Building Resilience

Through Play-Based Learning

Training Manual for Parents and Community Members

Introduction to the manual

This training manual focuses on capacity development. This workshop offers opportunity to parents/ community members to acquire skills and pedagogical knowledge to develop and implement effective strategies, approaches and curriculum on resilience building for children through play.

There are six modules to be covered in the training. These modules are based on research about how children can develop resilience through play as they learn and live in a complex and changing world. The modules reflect the growing consensus among early childhood professional organizations that a greater emphasis needs to be placed on young children's acquisition of resilience skills, play-based approaches and participation in a meaningful, learning and living experiences to be able to live happier and healthy lives that prepares them for the future workforce. It also provides opportunities for participants to reflect on their own perspectives, working styles, develop and acquire knowledge and competencies that will add value to their teaching skills and capacities. It is required for the facilitator and each participant in this workshop to have a copy of this manual and all other documents such as policies, instructional resources that will be used during the training.

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How to use this Manual?

Participatory approach

"Participatory methodologies aim to actively involve people and communities in identifying problems, formulating plans and implementing decisions" (DfID: Tools for Development, 2013)

Participatory approach is a technique wherein power is in the hands of all participants to control the process and actions involved in the training or discussion. It encourages the participation of individuals in a group process. The approach is designed to build self-esteem and a sense of responsibility for a community's decisions, and to mobilize the community as the source of change. The main goal of adapting a participatory approach is to implement change from the grassroots level. Participants learn from each other and develop a respect for each other's knowledge and skills. During this training, this approach should be used to offer opportunities for participants to share experiences, ideas, reflect on problems and brainstorm solutions. In this approach, the facilitator listens to the participant's discussions and respectfully provides constructive feedback.

Brainstorming

Brainstorming is a technique where a group of participants come together to generate ideas and solutions around a specific concept or topic of interest. Brainstorming is a valuable way to initiate discussion concerning a concept or topic. The step-by-step process of brainstorming are:

- Identify a problem or topic – the facilitator provides a short brief or explanation on the topic or concept.

- The facilitator establishes ground rules - such as " Listen To Others", "Do Not be Judgmental" and "Respect Others". Others may apply accordingly.

- Participants generate their ideas and write down in their notebooks. They present the ideas at the appropriate time and elaborate on the ideas during the presentation.

- From the pool of ideas, selections as per the needs of the topic are made and written down for further consideration.

- A summary of the relevant ideas is presented

Hands-on-minds-on technique

This technique requires the participants to be actively engaged in the learning or training process. Hands-on-minds-on is when participants are fully engaged in a task, and are actively thinking and doing an action simultaneously. The technique is associated with simulation, case study, role, behavior modelling etc . A participant's hands are engaged, minds are questioning, sorting through cross-cutting themes, and making connections. This approach allows participants to engage in kinesthetic learning and provides a unique opportunity to enrich their minds in a new and engaging way. Participants learn better when they are actively involved in the process in the form of playing games, role playing, and experimenting. This approach helps the brain to create pathways that facilitate information retention.

Plenary Discussion

In a plenary session, participants can be divided into discussion groups. The facilitator gives instructions and runs through the list of discussion topics. The groups will then carry on the discussion and record their ideas or opinions. The summary of the group's discussions is presented at the plenary session.

Role Play

Role play involves an activity which a participant or a group of participants dramatizes in their real reactions to certain topics or concepts. It is the act of imitating the character or behavior of someone who is different from the individual. The step-by-step process of role play involves:

- Identifying the concept or topic- The facilitator explains exactly what the participants will do and learn from the episode

- Establishing the situation for role playing- brainstorming the situation to fit the objectives

- Explaining the skills or insights of the activity

- Participants decide on which role they want to play and act out the role

The facilitator poses some probing questions to help analyze the presentation. Examples of such questions are: What happened in the play? Why did it play out that way? Which variation would produce other results? How do you feel after this activity?
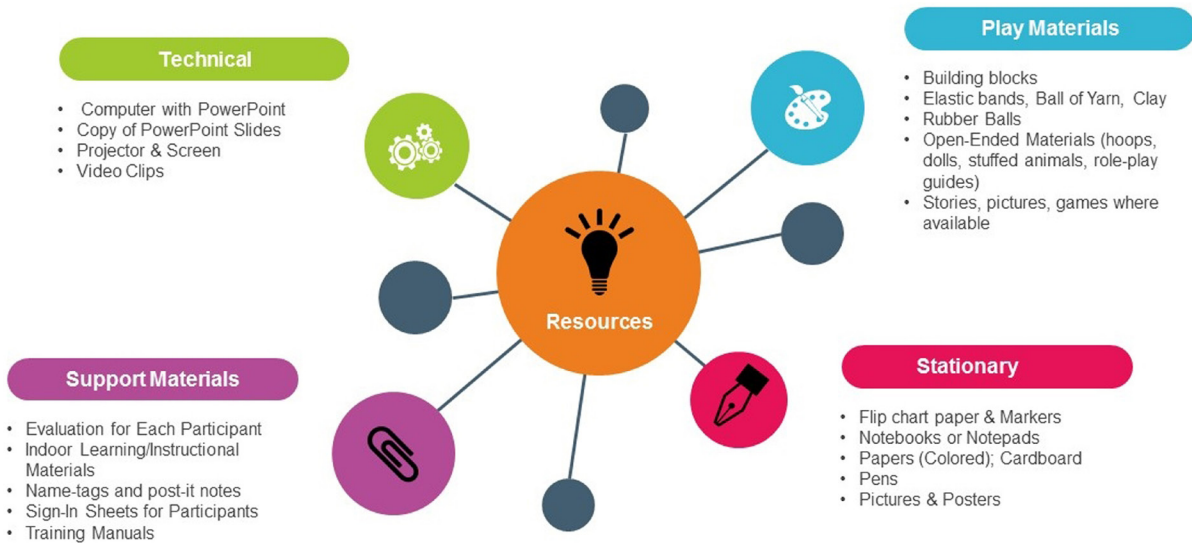
Individual Exploration

Individual exploration is a technique that focuses on the individuals in a given span of time in a training session. The technique offers opportunities to individuals to assess themselves on how they are progressing in the training. They will also be engaging in the activities available during the training.

This tool aids individual participants to determine their strengths and weaknesses, and introspect through the process, making this training more personalized for the participant. The technique helps participants to be themselves, be flexible and accessible, and to be committed to the process of the training.

List of Required Materials/Resources

Facilitators, and program planners must ensure that all these resources are prepared and available for the sound and smooth implementation of the training sessions.

