



PACIFIC PARENTING TOOLKIT

MODULE 1: CHILD PROTECTION AND SAFETY

1. Background

Violence against children (VAC) remains a pervasive global issue, with more than 1 billion children estimated to experience physical, sexual, or emotional violence each year, most commonly within their homes. (1) In the Pacific region, household surveys and qualitative studies suggest high rates of physical punishment, emotional abuse, and exposure to intimate partner violence (IPV), particularly in contexts of economic stress, gender inequality, and climate-induced displacement. (2) These forms of violence are often normalized and underreported, contributing to ongoing harm.

Children who experience or witness violence in the home face serious risks to their physical and mental health, school performance, and future relationships. Exposure to violence is associated with anxiety, depression, poor academic outcomes, early pregnancy, and a heightened risk of both victimisation and perpetration of violence in adulthood. (3) These impacts undermine children's right to safe and nurturing care and perpetuate intergenerational cycles of violence. Conversely, evidence shows that reducing violence in the home contributes to improved child development outcomes and can also reduce IPV, strengthening family well-being more broadly. (3,4) Children with disabilities are at higher risk of violence, neglect, and social exclusion due to stigma, discrimination, and barriers to protection and support services. However, data on children with disabilities remain limited.

Parenting interventions are among the most effective strategies to prevent VAC. These interventions equip parents and caregivers with knowledge of child development, skills in positive discipline and non-violent communication, and support to manage stress and conflict. (5) Parent support programmes and activities also address underlying drivers of violence, such as harmful gender norms, substance abuse, and social isolation. When well-designed, these programmes and activities help build strong relationships, resilience, and protective behaviours. They also create opportunities for parents and caregivers to reflect on their childhood experiences, gender roles, and family relationships.

In the Pacific, countries such as Vanuatu and Papua New Guinea are already delivering parenting interventions that incorporate elements of child protection and violence prevention. (5) For example, the Parent Support Programme in Vanuatu, Pasin Bilong Lukautim Pikinini Gut in PNG, and Famili I Redi in Vanuatu demonstrate locally grounded efforts to build parenting capacity. However, parent support programmes in the Pacific are more common for parents and caregivers of younger children (0–5 years). There are still major gaps in support for parents and caregivers of older children and adolescents, with limited focus on online safety and sexual and reproductive health. (5)

To be effective, parent support programmes and activities must be culturally relevant, embedded in trusted community structures, and delivered in local languages. In the Pacific, strengths-based, participatory approaches rooted in storytelling (e.g. *talanoa*) and communal caregiving traditions can help ensure cultural acceptability and sustainability. With appropriate training and support, local facilitators and peer-led models can expand access, shift harmful norms, and promote safer, more nurturing homes for all children across the region. (5)

Children's needs and the role of their parents and caregivers evolve across the life course. From infancy through adolescence, parents and caregivers require targeted knowledge, skills, and support to raise children in safe, nurturing, and protective environments. Evidence from the Pacific and globally shows that parenting support delivered through in-person, hybrid, and digital formats can reduce violence in the household, promote healthy development, and strengthen family well-being. (4,5,6)

Module 1.1

The module follows the structure outlined in Chapter 1 Section 1.4 Content Overview. In addition, there are three annexes at the end of this module, which provide further information or guidance for facilitators and programme managers. These include:

- 1. Guidance on Multi-sectoral integration:** identifying potential entry points for child protection and safety activities across other sectors to encourage a holistic approach to parenting
- 2. Programmes from the Region:** Programmes or interventions in the Pacific and globally that make reference to specific child protection and safety skills.
- 3. Facilitator Checklist:** A simple checklist per skill designed to support facilitators in preparing for and delivering the content related to child protection and safety.

2. Best Practices Across the Life Course

This section focuses on three core skills that support child protection and safety across the life course, from early childhood (0–5 years), through middle childhood (6–10 years), and adolescence (11–18 years). These skills include:

- 1. Managing Stress and Emotions**
- 2. Communication and Spending Time Together**
- 3. Modelling Non-Violent and Positive Behaviour**
- 4. Supervision and Everyday Safety**
- 5. Safety and Alternative Care**
- 6. Water Safety**
- 7. Road Safety**
- 8. Caring for Children through Crises**

These skills are relevant for parents and caregivers of children of all ages. Parents and caregivers will need to adapt these skills to suit children’s behaviour and stage of development. Starting these practices early can support children’s development. At the same time, it is never too late for parents and caregivers to learn and practise these skills. Doing so can help reduce tension at home and improve communication and well-being within the family.

Adopting a life-course approach to parenting for child protection and safety ensures that parents and caregivers receive timely, relevant, and culturally appropriate support to prevent violence, promote development, and build safer families as children grow. Across all stages, the most effective interventions combine self-care, relationship-building, and practical skills. These approaches should be embedded in local systems and respond to the lived realities of families in the Pacific.

Skill 1: Managing Stress and Emotions

Why It Matters

Chronic stress, unresolved trauma, and poor emotion regulation in parents and caregivers increase the likelihood of harsh discipline and emotional neglect. (3) Parenting interventions that teach stress management techniques such as deep breathing, reflective pausing, and seeking peer support have been shown to reduce caregiver stress and increase positive interactions with children. (7,8)



See Activity 1 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on managing stress and emotions.

Disability Considerations



Parents and caregivers of children and adolescents with disabilities may experience additional sources of stress related to caregiving demands, accessing services, managing health needs, or responding to stigma and social isolation. (9) Children with disabilities may also express emotions, frustration, or distress in ways that can be difficult for parents and caregivers to interpret or respond to. (10)

Strengthening the ability of parents and caregivers to manage stress and regulate their own emotions can therefore play an especially important role in supporting positive interactions, reducing conflict, and promoting children's well-being. Strategies such as seeking peer support, sharing caregiving responsibilities, practising calming techniques, and accessing professional guidance where available can help parents and caregivers feel more supported and better able to respond calmly and positively to their child's needs. (11)

Essential Building Blocks

- **Understanding stress and emotions:** Normalise stress and emotional change across childhood, adolescence, and parenting.
- **Self-awareness and emotional literacy:** Help parents and caregivers recognise their own emotions and support children to name and express feelings safely.
- **Calming and regulation strategies:** Teach simple techniques to calm the body and mind before responding.

- **Modelling communication about emotions:** Help parents and caregivers model talking about feelings with their children to improve child emotional regulation and behaviour
- **Positive communication and listening:** Strengthen empathetic listening, respectful dialogue, and calm guidance.
- **Coping with everyday stressors:** Support families to manage common pressures (economic, school, climate, digital, peer stress).
- **Strengthening relationships and social support:** Reinforce family, faith, and community networks as sources of emotional support.
- **Positive identity and belonging:** Support children’s confidence, cultural identity, and sense of belonging.
- **Non-violent responses to stress and behaviour:** Link stress management to positive, non-violent discipline.
- **Early recognition and help-seeking:** Identify signs of ongoing stress and provide clear referral pathways.
- **Consistent, multi-sector reinforcement:** Align messages across health, education, community, and protection systems.

Additional Strategies for Managing Stress and Emotions

To strengthen child protection outcomes, parent support programmes and activities should include practical modules that build the ability of parents and caregivers to recognise stress, regulate strong emotions, and respond to children in safe, non-violent ways. Modules should focus on skills that parents and caregivers can apply in real-time, during moments of frustration, conflict, or fatigue, across all stages of the life course.

- **Safe disengagement strategies:** Guidance on how to walk away safely when emotions feel overwhelming, ensuring children remain safe while parents and caregivers take time to calm down.
- **Self-care as a child protection practice:** Modules that frame parent/caregiver well-being as essential to keeping children safe, with particular attention to parents and caregivers of children with disabilities or additional needs who may experience higher stress.

Social Media Messages

- Taking a breath is not a weakness; it’s a parenting strength.
- When parents and caregivers stay calm, children feel safe.
- Big feelings happen. Pausing before reacting protects everyone.
- Caring for yourself helps you care for your child.
- Strong parents and caregivers ask for support when things feel heavy.

Skill 2: Communication and Spending Time Together

Why It Matters

Spending time with children builds trust, improves communication, and strengthens bonds between parents and children. This establishes parents and caregivers as sources of nurturing care which improves child wellbeing while decreasing likelihood of children behaving negatively, thus reducing the need for parents to use discipline, including verbal and physical abuse. Responsive caregiving in early childhood, such as playing at the child's level, maintaining eye contact, and tuning into cues, is linked to stronger attachment, reduced anxiety, and better developmental outcomes. (12) Spending time together with older children and adolescence remains a priority and supports building strong relationships of trust and respect. Parent support programmes and activities should include simple, low-cost modules that support parents and caregivers to spend regular, attentive time with their children in ways that strengthen relationships, attachment, and child protection across the life course. These modules emphasise presence, responsiveness, and positive interaction rather than materials or formal teaching.



See Activity 2 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on communicating and spending time together with their children.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Time together as a protective factor:** Position shared time between parents/caregivers and children as foundational to safety, attachment, and child protection. Investing in positive moments together reduces the likelihood of children and adolescents misbehaving.
- **Quality over quantity:** Emphasise short, regular, and attentive interactions rather than long or resource-intensive activities.
- **Age- and stage-appropriate interaction:** Support parents and caregivers to adapt shared time across early childhood, middle childhood, and adolescence.
- **Child-led play and responsive engagement:** Encourage listening, play, conversation, and activities guided by children's interests and cues.
- **Everyday moments count:** Promote using daily routines (meals, chores, walking, fishing, storytelling) as opportunities for connection.
- **Inclusive of all caregivers:** Encourage involvement of fathers, mothers, grandparents, and extended family members.
- **Strengthening relationships and trust:** Use shared time to build emotional connection, mutual understanding, and open communication.

- **Reducing risk through connection:** Highlight how strong relationships help parents and caregivers notice changes, stress, or risks early and respond protectively.



Fathers and male caregivers

Fathers and male caregivers play an important role in building early connections. (13) When fathers spend regular, attentive time with children through play, conversation, and everyday activities, it strengthens attachment, supports early learning, and contributes to children’s sense of safety and belonging. Even simple interactions such as holding and comforting a baby, talking and singing during feeding or bathing, playing together, reading or telling stories, or going for a short walk can help children and adolescents feel valued and secure. Encouraging fathers and male caregivers to participate in daily routines and shared activities supports strong relationships and reinforces the role of fathers as active caregivers in children’s development.

Social Media Messages

- Get down to their level. Play, laugh, and connect.
- Eye contact, smiles, and play build strong attachment.
- A few minutes of play means the world to a child.

Skill 3: Modelling Non-Violent and Positive Behaviour

Why It Matters

Children learn by observing. When parents and caregivers model empathy, respect, and non-violence, children are more likely to adopt these behaviours themselves. (14) Evidence also shows strong links between violence against children (VAC) and violence against women, including intimate partner violence (IPV). In households where parents or caregivers experience or perpetrate intimate partner violence, children are more likely to experience physical punishment, emotional harm, or exposure to violence between adults. (3,1) Modelling respectful, non-violent relationships between adults therefore plays a critical role in preventing both violence against children and intimate partner violence, and in promoting safe and nurturing family environments. Parent support that addresses communication, stress management, gender norms, and non-violent conflict resolution can help reduce violence in the home and break intergenerational cycles of harm. (3,4)



See Activity 3 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on modelling non-violent, positive behaviour.



Disability Considerations

Children and adolescents with disabilities face a higher risk of violence, neglect, and social exclusion. (15) Parents and caregivers therefore play a particularly important role in modelling respect, patience, and inclusion in their everyday interactions. Some children with disabilities may communicate, learn, or regulate their emotions differently, which can sometimes lead to misunderstandings or frustration within the family. (16) When parents and caregivers respond with empathy, calm communication, and non-violent guidance, they help children feel safe, valued, and understood. Modeling inclusive and respectful behaviour also teaches siblings and other family members to treat children with disabilities with dignity and care, helping to build a supportive and protective family environment.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Behaviour is learned by observing adults:** Explain that children learn behaviour by observing parents and caregivers. encourage parents and caregivers to model the behaviour they want children to learn, including how to speak, act, and respond to stress and conflict.
- **Parent and caregiver self-regulation:** Support adults to pause, calm, and manage emotions before responding.
- **Respectful communication:** Encourage parents and caregivers to model calm tone, listening, empathy, and clear expectations.
- **Non-violent discipline:** Encourage parents and caregivers to use realistic and appropriate consequences for non-compliance and rule breaking; redirecting, using calming techniques for negative attention seeking and demanding behaviours (e.g., whining, pestering, tantrums)
- **Offer positive guidance:** Guide parents and caregivers on how to use positive language to clearly describe the behaviours they want to see more of, and praise for behaviours they want to encourage.
- **Modelling peaceful conflict resolution:** Show parents and caregivers how to handle disagreements, apologise, and repair relationships without violence.
- **Promote respectful adult relationships:** Demonstrate respect, equality, and non-violent communication between partners to help prevent both violence against children and intimate partner violence.
- **Reinforce positive behaviour:** Encourage parents and caregivers to notice and praise effort and cooperation to encourage positive actions.
- **Consistency across caregivers:** Align expectations and responses among parents, extended family, and caregivers.
- **Positive role models in the community:** Engage fathers, elders, community leaders, and coaches to reinforce non-violent norms.
- **Challenging norms that justify violence:** Reflect on beliefs that normalise harsh discipline and promote respectful alternatives.

Social Media Messages

- Children copy what they see. Show respect, kindness, and calm.
- Calm voices build safe homes.
- When parents show empathy, children learn empathy.

Skill 4: General Supervision and Everyday Safety

Why It Matters

Across the life course, consistent and attentive supervision is one of the strongest protective factors against accident, injury, illness, and other harm. (17) As children grow, supervision must adapt, from close physical supervision in early childhood to monitoring peer relationships, online activity, and community environments during adolescence. (18, 19) Lapses in supervision are linked to increased risk of injury, violence, and exploitation. Effective supervision does not mean constant control; it means being aware, available, and responsive. For working parents and caregivers of school-aged children, planning in advance and knowing who will look after and be with their child during the school holidays is important, to ensure they have that adult supervision while parents and caregivers are at work.

