



# PARENTING WITH HOPE

FOR FAMILIES AND CHILDREN  
IN TRANSITION AND CRISIS

**PARTICIPANT'S GUIDE**



Universidad de Sucre



Imperial College  
London



WWO  
WORLD WITHOUT ORPHANS

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

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World Without Orphans (WWO), alongside Europe Without Orphans (EWO), calls and equips national leaders to collaborate, to solve their own country's orphaned and vulnerable children's crisis.

Viva is an international charity dedicated to changing more children's lives to fulfill their God-given Potential. We build and support networks that unite grassroots churches and organisations to support children. Our work alleviates the adverse conditions many children face, providing them with new opportunities and bringing hope to situations of fear.

Our partner networks are able to leverage their resources and expertise to provide an effective, long-term response to the holistic needs of vulnerable children in their communities and have an impact on local government.

The sessions that follow, are an adaptation of the original Parenting with Hope programme, which has been evaluated with support from Oxford University in collaboration with WWO, Childrens' Mission, and Ukraine Without Orphans, using a pre-/post-analysis. Results from the original intervention show significant increases in positive parenting, playful parenting, abilities to cope with stress, and reductions in physical and emotional abuse. This manual has been adapted for implementation in Colombia using the same principles of the original but modifying contextual and content elements to respond to the social, cultural, and historical context of Colombia. The adaptation of this intervention was completed by faculty and professionals from the Universidad de Sucre in Sincelejo, Colombia with additional support from professionals at Oxford University and Imperial College London, United Kingdom.

Designed and illustrated by Leah de Jager.

# CONTENTS

<b>Session 1</b>	
Finding Stability — Our Everyday Tools .....	1
<b>Session 2</b>	
Finding Stability — Our Anchoring Tools.....	4
<b>Session 3</b>	
Talk About It.....	8
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	11
<b>Session 4</b>	
Strong Families and Positive Parenting .....	14
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	17
<b>Session 5</b>	
Staying Safe Together .....	20
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	24
<b>Session 6</b>	
Staying Safe at Home .....	27
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	30
<b>Session 7</b>	
Coping with Loss	
– Building Hope by Understanding Guilt and Trauma .....	33
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	39
<b>Session 8</b>	
Learning Together with Resilience.....	43
Extra Tools for Supporting Children.....	48

# SESSION 1

## FINDING STABILITY — OUR EVERYDAY TOOLS

### Illustration 1

The types of change that create transition cycles:



Physical transition



Life stages



Unexpected sudden changes

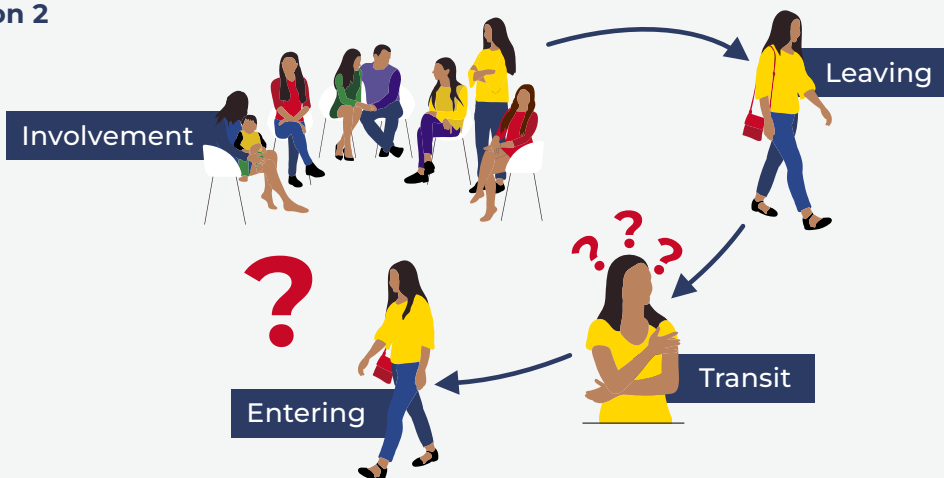


Traumatic events

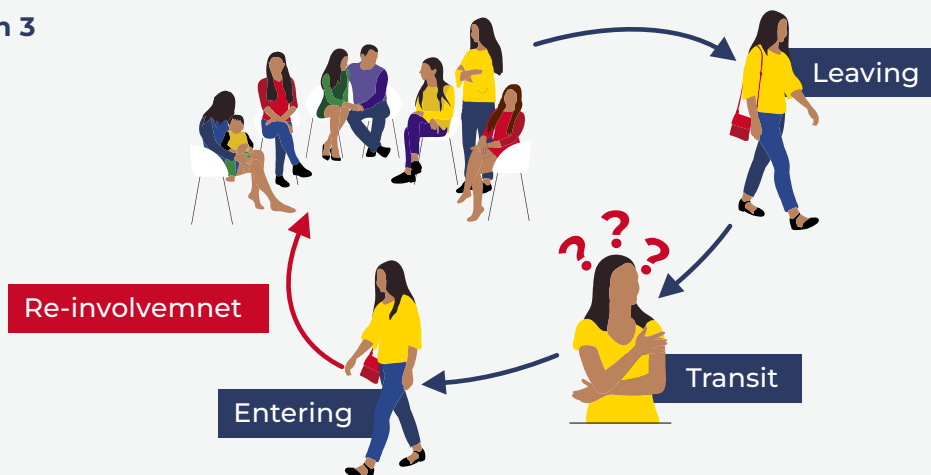


Other

### Illustration 2



### Illustration 3





## TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer  
– Psalms 61:1

## Moving from Transition to Stability — Our Everyday Tools

Transition can feel like chaos, like the image of the person holding their head in confusion. We might feel confused, in shock, lost. Loss of loved ones, displacement and disaster mean we are continually dealing with loss and traumatic situations.

The good news is we can work through transition and move toward a sense of stability. We cannot always change our circumstances, but we can develop a set of tools to help us regain some internal stability. These tools — things like healthy eating and sleeping habits, or talking with people we trust about our feelings — can also help us grieve our losses in a healthy way.

Let's imagine that each of us has a toolbox. Throughout these meetings, we are going to fill our toolbox with two sets of tools. The first set are our everyday tools — those we use routinely to help us have a healthier mind and emotions. They are a foundation for us. The other set are our anchoring tools — tools that are like an anchor for us in a storm, the tools we use when we feel afraid, anxious, panicked, or depressed.

Every one of us has the ability to fill our toolbox.

Some of these tools will be the same for many. Others will be different from person to person. The most important part of filling your toolbox is to find out what works for you and practice using the tools so it becomes a habit for you to use them.

Let's consider some everyday tools we might put into our toolbox :

### Physical tools

- Eat healthy foods and drink plenty of water.
- Try to develop healthy sleep habits.
- Get regular physical exercise, especially any that increases your heart rate. Even ten minutes a day can help!
- Watch out so you aren't overusing alcohol or medications, or turning to drugs for relief.
- Spend time outside, especially in the sunshine.

### Social Tools

- Look for ways to maintain contact and re-connect with friends and loved ones.
- If you have moved to a new place, get to know new people in the place where you are settled, even temporarily. Re-engaging in a social circle is vital for healing from trauma.
- Invest in friendships that are honest and non-judgmental.
- Be willing to ask for help or receive it.
- Help someone else.

### Emotional and Spiritual Tools

- Re-establish routines as much as possible. This is especially important for children.
- Read a funny book, watch a comedian or a funny movie.
- Regain a sense of control – complete small tasks, make small decisions.
- Avoid making big decisions, if possible. When you need to make decisions, find a time when you are well-rested and feel in a healthy state of mind. When you have to make decisions without the support

of those who are closest to you, consider discussing the decision with other friends or family members you trust

- Don't worry if you struggle to relate to God right now. It's normal to not want to read the Bible (or other sacred texts that have helped you in the past) or pray during these times, and it doesn't mean you have lost your faith.
- An inspirational quote or Bible verse (such as those below) can be a source of spiritual support that strengthens hope.

**“Nothing can dim the light which shines from within”**

Maya Angelou.

**“But those who wait on the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings like eagles, they shall run and not be weary, they shall walk and not faint”**

Isaiah 40:31.

### For Reflection

- Take some time to think about what resources you have. This is more than just money. Think about people who can help you, organizations, churches, or government programs. Think about your personal experiences or strengths that have helped you through this time. What tools do you already have in life?
- After considering, each person can take some time to share what resources have helped them.
- What new tool will you try out this week?



**This ends Session 1.  
Thank you for your participation.**



## SESSION 2

# FINDING STABILITY — OUR ANCHORING TOOLS



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer  
– Psalms 61:1



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.



I find hope in the darkest days  
and focus in the brightest.  
– Dalai Lama



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again. Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'



A true friend is one who takes you by  
their hand and touches your heart.  
– Gabriel García Márquez

## Recognizing the Signs

Last meeting we talked about common reactions to trauma. Learning about these things can give us a sense of power and hope; we realize we are not the only ones who feel this way, and we find common ground with the people around us. Let's review and consider a few more signs that might mean you have experienced a traumatic event.

### Physical Reactions

- Fatigue
- Sleep disturbances
- Changes in appetite
- Headaches
- Upset stomach
- Chronic muscle tension





## Emotional Reactions

- Feeling overwhelmed/emotionally spent
- Feeling helpless
- Feeling inadequate
- Sense of vulnerability
- Increased mood swings
- Irritability
- Crying more easily or frequently
- Suicidal or violent thoughts or urges

## Behavioral Reactions

- Isolation or withdrawal
- Restlessness
- Changes in consumption of drugs and alcohol
- Changes in relationships with others

## Thought-Pattern Reactions

- Disbelief, sense of numbing
- Replaying events in one's mind over and over
- Decreased concentration
- Confusion or impaired memory
- Difficulty making decisions or problem-solving
- Distressing dreams or fantasies

## For Reflection

Have you experienced any of these reactions since your family's loss, or difficult event or situation began? Are you commonly experiencing any of these now?

The good news is these reactions are normal and, with self-care and some intentional processing, the reactions may become less frequent and even disappear with time. We will talk today about tools we can use to find an anchor of hope during stormy times. These tools can help reduce anxiety, depression, and stress in our lives.

Remember that we are all unique! People experience different reactions to trauma, and different tools help them. You are going on a journey to find the tools that work for you.

It is also important to note that you might benefit from more than just these tools. If at any time, you feel that your trauma reactions are stopping you from living day to day life, ask your group facilitator if they can refer you to a psychologist or other mental health professional who can help you more directly.

## Our Anchoring Tools

### Intentional Breathing

Find a comfortable place to sit. If possible, look for a quiet spot, where you won't be interrupted. Taking just 30-60 seconds out of your day to breathe deeply can empower you to cope with stress. Here are some tips:

- Breathe from your diaphragm. Put your hand on your lower abdomen and feel that your stomach expands as you breathe in and falls as you breathe out.
- Listen to the sound of your breath.
- Count to 2 as you breathe in, then hold your breath for 2 seconds and slowly let your breath out for 2 seconds.
- Practice this every day, several times a day.
- When you feel particularly stressed, take 30 seconds to breathe in this way.

### Engage in Relationship

- Spend time outside. Nature, fresh air and sunshine have strong healing powers.
- Reduce stressors in areas of your life. Learn to say no.me away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time, without a phone.
- Physical exercise. Even 15 minutes can help. Consider walking, running, aerobics, swimming or yoga.
- Learn about stress. When you are learning and applying what you have learned, you are feeling more competent and successful.