Technical
- Computer with PowerPoint
- Copy of PowerPoint Slides
- Projector & Screen
- Video Clips

Play Materials
- Building blocks
- Elastic bands, Ball of Yarn, Clay
- Rubber Balls
- Open-Ended Materials (hoops, dolls, stuffed animals, role-play guides)
- Stories, pictures, games where available

Resources

Support Materials
- Evaluation for Each Participant
- Indoor Learning/Instructional Materials
- Name-tags and post-it notes
- Sign-In Sheets for Participants
- Training Manuals

Stationary
- Flip chart paper & Markers
- Notebooks or Notepads
- Papers (Colored); Cardboard
- Pens
- Pictures & Posters

Training Timeline

Facilitators, and program planners must ensure that all these resources are prepared and available for the sound and smooth implementation of the training sessions.

Training Timeline 9:00am-3:30pm			
Time	**Day 1**	**Day 2**	**Day 3**
1	Registration/Opening Ceremony	Review of Day One Activities	Review of Days One and Two Activities
2	Overview of the Workshop	Ice-Breaker	Ice Breaker
3	Ice-Breaker	Module Three: Concept of Resilience skills, 7Cs of Resilience	Module Six: Collaboration Between School and Community in Building Resilience
4	Module One: Importance of Early Childhood Care and Education	Module Four:Concept, Types and Benefits of Play	Action Plan
5	Tea/Health Break	Tea/Health Break	Lunch
6	Module Two: Risks and Protective Factors in the Community	Module Five: Play Environment {Indoor and Outdoor) and Safety Measures	Closing
7	Lunch	Lunch	
8	Daily Evaluation	Daily Evaluation	
9	Wrap Up/Closing	Wrap Up/Closing	

Facilitator Guide

The facilitator has a unique role in the training workshop. They need to acknowledge the experience and expertise of the parents, caregivers/teachers and stakeholders who work with the children on a daily basis, and have established bonds with them. By virtue of their roles, they have a great amount of knowledge, expertise and insights on the challenges that the children face and the deficiencies of the curriculum and other systems they function with. In addition, elders and community leaders influence to a large extent what happens in their communities. It is, therefore, imperative to create an environment where the facilitator's knowledge and the knowledge of the participants can be combined in order to explore the potential of the workshop.

Tips for the Facilitator

- Greet participants as they arrive

- Provide participants with name-tags

- Before the commencement of the training, ensure you address logistics such as breaks, location of restroom facilities, and are receive questions from participants regarding the logistics

- Ask participants to state any ground rules that they think are important for the workshop. Ask for agreement to these ground rules by a show of hands and make a final list. Place them somewhere in the room where everyone can see

- Involve participants by encouraging them to share their experiences with the modules. Many of them have valuable knowledge and experiences to contribute. Hearing different voices keeps sessions varied and interesting

- Be flexible with language. Make sure to use the language most convenient for the participants. Where it is expedient, mother tongue or language of the immediate environment can be used as a means of communication during the workshop

- Make provision to use inclusive language particularly when you have participants with special needs

- Keep to the time designated for the activity during the workshop. Be sure to start and stop the workshop on time

- Be humorous and share interesting experiences and practices, and build on ongoing experiences.

Module 1:

Importance of Early Childhood Care and Education (ECCE)

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module, participants should be able to:

- Explain the concept of ECCE
- Discuss the rationale for ECCE
- Increased awareness about the importance of ECCE

Materials Required

- Flip chart and paper
- Pen and Marker
- Projector and Screen
- Video clips on the "Importance of early years"

Ice-breaker: Name Game

This session should begin with the Name Game. Facilitator asks participants to move around the room. When she/he claps, participants should shake hands with the closest person and introduce themselves. Participants should greet as many people as they can. They shake hands and provide a greeting in their native language, and if their partner does not speak the same language, they try and interpret each other. The facilitator claps again and the participants find a new partner. Participant can discuss a little about their personal background. Some volunteers are selected who will then share the information they have learnt about their partners with everyone.

Activity 1: Concepts in Early Childhood Care and Education

The facilitator asks participants to share their most memorable early childhood experiences/stories. They are encouraged to share both good and bad experiences. The facilitator asks those who shared their stories to expand on why the events were memorable, happy or sad. The facilitator leads the discussion on the reasons why these events are still remembered today. Here are several explanations that can be demonstrated by the facilitator:

You are still able to remember these events because the early years are the period that 80% of the brain is developed, learning peaks between ages three to ten. Emotions develop early and emotions are closely connected with long-term memory. The early years of the child therefore are very critical because the experiences and exposure one receives shape the overall development. The facilitator links this to the concept of ECCE.

The facilitator writes on the flip chart or displays on the screen the following definition: "Early childhood is a crucial stage of life in terms of child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. It is a time when children particularly need high quality personal care and learning experience. A very high proportion of learning and crucial brain development takes place from the period of birth to age eight."

Which are some of the Developmental Tasks Preschoolers Must Achieve?

- Awareness of self
- Understanding others feelings/empathy
- Impulse control
- Resolving conflicts
- Problem solving
- Positive attitude about world, self and others
- Self-esteem
- Independence vs. dependence
- Distinguishing between reality vs. fantasy
- Language development
- Sensory development
- Executive functions

Activity 2: Importance of ECCE

Where the facilities (internet connection, compatible video player, speakers) are available, show the following video clips:

Note: All videos are in English with subtitles. Organizers are requested to prepare some form of translation in local languages during the implementation of the sessions. These can be in the form of subtitles included. In case of such an option being an unavailable, organizers are requested to translate all the material of the videos from English to the relevant language, and have the facilitator read it out after or before each video is played. Where resources are available, it would also be helpful to share a copy of the translations with all participants so that they can closely follow the content.

Video links

Nutrition and Brain Development

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGXIZOZkQzE

Why does early years education matter?

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XoOpfdQ6-G8

Participants watch the video clips and discuss. The facilitator asks probing questions to guide the discussion on videos.

Statements to highlight:

- Earlier is better than later in the provision of care, nurture and stimulation for children
- The future of millions of children is in jeopardy when the early years are neglected
- Humankind owes the child the best it has to offer, and should provide relevant services for a child's survival, development, protection and participation.
- We must provide a level playing field for all children so that the right of every child will be secured (equity and justice)
- Right and smart investments in children guarantee quality future and sustainable development. However, when ICT facilities are not available, the facilitator should lead the participants to discuss the importance of early years and the benefits that would be derived from investing in early years using the notes below:

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The Benefits of Early Childhood Education

Socialization

Children interact with other children and thereby transit towards their own friendship groups. They learn to share, cooperate, take turns and persevere. This opportunity helps them to overcome shyness, gain self-confidence, and develop healthy relationships among other things.

Early childhood education fosters the building of strong foundation for children's holistic development in terms of children's emotional, social and physical development .

