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## **Quarterly Bulletin of the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family**

June 2018, No. 106  
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### **Vienna NGO Committee on the Family**

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Dear Readers of Families International,

This 106<sup>th</sup> issue focuses, amongst others, on an International Forum, held on May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018, at the United Nations Vienna International Centre to observe the International Day of Families (IDF) 2018, with Dr. Wadih Maalouf, from the United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime (UNODC) dealing with 'Family Based Prevention in the Work of UNODC'. It includes texts provided by Dr. Maalouf emanating from the forum and relating to this theme.

Further included in this issue No. 106, is a background text from the United Nations on the IDF 2018, and texts from Member Organisations of the Committee, as well as a list of recent and upcoming events.

Data Protection is a theme of growing importance worldwide. Enclosed in this issue is a statement on Data Protection by the Vienna NGO Committee, which publishes this quarterly bulletin online.

Sincerely,

Peter Crowley Ph.D.

Editor

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*From the Vienna NGO Committee on the Family*



**VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY**



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**FULL COMMITTEE MEETING**

UNITED NATIONS  
VIENNA INTERNATIONAL CENTRE  
CONFERENCE ROOM CO234

**Monday May 7<sup>th</sup> 2018**

**INTERNATIONAL FORUM**  
to observe

**THE UNITED NATIONS  
INTERNATIONAL DAY OF FAMILIES 2018**

**FAMILY-BASED PREVENTION IN THE WORK  
of UNODC:**  
why it is important and what is our experience.

Wadih Maalouf  
United Nations Office on Drugs & Crime

13.00 – 15.00  
[Including Discussion with Presenter & Participants]

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Dr. Maria Riehl, Women's Federation for World Peace, Dr. Eleonora Teixeira Da  
Costa Rossoll, Federation of Catholic Family Associations



## VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY



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**Wadih Maalouf** holds a Doctoral Degree in Epidemiology specializing in Mental Health and Drug Addiction from Johns Hopkins School of Public Health. His dissertation thesis was on “The Role of Mother-Child Interaction in the Transmission of Marijuana Use from Mothers to their Children.” Since 2005 he has managed several projects within the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime (UNODC). Until 2010 he was based in the UNODC Regional Office for the Middle East and North Africa in Cairo as a advisor for the Arab countries region on assessment of the national and regional drug situation and the development of national strategies for reduction on demand for drugs. As of 2010, he resumed the post in the Drug Prevention and Health Branch of UNODC at the United Nations Headquarters in Vienna managing a global project on prevention where one of its main outputs is developing, adapting and piloting family skills programmes for the prevention of drug use, crime and violence. To date this output is active in 25 countries in 5 different geographical locations (South East Europe, Central and South America, East Africa and Central and West Asia).

**The presentation** discussed the science behind family-based prevention, showing its effectiveness in preventing a range of risky behaviours, including substance use disorders and violence. UNODC has been implementing evidence-based family skills training programmes in more than 20 countries in all continents. Results and lessons learned from this experience were shared with the participants, in an interactive discussion, as well as new developments, such as ‘Strong Families’ (a new programme developed by UNODC for families in low resource and/or humanitarian settings) and the campaign ‘Listen First’.

Dr. Wadih Maalouf, provided various relevant documents, with regard to the presentation, which are included in this issue of ‘Families International’ the quarterly bulletin published online by the Committee at: [www.viennafamilycommittee.org](http://www.viennafamilycommittee.org)

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# *Caring for Children through Conflict and Displacement*



Professor Rachel Calam  
Dr Aala El-Khani  
Dr Kim Cartwright

# *Looking after children who have experienced conflict and displacement*

Parents who have lived through war and conflict and who have been forced to leave their homes have told us how important their children are to them, and how concerned they have been about their children. The information here aims to help you by giving some ideas on how you can help yourself feel better, and how you can help your children.

Caring adults help to protect children in difficult times, especially when they are able to be warm, supportive, comforting and to help children make sense of frightening events. Family harmony helps to reduce children's anxieties while keeping children safe. Encouraging good behaviour in children helps children to cope as well as possible. It also makes it easier for parents to keep them safe.

We hope this information will be helpful for you in caring for yourself and the children in your care. We start by looking at what you might be experiencing, as we know that the ways that adults feel can affect the way that they care for children. Then we talk about ways of helping children.

If you find the ideas helpful and want to try them out, take it gently, step by step, and don't try to do everything at once. It may take a little while to work, but if you keep going then after a little while you should see changes.

## About you



### WHAT MIGHT YOU BE EXPERIENCING YOURSELF?

There are some very common reactions to conflict and having to move home.

- You may find that you become more easily upset or angry than you used to, and your mood may change suddenly. You may be especially anxious or nervous or feel depressed.
- You may have vivid memories of your experiences which come back over and over again. These memories, or flashbacks, can lead to reactions in your body such as rapid heartbeat or sweating.
- You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions, or become more easily confused. You may find that your sleeping and eating change. This can make you very tired.

All of these things are very common reactions in people who have had the experience of living through conflict.

### WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOURSELF?

- Remember that this is a challenging time, but one that you can work to manage. You have tackled other hardships at other times in your life.
- Recognise that you have strengths. Think about the skills and resources that you have personally and how you can use these to help yourself and your family.
- Allow yourself and your children to mourn any losses you have experienced. Try to be patient with changes in how you are feeling. These are a natural reaction to what you are going through.

- Try and keep hopeful and to take a positive outlook if you possibly can, even if it is only over small things day to day. This will help the children have hope for the future.
- Support each other and accept help from friends, relatives, community and religious leaders.
- Try to talk about your worries with adults that you trust, rather than talking to children about the things that are upsetting you.
- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- As much as you can, try to establish or re-establish routines, such as regular bed times.
- Try to keep yourself occupied with regular chores or with work or activities with others around you.
- Keep on with any religious and social activities you do, as these are likely to make you feel better.

Remember that looking after yourself will help make you stronger and more able to look after the people you need to care for.

## *About your child*

### **WHAT MIGHT YOUR CHILD BE EXPERIENCING?**

We know that there are many ways that children living through conflict and displacement show that they are stressed. How children react to stressful experiences can vary depending on a variety of things, for example their age, but here are some common ways children react:

- Physical complaints such as headache, stomach ache, fever, cough, lack of appetite.
- Being fearful and anxious.



- Difficulty sleeping, nightmares, night terrors, shouting or screaming.
- Children may go back to ways that they use to behave when they were younger, for example bedwetting, frequent crying, thumb-sucking, clinging to their parents or caregivers, being afraid to be left alone.
- Becoming unusually active or aggressive or, on the other hand, shy, quiet, withdrawn and sad.
- Difficulty concentrating.



It is important to remember that more than half of children show these sorts of reactions and behaviour changes after very frightening and distressing experiences. Parents sometimes blame themselves for changes in their children, but these are normal, very common reactions, and this is something that many families will be going through.

Caregivers say they are concerned about:

- Feeling unsure what to do
- Establishing or difficulty in maintaining routines
- Communicating with their children, and worries that their children are not listening to them

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## WHAT CAN YOU DO TO HELP YOUR CHILD?

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# *Safety*

- If you are living in a risky place, strive to keep your family together at all times.
  - Try hard not to be separated from your children for long periods of time.
  - Make sure your children know their name, where you are staying and how to get help if they are separated from you.
- 
- If you are going to collect food or other things for the family either keep your children close by at all times or leave them at home in the care of a responsible and trusted relative or adult.
  - If your child goes out to play make sure that they know that they must let you know where they are going, who they are going with and when they will be back.
  - If your children does go somewhere with you, plan ahead somewhere you can meet if you become separated. Ensure this is somewhere the child will know and feel comfortable.
  - If you are living somewhere that feels very risky, some families say it can be helpful to have a special word or phrase which the child can recognise which means that at that particular moment it is important for them to obey you straight away. For example, it may reduce risk in a dangerous situation, if your child understands that they must be silent when you use that special word. This could be any code word that you agree on. The important thing is that when the child hears the word they will try to do exactly what you want them to do. Practice using the word and praise your child when they do as you ask. You can practice this in a playful way like a game, so that it becomes automatic, but make sure that your child knows that when you use it at any other time it is real.

## *Providing warmth and support*

- Promise that you will do everything you can to care for and protect the child.
  - Try to be affectionate with the child often by for example, giving them hugs, kisses or holding their hand.
- 
- Try to tell them often that you care about them. Being caring and telling children that you love them will reassure them and help to make them more confident.



## *Giving praise* |

- One of the strongest ways of changing anyone's behaviour is by giving praise, showing that you have noticed what they are doing and that you like it. Noticing, warmth and praise helps to build good relationships with adults and with children. It also helps children to learn the behaviour that you want to see. Children are more likely to do things when they know they will be noticed and praised.
- Children usually love to be praised by people they care about. When you praise a child's behaviour you make them more likely to do the same thing again. If you praise a child for things that you want to encourage, it will increase the chances that they will behave in the way that you want to see them behave.
- If they do something and there is no praise, then they may be less likely to do that particular thing again.
- Look for opportunities to praise your child when they have done something good, however small it may seem. Something as simple as drawing smile helps to show that you are pleased with them.
- Make sure the child knows exactly what they are being praised for so that they learn what you want them to do. For example saying: "Thank you very much for picking those things up for me. You are a helpful boy" means that the child knows exactly what you are pleased with, and that you like his helpful behaviour.
- The child will learn best if the praise tells them exactly what you want them to do more of in the future. For example, "I'm so pleased to see you playing so kindly with your sister".
- Try to give your child very clear instructions. Clear information helps the child to understand exactly what it is that you want them to do. If instructions are given using positive rather than negative words so that the child knows just what they are supposed to do, it is much more likely that they will listen and do as they are asked. "Don't put that there" is negative wording and can sound as if you are annoyed. "Please put the cup on the table" is positive, and you can praise the child straight away by saying "thank you for putting the cup on the table" immediately if they do as they are asked.