- Ask questions. Sometimes asking others how they are doing, how they are coping will open ideas for yourself. Even when you share an idea of what might have helped you – you are potentially helping reduce your own stress.
- Write in a journal or a journal of thanksgiving.
- Watch a funny movie or TV show, or read a funny book. Smiling and laughter help reduce stress.
- Create music, a poem, a story or a game to play with others.
- Think about a quote or verse that gives you hope (there are examples below). You may want to pray about it or talk about it with your family and friends.

**“Hope is being able to see that there is light, despite all the darkness.”**

Desmond Tutu

**“Two are better off than one, because together they can work more effectively. If one of them falls down, the other can help him up. But if someone is alone and falls, it’s just too bad, because there is no one to help him. If it is cold, two can sleep together and stay warm, but how can you keep warm by yourself? Two people can resist an attack that would defeat one person alone. A rope made of three cords is hard to break.”**

Ecclesiastes 4:9–12

## Progressive Muscle Relaxation

Do you have frequent headaches? Do you feel tension in your neck, shoulders or back? When you are stressed, your body may respond with these physical sensations. Here is one technique to help your body and mind relax.

This practice involves gradually tensing and relaxing different muscle groups in your body. When you do this, you learn to recognize the physical sensations of tension and relaxation. Becoming aware of physical tension and symptoms of stress are an important part of healing.

Start by finding a quiet place where you can be alone and comfortable. Sit in a comfortable chair, close your eyes and let your body become relaxed. Next, begin to tense and then relax the muscles in your toes, and slowly work your way up the body, all the way to the head. Inhale as you tense each muscle group for about five seconds and then relax that same group for 30 seconds. As you relax, slowly exhale. Pay close attention to the sensations in your body as you tense and relax. You can repeat this process, and be sure to spend a little time enjoying your relaxed state!

## Imagine a Peaceful Place

Find a comfortable position, either sitting or lying down. Close your eyes, start to breathe more slowly, and imagine a place that is peaceful for you. Maybe you think of a favorite vacation spot, or somewhere you have always wanted to visit. Maybe this is a place from your own life. Imagine what you can see, hear, smell, touch and maybe even taste. Spend time imagining and breathing, simply enjoying the peaceful spot in your mind.

### For Reflection

- How did you feel as you practiced these tools?
- Which tool was most helpful to you?
- Which new tool do you plan to try in the coming week?



- Now let's think of your children:
  - › Which of these tools could be most helpful for your children?
  - › Which of these tools do you plan to try with them during the coming week?

**This ends Session 2.  
Thank you for your participation.**



# SESSION 3

## TALK ABOUT IT



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### HELP CHILDREN COPE WITH CRISIS

- Children may be scared, confused and angry. They need your support.
- Listen to children when they share how they are feeling.
- Accept how they feel and give them comfort.
- Every day before you sleep, praise yourself for trying to help your children cope.



If you love someone, tell them... many hearts are broken because of words that are never heard.  
– Paulo Coelho



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### MAKING TRAVEL PLANS WITH CHILDREN IN YOUR HOME

- Make a song with your child so they memorize your full name and phone number, and number of someone you trust. Go over it every day.
- Tell your child where you're going and why, in a way they can understand and handle.
- Make backup copies or photos of all your identity documents
- Praise yourself for doing the best you can.



Focus on the journey, not the destination. Joy is found not in finishing an activity but in doing it.  
– Anonymous



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### SMALL THINGS HELP KEEP CHILDREN SAFE

- Talk to children about what is happening in a way that they can understand.
- Identify a meeting point and make a plan in case you get separated.
- Assure your children that you will do everything to keep them safe.
- Planning with children helps them feel safer too.



No one Will ever harm you child. I am here to protect you. This is why I was born before you and my bones hardened before yours.  
– Juan Rulfo



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- If a child has a mobile phone, save your number and those of a few trusted people.
- Explain to your child how they should behave when at checkpoints, (i.e., be quiet, do not leave the vehicle).
- Hide money or bank cards in different places, in case you lose your bags.
- Being prepared takes hard work. Be sure to look after yourself.



How precious is the value of the family.  
– Papa Francisco



# Where Am I?

## For Reflection

1. How has life changed for you since your family's loss or crisis?
2. What has been the biggest change for you?

We've all been through a very difficult experience. We want to be able to cope and support ourselves and each other. To begin to do that, we need to be aware of where we are at, and what has happened to us. We might feel alone or think that we are the only one who feels this way — and it is true that each person's experience of a crisis is unique. But there are some common experiences people may have when difficult things happen.

### These are common reactions to our losses and crises:

- You are looking for someone to blame — yourself or someone else.
- You may have regrets over things you said or did — or did not say or do
- You may feel guilty — that you have survived while others haven't, or that others have suffered more than you.
- You may feel ashamed about how you are reacting or embarrassed about accepting help.

## For Reflection

Do any of these sound like where you are right now?

While we might look for someone to blame, feel guilty or ashamed, all these reactions can stop us from accepting what's happened, and accepting that it is not our fault.

Besides these feelings, we can also react to trauma in three main ways:

1. You may relive the experience — in nightmares or flashbacks during the day.
2. You may find yourself avoiding things that remind you of the event. You may avoid feeling at all, by becoming "numb," or you may work too much or too little.
3. You may be on alert all the time, feeling tense, overreacting, having difficulty

sleeping or feeling unwell. You may find it hard to concentrate

## For Reflection

Does any of that sound like how you are feeling?

These reactions are normal and it's good to notice them in ourselves, be aware of them and talk about it. By talking about our experiences, and finding ways to be calm and stay in the present moment, we can support one another to get through this time.

However, if these reactions continue for a long time or stop us being able to live our day-to-day life, we may need to speak to someone and get further support. Talk with your facilitator after the session if you feel you need more support.

Here are some other ideas on healthy habits that can strengthen you to go through this time:

- Learn to recognize stressful thinking. Paying attention to stressful thoughts may help you reduce them. Training yourself to be aware of your thoughts, your breathing, your heart rate and other signs of tension helps you recognize stress when it begins.
- Breathe. Deep breathing (take a breath in through the nose and then hold for a few seconds and then let out through the mouth) is a simple tip for stress reduction that can be used anywhere at any time.
- Take breaks from news stories, including those on social media. It's good to be informed, but constant information about the crisis around you can be upsetting. Consider limiting news to just a couple of times a day and disconnecting from social media for a while.
- Be your best self. Feelings of shame, guilt, regret, or inadequacy can lead to negative thinking. Develop the habit of gratitude and forgiveness of others.
- Time away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time.
- Connect with others. Get to know them better — ask questions, listen to understand them.

We have spent time sharing on where we as individuals are, and on how we are doing. This is important for our own healing, and also for us to recognize, in order to help children well, as they deal with similar issues. The next questions and tips will help us reflect on how our children are doing and how we can talk with them about their reactions to the crisis.

You may have friends, relatives or neighbours who are not a parent or caregiver. These tips we will talk about now (and others in future sessions) can be important for them as well. Think of other people who regularly interact with the children in your household or other specific children in your life (maybe a grandparent, an aunt or uncle, a teacher, or a close family friend). How could your friends also use these tools? Also, although these tools are for relating to children, many of the ideas are relevant for your adult relationships, too. For example, we encourage that communication with children should be open, honest, supportive and positive. All these recommendations are also relevant for communication in adult relationships.

### For Reflection

1. How often does your child seem stressed or worried?
2. How often is your child able to talk about their problems and share their worries?
3. Have you and your children talked together about what's happened? How did it go?
4. What are some of the fears or concerns children are expressing?

Take a moment to acknowledge examples of how you have reached out and listened to the children in your care. These moments are important, because children value when we are open and honest with them and take their concerns seriously.

Here are some key tips on how to speak with your child:

- **Be open** — Allow your child to talk freely. Ask them open questions (which means questions that can't just be answered by a "yes" or "no").
- **Be honest** — Always answers their questions truthfully. Think about how old your child is and how much they can understand. It's ok to not know all the answers.
- **Be supportive** — Your child may be scared or confused. Give them space to share how they are feeling and let them know you are there for them. Praise your child every day for something they do well.
- **Be positive** — Remind your child that you care and that they can talk to you at any time.

Avoid exposing your child to graphic details of violence: in real life, on TV, on radio or on your phone. Do not direct your child to feel a specific emotion (e.g. anger) but accept the way they feel.

Every evening, praise children and yourself for something — recognize how well you are doing in the circumstances.

## This ends Session 3. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



## SESSION 3

# EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN



**Live Conflict/  
Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this handout with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Talking with Children about the Crisis/Transition
- Extra Actions — Planning for Safety Together
- Talking with Children — Simple Steps to Stay Safe

## Talking with Children About the Crisis/ Transition



Begin the time with your child with regular check-in questions, such as:

1. What was the best thing that happened this week?
2. What was something funny that happened this week?
3. What was hard about this week?

### Game: Good and Bad

Explain that you will read some statements of things that could happen – a change – like winning a prize or starting a new school. The child should quickly decide whether the change is a good or a bad thing. There are no right or wrong answers!

e.g. You: “Winning a prize!” – Child: “Good!” ....  
You: “Starting a new school” – Child: “Bad!”

- Winning a prize

- Moving house to a new city
- Starting a new school
- Getting a new puppy

The crisis has made a lot of changes in our lives. Explain that today we’ll be looking at what’s happened, how we feel about it, and what we can do together to stay safe.

### For Reflection With Your Child

1. What are some of the changes that have happened for you and your family since your loss (of your parent or caregiver), and / or the other losses or crises?
2. How do you feel about these changes, or about what’s happening now?

You can explain this to your child, or a trusted relative or friend could explain:

“It’s normal to feel scared or upset. Adults do too! Lots of things have changed, and it can be scary when we don’t know what will happen next, like where we will go to school. It’s good to ask questions and to share how you are feeling. If there’s anything you might



be confused or worried about, don't be afraid to ask someone you trust".

Say to your child: Here are some ways you could talk to your parents about your questions or what's worrying you:

- Ask your parent(s) or caregiver to sit down with you for a few minutes and tell them how you are feeling
- If you have seen or heard things related to the loss (of your parent or caregiver) or about the crisis — from other people, or the news, or online, ask your parent(s) or caregiver to talk with you about it and ask them any questions you have.
- Draw a picture about how you are feeling about the situation and share it with your parent(s) or caregiver.
- Talk with your family about what helps you feel safe.

### Encouraging Others

Say to the child: You are doing so well so far – (mention something specific to the child's situation – such as "you have kept going to school" or "you helped your family when others have felt sad or lonely" or "you have played with your siblings and that cheers them up").

### For Reflection With Your Child

1. Thinking about other children in your family or community, or about people in your family or household: Is there anyone who is having a hard time, or seems like they might be sad or worried?
2. Do you think there's anything you could do to encourage someone else this week?

Encourage the child for all their ideas and the ways they already care for others and encourage them. Suggest to the child that here are some things they could do:

- Play games with a younger brother or sister, or read them a story.
- Tell your parent(s) something you love about them or want to say thank you for.
- Draw a picture and put it in your window with an encouraging message for people who pass by.

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

We might feel overwhelmed by the situation but actually, as we've talked about today, there are so many things we can do ourselves that can help us and our families to support each other and stay safe.

Some ways children can help are:

- Talking with your parents about what you are feeling worried about.
- Helping others in your family who might be having a hard time at the moment.
- Being kind – put a picture in your window with an encouraging message.
- Making a family plan together for staying safe and healthy.

*This ends the tool "Talking With Children About the Crisis/Transition". We look forward to hearing how it went!*

## Extra Actions — Planning for Safety Together



Planning for safety together with children helps them to feel safer, too. Children will be aware that things are uncertain, and being able to talk about it and have practical actions they can be part of helps them to feel calmer and safer.