Holistic Growth

The experiences that the early childhood facilities offer to children in terms of creating a consistent, secure and fair social environment help them to develop skills in managing their emotions, controlling their impulses and attaining key motor control and self-regulation abilities. Children, through play, experience a safe and controlled exposure to failures, problems, setbacks, and the sorrow of losing from time-to-time. These experiences serve as building blocks for coping strategies, which is foundational to developing resilience, and provide a small and controlled exposure to healthy stress. Healthy stress helps children develop motivation, and to learn the key tools to address stress in the future.

Development of mental health and personality traits

Early childhood period offers children the opportunity to develop confidence, self-esteem, patience, respect, and teamwork among others.

Development of enthusiasm for lifelong learning

Early experiences offer children the opportunity to learn with eagerness and enthusiasm, without the risks of harsh failures, and they develop a love of learning, discovery, exploration and experimentation. Their brains adapt to celebrate successful problem-solving by releasing endorphins, and children learn to seek solutions to problems in a healthy and self-regulated manner.

Activity 3: The Impact of ECCE

The facilitator leads the discussion on the scientific, economic, social justice, moralistic and human rights dimensions as justifications for investing in early years. They capture the major points raised in the discussion on flip chart.

ECCE offers children the opportunity to achieve their full potential, which is their universal human right.

Early childhood is a critical period to shape brain development and function, which when neglected results in lifelong mental,emotional and physical barriers.

Development and learning are children's rights , and UN Sustainable Development Goal 4 for 2030 is Ensuring Inclusive and Equitable Quality Education for All. Goal 4.2 specifically targets Early Childhood Development, Care, And Universal Primary Education (UN SDG 2030).

Participants are divided into five groups and each group answers the following questions, with one question per group

- What are the consequences of neglecting the early years of children?
- What are the crucial ways in which parents can be involved in ECCE?
- What are some child rearing techniques that are harmful to children's development?
- What are some child rearing techniques that are beneficial to children's development?
- 'Right investment will guarantee sustainable development of the society' Do you agree with this statement? Give reasons for your answer.

   After the group discussion, each group should make a presentation of their contributions to the discussion at a plenary while the facilitator moderates the plenary activities.

Summary

Early childhood is a crucial stage of life in terms of child's physical, intellectual, emotional and social development. The chart below details the argument of why to invest in ECCE and the sequential processes in early childhood development and the impact on society.

Improved health and physical outcomes: ECCE reduces the incidence of childhood neglect and abuse as caregivers are better informed on best practices and the wide needs of their children. Improved health also indicates to lower incidences of sickness, which means a child spends less time recovering from illness, and more time at school or at play.

Increased mental and cognitive abilities result in improved school performance and learning outcomes, which have the long-term effects of higher earning capacity in the labor market.

Improved linguistic abilities alongside accelerated cognitive development aid children to have better communication skills and develop their abilities to express themselves.

Better communication skills also result in prosocial behaviors that tap into developed socio-emotional bonds, which is a key adaptive skill for socio-emotional wellbeing and mental health.

Stronger mental wellbeing results in stronger coping mechanisms, which is an essential protective factor. Weak coping mechanisms are linked to unhealthy diet, poor health, addictive behaviors, substance abuse, early puberty and early risky sexual activity in at-risk children.

The high social costs of lost economic opportunity, incarceration, health disorders (in particular heart related ailments), and jeopardized parent-child relations are immense. In the United States it is estimated at a net $403 billion of the net GDP per year.

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Reflection

- Early childhood education fosters the building of strong foundation for children's holistic development in terms of children's emotional, social and physical development.

- As a participant in this workshop, what will you do to promote early childhood in your community?

- Which of the strategies do you think will work for you in your community?

- Who is a primary caregiver? Why is a primary caregiver so important?

- As a parent, what are the parenting strategies you will employ to improve your child's development?

Module 2:

Risk Factors and Protective Mechanisms

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module, participants should be able to:

- Identify risk factors and their effects
- Identify protective mechanisms

Materials Required

- Flip chart and paper
- Pen and Marker
- Pictures

Activity 1: Concepts of Risk and Protective Factors

The facilitator plays the video below where the facilities are available. The video link is below.:http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hGXlZOZk QzE
Participants will discuss what they have watched.

The facilitator leads participants to define what a Risk Factor and what Risk is. Capture as many as possible of relevant definitions. The facilitator will provide the following definitions:

Risk: An elevated probability of an undesirable outcome
Example: The odds of developing schizophrenia are higher in groups of people who have a biological parent with this disorder

Risk Factor: A measurable characteristic in a group of individuals or their situation that predicts a negative outcome on a specific outcome criterion
Example: Premature birth; parental divorce; poverty; parental mental illness; child maltreatment

Participants are divided into groups and identify difficulties and adversities that are overwhelming on children on a daily basis in your environment

Group 1: List risk factors that are related to children's socioeconomic status (homelessness, school dropout, high social barriers, poor health and nutrition, poor access to sound infrastructure and facilities, lack of social safety net)

Group 2: List risk factors that are related to family (Family violence, family stress, harsh parenting techniques, corporal punishment, neglect, abuse, household obligations such as chores)

Group 3: List risk factors related to the school setting (Poor school facilities, lack of instructional learning materials, bullying, lack of academic support and guidance)

 Group 4: List risk factors that are related to the community (Violence, immigration, political and social unrest, natural disasters, floods, lack of social services)

After the group discussion, each group will make a presentation of their findings. Discussions should be on how the risk factors can affect children's well-being, and how these effects are harmful to children. Participants will also discuss what happens when a child is exposed to more than one risk factor, i.e. multiple risk factors. The global trend happens to be that children living in poverty are exposed to multiple risk factors, and not just one or two. They can also discuss what are the **cumulative** effects of exposure to multiple risk factors.

Activity 2: Protective Factors

The facilitator discusses the definition of Protective Factors: These are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities or society that help people deal with significantly stressful events and mitigate or eliminate risk factors.

Protective Factor: A predictor of better outcomes, particularly in situations of risk or adversity Example: Airbags in automobiles; 911 services; neonatal intensive care; health insurance

Participants divide into four groups and brainstorm to identify protective factors within the individual, family, school setting and community.

Group 1: Protective factors within **individuals** (social competence, safe coping mechanism, school achievement, sense of personal identity)

Group 2: Protective factors within the **school setting** (good school environment, sense of belonging, prosocial peer connections, caring teachers)

Group 3: Protective factors within the **community** (access to support services, strong cultural identity, community networking, participation in community group activities)

After each group presentation, the discussion should focus on how to promote these factors. Participants identify the strategies and name resources that can be utilized within the context of the participants. There are cultural practices that can be used to promote the protective factors within the communities.

