

TOOLKIT

Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years

A Contribution to the Protection
of Children from Violence and the
Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being

BOOKLET IV

Guide for Organizations

CONSORTIUM

on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood
for the Prevention of Violence

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Booklet IV

Guide for Organizations

Booklet IV provides guidance for organizations working with religious and spiritual communities that wish to implement programs that address the spiritual development of children in the early years, as a contribution to the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

This guide for organizations has three sections.

- 1. Guidelines on Integrating the Spiritual Development of Children in Your Organization's Work** (a helpful overview of key issues)
- 2. Preparing to Roll Out a Program** (a model for roll-out with recommendations to ensure success)
- 3. Training Trainers and Staff – Guidance for Organizations** (guidance on how to train new trainers)

This booklet is part of a series of 7 Booklets that together form the Toolkit “Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years – A Contribution to the Protection of Children from Violence and the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being.”

Make sure to refer to the Conceptual Framework in Booklet I, as it contains important information that will strengthen your understanding of the topics.

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How to Integrate the Spiritual Development of Children into Your Organization's Work

This booklet provides guidance for organizations working with religious and spiritual communities that wish to implement programs that address the spiritual development of children in the early years, as a contribution to the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

Objectives

1. Identify entry points and concrete ways to introduce the spiritual development of young children as a thematic organizational priority and/or integrate it into existing programs.
2. Develop staff capacity to design, deliver, monitor and evaluate training programs to equip facilitators to address the spiritual development of children in the early years, thereby contributing to their protection from violence.
3. Train trainers to multiply the program by training more facilitators in selected locations.
4. Identify how the training model can be used to scale up across different locations.

The booklet has three sections.

1. **Guidelines on Integrating the Spiritual Development of Children in Your Organization's Work.** This section provides concrete recommendations to initiate discussions on this topic within your organization and build consensus about the need to integrate the spiritual development of children in existing programs or make it an organizational priority.
2. **Preparing to Roll Out a Program.** This section describes the roll-out model and provides recommendations to ensure a successful roll-out process.
3. **Training Trainers and Staff – Guidance for Organizations.** This section provides guidance on how to train new trainers, focusing especially on what organizations should take into consideration when planning, designing and delivering these training programs.

Guidelines on Integrating the Spiritual Development of Children in Your Organization's Work

Obtain support from your leadership

Before you try to introduce the spiritual development of children as part of your existing programs or propose that it be made an organizational priority, make sure that you have the support of your leadership.



The following suggestions can help you introduce the topic and engage in a fruitful dialogue with your leadership.

- Organize a meeting with your leadership to introduce them to and have a dialogue about the importance of the spiritual development of children in the early years and the impact of violence on child development. Underline the need to support parents, caregivers and educators and work together with religious and spiritual communities, who can have a critical influence on child upbringing. You can refer to the Conceptual Framework in Booklet I for information to support your dialogue.
- Explain the proposed Learning Program for Adults, its purpose, modules, and suggested sessions, as well as its flexibility for adaptation and use in diverse contexts. Refer to Booklet II for details.

These questions can help to guide decisions about introducing the spiritual development of children in the early years as a thematic priority in your organization.

- Does my organization already place importance on the holistic development and well-being of children? Or is it interested in learning more about it?
- Is my organization interested in addressing programmatic gaps by better supporting parents, caregivers and educators to nurture children's spiritual development and well-being?

- Has my organization already made efforts to integrate the spiritual development of children in the early years and would these efforts benefit from a more systematic approach?
- Does my organization work with religious and/or spiritual communities? Yes/No? How?
- Do religious and spiritual communities in the places where my organization operates have a significant impact on parents, caregivers and educators?
- Is my organization interested in working more closely with religious and/or spiritual communities to build upon the positive influence they have on parents, caregivers and educators?

Engage in dialogue with religious and spiritual communities and faith actors

Before you decide to implement a program for the spiritual development of children in the early years involving religious and spiritual communities and faith actors, it is important to understand the different communities you can work with and engage in dialogue with them about the important support they provide to parents, caregivers and educators.

The first key step is to map the religious and spiritual leaders and faith actors in the areas where you hope to work. If you are not an organization or actor local to the community, it will be extremely important to work with local religious and spiritual leaders first, as an entry point. Local leaders can help you identify the primary caregivers and educators and foster the spiritual development of children. You will need to build their trust.

Make connections with existing global frameworks

Many organizations have introduced and are implementing global frameworks to support early childhood development, protect children from violence, and foster the holistic development and well-being of children.

For the spiritual development of children to gain traction within your organization, and in particular, to help create linkages with other programmatic areas, it is recommended to reflect on some of the global frameworks that your organization may already be working with. Some of those are listed below.

Convention on the Rights of the Child

The UN Convention on the Rights of the Child (CRC) — a bill of rights for those under 18 years of age — was adopted in 1989, and it has since been signed by all nations and ratified by almost all, making it the most widely ratified human rights treaty in the world. The commitment to build a better world for children is placing child rights at the cutting edge of the global struggle for human rights to be enshrined as moral and legal obligations. In the years since the CRC was adopted, more governments have come to recognize the importance of children's survival, development, protection and participation.

The CRC has four general principles on the overall safeguarding of the rights of the child:

- The right to survival and development;
- The right to no discrimination;
- The right to be heard; and
- The best interests of the child.

In particular, Article 29 of the CRC states that the education of the child shall be directed to:

(a) The development of the child's personality, talents, and mental and physical abilities to their fullest potential; (b) The development of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms, and for the principles enshrined in the Charter of the United Nations; (c) The development of respect for the child's parents, his or her own cultural identity, language, and values, for the national values of the country in which the child is living, the country from which he or she may originate, and for civilizations different from his or her own; (d) The preparation of the child for responsible life in a free society, in the spirit of understanding, peace, tolerance, equality of sexes, and friendship among all peoples, ethnic, national and religious groups and persons of indigenous origin; and (e) The development of respect for the natural environment.¹

Additionally, Article 27 of the CRC recognizes the right of every child to a "standard of living adequate for the child's physical, mental, spiritual, moral and social development."

The concept of spirituality appears a few times in the CRC. Even though the CRC does not define what spiritual development entails, as just mentioned, it appears in the context of an area of development and well-being of the child, along with physical, mental, moral and social development. This implies that, in the CRC, the spiritual development of a child is as important as all these other developmental areas. This Toolkit reflects on how this "spiritual" aspect of the child's development can be nurtured, especially in the early years of the child's life. The Toolkit is an offering to continue and deepen the discussion of the holistic development of children, including their spiritual development as a central aspect of their holistic well-being.

Sustainable Development Goals

The Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), also known as the Global Goals, were adopted by all United Nations Member States in 2015 as a universal call to action to end poverty, protect the planet and ensure that all people enjoy peace and prosperity by 2030. The 17 SDGs recognize that action in one area will affect outcomes in others, and that development must balance social, economic and environmental sustainability.

Several SDGs relate to the importance of early childhood and prioritize efforts to ensure that children in the early years can thrive and develop fully. Explicit mention is made in SDG Target 4.2 which states that by 2030 countries should: "ensure that all girls and boys have access to quality early childhood development, care and pre-primary education so that they are ready for primary education."

The emphasis on “quality” in Target 4.2 is crucial. The strongest evidence demonstrating that impact on early childhood development is related to well-planned and well-resourced programs that:

- Are “developmentally appropriate,” respecting children’s rights, needs, capacities, interests and ways of learning at each stage of their early lives;
- Recognize the interdependencies between nutrition, health, care and education, from the “first 1,000 days” onwards; and
- Build on and support children’s key relationships, especially with their parents, caregivers, other family members, and educators in the specific physical, spiritual, social, cultural and language contexts that are the foundation for their well-being.

In addition to SDG 4, commitments to early childhood development (ECD) are referenced in at least seven other goals related to poverty, hunger, health (including child mortality), education, gender, water and sanitation, and inequality.



SDGs and their relevance to children’s development

Goal 1: Eradicate poverty — Early childhood development interventions increase adult productivity and income, and reduce inequities.

Goal 2: End hunger and improve nutrition — Interventions to promote nurturing care help to improve young children’s growth and development.

Goal 3: Ensure healthy lives — Supporting early childhood development increases quality of home care practices, protects against stress, and reduces risks of chronic disease and improves mental health in adulthood.

