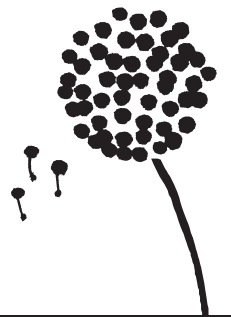


Footsteps

No.55 JUNE 2003

FAMILIES UNDER PRESSURE

TEARFUND



The qualities of a stable family

Today families are under so many different pressures. However there are many ways in which families can develop good relationships and provide a stable base, not just for family members but for others around them. Here are some ideas for strengthening family life:

Wise leadership The Bible describes the ideal parent as a leader, protector, spiritual guide and motivator. We need parents to act as role models for their children. Leadership in a family cannot be rigid and fixed – it must adjust to changing circumstances.

Showing affection A family must generate and give love in ways which show affection. This recognition can be through touch, a look, a smile or an encouraging comment. A stable family gives and shows love and appreciation for those who belong to it.

Valuable rituals For Christians, these can include showing faith through prayer before eating, reading the Bible and praying, or a particular activity on a special day. Every family must establish its own rituals. Though the particular learning gained through these rituals may be forgotten over time, the rituals themselves will continue with new lessons.

Accept and love members who are different These people add variety and spice to life. They may be people with good

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attitudes who are loyal and serve the family. Taking care of them develops a certain solidarity and a sense of caring interest in this valuable member of the family unit.

Record and share family history Any family get-together can be a time for joyfully remembering the past or sharing present experiences. Every family needs a person who loves to collect family souvenirs and reminders, such as photos, diplomas, letters or cards. If the history is written down it becomes a valuable legacy for the next generation.

Show hospitality Be open to receiving and inviting people from outside your family. Large families may find this easier to practise than small families. Use hospitality as a way of influencing and showing love and concern towards others. In the process the family will be strengthened.

Build a divine foundation When the family has a strong foundation, it can overcome many threats. For many Christians, a foundation of faith is extremely important for building a stable family.



Photo: Jim Leifing, Tearfund

Footsteps

ISSN 0962 2861

Footsteps is a quarterly paper, linking health and development workers worldwide. Tearfund, publisher of *Footsteps*, hopes that it will provide the stimulus of new ideas and enthusiasm. It is a way of encouraging Christians of all nations as they work together towards creating wholeness in our communities.

Footsteps is free of charge to individuals working to promote health and development. It is available in English, French, Portuguese and Spanish. Donations are welcomed.

Readers are invited to contribute views, articles, letters and photos.

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Tearfund is an evangelical Christian relief and development agency working through local partners to bring help and hope to communities in need around the world. Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, Middlesex, TW11 8QE, UK.
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Published by Tearfund. A company limited by guarantee. Regd in England No 994339. Regd Charity No 265464.

Pressures on the family in a changing world

by Esly Regina Carvalho

The pressures on families today are huge. All you have to do is look around. Many families may have only one parent, some children have no parents (often as a result of HIV / AIDS) and live in child-headed households. Some families are looking after orphans. In addition, modern life, particularly in urban areas, has put enormous pressures on the family and on the values held within society. Some of these include:

Cultural values Many values and customs that were accepted until recently have undergone great changes in the last few decades. Behaviour that was completely unacceptable when our parents and grandparents were young may now be acceptable. What is now shown on TV or in films was absolutely forbidden 10 or 20 years ago.

Social values Seeking personal pleasure without concern for the effects on other people is perhaps one of the social influences that has most changed our

society. This has made it possible for things like pornography, divorce and child exploitation to increase. Although it is hard to measure, the selfishness of personal desire has caused much harm, including HIV / AIDS, sexually transmitted disease and unexpected pregnancies, especially amongst the young.

Religious values Many well-established religions are now able to share their beliefs around the world more effectively through the internet and modern tech-



Sharing meals provides families with opportunities to support and listen to each other.

Photo: Jim Long, Tearfund

nology. In addition, a number of new religions or sects are developing, sometimes with beliefs that question or threaten family values. Sexual values have changed and purity before marriage has lost the value it once had in some cultures. In the attempt to be 'modern' and up-to-date, many values have been abandoned, including those that were considered part of a 'Christian culture'. Many people, particularly in urban areas, find that Christian values may now be seen as 'old fashioned'.

One thing that has not changed for many thousands of years is sin. It continues to influence all of humanity. The abuse of alcohol breaks families apart and may result in huge damage to family life. Addictions to other drugs cause similar effects. Violence in the home results in both physical hurt as well as emotional and psychological damage. Sexual abuse, both within and outside the family, may cause lasting damage.

What can we do to help families?

First we must accept the reality of family life and face up to the challenges. Often it may seem easier to ignore the problems and hope they will go away. However, problems don't go away when they are ignored. They go away because they are confronted and resolved in appropriate ways.

- The first step is to admit that there is a problem. If people do not admit there is a problem, there will certainly be no solution.
- Encourage them to ask for help. There are many places and institutions that can help people with their problems. People often fail to receive the help they need because they don't ask for it.
- Encourage people to talk to other family members about the situation. Often people keep their problems to themselves and don't realise that other family members are going through the same problems.
- Provide support and help. Often we can help others more than we imagine. If someone comes to you for help, **listen** and provide encouragement and support. Think of how they could find more help.

- When people feel they have no-one or nowhere to turn to, encourage them to ask God to bring someone into their life, or provide an event or circumstance, that will help them face their situation.

- Keep people's trust sacred. Never tell their secrets to other people unless it is life-threatening or damaging to themselves or to the well-being of a child.

- Read whatever useful materials you can find. Get to know the resources available in your community.

- Encourage people to keep going and never give up. Ask God to teach people what he wants them to learn with this situation.

Esly Regina Carvalho is a psychotherapist who teaches and trains in the area of Christian counselling, psychotherapy and the use of Bible-based role play. She has written various books and articles in Portuguese and Spanish on these topics. Her address is PO Box 915, Little Elm, TX 75068, USA.

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Support for families with young children

Ideas for action, which could extend the caring role of the church. They emphasise strengthening relationships between parents, children and communities.