- There is the network or web of support that is rooted in the culture of the communities. This could be explored and documented.

- There are indigenous stories and games that demonstrate protective mechanisms and could be promoted to enhance protection. For example, in one community, the game 'hide and seek' is very popular among the boys. The elders in the community mention that it is this game that help the children to identify safe places within the community. In the day of adversity, many boys were saved because they were able to hide from enemies. Participants can tell and document some valuable stories and games from the community. Participants can share some stories and play games that can highlight protective factors.

  Participants break into small groups to identify the linkages between risk factors and protective mechanisms, and what they could do to better develop these. How can caregivers identify these and help their children? What role do caregivers play? Participants will discuss.

Group 1 Risk and Protective Factors within individual or Child

Risk Factor	Protective Factor
Poor Health	Adequate Nutrition
Insecure Attachment	Attachment to the Family
Chronic Illness	Immunization
Poor Social Skills	School Achievement
Low Self-Esteem	Social Competence
Physical and Intellectual Disability	Good Coping Mechanisms
Alienation	Positive Self Image

Group 2: Family

Risk Factor	Protective Factor
Poverty	Supportive Family Members
Homelessness	Secure Attachments
Family Stress/Divorce	Supportive Relationship
Home Violence	Strong Family Norms and Values
Abuse (Physical, Sexual, Emotional)	Clear Family Communication

Group 3: School

Risk Factor	Protective Factor
Bullying	Positive Peer Relation
Peer Rejection	Supportive School Climate
Poor School Performance	Improved Teacher Practices
Discrimination/Racism/Classism	Rules Against Discrimination

Summary

- A Risk factor is anything that hinders children's proper development and learning. It also refers to increase in chances of injury, illness, health problems, healthy living that have significant stressful event or occurrence that traumatizes or destabilizes the child

- Protective factors are conditions or attributes in individuals, families, communities or society that help people deal more effectively with significantly stressful events and mitigate or eliminate risk factors.

Reflection

- What is the role of the caregiver in identifying risk factors and buffering children from the effects of these risks?

- How can caregivers take better care of their children?

- What is the importance of listening to children and taking their word seriously?

- How can parents help their children to be emotionally strong and independent?

Module 3:

Resilience and Pathways to Resilience

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module, participants should be able to:

- Explain the concept of Resilience, and how it develops in children

- Identify protective factors that are pathways to Resilience

- Identify good practices within the learning environment

- Observe the learning environment through the lens of Resilience sciences

Materials Required

- Flip chart and paper

- Pen and Marker

- Projector and Screen

- Rubber/Soft ball

- Hula hoop

- Plastic cups

- Worksheet (to be distributed to participants)

- Flash cards containing names and definitions of Resilience

- Prizes to be won (Candy, extra tea during tea break, bottle of water)

Activity 1: Fun Review Activity: The Ping Pong Game

The facilitator divides the participants into two teams and names the teams ("ECCE Team" and "Risks Team"). The facilitator gives instructions that each team should write five questions about the name of their team. For example, ECCE team should write five questions in their notebook on concept of ECCE, importance, benefits, etc. Risks team should also write five questions on risks, risk factors, and their effects on children.Participants work together in their teams to review all what they have learned according to their names. They write down their questions. Each team should be ready to ask the other team their questions in turn and at the same time be ready to answer questions from the other team.

The facilitator lets the participants know that there are rewards for those who will answer their questions correctly for their groups. There is also a reward to the group that will perform better than the other.

The game begins: ECCE team asks the Risks team a question about ECCE. If the Risks team member gets the questions right, the member will have the chance to bounce a ball into one of three plastic cups to get a prize.

Risks team in turn asks the ECCE team their question on Risks and if ECCE team members gets it right, then they are rewarded. The game continues till the five questions have been exhausted. The team that answers the highest number of questions correctly becomes the overall winner. The prize is an additional snack for the winning team members during tea time.

Activity 2: The Concept of Resilience

The facilitator asks participants to attempt to define or explain what they understand by the word "Resilience". The facilitator writes the following on a flipchart and read it out:

Resilience: Positive adaptation in the context of adversity
Example: Child brought up in poverty excels at school and emerges with high earning capacity in the labor market; Child who was exposed to neglect and emotional harm builds strong bonds and relationships with peers in adulthood

The facilitator presents some prepared flashcards that contain different definitions of Resilience

- Resilience is the ability to overcome various challenges (trauma, tragedy, personal crisis, life problems, death, etc.) and bounce back stronger and wiser
- Resilience is the process of adapting well in the face of adversity, trauma, tragedy, threats or significant stress
- Resilience is not the absence of distress or difficulty, it is the ability to adapt and bounce back to normalcy
- Resilience is the human capacity to face, overcome and be strengthened, and even transformed by adversities
- Resilience can be defined as a child's achievement of positive developmental outcomes and avoiding maladjustment outcomes under adverse conditions

The facilitator turns the cards upside down and ask participants to pick at random. Participants read out the definition in the card and discuss their understanding of the concept. This exercise should be followed by the use of a rubber ball to explain the concept of bouncing back. Each participant picks a rubber ball, presses the ball to its limit and then releases the pressure on the ball. The rubber ball will bounce back to its original shape. The exercise can be done with an elastic band. The elastic band should be stretched to its limit, released, and then the participants observe how it will returns to its original shape.

The facilitator links the exercise to resilience by discussing how adversities, trauma, significant stress, death, failure at any other difficulty or challenges can be overwhelming on people or children. However, when these adversities, trauma, etc are overcome and one bounces back like a rubber ball or the elastic then we become resilient. This can be used as an analogy for the human brain, and how the brain is "plastic", and the facilitator will discuss how the brain has the capability to rapidly change, and respond to trauma in various degrees, such as positively of negatively. The facilitator will raise the question: "How does the brain respond to trauma positively?"

What's the good news?

Children can be asked to deal with problems ranging from adapting to a new classroom to bullying by classmates or even abuse at home. Add to that the uncertainties that are part of growing up, and childhood can be anything but carefree. The ability to thrive despite these challenges arises from the skills of resilience.

The good news is that Resilience is like a muscle - it can be built, and it can be built to be strong.

Additionally, research indicates that children who have been exposed to more adverse childhood experiences than others, benefit exponentially more than regular children. This means that interventions designed to help children build resilience skills **work,** and they **work better for children in worse conditions.**

Resilience

What can Resilient Children do?

They can...

- Cope with the stresses of everyday life
- Learn new skills and apply those skills in new situations
- Solve problems that they encounter
- Manage strong feelings in a healthy way
- Express thoughts and feelings with adults and peers
- Demonstrate empathy for others
- Have a positive and hopeful outlook and belief system
- Develop and maintain supportive relationships with family and friends
- Manage disappointments
- Know who to go to for help
- Develop life skills they need to thrive as adults
- Feel good about themselves
- Have confidence in their abilities.

