

SAY and PLAY

A tool for young children
and those who care for them



inside front cover

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and those who care for them

Dr Jonathan Brakarsh
in association with
Project Concern International



About the author

Dr Jonathan Brakarsh is a child psychologist living and working in Zimbabwe. He has a humanitarian and professional interest in developing community-based mental health services which can respond to the psychological and social needs of large numbers of vulnerable children. His previous publication, *The Journey of Life series* (REPSSI), is now used in fourteen countries in Africa. UNICEF has also launched specific adaptations of *The Journey of Life series* in Malawi and Myanmar.



Project Concern International

Project Concern International is a global health and humanitarian aid organization dedicated to mobilizing and building healthy communities through integrated, holistic programming. We work in disadvantaged communities to bring hope to those families and children in greatest need. We work to prevent disease, respond to emergency relief situations and provide access to clean water, nutritious food and economic opportunity. In places where access to services is severely limited, the best way to combat poverty and protect families against disease is to empower parents, caregivers, community volunteers and local partners to be the positive force of change in their own lives and in the lives of their children. Project Concern International endeavours to achieve real and lasting change through empowering, participatory and community-led methodologies.

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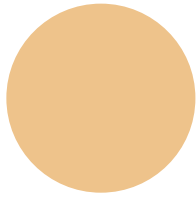
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Foreword

How often do we truly listen to our children? We created *Say and Play* in the belief that even young children are experts about their lives. Their opinions and observations can give adults vital information to improve relationships between parents, caregivers and children, and to guide and shape community services.

Say and Play encourages adults to learn about young children's experiences and views, and encourages children to express themselves naturally through games and stories. By improving communication, *Say and Play* creates a dialogue between adults and vulnerable young children in need of services or a hand to hold.

While many child development materials promote children's intellectual and physical development, few give children the opportunity to express their hopes, fears and experiences. This is especially true for vulnerable young children whose opinions are rarely sought and whose wisdom is rarely implemented. Adults often find it hard to identify and support young children's psychosocial needs. *Say and Play* helps children speak freely, giving adults the opportunity to learn from them.

Say and Play integrates existing action and participation methodologies – such as those found in *Auntie Stella* (Zimbabwe), *Journey of Life* (Southern Africa) and *Narrative Therapy* (Australia) – and adapts them for young children in early childhood development and family settings. Children love games, stories and pictures and these are the cornerstones of *Say and Play*.

When we started this initiative, the guiding question was, 'Who most frequently interacts with young children and can make an impact on their lives?' We identified home-based care teams, early childhood development teachers and community action groups as our future facilitators and implementers because they regularly interact with young children and are well-placed to make positive changes in the communities they serve. Our development process included local and international technical reviews by experts in early childhood development and psychology, and pilot tests in Lusaka, Chongwe and Mongu with early childhood development teachers, home-based caregivers and community action groups.

The pilot tests were successful – early childhood development teachers learnt more about the lives of their young pupils and were able to link those children in need to appropriate community services. Home-based care teams learnt more about the children's lives at home, discussed their observations with parents or caregivers and developed stronger links with teachers. The activities and pictures in *Say and Play* prompted community action groups to discuss the challenges facing young children in their communities, allowing them to devise simple, practical strategies to better protect and guide their young children.

Say and Play speaks the language of fun and discovery. When children and adults are having fun they make new discoveries about one another. We hope that through *Say and Play* children will find a voice and adults will learn to listen and take action to improve the lives of young children.

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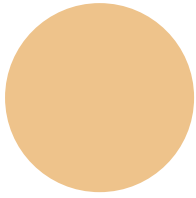
Home-based caregivers in Lusaka District from Bwafwano, Matero Ref, Bauleni, Kanyama and Roma Ngombe; early childhood development teachers in Chongwe District from Shiyala Community School, Nyashishi Community School, Lumuno Community School, Chongwe Community School, CALP Academic School and Mashila Community School; and early childhood development teachers in Mongu District from Mbuyoti Community School, Tukongote Community School, Mongu Academy School, Pilgrim Private School, Lourdes School, St Agatha Community School and Limulunga Community School.

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The facilitator's guide to

SAY and PLAY



Introduction

Say and Play is an interactive tool designed for orphans and vulnerable children from three to six years old and those who care for them. This includes parents, caregivers, early child development teachers, home-based care teams and all those who take an interest in the welfare of young children. Though *Say and Play* involves children from three to six years old, it also addresses the needs of newborn to three year olds by providing guidelines for parents and caregivers. It uses pictures, stories and games to help children talk about their lives and, through these activities, it guides adults to identify and support the emotional and social needs of children.

Say and Play has five objectives:

- To help us to better understand young children and their needs;
- To improve communication between adults and children;
- To strengthen the parent–child relationship;
- To increase children’s participation: to help them express opinions and make decisions about matters that affect their lives;
- To link young children to relevant health, educational and psychological services.

What’s inside?

Say and Play includes:

- **Pictures** and discussion questions about important issues in the lives of children under six;
- **Stories** from adults who care for children and from the children themselves about specific situations that need attention;
- **Games** to encourage children to participate and to express their views on issues relevant to their lives;
- **Information cards** to provide knowledge and skills for those who take care of young children;
- **Poster and playing cards** to help children and adults identify how children should be cared for at home, at school, at health clinics and in the community, and to help them take action to improve children’s lives.



How to use SAY and PLAY

Warm-up Before you use the pictures, stories or games, do a warm-up – this gives you an opportunity to bring everyone together and focus their attention before you begin the activity. It can be a song, a dance or, for children, an enjoyable game that they all know.

Topics There are seven topics:

- 1 What do children need to grow?
- 2 Helping young children with their problems
- 3 Children on their own
- 4 When the caregiver is sick
- 5 Talking to children about death
- 6 Our hopes
- 7 Caring for children

Pictures There are six pictures which address the first six topics. You can use the pictures for both adults and children. They pose a problem rather than give a solution and stimulate discussion about people's own experiences of the problem and what they and their communities can do about it.

For the seventh and final topic, a poster, 'Caring for Children – Yes or No?', encourages discussion about how children can be cared for. This is accompanied by eleven playing cards for a children's activity.

