

Called to Care

No. 6

The Child Within

Connecting with children
who have experienced
grief and loss

by Judy Rankin
with Rev Renate Cochrane
and Khulakahle Child
Counselling and Training Forum



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In the course of the training workshops, it was realised that there was a need for a new organisation, dedicated to training childcare workers in skills related to the care of vulnerable children. This led to the establishment of the Khulakahle Child Counselling and Training Forum, which will carry forward the work begun by the workshops organised by Masangane.

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Judy Rankin
Rev Renate Cochrane
Khulakahle Child Counselling and Training Forum
Glen Williams

Acronyms

AIDS	Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus



Preface

About the CALLED TO CARE toolkit

In many countries throughout the world, churches and individual Christians are responding to Christ's call to 'love your neighbour as yourself' by undertaking community-based activities to address the massive challenges of HIV and AIDS.

In sub-Saharan Africa, churches have often been in the forefront of efforts to reduce the impact of HIV and AIDS. They are demonstrating, in many practical ways, that they feel 'called to care' for those who are infected or affected by the AIDS epidemic. They have, for example, pioneered ways of making basic health care available to people living with HIV, and of providing children orphaned by AIDS with education, social support and health care.

Churches have been much less effective, however, in addressing problems such as HIV prevention, HIV-related stigma, shame and discrimination, and cultural and gender issues associated with high-risk sexual behaviour. Denial of the reality of HIV and AIDS within church communities is also widespread. Moreover, although sex is the main means of HIV transmission in most countries, it is rarely discussed in church circles in an open, non-judgemental way.

Yet churches and other faith-based organisations have enormous potential for empowering individuals and communities with the knowledge, attitudes, skills and strategies they need to deal with issues related to sex, gender and AIDS. Moreover, growing numbers of church leaders have become aware of the need for a much more concerted effort to address the issues raised by the AIDS epidemic in a broader, more comprehensive and open manner.

In order to support this effort, the Strategies for Hope Trust is developing the *Called to Care* toolkit. This consists of a set of practical, action-oriented booklets and guides on issues related to HIV and AIDS for church leaders (both clergy and lay people), especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The *Called to Care* materials are designed to enable pastors, priests, religious sisters and brothers, lay church leaders, and their congregations and communities to:

- ❖ Reflect on and understand the spiritual, theological, ethical, health, social and practical

implications of the HIV epidemic and the Christian call to respond with compassion.

- ❖ Overcome the stigma, silence, discrimination, denial, fear and inertia that inhibit church and community action to address AIDS-related issues more effectively.
- ❖ Guide their congregations and communities through a process of learning and change, leading to practical, church-based actions to help individuals, families and communities reduce the spread of HIV and mitigate the impact of the AIDS epidemic.

The *Called to Care* toolkit consists of printed materials for use with church groups and communities at different levels of awareness and experience in relation to the HIV epidemic. This book, No. 6 in the toolkit, is designed to promote resilience in orphans and other children who have experienced grief and personal loss by enabling caregivers to rediscover their own 'child within'.

Other *Called to Care* 'tools' will be developed in the course of the period 2008-2010. These will be on topics such as HIV prevention strategies, living positively with HIV and AIDS, HIV and young people, gender issues, and nutrition and food security for people living with HIV.

The *Called to Care* project is being implemented through a process of international, ecumenical collaboration between churches, faith-based organisations, international church organisations and networks, publishers, distributors and other partners.

We invite you to participate in *Called to Care*, not only by using the contents of the toolkit in your congregation or community, but also by writing to us about your experiences, which we would be pleased to post on the Strategies for Hope website: www.stratshope.org.

Yours in faith and solidarity,

Glen Williams
Series Editor
Strategies for Hope Trust



CALLED TO CARE partners

The *Called to Care* toolkit is published and distributed in partnership with the following international, national and local organisations:

Africa Christian Textbooks
African Network of Religious Leaders living with or personally affected by HIV and AIDS (ANERELA+)
Anglican Diocese of Southern Malawi
CAFOD
Catholic AIDS Action
Christadelphian Meal-a-Day Fund
Christian Aid
Christian AIDS Bureau for Southern Africa
Christian Connections for International Health
Christian Literature Fund
Council of Anglican Provinces of Africa
Ecumenical HIV/AIDS Initiative in Africa, World Council of Churches
Family Health International
International Christian Medical and Dental Association
International Network of Religious Leaders living with or personally affected by HIV and AIDS (INERELA+)
Interchurch Organisation for Development Cooperation (ICCO)/Kerk in Actie
Kachere Press
Khulakahle Child Counselling and Training Forum
Lutheran World Federation
Masangane
Maurice and Hilda Laing Charitable Trust
Mercy Ships
Micah Initiative
Misereor
Organisation of African Instituted Churches
Rede Cristão contra HIV/SIDA
Tabernacle Sifa
United Society for the Propagation of the Gospel
Tearfund
World Vision International
Zentrum Oekumene.



Foreword

This workbook is the result of community workshops held in 2006 and 2007 in villages nestled at the foot of the Maluti mountains in South Africa's Eastern Province. It arose out of an HIV treatment programme for mothers, initiated by Masangane ('to embrace' in Xhosa), a community-based organisation supported by the Moravian Church.

The treatment programme saved the lives of many local people. In gratitude, a number of women volunteered to look after orphans in their communities. Many orphans and other children are now cared for by grannies or relatives. Others live as child-headed households. But when our volunteers visited the homes, they often found the children withdrawn and sad; others were full of anger and had lost all interest in school-work.

Our volunteers searched for a way to touch the souls and open the hearts of these distressed children. But they – and the children's caregivers – felt at a loss as to how to address the grief of these children. In our culture, children don't ask questions – they speak only when an adult talks to them directly. What should we do when children cry inconsolably? How are we to discipline disobedient children who are in turmoil because they long for their parents?

We discussed our need for child-counselling training with our project adviser, Rev Renate Cochrane, and together we looked for a professional child psychologist and for a funder to sponsor such a training programme. Thankfully, we found both. We discovered Judy Rankin, a psychologist who specialises in child-counselling workshops that are not intimidating to people with little formal education. We were also fortunate in that Zentrum Oekumene in Germany agreed to fund the workshops.

In Judy's workshops we are all 'experts', as she asks us to think back and recall our own feelings during hurtful and happy moments in our childhood. Her approach has not only given us skills but it has also brought healing to many of us who still suffer from childhood scars. Remembering the hard strokes of physical punishment was sometimes painful, but our fellowship during these workshops created space for tears. Until then, some of us had punished our own children with belts, as we thought this was the right way to bring up children. We asked our children for forgiveness and began to talk with them in a new way. Our Bible studies about Jesus and children helped us to see our relationships with children in a totally new light. These 'child within' workshops taught us how to communicate with children and how to make children feel at ease when talking with an adult.

After the workshops we were so filled with our new understanding of children that we only had one wish: to share our knowledge with many more caregivers in the community. This is how the Kuhlakahle Child Counselling and Training Forum came about, and the idea of a workbook emerged. Kuhlakahle is a Xhosa word meaning 'to grow well'. We formed this new team with the goal of running child-counselling workshops in our communities. We received additional training and held workshops in our surrounding villages. The response of orphan caregivers was overwhelming,



and we soon had requests from various other groups to train them. Teachers, nurses and even members of the police force wanted to learn about the 'Kuhlakahle way' of communicating with children.

We now have regular advanced training courses and evaluation meetings with our child psychologist, Judy Rankin. Our task is to translate and run courses in local languages and to adapt the training materials to the local context. We fervently hope that this workbook can be a guide for orphan caregivers and parents who are trying to bring healing to adults and children alike, all over Africa, and even further afield.

Kuhlakahle and Masangane teams
Matatiele, Eastern Cape Province, South Africa



ANGELS

– a prayer to inspire our work¹

Loving God,

When our mother passed away into your arms, she promised us that you would send angels to help us. When she blessed us in her last hour, she told us in a soft voice that these angels are people who will give us love and kindness. Tonight, I want to thank you for our good day and all the angels you have sent.

Thank you for our neighbour, Mama Dala, because she made us wonderful porridge this morning.

Thank you for Thoko's grandmother, because she takes our little sister, Zanele, to the children's day centre. She often has to carry Zanele on her back because the road is full of stones.

Thank you for Mama Khesa, who allowed my brothers to play in her yard today. They returned with happy faces because they had steam-bread with jam.

Thank you for my teacher, who is so gentle. She gave me a new pen this morning and praised my poem.

Thank you for our principal, who invited me to his office and asked how I manage to look after my two brothers and little sister. I was not shy when I spoke to him. He said: "You are only 15 and you are such a responsible girl. Your parents gave you the best name: Thandeka, which means 'the one who is loved'."

Thank you for Aunt Lerato, who will come on Saturday to help us wash our clothes and collect firewood. She always has good words and never shouts at my brother Olo when he is naughty. Olo misses Mother so much - he is often angry.

Thank you for our cousin Thula, who brings us T-shirts, jeans and shoes from her madam's children. Thula works as a domestic worker. She says her madam has a golden heart.

Thank you for Uncle Siya, who visits every month and tells us stories, and never hits us.

Thank you for the women from the church, who bought us school uniforms. Now we look like all the other children, and my brothers and I are no longer ashamed to go to school.

Thank you for Mandisi's grandfather, who brings us sweet-potatoes and spinach almost every day.

Thank you for the nurse at the clinic, who gave Zanele medicine and a warm blanket.

Thank you for our pastor, who brought us a beautiful picture-book that made Zanele smile and then she did not cry for a whole week.

Thank you for the helpers at the care centre. They promised that they will protect us if strange relatives come and want to take us away. We are worried because this happened to my friend Sindi and her brothers. Sindi's aunts and uncles came and each relative took one child. Sindi's heart is broken because she says the relatives only want the foster-child grant from the government.

Thank you, God, that we can stay together as brothers and sisters because you send your angels to take care of us.

O God, I thank you because I know that our parents are with you.

AMEN



THE CHILD WITHIN



Introduction

This section presents the following information:

WHO this workbook is for.

WHY this workbook was written.

WHAT this workbook is about.

WHERE and **WHEN** this workbook can be used.

HOW this workbook can be used most effectively.

Please read these pages carefully before you begin to use the modules and exercises which make up this training course.

Who?

This workbook has been written for people who provide care and support to children affected by the illness or death of a parent or other family members, or who have encountered some other form of personal hardship. It is intended especially for use with and by:

- parents, relatives and guardians who are active within their church or other faith community
- volunteer child caregivers
- professional childcare workers
- church youth workers, Sunday School teachers and schoolteachers
- leaders of church youth groups, women's and men's organisations
- trainers of professional and volunteer child caregivers.

The workbook is designed so it can be used to facilitate training courses with people of varying educational levels. It may be necessary, however, for facilitators to adapt parts of the book to suit local educational levels and cultural factors. In our experience, the optimal number of workshop participants is 15-30 persons. People of all ages, and of both sexes, can participate.

Depending on the number of participants, the facilitator may need one or two assistants, preferably drawn from the local community.

We suggest that, at the end of the course, each participant be presented with a copy of this workbook. Many - but not all - participants should be able to run similar workshops with other members of local communities.

Although developed in southern Africa, the workbook can be easily adapted for use elsewhere in the world.

Why?

Throughout the world, tens of millions of children have suffered the loss of one or both parents, and have to cope with grief and personal loss. Many are also vulnerable to malnutrition, infections, lack of education, economic exploitation, and physical and sexual abuse. Many more millions of children worldwide are vulnerable because of wars, poverty, political oppression, and family and community breakdown.

In sub-Saharan Africa, one of the main causes of childhood grief and vulnerability is the AIDS epidemic. Many children live with one or both parents who are chronically ill, with



grandparents, other relatives or guardians, or in child-headed households; some live in orphanages or other institutions. Their carers are mainly family members, relatives or members of the local community, most of whom are also affected by the AIDS epidemic and are economically disadvantaged.

Orphans and other children who have suffered grief and loss have many needs: for example, for food, clothing, shelter, healthcare, education and parenting. They also need emotional and spiritual healing to recover from the impact of the chronic illness and death of their parents and guardians, or from other traumatic events in their lives. Finally, they are in need of *resilience* - the ability to lead hopeful lives despite personal loss, grief and adversity - and for this they need positive relationships with caring adults who understand their needs.