Toddler groups for parents and young children to meet together – particularly important in cities, when parents may feel isolated from family networks.

Child care or nursery facilities to allow parents to do training or work. By charging a small fee, this can provide work for the carers too.

Holiday clubs for children during school holidays when parents are working.

Toy and book libraries for children of poor families.

Parenting classes to help parents understand and cope with different stages in the development of their children.

Family activities to encourage families to relax and have fun together.

Adapted from Children and Family Breakdown: Children at Risk Guidelines Volume 1 by Tearfund.

EDITORIAL

This issue has been planned as a result of the *Footsteps* survey carried out last year. 'Pressures on the family' was one of the most common subjects requested by readers. Families can be seen as one of the building blocks of society, yet they have never before been under so many different kinds of pressure. In this issue we look at some of those pressures – economic migration to find work, the results of HIV/AIDS on children, globalisation and stress. We have covered the subject of domestic violence in particular because this is such a widespread issue, yet one that is seldom brought into the open and discussed. We have also included some really positive and practical ideas for families to enjoy together.

We all belong to families, some closer than others. People who have lost family members can sometimes turn their loss into more positive outcomes, either by considering how to support others who have also lost loved ones, or by developing closer relationships with other families.

If you received a slip asking you to confirm that you want to receive future issues of *Footsteps* (sent to all readers except those who subscribed from 2002 onwards), please make sure you do this very soon or you will be automatically cut off the mailing list!

Isabel Carter



Reducing migration among young people

by Karl Dorning

The lack of job opportunities in their home communities and the need to earn income have caused considerable migration from Myanmar (Burma) to Thailand. In some communities over half the young people migrate. However, there are many risks which migrants to Thailand face. These include drug trafficking, HIV/AIDS, prostitution, arrest and deportation. Knowledge about the risks of migration is widespread, yet migration continues.

The most obvious action might be to try to keep young people in their communities through:

- creating job opportunities
- raising better awareness of the risks of migration to Thailand.

However, World Vision Myanmar wanted to involve the community in identifying the causes of the problem and possible solutions. They wanted them to understand why some young people decide **not** to migrate. This might then help to identify appropriate and effective strategies to stop so many young people migrating.

A community near the border was selected, from where over half the young people migrate. Techniques which encouraged all community members to share and participate, such as drawing maps of their area, were used to identify the key issues. It was found that:

- Boys migrate as seasonal workers, while girls migrate more permanently.
- Typical migrants are aged 14 to 18.
- The key reason for migration is the need to earn income.

- Most migrants are from poor or medium income families.
- Agents from companies in Thailand come regularly to the village to recruit youth.
- A number of migrants had returned and died of AIDS, yet migration continues.

A number of young people who had never migrated to Thailand were identified. Again, participatory techniques were used with these young people to learn about their ethnic, family and educational backgrounds, attitude

towards migration, current occupation, leisure activities and social support networks. It was found that:

- Their economic situation was the same as that of the migrants (their families were either poor or middle income).
- They were engaged in the same occupations as those who migrated.
- They had the same education level.

All of these young people had decided not to migrate. Their reasons included: discouragement by parents and the fear of HIV/AIDS, arrest by police, losing contact with family, drug trafficking, drug addiction or being bullied by employers. One young man said he was 'proud that he had stayed in his own community'. Others said that although some had migrated for economic reasons, their families were also still struggling for survival.

They all had good relationships with other non-migrant youth in their community. It is likely that peer pressure is a factor, as many people migrate with groups of friends.

Another key factor that emerged was that all those who did not migrate were very close to their parents. They said their parents had encouraged them to stay at home.

The research concluded that the only real differences between young people who migrate and those who stay at home were the social support received from friends who were also not migrating and the attitude and support of their parents.



Photo: Richard Hanson, Tearfund

Many young people have little hope in the future.

Possible action

Rather than creating job opportunities and raising awareness of the risks, the research showed that the real priorities are to:

- form a parent support group which could inform other parents
- encourage pride among young people staying in their community
- encourage young people who have decided not to migrate to talk with younger youth who have not yet made a decision about migration.

Positive aspects of the approach

The participatory approach of the research allowed the community to consider the issue in a whole new way. People were able to reconsider their original strategies and design new ones that may prove more effective. The young people who had not migrated were empowered following the research and felt they had something important to contribute to their community. Because the process was participatory, interest in

the issue, energy and hope were rapidly increased, where before there seemed to be little.

World Vision Myanmar has found this participatory research to be very useful in mobilising the community. We encourage others to try the approach themselves.

Adapted from a research presentation. Karl Dorning works with World Vision, Myanmar. E-mail: karl_dorning@wvi.org

Globalisation and family life:

A GRASSROOTS PERSPECTIVE

Tearfund has recently carried out some research into the positive and negative impacts of globalisation on developing countries. Questionnaires were sent out to Tearfund partner organisations all over the world. One of the issues raised in the questionnaire was the impact that globalisation is having on family life.

- Some respondents said that globalisation is not affecting their family life. Most, however, said that globalisation is having an impact, mainly through television and technology.

Television lessens the amount of time that families spend together. It also exposes children to new value systems, makes them grow up faster and gives them a thirst for consumer goods.

Other technology is having a more positive impact. The internet and telecommunications are helping to connect families living in different places and allows fast communication.

However, both television and technology are leading to materialism. They create a growing desire for luxuries:

We are exposed to products that certainly make life easier, but sometimes we are not able to afford them. There is tension in the family when there is a mismatch between what members want and what we can afford. (Asia)

- Family lifestyles have changed. Family ties are breaking down and the traditional extended family system is gradually being replaced by families consisting only of parents and children.