Stories There are stories for both adults and children. The adult stories are in the form of letters from a caregiver, a neighbour or a child. The children's stories are designed to be told using the storyteller's creativity. The tone you use to tell the story needs to be full of wonder and fun so children become involved in the characters and plot. Questions for discussion accompany the stories for both adults and children.

Games You can play the games with a group of children, for example, in a classroom, or with one child and a caregiver during a home visit.

Adults will not only enjoy playing these games with children but will also learn more about the children's thoughts and feelings. You can also use a game as a warm-up exercise and follow it with a discussion about the relevant picture.

Information cards

These cards provide practical information to help parents, caregivers, teachers and home-based care teams. There are four cards:

- 1 The holistic care checklist** – these guidelines help home-based care teams observe if the relationship between the child and parent or caregiver is meeting the child's needs;
- 2 Child sexual abuse** – this card is useful for parents, caregivers, teachers or home-based care teams when they suspect a child may be sexually abused. It also suggests ways to protect young children;
- 3 How to talk to children about death** – talking to children about the death of a parent or someone they love can be difficult so this card gives you some simple guidelines to follow;
- 4 Parenting** – this information is in three parts (A, B and C). Parenting Card A outlines the basic parenting that children need for their emotional and social development. Parenting Card B gives guidelines for parents and caregivers of children under three. Parenting Card C provides a child improvement checklist to help identify children who are upset or frightened and to recognize signs of improvement.



Using Say and Play with Children

You can go through the topics in the order they are presented. If the children continue to be interested, you can use the game, story and picture in one session. Otherwise, do the game first and present the pictures and story at the next session.

Tips

- If you are working with one child, you can choose the topic most appropriate to the child's situation – for example, if you know a child has recently lost someone they love, you may want to begin with the topic, 'Talking to children about death'.
- Choose a language that all the children can easily understand. You don't have to speak in English.

Steps:

- 1 Select a **topic**.
- 2 Begin with a **warm-up** activity (a song, dance or prayer).
- 3 Use the **game** given for the topic.
- 4 Are the children still energetic and interested? If they are, proceed to the next step.
- 5 Show the children the **picture** and ask them the accompanying questions. Make the picture and questions interesting so you encourage children to answer.
- 6 Are the children still energetic and interested? If they are, proceed to the next step.
- 7 Tell the **story**. Have fun telling it (use noises and actions and refer to local events, places or people wherever possible) to make sure the children are fully engaged. Then ask the accompanying questions.

How to ask questions about the pictures

Ask children short questions that are easy to answer. Also ask specific questions to guide them to one aspect or to a specific person or object in the picture. Young children cannot easily absorb the meaning of an entire picture – so guide them through it, one person or object at a time.

The first type of question to ask is: *What do you see?* Then follow up with specific short questions to elicit further information. For example, ask what a particular person in the picture is thinking, saying or doing – *What is that girl doing? What is that grandmother saying to the boy?* or *What is that boy thinking?*

The second type of question can be about the feelings of the people in the picture: *What is that child feeling?* or *What is that adult feeling?* Because the children are young, you may have to demonstrate or act out the different feelings. Show a happy, sad, angry and scared face to make it easier for the children to look at the picture and choose the right feeling.

The third type of question you can ask focuses on the children's own experience of the situation in the picture: *Do you know children like this? Did this ever happen to you?* or *Does this happen in your home?*

The fourth type of question asks what can be done about the situation and who can help: *Who can help?* or *What could make this better?* If you need to make these questions simpler then ask yes/no questions, such as: *Could your mother help? Could your father help?* or *Can any of your friends help?*



If a child becomes distressed - What to do?

In using *Say and Play* children may talk about things that upset them, for example, about being beaten by a drunk parent or being sexually abused. As a result they may become sad, angry or scared. In these situations, take the following steps:

- Speak in a calm voice.
- Reassure the child that you will stay with them until they feel better.
- Ask the child to tell you what is making them so upset.
- If the child is in physical danger at home or is being sexually abused, tell the child that you will make sure that he or she is safe.
- If you need to, refer the child to organizations or government services that provide counselling or protection.



Using Say and Play with adults

Use the topics in the order they are presented. Decide if you will do one topic or more and whether to use the picture only or do the stories and games as well. This will depend on the time available and the interest level of your group. Your goal is to have a good discussion so that the participants can take action to improve the situation of children in the community.

Tip

Choose a language that everyone can easily understand. You don't have to speak in English.

Steps:

- 1 Select a **topic**.
- 2 Begin with a **warm-up** activity (a song, dance or prayer).
- 3 Show the **picture** and ask the accompanying questions.
- 4 If your group is interested in learning more, proceed to the next step.
- 5 Tell the **story**. Ask the accompanying questions.
- 6 Play the **game** if you think it would be enjoyable and useful. Or use the game as a warm-up activity.
- 7 Use the information card. Ask people to give examples from their lives or to comment about the information presented.

Pictures, stories
and games
for

SAY and
PLAY



TOPIC 1 What do children need to grow?

Purpose: To help participants understand what children need in order to grow and meet the challenges of life.

GAME

The maize plants and the farmers

This game helps children think about what they need to help them grow. It also informs adults about what needs children consider most important so that adults can ensure they provide for these needs. You can play this game with a group of children in the classroom, at a church or during a community meeting, or with one child and the parent or caregiver.

Give the following instructions to a group of children:

Tip

You can always tell the words to use (or translate) for the game by the pale orange background.

The instructions for actions are always in the pale, lighter-coloured text.

Half of you become the maize plants.

Half of you become the farmers.

The maize plants are waving in the wind and it's hot!

Maize plants, tell me what you need to grow. Say it out loud!

Farmers, tell me what this maize plant needs to grow. Say it out loud! (for example, water, fertilizer, sun).

(Select some of the children who are the plants to now become the pests.)

Oh! Oh! The pests are coming! Farmers, what do we do now? (The farmers show everyone how they respond to the pests.)

Children need to grow just like the maize plants. (Show picture 'What children need to grow'.)

What do children need for their bodies to grow? Let's hear what you have to say. (Children shout out their answers.)

Now, farmers, go ahead and give the children the things they need for their bodies to grow.

What do children need to become clever? Let's hear what you have to say.

Now, farmers, go ahead and give the children the things they need to become clever.