In most African countries, local churches and faith-based organisations provide important material assistance (food, clothing, blankets), educational help (books, pencils, school uniforms), as well as emotional and spiritual support to orphans and other vulnerable children. These efforts depend largely on the voluntary work of hundreds of thousands of local volunteers - mostly women church members - who regularly visit orphans and other vulnerable children to check on their welfare and to provide assistance wherever possible. Other members and sections of the community - for example, schoolteachers, religious leaders and voluntary organisations - also make important contributions to supporting orphans and other vulnerable children.

A key factor in helping children to develop resilience is the presence of a caring adult who understands the child's needs, encourages the child's self-belief and acts as a role model for the child. These adults may be surviving parents, relatives, guardians, teachers, church leaders, other church members or community volunteers. Rarely, however, have these adults been trained in the skills they need to connect with orphans

and other vulnerable children, and to enable them to develop the resilience which they need to form healthy relationships with themselves and others. They therefore need training in these skills.

Moreover, in sub-Saharan Africa, adults who care for orphans and other vulnerable children are very likely to have experienced personal losses in their own lives. They too may be in need of healing. Yet their experiences, however painful, are also potentially valuable. By exploring their own experiences, and by sharing them with others, the participants in this training course can discover their own 'child within'. This will also enable them to develop a better understanding of the challenges faced by orphans and other children who have experienced grief and personal loss.

What?

The main focus of this workbook is not on imparting new information, but on strengthening the capacity of the participants to connect with and support children who have experienced grief and loss, and are vulnerable to psychosocial and physical harm. At the end of the training course, the participants should be able to:

- Understand the different stages of child development and how these affect children's individual needs.
- Understand how children at different levels of development experience personal loss and bereavement.
- Connect and communicate with children, especially those who are orphaned or otherwise vulnerable, in ways that help to strengthen their resilience.
- Enable affected children to hold on to the memory of lost loved ones.
- Plan how to implement what they have learned through the course.

At the same time, the workbook offers an opportunity for the participants to heal



themselves and to support one another, as they embark on the journey of relating more effectively to the children in their care.

The workbook is grounded in a Christian approach to children as *“a gift from the Lord; they are a real blessing”* (📖 Psalm 127:3). It explicitly links the care and support of children with the basic tenets and teachings of Christian faith. It therefore includes Bible studies, and suggests places where it would be appropriate for prayers, and the singing of choruses and hymns.

Where and when?

The course can be run in a church, a school, a community centre, or in the open air under a tree. The course planners need to decide in advance how many hours per day the course will run for. This, in turn, depends on how much time the participants have available at particular times of the year. It is important, for example, to avoid scheduling training sessions during peak harvest and planting times, in the rainy season (especially if sessions are to be held outdoors), or during religious festivals. In some communities, it may be possible to cover the whole course in six to eight days. In others, it may be necessary to spread the activities over a much longer period; for example, 10 to 12 weeks at the rate of one session per week.

How?

The training course aims to create a highly participatory experience, in which everyone learns from one another, and feels supported by one another. Each session should follow the same basic structure, namely:

1. **Worship:** Each session should start with a short, lively act of worship, involving a prayer and the singing of a chorus or hymn. This should last for about 10 minutes.
2. **Reflections:** It is very important to start each new session of the training course

with reflections on the previous session. This should last for about 10 minutes.

3. **Activities:** These consist mainly of participatory exercises in small groups and plenary sessions.
4. **Ice-breakers, refreshers and cooling-down breaks:** The facilitator should introduce these as and when required. They should usually last for only 5-10 minutes. Please see the Appendix for details.
5. **Closing:** The facilitator explores with the group the important things they have thought about, discussed and learned during the day, and gives a ‘taster’ of the next one. Close the session with a prayer, a blessing and goodbyes. On some occasions it might also be appropriate to have the ‘Silent Circle’ activity (see Appendix, page 65). This should last for 10-15 minutes.
6. **Homework:** The facilitator may ask the participants to do some homework between one training session and the next. If so, time should be allowed at the start of the next session for the participants to present their homework, and for it to be discussed.

The workbook is divided into six modules, each covering a different aspect of promoting healing and resilience in vulnerable children. Each module consists of four to eight activities of varying length - usually 30-60 minutes long. The total amount of time required to complete each module ranges from two to five hours. However, the facilitator should be sensitive to the needs of the participants: some groups may need to spend longer than planned on particular activities.

The materials needed for each session consist of: a flipchart and marker pens, a Bible, and (for each participant) a notebook and biro pen. Any additional materials required are mentioned at the start of each activity.

Singing, and even dancing, usually happen spontaneously during the training day. These are always an important part of healing,



Singing and dancing usually happen spontaneously during the training day.

especially when the stories shared have evoked pain. It is also worth doing for the sheer pleasure of moving, dancing and having fun together!

If all the course participants are fluent and literate in English, the course can be conducted in that language. Otherwise it can be conducted in whatever local language is most widely used. In some places, it may be preferable to conduct the course in English and the local language.

To ensure that illiterate participants are not left out, please read out everything that is written on the flipchart, slowly and clearly. It is advisable to write questions on the flipchart and, where needed, to photocopy handouts before the start of each session. If participants themselves are asked to write something on the flipchart, invite them to do a drawing rather than write words, if they prefer. This will enable illiterate or semi-literate members of the group to participate more fully.



Module A

Introductions, expectations and new concepts

Activity A1: Welcome, worship and introductions

☉ Purposes:

- To introduce and welcome the participants.
- To introduce the facilitator(s) of the workshop.
- To create an energetic but relaxed atmosphere.

☐ **Description:** Full group discussion, collective worship and discussion in pairs.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Arrange for the room to have free space in the centre of a circle of chairs, to create an intimate relaxed space, with room for movement.

2. As participants arrive, provide each person with a self-adhesive label to display the name they would like to be known by during the course.

3. Ask the participants to sit together in the circle of chairs. The course facilitators should now introduce themselves.

4. Hold a short, lively act of worship, with songs and an opening prayer. 📖 Read Mark 9:33-37, which finishes with

the verse: *"Whoever welcomes in my name one of these children, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me."* Make the point that, for Jesus, there is no greater service we can give to God than placing children at the centre of our families and our communities.

5. Ask the participants to walk around the room and to introduce themselves briefly to people they do not know.

6. Before the participants return to their seats, ask them to choose a partner whom they do not know very well. Inform them that they are going to be introducing their partner to the whole group after a short time of conversation. Discourage them from





making notes. Allow them three minutes to tell their partner about themselves. The information may include facts about work, family, age, interests, and interesting personal details such as things they enjoy or dislike. The partner listens and asks further questions. The roles are then reversed and the other person in the pair is given

the same amount of time to introduce themselves.

7. Come back to the whole group, where each participant introduces their partner to the group, using the information they have gathered. Ask a few questions once all the members of the group have been introduced.

Activity A2: Hopes, expectations and fears

🎯 Purposes:

- To inform the facilitator what the participants are expecting.
- To foster small group participation and the development of relationships.
- To address any fears and discomfort which participants may bring with them to the workshop.
- To enable the participants to understand the nature of the course.
- To enable clarification if there is confusion.

☐ **Description:** Small group discussions, followed by report-back to the full group.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Introduce this activity by saying that you wonder what each person is feeling and thinking about coming to the workshop. You are also wondering how past experiences of workshops might have affected the feelings and thoughts of the participants.



2. Break into four groups, and give each a piece of flipchart paper and a marker. Each group should discuss their hopes, expectations and fears for the workshop, and should write these down on their flipchart sheet.



3. Return to the main group, where each sub-group reports on their hopes, expectations and fears. The facilitator highlights and discusses the hopes and expectations which are presented.



4. Explain to the group that the course aims to help them support orphans and other children who are vulnerable because of the death or illness of one or both of their parents, or because of poverty, violence or anything else which has brought suffering into their lives.

5. 📖 Remind the participants of Mark 9:37, which was read out in the act of worship earlier in the day. This tells us: *"Whoever welcomes in my name one of these children, welcomes me; and whoever welcomes me, welcomes not only me but also the one who sent me."* Ask the participants for their comments on this verse.



Activity A3: Course structure and group norms

🎯 Purposes:

- To explain the structural aspects of the course, e.g. time schedule and requirements for the certificate.
- To establish norms and ground rules for the course.

📋 **Description:** Full group discussion and small group role plays.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Explain to the group how the course will be organised, e.g. how often, and for how long, the group will meet; what activities will take place; and that at the end, each participant will be given a certificate.
2. Explain to the group that we are going to discuss the norms – or agreed standards of behaviour – that we shall follow during this workshop.
3. Ask the group for suggestions and write these on the flipchart. The list below
4. Divide the participants into four small groups and ask each to devise a role play in which one of these norms is not working. For example, one group acts out a scene in which participants disrespect one another, e.g. by interrupting one another while speaking; another plays a scene where someone breaks confidentiality by gossiping about another participant, and so on.
5. Bring the four small groups together and ask them to perform their role plays.



Activity A4: Jesus and children

🎯 **Purpose:** To demonstrate that the practical care and support of children is a cornerstone of Christian discipleship.

📋 **Description:** Bible study (full group).

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. 📖 Read Mark 10:13-16 aloud: *“Some people brought children to Jesus for him to place his hands on them, but the disciples scolded the people. When Jesus noticed this, he was angry and said to his disciples, ‘Let the children come to me, and do not stop them, because the Kingdom of God belongs to such as these. I assure you that whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child, will never enter it.’ Then*



he took the children in his arms, placed his hands on each of them, and blessed them."

2. Comment that on only one other occasion (the story of the moneylenders in the temple), is Jesus reported as having become 'angry'. In this case, his anger was directed towards his own disciples. Why? Some participants may come up with very good suggestions, e.g. that God values the simplicity, openness and trustfulness of children. As adults, we tend to live complicated lives, to look for ways of avoiding the truth, and to distrust other people.

3. Suggest that another answer could lie in the teachings of Jesus on the Kingdom of God. According to the Beatitudes, the lowly and the powerless are the main beneficiaries of God's reign: *"Blessed are you who are poor, for yours is the Kingdom of God. Blessed are you who hunger, for you will be satisfied. Blessed are you who weep now, for you will laugh."* (📖 Luke 6:20-22) Children shared the same social status of the poor, the hungry and the suffering,

whom Jesus said would be 'blessed'. The powerlessness and vulnerability of children are precisely what marks them as those who will be welcomed into God's reign.²

4. Mention also that, in the New Testament, children are even put forward as role models for adults - something which was unheard of at the time when Jesus lived. Jesus says (📖 Mark 10:15): *"Whoever does not receive the Kingdom of God like a child will never enter it."* With this statement, Jesus turns Jewish covenantal law on its head. According to Jewish Law, only those adults who followed the Law in every detail were acceptable to God. Jesus teaches us that God's love is unconditional and that God is on the side of the poor and the powerless, as represented by children.

5. Conclude by emphasising that the care and support of children is a cornerstone of Christian discipleship. It is as though Jesus is saying to us: "Follow me - care for the children. I need the Church to look after the children and to be advocates on their behalf."

Activity A5: Getting to know ourselves and our children

🎯 Purposes:

- To explore memories from our own childhood in order to know ourselves better, as this may increase our understanding and sensitivity to children's feelings.
- To help develop trust and group formation through sharing personal stories.
- To recall and recognise the importance of significant adults in our own lives.

☐ **Description:** Full group discussion, followed by small group discussions and report-back to the full group.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Write the following questions on the flipchart beforehand, and ask the group to reflect on them:
 - Can you remember a special place, when you were growing up, which has special memories and meaning for you? A place where you felt happy and safe?
 - Was there an adult or any person during the time when you were growing up who connected with you strongly? Take time to think carefully. This person might be a



schoolteacher, a family member, a neighbour, a Sunday School teacher, a parent of a friend, or some other adult person.

- How did this person connect with you and make you feel special? Can you remember any moment or event in detail?
- What would that person say about you today if they saw you sitting here, training to work with children?

2. Find a partner and share your stories with each other.



3. After 15 minutes, return to the main group, where participants can talk about some of the people and places they have remembered.

Activity A6: Stories of vulnerable children in our community

🕒 Purposes:

- To help the participants to identify vulnerable children in their own community.
- To enable participants to think more deeply about vulnerable children by exploring their own childhood experiences.
- To foster a relaxed atmosphere and group formation by working together in a psychodrama.

☐ **Description:** Psychodrama; full group discussion.

