

# Good Practices from Positive Discipline and Family Strengthening Interventions

Documented approaches of professionals working with children (in the home, learning environments, civil society groups and communities in Africa)



PARENTING IN AFRICA NETWORK  
For the Ultimate Protection of Children

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Documented approaches of professionals working with children (in the home, learning environments, civil society groups and communities in Africa)

**Parenting in Africa Network  
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P. O. Box 13892-00800 Nairobi, Kenya  
Tel.: +254 (20) 206 30 15/17/18  
Email: [info@parentinginafrica.org](mailto:info@parentinginafrica.org)  
Website: [www.parentinginafrica.org/en](http://www.parentinginafrica.org/en)

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### **Editorial Team**

Dr Susan Gitau, lead Consultant and her team, Jared Ogeda, Stella Ndugire-Mbugua, Isaiah Muthui (branding & creativity) and Esther Okoth. Special appreciation to Save the Children East Africa Regional Office for their continued partnership and technical support.

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## Executive Summary

“.....let us resolve to change legal and social norms that reinforce discrimination and prevent the elimination of violence against vulnerable family members. As we shape a new sustainable development agenda and strive for a world of dignity for all, let us stand united for women’s and children’s rights in families and societies at large” Ban Kimoon, UN secretary General’s message on 2015 International Day of the Family

These words picked from the from the UN secretary general’s message of the International day of Family 2015, echo the efforts of many stakeholders committed to strengthen vulnerable families for the wellbeing of children in Africa.

Parenting in Africa Network has established itself as a regional membership network that is changing the situation of the family in Africa; through innovative advocacy approaches in the region. Good practices from family strengthening Initiatives in Africa, is an initiative that will contribute to creating synergy among family strengthening organizations as well as a tool for knowledge and experience sharing. With the primary objective being providing a linking and learning forum for member organizations, this documentation will also be a strong advocacy and lobby tool for skillful parenting through the good practices and highlights shared. One thing is evident in all the good practices collected: the underlying factors that the presented interventions seek to address are quite comparable across the programs, therefore presenting a unity of purpose in the overall goal: Strengthening families for the wellbeing of children. Stakeholders will realize there is a lot to share and learn from one another, hence a very valuable resource for any organizational with an interest on forming or improving interventions on family strengthening. For most of the initiatives, being PAN members is a common streak; hence also noting that PAN has gained significant success in providing learning forums for its members to demonstrate family strengthening through program.

In all the family strengthening intervention surveyed and documented, all programs regard parents and caregivers as significant stakeholders and actors for successful interventions to happen. This demonstrates the reality that families do have strengths that only need to be identified, recognized and supported to enable positive change to happen. Nothing more could be more sustainable!

Finally, the documentation process has deliberately picked the components that focus on family strengthening through various approaches albeit these being organizations that have other aspects of programming in support of vulnerable children. These intervention ideas and strategies are definitely a window towards key examples of good practices that could inform common advocacy synergies that could go a long way in eliminating violence against children. This should be a living publication that gets periodic updates as more good practices from interventions become evident.

## Programs Embracing Family Strengthening

### ***Parenting in Africa Network (PAN): Building Strong Relationships in Families - A manual (program) for parenting workshops***

#### ***Background***

Parenting in Africa Network (PAN) is a pan-African, network of member organizations, individuals and institutions focusing on promoting parenting in Africa. Their mandate is drawn from the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCRC) and the African Charter on Rights and Welfare of the Child (ACRWC) to advocate for the rights of children by focusing on specific issues that affects the African family. All programs and research work developed, or supported by PAN is geared towards improving the wellbeing of children in Africa.

#### ***Stakeholders and Actors***

PAN's stakeholders and partners include members across Africa collated together in country chapters to ensure focused/localized efforts towards the needs and requirements of individual countries. Through the country chapters, PAN reaches out to governments in various sectors that deliver services to children and participate/influence relevant policies and practices on family strengthening. As a regional organization, PAN has observer status at deliberations of the Committee of Experts on the African Charter for the Rights and Welfare of Children in Africa.

#### ***Family Interventions***

PAN's interventions for strengthening families target member organizations and professionals who are committed to develop programs that target family and child wellbeing. Through national and regional forums that provide opportunities for learning and sharing, PAN is able to inform and showcase innovative programs across Africa and beyond.

***Building Strong Relationships in Families: A (training) manual for parenting workshops for families in Africa (2014).*** This publication is meant for educators and professionals who work with families including institutional based alternative care contexts where children are under the care of social workers as primary caregivers. With this guide, PAN aims to provide members with a guide to developing training programs targeting parents and caregivers. The manual consists of topics that provide knowledge and skills necessary for any adult tasked with the responsibility of care for children. It is available for PAN members to adapt and contextualize within child protection and parenting programs.

## **The course contents of PAN Parenting Resource Manual**

**Introduction:** *Skilful parenting Objectives, Use of manual, Facilitators notes, Ground rules and session organizations.*

1. **Parenting skills:** *Parenting styles, skillful parent, linking parenting skills to children development.*
2. **Child Protection:** *Definition, categories and causes of child Abuse; identifying signs of abuse and child protection.*
3. **Child development:** *Developmental milestones and key learning points for parenting.*
4. **Father involvement in Parenting:** *The greatest gift a father can give his children is to love and respect their mother; How to engage fathers in parenting as co-parents.*
5. **Communication skills for families:** *Importance of communication in families, effective communication with children (self-expression) and distressed children.*
6. **Discipline and character formation:** *Discipline and punishment, dealing with misbehavior, Positive discipline and alternatives to physical punishment.*
7. **Involving children in decision-making:** *Meaning of child involvement, degree of participation and family meetings.*
8. **Resolving conflicts in families:** *sources of conflicts, conflict resolution skills.*
9. **Life skills:** *Types of life skills, teaching children life skills*

**Appendix 1:** *Food, Nutrition and health requirements*

**Appendix 2:** *Laws supporting family and child wellbeing*

**Strengthening Families through Positive Discipline: A Multi-Country Report on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Rwanda.** This is another of PAN's interventions. This multi-country research informs parenting initiatives from among members to provide important highlights that enrich parenting interventions. This multi country research was conducted to document the existing Knowledge, Attitude and Practices (KAP) of parents and caregivers on child discipline in the targeted communities. This study revealed that common methods of behaviour correction for children were: provision of basic necessities, rewarding acceptable behavior, recognizing children, teaching mutual respect, involving children in decision making, beating, encouraging and showing warmth and affection. Of interest, according to this research, was that that 50% of respondents indicated that physical punishment was passed down through generations while 35% used it due to religious teachings. More so, respondents perceived parents, older siblings, religious leaders, and community members as having the responsibility of disciplining children. Prevalence of behaviour correction methods such as: shouting and yelling had the highest score at 70%, threatening to beat was at 68%, use of physical punishment at 48%, and walking out on the child at 32%. The research findings demonstrate the importance of continuous capacity building of parent/caregivers, communities, religious and educational institutions, local organizations, and governments as important in strengthening families for the wellbeing of children.