You could take some time with your children and ask them for their ideas of what you could do to stay safe. Here are some practical ways you can plan for safety together with your children:

- Make a plan together for what to do if you are separated and every day, agree on a clear place to meet if you are separated.
- Make a song or chant with your child so they memorize your full name and phone number, and the number of someone you trust. Go over it every day.
- Tell your child they should not spend time



outside alone after dark or accepting things from someone alone.

- Make sure you know who your children are spending time with online and in person.

### For Parent/Caregiver Reflection

1. What have you done that has helped to keep children safe, and what are you doing now?
2. Is there something we've talked about that you are going to put into practice or do differently this week?
3. What kind of plan could you make with your family to help stay safe?

Here are some tips for staying safe with children in active conflict situations:

- If there is no shelter available, it is better to stand in the staircase of a building and stay away from windows.
- Remind your child to avoid touching unknown items or remains, if there has been a shooting. Practice with your child: What do we do when there is a shooting? What do we do after?
- If there is a shelter available, practice running to the shelter. Making a routine out of the shooting can significantly reduce stress and provide your child with some sense of control.

### Putting it into practice this week

Talk with your child about what they have heard about the armed conflict and any questions they have. What can you do together as a family to stay safe?

## Talking with Children — Simple Steps to Stay Safe



Say to your child: You are doing so well so far – (mention something specific to the child's situation – such as “you have stayed safe on your journey here” or “you are helping your family when you have to shelter at home”).

### For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you have been doing with your parents or brothers and sisters to stay safe?

Encourage the child for all the ways they have been staying safe and the actions they are taking, even if it is difficult and means for example that they are not in school, not seeing their friends or loved ones. Share with them that there is a lot that children can do to help stay safe – we can work with our family to make plans to help us to stay safe and stay together when things are difficult.

Say: Here are some things you could do together with your parent(s):

- Take some time together as a family to agree on your family safety plan.
- Remember to avoid touching unknown items or walking in ruined buildings after a shooting, unless you are sure it is safe.
- Make a plan of what to do in case anyone gets separated from the others and agree on this plan every day.
- Make up a song or chant together to memorize your parent's full name and phone number, and make sure you know your own full name and address, too.
- In a conflict/disaster setting: Talk with your family about a plan for what to do when there is danger (e.g. running to the shelter, taking supplies with us).

### For Reflection With a Child

Is there something we've talked about that you are going to try to do this week?

*this ends the extra tools “Talking with Children about the Crisis/Transition”, “Extra Actions - Planning for Safety Together”, “Talking with Children - Simple Steps to Stay Safe”. We look forward to hearing how it went!*

## SESSION 4

# STRONG FAMILIES AND POSITIVE PARENTING

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### 5 MINUTES OF POSITIVE TIME WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Playing with and talking to children for a few minutes every day helps them feel secure.
- Ask children what they would like to do.
- Listen to them, look at them, give them your full attention.
- Small amounts of time can help them feel safe and loved.

A child reminds us that playtime is an essential part of our daily routine.  
– Ralph Waldo Emerson



 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### BUILDING CHILDREN'S STRENGTH IN A CRISIS

- Ask children to help with day-to-day tasks such as making food or cleaning.
- Praise children for trying or doing well.
- This encourages helpful behavior.
- Praising children shows them that you notice and care.

Where a door closes, another one opens.  
– The Quixote



Today's session talks about relationships within families and will help us think through how we can relate positively with our family members. Many of these principles are relevant for communication in relationships with children and other adults.

Many of us are now living in different family circumstances than before the crisis or loss. You may have been separated from some family members, and you may be living with other relatives, friends, or even new acquaintances. As we discuss "family" in today's session, please consider both your family members and the people you are currently living with. Also, when we discuss parents and children, the ideas are relevant for both parents and other caregivers, like grandparents or trusted friends of the family.

Let's be sensitive to each family member's situation. Where parents are separated, or where loved ones have been lost, we can

admit at the start that the missing person or separated family members are not there, and that this is difficult.

## Positive Communication At Home

### For Reflection

- Can you think of a time this week where you had a good conversation with the children you are caring for, or other family members?
- What was positive about it?

When we're under pressure at a time of crisis and change, it can be hard to keep our communication positive – but when we do, it has a big impact for children and adolescents. How we talk and behave in front of and with our children and adolescents influences how they

behave, too. Positive communication also involves positive discipline, such as speaking calmly and removing privileges, rather than hitting a child with our hand or another object. Poor communication between adults in the household can have a negative impact on children. Practicing peaceful, loving relationships helps children feel secure and loved.

### For Reflection

What do you think positive communication looks like in practice?

Positive communication could include:

- Trying to talk kindly to everyone in the family – both adults and children. When you are upset, make an intentional effort to speak kindly to your child and not shout or scream at them.
- Telling others what you want them to do instead of what you don't want them to do. Instead of "Stop shouting", try "Please speak more quietly".
- Being a good listener – be open and show others that you hear what they are saying.
- Saying thank you, even for small or routine things, can make a big difference.
- Praising your child every day for something they do well.

## One on One Time with Children

### For Reflection

- Can you think of an activity you have enjoyed doing with your child(ren) in the last 3 days?
- Is it easy or hard to spend time individually with each of your children? What helps or hinders you in this?
- How could spending quality time with your children help you or them?

Especially in times of loss or crisis, it can be difficult to find time to spend with our children. But, one-on-one time is one of the key ways

we can help children feel loved and secure, and it shows them that they are important. Playing with and talking to children every day helps them feel secure.

Even in difficult and uncertain times, you could do this by:

- Setting aside time to spend with each child. It can be for just 5 minutes or longer, and it could be at the same time each day so children can look forward to it.
- Asking your child what they would like to do. Choosing builds their self-confidence. If they want to do something that isn't possible in the current situation, then this is a chance to talk with them about it.
- Even if you aren't able to do an activity together, just listening to them, looking at them, and giving them your full attention, can make all the difference.

## Exercise — Model Possible Time with a Child

*Your facilitator will now lead you in an exercise about spending time with a child. You will be using the game called "Which Person in the House," and you can find that game in your Extra Tools for Supporting Children, at the end of this session.*

If your family has many children, you can make one on one time practical by suggesting group activities as a family, and one-on-one time less frequently.

If your family is in a more stable situation or you would like more suggestions for activities, consider the ideas below. Remember that where parents are under intense stress and in ongoing conflict/crisis/disaster settings, simply spending 5 minutes a day with your child is enough and will really help.

### Ideas for different age groups of children

#### Baby/Toddler:

- Copy their facial expression and sounds.

- Sing songs, make music with pots and spoons or other available items.
- Stack cups or blocks.
- Tell a story, read a book, or share pictures.

**Young Child:**

- Read a book, tell stories, or look at pictures, play games.
- Go for a walk if possible.
- Dance to music or sing.
- Do a chore together – make cleaning and cooking a game!
- Help with schoolwork if the child is in school.

**Teenager:**

- Talk about something they like: sports, music, movies.
- Go for a walk if possible.
- Play a game together.

You can do anything together! Good one on one time means that you listen to your child,

look at them, give them your full attention, and have fun, even if it's for a short time.

## Putting it into Practice

Can you plan to have quality one-on-one time with your child this week? What might you do together? Could you find out what they would enjoy? It's fine if this can only be for 5 minutes a day right now.

**This ends Session 4.  
Thank you for your participation.**

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session, and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children.



## SESSION 4

# EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN



### Settled

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent going through this handout with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Talking with Children About the Crisis
- Who Am I?
- My Family

## Talking with Children About the Crisis



(for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children who are settled, either at home or as displaced persons. You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the handout. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead)

Begin the time with your child with regular check-in questions, such as:

1. What was the best thing that happened this week?
2. What was something funny that happened this week?
3. What was hard about this week?

Note for the parent or caregiver: you should be sensitive to the child’s living situation and family context.

Where children are separated from a parent, or living in a different household away from some of the people they love, they may want to look back and talk about their family, or they may want to talk about who they live with now. Let the discussion be led by the child and don’t press them to talk about something they are not happy to discuss.

### Topic: Me and My Family For Reflection With Your Child

Who lives in your home (or the place where you are staying) with you now?

### Game: Which Person in the House

Explain that you will play a game together now. You will say something and the child should say the name of the person in the household who is the most like what you’ve said.

E.g. “Which person in the house makes the most noise” – “My dad!”

The child should answer as quickly as they can! And the answer can be “me”.

Be flexible here about which household the child is talking about. They may want to look

back at their family home setting, or they may be thinking about where they currently are – which may be someone else’s home, a transit centre, or many other living situations.

Which person in the house...

- Is the tallest?
- Makes the most noise?
- Is the youngest?
- Is the best cook?
- Is kind to others?
- Makes you laugh?
- Add your ideas on something special about your family members

Explain that now we’ll be looking at how you can be yourself and be the part of your family (or household) that only you can be.

## Who Am I?

### For Reflection With Your Child

Have you ever wished you could be more like your brother or sister, or your friend at school? (Note to parent: Be ready to share your own answer first if the child finds it difficult to answer).

Sometimes it can be good to try to be like someone else – like wanting to learn to play football like your sister, or to be a good listener like your brother. But it’s really important that we realize that we are also special just for who we already are!

There’s no one quite like you and there are things that only you can do! It might be things like:

- Being kind
- Making people laugh
- Helping your younger sibling or your parent(s)

### For Reflection With Your Child

What is one thing that you think is really about

you? It might be something you are good at or something about who you are. (Note to parent: again, share your own answer if you need to).

What do you think is special about being you?

## My Family

### For Reflection With Your Child

What is your favourite thing to do with your parent(s)? (or the adults the child is currently living with) (Share your own experience of your own childhood if you can!)

Say to your child: That does sound fun! Are you still managing to spend time together doing things like this at the moment? What has changed in your family and is it easier or harder to have fun together?

When things change, our parents or other adults around us might have a lot on their mind or have many responsibilities. Sometimes we may be separated from someone in our family, or not be able to see everyone. But, our parents still love us and want to spend time with us.

### For Reflection With Your Child

What might be some ways that you could spend time with your parent(s)? (or other caregiver)

Here are some ideas (if you need them):

- Ask your parent (or caregiver) if you can read a book or sing songs together.
- Do some exercise together to your favourite music.
- Ask if you can help with cooking or preparing a meal, or another household task.

If the child is currently separated from a parent or important caregiver, you may think together about how they could keep in touch, or remember this person together with those they are living with now. For example, through phone calls, writing a letter to express your feelings and tell them about the place you are living now, doing an activity you enjoyed doing together to remember them.

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

What is one thing you will ask your parent(s) if you can do together this week? Remember what you said is special about you – what can you do this week to share this with your family? e.g.

- “I am kind” – tell each person in your family something you love about them, or help.
- Someone
- “I’m good at making people laugh” – gather your family together and tell them some jokes!
- “I’m good at cooking” – ask your parents if you can help to prepare one of the meals this week.
- “I’m good at writing” – write a story or a poem and share it with your family/ household one evening.

*This ends the tool “Talking With Children About their Family”. We look forward to hearing how it went!*





# SESSION 5

## STAYING SAFE TOGETHER

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### KEEPING OUR FAMILIES TOGETHER

- Keep children with you or someone you trust all the time.
- Encourage them to share anything that worries them with you.
- Talk to them about things that are not safe.
- Be proud of your efforts and try to take care of yourself too.



The secret of getting ahead is getting started.  
– Mark Twain

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### MAKING AN IDENTITY TAG FOR A CHILD

- Write the full name & phone number of you and three people you trust.
- Write any medication your child needs, any special needs or disability.
- An identity tag should be covered in plastic or kept in a waterproof bag.
- Hide the tag in something your child always wears (e.g., a pocket, shoe, necklace).