What do children need to feel happy? Children, let's hear what you have to say. Now, farmers, go ahead and give the children the things they need to be happy.

Now you are such healthy and strong children!

Tips

- You can use this game as a warm-up activity.
- When children can't think of any answers to the questions, make some suggestions.

PICTURE What do children need to grow?



Questions for Children:

- 1 Look at this picture and tell me, what can you see?
- 2 How are the children different? How are they the same?
- 3 Point to the child who is strong. Now point to the child who is weak. How did one child become strong? How did the other child become weak?
- 4 What things make you strong?
- 5 Point to the child who is sad. Point to the child who is happy.
- 6 How can you help children who are sad? How can you help children who are weak?

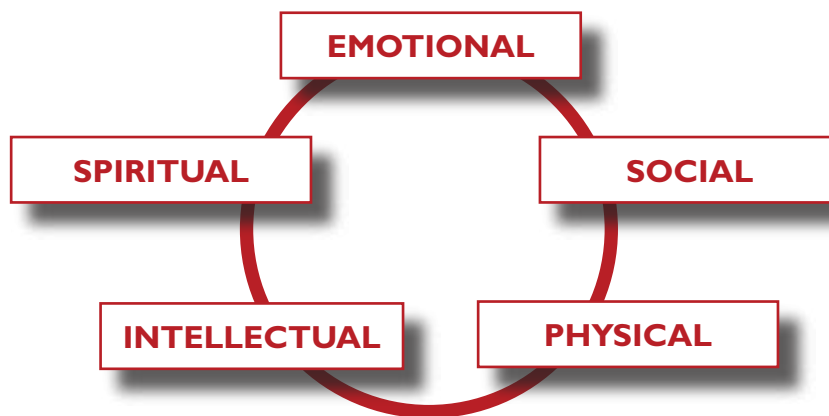
Questions for adults:

- 1 What can you see?
- 2 How are the children different? How are they the same?
- 3 Why is one child happy? And the other child sad?
- 4 Why is one child strong? And the other child weak?
- 5 Are there sad or weak children in your community? What happens to them?
- 6 Why does this happen?
- 7 What can you do to help children grow?

THE HOLISTIC CARE CHECKLIST

Children have *five* different kinds of needs: intellectual, spiritual, emotional, physical and social. Take this checklist with you on home visits and use it to assess if the parent or caregiver is providing for the child's five needs. If the parent or caregiver is not providing sufficiently for some of the needs, find out why and take action to remedy the situation. For example, link the child with the needed medical or educational services. Use the wheel of needs shown in the diagram below to ensure that parents and caregivers are providing a supportive environment for the child.

- Are the parents or caregivers providing for the needs of the child?
- What can parents and caregivers do to provide for these needs (for example, how can they show love or give encouragement)?



EMOTIONAL

- Love
- Protection
- Guidance
- Encouragement
- Intimacy – close emotional relationships with others

SOCIAL

- School
- Friends
- Opportunities to play
- Interaction with family members
- Attendance at social functions (family, religious)
- A sense of identity and belonging

INTELLECTUAL

- Ability to learn in school
- Stimulation at home (for example, language and number skills practice)

PHYSICAL

- Food
- Clothing
- Shelter
- Exercise
- Good health and hygiene

SPIRITUAL

- Involvement in religious studies or discussions
- Attendance at religious meetings (church, mosque, temple)

Adapted from J. Brakarsh (2005) *A protocol for child counselling*, Family Health International - India

TOPIC 2 Helping young children with their problems

Purpose: To identify the different problems that children face in life and how to solve them.

GAME Making Faces

This game provides children with the opportunity to express their feelings and discuss both the positive events and the problems in their lives. You can use this game to work with just one child and parent or caregiver, or with a group of children in the classroom or elsewhere.

This game is about making faces.

Can you show me an UGLY face?

Can you show me a BEAUTIFUL face?

Can you show me a HAPPY face?

Can you show me a SAD face?

Can you show me a SCARED face?

What things make you HAPPY? Tell me.

What things make you SAD? Tell me.

What things FRIGHTEN you? Tell me.

Go outside and collect a stone for each thing that scares you or makes you sad. You have three minutes so work fast!

(When the children return) Now we will put the things that make you sad or scared inside this bag so they won't bother you. Today you are the boss!

Name your problems as you put them in the sack. (Children name the things that make them scared or sad as they put their stones inside the sack.) You lift up the sack and say:

Ah! This sack is so heavy!

Invite other children or adults to lift up the sack. You say:

Sometimes children have too many problems and then they become sad or worried.

We can all help to solve these problems.

Tip

Remember that when children are weighed down by their problems they can sometimes misbehave.



The strength game

The strength game follows naturally from the 'Making faces' game. It builds on the idea that children can be actively involved in finding solutions to their problems and dealing with their worries.



When things scare us or make us sad, we need strength.

I will now teach you the Strength game.

Repeat after me:

I am strong in my muscles (touch muscles in arms),

I am strong in my heart (touch heart),

I am strong in my head (touch head).

Now let's do it as quickly as we can five times (touch arm, heart and head as fast as you can, saying: 'Muscle, heart and head').

Get into pairs and show your friend all the ways that you can be strong.

(Let the children show all the ways that they can be strong.)

Now I want you to be a strong animal and walk like that animal.

Good! Now I want you to walk like the tallest mountain and act like nothing can hurt you.

Now I want you to be kind to each other. That shows the strength of your heart.

Now I want you to count for me. Tell me your favourite colour. That shows how clever you are.

Can anyone tell me a story of being strong in their muscles? (Listen to one story.)

Can anyone tell me a story about when you were strong in your heart by being kind or helping someone? (Listen to one story.)

Can anyone tell me a story about when you were strong in your head – by being clever or solving a problem? (Listen to one story.)

You can be strong in so many ways! Sometimes we may need some extra help, so let's talk about who we can go to.



The helpers game

This game helps identify who children turn to in difficult situations. Use this game in a classroom or group setting or on a home visit where there may be only one child available. With one child, just ask the questions instead of getting the child to run around.

Tip

The questions given here are just a guide – feel free to add other questions that are appropriate for your particular group.

Tip

You can use the problems mentioned by the children in the 'Making faces' game (the things that scare children or make them sad) for this activity.