**Reflections on Africa's Indigenous Knowledge on Parenting: Indigenous parenting practices of different communities in Africa.** This is another of PAN's publications that involved a documentation of positive indigenous knowledge and practices across selected African communities that showcase positive parenting practices that are almost forgotten, due to globalization, but which are still effectively in use among communities in Africa. The publication details aspects of culture, which are held with importance by selected communities, which safeguard children.

The messages center around the care of mother and child before birth, role of fathers in raising responsible children, extended families and their importance in strengthening families as well as sexuality education for the growing boys and girls. This resource publication and its accompanying documentary is a demonstration of positive aspects of the African culture that are important to consider in developing parenting programs.

### **Key Highlights**

PAN's parenting training resource guide provides opportunity for members to adapt the training content into existing child and parent's focused programs. The emphasis of the training guide is that the many challenges affecting children are linked to parenting practices and the family environment that children grow in. Therefore the units' contents provide information that child protection programs can adapt to enrich their core mandate in child wellbeing. This training guide has been piloted by PAN members, since 2010, across the African region. The manual now published by the Secretariat, and in consultation with various members, is now updated and tailored for enabling members to develop their own parenting workshops. However, many are using the Resource Manual as is, or alongside their tailored modules for training parents and caregivers. It was also recently launched at the 3rd Pan African Conference on Parenting held on 21st - 22nd April, 2015, together with members in PAN Uganda Chapter, at Speke Resort Munyonyo.

Information and data presented by the multi-country report on Positive Discipline provides an important background and baseline data to inform Positive Discipline interventions in the individual countries. An important learning across the various countries indicate that communities consulted recognize that parents have a responsibility of ensuring non-violent approaches of imparting discipline in their children. Following the outcome of this study, PAN with support from Save the Children, conducted a 3-day training for Secretariat and members, with follow-up learning forums in various country chapters, to ensure that the Positive Discipline model is rolled out in schools, communities and organizations dealing with children. Some of the key materials developed by PAN include a Documentary: Children's Voices on Skillful Parenting at their early stage of development (Kenya, 2013), Positive Discipline: Opportunities for Strengthening Families, which is a summary of findings and Children's voices, documenting outcomes of a multi-country research on Positive Discipline and Skillful Parenting in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia and Rwanda (2015).

Because African cultures are endowed with rich and positive cultural traditions that were crucial in maintaining strong kinship relations for the wellbeing of families and children; Some of these traditions could be important in informing adaptation and contextualization of parenting programs within communities. Research to inform parenting programs need to be cognizant of values in target communities that could reinforce good parenting practices.

### **Contacts to web-link of PAN parenting resources**

[http://www.parentinginafrica.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1](http://www.parentinginafrica.org/en/index.php?option=com_content&view=frontpage&Itemid=1)

## **The YOPA program, Kenya: Promoting Successful Parenthood**

### **Background**

The Youth Oriented Parenthood into Action program (YOPA) is a project promoted by the Catholic Diocese of Kisii, Kenya in partnership with the Italian organization Arché-ONLUS. Launched in 2009, the program aims at bridging the intergenerational gap that exists between parents and their children, which may challenge the capability of parents to deliver proper guidance to youth living in our modern society. YOPA operates mainly within the municipality of Kisii, is interfaith in nature,

and consists of 20 community volunteers, belonging to different backgrounds, who spontaneously embraced the vision of the program: enhancing parental skills of community members with a focus on promoting family psychosocial and emotional welfare.

### **Stakeholders and actors**

Aside from the community outreaches, organized at the town mosques, various Christian churches and Self Help Groups, YOPA also cooperates with some schools, offering them school-based activities which brings together parents and children in an open forum to build rapport, and express themselves.

### **Family Interventions**

YOPA is currently implementing PAN's parenting guidelines, and organizes outreaches to empower communities with parenting skills, and assists them in understanding teenagers. The program, which targets parents regardless of their religion or race, helps adults to reflect on their parenthood roles and responsibilities, geared towards reducing family conflicts by generating a better parent-child interaction. YOPA is putting plans in place use PAN's manual to provide parenting skills as part of a wider program to promote parents-teachers partnership at ECDE level. PAN's manual curriculum will be delivered through trainings organized for parents of nursery school-going children, organized at the premises of the involved ECD centers, in Kisii, Kenya.

### **Key Highlights**

As a way of enhancing learning and empowering parents to change attitudes and practices on parenting, the parents trained by YOPA are given take home assignments, such as getting to know the best friends of their children, and understanding their children's hobbies and interests. One of the key issues brought up by parents was their fear of losing authority as parents, as a result of adopting non-violent ways of discipline.

### **Contact: Web-link to the program**

[http://www.parentingin africa.org/en/index.php?option=com\\_jdownloads&Itemid=49&view=viewcategory&catid=6](http://www.parentingin africa.org/en/index.php?option=com_jdownloads&Itemid=49&view=viewcategory&catid=6)

## **ICS Africa: Promoting Integrated Support for Families in Africa**

### **Background**

ICS-Africa is a child focused organization working in East Africa with a focus on improving the welfare of children as a priority, hence, child protection and children's rights are high on the agenda. In Kenya and Tanzania, it is a commonly held belief that children should be raised very strictly and by physical punishment. Parents have been raised this way themselves, pass on what they have learned and are not aware of positive alternatives. ICS enables parents and grandparents, to explore positive alternatives to Physical and Humiliating Punishment. And that a positive approach can have positive effects on all members of the family. Children that have had a generally happy and safe childhood often grow up to become positive and stable adults.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

ICS works with multiple partners such as national non-governmental organizations and community based organizations that support ICS in delivering their commitments of change for children. Key for the skillful parenting interventions. They also work with governments to influence various policies and guidelines that target the wellbeing of children.

## **Good Practices Family Interventions**

The Skillful Parenting training program developed by ICS helps fathers, mothers and other caregivers in rural areas of Kenya and Tanzania in raising children. Rearing children is not always easy, certainly not when poverty, violence and great inequality between men and women are part of your daily life. The curriculum of the training is definitely not a lesson on 'how it should be'; rather, it gives parents insight into how children develop. By way of group discussions and practical assignments, parents are invited to reflect on their role in the developmental process.

ICS' Skilful parenting approach is delivered in 12 weekly sessions to parents of children between 0-18 by trained local facilitators. The session discussion topics include: family relations and communication, basic parenting knowledge and skills, parental self-care and self-esteem, child protection, and family budgeting. ICS works with already existing (10) farmer's groups and turns them into parent peer groups. ICS has mainstreamed parents and children with disability into their program and is strengthening the social support networks for the families living with disability.

### **Key Highlights**

Mainstreaming parenting interventions within other child-focused programs has provided ICS with opportunities to strengthen families for the wellbeing of children. Embedding parenting programs within social business enterprises has the potential to demonstrate child sensitive social business.