You can cut the flowers, but you cannot keep spring from coming.  
– Pablo Neruda

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM ILLEGAL ACTORS

- Illegal actors can be men, women, couples, and could be from your own community.
- Teach your children that people sometimes lie and trick children into coming with them.
- Tell children to talk to a trusted adult if they feel confused or worried.
- Teach children to trust their instincts and get away if something feels strange.



Deliver my soul, O LORD, from lying lips, and from a deceitful tongue.  
– Psalms 120:2

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### TRAVELING WITH OUR CHILDREN

- Tell someone you trust your travel plans, where you are and who you are with.
- Travel in a group of people you know where possible
- If you need to show your passport or ID, try to keep it in your hands.
- When it's hard, remember you're trying your best in a difficult situation.



The darker the night, the brighter the stars.  
The deeper the grief, the closer is God!  
– Fyodor Dostoyevsky

 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### KEEPING SAFE ON THE ROAD

- If a child has a mobile phone, save your number and those of a few trusted people.
- Explain to your child how they should behave when at checkpoints, (i.e., be quiet, do not leave the vehicle).
- Hide money or bank cards in different places, in case you lose your bags.
- Being prepared takes hard work. Be sure to look after yourself.



How precious is the value of the family.  
– Papa Francisco

Today's topics are designed to be used in various contexts – whether settled at home, in a conflict zone, moving to a different home, displaced, or returning to home. Where activities vary, you will see these symbols – please choose the content reflecting your context. We believe the topics we will talk about today are important for every parent and child to understand, regardless of where they live.



**Live Conflict/Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

## Staying Together



### For Reflection

Have there been times so far where you have felt worried about the safety of children in your care?

In times of loss, conflict, displacement, and crisis, there is so much that we can worry about – it can be overwhelming, and we can feel that we cannot do enough to keep our children safe. However, as a parent or caregiver, you've already been doing so much – helping to find a safe place to live for your children, keeping them safe, finding food for them to eat, reassuring them.

One of the simplest and most powerful ways we can keep our children safe is just by staying together, and making sure children are not separated from us. That might mean keeping them with us or with someone we know and trust, so they have adult supervision. We know that sometimes parents are separated from one another by loss of life, conflict, attacks, or other crises, and sometimes we cannot avoid this. We shouldn't feel guilty about this, or that this is our fault. But we can do all we can to make sure that children are not separated from the family, or from people we trust. By doing this, we can avoid many risks that children might face.

### For Reflection

What do you already do to help to stay together?

It's great that you are already doing so much to keep children in your care together with you.

Some ways you can help to keep children safe by staying together:

- Tell children that staying together will help keep them safe
- Keep children with you or someone you trust all the time
- If you are travelling, hold their hand, have them walk in front of you, and stay in the same vehicle with them
- Create a safety note for each child if you are on the move, whether away from or returning home – this should be covered in plastic or kept in a waterproof bag. Write on the note the full name and phone number of you and three people you trust, any medication your child needs, any special needs or disability. Hide a safety note on every child (e.g. in a pocket that they always wear, on a necklace or in their shoe).
- Tell your child they should not spend time outside alone after dark or accept help from someone alone.
- Make sure you know who your children are spending time with online and in person.

### For reflection

Is there something new you will put into practice this week?



# Children's Changing Roles



## For Reflection

- Thinking about your children over this time of grief and loss, how are they spending their time?
- Have you noticed any changes in their role, or what they do every day? (For example, children may have been out of the house more, may have missed school, doing more of less of something, seeing their Friends more or less, helping more or less at home, etc.)
- Thinking of each child in the family, do you think the situation of losing their caregiver now has made children closer to, or further away from, what you think children “should” be doing as children? (For example, more time with family could be a good thing, but being out of school might not be).

There may have been both positive and negative changes to children's roles – and this may vary a lot between families and households. What do you think needs to be in place for children to be able to fulfil their roles as children?

Let's cover these key points, focusing on any areas which are especially relevant in your context or community:

- Engaging in education is really important – do your best to keep children in school, or enrol in support programmes, and take an interest in their work and studies, in their friends and hobbies.
- Children should only help with work in the house or work outside in a way that doesn't affect their wellbeing or development negatively. When thinking about sharing household chores as a family, think about an appropriate level of responsibility for children.
- Education and opportunities to learn and develop are equally important for both girls and boys, so be careful to ensure that children have the same opportunities, whatever their gender.

- Staying together as a family is very important for children's sense of safety and security; family separation (i.e. sending children away to a residential home) should be avoided).

## For reflection

Is there something that stands out to you from what we've talked about, or something that might be relevant for your family?

# Avoiding Trafficking



## For Reflection

Can you tell me about someone who has helped you so far in the crisis? (This might be someone who has helped you with housing, to access food and clothing, or told you about a staying safe in a conflict zone).

Can you share an example of something that has helped you feel safe during your family loss or crisis?

It's wonderful to have so many people who are willing to help and show kindness to one another in this difficult time. However, at the same time, we know that in any crisis – whether due to loss, conflict, displacement, disaster, epidemic, or transition, there are also people who do not have good intentions and see this as an opportunity to take advantage of people who are vulnerable.

## For Reflection

Have you noticed anything like that during this crisis – feeling concerned about whether someone you have seen or met has good intentions – in your experience so far?

One key risk in times of crisis and transition is recruitment by illegal groups – where people who may seem like they want to help are actually seeking to exploit those who need help, for their own gain. This could involve taking people to a place where they will have to work or be exploited, and will not be free to leave. This may be presented as a good opportunity for adults or children to find work, or be supported by people elsewhere. This can happen to both adults and children, and it will usually seem like a good opportunity to find a



safe place and earn money. A recruiter might offer to help a person get back home, if they have been displaced by the crisis or transition. A recruiter may also go out of their way to be helpful or give extravagant gifts, which make it difficult for people to say no to their requests.

Therefore, it's important to know the signs to look out for so that you can avoid danger and find honest people who will help, and share this information with others. It is also important to know there is a lot you can do to help yourself and your children stay safe in the crisis.

### For Reflection

How do you think we can stay safe from illegal groups?

Some ways you can stay safe are:

- Be aware that recruiters will look like ordinary people, and sound like they want to help.
- Trust your instincts — if something feels strange, get out immediately.
- Ask to see a photo ID before you accept anyone's help, transport or a place to stay. If local police are there, check with them.
- Teach children that they should not say yes to anyone offering help without talking to you first.
- If you are concerned that someone may have been recruited, or that is happening, you should report this to the nearest police station or local authorities.
- If you are travelling: Travel in a group of people you know.

- Keep someone you trust updated with your travel places, where you are and who you are with.
- When travelling with someone you don't know, take a photo of the person and the vehicle and send it to someone you know and trust.
- Make a code word with people you trust, to let them know if you are in danger.
- Don't give your passport or ID documents to anyone, or your personal phone.

### For Reflection

Is there someone you could share this information with?

## Putting it into practice this week

What actions could you take with your child, or what could you talk to them about from our conversation today?

## This ends Session 5. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



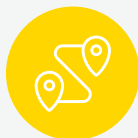
## SESSION 5

# EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following tools are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/  
Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Staying Safe Together
- Who Can I Trust?

### Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

## Staying Safe Together



### For Reflection with the Child

1. Imagine you could create a fun and safe place for children where you are. What would be there? What would it be like?

*In an in-person setting, you might ask the child to draw this place, and in a group, children could create a huge drawing altogether, or create individual pictures and share about them.*

With all the changes that have happened recently, it may be difficult to find these safe places for children to have fun and play together.

2. In the place where you live now, what are your favourite places to go? Where are the best places for children?

*In a group session, you could ask children to work together to draw a map of where they live – adding in places like shops, their homes, health centres, school, churches/mosques/temples etc. They can then mark on the map with one colour the places that are safe and good for children, and use another colour to show places that are not good or safe for children.*

3. Has this changed since the crisis?  
*(Are there new places that have been opened for children? Are there places that you used to go to, that you miss? Are there places that used to be safe, that aren't safe anymore? Is it safe for you to easily leave home and move around the neighbourhood?)*

When things are changing fast, or we are in a new place, we might feel uncertain or worried.

#### 4. What do you think can help children to stay safe where you are now?

There are some simple things that can help children to stay safe, wherever they are, even when things are changing a lot or are very different.

- Stay together with your family.
- Tell someone you trust if you feel worried about your safety.
- If you can, keep going with your schoolwork and ask for help to do that.
- If you are in an unstable place or might be moving to somewhere new: Make sure you know your full name and your parents' or caregivers' names, and your address.
- Talk with your parent(s) about what you would do if you were separated.

#### 5. Is there anything you might do to stay safe where you are this week?

## Who can I trust?



In a group setting, you could start this section with a group game – 'Secret Safe Zone'. Secretly choose one place in the room (such as a wall or rug) which is a 'safe zone' – where players cannot be 'tagged'.

Children should run around, and they can be tagged (tapped on the shoulder) whenever they are not in the safe zone. When a child is tagged, they must sit down where they are – they can be 'released' by being tagged by another child. Gradually children will be able to work out where the safe zone is. The children win when they are all in the safe zone. Play again with one or two children choosing the safe zone.

### For Reflection with the Child

Apart from your parents, can you think of any

other adults or children who have helped you and your family since the war started?

*(This could be people who have helped with food and clothing, a place to stay, transport, or sharing helpful information, for example)*

It's great that there have been so many people who are willing to be kind and help others during this difficult time. Most people are kind and want to help us.

But, sometimes people are not kind and might say they are trying to 'help' us and our family, but really they are not helping us. For example:

- Someone might come to the community and say that they have a great opportunity for children to learn or to work, in another place. They might also offer to help older kids get back home, if you had to leave your home, city or even country – this can be dangerous as children would be separated from their family, and might not be treated well, or what the person said may not be true.
- Older children might be asked to work with illegal groups, which puts children in serious danger.
- Our parents could be given a job which is not good for them, where they work too hard or are not safe at work.
- This can sound scary, but there are some simple things we can do as children which can help us to know who to trust, and how to get help from people who really want to help us.

### For Reflection with the Child

What do you think children can do to make sure they are helped by safe people?

Here are a few things children can do that will help you to stay safe:

- If at all possible, stay together with your family. Don't travel on your own.
- Don't accept help from someone you don't know without talking with your parent(s) first.
- If you feel worried about something, talk to someone you trust.





- Talk with your family about these issues, and talk together about how you can stay together and find help from people you trust.
- Share this information with other children or others in your family.
- For older children: Only share your phone number or social media details with people that you trust. Don't accept gifts which you have to keep secret.

### **For Reflection with the Child**

Is there anything you will talk with your family about?

If there is anything you want to talk about based on what we have discussed today, please do talk to me, or someone that you trust, about any concerns you have.

## **Wrap up: What can we do together this week?**

### **For Reflection with the Child**

From our conversation today, can you think of 3 things that might help you be safe where you are? Great!

*(Remind the child of one or two things that seemed to be important for them during the conversation.)*

What will you do this week to stay safe together?

*(Some suggestions are: Talk to someone I trust / talk with parents about safety / talk with parents about illegal groups / share safety information with others / other).*

*This ends the tools "Staying Safe Together" and "Who Can I Trust?". We look forward to hearing how it went!*





## SESSION 6

# STAYING SAFE AT HOME



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.

I find hope in the darkest days  
and focus in the brightest.  
– Dalai Lama



**PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times



### PROTECTING OUR CHILDREN FROM SEXUAL VIOLENCE

- Teach your child that no one has the right to touch them or make them uncomfortable.
- Practice saying “no” loudly and strongly.
- If they tell you about abuse, trust your child. Reassure them it's not their fault and they are safe and loved. Talking about this with your child helps protect them.
- Tell them that abusers often trick children by saying it is their ‘secret’

Rescue me, Lord, from evildoers;  
protect me from the violent.  
– Psalms 140:1



## When I Get Angry

### For Reflection

- What has been a time this week that you remember feeling angry about something or with someone at home?
- What did you do when you felt angry?