➤ **Special materials required:** Cards with various scenarios, which depict problems

frequently encountered by children in their community, for example:

- Death in the family.
- Having a terminally ill member in the family.
- Being a child in a family one week after a family member has died.
- Witnessing fighting between parents about money or alcohol.
- Child living in poverty.
- A child being the victim of sexual or physical abuse.

🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: A psychodrama is a 5-10 minute play about a situation. The various participants take on roles to act out a scenario. They choose someone to direct the play, and other people to act out the parts. The participants need to be encouraged to draw on their own life experiences to develop the play.



Procedure:

1. Divide into small groups. Each group should select a card, which will specify a topic for a psychodrama.
2. The groups work out a story and assign roles, e.g. the child, siblings, parents, grandparents, teacher, pastor, businessman, shopkeeper, bus driver.
3. After 10 minutes, the small groups come

together again and each acts out its psychodrama.

4. Now lead a discussion about the experiences that vulnerable children may face in their day-to-day lives, as well as the major stresses which they have been through. Focus attention on the feelings which they have, and on the links between their feelings, thoughts and behaviours.

Activity A7: Introduction to resilience

🎯 Purposes:

- To introduce the concept of resilience, drawing on our personal experiences.
- To introduce some key factors in promoting resilience in children who have experienced hardship and adversity.

☐ **Description:** Full group discussion.

 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: 'Resilience' is a term that is used to help us to understand how children can recover from adversity. It is about *the capacity of children to recover and to go on with their lives in a positive way, despite whatever setbacks they have experienced*. We must not forget that every child will need support, no matter how strong they may seem to be. Every child has some measure of resilience, but this needs to be built up.

Procedure:

1. Write the definition (above) of 'resilience' in children on the flipchart. Read it out aloud



and ask whether the meaning is clear to everyone in the group.

2. Ask the participants which *external factors* help to promote resilience in children. Keep prompting until you arrive at a list which includes the following:

- ✧ a close and secure relationship with a caregiver
- ✧ a close relationship with the remaining and extended family members



- ✧ enough food, shelter, clothing and medical services
- ✧ education
- ✧ financial stability, and
- ✧ close links to one's cultural community.

3. Ask the participants to talk about their own experiences of resilience. Ask : "Who experienced some forms of adversity in their own childhood?"; "What or who helped you to be the person you are, sitting in this workshop today?"; and "Which of the above external factors were important for you?" Write some of the responses on the flipchart.

4. Explain that in this training course we will be focusing especially upon *internal factors* which promote resilience. In learning to connect and talk with children, we will be aiming to help develop internal resources, which will enable the child to develop three positive attitudes:

- * **I have:** trusting relationships; structures and rules at home; role models; encouragement; social and interpersonal skills; religious faith.
- * **I am:** loved; loving; proud of myself; responsible; hopeful; and worthy of trust.
- * **I can:** communicate; manage feelings and impulses; seek trusting relationships.

Activity A8:

‘Cooking in the pot’: what skills, knowledge and experience do you bring here today?

☉ Purposes:

- To acknowledge the unique skills, knowledge and personal life experience which each participant brings to the training course.
- To emphasise that people with little formal education may have a lot of valuable experience and wisdom.
- To encourage the language of resilience: ‘I have’, ‘I am’, ‘I can’.

□ **Description:** Group activity and discussion in pairs.

🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.

▷ Special materials required:

- Different coloured sheets of paper cut into smaller strips. Each person gets five different coloured strips.

- A container/cooking pot or basket.
- Points to think about (see next page), written on a flipchart or a handout.





Procedure:

1. Place a cast iron African three-legged cooking pot in the centre of the room. (This could also be a basket or some other kind of container.)

2. Each participant should think about the following points, which are written up on the flipchart:

WHAT SKILLS, KNOWLEDGE AND EXPERIENCE DO YOU BRING HERE TODAY?

- ✧ your everyday knowledge and life experiences in relation to children - as a caregiver, a parent, or a teacher
- ✧ your memories from your own childhood experiences
- ✧ people who made you feel safe and cared for when you were a child
- ✧ your experiences of caring for children
- ✧ your experiences and knowledge as a parent

✧ Biblical guidance in caring for children

✧ cultural stories of caring which you find useful.

3. Participants should answer questions while thinking of the following:

★ **I have:** the external supports and resources that promote resilience. Think about a time when you had to face an adverse situation - what outside sources of support did you use?

★ **I can:** adult social and interpersonal skills.

★ **I am:** the strengths that are within the adult.

Ask the participants to think about these things and to discuss them with a partner.

4. Participants should choose a coloured piece of paper for each skill or knowledge which they have thought and talked about. They should each put marks or write some words on it to describe one of their skills, knowledge or experiences.





5. Each participant should go to the cooking pot, one by one, and place one piece of paper in the pot, after sharing it aloud with the group.

6. Continue this process until everyone has placed all five pieces of paper in the cooking pot.

7. Ask the participants how this exercise applies to working with children. What sorts of skills, knowledge and experience do children have? What knowledge and wisdom do we have? Discuss this for 5 minutes.

Activity A9: Homework

🕒 Purposes:

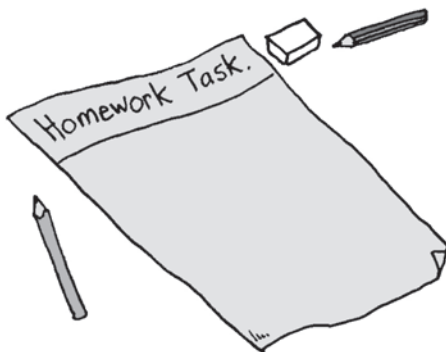
- To encourage reflection on the work done during the day.
- To help the facilitators understand how participants are responding to the workshop.
- To monitor the process of the workshop so far.

📄 **Description:** Drawing and reflections.

🕒 **Time needed:** 15 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Explain that, at the end of each day, participants may be given a task to complete at home. This task will take various forms



and should be completed by each participant, who should each write their name on the task which they hand in.

2. For this first homework, ask the participants to think of their responses to the course so far. If you could represent one particular response in a drawing, what would it look like? What colours would it be? How big or small is it? What shape is it? Using just a pencil and paper, and colour pens/pencils if they have them, each participant should draw what their responses to the course look like.

When they have finished the drawing, the participants should consider the following questions and write the answers on their drawing:

- Give your drawing/response a name.
- Has this response made an appearance at other times in your life? When? (For example, during other courses you have attended?)
- How does this drawing/response make you feel?
- What is it that encourages this drawing/response?
- Is there another response that you would rather have?
- If so, what is the other response? In what ways would this make you feel differently about the course?
- If not, what is it about your drawing/response that makes you feel happy for it to be a part of your life?



THE CHILD WITHIN



Module B

The many stories of our lives

Activity B1: Building resilience by fostering inner resources

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: Life experiences can be very difficult to talk about, so it is important to help children to talk about them. This is the focus of these workshops. Participants come with their own childhood experiences, good and bad. It is therefore useful to provide a space for them to remember how they felt as children in order for them to empathise with how children feel.

🎯 Purposes:

- To explore ways in which we can play and communicate with children, by exploring our own childhood experiences.
- To encourage participants to:
 - get in touch with their own feelings at present
 - explore feelings and experiences from their own childhood in order to facilitate a greater understanding of the children they care for now
 - experience feelings as a source of information
 - realise that different stories give rise to different feelings, and that different feelings are evoked by the stories we have of our lives and relationships

- realise the importance of expressing our feelings
- feel supported while expressing our feelings.

□ **Description:** Group discussion, individual work and discussion in pairs.

▷ **Special Materials:** One sheet of A4 paper; five crayons or coloured pens for **each** participant; drawing of 'feelings bottle' on flipchart paper.

🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.





Procedure:

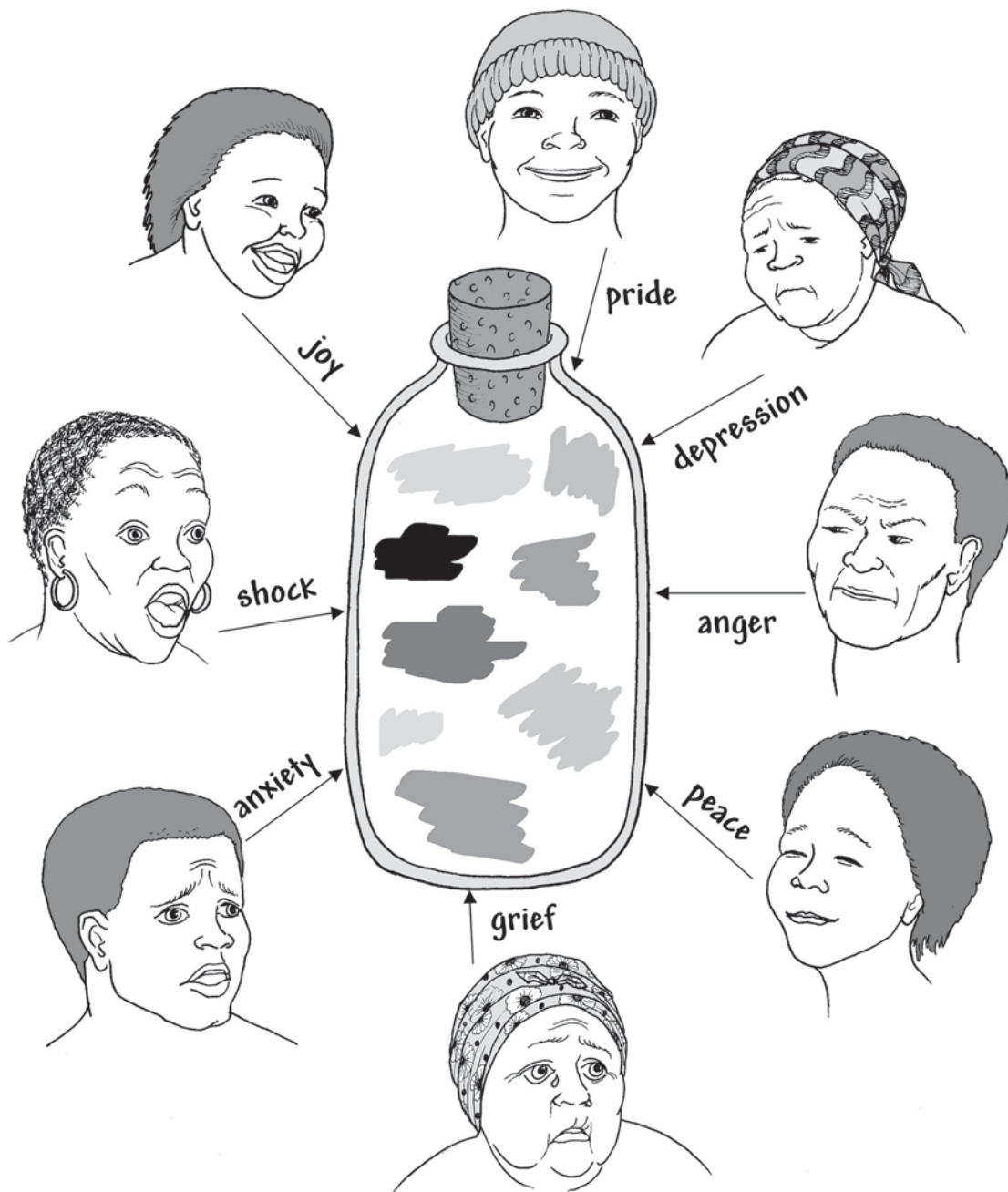
1. Explain that in an earlier session we spoke about *resilience* in children. Ask the group what they understand about the idea of resilience.

2. Ask the participants to recall some of the *external factors* which are important in building resilience with vulnerable children. (See pp. 20-21.)

3. Say that we are now going to look at how to strengthen the *internal factors*³ (see page 21) which foster resilience.

4. The two inner resources below are important for fostering resilience. Write them on a flipchart and discuss them briefly:

- * Understanding our feelings and being able to express them.



The Feelings Bottle.



- ✱ Being able to **remember and connect** with stories of our past. Such stories may be both good and bad. Our focus now, however, is on the stories that are positive in building our sense of history, belonging and cultural identity.

5. Draw an empty bottle on the flipchart.

6. Referring to the drawing of the 'Feelings Bottle' (opposite), say to the participants: "Imagine that we have all our feelings locked tight in the 'Feelings Bottle' like the one in the drawing. The bottle has a cork or cap, which fits tightly into or over its mouth. But then one day it bursts open, like a bottle of beer or sparkling water or wine that has been shaken up and opened. Bang!!!"