We can also get strength from other people. I need some HELPERS. Can someone be a daddy? A mommy? A granny? A teacher? A neighbour? A friend? Who are the other people you go to when you are sad, scared or feeling sick?

(The people who are named stand in front of the room with a sign or something to identify them so the children will remember who they stand for.)

There are many people who want to help you. I am going to ask you who you go to for different things. When I ask you, I want you to go quickly to that person.

Ask the children the following questions and let them run to the daddy, mommy, granny, teacher, neighbour, friend or other people they have chosen. For some of the questions below, ask why they chose that person.

If you are HUNGRY, who do you go to?

If you go to the well to get water and you CAN'T LIFT THE BUCKET, who do you go to?

If you HURT YOURSELF, who do you go to?

If you are BULLIED, who do you go to?

If a sister or brother is VERY NAUGHTY and won't behave, who do you go to?

If you are having BAD DREAMS at night, who do you go to?

If you are feeling very SICK, who do you go to?

If someone is BEATING you, who do you go to?

If someone is HURTING you in your private parts or touching them, who do you go to?

If SOMETHING WONDERFUL happens to you, who do you go to? What would be a wonderful thing to happen to you?

Let's ask all our HELPERS to make a circle around us.

(The HELPERS form a circle around the children with the children in the centre. On a home visit, you, the caregiver and any other relevant people can form the circle.)

Who are the other HELPERS in your life who are not in this circle? How does it feel to know that there are people around you who are ready to help you?

(List the HELPERS that children go to.)

GAME

This game provides another example of why it is important to have helpers in our lives.

Walking the bridge

(Draw a long thin line on the ground.)

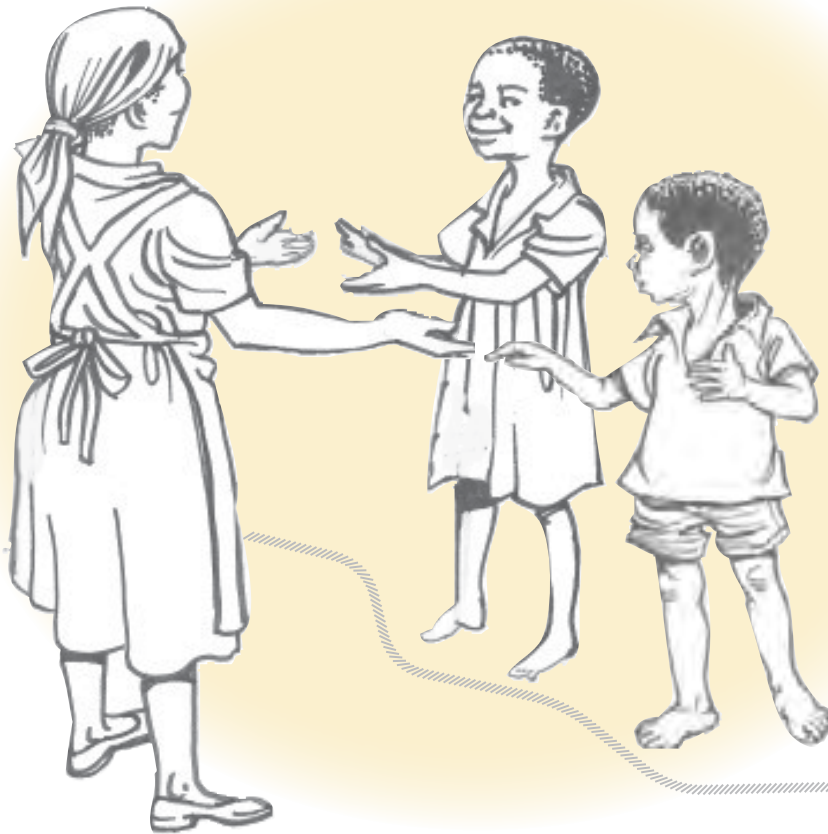
This is a very narrow bridge and there is a river on both sides. I want you to walk on the line quickly without falling off.

(Make the line very thin so most of the children fall off.)

Now each of you gets a helper to help you walk over the bridge in a straight line without falling off. Choose the HELPER that you want.

(The HELPER holds their hands as they walk the line – they should then succeed.)

If the bridge were wider or you could walk more slowly then you wouldn't need a HELPER. But sometimes life is difficult, scary or confusing and then we need a HELPER to get across the bridge.



PICTURE Helping young children with their problems



Questions for children:

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 What is the lion going to do?
- 3 What should the children do?
- 4 What are the children thinking and feeling?
- 5 Do you ever have problems that seem as big and scary as a lion?
- 6 What do you do?
- 7 How can adults help children who are scared or sad?
- 8 How can you help children who are scared or sad?

Tip

As the adults name the problems in their own communities, point to the blank spaces on the rocks.

Questions for adults:

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 What are the children thinking? And what are they feeling?
- 3 What does the lion stand for in this picture?
- 4 The rocks show some of the problems that may affect children. Let's read them together. What problems do children have in your community?
- 5 What should the children do?
- 6 Why do we have these problems?
- 7 How can adults help?
- 8 How can children help other children with problems?

STORY child sexual abuse

People can't always talk easily or openly about child sexual abuse. Child sexual abuse is when a child is exposed to sexual behaviour that is not appropriate for their age. The purpose of this story is to discuss what people can do about this problem which happens in all countries and communities.

For adults



I am a 26 year old man. But from when I was four years old until I was eight, my uncle who lived with us would touch my private parts and make me touch his.

I was scared.

He would give me sweets to make me feel a little better.

Now I am married to a good woman but every day I become so angry and I ask myself, 'Why couldn't someone stop what happened to me?'

David

Questions:

- 1 Does this happen to boys? Does this happen to girls?
- 2 How do children behave when an adult or older child touches their private parts?
- 3 Do boys and girls show their feelings differently?
- 4 How do children behave when the person who touches their private parts tells them to keep it a secret?
- 5 Do you know children who this has happened to?
- 6 How do you talk to a child if you think he or she has been sexually abused?
- 7 What can adults do to protect children?
- 8 What can children do to protect themselves and each other?

For children

Tip

Before you start this story, draw a picture of a grown man (the uncle) and a five year old girl (Miriam). They should be clothed.