*(Be prepared to share your own experience)*

Under stress it is normal to feel more angry than usual – whether about big things or small! We love our children and teenagers, but the stresses of our losses, grief, the conflict, disasters, or other crises, along with the extra pressures in daily life, separation from family members and the sadness we face, can all make us angry. This is normal and something that we all experience. Our anger doesn't need to be out of our control – we can do things before and during it to help us manage it.

### For Reflection

- The same things usually make us get stressed and angry every time – can you see any patterns in what makes you angry, and how do you normally react?
- Do you know what helps you to respond well?

*(In times of loss, conflict, or displacement, people may not be able to access rest, food, support and time out as in these examples. In this case, move straight onto the ‘Taking a Break’ tip below).*



There are ways we can help ourselves prevent anger from starting — for example:

- If we usually get angry when we are tired, can we get more rest?
- If we are angry when we are hungry, can we make sure we eat? (be sensitive to families who may not have enough food)
- If we are angry when we feel alone, can we ask for support or make sure we connect with others?
- If we feel under pressure and overwhelmed, can we make sure we are doing something that we enjoy and taking some time for ourselves somehow?

Finding someone we can talk to about how we are feeling can be a simple step that can make a big difference, even if we aren't able to solve all of the issues.

### For Reflection

Can you think of any ways you could prevent your anger from starting?

That sounds great! But also, however much we prepare, we will all still feel angry sometimes! We can also be prepared to react to our anger in a positive way.

Taking a break is one of the best ways to manage anger:

- When you start feeling angry, take a 10-second cool down. Breathe in and out five times before you speak or move. Then try to respond in a calmer way.
- Go somewhere else for 10 minutes to regain control of your emotions. If you have safe outdoor space, go outside.
- *(If relevant in your context:)* Drinking alcohol can influence our reaction. Cut back on drinking or don't drink, especially when children are awake.
- Do you have weapons or things that can be used to hit others? Lock them up, hide them, or take them out of the home.

### For Reflection

Is there something we've talked about that you want to try to put into practice this week?

## Using Positive Discipline with our Children

### For Reflection

- What have you noticed about children's behaviour during this time of their own loss and grieving, and of change in the family?
- Is it the same as usual or have you noticed more difficult behaviour?

All children misbehave. It is normal when children are tired, hungry, afraid, or learning independence. And this can be extra hard to cope with during a crisis.

### For Reflection

- How confident are you in using positive discipline rather than physical discipline with your children?
- What are some of the ways you help to encourage positive behaviours in your children?

Some ideas for positive discipline:

- Encourage positive behaviour by using positive words to say the behaviour you want to see (e.g. 'Please put your books away' rather than 'Don't make a mess') and praise your child when they are behaving well.
- Redirect unwanted behaviour quickly when you notice it beginning, by suggesting another activity.
- Use consequences rather than hitting or shouting – this is more effective and teaches children responsibility. Some ideas of consequences could be taking away privileges or taking some time to cool off (a time-out). Give your child a chance to follow instructions before giving them the consequence. Stay calm when giving the consequence and make sure it is something you can follow through with. Consequences should be proportionate and reasonable.

### For Reflection

What will you do differently for one specific behaviour with one specific child this week?

Sometimes something happens at home

or outside that makes a child feel unsafe – abuse or violence against children is one of the things that can make them change their behaviour and seem to be behaving “badly”. If we notice changes in our child’s behaviour or see any physical signs of violence we should encourage the child to talk to us.

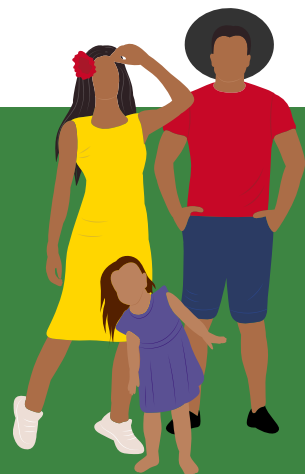
Share the appropriate procedure for reporting child abuse in your context (e.g. child helpline, social services, NGO or police.).

## Putting it into practice this week

- Could you try to talk with your child together about what ideas you and they have for how you can both manage your anger effectively?
- What could you do if you notice each other getting angry?
- What do you plan to put into practice with your child this week?

## This ends Session 6. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



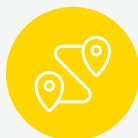
## SESSION 6

### EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following handouts are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/  
Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Staying Safe at Home
- Someone I Can Talk To

#### Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

- Ears?
- Feet?
- Mouth?
- Hands?
- Legs?
- Eyes?

### Staying Safe at Home



#### Activity to play with the child

Ask the child to tell you something they can do with the part of their body you name. You can take it in turns to ask one another, choosing a different part of the body each time.

E.g. “Legs” – “Running fast!” “Eyes” – “Noticing when my sister is sad”

What’s something you’re glad you can do with your...

If there are several children, the children can try to touch that part of their body as fast as they can, as well as shouting out their answers.

Explain that today we’ll be looking at how we can stay safe at home, including how we use our bodies in a positive way.

#### Me and My Body — For reflection with the child

It’s great that we can use our body to do so many good things, as we just talked about. But sometimes we can also use our bodies in less helpful ways — maybe to hurt others or even ourselves. Can you think of any examples of this?



Some examples might be:

- Using our hands to hit or hurt each other.
- Using our feet to kick someone.
- Using our mouth to say unkind words.

All of us get angry and upset sometimes (both children and adults!) and especially at the moment. When things are hard and confusing, sometimes we can find it difficult to stay calm and kind.

*In a group setting, you could ask children to make a face that looks angry.*

### For Reflection with the Child

- Can you think of a time you felt angry this week?
- What happened?
- What did you do?

*(Be ready to share your own example with the child, to show that all of us can find life difficult)*

### For Reflection with the Child

- What do you normally do when you feel angry?
- Does this help you feel better?

Some things we can do if we feel angry:

- Count to ten.
- Walk away from the situation.
- Breathe slowly and deeply.
- Talk to someone you trust.
- Do some exercise or physical activity.
- Write or draw how you are feeling.

### For Reflection with the Child

Will you try something different this week when you feel angry?

## Someone I Can Talk To



### For Reflection with the Child

1. What would you do if something happened to make you feel unsafe tomorrow?

*Do not prompt the child for answers, but some of their answers might include: (Talk to someone I trust / Tell someone to stop what they are doing / Get away from the situation / Don't know)*

Look at your hand and your five fingers. It's important that we have people to talk to in case we're feeling scared, upset, angry or sad.

2. Can you think of five people you can talk to if you are having a hard time? (one for each finger) (This might include parents, siblings, friends, wider family, teachers, mentors, faith leaders or others).

*In a group or 1:1 setting, children could be asked to draw around their hand, and write the name of (or draw) one person they can talk to on each finger.*

3. Can you still talk to these people at the moment?

If not, is there someone else at home or nearby you can talk to?

One of the other ways we can hurt one another is by touching someone in a way that makes them feel uncomfortable or when they do not want it. If that happens to us, we should know that we can:

- Tell this person to stop.
- Get away from the situation.
- Tell someone we trust about it.

We should never keep secrets that make us sad or worried, and so it's important to think ahead about who are the people that we will talk to if we ever feel worried. We should always tell someone if we feel worried about something or feel like something is making us uncomfortable.

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

### For Reflection with the Child

What is one thing you will do this week to help you if you feel angry, or to talk to someone you trust?

*(Some options include: do something different if I feel angry / talk to parent about managing anger / talk to someone I trust if I am worried / other.)*

*This ends the tools “Staying Safe at Home” and “Someone I Can Trust”. We look forward to hearing how it went!*





# SESSION 7

## COPING WITH LOSS – BUILDING HOPE BY UNDERSTANDING GUILT AND TRAUMA



### PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



#### TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.



Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer  
– Psalms 61:1



### PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



#### ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again, Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'



A true friend is one who takes you by their hand and touches your heart.  
– Gabriel García Márquez



### PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



#### COPING WITH STRESS, UPSET, AND ANGER

- Find someone who you can talk to about how you are feeling.
- Losing your temper? Breathe in and out slowly five times.
- Try to do something that helps you relax.
- Remember to praise yourself each time you take steps to cope.



I find hope in the darkest days and focus in the brightest.  
– Dalai Lama



### PARENTING TIPS

For challenging times



#### HELPING OUR CHILDREN WHEN SOMEONE WE LOVE DIES

- Tell children who they will live with and who will look after them – they often worry about this.
- Listen to and accept whatever your child feels. Children may seem happy but be sad.
- Do something together to say goodbye to the person – a song or letter or prayer.
- Allow yourself to mourn your losses too.
- In simple words, tell them the person has died and will not come back.



No matter how long the storms lasts, the sun always shines behind the clouds.  
– Khalil Gibran





### For Reflection

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

## Coping with Loss

Today's topics are coping with loss as a family and overcoming guilt or secondary trauma caused by the loss. We're all aware that this has been a difficult time for everyone, and many of us have lost friends or family members, or have struggled with other kinds of loss during this time. We know that our children have too. By the end of our session today we will have talked about:

- How we have experienced loss as a family
- How we can support our children to deal with loss and grief and to overcome secondary trauma caused by the loss.

This may be a difficult topic to talk about and, at any point, group members can feel free not to answer or to end the conversation or change the subject. Our goal is to create a safe space to begin to talk about this topic and think about some practical ideas, but if there is a need for further support, your group facilitator can help you connect to further support, such as counselling.

A fundamental aspect of trauma recovery involves learning to manage triggers. These are elements that, due to a previous traumatic experience, can evoke a stress response in you. Triggers can be both internal, such as feelings of anxiety, anger, or sadness, and external, related to the environment around you. Clearly identifying these triggers is an essential step in learning to address them. Compiling a list of things that provoke stress responses and the emotional, physical, and mental impacts resulting from those responses will provide you with valuable insights on how to effectively cope with them.

## How Have We Experienced Loss?

We have all experienced loss in different ways — being separated from friends and family, losing a loved one, losing a familiar place like a home, losing our job or school.

### For Reflection

Are there any ways you or your children have experienced loss during this time?

Grief is the name for the painful emotions we feel when we lose someone or something. As humans, connection to other people is very important to us, and that is why we feel bad when separated from those we love, and why losing a loved one creates the greatest pain.

We can also grieve for other losses: being separated from friends and family, or our home; losing access to a familiar place like school, the workplace, or our place of worship. And we can also grieve for things that are not so easy to see: such as losing our sense of security, or our hopes for the future.

Here are some additional hidden losses that can cause grief — loss of:

- Our world
- Status
- A sense of system identity
- A sense of cultural balance
- Cultural cohesion in the family
- Lifestyle
- Possessions
- Relationships
- Past that wasn't or past that was

## Phases of Grief

Grief is our reaction to loss. When we experience a loss, we may go through a number of phases in the grieving process. We might also go back and forth between these phases, and we might experience them in

different orders. The way one person grieves may also differ from the way someone else grieves: one may need solitude in nature and the other may need companionship. Our minds and emotions are trying to make sense of our loss and adapt to the new reality that has been created in our lives.

### Disbelief

We may feel numb or shocked. We might be struggling to believe that the loss has happened. We might avoid people or put off doing things. We might become forgetful and distracted, and try to stay busy.

We may find ourselves frequently telling others, "I'm fine".

### Anger

It's normal to feel angry after a loss. We may feel frustrated, impatient or resentful. Sometimes we might even feel like we are out of control. We might become pessimistic, cynical and irritable.