There is pressure for more work and less time to see each other and be together as a family... We are placing our children into other people's care because both parents have to work. (Latin America)

Child discipline, which should belong to everybody in society, now belongs only to parents. (English-speaking Africa)

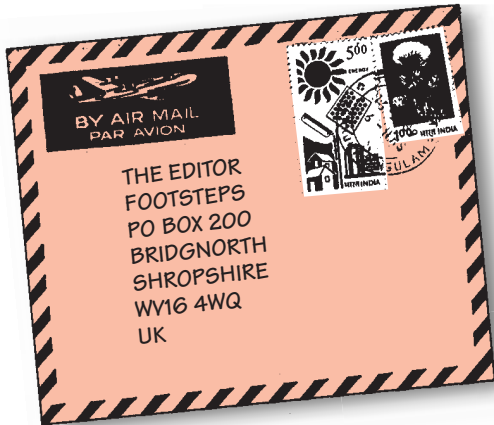
- Other respondents were less negative about globalisation – they have seen their family's health improving, and they like the fact that their children are global citizens and are able to appreciate different cultures.

Parents spend better time with their children. They listen to them and very often decide things with them. (French-speaking Africa)

Compiled by Fiona Wilson, Research Assistant to the General Director, Tearfund.



Photo: Jim Loring, Tearfund



Aids awareness for teenagers

ASSOPADEM is a rural association for social development in the Democratic Republic of Congo. Nearly 100 volunteers have received training to help tell others about the spread of HIV/AIDS.

These volunteers travel around from village to village to train, inform and make the local people aware. In some people this produced a new understanding but, in others, strong rejection. Some of the trainers were threatened, attacked or beaten by men because local girls now no longer wish to continue with unsafe sexual practices.

We hope to help to expand the training further so that we can limit the spread of HIV/AIDS here.

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Encouraging prisoners

I lead a group of Christians working to reduce crime. Our city used to have many problems with crime. People feared to go out wearing or carrying anything of value, such as watches, jewellery, wallets or cash. Armed robbers were constantly breaking into houses; people were being mugged at gunpoint in the street.

Working with prisoners in Nampula, Mozambique, may lead to a reduction in crime in the area.

Our group prayed about the situation and felt led to begin visiting prisoners in jail. We began by meeting prisoners in their cells. Then we met, five times a week, in the prison yard for Bible teaching. Many prisoners became disciples and we baptised them in their cells. The prisoners formed a Christian group to encourage them to maintain their faith. Nearly 100 of those who have been released from jail have joined local churches.

We work to share information in the cells about HIV/AIDS. Released believers who are homeless are helped with cheap accommodation. Some visit our offices asking for Christian training.

Crime in our city, which we believe was partly caused by lack of knowledge of Jesus, has now been reduced. We began with 70 prisoners, and today work with 10,000 across three provinces. God has given us much encouragement!

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Photo: Martin Leuders / CAFOD

Women's conference

At the end of 2002 the first conference of evangelical women took place in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso, organised by the Deborah Movement. This was inspired by Femmes 2000 in France. Our goals are prayer and evangelism.

During the five days of the conference, over 600 women from Chad, Togo, the Ivory Coast, Guinea, France, the USA and Burkina Faso received teaching on subjects such as: the power of prayer, widowhood, celibacy, bringing up children, non-Christian husbands, and coping with AIDS.

Public meetings were held in the evenings. Participants were uplifted by the conference and, as one pastor put it, 'returned to their local churches with a new fire for the Lord'.

Many church leaders (male) from different denominations were invited. Many women were also there who are leaders either in their churches or in government bodies.

We are now planning leadership training for women in 2003.

Joanna Ilboudo
Contact Editions, 04 BP 8463
Ouagadougou 04
Burkina Faso

Controlling fleas

In *Footsteps 53* there was a letter concerning the problem of fleas in Madagascar.

Many people in South Asia have found that the dried leaves of vetiver grass spread on the floor under sleeping mats give total protection against bed bugs. This treatment may well prove equally effective against fleas. The leaves could be scattered in the living area as a floor covering to protect other parts of the house. There has been a widespread national programme to encourage the use of vetiver for soil conservation in Madagascar. This should make it easy to find either planting material or leaves to try out the effectiveness of this treatment.

Stephen Carr
Private Bag 5
Zomba
Malawi



Photo: Dr Hans-Martin Hirt

Papaya, just one of the many medicinal plants widely available around the world.

Medicinal plants

I am a traditional Quechua healer from Cochabamba, Bolivia and the director of an organisation called Kuska-Cochabamba. My knowledge of traditional medicine was learned from family traditions going back four generations and I worked in this area for 35 years. I have written a small book called *Fifty medicinal plants traditionally used in Bolivia*.

Cloth filter could cut cholera deaths

Filtering drinking water through cloth can cut cases of cholera by half, according to a new study carried out in Bangladesh. Researchers from the US National Science Foundation found that filtering water through an old sari (or similar fine cotton clothing), folded at least four times, was highly effective in reducing the incidence of cholera, a waterborne disease that kills tens of thousands of people a year.

National Academy of Sciences

We hope our organisation could serve as a link or bridge between traditional medicine and modern medicine. We are currently exploring plans to build a centre for traditional medicine. Details of this and our work are on our website (in Spanish only).

I would welcome contact with other readers with similar interests.

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Communication through visual storytelling

A three day workshop on this subject will be held in Nagpur and Varanasi, India, in October 2003. It will provide training in the use and production of Christian comics as an excellent way of sharing information. The workshop costs 1,000 Rupees. More information from:

*Asian Sahyogi Sanstha India
42 Jail Rd
Gita Vatika
Gorakhpur
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India*

E-mail: rainbow4us@satyam.net.in



The happy story of my life

This is an adapted exercise from the teaching resource by Dr Carlos Raimundo, *The Play of Life*, reviewed on page 14.

Find a place where you can be peaceful and undisturbed for an hour. Place a large sheet of paper in front of you. The top left corner represents the day you were born and the top right corner is today.

Think back to times in your life when you were happy and felt understood, loved and recognised. Start from the beginning of your life. As memories come, use or draw a figure to represent you and write underneath:

- your age at that time
- the situation
- the names of people involved
- how you felt
- any messages received from people around you.

Age:	7 years old
Situation:	school
People:	teacher
Emotion:	happy, recognised, proud
Message:	given an award for reading

Continue through your life. When you finish, allow this story of your life to encourage feelings of gratitude and the awareness that you are not alone. You still have the memory of these people with you. During this exercise some people are surprised at the good events or experiences they remember with people they no longer meet or think about. A caring counsellor can use these experiences to help people who are troubled.