- It can take time to get used to praising children often. For children who are not used to it, it can sometimes feel strange too, particularly at first. It's good to practice this on little things in life day-to-day to get used to it. Simply saying "I like it when you ..." or "thank you for..." can make children much more likely to do as you ask.



- There are lots of ways of showing that you are pleased with the child, for example a smile, a pat on the shoulder, a hug or kiss, or a special name "My Superman!" Keeping a chart that you can draw smiley faces on when your child behaves in a way that you want can really encourage them.

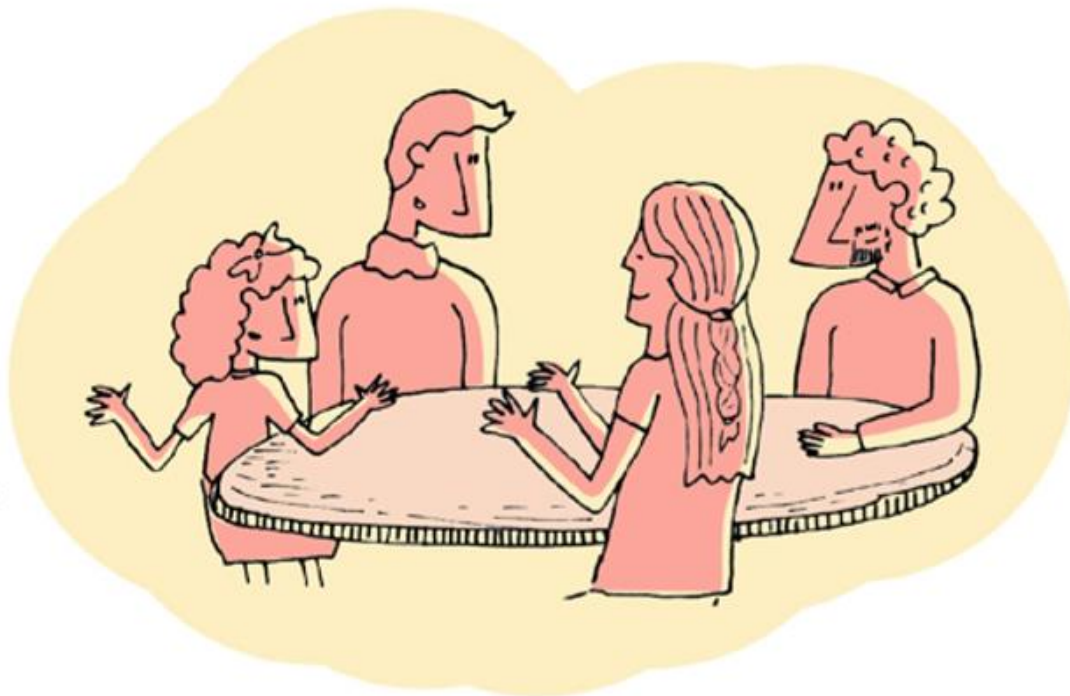
It may not work straight away. Give your child time to get used to it, and keep on trying.

Try to be patient with the child and not to criticise them for changes in their behaviour, such as clinging to you or frequently seeking comfort. The child is reacting to the stresses and changes that they have experienced and may still be going through. Being patient and praising them when they are behaving in ways that you want will help them feel more safe.

- Encourage the child to help you and other people, and praise and thank them when they do. Children are likely to cope better and recover sooner when they are able to help others. It makes them feel needed and important.
- Speaking clearly to your child and giving clear instructions without being angry is really important. By practising this calm, clear and positive way of speaking to the child, he or she will pay attention at times when it may be essential they really must follow an instruction.
- There may well be risks and dangers that you will be very worried about where you are living now. There will be times when it is very important that children do exactly as they are told. Making sure that your child is obedient to you and responds quickly to your instructions will help to keep them safe.

## *Spending time together and talking*

- It may be hard to find the time, but spending just a few minutes paying attention to the child whenever you can will help them to feel more confident and less anxious. Perhaps you can spend some time walking together or having a cuddle and a chat. This will make a difference to how you and your child feel. If you possibly can, make a little special time for each child.
- Sometimes, when no one seems to be listening to a child, the child may carry on trying harder and harder to get attention until someone will listen. For example, this may mean that they speak more loudly and perhaps shout for their caregiver's attention. The child learns that by making more and more noise, they eventually get the attention they want. By paying attention to what they want to show or tell you as soon as you can, you will help them to feel confident and to know that you want to listen to them as soon as you can.



- If they are wanting your attention but you can't give it straight away, make sure that the child knows that you will listen to them as soon as you can. This will also help them to be able to wait a little while for your attention. See if you can explain that you can't listen just now, and tell them when you will be able to give them your attention. This will make it more likely that they will talk to you when they need to.
- Sometimes, when no one seems to listen when the child wants to say something, they may just give up, and not try to communicate so much. It is important that children know that someone will listen to them. Try to make time to listen to them and to understand. Ask how they feel about their experiences and which experiences are most stressful and difficult to adjust to. You know the child best, and can guess at the best way to help them talk to you when they are going through very difficult times. Making sure that your child knows that you want to listen is very important for them.
- Do not promise children things you cannot provide. Children need to know that you are honest and that they can trust what you say.
- Be open and try to give children accurate information about what is happening. Remember though to keep information at a level that the child can understand, and try to explain in a way that will not increase their fears.
- If you need someone to talk to, look for another adult to share your feelings with so that you can stay as strong as possible for your children.
- Remember that they are children and try not to overload them with things you may be worried about, for example a missing family member. This may feel a big challenge but keeping this in mind might help you protect your children.

# Encouraging good behaviour

- We know that in addition to praise, attention and listening, there are a number of things that caregivers can do to help children to behave well.
- First of all it is very important to make sure that children know what the rules are. Sometimes children misbehave because they simply don't understand what it is that caregivers want them to do. There

will be all sorts of very practical things that you will want children to do, like speaking politely, being gentle with other children or keeping things tidy. You can help your child to learn by being really consistent in what you ask them to do and praise them for. Demonstrating the behaviours that you want to see through your own actions is extremely important. Children learn by watching the adults around them. Showing them the right way to behave will have a strong influence on them.

- Some caregivers who have lived through war and conflict and who have had to leave their homes to seek safety have told us that they are really concerned about children swearing and using bad words. So, a very straightforward rule for the child can be about how you expect them to speak to you and other people. It is important that you demonstrate this yourself so that they see the behaviour that is expected.
- Rules help to keep children safe and to behave well. Drawing a simple list of rules for the household can help the child to remember them. Positive wording is very important in making sure that the child knows what you want to see, for example, "speak politely", "be gentle" or "keep our home tidy". Image 10 Rules
- When you need to tell the child to stop doing something that you do not want them to do, make sure that you have the child's attention





# *Fears, anxieties and night disturbances*



These are very common reactions for children who have experienced conflict. Many children who have lived through conflict will be experiencing fears and anxieties. Using the positive approaches that we have described can help to make children feel more confident and reduce their fears. Warmth and praise, and providing as much safety and predictability as possible is very helpful for them.

- Fears and anxieties may lead to sleep difficulties such as nightmares and wetting their beds. Remember that it is difficult to control these and so it is important to take a gentle approach and not to make the child more anxious by showing that you find these night disturbances troublesome.
- If they are wetting their bed, check for any obvious changes that you can make. For example, are they afraid to get up in the night if they need to urinate? Think through the evening and night time routines for changes which might help. Make sure that they have enough to drink during the day, as this can affect the bladder. Restricting drinks during the day may actually make them more likely to wet the bed.

- Keeping a chart of dry nights and praising the child for these may help.
- Because of the situation, you may not be able to make promises for the future, but you can assure them that you will take the best possible care of them that you can and that you will do everything you can to keep them safe.
- If you have serious concerns, do try to see if you can find a doctor or specialist worker who can help.

and then tell them very simply what it is about their behaviour that you want them to stop, and what you want them to do instead. For example, you might say, "Stop shouting and speak in a quiet voice"

- If the child stops what they are doing, thank them using a clear and straightforward comment such as "thank you for speaking quietly when I asked you to."



## *Fighting and aggression*

One of the common changes that parents notice in times of conflict and change can be an increase in fighting and aggressive play and behaviour. This is a reaction to the changes that the child has been through, and what they may have seen, but is upsetting and worrying for parents. The place that you are living, and experiences that the child has had, can affect the way that they behave. Experiencing

or seeing violence may make children more likely to show these sorts of behaviours themselves. Sometimes something may remind them of something that has upset them, and this may cause them to show aggressive behaviour. They may re-play aggression that they have seen.