7. The story of the bottle and the cork shows some of the different feelings we might have at different times and in different places. Feelings come out, for example:

- ✱ when we cry
- ✱ when we shout
- ✱ when we sing
- ✱ when we pray
- ✱ when we dance
- ✱ when we feel angry
- ✱ when we talk with someone
- ✱ even when we sigh.

8. Now brainstorm ideas about all the possible feelings a person can have, and when these come out. Write all these down on the flipchart. There should be at least 20 different feelings, and ways of expressing them.

9. On a blank A4 piece of paper, each person should now draw their own bottle. It should be large enough to fill all the space on the paper. Hand out crayons or coloured pens (five to each person), and let the participants

work silently on their own, following the instructions below.

YOUR FEELINGS BOTTLE

- Think of the feelings which you have inside you.
- Choose a different colour for each feeling and colour in your bottle.
- What is the feeling which takes up the most space?
- What are the feelings which burst the bottle more often?
- What feelings are near the top and burst out?
- What feelings lie deep down and are more hidden?

10. Once they have finished colouring in their bottles, ask the participants to look at their feelings in the bottle represented by colours. They should choose two colours from their bottle. One should show a good feeling, and another a not very pleasant feeling.

11. Ask the participants to think of any stories in their lives that give them these two feelings.

12. Once all the participants have done this, ask them to get into pairs and to share their feelings bottle with a partner.

13. Once the partners have each shared their stories, bring the whole group together again. Invite participants to share with the full group what they have thought and felt during this exercise, and to tell some of their stories.

14. Now discuss the following questions:

- How can this activity be used with children?
- What sorts of feelings do children have?
- How do children express these feelings at various ages?
- Do you think some behaviour problems could be a way in which children express their feelings?



Activity B2: Childhood stories, songs and games

🎯 Purposes:

- To help evoke fun and energy. (The previous activity may evoke feelings of deep sadness.)
- To enable the trainees to return to their childhoods in playful ways, and thus connect and better understand the needs and feelings of children.
- To encourage group cohesion.

☐ **Description:** Small group work; full group discussion.

 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Divide the participants into groups of five or six people each.
2. Ask each group to work together to perform the following in front of the larger group: a song from childhood; a story they remember being told; and a game they played. Tell them they have 10 minutes to work together and prepare to present their song, story and game to all the other participants.



3. Return to the full group, where each performs their story, game and song.
4. Ask the participants to share their feelings after the presentations, and discuss how these feelings are related to the development of children.

Activity B3: The Tree of Life⁴

🎯 Purposes:

- To enable people to appreciate the fact that we all have multiple stories, not just one story, and that these multiple stories make up our life and identity.
- To enable the participants to experience the good and bad stories in their childhood.
- To enable people to explore their own

strengths and their ability to survive, despite life's hardships and challenges.

- To enable people to explore the good stories, no matter how few, which have contributed to their strength and resilience.

- To introduce participants to working with a guided drawing task, which can be done with children of all ages as a way of communicating with children.

☐ **Description:** Individual and group work; full group discussion.

 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.



- ▷ **Special materials required:** One sheet of flipchart paper and a marker pen for each participant.

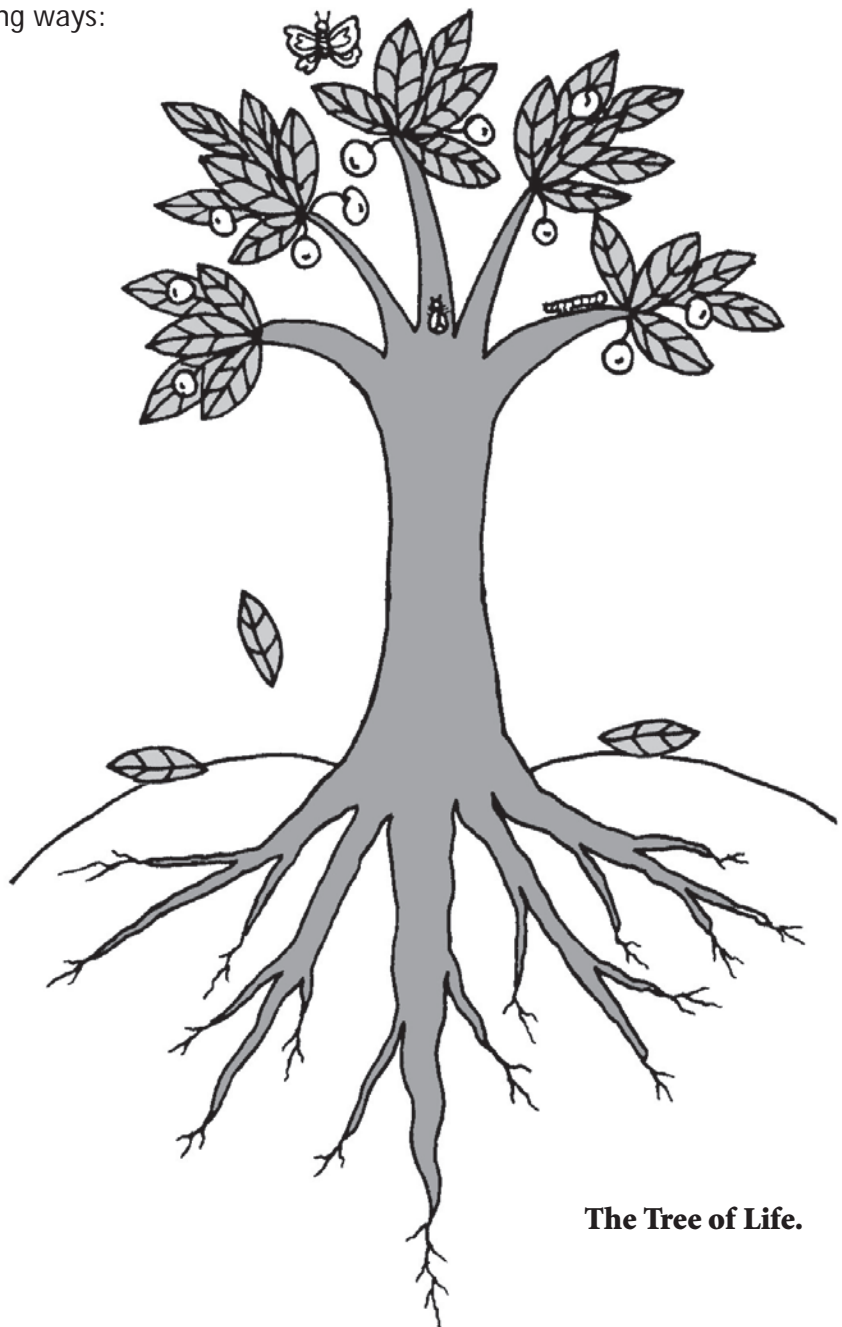
Procedure:

1. Ask the participants to fill all the space on the sheet of flipchart paper with a drawing of their own tree of life. The drawing should show the tree's roots, living and dead branches, new leaves and leaves that have fallen to the ground.

2. Participants should now mark the different parts of their tree in the following ways:

- ✧ **Roots:** These are important people in the lives of their families in the past, including their ancestors.
- ✧ **Trunk:** This consists of important events in their lives - either painful or happy. The trunk will bend and be shaped by these events.
- ✧ **Branches:** These are thoughts, wishes and hopes for one's own life.
- ✧ **Leaves:** These are important people in their own, more recent lives. Some leaves can be discoloured, representing people who have hurt them. Some leaves may have fallen to the ground, representing people who have died or are lost to the person.
- ✧ **Fruits:** These stand for achievements in their lives, of which they are proud.
- ✧ **Bugs:** These sometimes eat part of the fruit and destroy the leaves, or even the roots. These are day-to-day problems and challenges.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: Sometimes we fail to see beyond the problems which people face in their lives. But often there are other stories of survival, coping and hope, which we don't hear about, or which we overlook or choose to ignore. We need to discover the strengths, as well as the problems, in people's stories of their lives. We must look for these other stories of **HOPE** and **STRENGTH**, despite adversity.



The Tree of Life.



THE CHILD WITHIN

3. The group then divides into pairs to share their Tree of Life with a partner. Each partner asks questions to develop the story and the details.

4. Participants return to the main group, where a few participants share their Tree of Life with the others.

5. Break into two groups and discuss how this exercise could relate to the children with whom the participants work. Try to focus on how this can help build resilience in children by discussing not just the sad stories but also the positive ones, as well as their sense of history.



Module C

Childhood - a special time with special needs

Activity C1:

Applying the 'Golden Rule' to Children

🕒 **Purpose:** To explore the implications of the 'Golden Rule' for our relationships with children.

📄 **Description:** Bible study (full group).

🕒 **Time needed:** 15 minutes.

Procedure:

1. 📖 Read Matthew 7:12: *"Do for others what you want them to do for you: this is the meaning of the Law of Moses and of the teachings of the prophets."*

2. Mention that this verse has become known as the 'Golden Rule' of behaviour. If we apply it to relationships between adults and children, it means trying to understand and respect the child's feelings; in other words, putting oneself into the child's shoes. Children are new to the world. They have special needs for protection and care, depending upon their ages and the stages of their development. We adults sometimes forget what it is like to be small, weak and dependent on others. The world can seem like a very large, strange

and hostile place to a child. To have the love, support and protection of at least one 'significant adult' can make all the difference to a child's chances in life.⁵

3. Ask the participants for their interpretations of the 'Golden Rule' verse from Scripture.



The 'Golden Rule' of behaviour, when applied to relationships between adults and children, means trying to understand and respect the child's feelings.



Activity C2: Effects of circumstances on children

🕒 Purposes:

- To explore local understandings of childhood development and experience.
- To explore what experiences participants bring with them regarding the care of children.
- To explore understandings of the relationship between children's behaviour and emotional experience.
- To explore understandings of the different effects of circumstances on children, depending on their age.

📄 **Description:** Case study, followed by role play and full group discussion.

🕒 **Time needed:** 60 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Read the story of Nombulelo and her children (opposite) to the whole group.
2. Ask the participants to form groups of six people each. Each group should discuss how each of the children in the story is affected by the circumstances in which they were living. However, the group should not try to solve the problems or make suggestions. Ask them to discuss the following questions, which the facilitator should write on the flipchart beforehand:
 - The story says that Nombulelo was a good mother. What is a good mother?
 - Why and how was each child in the family affected by the circumstances?
 - What behaviour might each child show at the different stages of the story?

➤ What feelings might each child have?

3. After 15 minutes of discussion, each group is to prepare a role play of the case study. Each person takes on the role of someone in the case study. Allow 10 minutes to prepare this role play.

4. Each small group presents its play to the main group.

5. A full group discussion should then follow, with someone recording on a flipchart the *behaviours*, especially of children, which have been noted in the course of the role plays. The facilitator should look for general ideas regarding the effects on children of particular circumstances. Highlight similarities and differences between groups, and lead a general discussion about how children can be affected by the circumstances in which they find themselves.





Nombulelo and her children

Nombulelo had four children: Tandeka, Sipho, Tobeka and Thoelang. They all lived with her husband's mother, Maria. Nombulelo had been a good mother, and had always tried to look after her children well. But as her husband was working on the mines near Johannesburg, and returned home only once a year, she had been struggling to look after the children on her own.

One night Nombulelo disappeared. The family received a text message a few weeks later to say that she was working in a city 600 kilometres away and she would send money when she could.

Tandeka was very busy trying to finish Grade 11, but she was forced to give up school to look after two-month-old Thoelang. Although she was very sad to give up school, she grew to love him and she looked after him well.



Nombulelo started by sending small amounts of money home, but after a while the family heard very little from her. One Christmas their father did not come home, and

later they heard he was very sick in Johannesburg.

Tandeka, who had gone back to school part-time, received the good news that she had passed her matriculation exam and had been given a bursary to study at university. Sadly she left Thoelang with his very old grand-mother to further her studies in the city.



Sipho was now 16 but, unlike Tandeka, he liked to party with his friends and often slept away from home. He mixed with a bad crowd but his grandmother, Maria, was too old to discipline him.