Dan's story

Dan remembered his father teaching him to ride his bike when he was five. His father was close, affectionate, fun and loving. He later started drinking. He abused Dan and his mother and left them in poverty. Dan had been full of resentment, anger and hate for 20 years. He wanted to ignore that happy memory but was encouraged to treasure that time with his father, to separate that memory from all the other unhappy memories. A few months later he realised that this memory had allowed him to look at life in a more positive way.

Use your memories

Keep those memories in your mind. Continue to add other memories that come to mind. Use these memories during times of pain, suffering or despair. Be aware of the messages that could give most comfort, strength or support in this moment of difficulty. Remember these messages!

Family values

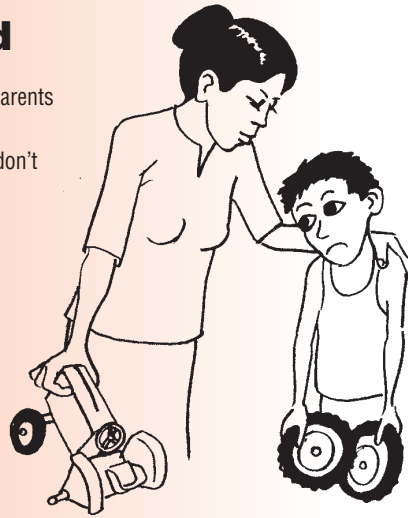
Parents are one of the most important role models for young people growing up. They have a huge influence on their children. Children will grow up doing what their parents **do** – rather than what they **say**.

If we don't set a good example, we can't expect high standards from our children.

A powerful word

Some of us may never have heard our parents apologise to us as we were growing up. However, parents are human too. They don't always get it right. Sometimes saying 'sorry' can be the strongest, most powerful word.

ACTION POINT Learn to apologise to anyone – whether child, parent, partner or colleague – whenever you need to.



Enjoy fun and relaxation together

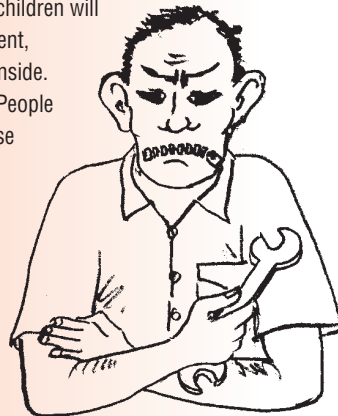
There is never enough time in life. However, it is so important to set aside quality family time. If possible, suggest a time each week when every family member (or extended family) can spend an hour together – longer if possible. Let each member of the family in turn choose how to spend this time. One week a child may choose a game, the mother may decide to make biscuits together, the grandmother may choose a walk. Everybody shares in this activity.

Learn to express your feelings

I worked with a mechanic. He used to say, 'If it doesn't work I usually hit it! This doesn't work so well with children or my wife, though. I don't know how to explain how I'm feeling.'

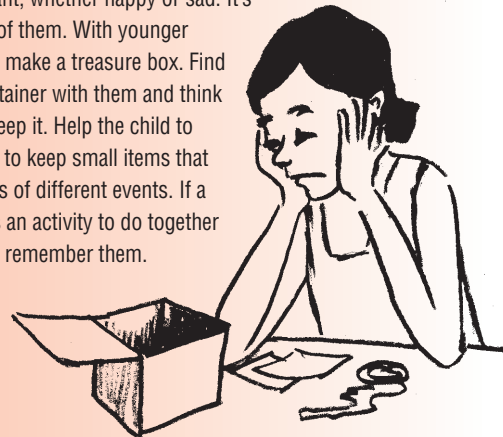
If we, as adults, can't express how we feel, our children will not learn how to either. Feelings of disappointment, sadness, frustration and pain can all be locked inside. They are only expressed as outbursts of anger. People need to express how they are feeling before these feelings explode and hurt someone.

ACTION POINT Tell someone honestly and openly how you feel – without hurting anyone. Talk about the relationship that means most to you. Be honest with yourself. Feelings cannot hurt you, but trying to ignore them can.



Treasure special memories

Memories are important, whether happy or sad. It's good to be reminded of them. With younger children, help them to make a treasure box. Find or make a special container with them and think of a special place to keep it. Help the child to use their treasure box to keep small items that have special memories of different events. If a parent is dying, this is an activity to do together that will help the child remember them.



What helps to keep a family stable?

Reflect on these words and what they mean to you...

- security
- love
- encouragement
- understanding
- fairness
- patience
- kindness
- clear communication
- grace

What words would you add to this list?

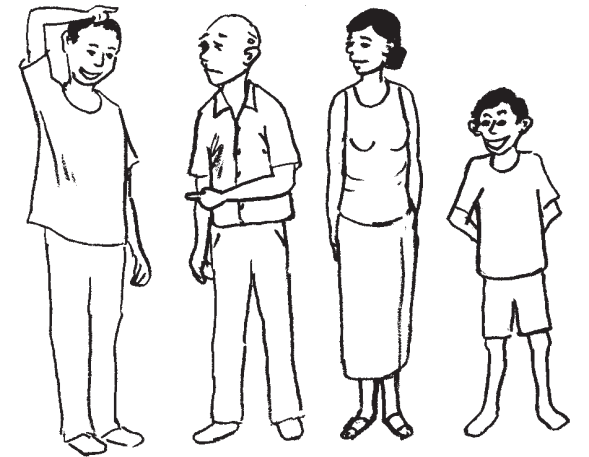
Ideas for games...

Hide and seek

One person covers their eyes and ears and counts slowly up to 100. Everyone else hides. The person shouts, 'Here I come, ready or not!' when they have reached 100 and tries to find everyone. The last one to be found is the next person to count and search.