- A good way of preventing fighting and aggression in the household is to have clear rules about what is and is not allowed. Writing these rules down, and discussing them with children is a good way of showing what the rules are. Saying what you want your child to do is very important. For example, rather

than saying “no fighting” you could say something like “keep your hands and feet to yourself” or, instead of saying “no shouting” this can be positively worded as “speak in a quiet voice”. Keeping to these positive rules very carefully, and praising children for doing as they are told to do, helps children to learn how you expect them to behave.

- When children are fighting, the first priority is to ensure the safety of the children. If children in your care are fighting, tell them firmly to stop immediately, and then tell them clearly what they should be doing instead.
- If there is a fight between a child in your care and someone else’s child, you will need to step in and protect your child. Then, you will need to consider speaking to the other parent about how to manage the children. Your child needs your protection, but you should not allow them to harm other children and they need to have clear limits for their behaviour.
- It is very important for caregivers to be fair in the way that they use these approaches to address aggression between children. With older children, finding a time later on when you are both calm to discuss the fighting can be helpful. Understanding the reasons that they got into the fight should help to enable the caregiver to give appropriate advice.
- Explaining your beliefs and what you value as important while your child is calm will help to build their understanding of appropriate ways to behave and react. Identifying risks in the broader environment and supervising play as closely as possible, perhaps by agreeing to share this with other families, can also help to reduce the risk of harmful activity.

## *Maintaining routines*

When you have had to move, it can be difficult to keep routines going. When you have a large family this may be even more true. However difficult life is at the moment, routines can be helpful. They can help to give you all structure in life. This sense of knowing what is going to happen can help children to feel more safe.

- Try to keep to some everyday routine as much as you can.
- For example if you are able to keep to a plan when it is time to go to bed, this can help children sleep better. Plan the time each evening when you would like your child to go to bed. Think about what you can do, as far as is possible, to make the same things happen each evening in a particular order so that your child has settled down and is ready to sleep. For example taking time to sit together, telling stories or singing songs can be a good way to do this.
- Encourage children to do school work (reading, maths, writing), even if there are no regular schools at the moment. This will help them to learn, and give hope for the future. Perhaps you could look at families around you to see if they could help with this.



# *Encouraging play*

Play is important in helping children relax. It is also an opportunity for them to work through past and current stress and experiences and to prepare for the future. Encourage the child to play with you, their siblings or other children. It helps maintain some normality in their lives.

- You can help your child's development by finding moments to play with them. Just finding a few minutes to play, or for older children, to talk with them, also helps to build your relationship. When you play with the child, try to watch what they are doing and show an interest, rather than trying to tell them what to do. The child will appreciate it if they can tell you what to do for a change! Let them guide you on how you can help them in their play. Tell them what you like about the way they are playing. For example, you could say "I like the picture you're drawing. Tell me about it".
- Parents have told us about their concerns about changes in their children's play. This may be through acting out violence or scenes that they have seen or heard about. If you are concerned about this, try to find alternative activities that you can suggest and attract them to take part in. Teaming up with other parents can be helpful in this.
- It is normal for teenagers to want some time away from you. Knowing who they are with, what they are doing and when they will be back is an important part of keeping them safe. Talk to your children about this and try to reach an agreement.



## *Relaxation techniques*

It is important that you spend time doing things that help you feel relaxed. To be able to care for your children appropriately, you must also spend time caring for yourself. For some people this could be by maintaining religious and social activities, for others it may be spending time alone reading or walking.

The way you breathe affects your whole body, yet when you are worried and anxious your body may become tense and your breathing may speed up. You can use breathing techniques to help you to calm down when you are feeling stressed or worried. Full, deep breathing is a good way to reduce tension, feel relaxed, and reduce stress.

To practice deep breathing you could try the following:

- Start by dropping your hands below your waist, and keeping your palms facing up. Slowly raise your hands as you breathe in through your nose. Stop when your hands are about shoulder level. Slowly lower your hands as you breathe out through your mouth.
- The key thing you should aim for is to breathe deeply from your abdomen.
- Try practicing this for two to three minutes. The slower you do this and the more attention you pay to taking deep breathes, the more relaxed you should feel.

Your children can also greatly benefit from learning these breathing techniques and using them when they too feel stressed or anxious. You may like to try teaching them and practicing deep breathing together.

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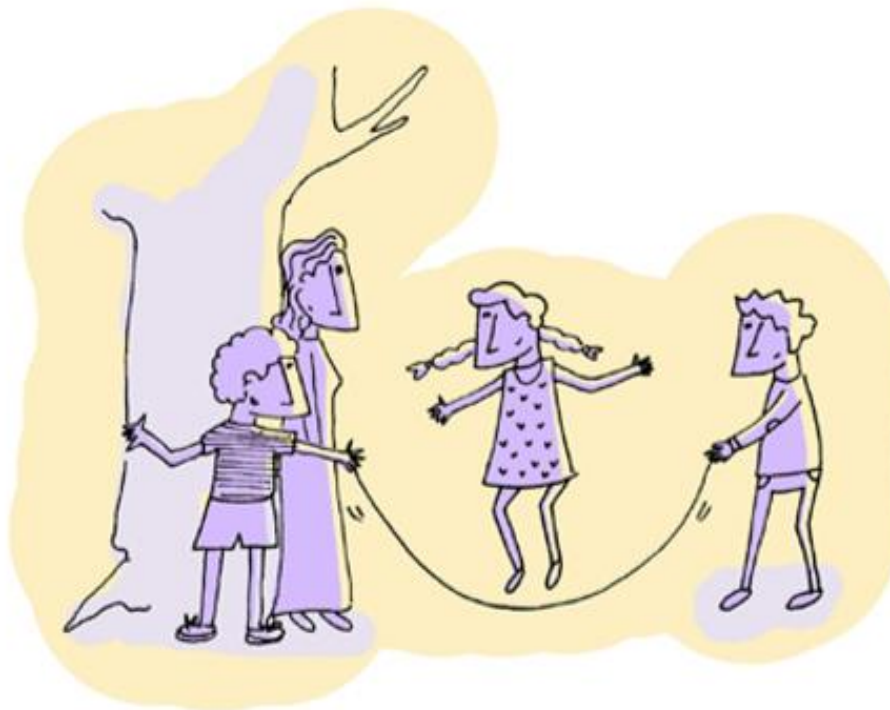
## WE HOPE YOU FIND THESE IDEAS HELPFUL

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Parents have told us that conflict, displacement and living in areas of low resources makes everything harder. Acknowledging to yourself that you are in difficult times can perhaps help you to find the moments when you are able to act on these tips.

Remember that fears, anxieties and sadness are a completely natural reaction to the experiences that you and the children have been through, and may still be going through. These reflect stress as a result of the conflict, and the losses that have been experienced. So far as is possible, trying to reduce stress by helping children feel loved and cared for, listening to their concerns, keeping up routines and trying to build in enjoyable activities are very important things that you can do.

Many families are living through these hard times and working together can make you stronger. Trying to stay positive can help, and give hope for the future.





*This booklet has been developed by Professor Rachel Calam, Dr Aala El-Khani and Dr Kim Cartwright at the University of Manchester, Division of Psychology and Mental Health with the support of the United Nations Office on Drugs and Crime.*

*An accompanying Conversation Group two hour PowerPoint presentation, encompassing the information in this booklet in a step by step manner, is available for facilitators to run with groups of caregivers. Notes for those facilitating the Conversation Groups are also available. These can be downloaded, along with other open access Family Skills resources, at:  
<http://research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/pfrg>*

*Notes for Facilitators  
conducting Conversation  
Groups with caregivers  
using the 'Caring for  
Children through Conflict  
and Displacement' Booklet  
and PowerPoint slides*



Armed conflict and displacement leave children at a high risk for the development of emotional and behavioural difficulties. Families and caregivers are the first line of defense in protecting children. Strong parental support and family cohesion can be an important way to protect children against poor mental health and maltreatment in situations of conflict and displacement. This highlights the need to provide families that have experienced, or are still experiencing, conflict with advice on parenting that can help them to strengthen supportive relationships and build family skills to promote better mental health and resilience and improved future outcomes for their children.

A child's adjustment to the stresses of conflict or displacement is dependent not only on their own individual responses and qualities, but also very significantly on the availability and quality of support that they may receive from their parent or primary caregiver. Reductions in supportive parent-child relationships can increase the impact of traumatic events on children. Family cohesiveness protects the mental health of children and adolescents affected by armed conflict. In contrast, poor family relationships can increase the risk of poorer psychological well-being in children in this context.

Living through conflict, displacement and low resource settings can place stress on the parent's ability to care for their children. Often families are forced to separate from their social groups and support networks, leaving caregivers lonely and struggling. Parents will be coping with their own reactions to the context and as a result may be experiencing emotional difficulties whilst at the same time seeing emotional and behavioural changes in the children they are caring for. Also, the worry, frustration and helplessness that results from trauma exposure and loss, poor living environments and uncertainty about the future may make it more difficult for parents to maintain positive parenting strategies. Sometimes this may lead to parents using harsh or aggressive parenting practices, which can lead to physical and emotional abuse.

