facilitators can give their own topics.)

When everyone has finished, ask participants to share their drawings with the rest of the group.

<sup>17</sup> Adapted from Life Skills Manual (2001), Peace Corps.

<sup>18</sup> Idea: Stacy Moore, Garrison Mill Elementary School Marietta, Georgia



## Appendix 3: Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses (IMCI)

The World Health Organisation and UNICEF have developed a way to improve child health and ensure that young children do not die from illnesses such as pneumonia, diarrhoea, malaria, measles and malnutrition. As many children often suffer from a number of illnesses at the same time, the focus is on the child as a whole rather than on one particular illness.

Many child deaths could have been prevented, but parents and other caregivers often do not know that their child is seriously ill and do not take him or her to get treatment before it is too late. The World Health Organisation has identified a number of danger signs that parents and caregivers need to learn so they will know when a child needs to receive immediate and urgent medical help.

The child:

- is unable to drink or breastfeed.
- vomits everything.
- has had convulsions with his illness.
- is lethargic or unconscious.
- is convulsing now.

Other signs that a child is very ill are:

- coughing and finding it difficult to breathe.
- diarrhoea.
- fever.
- ear problems.

The Integrated Management of Childhood Illnesses also provides guidelines for identifying children at high risk of HIV infection. A child at risk might:

- have pneumonia.
- have had an ear discharge.
- be underweight for age.



- be failing to gain weight or have lost weight.
- have had diarrhoea lasting for 14 days or more (now or in the past three months).
- have enlarged lymph glands in two different places (neck, armpit or groin).
- have thrush in his or her mouth.
- have an enlarged parotid gland.

When a child has three of the above conditions, the health worker will recommend to the mother that the child be tested for HIV infection.





## Appendix 4: Tippy-tap

The tippy tap is a simple device that allows people to wash their hands with very little water.

### How to make a plastic tippy-tap

To make this tippy-tap, you need 1) a plastic bottle with a screw-on cap, of the sort that cool drinks come in, and 2) the inside tube from a ball-point pen, or some other small, stiff, hollow tube.

1. Clean the bottle.
2. Using a heated piece of wire, make a small hole in the lower part of the bottle.
3. Remove and clean the inside tube from a ball-point pen. Cut it off at an angle, and push it through the hole in the bottle. The tube should fit tightly.
4. Fill the bottle with water and replace the cap. When the cap is tight, no water should flow through the tube. When the cap is loose, water should flow out in a steady stream. When you are sure that it works, hang it or place it on a shelf where people can use it for hand-washing. Keep soap nearby, or thread a bar of soap with string and tie it to the bottle.
5. To use the tippy-tap: Loosen the cap just enough to let the water flow. Wet your hands, lather with soap, and rub your hands together under the water until they are clean.

Tippy-taps can also be made with different designs and from different materials. Another that is common is made from a dried calabash gourd.



## Appendix 5: Healthy Food for Young Children

Children need to eat a balanced diet to stay strong and healthy.

- Children need different kinds of foods:
  - **Energy foods** such as mealies, brown bread, rice, potatoes, sorghum, porridge, oil, margarine, sugar.
  - **Growth foods** such as milk, eggs, cheese, meat fish, peas, beans, lentils, peanut butter, soya.
  - **Protective foods** that contain vitamins like vegetables (e.g., carrots, lettuces, spinach, butternut, beetroot, pumpkin, cabbages) and fruit (apples, oranges, bananas, pears, pineapples and peaches).
- Children need vitamins and minerals (micronutrients) to keep them healthy. These essential micronutrients are:
  - **Vitamin A** found in breast milk; yellow or orange fruits and vegetables such as pumpkin, carrots, sweet potato and peaches; spinach; oily fish, liver, egg yolks and dairy products.
  - **Iron** found in spinach and seruoe, liver, lean meats, fish and eggs.
  - **Iodine** found in iodised salt.

Vitamin A is very important for protecting children against respiratory infections, night blindness and diarrhoea. Young children receive Vitamin A supplements at the clinic from the age of 6 months. Children living with HIV or AIDS may not have enough micronutrients and may need to be given supplements if these cannot be provided in their diets.

Teachers should also remember that some children may have special nutrition needs. For example:

- A child may have a food allergy (e.g. to dairy products, wheat or peanuts).
- A child may have a disability that makes it difficult to chew or swallow some foods.

It is important to get information from families about their children's particular nutrition needs when they enrol in the programme.



**Children with HIV and AIDS have special nutrition needs**

- Sick or undernourished children need more energy foods that are easy to digest (e.g., porridge, soups, mashed potato and rice). Add vegetable oil for extra energy.
- Children may lose important micronutrients and need vitamin and mineral supplements. Children with severe diarrhoea should get zinc supplements.
- Many children living with HIV and AIDS find it difficult to eat. They may have sores in their mouths or sores which make it painful to eat, or they may have lost their appetites. Give them soft foods that are easy to swallow like porridge or mashed potatoes. Give a child with nausea a cup of warm water or ginger.



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