To illustrate what is happening, point to the various body parts on each picture, as the story requires.

Tip

When you ask a child to whisper in your ear and share a secret, draw two dolls on a piece of paper or make them out of fabric. Give one doll to the child and keep one for yourself. Encourage the child to use the doll to speak to your doll – the 'listening doll'.

Explain that this doll loves to listen to children. She takes all the children's secrets and helps to make things better.

Tip

When you ask who the children can talk to about their problems, refer back to the people they named as their helpers during the helpers games.

This is a story about a five year old girl called Miriam.

Miriam is very unhappy. Do you know why? (The children answer.)

She has an uncle who lives in her house. This uncle touches her here and here (point to breasts and pubic area on Miriam's picture) and she has to touch him here (point to pubic area on uncle's picture) almost every day. Sometimes she is scared and cries.

Her uncle gives her sweets to make her feel a little better. He tells her, 'This is our special secret. Don't tell anybody.'

Do you know what a secret is? (The children answer.)

Do you think Miriam told anybody that her uncle was touching her here and here (point to breast and pubic area on Miriam's picture)?

Miriam is too scared to tell anybody. Miriam thinks, 'Am I doing something bad?' But she doesn't want to keep this secret. Sometimes she cries at night because she doesn't know what to do. She wants her uncle to stop. But she is too scared to tell anybody.

What should Miriam do?'

Questions:

- 1 Do you know children who this has happened to?
- 2 Do you have a secret that is scaring you or making you sad?
- 3 Can you come and whisper it in my ear?
- 4 Who else can you talk to if you have a secret that is scaring you or making you sad? Let's make a list.
Remember, you can also come to me after class today or go to any of your helpers and tell them.
- 5 Is it okay with you if I go and find some helpers to take care of the things we have talked about?
- 6 How can children help each other?

Child sexual abuse

● How to protect your children

- With your children, make a list of five people they can speak to if they are ever scared or abused.
- Give your children permission to say 'NO' and to say it loudly if adults try to hurt them. Tell them they should run away and tell someone they can trust.
- Listen to children and believe them.
- Be aware of your children's safety when they share a room with other adults.
- Communicate with your children at home. Find opportunities to speak to them about their day, for example, at meal times and weekends, and ask them to tell you about one good thing that happened and one thing that they didn't like.

● How young children may show they have been sexually abused

- They complain of pain in their private parts (especially pain when passing urine);
- They exhibit sexual behaviour typical of a much older child or adult;
- They change their social behaviour – they may withdraw, become more aggressive or stubborn;
- They have nightmares or wet the bed.

● How to talk to a child to find out if they have been sexually abused

- Tell the child that he or she doesn't seem happy. Ask what is causing this unhappiness.
- Don't punish or threaten the child but ask in simple words whether their private parts hurt.
- Use a doll and point to the doll's private parts (penis, vagina, anus) asking, 'Has anyone touched you there?'

● If your child is sexually abused

- Talk to other family members and friends in order to make a plan.
- Keep the child away from the suspected abuser.
- Contact the Victim Support Unit of the police.

TOPIC 3 children on their own

Purpose: To help participants understand what happens to children on their own and how others can help.

GAME

come together,
run away!

This game gives children the experience through play of being on their own in a dangerous world, compared to being safe and close to an adult. It prepares children to discuss the picture and story which highlight the experience of children on their own.

You are all little chicks. And it is early in the morning and you are cold!

So come together as fast as you can and stay close to each other to keep warm. Your mother is there and she is helping to keep you all warm.

(All the children snuggle together as closely as possible.)

But then you smell a dog nearby (sniff the air). And you must run away as fast as you can.

Run, Run, Run, Run!

(Make sure that all the children run fast and far.)

Good. Everyone come back into a circle.

Now, when I say 'Come, chicks' you must all come together and stay as close to each other as you can to keep warm.

And when I say 'Run away' you must all run away as fast as you can because you don't want the dog to catch you.

Let's start.

Come chicks! (Let 10 seconds pass as all the children snuggle close together.)

There's a dog! Run away! Run away! (Let another 10 seconds pass.)

Come, chicks! (Let 10 seconds pass.)

The dog is back! Run away! Run away!

Repeat 'Come chicks' and 'Run away' a few more times.



PICTURE children on their own



Questions for children:

- 1 What do you see in each of these pictures?
- 2 Which children have no adults to help them? (Ask the children to point.)
- 3 Do you see the boy cooking? What is he thinking and feeling?
- 4 Do you know any children who don't have adults to take care of them? What do they do?
- 5 How can we help these children?

Questions for adults:

- 1 What do you see in each of these pictures?
- 2 How are these pictures different from each other?
- 3 How are these pictures similar?
- 4 How do the children feel in each of these pictures?
- 5 Do you know children who don't have any adults to take care of them? What do the children do?
- 6 How are these children treated by their neighbours and other children?
- 7 How can you help? Who else can help?
- 8 How can children help other children in this situation?

STORY Unsupervised Children

For adults

Story A talks about a man who is left alone to care for his children after his wife has passed away and the difficulties he faces. Story B talks about a mother who is so busy looking for either work or food that she cannot supervise her young children sufficiently. Choose the story most appropriate for your audience.

Story A

I am a concerned neighbour. Next door to us, Mrs Kamonga died five years ago. Everyone is saying it was because she had AIDS. Mr Kamonga is left with the children and sometimes he is sick.

What worries me is that he leaves his children alone for long hours when he goes out to work or to look for food. The children are little and they just sit and wait with no food and little to drink until the sun goes down and he returns.

What can we do?

A Neighbour

Story B

I am so busy I hardly have any time to spend with friends or my children. I am always looking for work and food. My four children have nowhere to go when I am out and I have no relatives here. My oldest child is 7 years old.

What can I do?

A Worried Mother

Questions:

- 1** Do you know children who are left on their own for many hours? Tell us about them.
- 2** Why does this happen?
- 3** What can happen to these young children while their parents are out looking for food or work?
- 4** What help do the parents need?
- 5** What can be done to change this situation?

For children

This is a story about the Musonda family. There are three children.

Hi John! Hi Mary! Hi Sarah!

Do you know how old these children are?

(The children answer.)