Children fare better in the context of supportive and positive family relationships. When caregivers are warm and provide support and comfort for children this can help them deal with fears and anxieties they may have. Encouraging good behaviour in children and finding ways of making sure that desirable behaviour is encouraged helps children to cope well. It also makes it easier for caregivers to keep them safe. Building a relationship with a child that is positive,

mutually respectful and that has open communication is a good way to ensure that parental attempts to keep their children safe and well cared for are complied with. The approaches described in the 'Caring for Children through Conflict and Displacement' booklet help caregivers to do this and seek opportunities for empowerment of parents through improving parental efficacy and competence. In the context of conflict or displacement children may have lost their biological parents and will be cared for by other family members or individuals close to the family. Throughout the booklet, "caregivers", "parents", "parenting", and "families" are used as shorthand to describe individuals close to the child taking a caring role for them (e.g. biological parents, adoptive parents, foster parents, older siblings, other relatives or people who have taken on a caring role).

In 2015, we developed a leaflet which included two A4 pages of context and culturally sensitive parenting information and a questionnaire to collect demographic data and feedback on the usefulness of the leaflet. Working with an NGO in Syria we distributed 3000 parenting information leaflets to families living in a conflict zone in Syria via bakery supplies, and questionnaires asking caregivers what they thought about the information. We received 1783 completed questionnaires, really highlighting how important these parenting information messages were to families in this context. Feedback from families was that they wanted more information on how to better care for their children. Here, we have expanded the leaflet into a booklet to explain key parenting skills in a simple and engaging way. This booklet aims at building parenting confidence and skills and enhancing child and family psychological well-being. It is based on evidence-based family and parenting strategies drawn from the parenting literature. This booklet has been tailored to the context of families that have experienced conflict and displacement and those living in low resource settings.

The booklet briefly covers five main areas:

- Normalising caregiver's reactions and the ways caregivers can help themselves to cope through the challenges they may be facing
- Normalising children's reactions and the ways parents can help them through paying extra attention to their safety, providing warmth, giving praise, talking

And listening and encouraging good behaviour

- Dealing with specific challenges children may be exhibiting such as fears, anxieties and night disturbances, fighting and aggression
- The importance of maintaining routines and encouraging play
- Relaxation techniques

### **How to use the Conversation Group slides**

Along with the booklet, we have developed a corresponding two hour Conversation Group presentation that is designed to help facilitate a conversation group with caregivers. The Conversation Group expands the information in the booklet in an engaging way so that both can be used together. This will allow groups to gather together to go through the booklet in a step-by-step and clear way and provide caregivers with opportunities to discuss ways to help them maintain as positive environment as possible for the children they are caring for.

These Conversation Group slides are intended for you as a facilitator. They are not intended to be printed for caregivers receiving the booklet. Facilitators of the Conversation Groups may be teachers, youth workers, psychologists, counsellors, community leaders, others involved on providing support for families or any adult who feels that on reviewing the Booklet and Conversation Group they have a clear understanding of the aims and the concepts of the booklet and corresponding slides. There is no training for facilitators to run these Conversation Groups. The materials have been designed for low resource settings where training opportunities may not be available.

Ideally two facilitators should work together to facilitate the Conversation Group, preparing in advance and deciding on the points where they will take turns to take the lead. A few hours should be spent preparing and practicing for the Conversation Groups. It is important that facilitators think about ways of explaining the approaches described in this booklet so that they can be confident that caregivers will understand what they are presenting. Co-facilitators should pair up to plan the session and allocate tasks before starting the groups. It may also be useful for facilitators to spend time after running the Conversation Group to reflect and debrief on how they felt the experience was for them and how they could improve the following time, if relevant.

It is helpful to prepare by reading the World Health Organisation guidelines on providing psychological first aid, which has valuable information on what to say and do, and what not to do, in contexts where people have experienced stresses, conflicts and disasters.

This document can be found in over 20 languages at:

[http://www.who.int/mental\\_health/publications/guide\\_field\\_workers/en/](http://www.who.int/mental_health/publications/guide_field_workers/en/)

Before beginning the Conversation Group, ensure you have prepared thoroughly and have printed a copy of the 'Caring for Children through Conflict and Displacement' Booklet for each caregiver. It would be also useful to provide a pen or pencil and some paper for each caregiver if possible, but this is not essential. If equipment is available, ensure you have a projector or computer to run the PowerPoint slides and an available room to hold the Conversation Group. This could be a classroom, a community centre or any place that will feel comfortable for families and safe. The sessions are best run in groups of 25 caregivers, but larger groups may be necessary under some circumstances. If more than one caregiver from one family would like to attend this should be encouraged, just ensure that you try to know ahead of time how many caregivers will be attending so that the group size is manageable for yourself and cofacilitator. These sessions are intended for caregivers of children from age 6-14. The broad age range with which the Conversation Groups can be used means that, as a facilitator, you may find it useful to find out some information about the families attending first, such as age range of their children, so that discussions and examples used in the group time is appropriate. However, the essential principles of praise for appropriate behaviour and consistent approaches to inappropriate behaviour hold true across the age span. It can be useful when possible for caregivers to be placed in a group of caregivers with children of a roughly similar age or maturity level.

### **Issues to be considered**

#### **(I) DISCUSSIONS ON VIOLENCE**

Family violence can be the strongest predictor of poor psychological wellbeing in conflict-affected children. Domestic violence is recognised to increase in response to major stressors and violence in the broader society. During your time facilitating the Conversation Groups it is

important to be alert to references to violence in the family. Addressing the broader question of domestic violence is beyond the scope of the materials offered within this brief booklet. Emphasis should however be placed on the importance of building family harmony as a way of promoting good outcomes for children.

#### (II) SIGNS OF EXTREME STRESS IN CHILDREN

During the Group Conversation time, some families may describe their children experiencing one or more of the reactions listed below. If this is the case, you should advise them to seek other help from someone such as a doctor or a health professional locally to them.

When a child has seen or heard a frightening event, they may have very bad dreams about it. Sometimes they get vivid pictures in their heads during the day, and get frightened by that. Sometimes a sound or a smell reminds them of what happened and they get very distressed. Younger children may play or draw the scary scene over and over again.

Some children will not want to go near the place that a bad thing happened. Others will avoid talking about it. This can interfere with every-day living and they never learn that the bad event is over.

Children may seem to be over-sensitive and show signs such as:

- Difficulty in falling or staying asleep
- losing their temper very often or not being able to control anger
- Difficulty in concentrating
- Being extremely alert, on the look-out constantly for bad things happening
- Being very jumpy or startled when something happens without warning
- The child is crying a lot, or seems very low in spirits
- The child seems to be far away in their thoughts and very dreamy, or feels that the world around them is not real or as if they are in a dream
- The child often says they don't feel anything

#### Providing Feedback

We would be very grateful for any feedback on how you find facilitating this Conversation Group, how parents engaged with the conversation Group and Booklet, including what modifications might need making to make the Booklet and slides more useful for caregivers.

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To download the 'Caring for Children through Conflict and Displacement' Booklet and Conversation Group Slides, to get in contact or leave feedback and for other open access resources that you may find useful, such as the Parenting Leaflet please visit:

<http://research.bmh.manchester.ac.uk/pfrg/resources/>

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## **INFORMATION FOR ADULTS LOOKING AFTER A CHILD OR CHILDREN THROUGH CONFLICT AND DISPLACEMENT**

### **ABOUT YOU**

What might you be experiencing?

- You may become more irritable than usual and your mood may change back and forth dramatically. You may be especially anxious or nervous or depressed.
- You may have repeated and vivid memories of your experiences. These flashbacks may lead to physical reactions such as rapid heartbeat or sweating.
- You may find it difficult to concentrate or make decisions, or become more easily confused. Your sleep and eating patterns may also be disrupted.

All of these things may affect how you get on with the child or children you are looking after.

What can you do to help yourself?

- Recognise that this is a challenging time but one that you can work to manage. You have tackled other hardships at other times in your life.
- Recognise that you are a unique person. Use the skills and resources that you have.
- Allow yourself and your children to mourn any losses you may have experienced.
- Try to be patient with changes in how you are feeling.
- Try and keep hopeful and a positive outlook. This will help your children have hope for the future.
- Support each other and take help from friends, relatives, community and religious leaders.
- Look after yourself as much as possible and try to rest when you can.
- As much as you can, try to establish or re-establish routines, such as regular bed times.
- Try to keep yourself occupied with regular chores or with work or activities with others around you.
- Maintain any religious activities you do.

### **ABOUT YOUR CHILD**

What might your child be experiencing?

How children react to stressful experiences can vary depending on a variety of things, for example their age, but here are some common ways children react:

- Physical complaints such as headache, stomach ache, fever, cough, lack of appetite.
- Being fearful and anxious.
- Difficulty sleeping, nightmares, night terrors, shouting or screaming.
- Older children may go back to bedwetting, clinging to their parents, frequent crying, thumb-sucking, being afraid to be left alone.
- Becoming unusually active or aggressive or the opposite shy, quiet, withdrawn and sad.
- Difficulty concentrating.

It is important to remember that it is NORMAL for children to show stress reactions or problem behaviours after frightening and distressing experiences.

What can you do to help your child?

### **SAFETY**

- Strive to keep your family together at all times.
- Try hard not to be separated from your children for long periods of time.
- Ensure your children know their name, and where you are staying and how to get help if they are separated from you.
- If you are going to a distribution site either keep your children close by at all times or leave them at home in the care of a responsible and trusted relative or adult.
- If your children do go along with you arrange in advance somewhere you can meet if you become separated. Ensure this is somewhere the child will know and feel comfortable.
- If your child goes out to play tell them to let you know where they are going and when they will be back.