Seven-up

Form a small circle and begin counting from one. As each person says the number they place one arm across their chest. If they use their right arm to point to the left, the person on their left says the next number. If they use their left arm to point to the right, the person on their right says the next number. The direction can be reversed at any time. Count until seven is reached – but this time, instead of saying 'seven' out loud, the person puts one hand up onto their head, again pointing either to the left or right. The next person starts again at one. When someone makes a mistake, they're out of the game!



The name game

Everyone needs to be able to write to play this. Each person needs some paper and a pencil. In turn, choose different categories, such as girl's names, trees, birds, football teams, rivers, cities, countries, fruit or songs. Without looking, one person points on a newspaper to find a letter from the alphabet. Give everyone a time limit (one or two minutes) to write down one word that begins with that letter in each of the categories. Then score points. If anyone else has the same word, it's crossed out. You score one point for every correct answer that no-one else has used. Keep playing, using different letters, and add up the total.

Bible charades

One person begins by miming a person or a story from the Bible. The first to guess correctly is the next to mime. This can be very funny!

Storytelling

Find a comfortable place to sit together and make up stories. Someone starts off an imaginary story with a few sentences. Each person in turn adds a few more sentences to the story. Alternatively, take time to tell children stories about their culture and history.

Healing touch

Sometimes a loving hug can stop the hurt and help to heal. However, in some families people just don't express their feelings through touch. Children grow up believing that it's not correct to hug. But we never grow out of needing to be held and hugged.

ACTION POINT Hug people you love – but only if they want you to! You will both feel better for it.



Kit Loring and Carrie Herbert work with the Ragamuffin Project, which provides creative arts therapies/psychotherapy for children, young people and adults in the UK and overseas. Ragamuffin is committed to the relief of emotional pain and psychological damage in children and adults.

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Child migration due to AIDS

The AIDS epidemic in southern Africa is causing many children to move to other areas. Often they go to live with extended families because their parents are sick or have died of AIDS. Or they might go to support their relatives who have HIV/AIDS. The distances these children may have to travel may cause difficulties for them. This article looks at how these difficulties can be reduced so that their migration is a more positive experience.

Research was carried out among primary school children, children in care and street children in Lesotho and Malawi. The aim was to find out more about children's migration, particularly due to AIDS within the family.

Migration can affect young people in many ways. It is often made more difficult through the effects of the HIV/AIDS epidemic. Southern Africa is the region worst affected by the global AIDS pandemic. Sixteen percent of adults in Malawi and 24% in Lesotho are infected with the virus. At present, 27% of all under-15s in Malawi and 14% in Lesotho have lost one or both parents. Children are affected long before

becoming orphans, yet this issue has received relatively little attention.

In most southern African countries there is a traditional history of people migrating to find work. Families often live far apart. One of the common strategies for dealing with AIDS within families is for young people to be sent to live elsewhere with relatives. They move in order to receive care, to care for others, or to find work to support themselves.

Key findings

- Families encourage migration as a way of meeting their children's needs.
- Migrant children often live with maternal grandparents.

Discussion questions

- How do people in our community respond to the challenge of children who are orphaned due to HIV/AIDS?
- Does our community have ways of supporting families to avoid children being sent to distant relatives?
- Does our community provide any kind of support to families who have taken in AIDS orphans?
- If not, what kind of help and support could be provided?

- Families send their children elsewhere to care for sick relatives, or to work (paid or unpaid) to help support themselves or others.
- Migration takes place both locally and over longer distances, which may involve moving from urban to rural areas.
- As situations change, many children move more than once.
- Children migrating face a number of difficulties that are often made worse by AIDS. They have to fit into new families where they have to work hard and may feel discriminated against. They have to join new communities, make new friends and attend a new school. They may also need to learn unfamiliar forms of work (especially if they have moved from an urban to a rural area).
- Children generally find ways of coping with migration, but these may involve adopting harmful behaviours such as smoking or drinking in order to fit in.

Recommendations

Build contacts before migration Families could be encouraged to help children develop contacts with new people and places before they migrate. This might involve taking children to visit the place and people first. By building up such

Often children go to live with extended families because their parents are sick or have died of AIDS.



Photo: Jim Leiring, Tearfund

contacts, children may be less anxious about moving.

Allow choice Allowing them some choice may also help them settle. For many children, the only way out of a difficult household situation is currently to move onto the streets.

Share information It is also helpful to tell children more about why they need to be moved and about the cause of illness and death in their families.

Maintain links Children should be encouraged to maintain links with their families and communities. This is particularly important for children in institutional care.

Encourage community support It was found that communities had little involvement in caring for orphaned children. Instead, the burden lay wholly with the extended family households. Communities could be encouraged to discuss possible ways of supporting these families – such as reducing school fees or sharing food.

Support households Children's difficulties in fitting into new homes are made worse by poverty. If the costs of caring for children were reduced, particularly costs concerning schooling, children might be more readily accepted into new households. This would enable them to stay with close relatives such as grandparents.

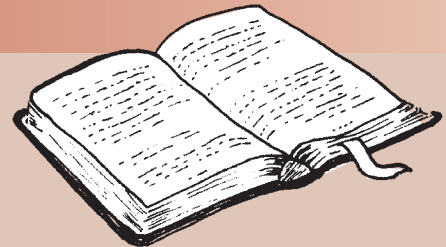


Adapted from a research paper published in id 21 by Nicola Ansell and Lorraine Young, Dept of Geography and Earth Sciences, Brunel University, Uxbridge, UB8 3PH, UK. The research was funded by DFID. Email: lorraine.young@brunel.ac.uk or nicola.ansell@brunel.ac.uk

BIBLE STUDY

God the parent

by Josephine-Joy Wright



Parenting is a complex gift and task. Often we can get so distracted with the tasks of parenting (providing food, discipline, shelter, clothing and education) that we lose our relationship with the child in all the pressures and worries. Yet the greatest need of a child in growing into a secure, self-confident and healthy adult is to know that they are loved. Love is expressed in trust, care, delight and freedom to develop as a person in healthy, forgiving relationships.

Read Psalm 139:13-16

God has created each of us. We are unique.

- What can we learn from this passage about how God sees each one of us?
- What does this passage tell us about God as our creator?