Disability Considerations



Children and adolescents with disabilities may require adapted supervision depending on their mobility, communication, understanding of risks, or ability to seek help in unsafe situations. Some children may need closer supervision in certain environments. Others may need extra support to learn safety routines and build independence over time. Parents and caregivers can support safety by clearly explaining risks, practising safety behaviours, and ensuring environments are accessible and secure. Balancing protection with opportunities to develop independence is important, helping children with disabilities build confidence and the skills needed to navigate everyday situations safely.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Active supervision for young children:** Ensure parents and caregivers keep young children within sight and sound, especially during play, cooking, bathing, and community gatherings.
- **Safe physical environments:** Reduce household hazards (fires, safe cooking pots, sharp tools, chemicals, unsafe structures).
- **Knowing children's whereabouts:** As children grow, encourage parents and caregivers to know where they are, who they are with, and when they will return.

- **Understand risks in the community:** Guide parents and caregivers to work together to understand risks facing children and make short-term and long-term plans for addressing those risks together.
- **Monitoring peer and online interactions:** Ensure parents and caregivers understand the importance of staying informed about friendships and online spaces without harsh surveillance.
- **Clear family rules/guidelines about safety:** Support parents and caregivers to set expectations about checking in, curfews, and safe spaces involving children and adolescents in agreeing on what these are.
- **Community awareness and shared responsibility:** Encourage neighbours and extended family to watch out for children collectively.
- **Balancing independence and protection:** Guide parents and caregivers to adjust supervision according to age and maturity.
- **Plan ahead:** Support parents and caregivers to plan ahead for school holidays and know who will look after their children, especially primary school children.
- **Core message:** Supervision changes as children grow, but protection never stops.

Social Media Messages

- Watch, guide, and stay connected. Supervision keeps children safe.
- Know where your child is, who they are with, and when they'll be home.
- Safe homes start with safe spaces. Check your home for hazards.
- Supervision changes as children grow, but protection never stops.
- Clear family rules help children stay safe and confident.
- Give children freedom to grow, with guidance to stay safe.

Skill 5: Safety and Alternative Care

Why It Matters

Young children rely entirely on adults for their safety, care, and emotional well-being and are particularly vulnerable to neglect, abuse, or harm when left in unsafe or inappropriate care. (3) When parents migrate for work, travel, or other reasons, caregiving arrangements typically change, increasing risks, particularly if decisions are rushed or based only on convenience or family obligation. (20) Safe alternative care is not just about supervision; it includes trust, consistency, emotional warmth, and the ability to protect children from violence, exploitation, or neglect. Careful planning helps ensure children continue to feel secure, loved, and protected in their parents' absence. (21) Prioritising children's safety when choosing caregivers strengthens family resilience and reduces the risk of long-term harm. (22)



See Activity 4 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on safety and alternative care.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Caregiving as a shared responsibility:** Reinforce that caring for children is a serious responsibility that requires planning and informed decision-making.
- **Safe and trusted alternative caregivers:** Support parents and caregivers to identify safe, trusted adults (family or community members) who can care for children when parents are away.
- **Clear expectations and supervision:** Encourage parents and caregivers to communicate clear expectations about care, routines, and discipline to alternative caregivers.
- **Keeping connected:** Encourage parents and caregivers to maintain regular contact with children through phone calls, messages, or visits where possible. Staying in touch helps children feel supported and reassured, allows parents and caregivers to monitor children's well-being, and strengthens trust and connection even when families are temporarily apart.
- **Understanding risks and vulnerabilities:** Help parents and caregivers recognise potential risks when children are left in others' care, including neglect, violence, or exploitation.
- **Children's voices and comfort:** Promote listening to children's feelings and comfort levels about who cares for them. Involve children in discussing safety issues, so they can understand the risks and feel part of the solution.

- **Community accountability and support:** Reinforce shared community responsibility for child safety, including knowing where to seek help or report concerns.

Social Media Messages

- Know who you trust. Trust matters.
- Children should always be in safe hands.
- Listen, protect, and keep children safe.
- Talking often when you're away helps keep children safe and supported.

Skill 6: Water Safety

Why It Matters

In Pacific Island contexts, children grow up around oceans, rivers, lagoons, wells, rainwater tanks, and flood-prone areas. Drowning is a leading cause of injury-related death among children globally, and risks increase during disasters, flooding, fishing activities, and when children play unsupervised near water. (23) Young children are especially vulnerable because drowning is silent and can happen quickly.

Active supervision, early water awareness, and clear family rules can greatly reduce risk. Teaching children safe behaviours around water, while closely supervising them, helps keep them safe and strengthens family resilience.



See Activity 5 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on water safety.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Active supervision near water:** Ensure active supervision of children around oceans, rivers, pools, wells, buckets, and tanks, even if they can swim.
- **Clear family rules about water:** Involve children to agree and establish simple rules for water safety, such as “No water without an adult,” “Swim with a buddy,” and “Wear flotation devices when fishing or boating.”
- **Age-appropriate water awareness:** Teach children basic safety behaviours (e.g. staying within safe areas, understanding currents, avoiding diving in unknown water).
- **Safe environments:** Cover wells and water tanks, empty buckets, and identify safe swimming areas.
- **Disaster and flood awareness:** Help children understand dangers during storms, king tides, and flooding, and establish clear instructions about staying away from fast-moving water.
- **Community responsibility:** Promote shared supervision at beaches, rivers, and community gatherings where children play near water.
- **Role modelling safe behaviour:** Model wearing life jackets, checking conditions, and avoiding alcohol when supervising children near water.
- **Core message:** Water is part of our lives. Supervision saves lives.

Social Media Messages

- Water safety starts with adult eyes.
- Drowning is silent. Stay close.

- No water without an adult.
- Life jackets save lives.
- It only takes seconds and a few centimetres of water for a young child to drown.

Skill 7: Road Safety

Why It Matters

As children grow more independent, they walk to school, ride bicycles, travel in vehicles, and move around busy community roads. Road traffic injuries are a leading cause of death among children and young people globally. (24)

In many Pacific settings, risks include overcrowded transport, lack of child restraints, limited pedestrian infrastructure, speeding, and distracted driving. Teaching road safety habits early, combined with adult modelling and supervision, significantly reduces risk. Road safety is both a supervision and role-modelling issue; children learn safe road behaviours by watching adults.



See Activity 6 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on road safety.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Active supervision for younger children:** Encourage parents and caregivers to hold hands when crossing roads; supervise walking near traffic.
- **Teaching safe road behaviour early:** Guide parents and caregivers to teach children to stop, look both ways, and cross with adults.
- **Safe transport practices:** Encourage seatbelt use, appropriate child restraints where available, and safe vehicle loading.
- **Helmet use and bicycle safety:** Promote helmet use for bicycles and motorbikes and safe riding practices.
- **Modelling safe driving behaviour:** Explain to parents the importance of modelling safe driving, such as avoiding speeding, drunk driving, distracted driving, and unsafe transport of children.
- **Safe school travel planning:** Support parents and caregivers to develop safe routes and travel routines for children walking to school and map unsafe areas to avoid.
- **Children's voices:** Encourage parents and caregivers to involve children and adolescents in discussions on road safety and safe and unsafe routes to empower them to take on responsibility.
- **Core message:** Safe adults raise safe road users.

Social Media Messages

- Hold hands, save lives.
- Buckle up, every trip.
- Stop. Look. Listen.

- Children copy how we drive.

Skill 8: Caring for Children through Crises

Why It Matters

Crises such as natural disasters, displacement, conflict, disease outbreaks, or economic shocks can disrupt children's sense of safety, routine, and emotional well-being. (25) In the Pacific region, many families experience disruptions caused by cyclones, floods, volcanic activity, and climate-related displacement. These events can increase stress within households, disrupt schooling, and raise risks of violence, neglect, and emotional distress for children. (26,27)

Children may also experience crises at the family level, such as the loss of a parent or sibling, serious illness, accidents, family separation, or divorce. These difficult life events can deeply affect children's emotional well-being, sense of security, and ability to focus on learning. Without supportive caregiving, children experiencing trauma or loss may struggle with anxiety, grief, behavioural changes, or withdrawal.

During times of crisis, children rely heavily on parents and caregivers for reassurance, protection, and stability. When parents and caregivers are able to maintain calm, provide emotional support, and restore routines, children are more likely to cope with stress and recover more quickly. Parenting support during crises can help families manage stress, strengthen relationships, and reduce harmful coping behaviours such as harsh discipline or family conflict. (3)



See Activity 7 and 8 at the end of this section for facilitator-led activities to do with parents and caregivers on helping children through crises and supporting children through loss and difficult events.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Provide reassurance and emotional safety:** Children may feel scared, confused, or anxious during crises. Parents and caregivers can reassure children on the ways that they can stay safe, listen to their concerns, and provide comfort.
- **Maintain routines where possible:** Simple daily routines such as meals, sleep, play, and learning activities help children feel secure and restore a sense of normalcy.
- **Manage caregiver stress:** Parents and caregivers experiencing high stress may find it harder to respond calmly. Encouraging adults to seek support, take breaks, and talk with trusted people helps protect children from stress and conflict.

- **Support children’s emotional expression:** Support parents and caregivers to encourage children to talk about their feelings, draw, play, or share stories about their experiences. These activities help children process difficult events.
- **Find small moments for play:** Even during a crisis, encourage parents and caregivers to find small moments to play and interact with their children to help them as part of the recovery process.
- **Protect children from harm:** Crises can increase risks of violence, neglect, exploitation, or separation. Parents, caregivers, and communities should remain attentive to children’s safety and well-being.
- **Make safety plans with children:** Encourage parents and caregivers to keep children with them or someone they trust all the time. Encourage them to tell children that staying together will help keep them safe. Help children to memorise their parent/caregiver’s full name, phone number and the number of someone their parent/caregiver trusts.
- **Encourage connection with school and learning:** Maintaining contact with teachers, learning spaces, or informal education activities supports children’s recovery and future opportunities.
- **Strengthen community support networks:** Families can draw on extended family, neighbours, faith groups, and community leaders to support children and share responsibilities during difficult times.
- **Support children when someone dies:** Support parents and caregivers on how to communicate that someone has died and will not come back; encourage them to listen and accept what children feel about this. Do something together to say goodbye.
- **Promote hope and resilience:** Support parents and caregivers to help children focus on positive coping strategies, problem-solving, and future goals supports emotional recovery and resilience.

Social Media Messages

- Children look to caregivers for safety during difficult times. Your calm and support helps them recover.
- After disasters, routines, reassurance, and connection help children feel secure again.
- Talking, listening, and spending time together helps children cope after crises.
- Communities and families together help children heal and rebuild hope.



Activities for Facilitators

Activity 1

Supporting Skill 1: Managing Stress and Emotions

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers recognise stress, calm strong emotions, and respond to children in safe, non-violent ways that protect children and strengthen relationships.

Disability Considerations



Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities may be facing additional emotions and stressful situations. Identifying these parents and caregivers and offering further support as well as local referral services and support networks is critical to help them manage their emotions and ensure they are able to support their children.

Time: 45 minutes

1. Welcome and Framing (5 minutes)

- Welcome participants and agree on respect and confidentiality.
- Explain that stress and strong emotions are normal in parenting and caregiving.
- Emphasise: Managing stress is a child protection skill.

Message to reinforce: Calm caregivers create safer environments for children.

2. Recognising Stress and Triggers (10 minutes)

- Ask parents and caregivers:
 - What situations make parenting/caregiving feel most stressful?
 - How does stress show up in the body or behaviour (e.g. raised voice, tension, shutting down)?
- Briefly discuss how unmanaged stress can lead to shouting, harsh discipline, or unsafe reactions.

Message to reinforce: Noticing stress early helps prevent harm.

3. Practising Calm-Down Strategies (15 minutes)

Guide parents and caregivers through one or two simple strategies, such as the following:

- Slow breathing or counting breaths

- Pausing and counting to 10 before responding
- Stepping away safely for a short time
- Prayer, reflection, or quiet grounding (where appropriate)

Ask parents and caregivers which strategy feels most realistic for them.

Message to reinforce: Calming the body helps the mind choose safer responses.

4. Safe Responses and Walking Away (10 minutes)

- Share a short scenario (e.g. child not listening, sibling conflict).
- Discuss:
 - What happens when stress takes over?
 - How pausing or stepping away changes the response.
- Reinforce that walking away briefly is a protective action, not neglect, when children are safe.

Message to reinforce: Taking space can protect children.

5. Commitment and Support (5 minutes)

- Each parent/caregiver chooses one strategy to practise this week.
- Briefly discuss who they can turn to when stress feels overwhelming (family, community leaders, services).

Message to reinforce: Seeking support is a strength and part of protecting children.

Key message for parents and caregivers:

- Stress is normal; harmful reactions are preventable.
- Calm parents and caregivers reduce the risk of violence.
- Small pauses can prevent big harm.

Activity 2

Supporting Skill 2: Communicating and Spending Time Together

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers reflect on how they spend their time and identify small changes that prioritise time with their children, strengthening connection and child protection.



Disability Considerations

Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities should be encouraged to identify different ways of communicating with their children, in line with their children's abilities and age. Spending quality time with children with disabilities is important to help children feel valued and respected.

Time: 20–25 minutes

Group: Parents and caregivers (mixed or separate groups)

Step 1: Setting the Tone (3–5 minutes)

- Explain that everyone is busy and this activity is about reflection, not blame.
- Emphasise that children value caregiver presence and attention, not money or special activities.

Key message: Choosing time with children helps them feel safe, valued, and protected.

Step 2: Quiet Reflection – Where Does My Time Go? (5 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to think quietly:

- How do I usually spend my free time?
- How much time goes to:
 - My children?
 - My phone?
 - Socialising, drinking, gambling, or other activities away from home?

(No sharing required.)

Step 3: Group Discussion – What Do Children Notice? (8–10 minutes)

Guide discussion with questions such as:

- How do children feel when adults are present and attentive?
- How do they feel when adults are distracted or often away?

- What messages do children learn from how adults use their time?

Link to protection: Spending time together helps parents and caregivers notice stress, changes, or risks early.

