

ECM BASIC TRAINING FOR CAREGIVERS

This training was developed by Every Child Ministries for use in training caregivers in a children's home or orphanage setting, or in any children's shelter.

A virtuous woman “looks well to the ways of her household, and does not eat the bread of idleness” Prov. 31:27

- What does it mean in an ordinary Ghanaian home for a woman to look well to the ways of her household?
- What does it mean here at Haven of Hope?
- What or who is your household here at Haven of Hope?
- What would the day of a mother here at Haven of Hope look like if she were looking well to the ways of her household?
- Can you describe the opposite? Can you describe a mother who does eat the bread of idleness here at the home?

Could it mean...

- She sees children disobeying rules but pretends she doesn't because it takes a lot of effort to deal with it?
- She leaves some children unsupervised while she gathers to visit with other mothers because it feels so refreshing to talk to them compared to watching children by herself.
- She knows a child is being punished by losing a privilege, but when the child takes that privilege anyway, she pretends to forget about the punishment because she doesn't want the hassle of having to enforce the discipline.
- She sits and watches the little children play without even trying to interact with them.
- Some children neglect to come to devotions, and she lets it go by because that's the easiest thing to do.

Pray: That God will enable us to be diligent in our jobs as mothers at the home.

What we will learn in this course:

1. General principles regarding supervision & discipline
2. How our policies & procedures support those principles
3. Discipline options & non-options
Discussion of discipline they have seen or know about. Is it or is it not an option under our guidelines?
4. Introduction of new discipline tools & methods
“I see you,” “We do this...” “Let's try that again.”, etc.
Demonstrate
Groups create a scenario
Groups demonstrate using the discipline tool

5. “What did the mother do wrong?” Case Studies based on our principles & policies
6. Activity: Groups create lists of possible offenses, Then list possibilities for appropriate discipline.
Together, the group discusses each case and decides on an approach to discipline.
Then the group prepares, practices, and acts out the discipline decided on.
7. Application Activity with Case Studies: “What would you do if...?”
8. Reporting Procedures
9. Fun Times-- Activities Mothers Can Do WITH the Children
10. Handling Daily Routines Gracefully

GENERAL PRINCIPLES REGARDING SUPERVISION & DISCIPLINE

- The principles by which we live in a children’s home must not be based on American culture, European culture, or African culture. They must be based on the Word of God which is an authority above all cultures. If you think something we are discussing or something is a policy that is cultural and not Scriptural, you may not ignore the policy, but we do invite you to discuss it with us and to express your viewpoint, which we promise to give serious consideration.
- Every child is worthy of respect and dignity because no matter what his experience of life has been, he or she is created in God’s image.
- Every child is worthy of respect and dignity because no matter what handicap the child may have whether physical or mental, he or she is created in God’s image.
- Every child is worthy of respect and dignity because no matter the beauty of the child or lack of it, he or she is created in God’s image.

With the tongue we praise our Lord and Father, and with it we curse men, who have been made in God's likeness. James 3:9 (NIV)

- Every child is worthy of our love because every child is the object of God’s love and care.

God does not love us if we are good. He loves us. Period.

Romans 5:8 “But God shows His love for us in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us.”

- Every child at Haven of Hope is worthy of our special love and concern, because every child who has been damaged or hurt by others is an object of God’s special love and concern.

*A father to the fatherless, a defender of widows,
is God in his holy dwelling. Psalms 68:5 (NIV)*

*Defend the cause of the weak and fatherless;
maintain the rights of the poor and oppressed. Psalms 82:3 (NIV)*

- We should always speak to the children, interact with the children, teach and guide the children, and discipline the children in light of the fact that every child is worthy of this respect, dignity, love, and concern.
- In speaking to the children or about the children we must avoid put-downs, insults, negative comments, angry shouting, and angry or insulting tone of voice. We must speak firmly, in a “teacher voice” or “voice of authority”, but always with kindness and love.
- In interacting with the children, we must address them by name whenever possible, look for opportunities to compliment good behavior, look for activities we can do with them, look for opportunities to engage in pleasant conversation with them, look for natural opportunities for bits of teaching and guidance, look for opportunities for appropriate touch—a hug or its equivalent.
- Children feel secure and safe when reasonable boundaries are firmly and consistently enforced by the same adults who also provide love and nurture.
- Children always test the behavior boundaries. It seems as if they want to find a hole in them, but in fact, they are always hoping to find them secure and intact.
- When children find a hole in the boundaries, they will enlarge that hole and their behavior will get worse.
- When no boundaries are enforced, or they are enforced inconsistently or inappropriately, children feel unwanted, unloved, and deeply angry.
- In discipline, we must not allow inappropriate behavior to slip by without consequence. We must not ignore it.
- In discipline, we must gain control of our own anger before disciplining a child.
- In discipline, corporal punishment must be administered in a way that hurts, but does not harm the child.
- Discipline needs to be consistent.
- Discipline needs to be fair (equally applied to all).
- Discipline needs to be appropriate to the child’s age and the severity and frequency of the crime
- Discipline needs to minimize opportunity for false accusations to be made against the caregiver.

