



PARENTING PROGRAMMES AS A CHILD ABUSE INTERVENTION IN HIGH-CONFLICT SETTINGS

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In high-conflict settings such as South Sudan, evidence-based parenting programmes can be highly effective in reducing the use of harsh discipline and improving positive parenting behaviour.

? RESEARCH QUESTION:

Are evidence-based parenting programmes effective in preventing violence against children in low-resource, high-conflict settings?



PARTICIPANTS:

97 caregivers in the child parenting programme; 107 caregivers and 108 adolescents in the adolescent parenting programme.



TIMELINE:

2017–2018



METHOD:

Community-based pre-post interviews with families.



STUDY DESIGN:

The study included two [Parenting for Lifelong Health](#) programmes, locally named “Beit Salaam Kids” (12 weeks long) and “Beit Salaam Teens” (14 weeks long). Participants were interviewed before and after the programmes by trained local community facilitators. The pre- and post-intervention data were analysed to determine the programmes’ effects on harsh discipline and positive parenting.



INTERVENTION:

The study included two Parenting for Lifelong Health programmes, locally named “Beit Salaam Kids” (12 weeks long) and “Beit Salaam Teens” (14 weeks long).

KEY MESSAGES:

- ➔ Over 1 billion children around the world experience violence each year, with children in poorer and more politically unstable countries disproportionately affected.
- ➔ Child abuse has a severe and lasting impact on children’s physical and mental health, with knock-on effects at the economic and societal level.
- ➔ In low-resource, high-conflict regions such as South Sudan, evidence-based parenting programmes can significantly reduce rates of child abuse within families and improve child–caregiver relationships.
- ➔ Using trained community volunteers to facilitate—and collect data on—such programmes can result in lower overall costs and greater scalability.

RESEARCH FINDINGS:

- ➔ Average attendance rates were high, considering the participants’ stressful postwar circumstances: 89% for the child parenting programme, and 49% (adolescents) and 53% (caregivers) for the adolescent parenting programme. In the child parenting programme, female and male caregivers and those with older children were more likely to attend. However, higher attendance was not necessarily associated with better outcomes in either of the two programmes.
- ➔ For both the child and adolescent parenting programmes, the reduction in violence and abuse levels was exceptionally high: between 68% and 77%, compared to pre-programme levels.
- ➔ In addition, both programmes had a moderate to large effect on positive parenting behaviour. The adolescent programme also had a moderate to large effect on parental efficacy. No harmful effects were reported.

LOCATION:
Juba,
South Sudan

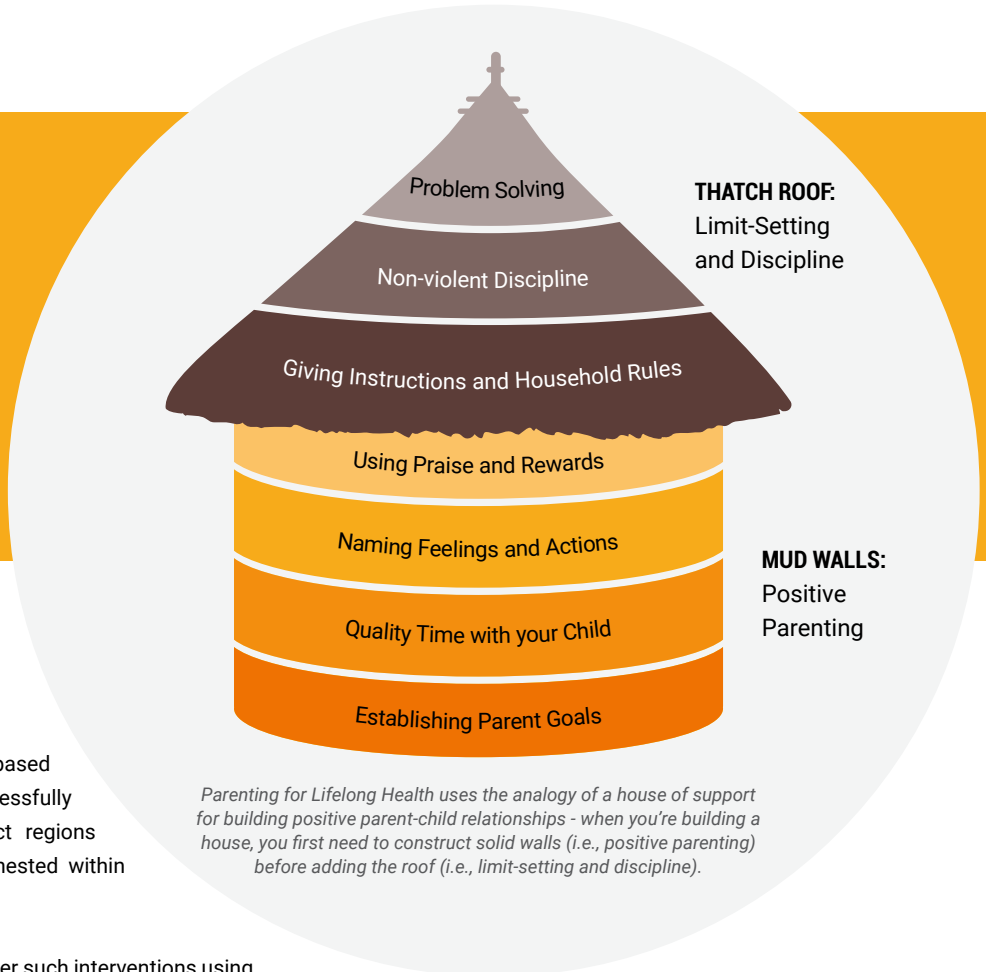




“For both the child and adolescent parenting programmes, abuse reduced between 68% and 77% following the programmes.”

IMPLICATIONS FOR POLICY AND PRACTICE:

- ➔ The findings suggest that evidence-based parenting programmes can be successfully carried out in low-resource, high-conflict regions such as South Sudan, especially when nested within other health and social services.
- ➔ The results show that it is possible to deliver such interventions using trained community volunteers in place of highly skilled professionals such as nurses and psychologists. This approach can translate into lower costs and improved scalability.
- ➔ The study also confirmed that community volunteers are able to collect monitoring data while implementing parenting programmes. It may be beneficial for donors to encourage data collection from their local implementing partners, given the importance of monitoring and evaluation for programme success.
- ➔ Overall, the findings indicate that parenting programmes carry great potential for supporting vulnerable families in low-resource, high-conflict settings.
- ➔ Further research is needed on the factors that improve and impair programme delivery in high-conflict settings.



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