Step 4: Small Change Commitment (5 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to choose one small, realistic change to try this week, such as:

- Putting phones away during meals
- Choosing one evening to stay home
- Replacing drinking, gambling, or scrolling time with talking, playing, walking, or chores together

Closing Message: Small choices about time make a big difference. Time together builds trust, connection, and safety for children.

Additional activities to support parents and caregivers:

- **Floor play and shared play activities:** Facilitated activities that encourage parents and caregivers to get down to the child's level and engage in play that follows the child's interests. Floor play supports bonding, communication, and emotional security, particularly in early and middle childhood.
- **Singing, storytelling, and shared enjoyment:** Activities that promote singing, storytelling, music, and rhythm as everyday ways to connect with children. These practices support language development, emotional regulation, and cultural identity while strengthening parent/caregiver-child relationships.
- **Eye-level and responsive interaction:** Modules that help parents and caregivers practise making eye contact, listening, responding to children's cues, and showing warmth through facial expressions and tone. Eye-level interaction reinforces trust, attention, and safety for children of all ages, including adolescents.
- **Adolescents need attention too:** Activities that support parents and caregivers to engage with their adolescents and show an interest in what they enjoy helps build trust and strong relationships. Activities can also support parents and caregivers to engage in simple conversations with adolescents about their interests, without passing judgment.

These modules should be adaptable for use in homes, group sessions, and community or faith-based settings, and inclusive of fathers, mothers, and extended family members. Together, they reinforce spending time together as a protective practice that helps parents and caregivers notice children's needs, respond early to concerns, and reduce risks of neglect or harm.

Activity 3

Supporting Skill 3: Modelling Non-Violent, Positive Behaviour

Purpose: To help parents recognise their emotions and practise calm communication techniques that support positive discipline.



Disability Considerations

Children with disabilities may react differently to specific situations and parents and caregivers will need to identify the best way to react and engage with their child. It's important to recognise that certain disabilities may mean that children are not fully in control of their behaviour in the same way as other children of the same age. Maintaining a calm and relaxed approach, taking time to reflect and exploring different options remains important. Identifying local support services is critical, to help parents and caregivers understand their children's behaviour better and explore different ways of responding and engaging with their children in a constructive way.

Time: 25–35 minutes

Group size: Small groups of 3–5 participants

Steps:

1. **Explain** to participants that parenting/caregiving situations can sometimes be stressful, and it can be difficult to respond calmly in the moment. Practising responses through role-play helps parents and caregivers learn strategies they can use at home when challenges arise.
2. **Remind** participants that the goal of the activity is to practise:
 - staying calm before responding
 - listening and communicating clearly
 - guiding behaviour using respectful and non-violent strategies.
3. **Divide** participants into small groups. Each group receives or selects a scenario. One participant plays the parent/caregiver, another plays the child or adolescent, and others observe.
4. **Ask** participants to act out the situation twice:

- First response, showing how the situation might occur when a parent/caregiver is stressed or reacting quickly
 - Second response, practising calm communication and positive discipline strategies
5. **Encourage** participants to focus on listening, acknowledging feelings, setting clear expectations, and guiding behaviour without shouting or physical punishment.
 6. **Remind** observers to watch for communication techniques that help reduce tension and improve understanding between parents/caregivers and children.
 7. **Role-Play Scenarios**
 - Early Childhood: A young child refuses to stop playing and come inside when called.
 - Middle Childhood: A child has not completed homework and becomes defensive when asked about it.
 - Adolescence: An adolescent arrives home later than agreed and reacts with frustration when questioned.
 8. **Group Reflection:** Bring participants back together and discuss the activity using guiding questions such as:
 - What differences did you notice between the first and second responses?
 - What communication strategies helped calm the situation?
 - How did the child or adolescent respond differently when the parent/caregiver used a calm approach?
 - What strategies could be used at home in similar situations?
 9. **Highlight** key skills such as taking a moment to calm down, using respectful language, explaining rules clearly, and focusing on guidance rather than punishment.
 10. **Emphasise** that practising these skills helps build trust, cooperation, and stronger relationships with children and adolescents.

Activity 4

Supporting Skill 5: Safety and Alternative Care

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers identify safe and trusted adults who could care for children if parents are away, and to think about how to keep children safe and connected.



Disability Considerations

Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities may need to consider the abilities of alternative caregivers to be able to support their child appropriately. Identifying local support services for children with disabilities may need to be a factor in determining where the child will be placed. Children with disabilities should be equally informed about the separation, and be given time to understand what is happening, in line with their developmental capacity and needs.

Time: 30–35 minutes

Materials: Paper, markers

Step 1: Talanoa – Caring for children together (10 minutes)

Begin with a talanoa discussion about shared caregiving traditions.

Ask participants:

- Who helped care for children when you were growing up?
- Who looks after children in your community today when parents are working or travelling?

Facilitator note: Acknowledge that in many Pacific communities raising children is shared among extended family and neighbours, which can be a strength when children are cared for by trusted and responsible adults.

Step 2: Circle of care mapping (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to draw a **large circle** with their child's name in the centre.

Around the circle, ask them to write or draw people who could safely care for the child.

Examples:

- grandparents
- aunts and uncles
- older siblings

- neighbours
- church leaders
- teachers

Encourage parents and caregivers to think carefully about trust, respect, and the child's comfort.

Step 3: Safety reflection (10 minutes)

Ask guiding questions:

- Does this person treat children kindly and respectfully?
- Does the child feel comfortable with them?
- Do they understand your family rules?
- Would they protect the child if something went wrong?
- Does this person have the time and capacity to provide supervision to the child?

Discuss that not every relative or neighbour is automatically a safe caregiver or is able to provide enough supervision.

Step 4: Staying connected (5 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- If your child stays with someone else, how will you stay connected?

Examples:

- phone calls
- visits
- asking another trusted adult to check in

Key message for parents and caregivers:

Strong families plan so children remain safe, supported, and connected even when parents are away.

Activity 5

Supporting Skill 6: Water Safety

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers recognise water hazards children face in their communities and identify ways to protect them.



Disability Considerations

Children with disabilities should be supported to enjoy water while supervised to make sure they are safe. Parents and caregivers should be encouraged to teach their children about the risks in developmentally appropriate ways. Additional strategies to keep children with disabilities safe in and around water should be adopted where needed, in line with the type of disability children have.

Time: 30 minutes

Materials: Flipchart or drawing paper

Step 1: Community mapping (10 minutes)

Ask participants to draw or list places where children encounter water.

Examples:

- ocean or lagoon
- rivers and streams
- wells
- rainwater tanks
- flooded roads or fields
- fishing areas
- boats and wharves

Facilitator note: Acknowledge that water is part of everyday Pacific life and culture, but it also brings risks.

Step 2: Story sharing (10 minutes)

Invite participants to share experiences:

- Have you heard of children falling into water or having close calls?

- When do accidents usually happen?

Common responses may include:

- children playing near water
- fishing trips
- flooding during storms
- children left unsupervised
- boating trips

Explain that drowning often happens quietly and very quickly.

Step 3: Building safer habits (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to suggest ways families protect children.

Examples:

- always supervising children near water
- teaching children basic swimming skills
- covering wells and tanks
- setting clear rules about where children can play

Facilitator tip: Encourage participants to think about one safety change they can make this week and to discuss it with their family.

Key message for parents and caregivers: Water is part of life in the Pacific, but watchful adults save lives.

Activity 6

Supporting Skill 7: Road Safety

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers think about how children travel safely in their community.

Time: 30 minutes

Step 1: Community journey mapping (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to describe how children travel to:

- school
- sports
- church
- markets
- visiting relatives

Ask them to draw a simple map showing one or more of these routes from their home.

Step 2: Spot the dangers (10 minutes)

Ask participants to identify possible dangers along the route. Examples:

- fast-moving vehicles
- poor lighting
- Hazards on the road
- children walking alone

Discuss which age groups face the most risk.



Disability Considerations

Encourage parents of children with disabilities to think about any specific risks their children may face on the road and how to mitigate these.

Step 3: Safer journeys (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers to discuss and suggest ways to improve safety. Examples:

- Younger children walking with older siblings or adults
- Children holding hands with adult caregiver when crossing or walking along the road
- Teaching children: 'Stop, Look, Listen' or 'Looking left, right, left and listening before crossing'

- Teaching children how to cross roads safely
- 'Walking school bus' where small groups of children are accompanied by teachers or caregivers for the walk home from school or to a safe pick up point
- Taking longer but safer routes away from busy roads

Activity 7

Supporting Skill 8: Caring for Children through Crises

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers understand how crises affect children and identify simple ways they can support children’s emotional well-being, safety, and routines during and after difficult events.

Disability Considerations



Re-establishing routines as quickly as possible is critical for children with disabilities. Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities should be supported to identify appropriate ways to explain what has happened and reassure children as quickly as possible, using language that is appropriate and in line with their developmental capacity.

Time: 20–25 minutes

Materials: Flipchart or paper and markers (optional)

Step 1: Understanding Children’s Reactions (5–7 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- How might children feel after a disaster or crisis (such as a cyclone, flood, illness outbreak, or displacement)? Write responses on the flipchart.

Examples may include:

- Fear or anxiety
- Clinginess
- Difficulty sleeping
- Anger or withdrawal
- Trouble concentrating

Facilitator message: These reactions are normal. Children often need reassurance and support to feel safe again.

Step 2: What Helps Children Recover? (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What can families do to help children feel safe and supported during difficult times?

Write ideas on the flipchart.

Guide discussion toward key actions such as:

- Comforting and reassuring children

- Listening to their feelings
- Spending time together
- Keeping simple daily routines
- Encouraging play and normal activities
- Staying connected to school or learning when possible

Facilitator tip: Highlight that children recover best when they feel safe, supported, and connected to parents and caregivers.

Step 3: Practising Reassuring Communication (5–7 minutes)

Present a simple scenario:

A child is worried after a cyclone and is afraid another one will come.

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What could a parent or caregiver say to help the child feel calm and safe?

Encourage responses such as:

- “You are safe now.”
- “I am here with you.”
- “It’s okay to feel scared.”
- “We will face this together.”

Step 4: Reflection and Take-Home Action (3–5 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What is one thing you can do this week to help your child feel safe and supported?

Invite a few volunteers to share.

Key message for parents and caregivers:

- After crises, children need reassurance, routine, and connection with caring adults.
- Calm and supportive caregivers help children recover, rebuild confidence, and continue learning.

Activity 8

Supporting Skill 8: Caring for Children through Crises

Purpose: To help caregivers understand how children may react to serious life events such as the loss of a parent or sibling, divorce, serious illness, or accidents, and identify ways they can provide emotional support and stability.

Disability Considerations



Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities should be aware that their children may react differently to other children, may understand or interpret the situation differently and will need more support to be able to understand and cope with the events. Children with disabilities may also express themselves in different ways, in some cases using non-verbal communication to share how they are feeling. Parents and caregivers are often best placed to know how to interpret their children's non-verbal communication and can be further supported with guidance on how to explain events to their children using different techniques.

Time: 25–30 minutes

Materials: Flipchart or paper and markers (optional)

Step 1: Understanding Children's Reactions to Loss (5–7 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- How might children react when something very difficult happens in the family?

Examples may include:

- Sadness or crying
- Anger or blaming themselves
- Withdrawal or silence
- Regression in behaviour (acting younger than their age)
- Changes in behaviour or sleep
- Difficulty concentrating at school

Explain that children may express grief or stress differently depending on their age and personality.

Facilitator message: There is no single “correct” way for children to react to loss. Children need patience, understanding, and support.

Step 2: What Helps Children Cope? (10 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What can parents and caregivers do to help children through difficult times?

Guide discussion toward key supportive actions:

- Listen to children’s feelings without judgement
- Reassure children that they are loved and not alone
- Maintain routines where possible
- Encourage expression through talking, drawing, prayer, storytelling, or play
- Restore their sense of safety through reassurance and routine
- Seek support from extended family or community leaders

Explain that strong family and community connections help children feel supported.

Step 3: Practising Supportive Responses (10 minutes)

Present a scenario:

A child is struggling after the loss of a family member and says, “I feel very sad and I miss them.”

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What could a parent or caregiver say to support this child?

Encourage responses such as:

- “It’s okay to feel sad. I miss them too.”
- “You can talk to me whenever you want.”
- “We can remember them together.”

Discuss how acknowledging feelings and offering comfort helps children process grief.

Step 4: Reflection and Take-Home Action (5 minutes)

Ask parents and caregivers:

- Who could you turn to for support if your family faced a difficult situation?

Encourage parents and caregivers to identify support networks such as:

- family members
- neighbours
- church or community leaders

- teachers or counsellors
- health services

Key message for parents and caregivers: Children recover best from loss and trauma when they feel safe, listened to, and supported by caring adults, and community members.

3. Age-Specific Skills Sections

This section builds on the life course skills outlined in the previous section and identifies specific skills that apply to children’s protection and safety at different stages of growth. The section is organized by age group: **early childhood (0–5 years)**, **middle childhood (6–10 years)**, and **adolescence (11–18 years)**.

To avoid repetition, the core lifecourse skills are not described in full again here. Instead, this section highlights the priority child protection and safety skills that are most critical at each stage of growth. These skills reflect the same principles of child protection and safety introduced earlier but provide practical guidance for parents and caregivers to navigate the changing risks and needs of children as they grow. Where skills overlap with those described in *Best Practices Across the Life Course*, readers are directed back to that section for full details. This approach helps facilitators focus discussions, activities, and messages on the protective behaviors that matter most at each stage, while reinforcing a continuity of care throughout the child’s life. Parent support programmes and activities should pull the relevant content applicable to the parents and caregivers they are supporting and the age of the children they would like support with.

3. a. Early Childhood (0–5 years)

This section focuses on positive discipline, communication, and connection for parents and caregivers of young children aged 0–5 years. During these early years, strong relationships lay the foundation for lifelong learning, behaviour, and well-being. (28) The section highlights practical, nurturing approaches that help parents and caregivers guide children with care rather than fear. It emphasises that discipline in the early years is about teaching, not punishment.