### **Contact: Web link to programs:**

<http://www.ics.nl/en/contact/ics-africa/>

## **Pendekezo Letu, Kenya: Half-way home for street girls and IGAs for parents/guardians**

### **Background**

Pendekezo Letu, Kenya, which means "our choice" in Swahili, is non-governmental organization established to assist children living on the streets and their families escape abject poverty and lead more fulfilling lives away from the streets and slums of Nairobi. Services that the organization provides are; referral for medical services, counselling, recreation, family tracing and reintegration, street-based education, referral to schools, vocational training and provision of business credit to small groups of children who choose not to leave the streets.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

Pendekezo letu works with stakeholders on child rights and protection in Kenya; key being the Department of Children Services, Kenya, mandated with child protection matters. Important stakeholders are the judiciary and police as law enforcement agencies because a lot of the children they work with get entangled with the law; hence the need to work closely with the department, for protection of these children, in conflict with the law. Also important is the Ministry of Education,

Science and Technology, which ought to support the education interventions for children. Key stakeholders for the success of the interventions are parents and communities from where the children originate, without whose support reintegration and reunification activities would not be successful.

### **Good Practices Family Interventions**

The organizations key business is rehabilitation of street girls, through various approaches: rescue from the streets, accelerated education, life skills, counselling while on the streets, half-way home where there is a residential stay of 10 months and vocation training. These interventions also target teenage mothers, to empower them with skills to raise their own children. While at the halfway house, the social workers use Positive Discipline approaches in working with the children, who have already experienced extreme violence while on the streets. The organization has therefore invested in Positive Discipline education for their teachers and social workers who work with the children in the half way house. The teachers and social workers make specific efforts to involve the children in decision making regarding regulations that govern their stay at the center, and the consequences which everyone must observe while undergoing the various programs.

The organization is keen to strengthen their programs through linking with organizations that have Positive Discipline capacity building as a family strengthening approach to further build their work with families.

### **Key Highlights**

For Pendekezo Letu, the behavior change process that the social workers and teachers use in rehabilitation of the girls has been made successful by embracing child participation in leadership and decision-making. This girls' rehabilitation residential center has a Positive Discipline committee within which the children have representatives. The function of the committee is to set and review regulations and ensure that the girls' input is considered.

### **Contacts**

<http://www.pendekezoletu.org/>

## **Kidogo Early Years, Kenya: Unlocking Potential, Transforming Trajectories**

### **Background**

Kidogo is an organization based in Kibera slums serving the Kisumu ndogo community with high quality ECD services that comprise learning and stimulation for children in the community. It incorporates the community by involving well trained caregivers/teachers and incorporating a business model that improves sustainability of the interventions.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

Kidogo works with many partners in the education sector; Ministry of Education, and other Early Childhood Development partners. The most important stakeholder for Kidogo is the parents and caregivers who are in the process of being empowered with skills to provide the interventions for child wellbeing.

## **Good practices**

### **Parenting Interventions**

At Kidogo, the caregivers involved in day to day care of the children are trained on Positive Discipline techniques like positive reinforcement under the ECD centers' model that combines business sustainability and high-quality care for the children. Their 22 caregivers and teachers have been trained on Positive Discipline and are expected to apply this in their interaction with children. Kidogo is looking forward to scale-up this training to parents of Kidogo children as well; so that the children receive similar care in school and at home. It's in this way that the commitment to transformational trajectories i.e. improving quality of life for Kenya's children, developing a pipeline of talent and, ultimately, helping to break the intergenerational cycle of poverty will be achieved.

### **Key Highlights**

After a roll out of training for Kidogo teachers, 90% of them STRONGLY AGREED that they would henceforth use information from the Positive Discipline training in their work. Participants' learning highlights are below:

1. "Kids behave in a certain way because some of their needs are not met."
2. "I will help both the children and parents to understand the importance of Positive Discipline."
3. "By listening and understanding my children, I will lay structures and rules together with them."

### **Contact: Web link to programs**

<http://www.kidogo.co/our-story/>

## **Children Hope Foundation (CHF), Kenya**

### **Background**

CHF is a membership Community Based Organization registered under the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Development. Its function is to provide children with a chance to achieve the right of identity. The Organization has been working with children, youth, and parents to empower families to live well.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

Children Hope Foundation, has established working relations with organizations that are child and family focused like APHIA PLUS Nairobi, Plan International, Parenting in Africa Network (PAN) and Hope World Wide. In addition, CHF works with parents, children and the community in achieving positive goals for children.

## **Good practices**

### **Parenting Interventions**

Children hope foundation has been working with parents and caregivers in Embakasi sub-county, Nairobi county; specifically Kayole, Soweto, Komarock and Umoja. The training sessions have been developed with the support of PAN through the training manual on Building relations in families. In the same project, teachers have been targeted with Positive Discipline training, to encourage use of alternative methods of correcting behaviour, rather than caning.

### **Key highlights**

Parents and caregivers, who have undergone the training with CHF, report high levels of improvement in their relations with children. They also report that their own children are now friendlier. 'We never thought that dialogue with children would yield such positive results'... said one parent in a Focused group discussion.

One of the challenges that CHF is facing after these interventions is numerous requests for more training, but resources are very limited.

## **Africa Child Policy Forum (ACPF), Ethiopia: Family Resilience in Parenting Children with Disabilities**

### **Background**

African Child Policy Forum, ACPF is a pan African institution of policy, research and advocacy on matters of the African child's wellbeing. It has a mandate to monitor and advice on legal and policy framework governing programming for children's issues as well as provide evidence-based recommendations for improvements in child wellbeing in African countries. Most importantly, it provides a platform for dialogue among policy makers, civil society and development actors on multiple pro-family and child-focused policies and programs.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

ACPF collaborates with governments, intergovernmental organizations, civil society and pan-African organizations in most of its work. A key stakeholder is the AU committee of experts for lobby and advocacy on matters necessary for African governments to follow through.

### **Good Practices**

#### **Family Interventions**

ACPF's Child and Family Program documents and promotes policies and programs that protect children from violence; reduce vulnerability, risk and deprivation of at-risk children; create a safe environment for children; and ensure the social and economic empowerment of children and families. Through extensive research, ACPF has provided evidence that proves that families and communities in Africa face challenges that impact their ability to provide adequate and secure environments in which children can reach their full developmental potential. ACPF promotes child friendly, culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive parenting practices. Furthermore, ACPF recognizes that relevant, child-sensitive and adequately resourced social and economic policies are required not only to reduce child vulnerability, but also to contribute towards continued economic development.

The African report on children with disabilities talks about family resilience in parenting children with disabilities, and demonstrates how parents struggle with raising children with disabilities. Shock, denial and anger; and thereafter depression are some of the initial responses to reality of giving birth to a child with disability; Support, acceptance and adjustment usually follows later. Of note is that parents and caregivers may re-experience grief when interacting with strangers, during transitions in the child's development, and social stipulations in times when life events are expected to occur. An existing gap that needs to be dealt with is that having comprehensive information about a child's disability is the greatest need for parents with children with disabilities. For these children, behavioral problems are particularly challenging to guide and correct since some problems may be triggered by a change of routine, medication, and with some symptoms of disability being might be misconstrued as indiscipline.

### **Key Highlights**

ACPF research enhances knowledge of the situation of children in Africa and the challenges they face. It aims to assist policymakers, practitioners and partners across Africa to strengthen their policies and programs and ensure that they are relevant to all children, and enabling them realize their rights.