Maria became very ill with high blood pressure, and suddenly died. A neighbour was able to trace Nombulelo in Johannesburg, and she returned home for the funeral. She was very thin and looked very sick. She stayed at home with Thoelang, who was now 4, Sipho and Tobeka. The children did not know that their mother had AIDS and was becoming weaker and weaker. Tandeka had to leave her studies and come home. After three days, Nombulelo died.



Activity C3:

Personal stories of attachment and loss in childhood

🕒 Purposes:

- To sensitise the participants to the experiences of vulnerable children by exploring their own personal stories.
- To introduce children's emotional needs as being just as important as physical needs.
- To explore the concept of resilience in greater depth.

□ **Description:** Small and full group discussions.

🕒 **Time needed:** 60 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Read out the story below about Thandi to the full group.

2. Form groups of three or four participants, and ask them to discuss the following questions for 15 minutes:

- What is your reaction to the story?
- Did any of you experience sad stories when you were younger?
- How did adults help you during this time?
- How might it have helped if the adults had spoken with you and acted in different ways?

Thandi

Thandi was one of 14 children and lived in a rural area of the Transkei, in South Africa. She was the youngest of the family. One day her father said that he was taking her to live with her aunt in Soweto, near Johannesburg. As her father's sister had no children of her own, he had decided to give Thandi to her. Because Thandi was only three years old, no-one told her anything about what was going to happen. She was just taken to Soweto and left with her aunt, whom she had never met before.

She grew up in Soweto, but she got into a lot of trouble at school. Everyone complained about her cheeky behaviour and said she was a bad child. When she was a teenager she joined a gang of children who sniffed glue and hung around the streets. She was getting into real trouble.

One day a strange man appeared at her aunt's place. It was her father. He introduced himself and said that he was inviting her home for the holidays. She did not understand but she went with him anyway.

Soon she discovered that she had a big family of sisters and brothers. At the age of 16, she finally learned the story of how she had been taken away to live with her aunt. At first she was angry, but after her anger subsided she grew into a strong, popular and respected woman in her community and her church.





- How does this story show resilience, despite Thandi's loss and pain?

3. Come back to the main group. Ask participants to share what they discussed in the smaller groups.

4. Show the participants, on a flipchart, the following possible reactions of children to the loss of a parent, guardian or other loved one.

Children's possible reactions to loss⁶:

- ✧ Self blame
- ✧ Seeking approval
- ✧ Feeling a sense of betrayal
- ✧ Becoming overly compliant
- ✧ Taking on adult responsibility e.g. being 'the man of the house'; trying to take responsibility for brothers and sisters
- ✧ 'Acting out' - being naughty to attract attention
- ✧ Cutting off their feelings - literally shutting down or blocking out their feelings
- ✧ Psychosomatic 'illnesses': e.g. tummy aches, headaches, sore limbs

- ✧ Re-enacting painful events: e.g. playing 'funerals', or drawing pictures of death, sores, or of injury being inflicted on others
- ✧ Becoming aggressive and destructive
- ✧ Become clingy and dependent, being fearful of being left alone
- ✧ Becoming afraid of the dark, of the future, etc.
- ✧ Regressing by behaving as if they are younger than they actually are: e.g. by going to bed early, in an attempt to revert to an earlier (and more secure) developmental stage.

5. Ask the participants to describe which of these reactions they have seen or personally experienced, but do not ask them to try to explain why children are behaving in these ways.

6. At the end of the exercise, give each participant a handout listing the above possible reactions.

7. Mention that in the next activity we shall be looking at the stages in children's development, and the factors that help to explain why they respond to personal loss in the above ways.

Activity C4:

The needs of children

🎯 Purposes:

- To explore local knowledge of children's needs and development.
- To elaborate and discuss ideas about the needs of children.
- To introduce a focus on child development, children's needs, and how children at different ages express their needs.

❏ **Description:** Full group discussion.

🕒 **Time needed:** 60 minutes.

▶ **Special materials required:** Two flipcharts and marker pens; 'Children's Needs' handout.

Procedure:

1. Brainstorm about the needs of children and write the responses on a flipchart.

2. On a separate flipchart, introduce the categories for grouping children's needs,



Children's needs ⁷

Children have many needs, all of which are important. Any unmet need may cause the child to be disturbed in some way.

Physical Needs

Children have many physical needs such as food, clothing, shelter, school-related expenses, healthcare and hygiene.

Emotional needs

Love, acceptance, security, encouragement, recognition by others, self-confidence and positive self-esteem. Children also need to be able to trust themselves, others and the world around them. They need to be heard, to speak to others and to feel that they are individuals. They need to be listened to and to be understood before they can understand.

Social needs

Humans are social beings. We need to live among others. No-one is an island. We need to feel that we are part of a cultural and national group. We do not like to feel different, or to be discriminated against. This is as true for children as for adults. It is important for children to have a sense of identity and belonging. Much of our behaviour is learnt within social

situations – with our parents, our wider families, our friends and our communities.

Skills and knowledge (Cognitive needs)

There are three main categories of cognitive needs:

- Formal education, where we are taught from early childhood what we need to know in order to survive.
- Informal education, where we learn by observing others, seeing what reactions others elicit, setting our own goals, dreams and ambitions, and learning what it takes to be a part of a community.
- General skills, such as life skills and general knowledge.

Spiritual needs

Through our spiritual beliefs we develop a sense of hope and meaning in our lives. Practising our faith in times of hardship enables us to cope better. It gives us a sense of purpose and enables us to see beyond the hardships of our present circumstances.





Children's behaviour is learned within social situations, especially with parents and wider families.

as set out in the box, 'Children's Needs' (opposite). At the end of the activity, distribute handouts containing this information.

3. Compare the two lists and group the needs identified by the participants into the categories listed in 'Children's Needs': physical, emotional, social, cognitive and spiritual.

Activity C5: Stages of development

© Purposes:

- To explore the participants' understanding of various stages of child development.
- To start a discussion about the needs of children at different ages.
- To enable participants to collaborate in order to identify the needs of children according to age.

☐ **Description:** Group discussion.

Time required: 45 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Introduce and explain the following chart on the developmental stages of children. The chart should be presented on a flipchart and



Children have different needs according to their ages and stages of development.



Ages and Stages of Development⁸

We can divide the growing process into developmental stages, roughly on the basis of individual ages, as follows:

- Infants and toddlers0-2 years
- Pre-school children.....3-5 years
- Young children.....6-8 years
- Pre-adolescents9-12 years
- Adolescents.....13-18 years

distributed to the participants as a handout at the end of the activity.

2. Return to the story 'Nombulelo and her children' (page 33). Discuss the experiences of each child, particularly in relation to their different ages. Ask the group which categories of the children's needs were not being met at the various stages of their lives.

3. Explain that, in the next session, we shall be discussing how we can communicate with children in ways that can help them to cope better with the challenges they face in their lives, and so become more resilient.



Module D

Connecting with children

Activity D1: Listening, not telling

- 🕒 **Purpose:** To develop the skills of asking children questions and listening to their stories.
- ☐ **Description:** Story, followed by one-to-one work, and group discussion.
- 🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.
- ▶ **Special materials required:** Flipchart and marker pen; handout of questions.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: Listening and asking questions are key skills in developing a conversation, and in connecting with children. By asking children questions and listening to their responses, we are able to encourage them to tell us the stories of their lives. When vulnerable children tell us their personal stories, they feel understood and experience a sense of healing. Children communicate differently according to the stage of development which they have reached. A child's stories might not always be factually true in every respect, but they represent the child's understanding of the world, as she or he knows it at the time.

Procedure:

1. Read the story of Joyce and Tebogo (page 40) as an example of a skill used in connecting with a child.

2. This story might sound easy but it raises the question: 'How do we talk with children?' To respond to this question, we shall first look at how we ourselves listen to other people and are listened to by them.



Answering questions and listening are key skills in connecting with children.



The story of Joyce and Tebogo

During a workshop one participant, Alice, told this true story: her neighbour, Joyce, was complaining about her 12-year-old grandson, Tebogo, who had just run off very angry.

"Teenagers are different these days," Joyce said, "they never listen and obey!" Alice asked Joyce questions to get a good understanding of what had happened. Joyce was desperate, as she had been looking after Tebogo since his mother had died of AIDS the year before.

After Joyce had finished talking, Alice asked: "What do you think he is feeling? Do you think he has worries? Do you think he misses his mother? Is he sad?" Alice asked her if she had ever asked him what he was feeling and thinking. Joyce said that she would try to do so in future.

A few days later Alice met Joyce again and she was feeling greatly relieved. She and her grandson had had a good conversation. She was able to understand him much better and they were getting on well together.

One morning...



A few days later...





3. In pairs, take turns to interview each other by asking the following questions, which should also be listed on a handout:

- Which adult or adults listened to you as a child in your family?
- Can you remember a teacher who ever listened to you? How did you know she or he was listening?
- Was listening different for men? For women? For children? If so, in what ways?
- Who do you think was the person most listened to in your family?
- Who was the least listened to in your family? Why?
- Think back to a time or times in your life when you felt most listened to. Try to recall who was there. What contributed to the sense of being listened to properly?
- When have you not felt listened to?

The listener should make notes on the responses of the interviewee.



4. Return to the main group and discuss the responses to these questions. Write selected responses on the flipchart and discuss.

Activity D2: Listening and not listening

🎯 Purposes:

- To illustrate the importance of listening by providing the opportunity to feel and witness what it is like not to be listened to.
- To identify behaviours which contribute to the feeling of not being listened to.

☐ **Description:** Role play; full group discussion.

Time needed: 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Ask for four volunteers to come to the centre of the room. Two will be the

interviewers and the other two will be the storytellers.

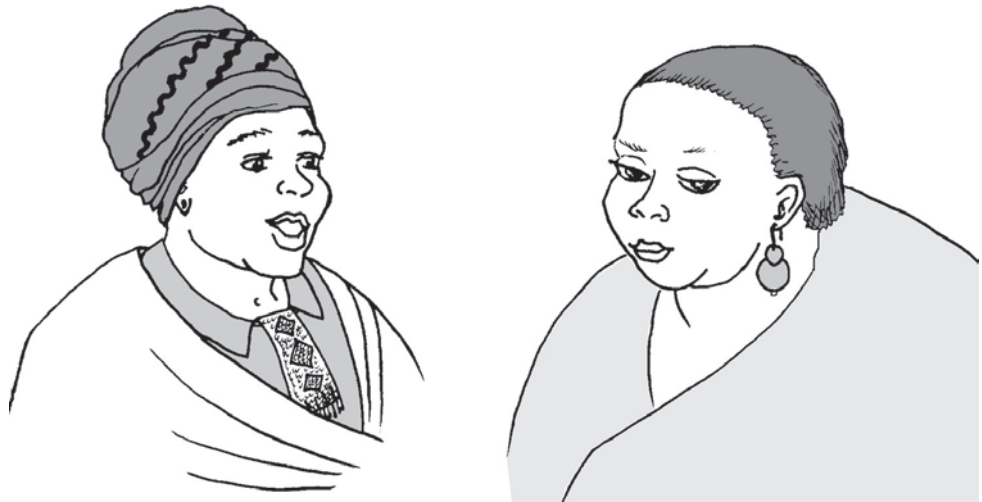
2. The facilitator takes the interviewers outside. The facilitator explains to each one what is required of them.

☐ **Interviewer A:** When your partner starts to talk, look at the floor or off into the distance, shift in your seat, clean your nails, and generally look bored. Do not offer any response that encourages the person to carry on talking. Just say “yes, yes” or “uh huh” in a bored way.

☐ **Interviewer B:** As soon as your partner has begun to tell you their story, interrupt them, talking over them if necessary. When they start again, make it difficult for your partner to tell you their story. Say things like, “You think that’s bad – you should hear what happened to me!”, or, “That reminds me of...”



It is very discouraging to talk to someone who looks bored or doesn't seem to be listening.



3. Return to the room and ask the first storyteller to tell a story to the interviewer about something which happened to them recently. It should be about something interesting but not too serious.

4. Repeat this procedure for the second storyteller and interviewer.

5. Ask the group to comment on what they have just witnessed, and whether they have encountered this in their own lives.

6. Ask what we can learn from this about good listening practices. Brainstorm with the group and write the responses on the flipchart.

Activity D3:

Listening by asking curious questions

🕒 Purposes:

- To enable the participants to focus on the importance of asking questions that lead to relevant and useful information.
- To give the participants an experience of how good questions can expand a story.
- To enable participants to experience how questions may contribute to the feeling of being heard and listened to.