By spending quality time together, using positive reinforcement, setting clear and consistent rules, calmly redirecting misbehaviour, and ensuring children’s safety, parents and caregivers help children feel secure, understood, and valued. These approaches help build trust, support emotional regulation, and strengthen a sense of belonging. They also support families in raising confident, resilient, and caring children.

The skills highlighted in this section are:

- 1. Positive Reinforcement**
- 2. Setting Clear Rules, Redirecting and Managing Misbehaviour**

Skill 1: Positive Reinforcement

Why It Matters

Evidence shows that praising positive behaviour is more effective than punishing negative behaviour in achieving long-term behavioural change. (29) Parent programmes and activities should include modules that help parents and caregivers recognise, encourage, and reinforce children's positive behaviour in ways that build confidence, cooperation, and safe relationships. These modules should emphasise non-violent, non-material forms of reinforcement that strengthen learning and child protection across the life course.



See Activity 9 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on positive reinforcement.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Noticing and acknowledging positive behaviour:** Support parents and caregivers to observe, name, and respond to children's positive actions, effort, and cooperation.
- **Praise that is specific and encouraging:** Promote clear, age-appropriate praise that focuses on effort and behaviour rather than comparison or shame.
- **Consistency and immediacy:** Reinforce positive behaviour consistently and close to the time it occurs to strengthen learning.
- **Non-material reinforcement:** Emphasise attention, warmth, words, shared time, and affection over gifts or money. Use culturally appropriate expressions of approval, storytelling, and collective recognition.
- **Modelling positive behaviour:** Encourage parents and caregivers to demonstrate calm, respectful behaviour that children can copy.

Social Media Messages

- Praise, smile, repeat; your words shape behaviour.
- Sticker charts, high fives, kind words, every win counts. Catch them being good!
- Encouragement grows confidence, connection, and cooperation.

Skill 2: Setting Clear Rules, Redirecting, and Managing Misbehaviour

Why It Matters

Positive discipline techniques like setting simple rules, calmly redirecting misbehaviour, and ignoring tantrums (when safe) can reduce aggression and improve child self-regulation. (3) This type of discipline fosters cooperation and trust. Using clear expectations and calm redirection helps children understand boundaries and develop appropriate behaviour. Consistent and safe responses are especially important during moments of frustration or strong emotions, supporting both the child's development and the caregiver-child relationship. (30)



See Activity 10 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on setting clear rules, redirecting and managing misbehaviour.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Clear, age-appropriate rules and expectations:** Support parents and caregivers to set simple, consistent rules that children can understand across the life course.
- **Calm and respectful communication:** Encourage explaining rules using clear language and calm tone, avoiding shouting, threats, or humiliation.
- **Redirection and guidance:** Teach parents and caregivers to redirect children toward acceptable behaviour rather than focusing only on what not to do.
- **Consistent and non-violent consequences:** Promote predictable, proportionate consequences that teach rather than punish.
- **Positive behaviour modelling:** Reinforce that children learn how to behave by observing caregivers' actions and responses.
- **Repair and learning after misbehaviour:** Support parents and caregivers to help children reflect, make amends, and rebuild relationships following mistakes.

Social Media Messages

- Gentle redirection works better than shouting.
- Set simple rules, explain, and guide with kindness.
- Ignore safe tantrums, praise cooperation, trust builds slowly.
- Boundaries + love = confident, respectful children.



Activities for Facilitators

Activity 9

Supporting Early Childhood Skill 1: Positive Reinforcement

Purpose: To support parents and caregivers to practise using positive reinforcement to guide children's behaviour.

Disability Considerations



Children with disabilities may exhibit different behaviours and act out in different ways depending on the type of disability they have. Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities will need to adapt how they support their children, continuing to use positive reinforcement rather than punishment, recognising that some behaviours are linked to their child's evolving abilities.

Step 1: Setting the Stage

- Explain to participants that children learn best when parents and caregivers notice and encourage positive behaviour. Positive reinforcement helps children feel motivated, respected, and confident while learning expectations. Emphasise that praise should be genuine, specific, and focused on effort or behaviour.
- Introduce the praise–guidance–praise approach, sometimes called a “praise sandwich”:
 1. Praise something the child is doing well.
 2. Guidance on what needs to change or improve.
 3. Offer praise and encouragement for effort or cooperation.
- Explain that this approach helps children understand expectations without feeling criticised or embarrassed.
- Divide participants into small groups and ask them to practise role-plays using the praise–guidance–praise technique.

Step 2: Role-Play Practice

One participant plays the parent/caregiver, one plays the child, and others observe.

Example scenarios:

- Early Childhood (0–5 years): A young child helps clean up toys but leaves some toys on the floor.
 - Example response:
 - Praise: “Thank you for putting many of the toys back.”
 - Guidance: “Let’s also put the blocks in the box so the room stays safe.”
 - Praise: “Great job helping to clean up.”

Step 3: Visual Tracking and Goal Setting

Introduce simple ways parents and caregivers can notice and celebrate positive behaviour over time.

- Ask participants to brainstorm examples such as:
 - a chart or calendar marking helpful actions or completed tasks
 - stickers, symbols, or drawings for younger children
 - shared goals or progress charts for older children.
- Emphasise that these tools work best when paired with verbal praise, warmth, and shared attention, rather than material rewards.

Step 4: Group Reflection

- Bring participants back together and ask:
 - How did the praise–guidance–praise approach feel compared with criticism or punishment?
 - What types of praise helped motivate the child in the role-play?
 - How might parents and caregivers use simple charts or tracking tools at home?
 - How can parents and caregivers make sure praise stays genuine and encouraging?
- Reinforce that consistent encouragement helps children learn expectations, build confidence, and develop positive behaviour over time.

Activity 10

Supporting Early Childhood Skill 2: Setting Clear Rules, Redirecting and Managing Misbehaviour

Purpose: To support parents and caregivers to practise setting clear rules and guiding children away from unsafe or unwanted behaviour using calm communication and redirection.

Step 1: Setting the Stage

- Explain that misbehaviour is often a way children communicate needs, emotions, or curiosity. Parents and caregivers can help children learn appropriate behaviour by setting clear expectations, redirecting attention to safer alternatives, and responding calmly during moments of strong emotion.
- Encourage participants to focus on three key strategies:
 - setting clear and simple rules
 - redirecting behaviour toward safe alternatives
 - responding calmly to strong emotions such as tantrums.
- Divide participants into small groups. One participant plays the parent/caregiver, one plays the child, and others observe and provide feedback.

Step 2: Role-Play Practice

- Ask participants to practise responding to the following situations using calm language and redirection.
 - A young child begins throwing toys across the room.
 - Possible approach:
 - State the rule clearly: “Toys are for playing, not for throwing.”
 - Redirect: “Let’s roll the ball on the floor instead.”
 - Reinforce: “That’s a good way to play safely.”

Step 3: Managing Tantrums and Strong Emotions

- Discuss how young children may express frustration or tiredness through tantrums. Encourage parents and caregivers to focus on safety and calm responses.
- Facilitators can demonstrate steps such as:
 - staying calm and speaking in a steady voice
 - ensuring the child is safe
 - allowing time for emotions to settle
 - reconnecting with the child once calm.

Example response: "I see you are very upset right now. Let's take a moment to calm down together."

Step 4: Group Reflection

Bring participants back together and discuss:

- What strategies helped redirect behaviour effectively?
- How did calm communication affect the situation?
- What made it easier or harder to stay calm?
- How might parents and caregivers apply these strategies at home?

Reinforce that clear rules, calm redirection, and safe responses to strong emotions help children learn appropriate behaviour, develop emotional regulation, and strengthen trusting relationships with parents and caregivers.

3.b. Middle Childhood (6–10 years)

From ages 6–10, children begin to grow more independent but still need clear guidance, safety, and strong relationships. This section highlights practical ways for parents and caregivers to balance clear rules with warmth. It focuses on using non-violent discipline, play, and shared time to help children learn responsibility, self-control, and respect.

The section also helps parents and caregivers recognise and respond to abuse, prepare children for the transition to adolescence, and maintain trust and open communication as children grow.

The skills highlighted in this section are:

- 1. Supporting Independence with Boundaries**
- 2. Non-Violent Discipline and Play**
- 3. Continuing Child-led Play and Time Together**
- 4. Recognising and Responding to Abuse**
- 5. Transitioning to Adolescence**

Skill 1: Supporting Independence with Boundaries

Why It Matters

Children in middle childhood need opportunities to build autonomy while still benefiting from clear expectations and warm guidance. Studies show that this balance fosters resilience and lowers the risk of violence. (31) Parent support programmes and activities should include modules that support parents and caregivers to balance children's growing independence with clear, protective boundaries during middle childhood. These modules should focus on helping parents and caregivers guide children's decision-making, build responsibility, and maintain safety in home, school, and community settings.



See Activity 11 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on supporting independence with boundaries.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Balanced autonomy and guidance:** Support parents and caregivers to gradually increase children's independence while maintaining clear, protective boundaries.
- **Clear rules with growing choice:** Encourage simple, age-appropriate rules alongside opportunities for children to make choices and learn responsibility. Involving children in decision making with boundaries helps build decision making skills and helps them take ownership for their behaviour.
- **Consistent supervision and safety:** Reinforce ongoing adult supervision and awareness as children explore more independence in home, school, and community settings.
- **Respectful communication and trust:** Promote calm discussion, listening, and explanation to build trust and cooperation rather than control.
- **Problem-solving and learning from mistakes:** Help parents and caregivers guide children to reflect on actions, understand consequences, and learn safely from errors.

Social Media Messages

- Let them grow but guide the way.
- Give choices, set limits, stay connected.
- Independence grows best with guidance.
- Clear expectations help children feel secure.

Skill 2: Non-Violent Discipline

Why It Matters

Children need boundaries, but they respond best to calm, predictable discipline and opportunities to learn through play. Structured choices and child-led play help children develop self-control, confidence, and problem-solving skills, while reducing aggression and fear. (32,33) Parent support programmes activities should include practical modules that support parents and caregivers to guide children's behaviour through calm, respectful, and non-violent approaches during middle childhood. These modules should focus on helping parents and caregivers respond consistently, reduce conflict, and teach children responsibility and self-control without fear or harm.

Disability Considerations



Children with disabilities are at increased risk of violence and neglect. Parents and caregivers are often under additional stress when looking after and supporting children with disabilities, which can lead to increased use of violence or neglect. Supporting parents and caregivers to identify appropriate ways to support and teach their children with disabilities, in line with the evolving capacities and needs is critical to reduce these risks.



See Activity 12 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on non-violent discipline.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Discipline as teaching, not punishment:** Reinforce that discipline helps children learn skills, responsibility, and self-control rather than causing fear or harm.
- **Clear expectations and consistent limits:** Support parents and caregivers to set simple, predictable rules that children understand and can follow. Involving children in agreeing on what those rules are helps them take ownership of those rules and they are more likely to follow them.
- **Calm, respectful responses to misbehaviour:** Promote taking a pause before responding without shouting, threats, or physical punishment, even during frustration.

- **Age-appropriate, non-violent consequences:** Use logical and proportionate consequences that help children understand the impact of their actions.
- **Problem-solving and reflection:** Guide children to reflect on behaviour, make amends, and learn from mistakes.
- **Positive relationship and modelling:** Emphasise warm, respectful parent/caregiver–child relationships and adult role modelling as the foundation of effective positive discipline.

Social Media Messages

- Play builds trust and teaches skills for life.
- Discipline with calm words, not fear.
- Parents take a pause before reacting with anger.

Skill 3: Continuing Child-led Play and Time Together

Why It Matters

Even as children grow more independent, ongoing parent and caregiver involvement helps them feel secure, valued, and supported. Child-led time together strengthens attachment, improves communication, and creates safe opportunities for children to share concerns. (32) Parent support programmes and activities should include modules that reinforce the continued importance of child-led play and shared time during middle childhood, even as children grow older and more independent. These modules should focus on strengthening relationships, supporting emotional well-being, and creating opportunities for learning through everyday interaction.

Parents and caregivers should explore activities that follow children's interests, such as games, sports, stories, or creative activities, and allow children to lead while adults provide attention and encouragement. Play and shared time together do not need to be formal or time-consuming. Simple, enjoyable moments like talking, laughing, doing chores, or playing together, help children feel valued, supported, and safe.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Play as connection and protection:** Reinforce that playing with children builds strong relationships, trust, and emotional safety.
- **Child-led play:** Support parents and caregivers to follow the child's lead, interests, and pace, allowing children to feel valued and heard.
- **Play as learning and practice for life:** Emphasise that play helps children practise problem-solving, cooperation, self-regulation, and social skills.
- **Everyday moments count:** Encourage integrating play and time together into daily routines (chores, cooking, storytelling, outdoor activities).
- **Enjoyment and stress reduction:** Highlight play as a way for families to laugh, relax, and reduce stress for children, parents, and caregivers.

Social Media Messages

- Follow their lead, connection comes first.
- Shared moments build strong families.
- Time together today builds trust for tomorrow.

Skill 4: Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Why It Matters

Children may disclose abuse directly or through behaviour changes. Parents and caregivers need skills to notice warning signs, listen calmly, and respond in ways that prioritise safety and trust. (3) Parent support programmes and activities should include modules that strengthen the ability of parents and caregivers to recognise signs of abuse and respond in ways that prioritise children’s safety, dignity, and well-being. These modules should focus on awareness, communication, and timely action, recognising parents and caregivers as a critical first line of protection during middle childhood.



See Activity 13 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on recognising and responding to abuse.

Disability Considerations



Children and adolescents with disabilities are at increased risk of abuse, neglect, and exploitation, and they may face additional barriers when trying to communicate what has happened to them. For this reason, recognising and responding to warning signs is not only important for parents of children with disabilities, but also for extended family members, neighbours, teachers, and other caregivers in the community. Some children may express distress through behaviour changes rather than verbal disclosure, while others may rely on adults for personal care, which can increase vulnerability. When adults in the family or community notice changes in behaviour, signs of fear, or situations that make a child uncomfortable, responding with care, listening respectfully, and seeking appropriate support can play a critical role in protecting children from harm.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Understanding what abuse looks like:** Support parents and caregivers to recognise different forms of abuse (physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, online abuse) and common warning signs in middle childhood.

