

# INTRODUCTION

## **1. Purpose of this Resource Kit**

The purpose of this kit is to provide facilitators with resources to train nurses and other health care workers to make appropriate interventions when they discover that the children in their care have been abused.

The resource kit provides notes, activities and handouts. It contains a schedule of four sessions to be conducted in periods of two to two and half hours each. The facilitators and participants could work on the scheduling of the workshop if there is a different time allocated and arrange the topics according to the learning needs.

This kit was prepared and tested with a workshop organised by the General Nursing Council of Guyana.

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- General Nursing Council
- Guyana Nurses' Association
- Mr Michael Gillis who was the pilot facilitator
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## **2. Philosophy of learning**

This kit assumes that the facilitators will be using a constructivist approach to learning in which the nurses and health care workers would be active participants in the learning. At the same time, there will be appropriate interventions to share facts and other information which may be new to the nurses and health care workers.

## **3. The Learning Objectives**

The learning objectives are as follows :-

By the end of the Session 1, the participants should be able to:

- Define child abuse.
- Explain their role in preventing child abuse.
- Recognise cultural and personal factors which may hinder appropriate interventions in cases of child abuse.

By the end of the Session 2, the participants should be able to:

- Identify physical and behavioural indicators of child abuse.
- State the risk factors contributing to child abuse.
- Describe the effects of child abuse.

By the end of the Session 3, the participants should be able to:

- Link the stages of children development with the appropriate interventions.

- Identify helping strategies for children who have been abused.
- Identify techniques to probe suspicions of child abuse.

By the end of the Session 4, the participants should be able to:

- List situations in which health workers must report suspected cases of maltreatment.
- Demonstrate their capacity to take action in protecting a child by filing a child abuse report and using other strategies.
- Describe the legal framework for reporting child abuse.

#### *Other learning objectives*

Facilitators are encouraged to let participants also state their own learning objectives. They should encourage the participants to identify other strategies for addressing questions which they still have during the final evaluation.

## **4. Notes about Facilitation and being a Facilitator**

### **4.1 What is a Facilitator?**

A facilitator is one who uses methods of interaction with other people to enhance learning. A facilitator uses techniques which encourage discussion, dialogue, introspection and sharing of experiences.

### **4.2 Qualities of a facilitator**

A facilitator has the following qualities:-

- Trusts other people and their abilities.
- Respects other people's ideas and experiences.
- Is willing to listen and has good listening skills.
- Has confidence and is humble.
- Is friendly, interested in people and their development and sensitive to their needs and feelings.
- Is creative, flexible and dynamic.
- Is open to feedback and willing to adjust or change accordingly.
- Is aware of their strengths and weaknesses, and is willing to learn more.
- Is alive, active and has a good sense of humour.
- Gets things done.
- Is mentally and physically organised and has a sense of order and system.
- Is skilled in participatory processes.
- Works well with a team or group.
- Is creative.
- Speaks clearly and uses simple words and short sentences.

### **Developing Facilitation Skills**

There are several important skills that a facilitator can develop and use to create a safe and dynamic learning environment. Some of these skills are listed below with tips on their use.

#### *a) Develop a relationship of trust with the participants.*

- Be respectful, honest, open and friendly before, during and after the process.
- Conduct group work while sitting in a circle, whenever possible, the way people do in informal discussions. Sitting behind desks or tables may intimidate some participants and create a

competitive setting for others.

- Encourage and value all the participants' contributions.
- Establish an informal and comfortable atmosphere using your words and actions.
- Emphasise that you are learning and growing through the process as well; avoid presenting yourself as the expert.
- Share the objectives of the process openly and address the expectations that the participants may have.

b) *Structure the learning process in an understandable and meaningful way.*

- Think and plan ahead about how to facilitate each activity so that the participants can feel that you are a reliable and credible person.
- Keep time and negotiate any major schedule changes with the participants.
- Share the timetable. Explain the flow of the process and obtain agreement. Be willing to modify the schedule if the group suggests alternatives.