#### PROVIDING WARMTH AND SUPPORT

- Promise that you will do everything you can to care for and protect them.
- Try to be affectionate with your child by often giving them hugs or holding their hand.
- Try to tell them often that you love them. Being caring and telling your children that you love them will reassure them.

#### GIVING PRAISE

- Look for opportunities to praise your child when they have done something good, however small it may seem.
- Try to be patient with your child and not to criticise them for changes in their behaviour, such as clinging to you or frequently seeking reassurance.
- Encourage your child to help, and praise and thank them when they do. Children cope better and recover sooner when they help others.

#### SPENDING TIME TOGETHER AND TALKING

- Pay attention to your child. Spend a few moments with them whenever you can.

- Take time to listen to them and try to understand what they have experienced. Ask how they feel about their experiences and which experiences are most stressful and difficult to adjust to.
- Do not promise your children things you cannot provide.
- Be open and try to give children accurate information about what is happening.

#### ENCOURAGING PLAY

- Encourage your child to play with you, their siblings or other children. Play is important in helping children work through past and current stress and experiences and to prepare for the future. It helps maintain some normality in their lives.

#### MAINTAINING A ROUTINE

- Try to maintain everyday routines, such as bedtimes, as much as you can.
- Encourage children to do school work (reading, maths, writing), even if there are no schools.



## Strong Families Programme

### A prevention programme

### for Families in Challenged Settings in Low Resourced Countries



#### WHY work on Family Skills for prevention?

Family is undoubtedly one of the most influential social institutions. Specific parental faculties and functions are particularly important in preventing negative social outcomes, these faculties and functions require proper implementation, orientation, practice and hence training, thus the term “skills”.

Family skills are interventions described in the UNODC International Standards of Drug Use Prevention<sup>1</sup> with “very good” indication of efficacy (based on the wealth of scientific evidence available). Such programmes in essence support caregivers in being better parents and strengthen positive age-specific and age-appropriate family functioning and interactions in general. They promote a warm child-rearing style allowing parents to set rules for acceptable behaviours, to closely monitor free time and friendship patterns and become to good role models while helping their children acquire the skills to make informed decisions.

Because they address such very important vulnerabilities, these programmes have been found to be effective in preventing a wide range of social and health outcomes (including violence, crime, educational attainment, mental health, physical health and substance use). The World Health Organization in its series of briefings evidence for Violence Prevention, listed “increasing safe, stable and nurturing relationships between children and their parents and caregivers” as one of the 7 (seven) main strategies for preventing interpersonal and self-directed violence<sup>2</sup>. Parenting skills is also one of the 7 (seven) strategies prescribed by the INSPIRE initiative to end violence against children<sup>3</sup>.

Family skills programmes provides positive effects on the mental wellbeing of parents. These programmes reduce parental and occupational stress and support the development of children, in terms of fewer behavioral and emotional problems (reduced anxiety, internalizing

behaviors, social withdrawal and higher self-esteem).

From a gender specific perspective, the available evidence suggests that not all drug prevention strategies necessarily carry the same effects on girls and boys. Family-based strategies on the other hand, seem to generally be effective for both genders, and often even more effective for girls.

Inspired by this body of knowledge UNODC Drug Prevention and Health Branch, Prevention Treatment and Rehabilitation Section has been actively promoting and building capacity on such programmes globally since 2010 in around 22 low and middle income countries.

While the main aim supports 2030 SDG Target 3.5 “Strengthening Prevention and Treatment of Substance Abuse Including Narcotic Drug Abuse and Harmful Use of Alcohol”, this sort of programme serves a wider range of SDG Goals and Targets. These includes:

- SDG 5.2 “Eliminate all forms of violence against all women and girls in the public and private spheres including trafficking and sexual and other types of exploitation”
- SDG 16.1 “Significantly reduce all forms of violence and related death rates everywhere”
- SDG 16.2 “end abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children”
- SDG 4.1 “ensure that all girls and boys complete free, equitable and quality primary and secondary education leading to relevant and effective learning outcomes”
- SDG 4.5 “eliminate gender disparities in education and ensure equal access to all levels of education and vocational training for the vulnerable, including persons with disabilities, indigenous peoples, and children in vulnerable situations”



- SDG 4.7 “ensure all learners acquire knowledge and skills needed to promote sustainable development, including among others through education for sustainable development and sustainable lifestyles, human rights, gender equality, promotion of a culture of peace and non-violence, global citizenship, and appreciation of cultural diversity and of culture’s contribution to sustainable development”

#### WHY Strong Families as a programme?

While several evidence based family skills programmes exist globally, these have been deemed a bit harder to implement and bring to scale in low and middle income countries, particularly in resource challenged settings. Such challenges include:

- 1) Very limited community services to support implementation of such programmes,
- 2) Difficulties of families living in such circumstances to the programmes’ multiple sessions
- 3) Bringing these programmes to scale for reasons that include costly royalties and copyrights fees associated with existing programmes, in addition to further resources to ensure constant fidelity to the complex structure of implementation.

Accordingly UNODC initiated the development of a family skills programme labelled “STRONG FAMILIES” with the intention of designing it to be:

- 1) Brief: 1 or 2 session long (1-2 hours / session tops)
- 2) Light: requiring an infrastructure that is easy to mobilise and train
- 3) Evidence Based: proven to have an effect on the vulnerability of concern and preventing or delaying the age of onset of substance use
- 4) Suitable for low resource settings: for communities with poor human and infrastructure resources (such as post conflict, displaced, underserved communities, etc...)
- 5) Open source (available to everyone without need to pay royalty or copyright fees): to allow benefitting counterparts to have national ownership to bring it to scale at minimum cost
- 6) Cost Effective: showing the desired effect with limited resources (including for training, implementation and fidelity of implementation)

#### WHAT IS Strong Families Programme?

Strong Families Program is a family skills programme, that provides an evidence-based public health prevention to build strong families to effectively benefit the mental health of children from both genders as well as their parents. It is cost-effectiveness and has the potential to be easily adapted in the low resource settings.

Strong Families Program is a universal/selective prevention intervention designed for families with children aged between 8 and 15 with the aim of improving parenting skills, child well-being and family mental health. The programme is designed for families living in especially challenged settings (including those in rural/underserved areas, the displaced, refugees, in conflict/post conflict situations).

The Strong Families Programme was developed through the concerted efforts of specialists with varying domain of expertise, including:

- Developers and lead trainers of one of the most prominent and well researched family skills programme (Strengthening the Families Programme SFP 10-14)
- Lead programme developers and prominent researchers from University of Manchester implicated in developing and researching parenting skills programme for refugees and caregivers living in conflict/post conflict situations.
- Lead researchers from Oxford Brookes University that worked on adaptation, training and monitoring of fidelity of implementation of evidence based prevention programmes (including Strengthening the Families Skills SFP 10-14 programme)
- Civil Society Organisation availing humanitarian and social support services to refugees and individuals living in conflict/post conflict situation.
- UNODC expert coordinators working since 2010 on adapting and building capacity on family skills prevention programming and on dissemination of the UNODC International Standards on Drug Use Prevention at the UNODC Headquarters in the Drug Prevention and Health Branch as well as in the regional offices for Central America and the Caribbean, in South East Europe, Central and West Asia and East Africa.

The Strong Families Programme was developed thanks to the generous support of the US-INL and is currently being piloted in Afghanistan (also through the generous support of US-INL) and in

refugee camps in South Serbia and in rural areas in Zanzibar-Tanzania (through the generous support of the government of Sweden).

A logic model of the Strong Families Programme is described in Table 1. The Table 2 illustrates the program structure.

Table 1: Logic Model of Strong Families Programme

Program components	Program process to address underlying causes	Short term impact	Long term impact
<b>Caregiver sessions</b>		Improved caregiver confidence in family management skills	
<b>Goal:</b> Normalise and manage stress; improve parenting confidence and skills to develop positive parenting strategies; enhance resources to deal with stress	<b>Decrease risk factors</b>	Improved caregiving in parenting skills	Reduction in violence
	Favourable attitudes towards coercive parenting strategies; poor family management skills; high levels of stress; environment favoring early initiation of drug use and of conflict and violence	Improved child behaviour	Reduction in substance abuse
<b>Child sessions</b>		Reduced aggressive and hostile behaviors	Reduction in risky behaviours
<b>Goal:</b> Improve mental health outcomes; better deal with stress; reduce challenging behaviour	<b>Increase protective factors</b>	Increased capacity to cope with stress	Improved mental health for caregivers and children
	Improved family interaction; enhanced relationships, non-violent discipline, prosocial involvement, caregiver social support	Improved mental health outcomes in children and parents	
<b>Family sessions</b>			
<b>Goal:</b> Improved communication and relationships; decreased coercive parenting			

Table 2: Structure of Strong Families Program

Week 1	Week 2	Week 3
	<b>Parent session 1</b>	<b>Parent session 2</b>
	Using love and limits	Teaching children what is right
<b>Parent pre-session</b>	<b>Child session 1</b>	<b>Child session 2</b>
Understanding Strengths and Stresses	Learning about stress	Following rules and appreciating parents
	<b>Family session 1</b>	<b>Family session 2</b>
	Learning about each other	Supporting values and dreams

<sup>1</sup> UNODC International Standards on Drug Use Prevention, 2013

<sup>2</sup> World Health Organization, Violence prevention: the evidence, 2010

<sup>3</sup> WHO/CDC/End Violence Against Children Global Partnership/ PAHO/ PEPFAR/ Together For Girls/ UNICEF/ UNODC/USAID/ World Bank: INSPIRE seven strategies for ending violence against children 2016

*From the United Nations*



INTERNATIONAL  
DAY OF FAMILIES  
15 MAY 2018

**International Day of Families  
2018 Observance**

***Families and Inclusive Societies***

**Background Note**

The 2018 observance of the International day of Families focuses on Sustainable Development Goal 16 relating to the promotion of peaceful and inclusive societies for sustainable development.