Read Galatians 4:4-7

God gives us an opportunity to be in a relationship with him. Each of us has a strong desire to be loved and to belong in families



Photo: Jim Leung, Tearfund

and communities. If we know we are loved, we know we belong. Secure in that knowledge, we can grow into God's promises for our lives.

- What does it mean for you to belong to God?
- How can we help each other know we are wanted and belong?

Read Matthew 12:18 and Luke 3:22

God was not afraid of expressing his love for his Son and for us as his children. He asks us to do the same. Children know if our love is a duty or a joy. Joyful love frees a child to be happy, creative and to discover who they are.

- Are you secure enough in God's love to share this in your relationships with your children and others?

Read Jeremiah 31:3-20

God forgives us as we stumble and grow towards maturity. His love for us gives us the security to step out and try new things. We can be confident that he will never hurt or abandon us.

- What does it mean to me to know that God delights in me?
- What stops me from giving this same gift to the children that I care for? How can I change with God's help?

Meditation

Let God's love and delight in you speak to you and heal any hurts from the past. May we delight in our children for who they are, and give them the freedom to be themselves in Christ.

Dr Josephine-Joy Wright is a clinical psychologist with children and adolescents. She works with the NHS in the UK, is a training consultant for Viva Network and is co-editor of Celebrating Children, shortly to be published by Paternoster Press, UK.

Domestic violence

by Arline Poubel e Silva and Suzy da Silva Cyrillo

In most cultures, people hide the problem of violence within the family. This means that little is known about the level of violence that affects families. Ill-treatment within the family has increasingly come to the attention of health services, but is rarely included in community programmes for health and education. However, the majority of cases are not even reported. This means that those committing the violence are not made responsible for their actions. Often they do not even realise that they have committed a crime.

At the beginning of the last decade in the United States, for example, one and a half million cases of ill-treatment against children and adolescents were reported, with one thousand deaths annually. It is estimated that the actual number of cases was 20 times higher. In many developing countries the problem is rarely reported.

The term *domestic violence* is used to describe any violent attitude or neglect within the family. The victims may suffer from all kinds of physical and mental



problems – including stress, sleeping problems, flashbacks to the trauma, aggression, social isolation, self-destructive behaviour, depression and phobias. Some may even commit suicide.

Poverty and lack of education may increase the level of domestic violence. Other individual, family, community and social factors can also be involved. However, the abuse of power over defenceless family members is always present. Women, adolescents, children and those with disabilities are the most frequent victims.

Definition of ill-treatment

Physical abuse involves the intentional use of physical force, with the purpose of causing pain. Sometimes the physical abuse results in death. Babies are at risk from the 'shaking baby syndrome'. Here an adult violently shakes the child, generally to make the baby stop crying. This can cause brain damage and sometimes death.

Child sexual abuse describes situations where a child or adolescent is used for sexual pleasure, either by an adult or by an older child. The abuse may include touching, sexual exploration, forcing the child to watch pornography, or a sexual act, with or without violence.

This abuse is based on a relation of power. However, violence is not always involved. The abuser can win the



participation of the child using various strategies:

- games leading to sexual contact
- bribery, using sweets or presents
- persuasion, by telling the child that unless they agree to sexual contact, the abuser will not like the child any more
- shared secrets, where small children are told they are 'special friends'
- physical force – used only when other strategies fail.

Sexual abuse causes physical, psychological and social damage, even though some victims do not show any visible signs of these effects. The victim may suffer for the rest of their life if the effects of the abuse are not treated adequately.

Emotional damage While not usually as severe as physical or sexual abuse, people can also suffer emotional damage. Family members are often not aware that they are harming a child in this way. The following kinds of behaviour can cause long term damage to a child's self-esteem and well-being:

- when a child does not receive emotional support through physical affection by touch, affectionate words, encouragement and ongoing interest
- when a child is always contradicted, their views denied, their actions

rejected and when they are always being criticised

- when unrealistically high expectations of performance at school or work are made which the child cannot reach
- when excessive protection or hygiene demands a high performance from the child.

This kind of damage is little researched or understood and is often linked with other kinds of abuse. The victims are mostly children and women, but also the elderly.

Helping victims

Cases of domestic violence ideally need to be treated by professionals, since inadequate help can lead to further problems. However, when this is not available, friends who are willing to listen and give support can help. Giving evidence can be damaging to the victim so, again, expert help is recommended in order to minimise the damage. The sooner ill-treatment is identified and tackled, the greater the chances of preventing further violence and treating violent people successfully.

How can non-professionals help?

At first it is important to listen carefully to the victim and to believe them. Go with them to an official department to make their case and help them to seek professional help. Usually victims are afraid to seek help, but with such support, they may manage to move forward.

Never ask the victim to ignore or forget what happened. You should not ask victims of violence simply to forgive those who ill-treat them, particularly if the violence continues. The question of forgiveness is between the person and God. Instead, the victim needs to be believed and able to talk openly. Shame and guilt are among the most common feelings experienced by victims of domestic violence. They think that no-one can understand them. **Never** let the victim think that you believe they are to blame for what has happened.

Adults who want to protect children and adolescents ought to look out for any signs of violence and help them. Encourage them to seek help and to talk with someone they can trust about what

is happening. In many cases the child may be too afraid to seek help.

If any ill-treatment is suspected, do not ignore it but, for the sake of the victim, investigate or ask for help.

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*Suzy da Silva Cyrillo is a psychologist and consultant for Tearfund.
E-mail: susycyrillo@terra.com.br*

Support for families under pressure

Ideas for action, which could extend the caring role of the church. Most of these emphasise the need to build up and strengthen relationships.

Respite care provides organised breaks for families where parents are either under severe stress or find it difficult to cope, or where children have learning or physical disabilities.

Marriage preparation classes to prepare young couples for the changes they will face.

Marriage support events such as classes and discussion groups to enrich and strengthen marriages.

Drop-in centres such as church-run cafés where people can make friends, find informal support and advice and get help with filling in forms or applications.

Sheltered homes for pregnant teenage girls who want to have their babies but are unable to stay with their families.

Literacy classes for parents with poor literacy skills.