- Discipline is reserved for willful disobedience or defiance and is not for accidents or clumsiness or giving a wrong answer.
- Many problems can be avoided through observing a good routine of activities.
- Many problems can be avoided through keeping the children occupied with interesting, worthwhile activities.
- Children need to have access to a variety of toys during play time.
- Children need to learn to take care of things when they are finished with an activity.
- Children need to learn appropriate sharing and appropriate respect of another's property.
- Children must treat others with respect—both other children and adults.
- Children must obey when adults in charge give them instructions.
- When children report problems to us, we must first hear both sides of the story and ask for witnesses before making a decision.
- Haven of Hope will be a safe home for every child, a place where he will be accepted, loved, nurtured, guided, and respected both by staff and by other children.
- Haven of Hope is a constructive place, so destructive behavior of any kind is not tolerated.
- Mothers must make the safety and welfare of the children a priority.
- Supervision begins with being physically present, but it does not end there. Supervision includes:
 - Observation, paying attention to what is going on
 - Stopping any threats to the children's safety
 - Preventing inappropriate behavior, including fighting, insulting, inappropriate grabbing of toys
 - Encouraging the children & interacting with them in positive ways whenever possible

UNACCEPTABLE AT ANY TIME DISCIPLINES

Ignoring bad behavior

Making threats you cannot or will not fulfill

Insulting a child

Demeaning the child's background, character, family, or religious background

Talking to the child in a hateful, mean tone of voice

Hitting a child on the face, head, neck or back

Disciplining in anger or when you yourself are out of control

Disciplining for accidents, clumsiness, or giving a wrong answer

ACCEPTABLE UNDER CERTAIN CONDITIONS DISCIPLINES

Coporal or physical punishment like beating on the buttocks or smacking a young child's hand with yours

ACCEPTABLE DISCIPLINES

Making the child accept the natural consequences of his act

Writing papers or drawing about his misdeed and how to do better

Apologizing to someone who was hurt or endangered by his misbehavior, either verbally or in writing

Making restitution for anything destroyed through his misbehavior

Doing extra work, especially work related to the misdeed

Losing privileges

Paying a fine

Temporary isolation from others

Restricting the child's movement to the home, the dorm, his room, his bed, a chair, a certain spot

Doing something positive for one he has hurt

"Instant redo", practicing the proper behavior

To test—Have them cover up their list of disciplines and give them a list where

disciplines from the three categories are mixed up. Divide in three groups and have them classify each discipline, putting it into one of the categories. Have each group report on their list. Discuss any differences & ask the reasons for some of their choices.

WHAT DID THIS MOTHER DO WRONG? WHAT COULD THEY HAVE DONE DIFFERENTLY? CASE STUDIES

Small children are playing on the platform at the top of the slide, leaning over the edge. The mother tells them, "If you fall and get hurt, I'm going to beat you."

A mother sees boys throwing stones at a security light. She warns them, "If you break that light, you're going to be in big trouble."

A mother hears a group of children calling another child, "Prostitute!" She asks, "Why do you do that?" The children shrug their shoulders and walk off.

A mother notices a child has sores on his arms. They get worse every day. Finally the sores become infected and very painful. The mother scolds the child for not keeping the sores clean.

A mother notices that many of the girls will not speak to one particular girl. She just ignores it.

A child gets angry and breaks a chair against a wall. The mother gives him another one to sit on and tells him he shouldn't have done that.

The children leave their toys scattered about. The mother yells at them, calling them "filthy pigs."

A child is caught stealing from another child. The mother grabs the child by the arm and takes her around to all the other children, telling them, "This one is a thief. You must all be careful of her."

A mother is enjoying coffee in the kitchen with all the other mothers. She hears screaming. Soon she realizes that one child has hit another in the face with a stick. The child's eye is now bulging out. The mother grabs the stick and beats the child angrily.

A mother assigns extra work as a punishment. The child looks at her, puts his hands on his hips, and says, "Make me." The mother is angered by his attitude, so she smacks him across the face.

A mother hears rumors that two of the children are having sex. She hasn't seen them, so she ignores the rumor, not wanting to get involved.

APPLICATION – WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF???

ECM policies say children must be supervised at all times. You notice the mothers congregate in the Activity Center. Some of the children are there, but others are on the playground, on the school veranda, and in back of the girls' dorm. To fulfill your responsibility of supervision, what would you do?

Two children are assigned to clean up the dining room. They don't do it. You call them to do it, but they just laugh at you. What do you do?

You see a child cleaning his ears with a dirty, rusty nail. What do you do? Why?

You give a child a punishment. He looks you in the eyes and says, "I will not do that." What do you do?

You hear a group of children insulting one of the kids. They are not physically hurting him. No one else is around. What would you do?

During church service, a child near you keeps on deliberately flashing. Those around him are giggling. The speaker is far away and doesn't notice. What do you do?

In the dining hall, a child doesn't like what is served, so he throws his dish of food on the floor. What do you do?