Goal 4: Ensure quality education — Programs that are well-planned and well-resourced as well as “developmentally appropriate” support and prepare young children for primary education.

Goal 5: Achieve gender equality — Early childhood development interventions improve motivation and opportunities for learning for girls, so that they can benefit equally from schooling and enter the job market.

Goal 10: Reduce inequality in and among countries — Early childhood stimulation and food supplementation prepare children living in extreme poverty to attain outcomes closer to their more affluent peers.

Goal 16: Promote peaceful societies — Children who are well nourished and secure show enhanced coping strategies, even in conditions of severe adversity. In the absence of nurturing care, there is a high likelihood that an increasing number of children across the globe will be exposed to violence in their homes and communities.

Goal 17: Strengthen the means of implementation — Early childhood development interventions have the potential to strengthen coordination across sectors to achieve common health, social, and economic goals, and to bring together civil society and governmental partners.²

Organizations in Africa can also refer to the African contextualization of the Sustainable Development Goals, Agenda 2063, through the following goals.³

Goal 3: “Healthy and well-nourished citizens”;

Goal 13: “Peace, security and stability is preserved”;

Goal 18: “Engaged and empowered youth and children.”

SDGs and their relevance to ending violence against children

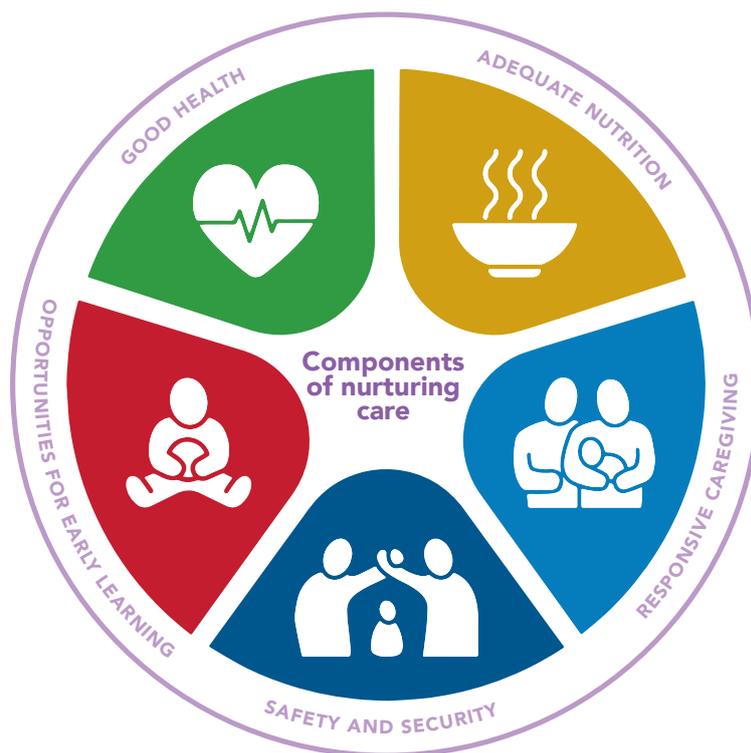
All 17 goals of the SDGs touch children’s lives in one way or another, as drivers of violence against children span the political, economic, social, and cultural spheres. The SDGs include several specific targets aimed at ending violence against children.

- 16.2 — End abuse, exploitation, trafficking and all forms of violence against and torture of children
- 5.1 — End all forms of discrimination against all women and girls everywhere
- 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
- 5.3 — Eliminate all harmful practices, such as child, early and forced marriage and female genital mutilation
- 8.7 — Eradicate forced labour, end modern slavery and human trafficking and secure the prohibition and elimination of the worst forms of child labour, including recruitment and use of child soldiers, and by 2025 end child labour in all its forms

In relation to early childhood development, target 16.2 is especially relevant because it implicitly includes corporal punishment and other violent means of disciplining children. Although corporal punishment is not explicitly mentioned in the target itself, it is reasonable to assume it is included because one of the progress indicators for 16.2 explicitly refers to physical punishment and psychological aggression: “16.2.1 Proportion of children aged 1–17 years who experienced any physical punishment and/or psychological aggression by caregivers in the past month.”

Nurturing Care Framework for Early Childhood Development⁴

This is a framework for helping children survive and thrive to transform health and human potential, which provides a roadmap for action. It builds on the latest evidence about how early childhood development unfolds and how it can be improved by policies and interventions.



The framework outlines:

- Why efforts to improve health, well-being and human capital must begin in the earliest years, from pregnancy to age three;
- The major threats to early childhood development;
- How nurturing care protects young children from the worst effects of adversity and promotes development — physical, emotional, social and cognitive; and
- What caregivers need in order to provide nurturing care for young children.

Spiritual development is an integral part of responsive caregiving; it is critical to create safe environments for children, in order to foster secure attachment and opportunities for early learning. Protection from violence, a prerequisite for healthy spiritual development, also cuts across all the components of Nurturing Care.

INSPIRE Strategies to End Violence¹

INSPIRE is an evidence-based technical package to support countries in their efforts to prevent and respond to violence against children. It identifies a selected group of strategies that have shown success in reducing violence against children. These strategies span areas such as: implementation and enforcement of laws; norms and values; safe environments; parent and caregiver support; income and economic strengthening; response and support services; and education and life skills.

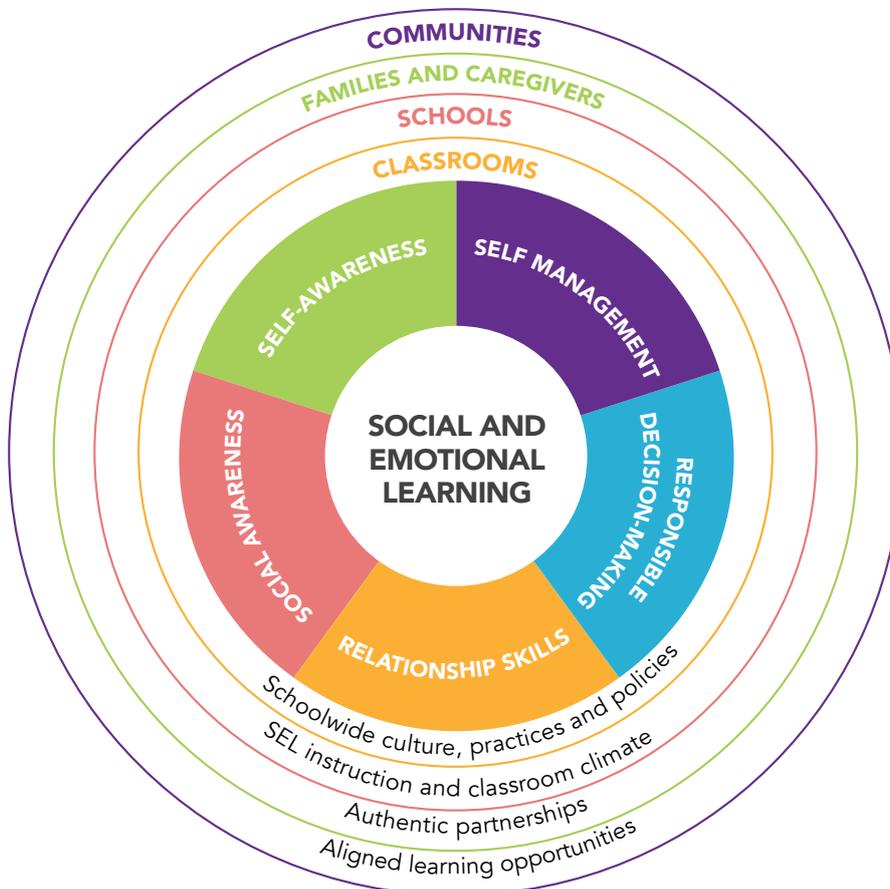
¹ In 2016, ten international organizations launched *INSPIRE: Seven Strategies for Ending Violence Against Children*, an evidence-based resource package of seven strategies to end violence against children. https://www.who.int/violence_injury_prevention/violence/inspire/en/

Areas covered by the INSPIRE strategies are interconnected and, one way or another, related to all aspects of children’s lives. To successfully eradicate violence against children, multisectoral approaches catalyzing change and transformation in all seven areas are needed. Religious and spiritual communities are often present in all of these areas, touching children’s lives directly or indirectly, and the moral authority, influence and exemplary actions of members of these communities can have a positive impact on children’s well-being. In this Toolkit, particular emphasis is given to the role of religious and spiritual communities in the areas of norms and values, parent and caregiver support, and education and life skills, which are all critical to support the spiritual development of children.