c) *Enable the participants to share their experiences meaningfully.*

- Develop ground rules with participants at the beginning of the process to share responsibility for the outcome of your work together.
- Create a safe way for participants to introduce themselves to the group at the beginning of the process and thus help them feel that they are members of the group. A fun activity often works well.
- Protect shy and vulnerable participants from being forced into silence or revealing personal information inappropriately.
- Delegate some of the 'disciplinarian' roles to nominated members such as time keeping and monitoring whether the objectives are being met.
- Ask open-ended questions that help participants expand on what they are sharing and that help the group broaden their discussions.
- Emphasise in words and actions that all contributions are valid. Build on and make links between participants' contributions instead of searching for 'right answers'.
- Avoid pressuring participants or singling them out to share their views (e.g., calling on participants, when they are not ready, putting people on the spot). This may inhibit the participants and make them anxious about getting it wrong.
- Clarify what participants contribute using gentle probing questions and by repeating what you think is being said.
- Invite elaboration without embarrassing participants by using neutral questions such as "Can you say more?"
- Extract meaning from a set of contributions by summarising them and linking them to form a collective understanding.

d) *Intervene if you feel the group's objectives are being compromised.*

- Seek contributions from different participants if one or two of them are dominating the group.
- Have a private word with a participant if s/he is promoting an agenda for personal instead of collective learning or one that opposes the group's learning objectives.
- Focus the discussion if it is becoming diffuse and straying from the objective of the workshop.
- Boost the energy of the group by introducing a game or a physical activity, especially if energy is low during a demanding discussion or the heat of the afternoon.

e) *Ensure that the work remains a learning process.*

- Summarise frequently, and always summarise at the end of each activity to highlight the collective learning that has occurred.
- End each session with an overview of the discussions and, if appropriate, questions for reflection until the next session.
- Begin each new session with an overview of the previous session's work and with an opportunity for participants to contribute reflections.
- Conduct an oral evaluation of the process and a written evaluation if appropriate. This allows the participants to come to a collective emotional understanding of the process.
- Ensure, whenever possible, that participants have had an opportunity to think about what they will do practically with what they have learned.
- Discuss, if appropriate, what support the participants will need, and who from, to apply what they have learned.

Every time you facilitate a learning process, the participants are placing their trust in you and therefore placing on you the responsibility to be as effective as you can be. Becoming an effective facilitator is primarily about having respect for the participants with whom you are working.

If you begin with that, then the rest will come with experience and practice. It is also important to believe in your ability to make a meaningful contribution to the development of the participants.

Keep learning from each process you facilitate and, above all, make it fun!

### **Facilitating a Training Session for nurses and healthcare workers**

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The modules are geared toward encouraging discussion, dialogue and introspection about issues of child abuse. In order to increase good open communication with participants, think of the following:-

- Remember to ask open-ended questions. This is a good way to start and continue a discussion. Open-ended questions start with: How, Why, When and What (e.g., “How does this affect you?”, “Why is this so?”, “What can we do to help/change this situation”).
- Listen and acknowledge different opinions. If a participant introduces a controversial point, try to separate what is fact from opinion. **Should a disagreement occur, encourage participants to challenge the ideas, not the participant/participants.**
- Encourage lively discussions but avoid arguments. Because the issues in this manual are emotional topics for many, especially in the area of child abuse, people usually have strong convictions and discussions can become heated. If this happens you can call a time out and get participants to reflect on why this is happening (e.g., it could be a defence mechanism for someone who may be abusive or who may have suffered abuse but is in denial, or defending a parenting style that has been passed on to them.)
- Stay focused. When discussions seem to get off track, try to reintroduce the original issue being addressed.
- Listen. Ask everyone to listen to and respect each person’s point of view before responding. It is important not only to understand what a person is trying to say, but also to allow her/him an opportunity to express herself/himself.

- Recognize that there are many views on any topic. The whole purpose of discussion is to share ideas/information –it is not about winning a discussion or being right.
- Do not feel you have to be an expert on all issues. If you do not know something, admit it. If a participant raises a difficult question, ask if anyone knows the answer. Or, if the question is important, state, “My understanding is that..., but I’ll have to look into it further.”
- State clearly from the beginning that abusive behaviour is not acceptable at any time including during this session. In discussions, differences will be respected but not abusive or insulting behaviour. Language that poisons the environment - words and ideas that are sexist, racist, or biased against particular groups of people (based on their nationality, age, sexual orientation, religion, or physical abilities) should be challenged. Discussion is great; hurtful words are not.

