

Caregiver skills training for families of children with developmental delays or disabilities

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Preface

This is the first part of the caregiver skills training package for families of children with developmental delays or disabilities. This five-part course package provides guidance – presented in text form as well as in a set of illustrated parenting strategies – to increase caregivers' ability to promote their children's development and well-being through play and home routines.

Caregivers play a key role in promoting nurturing environments. Psychosocial interventions and parent-mediated interventions can improve the developmental trajectories, functioning and quality of life for children with developmental disabilities. Yet most children with such conditions and their caregivers do not have access to such care.

The caregiver skills training package is designed to be delivered by trained non-specialists. The training adopts a family-centred approach to help care providers support caregivers in defining specific training goals for each family. The training package is for the caregivers of children aged 2–9 years with developmental delays or disabilities and aims to provide them with skills that they can use at home to improve their child's engagement in activities and communication, and to promote positive behaviour and skills for daily living. The course is designed to be integrated within a network of community-based health and social services for children with developmental disabilities and their families. It should be delivered as part of the “stepped care” approach to child health whereby the most effective, yet least resource-intensive, treatment is delivered before “stepping up” to more specialist services.

During field-testing the caregiver skills training package was found to support the feasibility, acceptability and relevance of this training package as an intervention for families while helping to improve the caregivers' parenting skills and supporting their well-being.

We hope that once this training package has been adapted to fit the local context in countries across the world, it will reach many more families and help caregivers and their children with developmental disabilities to enjoy optimal well-being, relationships and quality of life.

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Director

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