WHEN TO SEEK HELP AT THE NEXT LEVEL OF AUTHORITY

- When you have tried your best to enforce discipline, but the child blatantly refuses.
- You have stopped what you are doing, looked the child in the eye, spoken firmly.
- The child insults you without repenting or repeatedly.
- You or other children are in immediate danger.

IMPORTANCE OF COMMUNICATION & FOLLOW THROUGH

- Damaged children like to play games in which they pit one adult against another.
- When children lose privileges, it requires a united effort in order to enforce the punishment.

HOW TO ENCOURAGE STICKING TOGETHER AS A FAMILY

- Don't talk negatively about other staff or ECM family members. Don't say anything you wouldn't say to the person's face.
- Don't listen to gossip about other members. Say, "Let's go ask her about that."
- Write down all discipline decisions & report to those needed to help enforce (the person, the penalty, the length of the penalty, and the reason).
- Don't put the leader in the position of calling for help with discipline when you have done nothing to enforce it or when you have repeatedly let an offense slip by

and then decided you were tired of it. (When he asks what you have done already, you will look foolish in front of the children.)

- Never question or put down the discipline decision of another staff member openly in front of the children. If you have concerns, address them privately with the member involved.
- Do your best to support the discipline decisions of other staff members.

REPORTING

Monthly reports:

What has to be included--

- Special activities for the month. This could be outings or something as simple as reading the children a bedtime story. There should always be something special to report.
- Special challenges you are facing.
- Reports on the health, progress and behavior of each child, citing specific incidents if possible, rather than broad character descriptions.

Examples: Which is specific?

Kofi likes fighting a lot.

Kofi got into another fight with Kwesi. They both wanted to play with the same ball.

Jamie is fond of arguing.

In the past week, I have counted 9 times that Jamie has argued with someone, each time claiming they are wrong and she is right. Last night was the last time.

Jamie argued with Carrie over the correct pronunciation of a certain Twi word.

- Specific discipline matters of consequence
- Reports on damage to property at the home (What happened, when, how, who, why? What arrangements have been made for repairs or replacements?)

What can be very helpful to include—

- Specific ways to pray for each child

Show good & bad examples of reports & discuss why they're good or bad

Act out scenarios & have mothers write reports on what they saw. Then discuss.

Scenario 1: Toby and Abbie are young children playing with cars. Toby grabs a car out of Abby's hand. Then Abby child kicks Toby in the stomach. He does not return the car, so she kicks him in the mouth, knocking two teeth out. What should the mothers write in their report?

Scenario 2: Three boys are throwing rocks at security lights. They break two of them. What should the mothers write in their report?

FUN TIMES-- ACTIVITIES TO DO WITH THE CHILDREN

The child's trust bank--

Every child has an imaginary emotional "trust bank". You make deposits to this bank by spending time with the child, by talking to the child in encouraging ways, by giving hugs, by noticing good behavior and giving honest compliments. When you need to discipline, you make withdrawals from the bank. You need to make sure there are always sufficient deposits in each child's "trust bank" so that if you need to discipline, you will not find it empty. Disciplining a child without something significant in his "trust bank" makes him feel hated or used or despised. Disciplining a child when there is plenty in his "trust bank" makes him feel secure and is actually comforting to him.

Story time

Group storytelling

Tell me about when...

Motion songs

Singing & dancing

Simple games like "I spy", "Hide the button", "I'm thinking of something", etc.

Blocks, puzzles, dolls, cars –how to play WITH the children

Respecting another child's use of toys

Each group of children can do only one activity at a time. They must clean up from that activity before proceeding to the next.

HANDLING DAILY ROUTINES GRACEFULLY

Importance of routine—

Virtually all experts at working with emotionally disturbed children agree that reasonable, reliable routine is a key ingredient to the child's recovery.

Reasons for routine—

- Routine lets a child know in advance what is expected of him so that he has the best possible chance to succeed.
- Routine helps a child feel secure in his world. It lends a much-needed stability to his life.
- Routine, once settled into, makes life easier for everyone because it means that much less that you have to enforce. Without routine, every single thing is an issue all day long. On the other hand, routines require a minimum of effort.

Main life routines--

- Getting up routines
- Bath time & teeth time
- Daily devotions & prayers

- Preparing for school
- Changing clothes after school
- Siesta time
- Picking up things after using them
- Household chores
- Personal chores
- Homework
- Mealtimes
- Bedtime
- Worship

Routine is doing the same thing at the same time in somewhat the same way so that it becomes habit and no longer a subject for discussion or debate.

Routine may vary by weekday and weekend or by school & no school. Some days have their own routines, such as Sunday mornings.

It is important that weekends or no-school days have a routine of their own. It may be a different routine from weekdays or school days, but it is still a routine. A day with no structure is begging for disaster.

Routine should be

- Reasonable (Do-able)
 - How long does it take to do this?
 - How many other people need to do it at the same time or in the same space?
 - What is the ability of the children? Can they do it alone or do they need help?
- Fun or interesting
- Communal, a group activity. You don't just tell them. You work with them.
- Singing & rhythmic activities help make it fun.
- Complimented when it is done well.
- Appropriate "warm up" and "cool down" times are needed. Quiet activities & songs before siesta & bedtime.