Some are your age and some of the children are just a little older. Their mother goes out to work early in the morning. When the children wake up, their mother is gone but there is some porridge to eat.

What do the children do all day? (The children answer.) These children love to play with each other. What games do you think they like to play? (The children answer.) Can you show me one game? (The children demonstrate.) So the children play together all day long.

Sometimes it is very hot and the day is very long. The children get thirsty and hungry. Show me what you look like when you are thirsty and hungry. (The children act this out.) What do John, Mary and Sarah do then? (The children answer.)

Sometimes they fight and there is no older person to stop them and talk nicely to them. Then what happens?

But they wait patiently for their mother to return. They do not see their mother all day, until it is dark.

When she comes home, she sits down and has all the children sit on her lap and they talk. What do they talk about?

(The children answer.)

This is the story of their lives.

Questions

- 1 Do John, Mary and Sarah like to be on their own all day?
- 2 What is nice about being on your own all day without your mother?
- 3 What is not nice about being on your own all day?
- 4 Do you know children like John, Mary and Sarah whose mother goes to work all day and leaves them alone?
- 5 Who helps them?
- 6 How can you help John, Mary and Sarah?

TOPIC 4 When the caregiver is sick

Purpose: To help children express their feelings when a caregiver is sick and to guide the community in finding solutions.

GAME our granny

This is an adaptation of a traditional game played throughout Zambia. This game allows children to experience both the fear when a parent or granny is ill and the joy when she becomes well again.

You will need a group of children, someone to play the Nurse and someone to play the Granny.

The Granny should sit down in the middle of the circle and look sick.

The Nurse should come into the centre of the circle as well.

The children will form a circle around the Granny and Nurse.

The group walks around the two children in the middle singing:

'We want to see our granny, our granny, our granny.

We want to see our granny.

Our granny is sick.'

The group stops walking and says:

'Where is granny?'

The Nurse says that Granny is in bed sick.

The activity is repeated and, each time, the Nurse gives a better report. For example, 'Granny is still in bed but she is getting better.' Carry on until Granny is completely well.

At this point, the Granny and Nurse join the group and they all sing together,

'We want to see our granny, our granny, our granny.

We want to see our granny.

Our granny is fine!'



PICTURE When the caregiver is sick



Questions for Children

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 Who is the woman who is sick? What will happen to her?
- 3 What is this child thinking? What is the child feeling? (Point to the child who is feeding the mother.)
- 4 What will happen to the children?
- 5 How do you feel when your mother, father, granny or someone you love is sick?
- 6 What do you do?
- 7 Do you know any children who have someone sick at home?
- 8 How can we make these children feel better?
- 9 What can adults do to help?

Questions for adults

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 What are these children thinking? And what are they feeling?
- 3 What will happen to the woman who is sick?
- 4 Do you know children in this situation? Tell us about them.
- 5 What information do these children need about the sick parent or guardian?
- 6 What kind of help do these children need?
- 7 What help does the sick woman need?
- 8 Who can provide this help?
- 9 What can you or your friends do to help?

TOPIC 5 Talking to children about death

Purpose: To help parents and caregivers talk to children about the subject of death.

GAME

The insect game

You can use this game with a child and caregiver when making home visits, in a classroom situation or in any group situation with children. It helps children to understand the concept of death in a clear and simple way.

Tip

You can also use other examples, such as a fish or a chicken.

Have you ever seen an insect? Show me what it looks like.

(Let the children show you what an insect looks like by drawing, acting or finding an insect.)

Have you ever seen a dead insect? Now, show me what it looks like.

(Let the children show you what a dead insect looks like. They can act it out or draw it.)

Every living thing dies – insects, animals and people.

When an insect or animal dies ...

Are they breathing? (All children answer 'No!')

Are they sleeping? (All children answer 'No!')

Can they eat? (All children answer 'No!')

Can they play? (All children answer 'No!')

Pinch yourself. Can they feel a pinch? (All children answer 'No!')

All these things are also true when a person dies.

When someone dies, it is forever and that person will not be coming back.

But we can always remember the person we love in our minds. We can talk about them, think about them and remember the things they said or did.

PICTURE Talking to children about death



Questions for Children

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 What is the old woman saying to the little girl?
- 3 How does the little girl feel?
- 4 What is the little girl thinking about?
- 5 What will happen to the little girl?
- 6 Do you know children whose mommy or daddy has died?
- 7 Will their mommy or daddy come back again? Will the children see them again?
- 8 How can adults help?

Tip

When asking about the feelings of the little girl in the picture, suggest or demonstrate different feelings for the children to identify.

Questions for adults

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 What is the girl thinking about? What is she feeling?
- 3 What is the old woman thinking and feeling?
- 4 What questions does the girl have about her mother who has died?
- 5 What are the important things to tell children when someone dies?
- 6 What are the traditional beliefs in your community concerning death? Do any of these beliefs prevent adults from talking to children about death?
- 7 What help does the girl need now?

STORY Grieving

For adults

I am worried about my sister's little girl who is four years old. She has been misbehaving since her mother died six months ago. I have not said much about her mother's death. I worry that it will upset her.

She fights with the other children and is always getting into trouble. I have told her that her mother is on a slow train and will take a long time to return.

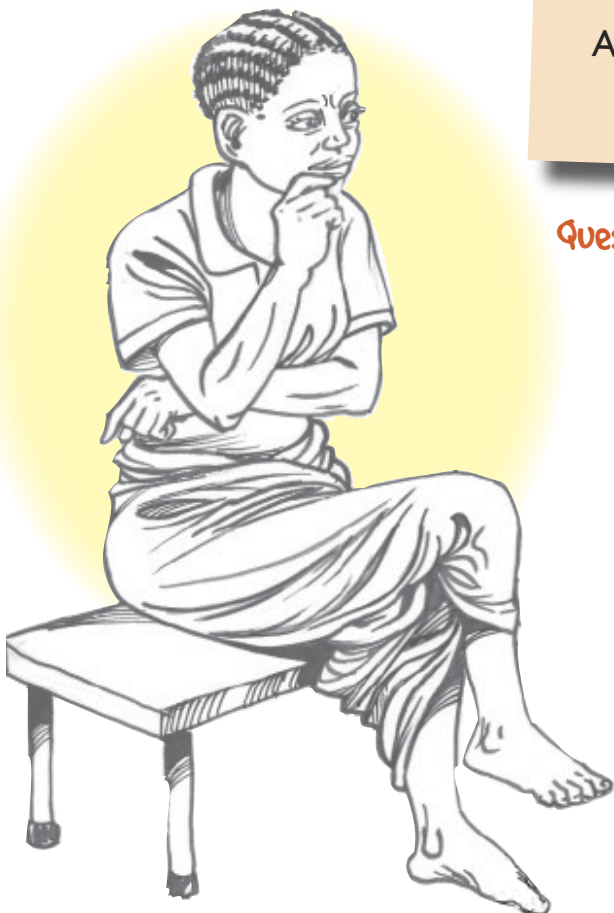
This little girl sits outside every afternoon, waiting. I have talked with her and prayed with her but nothing I do seems to help.