### **Your Role as Facilitator in Creating a Safe Environment**

The modules in this training, especially those which deal with abuse, can be very emotionally charged and personal in nature. As a facilitator you need to create as safe a space as possible for participants to honestly discuss their experiences, opinions and feelings. The following points are suggested as ways to help create a safe environment.

#### Respect

As a facilitator you have to lead by example and make sure you demonstrate respectful behaviour yourself at all times. It is of vital importance to be sensitive and aware of differences or different perspectives being expressed by participants. At the same time, you need to be sensitive and aware of embarrassment, discomfort or emotional reactions that participants may be experiencing during the discussion of an topic.

#### Judgement

Be careful not to be judgemental in your opinions. Keep focused on the facts.

#### Safety and Ground Rules

At the very start of the workshop to encourage open discussion establish safety and ground rules. Ask participants what they need from you and each other in order to feel safe talking about issues, Some such rules may be

- Confidentiality.
- Respect for other opinions and views expressed.
- Avoidance of abusive language, labelling, name calling, insults or discrimination.

Another way to create safety for participants is to set up a ‘question box’ in which participants can anonymously ask questions that might be difficult to raise in front of other participants. As facilitator, you can then read aloud and answer these questions without reference to an individual.

### **Working with Disclosure**

The issue of abuse may affect participants in a very personal way. In discussing sensitive topics and

issues some participants may disclose previous or current abuse or assault. The following points may help when dealing with disclosure:

#### Find a Safe/Quiet Space

If possible talk with the participant in a quiet, safe atmosphere, where he/she will not be disturbed. Do not under any circumstances break the confidentiality of a participant unless the participant is at risk to herself/himself or others. If in doubt, refer the matter to Help & Shelter or a trained counsellor.

#### Listen

This may be the first time the participant has ever spoken about her/his experience. She/he may just need a willing ear and not require any action on your part.

#### Believe

It is very important that the participant feels understood and believed. Your demeanour should communicate that you believe what is being said.

#### Reassure

Reassure the participant that the abuse/assault is not her/his fault.

**From the outset, do not make promises you cannot keep. Avoid making statements such as I'll take care of it"or I won't tell anybody." Make sure the participants understand what information can and cannot be kept confidential.**

#### **Preparation for the Session**

- Ensure that you have made all arrangements and that the venue is confirmed. If it is possible, you might want to visit the selected venue for the sessions to familiarise yourself beforehand. Alternatively, you could plan to arrive about 20 minutes earlier than the scheduled start of your session so that you could ensure that the surroundings and room arrangement are comfortable and appropriate.
- Ensure that you have the materials you will need. Check the following:-

Handouts

Flip chart paper/News print

Tape

Markers

Scissors

Equipment

*Ensure that you have your outline of the activities for the session with the participants.*

#### **Before the Session Begins**

- Arrange the participants in a formation that allows you to see every participant.
- Outline the learning objectives for the particular session.

#### **During the Session**

- Refer to the session's topics and objectives.

- Check that quiet participants also get a chance to participate.
- Keep an eye on time management, allocate participatory activities with discussions and briefing points.

#### **After the Session**

- Conduct an evaluation of the session, and get feedback from the participants.
- Prepare a report which you can use for further learning.
- Check in with the organisers if necessary to make plans for follow-up sessions.

### **5. How to Use This Kit**

This kit been provided as a resource for use by facilitators who would like to work with nurses and other health care workers.

- Before you begin a session, read through the manual and plan how you will facilitate the session.
- Look through the introduction to make sure you have all the materials ready prior to conducting the session.
- You may choose to facilitate the activity as described or adapt it for your group.
- Once you are familiar with the steps and the intent of the session, allow your creativity to flow.
- Ensure that the core knowledge, attitudes and skills are transferred within the allotted time period.
- Feel free to organise your own plan based on the objectives of the group. Some groups might want details on some areas. The sessions can be reorganised according to the needs of the group.