Families play an important role in creating and sustaining peaceful and inclusive societies indispensable for sustainable and inclusive development. Children growing up in stable and supportive families develop positive cognitive, emotional and social characters thus becoming stable and peaceful adults.

There are several important aspects of stable family environments ensuring children's well-being and early socialization, such as secure attachment and the process of the transmission and acquisition of values.

Research demonstrates that children who developed secure attachment relationships in their families are more self-reliant and empathetic

adults. They are more likely to be civically engaged and involved in community work and have good problem-solving skills. Moreover, longitudinal studies show that securely attached children are more likely to develop strong relationships and lead stable family lives.

As initial socialization in families, linked to the transmission of values, impacts attitudes and sensitivities to violence and conflict, positive socialization experience contributes to the development of a sense of self and belonging in community and in broader society. SDG16 aiming at promoting peaceful and inclusive societies also implies that

individuals influence the decisions affecting themselves, their families, communities and society at large. Moreover, SDG16 relating to the promotion of justice and accountable institutions at all levels is especially relevant to families and the status of vulnerable family members within their respective families.

Here stronger laws giving rights and protection to all family members, especially women are directly related to their status within families.

Although inclusive societies must ensure legal protection and rights of women, they should not only be linked to women's roles as mothers and caregivers in their families. Governments must ensure that women have equal access to economic resources, ownership of land and other property as well as work providing decent living wage to sustain themselves and their families. Similarly, children have the right to adequate nutrition and shelter and to grow up in the atmosphere of love and harmony.

It is useful to point out that research in OECD countries indicates that in countries where women do not have right to own land, there are 60 per cent more malnourished children than in places where women have some access to land. It is an established fact that land ownership empowers women to make decisions about health and nutrition of their children and children of women who own land are less likely to be malnourished and underweight.

Access to justice to all family members also involves the achievement of target 16.9 under SDG16, referring to the provision of legal identity for all, including birth registration for children.

Establishing legal identity and ensuring birth registration for all remains a challenge in many countries with the World Bank estimating that 625 million children up to the age of 14 remain unregistered.

The importance of having a legal identity cannot be overstated. Without it, the access to basic social services can be severely restricted. The lack of legal identity hinders the ability of women and marginalized groups to exercise their civil and political rights to vote. Unregistered individuals cannot secure the socio-economic benefits from the state. What's more 'administrative hurdles, poverty, limited awareness, and discriminatory legal provisions bar unregistered women and vulnerable, marginalized groups everywhere from securing their citizenship or registering their marriage or child's birth." (Trask, 2018)

A number of family-oriented policies, especially those targeting vulnerable families in indigenous communities, or those with family members with disabilities have a potential to contribute to the achievement of above mentioned target under SDG16. For instance, awareness raising campaigns focusing on the importance of birth registration in remote communities have resulted in higher registration of births even in some countries.

Expanding social protection programmes reaching out to vulnerable families and ensuring the coverage of all family members, including children and older persons have contributed to creating more inclusive societies which secure rights to basic social and economic rights for vulnerable family members.

The approaches to family policies for inclusive societies vary around the world. In some regions emphasis is placed on social inclusion of various types of families and/or individuals such as migrant or indigenous families, ethnic minorities or families with persons with disabilities.

In some regions primary emphasis is placed on social protection for vulnerable families to facilitate their full inclusion in the mainstream of society. Inclusive education for all, especially children from ethnic minorities or those with disabilities is also considered essential for social inclusion.

As approaches vary, this year's observance of the International Day of Families is to raise awareness of the role of families and family policies in achieving more inclusive societies from regional perspectives.

In particular, the discussion will focus on the importance of ensuring equal justice to all family members, especially women. It will also address the efforts at universal birth registration and legal identity for all, especially targeting vulnerable families. The importance of social protection for social inclusion and other aspects of socially inclusive and family-oriented policies will be addressed as well.

References:

“Transforming our world: the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development”, United Nations, 2015 (A/RES/70/1)

United Nations Expert Group Meeting on Family Policies for Inclusive Societies: Concept Note, New York, 15-16 May.

Bahira Sherif Trask, “Ensuring Social Rights for All Families: Legal Frameworks, Legal Identity and the Right to Participation, Housing, and Public Green Spaces in the 2030 Agenda and the SDGs” Background paper for Expert Group Meeting on Family Policies for Inclusive Societies, New York, 15 - 16 May 2018 (forthcoming)

United Nations International Day of Families May 15<sup>th</sup> 2018: ‘Families for Inclusive Societies’  
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/international-day-of-families/2018idf.html>

United Nations Expert Group Meeting (EGM) on ‘Families for Inclusive Societies’  
<https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/2018/04/23/egm-on-family-policies-for-inclusive-societies-15-16-may-2018/>

For further information on the EGM:

<https://www.un.org/development/desa/family/meetings-events/family-policies-for-inclusive-societies.html>

FROM MEMBER ORGANISATIONS OF THE VIENNA NGO COMMITTEE ON THE FAMILY

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## Inclusive means also digital

### Traditional urban patterns can no longer coexist with cyberspace

1 April 2018



Much has been said, written, reflected on and disseminated nowadays regarding the relationship that the city has with new technologies. There are even labels that try to define this relationship using a term that already implies something more than what it had originally reserved for itself: 'Smart'. This word, which initially only admitted the meaning of intelligence or ability, is already used at the beginning of this new millennium as a pronoun linked to everything that uses new information and communication technologies, as well as information technology, even in the form of management of data in a massive way

(BigData). Due to the growing impact of these systems in urban environments, the Smart City concept appears. Thus, when trying to deepen on what elements constitute a Smart City, the definitions are wide and varied, and rarely include the citizen in an inclusive manner, but as a mere 'empowered user' thanks to the new technologies available.

Historically, cities have been an immense laboratory for trial and error, failure and success for urban construction and design, and for this reason urbanism [1] would have to use this new technified laboratory to learn, formulate and test their theories.

The current digital revolution has accelerated the evolution of communication systems, while fostering the development of new production and relationship schemes. Traditional technological scenarios face new challenges, and cities find a new basis for urban and territorial competitiveness. At the same time, it is the citizen who should have the power to establish these new scenarios, and that is why we need to study the way in which people interact with these new hyper-technified cities.

The information and communication technologies that manage and transform the cities and territories of the 21st century must be able to be analyzed and ordered in an intelligent way, studying their impact on the new social behaviors that shape urban spaces and redefine the way to relate among people, their cities and their territories.

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CEO at SUR. Smart Urban Regeneration.

On the other hand, today the global tends to make the local disappear, with cloned proposals that spread throughout the planet, understanding that none of these events occurs isolated from political, social, economic or

technological reality. [2] The question that currently arises in cities from the increasing weight and interaction that is generated from new technologies for citizenship will be: civilization or barbarism? We will have to discover how these new relationships are generated from new technologies and a new barbarism, defined by citizens who break with traditional systems to create new ways of relating, both with each other and with their city. What instruments will be used to materialize these links, how will they become visible and, ultimately, how will the polis be transformed in which this new society manifests itself, which is no longer organized by hegemonic powers or by tangible infrastructures, but by a new organization between individuals who are related not so much by power, historical or territorial ties, but by new areas of interest, sometimes real, other virtual. Though above all things, we must take care that this new era that begins does not generate social exclusion for those with more difficult access to these new technologies.

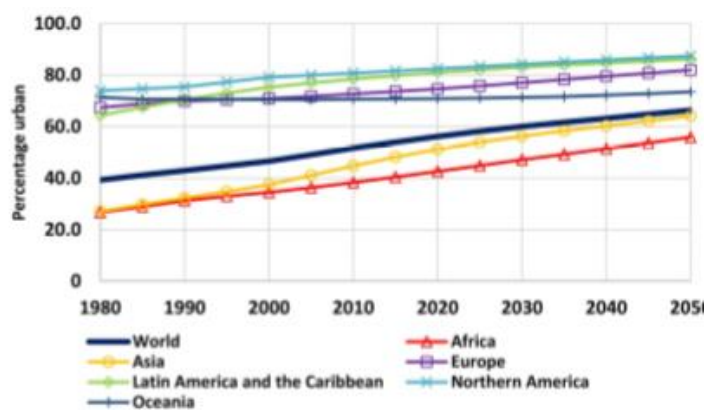


Figure 1. Proportion of total population residing in urban areas for the world and geographic regions, 1980–2050  
Source: United Nations, 'World Urbanization Prospects: the 2014 Revision' (New York, 2014)

The impact of technologies has always been made more visible in the city, either directly or indirectly, through citizens and their actions, or at least it has been until the end of the 20th century, since the technologies applied in urban environments always had a relatively immediate physical impact. Therefore we must not forget that technology is part of the culture and is not part of our body, but projects our mental capacities, enabling the transformation of the material world that surrounds us. [3] It has always been a complement and a projection of the human intellect and, therefore, has always been at the service of it. Never the other way around.