☐ **Description:** Question-and-answer session in pairs, followed by sharing experiences in the main group.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Divide into pairs; one person acting as the interviewer and the other the storyteller.
2. The storyteller describes what they do for the first two hours of the day, from the moment they wake up in the morning.
3. The interviewer asks questions about every detail mentioned: what time exactly, which colours, where the water comes from, who else is awake, and so on.
4. After five minutes, change roles and see what details the second interviewer can get.
5. Return to the main group and share the experiences. Ask what we can learn from this about asking questions.



Activity D4: Open and closed questions

🕒 **Purpose:** To let people discover, through fun activities, the difference between open and closed questions.

📄 **Description:** Yes and No game (full group).

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. In the full group, ask people to come forward to be interviewed about a subject of their choice. The other members of the group should now ask them questions. However, they are not allowed to answer “yes” or “no”. If they answer “yes” or “no” three times, they are out.

2. After this has been done a few times, ask the group to look at the type of questions where people answer “yes” or “no”. Point

out that ‘closed questions’, to which people can answer only “yes” or “no”, are not helpful in taking a story forward.

3. Ask the group for examples of ‘closed’ and ‘open’ questions, and write these on the flipchart.

4. Using a flipchart, explain that, through good questioning and listening skills, we can:

- ★ Actively explore the child’s story.
- ★ Develop and expand the child’s story.
- ★ Assist the child to talk and think about things that they may not have thought about before.
- ★ Learn what the child is thinking and feeling about her or his life.
- ★ Communicate to the child that we understand and are interested in what she or he is saying.
- ★ Help the child to express feelings and to feel less isolated.

5. In the full group, discuss the above points.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS:

Closed questions are those to which “yes” or “no” are the only possible responses. For example: “Are you sad?”, “Do you like your teacher?”, “Do you have friends?”, “Are you 10 years old?” These questions limit the amount of information we receive.



Open questions are those which enable the respondent to tell their story. For example: “What does that feel like?”, “Can you tell me more about . . . ?”, “Would you like to talk about . . . ?”, “Where would you like to begin?”, “How do you feel about . . . ?”, “Can you tell me what that means to you?”, “How would you like things to be?”, “What have you thought of?”, “What would you like to do about . . . ?”



Activity D5: Communicating with children through drawing and painting

🎯 Purposes:

- To participate in creative and non-verbal activities in order to model ideas for talking with children.
- To experience how play and drawing activities can be used to tell a personal story.
- To show the various methods and materials which can be used to work with children.
- To learn how to communicate with children through drawings.

- To enable the participants to discover how these activities are important in building internal resilience.

▷ **Special materials required:** Flipchart paper, crayons, pencils, charcoal sticks, finger paints. Participants should bring an apron.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: Stories can be told in many ways and through different activities. A drawing or painting tells a story even if we do not speak to the artist. Through such stories, children can express their feelings and can communicate with someone they trust. Drawing and painting are activities which do not require expensive toys or equipment for you to use with children.

□ **Description:** Group discussion, individual drawing activity and paired work.

🕒 **Time needed:** 60 minutes.





Procedure:

1. Explain that, as adults, we may find it helpful to share our stories of pain or of joy by *talking* about these experiences with a close friend or family member. Children are different. They show us through their *behaviour* whether they are happy or whether they are suffering from problems in their lives. A child who is abused at home may be withdrawn or aggressive; this behaviour is telling us a story about the child.

2. Explain that children draw what they believe the world to be like. Even if they express a fantasy, e.g. that their mother is alive when in fact she is dead, this gives us a way to understand that the child has not fully accepted the reality. The drawing then opens up the possibility of a conversation with the child about her or his mother.

3. Mention that psychologists often use drawings and paintings to assess and understand children. However, one does not have to be a trained psychologist to use this technique in order to communicate effectively with children about subjects which they find difficult to discuss.

4. Divide the participants into two groups, 'A' and 'B'. Ask each of the members of Group 'A' to do a drawing of some people in their family. Ask the members of Group 'B' to do a drawing of something they are feeling about their life at the moment; their drawing should include some people, but they do not have to be members of their family.

5. Link each member of Group 'A' with a member of Group 'B'. The Group 'B' people should ask the Group 'A' people a series of open questions, for example:

- Who is each person in the drawing?
- What is each person in the drawing doing?
- Who in this family is very kind?

- Who in this family shouts the most?
- Who in this family is the most fun?
- Who in this family is a good listener?
- Who is missing from this family?



Who in this family is a good listener?

6. Now change around, so that the members of Group 'A' ask the members of Group 'B' to explain their drawing, by asking questions such as:

- What is the story of your picture?
- What are the stories behind the people in the picture?
- What do you hope will happen to the people in the picture?
- What are you afraid might happen to the people in the picture?
- Who is missing from this picture?
- How would you like this picture to change?

7. Bring everyone together in the full group, and ask the participants what they learned from this exercise.



Activity D6: How far have we come?

🎯 Purposes:

- To revise all the activities we have shared which are useful to working with children.
- To emphasise the key concept that it is through activities that children tell their stories.

☐ **Description:** Group discussion.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

📋 Procedure:

1. Brainstorm with the full group about the activities that we have carried out during the training course so far. Ask which ones we could use with children to help them tell us the stories of their lives. We hope the participants will remember activities such as:

- ★ the feeling bottle
- ★ drawing and painting

- ★ playing and telling childhood stories
- ★ laughing and dancing with children in groups.

2. Share some thoughts about the session, and invite discussion and sharing. This can elicit strong emotions, as the participants talk about their lives. It is important to allow them time to share these stories with one another, if they wish to do so. In this way you, the facilitator, will be modelling the ways of listening and asking questions which you are trying to promote through the training.

3. Encourage the participants to take their drawings home and to show them to a significant family member or a friend.

4. As homework, each participant should ask a child to do a drawing of something related to their family. After the child has finished the drawing, the participant should ask questions to enable the child to develop the story.

5. Mention that in the next two modules we will be doing more activities, including some on child discipline.



Module E

Discipline

Activity E1:

What is good discipline with children?

🕒 **Purpose:** To encourage participants to share their current understanding of discipline with children.

📝 **Description:** Group brainstorm.

🕒 **Time needed:** 15 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Ask the group the following questions and write the responses on a flipchart, but do *not* comment on them:

- What is discipline?
- Why do we need discipline?
- What are some good methods of discipline with children and young people?
- What is the difference between 'discipline' and 'punishment'?

2. Now put up the following quotation from the list of children's needs on a flipchart, and ask someone to read it out:

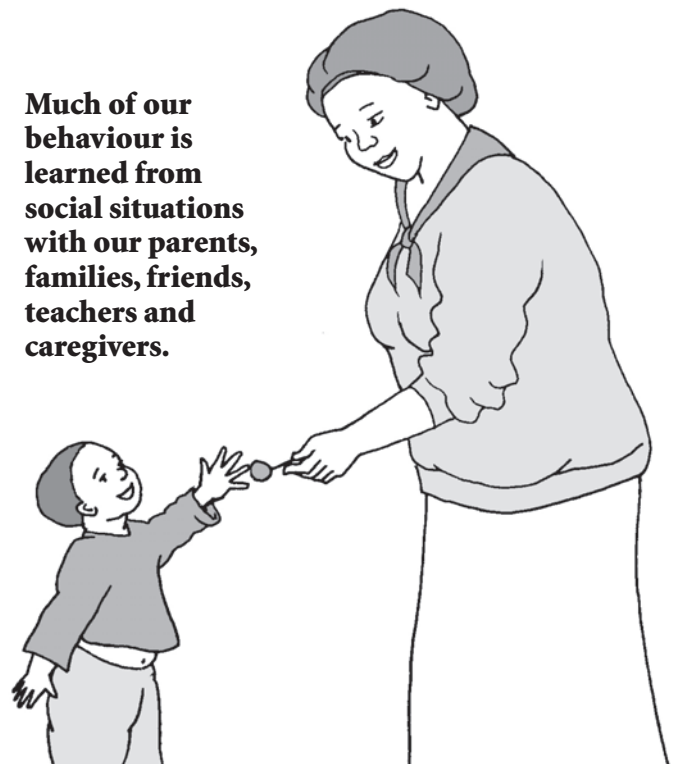
"Humans are social beings. They have to live amongst others. We need to feel that we are part of a cultural

*group and nation group. We need to know the rules of living so we feel we belong. Children need to learn what is right and wrong as they grow. Much of our behaviour is learnt from social situations with our parents, families, friends, teachers and caregivers."*⁹

Ask the group if this fits with what they think.

3. Conclude by explaining that, in the next activity, we shall conduct an important exercise which links this quotation to discipline and children.

Much of our behaviour is learned from social situations with our parents, families, friends, teachers and caregivers.





Activity E2: Narrative theatre: How do we deal with children's problem behaviour?¹⁰

🎯 Purposes:

- To share some of the behaviour challenges which parents, guardians and other childcarers face.
- To develop a group approach to solving children's behaviour problems.
- To identify which methods of disciplining children are useful and acceptable.

☐ **Description:** Narrative theatre.

 **Time needed:** 90 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Select a group of five people who will put on a play to show some of the behaviour

problems which can arise with children aged between 3 and 5 years old; the roles should be two parents, guardians or other caregivers, and three children of different ages.

2. Select another group of five people who will put on a play to show some of the behaviour problems which can arise with children between 6 and 12 years old; the roles should be two parents, guardians or other caregivers, and three children of different ages.

3. Select another group of five people who will put on a play to show some of the behaviour problems which can arise with children between 13 and 18 years old; the roles should be two parents, guardians or other caregivers, and three children of different ages.

4. Give each group 10 minutes to prepare a play, following this general instruction: "Think of a situation involving children as they grow. Think specifically of any 'wrong' or difficult behaviour which you, as parents or caregivers, experience with children who are in the age group which you have been given."





The play should last for a maximum of five minutes.

5. Ask the first group to perform its play. After they have finished, ask each member of the performing team what they were feeling.

6. Ask the group to perform their play again. This time, however, the people watching are allowed to intervene to show how they think the parents or other caregivers should behave. At any point, any person from the

audience can shout "Stop" and join the play by taking over the role of the parent or other caregiver, and then handling the situation differently. Anyone else in the audience can also shout "Stop" and replace the new person in the play to offer a new idea.

7. After Group One has performed in this way, ask Groups Two and Three to perform in the same way.

8. Conclude by asking the participants what they have learned through this exercise.

Activity E3: The Bible and discipline with children

🕒 Purposes:

- To introduce some new ideas about discipline and children, in addition to those we have already shared.
- To challenge critically (but respectfully) the use of corporal punishment with children.
- To help the participants understand the difference between 'punishment' and 'discipline'.

📄 **Description:** Bible study with the full group.

🕒 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. 📖 Read Proverbs 13:24: *"He who spares the rod hates his son, but he who loves him is careful to discipline him."* Explain that, traditionally, this Old Testament verse has been understood to mean that parents should punish their children through beatings. But the Hebrew word *shebet*, usually translated as 'rod', is actually the word for

the shepherd's staff – a long pole used to guide the sheep and to protect them against predators. It was not meant as a stick to beat children with. More recent translations of this verse emphasise the importance of discipline rather than punishment.



2. 📖 Read Matthew 5:7: *"Blessed are the merciful, for they will be shown mercy."* Ask the participants how this might apply to children's behaviour. Try to elicit the following sorts of responses: children are not yet adults, so they will make mistakes which irritate us, as adults. This does not



mean that we should punish them through physical force. Rather, we should show them mercy by treating them with kindness and understanding. We should try to guide, teach and protect them, rather than speaking harshly to them and beating them with a stick.



3. Ask the participants to explain the difference between 'punishment' and 'discipline'. Write the responses on the flipchart. Explain that 'discipline' is derived from the Latin word, *discipulus*, meaning 'learner' or 'follower'. The first chapter of the Book of Proverbs defines this form of

discipline (or learning) as "gaining instruction in wise dealing, righteousness, justice, and equity". This is very different from hitting children in order to force them to behave in certain ways. Ultimately, the most effective form of discipline is *self-discipline*, which children can best learn from the example set by parents, guardians and other 'significant adults'. Adults need to behave as good role models, rather than simply instructing children in how to behave.