-  **Implementation and enforcement of laws**
-  **Norms and values**
-  **Safe environments**
-  **Parent and caregiver support**
-  **Income and economic strengthening**
-  **Response and support services**
-  **Education and life skills**

Collaborative for Academic, Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL)⁵

CASEL’s Social and Emotional Learning Framework fosters knowledge, skills, and attitudes across five areas of competence and multiple key settings to establish equitable learning environments that advance students’ learning and development.



This Toolkit sees spiritual development as central to the five areas of competence, which are: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, relationship skills and responsible decision-making.

Identify opportunities for integrating spiritual development into existing programs

This Toolkit is not intended to be implemented in isolation. It is recommended for integration into existing parenting and/or ECD programs, or others that support families or provide comprehensive support for child development. It is, therefore, important to find entry points where the spiritual development of children can be introduced into existing programmatic areas. This can help to reach across silos, strengthen programmatic actions, and avoid creating new programs targeting similar population groups.

Integrating into early childhood programming

Early childhood programs may be interested in incorporating the spiritual development of children in their work by implementing and customizing some or all of the suggested modules and sessions of the Learning Program for Adults, found in Booklet II, for parents, caregivers and educators. The Activities for Children, found in Booklet III, also works very well when included in existing programs. For maximum benefits, it is suggested that modules, sessions, and activities are not used in a one-off manner; it is best to use them together as part of an integrated program.

Many types of programs in different settings can benefit by incorporating the spiritual development of children: parenting education, mother and child health services, village child nutrition clubs, home visits, parent support groups, local preschools, local home-based day care providers, private providers of preschool or day care, religious-based preschools (e.g., madrasas, Sunday schools), civil society early childhood programs, government programs, and more.

It is recommended that you emphasize to early childhood implementers that spiritual development programs or sessions would not replace or take priority over existing activities, but that they are best implemented alongside activities in other domains, such as social-emotional, cognitive and language activities, to promote holistic child development. Also, note that some of the activities to build spiritual capacities simultaneously also build language, socio-emotional and cognitive competencies.

Integrating into child protection programming

Organizations with child protection programs can integrate the spiritual development of children to address the protection of children from violence and abuse in early childhood by deepening their own understanding of the role that spirituality plays in the life of the child and those directly or indirectly engaged with children. Many children are exposed to the risk of abuse and violence, which are closely tied to social or cultural norms that condone such behaviors and actions. Understanding and addressing the underlying causes requires, among

other things, applying a spiritual lens fostered by dialogue on the relational interdependence of children with adults and the influence of those relationships on children — looking at the developmental impacts of the environment and the experiences that adults provide to children. It is important to engage religious and spiritual communities in self-examination of beliefs and practices that support positive social norms and help them to challenge those that condone violence against children. Child protection programs can coordinate closely with religious and spiritual leaders to ensure that these messages reach the community.

The Conceptual Framework and the Learning Program for Adults of this Toolkit detail the interconnectedness between the spiritual development of children and the protection of children from violence. Organizations can adapt the Learning Program for Adults, with its modules and sessions, within their existing child protection programming, such as positive parenting initiatives, community-based child protection programs, or initiatives to support mental and psychosocial well-being.

Integrating into health and nutrition programming

Many health and nutrition programs are already reaching large numbers of women, children and families. They may have an established platform and a workforce that engages these participants. Participants of health programs who are also interested in the spiritual development and holistic well-being of their children, may find this type of programming an appealing addition. Sessions and activities on how to nurture the spiritual development of children could be integrated into existing nutrition and health education programs.

Integrating into economic empowerment programming

Considering that poverty is a main risk factor that co-occurs with increased child exposure to violence⁶, with poverty more than doubling the rate of being a potential victim of violence⁷, there is great benefit in integrating this intervention into livelihood and economic empowerment programming. For example, sessions or activities for nurturing spiritual development in children could be integrated into meetings of a community's savings and loan group. Sessions could also be integrated into a program to teach agricultural techniques to rural farmers. The details of existing programs may vary, but the content of this Toolkit is designed to be flexible for wrap-around programming for your participants.

Linking to complementary programming

- **Domestic violence:** Child exposure to domestic violence has a similar impact on the brain and overall well-being as if the child themselves experienced the violence.⁸The suggested Learning Program for Adults (Booklet II) provides concrete complementarities and support for address violence in early childhood by fostering reflections and self-examination among parents, caregivers and educators on the impact of violence on the development of children, assisting them to develop concrete skills, and providing tools for them to foster the conditions for the spiritual development of children. These conditions help them develop safe, respectful and violence-free environments, positive and respectful relationships, and empowering experiences that support the agency of children. All members of the family can be engaged in this type of complementary programming.

- **Awareness raising:** This Toolkit focuses on effecting change within children and the individuals who spend the most time with them, with the knowledge that this is where the evidence base shows the greatest and long-lasting impact on children’s lifetime outcomes. However, the Toolkit can also be very effective in a broader way when conducted in concert with public awareness-raising campaigns and wider community initiatives to reduce violence. Programs that work with religious and spiritual communities to challenge norms that condone violence against children or strengthen those that foster holistic development are good candidates. Refer to Booklet VII — Guide for Religious and Spiritual Leaders for information on how they can help to raise awareness to support the holistic development and well-being of children.

Linking to supplementary service delivery and programming

Programs may have enhanced effectiveness when they partner with or piggyback on other existing programming. You can map government, civil society or private institutions that are providing service delivery and programming and see if there is a way to link with those existing efforts. For instance:

- Do community members already meet in religious or spiritual programs, savings and loans groups, reproductive health groups, sports, or for social purposes? Can you layer the modules and activities of the Toolkit into those already regularly occurring meetings? Can your activities capitalize on those venues and established ways of engaging?
- Can your sessions with caregivers accompany provision of nutritional support?
- Do community health workers already do home visits or extension visits? Can your facilitator accompany these health workers and provide complementary content?

Preparing to Roll Out a Program

Once you have the leadership endorsement to incorporate the spiritual development of children in the early years into your organizational programming, there are several factors aspects that you may wish to consider.

1. Who will coordinate the overall program? Will it be the child protection or early childhood team? Or another? Consider what would be most appropriate for the sustainability of the program, for supporting existing work or helping to close programmatic gaps.
2. How can the organization create complementarity with existing programs? What existing resources, tools or programs does your organization have to complement this work?
3. What kind of commitment and support will the organization offer for the roll out of the program? Are there additional financial resources allocated?
4. How can the organization involve faith actors throughout — from the design, planning, and implementation to the monitoring and evaluation phases of the program? It is recommended to develop a needs assessment or mapping before training new trainers

or involving religious and spiritual leaders and other actors, to help understand the context, motivations, needs, unique opportunities and potential challenges. Refer to the Needs Assessment section on page 20. It is also recommended to involve religious and spiritual leaders as trainers.

5. How will the program be rolled out? It is suggested to use a cascading model that will help build capacities in the organization and generate ownership from faith actors at the community level. Refer to the roll-out model below.
6. How will you monitor and evaluate the success of the program? Does your organization already have an M&E framework in place? How can you integrate with that in order to assess comprehensive results and linkages? For reference, refer to the M&E Booklet of this Toolkit, available online. It provides tools for monitoring and evaluating training workshops for trainers or facilitators, and sessions with parents, caregivers and educators. It also offers tools for monitoring impacts and benefits for children. For further helpful information on monitoring and evaluation, refer to: <https://childspiritualdevelopment.org>.

Roll-out model

The proposed roll-out model has four components that can support the cascading of the suggested Learning Program for Adults to the community level:

1

Organizational commitment and leadership. Ensure the sustainability of the program by connecting it to programmatic areas open to integrating the holistic development of children in the early years, with particular emphasis on the spiritual development of children for the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

2

Training of trainers. Develop a pool of trainers that includes staff from the programmatic areas in charge, as well as religious and spiritual leaders who can help to create trust and better linkages with the local community. If your organization operates across diverse geographical areas, make sure to ensure diversity in your global pool of trainers across the areas of work and be sure to represent the diversity of the populations served. This team of trainers might take the role of helping to design the program roll out, and customizing the program to organizational, contextual and participants needs. Trainers would be in charge of conducting the programs to train facilitators who will work directly with parents, caregivers, and educators and others who care for children.

