

# **You can give care to children and families**

## **Module 13**

# Learning objectives

- List things that children need when they are healthy and when they are sick
- Describe important communication skills for children
- Discuss the value of telling the truth to children
- Identify ways of supporting families
- Respond confidently to difficult questions.

# Buzz group

- *What do children need to be physically and emotionally healthy?*

# Examples of needs...

- physical/ emotional
- food /love
- safety / physical affection
- housing /play
- clothes /learning, stimulation
- physical exercise / attention and value
- encouragement, affirmation
- being part of a family or community

# Call out

- *What do children need when they are sick?*

# Examples of needs....

- *all of previous list*
- medical treatment
- symptom control - pain especially
- to have mother/father/siblings around them
- to be in familiar surroundings if possible
- to have their questions answered
- to be reassured that they will be cared for.

# Points to remember

- children still need all the things in the first list when they are sick.
- they still need play, learning, stimulation etc
- these are often neglected but are part of our holistic care for sick children

# Group work

**Aim:** to discuss the needs of the families of sick children.

1. What are some of the challenges families face – parents, siblings, other relatives?
2. In what ways can we support them?



# Needs of families....

- finance – cost of medicines, loss of income due to caring
- tiredness – work of caring, no time for their own needs
- anxiety/grief/stress/anger/guilt
- siblings – lack of attention, missing school
- extra burden of orphans in addition to own responsibilities
- strain on family relationships.

# Supporting families

- Communication, mutual partnership
- Acknowledgement and appreciation
  - appreciate their hard work, tell them how well they are doing
- Shared decision making
  - they are partners in care.

# Supporting families

- Avoid scolding, blaming, judging or patronising
  - understand their difficulties and look at ways of improving care from now on.
- Building communities of care
  - encourage them to share out the work of caring in the family
  - draw on support from their community
- Don't forget to pay attention to siblings

# Buzz groups

- How much should we tell children?
- You are looking after a 12-year-old with a bone tumour in his leg which has spread to his lungs. There is no treatment available. He asks you “Am I going to get better?”
- Should you tell him the truth?

# Communication with children

- Children usually know much more than we think.
- evidence shows that children and families cope better with illness when there is open communication.
- Children have the right to have their questions answered honestly.
- Talking allows them to express their fears and feelings and reduces sense of isolation.

- Recap Breaking bad news
- List out the extra points when we deal with children

# Communication with children

- Verbal and non verbal skills
- Talk with children , not about them, to parents
- For the first visit, presence of parent is important, later ask the child

- Summing up

- One point you have learnt today



- These resources are developed as part of the THET multi-country project whose goal is to strengthen and integrate palliative care into national health systems through a public health primary care approach
  - Acknowledgement given to Cairdeas International Palliative Care Trust and MPCU for their preparation and adaptation
  - part of the teaching materials for the Palliative Care Toolkit training with modules as per the Training Manual
  - can be used as basic PC presentations when facilitators are encouraged to adapt and make contextual



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