### **Contact: Web link to programs**

<http://www.kampalaconference.info/acpf15/index.php/en/programme/the-family-and-the-child-programme>

## **C-sema: Sema Tanzania, Child Protection Program**

### **Background**

Sema is a Swahili word meaning talk or speak; hence an avenue for providing children with an opportunity to speak. C-Sema, is a registered organization operating various life changing projects in Tanzania; the national Helpline 116 for Tanzania, Opinion Boxes in Schools, Training/Mentoring to young students and Sema Magazine, a publication that presents programs and features of their interventions. C-Sema is committed to see a Tanzania where all parents are informed about their roles and responsibilities towards children's right to be heard.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

The child helpline works closely with the existing social services, both public (through the Department for Social Welfare) and private (CSOs, CBOs, etc.) who are critical to delivering services to children. Children, as key stakeholders, are important in informing service delivery which is geared towards their protection.

## **Good practices**

### **Family Interventions**

C-Sema is a child focused organization that already has innovative child protection initiatives that target children, parents and caregivers in prevention and response to child rights violations. As a member of PAN, C-Sema is keen to start integrating family strengthening initiatives in its protection programs by enhancing guidance and counselling through the National Child Helpline on some of the reported issues, parenting workshops with parents, caregivers as well as guidance and counselling teachers; and introducing weekly articles on skillful parenting in the Mwananchi newspaper and a parenting section in their quarterly Sema magazine.

### **Key Highlights**

The outreach initiative; Happy and Sad Opinion Boxes, that promotes child participation by C-Sema is an innovative approach to bringing services at the community level. The initiative besides affording children opportunities to share their opinions, allows the helpline team to work directly with children (Child Participation) in promoting Child Helpline services to their peers and parents alike. This approach could be used to integrate a community based approach to protecting children and involving parents in the interventions.

### **Contact: Web link to interventions**

<http://www.sematanzania.org/work.php>

## **Child Care Rwanda - Kigali**

### **Background**

Child Care Rwanda is a nonprofit Christian based local organization in Rwanda, committed to care for children especially affected by neglect, mental and psychosocial issues. It is committed to tackle all forms of child abuse and family problems.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

Child Care Rwanda works with church ministries, government departments that focus on preventive services for children, organizations and associations that focus on treating family dysfunction, addictions and family strengthening. They work with parents, teachers and children as key stakeholders in the protection of children.

## **Good practices**

### **Parenting Interventions**

Child Care Rwanda has a strong commitment to ensuring family stability through equipping parents and guardians with winning methods and techniques in positive parenting. Child Care believes in using methods that are fully compatible with the Rwandan culture or reviving the Rwandan parenting norms. The focus of their capacity building for families is addressing family breakdown, hence building strong families that will effectively raise their children to their fullest potential. Some of the family strengthening approaches that Childcare Rwanda uses to deliver their interventions is counselling for trauma survivors, abuse and drug addiction in families and parenting skills' training for parents. Church ministers, local leaders and teachers are also targets of parenting skills training. In the coming days, Child Care Rwanda is planning to target community health workers and school teachers who are charged with the responsibility of instilling discipline. Community health workers play an important role in provision of advice on basic aspects of health

to families at the village level. They command a lot of respect from community members, hence they are an important resource.

### **Key highlights**

Through the intervention of Child Care Rwanda, the following are success stories

- Helped trauma survivors to restore their identity and many have reunited with their families. Others have taken decisions they never could have taken after a series of deliverance sessions.
- Broken relationships have been restored after being trained.
- Sponsored an anti-drug association to realize some of its outreach missions to rehabilitation centers.
- Trained members of Anti-Drug Association in trauma recovery and freedom from addiction.

### **Contact Web-link to interventions**

<http://childcarerwanda.org/>

## **Parenting Uganda: Building Purpose Driven Families**

### **Background**

Parenting Uganda is a nonprofit organization that was established to support families thrive and live a purpose driven life. It focuses on working with parents, caregivers and children to ensure that they have the skills and resources necessary to succeed.

### **Stakeholders and Actors**

A member of PAN, Parenting Uganda works with parents who are keen to provide their children with an opportunity for holistic care and development through their learning centers. There is ongoing collaboration with the government, other organizations that focus on the welfare of families in Uganda and PAN Uganda chapter members.

### **Good practices**

#### **Family strengthening Interventions**

Parenting Uganda establish and manage Early Child Hood Development Education in an approach that incorporate the total involvement of parents of the children in the care, learning and stimulation of their children. They ensure a clean, fun and peaceful environment where children are happy.

The organization provides a one-stop center for parents to access parenting skills building information through materials resources and organized workshops. Some of the parents targeted are teen-parents who they reach through seminars incorporating various topics that impart information on child care, stimulation, health and nutrition to enable the young parents raise their children appropriately. The youth in schools are reached through school seminars and talks that empower them with the ability to steer away from negative lifestyle habits that are destructive.

As a member of PAN, Parenting Uganda being a PAN Uganda chapter's lead, implements skillful parenting workshops which provide key information to parents to contribute to strengthening families.

## Key Highlights

Parenting Uganda works with parents and caregivers in their unique situations, family types, cultures and socio-economic backgrounds to ensure each one is empowered to nurture their families purposefully.

Some of the topics that incorporate the parenting discussions are

- Role of food and nutrition in child development
- Common diseases, injuries and their prevention
- Developmental stages of children
- Disability in young children
- Coping with the loss of a parent
- Positive discipline for children
- Step parenting and mixed families
- Prevention of child abuse
- Child Rights

**By age 8, a child's character is about 70% developed.**

This means that values and life skills like socialization, decision making, effective communication, problem solving and leadership abilities have been formed.

## Contacts to Web link for interventions

<http://www.parentinguganda.com/skillfull-parenting/36-child-focused-workshops>

## Uganda Parents of Persons with Intellectual Disabilities (UPPID): Parenting for children living with disabilities:

### Background

UPPID is founded as a non-governmental organization to represent families who have children with disabilities to ensure inclusivity and access to equal rights and opportunities. This also includes lobby for laws and programs to ensure provision of services.

It is a pressure group, whose aim is to work towards giving a voice to the voiceless and ultimately uplift their welfare by giving them a chance to enjoy their human rights as enshrined in the U.N. Declaration on Children's Rights and in the Constitution of the Republic of Uganda. UPPID - advocates for full inclusion of persons with intellectual disabilities as equal citizens and participants in all aspects of life. UPPID- provided support to parents with differently-abled children. The support is in form of self-help groups, self-advocacy groups, and counseling (group therapy) sessions.

### Stakeholders and Actors

UPPID works with about 12,000 members who comprise of organized local Parents Self-Help Groups (PSHG), District Executive Committees (DECs) and Self Advocacy Groups (SAGall) spread out within various districts. UPPID also collaborates with key ministries and other government sectors with interest on advocacy for children and families affected by disability, to influence important policies and guidelines that support families and children.

### Good practices

#### Parenting Interventions

UPPID's work in strengthening families involves mobilization and training of parents to PWIDs on parenting skills, the rights to services and how they can participate in forums that will ensure their inclusion. In addition, through sensitization, awareness raising, lobbying and advocacy on issues of families of children and people living with disabilities, their approach of a membership

structure provides them with an opportunity of being a 'pressure group' to push for the rights of the voiceless; people living with disabilities towards enjoying their rights as enshrined in the UN declaration on Rights as well as the Constitution of Uganda.