3

Training of facilitators. Develop a pool of facilitators from religious and spiritual communities and other faith actors who will implement the program with parents, caregivers, and educators, etc., in their local contexts. These facilitators will then plan and customize programs for parents, caregivers and educators, etc., of young children in their local communities. The facilitators should also be prepared to plan activities for young children (see Booklet III) in case parents, caregivers and educators bring their children along with them to their sessions.

4

Programs for parents, caregivers and educators. The Learning Program for Adults and Activities for Children are then used to equip parents, caregivers and educators to support the spiritual development of children. They learn key skills for nurturing positive relationships with children, fostering an environment free of violence at home, and creating empowering experiences to develop a child's sense of belonging, community, purpose and interconnectedness with others. This, in turn, contributes to positive development outcomes for children. The Learning Program for Adults and Activities for Children will help to engage diverse community actors, thereby fostering a whole-community approach.

TRAINERS

The individuals who design, adapt, deliver, and monitor and evaluate the programs to train facilitators. It is suggested that trainers are staff members of the organizations who have technical knowledge in child protection and empowerment as well as some experience working with parents, caregivers, and educators, and key faith actors in the community where programs will be implemented.

FACILITATORS

The individuals who design, adapt, implement and monitor and evaluate programs with parents, caregivers and educators (and sometimes, with children in parallel). It is suggested that facilitators are local faith actors who have direct contact with and already work with parents, caregivers and educators in their communities.

The learning program for adults

The Learning Program for Adults (see Booklet II) is made up of the suggested modules, thematic sessions and related activities to develop the knowledge, attitudes and skills needed to nurture and support the spiritual development of children in the early years, and ultimately to help foster spiritual capacities in young children. It is based on the Toolkit's Conceptual Framework (see Booklet I) and is built with a methodological approach designed to enhance internalization of concepts, promote dialogue and strengthen support networks.

The Learning Program for Adults is used to train both trainers and facilitators. Facilitators will also then use it with parents, caregivers and educators. It can be customized to meet the needs, objectives, programs and capacity of your organization. Thus, it is important for the organization's technical experts and trainers to make themselves very familiar with the content of Booklet II.

The following is an overview of the Learning Program for Adults:

LEARNING MODULE	SESSION
Module 1: Importance of Children's Spiritual Development for the Protection of Children from Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 1: Child Dignity and Child Rights
	Session 2: Early Childhood and the Holistic Development and Well-Being of Children
	Session 3: Spiritual Development of Children
	Session 4: Violence Against Children
Module 2: Nurturing One's Own Spirituality	Session 5: My Understanding of Spirituality
	Session 6: My Spiritual Well-Being
Module 3: Conditions for Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years	PART 1 Introducing Module 3 (for Trainers to Do with Facilitators in Training Only)
	PART 2 Session 7: Nurturing Positive Relationships Between Parents, Caregivers, Educators and Children. Session 8: Safe Environments. Session 9: Empowering Experiences
	PART 3 Session 10: Exploring the Activities for Children

Training Trainers and Staff — Guidance for Organizations

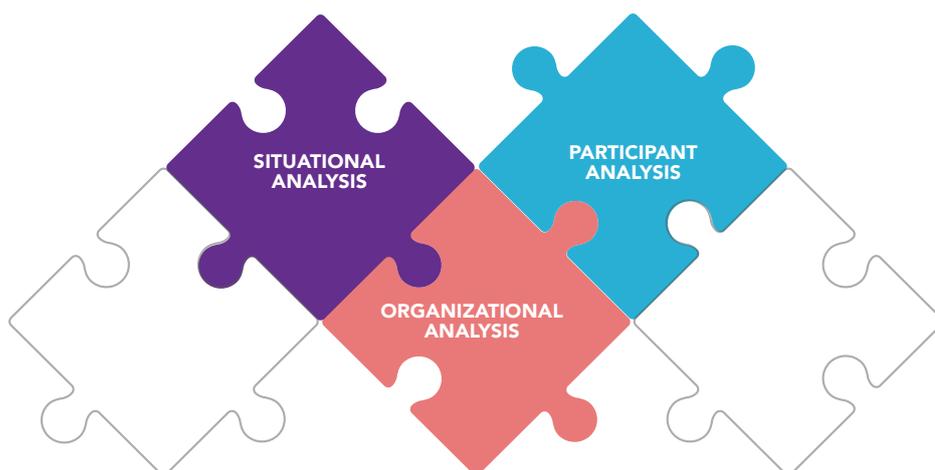
This section provides guidance to organizations that wish to develop a pool of trainers who will support the planning, design, and delivery of customized training programs for facilitators, helping to multiply and cascade the program in one or several locations.

Before: Preparing to train the trainers

Needs assessment

The needs assessment enables you as an organization to collect and analyze information on the context you work with and where you are planning to roll out the program, your organizational capacity, and your training participants' learning needs and expectations. This information is essential for making informed decisions regarding the planning, program design, allocation of resources, and cascading strategy.

The needs assessment is critical as you embark as an organization on the process of planning programs to support the spiritual development of children in the early years, and in the design of the training programs that will help you cascade the effort to several locations and many parents, caregivers and educators.



Situational analysis

Collect information that will allow you to examine the context in the community where you wish to implement the program, as well as the main issues that affect young children, their parents

and caregivers, and families in general. Based on these findings, when the training programs for facilitators start, trainers can engage facilitators-in-training in analyzing the context. This process will help them become more critically conscious about the social dynamics, contextual factors that affect children and their families, and the way your program will intersect with those, as well as their own views on all this.

You will want to conduct a mapping to identify the behaviors that promote or hinder early childhood development, children's spiritual development, and violence towards children. Gather with the potential trainers: they might include staff from your organization who might be leading the program, and/or senior faith actors who will be helping to multiply the program in their communities. Make sure that you have diversity, in terms of different ages, gender, and different roles in the community. You may also wish to invite participants beyond faith actors to participate in mapping, such as community actors, or service providers. For example, health and social service providers may know the families with pregnant women, those with multiple risk factors and vulnerabilities.

Take six pieces of large paper and hang them on the wall or around tables. Label six different papers:

- Current practices that promote positive early child development
- Current practices that hinder positive early child development
- Current practices that promote spiritual development of children
- Current practices that hinder spiritual development of children
- Current practices that promote violence towards children
- Current practices that hinder violence towards children

During the mapping process, you might also want to map items like these:

- Preferred modes of engagement of different types of community members
- Preferred spaces for gathering of different types of community members
- Preferred timing for gathering of different types of community members
- Existing actors already engaged in addressing early childhood development, prevention of violence against children, promoting spiritual development, and related areas
- Existing services that address early childhood development, violence against children, promoting spiritual development, and related areas
- Existing services that provide psychological support that may support the process and help address situations where trauma may be present



If you have literate community members, let them walk around the room and write their ideas on each sheet. If you have low levels of literacy, let them walk in twos, where one person can help by writing both person's ideas down.

When you have these answers, you can see what assets you can build upon in the community. You can also see what the biggest challenges in the community are. Then when you roll out your training programs, you can ask participants to bring forward the assets of the community and let other participants learn from good practices. From the challenges, you can identify where you need to spend more time and attention during your training.

Organizational analysis

As an implementing organization, it is important to assess your expectations and programmatic work, as well as your commitment and support. Take into consideration the following factors:

Expectations:

Are the expectations of my organization aligned with the program objectives set at the programmatic level to nurture the spiritual development of children in the early years? Does my organization understand how the program supports other ongoing programmatic areas and links to frameworks the organization is already committed to? This will allow a better roll out of the program and maximize synergies within the organization.



Commitment:

It is essential to know if your organization is committed to supporting the trainers to implement the program for the period set by your organization for the roll out of the program, including implementation with parents, caregivers and educators. Will the organization provide a dedicated budget for training, implementation, support, monitoring and evaluation? This will ensure that the programs you are initiating will be systematic and you will have the opportunity to monitor and evaluate what takes place.



Support:

It is important to assess the kind of support that trainers will need to implement the program. Will they need approval to deliver the training for facilitators from their departments or direct supervisors? Will they need additional time to develop, study, understand, and contextualize the content of the Learning Program and to develop and implement the training? This information will allow your organization to be better prepared to roll out the training program.