Regardless of the name given to these new initiatives for the design of the city (smart, digital, sustainable...) it is imperative that the planning of urban and territorial territorial environments can no longer be separated from the technologies that help to give them shape. But it must remember that cities belong to the people who inhabit them, who will end up validating any process of urban regeneration, whether based on technologies, systems or, simply, on common sense.

It can be said that this new digital revolution is already evident and therefore requires special attention, above all because of its implications for people and their urban environments. Several authors such as Edward Soja [4] or Jeff Brugman [5] pose it as an urban revolution similar to that which occurred in past centuries as the industrial revolution, and this new one is the derivative of the new technologies that the end of the 20th century and the beginning of the 21st brings; a new e-topia where traditional urban patterns can no longer coexist with cyberspace. [6] Likewise, at present, the development of teletechnologies and information technology not only have an impact on the material urban space, but also on the immaterial, on the virtual spaces and on time, since the Internet allows relations beyond of temporality and local spaces, transforming the dimension of time in the city. [7]

As a result of the increased migrations originated by the Industrial Revolution, the new generic and global city [8] appears as an inevitable necessity, and we cannot deny the demographic growth that the population continues to experience, especially in developing countries. In spite of an apparent depersonalization and loss of identity of the city due to its enormous and incessant growth, new cities are also being generated, or new developments within existing ones, that pursue a solution to the problem.

New technologies can help new service sectors emerge, as well as old production centers are resized. While it has been moving from location in central urban areas to a more diffuse distribution in the territory, both the organization of production and consumption are no longer

focused but constitute networks. The concept of centrality is abandoned as equivalent to production, asking for other services to the city, and its advantages are no longer measured only in terms of physical proximity, depending on the characteristics and peculiarities of each place in relation and competition with others at planetary scale. It appears to be an arean benefited by communication and telecommunication networks, which favors both the dispersion of activities and urban centrality.

This postindustrial, generic and global city also experienced the greatest development in terms of infrastructures, welcoming new technologies, overlaying the pre-existing urban traces. Means of transportation, under or above ground, infrastructures that could be buried (drains), aerial (power lines), or travel invisibly (radio waves, television and cell phones) but also visible, because they require antennas, communication towers, command centers or data processing centers. Likewise, all these new infrastructures require new codes and forms of communication (urban signage, traffic lights) or exchange and parking centers.

Currently, the new information and communication technologies transform the postindustrial city into something new, where it is yet to be seen what its real impact will be on the city and its citizens. Despite this growing weight of technologies and the possible trivialization of urban spaces, an optimistic view is proposed for its resolution, since the tension between the global and the local will end up moving towards one or the other side depending on how it is managed, and this is what will end up characterizing its urban reality. The search for sustainable cities will require the construction of socially and culturally diverse urban spaces, as well as functionally complex ones where we can explore strategies and attitudes capable of escaping not only from banality, but from its most dangerous byproduct, which is none other than social exclusion and the depersonalization of the individual.

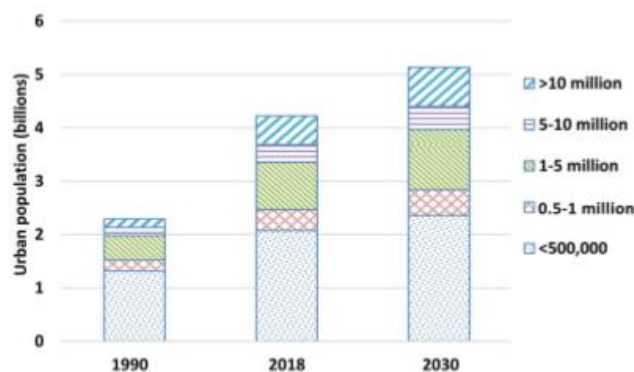


Figure II. Urban population by category of city size in 1990, 2018 and 2030  
Source: United Nations, 'World Urbanization Prospects: the 2014 Revision' (New York, 2014)



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### A new project on inclusive cities

The International Federation for Family Development (IFFD), in partnership with the Regional Council of the Veneto Region, the Municipality of Marseille and the European Local Inclusion and Social Action Network (ELISAN) is promoting a new project on inclusive cities, with a family perspective to benefit each and every one of the members of the family. Within a family, all the social realities inhabited by cities and territories are welcomed, and that is why a family approach to the city will make it more inclusive and promote values of belonging, will result in a greater attachment to the environment where it is inhabited.

In the context of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals, in particular SDG11 ('Make cities and human settlements inclusive, safe, resilient and sustainable'), and the New Urban Agenda, the 'Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families' project is directed to cities and Regions that wish to actively contribute to goal SDG11 to be inclusive of sustainable families by being responsive to their needs.

The commitment of their members will consist on presenting once a year a report about the results of their work on the following points:

1. *Housing* Cities design should include all family situations and social groups, flexible urban and environmentally sustainable planning, and social services to meet every need.
2. *New technologies* The need of connecting people through new technologies should be also included to ensure social inclusion, to bridge the digital gap via training of seniors, professional carers and socially disadvantaged families.
3. *Education* Inclusive and quality education for all and promotion of lifelong learning (SDG 4) should lead to the improvement of accessible and affordable childcare facilities in locations close to the residence or workplace of parents, parenting education, participation of older persons in educational activities for the younger, intergenerational meeting places for cultural and leisure activities, youth integration practices as well as second chance schools and chances to reintegrate in society.

4. *Healthcare* Organization of campaigns to promote healthy habits and lifestyles, especially those targeted to prevent mental disorders and to meet the needs of senior citizens, setting the necessary structure to stimulate innovation and human relations in hospitals as well as medical attention of visitors and tourists.

5. *Safety* Creation of a welcoming environment in the streets based on solidarity, mutual support and social interaction, through instruments like promoting volunteers, a neighbourhood police, the use of cameras and public lightning, information and training on how to behave in case of natural disasters, terrorist attacks, etc.

6. *Clean air* Creation of as many green areas as possible, tax benefits for garden buildings, progressive reduction of pollution produced by public transportation and increase of charging points for electric cars and support for circular economy.

7. *Transportation* Design of a plan to make public transportation more rational and accessible, dissuade citizens to use private cars, and to take advantage of teleworking.

8. *Affordability* Plan to facilitate access to housing for the most disadvantaged citizens, including promotion of smart cohousing solutions for different target groups with common use of services, efficient energy-saving and flexible buildings, and intergenerational arrangements to provide care for the elder and cheaper housing for the younger.

9. *Leisure and tourism* Foster of active engagement in the volunteering sector to conserve and restore the cultural and touristic of the city, as well as tools to facilitate access to cultural activities for all through special prices and adhoc exhibitions and locations for museums, theatres, etc.

10. *Vulnerable families* Establish specific programs to recognize the value of unpaid work and care, and address the needs of families in vulnerable situations, including singleparent families, large families, migrant families, etc.

***"Within a family, all the social realities inhabited by cities and territories are welcomed, and that is why a family approach to the city will make it more inclusive and promote values of belonging, which results in a greater attachment to the environment where it is inhabited."***



*After the meeting of the promoters of the 'Inclusive Cities for Sustainable Families' in Venice (January 2018).*

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[1] Jacobs, J.: The Death and Life of Great American Cities, 1961-1993.  
[2] Muxí, Z.: La arquitectura de la ciudad global, 2009.  
[3] Bermúdez de Castro, J. M.: La evolución del talento, 2010.  
[4] Soja, E. W.: Postmetrópolis, Estudios críticos sobre las ciudades y las regiones, 2000.

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[6] Mitchel, W.: E-TOPIA, Urban life, Jim-but not as we know it, 2000.  
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[8] Koolhaas, R.: The Generic City, 1997.



## MMM ACTIVITIES TO PROMOTE MOTHERS' RIGHTS

### International Conference #Mothers4Peace on 3–4 May 2018 in Casablanca, Morocco

Under the title “Mothers at the heart of change for a culture of peace – showcasing examples at family, community, national and international levels” MMM organised an international conference on Mothers for Peace, in cooperation with CARE Maroc International and under the High Patronage of His Majesty, the King Mohammed VI.

Mothers are the first educators for peace. Mothers have the power to build bridges and mobilize. They also play a crucial part within families and communities. Mothers are still untapped resources that must be involved in decision-making at all levels: within the family, the community, at national and international levels.

Leaders, thinkers, lead actors and movers in the field of women and peacebuilding exchanged essential findings and good practices regarding the importance of women and mothers to foster a culture of peace.

#### *Speakers included:*

**HRH Princess Esmeralda of Belgium**, Author of the book *Peace Nobel Prize Women*

**Gary Barker**, Brazil, Director and Founder, Promundo Institute

**Rima Salah**, Jordan, Yale University Professor, Former UNICEF Deputy Executive Director, Co-author of *Pathways to Peace: The Transformative Power of Children and Families*

Additional information, including the detailed program and a press release, is available at <https://www.makemothersmatter.org>.

A report of the conference is in preparation.

### MMM written statement submitted ahead of the 37<sup>th</sup> Session of the Human Rights Council: The transformative power of mothers for sustainable peace

#### *Extracts:*

Peace is not merely the absence of violence or conflict at the national and/or international levels. It may take different forms and begins on a much smaller scale: peace with oneself and peace of mind at an individual level; harmonious and balanced relationships within a family; social cohesion and solidarity at the community level.