Activity 3: Pathways to Resilience

"Just like no two trees are alike, no two pathways to Resilience walk the same" - The Pathways to Resilience Foundation

A pathway to resilience is a **mediating process,** that address a functional domain in a child's development and enhances it. A pathway to resilience can be described as a process that is supportive of a child's healthy holistic development, that if a child has access to a long term, can help the child to develop resilience in the face of adversity. A pathway to Resilience is a way to develop Resilience.

Examples of pathways to Resilience include-

- Consistent presence of a primary caregiver. The primary caregiver is never separated from the child

- The presence of caring adult exhibiting role-model behavior

- Food security and access to healthy daily meals

- Safety from physical trauma such as abuse or neglect

- Stress releasing activities such as play, music, dance, laughter

- Consistent peer support, social acceptance and praise from peers

- Autonomy and monitored independence of children example, such as children are given some leadership responsibilities, or allowed to make personal decisions

- Absence of toxic stress, and the ability for children to regulate their stress

  The facilitator will discuss how if a child has access to these pathways, then they will be able to develop Resilience.

What are Some Steps Caregivers, Teachers, and Parents can Employ?

Make connections

Teach your child how to make friends, including the skill of empathy, or feeling another person's pain. Encourage your child to be a friend in order to get friends. Build a strong family network to support your child through his or her inevitable disappointments and hurts. At home, watch for signs that your child is exhibiting some new behaviors. Connecting with people provides social support and strengthens resilience. Some find comfort in connecting with a higher power, whether through organized religion or privately and you may wish to introduce your child to your own traditions of worship.

Help children by having them help others

Children who may feel helpless can be empowered by helping others. Engage your child in age-appropriate volunteer work, or ask for assistance yourself with some task that he or she can master. At home, brainstorm with your child how they can help others.

Maintain a daily routine

 Sticking to a routine can be comforting to children, especially younger children who crave structure in their lives. Encourage your child to develop his or her own routines. At home, ensure that children eat meals and go to bed at the same time every day. Having a strict activities, fun time, and study schedule would be very beneficial to children.

Teach children self-care

Make yourself a good example, and teach children the importance of making time to eat properly, exercise and rest. Caring for oneself and even having fun will help your child stay balanced and better deal with stressful times. At home, have children display self-care routines, and maintain a diary/journal.

Move toward goals

Teach children to set reasonable goals and then to move toward them one step at a time. Moving toward that goal — even if it's a tiny step — and receiving praise for doing so will focus them on what they have accomplished rather than on what hasn't been accomplished, and can help build resilience to move forward in the face of challenges. At home, break down large assignments into small, achievable goals for younger children, and for older children, acknowledge accomplishments on the way to larger goals.

Nurture a positive self-view

Help children to remember ways that they have successfully handled hardships in the past and then help them understand that these past challenges help them build the strength to handle future challenges. Help children learn to trust themselves to solve problems and make appropriate decisions. At home, help children see how their individual accomplishments contribute to the well-being of the family as a whole. Congratulate them and support them.

Look for opportunities for self-discovery

Tough times are often the times when children learn the most about themselves. Help them take a look at how whatever they are facing to teach them "what they are made of." At home, consider leading discussions of what your child has learned after facing a tough situation.

Accept that change is part of living

Change often can be scary for children and teens. Help them to see that change is part of life and new goals can replace goals that have become unattainable. At home, point out how the family has changed over time, and discuss how that change has had an impact on them.

Activity 4: Resilience skills (the 7Cs of Resilience)

The facilitator leads the participants to discuss the Seven Cs (7Cs) of Resilience:

Competence

The ability to handle situations effectively. Children become competent by developing a set of skills that allow them to trust their judgment, make responsible choices and fade difficult situations.

Confidence

This is the solid belief in one's own abilities and is rooted in competence. Rather than by being told how special they are, children gain confidence as they demonstrate their competence in real situations. Children grow up with a sense of security through consistent and supportive relationships and is linked to self-efficacy.

Connection

Children with close connections to family, friends, school and community are more likely to have a solid sense of security that yields positive values and prevents children seeking negative alternatives. Family is the central place in children's life and this gives them the foundation for healthy development.

Character

Children need a fundamental sense of right and wrong to ensure they are prepared to make wise choices and contribute to the world. Each family of community has its own idea of what constitutes good character, and children with character enjoy a strong sense of self-worth and confidence.

Contribution

Children who understand the importance of personal contribution gain a sense of purpose that motivates them. This will help them make choices to improve the world. This also helps in developing leadership skills.

Coping

Children who learn to cope with stress effectively are better prepared to overcome life's challenges. A wide range of positive, adaptive coping strategies can also help prevent or reduce negative and unsafe responses to significant stressful conditions. Developing strong coping mechanisms also reduces the likelihood of risky coping mechanisms in adulthood, such as substance abuse, unhealthy diet and sedentary lifestyle, and risky sexual activity.

Control

When children realize that their decisions affect their lives and they can control the outcomes of their decisions and actions, they learn that they have control. This enables them to realize that they can make choices and take actions that will help them to bounce back in the day of adversity or challenges. This is also linked to impulse control and improved life-long discipline.

Activity 5: Practical Exercise on 7Cs of Resilience

During a plenary, the participants discuss how the 7Cs can be translated into actions in the classroom setting so that children will develop resilience skills. Participants are divided into 7 groups. Each group labelled after a resilience skill (Competence group, coping group, etc). The facilitator provides questions to guide the discussion at the group level.

- How will you adapt the resilience skills you have worked on to daily routine of children to foster the skills?
- What strategies would you employ to support the children in developing resilience skills?
- What challenges are you likely to be face in enhancing resilience skills?   Discuss how you will tackle the challenges.
- Participants work together in their groups and choose a representative to do the presentation and the other members support the presentation. Question and comments be taken after the presentations.

Summary

- Resilience is the capacity of the individual to demonstrate the personal strengths needed to cope with some kind of challenges, hardship or adversity.
- Resilience is the capacity to transform oneself in a positive way after a difficult event.
- Resilience is built through various pathways, which address multiple domains of brain functionality.

- Resilience is important because it enables children to bounce back, builds their character, protects and promotes good mental health.
- Resilience can be fostered through play-based participatory activities, ICT supported infrastructure, indigenous knowledge, creating a safety culture, promoting mental health, fostering youth centers, developing safe playgrounds in the school and communities.

Reflection

Make an action plan, list what you will start to do to support children's resilience. Identify who you want to work with, share the knowledge you have gained, and identify strategies about how to incorporate Resilience into your child rearing practices.