- **Listening safely and respectfully:** Reinforce the importance of listening calmly, without blame or judgement, when a child shares a concern or disclosure.
- **Believing and validating children:** Emphasise that children should be believed and reassured that they are not at fault.
- **Taking timely, protective action:** Guide parents and caregivers on when and how to seek help, report concerns, and access child protection or support services.
- **Maintaining safety and confidentiality:** Support parents and caregivers to prioritise the child's immediate safety while sharing information only with trusted, appropriate services.
- **Community responsibility and referral pathways:** Reinforce shared responsibility for child protection and ensure that parents and caregivers are aware of local referral and reporting pathways.

Social Media Messages

- Protecting children starts with believing them.
- Your calm response can change everything.
- Silence protects harm – listening protects children.

Skill 5: Transitioning to Adolescence

Why It Matters

As children approach adolescence, shifting from strict control to guidance helps them develop decision-making skills, responsibility, and self-confidence, while maintaining parent and caregiver influence. (34) Parent support programmes and activities should include modules that help parents and caregivers prepare for the transition from middle childhood to adolescence. These modules should support parents and caregivers to adjust their roles, communication, and expectations as children grow more independent, while maintaining strong relationships and protection.



See Activity 14 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on transitioning to adolescence.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Understanding early adolescent changes:** Support parents and caregivers to understand the physical, emotional, and social changes that begin before the teenage years.
- **Shifting parenting approaches:** Encourage parents and caregivers to gradually move from close control to guidance, supervision, and coaching as children mature.
- **Open communication and trust-building:** Promote listening, regular check-ins, and respectful conversations to strengthen trust in the transition to adolescence.
- **Clear boundaries with growing independence:** Support setting consistent rules while allowing age-appropriate choice and responsibility.
- **Preparing for puberty and body changes:** Help parents and caregivers introduce age-appropriate conversations about puberty, bodies, and personal safety.
- **Grounding guidance in cultural values:** Anchor transitions in Pacific values of respect, family connection, and collective responsibility.

Social Media Messages

- Growing independence still needs guidance.



Activities for Facilitators

Activity 11

Supporting Middle Childhood Skill 1: Supporting Independence with Boundaries

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers explore how shared decision-making and consistent routines can help children develop responsibility and confidence while still receiving appropriate supervision and support.



Disability adaptation considerations

Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities may sometimes find it hard to support their children's growing need for independence, especially in situations which may still require a lot of caregiver support. Despite this, parents and caregivers should identify different strategies for supporting their children's growing need for independence aligning with their children's evolving abilities, which may differ from children without disabilities. Children with disabilities should be supported to develop their independence and learn as much as possible how to gradually engage more in decision making and developing life skills while continuing to receive the guidance and support they need.

Time: 45-60 minutes

Step 1: Setting the Stage

Explain to participants that children learn independence gradually. Parents and caregivers can support this by offering age-appropriate choices, involving children in small decisions, and establishing routines that provide structure and predictability.

Step 2: Exploring Shared Decision-Making

Ask participants to work in small groups and discuss examples of everyday situations where children can be given choices.

- **Examples may include:**
 - choosing between two activities or games
 - helping decide the order of chores or homework
 - selecting clothes or snacks
- Discuss how parents and caregivers can guide decisions by offering limited and appropriate choices while maintaining clear expectations.

Step 3: Building Simple Routines

- Ask participants to brainstorm daily routines that help children practise independence while keeping clear structure.
- Examples may include:
 - morning or afternoon routines before or after school
 - homework or study time
- Encourage participants to discuss how routines can reduce conflict and help children know what is expected.

Step 4: Group Reflection

- Invite participants to reflect on the discussion using guiding questions:
 - How can offering small choices help children feel more responsible?
 - What routines already work well at home?
- Reinforce that supporting independence with boundaries helps children develop confidence, responsibility, and life skills, while maintaining strong guidance and connection from parents and caregivers.

Activity 12

Supporting Middle Childhood Skill 2: Non-Violent Discipline

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers manage misbehaviour using calm guidance, structured choices, play-based connection, and positive reinforcement.



Disability adaptation considerations

Parents and caregivers of children with disabilities will need to adapt these activities to the evolving needs and capacities of their children, remembering that praising good behaviour is a much stronger tool and teacher for children on how to behave than criticising misbehaviour. Consequences will also need to be adapted, in line with children's abilities and understanding.

Time: 45 minutes

Step 1: Reflect on Discipline (10 min)

- Ask parents and caregivers to briefly reflect on how they were disciplined as children.
- Discuss how these strategies made them feel. What are the short and long-term effects?

Facilitator Tip: Focus on learning, not blame. Gently introduce alternatives to violent discipline by guiding the group to reflect on how some approaches may stop behaviour quickly but do not always teach children what to do.

Step 2: Practise Structured Choices (15 min)

- Introduce structured choices to reduce power struggles and support cooperation.
- Examples: "Homework before or after dinner?" or "Walk inside or run outside?"
- Role-play common situations (chores, sibling conflict, routines).

Key Reminder: Calm voice, limited choices, consistent follow-through.

Step 3: Praise and Encourage (15 min)

Notice Positive Actions

- Take a few moments to reflect on moments when you acted calmly, patiently, or effectively in guiding your child.

- Write down one or two examples of actions you handled well.
- Remind parents and caregivers that it's important to praise positive behaviour and giving consequences for misbehaviour
- Explain that in some situations, focusing on the positive behaviour while ignoring the misbehaviours is powerful and helps children feel valued.

Use Specific Acknowledgement

- In pairs or small groups practise describing your positive behaviours in detail.
- Examples:
 - "I stayed calm while explaining rules to my child this morning."
 - "I listened fully to my child's concern before responding."
 - "I reminded myself to use encouraging words instead of raising my voice."
- Offer encouragement to each other: "I appreciate how you stayed patient during that tricky moment—it's inspiring."

Step 5: Take-Home Practice (5 min)

Parents and caregivers choose:

- One situation to use structured choices
- One behaviour to praise every day
- Parents practise using positive words to describe the behaviours they do want to see.

Activity 13

Supporting Middle Childhood Skill 4: Recognising and Responding to Abuse

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers understand how to recognise possible signs of abuse and practise responding in supportive ways if a child shares a concern.

Disability adaptation considerations



Remind parents and caregivers that children with disabilities are at heightened risk of abuse, violence and neglect and that they may not be able to express themselves when abuse is happening. Learning to read the signs, such as changes in behaviour and personality is critical to being able to respond and support children with disabilities. Parents and caregivers should work together with schools, communities and others involved and close to children with disabilities to help identify when abuse may be happening.

Step 1: Setting the Stage

- Emphasise that recognising warning signs does not mean immediately assuming abuse, but it is important for parents and caregivers to notice changes in behaviour, emotions, or well-being and respond with care and attention.
- Remind participants that abuse can take different forms, including physical, emotional, sexual, neglect, and online abuse. Signs may appear in behaviour, mood, health, or school engagement.

Step 2: Scenario Discussion

- Divide participants into small groups and provide short scenarios describing possible warning signs.
- Example scenarios
 - A child who used to enjoy school suddenly refuses to attend and becomes withdrawn.
 - A child becomes unusually fearful around a particular person.
 - An adolescent spends time online and becomes secretive, anxious, or upset after using a phone or computer.
- Ask groups to discuss:
 - What changes or warning signs do you notice?
 - What might be possible reasons for these changes?

- How could a parent or caregiver respond in a supportive way?

Step 3: Practising Supportive Conversations

- Invite volunteers to practise a short role-play where a parent/caregiver talks with a child who seems worried or upset.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to practise:
 - speaking calmly and privately
 - asking open questions such as “Is there something worrying you?”
 - listening carefully without interrupting or judging
 - reassuring the child that they are not to blame.

Step 4: Reinforcing the Child Protection Message

- Explain the key steps parents and caregivers can take if a child shares a concern:
 - **Listen** carefully and calmly.
 - **Believe** the child and take their concerns seriously.
 - **Act** by seeking help from trusted adults or appropriate services if needed.
 - Facilitators should briefly explain available support services, referral pathways, or trusted community resources relevant to the local context.

Step 5: Group Reflection

- Invite participants to reflect on the activity:
 - Why is it important for parents and caregivers to notice changes in behaviour or mood?
 - What helps children feel safe to share concerns?
 - Who can parents and caregivers turn to for help if they are worried about a child’s safety?
- Reinforce that caregivers play an important role in protecting children by noticing warning signs, listening with care, and seeking support when needed.

Activity 14

Supporting Middle Childhood Skill 5: Transition to Adolescence

From Control to Guidance

Purpose: To support parents and caregivers to shift from child-focused control toward guidance and shared responsibility, strengthening communication, trust, and decision-making as children move into adolescence.

Disability adaptation considerations



Remind parents and caregivers that children with disabilities will also go through adolescence and will be facing many of the same hurdles and behaviours that other children also go through. Parents and caregivers may need to adapt when some of the above strategies should be implemented in line with their child's evolving capacities.

Time: 60-90 minutes

1. Opening reflection: What is changing? (10-15 minutes)

Facilitator invites parents and caregivers to reflect:

- What changes do you notice as your child grows older?
- What worries you most about adolescence?
- What do you hope your child will learn during these years?

Facilitator reinforces:

- Adolescence is a time of learning independence, not of rejecting parents and caregivers.
- Strong relationships remain protective.

2. Understanding the shift: Control vs guidance (15 minutes)

Facilitator explains:

- **Control** relies on commands, punishment, and obedience.
- **Guidance** combines clear rules, listening, and shared problem-solving.

Use simple examples:

- "Because I said so" vs "Let's talk about what's fair and safe"
- Making decisions *for* children vs *with* them

Link to the mass message: “Clear rules + strong relationships = safer teens.”

3. Renegotiating boundaries and responsibilities (20–25 minutes)

Parents and caregivers work in small groups using scenario cards, such as:

- Child wants more freedom to go out with friends
- Child resists household responsibilities
- Child challenges rules that worked when they were younger

Groups discuss:

- What boundaries are still non-negotiable (safety, respect)?
- Where can responsibility be shared or increased?
- How can rules change without losing authority?

Facilitator highlights:

- Boundaries can evolve while values remain constant.

4. Practising problem-solving conversations (20–25 minutes)

Parents and caregivers practise short role-plays using a simple structure:

- **Listen first** – “Help me understand what you want.”
- **State concerns** – “I’m worried about your safety.”
- **Problem-solve together** – “What could work for both of us?”

Example practice topics:

- Curfews
- Screen time
- School responsibilities

Emphasise calm tone, respect, and follow-up.

- What is one way you can guide rather than control this week?
- What conversation will you try at home?

3.c. Adolescence (11–18 years)

This section focuses on positive discipline, communication, and connection during adolescence - a stage often marked by rapid change, strong emotions, and greater exposure to risk. While adolescents seek greater independence, evidence from parenting programmes shows that positive, involved and communicative relationships with caregivers remain critical for adolescent wellbeing and protection, reducing risks. (6)

This section supports parents and caregivers to stay emotionally close, communicate openly, and set clear, respectful boundaries that promote safety and responsibility. It also addresses peer influence, online spaces, discipline, consent, and healthy relationships as adolescents prepare for adulthood. Calm guidance, connection, and ongoing parental involvement help adolescents build resilience, make safer choices, and transition confidently into adult life.

- 1. Continuing Child-led Time Together**
- 2. Managing Risk and Online Safety**
- 3. Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence**
- 4. Discipline and Emotional Regulation**
- 5. Consent and Healthy Relationships**
- 6. Preparing for Adulthood**

Skill 1: Continuing Child-led Time Together

Why It Matters

Continued parent and caregiver involvement is protective against risky behaviours during adolescence, even as youth seek independence. PLH Teens showed increased caregiver-teen closeness and reduced maltreatment after 12 weeks. (29) Parent support programmes and activities should reinforce the importance of maintaining regular, child-led time together during adolescence, even as young people seek greater independence. The focus should be on preserving connection, trust, and communication as a foundation for protection and well-being.

- **Regular check-in conversations** support parents and caregivers to build simple, consistent check-ins with adolescents, through short conversations, shared activities, or routine moments. Activities emphasise listening more than talking, allowing adolescents to set the pace and topics of discussion.
- **Shared activities led by adolescents' interests** help parents and caregivers identify and engage in activities chosen by adolescents. This may include sports, music, cultural activities, community events, or everyday tasks done together. The focus is on presence, interest, and respect rather than instruction or control.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Spend time together doing what they enjoy:** Offer to go and do something they enjoy together, show an interest and ask questions about the things they enjoy. Conversations and time together is key.
- **Support exploration:** Adolescence is a time of exploration and change. Support adolescents without judging their choices, such as their music or clothing. Share your views in constructive ways and remember they are also adjusting to these changes.
- **Ask questions and show interest:** Adolescents will notice that you have asked questions. If their answers are short, don't give up. Continue to show interest.
- **Give them space but let them know you're there:** Adolescents will often try to be alone, and distance themselves. They may close their door to their room, shut themselves off with headphones and music. Give them the space but let them know you're there when they need you.
- **Core message:** *Stay close, even when they pull away.*

Social Media Messages

- Teens still need your time, just in new ways.
- Connection is protection.

Skill 2: Managing Risk and Online Safety

Why It Matters

Adolescents in the Pacific are increasingly online. Parents and caregivers must understand digital spaces (including Social Media), digital risks, and how to communicate about sexuality, consent, and safety. They play an important role in helping adolescents navigate these spaces safely. (35) Many parents and caregivers may feel less confident with technology than the young people in their care, but open communication, clear guidance, and ongoing interest in adolescents' digital lives are strong protective factors. Young people are more likely to stay safe online when they can talk to trusted adults about problems, ask questions without fear, and receive calm, non-judgemental support. (36)



See guidance in **Module 0: Foundational Parenting Knowledge and Practice: Social, Emotional & Digital Well-being: Managing screen time.**



See **Activity 15** at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on managing risk and online safety.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Early, open conversations about online life:** Support parents and caregivers to talk regularly about digital use, risks, and opportunities with their children.
- **Understanding online risks:** Help parents and caregivers recognise common online risks for adolescents, including cyberbullying, exploitation, harmful content, misinformation, and privacy breaches.
- **Social Media:** Help parents and caregivers understand what is meant by social media and the risks of social media for adolescents if this is not monitored carefully. Explain that there is currently a lack of legislation to protect adolescents, and what they can do to protect their adolescents from home. Reinforce that open communication is critical to supporting and protecting their adolescents.
- **Respectful monitoring and boundaries:** Promote age-appropriate supervision, clear family rules, and negotiated boundaries that balance safety with adolescents' growing independence.
- **Digital literacy and critical thinking:** Help parents and caregivers understand the online spaces their children use. Guide them to support adolescents in questioning online content, recognising unsafe situations, and making informed choices.
- **Responding calmly to online concerns:** Reinforce non-judgemental listening and supportive responses when adolescents disclose online problems or mistakes.