### **Key Highlights**

Collaboration with key ministries and with other lobby and pressure groups managed to influence the enactment of the Disability Act 2006, and the UNCRPD shadow Report).

### **Contacts to web link**

<http://uppid.org/?q=about-us>

## **Evidence based Parenting Programs and Adaptations**

The effort of ensuring parenting programs are informed by scientific research ensures that the results are safe and beneficial to those targeted by such programs. Also, through the research trials, the programs not only demonstrate the effectiveness of the interventions and positive impact but also indicate how those results are achieved. Therefore, evidence through scientific research provides the assurance that those positive results will be obtained; and that the interventions will benefit those targeted.

## **Positive Discipline in Every day Parenting – Save the Children**

### **Background**

This is an approach to parenting education developed by Save the Children in collaboration with the University of Manitoba that teaches and guides children, with the goal of obtaining optimal child development. The aim is to provide an effective, non-punitive approach to resolving parent-child conflict, promote children's rights and provide practical tools for everyday interactions between parent and child.

### **Parenting Interventions**

The program is delivered in weekly sessions that allow parents to apply the knowledge and skills and provide feedback during the training period. The content involves tools designed to instill problem-solving skills in non-violent ways by changing attitudes to child behavior. The program fosters understanding that punishment effects immediate compliance without learning new ways of behavior while Positive Discipline promotes self-reflection and learning. Parents build empathy through understanding the reasons underlying children's behavior, hence the development progression and how children behave in each stage is a critical component of this program. Parents learn and understand the child within their developmental stage and learn how to build a healthy relationship beneficial for the child's development. The training materials including a parenting-book have been developed in collaboration with University of Manitoba based on existing research and feedback on the piloted program.

### **Evidence from pilot programs: Behavior modelling and Positive Parenting in Childhood and Adolescence, Dadaab Refugee Camp**

Save the Children has implemented the program in Dadaab refugee camp, within an approach that is providing safety for children deprived of parental care within alternative family based care amongst volunteer foster parents in the community. The Positive Discipline project is delivered in sessions

that allow ongoing application of knowledge and skills, while allowing feedback. Based on Positive Discipline in Everyday Parenting (PDEP) approach, the training tools incorporate fostering problem solving between parent and children in non-violent ways. The program fosters understanding of how punishment results to immediate compliance while inhibiting internalization of good character formation. Community facilitators deliver the program in the participant's language hence 100% of parents commit to apply knowledge learnt. To date, about 700 parents have successfully completed the program through 30 community facilitators, while sensitization on challenging social norms and attitudes is ongoing. Child-friendly space activities provide psychosocial wellbeing of traumatized children and offer protective environments and counselling, to strengthen families to care and protect children. A 2015 KAP study by PAN on Positive Discipline, revealed that in Dadaab, 89% of the parents trained hadn't punished children in a year preceding the study<sup>1</sup>.

### **Key Highlights**

1. Testing small scale projects within a broader project allows for better planning to scale-up interventions: the Positive Discipline project in Dadaab has contributed to the efforts of the larger child protection program in elimination of violence against children within families.
2. Communities have valuable resource people who only need comprehensive capacity building to deliver parenting programs in enhancing the protection of vulnerable children.

### **Contacts: Web link to interventions**

<https://kenya.savethechildren.net/what-we-do/child-protection>

## **Triple P Positive Parenting Programs**

### **Background**

Triple P - Positive Parenting Program - was developed by Professor Mathew Sanders and fellow Researchers at the University of Queensland (copyright owner) while Triple P International, its social enterprise, disseminates Triple P programs throughout the world. The program's development was in close collaboration with the University's Parenting and Family Support Center where Prof. Sanders and associated researchers ensure that quality standards are maintained.

### **Good Practice Parenting Interventions**

The Triple P-Positive Parenting Program is guided by rigorous research and efficacy trials that continue to test its adaptability in many countries in the world. It has multiple strategies that target different types of families to help parents develop a safe, nurturing environment, promote positive, caring family relationships and develop effective, non-violent strategies for promoting children's development and dealing with common behavioral problems and developmental issues.

The program also aims to promote parental confidence, reduce parent's stress and, in the case of two-parent families, improves a couples' communication skills and consistency in parenting strategies; thus reducing known risk factors and strengthening protective factors associated with behavioral problems. Most importantly, the program's parenting and family support strategies are designed to prevent behavioral, emotional and developmental problems in children as well as reduce their severity.

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<sup>1</sup> Parenting in Africa Network 2014: Strengthening Families through Positive Discipline: A Multi-Country Report on Knowledge, Attitude, and Practices in Kenya, Uganda, Ethiopia, and Rwanda. PAN

## Key Highlight

Triple P parenting programs are grounded on evidence that has been conducted to prove its efficacy in strengthening families: Independent randomized trials, pre-post training evaluations, and, for most of them, a demonstrated increase in parent nurturing, reduction on harshness and for children, reduction in aggression. However, despite this level of success, little is known on Triple P's parenting programs efficacy in an Africa setting. All the documented trials have been mainly in Europe, United States, Australia and New Zealand. PAN is however conducting a regionally-scoped Independent Evaluation of group Triple P, gauging its efficacy in an African context, to be realized in 2016.

### Triple P Program Adaptations: Evidence on Trials

#### 1. UK-based South Asian Community

In order to assess the impact of an adapted Triple P program, a research to test the efficacy of a modified Triple P program, was delivered to parents of a South Asian community based in West Midlands UK, by Triple P trained facilitators. A comparison was done to compare the outcomes of the Group Triple P approach (control) and the adapted approach (experiment) to compare the outcome of the training. The experiment involved use of the prescribed 10 week training period, the prescribed 2.5 hour sessions and parent recruitment method for both control and test groups. However, additional slides were used, face to face consultations for the test groups as opposed to the prescribed content slides and telephone follow up for the control groups.

The research outcome for both the parenting program in the experiment (control and adapted) had a significant effect for parents, therefore indicating no significant difference on parent outcomes. However, the parents in the test group were more satisfied with the adapted interventions, and happy with the opportunity for face to face interviews.<sup>2</sup>

#### 2. Urban informal Settlement; Nairobi Kenya

A PAN-Triple P research in Kenya, was the first trial to test cultural acceptability of Group Triple P amongst parents in Africa. The aim was to test the various strategies used for parenting training would be culturally acceptable amongst Kenyan parents and if not, explore the adaptation of some key aspects to fit the African context. The research trials involved 30 parents from varying social economic statuses for the parenting training group and another 59 parents for the cultural acceptability study. The outcome indicated that the Group Triple P is largely acceptable, with an above 80% average of parents reporting no barriers to apply the 4 strategies of Groups Triple P parenting: Building Positive Relations, Encouraging good behavior, Teaching new skills and Behaviors and Managing Problem Behavior<sup>3</sup>. Generally, the parents were receptive of the program and exhibited motivation for help with their parenting responsibilities. The Triple P strategies perceived as highly relevant and useful in equipping the parents with skill and know-how to improve the future for their children. All the strategies were seen as culturally acceptable; however certain strategies like time out and quiet time needed to be changed to adapt to the context where families live in small one roomed houses and congested neighborhoods. The intended impact was however appreciated. The prescribed time for each session was not sufficient due to the need to provide translation for some of the parents who were not conversant with English as the language of delivery. For this trial, translation was provided by local trainers who had already been trained as Triple P facilitators.