Module 4:

Play and Resilience

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Define what Play is
- Identify some types of Play
- Demonstrate the benefits of Play
- Discuss how Play is a pathway to Resilience

Materials

- Balloons
- Open-ended reusable materials, and nonrepresentational and manipulative reusable materials
- Flip chart and paper
- Pen
- Locally available play materials (sticks, leaves, seeds, sand, water)
- Costumes, props and household utensils
- Blocks

Ice-breaker: Mixer

The facilitator calls out a list of characteristics of people that the participants could identify with examples. For example- all those who love to eat rice rolls should come forward. They will form a group in one corner of the room. Those who love football should come to another corner (that is another group). How many of you remaining live traveling? This will form another group. Groups will individually choose a volunteer among themselves to talk on behalf of their group on why they are part of the group. This should be done until all the groups are covered. Members of each group should find out other things that they have in common. These will form groups for the next activities.

Activity 1: Perspectives of Play

Participants write the definitions down and share the concept of Play. The facilitator and participants select the most relevant definition of play and write them on the flip chart.

- Play involves the cognitive, imaginative, creative, emotional and social aspects of a child.
- Play is a spontaneous, voluntary, pleasurable and flexible activity that involves a combination of body, objects, symbols and relationships.
- Play is conducive of healthy stress in children, and also relieves any ongoing stress in the child by the release of endorphins.

- Play is the building block of a child's intellectual skills. It is the main way children express their impulse to explore, experiment and understand the world, develop their social and problem solving skills, and interpersonal skills.

Activity 2: Types of Play

The facilitator leads participants to identify some types of play (physical or locomotive, social, parallel, object, symbolic, pretend, social-dramatic, etc)

- **Locomotive/Physical Play**: This can also be called exercise play. Examples include running, jumping, sliding, etc. Physical play involves the use of large muscles (gross motor skills). This type of play supports physical training for strength, endurance and skills. Exercises help children to space out cognitive demands for which they have less mature capacity. Physical play also helps young learners with short attention spans to conduct an activity to completion.

- **Social Play** refers to playful interaction among children, between children and caregivers or parents. Children acquire social skills such as friendship, sharing, and cooperation from social play.

- **Parallel Play**: It refers to when children play next to each other without any interaction. This type of play is common in two and three-year-old children. Parallel Play can be physical and can be incorporated into objects or language play.

- **Object Play** is a type of playful use of objects such as dolls, building blocks, jigsaw puzzles, etc. Sometimes it involves pretend play, for example, building a house, or feeding a doll and putting it to sleep. This type of play allows children to try out a combination of actions. This helps them develop problem solving skills, and planning abilities.

- **Pretend Play** refers to pretending that an object or action is something else than it really is. For example, sand could be "rice", banana could be "telephone". Pretend play involves simple actions such as pretending to sleep or putting a doll to bed. Symbolic play is often pretend play.

- **Socio-dramatic** Play is closely related to pretend play. This type of play is useful for developing pre-literacy skills. It also helps the mind development, and an ability to understand.

Activity 3: Benefits of Play

At the plenary session, the facilitator leads the discussion on "Why is play fun?" "Play at home is a great use of family time; how should parents use play as a method of teaching and bonding?" "Why is Play so serious for children?" Participants express their opinions about the above statements and explain the benefits of play using the following as a guide:

- Play is fundamental to healthy child development. Children acquire social skills through play and develop social competence. They build relationships when they are with others. They learn to resolve conflicts, control and regulate their behaviors.

- Play expands children's knowledge about the world. It helps them to space out cognitive demands beyond their age and maturity, and therefore serves as a tool for scaffolding. Play helps children to develop problem-solving skills.

- Play supports language development, and develops brain power that has increased flexibility to improve potential for learning

- Play fosters emotional security for children. It is a known stress release, which reduces the risk of children developing toxic stress. It is often linked to child well-being and to the development of resilience in a multifaceted context.

Activity 4: Fostering Play-Based Learning in Early Childhood

The facilitator leads the discussion on how to apply play into classroom practices and children's daily routines to acquire resilience skills. The facilitator begins the discussion by pointing out that play does not happen in a vacuum. Play is usually undertaken within a physical and social space. The parent has a role in making purposeful play happen so that children can benefit to the maximum. Participants divide into 6 groups to brainstorm on the following:

- What is the parent's role in facilitating purposeful play?

- How can parents incorporate play into the learning experience and daily routines of children in their home space? Can it be used as a tool for scaffolding?

- Identify some social, emotional and intellectual activities within the home space that will promote resilience skills through play.

- How is Play a pathway to Resilience?

- Majority of learning does not happen in schools, but at home. How can parents tap into this opportunity to help their children to learn through play-based approaches at home? How can parents structure and shape the home space to be children and play friendly? What else can parents do to promote learning through their home design? Each group presents the summary of their discussion at the plenary session.

  The facilitator leads discussions on the concept of play-based learning approach and how to foster it in early childhood to enhance resilience skills.

What is Play-Based Learning?

"Play is Learning, and Learning is Play" – Vygotsky, 1967

Play-based learning style is sometimes referred to as child-centered learning style, as the child is autonomous and the one with all the control on where the game play is headed. This style is relevant to the nature of children. It keeps them active and provides opportunities for them to use all their senses in the learning process. In the play-based approach, the teacher creates the structure but focuses on providing hands-on-mind experiences that will foster social, emotional, cognitive and physical development. Children freely choose the activities they wish to pursue based on their interests and are therefore autonomous and independent. This makes them in charge of their learning, and to some degree, they become their own teachers.

There are a variety of settings/centers/corners/stations and materials for children to carry out their play activities and learn at the same time. Participants give examples of such learning corners/stations/ centers (nature corner, literacy corner, home corner, science and math corner, manipulative corner, block corner, socio-dramatic corner, shopping corner, etc) that they can create in the classroom. Participants divide into groups and brainstorm on how they will create some of these learning stations/corners/ centers in their classrooms at no-cost or at low-cost. Each group should design the corner of their

choice, identify appropriate materials that will be relevant, prepare lesson plans on relevant themes or topics that will demonstrate how the station/corner/center can be used to foster learning through play and enhance resilience skills. Each group chooses a representative to present and demonstrate the use of these learning centers using a play-based approach. Participants talk about the presentations and lesson delivery, and discuss those that they can relate with and decide on an action plan to apply the experience or lesson learned in their own environment.

Summary

Play is a spontaneous, voluntary, pleasurable and flexible activity that involves a combination of body, objects, symbols use and relationships. Types of play are: Physical or locomotive, social parallel, object, symbolic, pretend, socio-dramatic. Play is a pathway to Resilience as it targets multiple domains of healthy child development, and can buffer the negative effects of the exposure to risk factors.