- **Knowing when and where to seek help:** Ensure parents, caregivers, and adolescents know trusted adults, reporting mechanisms, and referral pathways for online safety and protection concerns.
- **Core message:** Talk about it before adolescents learn it elsewhere

Social Media Messages

- Online safety starts with offline conversations.
- Curious teens need informed adults.

Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence

Why It Matters

Adolescents are strongly influenced by their peers. As they become more independent, they may not always recognise risks. (37) Parents and caregivers should guide and support them to make safe and healthy choices, including avoiding drugs and alcohol, practising safe sex, and preventing early or unintended pregnancy.



See Activity 16 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on understanding risky behaviour and peer influence.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Early, open conversations:** Support parents and caregivers to talk about risky behaviours early and regularly, including sensitive topics such as safe sex and contraception. Open conversations can help parents and caregivers discuss what their adolescents may have read online or heard from their peers, and support them in recognising potential misinformation.
- **Understanding peer influence:** Help parents and caregivers recognise how peers shape adolescents' choices, identity, and behaviour, both positively and negatively.
- **Recognising behaviour as communication:** Reinforce that acting out or risk-taking may signal stress, unmet needs, or a request for support.
- **Recognising bullying and peer pressure:** Help parents and caregivers recognise and respond to bullying, identifying warning signs and responding calmly and supportively.
- **Staying connected during risk-taking:** Promote maintaining connection, supervision, and collaborative problem-solving rather than withdrawing when behaviour becomes challenging.
- **Setting clear expectations and boundaries:** Support parents and caregivers to communicate clear rules around safety and to discuss consequences for breaking rules with their adolescents.
- **Knowing when and where to seek support:** Ensure parents and caregivers are aware of trusted adults, services, and referral pathways for additional support when concerns arise.

Social Media Messages

- Identify risks and work out problems together.
- Discussing risk today prevents harm tomorrow.

Skill 4: Discipline and Emotional Regulation

Why It Matters

Harsh punishment in adolescence can escalate conflict. Evidence shows that positive discipline approaches such as setting clear, respectful limits, using non-violent consequences, and involving adolescents in problem-solving, can reduce conflict, strengthen trust, and support children's self-regulation and cooperation over time. (34) Parent support programmes and activities should include modules that help parents and caregivers guide adolescents' behaviour using respectful discipline and emotional regulation. These modules should support caregivers to respond calmly, set fair boundaries, and help adolescents manage strong emotions, strengthening relationships and reducing conflict.



See Activity 17 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on discipline and emotional regulation in adolescents.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Respectful discipline grounded in relationships:** Reinforce that respectful, non-violent discipline builds cooperation and mutual respect; *respect earns respect*.
- **Parent and caregiver emotional regulation:** Support parents and caregivers to recognise and manage their own stress and emotions before responding to adolescent behaviour.
- **Calm communication during conflict:** Promote de-escalation skills, active listening, and calm dialogue during disagreements.
- **Clear expectations and fair consequences:** Encourage setting clear, agreed rules with consistent, proportionate consequences focusing on learning not punishment.
- **Supporting adolescents' emotional skills:** Help parents and caregivers guide adolescents to recognise emotions, manage anger or frustration, and problem-solve constructively.
- **Modelling self-control and coping strategies:** Emphasise adult role modelling of respectful behaviour, and self-regulation.

Social Media Messages

- Teens' brains are still growing. Calm guidance helps them learn, not fear.
- Big emotions need calm adults. Your response shapes how teens handle stress.
- When parents pause and listen, teens are more likely to open up.
- Discipline isn't about control, it's about teaching skills for life.

Skill 5: Consent and Healthy Relationships

Why It Matters

Understanding consent and respectful relationships protects adolescents from violence and exploitation and supports healthy development. (38,39) Parent support programmes and activities should support parents and caregivers to guide adolescents in understanding consent, respect, and healthy relationships as part of their transition to adulthood. These modules should focus on communication, awareness of risk, and reinforcing protective behaviours across friendships and romantic relationships.



See Module 2: Health and Wellbeing: Adolescence: Activity 13 for a Myths and Facts sheet for caregivers on “Talking Openly with Adolescents About Sexual and Reproductive Health (SRH)”



See Activity 18 at the end of this section for a facilitator-led activity to do with parents and caregivers on consent and healthy relationships.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Consent as respect and choice:** Reinforce that consent means freely given, informed, and ongoing agreement, grounded in mutual respect.
- **Starting early, building over time:** Support parents and caregivers to understand that consent is taught through everyday interactions long before dating begins.
- **Healthy relationship skills:** Promote communication, empathy, boundaries, and mutual decision-making in friendships and romantic relationships.
- **Recognising unhealthy or harmful behaviours:** Help parents and caregivers identify signs of coercion, pressure, control, or violence and support adolescents to seek help.
- **Gender, power, and social norms:** Address gender expectations and power dynamics that influence consent and relationships in adolescence.
- **Safe spaces and trusted support:** Ensure parents, caregivers, and adolescents know where to access trusted adults, services, and referral pathways.
- **Core message:** *Consent is respect, and it is learned at home, every day.*

Social Media Messages

- Healthy love includes respect and choice.
- Love is safe and equal.

Skill 6: Preparing for Adulthood

Why It Matters

Parents and caregivers have a critical role in supporting older adolescents into adulthood. This includes conversations about work, relationships, and responsibility. While few Pacific programmes explicitly address this, UNICEF recommends expanding parenting support up to age 18. (40) Parent support programmes and activities should help parents and caregivers guide adolescents as they transition to adulthood. This includes balancing growing independence with continued guidance and protection, while supporting life skills, safety, and future planning. Parenting support should recognise that guidance often continues beyond age 18.

- **Financial skills and budgeting for independence** help parents and caregivers support adolescents to develop basic financial skills, such as budgeting, saving, understanding expenses, and making responsible financial decisions. Activities may include simple budgeting exercises linked to everyday family life, school costs, or early work experiences.
- **Safety and well-being in new environments** support parents and caregivers to talk with adolescents about staying safe as they enter new settings, such as secondary school, training institutions, workplaces, or campus life. Topics may include personal safety, peer pressure, online risks, and knowing where to seek help.

Disability adaptation considerations



As adolescents with disabilities transition into adulthood, the pathways and timelines may differ depending on the type of disability, the support available, and the opportunities within the community. (41) In many Pacific contexts, specialised services, training programmes, or accessible workplaces may be limited, which can place greater responsibility on families and communities to support inclusion and skill development. Parents and caregivers can help adolescents with disabilities prepare for adulthood by building everyday life skills, confidence, and decision-making abilities at a pace that reflects the young person's strengths and needs. (42) This may include practising communication skills, managing money in simple ways, learning household responsibilities, travelling safely within the community, or exploring opportunities for education, training, or work where possible. With encouragement, patience, and community support, adolescents with disabilities can

continue developing independence and participate meaningfully in family and community life as they move into adulthood.

Essential Building Blocks

- **Gradual transition of responsibility:** Support parents and caregivers to progressively shift responsibility to adolescents while maintaining guidance and protection.
- **Life skills and decision-making:** Help parents and caregivers support adolescents to build practical life skills, collaborate with them to solve problems and make informed decisions.
- **Healthy independence and boundaries:** Promote clear expectations around safety, behaviour, and responsibilities as adolescents gain greater autonomy.
- **Open communication and trust:** Encourage honest, respectful dialogue on relationships, education, work, and future aspirations.
- **Preparation for work, education, and civic life:** Support parents and caregivers to guide adolescents in planning for education, livelihoods, and participation in community life.
- **Cultural identity and values:** Anchor preparation for adulthood in the Pacific values of respect, responsibility, family connection, and community contribution.

Social Media Messages

- Guidance today builds independence tomorrow.
- Strong families launch strong futures.



Activities for Facilitators

Activity 15

Supporting Adolescence Skill 2: Managing Risk and Online Safety

Purpose: To support parents, caregivers, and adolescents to jointly set clear, respectful boundaries around behaviour, safety, and responsibilities, and to agree on fair ways to respond if agreements are not followed.



Disability adaptation considerations

Remind parents and caregivers that children with disabilities may be at heightened risks of abuse and exploitation online. Explain that while this is important to understand, it should not be a limit on their adolescent's growing need for independence. Exploring ways together to develop clear rules with adolescents with disabilities is important to help them feel they have a voice and are participating and being respected.

Time: 90 minutes

Materials:

- Flipchart or whiteboard
- Markers
- Family agreement template (simple worksheet or paper)

1. Setting the Scene (10–15 minutes)

Explain that adolescence is a time when young people seek more independence. Clear and respectful family agreements help adolescents develop responsibility while maintaining safety and trust.

Discuss:

- Why rules work better when families agree on them together rather than when they are imposed.
- The difference between control and guidance:
 - Control focuses on punishment and strict rules.

- Guidance focuses on safety, trust, and helping young people learn to make responsible decisions.

Facilitator prompts

Ask parents, caregivers, and adolescents:

- What kinds of rules do families usually have for teenagers?
- Why do families create rules?
- What happens when rules feel unfair or unclear?

Explain that when adolescents help create rules, they are more likely to follow them.

2. Identifying Key Areas (15 minutes)

Ask families to choose 2–3 areas where clear agreements would help family life.

Possible focus areas include:

- Phone and social media use
- Curfews and going out with friends
- Chores and responsibilities at home
- School attendance or work commitments
- Respectful communication in the family
- Safety online and in the community

Facilitator Guidance

Encourage families to choose areas where misunderstandings or conflicts often happen.

Remind parents, caregivers, and adolescents:

- Agreements should focus on safety, trust, and responsibility, not punishment.

3. Creating the Agreement (30–40 minutes)

For each focus area, families discuss and write:

- a. What is expected? Example: “Phone use stops at 9:30 pm on school nights.”
- b. Why does it matter? Example: “So everyone gets enough sleep and schoolwork is not affected.”
- c. How will we support each other? Example:
 - Parents/caregivers agree to explain concerns calmly.
 - Adolescents agree to communicate if plans change.

d. What happens if the agreement is broken?

Encourage families to agree on fair and consistent responses, such as:

- Talking about what happened

- Losing a privilege for a short time
- Restoring trust through responsible behaviour

Facilitator tips

- Encourage parents and caregivers to listen to adolescents' views.
- Remind adolescents that agreements also involve responsibility and trust.

4. When Agreements Are Broken (15 minutes)

Explain that mistakes will happen. The goal is not perfection but learning.

Facilitator Guidance for Parents and Caregivers

When an agreement is broken:

- **Stay calm first:** Avoid reacting with anger or harsh punishment.
- **Talk about what happened:** Ask questions such as:
 - What happened?
 - What were you thinking at the time?
 - What could you do differently next time?
- **Reconnect expectations:** Remind the adolescent why the rule exists.
- **Apply agreed consequences:** Follow the consequence the family agreed on earlier.
- **Focus on rebuilding trust:** Encourage responsible behaviour moving forward.

Facilitator message: Healthy family rules work best when they are:

- Clear
- Fair
- Consistent
- Focused on safety and respect

5. Reflection and Closing (10 minutes)

Ask families to share (voluntarily):

- One agreement they made
- One thing that will help the family follow the agreement

Encourage families to place their agreement somewhere visible at home.

Key message

Family agreements help adolescents build independence while staying safe.

Activity 16

Supporting Adolescence Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers understand how peer influence affects adolescent behaviour and how they can guide adolescents through communication, trust, and practical decision-making.

Time: 60 minutes



Disability adaptation considerations

Adolescents with disabilities may require adapted communication and additional support to recognise peer pressure or unsafe situations, and parents and caregivers may need to provide more guided discussion and practice.

Steps:

Step 1. Reflection: Remembering Adolescence

Ask parents and caregivers to reflect on their own adolescence.

Facilitator prompts:

- Who influenced your decisions the most when you were a teenager?
- Did friends ever encourage you to do something risky or something positive?
- What helped you decide what to do?
- Invite a few participants to share their experiences.

Step 2. Identifying Types of Peer Influence

Divide participants into small groups and ask them to list examples of:

- Positive peer influence (for example encouraging school attendance, sports, helping others)
- Negative peer influence (for example pressure to drink alcohol, skip school, engage in unsafe relationships, or take online risks)
- Each group briefly shares their examples.

Step 3. Practising Supportive Conversations

Present a short scenario: A 15-year-old tells their parent/caregiver that friends are pressuring them to attend a party where alcohol may be present.

Ask participants:

- How might a parent or caregiver respond in a way that encourages openness and trust?
- What responses might make the adolescent less likely to share concerns in the future?

Participants role-play two approaches:

1. A punitive response (for example anger or punishment).
2. A supportive response (for example listening, discussing choices, and planning for safety).
3. Discuss which approach is more likely to help adolescents make safe decisions.

Step 4. Building Decision-Making and Refusal Skills**Introduce simple strategies caregivers can teach adolescents:**

- Pause and think: What could happen if I say yes?
- Practise saying no: Explore ways adolescents can refuse peer pressure.
- Identify safe support: Who can I talk to if I feel pressured?
- Invite parents and caregivers to discuss how they could practise these skills with their children.