4. Read Ephesians 6:1-4: "*Children, it is your Christian duty to obey your parents, for this is the right thing to do. 'Respect your father and mother' is the first commandment, that has a promise added: 'so that all may go well with you, and you may live a long time in the land'. Parents, do not treat your children in such a way as to make them angry. Instead, bring them up with Christian discipline and instruction.*"

Ask what this passage of Scripture has to say about our lives and the lives of the children in our care.

5. Ask the participants to comment again on the differences between 'punishment' and 'discipline', and the effects of each on the development of the child.

Activity E4:

How we were disciplined

Purposes:

- To enable the participants to reflect on these new ideas about discipline and children.
- To bring about a highly focused discussion, with concentrated listening.

☐ **Description:** Fishbowl discussion group.

Time needed: 45 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Ask six people to sit in the centre of the room in a circle, with a facilitator. The other participants should sit in a circle surrounding the inside group.

2. Explain that the group in the centre will discuss what we have been thinking about, in relation to the plays performed, and other thoughts about discipline and children which have been presented. The group on the outside is to listen and not interrupt.



Fishbowl discussion group.



3. Ask the group in the middle to share with one another their stories of how they were disciplined as children at home, in school or elsewhere. They should try to remember very particular times, places and events, and give specific details. Let the members of the group talk freely amongst themselves. If they start directing the discussion towards you, remind them that they should talk amongst themselves only.

4. When the discussion has flowed well and seems to have reached an end point, ask the group in the centre how they discipline their

own children, and whether they are thinking about changing this in any way.

5. After about 15 minutes, reverse the roles, so the people who were on the outside are now in the centre of the circle, and those who were in the centre now form the outside circle. The new group in the centre can say what they think about what was discussed by the first group. They can also add new ideas and their personal experiences of being disciplined.

6. Return to the big circle for a final discussion.



THE CHILD WITHIN



Module F

Working with grief and loss

Activity F1: Experience of personal loss

🕒 Purposes:

- To understand the experience of personal loss and bereavement by drawing on our own experiences.
- To listen to other people's experiences of personal loss.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: If we, as adults, want to connect to the stories of loss and bereavement in children's lives, we have to be able to listen to their stories. It is sometimes very hard for us to do this because it reminds us of the pain of our own loss. This activity demonstrates this and possibly how hard it is – and how we can deal with this challenge.

☐ **Description:** Question-and-answer session in pairs.

 **Time needed:** 30 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Ask the participants to group themselves into pairs, and to spread out as widely as possible within the room.
2. Ask the participants to think back to a

time in their lives when they personally experienced a loss through death.

- Who did it involve?
- What did you feel like at the time of the death?
- What were the attitudes of the people around you?
- How did you cope and who (if anyone) did you get support from?
- How did you find out about the death?





- Is there anything you would have liked to have been different about the way you found out about the death?
- What would have made it less painful or shocking?
- Who was the most helpful to you at the time?
- What feelings do you now have about that time?



Between each question, allow two minutes for each trainee to answer (in a soft voice) to their partner. This exercise may evoke strong feelings within the group.

3. Ask everyone to return to the main group, and invite those who would like to share their experience to do so.

Activity F2: Children and personal loss

🎯 Purposes:

- To encourage a clear understanding that children understand death differently, depending on the stages of their own development.
- To explore whether participants have noticed these or other differences in how children experience personal loss.
- To discuss the cultural appropriateness of the guidelines suggested for helping each age group.

☐ **Description:** Small group work; full group session.

▷ Special materials required:

- Age group information (see below) copied on to separate cards for each age group.
- Flipchart paper and marker pens for each group.

🕒 **Time needed:** 90 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Well before this session, prepare five cards, one each for the four main groups of children, according to their ages and stages of development:

- Infants and toddlers 0-2 years
- Pre-school children 3-5 years
- Young children 6-8 years
- Pre-adolescents 9-12 years
- Adolescents 13-18 years

2. Explain to the whole group that we are now going to discuss how children understand and respond to death, depending on their ages.

3. Show the group a flipchart listing the five main groups of children, according to their ages and stages of development. Ask participants to think about the age group they are most familiar with in terms of their own experience. This might be, for example, someone they know who has died



leaving a child at a particular age, or it may be the age of their own children. They should now join that group. (Note: try to have similar numbers of participants for each age group.)

4. Each group should now read and discuss what is written on their card. After discussion, they should copy on to the

flipchart any characteristics which fit their understanding and experience.

5. Ask everyone to return to the main group. Each small group should now present to the larger group the list which they have made. Encourage everyone to discuss and to share stories about children they have known in particular age groups.



Activity F3: Helping children cope with the death of a loved one: good and bad practices

⊙ Purposes:

- To explore some of the practices which are currently used by people in the community.
- To encourage people to discuss and think critically about some of these practices.
- To explore alternative practices, which will help children cope better with the loss of a loved one.

□ **Description:** Small group discussions then full group session.

▷ **Special materials required:** Flipchart with

questions written beforehand; flipchart sheets and marker pens for groups.

🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Divide the participants into groups of four or five people. Give each group a sheet of flipchart paper headed 'Good Practices' and 'Bad Practices', and a marker pen.
2. Ask the groups to respond to the following questions (which have been written beforehand on a flipchart visible to the full group) and to list what they regard as 'good' and 'bad' practices:
 - Did you ever experience attending a funeral as a child? What good or bad things do you remember? Please list these under 'good' or 'bad' practices.
 - Have you seen or heard stories that people tell children about the death of a loved



Good and bad practices for helping a child cope with the death of a parent.

one which you think are good or helpful? Please list these as 'good' practices.

- Have you seen or heard stories that people tell children about the death of a loved one which you think are *not* good or helpful to the surviving children? Please list these as 'bad' practices.
- What things have you heard about or seen which you think have helped a child deal with the death of a loved one? Please list these as 'good' practices.

- Are there cultural rituals that children attend which you think are good for surviving children? Please list these as 'good' practices.
- Are there cultural rituals that children attend which you think are *not* good? Please list these as 'bad' practices.

3. Return to the large group and invite the groups to present their ideas, which are then discussed.



NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: In addition to the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ practices identified by the groups, here are some other ideas for you to consider.

Good Practices:¹¹

- **Provide and facilitate opportunities for children to say goodbye:** It is good if the child can say goodbye to the parent or other loved one before they die. If this is not possible, symbolic ways of saying goodbye should be developed, for example, writing a ‘goodbye’ letter, or ‘play-speaking’ on the phone, using puppets, or sending cards or drawings with ‘goodbye’ messages.
- **Ceremonies and rituals of closure:** Performing a ritual gives those who mourn a chance to remember the person who has died and to honour her or him. It gives the mourners a sense of comfort and support, as they see that they are not alone in their grief. Children also need to participate in the family’s loss: for example, by taking part in family-based ceremonies. However, if the child is unprepared and does not understand what is happening, some rituals may be as

upsetting as the death itself, increasing the child’s fear and confusion. It is good to have a supportive adult with the child during the ritual.

- **Opportunities to remember:** Help the child to preserve memories of the dead person: for example, through a memory book or memory box (see Additional Resources, p. 66).
- **Special memories:** Give the child an opportunity to talk about special times with the loved one who is dying or has died. Include funny moments or things a person did, as well as heartwarming, happy or even painful memories.

The ideas above should be discussed in a culturally sensitive way, as they may not be appropriate for all age groups in all cultures.



A memory box can help a child to preserve memories of a parent who has died.



Activity F4: A plan of action

🕒 **Purpose:** To help participants use action planning to make good use of what they have learned on the course. Each participant should draw up a plan that is both realistic and achievable with existing personal and external resources.

📄 **Description:** Individual reflection, small groups and full group session.

🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Brainstorm the major ways in which participants could play a role in helping vulnerable children within their community, and write these on a flipchart. If necessary, share ideas from the box on the right and discuss how they could be applied in their church communities.

2. Give each person a piece of paper and a pen to work alone for about 10 minutes to think and make notes about:

- * three things they would like to do within the next *six weeks* to put into practice what they have learned about on the course
- * the support they would need to achieve what they want to do
- * how realistic these plans are.

3. Bring the participants together in pairs to share their plans.

4. Bring everyone back to the whole group and invite the participants to share their plans. Discuss how various members of the whole group could work together to help carry out their plans.

NOTE FOR FACILITATORS: Possible roles for participants after the course might include the following:

- Assisting with the ongoing support and life skills training of children. This could include setting up children's groups at the church.
- Being available to vulnerable children in families who are struggling with grief and loss.
- Joining with others in the wider church community in being an advocate for vulnerable children. (For example, raising issues such as the difference between punishment and discipline in the lives of all children.)
- Making people in your community, your workplace, or your province aware of the needs of vulnerable children, and how these needs vary with ages of development.
- Seeking further training in order to act as a trainer of groups such as child care-givers, schoolteachers and Sunday School teachers.



Individual reflection.



Activity F5: Group memories

- 🕒 **Purpose:** To foster a spirit of togetherness amongst the participants.
- 📄 **Description:** Full group activity.
- 🕒 **Time needed:** 45 minutes.

Procedure:

1. Give each person in the group a blank sheet of ruled A4 paper and a pen.
2. Ask everyone to write their name (as known to the group during the course) at the bottom of the sheet.
3. They should now pass the sheet to the person on their left.
4. Each person should now look at the name on the bottom of the sheet and should write at the top of the page something *good* which they will remember about this person from the course.

5. Everyone should now fold once over what they have written and pass the sheet to the person on their left, who does exactly the same thing.
6. Continue (using the back of the sheet if necessary) until the sheet comes back to you.
7. Now ask everyone in the large group to read out what has been written on their sheet.



Activity F6: Closing ceremony and presentation of certificates

- 🕒 **Purpose:** To celebrate the successful completion of the training course.
- 📄 **Description:** Act of worship, speeches and presentation of certificates.
- 🕒 **Time needed:** 60 minutes.

- ▷ **Materials required:** One certificate for each participant, signed by the head of the sponsoring organisation(s), with the name of the participant, and the date and place of the training course; drinks and snacks.

Procedure:

1. Well before the training course, invite a senior church leader to make a short speech and present the certificates.
2. On the day itself, the ceremony may start with a short act of worship, including a prayer and a hymn or chorus, and a



The closing ceremony begins with a short act of worship.

Bible reading (e.g. Mark 10:13-16). The church leader then makes a short speech, congratulating the participants on their successful completion of the course.

3. The church leader presents the certificates to the participants. Each participant makes a brief statement, explaining how she or he plans to use the knowledge and skills

acquired through the course. Alternatively, the participants might select one person to make a short speech on their behalf.

4. If possible, snacks and drinks should follow.

5. The church leader concludes the ceremony with a blessing for all the participants and the course organisers.





Appendix

Ice-breakers, energisers and cooling-down breaks

At the beginning of each day an ice-breaker is usually used to help people relax. During the session it may also be useful to include an energiser to promote energy and a sense of lightness, especially after the participants have shared sad stories. Occasionally, it might also be useful to use a cooling-down break to help people settle/wind down/compose themselves after a particularly exciting exercise. The following are some examples which may be used.

1. Fire! Fire!

Note: The facilitator should approach this activity with energy and a sense of fun and drama.

- ◆ Stand in a circle and explain with a dramatic voice that the floor is on fire and the participants should hop around the room from one foot to another to avoid the heat. Keep yelling out "Fire! Fire!" as the participants hop around the room.
- ◆ After 20 seconds, call out a number. Participants grab the nearest person/people and form a small group of the size called out by the facilitator. In a small group, the floor is cool and they can relax!
- ◆ The facilitator asks a question or makes a statement (general or course-related) which members of the small groups discuss while standing in a huddle. Allow the groups enough time

(two or three minutes) for each person to say something. Then yell "Fire! Fire!" again. The groups break up and everyone hops randomly around the room until another number is called out, indicating group size.

- ◆ Continue for another three or four questions.





2. The Name Game

Note: This is a good exercise to use early on in a training course, when there may be many people who do not yet know one another well. This exercise will help participants to remember each other's names in a fun way.

- ◆ One person begins by saying their name. The person beside them then has to say the first person's name and their own.
- ◆ A third person says the first and second persons' names and then their own.
- ◆ This goes on until everyone has said their own name and that of all of the others preceding them.
- ◆ The facilitator should place her- or himself last, so that she or he has the most difficult task.



