

## Network for Information on Parenting (NIP), Tamil Nadu - Zonal Networking

### Introduction

The Tamil Nadu Chapter of the Network for Information on Parenting (NIP) conducted a series of workshops in early 2002, to extend membership and networking activities to NGOs across the State, on a zone-wise basis. The aim was to spread awareness on Parenting for the child below three years, amongst institutions working with women and children, as an intervention into their on-going, service/training programmes. The project generated valuable awareness, and feedback on the Network's parenting activities and programmes.

### Introduction

The Network for Information on Parenting is made up of a loosely federated group of people who share the ideas of good parenting practices. The aim of the zonal networking project was to spread these practices and messages to NGOs across the State.

A series of parenting workshops were conducted for NGOs in selected districts, using the Parent Education Flip Chart. The Flip Chart is a parent education resource on holistic child development, adapted and indigenised from the Hincks-Dellcrest "Learning through Play" Calendar.

Programme participants comprised of a range of ECCD professionals, NGOs, and educational and research institutions.

### Methodology

#### Schedule

Five one-day, parenting workshops were conducted from January to March 2002.

S. No.	Date	Place	No. of Participants	
			NGOs	Pax
1.	20 Feb 2002	Gandhigram, Dindigul	8	24
2.	27 Feb 2002	ICSA, Chennai	14	20
3.	06 Mar 2002	Avinashalingam, Coimbatore	36	44
4.	15 Mar 2002	ICSA, Chennai (TNVHA)	14	25
5.	16 Mar 2002	Vellore (RUHSA)	14	24

#### Programme Overview

- Introduction, including identification of parenting roles.
- Understanding the concept of Early Childhood Care for Survival Growth & Development (ECCSGD).

- Connecting NIP's Critical Minimum Components to potential programme initiatives and activities in the community.
  - a. Parental readiness.
  - b. Planning for parenthood.
  - c. Welcoming the baby.
  - d. Nurturing the infant-toddler, and understanding holistic child development.
  - e. Importance of play.
  - f. Roles and responsibilities of parents/caregivers.

### **Programme Highlights**

- Sharing of experiences and programme initiatives by NIP members, comprising individuals, NGOs, and educational and research institutions, who have successfully implemented the parenting programme and the tool into their daily activities.
- In-depth review and understanding of holistic child development, including "the miracle of the brain", child development, and SPRUC.
- Practical illustrations of the importance of play, and learning through play concepts, through games and activities.
- Identifying problems, and appropriate solutions for Parenting today.

### **Feedback & Analysis**

- Over 80% of participating NGOs expressed willingness to join the Network following the programme.
- The top three problems and needs of children below three years, identified by participants, were Health, Hygiene and Nutrition, and Physical and Psychological needs, followed by Parenting skills.
- Most NGO programmes currently focused on Health, Hygiene and Nutrition.
- Participants felt that the best way to share the parenting messages learnt, at an individual level, was through family, friends, relatives, and neighbours.
- Most participants felt that the best way to share messages at an institutional level was through training of stakeholders, i.e. parents/caregivers, adolescents, women's and self-help groups, and professionals, and through orientation/awareness programmes.

### **Conclusion**

The above-stated Critical Minimum Components form the basis of NIP's parenting philosophy, and life-cycle approach to parenting. The zonal networking project was designed to extend networking activities to other NGOs working in ECCD. The project has had a significant impact in spreading awareness on positive parenting practices, and spurring new programme initiatives. The

project has also generated valuable feedback and recommendations for NIP programmes and activities going forward.