

State Level Awareness Programmes on the Parent Education Flip Chart for ICDS

Abstract

The Network for Information on Parenting (NIP) held a series of awareness programmes on the Parent Education Flip Chart for general and WB ICDS-III personnel, sponsored by UNICEF, in 2001-2002. The workshops were aimed at transferring expertise and knowledge on the Flip Chart to ICDS functionaries, to promote ownership of the tool, and to take the parenting programme forward into the community.

Introduction

The Parent Education Flip Chart is an adapted, indigenised version of the Hincks-Dellcrest "Learning through Play" Calendar, developed by Bala Mandir Research Foundation (BMRF), in collaboration with UNICEF and ICDS. The Flip Chart is a holistic child development tool, designed to meet the needs of child-care workers, and the communities they serve, across rural and urban India.

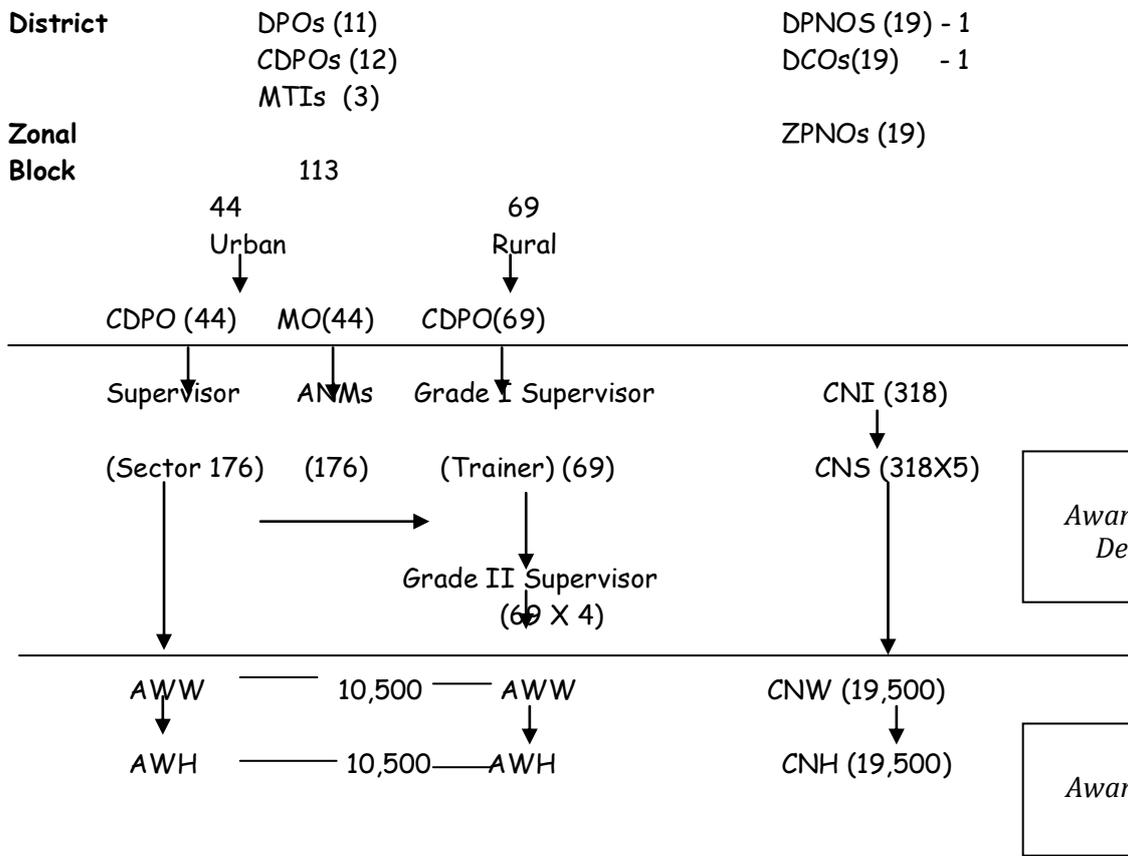
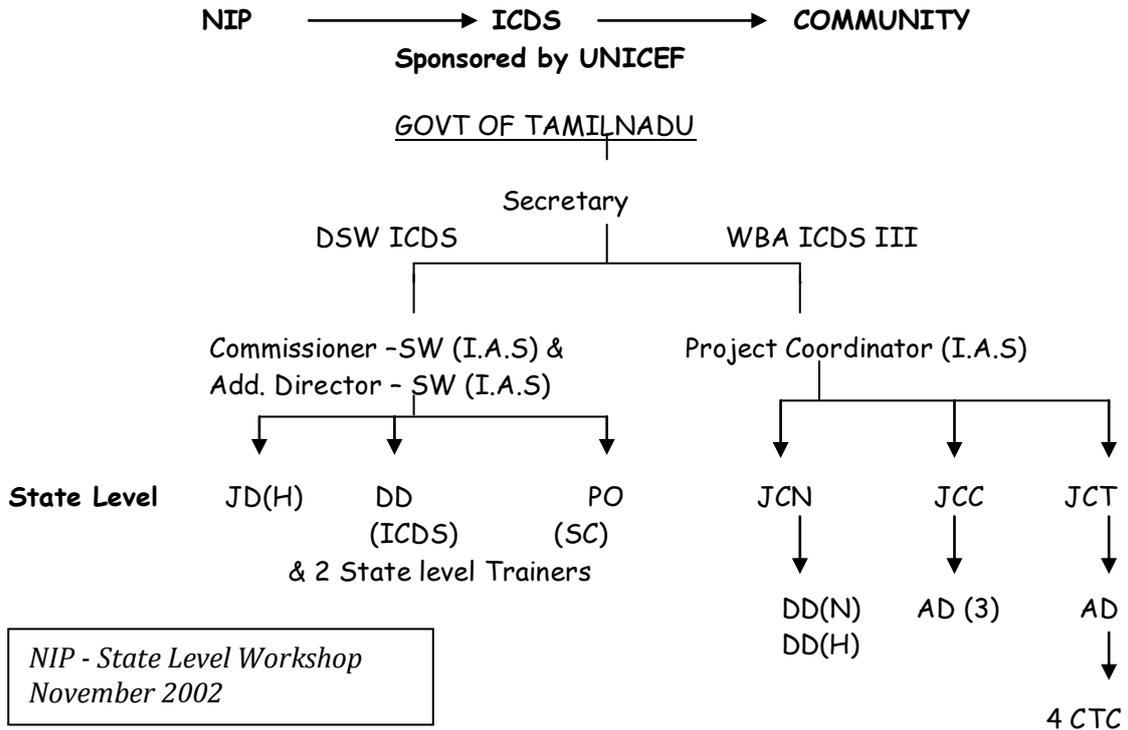
The tool recognises the importance of the Anganwadi worker as the central figure of intervention for quality community-based programmes, particularly for children below 3 years. The tool highlights various parenting and child development issues, such as brain development and early identification and intervention, the importance of fathers in the parenting role, and gender discrimination and the needs of the Girl child. It also teaches parents HOW to create a caring, supportive and stimulating environment for the child, with many play activities that parents can do with their children in the home, using everyday materials available in the household.