3. Music, singing and dance

This usually happens spontaneously during a training course. It contributes to fostering a sense of togetherness and also helps to

promote healing, especially when the stories shared have evoked pain. The sheer pleasure of moving, singing and having fun together is also worthwhile in itself. If this does not happen spontaneously, the facilitator can take the initiative!

4. Quacking up

1. Give an animal or bird name to each participant - about five or six animals or birds altogether. Everyone then closes their eyes and makes the sound of their animal or bird.

2. With their eyes closed, participants should move around the room to find and get into a group with all the animals or birds which are making the same sound as theirs.

3. The activity is complete when all the animal or bird groups are together.



5. The Ball Game

Note: This is a good exercise to energise the group after a break. It also provides a time for people to reflect and share how the training is going for them.

- ◆ Stand in a circle.
- ◆ The facilitator throws the ball at someone randomly, who tries to catch it. (This usually induces much laughter.)
- ◆ That person immediately throws the ball back to the trainer and says one thing regarding how the training course is going for them. Encourage the participants to be specific by making 'what' statements: e.g. what they are feeling about the course or any new thoughts they might have about the topics discussed.
- ◆ Repeat the process until everyone has said something.



6. Knots

Note: This exercise encourages cooperation and demonstrates the effects of a lack of cooperation. It also helps to energise the group. This activity can be done in groups of 5 to 20 people. Larger groups are too unwieldy.

1. To form the knot, everyone stands in a circle, shoulder-to-shoulder, and places their hands in the centre. Each person then takes a hand of two different people, neither of whom

should be their immediate neighbour on either side. This results in a complicated-looking knot of hands in the middle of the circle.

2. The task now is to disengage the knot without letting go of hands. Pivoting on the handholds is allowed and so is going over and under arms while still holding hands. If completely stuck, one letting-go is allowed.

3. The group should eventually find themselves in one large circle, or perhaps in two interconnected ones. No time limit is set for this activity.



7. What's different, partner?

Note: This ice-breaker gets people to interact with one new person, and helps everyone feel comfortable and part of the session. It also shows how observant we really are.

1. Ask everyone to team up with a partner (preferably someone they don't know very well). Ask them to turn back-to-back and change five things about their appearance, including one thing that is very silly.

2. Partners turn around when ready and try to guess the five things that have been changed.

8. Cool-down and encourage quiet reflection

Note: Sometimes the need is not to warm up, but to cool-down or return to reality after a particularly intensive or exciting exercise. Also, to get the full benefit of new materials, some 'introspective time' may be needed. Some people may regard this as 'slack' time, but reflection is one of the most powerful learning techniques available. Use it!

- ❑ **Silent reflection:** Ask the participants to lie on their backs on the floor, or to get into some other comfortable position. Encourage them to focus on their breathing in... and breathing out... Then ask them to reflect silently on what they have been learning

about. After about five minutes, say a key word or a short phrase, and ask them to reflect on it for a couple of minutes. Repeat once or twice, with different words. Then gather the group into a circle and ask them to share what thoughts they had during the reflection, and how these can be connected to their workplace, family or community.

- ❑ **A silent circle:** Ask the group to stand in a circle and hold hands. Stand there in silence for a minute or so. After this, they may turn to whoever they wish and touch them with care in some way. Each person then finds a quiet place and writes a few important things which they have learned, are thinking about, or are worrying them. You can decide whether this is entirely private, shared with a partner or discussed within the whole group. This form of written reflection should be a frequent activity which punctuates the day.

The silent circle.





Additional Resources

Never too Small to Remember. Memory Work and Resilience in Times of AIDS, edited by Philippe Denis. Published by Cluster Publications, cluster@futurenet.co.za, P.O. Box 2400, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 2005. ISBN 1-875053-54-9 (101 pages).

This highly recommended book consists of six chapters, taking an in-depth approach to Memory Work and Resilience, especially in the context of post-apartheid South Africa and, in particular, of Zulu culture. It also contains clear, detailed directions for facilitating a four-day Memory Box Training Programme. The authors of the book are staff members or associates of the Sinomlando Centre for Oral History and Memory Work, a research and community development unit of the School of Religion and Theology, University of Kwazulu-Natal.

A Training Programme to Sensitise Community Workers to the Psychosocial Needs of Vulnerable Children, 2nd edition, by Beverley Killian, Rose Schoeman and Angela Hough, School of Psychology, University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg, South Africa, 2002.

This is a highly recommended manual and training programme, dedicated to all those who strive under the most difficult circumstances to render services to children living with HIV and AIDS. It was developed in consultation with Sinosizo Home Based Care, the Oral History Project of the School of Theology, University of Natal, the KwaZulu Natal Programme for Survivors of Violence, and the School of Psychology, University of Natal.

Building Resilience in Children Affected by HIV/AIDS, by Sr Silke-Andrea Mallmann CPS, Maskew Miller Longman and Catholic AIDS Action, Windhoek, Namibia, 2003.

Another highly recommended handbook, designed to support people who live and work with children affected by HIV and AIDS. It covers topics such as 'Resilience in orphans and vulnerable children', 'Losing a parent', and 'Children's rights', and suggests a range of games for particular purposes: e.g. to foster trust, self-esteem, self-confidence and cooperation.



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² Judith M. Gundry-Volf, 'The Least and the Greatest: Children in the New Testament', in: Marcia J. Bunge (ed.), *The Child in Christian Thought* (Cambridge, U.K.: William B. Eerdmans, 2001), 36-48.

³ See also: Sr Silke-Andrea Mallmann CPS, *Building Resilience in Children Affected by HIV/AIDS* (Windhoek: Catholic AIDS Action, 2003).

⁴ Adapted from: Ncazelo Ncube, 'The Tree Of Life Project. Using narrative ideas in work with vulnerable children in Southern Africa', *The International Journal of Narrative Therapy and Community Work* (No. 1, Dulwich Centre, Adelaide, Australia, 2006).

⁵ Susan Lawrence, *Meditations on Scripture*, www.parentinginjesusfootsteps.org/jesus-teachings.html.

⁶ Adapted from: Beverley Killian, Rose Schoeman and Angela Hough, *A Training Programme to Sensitise Community Workers to the Psychosocial Needs of Vulnerable Children*, 2nd edition (Pietermaritzburg: University of Kwazulu-Natal, 2002).

⁷ Philippe Denis (ed.), *Never too Small to Remember. Memory Work and Resilience in times of AIDS* (Pietermaritzburg: Cluster Publications, 2005), 72-73.

⁸ Sharon Lewis, *An Adult's Guide to Childhood Trauma. Understanding traumatised children in South Africa* (Cape Town: David Philip, 1999), 149-53.

⁹ Philippe Denis (ed.), op. cit.

¹⁰ Sliep, Y (2004), 'Narrative Theatre for Social Action: A skill for psychosocial workers', *The International Journal of Mental Health, Psychosocial Work and Counselling in Areas of Armed Conflict*, 2 (6) 193-209.

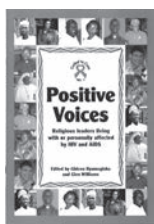
¹¹ Adapted from: Beverley Killian et al., op.cit. *shed 2005; ISBN 978-0-9549051-3-2*

The Called to Care toolkit

POSITIVE VOICES

Religious leaders living with or personally affected by HIV and AIDS

Personal testimonies by 14 African religious leaders (12 Christians, two Muslims) who are living with or personally affected by HIV. (40 pages; 2005; ISBN 978-0-9549051-3-2; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-01-positive.htm>)



MAKING IT HAPPEN

A guide to help your congregation do HIV/AIDS work

A manual to help church leaders establish and manage an HIV project. Includes sections on planning, decision-making, writing a project proposal, preparing a budget, accounting for funds, and monitoring and evaluation. (44 pages; 2005; ISBN 978-0-9549051-1-8; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-02-happen.htm>)



TIME TO TALK

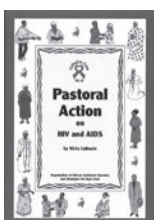
A guide to family life in the age of AIDS

A handbook to enable churches and communities to discuss family life and sex in the context of the global AIDS epidemic. Contains role plays, games, quizzes, discussion guidelines, Bible studies and other participatory exercises. (44 pages; 2006; ISBN 978-0-9549051-8-7; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-03-talk.htm>)



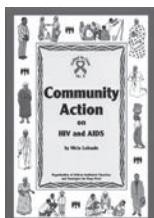
PASTORAL ACTION ON HIV AND AIDS

Developed by the Organisation of African Instituted Churches (OAIC), this handbook is designed for training pastors and lay church leaders in addressing the pastoral challenges of the AIDS epidemic. (48 pages; 2008; ISBN 978-1-905746-04-0; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-04-pastoral.htm>).



COMMUNITY ACTION ON HIV AND AIDS

Also developed by the OAIC, this book is designed to help church leaders deal with social, cultural and economic issues related to the AIDS epidemic at community level. Covers topics such as the sexual abuse of children, domestic violence, widow inheritance and property grabbing by relatives. (48 pages; 2008; ISBN 978-1-905746-05-7; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-05-community.htm>).



THE CHILD WITHIN

Connecting with children who have experienced grief and loss

Developed in South Africa's Eastern Province, this handbook breaks new ground in promoting resilience in children who have suffered grief and personal loss. It does



so by enabling adults who are child care-givers to rediscover and appreciate their own 'child within'. (68 pages; 2008; ISBN 978-1-905746-08-8; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-06-child.htm>)

CALL TO ME

How the Bible speaks in the age of AIDS

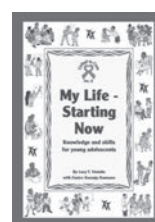
Designed for use by churches, faith-based organisations, NGOs and community groups. Consists of 20 Bible studies on topics related to HIV and AIDS, e.g. sex and sexuality; healing; death; grief and mourning; stigma, discrimination and denial; church leadership; marriage; children; fear and anxiety. (76 pages; 2010; ISBN 978-1-905746-14-9; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-07-me.htm>)



MY LIFE - STARTING NOW

Knowledge and skills for young adolescents

Focuses on knowledge and life skills for young people aged 10-15, with special emphasis on reproductive health within the total process of growing up. Takes a participatory approach to teaching and learning, using role play, case studies, games, stories, quizzes, Bible study and artwork. (80 pages; 2010; ISBN 978-1-905746-15-6; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-08-life.htm>)



MORE AND BETTER FOOD

For people living with HIV and AIDS, good nutrition is just as important as medical care. Yet in sub-Saharan Africa most people living with HIV suffer from food and nutrition insecurity. This book demonstrates how small-scale farmers can grow more food in sustainable ways that also address the challenge of climate change. (88 pages; 2011; ISBN 978-1-905746-16-3; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-09-food.htm>)



PARENTING: A JOURNEY OF LOVE

Focuses on the knowledge and skills which parents and guardians need to provide their children with protection against threats to their health and wellbeing, and to give them the best possible start in life. Uses stories, poems, quotes, Bible studies, games and participatory exercises. (56 pages; 2011; ISBN 978-1-905746-19-4; <http://www.stratshope.org/b-cc-10-parent.htm>)



To order or request copies of these books, please contact the Strategies for Hope Trust:

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93 Divinity Road, Oxford, OX4 1LN, UK.

The **CALLED TO CARE** toolkit consists of practical, action-oriented handbooks and mini-manuals on issues related to HIV and AIDS, designed for use by church leaders, especially in sub-Saharan Africa. The purpose of the materials is to enable pastors, priests, religious sisters and brothers, lay church leaders and their congregations and communities to:



- ❑ Reflect on and understand the spiritual, theological, ethical, health, social and practical implications of the HIV epidemic and the Christian call to respond with compassion.
- ❑ Overcome the stigma, silence, discrimination, denial, fear and inertia that inhibit church and community action to address issues related to HIV and AIDS more effectively.
- ❑ Guide their congregations and communities through a process of learning and change, leading to practical, church-based actions to help individuals, families and communities reduce the spread of HIV and mitigate the impact of the HIV epidemic.

CALLED TO CARE is an initiative of the Strategies for Hope Trust, which produces books and videos that promote effective, community-based strategies of HIV and AIDS care, support and prevention in the developing world, especially in sub-Saharan Africa.

CALLED TO CARE is implemented through a process of international, ecumenical cooperation involving churches, other faith-based organisations, international church bodies, publishers, distributors and other partners.

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The Khulakahle Child Counselling and Training Forum, based in Maluti district in South Africa's Eastern Cape Province, was formed during the process of writing and testing this book.



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