<sup>2</sup> Dr. Neelan Kumar 2013; Will a modified Triple P Parenting Program which takes into account cultural issues, produce better outcomes for a UK South Asian community in the West Midlands? Triple P; [http://www.ucl.ac.uk/education-ai-psychology/resources/Kumar\\_2013.pdf](http://www.ucl.ac.uk/education-ai-psychology/resources/Kumar_2013.pdf)

<sup>3</sup> Neelan Divya Dr., Kenya Triple P Project: Debrief, Triple P Parenting Program, University of Queensland

## **Key Highlights**

From these two trials, it is evident that the cultural context should be understood and taken into account when adapting or delivering the Triple P programs. Translation of the training materials is critical, including adjusting the prescribed session timing and allowing for face to face interactions.

## **Strengthening Families Program**

### **Background**

This is a parenting program started by Iowa State University to target children aged 10-14 and their parents. It has a seven-week family skills-building curriculum which aims at empowering parents with skills to be better parents and young people gain skills on dealing with peer pressure and its related risks to behavior and health.

### **Family Interventions**

The training program targets families that are deemed to have high risks; adolescents prone to risky behavior, like drug abuse and risky sexual behavior, those undergoing treatment for drugs and substance abuse. And for parents, it targets those at risk of maltreating children, possibly through violent discipline measures, neglect or a result of dysfunctional issues affecting the family. These are families that could be under monitoring by child protection services; for instance probation for drug-related offences, parents or adolescents undergoing treatment for drug abuse and children in foster care.

The program empowers parents with skills to interact and communicate positively with their children according to their developmental level, hence setting realistic expectations in line with the child's stage and abilities. They learn to notice and reward good behavior with attention and praise. Children on the other hand, learn communication skills to nurture communication with parents and peers, hence building resilience, problem-solving, positive thinking and anger management. The training incorporates practice sessions where parents and children get opportunities to practice what they learn in interactive exercises; which when translated into the home environment become opportunities for behavior change.

### **Adaptations of Strengthening Families Program**

#### **The Happy Families Program- Thailand –**

### **Introduction**

Building Happy Families Program is a parenting and family skills intervention, implemented by International Rescue Committee in collaboration with the Harvard School of Public Health and Duke University. At its initiation, it targeted displaced communities of Burmese families living on the Thai-Burmese border.

### **Parenting Interventions**

The training program consists of a 12 week family intervention program targeting parents and caregivers within families affected by displacement. The content involves setting appropriate developmental expectations; understanding negative consequences of harsh punishment; non-violent discipline strategies; positive communication and problem-solving skills; including stress management for caregivers. The training sessions involve caregivers and children who participate in parallel group sessions, and combines family practice sessions. This intervention is delivered by IRC program staff and community-based facilitators in the target communities.

**Key Highlight**

The intervention was subjected to an impact evaluation that used a randomized control experiment composing of 497 families. Some of who received the intervention immediately (treatment group) and another a delayed intervention (control group), allowing the comparison of outcomes. Largely, the results indicated an increase in caregiver-child interaction through improved parenting practices and a reduction in tendency to use harsh treatment. Families that were involved in the program, reported an increase in cohesiveness, better communication, problem solving and spending time together as a family<sup>4</sup>.

**Contact to web link for further details**

[http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/HappyFamilies\\_brief\\_FINAL\\_18Nov14.pdf](http://www.rescue.org/sites/default/files/resource-file/HappyFamilies_brief_FINAL_18Nov14.pdf)

**Parents matter: Embracing Parents in Sexual Risk**

This is an evidence-based program designed by researchers at CDC (Centers for Disease Control and Prevention USA) for parents of preteens to enhance protective parenting practices and promote parent-child discussions about sexuality and sexual risk reduction.

**The Intervention**

The program consists of five sessions delivered in 2 and half hour sessions. It is designed to help parents overcome common parent-child communication barriers and enhance parenting skills to tackle barriers to communication. It is about empowering parents with a clear understating of risks inherent in sexual risk taking among preteens, and consequently empowers them with skills to discuss sexual issues with their children by challenging the discomfort and embarrassment that is common with discussing matters relating to sex with children. In addition the program is keen to empower parents with knowledge on how to enhance positive reinforcement.

**Adaptations from Parents Matter Program****Families Matter! Program- Sub-Saharan Countries**

This Families Matter Program is an adaptation from the Parents Matter! Program; a CDC US based program for parents of preteens. The adaptation was spearheaded by PEPFAR in collaboration with CDC and in-country partners (KEMRI in Kenya) and was delivered in various countries in Africa to provide a parent-focused intervention that enhances parent-child communication on sexuality and sexual risk reduction. The goal of the program is to reduce sexual risk behaviors among adolescents, including delayed onset of sexual debut.

**The Intervention**

This parenting program recognizes that many parents and guardians may need support to effectively convey their values and expectations about sexual behavior and communicate important HIV, STD, and pregnancy related prevention messages to their children. The ultimate goal of the intervention is to reduce sexual risk behavior among adolescents, including delayed onset of sexual debut, by using parents to deliver primary prevention to their children and increasing awareness and protective strategies against child sexual abuse, and harmful gender norms that may lead to violence.

The program is delivered in six consecutive weekly group sessions, lasting approximately 3 hours each; includes a designated session where parents bring in their children (9-12 year olds); to practice communication skills learned. The program is facilitated by a team of two certified facilitators: male and female.

## Key Highlight

This parenting program has been implemented through a PEPFAR/KEMRI funded program in Western Kenya whose outcome evaluation amongst 375 families demonstrated that the intervention was well-embraced by the community and retained its effectiveness, successfully increasing parenting skills and parent-child communication about sexuality and sexual risk reduction.<sup>5</sup> Following successful initial outcomes, CDC/PEPFAR continues to support the adaptation, implementation, and scale-up of this program in 8 countries in sub-Saharan Africa, including Kenya, Tanzania, Cote d'Ivoire, South Africa, Zambia, Botswana, Mozambique, and Zimbabwe. On average, country programs maintain over 90% retention of participants across the original 5 FMP sessions. The program has been delivered to over 300,000 families and is currently available in English, and Kiswahili: including other African languages like Setswana, Lozi, Tonga, isiXhosa, isiZulu, Afrikaans, Xitsonga, isiSwati, Sesotho and Oshiwambo<sup>6</sup>.

## Interventions targeting Schools

Positive Discipline in learning institutions is critical for enhancing child wellbeing and safety. The goal of institutions of learning is to impart learners with knowledge, skills and an outlook to life that empowers young people with the knowhow of good and responsible citizenry. "Education is the soil to help them grow into global citizens who can contribute to our common future."<sup>7</sup> Schools, therefore, ought to embrace approaches that nurture warm caring relations upon which children would get an opportunity to learn. For many children in Africa, corporal punishment has been a discipline approach utilized by teachers and unknown to many, has been the cause of trauma and suffering for many children, to an extent of dropping out of school. There have been efforts to end this situation through design of non-violent approaches to discipline that aim at empowering teachers with skills to understand child development and the context that contributes to their behavior. Below are a few examples of such programs that have provided this intervention.