What can I do?

A Desperate Auntie

Questions

- 1 Why is this girl misbehaving?
- 2 How is the girl feeling?
- 3 What does she need?
- 4 How can adults help her?
- 5 How can children help her?



STORY

For children

This is a story about a little boy who is the same age as you. He loves to play running games. He is the fastest runner in the neighbourhood. Hardly anything scares him. He even taught his neighbour's dog to stop running after him and to stop growling.

But one day his mother died and he became very sad. No one told him where his mother went. He wished and prayed that his mother would come back. But she never did.

Then he decided that he would go to look for his mother. He started by looking under his bed. She wasn't there.

Then he looked in all the cupboards. She wasn't there.

He asked the adults where his mother went. Some people said she was in the ground. Some people said she was in Heaven.

The boy didn't understand. He became very angry. He started to fight with all the other children. He even had fights with the big children. He would get into all sorts of trouble and sometimes the adults would beat him. Do you know children like this? (The children answer.)

He just wanted to see his mother again. Do you know where his mother is? (The children answer.)



Questions for Children

- 1 What happens to someone when they die?
- 2 How does the boy in the story feel?
- 3 What should we tell the boy about his mother?
- 4 How can you help this boy?

How to talk to children about death

Answer honestly

Tell the child the truth about how the parent or relative died. For example:

‘Your mother died from a serious illness.’

‘Your granny died because she was very old.’

It is not helpful to tell the child a confusing story, for example:

‘Your mother has gone on a slow train and will take a long time to return.’

Help children to express their feelings and thoughts

Sometimes it is enough to sit with the child and listen.

You can also help by saying, for example: ‘I know you miss your mother very much.’

Allow the child to cry. If you feel that you also want to cry that is okay. This can be part of the healing process for both you and the child.

Allow children to express their sadness.

This sadness may appear as anger or naughtiness.

Comfort rather than punish a naughty child and explain that when children are feeling sad they often behave this way. You can say, for example: ‘It’s not that you’re bad, it’s just that you’re sad!’



TOPIC 6 Our hopes

Purpose: To help adults and children talk about their wishes for the future and learn how to move their lives one step closer to their hopes.

GAME The hope game

This game helps children think about their hopes for the future. You can play it with one child and a caregiver in a home setting or with a group of children in a classroom setting. Children's hopes can be more than just what they want to be when they grow up. Their hopes can include subjects such as food, love and other things that make them happy.

Show children the picture on 'Our hopes' which shows four children thinking about what they wish would happen in their lives.

Look at this picture. What do you see? (Get responses.)

These are the things that people wish would happen in their lives.

Jump up and down.

Walk and make sounds like a cow.

Walk in a funny way.

Now close your eyes. Open your eyes.

Do it again.

Now tell me something nice you wish would happen in your life very soon. (Listen to the children's responses.)

What is one thing you can do to make this nice thing happen? (Listen to the children's responses.)

Good. These are all things you can do to make your life happy. I want you to continue doing those things.

Tip

You may need to suggest ways the children can make nice things happen.

But be sensitive to situations which are difficult and don't pretend that all problems can be solved easily.

PICTURE Our hopes



The questions for children have already been suggested in 'The hope game' on the previous page.

Questions for adults:

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
- 2 How are the children feeling? What are they thinking about?
- 3 What are the hopes of the children in your community?
- 4 This is a place where you can think about how you want your life to be. Close your eyes and picture your hopes. Now open your eyes and tell us about them. (Participants can draw pictures of their hopes or talk about them.)
- 5 What can you do to bring your hopes closer?
- 6 What things might push your hopes further away?
- 7 What is one small thing that you can do now, today, to move closer to achieving your hopes?

To conclude...

Tell the adults:

'Knowing our hopes as adults will help us guide our lives and care better for ourselves.'

'Knowing our children's hopes will help us guide their lives and care better for them.'

TOPIC 7 Caring for Children

Purpose: To identify how people care for children, what activities have a positive effect on children and what parents commonly do that may affect children negatively.

This activity is based on the poster, 'Caring for Children – Yes or No?' (see a copy of the poster on pages 40 and 41) and the set of eleven playing cards which show each of the pictures presented on the poster (see copies of the cards on pages 42 and 43).

Using the poster

- Show the poster to the children and explain that it shows the different ways that adults take care of children.
- Then hand out the eleven cards. Ask one child with a card to come up and match the card to the picture on the poster.
- After the child has matched the card, ask all the children the following questions:

Questions for Children

- 1 What do you see in this picture?
 - 2 What is the adult (father, mother, teacher or nurse) doing with the child?
 - 3 Do you like what is happening – yes or no?
 - 4 Does this happen to you?
- Sort the playing cards into two piles – the pictures the children LIKE and the pictures the children DON'T LIKE.
 - Ask the next child to match the playing card to the picture on the poster. Ask the questions again.
 - Repeat this until all eleven cards have been matched to the poster. Then review the two piles of playing cards with the children (the LIKE and DON'T LIKE piles).
 - Ask the children if you can share what they said about the pictures with other interested adults and children.

If they say yes, ask two groups of children to make a display on the wall with the two sets of cards (what they like and what they don't like).

Tip

If you don't have a copy of the poster, you can use the smaller version printed on pages 40 and 41, especially if you are working with a small group of children.

If you don't have the cards, you can use the pictures on pages 42 and 43 and ask the children to discuss each one before they match them with the pictures on the poster.