Participant analysis

It is important to understand who you are training. It is suggested that you involve staff members who are in charge of child protection, early childhood programming, family programs, or other related areas, as well as senior faith actors who might add value to your program and help connect with the community.

Faith actors to include as trainers may include: clerics, gurus, imams, lamas, monks, mullas, nuns, priests, rabbis, shamans, sheikhs, sukias, swamis, and lay religious leaders, among others.

When collecting data, remember to consider the individual characteristics and profile of each participant. Certain characteristics such as age, gender, education and occupation, as well as religious and cultural background, and experience working with religious and spiritual communities, can influence the content of the training, frame the choice of methodologies and activities, and define group dynamics, particularly in some cultural contexts. Try to ensure gender, religious and age balance, and be aware that gender, age and education often influence the power dynamics within the group.



We recommend all programs to be in participants' first language or for participants to be comfortable speaking in the working language of the training. Be aware of participants' physical needs and literacy levels when considering activities and logistics.

Knowing participant's expectations and motivation in advance provides the opportunity to readjust the objectives and methodologies.

Objectives for training trainers

The overarching goal is to equip trainers with the knowledge, skills and tools they need to design, plan, implement, monitor and evaluate training programs for the facilitators who will be working directly with parents, caregivers and educators.

At the end of the training program, trainers should be able to:

- 1** Understand the importance of the spiritual development of children for their holistic development and well-being, and identify ways it can contribute to the protection of children from violence in the early years when incorporated into new or existing programs operated by the organization;
- 2** Apply the Conceptual Framework (Booklet I) to design, deliver, monitor and evaluate training programs that train facilitators to conduct programs that equip parents, caregivers and educators to nurture the spiritual development of children in the early years;
- 3** Demonstrate knowledge and skills needed to conduct training for facilitators that is customized to their cultural, religious and spiritual backgrounds; and
- 4** Use M&E tools to assess the success of the training programs.

Selection of trainers

The trainers have a very important role to play in the roll out of the program, as they will be in charge of ensuring that the training is customized to the facilitators and responds to the organizational, contextual and participant needs. They will ensure that the program is anchored in a community-level approach that builds on the knowledge, experiences and expertise of local faith actors.

The following are characteristics of a potentially successful trainer.

- At least three years' experience working in ECD and/or parenting programs or contexts
- Experience leading groups
- Functional literacy
- Experience using interactive methodologies and techniques
- Ability to listen with empathy, create dialogue, and handle contested ideas and tensions
- Capacity to refrain from judging others
- Knowledge of child development
- Sensitivity to religious and spiritual traditions, ethnic diversity, gender and disability
- Acceptance by the potential participants
- Ability to connect with peers
- Reflecting the diversity of participants (example, if participants include representatives of diverse ethnic and religious and spiritual groups, you may wish to include trainers from these backgrounds)⁹

Recommendations:

- Involve permanent staff members (likely to stay engaged in the organization for a longer period)
- At least some of the trainers have a good overview of the organizations' ECD programs and wide experience
- The pool of trainers reflects diverse backgrounds — protection, ECD, community workers, working at the global and local scale and languages spoken by the beneficiaries

Logistics

Materials

Create a checklist of all the materials you will need for the training. Make sure that the venue has the necessary equipment, such as projectors and speakers, moving chairs and tables, and plenty of light. To avoid delaying sessions, make sure that all materials are ready, and equipment is installed and working properly beforehand.

In some contexts, you may not have access to the proposed equipment or materials. The Learning Program is inclusive and adaptable to all contexts and can be used with minimum resources.

Setting the scene

When setting up and using the venue, ensure that all participants have a clear line of sight to the screen or to any material you may want to show. Placing the chairs in a semi-circle is more embracing and welcoming. Ensure that all participants are part of the semi-circle and take part in the activities, in order to create a relationship of equals among them all. In some cultures or religious and spiritual traditions, women and men sit separately; thus it is important to consider gender and other factors when arranging the training space.

If children will also be in attendance, make sure to have a separate space, close to the meeting room, with some materials adapted for their ages and the proposed activities, and appropriate staffing to care for them. If babies or toddlers will be present, make sure the space is welcoming and safe for them, as well.

Linking with local actors outside your organization

Before you start training the trainers, you will also want to seek out information on resources available and let local stakeholders know about the work you intend to do. Cover these issues in the training. For instance:

- If a case of child abuse becomes apparent when facilitators are working in the community later, is there a referral system where the abuse must/can be reported or where victims can receive help? Be sure to follow the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct of your organization.
- Will the village council or any other local governing body need to know about or grant authorization for you to implement your activity?
- Will you couple the program with parents/caregivers, with other services, like income generation activities, savings and loan groups, nutritional support, or health services?

Be sure to make contact with the local stakeholders in these and other relevant areas so that they will be prepared to support you in the work you intend to do.

Whole-community approach

Nurturing the spiritual development of children in the early years requires a whole-community approach that helps build the needed conditions around the child and provides support to parents, caregivers and educators. As an organization, you may want to roll out your program with the involvement of several community actors and institutions that are involved in the development of children. All of your trainers will want to be familiar with how to work with them, and some of these institutions' staff members could also be trained as trainers.

Below are some suggestions that you can share during the training so trainers-in-training can understand how to support facilitators to engage the broader community for greater reach, if

applicable and suitable to their needs, organizational capacity and objectives. Discuss these with your trainers-in-training, as appropriate.

Early learning and care settings

- If you have access or collaborations with a religious-based school or schools that might be interested in the spiritual development of children, early childhood educators can be trained as facilitators to implement the modules, sessions and activities in a preschool, day care center, weekly children's religious education, or informal play spaces.
 - Offer other actors involved in child-care the possibility to be part of your programs and/or particular sessions to enhance caregiving skills, and positive interaction with children.
- You may also wish to be in contact with public schools and public preschools in your area, share about the program with them, and welcome interested parties to engage in your program. Remember that the Toolkit includes specific instructions for easy customization in early learning centers and school activities.
- You can also encourage schools or early learning and care centers to incorporate some ideas such as:
 - Making schools safe places and nurturing environments for children, that are free of violence and provide opportunities for children to develop holistically
 - Aiding educators to develop alternatives to the use of corporal punishment
 - Advocating for spiritual development, and values-based and ethics education to be integrated into programming, teaching and curricula in education and care center settings
 - Introducing interreligious learning activities where children, from the early years, get chances to learn about diversity and collaborate with others from different religious and spiritual backgrounds
 - Introducing information sessions with parents, caregivers and educators about the importance of the spiritual development of young children and the impact of violence on their holistic well-being. You can encourage schools to use some of the activities for parents, caregivers and educators provided in Booklet III.

Religious and spiritual community settings

- For your program to be successful, you may want to involve religious and spiritual leaders in the communities where you operate in discussions regarding violence against children and its impact on child development, and on the benefits of nurturing spiritual development for children's holistic well-being. You can organize dialogues between religious and spiritual leaders and child protection experts to reflect on the issues using theological reflection and evidence-based information.¹¹

¹¹ You can find ideas for conducting these dialogues in the reports of the work conducted by the International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Protection of Children from Violence. See: INSPIREd Faith Communities: Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence (2019). <https://ethicseducationforchildren.org/consortium/>

- You can organize information sessions for religious and spiritual leaders about the Toolkit and its Learning Program for Adults, to gain their interest in training faith actors in their communities.
- You can encourage religious and spiritual leaders to integrate messages regarding the importance of nurturing the spiritual development of children and challenging norms that condone violence in child upbringing into their religious programming, worship, or services/sermons/ministries. You can find some ideas in Booklet VII — Guide for Religious and Spiritual Leaders.
- You can encourage religious and spiritual communities to become child-friendly spaces by training their members and staff members in child protection and integrating the Learning Program into their activities. They can offer programs for parents, caregivers and educators for nurturing the spiritual development of children. In sermons, home visits and other activities, they can use the scriptures or counselling to challenge norms that condone violence in early childhood, including sexual violence, as well as to promote the active engagement of fathers and encourage social norms that foster the positive development of children and their holistic well-being.
- Inform religious and spiritual communities of appropriate reporting and referral systems when cases of violence against a child are identified in their communities. If religious and spiritual communities discover a breach of the Child Safeguarding Policy and Code of Conduct of their organization, they should always comply with the policy and code and specified processes for reporting the concern/incident. Make sure that, when a case of violence against a child occurs, it is always reported to the appropriate mechanism, local authorities and systems. Never ignore a situation of violence or abuse of children!
- Stimulate networks of interreligious actors that collaborate with various stakeholders on the protection of children from violence and nurturing the spiritual development of children.