A five-day State level training programme on the Flip Chart was held in May 2001 for select trainers and personnel of ICDS and WB ICDS-III, followed by orientation/training programmes for zonal and district level functionaries between Oct 2001 - Mar 2002.

The main objectives of the programme were:

- To train ICDS functionaries to take the programme and tool forward into the community and Anganwadi Centres (AWCs).
- To gauge the views, and levels of understanding of the functionaries on parenting issues.
- To better understand the needs of the communities, and the use and effectiveness of the Flip Chart.
- To involve functionaries in the implementation of the programme.

Structural Chart



ICDS Programme Schedule - May 2001 - Mar 2002

Date	Venue	Participants	District
21-25 May 2001	Asha Nivas, Chennai	DSW & WB III	All
23-24 Oct 2001	CTC, Taramani	DSW & WB III	All
03 Nov 2001	Asha Nivas, Chennai	DSW & WB III	Select
10 Nov 2001	Vijaya Hospital, Chennai	DSW & WB III	Select
11-12 Dec 2001	Gandhigram, Dindugal	DSW & WB III	Select
06 Mar 2002	Avinashalingam University, Coimbatore	DSW & WB III	Select

Programme Overview

- Registration
- Participant Introduction - As parents and as those in a parenting role
- Emergence of the Parent Education Flip Chart
- Appraisal of existing programmes for children below 3 years
- An overview to Parenting - Critical Minimum Components
- Holistic Child Development - Birth - 3 years
- Actualising potential
- Orientation to the Flip Chart
- Reflections and Implementation
- Feedback

Workshop Highlights

- Identifying issues for children below 3 years to be addressed in the community.
- Identifying gaps in the ICDS programme, to improve coordination.
- Understanding the objectives behind the Flip Chart, and assessing whether the tool can be used to cover the gaps.
- Planning on how to take the tool forward into the respective districts.
- Understanding brain development, and the importance of positive psychosocial interaction between parents and children.
- Understanding the SPRUC domains of child development, with special focus on the 3 domains S, R and C, as being critical to P and U (cognitive) growth and development, which have to date, been the main focus of ICDS nutritional and health interventions.
- Understanding the importance and power of Play in holistic child development.

Feedback & Results

Consensus feedback from participants on the Flip Chart:

- Play is truly the best way for the child to learn.
- The tool promotes interest in, and understanding of holistic child development.
- The tool highlights key parenting and child development issues, such as extension of the parenting role beyond the mother, into the family. It also helps to address many important social issues, such as gender discrimination, female infanticide, and marriage.
- The parenting messages given are simple, and easy for all levels of functionaries to understand. Information is presented in a clear and organised manner, aiding onward teaching/presentation to parents.
- All parenting suggestions given are practical, and easily implementable in the field.

Suggestions for use of the Flip Chart:

- District-level review meetings for trainers, supervisors and workers.
- Training sessions for Anganwadi workers.
- Workshops/sessions for adolescent girls, antenatal and postnatal mothers, newly-weds, fathers and extended family members, self-help groups etc.
- Meetings with parents of children with development delays/disability.
- Parent-teacher meetings.
- Home visits, with one-to-one interaction.
- Functions, such as Children's Day, exhibitions, and cultural programmes, through role-plays, posters, etc.

Recommendations

Some recommendations/suggestions from participants on the tool, and programme implementation in the field:

- The size of the Flip Chart should be reduced, for better portability, and easy usage as reference material/tool in community centres and libraries.
- The programme timings should be made suitable for working mothers, and fathers, to enhance participation.
- The programme needs more planning, publicity and time to garner greater community involvement.
- There should be increased direct involvement of the Medical Officer (MO).
- The Anganwadi worker's schedule needs to allow for time to implement the programme, interact with the community, and evaluate feedback.

Conclusion

The awareness programmes on the Parent Education Flip Chart were developed as an intervention into on-going ICDS programmes, to facilitate the training of

Anganwadi workers and reach out to the community. The training and messages have been well received, promoting understanding, focus and interest in Parenting and holistic child development.