Reflection

Reflect on the following:

- Your perception of the concept of play

- The types of play children engage in in our communities

- How we can purposefully structure and organize play activities in our homes to enhance resilience skills

- How and why is play a pathway to building Resilience?

- How can the home space be designed to encourage playing and learning?

- How must parents engage with their children to encourage play at home?

- What are some parenting techniques that are best suited for encouraging children to be inquisitive and exploratory learner?

    Participants write their reflections in their notebooks. The facilitator should go through them as a summary.

Module 5:

Play Environment and Safety

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Define what a play environment is in the context of this manual
- Discuss the principles that construct play environments that will foster resilience skills
- Define what safety is
- Identify specific safety measures to consider in community play centers
- Discuss the importance of a first aid box/kit

Materials

- Materials Open-ended materials
- Slides
- Swing
- Old Tyre
- Hula Hoop
- Bean bags
- Trees/ladder
- Play ground
- Natural resources available in the community
- First Aid Box/Kit

Activity 1: Concepts of the Play Environment

The facilitator leads a discussion on the concept of play environments. Children's play environment is the area or space where children engage in play, and often includes various equipment, materials, toys, and tools. A play environment may be outdoors or indoors. It can be described as a physical space where play activities and learning takes place. It is also a place that provides essential information, time, experiences and opportunities for children to respond creatively to their world. Children interact with people and materials to develop interpersonal skills and to learn through play individually and cooperatively.

- **At Home-** soft toys, dolls, small cars, balls, cardboard boxes, post boxes, easy puzzles, crayon, charcoal, clay, dough, stacking toys, books, and so on.

- **In the community**-sand pit and sand pit tools, water play, swings, tyre, see-saw, merry-go-round, slides, riding small bikes, sturdy scooters, ball, hopping, chasing, learning to catch, natural environment to observe plants, animals, insects, and so on.

Activity 2: Principles of Guiding Play Environment

The facilitator leads the discussion on principles that guide creating children's play environments that foster resilience.

- The physical layout should be that which will safely support the needs and interests of the children through the selection of age appropriate materials that foster resilience.

- The play materials should be concrete and relevant to the children's own life experiences.

- The environment should be set up with multiple choices for children to explore.

- The activities should be child-initiated and parent-directed

- Activities should be both indoors and outdoors.

Activity 3: Concepts of Safety

The facilitator leads a discussion on the concept of safety. Safety has been broadly defined as the state of being away from harm or danger or undesirable outcomes. It can also be defined as a state of being protected from potential harm or something that has been designed to protect and prevent harm. Children's play environments, spaces, materials and the interactions that take place there, let children exercise their bodies, brains and social skills. It gives them a chance for unstructured free play that is important for healthy development and resilience building. Despite these values, children are expected to stumble down, poke, scratch and injure themselves as they are engaged in play activities.While these injuries are also healthy experiences that expose children to the opportunity of self-care and healing, the play environment does present a potential danger for children.

Participants should discuss how to ensure that children stay safe in the play environment. Staying safe in this sense means that they can have fun without sustaining serious injuries in the play environment.

- Prevention is better than cure. Children should be taught basic strategies for staying safe while spending time on play environment.

- Adult supervision: children should be supervised by an adult at all times.

- Equipment should be sturdy and safe, and caregivers must conduct regular checks to ensure that the equipment is functional and sturdy.

- Space: There should be enough space to accommodate group activities. Cramped and crowded spaces increase the chances of injury, and make it harder for children to evacuate in the case of a fire or other safety hazard.

- The ground should be grassy for children's games and large muscle activities. Other soft surfaces should be available to soften the impact of falls.

- There should be a balance of sunny and shaded areas.

- Sand, water, plants, animals are important parts of the natural world that children should enjoy in their play environment.

Activity 4: First-Aid Kit/Box

The facilitator leads the discussion that in our daily life, we face several risks/hazards inside and outside the house and in the community. Children in particular are exposed to danger in the play environment. First aid is the immediate or temporary care given to a victim of an accident or sudden illness. Its purpose is to be the first response in an injury, assist recovery and prevent aggravations of the condition until the services of the doctor is obtained.

The facilitator encourages participants to attempt to define a first-aid kit or box.

Participants discuss if they have it in at home or in their communities

Participants brainstorm on the benefits of keeping a first aid box or kit either at home or in play areas.

Reasons to keep a first aid box/kit:

- Prevent infection

- Prevent excessive blood loss

- Prevent scarring

- Prevent acute injury from becoming a chronic problem

- Prevent death

Some essential items in the first-aid kit include:

- A box of adhesive dressing (plasters) for covering wounds

- Blunt-ended scissors for cutting the bandage or plaster

- Antiseptic creams to use with a cotton wool and antiseptic wipes

- Cotton wool for cleaning cuts and to use with gauze

- Sterile dressings of various sizes for covering wounds

- Sterile eye dressings with bandage attached for eye injuries

- Some triangular bandages to several safety pins for making a sling for an emergency

- Band-aids

- Paracetamol, Aspirin and Ibuprofen preferably sealed in foil for cleanliness

- Antihistamine cream for insect bites and stings

- Antihistamine pills for allergic reactions

- Tweezers for removing splinters.

- Tubular gauze bandages for finger injuries and applicator tongs

- Conforming bandages for sprains and for wounds in spots such as elbows and ankles

Summary

Participants are to name community centers in their locality if there any. They should describe the centers by listing materials available and their various uses. Participants visit Community Play Centres and observe and document the activities and available materials to further discuss the role they can play to improve and keep the center in a good shape.

Children's play environment is a place where children can exhibit their natural talents of exploring spaces, toys, and the natural environment.

Children's play environments should support the needs of the children with safety being a priority, it should be set up for choices, and structured and scaled to reflect a child centered atmosphere. The play space should be one in which activities should be child-initiated and parent-directed, and planned and built in an efficient manner.

Safety has been broadly defined as the state of being safe from harm or danger undesirable outcomes. Prevention is better than cure.

Reflection

Reflect on the various play environments you have examined in this workshop. Design a safe and secure playground bearing in mind all safety measures, and also prioritizing how the play environment can be best suited for children's healthy learning and development.

- As parents and caregivers, how can you optimize the play facilities to develop stronger bonds with your children?

- As parents and caregivers how can you integrate into children's play environments and participate in play time with your children?