Key messages:

- Emphasise that risk-taking behaviour may signal a need for greater support and connection.
- Peer influence is a normal and powerful part of adolescence. Friends can influence both positive and risky behaviours.
- Parents and caregivers cannot fully control adolescents' peer groups, but they can remain connected and provide guidance.
- Open communication helps adolescents feel safe seeking advice before problems arise.
- Conversations about relationships, consent, safety, and peer pressure should happen early.
- Risk-taking behaviour may signal that an adolescent needs greater support, connection, and guidance rather than punishment.

Activity 17

Supporting Adolescence Skill 4: Discipline and Emotional Regulation

Purpose: To strengthen the ability of parents and caregivers to respond to challenging behaviour calmly, apply fair consequences, and reinforce positive behaviour through encouragement and communication.



Disability adaptation considerations

Adolescents with disabilities may not be able to regulate their emotions in the same way, depending on their disability. Parents and caregivers should be encouraged to adapt the strategies to meet the capacities of their adolescents, while continuing to coach and support them to learn to manage their emotions. Additional support from specialised services should be offered where appropriate to support both parents and caregivers as well as adolescents.

Time: 60-90 minutes

Steps

Step 1. Reflecting on Discipline:

Ask participants to reflect on their own experiences of discipline growing up.

Facilitator prompts:

- How were you disciplined as a child or teenager?
- Which approaches helped you learn and improve your behaviour?
- Which approaches made you feel angry, afraid, or misunderstood?
- Discuss how discipline can influence trust, communication, and behaviour.

Step 2. Teaching Through Consequences:

Explain that consequences should help adolescents learn from their behaviour.

Provide examples of fair consequences:

- Temporarily removing privileges (for example phone use or social activities).
- Asking adolescents to repair harm or take responsibility for their actions.
- Setting clear expectations and following through consistently.

Ask parents and caregivers to discuss in pairs:

- What are examples of consequences that teach responsibility?
- What consequences might feel unfair or unrelated to the behaviour?
- Share ideas with the group.

Step 3. Using Encouragement and Positive Reinforcement

Ask parents and caregivers:

- When was the last time you praised your adolescent for something positive?

Discuss ways parents and caregivers can reinforce positive behaviour:

- Recognising effort and improvement.
- Offering praise and encouragement.
- Giving adolescents opportunities to take responsibility and succeed.
- Emphasise that positive attention often encourages behaviour to continue.

Step 4. Practising Emotion Coaching

Present a scenario: A 14-year-old returns home angry after a disagreement with friends and begins arguing with their caregiver.

Ask participants:

- How might a parent or caregiver react if they are feeling frustrated?
- What would a calm and supportive response look like?

Core message: Discipline during adolescence is most effective when grounded in respect, communication, and emotional support - *respect earns respect*.

Key messages to reinforce:

- Discipline should teach and guide, not punish or shame.
- Clear expectations and consistent consequences help adolescents understand responsibility.
- Positive reinforcement and encouragement strengthen desired behaviours.
- Adolescents experience strong emotions; parents and caregivers modelling calm behaviour helps adolescents learn emotional regulation.
- Respectful communication builds trust and cooperation. When parents and caregivers show respect, adolescents are more likely to respond positively.

Activity 18

Supporting Adolescence Skill 5: Consent and Healthy Relationships

Purpose: To support parents and caregivers to guide adolescents in recognising healthy and unhealthy relationship behaviours and encourages open communication before adolescents encounter difficult situations.



Disability adaptation considerations

Adolescents with disabilities may be at heightened risk of abuse and exploitation as well as being mistreated by their partners. Supporting adolescents with disabilities to engage in healthy relationships based on mutual respect and trust is just as important, and parents and caregivers will need to adapt how they support their adolescents in line with their disabilities and their evolving capacities.

Time: 45 minutes

Steps

Step 1. Understanding Respect and Boundaries

Ask parents and caregivers:

- What does respect mean in a relationship?
- How do families teach children about personal boundaries?
- Encourage participants to share examples of how respect is demonstrated at home (for example listening to others, respecting personal space, or asking permission).

Step 2. Talking about Consent

Explain the basic principles of consent:

- Consent must be freely given.
- Consent must be clear and enthusiastic.
- Consent can be withdrawn at any time.
- Silence or pressure does not mean consent.

Ask parents and caregivers to discuss in pairs:

- How could you explain the idea of consent to an adolescent?
- What messages about respect and boundaries do adolescents need to hear from parents and caregivers?
- Invite participants to share ideas.

Step 3. Recognising Unhealthy Relationships

Present a scenario: A 16-year-old's partner frequently checks their phone, becomes angry when they spend time with friends, and pressures them to share personal photos.

Ask participants:

- What signs in this situation might indicate an unhealthy relationship?
- How might a parent or caregiver support the adolescent in this situation?

Discuss warning signs such as:

- Control or jealousy
- Pressure or coercion
- Isolation from friends or family

Step 4. Supporting Adolescents to Seek Help

Ask parents and caregivers:

- Who could adolescents turn to if they feel uncomfortable or unsafe in a relationship?

Discuss safe support options such as:

- Trusted family members
- Teachers or school counsellors
- Community leaders or health workers
- Youth support services where available
- Encourage parents and caregivers to remind adolescents that seeking help is a sign of strength, not weakness.

Core messages:

- Consent is taught through everyday interactions long before dating begins.
- Parents and caregivers play a central role in shaping adolescents' understanding of respectful relationships.

Key messages to reinforce:

- Respect and consent are learned through everyday family interactions.
- Consent means that agreement is freely given, informed, and can be withdrawn at any time.
- Adolescents benefit when parents and caregivers talk openly about relationships, respect, and personal boundaries before dating begins.
- Parents and caregivers can help adolescents recognise early signs of unhealthy or harmful relationships, including pressure, control, or disrespect.
- Open communication strengthens trust and helps adolescents seek guidance when they face challenges in relationships.

Annexes

1. Multi-sectoral Integration

This annex provides guidance on how safety, communication, and connection messages can be reinforced across multiple sectors and community actors. Children’s safety, well-being, and development are shaped not only through specialised services but also through the daily actions of families, schools, and community programmes. Coordinated efforts across sectors such as health, education, social protection, and community services can help ensure that parents and caregivers receive consistent guidance on practices that support safe environments, positive communication, and strong relationships with children and adolescents.

In addition to in-person services, digital communication platforms such as SMS, WhatsApp, and Facebook can be used to reinforce key parenting and safety messages at scale. These platforms can provide reminders, practical tips, and prompts that encourage parents and caregivers to practise positive communication, active supervision, and safe behaviours at home and in the community, including awareness of risks such as road safety, water safety, and online safety. They can also support conversations between parents, caregivers, and children about safe internet use, recognising online risks, and managing digital behaviours responsibly.

The tables below highlight entry points for integrating child protection, safety, communication, and parenting guidance across sectors, helping implementers align their efforts and avoid fragmented or conflicting advice. By coordinating messages and activities across different delivery platforms, implementers can strengthen support for parents and caregivers, and promote safe, supportive, and respectful environments for children and adolescents.

The table identifies key sectors and actors who interact with families, the delivery platforms through which they reach parents and caregivers, and practical tips for coordination at the community level. It also highlights which parenting and safety-related skills are reinforced across different ages, demonstrating how multiple services can support children’s safety, communication skills, and positive family connections throughout the life course.

Programme implementers can use this annex to:

- identify opportunities for collaboration across sectors.
- align safety, communication, and caregiving messages across services.

- strengthen referral pathways and coordination between actors.
- ensure that parents and caregivers receive consistent guidance on practices that promote safe environments, positive communication, and strong connections for children and adolescents.

Table M1.1: Multi-sectoral Integration for Child Protection and Safety

Sector / Actors	Delivery platform	Coordination Tips for Implementers (Pacific Context) to support Parents and Caregivers	Parenting Skills Reinforced (Across Ages)
Health Sector (nurses, community health workers, youth-friendly providers)	Clinics, outreach visits, school health sessions, child health days	Integrate parenting guidance into routine contacts; reinforce non-violent caregiving; support stress management; promote safe home and community environments, including supervision, water safety, and road safety; support age-appropriate independence; identify and refer protection concerns	Managing stress; non-violent discipline; emotional regulation; supervision and everyday safety; online safety discussions; SRH conversations; water safety awareness; road safety practices; safety planning; supporting independence
Education Sector (teachers, ECE facilitators, counsellors, parent-teacher associations)	Schools, early learning centres, parent-teacher meetings, life skills sessions	Align home and school behaviour expectations; reinforce positive discipline and emotional regulation; support communication; promote digital citizenship and safe behaviours in school and community spaces, including roads and water areas	Positive reinforcement; rule-setting; non-violent discipline; consent and healthy relationships; peer influence; emotional regulation; personal safety awareness; road safety; water safety; independence with boundaries

<p>Child Protection & GBV Actors (social workers, case managers)</p>	<p>Home visits, parenting groups, case management services</p>	<p>Support parents and caregivers to replace violent discipline; recognise and respond to abuse; provide coaching during high-stress situations; strengthen parent and caregiver supervision and household safety practices; ensure safe referral pathways</p>	<p>Recognising and responding to abuse; non-violent discipline; risky behaviour response; supervision and safety planning; safety and alternative care</p>
<p>Faith-Based Actors (church leaders, pastoral counsellors, youth ministry leaders)</p>	<p>Faith gatherings, family sessions, church groups</p>	<p>Reinforce parenting messages through shared values of respect, care, dignity, and responsibility; normalise help-seeking; promote shared caregiving and community responsibility for children’s safety and supervision</p>	<p>Positive discipline; consent and healthy relationships; spending time together; managing stress; shared caregiving; adolescence transitions; community safety responsibility</p>
<p>Community Actors (facilitators, parenting mentors)</p>	<p>Parenting groups, community meetings, home visits</p>	<p>Provide peer learning spaces; reinforce practical tools; normalise positive parenting; strengthen shared responsibility for child safety, supervision, and protection in community spaces</p>	<p>All core parenting skills including stress management, positive reinforcement, clear rules, adolescent communication, supervision and everyday safety, road safety, and water safety awareness</p>
<p>Youth Services & Sports Actors (youth workers, coaches, mentors)</p>	<p>Youth centres, sports clubs, after-school programmes</p>	<p>Model respectful relationships and teamwork; promote parent/caregiver–adolescent connection; support life skills, responsible behaviour and personal safety in community environments</p>	<p>Transition to adolescence; peer influence; emotional regulation; child-led time together; preparing for adulthood; personal safety awareness; road and water safety</p>

Livelihoods & Social Protection Actors (programme officers, employers)	Livelihoods groups, workplace initiatives, cash transfer meetings	Encourage shared caregiving responsibilities; support planning for adolescence and transition to work; promote family-friendly practices and safe transport and commuting practices	Including male and female caregivers; preparing for adulthood; shared responsibility; stability during stress; safe travel and road awareness
Disability Support Actors (Disability organisations, outreach workers)	Home-based support, parent groups	Ensure parenting and caregiving support is inclusive; tailor strategies to increased caregiving demands; promote respite and shared caregiving; support adapted safety and supervision strategies	Stress management; positive reinforcement; adapted supervision and safety planning including road and water safety; inclusion in all parenting skills
Migration & Resilience Actors (disaster preparedness, mobility programmes)	Migration planning sessions, resilience activities	Support families to plan safe alternative care; ensure continuity of caregiving during displacement or emergencies; include risk awareness related to transport, evacuation routes, and water hazards	Safety and alternative care; planning ahead; protecting children during transitions; awareness of road and water risks during emergencies

2. Programmes per skill

This annex highlights programmes, tools, and resources that support the parenting and caregiving skills presented in this module. Many organisations and initiatives have already developed materials that address similar topics related to child and adolescent safety, positive communication, and strong family relationships.

The table below lists programmes and resources that facilitators can use to learn more, access training materials, or find ideas for activities. These resources provide additional guidance, examples, and evidence-based approaches that support the skills promoted in this Toolkit. Facilitators can use and adapt these resources to fit local contexts, while keeping key messages on caregiving consistent. These messages support safe

environments, open communication, and strong relationships between caregivers, children, and adolescents. Where links are not available, programme managers and facilitators are encouraged to reach out to the relevant organisation directly to get more information.

Table M1.2: Programmes for Child Protection and Safety Skills

Programme and Guidance	Skill
<p>Name: The Parent Support Programme (PSP) Organisation: Ministry of Education and Training Country or Countries: Vanuatu Date of programme: 2022 Short description or link to the module: <a href="https://education.gov.vu/docs/ecce-
 psp/PARENT%20SUPPORT%20PROGRAM%20HANDB
 OOK%20-%20English.pdf">https://education.gov.vu/docs/ecce- psp/PARENT%20SUPPORT%20PROGRAM%20HANDB OOK%20-%20English.pdf</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 1: Managing Stress and Emotions</p> <p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 3: Modelling Non-Violent and Positive Behaviour</p> <p>Early Childhood Skill 1: Positive Reinforcement</p> <p>Early Childhood skill 2: Setting Clear Rules, Redirecting and Managing Misbehaviour</p> <p>Middle Childhood Skill 1: Supporting Independence with Boundaries</p> <p>Middle Childhood Skill 4: Recognising and Responding to Abuse</p> <p>Adolescents Skill 4: Discipline and Emotional Regulation</p>
<p>Name: UNICEF and Sesame Street Partnership Organisations: UNICEF and Sesame Workshop Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2020 Short videos for caregivers for example: <i>Mae's Minute</i> https://www.youtube.com/watch?app=desktop&v=ohBDn4B9xWU&feature=youtu.be</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 1: Managing Stress and Emotions</p>
<p>Name: Parenting for Lifelong Health for Young Children (PLH-YC) Organisation: Parenting for Lifelong Health Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2018 Short description or link to the module: Includes modules where caregivers reflect on their own childhood experiences and practise modelling</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 3: Modelling Non-Violent and Positive Behaviour</p> <p>Early Childhood Skill 1: Positive Reinforcement</p> <p>Early Childhood Skill 2: Setting Clear Rules, Redirecting and Managing Misbehaviour</p>