Community settings

- Promote services and interventions with community members that foster the spiritual development of children and their holistic well-being.
- Align and integrate your sessions and activities into existing services and programs, as appropriate to the context.
- Liaise with local stakeholders, like village elders, local community council, government service delivery, civil society projects, or other child protection or early childhood programs, so that they are aware of what you are doing.
- Hold community gatherings to gather stakeholders, share messaging, and invite community members to engage in more in-depth activities, like group sessions, or organizing activities with children.
- Conduct periodic home visits, if appropriate, with one-on-one interactions, dialogue and support to parents, caregivers and educators.
- Engage in multi-sectoral or interreligious dialogues, demonstrating the value that faith actors can bring to nurturing spirituality in early childhood and preventing violence.

Traditional media and social media settings

- As you sensitize community members about the importance of the spiritual development of children in the early years as a contribution to the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being, make them aware of how they may need to protect young children from exposure to violence that comes through traditional and social media.
- You may wish to start a social media campaign with members of different religious and spiritual groups. Goals could include: (1) raising awareness about how violence in early childhood impacts children's development; and (2) highlighting the importance of nurturing children's spiritual development by fostering positive relationships with parents, caregivers and educators, creating environments that are safe, respectful and free of violence, and fostering empowering experiences where children can develop their sense of belonging, community, purpose and interconnectedness with others.
- You may also use radio or TV programs to raise awareness about the importance of protecting children from violence and nurturing the spiritual development of children, providing concrete tips and ideas for parents, caregivers and educators based on the content of the sessions and activities proposed in this Toolkit.

Policy, systems, and structures settings

- If your organization is in a position to influence policymakers, engage with local officials to raise issues of concern regarding violence against children and child upbringing, and raise awareness about the impact of violence in children's development and holistic well-being.
- Join advocacy efforts with other organizations at local, regional or national levels.
- Advocate for more investment in children's services and support to families.
- Advocate for holistic approaches for promoting the well-being of children in the early years of life.

During: Conducting an effective training

Delivering the training

It is suggested that trainers-in-training experience the full Learning Program for Adults suggested in this Toolkit (found in Booklet II). This will allow them to gain a full understanding of all the key topics and the interrelations among areas that support the spiritual development of children in the early years. It will also help them internalize the importance of nurturing their own spirituality to better understand how spiritual development can be nurtured in children. The Learning Program also gives these new trainers an understanding of the conditions that enable the spiritual development of children in the early years and concrete ways to foster those conditions.

Depending on the experience and expertise of your group, you might want to shorten some sessions in the modules and focus more time on the sessions where you feel more knowledge is needed. Your trainers may be more or less familiar with various areas. For example:

- Some may find the concept of spiritual development challenging, wondering what it is and how it contributes to children’s holistic well-being. If so, you may want to spend more time on Session 3 of the Learning Program for Adults and organize several activities related to sessions 5 and 6, which deal with “Nurturing One’s Own Spirituality.”
- Some may be new to the concept of early childhood, wondering how it is critical for children’s well-being and for strengthening the foundations for spiritual development. If so, you may want to spend more time on Session 2 of the Learning Program for Adults.
- Some may find the issue of violence challenging or sensitive, or they may have experienced violence in their own childhoods. If so, you may want to spend time in Session 4 on this topic, and also create spaces throughout the training for self-reflection using the learning log or through peer-to-peer reflections and dialogues, to allow them to process their own experiences of violence.
- Some may be less familiar with adult education techniques and may be inclined to engage in one-way talking and lectures, rather than in practical and participatory methodologies. If so, you may need to spend more time allowing them to engage in practical activities to practice facilitation and how to build dialogue and facilitate highly participatory activities.
- Some might be very familiar with the topics or find it easier to understand their importance but do not have practical experience or understanding of how the spiritual development of children actually takes place. You might want to spend more time on each of the sessions of Module 3, which provide concrete knowledge and tools for supporting the development of caring, nurturing and positive relationships between parents/caregivers/educators and children which foster children’s spiritual development, for fostering environments that are safe, respectful and free of violence of children’s well-being, and for creating opportunities for children in the early years to develop their sense of belonging, community, purpose and interconnectedness with others.

Training program duration

It is suggested that your program to train trainers has a total duration of at least 32 hours, organized either during four to five consecutive days, or in sessions of two or four hours spread out over a month. Sessions can be organized face to face, online, or in a hybrid format. It is recommended that most of the sessions take place in person, as it allows participants to disconnect from their daily routine.

In the case of a residential program, the suggested duration will vary to add time for cross-sectional sessions such as morning reflections, interreligious visits, cultural evenings, or community engagement. However, each implementer is free to customize depending on the needs, number of participants, and areas that need less or more attention.

It is important to make sure that the training is organized consistently and, if done over a period of time, that participants take home some follow-up activities or reflections.

Training calendar

The table below shows the suggested areas to be included in the training. You are encouraged to adapt the objectives to your organizational needs and to incorporate other elements that might be appropriate for the integration into your existing programs and priorities. The program provides a suggested duration adequate to complete the full training on all modules, sessions and activities — 58 hours, which is approximately 8 full days (seven hours a day). Organizations can also run the training in a lighter version, implementing only one activity from each module, which yields a total duration of 32 hours, or approximately 4.5 days (seven hours a day). However, each implementer is free to customize depending on the needs, number of participants, and areas that need less or more attention. We highly recommend the minimum of 32 hours in order to cover all the key areas.

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Setting the scene	Welcome and getting ready for the workshop	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Welcome participants. › Share the objectives and agenda. › Ask participants to share their expectations. › Guide participants to define the important considerations for working together. 		30 minutes
	Getting to know each other	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Facilitate participants getting to know each other and start to build a safe learning environment. › Engage participants in reflections among themselves so they can discover connections with one another. 		90 minutes
	Introduction to organizational priorities and expectations	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Introduce participants to organizational priorities and relevance of “children in the early years” to the organization’s ongoing programs, and connections to global frameworks the organization is engaged with. 		60 minutes

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Conceptual Framework, Learning Program for Adults and Modules and Activities for Children	Introduction to the Toolkit and its diverse components, including the Conceptual Framework, Building Blocks, Learning Program for Adults and modules for nurturing the spiritual development of children in the early years and Activities for Children.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Facilitate an active exploration by participants of the Toolkit and its components, including the Conceptual Framework and Learning Program for Adults. 	Conceptual Framework, Learning Program for Adults, and Activities for Children	90 minutes
Module 1: Importance of Children’s Spiritual Development for the Protection of Children from Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 1: Child Dignity and Child Rights	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Analyze child rights and the Convention on the Rights of the Child and name methods of securing an environment that enables the realization, protection and development of children’s rights and dignity in order to ensure their holistic well-being and spiritual development. › Identify and reflect on the importance of the dignity of the child as a fundamental principle found in all religious and spiritual traditions, and understand how religious and spiritual traditions can help with protecting and affirming children’s dignity. 	Conceptual Framework and Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity, or 270 minutes for all three activities of the session.
	Session 2: Early Childhood and the Holistic Development and Well-Being of Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify the critical importance of the early years for the development of children and for their spiritual and holistic well-being. › Describe the different aspects of holistic development and well-being and the central role that spiritual development of children plays in their holistic development. › Identify the role of parents, caregivers, educators and the community. 	Conceptual Framework and Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity, or 270 minutes for all three activities of the session.