## Save the Children International, Kenya Program

### Background

With over 25 years operational experience in Kenya, Save the Children's programming targets Kenya's poorest and most marginalized children and their families. Child protection is a key sector for Save the Children and the programs range from child protection in emergencies; strengthening child protection systems; national level advocacy to ensure that all children have the protection and support they need, and strengthening capacity of civil society to deliver sustainable interventions for children.

Save the Children is committed to increasing children's protection against violence, abuse, exploitation and neglect, and to support children's recovery when these violations do occur. In order to increase children's protection from violations, Save the Children has embedded Positive

Discipline activities within the broader child protection program to provide interventions in addressing physical and humiliating punishment in attempts to instill discipline both in family and school settings. This largely involves initiatives that cultivate warm caring relations between children and adults in various settings.

<sup>5</sup> Poulson MN, Vandenhoutd HA, Wyckoff SC, Obong'o C, Othura J, Njika G, Othwoma NJ, Miller KS. Cultural adaptation of a US evidence-based parenting intervention for rural Western Kenya: From Parents Matter! to Families Matter! AIDS Education and Prevention. 2010; 20(4): 273-285.  
<sup>6</sup> Centers for Disease Control and Prevention; Families Matter Program Overview; Center for Global Health Division of Global HIV/AIDS 1600 Clifton Road, Mailstop E-04 Atlanta, GA 30333. <http://www.cdc.gov/globalaids/publications/ftp/full-overview-final-3.5.14.pdf>  
<sup>7</sup> United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon, at The Oslo Summit on Education for Development, July 2015

## **Stakeholders and Actors**

Save the Children actively involves government stakeholders within the relevant line ministries: Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST) - specifically the Department of Basic Education; and Ministry of Labour and Social Services (MLSS) - specifically the Department of Children Services. Other partners include various child-focused national and international NGOs keen to eliminate violence against children in all its forms, as well as parents and teachers. Children and adults (both men and women), as critical stakeholders, are always consulted to seek their opinions.

## **The intervention**

Save the Children Kenya, through a collaborative initiative with the Directorate of Basic Education (DoBE) in the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology (MoEST), initiated a process to enhance positive nurturing teacher-pupil engagements in schools through the drafting of a resource manual for teachers: *Positive Discipline: A Teachers Handbook*. The handbook is composed of topics that helps the teacher understand the learner's environment (from which they grow) which has a huge contribution to shaping their behavior. The objectives set in each unit addresses the need to focus on teachers' attitude, knowledge and skills regarding positive approaches to discipline. The handbook's roll out will be accompanied by a facilitators manual to reach practicing teachers, while advocacy and lobby efforts are ongoing among top level education management stakeholders in the country to embed the handbook's content into Kenya's Teacher Training Colleges' curriculum.

## **Plan International: Positive Discipline Programs**

### **Background**

Plan International is a child focused non-governmental organization that works to prevent and respond to issues that affect the wellbeing of children. The aim of starting the positive discipline programs was to help parents and teachers gain a better understanding about children's psychology and the consequences of punishment, whilst equipping them with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively apply Positive Discipline as an alternative to physical and emotional punishment. These newly developed materials teach adults to deal with underlying anger, whilst demonstrating Positive Discipline and helping their children to behave well without forceful, harsh, harmful punishment.

### **Interventions**

Plan International Vietnam: Positive Discipline - Training Manual

The training manual, developed by Plan International Vietnam, is aimed at training parents, teachers and caregivers on Positive Discipline. It covers techniques, case studies and advice for alternative forms of discipline and looks at the concept of punishment within the context of Early Childhood Development. This program is embedded within the child protection program whose aim is prevention of physical and emotional punishment against children in several provinces in Vietnam. The training content was developed in close consultation with educational and psychology specialists, practicing teachers and government officers.

### **Plan International Kenya: Trainers' Manual on Alternative Approaches to Discipline**

The aim of developing this trainer's manual was to impart knowledge and skills on alternative approaches to discipline to teachers, parents, guardians and other caregivers, tasked with the responsibility of care for children. The manual is a guide and offers strategies to adults, which will help them refrain from reacting to child behaviour. It enables them to instead, respond to such behaviours through Positive Discipline and help children to behave in acceptable ways

without forcing harsh, harmful punishments upon them. This training manual will therefore support potential trainers to facilitate courses for teachers, parents, guardians and other caregivers. Most importantly, the facilitator is not limited to using this manual in isolation, but can use it alongside other modules.

### **The Intervention**

The training content is designed to foster better understanding on children's growth and development, and the associated behaviour across the developmental stages. The training program allows trainees to understand the consequences of punishment. It further equips the targeted groups with the necessary knowledge and skills to effectively apply Positive Discipline as an alternative to Physical and Humiliating Punishment.

### **Contact: Web-link to program resources**

<https://plan-international.org/positive-disciplines-training-manual>

## **Raising Voices: Preventing Violence against Women and Children Creating a good school without Corporal Punishment - Uganda**

### **Background**

Raising Voices is a nonprofit organization based in Kampala, Uganda working toward the prevention of violence against women and children. The organization's interventions aim at influencing the power dynamics shaping relationships between women and men, girls and boys by catalyzing social change in communities.

### **Schools' Interventions**

Raising Voices developed a toolkit targeting schools 'The Good School Toolkit' to help educators and students explore what makes a healthy, vibrant, and positive school and guide them through formulation of their vision. It was developed as a response to a study that showed that 60% of children interviewed experienced violence in schools. The toolkit is provided in three packages, which consist of an introductory package that provides educators with the tools to inform the decision of creating a good school; its second package assists educators in preparing a team of community members dedicated to joining the journey to creating a good school, and explores qualities of a good teacher. The final and third package addresses discipline and helps educators to establish a school culture and disciplinary methods that support Positive Discipline instead of corporal punishment. It also provides steps to think about the future, plan for the way forward, and measure and celebrate success. Also included is a child-friendly and inspiring learning materials in form of posters and cartoon booklets.

### **Key Highlight**

A collaboration between Raising Voices, the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine and Makerere University, the study to investigate the efficacy of the Toolkit in Ugandan schools, has been conducted within 42 schools in Luwero District. The study was a randomized controlled trial and whose primary outcome was the reduction in physical violence against children. Basically, the trial results indicated that the toolkit is an effective intervention for reducing violence against children from school staff in Ugandan primary schools, in the following ways.

- A reduction of physical violence, by teachers and school staff, against children by 42% (within 18 months).

- In intervention schools, 50% fewer teachers (compared to control) report using physical violence against students.
- The Toolkit promoted students' identification with their school, as well as their sense of safety and belonging at school<sup>8</sup>.