Sometimes we may be aggressive and get into arguments with other people.

### Yearning

After experiencing loss, it's common to have strong emotions of wishing our loved one was still with us. We are looking for comfort, and we might relive memories of the person we lost, through pictures or items that remind us of them.

### Depression

It's normal to feel intense pain after a loss, and that pain might come and go over time. We might feel hopeless or overwhelmed. We might have trouble sleeping and eat less or more than we normally do. We might feel less energetic or less motivated, and we might try to avoid being around people. Some people use alcohol or drugs to deaden the pain..

## Guilt, Fear and Worry

It is common for those who have survived a traumatic event to experience guilt, shame, regret, fear, or worry. You might experience any of the following:

- Guilt about surviving.
- Guilt over what you "should" have done.

- Guilt over what you did.
- Guilt that you left a place or situation when others did not.
- Regret over what you did or did not do.
- Fear that it was your fault.
- Sadness for not having done what was necessary, helped enough, shared appropriately, or known what was required.

It's normal to think repeatedly about events that happened and to wonder what you could have or should have done differently.

You might also notice that your older child or children are experiencing the same feelings of guilt.

You might have feelings of regret, and you may be telling yourself you should have tried harder to help others or to do something different than what you did.

### Acceptance

Over time, the pain of loss usually lessens. This does not mean we are forgetting who or what we lost. We are learning to live in our new reality. We are adapting and being honest with ourselves and others. We're learning to be present and mindful. Practicing these coping skills can help us feel courageous.

### Making Sense

Loss creates a new reality in our lives, and we can find healing in making sense of that new reality. This usually takes time, and it does not mean we have to understand why our loved one died. It means we can honor our loved one and make sense of the life we now live and the people who are still with us.

**"Meaning is a reflection of the love we have for those we have lost."**

David Kessler



## For Reflection

- Which, if any, of these phases of grief have you experienced after your own loss?
- What has helped or might help you adapt to your new reality and find meaning?

If you find yourself with these feelings of guilt, there are some tips that can help you:

- Remind yourself you are not responsible for this situation – you did not cause this. You can mourn over the loss of a loved one but you should not feel guilty because it causes a lot of suffering.
- Don't assume responsibility for a situation that was out of your control.
- Remember that these feelings are common. During and after a death of a mother or father or caregiver, sadness, fear, anger, anxiety, grief, and guilt are completely normal responses, and feeling guilty does not mean you are guilty of doing anything wrong.
- It's actually healthy to feel thankful for your life while at the same time mourning the death of others.
- Be kind and loving to yourself and let self-forgiveness be the foundation upon which you move forward.
- Think about how people that love you feel about your LIFE. Embrace the knowledge that many who love you are deeply grateful that you are okay. This thought can provide comfort and help alleviate the feelings of guilt and regret that you may be experiencing.

## Children and Grief

### For Reflection

When considering the losses that your children have faced, whether it's the loss of loved ones or opportunities and friendships, it's important to recognize that there is no "correct" way to grieve. Children's reactions will vary a lot depending on their age and personality. If someone has died, children's reactions also depend on how close they were to that person, how the person died, and how

the family are responding.

While every child is different, you might see changes in your child's:

- **Feelings:** Children who had experienced a loss may undergo a broad spectrum of emotions, including sadness, anger, fear, loneliness, guilt, or confusion. They might experience more than one feeling simultaneously or go through periods where they feel nothing at all.
- **Thinking:** they may find themselves thinking constantly about what happened, or find uncomfortable or frightening thoughts or images suddenly appear in their head without warning. They may worry about the future, and find it hard to focus and concentrate.
- **Behaviour:** Children may experience different changes in their behaviour after suffering a loss. Some children may withdraw and isolate themselves, while others may continue with the regular chores as if nothing had happened. Some children may misbehave, deliberately getting into fights, or they may revert to the behaviour of a much younger child, such as thumb sucking, bed wetting, or demanding that you stay close. They may engage in 'repetitive play', repeatedly acting out an upsetting experience.
- **Physical state:** Children who have experienced a loss may also undergo changes in their physical state. Some children may lose their appetite or have difficulty sleeping. Others may experience nightmares or suffer from unexplained aches and pains.

Children can have different reactions to the loss of a loved one, and these reactions may vary throughout the day and over an extended period. The grieving process can be more challenging in complex life situations and may resurface during anniversaries or activities they used to enjoy with the deceased person. These reactions are normal, but in some cases, they can be intense and negatively impact the child's daily life. In such situations, it's important for parents to seek additional support, such as the assistance of a community health professional, for the child.



# Helping my Children Deal with Loss

*This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children.*

It is crucial to recognize that family members going through grief over the loss of a loved one may be so immersed in their own pain that the ability to provide comfort to one another may take months to develop. In such situations, allowing oneself to receive support from a close circle of trusted friends can be a significant resource to initiate the healing process.

## For Reflection

- How are your children coping now?
- What do you think is helping them to deal with their sadness or grief?

It's great that you can see some positive ways that your children are able to move forward and cope with these difficult things. While losing a loved one, or any other loss, can be deeply upsetting for a child, there are lots of things we can do to support our children and move forward together.

Here are some other ways we can support our children to cope with loss:

- Talking to children openly and honestly: While it is natural to want to protect children from getting upset, even very young children can tell when something unusual is happening, and not understanding what is happening causes more distress for children. If the truth is hidden from them, children can imagine something that is worse than reality, and they may blame themselves. All children, including those with physical and mental disabilities, need clear, honest, consistent explanations appropriate to their age and ability to understand, so that they can accept the reality of the loss. Telling your children the truth will increase their trust in you and help them cope better with the loss.
- Ensure that the child receives loving, consistent care from you. Try not to punish

the child for challenging behaviour or where they seem unable to do something they used to be able to do, as these can be reactions to the grief. Very young children feel more secure through loving physical contact, singing, cuddling and rocking.

- Try to maintain normal life routines and structure as much as is possible. Try to have a regular pattern to the day with allocated tasks and times for activities, such as cleaning the space, doing school work, getting exercise and having time to play.
- If there has been a death of a loved one, other children in the child's life, at school or in friendship circles, should be informed (through their teachers or parents) as to what has happened, so that they can support the child.
- Give children the opportunity to help you, but do not push them to take on adult roles and responsibilities beyond their capacity.
- Self-care — take care of your own physical and mental wellbeing. You have experienced loss as well. It is vital that you get enough sleep, eat properly, exercise, take time to relax, and also have someone to whom you can turn for emotional support. Try to avoid harmful practices such as increased alcohol or tobacco consumption.
- Art or drawing, drama, songs, and play can especially help children to find outlets for their grief. See creative ideas in the "Putting it into Practice" section below.

## For Reflection

Is there anything you want to put into practice with your children?

## Putting it into Practice this Week

An activity to do with your child this week: If the conversation has included examples of children dealing with the death of loved ones, you may want to suggest ideas for how the family could find ways to remember the person together.

Find ways for your child to show their love for the person who has died, and to show the importance of that person in the child's life. Children may like to paint a picture, read a poem, or something they have written about

that person, or sing a song, or make music. You could prepare and share a meal together which the loved one enjoyed, and talk about them during the meal. This kind of activity can also be repeated on significant anniversaries, like the birthday of the person who has died.

- Put a picture on a wall and/or objects that remind you of that person.
- Help the child to create a 'memory box' where they can place small items that remind them of the person who has died. These can be photographs if you have them, or objects such as buttons from a favourite jacket, or a pendant, or prayer beads. Or help the child create a scrap book in which they tell stories and make pictures of happy times that they remember.
- Work with children to draw a family tree. This emphasizes that there is still a connection with the lost loved one, even if they are not physically with us anymore. It also helps the child to see that they are still part of a wider family network.

## Wrap Up

We have all experienced collective trauma and losses. Engaging in a social network can help bring healing. Let's talk about how we can get involved with a small group of friends, in our community, in a hobby or sport, in a service organisation, in a church or faith community or congregation, or a project as part of supporting ourselves and our families in dealing with grief and loss at this time. Discuss if this Parenting with Hope is part of a larger organisation or church or faith community or congregation that participants might take part in. Also talk about any opportunities for children to get involved.

## This ends Session 7. Thank you for your participation.

You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing. We look forward to meeting again next week!



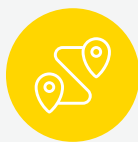
## SESSION 7

# EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following handouts are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/  
Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. This is the included tool for this session:

- Talking with Children about Coping with Loss

## Talking with Children about Coping with Loss



### Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

### My Game: More or Less

Explain: You will say several things to the child, and they should respond with either ‘More!’ or ‘Less!’ to let you know whether they think there has been more or less of each thing during the last few months.

E.g. You: ‘Going to school?’ Child: ‘Less’

You: ‘Playing with your family?’ Child: ‘More’

Use a selection of the following statements which will be relevant for the child you are speaking with

- Going to school
- Playing with your family
- Taking care of people at home
- Eating chocolate
- Exercising outside
- Seeing your friends
- Reading books
- Going shopping
- Helping with household chores

We all have been through a lot of change and gained and lost things, sometimes things that are really important to us. Explain that today we’ll be looking at what we’ve lost and sharing some ideas together to help us to cope with these difficult times.





## What Have I Lost?

We know that this has been a hard time for all of us (adults and children) and we've all lost different things – not being able to see our friends and family, or being away from our home; not being able to go to a familiar place like school, or to our place of worship or community centre. Some of us have also lost people we love. We can also lose things we can't see – for example we could lose our sense of feeling safe, or our feeling of hope for the future.

### For Reflection with the Child

Looking back over the last few months what are some things you feel like you have lost?

*The child may mention losing a loved one or friend, or they may choose to talk about other types of loss. That's fine, and you can be guided by what the child wants to talk about in the conversation.*

That must have been a hard time for you and your family.

### For Reflection with the Child

How are you feeling about it now?

It's normal to have different reactions and feelings when we lose someone or something, and we shouldn't feel bad about that.

Here are some different ways you might be feeling when you have lost something or someone:

- You might feel sad, angry, frightened, lonely, guilty or confused, and wish things could go back to the way they were. You might feel ok for a while and then suddenly feel really sad again.
- You might find it hard to concentrate or focus on your school work, or you might find you are thinking about the situation a lot.
- You might feel like you don't want to do the things you usually enjoy doing, or you might find yourself getting into trouble more often.
- You might feel less hungry or find it hard to sleep, or feel ill.

It's normal and ok to experience any of these reactions, and it's ok to cry or share the way you are feeling with someone you trust, so you don't have to handle it on your own.

### For Reflection with the Child

Do you have a parent, friend or other adult you can talk to about how you are feeling?

## How Can I Move Forward?

### For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you already do that help you to feel better?

You have many strengths and skills that help you cope with challenging moments. Surely, you can recall situations where you faced challenges and successfully overcome them. This is great and demonstrates that you already possess the necessary tools to move forward.

Here are some other ideas you could try, which could help you to feel better about what you have lost (if the child has mentioned losing a loved one, talk about this specifically):

- Remember that it's ok to have feelings! And that they might come and go at different times, and that's ok.
- Talk about it – find a way to talk with your parents or other trusted adults about what happened and ask any questions you still have.
- Share your feelings or find a way to express them (drawing, writing, talking to parent or a friend).
- Find ways to do the things that make you happy, like connecting with your friends, having fun with your family.

### For Reflection with the Child

When you consider survivor's guilt, it's helpful to understand what trauma can do to the body, brain, and sense of well-being. Your brain and body do best when they experience satisfying activities, like the birth of a baby, a party, learning something, and feeling success.