The educational role of parents, in particular that of mothers, is crucial, including as role models. It is within a family that one's emotional balance is built, where fundamental values are transmitted and upon which human beings construct themselves.

It is also within the family that a child first experiences and learns the meaning of safety or distress, the joys and challenges of living in a community, and the violent or peaceful management of conflicts.

A child's early years are especially crucial, and early childhood development has an important potential for the promotion of peace. An increasing amount of research stresses how safety, responsive caregiving and emotional ties within a family are equally essential for the physical, emotional, social and intellectual development of a child, beginning as early as during pregnancy.

Peace emanates from equal opportunities with a role for each one of us in a society: social injustice is one of the main triggers of social unrest and violence. Allowing children

to grow up in a healthy and loving family without violence will allow them to reach their full potential, and to find their role in society. Early childhood development and care has the potential to break the inter-generational cycle of poverty and is the foundation for a long-lasting peace.

Mothers also have the ability to gather and mobilize other mothers, to build bridges across social classes, race and ethnicity: they all share the same concerns and desire of a better future for their children, beginning with peace. Empowering mothers can have wide ranging positive impacts, cutting across many Sustainable Development Goals. It means investing in children and families, but the potential returns are high.

Mothers must be recognized as change makers, who can be instrumental in the realization of the 2030 development agenda and sustainable peace – if only they are adequately educated and supported in their different roles as caregivers, head of household, food producers, decision makers, economic agents, etc.

Ref. UN Document: A/HRC/37/NGO/174.  
Available on <https://makemothersmatter.org/the-transformativepower-of-mothers-for-sustainable-peace/>

### **MMM's oral statements at the 37<sup>th</sup> session of the Human Rights Council**

MMM took the opportunity of the March 2018 session of the Human Rights Council to make several oral Statements in relation to the topics of the reports that were presented, each time highlighting the role and transformative potential of mothers, and the linkages to development and peace.

- At the meeting on the Report of the Special Representative of the Secretary-General on Violence against Children, MMM drew attention to violence against mothers (especially domestic violence) and its impact on child development, including during pregnancy: violence against mothers is also violence against children.

- At the meeting on the Report of the Special Rapporteur on the issue of human rights obligations relating to the enjoyment of a safe,

clean, healthy and sustainable environment, MMM recalled that no group is more vulnerable to environmental harm than children; but within this group, environmental harm like air or water pollution, or exposure to toxics has the greatest impacts during their early years, including while in their mothers' womb. In addition, MMM highlighted the essential role of mothers to mitigate the effects of environmental harm on children.

### **MMM at the 71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly**

Thanks to advances in developmental neurosciences, we know that the early life experiences shape the future capacity of the brain, and have a direct – positive or negative – influence on the physical, cognitive and emotional health of a child. What children experience during their early years, including in utero, sets a critical foundation for their entire life course.

Moreover, while both parents are the child's first caregivers and educators, and fathers have a very important supporting role to play, it is mothers who are at the forefront of Early Childhood Development during pregnancy and the early years of childhood. However, mothers must face a number of challenges which do not concern health alone and cut across other sectors like social welfare, education, and labour:

- Barriers to breastfeeding
- Multiple stress on the family
- Violence against women and children
- Overlooked maternal mental health problems
- Parenting skills.

MMM developed these issues during its intervention at a side-event to the 71<sup>st</sup> World Health Assembly organized by the Alliance for Health Promotion on Early Childhood Development. MMM also provided recommendations for a cross-sectorial/multistakeholder approach to ensure that every child develops to their full potential through adequate Early Childhood Education and Care.

See the full text of the MMM Intervention:

<https://makemothersmatter.org/mothers-are-at-the-center-of-early-childhood-development-but-they-need-recognition-and-support>

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### **About Make Mother Matter – MMM**

*Make Mothers Matter (MMM) is an international NGO created in 1947 to raise the awareness of policy makers and public opinion on the contribution of mothers to social, cultural and economic development. MMM has no political or religious affiliations, and thus transparently voices the concerns of mothers at international level with permanent MMM representatives at the United Nations (General Consultative Status), UNESCO and the European Union. MMM federates a network of about 40 grass-root organisations, working across the world to advance the rights of women and children.*

Compiled by Irina Pálffy-Daun-Seiler, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Vienna, with input from Valérie Bichelmeier, MMM Representative to the United Nations in Geneva.

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## Education works –

### Global Civic Education is Crime Prevention

Side Event /Commission on Crime Prevention and Criminal Justice

15 May, 14:20 - 15:10  
Summary report



#### Chair and Opening words by H.E. Ms. Pilar Saborio de Rocafort, permanent mission of Costa Rica to Austria

Peace does not come by itself, peaceful behaviour is something to be learned and to strive for day by day, one needs compassion to create peace.

People need civic skills to participate, a sense of identity and belonging. This all helps to develop a sense of responsibility towards everyone and everything that surrounds you: People, nature, buildings, etc.

Civic education means to strengthen that feeling inside oneself that I am part of the whole, I not only effected by my surroundings, but I can have an effect too, up to a certain point we can be co-creators of the world around me.

crime and corruption. It emphasizes that education for children and youth is fundamental in promoting a culture that supports the rule of law, crime prevention and criminal justice.

In support of this, the Education for Justice (E4J) initiative - under the Global Programme for the Implementation of the Doha Declaration - has been developed to create and disseminate education materials in UNODC mandated areas of crime prevention and criminal justice across the primary, secondary and tertiary education levels. Online tools and academic resources will be made available free of charge, while workshops, conferences and symposia will be organized for teachers and academics to learn and exchange ideas and research.



Gilberto A. Duarte Santos introduced a recent Educational program from UNODC: E4J –Education for Justice”:

Adopted at the conclusion of the 13<sup>th</sup> United Nations Congress on Crime Prevention and

Criminal Justice, the Doha Declaration highlights the importance of education as a tool to preventing



Ms. Izabella GORCZYCA, Director of NO BELL school in Poland; this school won the EDUMISSION Award 2017 as a most innovative school.

Dir. Izabella Gorczyca, explained how the development of technology has become very fast during the last century, but while we are developing intellectually, the emotional

development is far behind; This is true with grown ups it is the same with children.

So her desire has been to develop a way of teaching that encourages the development of personality, of social behaviour, all that what is called "emotional intelligence"

With a great effort from the side of teachers very creative ways of learning, studying, researching are developed, giving much of the decision-making to the children and young people.



#### No Bell Schools, Konstancin-Jeziorna, Poland

We all know that it pays off to invest in relations with students. We are aware that they must learn the hard art of making choices. This, in turn, calls for a change in teaching methods and in the ways we assess our students. Only if these elements change can we create a pupil-friendly educational space. So we know and we realise, but the question we all keep asking is – how to start. Our answer is: by withdrawing from power, by transferring power to students. By giving up our tools of institutional control and domination over our pupils. By treating them as independent subjects, and opening up to their needs and expectations. Stay with us and you will see that withdrawing from power does make a lot of sense.



Ms. Zita Kiedler, teacher in a middle school since 6 yrs. Informed about the experience in teaching the subject "Happiness", which we all were very excited to hear: "Schulfach Glück" is a subject that promotes life skills and

happiness. Schools need space for character education and teamwork. Through this subject adolescents are supported in creating an active and self-reliant life. The concept is about experiencing joy through living and also through one's performance, overcoming and understanding challenges and experiencing the unity between mind and body. Resilience, self-confidence, creativity and reliability are part of the curriculum. The different methods create key-experiences that can trigger personal growth and self-awareness.



Dr. Maria Riehl came back to the origin- the family. She reminded the audience that we did not create ourselves- in contrary are coming from two origins – our parents. So we are created beings. None of us created ourselves.

She also commented on that fact, that contrary to animals, that need to be able to move by themselves right from the time of birth, every human beings is borne completely helpless, being completely dependent on a caregiver, on a family surrounding the new borne.

Also being a grandmother she portrayed how much impact the everyday life in the family, has for a child especially with siblings growing up together.

She mentioned 4 realms of love that can be learned in a family: Starting with the love of a helpless child towards their parent, the precious love among siblings, growing to the love among partners to eventually develop into the love of parents towards their children.

After the official part was ended the discussions among participants continued for almost 2 hours over the coffee table.

*Summary by Renate Amesbauer and Carolyn Handschin*



## Recent and Upcoming Events

### 2018

#### August

- 3.-5.: 19<sup>th</sup> Annual Midwest Catholic Family Conference (Wichita, KS, USA)  
<https://catholicfamilyconference.org/>
- 13.-17.: UFM Family Conference 2018 (Theddingworth, Great Britain)  
<https://www.ufm.org.uk/product/family-conference-2018/>
- 21.-26.: World Meeting of Families (Dublin, Ireland)  
<https://www.worldmeeting2018.ie/en/>
- 24.-27.: Family Conference 2018 (Birmingham, Great Britain)  
<https://www.ofnc.org.uk/event/family-conference-2018/>
- 28.-31.: Family Conference (Watersmeet, MI, USA)  
<https://familyconferences.org/events/family-conference/northwoods-august/>

#### November

- 12.-15.: International Conference on Family Planning (Kigali, Rwanda)  
<http://fpconference.org/2018/>



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