Credit and savings schemes to encourage people with financial difficulties to discuss their concerns and save small amounts of money.

Shelters for women and children experiencing domestic violence.

Counselling training for church members in marriage guidance and family issues.

Adapted from Children and Family Breakdown: Children at Risk Guidelines Volume 1 by Tearfund.

Suggestions for victims

Here are some suggestions for security and protection:

- Be prepared for violence and have a plan of action. For example, run to a corner and crouch, protecting your face and head, covering them with your arms and hands.
- Do not run to where your children are, as they could end up being hurt as well.
- Avoid fleeing without your children, as they could be used for emotional blackmail.
- Teach your children to ask for help and to leave the place in the event of violence.
- Avoid being alone with the violent person in places such as the kitchen and the bathroom where there are knives, dangerous objects, dangerous surfaces and little space.
- Avoid places where there are weapons. Never attempt to use a weapon to threaten the violent person. It could be used against you.
- Keep with you, at all times, details of where to find help – particularly telephone numbers.
- Find out if there are any secure places near your house where you can stay until you get help.
- Prepare a bag of clothes and other essentials for yourself and your children, and leave it with a neighbour or friend so it is available if you have to abandon your house.
- Keep copies of important documents in a safe place outside the home.
- Tell people you trust about the situation. Arrange signals with them to tell them if you are in danger.
- If you are wounded, go to a hospital or health post. If you hide the fact that you are a victim of violence, nobody can help you.
- Seek help. Do not isolate yourself. You are not alone, and there are people who can help you.

Books Newsletters Training materials

Play of Life

by Dr Carlos Raimundo

This is an innovative, simple and effective technique which uses small figures on boards as a way of helping break down the barriers to communication which can arise within families. The tool is based on Christian teaching and helps people to communicate in a constructive way.

The *Play of Life* has been developed by Dr Raimundo, a Christian psychiatrist now living in Australia. Trainers and educators have been successfully introducing this powerful and simple tool to bring new health and hope to people in their relationships. The tool can be learnt by distance education and should be of interest to psychotherapists, counsellors, pastoral carers and self-help groups.

Active Learning Pty Limited
PO Box 275
Gladesville 2111
Australia

E-mail: enquiries@playoflife.com

Website: www.playoflife.com

...for more information and case studies.

Time out for parents

A manual, workbook and other information to encourage good parenting are produced by Positive Parenting. They also have a number of leaflets available on subjects like discipline and relationships. Their materials are available in English but some are also available in Spanish, Urdu and Punjabi. For more information contact:

Positive Parenting
2a South Street, Gosport
PO12 1ES
UK

E-mail: info@parenting.org.uk

Website: www.parenting.org.uk



Family and Pastoral Counselling

The Latin American Association for Family and Pastoral Counselling (EIRENE) offers training and a certificate in family counselling (El ciclo vital de la familia). It is targeted at religious leaders, health professionals or anybody else interested in work with families. It provides training in counselling with a biblical focus. The training takes around 600 hours for tutored and distance courses, workshops and regular evaluations. Teaching is in Spanish.

The first level (300 hours) covers topics such as today's changing families, basic psychology, communication within the family, biblical foundations for the family and sexual issues. These topics can be studied either by distance learning or by attending classes.

The second level consists of five workshops (180 hours), usually held over weekends, while the third level is work or discussions supervised by the tutor (120 hours).

Further information from:

Dr Jorge E Maldonado
Centro Hispano de Estudios Teologicos
6113 Clara Street, Bell Gardens, CA 90201
USA

Tel: +1 (562) 806 8325

Fax: +1 (562) 928 6983

Mujer y Autoestima

by Esly Carvalho

A helpful manual in Spanish which can be used with individuals or groups. It is designed to build confidence and self-esteem in women. Copies cost US \$5, including postage, and can be ordered from:

Plaza del Encuentro
PO Box 915, Little Elm, TX 75068
USA

E-mail: plazadelcentro@attglobal.net

Familia em Crise

by Esly Carvalho

IINDEF Publications

This is a book about families in crisis. It discusses issues of AIDS in the family, domestic violence, sexual abuse, addiction, divorce and homosexuality. It has nearly 100 pages, costs US \$4 and is

ThermoSpot



Keeping new babies warm, particularly premature babies, can be difficult. If a newborn baby's temperature falls too much, this can lead to death. It can be hard for nursing staff and mothers to know when a baby is getting too cold. The ThermoSpot is a new and simple way of showing the temperature. It consists of a small adhesive plastic disc that is placed on the baby's stomach. If the baby is warm enough, the disc turns green and shows a happy face. If the baby gets too cold, the disc turns black, indicating that action is needed. A pack of 25 ThermoSpots costs £2.50 from:

TALC, PO Box 49, St Albans, AL1 5TX, UK

For more information, contact John Zeal

E-mail: temperaturedoc@aol.com

available only in Spanish and Portuguese.

Spanish copies are available from:

Apartado 168-2350
San Francisco de Dos Ríos
Costa Rica

E-mail: iindefcr@racsa.co.cr

Portuguese copies are available from:

ABU Editora
Caixa postal 2216
São Paulo, SP 01060-970
Brazil

E-mail: editora@abub.org.br

Practical health training

ENDA Tiers-Monde has a training centre in Senegal set in a large botanical garden with 182 local medicinal plants. It offers practical training in traditional medicine in French to health workers and can take groups of 12 to 60 participants for short courses. For more information and prices contact:

CADI, Enda-Madesahel
BP 6259, Dakar
Senegal

E-mail: salyloisirs@ns.arc.sn

Tearfund publications...

■ Two new ROOTS publications aimed at organisations are now available in English (with copies in French, Spanish and Portuguese available shortly)...

Capacity self-assessment is an organisational assessment tool to enable groups to identify their capacity-building needs and to plan for the future.



Peace-building within our communities contains key learning points taken from case studies of Tearfund partners who have been involved in encouraging peace and reconciliation in their communities.

Both these publications cost £10 each (US \$15 or €15) including postage.

■ Three new PILLARS guides for use with grassroots community groups are now available in English (with copies in French, Spanish and Portuguese available shortly)...