These satisfying experiences are prompted by hormones that help regulate your moods and promote positive feelings. We need these

hormones in our life to feel regulated and experience well-being.

Traumatic experiences have the opposite impact on your emotions. Toxic stress produces unhealthy hormones that take over, and they tell you to “fight, freeze, or flee.” However, there are also healthy hormones that have a calming effect on your body when you are stressed, and they help you adjust to stress and actually grow through it.

Below are some POSITIVE STEPS that can help YOU, even starting TODAY to produce the healthy hormones and reduce harmful hormones:

- Do something meaningful for someone else.
- Allow yourself to grieve. It is hard to grieve loss during conflict because the threat is still present. In little moments, try to find ways to acknowledge and honor the people who were lost.
- Find a safe person to talk with.
- Find positive ways to express yourself; art, song, poetry, or dance are examples. Journaling can also be helpful.
- Practice self-care. You have experienced a harrowing event and taking care of yourself both physically and emotionally is essential for healing. Eat well, sleep well, move your body and find support to help make sense of it all.
- Go to bed and wake up at the same time each day.
- Exercise earlier in the day. Exercising regularly can improve sleep quality but should be done at least 2–3 hours before bedtime.
- Limit caffeine intake. Avoid nicotine and alcohol.
- Limit exposure to bright light at night. Go to bed in a quiet room. Take naps.
- Learn to recognize stressful thinking. Paying attention to stressful thought may help you reduce them. Training yourself to be aware of your thoughts, your breathing,

your heart rate and other signs of tension helps you recognize stress when it begins.

- Get outside, turn your face to the sun and close your eyes for a few seconds.
- Laugh. Find a video on YouTube or a movie you can watch that is funny. Sit with someone and tell stories of experiences that brought you joy. Laugh or giggle.
- Sit and meditate, reflect, pray. If faith is important to you, reading an uplifting story or book, such as the Bible, may bring hope.
- Practice talking about what you are grateful for! Research shows practicing gratitude and laughter help us recover.
- Find and use different spices known for producing “happy” hormones: (Spicy foods; Yogurt, beans, eggs, meats that are low-fat; Almonds; Sauerkraut; Foods with tryptophan: oats, cheese, canned tuna, seeds, whole milk; Green Tea extract).
- Be your best self. Feelings of shame, guilt, or inadequacy can lead to negative thinking. Instead, practice the every day habits of gratitude and forgiveness of others.

Guilt can paralyze us or motivate us. Grieving your experiences is part of the healing process — but remember this is not your fault. You can decide today to build healthy simple habits that make your healthy hormones increase and actually build hope!

The POSITIVE suggestions for you on healthy hormones that we talked about can be helpful if you are experiencing secondary or vicarious trauma. Below are some additional ideas of healthy habits:

- Listen to your body. Learn to recognize and manage tension – use relaxation techniques.
- Reduce stressors in areas of your life. Learn to say no.
- Time away. Step away from others and allow yourself some alone time.
- Learn about stress. When you are learning and applying what you have learned, you are feeling more competent and successful.

- Take breaks from news stories, including those on social media. It's good to be informed, but constant information about conflict (or crisis around you) can be upsetting.
- Move more and sit less – keeping a commitment to keeping your body moving – a walk, stretches or other exercises.
- Learn to take deep breaths in through the nose and then to hold that breath – then letting it out slowly through the mouth.
- Drink plenty of water. Keep hydrated.
- Create a 'memory box' where you can keep small items that remind you of the person
- Create a scrapbook with stories and pictures of happy times you can remember with the person

## An invitation to connect

If there is a programme or activity that the child could join in with as part of your organisation/project/church/community, explain this to the child now, and ask if they would like to be part of it. Ensure that you have asked permission from the parent before inviting the child to participate in any group activity.

*This ends the tool "Talking With Children about Coping with Loss". We look forward to hearing how it went!*

### For Reflecting with the Child

- Who are some people who are glad that you are safe?
- Which of the POSITIVE suggestions above are ones that have helped or that you think would be helpful for you?
- Which of the POSITIVE suggestions above can help the children in your care?
- Who is one person you could share this information with?

Is there anything you might do this week to try out these ideas?

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

If the child has mentioned the death of a friend or loved one, you may want to talk with them about these ideas for remembering the loved one together as a family.

The child may have their own idea, or some suggestions could be:

- Paint a picture, read a poem, or something they have written about that person, or sing a song, or make music
- Ask if you can prepare a meal at home which is one that reminds you of the person you have lost
- Put a picture on the wall of the person



## SESSION 8

# LEARNING TOGETHER WITH RESILIENCE


 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### TAKING CARE OF YOURSELF

- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- Connect with loved ones as often as you can.
- Take a moment each day to listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- Taking care of yourself also helps you to help your family.

Hear my cry, O God; attend unto my prayer  
– Psalms 61:1



 **PARENTING TIPS**  
For challenging times 

### ROUTINE HELPS CHILDREN FEEL SAFE

- Even when it feels hard, try to have some daily routines for yourself and children.
- If you can, help children with daily routines like meals or schoolwork.
- Our children learn calmness and kindness from us.
- Tell yourself a calming message again and again, Try 'I can do this, I am trying my best'

A true friend is one who takes you by their hand and touches your heart.  
– Gabriel García Márquez



## Supporting Children to Learn



Be aware that in an active conflict or disaster zone, children and parents may not have capacity to concentrate on schoolwork or learning. In this case, move straight to the topic “Creating Structure and Routine in our Day”, and perhaps return to this topic when the family are in a more stable setting.

### For Reflection

1. Is your child in school at the moment?
2. Whether they are or not, how has it been going trying to support your child’s learning at home?

In a crisis, we may think we can’t possibly think about children’s learning as well as everything else we are dealing with. But, being able to keep learning is one of the things that can help children to feel normal and cope with change. And, as a parent, you already have all the qualities you need to be able to help your child learn. They have already learnt a lot from you!

We can be encouraged that even a few minutes every day sitting with your child and discussing what they have been learning makes a big difference! Supporting children to continue learning will help them feel positive about the future and ready to return to school if they are not able to attend at the moment, or help them with adjusting to school in a new place, or in a new language, or online.

Your children may have access to learning materials through books, radio, television or the internet. If you have these resources, don’t

put too much pressure on yourself or your children to complete all available tasks. If you do not have these materials, you can still help children learn.

### For Reflection

Can you think of ways that what you're already doing together is helping children to learn new skills or practise what they know? Some simple ways we can help children to learn include:

- Talk to children about your daily tasks and let them help you.
- Encourage your child to practise skills and knowledge they already have.
- Encourage older siblings to help explain difficult subjects to younger children.
- Give your children a task to work on together, e.g. draw a map of your community, build a tower, write and draw a story together.

### For Reflection

Is there something we've talked about that you want to try this week to help your child learn?

## Creating Structure and Routine in our Day

### For Reflection

- How has your time together as a family changed since the conflict/transition?
- Do you spend more or less time at home together?
- Do you do the same kinds of activities?

It's likely that most of your usual routines will have been disrupted. You may be living with different people in the household or have left some people behind; or things could be changing fast all the time; you might be in a totally new place; or you may feel stuck in one place and unable to do your usual activities. The disruption to our daily routines of work, home and school can be hard to cope with. Making new routines together can help make children feel more secure and be better behaved.

## Talking with Children About Feelings and Emotions

- Explain that this section is a practical guide for parents or caregivers to use when talking with their child about loss. It includes specific statements, questions, and ideas for talking with and helping their child deal with the trauma and transition.
- After discussing this briefly in your session, encourage members to use this tool in communicating with their children.

### Complete the Evaluation Forms

Your answers to a few short questions can help us understand how to best offer hope to people in difficult circumstances all over the world.

Open your material and answer the questions or activities.

### For Reflection

Are there things you try to do every day, or to do at particular times when you are together at home?

Here are some other ideas of ways to plan your days together:

In an active conflict or disaster setting, or on the move, it may be hard to imagine any kind of routine. You could do something very simple, like something you and your children do at the start of the day and at bedtime (e.g. a song in the morning, a prayer or story before bedtime) or one thing you want to try to do each day.

If the family is in a more settled or safer context, some ideas could be:

Children or teenagers can help plan the routine for the day – like making a school timetable. Today's activity (below) will help you to work on this together. Children will follow the timetable better if they help to make it.

- Include time for structured activities as well as free time.
- Allow time for normal chores and play time. Play is one of the best ways for children to learn and to support their wellbeing. Art or drawing also help children express their emotions. After the child draws, ask them: "Tell me about your drawing."



- Include exercise in each day – this helps with stress and where children have lots of energy at home.
- At the end of each day, take a minute to think about the day. Tell your child about one positive or fun thing they did, and ask your child what they liked most that day. Recognize something that you did well too!

### For Reflection

Is there something you might add into your day, or an adjustment you might make to your daily routine?

## Your Feelings Matter

How are you feeling today?

We usually say we are “fine” – but this sometimes doesn’t really show our true feelings. This is a stressful time. We need to take care of ourselves so we can support our children.

### For Reflection

- Can you think of anything that has made you feel happy during .. either recently or since the crisis began?
- And what are some of the more difficult feelings you have had during this time of family loss and crisis?
- Can you think of something that made you feel worried, stressed or sad? What do you do when you have difficult feelings like this?

We tend to think some of our feelings are ‘good’ and others ‘bad’, but all our feelings are ok! As parents we might be tempted to try to ignore or push away our feelings, but when we don’t take care of ourselves well, we get gradually worn down and it gets harder to care for our children. Stress can build up and then burst out in unhelpful ways when we don’t expect it!

### For Reflection

Do you already have any strategies you have to help you when you are feeling stressed or overwhelmed?

*(Some ideas include: Take a break or time-out / Breathing exercise / Talk to someone / Exercise)*

When we feel overwhelmed it can be difficult to stay focused on the present – we might find ourselves thinking about what has gone wrong, or unable to focus. When you feel like this, it’s good if you can notice, and pause, and take a moment to ground yourself.

### Activity: Breathing Exercise

We practiced a breathing exercise in an earlier meeting of Parenting with Hope. It can be helpful to revisit these types of practices to check in on how they are helping us and remind us to keep practicing these types of coping skills.

Here is one simple exercise you can try when you are feeling overwhelmed:

When the stress is too much, take 30 seconds for yourself. Let’s try this together now:

- Listen to your breath as it goes in and out.
- You can put a hand on your stomach and feel it rise and fall with each breath.
- Then just listen to your breath for a while.
- Try this every day.

How did that feel?

### For Reflection

What are some of the ways you already try to take care of your own needs? Is there a time in the day where you could take some time for yourself?

Some ideas could be:

- Spend some time outside
- Get some exercise that you enjoy
- Listen to music
- Get enough sleep
- Do something that makes you laugh
- Talk to a friend
- Pray or write in a journal
- Do something creative

We can all recognize that some of these things might not be possible or realistic in



our circumstances. Let's make special note of those which could be possible where we are at.

### For Reflection

- Is there something we've talked about that you want to try to put into practice this week?
- Is there someone in your life who is willing to simply listen to you, to be present with you in your questions, sadness or suffering, as well as in your celebrations, hopes, dreams, and joys?
- Is so, would you want to make a plan this week to spend time with that person?

### For Reflection

For many people, spirituality involves a close loving relationship with God that gives them hope and strength. Caring for our spirit is an important part of developing resilience. There are times, especially when we experience suffering or trauma, when we wrestle with spiritual distress, feeling empty and detached, questioning our beliefs, and feeling angry or afraid over questions about life and death.

As you consider these tips, remember that an important resource for your spiritual care is the hope we feel, from the compassionate presence of someone we can trust. Let's look for people like this and take care of ourselves so that we can grow together, more and more, to become these kinds of people!