Module 6:

School and Community Collaboration to Foster Resilience Skills

Approximate Duration: 1.5 hours

Facilitators are welcome to extend the duration of the sessions as they see fit, and as the program and the participants require

Objectives

At the end of this module participants should be able to:

- Describe parents' and teachers' role in building resilience skills in children through play

- Articulate the collaborative roles of caregivers/teachers and parents in ECCE

- Identify the strategies of working together of these important stakeholders

- Discuss the available opportunities within the school and the communities that they can explore to promote resilience skills through play

Materials

- School materials and equipment

- Community resources available in the environment

- Pictures of parents and teachers working together

- Hula Hoops

Ice-Breaker : Hoop Challenge

This game is played in a circle with all participants holding hands. Participants pull their body through a hoop without using their hands. Each participant has a space in the circle. The facilitator places the hoop over 2 people's interlocked hands so that it can't leave the circle. The goal of the game is to get the hoop all the way around the circle.

Activity 1: Group Chat

Participants share experiences of their involvement in their children's lives, what they do for or with them (provision of children's basic needs such as food, shelter and clothing). Together with the participants, the facilitator leads them to identify areas of neglect that are very important to the well-being of children (building strong relationships with their children through play, scaffolding children play activities, listening to and answering children's questions, etc).

Participants discuss hardships and difficult situations as risk factors (natural disaster, terrorist attack, loss of loved ones, sickness, neglect, poverty) present within the community, that the caregivers/teachers and parents can come together to address. Participants share their perspectives on how they think the role of the parents and how to align them with those of the teachers to equip the children with resilience skills, and build their own pathways to resilience.

Activity 2: Role of Parents in Promoting Resilience Skills through Play

The facilitator splits participants into two groups. Group 1 should brainstorm on the role of parents in promoting resilience through play and note them down. Group 2 should work together and agree on the role of families and family rules in promoting resilience through play. After this exercise, the groups come together to align these roles.

Activity 3: Roles of Stakeholders in Promoting Resilience Skills

The facilitator gives out this worksheet activity on possible roles in which parents and teachers can collaborate.

Instruction: Please fill the blank spaces

Mediator	Activity	Targeted Resilience Skills
Building Strong Relationships	Listening to children; Regular communication with parents and teachers	Confidence, Connectedness, Coping
Volunteering	Involvement in school/community activities/events	_____
_____	Delegate responsibility to children	Responsibility
Parenting	_____	_____
Communication	Parenting	_____
_____	Clear messaging between home and school	_____
_____	_____	Reaching Out

Activity 5: Action Plan to Sustain building Resilience Skills

Participants are divided into two groups: Parents and Communities. Each group should brainstorm and discuss the plan they will embark on after the workshop experience. Let each group present their plan.

Activity 6: Evaluation

Participants answer the following questions:

- What did you find most useful in this workshop?
- Will you employ new parenting techniques?
- What do you still need to learn about Play and Resilience?
- How will you apply the knowledge and pedagogical skills you have acquired from this workshop in your learning environment?

Summary

The role of parents includes the provision of children's basic needs (food, shelter and clothing). Unfortunately, some parents neglect the following in the process of upbringing practices:

- Building strong relationships with their children through play
- Scaffolding children play activities
- Listening to and answering children's questions
- Respecting their children's personal identities and choices
- Allowing children the independence and freedom to groom their own likes and dislikes

Some children face a variety of risk factors within the community. Parents, caregivers/teachers must collaborate to mitigate the effects of these risk factors.The avenues of collaboration can include:

- Regular meetings
- A database for communication, such as phone chat groups
- Forming interest groups to work together
- Maintaining good relationships where ideas are shared
- Visits to schools and learning centers
- Involvement in children's activities
- Functioning as positive role models
- Celebrating their children's success
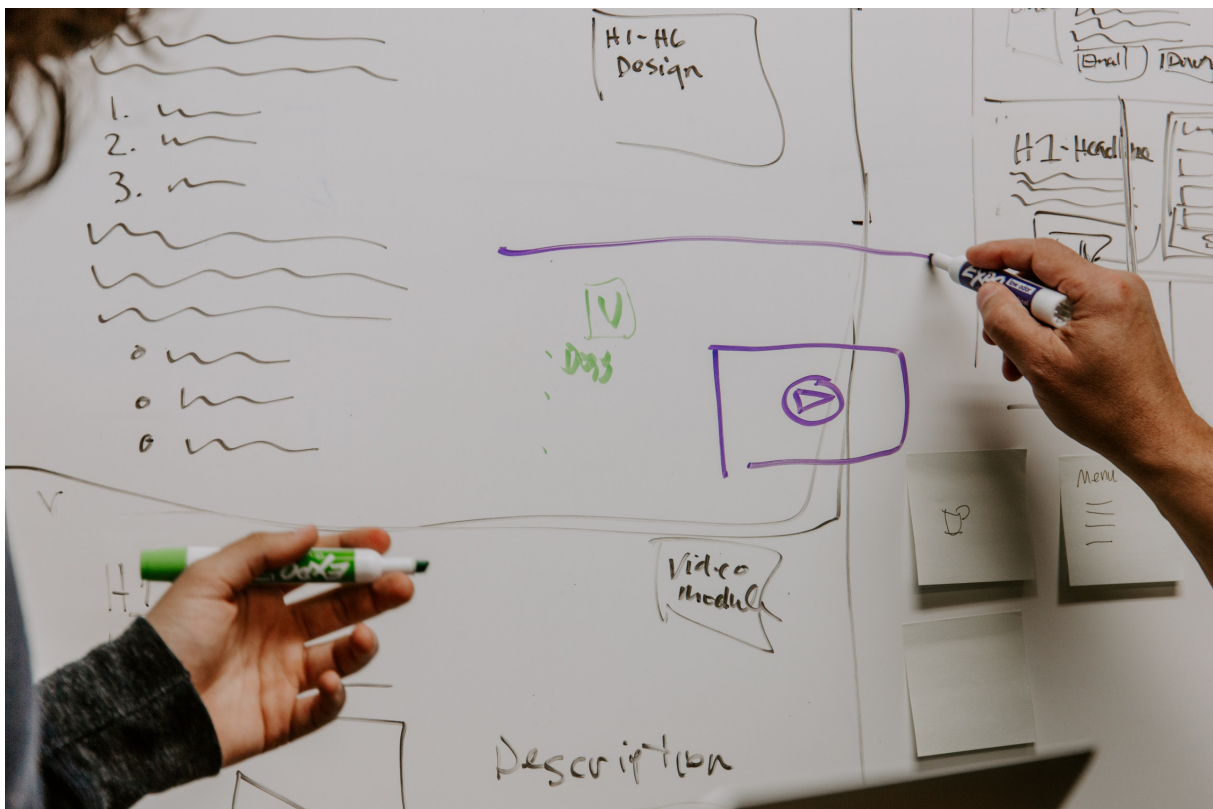
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