Questions for adults

Using the poster, ask the following questions:

- 1 Which pictures show adults caring for children in a good way? Does this happen in your community?
- 2 Which pictures show adults caring for children in a bad or hurtful way? Does this happen in your community? Why?
- 3 Compare your responses to the children's responses if they are available. How are they different? How are they the same? What do you learn from this?
- 4 Do you like being a parent? What do you enjoy about being a parent? What are the difficult things about being a parent?
- 5 As a parent, what are you proud of?
- 6 What help do you receive in being a parent (from relatives, friends, your children)? What help do you need?
- 7 How can you help other parents who are having difficulties?
- 8 What can the government do better to care for your children?
- 9 What can people in your community do better to care for their children? How could this happen? Who can do it?

To conclude...

Summarise what has been learned from the children and the adults.

Sum up the accomplishments of the parents and community in caring for children as well as what people would like to do to improve the lives of children.



Caring for Child



Children – Yes or No?





The playing cards for the poster game

If you don't have the set of playing cards you can use these pictures for the matching game.

You can also photocopy these cards, cut them out and paste them onto a piece of thick paper or cardboard (to last longer).

Then you will have your own set of cards for the poster activity.





Parenting – card A

This information gives parents and caregivers guidelines on responding effectively to the challenges of parenting young children. Home-based carers can use this information as a brief assessment tool to observe positive adult to child interactions and as a guide for positive parenting behaviour. If you are a teacher, you can also use the guidelines to help improve your students' self-esteem and confidence.

Tip

Choose the sections of the information cards – Parenting A, B or C – that are most appropriate for the group you are working with. You don't have to use all three sections.

Tip

Ask parents to identify pictures on the poster which illustrate love, guidance, encouragement and understanding.

What parents should give their children

Love

- Show your enjoyment of your child and his or her personality.
- Express physical affection (holding, hugging, cuddling).

Guidance

- A child learns by your example, by your behaviour – keep this in mind when you are dealing with difficult situations or situations that make you angry.
- Do not shout at, criticize or blame your child.

Encouragement

- Say things to help your child gain self confidence even when things are difficult at home or at school.
- Say kind words that help your child appreciate him or herself – acknowledge your child's strengths and qualities.

Good Communication and Understanding

- Speak in a calm voice so your child can hear what you have to say. Never shout at your child.
- Check to see if your child understands you. Ask your child to repeat what you said. You can also repeat what your child said to make sure you heard correctly.
- When your child is naughty or upset, first try to put yourself in your child's place (this is *empathy*) – try looking at the world through your child's eyes.
- Speak simply and honestly to your child about difficult issues like death, divorce or lack of food.
- Make time to talk with your child about the best things about the day and anything that was upsetting or worrying.
- Make sure you spend some time each week playing with your child.

Parenting from 0 to 3 years

Building a good relationship

- **Touch** and **cuddle** your child.
- **Look directly** at your child and smile.
- **Sing** to your child.
- **Talk** to your child about what you are doing and thinking. Ask your child questions as well.
- **Tell** your child what you will do next (for example: 'I am going to change your nappy!')
- **Play** with your child each day.
- **Tell stories** to your child (especially if your child is two years or older).

Tip

Your child is unhappy or distressed if he or she cries or appears uncomfortable.



Indicators of improvement

**How to know
that your child is
improving and is
now happier**

When children experience difficult times that make them sad, stressed or frightened, they show certain behaviours. The words in **bold red** tell you the emotions or behaviours that children show when they are feeling this way.

If you follow the guidelines given in the information cards Parenting A and Parenting B, your child will improve. When your child improves, you should see the changes described in the checklist below.

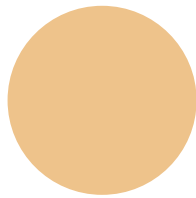
The items below apply to children from one to six years old.

CHECKLIST

- The child is less **distressed**
- The child is less **confused**
- The child is less **distracted** or **dreamy**
- The child is less **angry**
- The child doesn't **hit** or **bite** as much as before
- The child **cries** less
- The child is less **irritable**
- The child is less **worried** or **anxious**
- The child is less **shy** or **socially withdrawn**
- The child does not become **upset when there is a change in the environment**, such as a transition to the next activity at school or a change of teacher or schedule
- The child can concentrate and pay attention better
- The child has a healthier appetite than before
- The child now displays more happy emotion than sad or angry emotion:
 - The child smiles more;
 - The child is more affectionate with his or her parents (caregivers) than before;
 - The child laughs and plays with others more than before.

Tip

It is also useful to talk to other mothers with children of the same age so that you know what the expected or usual behaviour for children of a specific age is.



A final word . . .

We hope that *Say and Play* has helped parents, caregivers, teachers and home-based care teams understand the needs and problems of young children and that you will all continue to work with young children in creative and supportive ways.

There are many organizations and resources that you can use for additional support. Below are some examples:

- **The Better Care Network**

You can access this organization on the internet at:
www.bettercarenetwork.org

This site includes articles from all over the world about how to care for orphans and vulnerable children.

- **The Bernard Van Leer Foundation**

You can access this organization on the internet at:
www.bernardvanleer.org

This site offers extensive resources on early childhood development.

- **The Regional Psychosocial Support Initiative (REPSSI)**

You can access this organization on the internet at:
www.repssi.org

This site presents articles, manuals and training on counselling orphans and vulnerable children.

If you would like to give feedback about how you have used *Say and Play*, please write to Project Concern International in Zambia ((info@pcizambia.org.zm) and Dr Jonathan Brakarsh (brakaim@hotmail.com).

We look forward to hearing from you!



inside back cover



Say and Play encourages adults to learn about the experiences and views of young children and helps children freely express themselves in their natural way – through pictures, stories and games.

While many child development materials promote children's intellectual and physical development, few give children the opportunity to express their hopes, fears, and experiences. Through *Say and Play* children will find a voice and adults will learn to listen and take action to improve the lives of children.

The full *Say and Play* package includes the following:

- The *Say and Play* manual which includes information cards, games, pictures and stories
- Six colourful A3 size pictures
- One A2 size poster
- A set of eleven playing cards
- A carrying bag



Project
Concern
International

Produced with kind assistance from:

