

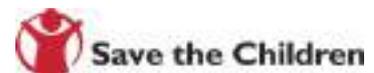


REAL FATHERS

Mentor Home Visit and Group Meeting Protocol

Using Mentors to Increase Positive Fatherhood
Practices and Non-Violent Couple Communication
with Newly Married Young Men

Adapted to include early childhood development (ECD) content.
September 2021



The Republic of Uganda



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About REAL Fathers

REAL Fathers' Goal

REAL Fathers is a four-component intervention designed for fathers (aged 16-24 years) of children (1-3 years). The goals of the program are to: 1) increase fathers' ability to use positive parenting techniques with their children, 2) develop healthy, gender-equitable relationships with the mothers of their children, and 3) stop intimate partner violence (IPV).

REAL Fathers' Evaluation

The REAL Fathers intervention was rigorously evaluated in Northern Uganda between 2013 and 2015. Men participating in REAL Fathers demonstrated significant reductions in IPV and physical child punishment at the study's end line compared to fathers who did not participate in the intervention.²

Intervention Components

REAL Fathers is a comprehensive intervention that takes place over seven months and includes four components.

1. Mentor Training

Master Trainers facilitate a five-day training for community mentors. Mentors also receive follow-up booster training and supportive supervision. For more information about the Mentor Training, see the *REAL Fathers Mentor Training Manual*.

REAL Father Mentors

One unique aspect of the REAL Fathers intervention is the engagement of community mentors to serve as role models and teachers.

Mentors are carefully selected from the community with one selection criterion being that they are admired by, trusted by, and relatable to young fathers from the same community. They must also possess the ability to work well with young men in a non-judgmental, open, and proactive way.

Each mentor is assigned to 3-4 mentees with whom to work.

2. Home Visits

¹ REAL stands for **R**esponsible, **E**ngaged **A**nd **L**oving

² Ashburn K, Kerner B, Ojamuge D, Lundgren R. Evaluation of the Responsible, Engaged, and Loving (REAL) Fathers Initiative on Physical Child Punishment and Intimate Partner Violence in Northern Uganda. *Prev Sci*. 2017 Oct;18(7):854-864. doi: 10.1007/s11121-016-0713-9. PMID: 27738782; PMCID: PMC5602091.

Mentors conduct four home visits with the young fathers assigned to them and three home visits with fathers and mothers (total of seven visits).

Before starting the home visits schedule, there is a short inception visit where mentors and the couple become acquainted with each other and the program.

Through monthly home visits, mentors provide young fathers the opportunity to reflect on and practice newly learned positive communication and relationship skills, as well as specific ways to support their partners. Along with their wives, they are also encouraged to try new parenting and discipline skills, and become more involved in child care.

Eight themes frame each of the home visits and the group meetings. They are:

1. Fatherhood
2. Tips and Tricks to Being a REAL Father
3. Family Dreams
4. Loving My Family
5. Communication
6. Parenting
7. Family Planning
8. Early Childhood Development (ECD)

For each theme (except ECD, which is weaved into the other seven themes), there is one home visit and one group meeting. Every month, for seven months, the mentor conducts one home visit and one group meeting on a theme. For example, the mentor will conduct a home visit on fatherhood for each father he mentors in the first month.

3. Group Meetings

Mentors from the same sub-parish facilitate four group education meetings with their mentees and three group education meetings with their mentees and their wives. These monthly meetings reinforce new information and skills discussed during home visits and provide social support for young fathers to make positive changes.

At the end of the program, there is a closing ceremony with community members. During the ceremony, fathers commit to being REAL Fathers.

4. Community Poster Campaign

Posters promoting positive parenting norms are posted around the community. They are designed to spark discussions in the community at large and the during the group education meetings.

Resource Sheets

Mentors received 13 easy-to-read resource sheets. Mentors can reference these resource sheets as needed, as well as share them with their mentees during home visits and group education sessions. The titles of the resource sheets are listed below.

1. Tips and Tricks to Being a Great Father
2. Train, Improve, and Score! Fatherhood Is Like Football!
3. Fatherhood Discipline Styles
4. Positive Discipline
5. Communicating with Children Ages 1-3
6. When Parents Hit Children
7. Kind and Assuring Words Daughters AND Sons Need to Hear from their Fathers
8. Home Communication Conduct
9. Communication Skills
10. The Rules of Football vs. The Rules of Marriage
11. How Toddlers Grow
12. What Fathers Can Do to Support their Toddlers Growth
13. Uganda Policies and Strategies Related to Positive Fatherhood and Violence Prevention

There is also a booklet titled *Teaching Aides to Support Early Childhood Development*. The booklet contains several activities and resources to support a toddler's physical growth and movement, thinking and problem-solving, relationships and managing feelings, and communication. Mentors are free to share the booklet with their mentees.

Topics

Using interactive learning methods (e.g., role play, critical reflection, small group work), mentors engage fathers in learning information and skills related to parenting young children, positive discipline, gender-equitable relationships, communication skills (with child and spouse), family planning, and joint decision-making.

This edition of the REAL Fathers Intervention (2021) integrates an early child development (ECD) lens. An ECD lens, corresponding to the ECD content in this manual is also added to the Home Visit Protocol, Group Education Discussion Guide, Resource Sheets and Community Posters. This was done to facilitate expansion of REAL through Uganda ECD programs and to contribute to government priorities.

Rationale

There are few programmes focusing on the development and parenting of children 0 - 3 years, yet these years are a critical time for children's physical growth, and ability to think and problem solve, relate to others, manage emotions, and communicate. Engaged fathers can have a positive impact

on all of these areas of development. REAL Fathers + ECD (2021) recognizes the need for an intervention that teaches fathers about early childhood development while also addressing its original aims of preventing violence against children (VAC) and violence against women (VAW). The two goals combine well together as experiencing or witnessing violence can have multiple negative effects on all areas of child's development.

REAL Fathers + ECD incorporates family and community engagement through the selection of respected mentors from the communities, home visits, group education session, and a community poster campaign. The intervention recognizes that the home is at the center of healthy childhood development. This programming approach aligns well with the National Integrated Childhood Development (NIECD) policy aimed at reducing VAC and VAW.

In addition to being aligned with NIECD policy, REAL Fathers + ECD is aligned with Uganda's Vision 2040 which aspires to have a progressive and developmental culture that blends traditional beliefs and national values. Ugandans aspire for a future in which men, women, youth, children, and persons with disabilities are empowered to participate as equal partners in development. This can only be achieved if families are stable, children are healthy and educated, and parents are engaged in eliminating VAC and VAW. REAL Fathers + ECD is one programme that can support the government in this direction. Lastly, REAL Fathers + ECD is also aligned with two National Development Plan (NDP) programmes—Human Capital Development (HCDP) and Community Mobilization and Mindset Programme (CMMP).

Program Resources

A list of REAL Father Intervention Resources is listed below.

1. Mentor Training Manual
2. Mentor Home Visit and Group Meeting Protocol
3. Mentor Group Discussion Guide for Less Literate Mentors
4. Resources Sheets (13)
5. Community Posters (6)
6. Implementation Guidelines for Adaptation and Use

For More information

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Inception Visit

Before starting the home visits with fathers, mentors will visit the couple at home. The purpose of the inception visit is to create a mutual, supportive connection with the whole family, engage the wife (children's mother) in the program, and agree on a mentorship schedule with the young father and his wife.

Below find the steps to follow during the inception visit (45-60 minutes).

Introduce Yourself and the REAL Fathers Program

1. **Exchange greetings** with the couple.
2. **Introduce yourself** as a REAL Father Mentor and allow the couple to introduce themselves to you.
3. **Explain** that the husband has been selected to participate in the Responsible, Engaged, and Loving (REAL) Father program. Explain that the **father** is going to learn many things about how important they are in their children's lives.
 - One thing we are going to learn about is how toddlers develop and what fathers can do to support their toddlers' growth. "**Toddler**" is a special name that we give to children between 1 and 3 years.
 - Many people think that a child's growth is about how tall they become or how much they weigh. It's so easy to see these physical changes. But children grow or develop in many other ways. By "**develop**," I mean all the new things they can do with their bodies and their minds as the months and years go by.
 - As toddlers grow, they also become more independent. Toddlers need a lot of support from their parents (or other caring adults) as they figure out how to do new things, test their limits, experience different emotions, and relate to other people besides their mother and father. We are going to talk about parenting skills, communicating with your children, ways to keep your children safe, showing affection, and using positive discipline.
4. Another thing we are going to talk about is about how to be the best **husband** he can be.

- Children need both their mothers and fathers to be involved with their care and their development. When mothers and fathers work as a team, their children have better health and do better in school.
- So, we are also going to talk about relationships skills, couple communication, and ways to support each other. We will also have an opportunity to create a vision for your future. The use of family planning will be part of that discussion. In fact, there will be some home visits and some group meetings where both husband and wives will attend. I will explain what home visits and group meetings are in a minute.

Explain Program Benefits

5. **Ask** the couple what they think the benefits are when a father becomes more involved in parenting and the family. Be sure that both the husband and the wife have an opportunity to share.
6. **Explain** that more and more families in Uganda and around the world have found that when fathers are more involved in parenting early in their children's lives, there are benefits for the child, the family, and the father himself. When a father is positively involved in his child's care, they are healthier and better educated. The couple will also benefit from improved communication, respect for each other, harmony and shared roles.

Describe the Home Visits and Group Meetings

7. **Explain** that you will visit the home once a month for seven months. During the first four visits, you will work with the husband one-to-one about parenting and relationship skills. For the last three visits, you will talk with the husband and wife—as a couple—about similar topics. For example, you will talk about how to resolve conflicts and positively discipline your children together.
8. **Explain** that you will also cooperate with other mentors in the sub-parish and the fathers they are working with to conduct group discussions where they will discuss the same topics as a group. These group sessions will also take place once a month for seven months. The first four will be for fathers alone, and the last three will be for fathers and mothers together.
9. **Clarify expectations.** The young father will learn new information and skills related to parenting young children and getting along with their wives. Wives and husbands will try out new skills together. Both the young father and his wife are expected to attend and be active in all sessions designed for them, to share their experiences and ideas, and ask questions. We want you to learn and enjoy the process.

10. **Clarify your role as a mentor.** The mentor's role is to teach, guide, and support young fathers in becoming more involved with their families and children.
11. **Ask** the couple if they have any questions about the program.

End the Visit

12. **Seek** agreement from the couple on continued engagement for all sessions designed for them.
13. **Set** a date and time for the first visit and exchange mobile phone numbers.
14. **Ask** the young couple to complete a homework assignment. Ask them to think through who in their extended family has had a big impact on their lives and has had a big say in their marriage. Encourage the couple to explain how they will participate in the REAL Fathers program with one or two of these people. Ask the couple to watch for the person's response and reaction carefully.
15. **Thank** the couple for their time and willingness to participate. Express your enthusiasm for the opportunity to work with them.

THEME I: Fatherhood

Purpose

The first home visit with the young father will set the stage for all future visits and discussions.

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers will be able to:

1. State three goals he has for his children's future.
2. Describe the kind of father he wants to be in order to reach these goals.
3. Describe what kind of family life he wants to have.
4. State what it means to be a man in his community and how that relates to his vision for the future.

Home Visit #1: Fatherhood

Preparation

1. Review the home visit plan in advance.
2. Make copies of the Resource Sheets titled **How Toddlers Grow** and **What Fathers Can Do to Support their Toddlers Growth** to give to fathers

Time

1 Hour to 1.5 Hours

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Greet** the father and welcome him again to the REAL Father's program.
2. **Ask** the father if he had the opportunity to talk to someone in his extended family about REAL Fathers planned activities and his involvement. Ask how it went, what the reaction was, and if there were any concerns. If he did not try, encourage him to find time to do it during the course of the mentoring process.

B. Introduction to Home Visit #1

1. Introduce the topic of today's home visit by **saying** something like:
 - A father is one of the most influential persons in a child's life. A father can love, teach, and raise their child in very positive ways. A father offers priceless love for their child. Today, most young fathers know this and want to be responsible, engaged, and loving fathers to their children.
 - Sometimes, as fathers, we get busy with other activities or do not know how to act in certain situations. We often do not have models of responsible, engaged, and loving fathers to learn from daily.
 - For this reason, I will be your mentor through your journey as a father and a husband during this important stage in your life.
 - Just like no two children are the same, no two fathers are the same. Everyone has their own personality and style. It is up to you to decide how you want to be as a father. As your mentor, I will guide you through a series of activities and discussions to help you learn

and plan how to be a father. It is your family and your future. I will guide you to make your own choices on how you want to be and how you want to live.

C. Child Development

1. Introduce the concept of child development by **saying** something like:

- During our first visit, I mentioned that toddlers are growing and developing rapidly. I want to share with you four areas in which children grow.
 - Physical Growth and Movement
 - Thinking and Problem Solving
 - Relating to Others and Managing Feelings
 - Communication
- Understanding some of the ways that children grow is important for fathers. Having this information in mind will help you better understand normal behavior for your child's age and help you support them in their growth.

Facilitator Note

The order of how you present each of the four areas of growth and development does not matter.

2. **Explain** the 1st development area: **physical growth and movement** by saying something like:

- As I mentioned last time, toddlers grow in height and in weight, and they also grow on the inside. Their muscles are growing and becoming stronger, and they can do more and more things with their bodies.
- Some of our muscles are large—like the muscles in our arms. For example, a three-year-old could not lift a heavy piece of wood, but an older child, with more developed arm muscles could. Other muscles are small—like the muscles in our fingers. A child that is one year old can't hold a pencil to draw, but as she gets older, the muscles in her fingers become stronger, and she can control a pencil in her hand. All of this growth affects what children can do, play, eat, etc.

3. **Ask:**

- How have you seen your child grow in their ability to use their muscles and move around?
 - What have you done to help your child strengthen their muscles and move in new ways? (Give the father positive reinforcement, as appropriate.)
4. **Explain** the 2nd development area: **thinking and problem solving** by saying something like:
- The ability to think and problem solve is another way child grow.
 - For example, a two-year-old (or even younger) can figure out that to drink water, they need to raise the cup to their mouth and tilt it to drink the water. This may sound simple for us, but this is a major accomplishment for a 1-year-old! They solved a problem. They were thirsty and figured out how to get water.
 - As they grow, toddlers learn by observing others. They model more of what they see around them. For example, after a child sees people saying "bye-bye," they learn to say "bye-bye."
 - Toddlers are very curious and it's normal for them to want to explore everything in their surroundings. By doing so, they learn.
5. **Ask:**
- How have you seen your child learn new things and problem solve?
 - What have you done to help your child learn and problem solve? (Give the father positive reinforcement, as appropriate.)
6. **Explain** the 3rd development area: **relationships and feelings** by saying something like:
- And a fourth way that children grow is in how they relate to others and manage their feelings.
 - For example, when a child is one, they may be afraid to go to others who are not part of their immediate family. When mom or dad walk away, they may feel fear and start to cry. Having their parents nearby makes them feel secure. By the time they are three, they are more likely to have friends and show that they want to be independent by playing with friends (rather than you), dressing themselves, and feeding themselves.

- They are also learning how to manage their feelings. For example, they might feel frustrated because they can't do something they want to do (or don't know how to do something they want to do) or because one of their siblings is bothering them. Rather than asking for help, having patience and trying to do something again, or compromising, they might cry or hit their sibling out of frustration. This is normal behavior for a toddler, and it's also an opportunity for a father to teach them about how to treat others and how to cope with their feelings.

7. Ask:

- How have you seen your child change in the way they relate to other people?
- What have you done to help your child learn about relationships and coping with their feelings? (Give the father positive reinforcement, as appropriate.)

8. Explain the 4th development area: **communication** by saying something like:

- Another way children grow is in how they communicate.
- For example, a 1-year-old has few words but can communicate by pointing, crying, or making gestures. Sometimes, parents have to try to guess what their one-year-old needs. In comparison, a three-year-old has many more words and can more clearly communicate what they want, what they don't want, and their feelings.

9. Ask:

- How have you seen your child grow in their ability to communicate?
- What have you done to help your child learn how to communicate? (Give the father positive reinforcement, as appropriate.)

10. Ask the father if he has any questions about what you just presented.

11. Share:

- a. The Resource Sheet titled **How Toddlers Grow** with the father. Explain what is in the resource and how they can use it.

- b. Then share the Resource Sheet titled **What Fathers Can Do to Support their Toddlers Growth**. Explain what is in the resource and how they can use it.
- c. Lastly, share some of the tools in the booklet titled *Teaching Aides to Support Early Childhood Development*. Depending on time, model how to use a few of the tools in the booklet and how they support different areas of toddler development.

D. Fatherhood Discussion

1. **Ask** these questions and listen to the young father's response.
 - What animal would represent a father? Why?
 - Is there a father who you admire now, or one you admired when you were young? Why?
 - Do you think fatherhood today is different than in the past? How is it different?
 - What does it mean to you to be a father?
 - How did you feel when your child was born?

E. Visioning Exercise

1. **Explain** the next exercise by saying something like:
 - I am going to guide you through a "visioning" exercise. A vision helps to create a goal to work toward. A vision is the first step to a plan. A vision also gives us hope for our future.
2. **Ask** the father to listen as you slowly ask five questions. If he would like to, he can close his eyes as he listens. Then tell the father that you are going to read the questions again. As you do, ask him to create a vision in his mind for his future. Tell him that after all the questions, you and he will talk about his vision.

Pause for a few seconds between each question to give the father time to think.

- a. In the future, how big do you want your family to be?
- b. What would you want people in the community to say about your family?

- c. What hopes and dreams do you have for your child in the future?
 - d. What do you want your child to say about you as a father when they grow up?
 - e. To achieve these things, what type of father do you want to be?
3. Invite the father to share his vision about what type of father he wants to be with you.
 4. **Explain** by saying something like:
 - Some men feel pressure to be like other men, whether it be their peers or elders. They feel that there are many expectations about how they should act as a father and as a man.
 - As your mentor, I will not judge you and I will not expect you to prove that you are a "real" man. I know that you are a real man already. The point of this program is that fatherhood today requires new skills and a new way of thinking. All of us have room to improve and strive to be the best father and husband we can be.
 - I will help you learn skills and make plans to achieve your vision in future visits.

F. Homework

1. **Ask** the father to do an assignment between now and the next home visit.
 - Encourage him to share his vision with his wife.
 - Ask her to talk about her vision and listen to her response.

G. Wrap Up

1. **Congratulate** the father for taking an important step for himself and his family.
2. **Ask** the father if he has any questions for you, and try to answer them or find a way to bring the answers later.
3. **Agree** on a time for the 2nd home visit in the next month.
4. **Inform** the father of the plan for the group discussion with other fathers and mentors.

Group Meeting #1: Fatherhood

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.
2. Prepare the space and materials needed for a Wang-oo.
3. Gather the materials needed for **Activity C: Ordinary Objects**. Below find a list of such objects that are particularly suited for each of the four areas of toddler development. However, note that almost all the objects on these lists can stimulate growth in all four areas! There is a lot of room for creativity!
 - **Physical Growth and Movement:** A ball that can be thrown or kicked, plastic cup half full with maize kernels or beans for a child to pick up and put into a container like an empty water bottle or a box or can with a hole in it, box or pot and spoon that can serve as a drum, crayon (or pencil) and piece of paper, string and large beads (also can cut up toilet paper rolls into three or four pieces), three small cups and a small item that can be hidden under one of the cups, a banana, etc.
 - **Thinking and Problem Solving:** Items from the REAL Fathers ECD Teaching Aides booklet: Colored shapes, counting sheet, flower and cat puzzles. Also, little boxes that can be used for building, a box or a water bottle with an item in it that the child has to figure out how to remove.
 - **Relationships and Feelings:** Relationship and Feelings photos found in the REAL Fathers ECD Teaching Aides booklet.
 - **Communication:** Ugandan folktales and Ugandan child songs. One recommendation is to have one of the songs or book readings cued up on a smartphone or laptop and ready for fathers to watch. Keep the video clip short. Remember, fathers will only have five minutes.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Introduction

1. **Welcome** the fathers to the meeting.
2. Conduct an icebreaker.
3. Introduce the meeting by **saying** something like:
 - Being a father is one of the most important roles you will have in life. Being a father to a young child is a special opportunity and time. Childhood is when your child learns about love, care, values.
 - As we discussed in our home visit, the toddler years is a time when children show remarkable growth. The child grows not only in height and weight but also in four other areas: 1) their ability to use their muscles and move, 2) think and problem solve, 3) relate to other people, become more independent, and manage their feelings, and 4) communicate using words and gestures.
 - We know that fatherhood is a central role for men. And we also recognize that fatherhood has changed from the past in some ways. There are different challenges and opportunities for families today. Young fathers need to learn new ways of being involved with their children's education and wellbeing of their families.
 - During this group discussion, we are coming together as fathers to share what this means and how we can support each other to be the fathers we want to be for our children, families, and ourselves.

B. Wang-oo Discussion

1. **Lead** a large group discussion with the questions below.
 - What does it mean to be a "father" today?
 - During our last home visit, we talked about your vision of fatherhood. Who would like to share their vision?
 - What have you thought about or realized since the last home visit with your mentor?
 - Now that you know more about all the ways that toddlers grow, have you noticed new things about how your child behaves?
 - What new insights or ideas about fatherhood have you had?
 - What questions do you have about fatherhood? (Encourage fathers to share ideas and experiences.)

C. Ordinary Objects

1. **Say** something like:

- Today we are going to learn how we can use ordinary objects that we can find in or outside the house to support our children in the four areas of development that we discussed in our home visits: 1) physical growth and movement, 2) thinking and problem solving, 3) relating to others and managing feelings, and 4) communicating.

Facilitator Note

Depending on the time you have, you can assign each pair one object or multiple objects.

- First, I would like you to pair up with one of the fathers sitting near you.
- I am going to give each pair of fathers an ordinary object (or objects). When you receive the object(s), I would like you and your partner to take 5 minutes to think of as many ways that the object(s) can be used to stimulate the four areas of child development we discussed.
- Let's do one together so you can see what I mean. Here I have a ball. How do you think the ball can be used to support a child's physical growth and movement? How about her ability to communicate? How about her ability to think or problem solve? And how about her ability to relate to others? (Compliment the fathers for each of their ideas.)

2. After five minutes, **ask**:

- I would like each pair of fathers to share at least one idea they came up for the object(s) assigned to you. Who would like to start?

3. Conclude the activity by **asking**:

- What do you think of these ideas?
- Are there ideas for other ordinary objects that could be used to stimulate a toddler's development in the four areas we have been talking about?
- Do you think you could try one of them? Which one?

D. Community Poster Discussion

1. Show the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?



My son is a REAL Father!

Elders say:

- He is hardworking
- He loves his children and takes care of them
- He has a vision for his children and works hard to give his children a better future
- He corrects his children

E. Group Commitment

1. **Ask** the fathers:
 - What do you plan to do to become the fathers you want to be?
 - What will you do to support each other to become the fathers you want to be?
2. **Ask** the group to decide together on one new behavior they will all commit to trying this month.
3. Make a group sign of commitment, such as hands together in a circle or a special handshake. One person may write down the commitments stated.
4. **Summarize** the commitment.
5. **Congratulate** the fathers for their good work today!

THEME 2: Tips & Tricks to Being a REAL Father

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers will be able to:

1. State one new idea for communicating with their child.
2. State two positive (non-violent) ways of disciplining their child.

Home Visit #2: Tips and Tricks

Preparation

- Review Resource Sheets #1, #5, #6, and #7.
- Gather ten stones when you get to the fathers' home.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the father.
2. **Ask** the father if he tried the homework assignment. If he did, ask him to share his fatherhood vision with you and his wife. Ask about any challenges. If he did not try the assignment, encourage the father to do it this week.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. Introduce Home Visit #2 by **saying** something like:
 - A father's involvement in child care benefits the child, the family, and the father himself.
 - Fathers (and mothers) have many roles in their children's lives. During the program, we are going to be talking about four roles in particular: 1) teacher, 2) designer, 3) gardener, and 4) disciplinarian.
2. Explain the four roles by **saying** something like:
 - The 1st role is as a **teacher**. A teacher shares knowledge, helps children learn to do new things, gently corrects mistakes, and models good values and character.

Can you give me an example of how you have been a teacher to your child? (Praise the father's example.)

- The 2nd role is a **designer**. A designer is like an architect or an engineer. He plans the form, look, safety, or workings of something like a house, car, airplane, or cell phone.

A father is a designer when he creates an area for his children to play or organizes his house in a way that is safe for a toddler.

Can you give me an example of when you have been a designer for your child? (Praise the father's example.)

- The 3rd role is a **gardener**. Most of us have had experience as farmers or gardeners. We know how to grow crops. A gardener has to spend a lot of time cultivating the seeds that he plants. He tends to the soil, waters them, fertilizes them, and protects them from pests. By doing so, he will have healthy plants that will bear fruit.

Like a gardener, a father supports his child's growth by caring for their physical and emotional needs, helping them, consoling them, encouraging them, and protecting them.

Can you give me an example of how you have been a gardener to your child? (Praise the father's example.)

- The 4th role mothers and fathers have is **disciplinarian**. Discipline means setting rules and limits that help children to behave well. The aim of discipline is to improve children's behavior in the future. Discipline means to teach or guide or correct. Discipline is not the same as punishment

Punishment means to penalize for doing something wrong. Punishment often instills shame and fear in children. While it may immediately stop misbehavior, it does not teach the child.

Positive discipline helps children in their development. Punishment does not.

Being able to use positive discipline means understanding normal behavior for children 1-3 years old based on the state of their development and appropriate techniques to correct misbehavior.

Can you give me an example of how you have disciplined (not punished) your child? (Praise the father's example, however, only for correct examples where physical punishment was not used.)

3. Then **ask**:

- Which of these four roles do you relate to most?
- Which role would you like to be better at?

4. Explain by saying something like:

- These roles are not always easy to do in a positive way. Sometimes when a father is feeling tired or stressed, or around his friends, he may not act the way he would like. He may feel pressured to behave in ways that reflect the old way of thinking that is not always good for the father, child or family.
- Learning new skills, preparing in advance, and practicing can help us be the father we want to be. Remember that we are not perfect, and we can always get a second chance to try and communicate and discipline in positive ways.
- Communication is a key tool for fathers to use in all of his roles. Communication also creates strong bonds between the child and father.

C. Discussion

1. **Ask** and then **explain**:

- How can a father show care to their children? How can they be good gardeners?
- Men are usually taught that fathers should provide material things, while mothers should be the ones to care for children. Because of this, boys and men are often denied the opportunity to learn the skills to be a REAL father.
- But fathers can, and need to, provide care to children as well. There are many ways to do this. We will learn some tips and tricks for you to be a REAL father.

2. **Ask** and then **explain**:

- Good communication is essential for all four roles we just discussed. Without good communication, it would be difficult for a father to be a good teacher, designer, gardener, or disciplinarian. How can fathers communicate well with a young child?

- Communication can mean many things: verbal and nonverbal. Communication with young children includes talking and teaching and nonverbal communication like holding or hugging the child, smiling, how you hold your body, tone of your voice, etc.
- As fathers, we have many responsibilities. We often feel pressured, feel tired, and our child will sometimes irritate us. You might not pay attention to your child or speak to your child in a hurtful way without that intention. But you can learn to communicate better with your child.

D. Resource Sheet #5: Communicating with Children Ages 1-3

1. Give the father *Resource Sheet #5: Communicating with Children Ages 1-3* and review it with him. Then **ask**:

- Which of these methods do you think you could try with your child?

2. **Explain:**

- We talked earlier about a parent's role as a disciplinarian. As I said earlier, Discipline means setting rules and limits that help children to behave well. The aim of discipline is to improve children's behavior in the future. Discipline means to teach or guide or correct. Discipline is not the same as punishment

Punishment means to penalize for doing something wrong. Punishment often instills shame and fear in children. While it may immediately stop misbehavior, it does not teach the child.

Positive discipline helps children in their development. Punishment does not.

- Some people worry that the children will become spoiled or hopeless if they do not use physical ways to discipline or correct.

Lifelong respect from children comes from you showing respect to your children. Choosing a non-violent way of disciplining, here children know how you expect them to behave, and correcting misbehavior through actions and words instead of beating, is what truly leads to respect and learning. This takes more time and effort, but it will strengthen the love and bonds between you and your child.

3. **Ask:**

- How can a young child be disciplined effectively, without violence?"
4. Mark 2 circles on the ground with a stick: one for fear and one for respect. Give the father 10 small stones.
 5. Explain the activity instructions by **saying** something like:
 - I will read different methods of discipline and punishment. After reading each one, think about whether that method creates fear or respect from the child, throw a stone into one of the circles (for fear or respect).

Discipline and Punishment Methods Statements

1. Model what you want the child to do.
2. Hit with a stick.
3. Talk to the child about your expectations and rules.
4. Shout at the child.
5. Take the child away from the situation that is causing a problem.
6. Beat the child.
7. Call the child bad words or names.
8. Threaten to beat the child.
9. Take away the toy or the chance to play.

6. **Explain:**

- Praising what a child does well has many benefits. Praising your child (when deserved):
 - Positively reinforces good behavior.
 - Help the child feel confident that you love and care for them.
 - Helps build the child's confidence and self-esteem.
- Praising is part of a father's role as a teacher, gardener, and disciplinarian.

7. **Ask:**

- What kind of things can a father say to praise the child?

E. Resource Sheet #7: Kind and Assuring Words Daughters and Sons Need to Hear from their Fathers

1. Give the father *Resource Sheet #7: Kind and Assuring Words Daughters and Sons Need to Hear from their Fathers*.
2. Review the resource sheet together.
 - I am so proud of you!
 - Well done!
 - I like how you put the sticks / toys in that way.
 - You are beautiful/handsome.
 - You are intelligent/brave/creative.
 - You are kind and thoughtful.
 - Thank you for helping.
 - I believe in you.
 - You can do it!
 - I will always be there for you, no matter what.
 - You are special.
 - I'm glad that you are my son/daughter.
 - I appreciate you so much.
 - The day you were born was one of the best days of my life.

F. Homework

1. **Ask** the father to do an assignment between now and the next home visit.
 - Practice doing four things:
 1. Being a **teacher**. Teach your child something, no matter how small.
 2. Being a **designer**. Assess the areas where his child lives and plays. See if there is anything you can do to make it safer for your children and more enjoyable for them to explore.
 3. Being a **gardener**. Give words of praise to your child.
 4. Being a **disciplinarian**. Use a positive discipline technique.

G. Wrap-up

1. **Ask** the father how he feels about these tips and tricks to being a father.
2. **Agree** on a time for the 3rd home visit in the next month.
3. **Inform** the father of the plan for the group discussion with other fathers and mentors.
4. **Congratulate** the father for his good work today!

Group Meeting #2: Tips and Tricks

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Introduction

1. **Welcome** the fathers to the second group meeting.
2. Conduct an icebreaker.
3. **Introduce** the meeting by saying something like:
 - Being a father is one of the most difficult, but rewarding, roles in life. Although it is a difficult job, there are things we can do that make it easier. Know that there is no perfect father. You and your child will make mistakes—and learn from them—every day.
 - During our home visits, fathers learned about parents' four roles: teacher, designer, gardener, and disciplinarian.
 - We learned about ways we can communicate with young children and discipline young children peacefully and effectively. These methods may not be easy to maintain, and fathers may feel pressure from others to resort to old ways.
 - This group of fathers can support and encourage each other to try new, positive ways to keep their family healthy and strong.

B. Group Exercise

1. Put three sticks, rocks, or marks on the ground for three answers: "Agree", "Disagree", and "Don't know".

2. Explain:

- I will read some statements. After each statement, move to a location to show that they "Agree", "Disagree", or "Don't know". After moving, I will ask a few of you to share your views.
- If during the discussion, you would like to change places, you are welcome to do so.

Statements

1. Children learn best from being hit.
2. Young children who cannot talk yet benefit when their parents talk with them.
3. Children who are not hit will be spoiled or hopeless.
4. Teaching a child is the best gift a father can give.
5. Children will not remember later if they are hit when young.
6. My friends will laugh if I play with my young child.
7. Parents have a responsibility in preventing accidents from happening in the first place.
8. Girls and boys need the same kind of affection from their fathers.
9. A child as young as one is learning how to think and solve problems.

C. Discussion

1. Ask the group:

- Have you ever felt like other people have judged you as a father?
- Who judged you? What did they say?
- Have you ever felt like other people have admired you as a father?
- Who admired you? What did they say?
- Why would they admire the way you interact with your child?

2. **Explain:**

- All men want to be the best father they can be. Your friends will learn from you what it means to be a REAL father. You are an important role model.
- Your neighbors will see how your children respect and love you because of your caring actions.
- Other fathers will admire how you have managed to be happy in your home and want to have the same thing.
- Being a REAL Father is a way of earning respect from everyone around you.

D. Community Poster Discussion

1. **Show** the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?

	<p>My dad is a REAL father!</p> <p>A child says:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• My father plays with me.• My father teaches me.• My father knows me.• My father comforts me.• My father loves and works hard for me.
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E. Group Commitment

1. **Ask** the group about what actions they will commit to with the questions below.
 - What will you do that will lead you to be more involved in caring for your child?
 - What will you do to be a teacher to your child? What about a designer? What about a gardener?
 - What will you do to be a positive and loving disciplinarian? What will you do to have a firm, but peaceful, reaction if the child does something wrong?
 - What will you do to communicate regularly with your child?
 - What will you do to support each other in all of these roles?
2. Ask the group to decide together one new behavior they will all commit to trying this month.
3. **Make** a group sign of commitment, such as hands together in a circle, or a special handshake. One person may write it down.
4. **Summarize** the commitment.
5. **Congratulate** the fathers for their good work today!

THEME 3: Family Dreams

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers will be able to:

1. Explain how alcohol abuse would be an obstacle to achieving their goals.
2. Describe three ways to manage the pressures that lead to alcohol abuse.

Home Visit #3: Family Dreams

Preparation

1. Review the plan in advance.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the father.
2. **Ask** the father if he tried the homework—to practice being a teacher, designer, gardener, and disciplinarian. If he tried, ask how it went and discuss any challenges. If he did not try, encourage the father to do it this week.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. Introduce Home Visit #3 by **saying** something like:
 - As fathers and men, we face many pressures. One of the ways that men relieve the pressures they feel is sometimes to spend time with other men and drinking alcohol. Drinking alcohol can be a good way to enjoy time with friends. But drinking too much and getting drunk causes problems.
 - Men can feel pressure build up and sometimes not know how to deal with the stress and emotions that come with this pressure. Sometimes the pressure is so great they feel like they are going to “explode.” This is a terrible feeling.
 - Today, we will reflect on alcohol abuse and learn ways to manage stress and pressure in a healthy way.

C. Spinning

1. **Ask:**

- What kind of father do you want to be, and what do you want to achieve for your children, wife, and family?

2. Pick a point across the compound 3 to 5 meters away. Use a stick to draw a straight line in the dirt. Explain that the line's endpoint represents his goal for his family and all of his hopes and dreams for the family. The line represents life's journey while trying to achieve these goals.

3. **Instruct** the father to spin around quickly two times and then walk on a straight line toward the point, trying not to step off of the line.

4. Next, **instruct** the father to close his eyes and spin around quickly five times and then walk in a straight line toward the endpoint, trying not to fall off of the line.

5. **Ask** and then **explain:**

- How did that feel?
- Each time you spin, imagine it was like having another round of beer.

6. **Ask** and then **explain:**

- How do you think drinking too much alcohol, like the second time, affects your ability to reach your goal for your family?
- Even if you do not get drunk, you may have friends who do or feel pressure in the future to do this.

7. **Ask:**

- What do you think a child sees, learns, and feels when they see you drunk?
- How do you think drinking too much affects a father's ability to be a teacher? Designer? Gardener? Disciplinarian?
- Besides drinking too much, what other situations may derail you from achieving your goal for your family?
- How could you be prepared for these challenges?

D. Managing Pressure

1. **Explain:**

- At times everyone feels pressure. As men and fathers, we are expected to do many things and provide for the family without talking about the pressure we feel or showing our stress. As a result, the pressure we feel may build up and then come out in ways we don't want, such as drinking too much, being aggressive, using physical or emotional violence, and even hurting ourselves physically.

2. **Ask** the father:

- Do you find it easy to be a father?
- Do you feel any pressure?
- Where does this pressure come from?
- Does the pressure feel too strong sometimes?
- How does having too much pressure feel like?
- What do you do to handle the pressure?

3. **Explain:**

- There are different ways we can manage the pressure and stress that are unhealthy. For example, we can play sports or take a walk.
- Playing games with your child can also be a way to feel better. When a child has fun and laughs, it's hard not to have fun and laugh as well. Remember that play is often an opportunity to teach your child. It supports them in all the ways they develop: movement, thinking and problem solving, relating to others, and communicating.
- Some men may talk to a friend, laugh with friends or family members, read or write stories, or listen to music. Others fix something around the home. It depends on what you like. What is important is to recognize when you feel too much pressure and decide how to manage it in a good way for you and your family.

E. Homework

1. **Ask** the father to do an assignment between now and the next home visit.
 - Prepare what to say to friends to reduce alcohol intake
 - Practice healthy ways to manage pressure.

F. Wrap-up

1. **Ask** the father how he feels about this discussion and if he has any questions.
2. **Agree** on a time for the 4th home visit in the next month.
3. **Inform** the father of the plan for the group discussion with other fathers and mentors.
4. **Congratulate** the father for his good work today!

Group Meeting #3: Family Dreams

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Introduction

1. **Welcome** the fathers to the meeting.
2. Conduct an icebreaker.
3. **Introduce** the session by saying something like:
 - Many men feel stress because of the pressure they feel to provide for their families. Some are not even aware that they feel this pressure, and then little annoyances can lead till reacting more strongly than usual. Or they may treat others in disrespectful or unkind ways. We cannot control the feelings we experience, but we can control how we express our feelings.
 - Today, we will discuss ways to avoid drinking too much alcohol and using violence by recognizing feelings and learning how to express feelings in a healthy way.

B. Discussion

1. **Ask** each father to close his eyes and listen as you ask questions and think of their answers. Read one question at a time and give fathers time to think about a response before reading the next question.
 - Think of a recent situation when you were angry.
 - What were you thinking and feeling during this situation?

- Try to remember what you were feeling in your body? Where in your body did you feel your anger?

2. Explain:

- When we feel angry, men often react immediately by shouting, throwing something, or hitting. Sometimes we can be silent and sad. We hold our anger inside. Usually, these reactions can cause hurt to others and ourselves.
- We might react differently if we had time to stop and think first about the situation.

3. Ask participants to sit in pairs and take 15-20 minutes to discuss the four questions below. Afterward, **invite** a few pairs to share their answers

- What are some consequences when a father reacts immediately with violence?
- How do you think experiencing or witnessing violence affects a child?
- Is a father still respected if he does not react immediately with violence?
- What else could a father do when he is angry?

4. Then **ask** them to turn to their partner again and take about 30 minutes to share their answers to the sentence stems below. Afterward, **invite** a few fathers to share what they discussed, especially what they can do to help each other (last sentence stem).

- I feel pressure because _____
- When I feel too much pressure, I _____
- To feel better about pressure, I _____
- If I feel myself wanting to use violence, I _____
- I can support friends who feel too much pressure by _____

5. Explain:

- All feelings are OK. Feelings are neither good nor bad. It is the way that we show and handle our feelings that can cause problems.
- Many boys are taught that they have to be "tough" all the time and never show their feelings. If they do, they are considered "weak." When we feel sad, we are encouraged not to talk about it. This is also considered "weak." These are made up ideas. Feelings are a natural part of being a human being—they do not mean you are weak.
- Also, as men, we are expected to show our strength through physical reactions. By not talking, the feelings often build up until they are expressed through shouting, violence, or drinking too much alcohol.
- As a consequence, men's relationships with their families suffer. In addition, research shows that men who hold in their anger and don't release the pressure they feel suffer more from physical and mental health problems.
- All of this can negatively affect our children, our families, and ourselves. When we express ourselves and manage pressures using healthy techniques such as being physically active, talking, praying, writing, or playing with our children, we can be REAL fathers who stop and think about our feelings and then react. When we take time to stop and think, we are less likely to react violently.
- As fathers, we need to support each other to have the courage and strength to try new ways of coping with and expressing anger (or frustration, fear, disappointment, shame, etc.)

C. Community Poster Discussion

1. **Show** the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?



My friend is a REAL father!

A friend says:

- He drinks responsibly.
- He does not drink to the point where he cannot control himself.
- He loves his children, and his children love and respect him.
- He is a good teacher and role model to his children. He helps them learn how to deal with their feelings when they are sad, frustrated, or angry.
- He teaches his children alternatives to hitting, insulting, or yelling at others.

D. Group Commitment

1. Ask:

- What will you do to drink responsibly and manage pressures?
- What will you do to support each other to:
 - Relieve stress in active and healthy ways?
 - Achieve your life goals?
 - Drink responsibly?
 - Be good role models to your children?
 - Continue making changes to be REAL fathers?

2. **Ask** the group to decide together one new behavior they will all commit to trying this month.

3. Make a group sign of commitment, such as hands together in a circle, or a special handshake. One person may write down the commitments stated.

4. **Summarize** the commitment.

5. **Congratulate** the fathers for their good work today!

THEME 4: Loving My Family

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers will be able to:

1. Describe three actions they will take to build and maintain a mutually respectful relationship with their wife.

Home Visit #4: Loving My Family

Preparation

1. Review the plan in advance.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the father.
2. **Ask** the father if he tried homework to speak up to friends to reduce alcohol intake and practice managing pressure. If he tried, ask how it went and discuss any challenges. If he did not try, encourage the father to do it this week.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. Introduce Home Visit #4 by **saying** something like:
 - Husbands and wives are the central pillars of the family. It is not always easy, but it is important to put in the effort as a couple to understand each other and build a strong relationship and family.
 - You, as the husband, can set the tone for the relationship. Being loving and understanding can help your wife to act this way too. In the same way, reacting negatively or violently without asking questions or listening can set a negative tone for the whole household. I
 - Research shows that children who witness violence in the home do less well in school and are more likely to have health problems compared to children who do not see violence in the home.
 - Today, we will discuss some challenges in maintaining a harmonious relationship and skills that you can try.

C. Discussion

1. **Explain:**

- In traditional African culture, wives do caring things for the husband, such as foot rubs at the end of a long day. Continued courtship helps keep the relationship strong so that discussions can go smoothly and address problems or conflicts.

2. **Ask** and then **explain:**

- What can you do to show care and love to your wife? (Discuss any concerns he may anticipate (e.g., feeling shy, never done so before, being teased by others.)
- Some young fathers express fear that being kind allows their wives to overpower them. Do you think this is true?
- Being caring is part of setting a tone for the relationship and household. It is not about who makes decisions. It is about making the home a happy place through small actions to each other, which make you both happy and make your child happy.

D. Exercise

1. **Explain:**

- Some young fathers have expressed fear that being too nice will allow their wives to overpower them, but being too tough will cause them to mistrust them or even leave. This is difficult, especially if the husband and wife are not talking with each other.
- Balancing the power should be our goal. This balance leads to trust, harmony, and productive families.

2. **Hold** two jerry cans equally full of water and stand on one foot and then **ask:**

- Do you feel balanced?
- (Next, dump out half of the water from one of the jerry cans only and stand on one foot.)
- How does this feel different?

3. **Explain:**

- Power and respect are like this. If the couple equally respects each other and has the same amount of power in the relationship, the family can move forward and develop in great ways. There is more support, and the family is stronger and more secure.

E. Practice

1. **Explain:**

- All couples experience times when they disagree about something. This is normal.
- How couples resolve conflicts is important. Fighting, fleeing (avoiding), or freezing (being silent) are not effective. Conflicts and disagreements can be solved while still showing respect to each other.
- To do this: 1) focus on the issue at hand, 2) discuss possible solutions together, and 3) make a decision based on the solution that is mutually agreeable and benefits both the husband and wife. It may not be perfect for either person, but it should benefit both. This is called 'win-win'.
- Then, forgive, forget, and move forward. This is how your relationship will improve over time.

2. **Read** the scenario below.

Scenario

In one home, the husband wants to save his money for a bicycle so that he can get to the market earlier in the day. The wife understands the importance of saving, but wants to buy new school uniforms for the children.

3. **Ask** and then **explain:**

- What would be the consequence if the husband uses all his power and decides to buy the bicycle on his own?

- How can a husband and wife work together to come to a "win-win" solution?
- It is also good for a child when a father maintains a harmonious relationship with the child's mother. This is a model for the child and their future relationships. Observing their father and mother respecting each other also gives the child a stable foundation and helps them feel secure.
- When parents model treating each other with respect, it also helps their child in their development. They learn how to relate with others, manage feelings, and communicate in healthy ways.

F. Homework

1. **Ask** the father to do an assignment between now and the next home visit.
 - Practice: 1) showing love and respect for your wife, and 2) discuss family issues with his wife and make a decision together.

G. Wrap-up

1. **Ask** the father how he feels after the discussion and if he has any questions.
2. **Agree** on a time for the 5th home visit in the next month.
3. **Inform** the father of the plan for the group discussion with other fathers and mentors.
4. **Congratulate** the father for his good work today!

Group Meeting #4: Loving My Family

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Introduction

1. **Welcome** the fathers to the meeting.
2. Conduct an icebreaker.
3. **Say** something like:
 - It is never justified to use violence in your household. Some men will say it's "natural" for men to use violence; it's something they cannot control. This is false. Others will say that they were provoked to be violent. This is also false. Violence is a choice. There is always an alternative to using violence, except in some cases of self-defense.
 - Communicating is the key to a more peaceful home. Understanding when we are upset and what we can do when we are upset will help us avoid violence in the heat of the moment.
 - We may not have learned to do this so well because we weren't taught how or because it wasn't modeled for us. We are going to learn more about how to communicate well today. And we hope that you teach your child how to communicate well so they will have this important skill later in life.

B. Group Exercise

1. Put three sticks, rocks, or marks on the ground for three answers: "Agree", "Disagree", "Don't know".
2. Give instructions for the activity by **saying** something like:

- I am going to read some statements aloud.
- After each statement, move to a location to show that you "Agree", "Disagree" or "Don't know".
- After moving, I will ask a few fathers in each section to share their views.

Statements

1. Using violence to maintain power over a wife is fair.
2. Violence in the household is misuse of one's power.
3. Violence is the only way to keep my status in the family.
4. I have no choice but to use violence when my wife does not greet me nicely.
5. If I treat my wife nicely, she will overpower me.
6. Violence is not the only way to maintain status as the head of the family.
7. Violence in the household leads to fear, and a weaker relationship.
8. Children who see violence at home can fear their parent and work hard only when the parent is there.
9. Children who see violence are more likely to be violent themselves.
10. When children see violence in their family, they are more likely to feel stress, feel depressed, and not do as well in school.

C. Community Poster Discussion

1. **Show** the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?



I am a REAL father!

A young father says:

- I have the courage to try new things and become a responsible father and husband.
- I am strong enough and confident enough to share power in the home with my wife.
- I know that working together with my wife benefits our family.
- I know that supporting my wife benefits our family, and me.
- I can express my feelings in a constructive way.
- I respect my wife and she respects me.

D. Group Commitment

1. **Ask:**

- What will you do to show respect and care to your wife?
- How will you support each other to continue having the courage to trying new things and ways of being a father and husband?

2. **Ask** the group to decide together one new behavior they will all commit to trying this month.

3. Make a group sign of commitment, such as hands together in a circle, or a special handshake. One person may write down the commitments stated.

4. **Summarize** the commitment.

5. **Congratulate** the fathers for their good work today!

THEME 5: Communication

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers and their wives will be able to:

1. Use positive communication.

Home Visit #5: Communication

Preparation

1. Find a time when both the husband and wife will be available.
2. Review the plan in advance.

Time

60 to 90 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the father and his wife.
2. **Ask** the father if he tried homework to show love and respect to his wife. If he tried, ask how it went and what he will continue to do. If he did not try, encourage the father to try different ways this week.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. Introduce Home Visit #5 by **saying** something like:
 - Communication is very important. The way we communicate determines the way the other person responds and reacts. When we communicate carefully and politely and listen to each other, even if we are not in agreement with each and every point, it leads to understanding and a mutually agreed conclusion.
 - Communication is the key to a successful and harmonious relationship that can last over time. That is why we will focus on communication in our first of the three couple home visits.

C. Introductions with Spouse

1. **Ask** the husband to introduce his wife to you and state three positive characteristics about her. Then ask the wife to introduce her husband to you and state three positive characteristics about him.
2. **Ask** how it feels to have nice things said about them and how they can continue to do this on their own.

D. Blind Communication

1. **Explain** that the couple will practice communication by leading each other in a short exercise.
2. **Ask** one person to cover their eyes with a scarf or their hands. The other person directs them towards an object in their surroundings using only words. After this, they can switch roles. It is OK to touch/guide the blinded person during this exercise if you think they will trip or hurt themselves.
3. **Ask** the couple the questions listed below. Allow each of them to answer.
 - How did you feel about your partner's communication?
 - What did they say well?
 - What could have been better?
 - How can the lessons from this exercise be used in your daily life?
4. **Ask** the couple:
 - How would you compare good communication to bad communication within a couple's relationship? (Allow both to answer.)
 - What are some things a husband and wife should do to have good communication?
 - How do you think good communication between a mother and father helps their toddler develop?
5. **Add** the following tips if not mentioned by the couple:
 - Listen well.
 - Do not interrupt while your spouse is talking.
 - Remember that communication is also through what we do and how we react. When your spouse is talking, use open body language to show you are not defensive or angry.
 - Show respect and acknowledge what your spouse says, regardless of whether or not you agree.
 - If you need time to think or be quiet, explain this and agree to continue the discussion later.

- Find a mutually beneficial conclusion for both the husband and wife.

E. Yellow Card

1. **Ask** the couple:

- Do you know what a yellow card means in football? (A yellow card is what a referee gives a player for a foul.)

2. **Explain:**

- I am going to provide a yellow card to both of you. Either person can take out the yellow card when they feel there is a need to stop and talk, kind of like taking a time out or a warning...just like in football.
- For example, let's say a husband returns home late and expects food. You can take out a yellow card as a way to get you both talking about the situation.

3. **Introduce** the yellow card and dialogue cues on the reverse side:

- 1st: Explain: Share your feelings.
- 2nd: Ask: What is the situation and why?
- 3rd: Ask: What can we do to solve this together?

4. **Say** something like:

- Let's work through two pretend situations together to practice using the yellow card.

Example 1: Let's say that a wife comes home late from working in the field where the couple has maize. The husband is angry because dinner is not ready. The wife tries to explain why she is late but the husband pushes her against the wall and says that she is useless.

- I would like you (point to the wife) to use the yellow card now with your husband. This exercise is pretend. You are simply actors in a drama practicing the use of the yellow card.

5. Provide positive and constructive feedback as appropriate. Then **ask:**

- How do you think this situation could affect a child's development, especially when it comes to relationships, managing feelings, and communicating?

6. **Say** something like this:

- OK, let's try another example.

Example 2: Let's say that a husband consistently sees his wife leave knives on the table cooking. He worries because their 2-year-old child is always running around the kitchen. He has told her several times to be careful about where she leaves the knives. He tells her again and she ignores him at first. She then says, "if you are so concerned about the knives maybe you should do some of the cooking around here."

- I would like you (point to the husband) to use the yellow card now with your wife. Again, this is just pretend. You are simply actors in a drama practicing the use of the yellow card.

7. The mentor should provide positive and constructive feedback as appropriate. Then **ask**:

- How do you think fathers and mothers can fulfill their roles as designers in this situation?

8. Now **guide** the couple through the questions below.

- Where can you keep the yellow card so that both of you can easily find it?
- When might you use the yellow card?
- How can you agree to react if your spouse uses the yellow card?

9. **Say** something like:

- I would like you to promise that you will never use violence (physical or verbal) against the other if one of you takes out the yellow card. Both of you must have trust and not fear what happens if they talk about a situation or conflict.
- It is best not to use the yellow cards if one of them is drunk. Instead, wait until the following morning to use the yellow card and talk.

F. Homework

1. **Ask** the couple to do an assignment between now and the next home visit.

- Make relationship agreements and discuss issues before they become problems. Refer to resource sheets #1, #5, #8 and #9.
- Use the yellow card when there is a need to stop and talk.

G. Next Steps

1. **Ask** the couple how they feel after this discussion.
2. **Agree** on a time for the 6th and final home visit in the next month.
3. **Inform** the father of the plan for the father's group.

Group Meeting #5: Communication

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.
2. Prepare the space and materials needed for a Wang-oo.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Introduction

1. **Welcome** the fathers to the meeting.
2. **Conduct an icebreaker.**
3. **Introduce** the meeting by saying something like:
 - This group discussion is an opportunity for young fathers to share their experiences to date with the REAL Father program, resolve any questions or concerns, and encourage each other to continue making changes.

B. Wang-oo Discussion

1. **Ask:**
 - Who would like to share some of your experiences as a father and husband since the program has started?
 - What changes have you made?
 - What challenges have you faced?
 - What solutions have you discovered to the challenges?
 - Have you noticed any positive changes in your relationship with your wife? What about your relationship with your children?

C. Distribution of Reminder Gifts

1. **Say** something like:
 - Congratulations on taking important steps for your children, your relationship with your wife, your families, and yourself.
 - It takes courage to make changes, and you have demonstrated your commitment to being a loving and caring father and husband.
 - Sometimes maintaining change over time is a challenge. Also, your children are growing up, and they will face new and different challenges as a father every day.
 - This reminder gift is intended to help you remember the skills you have learned and practiced. Each time you see it, you can feel proud of what you have done and the father you are becoming.
2. **Ask:**
 - How can you support each other to maintain changes and continue to develop positive fatherhood and relationship skills?

D. Community Poster Discussion

1. **Show** the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?



My husband is a REAL father!

A young wife says:

- He respects me and I respect him.
- He spends time with me and the children.
- He shows care for me and the children.
- He discusses important issues with me.
- He is the best husband!
- He talks with me about our issues before they become problems.
- He uses soft words instead of violence with me.
- We parent together and our child is growing and developing fast.
- We work as a team to have a peaceful home and family.

E. Commitment

1. **Ask:**

- What specifically will you do to improve communication and peaceful reactions with wives? When will you do it?
- What will you do to support each other to improve communication and peaceful reactions with wives?

2. Ask the group to decide together one new behavior they will all commit to trying this month.

3. Make a group sign of commitment, such as hands together in a circle, or a special handshake. One person may write down the commitments stated.

4. **Summarize** the commitment.

5. **Congratulate** the fathers for their good work today!

THEME 6: Parenting

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers and their wives will be able to:

1. Describe their parenting goals, styles, and commitments.

Home Visit #6: Parenting

Preparation

1. Review the plan in advance.

Time

60 to 90 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the couple.
2. **Ask** the couple if they tried their homework—to make relationship agreements and use the yellow card to stop heated moments and discuss.

If they tried, ask how it went and what they will continue to do. If they did not try the assignment, encourage the couple to do it this week and report back to you.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. **Introduce** Home Visit #6 by saying something like:
 - Mothers and fathers are both important as partners. Both can provide care, but each brings different perspectives and skills to raising a child. Each can teach the child special things.
 - Mothers and fathers need to pay attention to their child's development. They know that their growth doesn't just happen without help. Parents play a crucial role in ensuring that their children: 1) grow and learn to move safely in the world, 2) think and problem solve, 3) relate in healthy ways to others and manage their feelings, and 4) communicate well.
 - A mother and father who raise the child together – parent together – do the best. When they work together, agree on parenting rules, and act consistently, they create a stable and secure environment for the child. When they work together to fulfill their roles as

teachers, designers, gardeners, and disciplinarians, their child thrives.

C. Radio Interviews

1. Introduce the activity by **saying** something like:
 - Before agreeing on parenting rules for the family, it is important to know each other well, including your hopes and expectations.
 - I am going to ask you to interview each other. I am going to read you six questions that you will use for the interview (see questions below).
 - One of you will start by pretending to be a radio presenter who conducts an interview with a spouse. After some minutes, I will ask you to switch roles. (Ask the couple if they have any questions about the exercise.)

Radio Program Interview Questions

1. What do you want for your child in the future?
2. What would you like your child to say about you in the future?
3. How many children do you want to have?
4. What kind of spouse do you want to be?
5. What is your spouse's best characteristic?
6. How do you think that characteristics can be transferred to your child?

2. After the interviews, **ask**:
 - Did you hear any points of similarity or difference while the interviews were taking place? What were they?
3. Encourage the couple by **saying** something like:
 - I'd like you to discuss differences together to find a joint agreement later.
 - Continue asking each other questions and learning about each other.

D. Parenting Commitment

1. **Introduce** the idea of parenting commitments by saying something like:
 - This is a way of confirming the intention to be an involved and committed parent to the child. It can also help to clarify how the two parents agree to work together.
 - For example, some parents agree that:
 - They will set certain rules for the child.
 - When one is having a hard time, the other parent will support.
 - They will listen to the child and respect the child's ideas.
 - Dedicate some time to play or spend time with their children during the week.
 - They will not hit their children.
2. **Ask** the couple to discuss and propose three ways that they want to parent and three rules for the children they agree upon.

E. Homework

1. **Ask** the couple to continue working together to complete their parenting commitment after more discussions together. Explain that they may need to adjust as the child grows up.

F. Next Steps

1. **Ask** if the couple feels about these new methods and if they have any questions.
2. **Congratulate** the couple for working together to have a strong relationship and be caring and committed parents.
3. **Inform** the couple of the next activity, which will be a meeting with young fathers and their wives prior to a community ceremony for the fathers.

Group Meeting #6: Parenting

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.
2. Invite the young fathers and their wives.

Time

60 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Introduction

1. **Welcome** the couples to the meeting.
2. Conduct an icebreaker.
3. **Introduce** the meeting by saying something like:
 - This group discussion is an opportunity to prepare for the community ceremony for young fathers.

B. Discussion

1. **Ask** young fathers and their wives (together or in separate groups):
 - Share what it means to be a REAL father now that you have completed the program?
2. Explain the closing ceremony by **saying** something like:
 - Soon, there will be a ceremony to explain what it means to be a REAL Father and share your program experiences with the community. Elders, leaders, and families will be invited.
 - At that time, you can share your views and experiences related to what you have learned, how you have changed, and what you

commit to continue doing. This will be in the form of making a pledge on the community message board. This will be voluntary; only fathers who wish to speak up should do so.

- Wives can also share their experiences if they want to do so.
- We are holding this ceremony because it is good for the community to learn how much you have learned so that they respect you as fathers and couples and give you needed support. It can also help other fathers who have not yet participated in learning how to be REAL fathers.
- Everyone who has taken steps to be involved parents will be congratulated.
- None of us is perfect; we all can improve. Even those of us who are not perfect can be role models for others and contribute to healthy and safe families and communities. We can also commit to doing new actions to improve our lives. We can all learn how to be good teachers, designers, gardeners, and disciplinarians to our children. Little by little, we become better and better at these roles. In fact, with practice, you will get to the point where you can teach other fathers to be REAL Fathers.

3. **Ask:**

- What ideas do you have about how to plan the ceremony?
- Who else in the community should we invite?
- How can we involve our children in the ceremony?
- Are there any special guests that you want to recognize for being loving and caring husbands and fathers?

C. Community Poster

1. **Show** the group the poster that will be placed in the community this month (see below).
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?

REAL fathers bring our community hope.

- A REAL father teaches his children by sharing information, showing them how to do new things, and modeling good character.
- A REAL father designs safe places for his toddlers to play and learn.
- A REAL father cares for children, gives them affection and encourages them.
- A REAL father shares and listens to his wife and children.
- A REAL father spends time with his wife and children.
- A REAL father disciplines with love.
- A REAL father continues to learn and get better.
- A REAL father is loved and admired.



THEME 7: Family Planning

Purpose

By the end of this home visit and group meeting, young fathers and their wives will be able to:

1. Decide on healthy timing and spacing of their pregnancies.
2. Agree on fertility goals and actions they will take to fulfill their desires.

Home Visit # 7: Family Planning

Preparation

1. Review the plan in advance.

Materials

1. Maize kernels

Time

60 to 90 minutes

Procedure

A. Welcome and Homework Review

1. **Exchange** greetings with the couple.
2. **Ask** the couple if they tried their homework to continue working together to develop their parenting commitment after more discussions together. If they did their homework, ask how the discussion went and what parenting commitments they made to each other.

If they did not try, encourage the couple not to be afraid to discuss the type of parenting behaviors they want to try with their children.

B. Introduction to the Home Visit

1. Introduce the topic of today's visit by **saying** something like:
 - Mothers and fathers typically want the same thing for their children— that they grow up healthy, happy, and strong. They want their children to thrive in all areas of their development, including: 1) how they grow and move, 2) think and problem solve, 3) relate to others, and 4) manage their feelings and communicate.
 - Both have ideas of what their future lives will look like. But sometimes, husbands and wives don't have time to share these visions with each other.

- A husband and wife have a better chance of making their family visions become a reality when they talk about: 1) the quality of life for all the family members, 2) when their next child should come, 3) ways to prevent pregnancies before they are ready for another child, and 4) decide together on the ideal family size.

C. Harvesting Maize

1. In earlier visits and group meetings, we talked about fathers (and mothers) being gardeners to their children. Gardeners know when to plant, how to plant, cultivate seeds, and take care of their plants. When they pay attention, take the time needed, they grow great crops with lots of fruit. Just like parents raising and caring for their children.
2. **Explain** that you are going to talk about growing strong and healthy maize and then relate growing maize to the growth of our own families.
3. **Tell** a story of two farmers living in the same village who both grow maize.

Story

Both farmers had the same number of seeds, which they just planted in their gardens. One farmer named Okello yielded big maize cobs and the other farmer, Komakech, grew maize with very thin plants with miserable maize cobs.

4. **Show** the couple the grains of maize you brought.
5. **Ask** the couple to take the grains of maize and make two rows of maize that are perfectly planted with the right amount of space between each grain. Then ask the couple to make two more rows of maize that are planted very close together.
6. **Discuss** these questions:
 - From the story, which farmer would they prefer to learn from?
 - How do the plants in the two gardens differ?
 - Why did the plants grow differently?
 - Based on how you just put the maize grains on the ground, how do you think they will grow?

- Will they grow differently?
- Will some of the maize be healthier and stronger than the others? Why?
- What will happen if maize is planted too early, before the rainy season or towards the end of the rainy season?
- What happens when the farmer plant too many seeds, and he simply does not have enough time, energy, or equipment to cultivate them?

7. **Explain:**

- When maize is planted too close together, it will not grow properly. The maize plants will compete for nutrients in the soil and won't be properly nourished. The maize will then not grow as tall, not be as strong, and not produce abundant cobs of maize. On the contrary, maize planted with proper spacing will grow tall, strong, and abundant.
- The timing of planting maize is also very important. Maize planted too early in the season before adequate rainfall will also not grow strong and healthy likewise, maize planted towards the end of the rainy season will not do well.
- What you were discussing was how to harvest strong and abundant maize. However, you want them to relate what they have learnt from growing maize to life in their families and how we space the births of our children.

8. Encourage the couple to make connections between the example of planting corn and family planning. **Ask** the couple:

- How is planting maize related to how we plan our families?
- Like the space between maize grains, why is the spacing between children important?
- Just like the timing of planting maize at the right time of the season is important, why is the timing of our first birth important?
- Why don't you want children close together or a lot of children?
- Who in your community can provide you factual information about child spacing?

9. **Say something like:**

- There are many reasons why couples do not use family planning methods to space their children, even though they know spacing children will help their children grow and develop healthy and strong

10. **Ask** the couple:

- Who makes decisions about planning our families?
- Who makes decisions about using family planning?
- What is the influence of our family and elders on your decision about when to have children?
- How could a husband and wife decide together if they want to use family planning?

11. **Explain:**

- There are family planning methods available to them at the health center and through the Village Health Teams. There are also private clinics, drug shops and pharmacies where family planning is available.
- I've heard from others using family planning, as well as from doctors, that they are very safe to use, and other people in their lives do not know they are using them.
- It is a decision that a husband and wife can make after sharing their vision of what kind of family to have and how to space children so they grow big and strong, like the maize planted by farmer Okello.

12. **Ask:**

- What would you like your child to say about you in the future?
- How many children do you want to have?
- What kind of spouse do you want to be?
- What is your spouse's best characteristic that you want your child to be as well?

D. Talk about the Community Poster

1. **Show** the group the poster.
2. **Ask** the group:
 - What do you see happening in this poster?
 - What do you think the poster is trying to communicate?
 - How do you feel when you look at the poster?



“My client is a REAL father!”

A health worker says:

- He learns about contraception.
- He talks to his wife about spacing pregnancies.
- He talks to his wife about family planning.

E. Homework

1. **Ask** the couple to:
 - Share with each other: 1) when they want their next child, and 2) how they will plan together so they do not get pregnant before the time they actually want another child.
 - Make a commitment to each other about how they will space and limit their pregnancies.
 - Find more information on family planning services in their community.
 - Make a commitment to use family planning as appropriate to their family plan.
2. Remind them to use the Yellow Card if they feel they are not being listened to.

F. Next Steps

1. **Ask** how they feel about talking about family planning together. How they feel about using modern methods to family planning.
2. **Congratulate** the couple for working together to have a strong relationship and planning when to have children and how to care for them together.
3. **Inform** the couple that the next activity will be a community ceremony for the fathers, but the whole family is invited.

Closing Ceremony

Preparation

1. Meet with the other mentors to review the session and divide responsibilities on how they will work together to conduct this discussion.
2. Plan a ceremony that is meaningful to your community. Request a community and/or traditional leader to lead the ceremony. Consider asking a music, dance, or drama troupe to perform. You may also want to request a leader to talk about positive fatherhood and sign the pledge board along with young fathers.
3. Prepare the pledge board and all supplies needed.
4. Be sure to invite wives and family members to the ceremony.

Introduction

The final group meeting is a community celebration of the young fathers. During the ceremony, the young fathers can make a public pledge and commitment to maintaining the changes they have adopted, and continue trying to be REAL fathers. It is an opportunity for the fathers to show the community what they have learned and be recognized by their families and community members for what they have changed.

Ceremony

1. **Reveal** the final community poster.

REAL fathers bring our community hope.

- A REAL father teaches his children by sharing information, showing them how to do new things, and modeling good character.
- A REAL father designs safe places for his toddlers to play and learn.
- A REAL father cares for children, gives them affection and encourages them.
- A REAL father shares and listens to his wife and children.
- A REAL father spends time with his wife and children.
- A REAL father disciplines with love.
- A REAL father continues to learn and get better.
- A REAL father is loved and admired.

REAL fathers, sign here:



2. **Explain** that at this time of the ceremony, we want to give some time to those who want to commit to becoming a REAL father: meaning, they will be engaged and loving with their children, AND also loving and respectful to their wives.
3. **Invite** young fathers to come up and **sign the pledge** board. Each young father can share their commitments with the community about what they will do differently or changes they have already made and will continue to do to keep their child and family healthy and in harmony.
4. Mentors and leaders can also **sign** the pledge board to continue to provide guidance to young fathers.
5. **Congratulate** the fathers and the community.
6. Also, **congratulate and recognize** yourselves as mentors!