Preparing for disaster encourages communities to consider possible risk situations in order to prepare and respond effectively. It includes information on first aid, emergency stores and community shelters.

Healthy eating Ideas to help improve household nutrition at low cost – food groups, kitchen gardens, recipes, methods of food preservation and hygiene.

Mobilising the community An exciting process of encouraging and supporting communities to analyse their own situations and to take steps to work together to make changes for the better.



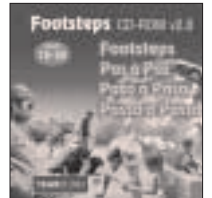
PILLARS guides cost £5 each (US \$8 or €8) including postage.

■ **Children and family breakdown** The first volume in the *Children at Risk Guidelines*, containing case studies, biblical perspectives on families, key principles and questions and resource information. Available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese for £5 (US \$8 or €8) including postage.

■ **Footsteps CD-ROM** Do you lend out issues of *Footsteps* to friends and then never see them again? Have you lost some of your issues? Are you a new

reader and wish you had back copies? A CD-ROM with issues 18–50 of *Footsteps* is available in English, French, Spanish and Portuguese. You can search for issues or topics and print out the information you need. We also have copies of the earlier CD-ROM (issues 1–40) still available.

These CD-ROMs cost £15 each (US \$22 or €22) including postage. Organisations unable to pay can request free copies.



■ Also available, is the Community development CD-ROM library, published by Human Info NGO. Version 1.0 of this very useful resource contains over 1,500 books and newspapers about development. It covers agriculture, building, education, forestry, gender, nutrition and water. Copies are available for £7.50 (US \$11 or €11) including postage.

To order any of the items, or for more information, please contact:

PO Box 200
Bridgnorth
WV16 WQ
UK

Fax +44 1746 764594

E-mail: roots@tearfund.org

Some useful websites

www.kairos.org.ar A Spanish language website which looks at all kinds of development issues from a Christian perspective. Kairos produce two useful newsletters. Issue 3 of *Kairos* magazine contains very useful information on families.

www.positiveparenting.com Ideas, advice and resources to help parents – in English.

www.parenting.org.uk A website giving information about a number of good resources to encourage good parenting skills – in English, Urdu, Spanish and Punjabi.

www.saudeprev.com.br/violencia.php A Portuguese language website on domestic violence.

www.mundomatero.com/proyectos/cristel/violencia.html Useful facts in Spanish on domestic violence.

http://familydoctor.org A useful website on all aspects of health. Information available in both English and Spanish.

www.justicewomen.com/tips_escape_sp.html Well-designed information in both Spanish and English. Based on the situation in the USA, it has lots of practical tips.

www.womenofsubstance.org/dviolence2S.htm The dynamic of domestic violence – Spanish and English.

www.coriac.org.mx/vi_obj.html A useful Spanish language site written for men.

www.growing.com/nonviolent/victim/svict_re.htm An information and reference manual in Spanish on domestic violence.

www.growing.com/nonviolent As above, but in English.

The best-kept secret

by Esly Carvalho

How can the church face up to the problems of domestic violence? Recently an investigation was published by the InterAmerican Development Bank, with some shocking findings...

- Around 30-40% of Latin American women have suffered some kind of violence in the family. One in five women are absent from work because of physical violence at home.
- In Brazil, 30% of the women who complained of violence at home in 1997 returned to the police the next day to withdraw their accusation. Women who are not self-supporting frequently remain at the side of those who hurt them.
- In Nicaragua, the study showed that 41% of the women without an independent income were victims of violence, whilst only 10% of women who earned an independent income suffered violence.
- More than half the men who injure their wives also physically abuse their children. In São Paulo, Brazil, 64% of the accusations of physical violence against children happen in their own homes. 'Experience has shown that the majority of street children left home because of family violence.'¹
- A recent WHO report found that nearly half the women murdered worldwide were killed by family members or boyfriends. In some countries this rose to 70%.

These statistics are alarming. Domestic violence can also happen in Christian homes. Some of the people who commit domestic violence are in church every Sunday – some even have positions of leadership in

their churches. Domestic violence is one of the best-kept secrets.

Unhelpful thinking

Many women say they put up with violence because of their children. They think it is better to give children a home with a violent father, than to live in a broken home. The problem with this thinking is that the woman becomes an accomplice to the violence. She allows her husband's behaviour to continue, without breaking the cycle. She doesn't protect her children from the violence.

The church does not always know how to cope wisely with homes where violence exists. To tell a woman that she has to put up with it is not a good solution. To threaten her with discipline or with expulsion from the church if she separates does not help. Sometimes the church's teaching obliges a wife to continue with a violent husband. Every effort should be made to rescue the marriage relationship, but when an abused woman does not want to go back



What can be done?

- Break the silence and ask for help
- Recognise how serious the problem is
- Repent of past behaviour
- Heal the hurts of the past
- Look after the children
- Separation
- Seek help from others

home to a violent husband, the church should support her decision.

Breaking the silence

I believe that, as Christians, we need to break the silence. God does not want any kind of violence to exist in the home. Colossians 3:12-15 teaches us that God has called us to peace. We ought to treat each other with humility, doing everything in a spirit of gratitude to God, linked together by love. The church ought to be the first to lift its voice in exposing the terrible secret of domestic violence. It should support the people involved in such situations so that they can find good, healthy and biblical solutions to their conflicts, including new methods of communication within families.

Adapted from information in chapter 3 of The Family in Crisis by Esly Carvalho, published by INDEF Publications, Costa Rica.

¹ Report of the Latin American and Caribbean Agency of Communication (ALC), July 24th 1998; Apartado 14-225, Lima 14, Peru; by Edelberto Behs. Publications on women and domestic violence: www.iadb.org

Published by: Tearfund, 100 Church Road, Teddington, TW11 8QE, UK

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Tearfund staff spend considerable time dealing with many thousands of funding requests that we are unable to support. This is taking them away from their work of bringing good news to the poor through current partnerships. **Please note** that all funding proposals will be rejected unless they are from current Tearfund partners.

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