<p>new behaviours through role-play. Under PLH-YC, caregivers are trained to “catch their child being good” and reinforce it consistently. https://parentingforlifelonghealth.canto.com/b/J9GSE</p>	
<p>Name: <i>Baby Makes 3</i> Organisation: VicHEALTH Country or Countries: Australia, Nauru Date of programme: 2012 Short description or link to the module: <i>Baby Makes 3</i> (Australia, adapted in Samoa, Tonga and Nauru). Baby Makes 3 implementation guide</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 3: Modelling Non-Violent and Positive Behaviour</p>
<p>Name: <i>Famili i Redi</i> Organisation: IOM and World Vision Country or Countries: Vanuatu Programme date: 2021 Short description or link to the module Famili i Redi is focused on preparing families who will be separated due to labour migration programmes. https://roasiapacific.iom.int/sites/g/files/tmzbdl671/files/documents/2023-10/famili-i-redi-rapid-review-report-digital.pdf</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course Skill 5: Safety and Alternative Care</p>
<p>Name: Safe families Organization: Save the Children Country or Countries: Solomon Islands Date of programme: 202 Short description or link to the module This programme involves workshops for parents focused on positive parenting and support for safety and connection between parents and children from early to middle childhood. https://resourcecentre.savethechildren.net/document/final-evaluation-safe-children-protection-and-care-for-children-in-the-solomon-islands-2025</p>	<p>Middle Childhood Skill 2: Non-Violent Discipline and Play Middle Childhood Skill 3: Continuing Child-led Play and Time Together</p>
<p>Name: Parenting for Lifelong Health Teens Programme Organization: Parenting for Lifelong Health Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2018 Short description or link to the module:</p>	<p>Adolescence Skill 1: Continuing Child-led Time Together Adolescence Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence</p>

<p>Evidence-based programme for caregivers and adolescents that strengthens positive communication, non-violent discipline, and family wellbeing.</p> <p>https://parentingforlifelonghealth.canto.com/b/P13K3</p>	
<p>Name: <i>Place for Parents</i> Organization: UNICEF Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2022 Short description or link to the module: Website with useful resources and guidance for parents and caregivers. https://www.unicef.org/eap/place-for-parents</p>	<p>Best Practices Across the Life Course SKill 6: Water Safety</p> <p>Adolescence Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence</p>
<p>Name: Girl Shine Caregiver Curriculum Organization: IRC Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2022 Short description or link to the module: https://gbvresponders.org/adolescent-girls/</p>	<p>Adolescence Skill 5: Consent and Healthy Relationships</p>
<p>Name: Yut Rise Up Vanuatu Organization: Save the Children Country or Countries: Vanuatu Date of programme: 2023 Short description or link to the module: Parents and caregivers attend 4 weeks of workshops covering adolescent development, peer influence, ender equitable parenting, consent and healthy relationships and online safety.</p>	<p>Adolescence Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence</p> <p>Adolescence Skill 5: Consent and Healthy Relationships</p>
<p>Name: Early Adolescent Skills for Emotions (EASE) Organization: WHO Country or Countries: Global Date of programme: 2023 Short description or link to the module: This initiative includes structured sessions for adolescents and caregivers and supports emotional regulation and caregiver communication. https://www.who.int/publications/i/item/9789240082755</p>	<p>Adolescence Skill 3: Understanding Risky Behaviour and Peer Influence</p>

3. Facilitator Checklist

This checklist is designed to support parents, caregivers, and facilitators in preparing for and delivering the safety, communication, and connection content of the Pacific Parenting Toolkit effectively. It highlights key steps to consider before, during, and after each session to ensure that activities are well organised, inclusive, and supportive for parents and caregivers.

The checklist helps facilitators:

- prepare materials and plan activities in advance
- create a safe and respectful learning environment where parents and caregivers feel comfortable sharing experiences and perspectives
- guide discussions and practical exercises that strengthen positive communication and family relationships
- reinforce key messages about safety, trust, and strong parent/caregiver–child connections
- reflect on what worked well and identify areas for improvement.

Facilitators can use this checklist as a practical reminder during session preparation and delivery, helping maintain consistent quality across sessions and supporting positive learning experiences for parents and caregivers.

Table M1.3: Facilitator Checklist for Child Protection and Safety

Best Practices across the life course

Skill 1: Managing Stress and Emotions
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide parents and caregivers to identify practical daily self-care activities (e.g., rest, relaxation, enjoyable activities) that are realistic within their context.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Teach and model simple stress-reduction strategies (e.g., breathing exercises, grounding, mindfulness) and provide opportunities for practice during sessions.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Encourage parents and caregivers to recognise signs of overwhelm and identify trusted sources of support.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Facilitate reflection on emotional awareness and guide parents and caregivers on responding to children calmly rather than reactively.
Skill 2: Communication and Spending Time Together
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Guide parents and caregivers to identify simple, daily opportunities to talk, play,

and interact with their child.

- Guide parents and caregivers on following the child's lead and responding sensitively to cues, interests, and developmental needs.
- Facilitate discussion on how everyday routines (e.g., meals, chores, walks, storytelling) can be used as connection-building moments.
- Encourage inclusive engagement of fathers, mothers, grandparents, and other caregivers in shared time and caregiving activities.

Skill 3: Modelling non-violent and positive behaviours

- Model respectful and caring communication in all facilitator-participant interactions. Encourage parents and caregivers to also model positive behaviours at home.
- Support parents and caregivers in identifying realistic and appropriate consequences for non-compliance and rule breaking; redirecting, using calming techniques for negative attention seeking and demanding behaviours
- Facilitate reflection activities that help parents and caregivers examine how their own upbringing influences their responses to children.
- Guide parents to use positive language to clearly describe the behaviours they want to see more of, and praise for behaviours they want to encourage.
- Guide parents and caregivers to use praise, encouragement, kindness, and problem-solving strategies, including through role-play and practice.
- Challenge norms that justify violence, reflecting on norms that justify harsh discipline and offering alternatives.

Skill 4: Supervision and everyday safety

- Encourage parents and caregivers to stay within sight and hearing of young children, especially during play, cooking, bathing, and community gatherings.
- Support families to reduce common hazards in the home such as open fires, unsafe cooking pots, sharp tools, chemicals, or unstable structures.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to know where their children are, who they are with, and when they are expected to return.
- Help parents and caregivers adjust supervision as children grow while maintaining clear safety rules and staying involved in children's lives.
- Support parents and caregivers to work together at community level to identify risks for children and make plans to address these together.
- Encourage parents and caregivers to plan for school holidays so they know who their child will be with if they cannot be with them

Skill 5: Safety and alternative care

- Ensure parents and caregivers understand the importance of choosing a responsible, trusted adult who can provide safe, caring, and consistent

<p>supervision for their child when they are away.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents and caregivers to talk with the alternative caregiver about children’s routines, health needs, school attendance, discipline approaches, and safety rules.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind parents and caregivers to stay connected with their children through phone calls, messages, or visits when possible so children feel supported and parents can check on their well-being.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents and caregivers to check how children feel about their caregiver and to pay attention to any concerns about neglect, violence, or other risks.
<p>Skill 6: Water safety</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind parents and caregivers that young children should always be closely supervised around oceans, rivers, wells, tanks, pools, and buckets, even if the child can swim.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage families to set simple rules such as “No water without an adult,” “Swim with a buddy,” and wearing flotation devices when boating or fishing.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support parents and caregivers to teach children safe behaviours around water, such as staying in safe areas, recognising dangers like strong currents, and avoiding unknown water.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage families to cover wells and tanks, empty buckets, identify safe swimming areas, and model safe practices such as wearing life jackets and supervising children carefully.
<p>Skill 7: Road safety</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents and caregivers to closely supervise young children near roads and hold their hands when crossing streets or walking near traffic.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support parents and caregivers to teach simple safety habits such as stopping, looking both ways before crossing, and crossing roads with an adult.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind families to use seatbelts and appropriate child restraints where available and avoid overcrowding vehicles.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage adults to set a good example by avoiding speeding, distracted or drunk driving, and by promoting helmet use for bicycles and motorbikes.
<p>Skill 8: Caring for Children through Crises</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents and caregivers to comfort children, listen to their worries, and reassure them of the ways that they can be safe during difficult events.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Discuss the importance of keeping regular routines such as meals, sleep, play, and learning activities to help children feel secure and restore a sense of normalcy.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Encourage parents and caregivers to let children talk about their feelings or express themselves through play, drawing, or storytelling to help them process difficult experiences.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support parents to make safety plans with their children and help them

memorise important information (address, phone numbers etc)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Remind parents and caregivers to seek support, stay calm where possible, and remain attentive to children’s safety, especially during times of increased stress or disruption.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support parents and caregivers on how to guide children through bereavement.

Early Childhood (0–5 years)

Skill 1: Positive reinforcement

- Teach parents and caregivers to notice and acknowledge children’s positive behaviours, efforts, and cooperation.
- Model and practise giving specific, behaviour-focused praise rather than general or vague praise.
- Emphasize the importance of reinforcing positive behaviour consistently and immediately when possible.
- Support parents and caregivers in using attention, warmth, shared time, and affection as primary reinforcement strategies instead of material rewards.

Skill 2: Setting clear rules, redirecting and managing misbehaviour

- Guide parents and caregivers in developing simple, age-appropriate rules that young children can understand.
- Model and practise the use of calm, respectful communication without shouting, threats, or humiliation.
- Guide parents and caregivers on redirecting children toward appropriate behaviours rather than focusing only on prohibitions.
- Support parents and caregivers in applying consistent, non-violent consequences that teach and guide learning.

Middle Childhood (6–10 years)

Skill 1: Supporting Independence with Boundaries

- Guide parents and caregivers in offering children simple, age-appropriate choices while maintaining clear and consistent rules.
- Facilitate discussion on appropriate supervision strategies as children explore home, school, and community environments.
- Model and demonstrate calm communication, active listening, and clear explanations to strengthen trust and cooperation.
- Support parents and caregivers in helping children reflect on their actions, understand consequences, and learn constructively from mistakes.

Skill 2: Non-violent Discipline and Play

- Guide parents and caregivers in setting simple, clear rules and consistent limits appropriate to each developmental stage.
- Model and practise calm, respectful responses to misbehaviour without shouting, threats, or humiliation.
- Support parents and caregivers in using logical and proportionate consequences that promote learning rather than fear.
- Facilitate activities that help parents and caregivers guide children to reflect on behaviour and make amends when appropriate.
- Reinforce the importance of building warm, respectful relationships and modelling positive behaviour.

Skill 3: Continuing Child-led play and time together

- Encourage parents and caregivers to regularly engage in play and shared time, following the child's lead, interests, and pace.
- Facilitate reflection on how play can strengthen problem-solving, cooperation, and social skills.
- Guide parents and caregivers in integrating play and connection into daily routines such as chores, cooking, or storytelling.
- Promote laughter, relaxation, and shared enjoyment as protective factors against stress.

- Encourage the use of traditional games, songs, and storytelling to strengthen cultural identity and belonging.

Skill 4: Recognising and responding to abuse

- Provide information on different forms of abuse and common warning signs in children.
- Model and practise calm, respectful listening skills for responding to disclosures.
- Emphasize the importance of believing children, reassuring them they are not at fault, and validating their feelings.
- Guide parents and caregivers on taking timely protective action and accessing trusted services when concerns arise.
- Reinforce principles of child safety, confidentiality, and appropriate information-sharing.

Skill 5: Transitioning to adolescence

- Encourage parents and caregivers to maintain regular, open communication and active listening as children approach adolescence.
- Guide parents and caregivers in explaining rules and expectations while gradually increasing age-appropriate choice and responsibility.
- Facilitate discussion on shifting from close control toward guidance and supportive supervision.
- Support parents and caregivers in initiating age-appropriate conversations about body changes, puberty, and personal safety.
- Encourage anchoring guidance in family and cultural values while promoting respect and dignity for others.

Adolescence (11–18 years)

Skill 1: Continuing Child-Led Time Together

- Guide parents and caregivers to intentionally spend time engaging in activities their teen enjoys and to show genuine interest in their interests.

- Model and demonstrate non-judgemental listening and respectful responses to teens' choices, identity, and self-expression.

- Encourage parents and caregivers to ask open-ended questions and maintain connection, even when teens appear distant or give brief responses.

- Facilitate discussion on balancing availability and emotional support with adolescents' growing need for space and independence.

Skill 2: Managing risk and online safety

- Support parents and caregivers to initiate regular, proactive conversations about online use, risks, and opportunities.

- Guide parents and caregivers in setting clear family rules and boundaries that allow for increasing age-appropriate independence.

- Facilitate activities that help parents and caregivers teach critical thinking skills and recognition of unsafe online situations.

- Model calm, supportive responses when adolescents disclose online concerns or mistakes.

Skill 3: Understanding risky behaviour and peer influence

- Encourage parents and caregivers to begin early, ongoing conversations about risky behaviours in age-appropriate ways.

- Facilitate reflection on peer influence and how it shapes adolescents' choices and identity.

- Support parents and caregivers to stay connected and offer guidance even when adolescents test limits or take risks.

- Reinforce the importance of maintaining clear expectations while allowing gradual independence.

Skill 4: Discipline and emotional regulation

- Guide parents and caregivers in setting clear rules and fair, consistent consequences focused on learning rather than punishment.
- Model and practise calm responses to challenging behaviour, including stress management and emotional regulation strategies.
- Facilitate skill-building in calm communication, active listening, and de-escalation during conflict.
- Reinforce modelling of self-control and healthy coping strategies in daily life.

Skill 5: Consent and healthy relationships

- Provide clear, age-appropriate guidance on consent as freely given, informed, and ongoing agreement.
- Facilitate discussions that model respect, boundaries, and shared decision-making in everyday interactions.
- Support parents and caregivers in helping adolescents recognise unhealthy or harmful relationship behaviours and identify trusted sources of help.
- Guide conversations around gender norms, power dynamics, and social expectations that influence relationships.

Skill 6: Preparing for adulthood

- Encourage parents and caregivers to gradually shift responsibility to adolescents while maintaining guidance and protective oversight.
- Support parents and caregivers in fostering life skills, collaborative problem-solving abilities, and independent decision-making.
- Guide parents and caregivers in setting clear expectations around safety, behaviour, and responsibilities appropriate to the developmental stage.
- Facilitate open discussions about education, employment, relationships, and future aspirations.



PARENTING
FOR LIFELONG HEALTH



for every child