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Module 1: Importance of Children’s Spiritual Development for the Protection of Children from Violence and for the Promotion of Their Holistic Well-Being	Session 3: Spiritual Development in Children Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Understand the spiritual development of children, why it is important, and how it contributes to children’s well-being. 	Conceptual Framework and Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity, or 270 minutes for all three activities of the session.
	Session 4: Violence Against Children Note: You can use only one activity from this Module or the suggested 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Analyze the types of violence that children face and how those affect children’s holistic development and well-being. › Identify how fostering children’s spiritual development contributes to the protection of children from violence and their holistic well-being. 	Conceptual Framework and Learning Program for Adults Note: As you conclude Module 1, remember to create time and space for the Learning Circle.	90 minutes for 1 activity, or 270 minutes for all three activities of the session.
Learning Circle		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Participants share their reflections on the session and connect with one another. 		30 minutes
Module 2: Nurturing One’s Own Spirituality	Session 5: My Understanding of Spirituality Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Explore and reflect on their own understanding of spirituality, and the practices and factors that foster its development. › Identify how their own religious and spiritual beliefs and practices contribute to their spiritual development. › Show a greater understanding of different religious and spiritual beliefs and new insight into their own and others’ spirituality. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.
	Session 6: My Spiritual Well-Being Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify how, by fostering their own spiritual well-being, participants can enhance their parenting practices and relationships with children, foster positive environments and experiences for them, and contribute to children’s well-being. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INSTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Learning Circle		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Participants share their reflections on the session and connect with one another. 		30 minutes
Module 3: Conditions for Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years	Introducing Module 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Demonstrate understanding of the conditions for nurturing the spiritual development of children and articulate how they are critical for the unfolding of spiritual development and the nurturing of spiritual capacities in children. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.
	Session 7: Nurturing Positive Relationships between Parents, Caregivers, Educators and Children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify the benefits of positive and respectful relationships between parents, caregivers, educators, and children. › Identify concrete ways to build positive relationships with children that support their well-being and spiritual development. › Show awareness of the importance of modeling values and behaviors that benefit children through example. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.
	Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.v			
	Session 8: Safe Environments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify the factors that hinder or support the creation of environments for children that are safe, respectful and free of violence to enable their spiritual development. › Describe how the family and community, including religious and spiritual communities, contribute to children’s spiritual well-being. › Explore and understand children’s rights and name methods of securing an environment that enables the realization, protection and development of children’s rights and dignity in order to ensure their holistic well-being and spiritual development. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.
	Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.			

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Module 3: Conditions for Nurturing the Spiritual Development of Children in the Early Years	Session 9: Empowering Experiences Note: You can use only one activity from this session or all 3.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Identify what experiences enhance children’s ability to develop prosocial behaviors, ethical values and capacity for reflection. › Describe and understand the importance of using play to nurture children’s spiritual development, and how you can do it. › Analyze how the experiences children go through support them in developing their agency and sense of belonging, community, purpose and interconnectedness with others. 	Learning Program for Adults	90 minutes for 1 activity or 270 minutes for the three activities of the session.
	Session 10: Exploring the Activities for Children Note: You can use only one activity from this session or the suggested 2.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Demonstrate familiarity with the Activities for Children and how to use them. › Identify and reflect upon diverse spiritual capacities. 	Learning Program for Adults and Activities for Children	90 minutes or 180 minutes for the two activities of the session.
Learning Circle		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Participants share their reflections on the session and connect with one another. 		30 minutes
Learning Approach, Process and Methodologies	Adults’ learning styles and the Toolkit’s suggested learning approach, learning process and methodologies as you can find below on pages 39-42.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Guide participants in exploring how adults learn and how the methodologies and learning approach proposed in the Toolkit support active participation and involvement. 		120 minutes
Design a Training Program for Facilitators	Guided simulation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Guide participants as they practice planning and preparing to deliver a training program and plan sessions for facilitators. 		120 minutes

SEGMENT	TOPIC	INTRUCTIONS LEARNING OBJETIVES	RESOURCES	DURATION
Monitoring and Evaluation	Part A. Understanding monitoring and evaluation tools to assess training programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Explore the difference between monitoring and evaluation and its importance when implementing the Toolkit. › Introduce the Toolkit's approach to monitoring and evaluation. 	Monitoring and evaluation tools (online)	90 minutes
	Part B. Understanding tools for assessing parent, caregiver and educator learning outcomes and impact and benefits for families and young children	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Introduce concrete tools that facilitators can use in their programs to assess, monitor and evaluate parent, caregiver and educator learning outcomes, impact and benefits for families and young children. 	Monitoring and evaluation tools (online)	60 minutes
	Part C. Training assessment	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> › Invite participants to assess the training, their progress and their takeaways. 	Monitoring and evaluation tools (online)	30 minutes

Elements to consider for the whole training

Elements for a successful journey

At the beginning of the workshop, allocate some time to formulate a set of agreements to be respected by all participants. Ask the participants to propose the content, and complement as needed. This may include an agreement on punctuality, to ensure a timely start and closing of each session, the use of mobile phones, etc.

House instructions

Provide information about specific considerations to be respected in the venue such as smoking restrictions and eating and drinking restrictions. Use this opportunity to inform participants about available places for prayer, the location of the toilets, secretariat, emergency exits, medical kits, and places where coffee/tea breaks and meals will be served.

Morning reflections, meditation/prayer and silence

It is suggested to start each morning's session with a moment for participants to connect with themselves and prepare their minds for the day. You might also want to offer other such times during or at the end of the day. This can be a reflection, a meditation or prayer, or a moment of silence. You can use poems, stories, songs and, when appropriate, interreligious prayers. You can invite the participants to organize these reflections.

Cultural evenings

Residential and regional trainings may give the opportunity to organize a cultural evening. During this activity, participants can share some of their traditions and culture. This is a moment for interconnectedness, appreciation of diversity and bonding. Participants should be informed prior to the training so they can prepare themselves.

Interreligious visits

When the group is multi-religious and there is time available, you can organize interreligious visits. This experience can enhance participants' awareness of other religious and spiritual beliefs, challenge stereotypes and expand participants' circles of concern. You can ask some of the religious or spiritual leaders present in your training to help organize visits to their religious or spiritual communities.

Community engagement

You may want to create opportunities for participants to engage in dialogue with the community, particularly to understand the role of religious and spiritual communities in supporting families in the upbringing of children. Engagement with the community is also important as it provides better linkages with critical community actors and can provide validation and support for the work.

Context and community reality

Customization to the local reality is very important. When preparing the training, make sure to customize the content and calendar to address issues affecting children and families in the setting where programs will be implemented. Also be sure to take into consideration community and social dynamics, for instance issues of poverty and violence, policy frameworks, and various challenges. Use this information to customize examples, resources and activities. We encourage you to include a session specifically dedicated to discussing the context and community realities and ways to connect programs with those.

Learning approach

Use the "Two Hats"

Create opportunities throughout the program and at the end of each session, for participants to reflect on the topics, introduced from two angles:

- What have I learned as a participant in this program, and
- What I have learned as a trainer who will be training facilitators to cascade the program with parents, caregivers and educators, looking at ways to introduce and explore the content with the target group.



Doing this will help trainers connect with the content and be able to internalize it, thereby avoiding simple replication with the facilitators later of what they did during their training.

Considerations for adult learners

The learning approach is based on principles of adult learning emphasizing the need to: involve adults in the planning and delivery process; allow them to have control of their own learning; build on their own experiences and knowledge working with parents, caregivers and educators; encourage them to reflect on their own spiritual needs and development and those of other adults; tap into their internal motivation to help parents, caregivers and educators create conducive environments for nurturing spiritual development; and identify ways to use what they have learned to put it into practice.

Learning process and methodologies

The learning process below suggests the journey that trainers-in-training take to:

- Internalize the importance of the spiritual development of children
- Connect with their own spirituality and religious or spiritual beliefs, and challenge practices that condone violence and violate children's rights; and
- Strengthen their knowledge and skills for equipping facilitators to design and deliver programs to help parents, caregivers and educators create the conditions for nurturing the spiritual development of children.

At the center of the learning and methodological approach is the use of **dialogue** as a tool to learn from one another, listen to oneself and to others' experiences, and experience encouragement and support. Dialogue is important to the Learning Program's emphasis on **internalizing knowledge, strengthening positive attitudes, developing new skills, and putting them into practice**. Some of these new skills focus on engaging adult learners in an effective manner. Others are skills for helping adults tune into their own spiritual life and reflect on the practical ways they can nurture children's spiritual development and the importance of doing so.