## Helping My Children to Cope

This section is relevant for parents, grandparents, teachers, Sunday school teachers, and others who regularly interact with children.

### For Reflection

What have you noticed about how your children have responded during this time? If they have been finding it difficult, have they talked about it with you? or have you seen changes in their behaviour?

Children may respond to stress in different ways, such as being more clingy, anxious,

withdrawn, angry or agitated. They might seem to move backwards in their development, for example begin wetting the bed again, or be unable to do tasks they had been able to do before the crisis.

It can make a big difference to children's ability to cope if we are able to be supportive and reassuring and help our children to feel safe. They may often communicate their feelings through their behaviour, and so it's good to be alert to any changes or patterns.

### For Reflection

What ways have you found already to help your child to be calm and feel safe and supported during this time?

These are great ideas! Some other tips are:

- Give children extra time and attention.
- Listen to children and speak kindly to them.
- Make opportunities for children to play and relax:
  - › Even in times of loss and grieving, conflict, or crisis settings, spending 5 minutes playing a familiar game can really help children restore hope and stability.
  - › In new family circumstances after losing a loved one, or in a new home or place, try to make time to help children do familiar activities they enjoyed before the loss or crisis (e.g. a hobby like a sport, music, or art that they really loved or spent a lot of time on before, or games they liked before.)
- Keep to regular schedules and routines as much as possible. Even just maintaining simple routines in the morning (breakfast – dress – brush teeth) and evening (clean up – pyjamas – brush teeth – story time – prayers – lights out) can help to create a sense of normality.
- Give children clear information and facts about what is going on and on your plans for the coming days or weeks, and respond to their questions honestly and sensitively.
- Praise your child every day for something they do well.



### Putting it into practice this week

Think about how you can tell each other how you feel every day at home:

- Support the child in his learning.
- In more stable settings: Could you create a chart together with faces showing different feelings, and then show each other which one you feel each day? See an example below.
- In crisis/transition settings, settings or on the move: How could you give 5 minutes to listen to your child each day?

## Wrap up

What do you plan to do this week to take care of yourself, and to help your children deal with their emotions?

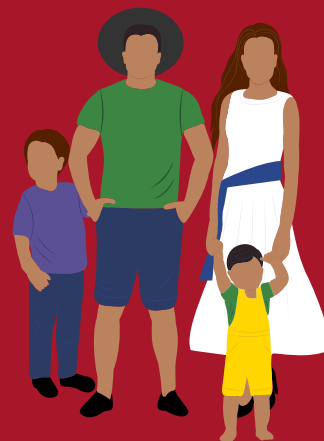
*(Some ideas include: Take more time for myself / Talk about my feelings / Breathing Exercise / Talk to children about how they feel/ Create a feelings chart).*

### Evaluation Form

We are so glad you have participated in this Parenting with Hope! Your answers to a few short questions will help us serve many other people who are experiencing crisis all over the world. All answers are 100% anonymous. Thank you for your answers.

**This ends Session 8 and this Parenting with Hope. Thank you for your participation.**

We look forward to hearing how these sessions help you and your family continue to adjust and thrive. You will find a short discussion guide that follows this session and includes optional questions to help you talk with your own or other children about how they are doing.



## SESSION 8

# EXTRA TOOLS FOR SUPPORTING CHILDREN

The following tools are for parents, caregivers, or trusted friends to do with children in various settings. You will see the following symbols, which show if the tool is for use with children in live conflict/disaster zones, children on the move, or those who are settled.



**Live Conflict/  
Disaster**



**On the Move**



**Settled**

You will see the words “parent” and “parents” in the tool. If you are the parent or caregiver going through this tool with your own child, you can substitute the words “parent” or “parents” and say “me” and “we”, instead. These are the included tools:

- Learning Together Every Day
- Activities in My Day
- Talking with Children about Feelings and Emotions.

## Learning Together Every Day



### Activity to play with the child

Ask the child to tell you about what their perfect day at home would be. What would they do when they woke up, what would they have for breakfast, what activities would they do through the day? Try to get as much detail as possible.

*Also be ready to share your idea of a perfect day!*

*In a group setting, children could work in pairs to create their perfect day, and share this with the group. Or, for a game, you could have different daily activities on pieces of paper, which the children need to arrange in the right order as fast as they can (e.g. wake*

*up, breakfast, playing, reading, go to bed, etc).*

Explain that today we'll be looking at how we can keep learning even when we're at home, and how we can enjoy our time together with our family.

### Learning Wherever I AM

Lots of children affected by this crisis/transition have had to stop going to school during this time, or are trying to learn online, or are going to school in a new place. It can be hard when things change and are uncertain, and we shouldn't feel bad if we don't feel that we are able to focus and concentrate as well as we usually can. We don't have to stop learning just because we are not in school, or if we are in a new place.

### For Reflection with the Child

- If you are not attending school,
  - › If you are not able to be in school at the



moment, How are you learning?

- › What do you miss about school?
- › If you are spending more time at home, is that a good or bad thing? Why?
- If you are attending school,
  - › who is helping you to keep learning?
  - › how is it going?
  - › Can you think of something you've learnt during the last month?
  - › How are your parent(s) or other adults at home involved in helping you learn?

It's great that you have still been learning! Even if you don't think you are, there are a lot of ways we learn apart from by doing schoolwork. When we do things with our family – helping with chores or helping a brother or sister to learn — we are learning! And when we play or have fun together, we are also learning skills like how to solve problems and how to work together.

### For Reflection with the Child

Here are some ways we can ask our parents to be involved in our learning with us:

- Share your schoolwork with them and explain what you have been working on each day.
- Work together to write a story, draw a picture, sing a song or read a book together.
- Ask them to teach you something that they can do that you want to learn – cooking a favourite food, or learning to sew, paint, build or repair something.

## Activities in my Day



### For Reflection with the Child

What is your favourite day of the week at home? Why?

*(If children are in a conflict or disaster setting or on the move, you could ask them about*

*their favourite day of the week before the conflict began.)*

Especially when we are spending our time in a new place, or a lot of things are changing, it can be good if we plan to have different activities in our day to help us stay healthy.

### For Reflection with the Child

What are some things you think it is important to do every day?

For example:

- Exercise and being active (even inside!)
- Getting enough sleep
- Eating healthy meals
- Playing and having fun
- Learning or schoolwork
- Family time
- Time outside (if we can)

*In an in-person or group setting, children could mime or act out the different activities for others to guess.*

### For Reflection with the Child

- Which ones do you do every day?
- Which would you like to do more (or less!)?

It's important that we can talk together as a family and work together to plan our days. You could ask your parents if you can make a schedule for your days if you don't have one.

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

### For Reflection with the Child

What is one thing you will do to learn together with your parents this week, or to add an activity to your days? *(Some ideas could be: Talk with a parent about schoolwork / Ask to read, write, draw, sing together / Ask parent to teach you a skill / Talk about daily schedule).*



# Talking with Children About Feelings and Emotions



## Beginning the time together

Begin with your regular check-in questions, such as:

- What was the best thing that happened this week?
- What was something funny that happened this week?
- What was hard about this week?

Remind the child that you are talking together about how you are doing, giving you a chance to talk and share how you are feeling, and sharing ideas together which can help you and your family.

## My feelings and emotions

Some of the activities in this tool build on activities in earlier tools from the Parenting with Hope. It can be helpful to revisit these types of practices to check in on how they are helping us and remind us to keep practicing these types of coping skills. You will also find additional suggestions on how to creatively use the activities one on one or with groups of children.

## For Reflection with the Child

How are you feeling today?

Explain that you will start with a quick game about our feelings. You will say a feeling (e.g. “scared”, “happy”) and the child should quickly tell you something that makes them feel this way.

E.g. “Scared” – “Spiders!”; “Happy” – “when my sports team wins a competition”.

What is something that makes you feel:

- Happy?
- Excited?
- Surprised?
- Bored?

Let the child also ask you some of these questions and give your answers! Explain that today we’ll be looking at how we can recognise our feelings, and what to do when we have difficult feelings.

*In a group setting or as other options to play this game with your child, you could write different feelings on sheets of paper and spread them out through the room. Then shout out a scenario, and the children can run to the sheet which expresses how it makes them feel.*

## How do I feel?

### For Reflection with the Child

- Can you think of something that happened this week that made you feel good?
- What was it and what feelings did you have? (e.g. happy, excited, joyful) (Be ready to share your own example first if needed).
- Can you think of something that made you feel bad?
- What was it and what feelings did you have? (e.g. sad, angry, bored, worried, scared). (Be ready to share your own example first if needed).

It’s normal to have difficult feelings when we go through a hard or confusing time, or when lots of things are changing around us.

We might:

- Feel more worried
- Not want to be apart from our family
- Not want to talk to people or play
- Be more angry
- Not be able to stay still and focus
- Do things we did when we were younger like wet the bed, or forget things we have learned
- Feel afraid of what might happen

This is totally normal and ok – all of our feelings are ours and we shouldn’t feel bad about



having them. It's good to talk about how we feel so that others can help us and understand us better. It can sometimes be hard to say how we are feeling.

### For Reflection with the Child

Can you think of some ways we can share our feelings with our family?

It can sometimes be hard to use words to say how we feel. Here are some activities that can help your child express their feelings.

**Activity 1:** Ask your child what sound a car would make when it is a happy car. The child should create the sound, and you repeat it and ask the child if they agree that this is a happy car sound. Next, ask the child what sound a car might make if it's starting to get upset. When the child makes the sound, repeat it and ask if this is the sound of a car that is getting upset. Repeat this process with other feelings, like anger. You can then ask your child regularly, "How is your car running today?" (*You could also use the sounds of the child's favourite animal, music sounds, or hand clapping*).

Some examples of feelings your child might express are sad, happy, scared, bored, worried, angry, surprised, or others.

**Activity 2:** Cut out shapes of a child and leave the faces blank. Have an envelope for each child with their name on it. The child can pick a shape and draw a face on it to show how they feel. They will then place the shape into their envelope, leaving the head facing out. This gives the parent/caregiver an opportunity to talk with their child about how they feel. The child can pick a new shape and draw a different face at any time of the day, to show when their feelings change.

If paper is not available, this activity can be done by making a game out of it. You ask the child to draw the feeling face on your back with their finger, and then you guess what it was. Now take turns and you draw the face of your feelings on the child's back and have them guess. Afterwards say, "I am so proud of you! We are learning together to talk about our feelings!!"

*In a group or 1:1 session, you could create child shapes together to take home to use with your family.*

## What can I do with my feelings?

### For Reflection with the Child

What do you usually do when you have a difficult feeling (like you talked about earlier) or when you are feeling worried or scared?

It's great if we can think ahead to have some ideas of things we can do when we feel sad, worried or upset. Then we'll be ready to take action and help ourselves to feel better.

### For Reflection with the Child

What might be some things you can do that could help you when you have a difficult feeling?

Here are some ideas (if you need them):

- Talk about your worries to your parents, a friend, or someone you trust
- Write down your feelings
- Do some exercise that you enjoy
- Listen to music, dance, or sing
- Do something that makes you laugh
- Play a game together with your family
- Draw a picture of how you are feeling
- For difficult feelings you could draw or write these, then scrunch them up and throw them away.

## Wrap up: What can we do together this week?

### For Reflection with the Child

- What can you do this week to help you and your family share your feelings?
- What is one thing you will do this week if you feel sad/scared/worried/upset? (Some ideas might be: Make a feelings chart with my family / Talk to someone about my feelings / Try something new if I feel sad or upset).

*This ends the tool “Talking With Children about Feelings and Emotions”. We look forward to hearing how it went!*





# PARENTING WITH HOPE



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