**Contact: Web link to program resources**

<http://raisingvoices.org/good-school/>

## **Western Cape Education department: Learner Discipline and School Management, Western Cape, South Africa**

### **Background**

This is a training program developed for school managers and stakeholders to enable building of capacity of educators in dealing with learner discipline challenges after banning of the old system of corporal punishment and control within schools in the Western Cape. Education managers and researchers being cognizant of the urgent need to deal with behavioral issues in innovative ways came up with the program; Learner Discipline and School Management, an approach to positive behavior support that represents a shift from a focus control, towards a developmental and restorative approach.

### **The Intervention**

The training program is designed with a goal to ensure comprehensive development of the child. It equips the teachers with skills to engage with learners and consider their needs with a positive attitude. The program structures considers school managers, teachers, class prefects as well as parents as having specific responsibilities to ensure Positive Discipline and lists these responsibilities. Emphasis is that each stakeholder has a contribution to make to the child in enhancing Positive Discipline in the school environment. The role of the parents is deemed very important in supporting the positive non-violent discipline strategies as well as ensuring constant communication with the schools and teachers. The training program has 3 critical subject areas that provide the teacher with practical skills to handle conflict, deal with behavior problems and manage anger; both self and the learners. It underscores the importance of support systems and provides contacts of counselling and psychosocial support agencies that can be contacted for child and family therapy.

### **Key Highlights**

This training program is very comprehensive and has considered all relevant stakeholders in addressing the learners need for acquiring discipline, responsibility for actions and decisions, self-respect and respect for others in upholding peace and coexistence<sup>9</sup>. All topic sections provide contacts for additional support from agencies that provide support to children and families.

<sup>8</sup> Devries, Karen M et al. The Good School Toolkit for reducing physical violence from school staff to primary school students: a cluster-randomized controlled trial in Uganda *The Lancet Global Health* . Volume 3 , Issue 7 , e378 - e386  
<sup>9</sup> Education Management and Development Centre, Western Cape, 2007 page 1

## Recommendations

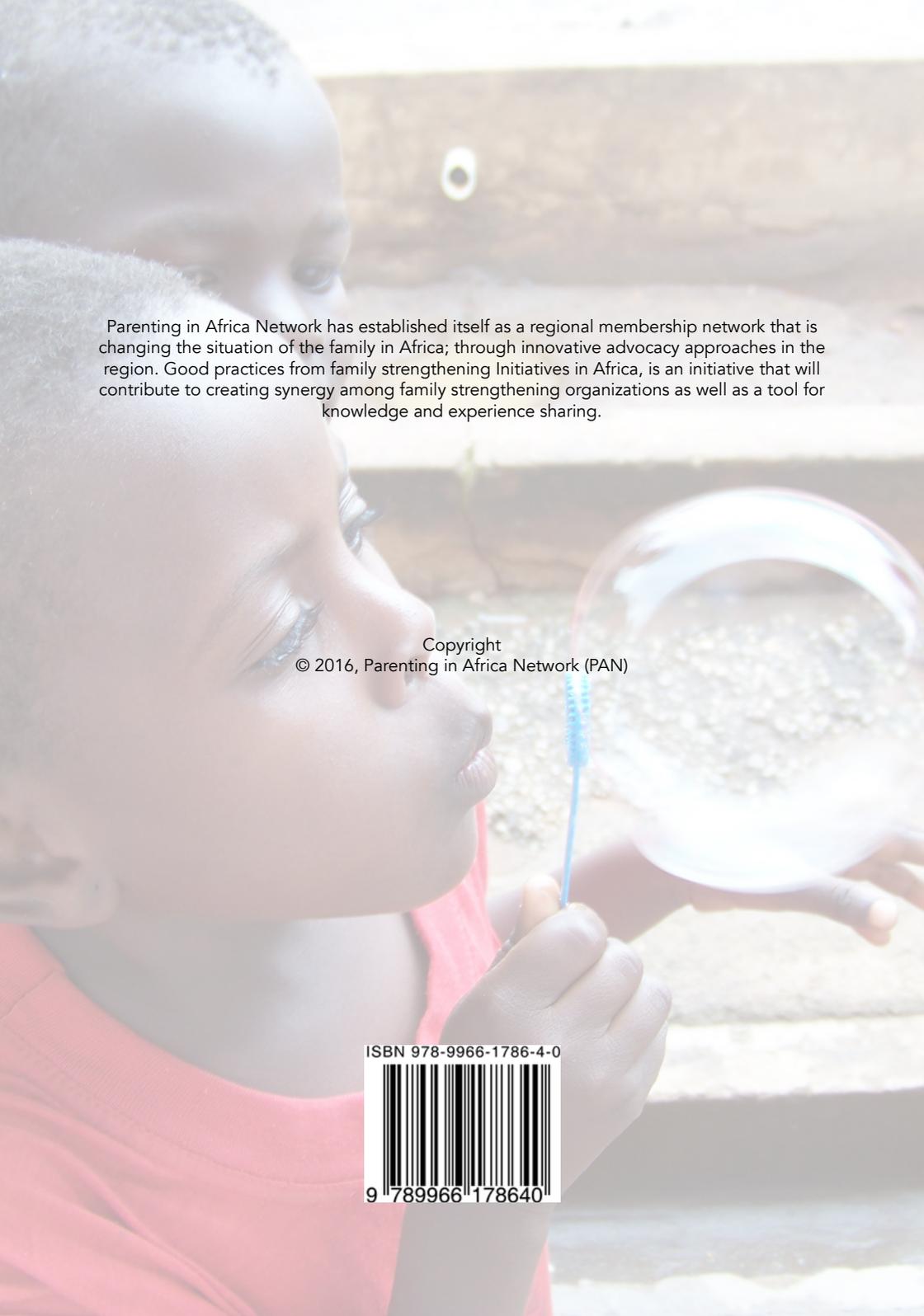
PAN holds an important position in informing parenting programs in Africa. This inquiry into existing and ongoing Positive Discipline and family strengthening programs reveals the great need that is there on efforts to empower parents for the wellbeing of children. Evidently, child wellbeing is central in all these efforts, hence programs must ensure materials and training resources developed are user-friendly and based on identified needs and capacity gaps of target groups.

Some of the critical issues that PAN needs to take cognizance of are:

- **Scientific Evidence** is a critical aspect of proving efficacy of parenting training programs so that interventions are measured for effectiveness and expected impact. The rollout of training programs for parents require resource allocation that should be accompanied by comprehensive training plans, priority target organizations, alongside clear monitoring and evaluation strategies to provide the relevant research evidence.
- **Adaptations or design of programs** deemed for implementation cannot ignore the presence of positive aspects of culture and traditions within communities that were/are effective in family strengthening. Research has proven that the success of interventions will largely depend on contextualization of training approaches through translation into local language and use of examples/illustrations from the target community.
- **Embracing partnership** in design and implementation of programs is critical in ensuring the success of interventions. Institutions of research and training are important stakeholders that would ensure parenting programs are indeed transformational. Scientific research is a resource that PAN could consider available to its members, through its linking and learning programs to test the efficacy of some of the parenting approaches reflected in this publication.

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Parenting in Africa Network has established itself as a regional membership network that is changing the situation of the family in Africa; through innovative advocacy approaches in the region. Good practices from family strengthening Initiatives in Africa, is an initiative that will contribute to creating synergy among family strengthening organizations as well as a tool for knowledge and experience sharing.

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