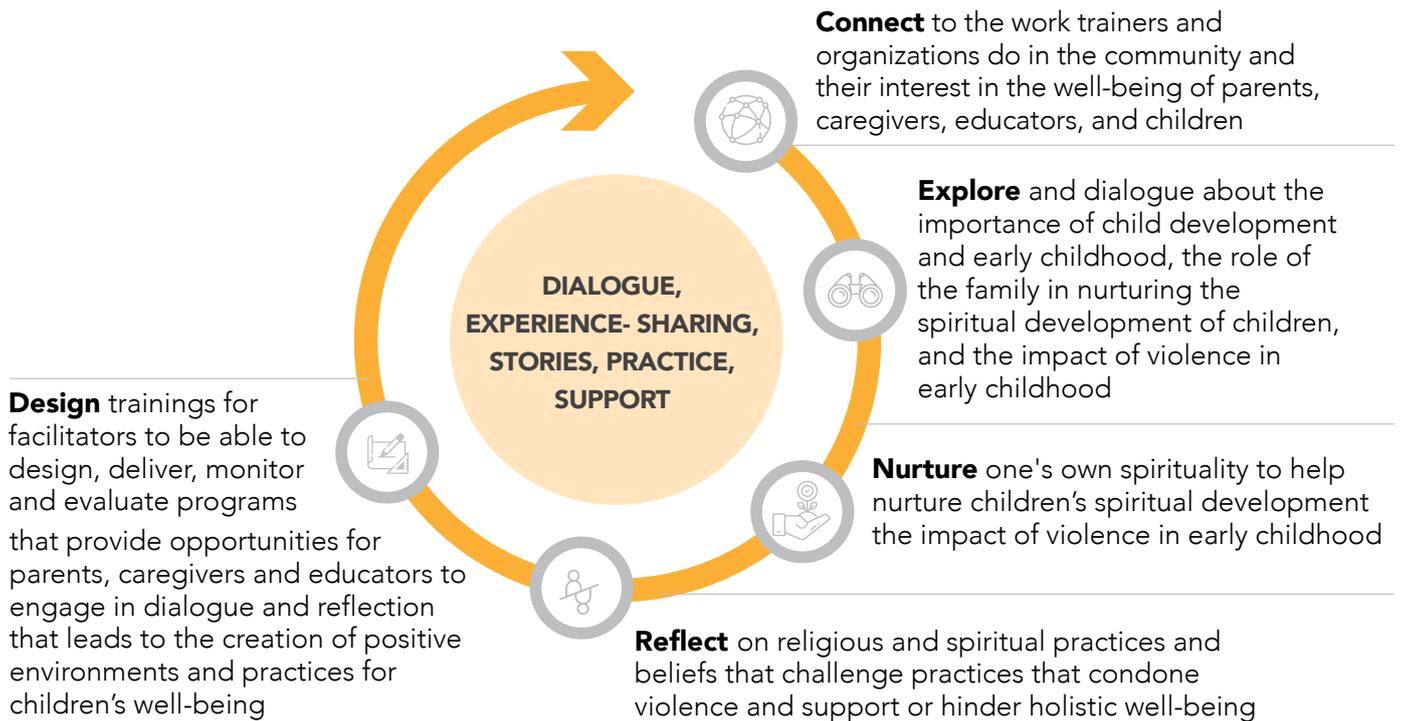
Within the sessions with participants, there are presentations of new topics, real-life examples, use of stories and case studies, role plays, experience sharing, and activities to build a support network. Trainers-in-training are then encouraged to think about how these same processes may be used to train facilitators. These processes promote a change in ways of understanding children and their spiritual development, and the environment that they need to express and fully develop their spirituality.

Throughout the program, make sure to use methodologies that are interactive, collaborative, and encourage reflection. While doing so, you will be modeling behaviors and attitudes that support and enhance participation, explicitly express respect for the other and their opinion, show effective and ethical ways of handling any conflicts in the group, and work towards maintaining the safe learning space for the participants

Learning process

The learning process illustrated below shows the journey participants go on through the training program, based on the Conceptual Framework of the Toolkit (see Booklet I).

The center, light-orange circle, summarizes the methodologies used throughout the learning process, the stages of which are shown in the different sections.



The participants' motivation for their work stems from their interest in the well-being of children and the work they do globally or at the grassroots level in their communities. You can build on this motivation to engage participants in the activities and reflections. As additional inputs, the training helps deepen their understanding around the well-being of children, the need for nurturing their spiritual development, and the ripple effects this has for the wider community. It also exposes them to more knowledge about the impact violence has on children in the early years and the ways that the spiritual development of children can act as a preventive and protective factor against violence.

As the participants are trainers who are going to be working mostly with facilitators, they will also need to reflect on how adults' spiritual development affects children's spiritual development and well-being. Participants are given an opportunity to reflect on this essential aspect of providing time and space for adults' spiritual growth. As the trainers' journey goes on, they take time to re-evaluate how adults' spiritual beliefs and practices influence, translate, or are reflected in actual interactions with children. All this information and these reflections are then used by trainers to

design their own training programs to equip facilitators to design, deliver, monitor and evaluate programs to help parents, caregivers and educators provide positive environments, practices, and experiences for young children.

Methodologies

All these processes are brought about using the methodologies listed at the center of the diagram. Holding respect, empathy, kindness and compassion for the other at the center of these interactions, trainers are helped to dialogue, share experiences and stories, and practice the art of facilitation and design of programs.

It is also important to take into consideration that adults may have had learning experiences that may be both positive and negative. It is important to recognize some of these to either utilize or address during the training.

After: Following up to enhance outcomes

At the end of the training, trainers are ready to design their own training programs for facilitators. Trainers are encouraged to use the learning process and methodologies that were used with them with facilitators, transmitting the approach consistently and creating space for internalization, adaptation and practicing. These are further detailed in Booklet V — Guide for Trainers.

The Guide for Trainers provides guidance for trainers on the different steps to take into account when designing training programs for the facilitators who will work directly with parents, caregivers and educators.

Ongoing support and mentoring of trainers

Just as important as preparing for a training, is reflecting on and improving trainers' delivery of content. You can use the following strategies to help trainers improve the quality of the training they provide, over time.

Trainers reflect after each session

TRAINERS MAY WISH TO ASK THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS	ANSWER
What went well during this session?	
What was challenging?	
What will I do differently next time?	
What gaps in knowledge or support did I experience?	

Note: Trainers can use this form to document ideas, reflections and recommended actions for further follow-up by the organization, other trainers, or themselves. Information gathered from this reflection could also be input for designing/improving coaching and mentoring programs.

Regular trainers' gatherings to share experiences

Organize regular meetings to discuss what is working well, what challenges exist, and what solutions there are for those challenges. Fill any need in gaps of knowledge, skills or other areas of support.

Mentoring

Conduct regular coaching and mentoring for trainers. Visit and attend trainers' sessions, then provide constructive feedback on the positive aspects and where they can improve, after the session.

→ Visit the website (<https://childspiritualdevelopment.org>) regularly to find new or updated resources, as well as to learn from others' experiences and connect with the wider movement of committed people who are implementing the Toolkit.

Endnotes

¹ United Nations Human Rights Office of the High Commissioner (1990). Convention on the Rights of the Child.

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³ African Union (no date). Goal & Priority Areas of Agenda 2063. <https://au.int/agenda2063/goals>

⁴ UNICEF, World Bank & WHO (2018). Nurturing Care for Early Childhood Development. WHO. <https://who.int/publications/item/9789241514064>

⁵ CASEL (no date). What is the CASEL Framework? <https://casel.org/fundamentals-of-sel/what-is-the-casel-framework/>

⁶ WHO (2006). Preventing Child Maltreatment: A Guide to Taking Action and Generating Evidence. <https://apps.who.int/iris/handle/10665/43499>

⁷ Harrell, E., Langton, L., Berzofsky, M., Couzens, L. & Smiley-McDonald, H. (2014). Household Poverty and Nonfatal Violent Victimization, 2008—2012. Bureau of Justice Statistics. <https://bjs.gov/index.cfm?ty=pbdetail&iid=513>

⁸ Big Win Philanthropy (2018). Violence against children: A review of evidence relevant to Africa on prevalence, impacts and prevention. https://bigwin.org/nm_pent_bigwp/wp-content/uploads/2018/07/Violence-Against-Children-Big-Win-Philanthropy-July-2018-FULL-REPORT.pdf

⁹ Li, P. (2022). Early Brain Development in Children. Parenting for Brain. <https://parentingforbrain.com/brain-development>

About the International Consortium on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood for the Prevention of Violence

The Consortium, convened by Arigatou International, brings together civil society and faith-based organizations, religious communities, multilateral organizations, academia and individual experts to foster collaboration, share good practises and develop evidence-based and innovative approaches to integrate values-based education and spirituality in early childhood for the protection of children from violence and the promotion of their holistic well-being.

CONSORTIUM

on Nurturing Values and Spirituality in Early Childhood
for the Prevention of Violence